



National Offender Management Service

Data gateway service Approval of data collections

This instruction applies to:-		Reference:-
Prisons Providers of Probation Services NOMS HQ		PSI 21/2014 PI 16/2014 AI 16/2014
Issue Date	Effective Date	Expiry Date
1 May 2014	1 May 2014	1 June 2018
Issued on the authority of	NOMS Agency Board	
For action by (Who is this Instruction for)	<p>All staff responsible for the collection of data from prisons and probation services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOMS HQ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Sector Prisons <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contracted Prisons* <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Probation Service (NPS) Directorate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heads of Groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Providers of Probation Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOMS Rehabilitation Contract Services Team <p><i>* If this box is marked, then in this document the term Governor also applies to Directors of Contracted Prisons</i></p>	
Instruction type	Service Improvement	
For information	All staff in NOMS HQ, prisons establishments, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies.	
Provide a summary of the policy aim and the reason for its development / revision	<p>The Data Gateway Service aims to reduce the burden of data collection from prisons and probation services by ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection serves business needs • Collection of information is not duplicated • There is one definitive data set: 'One Version of the Truth' • Data is collected efficiently and effectively • Data is extracted from operational systems wherever possible • Data collections maintain high standards of data quality and security 	
Contact	Steve Ellerd-Elliott, Planning and Analysis Group Steve.Ellerd-Elliott@noms.gsi.gov.uk 0300 047 6286 DataGateway@noms.gsi.gov.uk	
Associated documents	None	

Replaces the following documents which are hereby cancelled : PSI 59/2010 – Data

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Audit/monitoring: The Director of NPS in England, Director of NOMS in Wales and NOMS Director of Rehabilitation Services for CRCs will monitor compliance with the mandatory requirements in this instruction.

NOMS contract management will hold providers to account for delivery of mandated instructions as required in the contract.

NOMS Deputy Directors of Custody and Controllers, will monitor compliance with the mandatory actions set out in this Instruction.

Introduces amendments to the following documents: None

Notes: *All Mandatory Actions throughout this instruction are in italics and must be strictly adhered to.*

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Section	Subject	Applicable/For Reference to
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1. Executive Summary

Background

- 1.1 This Instruction introduces updated arrangements to regulate the collection of data across NOMS where there is a resource impact on staff in order to collect the data.
- 1.2 This is a revision of PSI 59/2010 – Data Gateway Service Approval of Data Collections, to reflect changes in responsibilities within the NOMS business model following the restructure, notably:
 - Increased scope of the Gateway to cover all non-operational collections;
 - Change in process to reflect the role of the Planning and Analysis Group.
- 1.3 The Planning and Analysis Group are now the centralised analytical and business planning function within NOMS; providing analysis and statistics back to other business directorates and teams, and supporting business and strategic planning. The group has responsibility for collecting, processing and analysing all NOMS non-operational data collections.
- 1.4 The underlying principles of the Data Gateway remain the same. The Data Gateway covers both routine and one-off data collections. Data Gateway approval is in addition to approval by the Research Applications and Ethics Panel. The Data Gateway does not cover data collection in respect of an individual member of staff or an offender.

Desired outcomes

- 1.5 The Data Gateway Service aims to reduce the burden of data collection from prisons and probation services by ensuring that:
 - Data collection serves business needs;
 - Collection of information is not duplicated;
 - There is one definitive data set: 'One Version of the Truth'
 - Data is collected efficiently and effectively;
 - Data is extracted from operational systems wherever possible; and
 - Data collections maintain high standards of data quality and security.

Application

- 1.6 Chapter 2 explains how to identify approved data collections and explains how to report unapproved collections to the Data Gateway Manager. *All staff must be familiar with this chapter.*
- 1.7 Chapter 3 sets out the processes to be followed by those planning a new data collection or changes to an existing data collection. Only those responsible for collecting data are required to read and follow this chapter.

Mandatory actions

All staff involved in data collection must be familiar with Chapter 2 of this instruction and understand the distinction between approved and unapproved data collections and how to identify whether a data collection has been approved. Governors, National Probation Service Deputy Directors and Community Rehabilitation Companies Chief Executives must ensure that all staff completing data returns are made aware of this instruction.

