Terms of reference

Purpose

1. The techUK Interop Working Group will provide strategic direction for all techUK and activities related to the Interoperability for Policing initiative.
2. For the purpose of this ToR interoperability is defined as: “the ability of different information technology systems and software applications to communicate, to exchange data accurately, effectively, and consistently, and to use the information that has been exchanged.”
3. The Interoperability Working Group is a standing committee established to ensure that technology suppliers to policing are aligned with Policing strategy on interoperability and can inform strategic Policing decisions regarding interoperability. It is responsible for ensuring that:
   1. The technology supplier community can provide direct input into policing Interoperability decisions and standards.
   2. Policing strategy and opportunities to engage are clearly communicated to the technology suppliers community.
   3. It captures and shares technology supplier concerns and opinions regarding Policing interoperability decisions and plans.
   4. The latest developments in technology supplier interoperability are captured and represented in the appropriate Policing forums.
   5. It works closely with policing and the Home Office to support and promote the value that interoperability can bring.
4. The Interoperability Working Group will use its domain knowledge and expertise to determine, contribute and communicate the best course of action to improve the Interoperability of policing systems. As well as being a visible working group and voice in the community evangelising for better interoperability of Policing systems, it will provide practical guidance on the adoption of interoperability standards.
5. Its responsibilities will include
   1. Provide an oversight function for technology supplier and JPS sector interoperability, identifying new requirements for interoperability standards due to technological developments, legislative or regulatory changes and case law.
   2. Advise Policing on interoperability standards at a national and local level.
   3. Support national Policing programmes and bodies with the development of interoperability standards & approaches.
   4. Work to ensure that TechUK members & wider technology suppler community are appraised of the Interoperability initiatives as part of the National Digital Policing Strategy 2020 – 2030.
   5. Provide a mechanism for technology suppliers to engage, contribute and feedback on the market direction and strategy for interoperability.
   6. Represent the market direction of interoperability to the appropriate Policing forums.

Responsibilities

1. Members of the Working Group are expected to act in accordance with [techUK’s Values](https://www.techuk.org/who-we-are/about-us.html).
2. Members of the Working Group will be expected to engage in debate and discussion. Members should be ready and willing to openly discuss issues with stakeholders and other members in every meeting.

Membership

1. techUK Membership Groups aim to reflect the range of companies, both in terms of sectors and size that are interested in each work programme. It will also strive to reflect diversity in all its forms and, in particular, from underrepresented groups across the tech sector.
2. The working group will have a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) appointed with agreement from the working group members, stakeholders, national bodies and customer organisations. They will act as a public leader and advocate for the need for Interoperability at a national level.
3. One member of the working group will be appointed as Chair, and another as Vice-Chair to help coordinate its output with the techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager.
4. The working group will comprise approximately twelve members.
5. Four of these members will represent stakeholders, national bodies and customers with responsibility for data and integration standards in policing:
   1. The Interoperability Working Group SRO
   2. Home Office Police & Public Protection Technology representative
   3. Police ICT Company National Standards Lead
   4. National Data Quality & Standards Lead
6. Eight of these members will be from the technology supplier community. They must be employed by a body that is a member of techUK and should ideally be of manager status or above. If appropriate and agreed by members of the group, stakeholders can be invited to attend meetings on a regular basis.
7. At least two of the eight supplier community members are designated from an SME.
8. Membership, including the Chair, will run for two-year periods on an individual basis. Members will be nominated via an open call to relevant techUK groups, followed by a member vote if necessary. Only one individual per techUK member company may be on a working group.
9. If an individual working group representative leaves their company to join another techUK member then they may remain on the working group (as long as this doesn’t result in a techUK member company having two representatives). If they join a company which is not a techUK member they may remain on the working group for 3 months, after which they will be required to leave unless the company is in the process of applying for techUK membership.
10. Representatives may be re-elected onto the working group, and there is no cap on how many times they can be re-elected.
11. The working group will operate a ‘Strike’ attendance policy. If a member is not present (even with apologies sent) at two or more compulsory meetings during a calendar year that representative will be ejected from the working group. The Chair, Vice-Chair and techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager will have discretion in making a final decision.
12. The working group shall have the power to create sub-groups and working groups to address strategic and tactical issues which require a more detailed input. These sub-groups will be led by working group members and comprised – where required – of other invited individuals (including data, architecture, integration and API technical authorities) from the wider technology supplier community and customer base. The chair of these sub-groups shall report back to the working group when requested.

Meetings

1. The Working Group will meet monthly, with further meetings to be scheduled as required/agreed by the membership.
2. There is no fixed monthly agenda. An agenda and supporting papers for each working group will be published a week ahead of the scheduled session.
3. Meetings will be minuted by the techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager unless a private session is requested and agreed to by the Chair.

Decision-making process

1. When techUK member funds are being used to commission work, a high level of consensus is required.
2. When developing a position, the techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager will only develop an outline once at least six members of the working group have indicated a willingness to participate.
3. Policy positions require a lower level of consensus although techUK is at its strongest when it speaks with one voice. There will be times when consensus cannot be reached given the different viewpoints present in the working group. In the first instance, the techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager will seek to set out the differences within the working group. It will not, however, seek to quantify these differences. If the working group is particularly divided – or if there is significant opposition to developing a position, the techUK Justice & Emergency Services Programme Manager in conjunction with the Chair will make a decision on whether a public position would play a role in ensuring techUK remains a relevant, influential and credible voice.