



Agenda Item 6

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Forensic Services Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>5 February 2024</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>Digital Forensics – Next Steps and Timeline for Progression</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>Appendix A – SPA Forensics Service Committee ISO 17025 May 2023</b> <b>Appendix B – ISO 17025 Project Timeline All hubs</b>

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to provide SPA Forensic Services Committee members with an update on Police Scotland’s progress towards obtaining ISO 17025 within Digital Forensics.

This paper will specifically provide an update in respect of:

- Agenda item 6 – Digital Forensics – Next Steps and Timeline for Progression

Members are invited to note the contents of this paper and discuss accordingly.

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is the largest publisher of quality standards in the world. ISO develop and publish standards across multiple industries. Adherence to these standards ensures that organisations around the world conform to the same management techniques, processes, controls, quality, products and services.
- 1.2 ISO 17025 is the international standard for testing and calibration in forensic science labs. Essentially it is a set of requirements used to demonstrate that labs are operating a robust quality management system/framework and are competent to conduct the work that they are required to do.

Specifically, the accreditation covers a variety of areas:

- Qualifications, training and experience of staff
  - Equipment – is it properly calibrated and maintained
  - Adequate quality assurance procedures are in place
  - Sampling and testing procedures
  - Measurements can be traced
  - Accurate recording and reporting
  - Suitable test facilities
- 1.3 Similarly to SPA Forensics, ISO 17025 has been deemed as the most appropriate and internationally recognised framework under which Digital Forensics can be assessed. It is used by police services in England and Wales and has now been formalised as a project within Police Scotland. Achieving ISO accreditation will build trust and confidence in our provision of evidential products and services to victims and witnesses.

## 2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 Further detail on the ISO 17025 Project can be found in the briefing paper presented by CS Conrad Trickett (Business Lead, Policing in a Digital World Programme) at the SPA Forensics Services Committee on 04 May 2023 (**Appendix A -May 2023 Item 7 SPA Forensics Service Committee ISO 17025**).
- 2.2 In addition to the background of ISO 17025 Project, the briefing paper outlined the following:
- The staged approach to both the scope of accreditation and implementation across the 5 existing Digital Forensic Hubs in

Aberdeen, Inverness, Dundee, Glasgow and Newbridge by 2026 (originally 2024).

- Update in respect of commencement of the Project, the associated timeline and introduction (June 2022) of the Quality Team within the project to collectively work towards ISO 17025 accreditation.
- Scheduling and delivery of training has been completed to broaden understanding of ISO 17025 accreditation. Planning towards data validation of mobile devices to be progressed which will contribute towards time lined activity and preparations for pre-assessment.

### Progress since date of last reporting (May 2023)

#### *Adoption of ISO principles*

- 2.3 The detailed work of documenting the process undertaken in relation to Mobile Phones was progressed through 2023, initial plans were to complete each site independently. Further review established and recognised the benefits of progressing each Lab to steady state would provide greater clarity and understanding, ensuring each lab had sufficient time to absorb and work within the principles laid out. Aberdeen Digital Forensic Lab has begun its Steady State with Documents and processes in place as a pre-requisite for UKAS Assessment, these have been uploaded to the Quality Assurance module of our Digital Forensics Case Management system. Any further changes will adopt the change management process and be captured on the Quality Assurance System.
- 2.4 The planned assessments dates have not altered following the change request approval captured in **Appendix B**. These dates remain as is, these however may move to the right due to UKAS contract agreement. The reporting baseline remains with a project completion date of June 2026.
- 2.5 **Appendix B - ISO 17025 Project Timeline All Hubs** – this details the sequence of accreditation by Hub location. At the conclusion of this cycle, on the assumption that re-accreditation will be achieved at already accredited locations, the scope of accreditation would then as previously planned be expanded to include computers as the Project moved from Programme activity to business as a usual (BAU).

*Contractual update*

2.6 Contract Negotiations between Police Scotland and UKAS are progressing with a view to moving toward agreement in the following areas: -

- UKAS, Police Scotland are looking to achieve final agreement on one outstanding area, this is expected to be resolved by financial year end.
- UKAS Accreditation timescales confirmed upon contract agreement / Sign off and Police Scotland Application submission accepted and approved.
- A UKAS Liaison Officer will be appointed upon User Agreement completion to work with Police Scotland to prepare for Assessment.

It is understood that the plotted accreditation dates of each hub will reflect the delay in contract agreements, however, the planned project end date will remain unchanged.

The quality team have been in post and established from June 2022, the current Quality Assurance Manager post has been recently vacated and it is expected that this post will be filled prior to formal accreditation.

