

£15 million of taxpayers money wasted on a scrapped computer system due to project management failures

Submitted by: ILX

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A multi-million pound computer project created by Surrey Police is scrapped after a number of management failures.

Surrey Police has abandoned the multi-million IT computer system project which was commissioned in 2009. The system was going to be called 'The Surrey Integrated Reporting Enterprise Network' (SIREN).

An audit report has concluded that £14.86 million has been wasted on the project altogether. SIREN was initially being developed a system which could store criminal records and log crimes. It would have made mapping trends of offences across the county significantly easier for the police.

There were some incredibly large management and governance failures. With a total of five Senior Responsible Officers and five Programme Project Managers there is a lot of criticism as to why so many mistakes were made. These include a huge list of failures between the police and their contractor Memex. The key project failures were the high number of technological blunders also management failures included the inability to report effectively to the governing board and to forecast costs.

There were several mistakes made in the initiation of the project. It is reported that no functional specification for the system was ever formally agreed between the police and Memex, and also that original plans were in fact fundamentally flawed. The necessary steps were not taken by project managers on both sides to outline fundamental details and predict future problems.

A spokesperson from ILX remarked on the project failures, stating: "A project failure such as this shows a clear lack of communication. A collaboration of two companies requires constant contact in order to make sure targets are being continually met. Being an efficient project manager requires training and qualifications, along-side a skilled and committed team. A huge amount of tax payers money has been wasted here and Surrey Police should take more care in future that their project managers have had appropriate project management training."