

CJSM - Secure email services

The Problem

TSol and many other departments have instructed staff not to use email to exchange any personal information with Counsel on the Internet until a secure solution is agreed. TSol have conducted investigations and have found something that appears to be suitable. This solution is hosted by the Office of Criminal Justice Reform and allows for more secure exchange of personal information with Chambers on the Internet. It is our intention to use this solution to ensure the safe transmission or exchange of personal information between Government lawyers and Counsel.

What is CJSM

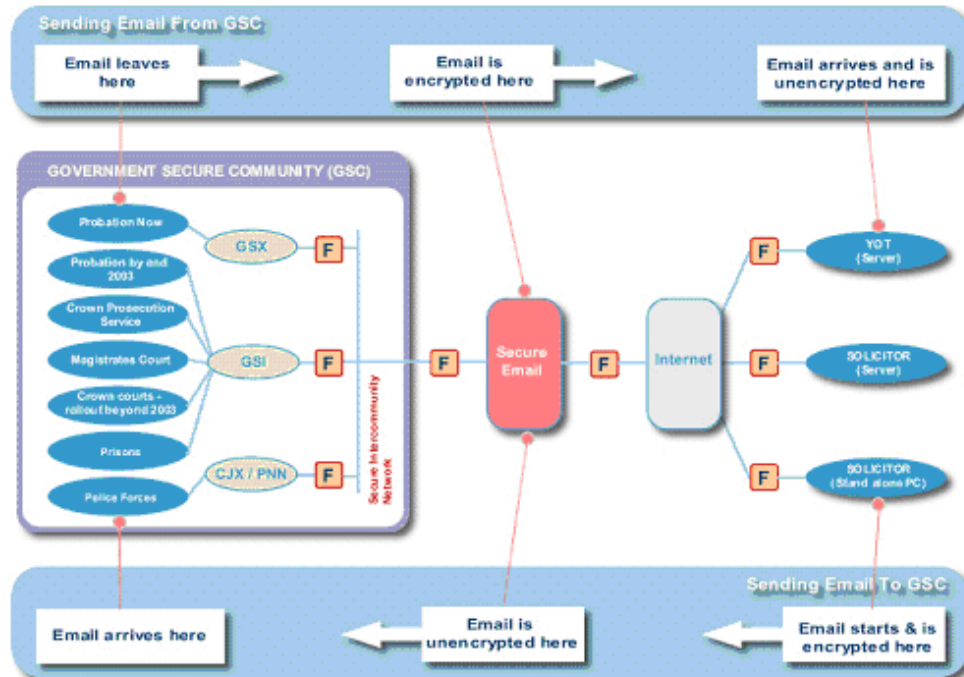
Criminal Justice System eMail (CJSM) is a secure email system that gives Criminal Justice Organisations, Government Departments, Counsel and practitioners the confidence to send and exchange sensitive information up to 'RESTRICTED' via email. The RESTRICTED classification is higher than the new PROTECT mark that some Departments are using for personal information.

CJSM allows agencies or Organisations not connected to the GSC (Government Secure Community) to exchange unstructured messages (email) to agencies within the GSC. Examples of CJA's within the GSC are Police, Prison Service, Court Service, CPS & Probation. Examples of agencies/CJP's outside the GSC who are expected to be the prime beneficiaries of CJSM are Yots, Victim Support, and Barristers/Counsel.

The overall CJSM programme is being managed by Criminal Justice IT (CJIT), part of the Office of the Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR). CJSM does not provide "secure email" in the sense in which the phrase is normally used.

The messages themselves are neither signed nor encrypted¹. It isn't altogether concerned with end-to-end security in any case; rather, with providing a level of security for messages conveyed between organisations (via the Internet) equivalent to that provided within the existing GSC. Files or documents downloaded from email system to PC's will not be protected. Some form of encryption must be applied to PC's in order to manage the risk of unauthorised access.

¹ In fact, they cannot be signed or encrypted. Modifications made to the message in transit across CJSM mean that the message digests (think of these as checksums or fingerprints of the original message) used to calculate the original keys would not match those of the message received. Signature verification would fail, and decryption of the message would be impossible. This behaviour is understood and it is by design.



Impact on Counsel

This secure email system should be used by Counsel who are likely to exchange personal information with the GLS. This secure email system will be similar to "Hotmail" in appearance and operability. Counsel will all have an additional email address e.g. brown@5essexcourt.co.uk.cjism.net which will be accessible via a web browser (Internet Explorer). Those in Departments corresponding with Counsel will have to be familiar with this new email address format so that they can send emails securely to the intended recipient.

TSol is contacting London and Regional Chambers in turn asking them to sign up to CJSM so Chambers should wait to be contacted. There is no charge for CJSM.

Where Chambers have their own server the CJSM address will simply have cjism.net added to the usual address. It is a bit more complicated where they do not. The address will be different e.g. john.smith@11kbwldn.cjism.net.

Counsel in Chambers without a server will also have to go online to check all e-mails and correspondence. In such cases Counsel may wish to ask instructing solicitors to warn that email is coming on the CJSM so that he knows to check.

When e mailing Government lawyers, Counsel should add cjism.net to the office address e.g. jane.smith@tsol.qsi.gov.uk.cjism.net

There is of course no point in Government lawyers emailing Counsel at Chambers using CJSM for Chambers just to forward the e mail to Counsel's home address. The protection of CJSM is lost. It is possible for Counsel to have a separate CJSM account for use outside Chambers but this is only likely to be possible if there is a

regular need for Counsel to work on documents marked RESTRICTED outside Chambers. If you think that this may apply in your case please contact your instructing solicitor, who in turn may wish to contact Hayley Devine at TSol. 0207 10 2917. Hayley.Devine@tsol.gsi.gov.uk

Simon Harker
TSol
14 August 2008