

*HMcpssi*



# **"XHIBIT"**

**A JOINT REPORT BY:**

**HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate  
HM Magistrates' Courts Services Inspectorate  
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary  
HM Inspectorate of Prisons  
HM Inspectorate of Probation**

**A JOINT STUDY INTO THE EMERGING  
FINDINGS FROM THE ESSEX PILOT IN THE  
CROWN COURT IN CHELMSFORD**

**October 2002**

## CONTENTS

Section	Title	
1	Purpose of Report	1
2	Underpinning knowledge that informed the Study Team	1
	Table 1: Overarching XHIBIT objectives	1
3	Background to this Study and Study Aims	3
	Table 2: Study Aims	3
4	Study Methodology	3
	Table 3: Clusters of Questions to deliver the Study Aims	4
5	Emerging Findings	
	Tables 4 – 8: Suggestions flowing from the Findings	5
	Table 4: Achieving the benefits	6
	Table 5: Implementation Planning	8
	Table 6: Organisational structures and Review mechanisms	10
	Table 7: Project support	11
	Table 8: Equality of Opportunity	11
6	Concluding Comments	11
7	Study Team Members	14

**The Joint Inspectorates Study Team was assisted significantly by David Kennedy and his XHIBIT implementation staff (especially John Fitzgerald, Project Manager for the Essex Pilot) and expresses thanks to the many contributors who made this study possible.**

## 1. Purpose of this Report

### 1.1 This report:

- ❖ Sets out the Study Team's underpinning knowledge, including the objectives understood to have been established for XHIBIT;
- ❖ Describes briefly the Study background, aims and the methodology employed;
- ❖ Sets out the emerging findings and consequential suggestions in a way that is intended to assist with improved implementation in Essex, in further pilots and eventually with a potential national roll-out;
- ❖ Links the findings to the overarching objectives established for XHIBIT.

## 2. Underpinning Knowledge that informed the Study Team.

### 2.1 The XHIBIT high-level project planning documents show that the LCD has worked with the Criminal Justice Integration Unit, IBIS (now CJIT), partner Criminal Justice Organisations (CJOs) and IT partners to:

***“build and showcase a demonstrator application that addressed specifically the operational and customer service improvements that could be made based on the better communication of hearing information.”***

### 2.2 Additional XHIBIT **overarching objectives**, later linked to the Study's emerging findings and concluding comments, included:

Table 1: Overarching XHIBIT Objectives	
①	The introduction of new technology into the Crown Court;
②	Opportunities to integrate CREST and XHIBIT information and to enable court clerks to undertake administrative work whilst in court;
③	Improving the transparency of court processes and as a consequence increased public confidence in the CJS; and
④	Improved court efficiency.

### 2.3 The key components of this system were set out to include:

- ⇨ each court clerk having an in-court terminal where they can record, in real time, the progress of a case (e.g. standard events such as jury sworn in, prosecution started) and with which they can communicate with each other, the list office and externally;
- ⇨ the list office having the capacity to electronically communicate with court clerks and also with the diverse set of CJOs and other parties involved in their caseload. The latter would include the ability to 'push' information using the contact method favoured by each of the parties concerned (such as e-mail, fax, pager, mobile phone); and
- ⇨ the 'real time' promulgation of hearing information on to public information screens in the court precincts, the Government Secure Intranet and the Internet, thus giving access to up to date information for all who may require or desire it.

2.4 It was originally intended that there would be between three and six pilot projects aimed at testing and proving the benefits to be gained from sharing hearing information in this way. The first pilot, in the Essex Group (Chelmsford, Basildon and Southend) commenced in Chelmsford on 17 December 2001. The official launch took place in Chelmsford on 19 February and was attended by Michael Wills MP. The event attracted considerable media coverage, included TV crews from Sky News and Anglia TV as well as a number of national and local radio and newspaper reporters. More recently there was a presentation concerning XHIBIT to the Prime Minister. The PM maintains keen interest in its ongoing development.