- 1.8 *Prison, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies staff receiving a request for a **new** data collection or change to an existing data collection without Data Gateway approval must report the details to the Data Gateway Manager (DataGateway@noms.qsi.gov.uk).*
- 1.9 *Deputy Directors, Heads of Group, Deputy Directors of Custody, National Probation Service Deputy Directors, NOMS Contract Managers and Community Rehabilitation Companies Chief Executives must make sure that all new data collections, or changes to existing collections, that have an impact on staff are approved by the Data Gateway Service before implementation.*

Resource Impact

- 1.10 The Data Gateway Service is intended to reduce the overall burden of data collection for both data requestors and data providers. The investment of time and resources in the approval process is designed to be repaid over the longer term. For example, the Data Gateway Service will identify duplicate or overlapping collections and advise where data is available from operational systems. The Data Gateway Service can also advise on the use of established management information systems such as the NOMS Hub.

(Approved for Publication)

Andrew Emmett
Director of Finance and Analysis, NOMS

2. Approved Collections

- 2.1 *All staff must familiarise themselves with this chapter to ensure that they understand the distinction between approved and unapproved data collections and how to identify whether a data collection has been approved.*
- 2.2 *Prison, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies staff receiving a request for a **new** data collection or change to an existing data collection without Data Gateway approval must report the details to the Data Gateway Manager (DataGateway@noms.qsi.gov.uk).*

Data Collections

- 2.3 Data Gateway approval is required for new data collections, and any changes to existing data collections, which are collected as returns outside of operational systems. This includes:
- Financial information;
 - Performance information;
 - Short-term and one-off requests;
 - Electronic, telephone and paper returns; and
 - Information for responses to Parliamentary Questions.
- 2.4 The Planning and Analysis Group are the centralised analytical and business planning function within NOMS providing analysis and statistics back to other business directorates and teams, and supporting business and strategic planning. The group has responsibility for collecting, processing and analysing all NOMS non-operational data collections.
- 2.5 A NOMS non-operational data collection is any collection outside of the NOMS centralised operation and case management systems: this would include any data collection, routine or one-off, which is gathering information, either quantitative or qualitative, for any purpose other than delivering a service.
- 2.6 Requests for the collection of data could come from any group including :
- Central NOMS business teams;
 - Deputy Director of Custody or Probation; and
 - Outside NOMS e.g. other Government departments or public sector agencies, subject to the appropriate data sharing arrangements being in place.
- 2.7 The Data Gateway covers both routine and one-off data collections. For example, quantitative data on the current operational capacity of an establishment is within the scope of the Data Gateway; as is a qualitative collection of views as to how to maximise efficient use of beds. For research collections, Data Gateway approval is in addition to approval by the Research Applications and Ethics Panel. The Data Gateway does not cover requests for specific data about an individual member of staff or an offender.
- 2.8 To ensure that the day-to-day safe running of prisons and probation is not impeded by delaying urgent data collections, there is a **Fast Track Process**. This process is designed for use in exceptional circumstances and the Data Gateway should be alerted as soon as a requirement for an urgent data collection is known.
- 2.9 Certain instances where there are established processes for managing data requests, such as FOI Requests and Subject Access requests, are exempt from the Data Gateway. Please

contact the Data Gateway Manager (DataGateway@noms.gsi.gov.uk) if you are unsure whether a collection requires approval.

