

DPC Capacity Enhancement and Peer Review Task Force: A Proposal

Venue and Arrangements

The meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th September 2011 in The Premier Inn, King's Cross St Pancras 26-30 York Way, London (N1 9AA) at 1030. Please report to the reception desk at 10.15 am. Tea and coffee will be available at the start of the meeting and delegates will be invited to lunch after the meeting finishes, which is expected by 1300. The meeting will be chaired by William Kilbride.

Purpose of the meeting

Delegates at this meeting are invited to discuss, review and endorse updated terms of reference for a new DPC task force that aims to provide members with opportunities for peer review of each other's digital preservation facilities. The aim of such a review is four fold: to provide conspicuous external validation of tools and services deployed by preservation facilities; to enhance practice in the facilities reviewed; to enhance the knowledge of the reviewer in order to improve their own practice; and to prepare the DPC membership for standards based certification and audit.

Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
 2. **Review of DPC Certification Activities**
 3. **Review of current certification efforts in digital preservation**
 - Overview of current trends and standards
 - Sharing of experience
 4. **Updated Terms of Reference for DPC Task Force (DPC-CERT)**
 5. **Organisational Matters**
 - Appointment of reviewers
 - Publication of reports
 - Frequency
 6. **Substantive issues for peer reviewers**
 - Evidence
 - Policy
 - Practice
 - Resources
 7. **Next steps**
 - Agreed action points
 - Interface with DPC Board
 - Future meetings and circulation of documents
 8. **AOB**
- Lunch**

DPC Capacity Enhancement and Peer Review Task Force: Updated Draft Terms of Reference, Sept 2011

1. Introduction

In November 2009 the DPC Planning Day noted the Coalition's interest in certification and accreditation of digital preservation facilities – noting that the Coalition's distinctive constitution and standing made it an obvious candidate to undertake certification of digital repositories or to provide training and accreditation of those undertaking such certification. In March 2010 the Board called for a Task Force to be established to move this forward and draft terms of reference were approved by the Board in July 2010. However a lack of resources and recognition of the rapid development of standards in this domain prevented the group from ever meeting.

The Planning Day in 2011 reiterated the opportunity and benefit that such a group could bring but proposed that, instead of certifying repositories against an externally-validated standard, that the DPC facilitate peer review between members to enable capacity enhancement. Peer review, it was argued would be mutually supportive: the reviewer is likely to learn something in the course of their work which they can apply in their own setting.

This document represents a first draft of updated terms of reference for the DPC Capacity Enhancement and Peer Review Task Force (DPC-CERT). Participants at this preliminary meeting are invited to **discuss and debate** the updated draft terms of reference and to **consider and recommend** practical steps for their implementation.

2. Background

For some time the digital preservation community has attempted to define, publish and implement standards that can be used to benchmark digital preservation activities. Such standards provide confidence to funders and depositors and provide greater clarity in the management and development of services. In addition, the development of independent certification raises allied questions about what constitutes an appropriate authority or individual to undertake certification.

There are now a number of initiatives in different sectors examining, developing and implementing standards for certification of digital repositories and DPC members have been involved in many of them. These include the National Archives / MLA Digital Preservation work stream related to Archives for the 21st Century, the CLR audit of the PORTICO's post-cancellation access journal services based on the 'TRAC' methodology, the Data Seal of Approval initiated by DANS in the Netherlands and supported by UKDA, the Data Audit Framework developed by DCC and HATII and currently being implemented by the Incremental Project at Cambridge University, BIP10008 on the 'storage of data as evidence' as implemented by National Archives of Scotland and the DRAMBORA risk assessment tool developed by HATII and implemented across a number of test sites. A variety of sectors are developing their own requirements and methodologies for long term information management such as the aerospace industry and criminal justice agencies and internationally agencies such as NESTOR and APA have made significant statements on preservation standards for research data. A new round of funding from the European Commission has provoked more development in this field under the APARSEN Network of Excellence.

3. Terms of reference

The relative immaturity of the standards and the diverse ways they have been implemented and understood makes it difficult to understand and compare results and it is not even clear that the tools currently available are sufficiently flexible to be applied consistently. Moreover the proliferation of standards in this field is welcome insofar as it demonstrates a lively commitment by a wide range of individuals and agencies, but it also risks fragmentation and it increases the costs of participation.

Consequently the task for the DPC is not so much in the development of standards so much as in the refinement, application and implementation of existing standards as templates for peer review of repository services. This will provide members with a conspicuous and independent measure of quality; clearly articulated improvement plans for their repositories; an opportunity to learn from other members; and a

means to prepare for more formal external certification. Such work will be useful for funders who seek to designate repositories and, by improving practice it will support the DPC's core mission of ensuring that our digital data is accessible tomorrow.

4. Progression

The Task Force will set its own programme at the outset, so the following is intended to be illustrative. It will start by taking developing an initial framework for peer review based on existing standards for certification and after consultation with those who have been assessed by an external agent or undertaken self-assessment. The group will then agree a series of test implementations over a fixed duration and report back.

Key questions to be addressed before the group can proceed include:

- How are peer reviewers to be appointed?
- Can we agree a shared template of questions for each peer review?
- How can the group keep abreast of relevant developments in certification?
- How might a repository and a reviewer agree those elements of a service to review?
- What constitutes appropriate evidence for review?
- What is the appropriate frequency for reviews?
- How should the results of peer review be shared with other members?
- How might a reviewer implement learning gleaned from a review?
- How might the DPC badge those facilities which have been reviewed?
- How should the work of the group be communicated to other stakeholders?

5. Operation of the meetings

The DPC will provide a secretarial function for the meetings and arrange logistics. Given the nature of the topics it will be important that participants are appropriately selected and delegated from their institutions. It is appropriate to bring more than one representative to any meeting and for representatives to vary between meetings. Facilitators or commentators will also be invited as required.

6. Quality measures and evaluation

The ultimate goal of the task force – to support the creation of a coherent digital legacy by helping to shape policy – cannot be measured directly. Proxy measures of success include

- Willingness of members to participate
- Quality and timeliness of documents produced
- Quality and focus of discussion
- Use of reports and papers outside of the Task Force
- Hits on appropriate web pages
- Interest from prospective members

The Task Force will evaluate its own success after 12 months and opt to wind up at this point or to continue for an additional period. The Task Force will be evaluated as part of the DPC's three year evaluation (2012-2015) to be completed in 2015.

7. Values and constitution

The Task Force will be facilitated by the DPC as a working party of the DPC board. As a task force of the DPC, it will adopt the values and relevant parts of the constitution of the DPC. Consequently it will:

- Operate as a neutral body.
- Embrace a consultative, innovative and open approach.
- Engage in a collaborative manner with all stakeholders to comprehend and respond to their needs.
- Maintain sound stewardship of the Coalition's resources.
- Share best practice and knowledge transfer with our members to support their local priorities.

- Maintain vendor neutrality.
- Support developments of standards and generic approaches to digital preservation.

8. Membership

The Task Force will be open to all current members and associates of the DPC. From time to time and as the need arises, third party experts will be invited to contribute to and facilitate meetings. Should parties wish to join the Task Force that are not current members of the DPC then they should be directed to join the DPC as an associate or Board Member. The DPC Board will reserve the right to levy a subscription to non-members that wish to have a regular presence at the task force.

9. About this document

Version 1	Document initiated	20/06/2010	WK
Version 2	Proof	29/06/2010	WK
Version 3	Approved by board	01/07/2010	Board
Version 4	Updated and reviewed in light of DPC Planning Day 201	01/09/2011	WK