2.5 Project plans identified the potential beneficiaries of the use of XHIBIT to include:

- † Judges, by having better planned trials and smoother court operations, knowing that witnesses and those staff required for each trial from the various CJOs can plan their contributions more efficiently and effectively;
- † Court staff, using technology to improve efficiency of information exchange and accuracy, and by focussing list offices on improving court room utilisation by being able to react effectively to unexpected events such as prisoners being delayed in transit;
- † Defence and prosecution Barristers and CPS, with more up-to-date information available also enabling better trial planning. Defence and CPS will be assisted in their witness management responsibilities;
- † Prison staff, helping to ensure prisoners arrive at the right courts at the right times and thus enabling prison staff to provide a more humane service to unconvicted prisoners (e.g. reducing unnecessary prisoner productions);
- † Prisoner escort staff, enabling them to plan their duties in the light of real-time sentencing information and PEC managers to deliver more efficient future contract proposals;
- † Police, by reducing the amount of time that they spend waiting to give evidence and thus creating efficiencies that can be translated into more time devoted to active community policing;
- † Witnesses, by reducing the time they spend waiting to give evidence in what may feel to be an 'intimidating' and unfamiliar setting, especially important for those victims of crime who are called to give evidence. In addition, reductions in the number of ineffective trials would act directly to reduce the inconvenience to witnesses and probably encourage witnesses being prepared to be witnesses again. The real-time public information will allow victim and witness services to know more accurately when they might be required to offer support;
- † Expert witnesses, by improving their use of time and by reducing the cost of professional witness expenses;
- † Probation staff, by ensuring that they can be available at the key relevant moments; and
- † The public and the press, by providing better and more transparent information.

### 3. Background to this Study and Study Aims.

3.1 On the 6 March the CJCIG recognised that a joint study to identify the emerging findings from this first pilot was likely to advantage the CJS as a whole. Consequently, the CJCIG established a Study Team consisting of representatives from each of the Criminal Justice Inspectorates to investigate how the benefits to be gained from the use of the XHIBIT technology could best be realised. It delegated the study co-ordination and planning to the JIS. The Study Team was also charged with presenting an interim report to Sir David O'Dowd's Policing Bureaucracy Task Force by June 2002.

3.2 The study aims were agreed as follows:

<b>Table 2: The Study Aims</b>	
⊙	To ascertain the degree to which the potential beneficiaries of XHIBIT are making best use of the system to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their individual and joint services;
⊙	To ascertain if the use of XHIBIT has improved the overall delivery of Criminal Justice in the pilot area of the Essex Crown Court bases;
⊙	To identify learning points from the implementation of the first XHIBIT pilot to enable business process improvements to be achieved;
⊙	To promulgate more broadly best practice to assist with the implementation of XHIBIT in future pilot areas and then more widely nationally. This will include performance indicators that will enable ongoing and more thorough evaluation of the benefits of XHIBIT;
⊙	To identify potential enhancements to XHIBIT and its potential use in other cases and courts, and to advise the XHIBIT implementation team accordingly; and
⊙	To identify potential equal opportunities issues associated with the use of XHIBIT.

3.3 The CJCIG and the Study Team recognised that the evidence base for evaluating the benefits of XHIBIT might be limited at this relatively early stage of implementing the first pilot, confirmed by the LCD Project Team. It was also expected that a first pilot project of this nature was likely to experience a greater degree of difficulty than subsequent implementations.

### 4. Study Methodology.

4.1 The pre-fieldwork methodology for the study included:

- A demonstration of XHIBIT;
- Study scoping;
- A familiarisation day (16 April) at Chelmsford Crown Court to see XHIBIT in action and preliminary meetings with contributors during the familiarisation day;

- A letter to relevant chief officers in Essex to inform them of the study;
- A letter to study contributors to advise them of the aims and objectives of the study and to set out the meetings programme and discussion topics.

4.2 The contributors and consultees to the study were identified to include:

- HH Judge Pearson, the Resident Judge;
- The court manager;
- The senior court clerk and her staff;
- The senior listings officer and her staff;
- Witness support staff in the Crown Court;
- Police, from the Criminal Justice Unit;
- Police, from the co-located case preparation unit within the CPS;
- The CPS (trials unit manager) and the CPS witness liaison manager;
- Probation, manager and team members and HQ Information Systems Manager;
- The governor of HM Prison Chelmsford and staff;
- Barristers, as available.