Approved Collections

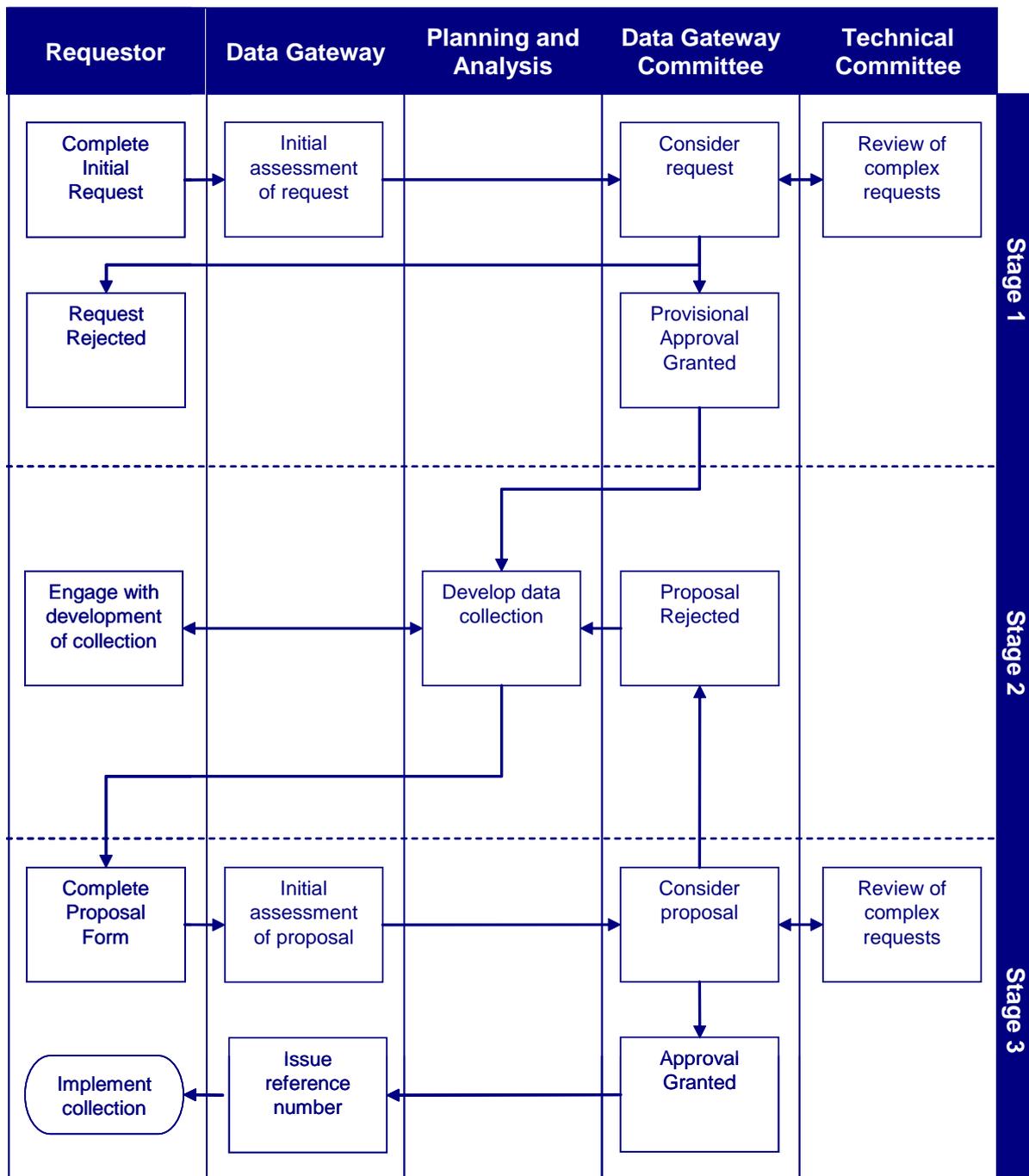
- 2.10 The Data Gateway Manager assigns a unique Data Gateway Reference Number to each approved data collection.
- 2.11 *Prison, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies staff are not obliged to complete any new data collection that does not have a Data Gateway Reference Number. The Data Gateway Manager must be contacted (DataGateway@noms.gsi.gov.uk) if a new or changed data request does not comply with the above criteria.*
- 2.12 A list of current collections approved by the Data Gateway Committee can be found in the Data Catalogue on the NOMS Hub (<https://pmu.hub.uk.com>) or through the Data and Statistics Unit page on the [NOMS Intranet](#).

