

Q2

Interviewer

Okay. So the transcription's started and the recording has started.

So we've already done the introduction, so the the next stage is to just to talk to you about your previous experience. So can you tell me about your experience of introducing new technologies into UK law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

Yes, the first time would have been as a police officer. It wasn't really new technology, it was existing technology that nobody knew how to use.

So they built a bespoke case management system, that they'd left undocumented for the end user.

And the innovation part from me was bridging the gap between they've got this wonderful programme that everyone has to use and no way of teaching the people at the end how to use it.

So we had a whole bunch of IT people writing a programme.

They were not the end users, they'd never been the end users, and they've neglected to write their manual for how the end users were actually going to achieve use of this phenomenal system that they've introduced into the law enforcement arena I was in.

So I spent about six weeks, at least six weeks, writing the manual and going through each and every screen if you like, of what they had.

At that time we had 14 different divisions in my police area and there were 14 different ways of recording the information that was to go into this one system.

So again it was trying to standardise it so that they would have a streamlined, comprehensive one way of using the one system as opposed to the let's make it up as we go along.

And everyone was doing it their own way.

So the innovation part from me was they'd innovated internally that they'd computerise and we are going back 30 years.

But to my mind, it hasn't really changed because they come up with these ideas; implement them and then, ohh sorry they came up with the idea, get it ready to be implemented and then the afterthought is who's going to use it?

But it's always the case that the innovation neglects the end user and that is because there's no consistency.

They haven't actually got the end goal in mind of what is the purpose of this.

They see an idea grab hold of it, run with it and quite often by the time it's finished the original need for it has moved on and the people that were gonna use it are still as clueless and they've worked out their own work arounds, of how to achieve what they wanted to achieve.

Hence the reason 14 different ways in 14 different divisions of putting information into one system: no training, no communication, no workshopping or work groups or anything, just here's what we've come up with for you to use.

So innovation in one way lacking the input of the most important stakeholder, the end user.

So that's first example.

Interviewer

And.
OK.

Interviewee 1

So sorry.

Interviewer

Yeah, you know, I was about to say and and since then, um, experience of other innovation since then.

Interviewee 1

So in the after after that I worked in the private sector and the company I worked for again, trying to introduce more efficient procedures.

There there was no.

They had no systems in place.

To comprehend efficiencies and automation.

And they've always done it particular way.

In fact, I remember clearly a senior person in that establishment saying, well, we've done it this way for 10 years and my response being just because you turned that way doesn't mean it was the right way, because they were so anti innovation that, well, we we've got a system and it works. Why are we gonna change it?

And they weren't looking for continuing to continuous development or CPD professional development, whether it's individuals or processes or whatever, it was we've got a way that does it and and that's it.

I like to think I'm an automator. Why do something manually when a machine can do it for you?

Because that then gives you. It doesn't cost jobs or anything. It's frees up time to do with things and come up with more ideas and better ideas because you're not spending all day manually doing tasks that can be automated.

And the response coming back from senior staff saying what we've always done it that way it works, is so narrow minded and insular and not forward-looking at all that that is again they they come up with an idea that they stick with that one idea and run with it and that's it.

Um, since then, so that's sort of that, that would be in the the middle past probably in the last

15 years, coming forward in time, because we're covering about 3 decades, possibly more, coming forward in time since I've joined the establishment I worked for now, I have seen good and bad.

When I first started, about 7 years ago, it was very forward thinking and there was impetus and focus on getting change in and consulting others who had done similar to get best practise from it.

That's faded over the past three or four years and it's all imploded and we've now got in the field, I used to be in, in [REDACTED – operational], it has taken a backward step by about 10 or 15 years.

We have got a revolving door policy currently on staff, we get people coming in, they get a tick in their CV saying who they've worked for, get some training and disappear out into the private sector to earn stacks of more money because the innovation has stalled.

Though for the five past year, the past five years, there's been been single focus in that arena on [REDACTED as would identify operational capability], and that has been implemented in such a bad way that the actual day job is now unachievable.

So there's been no innovation at all. When there is an innovation, it's because of necessity, because they haven't actually got the people to do the job. So they're now looking at ways of bringing in automation to account for the fact that they haven't actually got the resource to do the day job.

And even then, it is so scripted what they do that if it doesn't fit into do ABC, there is no other letter in the alphabet. You can't bring in ohh what about this? Because it's not part of their framework of what they're doing.

So innovation in that particular arena, from what I see, hasn't just stalled its died.

There's a it goes back to the middle ground example of what we've always done it this way and it's like, yeah, great 99% of the work can be done in that way, what about the 1% that can't? They haven't got an answer; there is no answer; there's no emotion.

