



Upstream!

Chronicle of the Streamlining Key Data Programme

EDITED BY HEIN VAN DUIVENBODEN AND MARC DE VRIES

Foreword

During the past three years a unique form of collaboration took place within the Netherlands public administration, whereby a large number of ministries, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities and the Dutch Data Protection Authority were engaged in the joint implementation of the Streamlining Key Data Programme - a Programme designed to impart a targeted impetus to the irreversible restructuring of their information infrastructure. The design of this Programme was based on the principle that 'the government should not ask what is already known', and consequently it endeavoured to provide for a fundamental break with the past: whereas until now each government agency was, in principle, responsible for the independent collection of the data it needed to perform its duties, in the future the data required by a number of agencies would, in principle, be collected on just one occasion and then made available to the relevant agencies. The benefits achieved by this approach were not to be restricted solely to a structural reduction of the administrative burden imposed on the public and the business community; a development of this nature also constituted a necessary condition to be fulfilled for the achievement of an integral and proactive form of the provision of services (one-stop shopping), the improvement of measures to combat fraud, the intensification of the enforcement and supervision of the country's legislation and regulations, the achievement of more transparent policy-making and accountability, and improved efficiency. Or, in other words, the Streamlining Key Data Programme was perceived as an inevitable operation required for the development of a modern and demand-driven (electronic) government that:

- *inconveniences the public and the business community with requests for data only when this is absolutely necessary;*
- *offers them a rapid and good service;*
- *can not be misled;*
- *knows its facts;*
- *instills the public and the industrial community with confidence;*
- *is provided at a cost that is no higher than strictly necessary.*

This book, which is comprised of a chronicle of the course of the Programme, does not restrict itself solely to the results that were achieved; in response to many requests, both at home and abroad, it also extends to a review of the lessons learnt during the work. Consequently

Upstream encompasses a summary of the many separate publications that appeared during the course of the Programme, supplemented with the personal experiences of the staff of the Programme Bureau. We are of the opinion that many of the experiences reviewed in this publication will be familiar to those engaged in other major change processes in the public sector and, possibly, also in other sectors.

Upstream is comprised of four sections.

Section I outlines the objectives and the relevance of the Programme, together with the design of the Programme as based on the forces that were at play during its implementation. Section II contains a summary of the results from the first line of action, the development of the policy.

Section III contains a summary of the results from the second line of action, the implementation of the policy.

Section IV contains an evaluation of the Programme, and reviews the lessons that were learnt during its implementation: i.e. what went well and what, in retrospective, was capable of improvement.

A summary of the publications that appeared during the course of the Programme enclosed at the end of this book will be of use to readers interested in obtaining more information about the Programme.

Steven Luitjens

Former Manager of the Streamlining Key Data Programme
The Hague, May 2003

Table of contents

Foreword	3
I The scope of the Programme	7
1 The problem: to do more with less data	
2 The solution: old wisdoms in combination with new technologies	
3 Implementation: collaboration is cooperation	
II The development of the policy	25
4 Development of the policy: objectives, core issues, and the approach	
5 Elaboration of the information-technology issues	
6 Elaboration of the legal issues	
7 Elaboration of the administrative-organizational issues	
8 Elaboration of the financial and economic issues	
9 Elaboration of the personal identification number policy	5
III The implementation of the policy	53
10 The implementation of the policy: objectives, central issues, and the approach	
11 The development of the key registers	
12 Other projects in the participating policy sectors	
13 The Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme')	
14 Communications and the provision of information	
IV Review and preview	75
15 On half-full and half-empty glasses: what we achieved	
16 Rowing upstream: what we learnt	
Summary of publications	96
Colophon	108

The scope of the Programme

1 The problem: to do more with less data

Ever since the first computers made their appearance, the Dutch authorities have been engaged in discussions about the opportunities they offered for a more effective and more efficient design of the authorities' supply of information. The first outlines appeared in as early of the beginning of the sixties, followed by a number of significant practical initiatives in a number of fields. Examples of these are the various successful projects that received a great deal of attention - both at a national and an international level - that were focused on the automation of the population registers in the form of one national Municipal Personal Records Database (the GBA), the automation of land registers, and the creation of a central vehicle-registration database. However only in the mid-nineties did the pleas for a structural and pan-government reorientation of the general design of databases and the structure employed for exchanges of information from those registers become fully appreciated by others than those with a professional interest in the subject.

The very gradual realization of the opportunities offered by Information and Communication Technology in the improvement of the quality of the public administrative organization was at most only in part due to the state of the art of the technology of the time. During a great many years the comprehension of - and consequently interest in - the capabilities of ICT possessed by policy-makers, managers and administrators was inadequate for a full appreciation of the opportunities that were available. They did not dream of giving fundamental consideration to the design of their information systems - not even to the design of their organization's system, let alone to the exchange of information with other organizations, i.e. the perception of their information systems as part of a larger entirety of databases and flows of information. It should be noted that this latter perception was, as such, totally absent in the modern decentralized Dutch state; over the course of the years each organization had, in analogy with other fields, adopted its own individual course. This was not only a result of attitudes within the government apparatus, i.e. the prevailing culture; in a formal sense, as seen from the perspective of the structure of agencies' responsibilities and powers provided by the relevant legislation, it was in fact the only logical approach to adopt.

Over the course of the years the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations - entrusted with the coordination of the government's supply of information - had on a number of occasions initiated discussions intended to provide for (re) consideration of the design of the information infrastructure. These discussions led to the Government's introduction of a number of regulations and the issue of a variety of instructions. However in practice virtually no heed was taken of these regulations and instructions. Individual agencies did not take them very seriously, and the Ministry found no response when it wished to raise the issue. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations might well have come to the correct conclusion, but it was nevertheless unable to succeed in its intentions. Every endeavour to introduce the central management of the development of the government's information infrastructure on the basis of a shared blueprint was met by fierce resistance. It subsequently proved impossible to break this resistance: in the midst of other issues that were considered to be of greater importance, the ministers and senior civil servants did not exhibit an inclination to quarrel about the design of the information infrastructure.

A number of factors resulted in a gradual shift in attitudes during the mid-nineties:

- The modernization of the government's provision of services, which - in comparison with the innovations being introduced within the business community - was being implemented at only a very slow pace, and certainly not across the board.
- The increasingly vociferous appeals that were made for a reduction of the administrative burden the government imposed on the public and the business community;
- The regular inability of government agencies to cooperate in an effective approach to growing social problems such as fraud, petty crime, organized crime, outbreaks of epidemics amongst cattle, etc.
- Frequent bickering between the authorities during a wide variety of policy discussions as to the extent to which the data was complete, correct, and up to date.

Analyses of these and other problems consistently came to the same conclusion. Time and time again one of the first causes of these problems cited in the analyses was the government's increasing difficulties with the manner in which it organized its information infrastructure. The conclusion was that a fundamental review of the structure was urgently required.

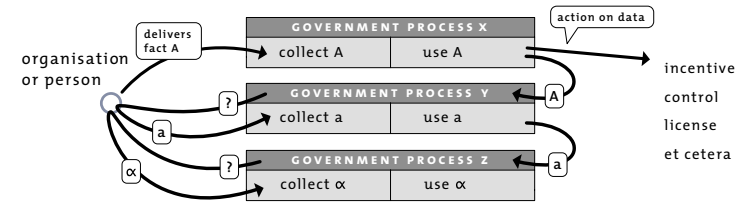


Figure 1: the situation at the time

From the very beginning, the diagnosis made by the ICT specialists gave little cause for surprise: the manner in which government agencies collected and stored their information was conducive to the segregation and fragmentation of the information infrastructure - the infrastructure was not only inefficient but also, and above all, ineffective. The continually increasing diversity of the definitions of data and - if possible - even larger diversity in systems was gradually resulting in a situation that was not only becoming more and more expensive and causing unnecessary irritation to those requested to provide information; it was also resulting in the development of a situation in which it was no longer possible to see the wood for the trees. The current procedures were resulting in a government that was structurally unable to keep up with developments in the needs and requirements to be met by the information infrastructure. In view of the government's accountability for the issues it was required to address an information infrastructure of this nature was highly undesirable, and it undermined the credibility of the political system. Consequently a new approach to the organization of the information infrastructure was required - not so much with a view to efficiency but primarily, and above all, with a view to the effectiveness that was increasingly coming under pressure as a result of the infrastructure of the time.

However the increasing insight into the diagnosis of the problems and the approach needed to resolve them was accompanied by a growing awareness of the sweeping scope of the changes that would be required. Mention has already been made of the structure of the Dutch state and the prevailing culture, which are reflected in the pronounced sectoral

approach to legislation and the manner in which government agencies are funded. Another issue which immediately became apparent was that of privacy. Irrespective of the need for a more coherent governmental information infrastructure, an excessive development in the direction of a Big Brother is watching you situation in the Netherlands would result in fierce resistance from the country's society and politicians (and irrespective of the question as to whether national legislation and international regulations on the protection of privacy would permit such a development).

In view of the above, in the mid-nineties the then Government decided to investigate how the fundamental changes could be imparted with a tangible shape. The first issue led to the introduction of the concept of 'Authentic Registers'. The second issue resulted in the launch of a proposal to initiate a pan-government programme.

2 The solution: old wisdoms in combination with new technologies

The investigation led to the conclusion that the government should work on the implementation of 'Authentic Registers'. It would be necessary to arrive at:

- the communal use of data: in principle data would be collected on one occasion, and then repeatedly used for the implementation of a series of laws;
- the joint use of data: data from different records required for the performance of a specific government duty would be combined in one database.

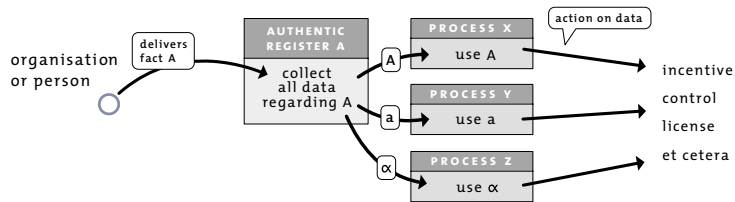


Figure 2: the planned situation

Consequently when formulated in slightly more abstract terms, it was concluded that a segregation should be effected between the government organization and the information infrastructure - or, in slightly more elegant phrasing, there was a need for the implementation of an information infrastructure at a supra-organizational level that would transform the existing autonomous islands of records into one coherent system. In the future, frequently used and/or vital data - key data - would no longer be collected and managed by each individual agency; instead, joint databases would be implemented for (clusters of) data. One government agency would be designated as the 'authentic source' of specific data; other agencies would consult this authentic source when they needed the data for their own purposes. National and international experience - with the databases maintained in the Netherlands mentioned in Sub-section 1, as well as experience acquired with other systems such as the Kruispuntbank ('Crosspoint Bank') in Belgium - has since revealed that this approach, obviously adopted on a large scale and based on the astute use of ICT, is capable of resulting in an alternative design readily capable of use by all those involved. Moreover an alternative of this nature would not only be more economical - it will immediately apparent that the non-recurrent collection of data would result in cost-savings throughout the Dutch government apparatus - but would also result in an increased effectiveness; the well-known saw that 'two heads are better than one' is also based on experience!

Although this was the first occasion on which use was made of the term 'Authentic Registers', the references to existing examples included in the reports reviewing the study indicated that the underlying concept was anything but new. It will be self-evident that recent technological developments, in particular the emergence of Internet technology, created opportunities that greatly simplified an appropriate implementation of the concept. At most, the only additional new development pertained to the plea made by some that the concept should, above all, not be restricted to a few separate databases; the concept could be employed for dozens of databases currently in use at both a sectoral and supra-sectoral level. In contrast to many people's initial impression, the data coming into consideration for an integral system is not restricted to data identifying individuals, companies, buildings, and land; data pertaining to incomes, periods of employment, permits, etc., find at least as frequent use by a number of agencies - and are used as least as intensively by them in the performance of their duties. The benefits offered by this approach would increase with the scale at which the concept was

introduced and, in particular, with the degree of coherence achieved between the individual databases - i.e. when a system of databases was created. In everyday practice the answers to many questions involve combinations of data. A more astute approach to answering these questions would employ the consultation of a number of sources and the combination of data from those sources to answer the request, rather than making a new and unique database for the specific situation - thereby ignoring the presence of data already available.

The major question then to be addressed was the question as to the shape to be imparted to a change of this nature. As mentioned in Sub-section 1 the Netherlands had already acquired the necessary experience with a top-down approach to the information infrastructure, i.e. a decision taken by the Government that was subsequently to be loyally implemented at all levels within the public administration. Moreover should an approach of this nature result in the creation of a number of central databases - a development that would be no more than a logical conclusion - then this would certainly result in associations with a Big Brother is watching you government, with all the concomitant disadvantages. Moreover such an approach would be expected to be accompanied by the commensurate technical problems, and it would result in a system largely incompatible with the general administrative culture of the Netherlands. However the continuation of a bottom-down approach also appeared to be an unfeasible proposition, even if henceforth implemented in a somewhat more coordinated manner. The analyses carried out during the study revealed that the potential for bilateral agreements on the exchange of information between individual organizations had been virtually exhausted. The implementation of this approach on a larger scale would result in an exponential increase in the complexity of the agreements and the concomitant efforts; moreover when viewed from the perspective of the specified ambitions and the problems experienced with the information infrastructure it would ultimately be inadequate for the authorities' general objectives. For this reason it was decided to set up a Programme which would, at least for the initiation of the changes, be implemented at a level above the ministries and sectors involved. The programme became known as the 'Streamlining Key Data' Programme.

The formal objective of the Streamlining Key Data Programme was to impart an impetus to the development of a system of authentic registers. The underlying goal of the Programme was to provide for an irreversible pan-government transformation in the required direction. In view of its coordinative role mentioned earlier in this Section the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom

Relations was assigned the responsibility for the preparation of the Programme in more detail. It was decided that, for the time being, participation in the Programme would be on a voluntary basis. Subsequent to a round of consultative discussions seven ministries and the Dutch Data Protection Authority jointly adopted the role of the initiators of the Programme. The other ministries and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities would initially watch from the sidelines, and could decide to join the Programme at a later point in time¹. It was decided that in due time the Programme would, together with other pan-government projects and programmes with a pronounced ICT element, be brought under an ICTU ('ICT Implementation Agency') Foundation to be established by the Government. In addition, funds were reserved for the project amounting to a total of NLG 35 million (more than EUR 15 million) for a four-year period. On the basis of a Programme with a duration of about three years in the period from 2000 - 2003, the indicative allocation of the funds reserved NLG 5 million for the preparations for the Programme in 1999 and annual amounts of NLG 10 million for the three successive years.