3. Data Gateway Service

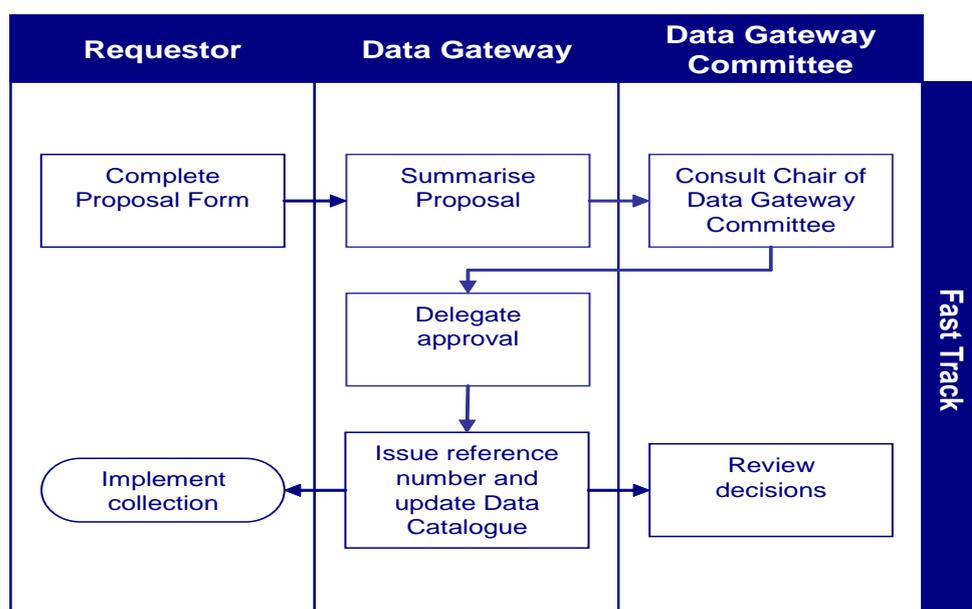
3.1 Deputy directors, Heads of Group, Deputy Directors of Custody, National Probation Service Deputy Directors, NOMS Contract Managers and Community Rehabilitation Companies Chief Executives must make sure that all new data collections, or changes to existing collections, are directed to the Data Gateway Service at the earliest opportunity and always before implementation.

Gaining Approval

3.2 The standard process is set out below:



- 3.3 *Anyone considering a new collection or changing an existing collection must complete and return an Initial Request Form to the Data Gateway Service as soon as the need for a data collection is identified. This form can be found on the NOMS Hub (<https://pmu.hub.uk.com>) or through the Data and Statistics Unit page on the [NOMS Intranet](#). The Data Gateway Manager will inform the requestor if the collection is required to go through the Data Gateway process.*
- 3.4 *If the collection is required to go through the Data Gateway process then the Data Gateway Manager will work with the Requestors to:*
- *check that the data is not available from operational systems;*
 - *check that the data is not already collected e.g. by reviewing the Data Catalogue;*
 - *consider whether the need could be met by alternative proxy measures;*
 - *ensure that the request is supported by a member of the Senior Civil Service;*
 - *ensure that the data collection is resourced and funded; and*
 - *seek provisional approval from the Data Gateway Committee.*
- 3.5 *If the collection receives this provisional approval then the Data Gateway will link up with analysts in the Planning and Analysis Group who will then work with the Requestors to:*
- *develop a data collection system with appropriate quality assurance;*
 - *undertake testing and pilot of the collection;*
 - *develop the associated reporting; and*
 - *complete a proposal template for consideration by the Data Gateway Committee.*
- 3.6 Timescales for the Data Gateway process will vary depending on the complexity of the data collection and so these will be discussed and agreed with the Requestor once the provisional approval has been granted.
- 3.7 The Data Gateway does operate a Fast Track process, for use in exceptional circumstances where there is an urgent need for a one-off data collection, allowing these to be given delegated approval by the Chair of the Data Gateway Committee. There are no fixed timescales for this process – reflecting that the Data Gateway process can be adapted to meet urgent requests.



Expiry and re-approval

- 3.8 Once approved, data collections are issued with an Approval Expiry Date - two years for ongoing collections and six months for one off collections. After this date, sponsors are contacted by the Data Gateway and required to submit a new proposal. This ensures that there is a continuing business need to collect the information.