They just haven't factored in the outliers, the anomalies, the ones that need ohh, manual intervention and out-of-the-box thinking hate that phrase, but you've got to think beyond the norm and and well innovate. That's the whole thing. You've

got to have the knowledge of all round that, yes, 90 to 95 to 99% of the work will fit this model and can go through, but what if it doesn't? You've gotta come up with different ideas for it. And that that doesn't happen. From what I can see.

Interviewer

Okay so.

Interviewee 1

In that arena.

Ohh.

Interviewer – FQ2

Sorry.

And.

So the experience that you've had, over those decades, what bits would you use for a similar requirement if you had another project now for example? What what would you take from your experience and incorporate into that new project?

Interviewee 1

So in my current role, one of the things that took is from the very first example of who's going to use the system? The end user.

To part of my job, self developed as it has been, was to create inductions to explain at an early stage to the end user how the system works. Because again, they were let loose on a system with no and this is the current system that I work on, I'm being purposely vague not to mention networks and frameworks and stuff, but it was it's a very wide-ranging network that holds lots of relevant data for investigation. But again, no handbook, no training, no information for the end user of how they can do what they need to achieve.

So from the very first thing I did which was writing the handbook, I've transitioned that into doing presentations and it's bespoke. So depending on the audience, I've got a framework that I follow from what I'm going to tell them, and it's customised, on-the-fly, that I've followed the script I've got, but it's, um, audience led. They asked the questions as I'm going the wrong, along, it's not it's not a case of here's all the information, ask questions at the end. It's here's a bit of information have you got any questions? Ohh how do I do this? How do I do that? And it's customised each time. Some audiences are very quick and they understand it very quickly, others they don't and I've had a training course last a day and 1/2. I've done the same training course in about 2 1/2 hours, it's all dependent, but the the script of what information they are given access to, which is the key fundamentals of the system which is in, in and of itself the system I'm talking about is quite innovative.

And that's where their data sits and they've got all the applications and information at their fingertips wherever they are, but they don't always get sign posted of how to set it up for them to use and how they can be in control of their data.

Because again, at the end of the day for that network we are only data processors we host the data for them, but in a way we control who accesses it, but it's not our data we we don't do anything with that data, it's theirs and it's their system, we're just there to facilitate.

And as as it is with [REDACTED as would identify operational capability] which I'm a little bit more friendly with than [REDACTED as would identify operational capability], our job is the CIA. So for data we just make sure it's confidential, that the integrity is there and the availability for them. But all of those three are again for the end user they're not for our benefit. Because it's not our data, we've got a platform that is hosting data for them, so the innovation from the system is that we've got the system.

But again, there is no framework of how that's evolved, it's what it's been an evolution. And I think one thing I was thinking of before is a lot of projects in law enforcement are evolutions of necessity.

It's. There's very little in my experience that is actively planned for and works as it should straight away. And again going back seven years, when I first joined and there was innovation there were contractual issues with access because it was a very much commercial exercise but the company that was implementing it and they were very much into bureaucracy or statement of works and what you asked for and everything else, and if it wasn't in that document, there was no leeway.

So we wanna be able to control our own programme, but we can't do that, but it's our system, but we can't trust you to be able to do that. So for the longest time we couldn't even create folders. So that stifled any sort of innovation. What we want to install the ohh you can't do that. You can't use those programmes.

And it was backwards thinking because you don't know what's gonna fit the circumstance for every case and again, let's go in 95% of the cases are standard and most tools will fix them. Well if you've got no mechanism to be able to stretch yourself and use a new piece of software or a new version, or a new idea here, than the 5% that doesn't fit the foundation work you just ignore it or they haven't got the answer. They don't think about it, they're not. They themselves are not innovating. They are thinking of what we've got is what we've got. And it's very linear and blinkered and narrow minded. I don't think outside of the box. Again, the phrase I don't really like but it's what I find myself doing a lot of the time thinking outside the norm. How could I do that?

There's three different ways. Well, the current framework that's in force where I'm working is we are going to do one of them. And that's it. Yeah, but that one doesn't always fit. You need 2 and 3. You need plan ABC. You've always got to have something to fall back on. That doesn't seem to be the way here.

Q3

Interviewer

So moving on now to the governance aspects of introducing new technologies, what considerations do you think are necessary to introduce new technologies into UK law enforcement from a governance perspective?

Interviewee 1

So the, again, the governance depends on the the remit of what it's gonna be. And again. Two sisters sites separated by 200 miles, effectively holding the same data. We wanted to mirror two the two folders that contain common software. The governance that went above and beyond copying a closed network t(w)o sister site was phenomenal.

