

ARMY PERSONNEL DATA MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Overview, Functions and Structure (Submission for Data Governance Best Practice Award 2010)

1. Background

In 2007 a new Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system was introduced into the Armed Forces, combining 3 bespoke systems which had, at least in the Army's case, been operating (with significant modifications over time) since the 1960s. The Armed Forces are a complex organisation of about 170,000 full time Serviceman and over 30,000 part time Reservists. It incorporates many nationalities, ethnic backgrounds, religions and is spread across the world, on occasion in areas inaccessible to internet or mobile phones. Within each Service there are multiple levels of complexity, from the rank structure to the trade structure, each combination of which is paid and potentially administered differently. Even naming conventions are complex, with a Private soldier potentially being called a Private, or Guardsman, Gunner, Sapper, Driver etc.

The new JPA system changed the cultural approach to administration in the Services from a system based on collective and top-down administration to the onus being on the individual; it also incorporated a new allowance and appraisal system at the same time. The language of the Commercial system purchased by Defence was different to the language the Services were used to: for example, absence in the Services suggests unauthorised absence, whilst the new system categorised authorised leave as absence. With this potential confusion, and the fact that the new system was predicated on a significant reduction in administrative staff, as well as an inherent cultural scepticism, JPA has found it hard to settle. Importantly, in many cases individuals, focussed on operations, did not appreciate the value of the data within the system. With the benefit of hindsight, insufficient attention was given to how this commercial off-the-shelf system should have been tailored to Army requirements, and the need for effective change management had not been considered.

And yet, accurate personnel data is fundamental to the support of many processes within the Army, including sustaining current operations. The delivery of accurate, useful information to the appropriate decision-makers within the necessary timeframe to support effective decision-making is a key requirement. With manpower being 27% of the Defence Budget and 74% of the Army Budget, critical, large financial decisions must be informed on the basis of sound data.

In April 2008 the Army therefore launched an initiative under a single Programme Manager to improve both the understanding and the accuracy of the data. At this time the Army faced significant problems with the personnel system, such as:

- Inaccurate and missing data, making the delivery of reliable information impossible and needing over 100 man days per month to meet even the minimum needs. This was costing the Army significant sums; and our data was not fit for purpose, or for monthly national publication, without caveats.
- Inconsistent data between people and positions, anomalies between manpower accounting and resource expenditure, and lack of information at a sufficiently granular level.

Issues were being identified but with no overall co-ordination and prioritisation, and with little or no attention given to the root causes of the problem – meaning that the same data was having to be cleansed each month. The Programme Manager launched a Personnel Data Action Plan in 2008 to address these issues and in December 2008 the Army appointed Detica, a consultancy firm specialising in information intelligence, to launch a data management and governance programme working alongside the Programme Manager.

The intent was to deliver a single and accurate version of data truth, with processes properly adjusted to ensure that the data remained accurate, despite being amended frequently. With the large number of amendments to data every week, it was important that errors were caught before they could have an impact, which requires a system to identify errors as they occur, and a mechanism for correcting them, all within days of identification. Further, a requirement for a Continuous Improvement feedback loop was identified, to ensure that lessons could be learned and acted on. It is relevant to understand the priority of the work that was to be undertaken. With poor data costing the Army money and imposing reputational risk, there was an absolute imperative to tackle the issues head on. And in an organisation designed around decisive action and rapid results, a leisurely approach to data management was not an option: results had to be immediate and tangible, leading to in year clarification and savings. Further, because of the immediate priority of this work the Army, despite stringent financial circumstances, was prepared to fund data improvement: in reality **this was the only project funded outside direct support to operations or legal imperative within the 2009/10 financial year.**

2. Sponsorship, Planning and Framework

2.1 Sponsorship

The Adjutant General, a three-star Lieutenant-General, is Principal Personnel Officer for the Army and therefore the ultimate owner of Army personnel data. He has delegated the day-to-day responsibility for data assurance to the Director of Manning (Army) - DM(A) – who is therefore responsible for personnel data being fit for purposes such as:

- Career Management.
- Manpower Planning and Accounting.
- Personnel Administration.

The senior sponsors of the data management and governance programme are DM(A) and his superior officer, the Director-General of Personnel (a two-star post).

2.2 Planning

The first phase of the Data Governance assignment ran from December 2008 until March 2009. This consisted of two parallel activities:

- 1) The design of an Army Personnel Data Management Organisation (APDMO), together with a roadmap for its introduction.
- 2) Formalising the process for managing data quality issues, including the appointment of Data Champions from each of the affected business areas and the establishment of a small team of Data Analysts to investigate the scale, complexity, root causes and potential solutions to the data quality issues.

