ICL Pathway	Report on Release 2 Process Improvement Programme	Ref: IA/REP/004 Version: 1.0 Date: 18/06/98

Document Title: Report on Release 2 Process Improvement Programme

Document Type: Report

Abstract: This report presents the background, context and programme of actions put in place, in the light of the PA Consulting Report (1997) to improve process, standards and compliance and discipline during Pathway Release 2.

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O Document control

0.1 Document history

Version	Date	Reason
0.1	14/01/98	Initial draft
0.2	21/05/98	Incorporation of MSQA audit results
0.3	27/05/98	Following presentation to Pathway Management Team
1.0	18/06/98	Initial Issue

0.2 Approval authorities

Name	Position	Signature	Date
M. Coombs	Programme Director (Programme Sponsor)		
M. Bennett	Director Quality & Risk		

0.3 Associated documents

	Reference	Vers	Date	Title	Source
[1]	PA/PRO/025	15.0	06/05/98	Pathway Online Standards (Gateway)	OLS
[2]	IA/CAP/001	1.0	17/65/98	Schedule of Corrective Actions; NR2 Mid Stage Audits (Consolidated)	
[3]	IA/REP/002	1.0	04/12/97	NR2 MSQA#1 : Design	
[4]	IA/REP/003	1.0	03/03/98	NR2 MSQA#2 : Development	
[5]	IA/REP/005	0.2	17/04/98	NR2 MSQA#3 : Technical Integration	
[6]	IA/REP/006	0.2	18/05/98	NR2 MSQA#4 : Test & Integration	

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0.6 Table of content

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1 Introduction

A review of the Pathway project (Release 1) was carried out during 1997 by PA Consulting Ltd (PA). One of the observations raised during that review was that while ICL Pathway possessed processes and standards, their deployment and subsequent compliance by members of the project team could be improved.

A corrective action programme was put in place inside Pathway to address the many observations and recommendations made. This report presents the results of that programme, culminating in the sequence of Mid Stage Quality Audits conducted between December 1997 and May 1998.

I would like to express my thanks for the help and co-operation received during the conduct of the programme, especially during the audits, from colleagues in the Systems and Programmes Divisions of ICL Pathway.

2 Scope

This report presents a breakdown of the programme of activities put in place inside ICL Pathway to address one of the recommendations contained in the PA Report :

"5.1(iii) ... apply development/design disciplines".

3   Management Summary

In many respects the PA Report acted as a catalyst to bring about an 'discipline improvement project' that had been internally proposed a number of times. The quality audits conducted by the Pathway Quality Manager during 1997 had identified shortcomings in process compliance in development and testing during Release 1 and a number of action plans and programmes had been initiated, although it was clear that competing pressures for management and individual's time meant that these did not bring about the desired outcome.

The extreme timescales of the Pathway project, coupled with the rapid increases in staff numbers and relative 'youth' of the organisation also contributed to the situation identified by PA. It was fully anticipated that the passage of time, along with the Discipline Improvement Programme (DIP), would deliver a marked improvement in the quality of Pathway's processes and standards as well as compliance with them.

The DIP consisted of four key Elements :

a.   Process Improvement and Awareness.

b.   Improved in-process checking.

c.   Activities in the Release 2 Plan.

d.   Mid Stage Quality Audits

3.1 Improving Process

The two key processes considered by the PA review are the Pathway Development Method and Test & Integration Process, both of which are widely available through the Pathway Online Standards (OLS). A number of workshops and meetings were held during October and November 1997 to target shortcomings identified during Release 1 and define improvements for Release 2.

One significant improvement which involved significant organisational change was the introduction of the Technical Integration function to sit between the Development and Test and Integration units to provide effective control over the transfer of software and products between the two groups.

Major changes to the Development Method were introduced at OLS Release 6 dated 09/05/97 and minor updates have taken place since then.

Similarly, major changes to Test & Integration were introduced at OLS Release 11 dated 21/11/97 in line with the revised Release 2 Testing Strategy.

Since the major upgrades to the key processes there has been a continual programme of improvement and change to the OLS culminating in Release 15

which was issued in early May 1998. A chronological presentation of changes made can be found at Section 5 to this report.

Further changes are anticipated as a result of the Mid Stage Quality Audit (Section 4) and further refinement of the Technical Environment Description (TED).