3 Implementation: collaboration is cooperation

Agreements on the basis of necessity, not feasibility

The political-administrative forces at play in the arena in which the Programme was to be implemented played an important role in the implementation of the outline Programme at the end of 1999. In view of the issue's history and the organization of the Dutch administrative structure - and the concomitant great degree of autonomy in the decision-making powers of the various government and semi state-controlled agencies - it was evident that the achievement of the Programme's objectives would be a far from simple task. During the past few years it had become even more apparent (if that were possible)

1) In addition to the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the other ministries initially participating in the programme were the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, and the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. Midway through the programme the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities also joined the Steering Committee of senior civil servants responsible for the management of the programme.

that ‘the government’ is in fact no more than an umbrella term for a greatly-differentiated pallet of organizations which are each assigned specific duties and each possess specific procedures, structures, and cultures. In fact individual agencies are actively encouraged to adopt this approach, since relatively small and nimble units are able to exhibit a flexible and rapid response to practical policy issues. Consequently organizations that plough through the waves like supertankers are not the most appropriate for the fulfilment of their duties. However it will be self-explanatory that a government which organizes and develops itself in this manner, i.e. with a pronounced distribution of responsibilities and powers, also has its drawbacks. It will be self-evident that agencies would not, a priori, be willing to relinquish (part of) their autonomy required in the cooperation as envisaged in the Streamlining Key Data Programme. It was to be expected that the participants in the Programme would be indefatigable in raising arguments against collaboration, or for collaboration to only a limited extent, in the implementation of tangible projects - such as, for example, during discussions about investments (“I cannot justify these costs within my organization, since they will be to the sole benefit of other organizations”), the ‘it’s not my problem’ syndrome (“we sorted out that problem a long time ago, it’s primarily an issue confronting others”) or competition in terms of times and resources with other policy programmes already in progress within the organization (“I can’t remove my staff from that essential project simply because we have to invest time in this one as well”). For this reason it was decided that not only would the relevance of the Programme repeatedly be emphasised from the very beginning of the Programme but, and in particular, every endeavour would be made to avoid the impression that more agreements were being reached within the scope of the Streamlining Key Data Programme than were absolutely necessary. From the very beginning of the Programme the underlying principles were made very clear by conveying the following dual message:

- *Any agreements that are made will be restricted to the absolute minimum required.* The Programme pertained to the exchange of data that had to be exchanged. The Programme was not based on the removal of all impediments - quite the contrary, in fact. The areas that were to be standardized would be those that had to be standardized, not those that could be standardized. Decisions as to this issue were to be based solely on the data that was demonstrably necessary for the performance of the statutory duties in accordance with the quality requirements derived from the aforementioned objectives.

- *Any agreements that are made should not be perceived as agreements without obligation.* Those arrangements that needed to be rendered mandatory would be rendered mandatory. The benchmark would be whether the government could achieve its ambitions and resolve the problems for which it is accountable to society. Each agreement would need to be accompanied by a review of the risks involved in the event that all, or at least a number, of the agencies involved were permitted to disregard the agreements if they so wished. It would not be possible to grant them this freedom in situations in which the policy objectives on which the Programme was ultimately based were placed in jeopardy. The Streamlining Key Data Programme would be able to achieve the intended benefits solely when all those involved in the performance of public duties actually made use of the authentic registers implemented for that purpose. This use of the authentic registers could not depend on the agencies’ goodwill, or on agreements laid down in covenants. If necessary an adequate operation of the system would be safeguarded by the implementation of the most stringent compulsory measures at the Government’s disposal - albeit always in combination with other tools: legislation in the formal sense of the word.

The Programme’s demarcations

So as to avoid any risk of doubts issues which were expressly not part of the Streamlining Key Data Programme were specified at the beginning of the Programme.

- 1 *Firstly, it was not the intention to arrive at a discussion on or to provide for the erosion of the existing protection of privacy of the public and the business community. An explicit precondition governing the Streamlining Key Data Programme stipulated that the exchange of data was permitted solely in the event of a statutory basis for the repeated use of that data (pursuant to, for example, the Personal Data Protection Act).*
- 2 *Secondly, it was not the intention to arrive at a substantial reduction in the number of databases maintained by the authorities. Although it was self-evident that there was no objection to any reduction found to be a feasible option during the course of the Programme, this was not an advance objective of the Programme.*

- 3 *Thirdly, it was not the intention that the Programme would - or should - restructure the information infrastructure on the basis of a blueprint drawn up in advance. The decision to implement the Programme was accompanied by an explicit ultimate objective; however the various elements of the government apparatus would need to develop and elaborate their personal approach and their individual rates of progress towards that objective during the course of the Programme.*
- 4 *Fourthly, it was not the intention to modify the main structure of the Dutch government and/or restrict the responsibility of each minister for his or her policy field(s). Authentic Registers would be constructed under the responsibility of the most appropriate minister as assessed on the basis of the content of the relevant register.*

Voluntary collaboration, but not without obligation

From the very beginning of the Programme it was made clear that although participation was voluntary it was not without obligation. This principle was reflected in the design of the organization for the Programme. It was decided to adopt a design that would be characterized both by a clearly-visible involvement by the senior management and an active personal contribution from all participants in terms of both the time of their staff and their resources. Eight important agreements of relevance to these issues reached at the beginning of the Programme were:

1. The Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities bore the political responsibility for the achievement of the Programme's general objectives². On this basis the Director of the Public Sector Information Policy Department of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations was appointed the official coordinator of the Programme. The Director of the Public Sector Information Policy Department reported to a Steering Committee chaired by the Director General of Public Administration of the

2) In the Netherlands the portfolio of the Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities included the formal responsibility for the government's information infrastructure at the time of the initiation of the programme. When the new Government took office in 2002 this responsibility was returned to the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, who had previously been responsible for the issue (please refer to Sub-section 1).

- Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, comprised of one Director-General of each ministry participating in the Programme and the Chairman of the Dutch Data Protection Authority. This Steering Committee monitored the main strategic lines of the Programme.
2. All ministries participating in the Programme entered into the obligation to actively participate in the development of the policy, and to take tangible measures within their ministries in the implementation of the policy.
3. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations was responsible for the coordination of the development of the policy. All ministries participating in the Programme would make their individual contributions based on a plan of approach drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.
4. Each ministry participating in the Programme was to carry out at least one feasibility study into the implementation of an authentic register within the ministry's field of responsibility. The relevant minister would use the results from this feasibility study in a decision as to commence an implementation project.
5. The Steering Committee would decide which implementation projects were eligible for financing from the funds for the Programme. The responsibility for the implementation of the authentic register would be borne by the ministry responsible for the field of relevance to the register.
6. No feasibility studies or implementation projects falling within the scope of the Programme would be financed solely from the funds available for the Programme. As a general principle funding was to be provided to a maximum of 80% of the cost of feasibility studies, and to a maximum of 20% of the cost of implementation projects. The ministry responsible for the study or project was responsible for its overall funding. This responsibility also extended to the provision of cover for any financial disappointments that became apparent during the course of the work. The 80/20% scheme was intended to serve as a litmus test (i.e. put your money where your mouth is").
7. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations was responsible for a special (financial) incentive scheme - the Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme') - for the achievement of quick wins as proposed by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on the basis of a framework drawn up by the Steering Committee. This incentive scheme was primarily intended to encourage the harvesting of 'low-hanging fruit': in parallel to the long-term programmes for the development and implementation of authentic registers, funds were also made

available for the 'immediate' achievement of modest systems for the re-use of data. This approach would be beneficial both to confidence in the authentic-register concept and to general familiarity with the concept.

8. Each ministry participating in the Programme would submit quarterly progress reports to the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations reviewing the relevant ministry's work on the Programme. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations would then process these reports - inclusive of the report on its own activities - into a quarterly overall report to be submitted to and adopted by the Steering Committee. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations was also entrusted with the preparation of an annual progress report to be submitted by the Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities on behalf of the ministries participating in the Programme to the House of Representatives of the States General in December of each year.

Two lines of action: the development of the policy and the implementation of the policy

The aforementioned list of agreements reflected the underlying principle adopted by the Programme Bureau whereby - and notwithstanding the formal support provided by the Government for the initiation of the Programme - it would, above all, be necessary to prevent the forces at play within the existing political and administrative apparatus from raising (too many) impediments by adopting some form of strategic evasive or counterproductive conduct. The agreements compelled the participants to perceive the development of the policy as a problem shared by all those taking part in the Programme. At the same time commitment to the above agreements implied that the implementation of the policy would emphatically be regarded as the individual responsibility of the ministries participating in the Programme. The objectives of the Streamlining of Key Data Programme could be achieved solely when the ministries implemented the Programme within their jurisdiction and assigned priority to the Programme on the basis of the policy problems and challenges confronting the relevant ministry.

These needs gave cause to the decision to create a distinction between two lines of action within the Programme:

- a development of the policy line of action, with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations as the central coordinator, whereby the primary role of the Programme Bureau would be to serve as a catalyser (by virtue of its initiation of

studies, indication of alternative lines of approach, and organization of opportunities for joint decision-making);

- an implementation of the policy line of action, whereby the ministries participating in the Programme bore the responsibility for the implementation with the scope of their policy issues. The role played by the Programme Bureau would be to monitor the scheduling and the progress, provide support by rendering the policy accessible and supplying the necessary tools and, where so required, acting as a consultant in specific projects.

It was decided to implement both lines of action in parallel with each other and not, as is customary, in series with each other. This decision was based on the philosophy that a parallel implementation would result in a mutual cross-fertilization whereby the development of the policy would be directly influenced by the experience acquired during the implementation of the policy and whereby the implementation of the policy would not be based on a trial-and-error approach, but would instead be imparted with the nature of a structured and planned process.

The aforementioned principle also resulted in the decision not to set up a large centralized Programme Bureau, since the majority of the implementation was to be carried out by the sectors participating in the Programme. Consequently the staff of the Programme Bureau above all needed to be accommodated within the line management of the relevant organizations involved in the implementation.

But what is an impetus?

A particular issue requiring consideration at the beginning of the Programme was the precise specification of the Programme's objective with respect to the deliverables. During the preparations for the Programme no one was very concerned about the exact meaning of "an impetus", or as to when it would be possible to refer to the intended "irreversibility" of the transformation to be achieved. These definitions were elaborated and quantified in a Programme Plan focused largely on the tasks involved in the implementation of the policy. It was agreed that this overall Plan was to be updated at

annual intervals during the course of the Programme, and that it would be improved by means of “working plans”. The advance reservation of funds amounting to NLG 35 million and the sub-division of the funds for each year of the Programme mentioned earlier in this Section was adopted as an underlying fixed target for the work on the Programme. In so doing the discussions in effect focused on the participants’ joint specification of the activities to be financed by NLG 35 million over a three-year period required to achieve an irreversible transformation within their policy sectors.

Communications and the provision of information as spearheads

Last but not least, from the very beginning the design of the Programme was based on the great importance of communications and the provision of information to the achievement of the Programme’s objectives. For this reason structural attention was devoted to these issues during the elaboration of the plans of action for both the development and the implementation of the policy. This was based on the need for the underlying philosophy of the Streamlining Key Data Programme to become common property amongst all sections of the government apparatus, for the (interim) results achieved by the Programme to gain both recognition and acknowledgement, and for the experiences acquired with approaches achieving a greater or lesser degree of success to be shared amongst those participating in the Programme. At the same time the following principles were formulated:

- In view of its general objectives the Streamlining Key Data Programme was in fact comprised of communications and the provision of information. Communications and the provision of information constituted integral components of all activities carried out within the scope of the Programme; consequently they were not the responsibility of one person, but were in fact a shared responsibility of all those involved in the Programme.
- An issue such as the Streamlining Key Data Programme would benefit from frappez toujours, or constant renewal; it was not a ‘sexy’ issue that would more-or-less automatically drew attention to itself. Moreover once attention had been drawn to the issue this did not imply that it would continue to receive attention.
- It would be necessary to communicate the fact that the Streamlining Key Data Programme was anything but a more-or-less autonomous ICT operation, but that it in

fact constituted an integral element of the endeavours to improve the quality of public administration and which was both primarily and above all characterized by the politico-strategic, socio-organizational, financial and legal issues associated with its objectives.

- It would be necessary to communicate the fact that the Streamlining Key Data Programme constituted an indispensable condition for the achievement of a number of policy objectives the government had set itself, such as a reduction of the administrative burden, the improvement of the services, and measures to combat fraud. The Programme would not focus on one or a couple of these objectives, since this would (a) be intrinsically incorrect and (b) would render the Programme unnecessarily vulnerable to issues that might or might not be on the current political agenda.
- The underlying principle of the Programme was “the government should not ask what is already known”.

In addition, a number of specifications for the style were drawn up, whereby the communications and the provision of information were to focus on the content. The binding factor of communications is their content; although a striking design is also of importance, this is ultimately no more than a supporting role. In addition, the communications and the provision of information would need to be demand-driven, and focused on the needs, questions and the problems confronting those to be reached by the communications. Last but not least, the communications and the provision of information would need to endeavour to achieve a personal approach, whereby one-to-one communications would constitute the ideal; every recipient would need to perceive a given message as being expressly intended for them.

PART II

The development of the policy

4 Development of the policy: objectives, core issues, and the approach

The Programme Plan designated three spearheads for the development of the policy line of action:

1. the development and adoption by the Government of the definition of the term 'authentic register', inclusive of the requirements to be met by authentic registers and the organizational, legal and financial policy framework applicable to their development and implementation.
2. the further elaboration of the legitimacy - the purpose - of the Streamlining Key Data concept: which tangible benefits would be offered by the streamlining of key data, and which disadvantages would be associated with a decision not to introduce the concept?
3. the instrumentation of the aforementioned policy framework by the elaboration of tangible guidelines for the implementation of the policy.

These spearheads arose from the policy issues associated with the Programme from its very inception. These issues were not restricted to the continual insistence for the provision of more clarity as to what authentic registers do or do not entail, and for an answer as to the approach to be adopted for their institutionalization within the public sector in view of the organization, the existing statutory frameworks and the conditions attached to the financing. In addition, in spite of the analyses that gave cause to the initiation of the Programme, questions were repeatedly raised as to whether the streamlining of key data was really necessary; moreover there were frequent requests for the provision of practical tools that could be used to impart the concept with a tangible shape.

