



## Making Use of Audio-Visual Facilities

**Meeting Name** BSC Panel

**Meeting Date** 10 October 2013

**Purpose of paper** For Decision

**Summary** This paper invites the Panel to consider how best to make use of the options for recording or broadcasting Panel meetings in view of the new Audio-Visual equipment installed in the Pink Room. It recommends that we makes arrangements for audio recordings to be made of Panel meetings for ELEXON use only and that we put in place measures for the open portion of each Panel meeting to be broadcast via webinar for a trial period.

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In 2012 the Panel considered [Modification P287 'Allow the BSC Panel to conduct Modification Business via teleconference'](#). There was unanimous support among respondents for making Panel meetings more accessible. While the Panel rejected the Modification Proposal, in acknowledging a consultation response from Scottish and Southern, the Panel indicated it may investigate making meetings more accessible by broadcasting them over the internet.
- 1.2 In early 2013 the Panel discussed the possibility of using technology to improve the accessibility of Panel meetings and asked ELEXON to investigate the options for recording Panel meetings.
- 1.3 We have therefore reviewed how we could make use of the refreshed AV facilities at ELEXON. This paper sets out the options for the consideration of the Panel.

#### 1.4 Transparency Obligations

- 1.4.1 The BSC confirms that Panel meetings should be open to attendance by BSC Parties, the Authority and any other persons entitled to receive notice of Panel meetings (BSC Section B4.5.1) which may, where the Panel Secretary considers it a requirement, include any BSC Agent or Market Index Data Provider (BSC Section B4.1.7).
- 1.4.2 The Chairman may also invite any person to attend all or any part of the meeting (BSC Section B4.5.3).
- 1.4.3 While exclusions apply to confidential and commercially sensitive business (BSC Section 4.5.2(b)), custom and practice has been to allow any person to attend the open session of the Panel, provided that they notify the Panel Secretary in advance. This approach is consistent with the Code Administration Code of Practice which emphasises transparency and openness.
- 1.4.4 The Code Administration Code of Practice promotes easy and early access to the deliberations of Committees. Principles 1 and 3 of the Code of Practice contain the following guidelines:

**EXTRACT FROM PRINCIPLE 1: "Code Administrators shall be critical friends"**

A 'critical friend' is a Code Administrator who provides support to all with an interest in the code Modification process, but paying particular attention to under-represented parties, small market participants and consumer representatives. [Code Administrators should aim to]:

- Hold teleconference rather than 'face to face' meetings if this is more convenient for those that wish to participate, including smaller market participants;
- Improve websites, potentially with the inclusion of web-based forums, to provide easy access to information on code Modifications.

**EXTRACT FROM PRINCIPLE 3: "Information will be promptly and publicly available to users"**

Information produced by Code Administrators will be easily accessible to users through a number of channels. Users of the Code Administrator's services should expect that:

- Code Administrators will be transparent in their processes and services;
- Code Administrators will make all non-confidential information available;
- Information will be available through various common communication channels (e.g. websites).
- Information will be published in a timely manner (in line with the respective Codes reporting timescales)

## 1.5 Other Codes

- 1.5.1 In conducting the review we have noted that ELEXON's current approach is consistent with that of other Code Administrators (including National Grid, MRASCo (Gemserv Ltd) and the Joint Office) who all publish written records of their respective committee meetings.
- 1.5.2 While there is use of teleconferencing, other Code Administrators do not currently record, publish or stream audio or video recordings of their committee meetings via their respective websites. Some have used webinar services to engage industry participants, but these are not used as a matter of course for standard committee meetings.

## 2. Options

- 2.1 We have set up the Pink Room with both teleconferencing and video conferencing facilities and this is now the main committee meeting room in the ELEXON offices. The technology installed in the Pink Room offers the opportunity to quickly implement the following options:
- Audio Recording; and
  - Webinars.
- 2.2 ELEXON is currently implementing a unified communications technology strategy. Over the next 6 months facilities will be introduced in the communications infrastructure which could then facilitate the introduction of:
- Video Recording; and
  - Live Video Streaming.
- 2.3 More information on each option is set out in the appendix to this paper, however, there are a number of general benefits and concerns that arise to a greater or lesser extent depending on the option taken forward.