4.3 In advance of the meetings, contributors were alerted in writing to the discussion items and meeting agenda, which included the following 5 clusters of questions, established to deliver the Study Aims:

<b>Table 3: Clusters of Questions to deliver the Study Aims</b>	
?	The benefits that you understand will (or could) result from the use of XHIBIT; The benefits that you may already be getting from the use of XHIBIT; Any evidence that you are collecting that might demonstrate benefits arising from XHIBIT;
?	Your inclusion in the development phase of XHIBIT; Your inclusion in the planning for implementing the pilot in Essex; The priority afforded to implementing the pilot by your agency;
?	The structures in your agency to enable successful pilot implementation; The structures across the agencies to enable successful pilot implementation; Within and across agency review procedures during implementation, including any data used to enhance such reviews;
?	The support structures available to help you implement the pilot; The technical resources available to enable successful implementation, both hardware and advisory;
?	Equal opportunity and diversity factors that are addressed by XHIBIT, or that might be; Enhancements to XHIBIT to deliver greater benefits.

4.4 These topic areas were enhanced by additional specific questions addressed to each of the contributors. The findings in this report are set out in the context of the 5 clusters of questions. In addition, the Study Team made inquiries concerning:

- Factors that contributed to successful implementation;
- Factors that would have contributed to more successful implementation and blocks to success;
- Suggestions to improve local and national implementation.

#### 4.5 The fieldwork methodology included:

- A briefing and planning meeting of the fieldwork Study Team with John Fitzgerald (LCD Project Manager) on 21 May;
- Agreement about the core and additional questions to each specific contributor;
- Agreement about the fieldwork team pairings and leadership of meetings;
- Agreement about the note preparation for the report;
- Meetings with the contributors on 22 and 23 May, as set out above;
- An evaluation of the XHIBIT project team documentation;
- Agreed reporting processes.

4.6 Following a detailed planning phase, the fieldwork for the study was completed as anticipated in Chelmsford on 21, 22 and 23 May. Each of the CJ Inspectorates has made a contribution to this study. The LCD XHIBIT Project Team is undertaking an evaluation of the benefits of XHIBIT, as yet not available to the Study Team.

### 5. Emerging Findings.

5.1 From the 5 clusters of questions discussed with contributors, evidence from the Essex (Chelmsford) pilot identified the following issues. Each section concludes with suggestions focussed either on both Essex and further pilots, or just on further pilots, to improve local implementation and to enhance the success of future pilots.

#### 5.2 ***In relation to the first cluster of questions concerning the benefits resulting from the use of XHIBIT:***

- ✍ Although contributors agreed about the potential of XHIBIT its quantifiable measurable benefits had yet to be realised, especially in the terms identified in the Project Plans (e.g. the Project Initiation Documents) and by the Project Team in relation to a broad span of CJOs. For example, XHIBIT had yet to impact on witness management, saving police time, enabling speedier list distribution (although this was now possible through email), better co-ordination of prisoner production and return to custody, and alerting the probation service to key events for which they needed to be available in the Crown Court. This important finding needs to be set into the context of a rapidly developed and implemented IT system, the potential of which was only more recently becoming understood by the CJOs;
- ✍ Court staff and the CJOs remained committed to delivering the individual organisational and mutual benefits that XHIBIT offered. Although the Project Team had recent information concerning improved court efficiency (less cracked trials), there was insufficient evidence to attribute this to XHIBIT;
- ✍ Initially the CJOs involved were of the opinion that XHIBIT would deliver the benefits identified with little organisational change, clearly not the case. It was now perceived appropriately as an information exchange system that required more attention to intra- and inter-organisational processes and behaviour. Considerable work still needed to be undertaken to map these current processes and those that need to be in place to achieve the benefits.

Inevitably, this work will reveal a redefinition of roles and tasks and more fundamental culture changes, likely to present greater challenges than the introduction of XHIBIT itself. The broad XHIBIT implementation plans recognised that organisations involved would need to address their business processes, without going into detail, but the pilot demonstrated that the degree of work associated with this aspect of successful implementation had been under-estimated;