From Spring 2009 for twelve months, a transitional phase has been underway:

- 1) Implementing the roadmap to build to the full APDMO in April 2010, using Detica consultants to create the governance framework.
- 2) Further data quality management work, auditing and analysing specific areas of data and designing a 'Remedial Actions Programme' (RAP) to cleanse the high-priority data elements.

The approach has been based on Detica's 'Information Management Excellence' framework (see Figure 1) which has been presented at a number of information management conferences and which has been implemented across all main industry sectors and in both the public and private sector. So far the work has concentrated on the first three segments clockwise from the top of the diagram:

- Setting the vision and objectives, as described in the following paragraph.
- Design of the APDMO, the methodology of which is outlined in section 3 *Business Requirements and Business Participation*.
- Implementing Data Stewardship, incorporating Data Governance and Data Quality Management.



Figure 1. Detica's Information Management Excellence framework

The APDMO will be fully funded from April 2010. Full-time staff are already being recruited, and this will continue until mid-2010 by which time the Detica consultants will have fully handed over to the new team.

The goal is that, by the end of June 2010, DM(A) will be able to inform the Adjutant General that all the high-priority areas of Army personnel data are fit for purpose. This is a challenging goal which is focusing the minds of the fledgling APDMO as it manages the data quality fixes while at the same time establishing the full governance and data management framework.

2.3 Framework

The vision of the APDMO was established early in the first phase of Detica's work, with Detica consultants interviewing the senior stakeholders and then socialising an agreed vision among this group. It is for:

“A professional Data Management Organisation that understands what personnel data is important to the Army; advises on data governance, monitors and maintains data quality; and helps the Army exploit the data which is available”

The strategy will be delivered through the following objectives, which were developed during the initial APDMO design phase in a stakeholder workshop facilitated by Detica:

- Provide complete, reliable information on where data consumers should go to find the data they need.
- Enable its customers to answer the fundamental questions about manning and manpower planning from a position of strength.
- Provide a coherent policy for Army personnel data.
- Share expert knowledge about Army personnel data.
- Operate within a framework of policies and standards for data management where compliance is monitored and enforced.
- Provide excellent service to data consumers through education and empowerment of staff.
- Act as a model for the expansion of Data Management services across the Army as a whole.

Along with these objectives is a series of key 'Principles of Data Management' which underpin the role of the APDMO, and which the APDMO will interpret on behalf of the Army's personnel data:

- Data is an Asset.
- Data is Shared and Accessible.
- Data Quality is Fit for Purpose.
- Data is Compliant with the Law and Regulations.
- Data is Secure.
- There is a Common Vocabulary and Data Definitions.
- Data is not Duplicated.
- Data Management is Everyone's Business.

2.4 Status as at end January 2010

- The first permanent members of staff have joined the APDMO, and recruitment has started for the remainder of the roles. A start has been made on creating the knowledge repository which will support the achievement of the first objective above.
- Policies and standards have been drafted (for implementation between February and April), and regular communications have been launched including an APDMO Web Page.
- The Data Champions Working Group is an enthusiastic and proactive body which has met six times since May 2009. Almost half of all the data quality issues raised have been signed-off, and new issues are being raised through the Data Governance Community at the rate of 3-6 per month.
- The Data Analysts are producing seven separate Data Quality Scorecards on a monthly basis, some for the business processes which they have audited and some for specific data quality issues for which fixes are in hand or have been completed. **Where the fixes have been completed, all the trends are upward.**
- The Data Analysts are also involved in the initial investigation and root cause analysis phases of a number of the data quality issues, some of which have been raised as a result of their audit activity.
- Significant benefits have already been delivered, both in terms of improved data quality and in reduced time spent cleansing the data each month; see section 6 *Measurements Programme and Success Stories*.

3. Business Requirements and Business Participation

3.1 Business Requirements

The business requirements for data governance are probably unusual in that they relate purely to personnel data, not to wider considerations. A number of other data management activities have started in various other parts of the Army organisation, but none are advanced as the Army Personnel programme; indeed the APDMO is seen as leading the way in establishing and setting the standard for good practice.

Detailed requirements were captured in order to produce business cases at four points in the programme:

- To fund the engagement of Detica for the initial phase (Dec 2008 – March 2009).
- To continue the data analysis work and start the journey along the APDMO Roadmap (April - Sept 2009).
- To build on this work and complete the APDMO Roadmap (Oct 2009 – March 2010).
- To fund the full-time APDMO as a new, permanent Army function within the DM(A) organisation (business case initially presented in mid-2009 for implementation in April 2010).

