



North East Corner,
Level 6, Adelphi
1-11 John Adam Street,
London, WC2N 6HT

25 August 2009

To: Section 151 Officers (or equivalent): English and Welsh Local Authorities

GSI Code of Connection 4.1

You may be aware that the GSi community is revising the Code of Connection that controls access to the GCSX circuits provided by Government Connect. Currently local authorities are being assessed to Code of Connection version 3.2, the new version is 4.1. Compared with version 3.2 the main Code of Connection version 4.1 areas of change are:

- Mobile working - full implementation of compliant service
- Firewall specification (EAL 4)
- Execution of unauthorised software
- Requirement for IT Healthchecks (CHECK / CREST)
- Labelling e-mails with protective markings

Government Connect regards Code of Connection 4.1 as a positive development towards improved information assurance and supports ongoing developments in this area. However, as you might expect Government Connect is also keen to ensure that any changes introduced to local authorities are both manageable and relevant to the evolving view of risk.

The GSi is governed by the Managed Telecommunications Executive (MTE) and GCSX users are represented at this forum by the Government Connect Programme Director. On 6 August MTE agreed Code of Connection 4.1 would be introduced, but its introduction for GCSX users, whilst inevitable, would follow a separate path to be determined by a working group of Cabinet Office, CESG and Government Connect officials. This working group will take into account the change in perception of threats that has led to Code of Connection 4.1, developments towards acceptance of mobile / home working using non-authority owned equipment and the broader business context e.g., significant recent council investments and Council tax levels having been set.

I am quite sure the working group established by MTE will strike the right balance for local government to ensure Code of Connection 4.1 is introduced and interpreted appropriately and sensitively. You may have seen recent Buying Solutions notices and communications concerning Code of Connection 4.1, please be assured that there is no immediate impact on GCSX users; until further notice all GCSX Code of Connection assessments and re-assessments will be with reference to version 3.2. I will write to you again when we have reached an agreeable position as described above.

Yours sincerely

Philip Littleavon

Copies: IT Leads