3.2 Improving Awareness

Process awareness is a major element of deployment and can be broken into three parts :

a. The presence of process information and guidance (the water in the trough).

b. Its availability to the desired audience (the leading of the horse to the trough).

c. The recognition and use of the information by the audience (the drinking of the water by the horse).

It could be claimed that the water is in the trough and the horse has been shown the trough. Unfortunately neither the horse nor the jockey seem inclined to partake of the water.

3.2.1 Presence

The Pathway Online Standards (OLS) has been seen by a number of external organisations and complemented on its content and novel approach to information dissemination. The use of Windows Help files removes the administrative burden of a paper based system and presents in a more appealing and acceptable manner.

3.2.2 Availability

Early Releases of OLS were held on the Pathway45 server in the Programme Office. The limited availability of this server around the FEL01 based Pathway organisations meant that significant groups were blind to the processes. In December they were transferred to the CMServer which has a far wider audience, including other ICL departments with whom Pathway is associated.

3.2.3 Recognition & Use

The PA report focused attention on this element of awareness. Unlike Pathway45 the CMServer is an NT box and NT can provide statistics of file accesses by terminal. This mechanism can be used to audit access to OLS and will be the first time that evidence of use (or otherwise) will be available.

3.3 Increasing In-Process Checks

The Document Management process requires that documents created or updated are subject to formal review prior to authorisation and use. For internal use documents this is limited to email reviews but for those to be issued externally this includes a formal Fagan style document inspection. The responsibility for organising reviews has been transferred from the document author to the Document Controller, a role within the Configuration Management team, who is now responsible for arranging document reviews and disseminating the results. There has been a marked increase in the number of reviews undertaken although the quality of responses varies.

Further work is underway to improve this area.

3.4 Activities in the Release 2 Plan

An exercise was carried out to validate the Release 2 Plan structure with the Development Method activities and deliverables. This was achieved by developing a 'nil duration activity' network from the processes and comparing this with the Release 2 Plan. The deliverable and key review activities were identified on the network and their corresponding real world equivalents found on the Plan. The result was reviewed as part of the Design MSQA (see Section n).

3.5 Mid Stage Quality Audits

In order to provide assurances to Pathway Management that the improvements required by the PA Report are actually taking place a series of Mid Stage Quality Audits (MSQA) were sponsored by the Programme Director :

a.   MSQA#1 - Design (Report reference IA/REP/002).

b.   MSQA#2 - Development (Report reference IA/REP/003).

c.   MSQA#3 - Technical Integration (Report reference IA/REP/005).

d.   MSQA#4 - Test & Integration (Report reference IA/REP/006).

This sequence is now complete, in the sense that Reports have been issued and the corrective actions are either in place, in progress or subject to final agreement.

Inevitably, the value of the audit increased the further down the development lifecycle it addressed, for example, the recommendations emerging from MSQA#1, dealing as they do with documentation form and content, appear relatively trivial compared to those from MSQA#3 and #4 which identified

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shortcomings in organisation wide activities, including software delivery, communications and metrics.

The following section outlines the audit issues that emerged from the sequence of audits. Where corrective actions have been agreed a brief overview and current status is provided.

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4 Audit Issues

4.1 Scope

It is not the intention of this section to repeat the detail contained in the MSQA Reports, reference can be made to them to support the information presented here.

It has been recognised that although Pathway started life as a full PFI integration project anticipating minimal design activity it has evolved into a more traditional development lifecycle with considerable design effort being required.

That said, some of the normal constraints affecting an integration project, for example the non availability of some components early in the lifecycle can have a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of those early lifecycle stages.

The audit issues have been expressed in terms of control absence, failure or weakness and the impact that might have on the risk that the Programme is exposed to.

An associated Schedule of Corrective Actions [2] contains details of the recommendations emerging from the audits and the agreed corrective actions. This is distributed under a separate cover to enable progress monitoring and re-distribution of the Schedule without having to copy the bulk of this report each time.

4.2 Documentation Sets & Baselines

Identified in MSQA#1

Pathway is awash with documentation! Currently there are in excess of 3,000 documents registered in PCMS of in varying status and degree of development. There are ~1,750 combinations of the project and item codes that establish a unique identity for a document although not all of these combinations are populated. The introduction of PCMS to Pathway enables greater control to be established over the production, authorisation and distribution of documents as well as imposing discipline on the identification, definition and control of document baselines.

