A 6000% rate of return: the UK Government's answer to improving Programme Delivery

Simon Eccles, Dr
Department of Health
United Kingdom

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Dr. Simon Eccles, SRO for NHSmail

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What were the improvements?

The Major Projects Authority (MPA)

The MPA – Overview

Background: An estimated two thirds of Government projects failed pre 2010; projects were not delivering the expected quality, within timeframes and budget plans.

Purpose: To transform the implementation of Government policy through world-class delivery of Major Projects

Prime Minister's Mandate (January 2011):

-Power to establish the Government's Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP)

- Delivery of an integrated assurance and approvals regime working in partnership with HM Treasury

- Power of intervention

- Transparency and reporting

The Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA)

The MPLA - Enabling Major Project Leaders to deliver

Established by the MPA to :

- Develop Major Project Leadership capability in Whitehall

- Develop project leaders who are world-class at successfully delivering Major Projects

- Create a cadre of world-class Project Leaders formed into an expert support network

- Build status of project leadership professionalism in Government

> *"The MPLA has undoubtedly taught me some new and relevant concepts and re-enthused me with the power of academic rigour. If the MPLA only makes a small difference to the outcome on this £15bn+ acquisition programme with impacts and further costs reaching 50 years into the future then the leverage is huge." – MPLA participant*

The MPLA – Backed by partnership

Supporters:

• Supported by MCO, Lord Browne, Permanent Secretaries and championed by Richard Heaton, Permanent Secretary for Cabinet Office and Una O'Brien, Permanent Secretary for Department of Health

• Co-designed with experts from across Government incorporating key lessons learned from practitioners through Whitehall and the Project Leadership Profession

• The Academy uses expert practitioners, private and public sector, across the programme to share the experiences of 'master builders' offering learning from success and failure

Participants:

• Programme is for SROs and Project Directors with a focus on GMPP project leaders

• Current number of participants on the programme including Cohort 8 is 240

The MPLA – Initial benefits

Strong uptake: 240 delegates over 3 years, it has reached this number 2 years from launch and within the original budget.

Positive feedback: 100% of cohorts are recording high satisfaction levels - over 80% ranking "good" and up to 50% rating "excellent"

Direct or indirect benefits:

[The programme] 'helped me reset the role of the board, its membership and the tools we use. This allowed me to move the board from a series of bilateral conversations 'holding people to account' to one where we focussed on resolving problems'

Participants from the Department of Health and Home Office indicated that treatment of risk has moved from a focus on reporting to better quality of discussion and elevation of key issues.

MoD participant reported lifting 'SRO-ship' to "another level" on a £28bn project, noting the difficulty in isolating immediate benefits.

BIS participant identified over £100m in savings that resulted from having the confidence to hold the line on a project implementation date, which if not achieved would have led to a one year delay.