## 2.4 General Benefits

- 2.4.1 Recording meetings would provide a reference for the minute-taker and a record that could be referred to should queries be raised on the minutes of the meeting. Publishing recordings would enable those who were not able to attend the meeting itself to understand Panel deliberations in advance of the publication of the approved minutes.
- 2.4.2 Live broadcast of meetings (either via webinar or streaming services) would allow interested parties to log in to the meeting to attend all or some of the items on the agenda without incurring the time or cost associated with travelling into London.

## 2.5 General Concerns

- 2.5.1 Panel members have previously expressed concerns that opening up Panel meetings to extend beyond those that are in the room could curtail the discussion and limit the openness of the debate. A particular concern is that discussions may inadvertently divulge confidential or commercially sensitive information which would then be available in the published record of the meeting.
- 2.5.2 With audio-only recording or streaming it may also be difficult for the listener to keep track of who is speaking with only the slides and an audio track to follow proceedings. This is a concern that the Panel reflected on when considering Modification P287. To overcome this problem it may be necessary for attendees to identify themselves each time they speak, disrupting the natural flow of debate and making discussions appear overly formal.
- 2.5.3 The capability for external users to watch videos on-line may be limited as many office environments have bandwidth limits in place. Video files are large and organisations may frown upon staff watching video during office hours due to the strain it puts on their internal network.

## 2.6 Costs

- 2.6.1 Below is a summary of the indicative costs associated with implementing the audio recording and webinar options.

Option	Use	Implementation Cost	On-going Cost p.a.
Audio recording	for ELEXON use only (e.g. transcribing minutes)	£1,000	£500 (hardware maintenance / file storage)
	for publication on ELEXON website (e.g. audio-podcasts)	£1,000	£500 (hardware maintenance / file storage) approx. 12 man-days p.a. reviewing audio files
	for publication as clips edited by subject matter on ELEXON website (e.g. audio-podcasts)	£1,200	£500 (hardware maintenance / file storage) approx. 24 man-days p.a. reviewing and editing audio files

Option	Use	Implementation Cost	On-going Cost p.a.
<b>Live Webinars</b>	for remote attendees to listen to the debate	None	£360 (for 12 Panel meetings)

2.6.2 The costs associated with video recording/video on demand or live video streaming of meetings will be higher than those for the audio-only options and, should the Panel wish to consider these options further, the costs will be investigated as part of the work being undertaken on our communications infrastructure.

## 2.7 Meeting Logistics and Operating Practices

2.7.1 **Data Protection and Consents:** In all cases, where meetings are to be recorded or broadcast we would be required declare that this is the case at the start of each meeting. This declaration must also confirm how such recordings may be used. Further, appropriate data protection steps and notices would need to be taken. For example, if an individual asked a question of the Panel through a webinar (and therefore had their name published) we would need to make sure that relevant privacy notices and consents were in place when they log into the webinar.

2.7.2 **Code of Conduct:** We may need to consider some sort of code of conduct for participants in Panel meetings that deals with offensive statements. While it is highly unlikely that this would be an issue we must consider how (or whether) this needs addressing.

2.7.3 **Defamation:** Although unlikely to ever occur, there could be risks for ELEXON if an attendee said something defamatory at a meeting. If this happened at a webinar then we would need to look at whether ELEXON might have liability (on the basis that it had published the defamatory statement). This would be more of a risk for ELEXON if meetings were actively edited or not transmitted live (i.e. that we have an opportunity to screen for defamatory comments). In addition, we would need to amend Panel Indemnities to make sure that ELEXON (and therefore BSC Parties) were not indemnifying anyone for potentially defamatory comments.

## 3. Conclusion

3.1 The costs and complexities arising in respect of video recording/streaming together with the uncertainty of take-up among BSC Parties, seem, at this point, to limit the case for adopting this technology. However, should the Panel wish to consider these options further, we will investigate video recording/streaming as part of our unified communications technology strategy.

