



How GCSX Supports 'In & Out of Work'

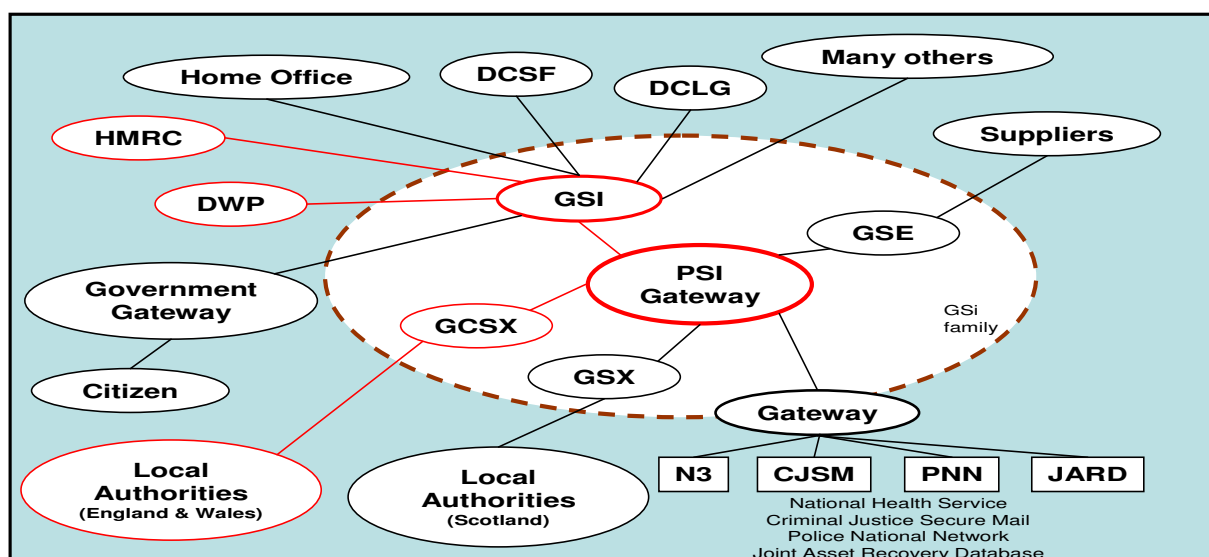
This case study describes how Government Connect Secure Extranet (GCSX) supports the new processes being rolled out by the In and Out of Work project.

Key In and Out of Work Benefits

- Enables single point of contact for citizens moving in or out of work to access benefits and credits paid by DWP, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and local authorities
- Enables secure electronic information transfer between local authorities and DWP as part of the In and Out of Work process, leading to quicker payment of benefits.
- Increased confidence to take up short term employment as benefits and credits can be turned 'on and off' more quickly.

GCSX provides secure IT connectivity between local and central government. As a result it supports integrated service provision based around the citizen by enabling information to be captured once and transferred securely and quickly across government.

The Government Secure Intranet route for In & Out of Work



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In 2006 customer insight showed that the arrangements for receiving benefits when people moved into or out of work were complicated. Customers had to contact three different organisations, who often required the same information, meaning benefits and credits took too long to process. This put people off taking the step into the labour market, particularly into short-term employment.

The organisations responsible for delivering the benefits, Jobcentre Plus, HMRC and local authorities did not have streamlined processes for sharing information and realised that more efficient and more secure methods could be utilised for transferring data.

Because the organisations were not fully joined up, there was a significant amount of double handling of information. The process was cumbersome and complicated, and it was often difficult for people to understand who was dealing with what and when.

DWP, HMRC and local authorities recognised the need for more joined-up working and improved information sharing and realised this could not be achieved without the use of the secure connectivity provided by GCSX.

On its own GCSX will not deliver improved public service delivery but when local authority staff realise its potential and make optimum use of the technology the benefits are limitless. The Government Connect team has produced a series of case studies to enable local authorities to consider how GCSX could support their services.

“ GCSX currently provides a quick and secure way of sending Housing and Council Tax applications from JobCentre Plus to Tower Hamlets, allowing claims to be initiated quicker. In the near future GCSX will provide a fast and secure medium for transferring information and evidence in respect of claims for housing and council tax benefit between Jobcentre Plus and the LA Benefit services. As such, it should speed up claim processing and allows us to get help to the financially vulnerable faster.”