Two initiatives have been taken to address the issues raised in the report. The first, an external review by HPS of the key processes involved (Change Management, Document Management and Baseline Management) and identified severe shortcomings with the Baseline Management process (there wasn't one in operation). The second, an internal working group charged with

defining a Document Set structure to PCMS, populating it and establishing effective control, has started work and is progressing well.

4.3 *Documentation Content & OPENframework*

Identified in MSQA#1

When the project started it was not anticipated that extensive design activity would be required. Neither were there any established design processes or standards for documentation. As a result the emerging design documentation did not conform to any particular style or standard not was the ICL OPEN*framework* approach to design and development exploited. Standards were quickly established and compliance is, by and large, now satisfactory.

The exploitation of OPEN*framework* is being addressed as a separate initiative. An external review by ICL's own OPEN*framework* Consultancy division resulted in a detailed report complete with action plan. Unfortunately the initial report concentrated on business applications and its content was of limited use. A second iteration has targeted the technical infrastructure and these recommendations will be implemented during NR2+.

4.4 *Protection of Assets*

Identified during MSQA#2

There does not appear to be a systematic approach to the protection of Pathway's intellectual property during Design and Development. Unless documents are transferred to the PCMS library there is no guarantee that they are protected against accidental or deliberate loss.

The situation is better for source code although again, there is little evidence of a systematic approach.

The recommendation here is to formalise the policy and approach for protecting Pathway's IPR as reflected in its design documents and source code. It may require changes in basic work practice, for example the introduction of a Pathway network which would enable automatic backup of desktop PCs.

4.5 *Programme Measures*

Identified in MSQA#2, 3 & 4

There are a number of measures in regular use on the programme including test execution progress against plan and PinICL initiation and resolution. The audit issue here is their one dimensional nature insofar as that they deal only with progress against time to the exclusion of product quality and resource utilisation.

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All three topics are vital to successful process improvement and the audit recommendation is that the Programme Office initiate a project to define and implement a regime of measures that will provide a complete and accurate statement of process performance in terms of progress (process efficiency), quality (process effectiveness) and resource utilisation (process economy).

4.6 Rework

Identified in MSQA#2, 3 & 4

Quality costs can be divided into three categories, preventive, appraisal and failure. Rework, defined here as dealing with PinICLs raised during System Test and beyond, fall into the failure costs bracket and is adding unnecessarily to the costs of the project.

Ordinarily rework can be attributed to a number of failings earlier in the lifecycle and to some extent this has been borne out during the audit sequence. From the unit and link testing perspective the nature of an integration project can mitigate against the ability to run these activities in an environment that reflects the eventual target resulting in some errors not being found until the something approximating the target environment is available, for example in system or business integration test.

MSQA#2 attempted to place some figure on the costs. At the time of the audit there were some 6,200 incidents recorded on the PinICL system. No actual costs are maintained but it is reasonable to assume a spend of between 1 and 2.5 mandays to clear a PinICL. If this is the case then the resource cost alone to Pathway to date (March 1998) could be in the range £2m to £5m. If all opportunity costs are taken into account the results is far worse - 100 people tackling 6,200 PinICLs = 62days = 3 months = £30m.

The audit also identified that the targeting of improvement measures should be informed through understanding the causes of failure but there was no evidence of any analysis of PinICLs to determine the nature and origin of the fault/problem.

The recommendation is that the feasibility of having a (some) target environment rig(s) in Development is investigated. Up to NR2 it would probably not have made a significant impact as there were new products being delivered so the availability argument would hold. However, the NR2+ environment is essentially the same as NR2 so there should be a bigger payback during the NR2+ lifecycle, reductions in Cat C and D PinICLs raised, less rework in Development, fewer software deliveries and less emphasis on time as the prime driver.

4.7   Improving Unit and Link Testing

<u>Identified in MSQA#2, 3 & 4</u>

It is suggested that unit and link testing during NR2 has not been as effective or consistent as it could have been. There is little evidence of testing having taken place and the expected effect of this, considerable rework, particularly of Category C and D PinICLs tends to support this assertion.