2.7 The Policing in a Digital World Programme (PDWP) continue to ensure that the ISO 17025 Project and the wider Programme activity is aligned, where applicable with the NPCC Digital Forensic Portfolio. This is to ensure Police Scotland's strategy is underpinned by standards, accreditation, Ethical and Legal governance consistent with the UK approach.

2.8 PDWP have kept oversight of developments associated to the Forensic Science Regulator and the regime of scientific quality standards and good practice that are set to encompass all forensic science services In England and Wales. PDWP have met with the regulator to understand the codes of practice. A number of workshops and workstreams have been established across the business areas with the expectation of Police Scotland aligning where possible to the codes laid out.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Costs relating to the ISO 17025 Project are within funding allocation.

### **4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

### **6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The introduction of ISO 17025 accreditation will demonstrate that Police Scotland are achieving a high standard of service delivery in relation to Digital Forensics, in support of wider Criminal Justice service needs and to better meet the expectations of victims and witnesses. Reputational risks exist if this accreditation is not achieved, and criminal justice processes are negatively affected.

### **7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

### **8. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 8.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

### **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

### **10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.



<b>Meeting</b>	Forensic Services Committee
<b>Date</b>	04 May 2023
<b>Location</b>	Video Conference
<b>Title of Paper</b>	ISO 17025 Update – Policing in a Digital World Programme
<b>Presented By</b>	CS Conrad Trickett
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	For Noting & Discussion
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	Appendix A – SPA Forensics Service Committee ISO 17025 December 2022 Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline All Hubs

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to provide SPA Forensic Services Committee members with an update on Police Scotland’s progress towards obtaining ISO 17025 within Digital Forensics.

This paper will specifically provide an update in respect of:

- Agenda item 7 – Digital Forensics

Members are invited to note the contents of this paper and discuss accordingly.

## 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is the largest publisher of quality standards in the world. ISO develop and publish standards across multiple industries. Adherence to these standards ensures that organisations around the world conform to the same management techniques, processes, controls, quality, products and services.
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Specifically, the accreditation covers a variety of areas:

- Qualifications, training and experience of staff
  - Equipment – is it properly calibrated and maintained
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  - Measurements can be traced
  - Accurate recording and reporting
  - Suitable test facilities
- 1.3 Similarly to SPA Forensics, ISO 17025 has been deemed as the most appropriate and internationally recognised framework under which Digital Forensics can be assessed. It is used by police services in England and Wales and has now been formalised as a project within Police Scotland. Achieving ISO accreditation will build trust and confidence in our provision of evidential products and services to victims and witnesses.

## 2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 Further detail on the ISO 17025 Project can be found in the briefing paper presented by CS Conrad Trickett (Business Lead, Policing in a Digital World Programme) at the SPA Forensics Services Committee on 14 December 2022 (**Appendix A -SPA Forensics Service Committee ISO 17025 December 2022**).
- 2.2 In addition to the background of ISO 17025 Project, the briefing paper outlined the following:
- The staged approach to both the scope of accreditation and implementation across the 5 existing Digital Forensic Hubs in



## OFFICIAL

Aberdeen, Inverness, Dundee, Glasgow and Newbridge by 2026 (originally 2024).

- Update in respect of commencement of the Project, the associated timeline and introduction (June 2022) of the Quality Team within the project to collectively work towards ISO 17025 accreditation.
- Scheduling and delivery of training has been completed to broaden understanding of ISO 17025 accreditation. Planning towards data validation of mobile devices to be progressed which will contribute towards timelined activity and preparations for pre-assessment.

### Progress since date of last reporting (Dec 2022)

- 2.3 In terms of Governance for the ISO Project 17025, On 22 February 2023, the Change Request for the delivery of the final lab to achieve accreditation (Edinburgh) in 2026, was approved at Change Board.
- 2.4 The Change Request also approved the delay in spend and an additional £47,000 to cover additional accreditation costs that have been identified as the project as developed.
- 2.5 The new reporting baseline is a project completion date of June 2026.
- 2.6 **Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline All Hubs** – this details the sequence of accreditation by Hub location. At the conclusion of this cycle, on the assumption that re-accreditation will be achieved at already accredited locations, the scope of accreditation would then as previously planned be expanded to include computers as the Project moved from Programme activity to business as a usual (BAU).
- 2.7 Work will continue to develop and finalise ISO 17025 specific documentation and processes. On completion, these will be uploaded to the Quality Assurance module of our Digital Forensics Case Management system, with work continuing to implement this on the system.
- 2.8 Contract Negotiations between Police Scotland and UKAS are progressing with a view to moving toward agreement in the following areas:-
- Completion by UKAS of appropriate Vetting documentation.
  - UKAS Application Forms by Police Scotland – Ongoing.
  - Contract Terms and Conditions mutually agreed between UKAS and Police Scotland Legal team and Procurement business areas.



