Brief *EnCounters*

The ICL Pathway Newsletter

Dec 99/17

View from the Top

1999 proved in many ways, to be the best yet for ICL Pathway as we accomplished a large number of tasks. We delivered two major key milestones: that of Acceptance and the Horizon go-live in 1,856 post offices - our service in these Horizon offices performs extremely well.

As planned, the installation programme has been put on hold in the run up to Christmas and New Year to avoid disruption to post offices during their busiest period. This time is also being used to review our progress to date. There are still some important issues which we are working on with the Post Office but, we plan to restart roll-out on 24th January 2000 at which time we will rapidly reach the rate of 300 post offices per week, completing as planned in Spring 2001. Meeting these dates is just as important to the Post Office as to us, since they are keen to get started on the exploitation opportunities, which Horizon provides. The next major new activity for both parties will be around banking services. Work here will accelerate rapidly through 2000.

There are circa 19,000 post offices in the UK and to date the Post Office Regional General Managers have informed the postmasters in over 17,500 offices that their office is now schedules in the Horizon automation programme. As a result over 18,000 managers have attended MIB (Management Infrastructure Briefing) events, and over 16,600 site surveys have been undertaken. This means that nearly every post office has been involved somewhere within the programme.

We have recently hosted, here in Feltham, Alan Johnson MP, Minister of State at the DTI, responsible for the Post Office. Like many of his colleagues, he found the session an excellent introduction to the project. We have also been very fortunate to have visits from the Parliamentary IT Committee and the Performance & Innovations Unit from H.M.Treasury during November. Those attending were particularly excited by the impact that this project can have on the way that government services are delivered in the future, exploiting the natural strengths of the post office network.

2000 will be a challenging and exciting year for us all and I thank you all in advance for all your efforts and wish you and your family a Happy Christmas and New Year.

John Bennett

Achievements to date

➢ 1,856 Post Office, 4,173 Counters
(as at w/e 12th November 1999)
➢ 17,563 RGM letters issued
➢ 18,080 Postmasters attended MIB events
➢ 16,617 site surveys undertaken
➢ 9,035 site preparations done
(as at w/e 12th November 1999)
➢ 28.5 million – number of EPOSS transactions to date
➢ £617 million – value of EPOSS transactions to date
➢ 5.0 million – number of APS transactions to date
➢ £109 million – value of APS transactions to date
*(as at the end of November 1999)*

Business Continuity

Did You Know

80% of businesses involved in a serious incident go bust! This is because they do not have recovery plans in place and when an incident occurs it is too late to plan: chaos ensues.

For the Post Office and ICL Pathway this risk is unacceptable: plans have been developed to enable us to respond effectively in an emergency. These inter-related Plans are summarised below.
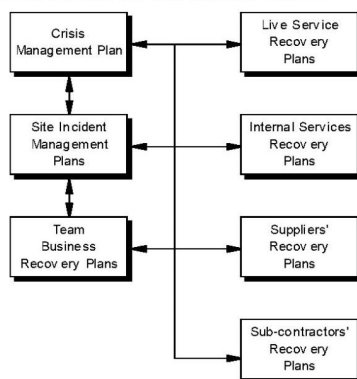
We have in place:

- Resilient network
- Dual data centres
- Dual site HSH Desks
- Two test centres / locations
- Dual site Configuration Management and PinICL
- Tape back up of desk top servers
- Resilient mail system

Most important when responding to an incident is excellent internal communication. Everyone affected needs to know what to do – **QUICKLY.**

The Communication Team handles communications with the media, as always. Our response to a serious incident is controlled by our Crisis Management Team and communicated to all staff via the Business Recovery Team Leaders or their Deputies. Everyone is assigned to a Team.

Disaster Recovery Site

In serious situations it may be necessary to work at a different location for example another ICL site, or working from home. We also have reserved office space at a recovery site run by:

Guardian Disaster Recovery at:
1a Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7BP

You will be informed as to which site to attend.

Questions

1. Does ICL Pathway have details of how to contact you and your next of kin?
2. Is everything you need to recover your work backed up on another site?

If your answer to either question is **NO** please take the following **ACTION**:
1. Informing personnel of your next of kin details
2. Ensure that your work is backed up

Y2K

Despite everything we have done to avoid systems problems associated with the new millennium, disruptions may occur, not necessarily as a result of our own actions or omissions.

Key staff will be on site over the millennium weekend to confirm critical systems operation and monitor the availability of utility services to our sites. A support team has been identified, and will be on standby, to enable us to recover efficiently from any situation. Everyone required to be on site or on standby has been informed of the requirement. Spare a thought for them as you celebrate!