	Priority A	Priority B	Priority C	Priority D	Total
System Test	3 (<1%)	140 (13%)	519 (49%)	396 (37%)	1058

Under the current priority-based classification regime Type C restrict progress and Type D are non urgent. Although PinICL does not provide an analysis of the nature of the fault the fact that ~86% of them do no more than restrict progress could infer that System Test is not the time to be trapping errors of this type.

The Pathway Online Standards did not provide any guidance on the production of unit or link test strategies and plans and while not forming a valid reason for not carrying out testing at this stage, could explain why there is little evidence to support claims that it was.

There is also the question of how effective unit and link testing can be in the absence of a target test environment. This has been addressed earlier in the report.

Improving the effectiveness of unit and link testing is being addressed in a number of ways :

1. Product Descriptions for Unit and Link Test Strategies and Plans have been defined and are available in the Online Standards. (MSQA#2)

2. The recommendation that a discrete PCMS control is introduced to control the transfer of software between Development and Technical Integration through a formal authorisation by a Development Team Leader following a review of deliverables and process compliance. (MSQA#3)

3. The recommendation for improvements in the test environment (MSQA#4).

4.8   Improved Controls Between Development & PIT

Identified during MSQA#3

Notwithstanding the observation concerning the software delivery mechanism (Section 4.9) a strong control should be initiated between Development and PIT. This would provide Development with the opportunity to satisfy themselves that all appropriate unit and link testing has been conducted to the required level and PIT the opportunity to satisfy themselves that the drop is complete, has been tested and meets their entry criteria before it is actually delivered.

The recommendation here is that the PCMS status 'Awaiting Review' is re-introduced and assigned an appropriate authority level. In addition the PIT Checklist, currently used informally, should be formalised and become a formal control feature between the two departments.

4.9 The 'Entente Cordiale'

Identified during MSQA#4

Following Release 1c an 'entente cordiale' was reached between Design and T&I regarding the mutual review of each others specifications, the objective being to ensure adequate test coverage on the one side and prevent nugatory work preparing tests scripts on the other. There is little evidence to show that this was exercised to any extent.

The recommendation here is to put the arrangements into effect and to re-enforce this by having the design reviews identified on the T&I plan and vice versa. The final enforcement is to have mutual sign-off of the respective design specifications and HLTPs.

4.10 The Software Delivery Mechanism

Identified in MSQA#4

The increase in time pressures have resulted in changes being made to the method of delivering software product from Development to Technical Integration. The approach, known as Incremental Delivery (ID) bypasses the need to make a baseline drop to PIT and any confidence testing that PIT make prior to delivery to T&I. The time imperatives driving this change are recognised but so are the increased risks of :

1. Increasing the proportion of non-confidence tested software on the test rig.

2. Increasing the administrative burden of ensuring that all Ids are swept up in the next baseline drop.

The recommendation here is that limits are established after which a new baseline must be declared and a new baseline drop made to PIT.

4.11 Relationship with TSC

Identified in MSQA#4

Despite the value of the Pathway work to TSC, some £500k pcm, there is no formal agreement between the two organisations. There is already evidence of misunderstandings between the two organisation in terms of work scope and working arrangements.

The recommendation here is that the relationship is formalised through a contract or other appropriate documentation.

4.12 ICL Trading Rules

Identified in MSQA#4

New ICL 'zero profit' trading rules put Pathway at significant risk where they are trading with other ICL departments and those departments are targeted to make profit from their resources. The risk manifests itself where the ICL department supplying key individual skills or teams of resource to Pathway is a profit centre.

Significant progress has already taken place to mitigate this risk with the two largest ICL suppliers, TSC and ISTL.

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5 Pathway Online Standards Improvement

Release 15 : 06/05/98

Release 15 introduces two new document Product Descriptions and associated Templates. They are the Host and Counter Low Level Design Specifications. These will soon be joined by a complementary Agent Low Level Design to make up the full set.

Changes have been made to the Interface Specification Product Description to reflect the fact that Interface Specifications are now Contract Controlled Documents (CCN 198 dated 3rd February refers) and that a Change Control Note is required, ideally before work commences but definitely before the changes can be approved and implemented.