- UKAS Accreditation timescales confirmed upon contract agreement / Sign off and Police Scotland Application submission accepted and approved.
- Finalisation of Police Scotland UKAS Procurement Strategy.

2.9 The Policing in a Digital World Programme (PDWP) continue to ensure that the ISO 17025 Project and the wider Programme activity is aligned, where applicable with the NPCC Digital Forensic Portfolio. This is to ensure Police Scotland's strategy is underpinned by standards, accreditation, Ethical and Legal governance consistent with the UK approach.

2.10 In addition PDWP will keep oversight of developments associated to the Forensic Science Regulator and the regime of scientific quality standards and good practice that are set to encompass all forensic science services In England and Wales.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Costs relating to the ISO 17025 Project are reform funded, and the small additional costs have been approved in the change request, ie all funding is within the approvals of business case and subsequent change request.

### **4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

### **6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The introduction of ISO 17025 accreditation will demonstrate that Police Scotland are achieving a high standard of service delivery in relation to Digital Forensics, in support of wider Criminal Justice service needs and to better meet the expectations of victims and witnesses. Reputational risks exist if this accreditation is not achieved and criminal justice processes are negatively affected.

### **7. UNSOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

### **8. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

8.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

**9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

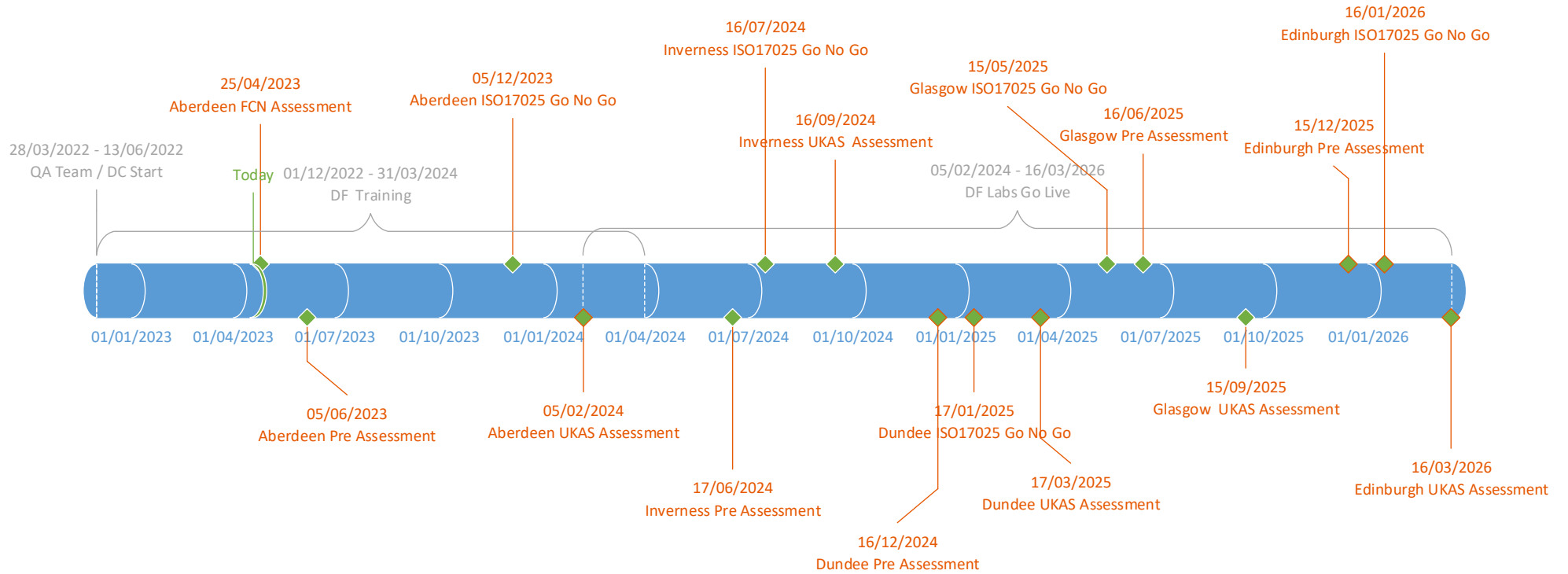
9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

**10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.



### Draft - ISO 17025 Accreditation – Enhanced Digital Forensics All DF Hubs



#### Project Milestones

**Milestones at Risk – Unknown target predicated by full compliment of Resources to develop Documentation and complete Recommendations**  
**Project Red Line without Resources / Milestone Missed**