- ✎ Some benefits required negotiations across current organisational boundaries. A very specific example of this related to prisoner productions, a matter of significant concern. Improvements needed not just better production and reception information to the prison, using XHIBIT, but also a detailed understanding of the local and national contractual agreements between the prison service and the contractors responsible for prisoner escort duties;
- ✎ It was constructive to learn that the Judge will model some of the behaviour changes needed by meeting with counsel at pre-determined stages to establish a witness 'batting order' and requesting information as to why the witnesses were required at all. A pilot trial had been identified (involving only police witnesses, to identify police-time savings) but this had been postponed. The idea to use a pilot trial was a good one, and one that now needs to be implemented quickly, not least to signal to counsel their roles in trial planning and management and to provide hard data on the potential impact of the use of XHIBIT on saving police time;
- ✎ During January and February there had been a series of meetings between the LCD Project Team staff and the individual CJOs to identify the benefits for each, and to agree approaches to evaluation. However, specific benefit evaluation processes and information requirements to enable XHIBIT evaluation were not more fully specified until the pilot was well under way (March). Despite the meetings, CJOs were generally still not clear as to how benefits were to be evaluated, although there was now a reasonable appreciation of the benefits that XHIBIT could deliver, both more generally and for the specific CJOs;
- ✎ Overall, XHIBIT was assessed by CJOs as a potentially very useful management tool that could well assist in the delivery of many of the possible benefits referred to in the project plans, but the CJOs still needed to decide how to use this tool, both individually and collectively. It was also clear that many of the process changes that could lead to greater efficiency in the Crown Court did not need XHIBIT, although XHIBIT proved to be a useful potential catalyst to change and modernisation. As one contributor said,

***“XHIBIT has thrown us together, but we don't really know how to behave towards one another to sort out problems that we have in common to achieve the possible wider CJS improvements.”***

5.3 **On the basis of these findings, it is suggested that:**








**Table 4 : Suggestions based on these findings**



***For Essex and further pilots:*** Under the guidance of the Resident Judge, the Court Manager working with the police, CPS and witness support, should identify a number of cases to test the capacity of XHIBIT to contribute to more efficient witness management, as a matter of urgency. Such testing would then enable the Resident Judge to implement his planned meetings with counsel to determine whether particular witnesses were required and the trial running order.

***For Essex and further pilots:*** A clearly understood evaluation model, and associated specific criteria would, enable the participating CJOs and Court staff to demonstrate (or not) the benefits of XHIBIT. Demonstrated benefits will encourage the CJOs in their further use of XHIBIT.


5.4 ***In relation to inclusion in the development phase of XHIBIT, implementation planning and the priority afforded to XHIBIT by various contributors to the Study:***

-  The initial risk assessment for the project highlighted that there could be variable buy-in by the CJOs, who had limited understanding of the real benefits that XHIBIT might deliver. The study confirmed this – for example the prison service locally had not been involved in the developments after the first presentation stage. This was a prison service decision in the light of their view of the technology which they believed was needed within HM Prison Chelmsford to secure some of the possible gains, at a time when the Governor faced other priorities;
-  Importantly, the Resident Judge was a strong supporter of XHIBIT and his leadership was a crucial ingredient in ensuring the commitment of court staff, through the Court Manager. The Judge was determined to achieve better trial management and to use XHIBIT to assist with this;
-  The Project Team rightly placed considerable initial emphasis on including the court-based staff during the development phase, especially the clerks at the centre of inputting the information. Less attention had been paid to developing the roles and potential inputs of the other CJOs in the early stages of implementation;
-  Apart from a valued demonstration to chief officer staff of the various CJOs before XHIBIT installation, they had not been more fully included as the project rolled forward. Without their specific support and authorisation middle managers were uncertain about the priority that they could and should afford to gaining the benefits from implementing XHIBIT;
-  The clerks as a group felt fully involved in the development phase and made a significant contribution to the evolving design of the system. Consequently they were most included in the implementation of the system;
-  Ushers made a constructive contribution to the project, recognising the potential impact XHIBIT had on their role and function;
-  Although the listings section had been included as part of the core court staff, there was greater ambivalence here in embracing the potential that XHIBIT had to offer. In





particular, in this section there was a strong desire to see a greater integration of the CREST and XHIBIT information systems, to be a feature in future pilots;