Dave Groom & Ian Honnor

The Official Newsletter of ICL Pathway

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

Configuration Management News

Helpdesk mailboxes

The old TeamWare mailbox for PinICL HelpDesk has been closed down. Two mailboxes have replaced it:
- ➢ Pathway PinICL Helpdesk (PathwayPinICLHelpdesk GRO)
- ➢ Pathway PVCS Helpdesk (PathwayPVCSHelpdesk GRO)

Pathway PinICL Helpdesk
Please send mail to this mailbox for:
1. All requests for new/change/deletion of PinICL users including changes to teams accessed. (Requests for new users must be sent from a team leader/manager or an administrator/PCO.)
2. Requests for resetting passwords
3. Queries regarding possible problems with PinICL or enhancement requests

General information (e.g. unavailability of service, new versions etc.) will be sent from this mailbox.

Asim Mushtaq or John Newitt will regularly check the mailbox.

Pathway PVCS Helpdesk
Please send mail to this mailbox for:
1. All requests for new/change/deletion of PVCS users including changes to roles or worksets accessed. (Requests for new users must be sent from a team leader/manager or an administrator/PCO.)
2. Requests for resetting passwords
3. Queries regarding possible problems with PVCS or enhancement requests
4. All Requests for creation /modification/withdrawal of WorkPackages
5. All Requests for Item Slot creation/modifications

General information (e.g. unavailability of service, new versions etc.) will be sent from this mailbox.

The mailbox will be regularly checked by John Newitt (items 1-3) and Alec Hanson, Pete Green, Amit Chauhan, Martin Bailey (items 4-5).

PVCS access from sites other than FEL01

Users of PVCS from sites other than FEL01 will usually find that access via Terminal Server is faster than using the normal PC Client. Terminal Server has replaced Winframe, which **will be closed down by mid December** since it is not Y2K compliant. If you still use Winframe, contact John Newitt urgently.

I have provided Terminal Server access to PVCS using the UK domain username for all known users in BRA01, IRE01 and IRE11; I should have completed KID01 by Christmas. Please email Pathway PVCS Helpdesk if you have any problems.

Year end closedown

The CM team have spent a lot of effort to ensure that we are prepared for Y2K. The last hurdle starts at 15:00 on December 31st, and staff will be working through the night to enable all you keen PVCS users to start work once again in the morning of January 1st. To achieve this, please note that PVCS will not be available after 15:00 on December 31st.

The last backup of the CM servers will be overnight $30^{th}/31^{st}$ December. Changes after about 20:00 on the 30th will not be backed up (due to the elapsed time required). Users who make changes after this time will be responsible for taking any essential security copies.

John Newitt GRO

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Post Office Announces Half Year Results

On 30th November, the Post Office announced a pre-tax loss for the 1999/00 half year of £386 million. It is the first half year loss since 1990/91.

A Post Office spokesman said the loss was due to the need to include an exceptional charge of £571 million in the accounts in relation to the Horizon project to automate the nation-wide post office network. Without this charge, The Post Office would have made a pre-tax profit for the half year of £185 million.

Key points:
➢ Sales increased by 9% to £3,623 million,
➢ Operating profit before exceptional charges up by 4% to £157 million,
➢ Exceptional charge of £571 million made to account for the costs of the Horizon project,
➢ Pre-tax loss of £386 million due to these exceptional charges (1998: £283 million profit),
➢ Operating profit/(loss) before exceptional charges by principal business is:

Business	Operating Profit/(Loss) before exceptional charges for the half year to September 1999 £M	Change from Sept 1998 £M	% change
Royal Mail	139	(33)	-19
Parcelforce Worldwide	(15)	1	+ 6
Post Office Counters	15	(4)	-21

The Post Office spokesman said: "Our final figure is dominated by the accounting implications of the Horizon project for automating the Counters network. The Post Office agreed with Government to proceed with the project, despite the decision to move to payment of benefits direct to claimants' bank accounts in 2003. The Government has agreed that The Post Office can draw on reserves to fund Horizon payments this year and we will need to do so in coming years. In complying with accounting standards, The Post Office has had to make an assessment in its accounts for acquiring an asset which does not at this stage yield sufficient assured income to justify the cost. This has meant an exceptional charge amounting to £571 million."

Without the exceptional charge, Post Office Counters would have made a pre-tax profit for the half year of £15 million - compared to £25 million in the first half of last year.