The development of the policy was emphatically approached as a joint quest by all parties participating in the Programme. Although the initiative for the process was taken by the central Programme Bureau, the Bureau was not intended to serve as some sort of ivory tower with white smoke issuing from the chimney every time a new step had been taken. A further significant underlying principle of the development of the policy stipulated that wherever possible use would be made of practical experience acquired both at home and abroad. It was also emphasised that a not-insignificant issue to be addressed during the development of the policy would be the acquisition of an insight into the agreements required to develop coherence between individual authentic registers during the course of the Programme. Subsequent to the first year's work an additional specific issue was included in the working

plan for 2001, i.e. the elaboration of a policy framework for the use and maintenance of personal identification numbers within the public administration sector. This decision was based on the conclusion that one of the recurrent problems confronting the Dutch authorities was the achievement of a true streamlining of personal data.

The following sub-sections review the activities carried out during the development of the policy line of action, whereby the focus is placed on the tangible results achieved with those activities. Throughout the Programme the development of the policy was perceived as a multi-disciplinary duty that would simultaneously need to give due consideration to the various rationalities and perspectives. The review begins with a discussion of the information-technology issues (Sub-section 5), focused on attention for the functional design of the information infrastructure, the role to be played by authentic registers, their position within the infrastructure, and the requirements they would need to meet. Sub-sections 6, 7 and 8 review the legal, organizational and financial issues respectively, and the concluding Sub-section 9 contains a separate discussion of the aforementioned personal identification number policy.

5 Elaboration of the information-technology issues

From the perspective of the information-technology issues involved in the development of the policy the primary need pertained to the elaboration of the concept of authentic registers required for the provision of an as tangible as possible framework for the definition of the nature of authentic registers, and the specification of the requirements they would need to meet. In summary the central issues to be addressed were:

- What do authentic registers entail?
- What does a System of authentic registers contain?
- Which requirements need to be met by authentic registers, and what is involved in ensuring for compliance with those requirements?

What do authentic registers entail?

The first result from the development of the policy was a further definition the nature of authentic registers; this definition was subsequently adopted by the Government. As summarized briefly in Sub-section 1, it was decided that authentic registers are databases

officially designated as such by the government that constitute the sole basis for data required for the performance of public law duties, such as the Municipal Personal Records Database (GBA) for the most frequently used personal data, and the registration-number database for the identification of vehicles. By its very definition a government register that has been assigned the authentic register status is deemed to constitute the sole source of correct data, as a consequence of which comparable data from other registers may not be employed in the performance of public duties. This means that government agencies in need of data incorporated in an authentic register are under the obligation to make use of the authentic register - or, in other words, data may not be obtained from the public, the industrial community or other government agencies unless it is possible to demonstrate that the requisite data is not incorporated in any authentic register.

Each authentic register is assigned to one government agency, or group of agencies, such as the municipalities responsible for the Municipal Personal Records Database; this agency or these agencies is/are then appointed the owner of the register. The owner is under the obligation to maintain the register in accordance with the national guidelines, and to ensure that the register complies with explicit quality guarantees specified for the register. The quality and the value of the data will increase with the number of organizations which make use of that data; this is furthered by means such as the introduction of the obligation to give the owner notification of any errors that may be encountered in the authentic register.

What does a system of authentic registers contain?

In essence, the Streamlining Key Data Programme pertained to the re-use of data. The achievement of this objective on a large scale involves more than simply designating the authentic registers for individual (groups of) data; the re-use of data requires an explicit coherence in the government's information infrastructure. It should be realized that data incorporated in one (authentic) register, usually possesses a relationship with data in other (authentic) registers. The acquisition of the necessary coherence requires the creation of relationships between the various registers based on the communal data they contain. Consequently a coherent group of mutually-related registers constitutes a System of registers.

During the development of the policy it rapidly became apparent that clustering registers in a System would simplify access to data incorporated in the existing registers. Moreover a system of government registers would be conducive to the orderliness and transparency of the entire government information infrastructure, albeit subject to the proviso that the System employs unequivocal definitions and unique designations for the objects. Authentic registers play a leading role in the fulfilment of these conditions; the government registers and the data they contain need to be streamlined in a manner such that comparable data can be defined and designated in just one - authenticated - manner. Moreover the use of authentic registers ensures that the data is collected on just one occasion.

It was decided that the System of government registers would need to be designed in a manner ensuring that it possessed both the flexibility and expandability required for the incorporation of new registers at some later point in time. This would result in the development of a layered structure of registers based on a joint objective (such as records of incomes) or on the level of a policy sector (such as the health-care sector). This approach would achieve a more orderly and transparent System of registers, in turn simplifying both searches for data in registers and the re-use of data.

It was then concluded that if the System were to be of practical use it would be necessary to define a number of management duties providing for the maintenance of and access to the System. These management duties would also need to prevent the collection of specific data on a number of occasions - as a result of which a government agency wishing to make use of or record or amend data pertaining to a specific object (and which possesses the requisite authorization) would need to be offered a rapid and simple manner to determine whether that relevant category of data was already available elsewhere. Should this be the case then it would subsequently be necessary to determine whether records of the relevant item had already been made. To this end functions and facilities would be required that were focused on (1) an insight into the categories of data, (2) an insight into the location of the data, and (3) access control governing making records of data, amending data, or reusing data. For this reason a number of tools were devised and prototyped (please refer to the following box) that would provide for the appropriate performance of the government information infrastructure.

Tools for the support of an operational System of authentic registers

Within the scope of the development of the policy it was decided that a specification would be drawn up of the categories of data available in each authentic register, the 'Authentic Register Catalogue'. Consequently the Municipal Personal Records Database Catalogue, for example, would contain information enabling potential users to determine whether the data incorporated in the database could be used in the performance of their specific public duties. In addition, a 'National Authentic Register Catalogue' would be prepared which contained an integral summary of the most important categories of data available in all authentic registers. This National Catalogue was intended to obviate the need, for example, to consult a large number of catalogues in answering a question such as 'which register contains information about the year of manufacture of motor vehicles?' In conclusion, a 'National Authentic Register Dictionary' would be prepared which listed all the names and definitions used in compiling the various catalogues.

Which requirements need to be met by authentic registers, and what is involved in ensuring for compliance with those requirements?

It will be self-evident that the specific objective and the required performance of authentic registers gave cause to the need for requirements imposed on their maintenance and use that differ from the requirements imposed on registers used solely in the support of one specific duty and that, in general, these requirements would need to be more stringent. For this reason a set of specific requirements and preconditions would be drawn up that would need to be met by authentic registers for the achievement of an optimum performance within the system of government registers.

The initial step was to draw up a formal definition of 'authentic registers' that was subsequently included in the first progress report to the House of Representatives and adopted by the Government. According to this definition an authentic register is specified as 'a high-quality database accompanied by explicit guarantees ensuring for its quality assurance that, in view of the entirety of statutory duties, contains essential and/or frequently-required data pertaining to persons, institutions, issues, activities or occurrences and which is designated by law as the sole officially recognized register of the

relevant data to be used by all government agencies and, if possible, by private organizations throughout the entire country, unless important reasons such as the protection of privacy explicitly preclude the use of the register’.

This definition was then used to draw up a summary of the specific requirements to be met by an authentic register (in addition, as will be self-evident, to the general requirements imposed on all large government registers, such as security requirements and, in the event of personal records, measures to protect privacy, etc.) The specific requirements were adopted by the Government and included in their entirety as Appendix 2 to the concluding letter on the Programme submitted to the House of Representatives of the States General. A further explanation and elaboration of the specific requirements was provided in ten Guidelines published by the Programme Bureau in 2002³. The following box contains a summary of the specific requirements.

Summary of the specific requirements imposed on authentic registers

1st requirement: Transparent legislation

- *The register is governed by law;*
- *The users are under the obligation to notify the owner of the register of any errors or shortcomings*
- *Use of the authentic register is mandatory for the entire government apparatus*
- *Liability issues are rendered explicit*

2nd requirement: Transparent finances

- *The implementation and operation are effected at reasonable costs, and there are explicit specifications of the apportionment of the costs*

3rd requirement: Explicit content and structure

- *The content and scope of the register has been rendered explicit*

4th requirement: Explicit responsibilities and procedures

- *Exhaustive agreements and procedures have been drawn up with respect to the owner of the register and the suppliers and users of the data*
- *Explicit procedures have been drawn up governing the accessibility of the authentic register*
- *A stringent quality-assurance scheme has been implemented*
- *Specifications have been laid down stipulating that users of the data shall be involved in the decision-making about the register, the manner in which this involvement has been effected, and that this involvement is not without obligation*

5th requirement: Part of the system

- *The position of the authentic register within the System of authentic registers has been rendered explicit, and the relationship with the key registers have been specified*
- *The control of the authentic register rests with an administrative body, and a minister has been assigned the responsibility for the implementation and operation of the register*

In view of the purpose to be fulfilled by the authentic registers it will be self-evident that a leading role was assigned to quality assurance during the elaboration of these requirements. This was based on the understanding that in the absence of an irrefutable quality the policy would as such be the subject of continual discussions: an appropriate quality of the data would be conducive to the users’ confidence in the register, and would in turn encourage them to make use of the data it contained. Within this context ‘quality’ is understood as the extent to which the data incorporated in the register is up to date, correct, and complete. Three stages were distinguished in the achievement of the necessary quality of the data: (1) at the source, by means of measures pertaining to the acquisition of the information, the use of source documents, and the use of data from other authentic registers, (2) during the processing, by means of measures such as the inclusion of data in a register of amendments, the approval of data, and the performance official correction, and

3) Please refer to the list of publications enclosed at the rear of this book.

(3) during the use of data, such as by means of the obligatory notification of any errors observed by users and the entitlement of those included in the register to have their records corrected.

6 Elaboration of the legal issues

Although it was evident from the very beginning that a legal elaboration of the concept of authentic registers would be of great importance to the Programme, it was nevertheless decided that jurists would not be intensively involved in the first months of the work. This decision was based on the need for full certainty as to the government's overall objective for the Programme prior to proceeding to a review of any legal or other obstacles to the Programme and to an assessment as to how any obstacles should be addressed, an approach which was adopted in view of the concern that allowing the two discussions to take place simultaneously would be grist to the mill of those opposed to the policy. However once the course to be adopted by the Programme had been decided the jurists were fully involved in the further developments so as to ensure that the legal issues would not become a bottleneck - a need which was of great importance in view of a number of significant issues that needed to be addressed. These issues included questions such as: How should the function and the operation of an authentic register be formalized? Who is the owner of the register? Who is liable for errors in the register? Which privacy issues play a role? What level of security will be required? However other important questions were also: How can the re-use and the prohibition on the acquisition of data at source be arranged? Which form of legal entity should be adopted: an agency, a foundation, a private limited liability company, an autonomous administrative body? What can be arranged with contracts, and when will legislation be required? When reviewing these questions it is important to bear in mind that the implementation, management and use of authentic registers was a new development. The Streamlining Key Data Programme was based on the obligation to re-use data, the prohibition on the acquisition of data at source, the liability to provide for the maintenance of the data incorporated in the authentic register, and the pan-government use of the data - all of which were fundamentally different from the then customary concepts employed by the government in the implementation and management of databases and the exchange of data between them.

An initial exploration of the legal aspects revealed three key questions requiring further analysis:

1. Which issues, from a legal perspective, needed to be reviewed in connection with a system of authentic registers, i.e. the location and integration in the current judicial system in the Netherlands and, in particular, the liability issues?
2. Which legal arrangements would consequently need to be made, i.e. which rights and obligations would need to be specified?
3. How would these arrangements need to be made, i.e. what form of legal framework would be required?

Which legal issues needed to be reviewed in connection with a system of authentic registers?

Would there be any legal impediments to creation of a system of authentic registers? This was the first question that was addressed by the Programme Bureau. The resultant study yielded a two-part answer: (1) there were no principle legal objections, but (2) no relevant legal arrangements were available at the time. Consequently the actions that were required were both straightforward (no impediments or obstacles would need to be removed) and simultaneously complex (which arrangements would need to be made first?).

In his progress letter of October 2001 to the House of Representatives the Minister, Mr Van Boxtel, concluded that it would not be possible to implement the Programme in the absence of new legislation. This legislation was necessary since the plans constituted a fundamental modification, imposed by the Government, of the entire government's information infrastructure (the obligation to make use of the authentic registers, and the prohibition on the recollection of existing data⁴). Procedural legislation would be required in view of the 'polder' nature of the decentralized Dutch state⁵. In his letter the Minister also assumed that the arrangement of the issues involved in each authentic register would require either a new Act or the amendment of any existing procedural legislation of relevance to the register. It was also noted that it was possible that at a later stage (i.e. once sufficient experience had been

- 4) i.e. the obligation imposed on administrative authorities requiring them to ascertain whether a specific category of data is available from an officially-designated authentic register prior to any further action, as well as the obligation to ensure that the data in their records is identical to the data contained in the relevant authentic register.
- 5) However this does not imply that all arrangements need to be laid down in legislation; details can be stipulated in lower-tier regulations such as Orders in Council, or even laid down in contracts.

acquired) umbrella regulations could be implemented which would be applicable to the entire system. These umbrella regulations could, for example, bring the procedures for the streamlining of key data which have evolved by that time in line with administrative practice - i.e. the confirmation of what are referred to as the 'general principles of proper administration'. It should be noted that it was also observed that, irrespective of any decision to implement new regulations for each register, these registers would also be governed by a variety of existing laws such as the General Administrative Law Act, the Personal Data Protection Act, the Government Information (Public Access) Act, and the domain of the Netherlands Civil Code (applicable, for example, to liability). Other regulations of relevance include sectoral legislation such as the Municipal Database (Personal Records) Act (GBA), the proposed Key Business Register Act (BBR), the Land Registry Act, and adjoining regulations.

Which rights and obligations would need to be specified?

The general principle adopted with respect to the second key questions stipulated that it would, above all, be necessary to avoid making arrangements for issues for which arrangements had already been made. This could be achieved by integrating the new arrangements in the existing regime; for example the General Administrative Law Act (AWB) contains provisions specifying the meaning of a 'decision' (for example, the refusal to correct an error in a register), whilst the Personal Data Protection Act (WBP) specifies precisely what - and, in particular, what is not - permitted with respect to the use of personal data. Studies have also revealed that the Netherlands Civil Code and the WBP already contain many provisions of relevance to liability.