Took months. Because the bureaucracy to just say we want that same data over here on site B, I've got it on site A. We don't wanna download all the same stuff again, we've got it, let's just copy it across because the two are sister networks, but they are segregated by different network commands and everything else. And the governance of getting permission to do that, and then the cost implication, again it's a commercial entity that was doing this, and I still to this

day can't believe £135 piece of software cost £8000 to install to do that, because the governance of who can do what on it, was just, beyond the norm.

Getting it implemented? Again, it's bureaucratic. If we've got a closed system that's only got closed data and it's got a little bit of data to transition across, it's our network - let's, let's do it! If it's multi-agency, yeah we've gotta make sure there's security in place and that it's not going to cause any issues there. But again, it's, to my mind we don't always have the right people at the right level with the right understanding.

And the the usual response is. Now you can't do that. What was the question? And you have to go through numerous hoops to make your step forward, which could take months. And again, by the time you've actually got that in place. It has caused such a delay that workarounds have been figured out.

So the governance aspect is, yeah, we we need to have an understanding of who's doing what across the network, but there's got to be some pragmatism that for a simple folder replication that affects a very small team, it doesn't need to go up to an enterprise level when it's only the small team that ha've got access to it.

Different if it was something like the [REDACTED – operational system name] or something that affects 10s of thousands of users, I agree, that the governance has got to be scoped for the use case that it's at. Again, you can't have a one size fits all.

You shouldn't need to go to the levels of um it needing [REDACTED – Head of Agency/Force] authority to to get, or Home Secretary authority, to get something implemented that affects a handful of users. But it's almost as if the governance system is, well we've got a process for this.

There's no shortcuts. It's gotta go all the way through and get the sign off of somebody very high up the chain who's got no interest at all, and probably even less understanding. So delegation and devolved responsibility in governance is is key. You've gotta have a pragmatic approach that you don't need to have top-level sign off on everything.

Interviewer – FQ3

And do you feel that that's achievable within law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

It could be, but again, they seem to be far more risk averse than the NDM would allow, so the national decision model of going going through the analytics of where we are and what we need to do and what authorities all of that which is meant to be in place for every officer and every member of staff that's there, just doesn't seem to be functioning properly and and from what I've seen is particularly where we are now, or where I am now, they're risk averse. [REDACTED as would identify operational capability] especially. Um, going on about...

[REDACTED as would identify operational capability]

Interviewer

OK.

Interviewee 1

The risk of it.

Q4

Interviewer

So moving on now to the requirements for introducing new technology.

And so if we think about the main requirements needed to introduce technologies into UK law enforcement, what do you think are the the key building blocks to successfully introduce such new technologies?

Interviewee 1

Ohh I think one is either a desire or an acceptance of change.

Because just cause you don't want my all the time doesn't mean it's the best way of doing it. So wanting to improve efficiency and wanting to service the end user.

A lot of this systems that get implemented seem to be self fulfilling prophecies in as much as somebody's come up with an idea. But they haven't considered the impact on the end user.

Good, bad or indifferent.

That goes all the way through to the end user because end users don't always like change either.

In fact, a person I'm quite fond of, in an interview, previously asked me about change, and I remember my answer about adapting and adopting. And that seems to have stalled along the way.

Across the board. That there is reticence of adapting to change or adopting new procedures.

Interviewer – FQ4

Okay and do you think there's anything which may prevent the successful implementation of new technologies to law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

Lack of understanding at multiple levels about the benefits of adapting and adopting.

Change is not always a good thing. A change for change's sake, particularly in areas where there is a scarcity of longevity at senior levels, and everybody that comes in, irrespective of department, but it's pretty much a new broom sweeps clean, on every instance and they want to leave their legacy of how they're going to do stuff.

And, quite often we get change for change sake where it's not required and the previous change hasn't actually had a chance to bed in. And that will affect innovation because they'll be something, these things do not always work straight away. Even less so when from idea to implementation is years.

So. I don't use the agile framework for development, but I do in as much as I will do short pieces of work and deliver them to see if they are what is required and if not go back and tweak it.

Whereas what I experience and I recently went to a conference where they had shown us a IT support management system which had been taken a year or two years to uplift and pretty much the only thing that had been achieved in all that time is, they've moved the old database to the new system, which is the same software but a new version, and, um, that was about it.