Lee Fearon Benefits Policy Manager, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Supporting people before ‘In & Out of Work’

- Customers had to make multiple contacts with three different organisations
- The process was repetitive - with 30% of information being asked for more than once
- Benefits took far too long to process
- Customers weren't confident in the process, resulting in a reluctance to take up employment - particularly short-term



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In September 2007, a cross government team involving Jobcentre Plus, HMRC and local authorities set up six pilots in very diverse areas, tasked with streamlining the way in which customers moving into and out of employment could access their benefit entitlements.

GCSX was identified as the solution for ensuring data could be transferred securely and efficiently between DWP and local authorities.

The pilots developed and refined new processes with a strong focus on the customer and evaluation revealed:

- A single point of contact and improved, secure data sharing significantly improved processing times.
- People thought the new processes were easy to understand.
- People rated the way the organisations worked together as good.
- People would be more willing to take up short term employment in the future.

The In and Out of Work processes are a real example of transformational government in action, and received Ministerial approval to rollout nationally in October 2008. Implementation across England, Scotland and Wales is planned to be completed by early 2010.

GCSX supports In and Out of Work and the wider government Transformation Agenda:

“Joined-up Government” is easy to say but incredibly hard to do. In and Out of Work is, quite simply, one of the best examples of real joined-up Government that I have seen. It reflects credit on everyone involved”

Leigh Lewis, Permanent Secretary, DWP

GCSX Supporting the In & Out of Work Processes

Simpler, easier transfer of information

GCSX facilitates a simpler transfer of information between local authorities and Jobcentre Plus:

- Reduced double handling at information collection and exchange points

Safer, more secure transfer of information

GCSX facilitates the secure transfer of information:

- Better information security
- Increased compliance with LGA Data Handling Guidelines and the Data Protection Act

Improved performance

GCSX facilitates faster electronic transfer of information:

- Improved end to end processing times as customer information is collected and shared more quickly
- A reduction in overpayments because the local authority gets information about the customer or partner starting work on the day it is reported to Jobcentre Plus

Reduced customer contact

GCSX facilitates a reduction in the number of contacts a customer has to make:

- Customer information collected at the start of the claim process can be forwarded to local authorities thanks to GCSX

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How GCSX will continue to support service transformation

Part of the new In and Out of Work processes make specific use of the GCSX infrastructure to transfer information quickly and securely between DWP and local authorities. Other DWP projects have similarly, identified specific ways in which the GCSX infrastructure can be used for the quick and secure transfer of Local Authority Input Documents (LAIDs) and Local Authority Claims Input (LACIs), electronic transfer of data and data matching files. There are many other areas where GCSX infrastructure could be used to improve processes.

For example:

- To securely transfer misdirected information from one local authority to another
- To securely email enquiries from local authorities to Jobcentre Plus about NI numbers
- To securely exchange information between local authorities and Benefit Delivery Centres
- To reduce the inefficient and less secure FAX traffic between local authorities and the Local Authority Support Team (LAST)

Other Authorities who are realising the potential of GCSX

- Devon County Council Trading Standards Special Investigative Unit is securely sharing information and intelligence with the Police
- Torbay Safeguarding Children Unit is securely sharing information with the Police
- Tower Hamlets London Borough uses GCSX to support the speedy and secure sharing of information with Jobcentre Plus to ensure vulnerable members of the public receive timely financial support
- Departments within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council such as Revenues & Benefits, Integrated Children's Services, Trading Standards and Emergency Planning are using GCSX to support the secure sharing of information with the Police, Government, Jobcentre Plus and DWP
- Departments within Caerphilly County Borough Council such as Benefits, Trading Standards, Community Safety, Protection of Vulnerable Adults, and Youth Offending Team, are using GCSX to support the secure sharing of information with the Police, Government, Jobcentre Plus and DWP
- Preston City Council's Revenues and Benefits section use GCSX to exchange data securely with the DWP and Jobcentre Plus.
- South Hams District Council Housing Benefit staff use the GCSX connection for accessing the CIS e-SEF system and for the sending/receiving of secure emails

Information about other local authority initiatives using GCSX to improve service delivery can be found on the IDeA Community of Practice at www.communities.idea.gov.uk

For further information about Government Connect contact the team at 0845 838 2945 or by email at gc.info@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or contact the In & Out of work team direct at: IOW@JOBCENTREPLUS.GSI.GOV.UK

www.govconnect.gov.uk

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