During the half year, Royal Mail has maintained its freeze on the 26p basic first class postage - a price which has been unchanged since July 1996 so customers have had the benefit of stable basic first class postage for more than 40 months, the longest period of frozen prices for more than 40 years.

A continuing freeze on many postage prices and a 1p cut in basic second class postage to 19p in April this year is sharpening the business's competitive edge but the effect is also contributing to reduced profits.

In July this year, The Post Office announced a pre-tax profit of £608 million for 1998/99 - £56 million lower than the previous year, when it had first warned of lower profits as a result of rising competition.

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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Flagship Post Office at the Dome

Did you know that the Post Office and ICL Pathway are setting up a flagship post office at the Millennium Dome to cater for the expected 12 million visitors to the Greenwich site?

The new open plan office will have two counters running with Horizon and a back office terminal. It will be located in a convenience store right by the main entrance to the Dome. It will be open seven days a week from 8am to 8pm, with trading hours extended to 11pm when the Dome has late-night opening to the public.

The hardware will be installed and migrated by Friday 17th December. Training will be taking place week commencing Monday 20th December, with the post office opening up for business on 30th December.

The 20 acre Dome, which could accommodate 13 Royal Albert Halls, is the centrepiece of the UK's celebrations to mark the new Millennium.

Corpse and Robbers

Two men and a woman tried to claim the pension of a dead man by taking his corpse into a South African post office and attempting to manoeuvre his hand on a fingerprint identification card.

Holding up the corpse between them, the trio arrived at the main post office, approached a counter used to serve illiterate people and said the man was an uncle who was not feeling well, said Postmaster Dawie Bester.

Seeing that the man's eyes were closed and that he was obviously not in control of his body, the cashier became suspicious, especially when one of the men carrying the corpse had to manoeuvre the dead man's hand for fingerprint-taking, the official said.

When another postal worker approached and felt the pensioner, he discovered that he was "ice cold". The body was then taken into the assistant postmaster's office and laid on the floor.

While the trio slipped out of the post office, paramedics arrived and said the man had been dead for some time. The cause of death was not immediately clear. Bester said the post office was investigating.

Source: Post-express

EDITORS NOTE:

This is the seventeenth edition of the official newsletter from ICL Pathway - a regular for staff and friends of ICL Pathway !

If you have any news, views, or comments, please send them to Chrissie Kennedy, FEL01

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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The Business Transformation Campaign

Employee feedback has made it clear that ICL needs to invest more time and energy in internal communication to ensure that everyone in ICL understands ICL's global business priorities and can see how they can make a real difference in achieving ICL's business goals.

This programme is known as 'Conversations for Change' and events are being held across ICL globally between December 1999 and February 2000.

ICL is using a new and innovative communication process based on groups of three or four people having a dialogue around a number of visuals known as 'WorkMats'.

These WorkMats cover six main subject areas:
➢ the history of ICL
➢ imagining the future and the role that technology will play
➢ ICL's vision and goals
➢ what differentiates ICL from other companies
➢ how we will operate and where we will focus to achieve our goals
➢ actions you choose to take with your own team

Every ICL employee across the world (and long-term contractors wherever possible) will participate in Conversations for Change. A monitoring system will track progress as people participate across the world. Over 200 ICL facilitators are being trained to support this programme. A core implementation team has been working on the logistical challenge of registering ICL people across the world on to Conversations for Change sessions.

You may have already received an invitation from the EMC regarding attendance. If you have not, don't worry, full details on how to register can be found on the Conversations for Change community on Café VIK.

Conversations for Change is as a two way communication process and feedback will be gathered from every Conversations for Change session. These will also be published in the Conversations for Change space on Café VIK.

Conversations for Change will help create the focus and energy that are needed to bring ICL's global business performance to a new level. Please sign up for a session near you as soon as you have the opportunity.

Excellence Awards

Congratulations to the following people who have received Silver Excellence Awards.

➢ Steve Reed
➢ John Dicks
➢ Tony Hayward
➢ Dave Hollingsworth
➢ Dave Jones
➢ Dave Cooke
➢ John Coakes
➢ John Pope
➢ Patrick Cattermole
➢ David Groom
➢ Jan Holmes
➢ Pam Barlow
➢ Paul Curley
➢ Peter Robinson

If you would like to nominate one of your colleagues, please contact Chrissie Kennedy, FEL01, A2 [GRO]

"It's an excellent way to say thank you"

The Official Newsletter of ICL Pathway

ICL unveils major eBusiness expansion plan

On the 17th November 1999, ICL announced a £100 million plan to expand its eBusiness capability on an international scale. This follows a doubling of its eBusiness revenues over the past year and a surge in demand for its skills for developing a whole new generation of Internet services, delivered over non-desktop computer devices such as mobile phones and interactive digital TV.