Consequently what remained was a relatively restricted list of issues that were either not provided for in the current legislation, or for which other arrangements than those currently provided for in the legislation would be required⁶. It will be self-evident that many of the arrangements required for the various authentic registers were identical, whereby the arrangements for these issues would need to be based on the legal relationships arising between the most important dramatis personae of relevance to the registers, i.e. the relationship between the owner of the register and the supplier(s) of the data, the relationship between the owner of the register and the users of the data, and the relationship with the person whose records are included in the register or the person of

relevance to an item included in the register (such as the owner of a building). In view of the many questions with respect to the issue, the Programme devoted particular attention to the question of liability with respect to (errors made in) authentic registers, whereby it was noted that liability can be an issue with respect to (1) loss incurred as a result of incorrect and/or incomplete data in authentic registers, (2) acting in contravention of the statutory regulations pertaining to an authentic register, or (3) situations in which there is a breach of privacy (please refer to the following box).

One of the issues: liability

Although the framework governing liability was already largely in place, the Programme Bureau nevertheless devoted a separate Guideline to the issue. This reflected the nature of liability as the pitfall in legal issues; without an additional review the liability issue would continue to cast a shadow over the plans. However how large was this shadow in actual practice? In essence, it was concluded that the situation was not, in fact, extremely serious:

- *The government would need to act with due care. What are referred to as the general principles of proper administration imparted tangible shape to this requirement of due care. Liability could be an issue (only) once the government had acted contrary to this requirement.*
- *Second, liability could be an issue only once an error has been made (which had resulted in loss), i.e. the government was responsible for an error in the register. Appropriate procedures and working methods could render a high quality of the authentic registers a feasible proposition, and provide a guarantee for their accuracy of their contents. An approach of this nature would result in few errors in the authentic registers.*
- *Authentic registers do not need to be perfect to exclude liability. If it was possible to demonstrate that due care had been taken and that every reasonable endeavour had been made to prevent errors in the register then loss incurred as a result of an error that was nevertheless present in the register would not automatically result in a successful claim for liability and the need for the owner of the register to provide compensation for the loss.*

6) Further details are given in Schreuders and Prins' report, and in Guideline # 10 from the Programme Bureau.

- *The majority of data traffic would take place between organizations within the public sector. It was virtually inconceivable that within this sector one organization would summon another organization to appear in an administrative court in a claim for damages.*
- *Should, in spite of all the precautions, loss nevertheless be incurred then it would be necessary to be able to make use of emergency measures, i.e. explicit (written) agreements - which certainly did not need to be laid down in legislation - which provided for the obligation to bear that loss. These regulations would largely be of a procedural nature; they would need to be practical, and focused on a rapid resolution of the conflict (and the faults). Once this framework had been established the risk that the owner of an authentic register would be summoned to appear before an administrative court (and ordered to pay compensation) would negligible; administrative law usually already offered sufficient opportunities for the resolution of a dispute.*

What form of legal framework would be required?

The third and last key legal issue pertained to the form of the legal framework. Once it had become clear which arrangements need to be made it would then be necessary to develop the requisite legislation. It was noted that the most logical approach would be for the ministry responsible for a given register to take the initiative for this legislation (for example, the Authentic Building Register would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, and the Key Business Register would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Economic Affairs). Legislation jurists would employ the relevant regulations, what are referred to as the 'Directives for Regulations', to draw up a legislative proposal in collaboration with the stakeholders.

At the same time it was concluded that other legal instruments (such as supply contracts for users, covenants, etc.) that do not require legislation could, self-evidently, be prepared using a rapid process. This approach could be an appropriate option during the preliminary phase, during which experience was still being acquired. The Programme Bureau responsible for the plans (please refer to Sub-section 7) could, as it were, provide for these

instruments, although obviously consultation with the senior legislative framework would be advisable! It was also concluded that the construction of the legal framework should constitute an integral element of the entire project (i.e. the development of policy, but also the development of the system, the organization, the financing, consultations between the various officials, the implementation, and the evaluation). Moreover the design of the legal framework would need to take account of the experience acquired in the other areas of the project, since there would otherwise be a considerable risk of the preparation of regulations divergent from other elements of the Programme. This issue would also need to be reflected in the staffing and organization of the project team.

7 Elaboration of the administrative-organizational issues

The following issue that needed to be addressed during the development of the policy line of action was a review of the requirements from an administrative-organizational perspective. Which elements would need to be organized, and which element should be addressed first? This question became apparent immediately after work began on the development of an authentic register; although the administrative-organizational design was of particular relevance to the implementation phase, it nevertheless needed to be taken into consideration from the very beginning of the design phase.

The review of the plans from this perspective was based on the principle that a group intending to construct an authentic register will have given in-depth consideration to a business case for that register prior to its development: was there in fact a case? The next step would entail an assessment of the supporters of such a register (sponsors and users), and their requirements. Only once this had become apparent would work begin on the development of the register - i.e. the 'look before you leap' principle. The decision as to the appropriate administrative vehicle - such as an agency, an autonomous administrative body, a department, a foundation, or a public or private limited liability company - would depend largely on the results from the conceptual process: these results would determine the type of vehicle and the further organizational and legal elaboration of the authentic register! Once again, it should be realized that this approach to the design and the prior (conceptual) steps was largely determined by the Dutch situation and the forces at play as

reviewed briefly in Sub-section 1 of this book, i.e. a decentralized and consequently 'polder-like' state in which a number of ministries (but also other administrative layers) possess a substantial autonomy with respect to their information management. In other countries - for example, countries with a more centralized government - the design process would, or could, be of a more directive nature.

In summary, it was concluded that in fact the administrative-organizational design revolved around three central issues:

1. Which administrative vehicle should conduct the management of the register: an agency, an autonomous administrative body, or a private-law form?
2. How should such a vehicle be organized (co-determination, supervision, monitoring)?
3. How, in view of the applicable regimes, should the organization be interpreted in legal terms (legislation, contracts)?

The answers to these questions would largely be determinative: at a higher level of aggregation a number of leading elements ultimately determine the choices that needed to be made with respect to the administrative-organizational design of the authentic registers. Moreover they were sequential choices.

The following reviews a number of existing alternatives for the administrative vehicle, inclusive of considerations with respect to the selection of the relevant alternative:

- *A department.*
The register is brought under a directorate within a ministry. Full scope is available for ministerial responsibility, and full advantage can be taken of the benefits offered by direct ministerial management.
- *An agency.*
An agency is in essence an internal divestment of a ministerial department. A users' council is often set up for agencies. The responsibility continues to rest with the minister. The organization of agencies is often laid down in an owners' covenant governing the involvement of the various institutions of relevance to the agency
- *An autonomous administrative body.*
An autonomous administrative body is a more independent form of agency. Autonomous administrative bodies are managed by a management board or directorate whose operations are monitored by a supervisory board (appointed by the

minister and often nominated by other organizations involved in the autonomous administrative body, such as other ministries, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, the Interprovincial Consultative Body, or companies). These boards can also be supplemented with a users' council. In the Netherlands the procedural regulations for autonomous administrative bodies are effected by means of an act establishing the body.

- *A private-law form.*
The most independent form of organization is a private-law legal entity (usually a foundation, although a public or a private limited-liability company is also conceivable). Opting for this form offers scope for public-private collaborative arrangements. Direct ministerial responsibility cannot be exercised in the event of the creation of a private-law organization. Foundations can be provided with a policy council, which submits proposals to the foundation's board. An advisory board comprised of users can also assist the foundation in its operations.

Considerations with respect to the choice of the administrative-organizational design of the management

A detailed review of designers' deliberations with respect to the administrative-organizational form of authentic registers is beyond the scope of this book. Consequently the following is restricted to a number of general conclusions from the study carried out into this issue:

- *Preference was given to a public-law vehicle, in view of the nature of the Programme's objectives and the impact of the registers. However until such time as an explicit political-administrative business case became available it was preferable to opt for a private-law form.*
- *In the event that the (interests of the) primary users were distributed over a number of ministries then it appeared to be logical to give consideration to the creation of an autonomous administrative body. However experience acquired in the Netherlands indicated that this depended on the prevailing political climate. When resistance to the creation of an autonomous administrative body was great then a*

7) Please refer to Guideline # 8 from the Programme Bureau for more details.

preferable approach would be to determine the 'main sponsor' and subsequently entrust that organization with the primary administrative responsibility; however in such situations the administrative arrangements protecting the interests of the 'sub-sponsors' would need to be effected in a different manner. Nevertheless it could, in the longer term, prove prudent to migrate to an independent administrative body.

- *The organization in question would wish to be able to influence its autonomy from the minister responsible for the register. Political support would be necessary during the project phase, and the organization would wish for protection under the minister's aegis. However once the organization had begun its operations it would wish for the greatest possible autonomy from the political issues of the day.*

8 Elaboration of the financial and economic issues

Authentic registers were intended to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's information infrastructure. However at the same time the analyses carried out prior to the Programme indicated that financial and economic issues could in fact constitute one of the major obstacles to the implementation of registers of this nature. Although when viewed from a macro perspective the policy might in fact be profitable, a micro level the parties might nevertheless be confronted with the problem that in their specific situation the income and expenses were not in a suitable equilibrium. The question is then which approach should be adopted in such situations.

In view of this situation - and also in view of the general expectations that substantial initial investments would be required in the implementation of the policy - the Programme Bureau devoted a great deal of attention to the financial substantiation and justification for the Programme at the following two levels:

- Firstly the underlying policy of the Streamlining Key Data Programme was subjected to a thorough cost/benefit analysis from a macro perspective: what benefits would in fact be achieved from the policy?

- Secondly, the steps required for the construction of a financing system and funding model for a specific register - i.e. from a micro perspective - with respect both to the initial investments (the design and implementation of the register) and to the operation of the register (its use, and its management).

The income from and expenses of the Programme policy

At the very beginning of the project it was decided to actively seek confrontation with the question of the income from and expenses of the Programme policy as viewed from a macro perspective - i.e. the Bureau would not avoid this confrontation. For this reason on two separate occasions during the course of the Programme an independent research institute was requested to assess whether the policy could pass the requisite financial and economic tests. It was decided that the procedures used for both investigations would be based on the analytical method used within the Dutch government for the appraisal of major investments in the infrastructure such as new railway lines and new motorways by organizations such as the Government Finance Inspectorate and the Central Planning Office. This decision was based on the prior intention to make use of the results from the investigations in the provision of justification of the Programme's objectives to major organizations of this nature.

An initial quick scan, carried out at the beginning of 2001 whilst the elaboration of all the issues involved in the policy was in full progress, revealed that the policy would certainly be valid from a financial and economic perspective. The results from this first investigation were used to substantiate a proposal to the Government in which it was suggested that the further development and implementation of a system of authentic registers be funded from the income from natural gas (what is referred to as the 'ICES Fund'). The Government submitted this substantiation to the Central Planning Office; the Office assessed the claim to be sound, and issued a favourable recommendation. However the assessment of all investment proposals in the ICES round was prematurely terminated as a result of the Government's concern for the need to employ the ICES Fund to cover financial setbacks in other fields.

A second and more in-depth investigation was subsequently carried out during the last year of the Programme. This analysis focused on the group of what are referred to as 'key registers' (please refer to Sub-sections 10 and 11 for a further explanation). The results from the second investigation were once again extremely favourable. It was concluded that even when all the qualitative benefits (a reduced incidence of errors, more rapid provision of service and higher-quality information for policy) were not taken into account⁸ the Programme policy would certainly generate financial gains. However this conclusion was subject to the condition that the policy would be implemented in full - i.e. the implementation of the policy should not initially be restricted to one or a couple of discrete registers, since the magnitude of the benefits (both quantitative and qualitative) would increase exponentially with the number of separate registers incorporated in the new System. In addition, it would also be necessary to impose the proposed mandatory use of the authentic registers on all government agencies.

In addition, at the end of 2002 the Programme Bureau also carried out an in-house investigation of promising projects for the re-use of data, focused on the availability of small-scale opportunities for cost savings within specific sectors. As such the search for business cases of this nature was instructive, since the interviewees exhibited a degree of reluctance in indicating opportunities in their immediate fields in view of their concern that "next they'll be asking me why I didn't raise the issue before". Attention was also drawn to the detrimental consequences of the frequent practice of taking advance account of any potential gains rather than allocating (at least part of) the gains to the organizations that had achieved them⁹.

8) A significant characteristic of the – stringent- method used for the investigation.

9) A substantiation of the various issues is given in Bulletin # 3 from the Programme Bureau.

The financing and funding of an authentic register: four phases

The Programme Bureau drew up a plan comprised of four phases designed to arrive at orderly decisions with respect to the financing and funding issues involved in the creation of a specific register:

1. The minister decides on the basis of a business case

The intention to designate a register an authentic register should be addressed in the same manner as every other ministerial policy intention pertaining to a specific approach designed to serve a more-or-less general government interest and to provide for the performance of one of the government's core duties. In principle the same (financial) regulations are applicable. Ministers will reach their decision to designate an authentic register on the grounds of a business case. Prior to a minister's decision to establish and operate an authentic register it will be necessary to carry out an accurate determination of the concomitant income and expenses, whereby it will be necessary to prove that the implementation and management of the authentic register will be cost-effective. The costs incurred for an authentic register are comprised of the costs of the staff, accommodation, the materials, and similar, possibly accompanied by the costs of interest and depreciation. The income is comprised of income in the form of fees paid by the users and income from the client(s). This income can be accrued from one ministry or, in the event of a number of clients, via an apportionment formula governing payments from those clients.

2. Who sits at the table?

The funding and financing of an authentic register will need to be based on an explicit management model specified by the relevant minister indicating who fulfils which role in the determination of the design and the use and management of the authentic register in question. This model makes a distinction between the following roles:

- The financier, who provides credit facilities for the advance financing of investments. This is the party granting the loan (for example, the Ministry of Finance when it makes a credit facility available).
- The contractor, who is entrusted with the actual operation of the register (the operational and tactical management) and consequently bears the responsibility for the implementation of the investments within the specified budget. The contractor is also responsible for keeping the financial accounts (for example, the municipalities in the instance of the population register, the GBA).

