

A request was received on 27 March 2006 asking for the cost of the Home Office's correspondence tracking system and the identity of the consultancy firm involved.

Implementation Costs

Main Home Office Project	£640,000
2003 adaptations	£17,000
Management Information Module	£85,000
Temporary Immigration solution	£18,000
Development of an on-line training package	£41,000
Immigration Ministerial Correspondence Project	£750,000
Freedom of Information Compliance	£400,000
2005 adaptations	£295,000
Total	£2,246,000

On-going Costs (per annum)

Licences for 2,273 users @£11 per month	£300,000
Unitary charge	£576,000
Total per annum	£876,000

The Correspondence Tracking System was developed by Sirius the Home Office's IT suppliers who are part of Fujitsu. They were selected as the provider following a formal tendering process.

The Correspondence Tracking System was introduced in April 2003 to monitor and track the progress of correspondence from MPs and Peers (excluded immigration correspondence). In July 2003 it was extended to cover letters from the public and e-mails were tracked on the system from December that year. Correspondence from MPs on immigration matters were introduced onto the system in a phased manner and this process was completed by 1 October 2004. The system was subsequently adapted to monitor cases that fell under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In 2005 over 78,000 items of correspondence were tracked on the system. The system is expected to remain operational until 2011. When the system was introduced the department's performance in replying to correspondence was poor for example just 36% of MP's correspondence was replied to within target and the department now replies to over 90% of correspondence within target. Further we are able to quickly access the correspondence received and replies sent so are better able to respond to queries and produce reports which provide information on what concerns are being raised by the department. The system has resulted in genuine efficiency savings across the department.