

AGENDA PAPER

IFRS Foundation Trustees' meeting – Due Process Oversight Committee

London

10 April 2013

**Agenda
paper** 3E

Memorandum

To: Due Process Oversight Committee

From: Alan Teixeira

Date: 27 March 2013

Re: Operational matters

Overview

1. The purpose of this note is to update DPOC members of the steps we have and are taking to improve the resilience of the technology for recording meetings, following the problem we had during the February meeting of the IASB.

Recording failure

2. On 19 February I informed the DPOC via email of a failure into our recording processes that led to a 90 minute IASB session not being recorded.
3. As a consequence we have not been able to place a recording of that session on our website—the *Due Process Handbook* (paragraph 3.2) states recordings of public IASB meetings are made available on the IFRS Foundation website.

Background

4. We broadcast our meetings via the web. We use third-party providers to bring together remote participants (such as the FASB) and to broadcast and record the sessions. Essentially, one provider provides a bridge, bringing together the relevant parties. It is not a simple point-to-point video link, because we often have people participating in the meetings by video (such as the ASBJ on that day). A second

provider broadcasts the meeting and manages the registration by observers.

5. Subsequent investigation revealed that the broadcast provider changed some equipment the evening before our meeting that caused a link between the two providers to be lost. It took the providers three days to identify and remedy the problem. Unfortunately, because it was a connectivity problem between the two external providers it was not a case of us remedying a problem between us and one provider.

Response on the day

6. We have had broadcast failures before. The IFRS Interpretations Committee meeting in January 2013 (ie the previous month) also suffered a broadcasting failure that meant some portions were not able to be streamed live.¹ In that case our back-up recording systems functioned as planned and we were able to place a recording of the full meeting on our website. Our general approach has been to get messages onto our website to inform observers that we are aware of the problem and assure them that we are recording the meeting.
7. For an IASB meeting, if we identify a broadcast problem before the meeting starts our normal procedure has been to delay the start of the meeting until the problem is resolved or we have a clearer picture of the extent of the problem. However, it has been quite some time since we have had to follow this 'normal' procedure. Many of our staff have never experienced a failure of this nature—this was the first recording failure in ten years and for the IASB meeting the first major broadcast failure for several years. The fact that our back-up systems worked the previous month also gave the IT staff the confidence to assume that our back-up systems were working.
8. As it was, there was a 40 minute delay in informing observers that we were aware of the problem. It was compounded by the unprecedented failure in the back-up system.

Remedial steps

Live streaming

9. We are reviewing our service agreements with the external providers. In particular, we need to get a better response time from our providers. A problem between two external providers should not have affected us as badly as it did.

¹ The nature of the failure was not related to the February failure.

Back-up

10. This is our only known failure in the back-up system. It has operated without problems since that day. However, it is an older piece of equipment so we are planning to upgrade it.
11. We are also investigating installing an independent (audio-only) recording system as a permanent back-up—ie a backup that does not feed off our main video system.

On the day procedures

12. We will remind the IT and Technical staff before each meeting of what to do when they become aware of a failure in the video system.
13. We do not want to over-engineer our systems for what is a very unusual event. The important message is that if we have a live streaming failure we should pause the meeting to give our IT staff time to:
 - inform external observers that we are aware of the problem; and
 - run through additional back-up checks.
14. This should not be disruptive, because these steps can usually be completed within 15 minutes or so. In practical terms it will often come down to having an earlier than planned coffee break in the meeting.