The requirements have been addressed by the objectives in section 2. They go beyond the traditional requirements for governance, in that they include the need to manage the supply and demand for personnel information:

- Providing a centre of expertise which can advise its customers of where to go to find the data they need.
- Identifying potential sources of Army personnel information, including the various Management Information Centres and the APDMO itself.
- Creating data policies and providing guidance as to how the personnel system should be used (e.g. which of the various date fields in the main Personnel system should be used for Army data and which should be left blank).

The elements of the business case fell into a number of categories:

- Cost saving, by reducing the risk of either over-manning (the Army would have to find any necessary additional funding from internal resources) or under-manning (adverse impact on sustaining current operations, with requirement to use reserves).
- Cost saving by reducing the number of mobilised reserves.
- More effective operational manpower planning, identifying the strength of the Army by trade and through other cuts of the data.
- Cost saving by reducing the effort required in cleansing data errors.
- Improved clarity of responsibility for various key areas of data.
- Cost saving through better management of allowances thereby reducing overpayments.
- Reduced risk of harming the reputation of the Army by publishing late or inaccurate data, and / or by being seen as wasteful of public funds.

3.2 Business Participation

The Personnel Management process is divided into a number of distinct business processes, each of which has a Policy Process Owner and a Process Support within either Ministry of Defence (MoD) Main Building (Whitehall, London) or Headquarters Land Forces. There were ten business areas in all who held one or other of these roles, and each of these provided a senior member to the stakeholder group. Other members were representatives of each of the Management Information Cells (MICs) which provided reports and answered ad hoc queries for end users, and of the organisation which managed the main personnel system on behalf of all three services.

Each of these areas provided one representative to the stakeholder group, along with the senior stakeholder DM(A) himself.

For the ongoing business participation, see section 5 *People, Programme, Team and the Data Governance Roles*.

4. Data Governance Programme Structure

4.1 The Information Management Framework

The overall framework was based on a blueprint provided to the Army by Detica, and illustrated in Figure 2 below.