They they hadn't actually got it to a point where it was usable by the end user and it had taken them over a year to do. So they had a piece of software that was already 9 or 10 years out of date, unsupported. They'd brought in a new version of the software, which coincidentally, was also now out of date and no longer supported, and they were implementing this new updated out-of-date software to replace the previously very much out-of-date software, but at no point had they actually added in all the users and the meeting I went to was at the stage of they were ready to deploy it, in the next couple of weeks, so they'd spent a year or two getting it ready and the workshop work group stakeholder engagement was literally this is where we're at and we're going to deploy in a couple of weeks time.

Having spent such a long time getting nowhere.

So it's that that is gonna affect implementation of anything when it takes that long.

Whereas the model I follow, personally, because I do software development, is I get the idea and literally so it's the last week's project and we're talking current time now, is I have been asked to assist a colleague. And again, I'm lucky the area I work in, I can innovate dynamically.

But it was literally we've got thousands upon thousands of documents that require translation from one language to another, it's a very manual task, and within less than a week, I've got two programmes nearly ready to go. One is already ready and it seamlessly makes all the documents he needs to translate groups by 1000 at a time into by file extension.

So the innovation there is I've now saved him six hours of work, takes him 6 to 10 minutes. Instead of him having to keep filtering by extension and dragging and copying into new folder it just does it. He pointed at the folder, it just does it. He can now within 10 minutes instead of several hours chuck 1000 files at the time into his translation engine. At a meeting I've got later today it's gonna automate that even further. If I can speak directly to the interface of it.

So the innovation from there comes from his understanding that I've got the ability to be able to do this. We've been given approval that we can do this type of work. It is all in the law enforcement arena and we are talking law enforcement data, one law enforcement systems, but we've got the capability and the capacity to do this dynamically as required.

And once it's been proven that it can work, it can be rolled out to other law enforcement agencies who use similar systems. So that is almost my ideal of how it should be.

Interviewer

Okay.

Interviewee 1

How it would be, if it was not me doing it is we would sit and have meetings for six months talking about what's the end, what? What is the purpose of this? What's the requirement?

And then maybe in six months time they'd start looking at putting it process together to automate it. But the requirement is here and now and this is the whole thing about implementation, is, I don't think they always garner the need of the urgency that the requirement is now, not in six months.

To speed, speed is of the essence in implementing it.

[Q5 SKIPPED AS RESPONSES DID NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO RAISE THIS]

Q6

Interviewer

And we'll come on to that in the subsequent question as well.

So the next question is looking at the key to success.

So can you tell me what you think the most important keys to successfully introducing new technologies into UK law enforcement are?

Interviewee 1

The biggest one that springs to mind is not losing sight of who this is for, and it's the end user.

So whatever system you've got, somebody has to use it, and it's gotta be intuitive.

It doesn't matter if it's a [REDACTED as refers to operational capability] system, if it's a [REDACTED as refers to operational capability], whatever data, at the end of the day, we're dealing with data. And, pretty much the last person or the last entity in the chain is, the end user: a human being.

It may go through multiple cycles of automation, whatever else, it doesn't matter if it's a visualisation, doesn't matter if it's a database, it's spread. Whatever the output is, it's gonna be reviewed by the human. And getting it to that stage, it's got to be as seamless as possible. And that that is what people keep losing sight of.

[FQ6 NOT ASKED AS NOT MORE THAN ONE ASPECT RAISED IN Q6]

Q7

Interviewer

Okay. So you picked up on the, um, the urgent aspect of it. So we'll move on to that. And so looking at urgent operational requirements, so can you explain the impact which urgent operational requirements might have on the introduction of new technologies for law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

With too much governance, they won't get delivered at all.

With sign off at the wrong level, they won't get started.

With nothing but commercial entities who want to spend loads of time working out the wise wherefores of how they're gonna make money out of it, the commercialism is going to stifle innovation. Because it all boils down to budget holders and sign off and everything else, which is not a two-minute process.

Getting people to sign off a spend, particularly when it starts going to payments 6 figures, it's gonna storm everything. So it's a case of, um, focusing on the here and now and what we can do in almost real time.

Again, I had a data transfer issue over the weekend and it was over the weekend. So. It was done.

It's been transitioned. The urgency was we've got a live case that CPS needs to look at. And the officer can't review the data and hasn't got the skillset to translate it themselves, so I was working over the weekend regardless and I fit in an additional hour to do the data transformation for them because they're the end user.

The system didn't allow for automation of that process. It needed manual intervention from somebody that knew. The people who should have been doing it are the [REDACTED] people, but there are no resource available, and they haven't got the skillset whereas I'm in charge of the data and I've got the skill set to do it, so it's being done.