3.2 The benefits of publishing audio or video recordings of meetings may not be outweighed by the concerns arising.

3.3 In light of these considerations we propose that we make arrangements for:

- audio recordings to be made of Panel meetings for ELEXON use only; and
- the open portion of each Panel meeting to be broadcast via webinar for a trial period to determine the appetite among BSC Parties for such a facility.

3.4 Should these options prove successful for the BSC Panel, we would consider extending their use to other Panel Committees.

#### 4. Recommendations

4.1 We invite you to:

- a) **AGREE** that ELEXON makes arrangements for audio recordings to be made of Panel meetings for ELEXON use only;
- b) **AGREE** that ELEXON makes arrangements for the open portion of each Panel meeting to be broadcast via webinar for a trial period to determine the appetite among BSC Parties for such a facility;
- c) **CONFIRM** whether the Panel supports the further investigation of video recording and streaming; and
- d) **NOTE** that ELEXON will review the success of any options that are taken forward and, if appropriate, will consider extending their use to other Panel Committees in consultation with the BSC Panel.

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Overview of Options

#### For more information, please contact:

Adam Richardson, BSC Advisor and Panel Secretary  
[adam.richardson@elexon.co.uk](mailto:adam.richardson@elexon.co.uk)  
020 7380 4117

## Appendix I – Overview of Options

### Audio Recording

It would be possible to record Panel meetings using the fixed microphones in the Pink Room for a minimal outlay (for a hard disc recorder). This would bring the immediate benefit of a record that could be referred to should queries be raised in respect of the minutes for meetings. It would also be possible to publish audio files of the Panel meeting (either in its entirety or as clips by agenda item) on the ELEXON website for parties to download or stream. These audio recordings could be made available before the next Panel meeting (i.e. in advance of the publication of the approved minutes). The pros and cons of audio recording and publications are outlined below.

	1. Audio recording of meetings <b>for ELEXON use only</b> (e.g. transcribing minutes)	2. Audio recording of meetings <b>for publication</b> on website (e.g. audio-podcasts)	3. Audio recording of meetings <b>for publication as clips edited by subject matter</b> on website (e.g. audio-podcasts)
Pros	A reference for the minute-taker and a record that could be referred should queries be raised.	As (1) plus the full debate being available to those who were not able to attend the meeting itself and (potentially) the ability to understand Panel deliberations in advance of the publication of the approved minutes.	As (1) and (2) with the added benefit that it would be easier find and listen to the part of the debate that the user wanted.
Cons	Panel members have previously expressed concerns that opening up Panel meetings to extend beyond those that are in the room could curtail the discussion and limit the openness of the debate. It may also be difficult for the listener to keep track of who is speaking with only the slides and an audio track to follow proceedings. To overcome this concern it may be necessary for attendees to identify themselves each time they speak, making discussions appear overly formal.	As (1) plus a heightened concern that debate may be curtailed for fear that discussions inadvertently divulge confidential or commercially sensitive information which would then be available in the published record of the meeting.  Work will be required to ensure that the ELEXON website carries appropriate bandwidth to support publication and access to audio recordings.	As (1) and (2) plus the need for resource to be used following each Panel meeting to process and edit discussions into appropriate segments.
Costs	Set-up costs would be no more than £1,000. Comprising approximately £500 for the hardware and £500 for our service provider to integrate this with the existing AV facilities.  On-going costs of approximately £500 per annum arising from low level maintenance under the AV service provider contract, plus some costs associated with storage of the files on the ELEXON network.	(Set-up costs would be as (1)).  Audio files would be accessible via our Media Hub facility at no additional cost.  On-going costs would be as (1) plus internal resource to review the audio files of each meeting prior to publication (approximately 12 man-days per annum).	Set up costs ~£1,200 (As (1) plus a modest cost for the editing software.)  Audio files would be accessible via our Media Hub facility at no additional cost.  On-going costs would be as for (2) plus the internal resource required to edit each Panel meeting into clips for publication (12 man-days per annum).