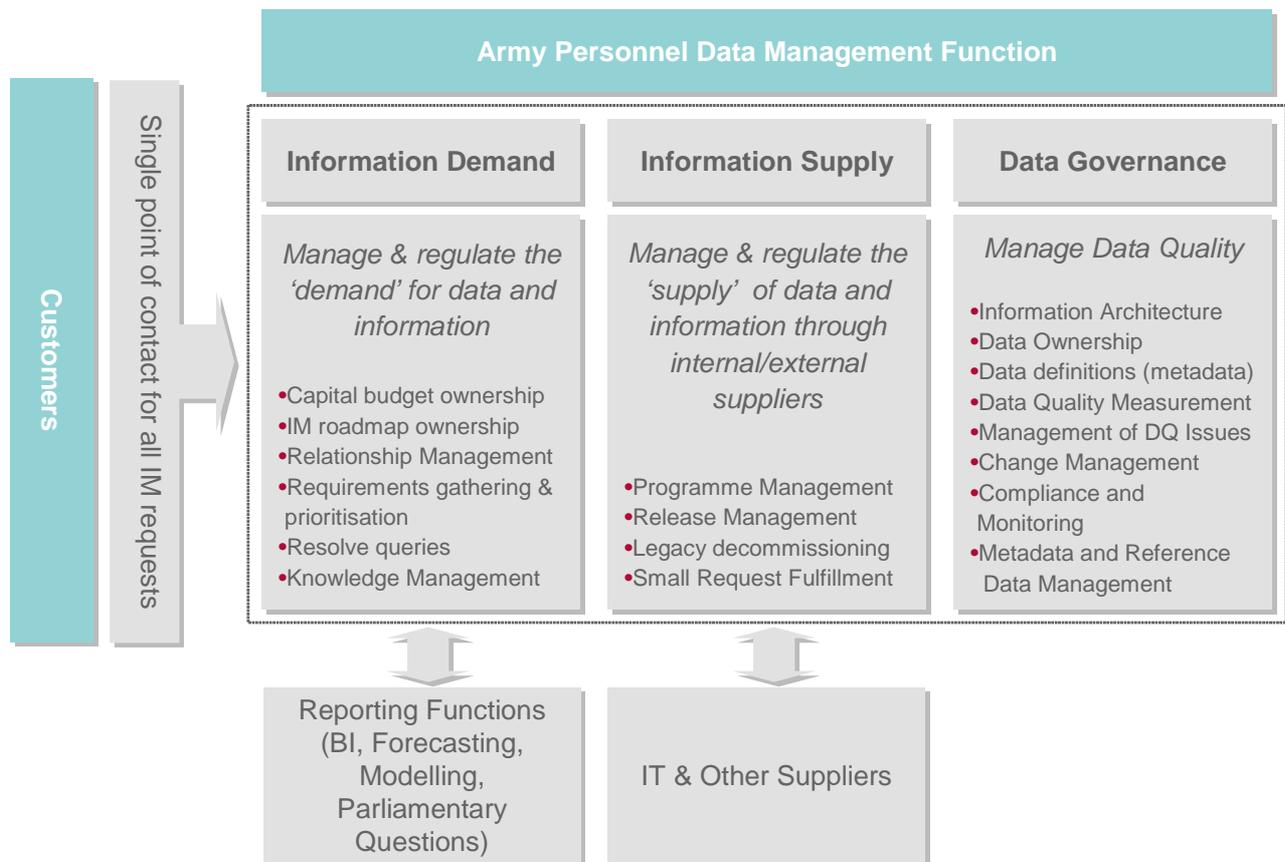


Figure 2. Detica's Information Management blueprint

Data Governance is one of three top-level functions of the APDMO, although it demands most of the manpower resources. The end-product physical organisation structure to which the new APDMO is being recruited is described in section 5 *People, Programme, Team and Data Governance Roles* based on the following general principles:

- The physical design should be based on the functional model produced by the stakeholders in the design workshops, with functions grouped into roles and roles into jobs according to the skills required and the budget available. This would be divided into 'Prevention' and 'Cure', where the former covers the management of demand and supply as well as the preventative aspects of data governance, while 'cure' would cover the data quality management function.
- The APDMO would have a full-time head, but strategic direction would be provided by the Assistant Director of Manpower Systems, an officer of Colonel rank reporting to DM(A) who was the prime mover in defining the scope of the overall APDMO initiative.
- DM(A) himself would have a hands-on role, planned at 10% of his time, as the individual with responsibility for Army personnel data assurance. He would chair the Data Champions Working Group and personally approve the overall strategy and major deliverables.

- Support, and all links to the stakeholder group, would be managed through the establishment of a Data Governance Community which is described in detail in section 5 *People, Programme, Team and Data Governance Roles*. Each member of the community would have a clear route in to a specific point of contact in the APDMO.
- The Head of the APDMO would maintain close contact with the senior stakeholder group, especially in the early days of the APDMO, to be aware of any difficulties arising with the operation of the APDMO and any resource imbalances, in order to act quickly and be seen to be responsive to stakeholder needs.

4.2 Software Tools

In addition to the database tools which are used to run queries and extracts on the underlying database, the tools currently in use fall into three categories:

- Data Quality Management, where we are using two proprietary Detica tools: DataServer which supports all the detailed analysis and DQInsight which is a data quality measurement and monitoring tool. A typical output from DQInsight is in Figure 3.
- Issues Management, where the Data Quality Issues Register tracks the delivery of issues from original capture through to fix and monitoring. This was implemented as an Access database in the initial phases of the programme, but will shortly be migrated to an Oracle solution.
- Reference Data, which is an interactive system managed centrally by the MoD on behalf of the three Services (Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force).

Further tools could be implemented in the future to cover requirements such as data dictionary, metadata and programme management for data quality fix initiatives.



Figure 3. Sample test data output from the Data Quality Scorecard

4.3 Supporting Information

Documents have already been produced to cover the following:

- All the roles within the Data Governance Community, the relationships between the roles, and RACI. A list of the current holders of each role is maintained within the APDMO.
- A detailed communication plan and schedule, including both 'information-based' and 'explanation-based' communication, has been developed and is being managed.
- The custodians of the central tri-service personnel system are understood to have a data dictionary and a logical data model, and the Detica team have access to the physical data model. An issue is logged on the Data Quality issues Register to turn these into user-friendly documents which will become part of the APDMO Library.
- The relationships between the central personnel system and local Army personnel systems has not been documented; again there is an issue on the Data Quality Issues Register to cover this. An inventory of all stores of personal data, wherever held throughout the Army, is being created by the business area responsible for monitoring compliance with the Data Protection Act, and an agreement is to be put in place between this team and the APDMO to ensure that the governance and data protection aspects are handled consistently.

Responsibility for all aspects of metadata will fall to the Knowledge Management function within the APDMO.

4.4 Data Quality Assurance

Any issues which require system development to resolve are prioritised with the tri-service owners of the system. However:

- Very few issues so far have required system changes; most can be resolved by more effective processes and clearer ownership.
- There is usually a short-term 'workaround' which plugs the gap until the system change is made.

