



Final Mile Optimisation (FMO) Joint Launch Communications



Background

The FMO project has reached the end of its Phase 1 development and is now ready for launch. Progress has been monitored between Royal Mail and the CWU through the Delivery Systems Working Group as agreed in section 19.3 of the National Guiding Principles Agreement. This communication summarises the system capability, engagement to date and steps to go live.

What is Final Mile Optimisation

FMO is a necessary technical refresh of the outdoor route planning systems for Delivery and Collections which are over 10 years old and reaching end of life.

New software and technology means that the new systems can:

- Simplify and improve current processes
- Take advantage of new data products e.g. road speed, terrain, maps, NYB
- Reduce the maintenance task for local units
- Enhance the verification processes
- Complete revisions faster with a quicker start-up phase
- Build in manual interventions automatically
- Use latest agreed outdoor values
- Achieve greater accuracy with high confidence in outputs

This refresh forms part of Royal Mail's Digital Transformation Strategy. It will help to better maintain accurate routing data ensuring fair and balanced workload for all, plan and execute change faster by automating many of the tasks that previously relied on manual input or intervention and supports the development of new products and services to customers such as Consumer Collections and Inflight Redirections.

FMO will be deployed in 2 releases as follows:

Release 1 goes live on a staged basis from w.c. 29th July 2019 and will include:

- Pegasus A-Plus and Road Network Maintenance applications replaced with a new Route Manager application for Delivery
- Georoute 2008 replaced with Georoute 2017 for Delivery
- Updated data products and automatic refresh cycle through trusted 3rd party sources

Release 2 will go live at a later date following completion of a design, build, test phase:

- Adjusted should take time to reflect forecast traffic
- Seasonal route planning capability
- Georoute 2017 and Route Manager for Collections

Royal Mail and CWU can now confirm that Release 1 is ready to go live from 29th July.

Planning for Release 2 will commence shortly with joint discussions taking place through the Delivery Systems Group continuing on the new capabilities associated with it. Both parties understand this development is likely to be deployed in late 2020 and as such have agreed these discussions will also take place parallel to the New Delivery Agreement outlined in section 19.3 Guiding Principles Agreement.

Current Status

The current status of the programme means that GeoRoute will be upgraded for Deliveries and will use the latest outdoor values taken from the nationally agreed exercise for the observation studies that took place in 2017. The current A-Plus and Road Network Maintenance systems will be combined into a new system called Route Manager, and large amounts of data will be automated in the new systems. Delivery will transition from the Pegasus platform onto Route Manager. The move to current technology will also assist with integration with other platforms which are also subject to further discussions between Royal Mail & CWU.

Training

Preparation has been underway for some time with a large-scale training programme upskilling over 3500 members of staff including Collections and Delivery Managers, Revision Planners, Aplus Champions and CWU reps. The training has targeted GeoRoute and/or A-Plus users to ensure they are re-skilled in the system enhancements for the applications that they use. The training programme will complete shortly.

The CWU have had two nominees trained in Georouteto support the Outdoor Department.

Every delivery office was asked to nominate a Champion for the Route Manager training (typically the current Aplus support). Unit Managers, Cover Managers and Delivery Line Managers have also received overview training in Route Manager.

The key focus in the next 3 weeks is to ensure any outstanding training is completed. Each Delivery Office will be reviewed to ensure the nominated Champion has been trained and it is essential those nominees not trained are highlighted to line managers as they will be prioritised for training, with those who have been unable to attend previously. There will also be refresher training via Skype calls beginning of August for those trained earlier in the year.

System Testing

An extensive 8-month programme of technical testing has been undertaken on all aspects of functionality. This has involved reviewing all functions and physically testing them within the system, a task performed by people from within and outside the Business to ensure a consistent outcome was achieved. In parallel a data cleanse exercise has been undertaken to minimise the number of system notifications to offices at go live.

Proof of Concept

The project team has also completed a number of system demonstrations known as Proof of Concept across 17 Delivery units. This involved working with a number of units to assure key stakeholders and CWU Reps that the functionality in the system will perform as it's been designed, and will deliver the system requirements as outlined above. These demonstrations were supported by the Local, Area and National CWU team as well as the local operations teams. This covered both the Route Manager (data maintenance system replacing Aplus and Road Network Maintenance), Outdoor planning value impacts, Manual Intervention Tool (MIT) and Georoute updates. From these sessions the feedback, concerns and bugs were captured and have formed a report on behalf of both parties, in addition this has helped for a FAQs document to be produced to assist users.

Next Steps / Notifications

A technical cutover of the Aplus system has now been completed. This means that units are unable to make changes to the underlying data until the new system goes live on a staged basis from w.c. 29th July. To manage the initial load on system resources a managed ramp up will be planned. Preceding go live further communications will be shared advising units when they can access the new system.

A key aspect of the new system is the notifications function which advises Champions and Unit Managers of any changes in Route Manager either for information or review and action. Units should expect an initial peak of notifications in the immediate period after going live. Managers will need to review the level of items to action, agree a plan to clear these down and schedule sufficient time for their Champions to complete these and this needs to be considered at future weekly resource meetings. It is important to note that Route Manager changes will not impact on workload at route level in release 1, it is purely an administrative task.


Support

Once the training is complete, and the systems are turned on, there will be support from Project deployment leads. Their role will be to work with Champions on Route Manager notifications and so support any units undertaking a revision with the new tools to complete data cleanse activity.

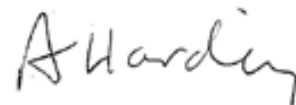
In addition to the updates above we are jointly launching the SAP JAM support software application for Route Manager champions to use to communicate during the rollout of FMO. This will act as a shared community to raise queries and view mini-videos as prompts (training aids). This will also allow Champions to provide a quick and easy avenue to raise questions and get a timely response back and feedback from this process will be shared with the CWU at the Delivery Systems Working Group.

Post Go Live Review

Both Royal Mail and CWU are keen to understand how the new systems support both business as usual and revision activity in the future. Further National discussions regarding the delivery revision programme along with a joint agreed revised revision process to support revision activity are continuing and further joint communications will be issued in due course.



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