- ✎ In some respects the development and implementation phases of this first pilot had overlapped in an unhelpful but probably unavoidable fashion, to ensure that the project deadlines were met. As XHIBIT was in the process of very significant development during implementation both the Project Team and users were handicapped in defining a moment in time when benefits might become apparent and when other CJOs might have considered it sufficiently valuable to engage more fully with the system. It is likely that future pilot implementation will avoid this degree of development and implementation overlap as the system should be more fully developed before installation;
- ✎ A training needs analysis had been undertaken, which had led to a training strategy. However, staff said that the time allocated to 'playing' with the system, testing and staff training was too short. It is understood from the LCD Project Team that this had been less of a problem in Basildon where Chelmsford staff had been able to assist with their new specific skills;
- ✎ There was no timeline developed that defined an installation period, a training phase, a testing and trial period, and then the 'going live' moment with clearly identified milestones of progress, supported by clear individual and multi-CJO plans. Although there were plans between the LCD Project Team and EDS, and installation plans with court service staff, there was not a broader Essex Pilot Project implementation plan available to all CJOs and understood by them, which identified individual CJO and mutual responsibilities to achieve the benefits. The lack of a widely agreed development and implementation plan undermined the pilot project;
- ✎ There was a lack of specificity in identifying the benefits that XHIBIT could and would deliver as part of the project implementation, although a number of potential benefits were listed. Despite the meetings with the LCD Project Team, contributors had not fully appreciated their roles in identifying the benefits as part of the pilot project, partly because they considered the pilot project aims to be insufficiently clear;
- ✎ In this context, contributors conveyed a fundamental uncertainty whether this was an IT project, EDS led and basically the responsibility of the Court Service, or a multi-agency information exchange project that required clearly allocated mutual responsibilities for success. As the project developed it became clearer to the CJOs that it was the latter;
- ✎ There remained differences of view about what XHIBIT could or could not do, and differences in understanding the fundamental nature of the information available on the system. This highlighted the need for an ongoing education and communication strategy to keep the CJOs on board.

5.5 **On the basis of these findings, it is suggested that:**

<b>Table 5: Suggestions based on these findings</b>	
	<p><b><i>For further pilots:</i></b> Chief Officers from the various CJOs, or senior delegates, need fuller inclusion at the early stages to enable middle managers to be clear about the priority to afford to XHIBIT implementation.</p> <p><b><i>For further pilots:</i></b> Court staff and the CJOs need a detailed overall XHIBIT implementation plan (distinct from an IT installation plan), copied to relevant Chief Officers, that sets out 'milestones of progress' towards achieving the benefits for each of the CJOs.</p> <p><b><i>For Essex and further pilots:</i></b> The CJOs should develop their own XHIBIT implementation plans, and resource requirements, in the context of the overarching plan.</p> <p><b><i>For further pilots:</i></b> The XHIBIT implementation plan should include a communication strategy, both between the LCD Project Team, Court Staff and CJOs, and between the CJOs and Court Staff.</p>

5.6 ***In relation to the structures in the Court and the various CJOs and the structures across the agencies to enable successful implementation, including review mechanisms:***

-  At the highest level, it was not clear that the project has had sufficient oversight by the Steering Group. The Steering Group had been involved at the outset of launching the wider XHIBIT Project, but not at review stages as initially appeared to have been expected. Very recently it was decided that the Project should be overseen by the Performance and IT Board;
-  Core Working Group meetings (Project Team, LCD, and EDS) took place. However, as previously indicated, but for the wider Project Initiation Documents, the project lacked an easily understood and detailed implementation plan, shared with the Court and CJOs, against which to review progress in achieving the XHIBIT benefits. The plans that existed focused more on the IT installation details, and getting the system up and running, which were reviewed with the court staff. Regular and routine reviews of wider implementation issues focusing on the delivery of the benefits, to include the Court and CJOs, were limited and hampered by the lack of a comprehensive implementation plan, associated internal CJO plans, evaluation criteria and hard data;
-  The CJOs were uncertain about the resources that they were required to commit to implement XHIBIT, and where such resources were to come from, both in terms of time and equipment. There was a view at the outset that this was a Court Services project, which needed to be resourced fully by Court Service. Projects such as this often need additional start-up resources, which can then be reduced following successful implementation;
-  In a similar vein, the degree of management time required to deliver the benefits by each of the CJOs was under-estimated;