The main points from the plan are:

➤ 4,400 new jobs: 1,000 in the UK; 2,700 in continental Europe; 700 in USA

➤ Massive training and staff redeployment programme

➤ 7 new 'eBusiness Centres of Excellence', 'Virtual Colleges' & Solutions Framework

➤ Agreement with IRRELEVANT to create wireless applications for mobile phones & new contracts from

IRRELEVANT

➤ Development of pan-European Internet trading community

Keith Todd said: "This Internet revolution is all about banking, shopping and doing business how and when people want it - whether by PC, mobile phone, TV, household appliance, in-car system or games console. Too few organisations have woken up to the opportunities afforded by these new channels and the power of this anytime, anyplace, anywhere service model for transforming their relationships with their customers. Fewer still have risen to the challenge of integrating all their business processes around the Internet. We foresee a multi-billion pound business for ICL in these areas over the next three years and are expanding aggressively to capitalise on our leadership position."

ICL's growth strategy includes the creation of over 4,400 new jobs over the next three years. 1,000 of these new jobs will be in the UK, located at ICL's facilities in the Thames Valley and at Kidsgrove, Staffordshire. 700 new jobs will be located in the USA with the balance in continental Europe. About half of the new jobs will be for eBusiness systems engineers. Creative new media designers, project managers, consultants and systems integrators will make up the balance.

Patricia Hewitt MP, UK Government Minister for e-commerce and small business, said: "Britain is a leader not a follower in eBusiness and I welcome this move by ICL to expand its eBusiness capability, particularly as it will create several thousand highly skilled new jobs in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. The Government is determined to make the UK the best place for the transaction of eBusiness and ICL is demonstrating that it shares this vision."

As well as the new jobs, ICL will reskill and redeploy an additional 4,000 staff from across the group to focus solely on eBusiness solutions. This underlines ICL's on-going commitment to training, life-long learning and the transformation of its business to meet customer needs.

The company will also develop seven Centres of Excellence, specialising in the development and deployment of eBusiness solutions. These will be located at ICL facilities in Aarhus (Denmark); Frankfurt (Germany); Helsinki (Finland); Dublin (Ireland); Bracknell, Kidsgrove (UK) and Dallas (USA).

The company will also look to expand its network of Virtual Colleges, which are run successfully in Denmark, Finland and Sweden. These involve students who, on completion of their university education, join ICL for 9 months where they receive a combination of classroom-based training, on-the-job experience and online training. Successful completion of the course results in the award of an ICL certificate in eBusiness and a permanent job offer.

The Official Newsletter of ICL Pathway

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

ICL helps Feltham First bring IT skills to the local area

On the 26th November 1999, the Feltham First Regeneration Partnership and Hounslow Library Network opened a new CyberSkills technology learning centre in central Feltham, Middlesex, to help local businesses and residents gain new technology skills. The centre is part of an initiative to help residents compete more effectively for local employment and provides low cost or even free training on the Internet, email, CD-Rom and word processing skills.

ICL is providing its CyberSkills workshops, which will provide local people with comprehensive IT training and support. Designed for individuals and small and medium-sized businesses, the workshops teach people how to use new technologies to gain competitive business advantage, to improve their employment prospects or simply for pleasure.

Leslie Forsyth, programme director, Feltham First, said, "We commissioned a survey in 1997 which showed that IT companies moving into the area were finding a significant skills gap in the local population. We are investing in local education and training to enable local people to compete effectively for local job opportunities."

Daniel Johnson, ICL's CyberSkills business manager, said, "The Government has highlighted that social inclusion is an important issue and ICL is responding by showing people how they can harness technology to gain new skills and combat unemployment. We helped Hounslow Library Network design a friendly drop-in centre to make it easier for local people to learn about technology, dispelling many of the fears associated with the use of IT."

KnowledgePool provides training for 60,000 travel agents

KnowledgePool has won a contract to provide British Airways with the largest ever-training programme for travel agents in the UK. As part of the contract, a customised training programme is now being delivered to 60,000 travel agents across the UK and Ireland.

The first module of the programme will run until the end of 1999, and provides an overview of all British Airways products. The programme has been designed to help travel agents understand and explain the range of products and services that British Airways has to offer to customers.