That would not have happened because if I hadn't been working and I had to apply for overtime, I would like to wait for additional stuff coming in. I've been able to double hand it that I can do 2 tasks at once.

Because the urgency has been expressed. There's no cost implication. I was working anyway.

Interviewer- FQ7

So how do you think you might be able to overcome those negative impacts?

Interviewee 1

I think understanding the law enforcement is 24/7/365, not Monday to Friday 9:00 to 5:00. Certain areas have got on call systems.

But IT support and IT in the main which we're talking about innovation this will or in this scheme predominantly for me is digital innovation because we're dealing with loads and loads of digital data, that that's where I'm taking my stamps from and data is required access when it's required, not Monday to Friday 9:00 to 5:00. And it's having the facility, and the ability, to have on not on call per se, but have a quick reaction? For me, next day would be acceptable. Three days later might be too late because I don't know what else is going on.

Enforcement doesn't stop on weekends. Operations kicking off all the time, the end user from my mind, I'm talking police officers and investigators. Well, they're working 24/7 in shifts. So they've got a problem at 5:00 PM on Friday night and the IT people are now off until 8:00 AM on Monday morning. They've now lost two full working days, plus ancillary. And and custody clocked times could be ticking on this. It is not, IT innovation and implementation and assistance is a 24/7 activity.

So for urgent stuff that is unforeseen. It as much as we knew it was coming, but we didn't know it was coming so quick, which is the usual thing in law enforcement, everything's at the last minute because CPS suddenly rack-up at the 11th hour of the or the 59th minute of the 11th hour, so I need this tomorrow.

And if they're gonna have to go through, well, we haven't got a system in place for that, we're gonna have to go and talk about it.

In fact, again, historically and anecdotally, it's about 8 years ago now, I think, I'm aware of a case that got lost at court and dismissed because times scales were missed by law enforcement. And material wasn't delivered in a timely fashion and the judge dismissed the case. But, the evidence was there, just hadn't been presented in a suitable fashion. And it did end up going to a civil tribunal. And he he was the the person involved in the matter was found guilty of wrongdoing, as he would have been had the case not been dismissed from Criminal Court.

Dismissed from the Criminal Court purely due to time scales and. um, more enforcement not

presenting in a timely fashion. And that's the whole problem of the urgency aspect of we need to be able in in law enforcement especially, we need to be able to react quickly. And that's not just.

The existing systems, IT systems that ohh we could do that, but it will take four days. Anywhere else, it will take four months. That's not acceptable.

Q8

Interviewer

OK, so we've spoken quite a bit about the technological aspects. So now we're just gonna focus on non technology factors. So do you consider there are any non-technical factors which may also be important to ensure the successful implementation of new technologies? And if you do, what do you think they are?

Interviewee 1

Well, again, that goes back to the governance. To the governance would be a non-technology one.

It would be a process of oversight by individuals. And there the delegation of approvals at the appropriate level.

So depending on what it is. Does it really need to go up to the level of, say, a chief superintendent, or a divisional commander when in actual fact that the local sergeant or the local inspector could give the appropriate authority?

So and and, the the [*rankings/gradings*] there would be transitional across government because it's not just police that are law enforcement, but it would be the same sort of thing in in various other areas that you could have a local supervisor or the local manager who doesn't have to go all the way up to the the branch commander or above to get something that's gonna affect just that one team to begin with, and when it works, it can be rolled out. Now if the additional rolling out requires additional governance, at least you haven't stalled the entire process and waiting for that original approval. So all of those would be non-technological.

From to innovate and it could be any sort of thing doesn't have to be a technological innovation either. But whatever change you want, it's gotta go all the way up the pipeline to come all the way back down. And there doesn't seem to be the devolved responsibility. I am very much of the seek forgiveness than rather ask permission. Provided they don't break security rules.

Interviewer

OK.

Interviewee 1

Just today, just today I had the opportunity of assisting in a particular data transfer, which I know I could physically achieve but would very likely upset a lot of people because of potential security implications. Where there are no security implications because access to all systems concerned would be authorised access. But because it doesn't follow the process that has been stipulated it would upset a lot of people.

[FQ8 NOT ASKED AS RESPONSE IN MAIN QUESTION DID NOT FACILITATE THIS]

Q9

Interviewer

OK, thank you. So we'll move on to the next area which is around a vision.

So how do you think developing a vision about implementing new technologies within UK law enforcement can be best achieved?

Interviewee 1

The the things that spring to mind are trust and acceptance. That you trust that your staff are the right staff in the right post and they know what they're doing and that you accept as a senior person, the the reason you've got those people in that position of trust is exactly that they know what they're doing, let them get on and do their job.

