

Virtual Court Operational Bulletin: 1
13 January 2010

This bulletin summaries discussions and agreement at the Virtual Court Operations Board held on 11/01/10. The Board has agreed that these bulletins will be the primary source of operational information for all those involved in Virtual Courts. They will be issued following each Board meeting with extraordinary bulletins issued between meetings when required.

1. **Volumes** Last week 37 cases went through the Virtual Court. This is an improving performance picture due to the efforts of everyone involved in the initiative and despite the snow. However, the challenge is to maintain this.
2. **Hearing slots** The Board agreed that they would move to 15 minute slots from **Monday, January 18th**. This is on the expectation that no issues are experienced by the CPS in relation to printing case files this week, should issues arise further communications on this will be issued. The slots that will be in place as of Monday are therefore listed at **Annex A** to this email.
3. **Bail backs** The Board confirmed that until further notice all bail backs (including next day bails) can be heard in the Virtual Court.
4. **Court and police bail** The legal position in relation to the use of bail and the live link has been confirmed between the Ministry of Justice and ourselves. The note confirming the position has been ratified by the Board and is attached at **Annex B**. Police and HMCS leads are asked to review the note and operate accordingly.
5. **Extended hours** Phase 2 of extended hours (**08:30 – 19:00**) will commence from **Monday, January 25th** on the basis of 15 minute slots. It will run initially for 4 weeks. All agencies (including HMPS and Serco) confirmed at the Board that they were operationally ready to commence this phase of extended hours. An operating plan will be issued by way of a bulletin next week having been agreed by the Local Implementation Team. The Board will hold an extraordinary meeting next week to discuss options for phase 3 of extended hours and further information will be provided via a bulletin by the end of the week.
6. **Booking System** The Booking System (scheduler) has now completed user acceptance testing and has been signed off for use. Accounts are therefore being circulated to all relevant users and the Booking System will be used from **Monday, January 18th**. Lee Clark will be training HMCS staff. A user guide will be sent to all police users with their account details to enable them to use the system. Further instructions will be sent to MPS Single Points of Contact (SPOCs).
7. **Governance** The Board discussed governance and agreed that the Virtual Court Operations Board had primacy in relation to all decisions pertaining to the pilot. The Local Implementation Team had primacy in relation to the operational running of the pilot in line with the scope agreed by the Operations Board. A governance document will be drafted and circulated next week.

[Click here to subscribe to these bulletins.](#)

Please contact Paul Burt in the central Virtual Court team for more information.
Email: paul.burt@cps.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 020 7796 8736

Information on the Virtual Court Initiative is also available on our [website](#).