

## Case study: Statutory Instruments



Statutory Instruments are the most common form of secondary legislation. They can provide detailed regulations which implement Acts of Parliament and can also be used to amend, update or enforce existing primary legislation.

There are approximately 3,500 Statutory Instruments created each year, which are usually drafted by the legal office of the relevant government department. The documents can be anything from one to several hundred pages long and can apply to the whole of the UK or to the individual countries within it.

### The challenge

In 2000, TSO, in partnership with a group of Sponsor Departments, created a solution for OPSI to improve the Statutory Instruments' drafting process. The key objectives were to help to achieve e-government targets and to implement a standardised process for use by all departments, which would provide a single source of data for print and electronic publications.

### The solution

TSO created the Statutory Instruments template, an MS Word based drafting tool, which can be used by sponsors to create secondary legislation. The template contains all the elements for the development of a Statutory Instrument, including typesetting styles and metadata elements.

The template forms the front end of a powerful automated publication system, which uses TSO's ActiveText™ content management system to store all the data captured through the template in a central, media-neutral repository. ActiveText can then be used to disseminate the information in print and electronically, ensuring consistency across all formats. The flexibility of the system ensures the data is future-proof and re-usable.

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The TSO solution also incorporated a clever online validation routine, configured through working closely with key users to produce a tool that is fast, effective and user friendly. Users within Sponsor Departments validate the Statutory Instruments and the output then flows into the TSO system for publication to OPSI.gov.uk.

Training was provided to help the Sponsor Departments implement the templates. User documentation is also provided along with on-going support. TSO also works closely with OPSI in developing the template to meet the requirements which are identified by user discussion groups.

## Service mix

- Multi-format production
- ActiveText™ content management system
- Web hosting

## Results

- 98% secondary legislation is produced through the template
- Successfully deployed throughout the UK Government Legal Service
- Typographic and proofing control moved upstream to the sponsor department, reducing time and cost
- Consistency across all secondary legislation
- Publication timetables reduced
- Errors reduced through use of automated rules and checking routines
- Regional variations have been created for Northern Ireland Statutory Rules, Welsh Statutory Instruments and Scottish Statutory Instruments.

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