

ICL Pathway

**PATHWAY RELEASE POLICY**

Ref: PA/STR/0003

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**Document Title:** Pathway Release Policy

**Document Type:** Strategy Document

**Abstract:** This document defines the Pathway policy for the identification and planning new Releases of Software and data.

**Distribution:** Pathway Management Team  
PDA

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## 1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

### 1.1 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Reason
0.1	20/10/96	First Draft for Pathway internal use only
0.2	30/10/96	Second draft following application of Pathway comments.
0.3	30/10/96	Draft for issue to the PDA.
0.4	12/11/96	Updated following PDA comments through Michael Purchase.
0.5	17/11/96	Updated following PDA & Sponsor comments received through Michael Purchase.
0.6	18/11/96	Further comments applied from Pathway and PDA.
0.7	24/11/96	Further comments applied from PDA.
1.0	26/11/96	Further comments applied from POCL.

### 1.2 CHANGES FORECAST

None.

### 1.3 ABBREVIATIONS USED

The terms and abbreviations used in this document are those defined in the AUTHORITIES Agreement (Schedule A01).

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## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 PURPOSE

This document describes Pathway's policy for identifying and planning the development of new Releases of Software and data. Pathway aims to do this in a manner which is responsive to the business needs of the Authorities and of Pathway and which also conforms with the provisions of the Related Agreements. Overall, it aims to:

- a) establish the principles associated with releases of Pathway Services in the context of the Related Agreements;
- a) establish the principles for regular and on-going Releases of the Pathway systems and Services;
- a) establish the provisions to bring in changes to functionality and new POCL Clients more quickly and frequently through Reference Data provided by POCL and/or Pathway and to explain the main qualifiers for doing this;
- a) establish indicative timescales for the different types of Release in order to put these into context, while recognising that these may need review when the underlying processes have been detailed;

The Pathway Release Policy is one component of a process of establishing business change. A number of associated processes, such as qualification and prioritisation of business opportunities, the definition of release content, service management and reference data management also need to be defined. This document supports the development of such processes and establishes the principles for the introduction of new functionality and Service improvements.

The incentives to introduce new functionality and Service improvements in a timely and efficient manner are shared by both Pathway and the Authorities, since commercially successful Services will benefit both parties.

### 2.2 DEFINITION OF RELEASE

The Related Agreements define a Release to be "a documented collection of Software and/or data provided by the CONTRACTOR to deliver a Service" while the Requirement 476 makes it clear that the definition also includes Reference Data. Throughout this document releases will be referred to as either Software Releases or Reference Data Releases. It is possible that both Software Releases and Reference Data Releases require the co-ordinated implementation of

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other Infrastructure and Supporting Services and it will be seen that this requirement leads to further subdivisions of the definition of Releases later in the document.

## **2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

Releases are required to support changes of Service delivery in order to implement business change. This business change will cover a wide range of scale and complexity. For example:

- i. adjustment to POCL trading variables, such as the price of a first class stamp;
- i. changes to business rules, e.g. whether or not to print a receipt for Automated Payment Transactions;
- i. amending the format or information provided for existing transaction types;
- i. franchising an existing outlet, or creating a new outlet;
- i. implementing a new client for an existing service;
- i. introducing a new service for a client service;
- i. Re-engineering services within the AUTHORITIES own operations.

The time, risk and cost of implementing such business changes will vary, depending upon the extent of:

- a) systems development;
- a) reference data changes;
- a) Infrastructure;
- a) support Services such as Help desk;
- a) documentation;
- a) training;
- a) marketing collateral;
- a) network and telecommunications;
- a) clients process re-engineering;
- a) and so on.

All these changes must be taken into account in the process of defining new business opportunities and setting priorities.

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Releases which embrace new business opportunities will require a study to prepare and qualify the business case for the AUTHORITIES and for Pathway. Pathway wishes to participate in this work in a spirit of business partnership. Successful studies will result in an agreed Business Requirements Definition document which then becomes the basis of a formal change request.