The MPLA – Programme curriculum

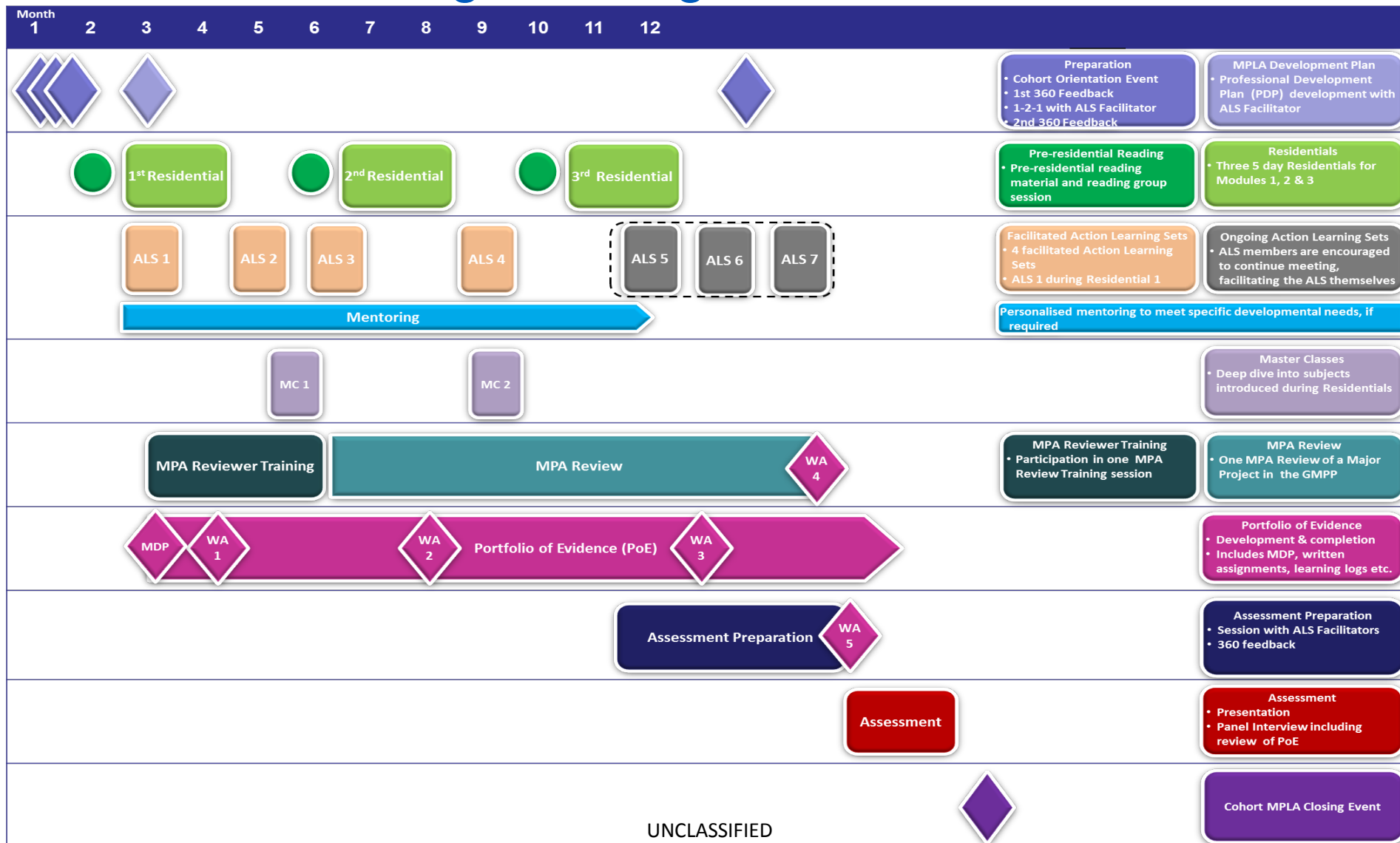| |
|---|
| **Module 1:** **Breaking Away: From 'managing projects' to 'leading temporary organisations'** |
| **Module 2:** **Managing Risk: Exploring the problem in depth** |
| **Module 3:** **Building the future: Mastering the delivery organisation and realising benefits** |

Leadership of Self	Leadership of Major Projects	Commercial Leadership	Technical Leadership

The MPLA – Programme agenda

Cabinet Office

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Preparation
- Cohort Orientation Event
- 1st 360 Feedback
- 1-2-1 with ALS Facilitator
- 2nd 360 Feedback

MPLA Development Plan
- Professional Development Plan (PDP) development with ALS Facilitator

1st Residential, **2nd Residential**, **3rd Residential**

Pre-residential Reading
- Pre-residential reading material and reading group session

Residentials
- Three 5 day Residentials for Modules 1, 2 & 3

ALS 1, ALS 2, ALS 3, ALS 4, ALS 5, ALS 6, ALS 7

Facilitated Action Learning Sets
- 4 facilitated Action Learning Sets
- ALS 1 during Residential 1

