

OFE PRELIMINARY RESPONSE TO UK GOVERNMENT OPEN STANDARDS CONSULTATION

HIGHLIGHTS KEY WORDS

CHAPTER 1 CRITERIA FOR OPEN STANDARDS

Open Standards -

Q1.1. How does this definition of open standard compare to your view of what makes a standard 'open'?

Key criteria

- 1). Transparency
Openness in development and maintenance
Openness in use
- 2). Multi-supplier interoperability
- 3). Complete and testable
- 4). Implemented by UK Government

Q1.2. What will the Government be inhibited from doing if this definition of open standards is adopted for software interoperability, data and document formats across central government?

- 1) Full, unencumbered use will enable an upsurge in innovation
- 2) Enables development of components
- 3) Integration of smart multi-featured systems
- 4) Increase the overall market for all types of software in a mixed software environment

Q1.3. For businesses attempting to break into the government IT market, would this policy make things easier or more difficult – does it help to level the playing field?

- 1) Enables unrestricted use by all
- 2) Open government infrastructures and architectures lower the entry cost for competitive products
- 3) Restricts vendor lock-in
- 4) Simplifies market access for SMEs

Q1.4. How would mandating open standards for use in government IT for software interoperability, data and document formats affect your organisation?

- 1) Suggest describe the impact on your organisation.

Q1.5. What effect would this policy have on improving value for money in the provision of government services?

- 1) More freedom and higher competition improves choice, stimulates innovation and lowers total cost as in any competitive environment.
- 2) Widest possible range of software suppliers
- 3) Minimise impact on 3rd Party users such as the public
- 4) Exit and transition costs minimised

Q1.6. Would this policy support innovation, competition and choice in delivery of government

services?

- 1) Benefit realised externally to the standard
- 2) Dominant factors external to IT
- 3) Wider debate needed on the delivery of public services.

Q1.7. In what way do software copyright licences and standards patent licences interact to support or prevent interoperability?

- 1) Software licenses must be free of cost and non assertable
- 2) No exceptions

Q1.8. How could adopting (Fair) Reasonable and Non Discriminatory ((F)RAND) standards deliver a level playing field for open source and proprietary software solution providers?

- 1) Open Source Community needs royalty free and non discriminatory/not assertable standard.
- 2) Implementations need to be free and open to inspection
- 3) An agreed generic of FRAND is essential

Q1.9. Does selecting open standards which are compatible with a free or open source software licence exclude certain suppliers or products?

- 1) By definition no.

Q1.10. Does a promise of non-assertion of a patent when used in open source software alleviate concerns relating to patents and royalty charging?

- 1) Nobody is excluded by Open Standards but lock-in is severely restricted.
- 2) Non-Assertion is to be widely encouraged

Q1.11. Should a different rationale be applied when purchasing off-the-shelf software solutions than is applied when purchasing bespoke solutions?

- 1) Current lock-in results from the inability to interoperate between COTS and wider integrated solutions.

Q1.12. In terms of standards for software interoperability, data and document formats, is there a need for the Government to engage with or provide funding for specific committees/bodies?

The importance of the Government's role cannot be overstressed

A strong compliance regime with teeth will be essential for success.

Q1.13. Are there any other policy options which would meet the described outcomes more effectively?

No answer at this stage