Both independent and Business and Leisure multiple travel agents, will receive the training which is a self-teach package delivered through either a workbook, video, or for the first time, via the Internet. To implement the training, KnowledgePool designed, developed and produced 30,000 training workbooks, 6,000 training guides for managers and over 2,500 videos.

The user-friendly training programme covers the wide variety of British Airways brands, ranging from Concorde and World Traveller, the Executive Club, franchise and alliance partners to onboard services and terminal facilities. The second module, planned for early next year, will provide a more in-depth view of British Airways' services.

KnowledgePool has also implemented a range of services including a support-agent telephone helpdesk, to answer queries and enable agents to order further training materials. In addition, KnowledgePool updates British Airways' database of travel agent records and monitors the results of the self-assessment questionnaires.

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IRRELEVANT

BUSINESS ANALYSTS

What do they do?
What do they offer?
How can they help me?

Good analysis can be defined as solving the right problem, compared with good design, which is concerned with solving the problem the right way.

The **BUSINESS ANALYSIS Skill Set** in A&TC's Technical Centre comprises more than 100 highly skilled professional IT Business Analysts.

The Business Analysts and Consultants focus on business issues and problems, working with all levels of the client organisation and ICL as appropriate, providing practical, hands-on, no-nonsense skills and capabilities. ICL Business Analysts uniquely are prepared to underwrite the appropriateness of any IT solution they recommend.

How can they help me?
In areas of Business Consultancy:

Vision and Strategy
Process Management - Defining the requirements for IS / IT developments, including requirements capture and analysis.
Data modelling
Quality Management - Ensuring a Quality approach, including development of a Quality Management System, audit & assessment.
Change Management - Supporting the changes required by Process & IS / IT developments.

You can find out more about how ICL Business Analysts can help you by visiting the newly launched Business Analysts Community on CafeVIK or by contacting Phil Harpin on:

Phone **GRO**
or
E-mail **GRO**

If you require a Business Analyst with specific skills contact Jim Thompson at the A&TC Scheduling Centre in BRA01 or to register a requirement for one (or more) of our professionals call the Sched on:

Phone **GRO**
or
E-mail the.sched **GRO**

Help Needed
Can you spare one Sunday afternoon each month?

Contact the Elderly needs more volunteers to take elderly, housebound people out to tea. Groups exist in most areas and meet one Sunday afternoon each month. Volunteer drivers pick up two or three elderly people and take them to a host who provides tea.

I have been doing this for many years and have found it really rewarding. If you are interested, I can provide further details or visit the web site at **http://www.contact-the-elderly.org/**

John Newitt (7229 4138)

New Joiners

We would like to welcome the following people to ICL Pathway:

Aileen Davis, *Joe Pugh*, Alison McCriskin, *Tony Green*, Sean Holme, *Jeff Dobson*

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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Word Puzzle

See if you can find the listed words, all connected with the post office. Words run in straight lines, horizontally, vertically or diagonally
- in either direction

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U  T  X  C  Q  N  M  S  P  M  A  T  S  P  F
D  S  I  S  E  M  M  A  R  G  O  R  E  A  H
R  U  E  F  U  F  B  X  Z  Y  O  T  X  S  V
A  X  I  C  E  R  C  S  I  D  X  A  T  O  D
C  M  S  B  O  N  F  S  E  Z  D  X  G  X  R
E  S  L  F  P  N  E  A  L  L  U  A  I  A  A
N  I  E  I  Z  E  D  B  C  E  A  C  R  T  C
O  S  C  R  A  W  N  C  D  E  T  C  O  D  T
H  A  R  S  K  M  E  S  L  L  M  T  S  A  S
P  V  A  T  I  L  R  L  I  A  I  A  E  O  O
E  I  P  C  Y  V  O  I  F  O  S  H  I  R  P
L  N  G  L  E  K  A  C  A  A  N  S  C  L  S
E  G  L  A  N  O  I  T  A  N  R  E  T  N  I
T  S  J  S  O  O  M  V  T  L  L  E  K  H  D
N  V  W  S  M  I  M  A  V  G  F  H  L  Y  X
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AEROGRAMME	AIRMAIL
CHILD BENEFIT	FIRST CLASS
GIRO	INTERNATIONAL
LETTERS	LOCAL
MONEY	PARCELS
PENSION	POSTCARD
ROAD TAX	SAVINGS
SCALES	SECOND CLASS
STAMPS	SURFACE MAIL
TAX DISC	TELEPHONE CARD
WELFARE	

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