Ongoing Action Learning Sets
- ALS members are encouraged to continue meeting, facilitating the ALS themselves

Mentoring

Personalised mentoring to meet specific developmental needs, if required

MC 1, MC 2

Master Classes
- Deep dive into subjects introduced during Residentials

MPA Reviewer Training, **MPA Review**, WA 4

MPA Reviewer Training
- Participation in one MPA Review Training session

MPA Review
- One MPA Review of a Major Project in the GMPP

MDP, WA 1, WA 2, **Portfolio of Evidence (PoE)**, WA 3

Portfolio of Evidence
- Development & completion
- Includes MDP, written assignments, learning logs etc.

Assessment Preparation, WA 5

Assessment Preparation
- Session with ALS Facilitators
- 360 feedback

Assessment

Assessment
- Presentation
- Panel Interview including review of PoE

Cohort MPLA Closing Event

How has the MPLA improved my programme?
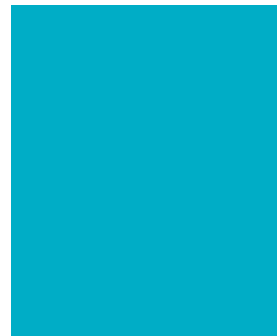
Dr Simon Eccles

What is my programme?

- NHSmail currently provides secure email, calendar, directory & SMS/fax gateway

- Used as primary email service by half of NHS organisations and over two thirds of its staff

  - 660,000 users

  - 99.99% availability

- NHSmail 2 is the replacement for NHSmail, due to be procured in 2015.

  - Standards based approach to integrating with other secure email systems including with local government

  - Product suitable for use across the public sector

MPLA

The MPLA Effect

- NHSmail(2) Gate 0   March 2012   Red

- The Review Team finds that the NHSmail programme is operating in a vacuum. There is no current published and endorsed strategy for the programme or the delivery of the service, no up to date business case and no clear link with DH/NHS policy.

- NHSmail2 Gate 1   Jan 2013   Amber/Green
- There are a number of positive factors associated with the NHSmail 2 project:
  - there is a strong SRO and Project Team in place who are proceeding at pace;
  - from a technology perspective the project is eminently deliverable;
  - there is good market engagement and stakeholder involvement;
  - this is a challenging project in a changing organisational environment, but the Project Team have embraced the challenges and are actively managing them

Risks

- Bigger isn't always better – challenging what we're doing

  - Constant question – are we the best way of delivering benefit?

- Make or buy?

  - De-risking integration

  - Working with small and medium sized companies

- Richer risk understanding

  - Conversations

- Multiple suppliers

  - Choice to drive down cost

  - Break clauses and easy switching

Risks - costs

- Driving down lifetime costs

  - Supplier expectations (per user per month)

    - 800k users x 12 months x 5 years = 48 million

    - 11p less = £5M saved.