4.5 Relationship with Ancillary Activities

All the main processes of the APDMO are documented in process maps, indicating the role of each of the members of the Data Governance Community. Key ancillary activities are:

- **Data Security.** The Army is subject to a formal and detailed regime of data security, both from a system perspective (managed by the Data Custodian and the Custody Team) and from a broader Information Assurance perspective (which is managed centrally by the Ministry of Defence). The APDMO, once fully established, may assume the role of assuring compliance with security policy as regards the use of personnel data by the business.
- **Data Protection.** This relates specifically to the management of 'personal data' as defined by UK law, covering matters such as its specific purposes, how long it is retained, and how it is processed. This is managed for the whole of the Army under a separate Directorate, but the APDMO will be working closely with this Directorate to identify and manage all the sources of personal data, and to identify how compliance with Data Protection legislation will be assured.
- **Business Intelligence.** A number of Management Information Cells (MICs) provide information on both a regular and ad hoc basis to end consumers who may include top-ranking officers and Government ministers. In addition, there are a number of teams involved in forecasting and modelling, some of which are within the same directorate as the APDMO. They rely on quality data to achieve their objectives, and each is represented by a member of the Data Champions team. Already they are finding that they are able to conduct analysis for which there have up to now been no reliable figures, and that the cleansing time for other sets of personnel data has been greatly reduced.
- **Programme and Project Management.** Once established, the APDMO will implement a policy whereby any project or programme which has an actual or potential impact on Army personnel data will need to be approved by the APDMO at the proposal stage, and monitored by the APDMO through design and development. The APDMO will have the power to 'pull the plug' on any such initiative which does not comply with APDMO requirements.
- **Master Data Management.** The MoD at a central level is implementing a tri-service data dictionary and reference data system, and the APDMO is working with them as front-runners to populate these tools with Army personnel attributes. Master data from an Army Personnel point of view will be managed by the APDMO within the existing system to ensure that there is a 'single version of the truth' – which is one of the key principles of data management which underpins the role of the APDMO.

5. People, Programme, Team and the Data Governance Roles

5.1 Data Governance Roles

The overall community is illustrated in Figure 5. Note that, with the exception of the APDMO itself, all the roles represent either formalisation of existing tasks or additional responsibilities allocated to existing roles.

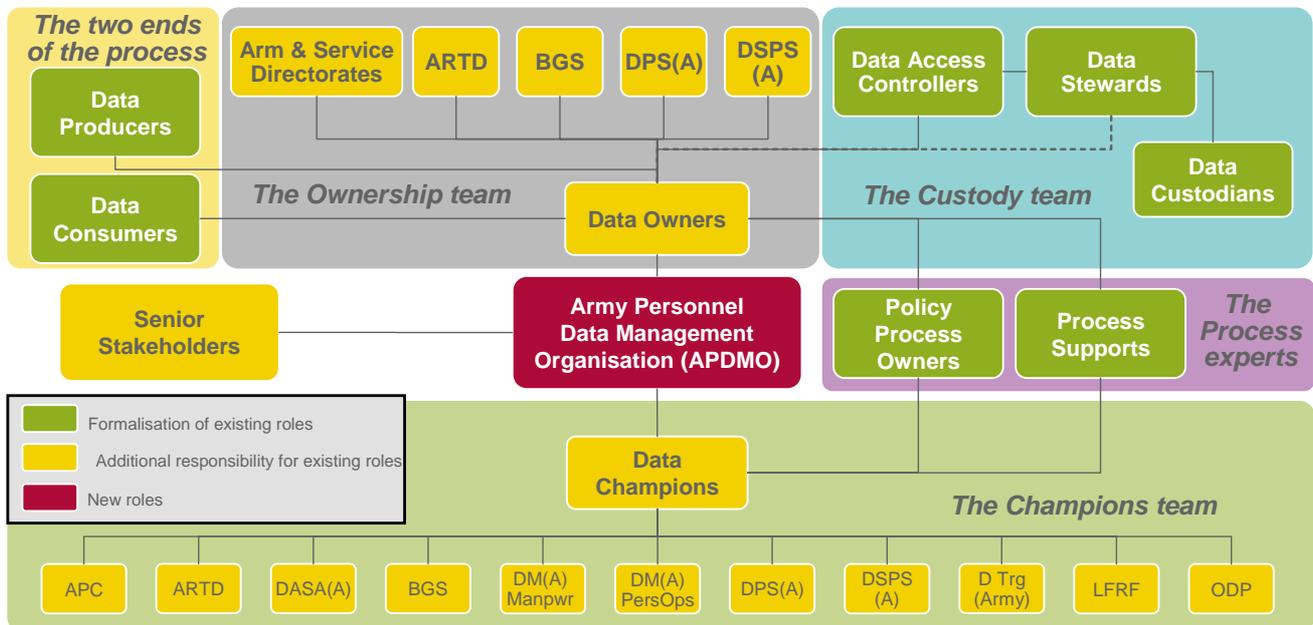


Figure 5. The Data Governance Community

The **two ends of the process** are just that, but their roles in the governance community are vital: *producers* are responsible for most of the data quality but not accountable, while consumers fall into two groups: the *analysts*, usually members of the MICs, who take the information from the system, cleanse it where necessary, and then get the blame from the *end consumers* (who might be senior MoD staff or Government ministers) when it is not right.