Release 14 : 27/03/98

Release 14 introduces changes to the Development Method in the area of Product Integration Testing. Following a review of the process it has been split into two; Product Integration and Establish PIT Baseline. A new PIT Quality Control form has also been introduced to formalise the handover from Development to PIT.

A new Product Description and associated Template for the Work Package Proposal, has been introduced. This document should be used during negotiations with 3rd party developers, external and internal to ICL, to establish the nature, scope and terms of the work to undertaken.

The Purchase Order Process has been changed to reflect the introduction of Oracle Financials to the project and to establish the hotlinks to the required documentation.

Finally the PinICL Incident Management process has been completely reworked for New Release 2. Use it.

Release 13 : 19/02/98

Release 13 is a significant Release as it provides linkage between the Product Descriptions and the actual document templates. Thus if you are accessing the PD and wish to generate a document of that type you can, by selecting the appropriate hotspot, load an empty Template. The Template contains all of the guidance currently shown in the PD, so completing one should not present any difficulties.

Release 13 also introduces changes to the Development Method in the area of third party development. Third parties supply significant amounts of software for integration into the Horizon solution and up to now their management and control has not been covered by the Pathway Online Standards. The role of

Technical Team Leader within the Systems Directorate is described and the various accountabilities for in-house as well as third party development defined.

New Product Descriptions have been defined for Unit and Link Test Strategies and Plans and their use within the Development Method is mandatory.

Release 12 : 14/01/98

Release 12 contains revisions to the Test Analysis Management Control Process (MCP) Database Operating Instructions and the Test & Integration processes.

The Review Role and Document Authority Matrices in the Document Management process have been updated to reflect the introduction of the Platform Physical Design Specification. Generation of the PPD Specification during Detailed Design has also been documented and a Product Description has been generated and can be found in the Standards section.

One of the empty icons has now been populated. The New Service Introduction process has been in operation for some time but has only recently reached a position where it could be considered sufficiently stable for inclusion. It will change over time but any changes are not likely to be significant. The associated Product Description for the Business Requirements Definition has also been updated.

The IT Equipment Ordering Process is also included in Release 12. Note that this is the only process to follow if you wish to order IT equipment on this project.

Release 11 : 21/11/97

Release 11 contains major revisions to the Test & Integration processes and the Test Analysis Management Control Process (MCP) Database Operating Instructions. The T & I processes have been re-engineered in line with the recommendations contained in the Release 2 Testing Strategy paper agreed with the PDA. It also contains the Service Provision and Technical Support process to complement the PIT process defined at Release 10. The Test management Control Database (MCP) has been changed in a number of areas and includes details of the Acceptance Test elements now contained in it.

Updates to the Product Description for Interface Specifications have been made, particularly in the Qualities section. Use of this PD in the development of Interface Specifications is mandatory as it is a part of the Agreement to Agree 891-1.

The Document Management process has been updated to reflect the switch from the TeamOffice library to PCMS. There is also a Review Role Matrix to complement the Document Authority Matrix so determining the review audience and the roles that they should a adopt during the review should now no longer be a major concern. There are also a number of minor changes which

simplifies the structure of the process, make it easier to follow and therefore comply with.

Release 10 : 10/10/97

Release 10 introduces the Product Integration Test Process and associated Product Descriptions (Installation Notes, CM Handover Documentation and Test Report) to the Development Method. The Development Method has also been updated to introduce an explicit link to the Formal Document Review process flow within Document Management. Changes to the detail within the Analysis process are also made.

A new Product Description for the Project Initiation Document is included. The PID is completed during the New Service Introduction process and becomes, subject to approval of the business opportunity, the basis for the full Product Management Plan.

Release 9 : 12/09/97

Release 9 sees the introduction of the CAR Management Process through which Pathway and PDA manage the delivery of the Contracting Authorities Responsibilities established in the contract.

Release 8 : 29/07/97

Changes have been made to the Incident Management process to improve the clarity of detailed work instructions.

The Change Control process has been updated to reflect the activities of the Technical Review Board which now undertakes a preliminary impact assessment of all non-budget CPs. The objective here is to filter out CPs that fail to provide sufficient information for an effective impact assessment to be made.

A new Purchasing Goods and Services process has been added to the Business Support suite of processes. Please ensure you are familiar with it and the various forms that must be used. You will find these in the TeamOffice Library and you will be expected to use them in future. A notice to this effect will be issued by Finance shortly.