- The manager responsible for the system, entrusted with the overall management of the register and the determination of the financial terms of reference in consultation with the client and contractor. In principle the investments are made on the instruction of the manager (in the event of the aforementioned GBA, for example, of the relevant agency within the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations).
- The client(s), entrusted with the management of the content of the register. On the basis of this management the client(s) submit(s) proposals for modifications and specifies/specify the requirements and guidelines applicable to the contract carried out by the contractor. In practice the client is the relevant minister responsible for the register (once again, in the example of the GBA, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations).
- The user(s), who is/are supplied with data from the register. Examples of users are the police, major administration agencies, the public, and companies.

3. *Who bears which costs?*

It will then be necessary to allocate the income and expenses on the basis of the distribution of the interests served by the authentic register. To this end the following model was adopted:

- The client bears the costs of the implementation and management (the investments required for the creation and maintenance of the authentic register). These costs are (infra)structural in nature, and pertain to the construction and maintenance of the actual authentic register. It will be self-evident that the register may serve the (delegated) interests of a number of departments; in such instances these departments will jointly act as the client, and the costs will need to be distributed between them.
- The users bear the costs involved in the operation (the use of the authentic register). These costs are incurred in rendering the data accessible, and pertain to all the activities and resources required for the provision of data to the users.

It was decided that in principle the same structure would be employed for all users both within the government apparatus and otherwise.

4. *Who will be responsible for (a contribution to) the funding?*

The final question pertains to the source of the necessary funds, whereby a distinction should be made between the funds required for the investments and the funds required for the use of the authentic register.

The investments

The cash receipts system employed in the Netherlands is incompatible with large investments¹⁰. For this reason it was strongly recommended that a cost/benefit system be used for the implementation and operation of authentic registers whereby the costs (and the benefits) are determinative (in contrast to the cash receipt system, whereby the expenditure (and the income) are determinative). Pursuant to the cost/benefit system a depreciation schedule is employed to deduct the investments from the operating results (i.e. in portions, and not on a one-off basis as in the cash receipt system) such that the cost price of the authentic register is relatively stable over the years (and not astronomically high in (solely) the first year, as is the case with the cash receipt system). In so doing the emphasis is no longer placed on the financing of the initial investment, but is instead transferred to the financing of the operation of the authentic register - or, in other words, the cost/benefit system is compatible with the actual operational situation, and it enhances the political-administrative appeal of authentic registers.

It will then usually be necessary to arrange a loan for the advance financing of the requisite investment, since the available funds will often be inadequate for the implementation of an authentic register. The funding can be arranged by those with an interest in the authentic register - i.e. the relevant ministries or other government bodies (the municipalities), as well as private-law organizations such as utility companies (who will in turn finance their funding needs with bank credits). Numerous credit facilities are available to the government; the availability of these facilities depends on factors such as the legal form of the applicant. In the event that the authentic register is implemented and managed by an agency (which, as reviewed in the previous Sub-section, will often be the case) then credit facilities will be available from the Ministry of Finance. Comparable facilities are available to autonomous administrative bodies - and even foundations - duly designated in a ministerial regulation. Consequently when deciding the form of the legal

10) The Dutch Government bases its accounts on the cash receipt system, whereby expenditure (and income) is entered at the time the expenditure is made (or the income is received), inclusive of situations pertaining to long-term investments that will generate income. It will be self-evident that this constitutes an impediment to the implementation of authentic registers, since the full amount of the major investments in the requisite hardware and software is charged to the current budget of the minister responsible for the register. This often conflicts with the minister's other (shorter-term) priorities, especially when it is realized that others will often enjoy the benefits offered by the register.

vehicle that will be responsible for the operation of the authentic register it will be necessary to take account of the funding requirements and the (in)feasibility of acquiring the necessary funds.

The operation

It was decided that the costs incurred in the operation of the authentic register should be borne by the users. The funding requirements for the operation of the register will usually be lower than for its implementation, since no investments are required (i.e. advance funds do not need to be made available); users pay a fee for the data they receive which is based on the marginal cost (determined by means of a complex cost-price calculation). Consideration could be given to a variety of fee systems, such as subscriptions, bulk fees, graduated fees, one-off offers, one-off issues of data, promotional offers, etc.). In principle a given fee is charged for each specific category of data obtained from the authentic register. Consequently transparent financial accounts are essential for a variety of reasons, of which not the least unimportant is an ability to give account of the level of the fees in relationship to the costs. In conclusion, whilst determining the fees it will also be necessary to devote attention to their management. The group of users will need to have a say in and supervise the fee system. A periodic evaluation of the fee structure will be essential.

9 Elaboration of the personal identification number policy

As indicated earlier in Sub-section 4, it was decided during the development of the policy line of action that one specific issue would be included in the Programme that had not been foreseen in the initial plans. This additional issue pertained to the government's use and management of personal identification numbers; its incorporation was due to the developing awareness that the practice that had evolved over the years would constitute a major impediment to the effective streamlining of personal data.

The consideration given to this subject was based on practical experience; it had become apparent that the use of personal identity numbers constitutes an important condition to be met for the effective and efficient electronic exchange of personal data. In an electronic environment the use of unique numbers for each individual ensures for the rapid and

irrefutable identification of the person(s) in question. This need for identification is required in numerous contacts between the public and the government, such as the determination of entitlements to specific provisions (such as subsidies, benefits, or permits), the detection of fraud (such as benefits fraud) or measures to combat poverty (such as searches for persons who do not make use of their entitlement to benefits such as special national assistance). In addition to use for the above purposes, personal identity numbers are also of value to research (such as studies focused on the ageing of the population) and to the collection of information required for policy-making (such as the determination of the number of asylum-seekers or police officers).

The Programme was confronted with the problem of the nature of the personal identification number practices that had evolved over the years. Pursuant to carefully-considered decisions the Dutch Government had introduced a number of different personal identification number systems during the past few decades, a decision which was largely influenced by the need to prevent any violation of the privacy of the country's residents - a question which has traditionally been an emotional issue in the Netherlands. However in recent years there had been an increasing amount of discussion about this policy, in particular with respect to its effects. The official position originally adopted by the Government specified that information would be collected from the public just once, and that this information would be stored (for further use) in the population registers, the GBA. So as to provide for a structural exchange of this data it would then be necessary to implement successive statutory regulations pursuant to which the A number specified in the GBA would be used to provide for the exchange of that data. However in practice what is referred to as the SoFi number (the tax and national insurance number, originally introduced for and restricted to the exchange of data for fiscal and social security purposes), had adopted the role of the A number.

In other words, it was concluded that a review of the policy was urgently required - both in view of the practices that had evolved over the years, and in view of new developments such as the emergence of increasingly integrated forms of (electronic) services and the concomitant need for the introduction of an electronic identity card and a public-key infrastructure that would require new choices with respect to the use of personal identity numbers. In view of the political sensitivity of the issue (the threat of the Government

developing into George Orwell's Big Brother) it was decided that the implementation would not be effected at an excessively rapid pace. Experience has revealed that the issue as to the use and management of personal identity numbers is a classic example of a subject about which everyone has an opinion as to how it should not be done, but not how it should be done. For this reason it was decided that the first phase would entail ensuring for an objective and rational debate; an unequivocal future policy could be formulated only once an open climate had been created and consensus had been reached on an overview of the potential alternatives and their advantages and disadvantages.

In view of the forces at play the Programme Management decided to organize round-table meetings for senior officials from all the relevant ministries, to be chaired by someone with undisputed impartiality. During a series of three meetings a systematic analysis and diagnosis of the problems was carried out using the input of experts with respect to issues such as the legal framework and the problems encountered in practice. It ultimately proved possible to formulate unanimous recommendations on the future approach to the use of personal identity numbers. These recommendations were then submitted to the Government, and shortly before the conclusion of the Programme the Government decided to adopt the recommendations and to proceed to the implementation of the resultant new policy.

In essence, these recommendations proposed that all Dutch residents should be assigned a BurgerServiceNummer ('Citizen Service Number', BSN) for use in all contacts between the public and the government that require the use of a personal identity number. This number contains no intrinsic data, i.e. it is not possible to derive specific information about the relevant person from the number - or, in other words, the BSN indicates solely who a person is, and not what entitlements are or are not applicable to that person. Consequently the number provides an unequivocal statement of the identity of an individual, but not of the rights and obligations of that individual (such as the entitlement to specific health care or the obligation to submit information about specific income to the Belastingdienst, the Dutch Inland Revenue). In addition, this unique personal identity number would be used solely in instances in which it was absolutely necessary to establish an individual's identity - for example, for the determination of their entitlement to child benefit or a rent rebate, but not for the dispatch of general government information. The recommendations also

extended to outline specifications for the achievement of the necessary equilibrium between efficiency and the protection of privacy. In essence, guarantees for the protection of privacy were provided by (1) rendering prohibited uses technically infeasible, (2) adopting the principle that uses that are not permitted by law are prohibited, and (3) the implementation of technical and organizational provisions designed to enhance the transparency of the use of data for the general public.

Explanatory notes to the new policy

The policy for the BurgerServiceNummer ('Citizen Service Number', BSN) is based on the further development of the aforementioned and already existing SoFi number ('tax and national insurance number'). This decision was largely based on practical considerations: the SoFi number is the number currently in widest usage, and consequently its conversion into the BSN will require the least effort (such as, for example, the issue of new numbers, which will now be largely superfluous) and funds. Moreover the existing SoFi number does not contain any intrinsic specifications of personal information, and consequently it will be impossible to derive information such as gender or age from the BSN.

An appropriate management of the BSN will be achieved by entrusting the responsibility for the quality assurance for the system to the Municipal Personal Records Database (GBA), available (jointly) to all municipalities. This decision was also based largely on practical considerations: in 2001 the Government designated the GBA as the national identity infrastructure for personal data, and the GBA has acquired substantial experience in the requisite management and quality assurance needs by virtue of its maintenance of records of all residents of the Netherlands. Persons who cannot be designated as residents of the Netherlands, such as asylum-seekers, foreign home-owners or persons who work in the Netherlands but live outside the country will not be assigned a BSN. It was agreed that separate arrangements for persons in this category would be made by the relevant ministries (such as the Ministry of Justice for asylum-seekers, and the Belastingdienst (Dutch Inland Revenue) for employees residing outside the country's borders).

A special Act, the Wet op het BurgerServiceNummer ('Citizen Service Number Act'), will provide the legal basis for the BSN. This Act will explicitly stipulate that every exchange of data effected using the BSN must be imparted with a statutory basis; it will also guarantee that the BSN will be used solely as a purely administrative number for exchanges of data between various policy sectors in the public sector. Within these individual sectors (such as housing, health care, social affairs and education) use will be made of what are referred to as 'sectoral personal identity numbers'. When the data pertains to residents of the Netherlands (i.e. those registered in the GBA) sectors may make use of the BSN number of their sectoral number, subject to the proviso that the use and management of the BSN as a sector number is explicitly provided for in separate regulations. A stringent legal regime will be applicable to what is referred to as 'extraordinary personal data' such as personal data pertaining to crime or health; in situations in which extensive use is made of this data within a policy sector it will not usually be permitted to make use of the BSN as a sector number. Consequently it will then be necessary to introduce a separate sector number that is linked to the BSN.

In conclusion: companies may use the BSN solely in connection with the performance of a public duty (such as collaborative arrangements between the authorities and companies) and in situations in which the law imposes a mandatory requirement on the exchange of data with the government (such as mandatory exchanges of data with the Belastingdienst, the Dutch Inland Revenue).

10 The implementation of the policy: objectives, central issues, and the approach

The implementation of the policy line of action pertained to the actual introduction - *simultaneously* with the development of the policy - of the authentic registers and other concepts for the re-use of data within the policy sectors participating in the Programme. As mentioned earlier, it was agreed that each ministry participating in the Programme would carry out at least one tangible implementation project; in practice appreciably more projects were ultimately completed.

It was self-evident that the concept of authentic registers could be considered to be applicable to dozens, if not hundreds, of (clusters of) data. A key issue to be addressed at the beginning of the Programme was whether a specific sequence should be chosen, a question which was of relevance in view of the risk of the Programme becoming bogged down as a result of the fragmentation caused by simultaneous work on all the issues involved. The implementation of a complete system of authentic registers by means of one major operation was not a feasible proposition, as a result of which it was necessary to opt for a growth model. This in turn led to the question as to the criteria applicable to a phased implementation of the plans - a question which, it transpired, was difficult to answer. A frequently-heard statement indicated the need for a focus on the most important data - but which data was most important?

It was decided to organize a series of workshops in which a number of opinion leaders would explain their perception for their relevant policy sector. Each workshop, held in November 2000, resulted in a surprisingly unanimous response. In combination, the workshops resulted in a long list of (groups of) data that should constitute the focus of the implementation; this list encompassed both existing registers that would need to be redesigned and new registers that would need to be designed along the lines of the Programme's concept. In addition, the workshops yielded a wide variety of suggestions for other opportunities to pluck 'low-hanging fruit' - i.e. quick wins - within the broader context of the re-use of data. As a result it was decided to implement a separate campaign for this latter objective, i.e. the Stimuleringsregeling Gegevensherbruik, a 're-use of data incentive scheme' which made subsidies available to the parties concerned for short-term initiatives designed to result in the rapid implementation of these quick wins.

A second important initiative involved in the determination of the spearheads for the implementation was a working visit the Programme Bureau and the Programme's Coordinating Director from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations paid to

Denmark more than one year after the start of the Programme. During this working visit it became apparent that Denmark had implemented a programme of the nature underway in the Netherlands many years ago, whereby the Danes focused on authentic registers of persons, companies, buildings, plots of land, and addresses. They explained that making appropriate arrangements for the registers constitutes a major step towards the achievement of the objectives, since this is the data which is repeatedly used by numerous agencies. In focusing on these categories of data the objectives are in effect largely achieved.

On the basis of this Danish experience recommendations were submitted to the Dutch Government in which it was proposed that the same approach be adopted. The decision to this effect was made in mid-2001, and from that time on the emphasis of the implementation was based on a restricted number of authentic key registers. As will become apparent in Sub-section 11 these registers are largely identical to the pivotal Danish registers.

It will be self-evident that the first question pertained to the focus of the implementation; the second being, how the implementation should be tackled and funded. In view of the need to maintain appropriate control of the implementation it was decided to adopt a stringent phasing of the Programme (explained in more detail in the following box). The phasing also made use of an analysis of the experience acquired in projects of this nature both in the Netherlands and abroad¹¹. As was discussed in Sub-section 3, it was agreed that all projects would be financed only in part from the Programme's budget, as a result of which the parties involved in the projects would need to finance the remainder from their budgets. In effect, this constituted a litmus test as to whether the parties really perceived the Programme to be beneficial to them - an approach which was based on the conviction that organizations exhibit a greater involvement in projects that are (in part) self-funded as compared to projects funded by others.