The first two categories above have required no real change, as the individuals concerned are already Data Champions and were happy to take on the dual role. For the Arm & Service Directorates, the 'invitation' to take on the role of Data Owner will be issued early in 2010 and is not something they will be expected to decline.

There will be between 20 and 25 Data Owners in the initial implementation.

The **custody team** represents no change to the previous mode of operation (which is why, as the term 'data steward' already has a clear meaning within the Army, we could not use this for one of the other roles). The Data Access Controller is the gatekeeper to the data, deciding what level of access should be provided to users; the Data Steward maintains this 'gate' on behalf of the Data Access Controller by physically controlling the access and maintaining a register of approved users; and the Data Custodian is the organisation that maintains the personnel systems on behalf of the Army and, in the case of the main personnel system, on behalf of all three Services. There is one of each of these roles for the central personnel system. There are another three linked systems which can be expected to come within an expanded scope for the APDMO during 2010-11, and these will each have a Custodian, a Steward and an Access Controller.

The **process experts** are the Policy Process Owner who is responsible for the overall policy for each of the 17 officially-documented personnel processes, and the Process Support is responsible for the delivery of the process. Many of these processes are the responsibility of more than one business area, so in total there are just six Policy Process Owners and just eight Process Supports – and one or more of each of these roles is fulfilled by one of the eleven Data Champions.

5.2 Marketing and Promotion of the Data Governance Programme

There are two main objectives of marketing and promoting the Data Governance programme:

- So that all users and suppliers of Army personnel data are aware of the existence of the APDMO and how it can help them, to ensure that they come to the central point for all information needs and receive a consistent response, and so that they do not go off and ‘reinvent the wheel’ or seek to use uncontrolled data.
- To support the requirement that the APDMO be seen as a model for the expansion of Data Management services across the Army as a whole.

Regular briefings are held of senior Army officers, particularly the Adjutant-General and the Director-General of Personnel, so that they are aware of how their money is being spent and so that they can spread the word of APDMO success across the Army and elsewhere in the MoD.

A Communications Strategy was included as part of the original roadmap for the APDMO, and this has now been turned into an active plan for both ad hoc ‘explanational’ communication (why do we need an APDMO and what’s it going to do?) and ongoing ‘informational’ communication (what the APDMO is doing and how it is performing). These have been addressed so far in three ways:-

- ‘Explanational’: presentations to various Army business units on how the APDMO came to be, what its functions are, the timeline for implementation, and ‘what’s in it for me’.
- ‘Informational’: a regular, monthly series of reports: a Data Quality Scorecard showing the results of the various DQ monitoring activities; the DQ Issues Register showing the latest status of all issues; and a high-level Data Management Scorecard summarising the APDMO’s achievements on monitoring, issues management, service development, and highlighting the milestones achieved (or missed) during the month.
- Both: a web site which covers all the above: starting with the background to the APDMO, including the main presentations delivered to stakeholders, and the latest Data Quality and Data Management Scorecards.

Furthermore, the results have been discussed at the highest levels on more than one occasion: this year data featured as part of the Chief of the General Staff’s Conference, which is the Army’s annual strategic conference of all available Generals.

5.3 Attracting New Members to the Data Governance Community

An initial set of induction material was produced at the end of 2009 to welcome the first permanent member of APDMO staff. This is currently being enhanced to support

the remainder of the permanent members as they come on board over the second and third quarters of 2010. So far there has only been one change to the community – a new Data Champion who replaced one who was moving to another role; this individual was introduced at a Data Champions Working Group and was therefore thrown in at the deep end! At that meeting we arranged a one-on-one induction session, supported by early versions of the induction material, and this will be enhanced along with the induction pack for the APDMO staff. We expect new members to be contacted one-on-one either by the Head of the APDMO, the Data Governance Manager or the Data Quality Manager.

6. Measurements Programme and Success Stories

6.1 Performance Measures

In the short term, the fledgling APDMO is required to produce another key deliverable: to enable DM(A), by June 2010, to say to his sponsors that “Army personnel data is now fit for purpose”. This has to be qualified because such a task is an ongoing one, but has been rationalised to a series of five projects which, if they deliver their objectives, will enable DM(A) to claim that all the *key* Army personnel data is now fit for purpose.