So the vision would be for senior managers to have devolved responsibility.

I don't know if that's too succinct an answer.

Interviewer – FQ9

No, that's fine. No, that's so the next bit for that then is, which touches on the the last bit you were talking about. So who within the overall implementation process do you feel should actually create this vision?

Interviewee 1

Not the bosses. So again, this is people in the know. People, the people who should be creating the vision are probably, ohh this needs to be. I'm I'm I'm trying to think wider than just the entity I work for.

So in in policing or in in law enforcement terms, I would think that the the central repository for for this, for a framework would be the College of Policing.

To have a multi-agency approach and get the information of this is how you can do it and and spelling out in there of devolving responsibility to the appropriate level.

To me, that would be part of a a vision and a framework of we're not gonna get this. There is not.

There is no one-size-fits-all. Every implementation of any innovation can follow the framework, but the framework is exactly that, it's a building block and the building block starts at the foundation and the foundation and the people at the coal face, the end user.

So they they don't get the say, of what's going to be innovated because they're going to use it, but they do get a say in inputting what could be useful. How it's going to be implemented is slightly different, but the requirement has got to be from the ground up and the ground up is the foundation and the foundation, as I've said, I'm repeating myself is the end user, so it's those that are actually the front end doing the work, who don't always like change, as I've already said, um, they're the ones who should be leading on the ask. Or if not them, their immediate supervisors or managers should be feeding back in.

I don't think that happens all the time. Sometimes it does. And from again from my own experience, when it does happen that way you get managers above them, and I speak

from personal experience, you get managers above them who get a little bit worried about their own security, who rail back against the manager. So you get a senior manager who wants to build an empire, harvest everything and kill all the ideas. And that is personal experience.

Q10

Interviewer

OK so this probably touches on some of that that you've spoken about and also some of the other areas. So it's now looking at preventing resistance. So would you describe any resistance which you feel may arise from introducing new technologies in law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

Yes. Particularly so, again, there's there's a phrase I was introduced to, which is very apt, that a certain level, when you're in the middle, you've got people below you that you are worried are going to try and take your job and people above you who you worried might take your job from you because you're not achieving it. They're called the frozen middle.

They're frozen in time, they're frozen in stature, they're just frozen and they're almost like rabbit in headlights that they rarely, if ever, make decisions. And when they do it for their own benefit, not for the greater good. They might wrap it up that it's for the greater good, but it's not usually. It's for their own purposes, for their own longevity, but they can show upwards and filter up and filtered down to their own design.

They are the ones to my mind that will stifle innovation. They will stifle all of it. Because if they don't carry it, and again because of the governance processes that are there, you have to go up to that level for the most menial things in some cases and, as opposed to presenting a fait accompli of this is what we've got, let's roll it out, it's please, can we do this? No, no, we've got something else in the pipeline, but there is nothing else in the pipeline. So it gets stifled at that point.

Interviewer – FQ10

So how do you think that resistance can be best overcome?

Interviewee 1

Get the right people in the middle. People that are not there for themselves.

Again, anecdotally, throughout my history of law enforcement, I am aware of people that can

talk a really good job, who do interviews beyond par, but you give them the day job and they are the most useless person there and again, a phrase that springs to mind, is promoted beyond their own capability.

Which is in law enforcement particularly, quite often it's who you are, not what you can do?

Q11

Interviewer

OK, so let's have a look at now the successful aspect and how you sort of determine whether something has been successful in terms of a new introduction. So thinking about a successful implementation of new technologies for law enforcement, what do you feel needs to be achieved to attain that level of success?

Interviewee 1

Um. Again, trust.

So that this system I work on currently has also been an evolution. It was born out of necessity.

It was envisaged originally by a middle manager, who had the foresight to realise that nationwide, we needed an entity that could link diverse law enforcement units together.

Because you you know about the [REDACTED UNIT NAME] and others and linking all those. So that's where the platform came from. So different law enforcement entity. So that fell to one side because of funding for a change, because even though it was implemented and it was functioning, the budget for it dried up.

So the entities that were being connected centrally weren't gonna pay their licence fees per se., and everything costs, I accept that, but it was not accepted that this was now business as usual for these additional departments, so once the funding dried up, so did their interest.

So it turned inwards.

That we have this platform that was available and was pretty much in every office that we had

because we were co-located with these other law enforcement and a lot of them, and those that we weren't, we extended to because we didn't have a footprint before.