**2.4 CHANGE CONTROL**

The delivery of new or changed Software and Services beyond that committed in the Related Agreements is subject to change control under Clauses 101.3, and 101.4, and Schedule A05 of, the AUTHORITIES' Agreement, the POCL Agreement and the DSS Agreement. Changes which require modification to the Related Agreements are approved under Clause 101.3 while conforming changes are approved under Clause 101.4. All Releases except those described as Class 1 Reference Data Releases at section 3.2.1 below are subject to Change Control. It is emphasised here that a new Release is the instrument of underlying business change and it is this business change that is primarily the subject of Change Control.

A proposed change becomes contractually committed upon the presentation of a Change Control Note (CCN) by the CONTRACTOR and its approval by the AUTHORITIES. The CCN as defined by Schedule A05 requires a detailed explanation of the requirements and commercial impact of each change together with commitments to timescales and costs. It is not required that the CONTRACTOR should commit resources or expenditure to the development and implementation of a change until the CCN has been approved.

In some circumstances it is possible that the lack of a complete specification of a Clients requirements, or lack of commercial commitment by a Client at an early stage of negotiations, could prejudice the time to market for a new Service. To help avoid such delays Pathway proposes that the commercial risk which is inherent in incomplete requirements or in Client commitment may be shared by the relevant AUTHORITY and PATHWAY by mutual agreement. Clearly the willingness of either party to accept such risks and the apportionment of the risk between them will be determined by their perception of the business opportunities. The acceptance and apportionment of such risks is the key to enable the time to market for new services to be shortened significantly for suitable business opportunities. The agreement of the acceptance and apportionment of any such risks, including any special conditions for the cancellation of the change, shall be recorded within the "Risk" section of the CCN.

For the avoidance of doubt Pathway emphasises that the commercial

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and risk aspects of Change Control discussed in the preceding paragraphs do not apply to changes that are already described by the Service Definitions and anticipated by the Score Card in Schedule A06 of the Related Agreements.

**2.5 INITIAL RELEASES**

Schedule B7 of the AUTHORITIES' Agreement describes the initial functionality of the Services delivered in two Releases. These are henceforth referred to as Release 1 and Release 2. The contents of Release 1 are described in the associated "Release 1.0 Content Description" document.

Release 2 enables the CONTRACTOR and the AUTHORITIES to introduce additional functionality at around October 1997, the release will also be defined in a Release Content Description.



### 3. CLASSIFICATION OF RELEASES

Releases are classified as either Software Releases or Reference Data Releases. In this section, Reference Data releases are further classified according to the impact and indicative timescales for implementation. It is emphasised that the classifications are not (and cannot be) exhaustive and the timescales are intended to be indicative only. Pathway will provide firm timescales for each Release, on a case by case basis, taking into account, amongst other things, the business priorities for the associated changes and relationships with changes to related Authorities and Client systems.

#### 3.1 SOFTWARE RELEASES

Software Releases result from changes and additions to the functionality of the Services. The impact of such changes measured in terms of the time, effort and risk and cost of implementing functional changes will vary widely from one change to another. Some changes will require extensive development effort or co-ordinated changes to Infrastructure and support Services while others require only minor localised Software development with little or no need for changes to the Infrastructure or support Service. Between these extremes there is a continuum of the possible scale and complexity of implementation of changes but all will require extensive and systematic testing. The impact of Software changes will be evaluated and stated in a Change Control Note (CCN) for each Change which is requested or recommended.

It is planned that two new Software Releases shall be implemented each year and Section 6 provides more information on timescales.

#### 3.2 REFERENCE DATA RELEASES

Reference Data Releases are broken down into more detailed classes according to the impact and target timescales for implementation. The classes are numbered 1 to 5 in order of complexity and timescale to implement. The different classes are not mutually exclusive and compound Releases consisting of elements from different classes can be envisaged. In these circumstances the Release taken as a whole is classified according to the class of the highest element within the Release. The class of a Release (other than for Class 1 Releases) will be advised by Pathway by analysis of the business requirement.



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The "APS Client Takeon Plan" is recognised to be a special case of Reference Data Release that will require a co-ordinated approach to implementation and migration that will be planned separately from the standard classes of Reference Data Releases that are discussed below.