- ✍ Without the clear buy-in of the most senior managers from each of the CJOs, as described above, none of the CJOs involved had developed an internal implementation plan supported by an analysis of benefits set against resource requirements, with identified milestones of progress and timescales. This encouraged an ad-hoc approach to implementation by the CJOs and naturally led to slippage, as other more clearly defined priorities needed to be addressed;
- ✍ Although there were frequent bi-lateral meetings between project team members, court staff and CJOs, there was insufficient routine and recorded project management with action points, with relevant staff from the whole group. This meant that individual CJOs and Court Staff approached the Project team for advice and support in an uncoordinated manner;
- ✍ There was scope to include operational staff more fully in meetings that addressed the implementation of the pilot and localised problem solving. There were a number of examples of issues and problems that a range of front-line staff referred to which seemed relatively simple to solve in a cross-agency meeting structure;
- ✍ Cultural issues related to information exchange between those 'in the court' (civil servants) and those 'out of the court' (e.g. witness support, probation, police) and managing meetings of such mixed staff groups had not yet been fully addressed, limiting the authority of meetings to address implementation issues;
- ✍ Similarly, clerks highlighted the potential job specification changes that XHIBIT could usher in. For example, clerks could have a role in witness calling through XHIBIT, currently a job undertaken by the CPS (warning) and the Ushers (calling to court). These were sensitive issues that will need to be addressed through appropriate problem solving mechanisms;
- ✍ Although the Resident Judge saw the Court Manager as the local XHIBIT implementation manager, as did the LCD Project Team, this was not a role that the Court Manager thought had been clearly defined. In addition he indicated that he was well occupied with his current responsibilities and priorities. Such a role requires clear delegated authority, agreed with the various contributors, to enable it to be fulfilled effectively;
- ✍ In this context, the project was led, and seen to be led, from 'outside' by the Court Service (LCD) Project Team, a structure that would have benefited from a locally based manager, from within the local Court/CJO system to promote local ownership. This might have ensured that implementation problems that were within the capacity of local CJOs to resolve were addressed speedily, rather than being referred to the Project Team;
- ✍ On a more positive note, recently meetings between the Court and relevant CJO managers had commenced (April) and these could be constructed to meet problem solving needs.

5.7 **On the basis of this section of findings, it is suggested that:**

**Table 6: Suggestions based on these finding**






***For Essex and further pilots:*** A structure is needed to bring together regularly the Court Staff, CJOs and LCD Project Team members with a focus on reviewing specifically the benefits being delivered through XHIBIT, in line with the implementation plan.




***For Essex and further pilots:*** Action points arising from project review meetings need to be clearly communicated and responsibilities and timescales to address problems specified.

***For Essex and further pilots:*** As part of the implementation plan problem solving mechanisms need to be specified, to include reference to those issues that need to be addressed locally and those that require either the LCD Project Team or EDS (the suppliers). A locally based 'project manager', seen to represent local ownership of the XHIBIT project, could be of value.



5.8 ***In relation to the technical advice and more general support available to the Court and CJOs to enable successful implementation:***

-  In general, the day-to-day project management and support was praised. This included overall guidance and technical support;
-  However, there were signs that project support from the project team was tailing off, possibly as a consequence of new pilots being planned. Court staff spoke of cancelled meetings with the Project Team to resolve existing problems and changes of personnel dedicated to help with implementation. Project plans indicated that the Essex pilot was to be fully supported until August;
-  There were communication problems associated with the change control mechanisms, which could have been avoided by more routine and recorded meetings between the project managers and the CJOs as a whole group (to highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the route to achieve the benefits). Court staff commented that they had lost track of certain change proposals, being addressed by the LCD Project Team now it was back up to strength and with additional staff appointments;
-  The illness of the overall XHIBIT Project Manager meant that the Project Team member with responsibility for the Essex pilot had to undertake the overall project management role in addition, at a time when considerable work was also going into new pilot planning;
-  As indicated above, hand-over plans to transfer responsibility for XHIBIT from the Project Team to be more substantially locally managed had yet to be agreed.


**5.9 On the basis of this section of findings, it is suggested that:**

Table 7: Suggestions based on these finding	
	<p><b><i>For Essex and further pilots:</i></b> Court Staff and CJOs need to be clear about those XHIBIT implementation matters that are their responsibilities to address and those that are the responsibility of the LCD Project Team.</p> <p><b><i>For Essex and further pilots:</i></b> The appointment of a locally based project manager, even for a sort period, would enable support requests and responses to be better co-ordinated and communicated.</p>

**5.10 In relation to equal opportunity and diversity factors that are addressed by XHIBIT, or that might be, and how XHIBIT might be enhanced further.**




-  Equality of opportunity and diversity factors had not been an element of the initial scoping, although there were clear implications in relation to the development of XHIBIT into other languages and access by those with limited sight;
-  The most common enhancement referred to was the inclusion of sentencing information.