The implementation of the policy in the form of a phased design and development process
Experience acquired with the implementation of authentic registers - such as the Netherlands' population register, land register and vehicle registration number register - revealed that the introduction of registers of this nature would require a great deal of time. The registers would gradually evolve in the required direction during the course of a number of years, whereby it

11) A substantiation is given in Bulletin # 1 from the Programme Bureau.

was important that due attention be given to the achievement of the ultimate objective. The probability that the ultimate objective would be achieved was increased when explicit agreements on the target were reached at the beginning of the Programme.

In view of this experience it was designed to draw up a stringent phasing for the implementation of the policy. In combination, the development and implementation of the policy constituted a cyclical process; where necessary the work began with a strategic investigation of the viability of the concept of an authentic register for specific (clusters of) data. In the event that this yielded a favourable answer the next stage was to carry out a feasibility study focused on the construction of an appropriate business case, the acquisition of an insight into the efforts that would be required, and an indication of the risk of failure. Only once these stages had been completed was the information available for a ministerial decision as to the commencement of an implementation project for the development and introduction of the relevant authentic register¹².

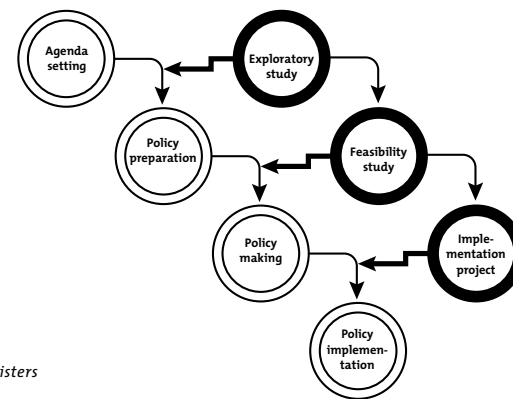


Figure 3: a System of registers

12) Details of the phasing and the approach to each step within the phases are given in Guideline # 7 from the Programme Bureau.

The implementation of the policy was based on the 'look before you leap' principle. A condition to be fulfilled prior to the implementation of an authentic register was the presence of a substantial societal interest that could not be met in the absence of the authentic register: each authentic register had to constitute a collective system offering an appreciable social value. Consequently so as to ascertain whether this condition was met it was necessary to establish which (societal) problems could be resolved by means of the authentic register, and which opportunities could be utilized on its introduction. Once this insight had been acquired it then became possible to identify the owner(s) of the problem, and to establish the relevant interests in the register. The adoption of this approach resulted in a specification of the intended users of the register. The organization of their contribution - the contribution, for example, to be made by the police, the municipalities, the administration agencies, sectoral organizations, as well as by the public and companies - constituted an extremely important element of the implementation process. It was evident that the owner of the register would be able to achieve very little in the absence of potential customers who were taken seriously right from the very beginning of the project, even when (as is the case with authentic registers) mandatory sourcing was imposed. As such, this last issue constituted reason enough for the need for due heed to be taken of the contribution from the users. The implementation of an authentic register gave rise to both rights and obligations on the part of the users; for this reason it was no more than logical that the development of the register took due account of their interests.

Once both the nature and the identity of the owner(s) of the problem had become clear it was then necessary to establish the identity of the organization which was drawn to the political interests of the owner(s) of the problem, and consequently the identity of the sponsor(s) of the design project. Personal preferences with respect to the minister to be assigned the responsibility for a specific dossier could play a role in this assessment. Experience acquired during the implementation of the policy revealed that an appropriate substantiation of the policy was essential; the reasoning on which the development of the register was based had to (continue to) be evident to the relevant minister. Moreover the associated economic - and, in particular, the political-

administrative - business case for the authentic register also needed to be completely explicit. In addition, in view of the fact that political opinions were subject to change and that policy objectives were vulnerable to erosion it was also advisable to base the substantiation for the policy on a number of policy issues, since this would ensure that it was possible to (continue to) demonstrate the societal value of the authentic register in a number of policy fields over the course of time).

The above outline of the design of the approach to the implementation of the policy is followed by a summary of the results of the implementation: the first Sub-section reviews the development of the key registers (Sub-section 11), followed by the implementation of other authentic registers (Sub-section 12), a separate discussion of the results from the Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme') (Sub-section 13), and concluded with a review of the communications and the provision of information (Sub-section 14).

11 The development of the key registers

The key registers the Government designated in mid-2001 as the core of the System of authentic registers pertained to a total of six clusters of (identifying) data. The Government also assigned the primary responsibility for each cluster to a minister. It was noted that in three instances the implementation of the key registers would in fact constitute an upgrading of existing registers; these registers were the Municipal Personal Records Database, the Land Registers and what was referred to as the 'Key Geographical Register'. In the other three instances - the Key Business Register, the Buildings Register and the Key Addresses Register - the authentic registers would be completely new registers.

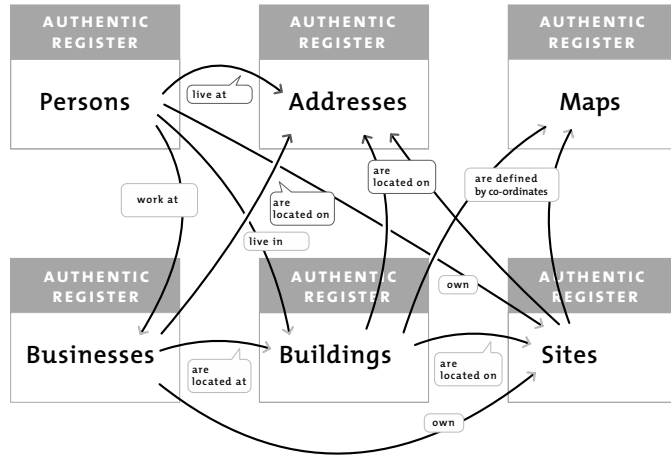


Figure 4: From development to implementation of the policy

A key register for personal data: the Municipal Personal Records Database (GBA)
The personal data register designated as one of the key registers has already been discussed earlier in this Chronicle, and this register served as one of the models for the development of the current Programme's policy. Consequently in this case the implementation of the policy was in the first instance restricted to an assessment of the need for the Municipal Personal Records Database (the GBA) to undergo modification pursuant to the requirements laid down during the development of the policy (please refer to Sub-section 5 for more details) followed, if necessary, by the implementation of the requisite modifications. It was decided that both these phases would be incorporated in the general modernization of the GBA in progress in parallel with the Streamlining Key Data Programme (please refer to the following box for details).

The most important conclusion from this appraisal of the GBA was that many of the users of the database did not in fact employ the GBA in its current form as a key register - even though this was the intention at the time of its development, and was certainly the objective of the Streamlining Key Data Programme. Consequently within the sense of the Streamlining Key Data Programme the GBA would, within its capacity as a key register, need to be assigned an enhanced role as a verification database for use with personal data in part collected by the agencies themselves. At the time of the introduction of the GBA the municipal executives were free to exercise their discretion as to how they implemented the GBA as a key register within their administrative system; however the studies carried out within the scope of the Streamlining Key Data Programme revealed that only a fraction of the municipalities had completed this process. The results from the appraisal gave cause to the decision that the Modernization of the GBA project would henceforth impose this requirement on all municipalities. This would in turn require an amendment of the Municipal Database (Personal Records) Act so as to provide for formal mandatory compliance with the requirements.

The GBA and the modernization of the GBA

The Municipal Personal Records Database (the GBA) was developed during the period between the mid-eighties and the nineties; the intention was to provide for a uniform system of registration of the residents in all Dutch municipalities. Pursuant to the relevant legislation the functionality required for the system is laid down in a Functional Design. Individual municipalities were free to exercise their discretion in the manner in which they implemented the design. In addition, the GBA system also extends to a network for the electronic transmission of messages between municipalities and several hundred what are referred to as 'users' who, pursuant to the aforementioned Act, are entitled to receive electronic messages (via subscriptions) containing information about any subsequent amendments to the data in the database.

After concluding that some elements of the GBA had become outdated the Government decided in 2001 that the system would undergo a modernization. This modernization, which is currently underway, includes modifications such as the introduction of online accessibility to the GBA and measures to reduce the dependency of the municipalities on their software suppliers that has developed in the aftermath of a number of mergers in the ICT sector. The intention of the modernization programme is to ensure that the GBA, as an essential element of the Netherlands' public information infrastructure, will become even more compatible with the needs of its users.

A key register for real estate ownership data: the Land Registers

As was the case with the GBA, in effect the Land Registers fulfilled an important de facto role as an authentic source of data - and, in fact, they had done so for a much longer period of time. These registers played a leading role in ensuring for the necessary legal certainty with respect to the sale and purchase of real estate. Consequently the Programme Bureau, reviewing the history of Land Registers, observed that it was making use of the ICT available in the electronic era to achieve the same results achieved by Napoleon for a number of categories of data using the technology available to him at the time.

As is the case in the countries surrounding the Netherlands, the Dutch Land Registers had already become largely automated over the years. Consequently, and in analogy with the GBA, the implementation of the policy involved little more than an assessment as to whether the registers complied with all the requirements imposed pursuant to the Programme, followed by the implementation of any modifications that were found to be necessary. As expected, the necessary modifications to the Land Registers were of a minor nature. The land registry maps, which include specifications of the property boundaries, had in fact already been assigned the status of an authentic register by virtue of the references to the notarial deeds incorporated in the maps. Consequently at the end of the Programme it was concluded that the formal designation of the Land Registers as key registers within the sense of the Streamlining Key Data Programme would be no more than a formality.

A key register for topographical data: the Key Geographical Register

The Key Geographical Register was understood as a key register demarcating all geographical objects in the Netherlands on 1:10.000 scale maps. During the preparations for the Programme digital maps developed by the Ministry of Defence - what was referred to as the 'Top 10 vector database' - were designated the candidate for development into the Key Geographical Register as a result of their wide-scale use by the Ministry of Defence and by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management and the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, as well as all the provinces, the water control authorities, and a growing number of municipalities.

During the first half of the Programme an analysis was made of the tangible modifications to the content and the organization of the Top 10 vector database that would be required for its designation as a key register suitable for the future purposes of the intended users. It was decided that the upgrading of the database would coincide with the transfer of the Topografische Dienst Nederland, the topographical service from the Ministry of Defence (which developed and managed the database) to the Land Registry falling under the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment. While work on the implementation of the necessary modifications had already begun at the time, in mid-2002, the State Secretary of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment formally notified the House of Representatives of his intention to designate, by law, the Key Geographical Register as an authentic register.

A key register for company data: the Key Business Register

Although contrary to the impression that may have been given by the company registers maintained for many years by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, insiders had long been aware that the Netherlands is not in the possession of a uniform and comprehensive register of companies. For reasons such as the need for effective measures to combat fraud, government agencies - in particular, those in the fiscal and social security fields - indicated that for as far as they were concerned the Streamlining Key Data Programme above all needed to focus on filling this void, and that it needed to provide for the introduction of a 'Key Business Register'. This register needed to constitute the key register for all the relevant organizations, inclusive of both private organizations and independent practitioners of their trades and institutions with public-law duties. In view of the distribution of responsibilities between the ministries the Ministry of Economic Affairs was considered to be the logical ministry to adopt the responsibility for the implementation of a register of this nature.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs initiated a study to acquire an insight into the requisite functionality of a Key Business Register even before the formal commencement of the Programme. The parties with an immediate interest in the register participated in this study, i.e. the National Social Insurance Institute¹³, the Association of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and the Central Bureau of Statistics. Shortly after the beginning of the study the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports also joined the project on their conclusion that their sectors were confronted with not the least significant problems caused by the absence of a comprehensive register of all the country's economic activity.

The first complication that was encountered was the variety of legislation and regulations pertaining to what is and is not a 'company', and what should and should not be included in the register. It was not without reason that earlier endeavours to develop a Key Business Register ultimately proved unsuccessful. It was rapidly appreciated that a great deal of time would be required for the implementation of the register, and that it would be necessary to give careful consideration to the evolution programme required for its development. In his

letter to the House of Representatives in mid-2001 the Minister of Economic Affairs outlined the programme that was to be adopted; an initial version of the register, primarily designed to fulfil the needs of the original four participants, was to become operational in 2003. During the years following 2003 work would continue on the definitive form of the register, for which it would also be necessary to draw up new legislation.

From the very beginning the Key Business Register project was assigned an important role within the scope of the reduction of the administrative burden on companies, one of the spearheads of Government policy since the end of the nineties. The project would also form one of the cornerstones of a special interdepartmental 'ICT and administrative burdens' programme to be initiated in 2002.

A key register for data on buildings: the Key Buildings Register

Work on the acquisition of an insight into the requisite functionality of a 'Key Buildings Register' also effectively began prior to the formal initiation of the Streamlining Key Data Programme. Municipalities, in particular, had traditionally maintained registers of this nature; in addition to the inefficiency resulting from each municipality's adoption of its own approach to the register, a further problem was caused by the great variety in obligations pertaining to the maintenance of records. The skill involved in the implementation of a Key Business Register was to purge both the numerous existing registers and the underlying legislation and regulations accompanying the registers during the development of one transparent entirety.

A comprehensive study resulted in an outline proposal for the contents of a Key Building Register and the manner in which the register should be organized. Since it was immediately apparent that the implementation of the proposal would be an extremely expensive and complex operation, the Ministry with primary responsibility for the register - the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment - decided to implement a phased approach. The Ministry opted for an approach comprised of three phases; Phase 1, to be concluded at the end of 2003, will be comprised of a number of practical trials, after which Phase 2 will focus on the preparation of the necessary legislation and the encouragement of the voluntary introduction of the register. The project will be completed with Phase 3, the implementation of the register.

13) During the course of the programme the Institute was incorporated in the newly-formed Employee Insurance Schemes Administration Agency (UWV).