**3.2.1 STANDARD REFERENCE DATA CHANGES (CLASS 1 )**

This represents the simplest and quickest type of Release to implement and includes Immediate Reference Data and Advance Reference data as described in the Related Agreements. Class 1 changes apply only to the value of those defined Reference Data fields which are conformant with the Service Definitions, the SADD and other Controlled Documents. No Software is developed and there are no physical or logistical constraints associated with Service delivery. Typically, such changes will be characterised by simple numeric adjustments to POCL trading variables such as the price of a first class stamp.

The potential for distribution is overnight for use the next day. Service Level targets apply to this class of Reference Data and the commercial aspects of the changes are covered by the Score Card in Schedule A06 of the Related Agreements. This is the only class of Reference Data that is implemented outside the Change Control procedure.

**3.2.2 BUSINESS RULES CHANGES (CLASS 2)**

These are relatively simple changes to values of Reference Data fields which define how the services operate. Such changes will require a change to the Service Definitions, SADD and/or other controlled documents.

No Software needs to be developed and there are no logistical constraints associated with Service delivery. Testing of Reference Data parameter changes may be required and also minor changes to documentation. Typically, such changes will be characterised by changes to the business rules. An example could be the requirement, whether or not, to print a receipt for Automated Payment Transactions.

The potential for distribution is within one month from approval of the Change Control Note allowing time for any changes to Pathway or Authorities' business rules as identified in the impact analysis. It is anticipated that the commercial aspects of most Class 2 changes are covered by the Score Card in Schedule A06 of the Related Agreements.

**PATHWAY RELEASE POLICY****3.2.3 LOGISTICALLY CONSTRAINED CHANGES (CLASS 3)**

This represents a class of change that is subject to logistical constraints on Service delivery. Typically these are physical changes, such as refurbishment of premises and installation and testing of counter equipment. Some examples are:

- Franchising an existing Outlet
- Creating a new Outlet

The potential for distribution is within one month from approval of the Change Control Note, although the actual timescale will be in line with the associated change in service delivery. The commercial aspects of Class 2 changes will in some cases be covered by the Score Card in Schedule A06 of the Related Agreements.

**3.2.4 EXTENDED FUNCTIONALITY (CLASS 4)**

Class 4 covers more extensive changes which reuse existing Software in the same business context or modify functionality and which can be activated by means of Reference Data without new software development. Examples of Class 4 changes include modifying the user interface for existing transactions, amending the format of outputs and re-using existing transaction types with a new set of Reference Data. By their nature, Class 4 changes will probably require testing, data take-on, revisions to marketing collateral and user documentation, and user training.

The expected turnaround time will vary from case to case and will be determined by impact analysis during change control. A significant determinant of timescales will be the need (or not) for a new Client link. Without such a need, straight forward transaction type reuse could be envisaged in one month. Implementing a new Client link could take up to 4 months from approval of the CCN. Other Class 4 changes are likely to take between these two extremes.

**3.2.5 NEW FUNCTIONALITY (CLASS 5)**

This class of Reference Data Release is directly dependant upon a related Software Release and is associated with the development and testing of new Software. Examples are:

- New (or amended) Service requiring changed Software.
- New (or amended) Service requiring a new type of Reference Data.

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The planning and management of this class of change will be incorporated into that for the related Software Release.

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## 4. DEFINITION OF RELEASE CONTENT

The change management procedures described at Schedule A05 of the Related Agreements represents the contractual basis for the definition of functional changes to Services, which once agreed, will be included in the contents of Releases. The control, testing and approval of Releases are also subject to the provisions of Requirement and Solution 476.

This section considers:

- Definition of changes
- Preparation of CCN
- CCN Evaluation and decision
- Release Control & Content
- Emergency Procedures

### 4.1 DEFINITION OF CHANGES

The AUTHORITIES may request changes and Pathway may recommend changes to the Related Agreements. Neither the AUTHORITIES nor Pathway shall unreasonably withhold or delay their agreement to a change. Following approval, changes may be implemented in one or more new Releases.