6.2 Tactical Fixes

A particular feature of the way the Army has implemented Data Governance is that it did not wait for the governance programme to be implemented before kicking off the DQ Management process. Even before the role of the Data Champion had been identified, a number of key individuals with a passion (and a vested interest) in data quality were identified; a small group of high-priority DQ issues was agreed; extracts were taken, business rules developed, analysis undertaken and DQ monitoring introduced. The risk of doing this is that the initial team might have to be unwound when the formal structure is agreed; however Detica were confident that:

- Whatever the outcome of the APDMO design process, there would be a DQ management process and we knew what form it would take.
- The individuals we had identified would end up being Data Champions.

The one obstacle we had to overcome in doing it this way was the thought that “if we can fix our most important issues by doing it like this, why do we need a governance programme and an APDMO?” We worked hard to ensure that people understood why this was only a tactical solution and that the underlying problems had to be resolved if any permanent improvement in data quality were to be realised.

6.3 A High-Profile Quick Win

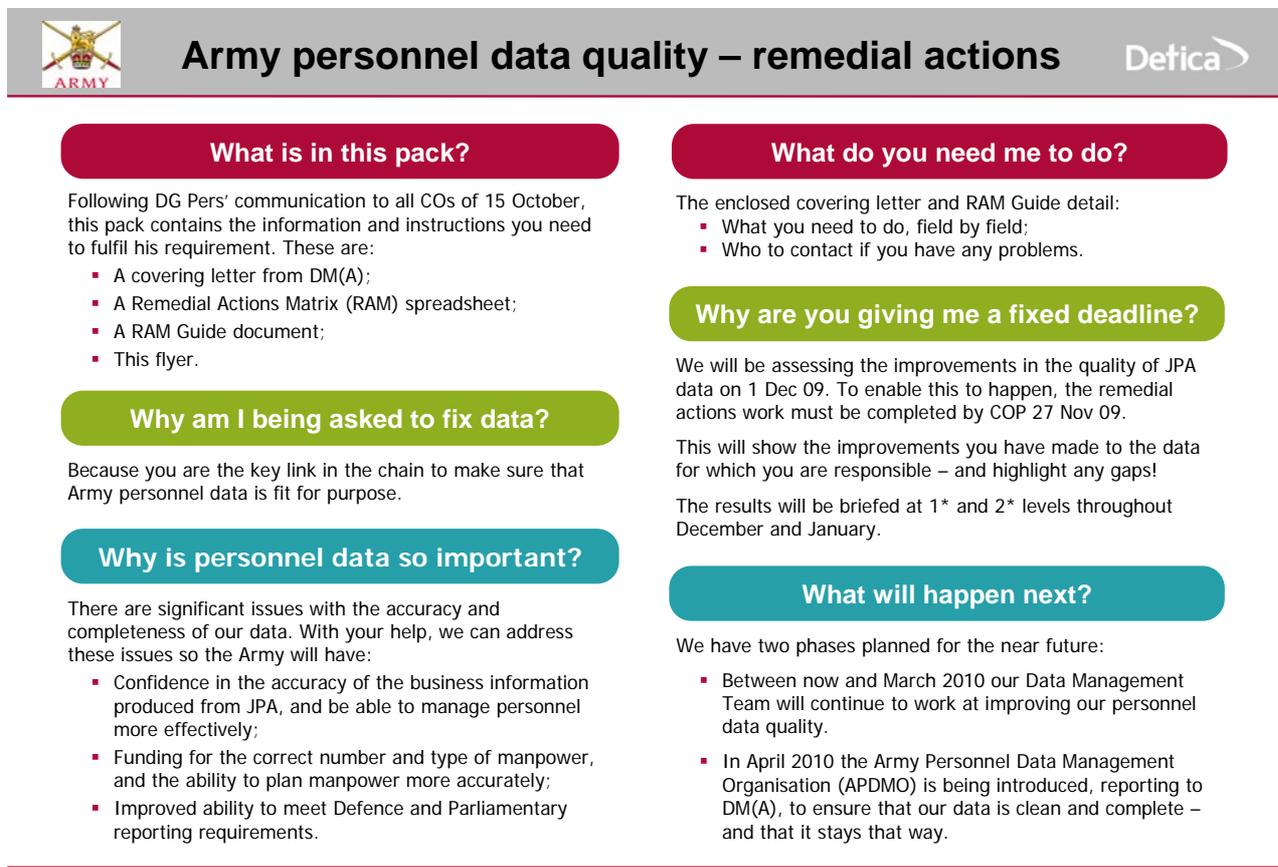
We soon recognised that many of the data problems were caused, not by errors in the system, but by lack of ownership and understanding of the importance of personnel

data. Once the initial business rules had been developed and the scale of the problem identified, we put into place a 'Remedial Actions Programme' which involved:

- Running the Data Quality Scorecard across all regular soldiers and reserves.
- Re-sorting the data errors by individual soldier rather than individual issue – thereby producing one data record for every soldier who had at least one data error.
- Drafting a full set of procedures which could be understood by all the unit administrators – the people who were being asked to take action on the errors.
- Setting up all the permissions in the personnel system so that the right people could update the right fields.
- Cleansing the data on unit names, email addresses and locations – so that the right spreadsheets went out to the right individuals.
- Communicating to all those involved what was going to happen, why, and what was expected of them.
- Sending out packs to every unit in the British army – and waiting for them to take action.
- Preparing the downloads so that the (we hoped!) improvements could be tracked through the APDMO monitoring process.