A key register for address data: the Key Addresses Register

From the very beginning of the Programme it was evident that the Key Addresses Register would be a special register - special, from an information-technology perspective, in that an address is a designation for a building and not, as such, the subject of a register. However at the same time an address is a potentially extremely powerful tool for the improvement of the accessibility of registers with respect to communications with the public and companies. The address is the only item included in all the registers of the three clusters (natural persons, non-natural persons, and geographical objects). Moreover people either make a mental note of addresses, or can alternatively readily seek the address they need. Someone intending to buy a house will wish to take cognizance of any public-law restrictions on that property, and of the identity of the current owner; they will be aware of the address, but not of the cadastral plot number or the building number, where relevant. For this reason the address register was positioned as the link between the other key registers. So as to fulfil this function one register of addresses in the Netherlands was required that was to be imparted with the properties of an authentic key register, and would serve as an authentic register.

In view of the above a feasibility study was started at the beginning of 2001 and concluded at the end of 2002. It was concluded that the address - in combination with the personal identification number - should indeed be perceived as an essential link between the registers in the proposed system of authentic registers. The study also yielded a specification of the required contents of a Key Addresses Register; the name of the street and the number in the street of the structures of greatest relevance to the public administration, i.e. residential units, (caravan) park positions, and mooring places for houseboats. It was decided that the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment would be assigned the responsibility for the implementation of the register. In view of the relationship between the Key Addresses Register and the Key Buildings Register the projects for the implementation of the registers would be carried out in parallel during the coming period; further details of the specific operational plan would be drawn up in 2003.

12 Other projects in the participating policy sectors

Although the primary focus of the implementation of the policy was to be placed on the aforementioned key registers, the Programme also devoted the necessary attention to other potential authentic registers. As had been previously agreed, each ministry participating in the Programme was to implement at least one specific initiative; in some instances the number of initiatives was in fact much higher.

Health care

Within the health-care sector the Programme was initially used as an opportunity to work on the preparation of the introduction of a unique patient identification number, what is referred to as the Health-care Identification Number (ZIN), and on the improvement of the registers maintained by health-care institutions. However the spearhead that gradually emerged within the context of the Streamlining Key Data Programme pertained, in particular, to the development of modern electronic exchanges of data between the health-care and social-security sectors. Subsequent to the announcement of the official kick-off of a specific project with this objective by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports in 2001 the exchange of employment data between the health care insurers and the Employee Insurance Schemes Administration Agency (the UWV) attained a level by 1 January 2003 such that the existing system for the notification of sick-leave and the return to work that had been in use for many years could be revised; it proved possible to abolish the written VVW 'Employer's Insurance Statement' messages and replace them with electronic messages. In addition, the newly-implemented infrastructure also rendered data from the Insured Persons or Policy Database (more details are given later in this Sub-section) accessible to the health-care sector. This project pertained to the re-use of data that resulted in a very substantial increase in the efficiency; it transpired that a non-recurrent investment of less than one million Euros resulted in a structural saving of several tens of million Euros per annum.

Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries

Under the responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries a separate Key Register Directorate was established on 1 July 2001 for the purposes of the central development and maintenance of key data essential to this specific sector. This

move was taken for a variety of reasons, not in the least the problems confronting the Ministry with respect to food safety, as well as the need to control large-scale outbreaks of cattle diseases. The initial efforts in part carried out under the flag of the Streamlining Key Data Programme were focused on the perfection of the 'Key Land Register' that became operational on 1 January 2002, and which had the primary objective of providing support to the country's manure legislation. The other main objectives of this register were to improve the animal identification and registration systems, and further the joint relationship management of all Ministry departments. The Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries provided separate information to the House of Representatives about the policy framework for these developments. These progress reports indicated that in addition to addressing the aforementioned problems, these developments are also intended to achieve a structural reduction of the administrative burden and the adoption of a more customer-oriented approach.

Police and Justice

Within the police and justice field an investigation carried out within the scope of the Streamlining Key Data Programme and completed in mid-2002 reviewed the desirability and feasibility of developing the existing company register into an authentic register. This investigation resulted in the conclusion that, subject to certain conditions, the existing system could evolve into an authentic register containing historical and current data about companies, and that a reference index for legal entities could be developed in a separate programme. It was decided that a further investigation to be carried out in 2003 would assess the potential use of the Key Business Register briefly discussed Sub-section 11 for these purposes.

It also transpired that endeavours being made to render a number of other developments within the police and justice field were compatible with the objectives of the Streamlining Key Data Programme and the approach adopted for the Programme. This was, in particular, certainly applicable to the improvement of the aliens' database currently in progress in a parallel programme. The concepts employed in these improvements were fully compatible with the policy adopted for the Streamlining Key Data Programme.

The Streamlining Key Data Programme as the cornerstone for effective measures to combat fraud

The general benefit of the Streamlining Key Data Programme to the quality of the public administration gradually became apparent from developments such as the policy plan the Government presented in the spring of 2002 focused on the further tightening of measures designed to combat misuse and improper use in relationship to taxes, social security, and subsidies. This 'Fraud Policy Document' drew specific attention to the importance of the initiatives taken within the scope of the Streamlining Key Data Programme for the exchange of identification and personal data. The Policy Document also announced a trial to investigate the online accessibility of personal data from the GBA that was discussed in Sub-section 11 to the front-offices of the Centres for Work and Income on the basis of the 'National Reference Directory' introduced in 2003 within the scope of the modernization of the GBA.

Social security

The work in the social-security field within the scope of the Streamlining Key Data Programme was focused on the introduction of an authentic register of all insured persons as managed by the Employee Insurance Schemes Administration Agency (UWV). The introduction of this register constituted one of the cornerstones of the new structure being implemented throughout the entire 'work and income' field. This what is referred to as the 'Insured Persons or Policy Database' was to constitute the authentic source for all employment information available to agencies inside and outside the sector. Conversely, the various social-security agencies would, where possible and of benefit, be able to make use of the available authentic registers of data about natural persons and legal entities. The foundations for these developments will be provided by a separate Act, the WALVIS Act (Social Insurance (Reduction of Administrative Burden and Simplification) Act). According to the schedule for the project the entire Policy Database is to be operational by no later than 1 January 2005.

Transport, Public Works, and Water Management

Not unsurprisingly, the primary focus in the field of transport, public works and water management was placed on the vehicle registration number register - the de facto

authentic register for a number of years. Within the government the what is referred to as the 'key vehicle registration number register' has served as the authoritative source - inclusive of in the legal sense - of data pertaining to the registration number of vehicles, the vehicles, and the holders of the vehicles.

The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management was also engaged in a feasibility study of the designation of both the Nationaal Wegenbestand ('National Road Database') and the Actueel Hoogtebestand Nederland ('Current Digital Elevation Map of the Netherlands') as authentic registers. The Nationaal Wegenbestand is comprised of a digital geographical network of the Dutch traffic and transport infrastructure (roads, waterways, and railways). The database was developed as a result of the need for one integral digital road database based on the Key Geographical Database discussed briefly in Sub-section 11. The Actueel Hoogtebestand Nederland pertains to the collection and management of elevation data - indispensable for appropriate water management, not only in the event of flooding, but also for the implementation of suitable measures designed to combat the parchement of the land resulting from the drawdown of the groundwater table. The database is also used during the determination of the noise hindrance resulting from the construction of (motor)ways, the calculation of the earthmoving work involved in nature development, preliminary studies of alignments, watercourses and urban planning, for hydrological models, for flooding calculations, and for projects designed to control of parchement.

Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment

Within the scope of the streamlining of key geographical data an investigation, supplementary to the work already mentioned in Sub-section 11, reviewed the desirability and feasibility of the development of the existing 'Large Scale Standard Map of The Netherlands' into an authentic register. The Large Scale Standard Map of The Netherlands can be regarded as a large-scale (1:1000) pendant to the Key Geographical Database (scale 1:10.000) mentioned earlier, and was developed by (local collaborative arrangements between) municipalities and utility companies. It was concluded that the designation of the Large Scale Standard Map of The Netherlands as an authentic (key) register was not an issue at that point in time in view of the improvements in quality that were yet to be made and the administrative-organizational changes that were to be implemented. In part in

view of this latter aspect a further study will be made of the desirability and feasibility of (more) active participation by the Government in the development and management of the Large Scale Standard Map of The Netherlands. It was evident that the central authorities have a growing interest in a large-scale geographical key map, in particular for the purposes of public order and for spatial planning (for example, in the form of - the exchange of - digital zoning plans). In a letter submitted to House of Representatives in mid-2002 the State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment indicated his support for this approach.

The registration of public-law restrictions

A decision highly compatible with the approach to the Streamlining Key Data Programme taken, subsequent to lengthy discussions, by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment was to finally proceed to the introduction of one systematic register of the public-law restrictions various agencies impose on real estate. These registers would be drawn up for each municipality, and would also be accessible for third parties. A legislative proposal to this effect was submitted to the States General at the beginning of 2002. Pursuant to these regulations, in the future each municipality would be required maintain what were referred to as 'municipal restrictions registers' that would be available for consultation without charge.

13 The Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme')

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the Programme a number of parties observed that the implementation of authentic registers in accordance with the applicable definition constituted the most fundamental variant of the ultimate objective - the re-use of data. Examples available both at home and abroad revealed that less extensive variants are also conceivable that can be used to achieve a number of quick wins. However many independent initiatives in this field were unable to get off the ground as a result of the bickering between the parties involved as to whom should bear which costs. Consequently

it was decided that the Programme Bureau would lend a helping hand to projects of this nature. This resulted in the introduction of the Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme'), which was designed to provide financial support to a number of agencies in a variety of policy sectors and administrative layers for the implementation of projects capable of achieving rapid and tangible results in the exchange and re-use of data.

Pursuant to this scheme, during the years 2001 and 2002, a total of eight projects were (jointly) funded throughout all layers of the government. Consequently during the course of the main Programme a distinct and recognizable programme evolved in parallel to the major projects discussed in the previous sub-sections. A covenant concluded for each project specified the funds to be provided for the project; the covenant also laid down agreements whereby the participants undertook, in exchange, to draw up an explicit report of the lessons they learnt during the course of the project. This information served as the input for workshops organized at the end of the Programme, whereby the objective of the workshops was to establish generic lessons - with substantiation - learnt during the Programme¹⁴. It was concluded that the scheme was extremely successful. The supplementation of the major projects dominating the implementation of the policy by these simultaneous smaller projects that achieved rapid results was of great use in demonstrating the objectives of the Streamlining Key Data Programme and the intended improvement in quality and reduction in costs. Moreover as compared with the major projects a much larger group became aware of the benefits offered by the smaller projects - and consequently became enthusiastic to take the next steps. However it will be self-evident that on balance, and certainly when viewed from a macro perspective, the results achieved with these smaller projects should not be over-exaggerated. Nevertheless the modest gains that were achieved did generate the confidence amongst those directly involved required to take the next steps. Consequently the Programme had broken through a major barrier; 'Streamlining Key Data' was no longer merely a programme, it had evolved into a self-explanatory working method - and the adoption of this attitude was precisely what was required.

14) Please refer to Bulletin #2 from the Programme Bureau.

14 Communications and the provision of information

As indicated in Sub-section 1, at the very beginning of the Programme it was decided that communications and the provision of information were essential elements of the Programme. Moreover this was not only applicable to the development of the policy, but was also - and above all - applicable to the implementation of the policy. The Programme Bureau deployed a relatively large range of techniques for this purpose. Obviously since the idea was that there must be something to relate the communications and the provision of information gradually increased in intensity during the course of the Programme. In November 2000 a continually updated website was launched, and customized lectures or presentations were given to individual groups at a continually increasing frequency (in 2002, at least once a week). In addition, frequent visits and contributions were made to congresses, a number of workshops were organized, and interviews were given. Moreover in 2002 a beginning was made with two series of publications amounted to a total of 15 books published at regular intervals. In conclusion, in 2002 a monthly electronic newsletter was distributed to contacts that had grown to many hundreds during the course of the Programme, and four newsletters were submitted to a widely-read journal.

Time and time again, the responses revealed that the carefully-considered use of an immediately-recognizable house style (reflected in the design of this book) for all communications contributed greatly to the attention received by the issue. Strict use of the *frappez toujours* (constant renewal) principle was, in particular, made for the publications issued in 2002 - as a result of which there was no opportunity for the Streamlining Key Data Programme to entirely escape the attention of the target groups. The communications and the provision of information were focused on a number of target groups, each of which was addressed in a customized manner. All communications made the link between the Streamlining Key Data Programme and the relevant target group's everyday work, a decision based on the conviction that serious interest could be generated only in the presence of such a link. The streamlining of key data was not an issue that will be met by advance resistance from those involved; however the skill lay in motivating people and in acquiring their active support - an objective that could be achieved solely when the Programme was brought in very close proximity to their work and the problems that confronted them. The workshops briefly mentioned in Sub-section 10 that were organized in November 2000

with the slogan 'Wanted: authentic registers!' were of specific importance to the commencement of the implementation activities. These workshops played an essential role in the conceptualization and the selection of the participants in the Programme with respect to what authentic registers - should - entail in their policy fields. Each ministry gradually developed a long list of subjects that, in retrospective, were found to have largely determined the agenda.

When reviewing the results achieved with communications and the provision of information the general conclusion subsequent to the conclusion of the Programme was that the structural approach to the Programme's objectives resulted in the approach and the achieved (interim) results becoming familiar to a gradually increasing number of people. The strategy that was adopted resulted in the Programme reaching all layers of the administration; virtually all ministries, provinces, water control authorities and 70% of the municipalities became familiar with the concept of the Streamlining Key Data Programme and aware of the benefits it offered - and its necessity. The objective formulated at the beginning of the Programme stipulating the acquisition of wide-spread familiarization with the 'authentic register' concept was certainly achieved. Moreover the importance of the concept was increasingly recognized and acknowledged within the context of the government's general ambitions to achieve an improvement in quality, and in relationship to the government's objectives and the interests of the individual agencies within the government.

15 On half-full and half-empty glasses: what we achieved

Subsequent to the explanation of the framework (Section I) and the description of the progress in the Programme both with respect to the development of the policy (Section II) and the implementation of the policy (Section III) it is now opportune to carry out a review and a preview of the developments. This Sub-section contains a brief review of the Programme results, whilst the following Sub-section devotes comprehensive attention to lessons that were learnt

On the basis of its formal objectives the Programme can, in retrospective, be considered to have been a success. Not only were all the objectives achieved in a qualitative sense; they were also achieved within the budget, and the Programme succeeded in imparting the intended impetus. During the course of the Programme increasingly ambitious objectives were specified in the annual working plans - and most of these more ambitious objectives were ultimately achieved. Contrary to the expectations voiced by many, it transpired that the Streamlining Key Data Programme certainly was a viable approach within the context of the Dutch public administration. The demonstration of its viability involved more than merely ensuring that it gradually became accepted that the government should not ask what is already known; a great deal was also achieved from a strictly operational perspective, and a cost/benefit analysis drawn up during the Programme revealed that even when viewed solely from a solely quantitative perspective the policy was certainly worthwhile. And, last but not least, during the implementation of the Programme confidence grew in the ability to avoid operations of this nature from becoming bogged down in their intrinsic complexity in everyday administrative practice, provided that a serious organizational and management approach is adopted to their development.