It is anticipated that the POCL will predominantly request changes which are associated with the introduction of new or improved Services to their Clients. It is anticipated that DSS will predominantly request changes to meet legislative requirements and improve business controls. It is anticipated that Pathway will predominantly seek changes which improve the quality and control of the Services.

A formative stage of discussion is envisaged during which Pathway's Business Development section will work together with POCL or DSS business managers to develop and qualify new business opportunities for the AUTHORITIES and for the CONTRACTOR. Support will be given to the development of the business case and establishing the feasibility of developing new business through new Service functionality. A business qualification process will include indicative business volumes from the AUTHORITIES and indicative timescales and prices from the CONTRACTOR.

Qualified business opportunities will be taken to the next stage either

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by the AUTHORITIES, who will raise a change request or by the CONTRACTOR who will raise a recommendation for a change by CCN.

The request for a change shall contain sufficient information to enable Pathway to respond with the fully costed and timetabled proposal that is required in a CCN. The Business Requirements Definition for each qualified business opportunity shall form the basis for the change request. This should cover:

- a) A statement of the business opportunity which explains the key business drivers and gives firm transaction volumes;
- a) Required changes to the Related Agreements, particularly any new or changed:
  - ii) Requirements
  - iii) Service Definitions, Service Levels and other Schedules.
  - iv) Controlled Documents which are maintained by the AUTHORITIES.
- c) Assumptions, e.g. the indicative timescales and prices already provided by the CONTRACTOR.

Workload volumes will be forecast by POCL annually in a document called the "Workload Compendium", which taken together with the "Client Take On Plan", provides the basis for more detailed plans.

## **4.2 PREPARATION OF CCN**

The content of the CCN is set out at Schedule A05 (para 3.2.1). Each CCN contains a statement of the costs and charges, timescales for implementation and the period of validity of the CCN. Each functional change will be mapped on to one (or possibly more than one) Release. The period of validity of each CCN will take into account commercial considerations and also the cut-off date by which the associated Release Contents document must be approved by the AUTHORITIES in order to meet the planned dates for each Release.

The commercial terms and target timescales for producing a CCN are described in Schedule A05.

The CCN also includes a statement of any commitments that are required of the Contracting Authorities in order that Pathway can implement the change requested.

To the extent that the business predictions are not firm at the time of preparing a CCN, then the identification of the degree of risk and the proposed risk sharing arrangements will be included as described at Section 2.4 above.



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**4.3 CCN EVALUATION AND DECISION**

The AUTHORITIES' CCB shall evaluate each CCN and indicate its acceptance or otherwise as set out in Schedule A05 (para 3.1). Those CCN's which are approved within the period of validity of the CCN will be implemented as part of the Release(s) identified in the CCN.

**4.4 RELEASE CONTROL & CONTENT**

The Requirement and Solution 476 refers to the testing, control and approval of Releases while the testing of Releases is described in Pathway's testing strategies and plans.

The content of a Release is determined through one or more CCNs that shall be approved prior to a predetermined cut-off date for each Release. The purpose of this cut-off date is to ensure that the changes required in each Release are fully defined in time for the start of detailed design, development and testing. After the cut-off date changes may only be introduced under contract Change Control.

Requirement 476 requires the AUTHORITIES' approval (such approval not being unreasonably withheld) to the:

- contents of any release
- upgrade path for any release
- timing of the distribution of any release
- timing of the activation of any release

**4.5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Schedule A05 (paragraph 4) allows that if Pathway considers that any change is necessary in order for it to comply with its obligations under the related Agreements and there is insufficient time to comply with the procedures then Pathway shall be entitled to proceed with such change, provided that it shall as soon as practicable provide the AUTHORITIES with a CCN for retrospective change. Such change shall be subject to the procedures described in Schedule A05, and if the AUTHORITIES, acting reasonably, do not agree to such change, such change shall be invalid and the CONTRACTOR shall at its own expense promptly take all steps necessary to reverse and remove the effects of such change.