We were originally planning to omit any unit that was deployed on operational service – but the interest and visibility gained by the exercise was so great that we had requests from these units – Afghanistan included – to take part in the exercise.

The flyer that went out with the data packs is shown as Figure 7.



The flyer is titled "Army personnel data quality – remedial actions" and features the Army crest and the Detica logo. It is organized into several sections with colored headers: "What is in this pack?" (red), "What do you need me to do?" (red), "Why are you giving me a fixed deadline?" (green), "Why am I being asked to fix data?" (green), "Why is personnel data so important?" (teal), and "What will happen next?" (teal). Each section contains specific information about the remedial actions program, including a list of items in the pack, a list of actions required, a fixed deadline of COP 27 Nov 09, and details about the assessment and future phases.

What is in this pack?

Following DG Pers' communication to all COs of 15 October, this pack contains the information and instructions you need to fulfil his requirement. These are:

- A covering letter from DM(A);
- A Remedial Actions Matrix (RAM) spreadsheet;
- A RAM Guide document;
- This flyer.

What do you need me to do?

The enclosed covering letter and RAM Guide detail:

- What you need to do, field by field;
- Who to contact if you have any problems.

Why are you giving me a fixed deadline?

We will be assessing the improvements in the quality of JPA data on 1 Dec 09. To enable this to happen, the remedial actions work must be completed by COP 27 Nov 09.

This will show the improvements you have made to the data for which you are responsible – and highlight any gaps!

The results will be briefed at 1* and 2* levels throughout December and January.

Why am I being asked to fix data?

Because you are the key link in the chain to make sure that Army personnel data is fit for purpose.

Why is personnel data so important?

There are significant issues with the accuracy and completeness of our data. With your help, we can address these issues so the Army will have:

- Confidence in the accuracy of the business information produced from JPA, and be able to manage personnel more effectively;
- Funding for the correct number and type of manpower, and the ability to plan manpower more accurately;
- Improved ability to meet Defence and Parliamentary reporting requirements.

What will happen next?

We have two phases planned for the near future:

- Between now and March 2010 our Data Management Team will continue to work at improving our personnel data quality.
- In April 2010 the Army Personnel Data Management Organisation (APDMO) is being introduced, reporting to DM(A), to ensure that our data is clean and complete – and that it stays that way.

Figure 7. The flyer from the Remedial Actions Programme

6.4 Results

Although the APDMO is not yet in place, we can point to the following successes:

- Over half the DQ issues which had been raised by September 2009 had been resolved or closed by year-end.
- The number of recognised data errors in the Remedial Actions Programme had been reduced by *more than half*.
- The time spent by one of the MICs in cleansing data had also been reduced by *more than half*, meaning that they could now deliver their monthly statistics over a week earlier.
- A manpower forecasting model is being commissioned. Until now this model could not have been contemplated as the data was too unreliable.

The successes of the Data Management work achieved so far, and the forthcoming APDMO, have achieved visibility at the highest levels in the Army; evidence for this being that funding has been made available in an environment when every budget is being squeezed to the limit. Furthermore, the Programme Manager from the in-house team has been awarded the Adjutant General's Commendation, a significant award just below national-level honours such as the MBE.

Efforts are now focused on delivering the results which will enable the Director of Manning to confirm that all the key elements of Army personnel data are now fit for the purposes for which the sponsors need them.

6.5 Summary

The Army has come a significant distance in the last 12-15 months. From an environment where 'Data' was not even recognised as an issue, and where JPA was considered an inconvenient and unwieldy process, to the current state of data understanding has been a major achievement. With the setting up of the APDMO, cleansing a majority of the data, a governance structure that is supported and understood, and the tracking of data quality both in terms of data accuracy and data process, the ability to achieve a satisfactory level of accuracy by June 2010 is possible. Further, and as a true mark of the success of this enterprise, the Army is now finding errors in its own non-data systems and processes, as a result of the data being accurate, rather than a simplistic acceptance that 'the data must be wrong'. From this will come a greater rigour of all our systems related to manpower and personnel as well as a trust forged by accurate data.

Brigadier R E Nugee MBE, Director of Manning (Army)

Chris Saunders (Detica)

January 2010