**Webinars**

Web-based meetings can be delivered using the existing facilities in the Pink Room. This would enable remote attendees to log in to the webinar to view the slides being presented and listen to the debate in the meeting via the fixed microphones in the meeting room. It is possible for remote attendees to ask questions by typing these into a dialogue box should the Panel wish to offer this functionality. We have used webinars for the Cross Codes Forum in the past and these facilities have been well received.

Pros	It would be straightforward for interested parties to log in to the meeting to attend all or some of the items on the agenda without incurring the time or cost associated with travelling into London. Using the Webinar facilities it would be possible to have an indication of who was viewing the Panel meeting.
Cons	Panel members have previously expressed concerns that opening up Panel meetings to extend beyond those that are in the room could curtail the discussion and limit the openness of the debate. It may also be difficult for the listener to keep track of who is speaking with only the slides and an audio track to follow proceedings. To overcome this concern it may be necessary for attendees to identify themselves each time they speak, making discussions appear overly formal.
Costs	We would use Webex or similar services to provide webinar facilities at a cost of approximately £30 per month.

**Video Recording**

The camera's installed in the Pink Room for video conferencing (together with the fixed microphones) would make it possible to record video of Panel meetings. Publishing the proceedings of the Panel in this way puts faces to names and makes the debate more engaging than an audio file. However, it carries the same risks, may make attendees more uncomfortable and brings additional costs. The pros and cons of video recording and publication are outlined below.

	1. Video recording of meetings <b>for publication</b> on website.	2. <b>Video recording</b> of meetings <b>for publication as clips edited by subject matter</b> on website
Pros	A reference for the minute taker and a record that could be referred should queries be raised.  The full debate being available to those who were not able to attend the meeting itself and (potentially) the ability to understand Panel deliberations in advance of the publication of the approved minutes. Video also enables remote attendees to put faces to names.	As (1) with the added benefit that it would be easier find and listen to the part of the debate that the user wanted.
Cons	Panel members have previously expressed concerns that opening up Panel meetings to extend beyond those that are in the room could curtail the discussion and limit the openness of the debate. There is also a concern that debate may be curtailed for fear that discussions inadvertently divulge confidential or commercially sensitive information which would then be available in the published record of the meeting.	As (1) plus the need for resource to be used following each Panel meeting to review and edit discussions.  But also, avoiding the con related to long, unfocused video files.



	<p>The capability for external users to watch videos on-line may be limited as many office environments have bandwidth limits in place. Video files are large and organisations may frown upon staff watching video during office hours due to the strain it puts on their internal network.</p> <p>Research<sup>1</sup> has indicated that web-users tend not to watch videos online for longer than 4-5 minutes. This is often to do with the length of time it takes to download videos or that people just don't have the time or interest to watch something longer than this in one go.</p>	
--	---	--

### Live Video Streaming

By engaging a streaming client the video conferencing facilities in the Pink Room can be used for streaming Panel meetings. This would enable remote attendees to view Panel meetings remotely via their web-browser, however, they would not be able to interact with the meeting.

Pros	It would be straightforward for interested parties to view the meeting via the ELEXON website in order to attend all or some of the items on the agenda without incurring the time or cost associated with travelling into London.
Cons	<p>Panel members have previously expressed concerns that opening up Panel meetings to extend beyond those that are in the room could curtail the discussion and limit the openness of the debate.</p> <p>The capability for external users to watch videos on-line may also be limited as many office environments have bandwidth limits in place. Video files are large and organisations may frown upon staff watching video during office hours due to the strain it puts on their internal network.</p> <p>Research<sup>2</sup> has indicated that web-users tend not to watch videos online for longer than 4-5 minutes. This is often to do with the length of time it takes to download videos or that people just don't have the time or interest to watch something longer than this in one go.</p> <p>Further, it would not be clear during the meeting who (if anyone) was watching proceedings via the internet.</p>

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://socialmediatoday.com/truscribe-videos/780696/understanding-online-video-viewing-habits> and <http://www.labnol.org/internet/optimum-length-of-video/18696/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://socialmediatoday.com/truscribe-videos/780696/understanding-online-video-viewing-habits> and <http://www.labnol.org/internet/optimum-length-of-video/18696/>