So all of this innovation was being done, not under the radar that's the wrong phrase, but it was being done because there was a need and it was being done fundamentally with the appropriate budgetary authorities, so the budget, stakeholders and approvers, and that they knew what they were spending the money on, but it wasn't going through to [REDACTED – head of the organisation] level governance or enterprise level governance because it wasn't affecting the wider world. We were still talking hundreds of users, not thousands. We were talking 10s of sites, not hundreds. We were talking a couple of 100 units, not thousands of units. So it was a much smaller scale than the equivalent corporate side of stuff.

It's now taking over. It's been recognised that people are reliant on that innovative system, and it's being rolled out across the board in all branch offices, including not only UK, we've got separate systems that are being implemented of the same model because it's been seen by particular [REDACTED – senior management level person] of the, um, usefulness and the requirement of having this platform and in no little part the success it has been that that particular senior manager, very senior manager, has identified that the small team led by that original innovator have achieved in four years what the huge commercial IT support have not been able to deliver in any length anyway, shape or form. In fact, I totally my understanding is that the last 14 projects that the commercial entity got their hands on that

we're working travelled since failed, so they're not allowed to touch this one. Because they've got a track record of breaking what was working. Because the process is they've got are geared towards commercial bureaucracy and profit not end users.

Our focus is on the end user, hence, doing data translations over weekends and stuff like that, because the urgency and the requirement is for them.

Or commercial entities, I think it's because they given a task that they're never gonna use. They set up a system that they've got no interest in how it actually functions for the people that want it. They go off the script of speaking with senior management above the level that's gonna use it because they're the ones that want to go to the meetings. I think the whole thing is you gotta have the right people in the right place at the right time and that doesn't happen. You get senior senior officers who don't do this on a daily basis who hear buzz words, who think they know about something and they run with it, not realising that it's completely the wrong thing for that place and by the time it's implemented, 2 years late, that requirements now gone anyway.

Interviewer – FQ11

So picking up on the time frame, do you feel there actually is a time frame which this needs to be achieved in for it to be more widely accepted within law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

Months, not years and if possible weeks, not months.

If you've got an idea so so the phrase I use is fail fast and move on. Because if you implement it and it's wrong when you do that fairly quickly, if you've got the initial idea, if it's the right idea, it can be enhanced. If it's completely the wrong idea when you pick it up at an early stage.

The number of times I've anecdotally heard of. Systems that have been deployed that are so far of the mark of what they actually require it's just a waste of everybody's time, effort and money.

Whereas if you've got something that even if it starts off small and gets built on, if you deliver that in a timely fashion then people will start adopting it much quicker and they will start asking for more because if they can see that they could do their job easier, they won't rail against it, that they're being replaced, they'll see that they've got more time.

And that to me, that's the biggest thing about innovation. It's not replacing people, giving people more chance to do more stuff that is menial to, it I I hate the word menial cause it's a derogatory term. But it's menial and mundane that if you can automate it, then automate it.

Equally, there are some tasks that have to be done.

Again, going back to foundations and going back to couple of people I've got in mind who wanted to run before they could walk. They wanted to be delving into the in's and out's of all the fine detail of data before they even knew how to acquire data. Talking [REDACTED – *operational capability*] again, now. But it's a case of sometimes you need to have the automation available. But to understand how it works and how to fix it when it doesn't work, you need the manual methods, but those are for technical specialists.

99% of the users of data are non-technical specialists. They're just people who want to say, is that bit of information there or not? How do I get to it? And they haven't got degrees in computer science, and they're not programmers, and they are investigators and police officers, and they're the ones who need to have a friendly, intuitive system and if you give that sort of thing to a company that doesn't do the day job and doesn't understand the day job, you're not gonna get something fit for purpose in a timely fashion because they just don't understand it.

Understanding is key.

And the right understanding. So the right people to be involved are not the bosses who no longer do this. They are senior managers looking after teams of people achieving a goal that set above them. How that goal's achieved is down to the people underneath them. So the people underneath them are the ones that should be going and establishing what's required, and feeding back into them.

Q12

Interviewer

OK, so for the last area now that that's just now to start doing the any other areas effectively. So are there any other factors or issues we haven't yet discussed which you feel are important for the successful implementation of new technologies within UK law enforcement?

Interviewee 1

The rapid change of technology, I think, is one area we haven't covered.

So we could be discussing something today and we come up with an idea of how to do it, and we start down that road and this is why fails fast and move-on comes in. Because we don't know today what's going to be delivered tomorrow. So we could set off on a project in the current guise, which in two years time we're going to use today's technology. Not realising that tomorrow or even a week from now, something better comes along, which we completely disregard, as having a profound impact on what we could deliver, because we're now down this rabbit hole of what we've set off on this so we're gonna carry it through to the end. And because the timeline is so long in the current guise, we now gonna go two years missing-out effectively, on two years of new technology. Because there's only one day or one week between. But we're gonna ignore that until we've delivered this first channel.