**5.11 On the basis of this section of findings, it is suggested that:**

Table 8: Suggestions based on these finding	
	<p><b><i>For further pilots:</i></b> The profile of equal opportunities issues need to be addressed more fully within the high-level Project Initiation Documents.</p>

**6. Concluding comments.**

6.1 Related to the XHIBIT **overarching objectives**, as set out previously, the emerging findings have led the Study Team to reach the following conclusions for the first pilot of the XHIBIT project:

-  There has been rapid development of an IT based Crown Court hearing information and communication capability;
-  A technological basis has been established to secure the gains that XHIBIT clearly has the potential to deliver;
-  Generally, new technology had been introduced successfully into the Crown Court setting, supported by a committed group of Court Clerks who had the major responsibility for updating the system. However, speed of implementation had led to numerous change requirements, to be expected in a first pilot, but which had frustrated users and understandably had delayed the delivery of expected benefits. It was difficult to assess the value of the

- ↵ role of XHIBIT in the overall modernisation of the courts as part of the government's modernisation programme, and outside the scope of the Study;
- ↵ The new technology requirements and support for the Criminal Justice Organisations (CJOs) working alongside the court staff still needed further attention if wider CJS benefits were to be realised;
- ↵ Beyond drawing down static information from CREST to XHIBIT, greater integration between CREST and XHIBIT was outside the scope of this first pilot, although this will feature in future pilots;
- ↵ Improved transparency of the court process, but it was too early to identify if this had led to improved public confidence in the CJS, understood to be a key objective for the LCD. The public seemed to value the progress information available on the court based screens available in the waiting area;
- ↵ Similarly, witnesses could follow the progress of cases in their dedicated waiting area, especially now that a large screen had replaced the first small screen. However, better witness management (to include victims, expert, civilian and police witnesses), a key and much quoted potential benefit to be derived from XHIBIT, had not materialised as yet. In this respect it was disappointing that the CPS had not engaged more fully with the possibilities that XHIBIT offered. The witness support service within the Crown Court, despite a willingness to be fully involved, felt frustrated by the lack of progress with improving witness management and the generally negative views witnesses had of their court experiences;
- ↵ In a similar vein, despite an earlier discussion between HMIC and Essex Constabulary in Chelmsford, progress with testing the system to see if police time could be saved remained slow;
- ↵ Improved court efficiency, as a direct result of XHIBIT, had yet to be demonstrated. Clerks, as the hub of the information exchange processes, had been a positive force in implementing XHIBIT, despite the fact that they considered that it required additional clerking resource to meet the inputting demands. With increased experience such resource issues can be reviewed. As a group they did not see themselves as primary beneficiaries, although they hoped that the other CJOs would be able to take advantage of the information they were inputting. In this context they were disappointed that the tangible benefits they believed were possible had not yet materialised. However, clerks were using the system to communicate with each other, printed logs were now more accessible (and always legible) and the case progress logs were available to the listings office to enable improved court usage.

6.2 As an aside, a detailed analysis of the Project Directory highlighted a need to rationalise and review the project documentation and to ensure that all documentation is dated and ascribed to specific authors.

6.3 It is hoped that the suggestions made under the various sections of the emerging findings will enable some of the shortcomings identified by this study to be addressed, both in Essex and in further pilots.

6.4 In addition to the study findings it is important to communicate that:

- The study team formed the view that, contrary to initial expectations, this study proved timely in the life-cycle of the pilot project and for the planning of further pilots;
- The methodology proved effective and enabled the aims of the study to be met;
- Although not each inspectorate could release staff, each inspectorate made a contribution to the study;
- The inspectors directly involved in the planning and fieldwork quickly formed a shared understanding and team approach, and worked effectively together;
- The study team believes that the findings will be of value locally in the Essex pilot and more widely in the preparation of future pilots and a national roll-out;
- The study benefited from co-ordination by one person, and this was effectively carried out by the JIS, in parallel with the JIS developmental work; and
- CJCIG has demonstrated that it can mount an incisive project quickly and to good effect.

## 7. Study Team Members.

Sharon Davidson	Head of the Joint Inspectorates' Secretariat
David Abbott	HM MCSI
Steve Ash	HMIC
Andrew Torrington	HMCPSI (watching brief only)
Guy Baulf	HMIPrisons
Ray Wegrzyn	HMIProbation (watching brief only)
Joe Kuipers	Organisation and Development Advisor and XHIBIT Joint Inspectorates Study Manager

Special thanks to Joe Kuipers who led this study on an operational level as project manager and was highly supportive of the JIS in its early developmental stages as a consultant.

**Prepared on behalf of:**

**THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHIEF INSPECTORS GROUP (CJCIG)**

**BY:**

**The Joint Inspectorates' Secretariat (JIS)**

**October 2002**