The Recruitment process has been changed to reflect a name change - Enterprises HR has become Group Resourcing.

Changes have been made in the Email (Postal) Document Review element of Document Management.

Release 7 : 01/07/97

The Test & Integration Management Control Process has been redefined for Release 1e in this Release of the On-line standards. These can be accessed direct from the icon or from the appropriate process flow charts in the main T & I processes.

A new Employment Termination process has been added to the Business Support suite of processes. Please ensure you are familiar with it and the Employment Termination Checklist which all managers will be expected to use in future. A notice to this effect will be issued by Personnel shortly.

Release 6 : 09/05/97

This Release introduces a completely redesigned Development Method for Release 2 of the Pathway solution. Gone is the joint development activity to be replaced by a more structured waterfall/V model. An Analysis stage has been defined to cater for the increasing volume of Business Requirements Definitions that are being received and this has brought about the introduction of a new document, the System Outline Design (SOD). A product Description has been provided.

A further improvement has been to hot-link, where possible, the documents created or used in the Development Method to their respective Product Descriptions. There can be little excuse now for not producing documents to the required standard with the required content. Remember, when creating documents to register them with Annet Fernandes (x4139) and obtain a valid Reference Number for the library.

Release 5 : 18/03/97

Hot on the heels of Release 4 comes this one containing a number of changes to the Testing & Integration process, primarily the introduction of the Management Control Process Database Operating Instructions. These are accessible from the T & I processes or directly through its own icon.

I'm afraid that there are no incentives this time - you were far too quick to find them last time.

Release 4 : 05/03/97

This Release introduces an active link to the Pathway Quality Policy, which will be extended in due course to accommodate other Policies that apply to the project.

It also introduces a range of Change Proposal Quality Criteria which will be enforced on new Change Proposals. In essence, if your CP does not conform it will not be accepted into the Change Control Process. Please make yourself aware of these new criteria by looking in Change Control : Raise a Pathway Change Proposal.

We have started a library of PRINCE Product Descriptions (PDs). PDs are vital elements of the PRINCE (Projects IN Controlled Environments) method for project management and control, compliance with which is a requirement of Pathway. The library will be added to as further PDs are defined.

Other improvements have been made to some of the process flowcharts which Windows95 users were having difficulty with.

Oh, and there's an incentive to read through the various screens. Somewhere in the on-line standards you will find one of these :

It will be larger than this example so you cant miss it. Click on it to see what you could win!

Release 3 : 17/01/97

This Release provides significant improvements and updates to the Pathway Online Standards.

The major improvement is that all Process Flowcharts have fully interactive diagrams where there is a Graphic Hotspot indicated. Graphic Hotspots are identifiable through their colour which is that rather vivid PURPLE. As the cursor passes over the box you will note that the arrow changes into a little hand. Click and the next level of information is displayed. Try it on this example below :

Updates have been made to both the Development Method and Testing and Integration to reflect some of the lessons learned during Release 1 activity. The T & I process has also been changed to reflect the new Joint Testing Strategy.

New processes included at this Release are :

Recruitment

PinICL Incident Management

Programme Risk Management

There will be a further Release in the very near future when Release Management and New Product Introduction will be added (you will note that the Icon graphics are currently de-activated).

Release 2 : 01/11/96

This Release provides several enhancements.

Project Planning, Reporting and Control has been added to the suite, as has Baseline Management. BM will probably expand as more detail emerges.

Document Management now includes the detail in what was PA/WKI/0001 - Document Template Work Instructions, and provides detailed instructions on the use of the Pathway Document Template (PA/TEM/0001).

The raising of a Change Control Note in Change Control has changed from the CP Administrator to the originator of the Change Proposal or another person nominated by the (P)CCB.

Release 1 : 23/10/96

Welcome to the Pathway On-Line Help System.

In here you will find the various Policies, Standards and Processes that you need to know about while you are working here.

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Clearly this system will be added to over the coming months and I will be informing you all via email when something has happened. To find out exactly what you will need to access this page.

This system lives or dies through your active involvement so I greatly appreciate any comments or observations that you may have about it, its presentation and content.

Suggestions for additions and improvements are welcome and should be made to me, Jan Holmes on x2112.

Good reading.

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