Whereas if we produce the delivery time to, um, what do they call it? MVP, I think is the term minimal viable product. So if the lead time for an MVP is so long, and it is so long, as, as I said, two years to upgrade some out of date software, which is already out of date in and of itself, then, what do they get it? It's just nonsensical. That the whole system is not agile, I think.

And it's not using that agile framework of waterfalls and cascades and everything else I know about it, it's not that. Like I said, my technology is fail fast and move-on, and that is a positive because every failure is a step to success. And, it may be that version one doesn't quite hit the criteria and it's a fail in as much as well it doesn't do everything I want it to do. Yeah but is it starting to do what you want? Can it be tweaked? Can it be modified? Can it

be enhanced? And if that's the right framework, or the right part of the innovation they're looking for then you can expand on it. If it immediately is the wrong, no, you've misunderstood what the requirement is. But let's not spend 6 to 12 months working out what the requirements are, when, um, technology is moving on.

So, er, anecdotally, the system I used to manage, when I first joined, had tape back-up. Tape back-up was the way of archiving previously, but it's moved on. Hard drive used to be considerably more expensive than tapes. Which is why tape archives were there. But over the years they have maintained a certain speed because of physics. They've got bigger, but it just means you can pack more data on to a smaller cartridge, but it just takes longer to read off. Um. But the whole model that we had was stifled in the archiving was going to be, a tape library.

They could have migrated that to using hard disc drives. The amount of money that was wasted because it was in their contract that we were gonna use tapes. And there was no swaying from it.

They would not move because, well, the contract said this. Well, amend the contract, different

technologies come on. Change it, do an amendment. We're not gonna do it, and they don't do that. They've got it in black and white. It was a commercial entity, it's in black and white, that's what you've asked for, that's what you're gonna get. Yeah, but in that intervening time, things have changed. Yeah, well, we can't accept that. We have to go all the way back to the beginning drawing board. No, there's gotta be some flexibility. It is again, it can't be cast in stone. Technology is not cast in stone. These things have to have some ability to drift. It's gotta be discussed, yeah, but it's not going back to the drawing board. It's a module. It should be a part of it that can be improved.

And that's not the way I see it being implemented in so many different projects.

Interviewer – FQ12

So how do you think that's best incorporated into the implementation process?

Interviewee 1

Understanding and and again the difficulty there is when you get commercial entities involved and

you get a statement of works and again just to digress for a moment. Just last week I was involved in a project. Where incorrect terminology had been used. Thankfully, the people that were directly involved have the flexibility to modify what the statement of works was. But again, it's commercial entity discussed at a higher level by people who have got some knowledge of the aspects of it.

But they've got so, so again, this shouldn't actually touch on anything.

[REDACTED as operationally specific]

And. The person who had written the scope of words or saving of works. [REDACTED as operationally specific] So the people that were directly involved, myself included, have got sufficient knowledge and understanding of it, that we were able to understand the misunderstanding of the senior person who's written a statement of works, who's got peripheral knowledge of it, but it got it completely wrong. Had they followed it to the letter, we would have the wrong product coming out. And it's that we've got the flexibility and the wherewithal and the ability to say no, that's wrong, this is what we need to be doing. Because we are the people who have the knowledge. They've got an overall awareness of

the process but they haven't got the fine detail. And, we have the ability to change that. That's what's required in these type of project that, if you don't get the right people involved at the earliest stages, the high level design is gonna be wrong. If the high level design is wrong and the commercial entity is of such an ilk, which this one wasn't, but the previous one was and still is, then no, you didn't ask for that, it's gonna cost you more. Yeah but it's not gonna actually. It's a it's a tweak. It's actually gonna cost us less. It should cost us less because we don't need as much hardware, we don't need as much consumables, we don't need as much this it it's it's built. Yeah, but you didn't ask for it, so you can't have it. But that's the wrong approach. But that's the approach I think that is prominent throughout law enforcement, especially when third party entities are brought in. And, they invariably are because typically within law enforcement, you don't have specialisms like we have where we are. Especially the can stand-up and say that's wrong. This is what we should be doing.

Interviewer

Okay, thank you.

Interviewee 1

That makes sense.

Interviewer

Just that that's the end of the question. So I'm just going to stop the transcription and the recording.

Interviewee 1

Okay.