  - Negotiate licensing deal

- De-risking procurement

  - Around £4M savings from end-of-life contract

  - Cabinet Office briefings
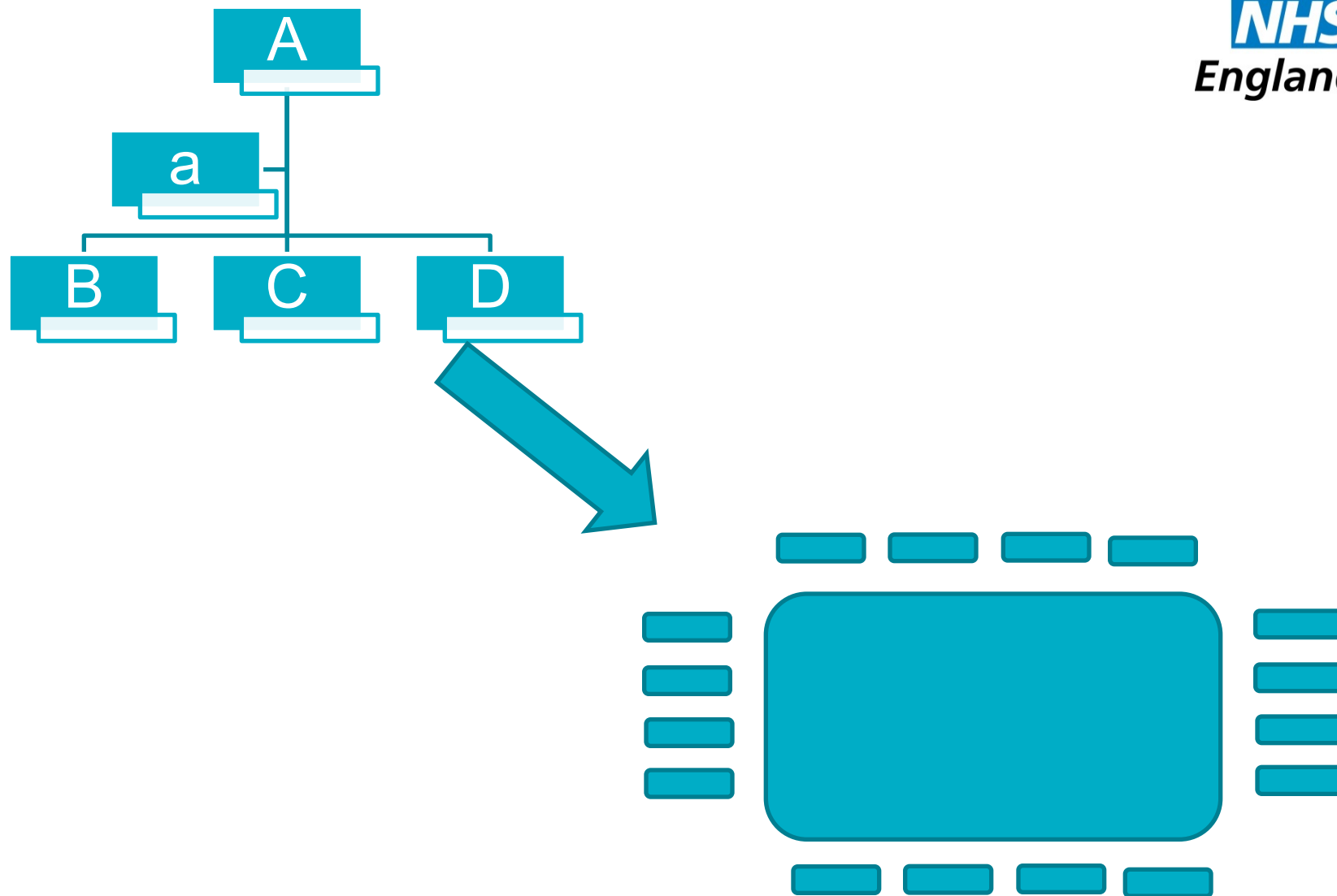
Project management

- The programme boards

  - Two into one, into two

    - NHSmail and NHSmail2 merged

    - Separate Operational, and Strategic boards

- Metrics

  - Monthly (and annual) expected reports but…

  - Regular focus on how we're maximising long term benefit

  - Conversations

- Upstream

  - Brief many, brief often

  - Really challenging with the government/health hierarchy

Strategic

Operational

Interpersonal

Leadership

- Commercial

  - Ensuring commercial strength

    - In procurement

    - During contract life

    - Aligning incentives

- Technical

  - The "Dad" test

  - Trust and transparency

    - Huge numbers of excellent ideas – **over £2,000,000 saved**

- Vision and inspiration

MPLA key lessons

- The role of the SRO

  - Deliver the original reason for doing the project

  - Hold the strategic picture

  - Enable conversations

    - The rounded team

    - Enabled and encouraged staff

  - Question everything

    - "Is there a better way of doing this?"

  - **Protect the benefits**

Thank you