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## 5. MAINTENANCE RELEASES

From time to time there will be a need for Releases of new Software and data in order to remove faults or to improve Service Levels without changing business functionality or business data. Such Releases are called Maintenance Releases. Maintenance Releases shall be planned and implemented under Pathway's management control. Maintenance Releases shall be subject to the Change Control procedure and the Emergency Change procedure (Paragraph 4.5 above) shall be invoked only when urgent action is needed.

Maintenance Release will range in scope from very minor Releases which require little regression testing to major Releases that may require full Regression testing and the recalibration of SLA measures and timings. The requirement for testing will be determined on a case by case basis.



## 6. RELEASE SCHEDULE

### 6.1 SOFTWARE RELEASES

Pathway plans to implement approved changes in two Software Releases each year. This frequency is judged, from the experience of other large service contracts, to be the optimum balance between the business imperative to introduce new functionality and the risk of adverse impact on Service Levels resulting from excessive rates of change. The frequency of Releases will be reviewed in line with experience gained during live operation.

The scheduling of releases will normally be in the spring and the autumn in order to avoid the POCL seasonal Christmas peak workload.

The relationship between activities in successive Releases is illustrated below.

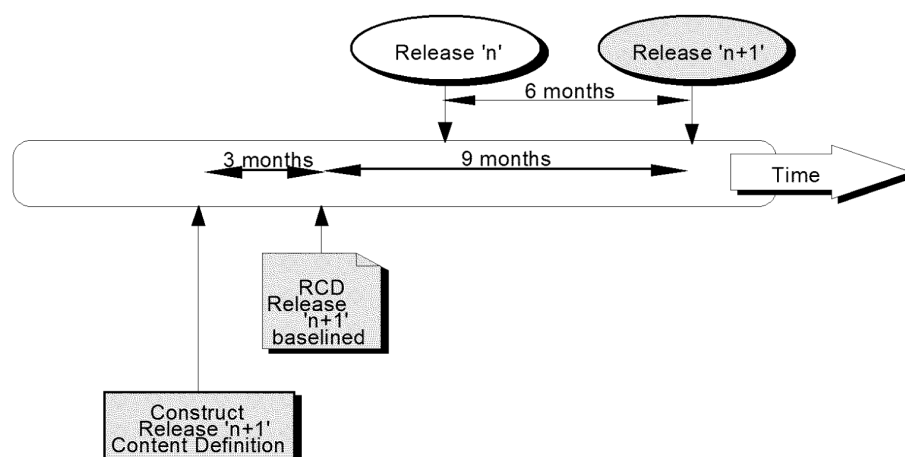


Fig 6.1 - Release Planning

Changes which have been approved within the Validity Period of the associated CCN will be included within the Release Contents Definition for the Release stated. Three months are allowed for the approval of each Release Contents Definition which is then baselined while the Release is implemented. Thus in steady state, there will be at any time, one live Release (Release "n") and two new Releases (n+1 and n+2) at different stages of design and implementation.

The table below illustrates a possible timetable.

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Release Contents Frozen	Design	Development	Test & Integration	Implement	Release
1 July	1 July - 31 July	1 Aug - 31 Oct	1 Nov - 28 Feb	1 Mar - 31 Mar	1 April
1 January	1 Jan - 31 Jan	1 Feb - 30 Apr	1 May - 31 Aug	1 Sep - 30 Sep	1 October

Fig 6.2 - Release Timetable

In constructing the illustrative timetable shown above, Pathway has assumed that the four month Test & Integration period will include a period of one month within which the Authorities undertake joint testing and Acceptance of the Release.

As was discussed at the paragraph 2.4 it is possible that the time to market for a new Client or Service could be reduced significantly if the AUTHORITIES and/or PATHWAY are willing to accept the risk which is inherent in committing resources and expenditure ahead of a complete specification of requirements or ahead of commercial commitment by the client.

## 6.2 EXCEPTIONAL RELEASES

In the event that an exceptional circumstance including for example a Legislative change or an exceptional business opportunity requires an additional release or a non-standard release schedule then Pathway shall use reasonable endeavours to meet that need.

## 6.3 REFERENCE DATA DISTRIBUTION

Indicative timescales for the implementation of the different classes of Reference Data Release have been provided at Paragraph 3.2 above.