It transpired that the Programme did not result solely in good intentions, i.e. policy; in fact the implementation of the Programme resulted in the initiation of many more projects than were ever announced in the official Programme documents. All sectors represented in the Programme initiated specific projects focused on the streamlining of key data. At all levels of national government, as well as at all the country's other authorities, it has now become impossible to conceive of organizational improvements of the quality of the Dutch public administration that do not encompass the implementation of authentic registers.

This was in part achieved by virtue of the explicit links created between the Streamlining Key Data Programme and a number of important political issues. For example, as mentioned earlier, the concept has now become one of the cornerstones of the Government's policy on measures to combat fraud.

In its concluding letter on the Programme submitted to the House of Representatives at the beginning of March 2003 the Government also stated the follow-up activities adopted by each ministry. A number of projects initiated during the Streamlining Key Data Programme have been brought under other programmes or operations. A working party chaired by the Directorate-General for Legislation of the Ministry of Justice will continue to monitor the progress of the individual legislative programmes initiated for the purpose of the six key registers. In consultation with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations the ICTU Foundation, responsible for the Programme for the last eighteen months, has implemented measures for the active management of the knowledge and experience acquired during the Programme, the continued dissemination of this expertise and, where possible, the further accumulation of expertise in the issue. It is gratifying to note that a self-appointed committee of authoritative administrators and scientists has explicitly called on the new coalition Government to be formed in the spring of 2003 to continue with the streamlining of key data and the introduction of authentic (key) registers⁵.

However it will be self-evident that developments of this nature should not result in premature celebration. For this reason the Programme Bureau's final report included a number of warnings, since the race is certainly not over yet:

- As yet there are no clear indications that the streamlining of key data has really become integrated in the mind-set of the politicians who ultimately take the decisions, i.e. that the concept of authentic registers and the need to implement them on a broad scale has been assigned a suitably permanent place on the agenda of both local and national politicians and administrators in the Netherlands.
- As was the intention, mid-way through the Programme the emphasis shifted from the development of the policy to the implementation of the policy (from concept to action). In spite of the efforts made during the course of the Programme it is not yet certain that the impetus given during the implementation of the Programme will in fact be of an irreversible nature; in practice the competition from other subjects with a greater

shorter-term relevance dominates the agendas of all the sectors. For the time being the funds and, above all, the human resources made available by the government bodies for the implementation of the plans remain modest in scale. Moreover the limited human resources made available for the Programme was not only an issue with respect to the experts involved in the implementation, but was also certainly a question of relevance to the (senior) officials required for the management of the plans.

- Although the number of initiatives currently being implemented is large, the pace of the implementation of the policy is still low. Should this situation continue then many years will be required for the achievement of the gains forecast for the projects. During the implementation of the Programme it transpired that delays in the scheduling of the projects were the rule rather than the exception. For this reason a number of the ministries decided that they would not commence all the planned activities; they appreciated that the completion of a limited number of projects in the appropriate manner was preferable to a larger number of half-finished projects.
- Monitoring will continue to be required to ensure that the policy is implemented in full, inclusive of the key registers, and that it is not half-finished and/or restricted to the implementation of measures to achieve just one objective. Should this occur then all the ultimate objectives of the Programme (a reduction of the administrative burden imposed on the public and the business community and one-stop shopping and an improved information infrastructure for enforcement and supervisory duties and a reduction of the costs) will at best be achieved only in part.

The Programme Bureau recommended that the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the minister responsible for the coordination of the government's information infrastructure, should indeed adopt the serious approach to the monitoring announced in the concluding letter to the House of Representatives. This has become even more important now the separately-organized and pan-government monitoring of the streamlining of key data by senior officials has come to an end. This monitoring should, in particular, also extend to urging on those policy fields in which progress in the implementation of the programme is falling behind, such as the police and justice, health care, and education.

16 Rowing upstream: what we learnt

Former Minister and past Chairman of the Netherlands' largest employer federations Mr Van Veen once said despairingly: "Getting two departments to work together: some things are difficult. Getting three departments to work together: you shouldn't tempt fate. Getting four departments to work together: some things are simply impossible." The Streamlining Key Data Programme was a temporary collaborative arrangement between seven, later nine, ministries, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, and the Dutch Data Protection Authority. So was the Programme a mission impossible? Were the results that were achieved simply due to luck? "You have achieved more than I had ever believed possible" was a comment frequently heard by the members of the then Programme Bureau. However there is no cause for complacency; the Dutch public administration's streamlining of key data is far from complete - in fact, to be precise, it has only just begun. Nevertheless it is possible to state that the genie is out of the bottle, and that it will be difficult to get it back in again. The approach adopted for the Programme gave cause to a considerable disruption to the government's procedures. However during the three years of the Programme Bureau's existence its procedures became reasonable well-known, and the political-administrative forces at play and the existing consultative rituals gradually regained their equilibrium. Streamlining key data became an acceptable concept, and for precisely this reason the termination of the impetus was a prudent decision; the impetus was concluded to ensure that the development would continue. It was time to adopt a new direction, for new faces and new tactics capable of ensuring for the achievement of the underlying objectives—and consequently the slogan was, and remains: we are not asking what is already known!

This concluding Section of the Programme's chronicle ends with a list of ten lessons learnt during the work¹⁵. The list employs analogies with sport; the reader does not need to be concerned that the summary will entail nothing more than a statement of the obvious, since it encompasses solely lessons of a special nature - lessons that were learnt and can be understood solely within the specific context of the Dutch State and the content and objectives of the Programme.

15) Please refer to the pamphlet *Een kwestie van uitvoering* ('A question of implementation') published at the end of February 2003.

A list of ten lessons we learnt

- Lesson 1: The beginning - reconnoitre the pitch before the match*
- Lesson 2: Mission and objectives - "5-0, sonst bin ich nicht zufrieden"*
- Lesson 3: Strategy - every form of attack is appropriate, as long as it results in goals*
- Lesson 4: Responsibilities - the coach sets out the lines, the groundsman chalks them in*
- Lesson 5: Finances - don't begin without a good case and well-filled club funds*
- Lesson 6: Implementation - i.e. the actual match*
- Lesson 7: Results - head in your own shot*
- Lesson 8: Timing - jump into the air in time; and land in time as well*
- Lesson 9: Communications - the public constitutes the 12th man*
- Lesson 10: Winning - allow everyone their personal celebration*

Lesson 1: The beginning - reconnoitre the pitch before the match

Sow your own pitch

The Streamlining Key Data Programme was addressed as an independent issue. Although the contents of the Programme were related to numerous other issues - ranging from the reduction of the administrative burden, one-stop shopping, measures to combat fraud, the improvement of the accountability for policy and the manure policy, right through to the reduction of the waiting lists in the health-care sector - it was nevertheless decided to initiate a separate programme, with a separate programme organization, so as to ensure that the issue would be imparted with the necessary substance during a three-year pan-government implementation period. This approach rendered it possible to impart the Programme with its own identity, and to operate in independence from (the progress in) specific policy themes.

Start in the appropriate division

The Programme was continually positioned as a necessary precondition to be met for the achievement of current political and policy themes, and emphatically not a programme of an intrinsically ICT nature. It was necessary to ensure for the appreciation of the objectives

as a pan-government management and organizational issue, and that legislation would be required. In essence the Programme constituted a fundamental modification of the government's operations that would have major consequences for the division of duties, responsibilities and powers, and for the financial resources.

Ensure for the Board's support

From the very beginning the Programme Bureau adopted the principle that the success of an operation such as the Streamlining Key Data Programme would depend entirely on support from at least one minister and a group of senior officials at director-general level. This conviction was based on the appreciation that the main problem confronting the Streamlining Key Data Programme was not the content of the Programme, but rather the administrative attention to the theme and its relationships with current policy themes.

Reconnoitre the course, especially the mountain stages

The Programme Bureau was always aware of the fact that the design and implementation of authentic registers would be an operation with far-reaching consequences. For this reason the Bureau carried out an advance analysis of the potential painful issues confronting the various parties involved in each project, and subsequently monitored progress in overcoming them. This analysis included an assessment of the possible weakening of existing positions, the review of any appreciable political risks, the presence of old grievances between parties that would be required to cooperate with each other, and the nature of any legal or financial problems.

Create a closely-knit team with a large number of internationals - but a small reserve bench for the players

As a result of the intended division of the responsibilities a carefully-considered decision was made to implement a programme organization with a very small central staff. Consequently the Bureau was comprised of no more than eight members of staff, whereby a deliberate choice was made to provide for an appropriate mix of persons of different origins (five government officials and three members of staff contracted from outside the government) who possessed a suitable range of specialisms and personalities. This approach ensured for self-criticism; a person who is never contradicted will not be certain whether he or she is right.

16) Specific lessons are discussed in more detail in the series of Bulletins published by the Programme Bureau.

Never forget the warming up

The Streamlining Key Data Programme required a lot of effort over a long period of time; the subject was intrinsically thixotropic, and consequently pressure was required if there was to be any action. For this reason it was essential that the parties were with imparted with a sense of urgency that would induce them to act. However it transpired that a number of players were too 'stiff' for an immediate entrance on the field. For this reason the Programme Bureau began by organizing some preparatory exercises (i.e. rounds of consultations and the provision of information). In the absence of these warming-up sessions a number of players would undoubtedly have suffered (severe) injury, and would subsequently have been unable to take any further part in the Programme.

Lesson 2: Mission and objectives - "5-o, sonst bin ich nicht zufrieden"¹⁷

Begin by specifying the result to be achieved

The Bureau began the Programme by drawing up as precise as possible specifications of the results that were to be achieved. During the course of the Programme the experience acquired during the work was used for regular reviews of the objectives, thereby ensuring that the objectives were imparted with increasingly tangible shape. This ensured for the focus needed for a targeted approach to the implementation of a long-term Programme; it also provided for the separation of the wheat from the chaff needed when the project teams were confronted with the multitude of activities involved in large-scale operations of this nature.

No misunderstandings about the ultimate ambitions

The selection of 'the government should not ask what is already known' slogan for the Programme resulted in the specification of an explicit long-term finish photo. This in turn resulted in the definition of a norm that could not be ignored; 'Streamlining Key Data' was defined as a new general principle of proper administration. Moreover the burden of proof was reversed: government agencies were required to explain why they would not participate (rather than needing to 'sell' the Programme each time a project was proposed).

17) This quotation refers to a statement from the rich collection bequeathed by Ernst Happel. He said these words in his capacity as the coach of the Dutch football team, immediately prior to the match between the Netherlands and Iran during the World Cup in Argentina in 1978.

Winning is more important than taking part

The Programme Bureau always realized that the parties would ultimately be able to work with each other solely on the basis of the content. Effective collaboration between the various organizations was possible only when each of the organizations involved would benefit from the collaboration, i.e. once they appreciated that major problems confronting them could be resolved only by means of collaboration, or when they realized that opportunities available to them could be utilized only with collaboration. For this reason the Programme Bureau made substantial investments in ensuring for (and retaining) the transparency of the political-administrative business case on which the Streamlining Key Data Programme was founded.

No friendly practice matches

It had to be clear that the Streamlining Key Data Programme had a specific objective, and consequently was not without obligation. Ministries agreeing to participate in the Programme were required to specify the implementation projects they would carry out. The decision to opt for participation on a voluntary basis but with obligations resulted in the formation of a powerful coalition - a coalition that was able to tackle an issue that would have been beyond the capacity of any individual participant. The participants committed themselves to the overall objective, and formulated tangible specifications of the contribution they would make to the programme.

One ball at a time

A major hazard confronting a large-scale operation is the specification of a wide variety of simultaneous objectives - which in turn results in an exponential growth in the risk of failure. The motto 'think global, act local' was intended to prevent the entire operation from stranding in megalomania. Stringent monitoring ensured that the focus was maintained on the ultimate objectives, and that the Programme did not become sidetracked by entering one of the numerous paths encountered along the main route.

Lesson 3: Strategy - every form of attack is appropriate, as long as it results in goals

A good service is a varied service

The Programme Bureau continually projected a number of policy themes. This approach was based on the understanding that a number of presentations (which, self-evidently, need to be mutually consistent) are required when a large number of people with individual backgrounds are involved. This enabled all the participants in the Programme to select the presentation focused on their specific problems (i.e. their own sector's issues) and further elaborate that presentation on the basis of their individual approach to the issue (their own sector's logic): for example, more effective enforcement (the Ministry of Justice), the reduction of the administrative burden (the Ministry of Economic Affairs) and the furtherance of the provision of electronic services (the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities), and the protection of privacy (the Dutch Data Protection Authority). This rendered it possible to place the emphasis on one of these themes or to amend the sequence of the themes to accommodate the nature of the group and the time of the presentation. It transpired that this was essential to the retention of the Streamlining Key Data Programme on the agenda.

Play with a mourning band when necessary

The Programme Bureau was always highly alert to any political developments of importance to the Programme, an attitude which was necessary in view of the day-to-day changes that can occur both in politics and in society. The firework disaster in Enschede and the major fire in Volendam, for example, provided a macabre demonstration of the vital need for some data to be organized in an appropriate fashion. This ensured for the maximization of the conveyance of the purport of the message - and its impact - in the various arenas. In adopting this approach the Programme Bureau was continually open to change, and ensured that the Programme retained the necessary flexibility.

And, and, and: the modern pentathlon

Consequently at a higher level of aggregation the Programme Bureau never bet all its money on one horse: the Bureau continually opted for an and-and-and strategy, such as:

- emphasising the pan-government importance of the Streamlining Key Data Programme and its importance to individual agencies;

- emphasising the importance of a joint approach and the personal responsibility of ministers for their own sector(s);
 - working on the normative understanding that ‘not asking what is already known’ (i.e. the once-off collection of data) is a general principle of proper administration and that a quantified cost/benefit analysis of the policy was involved and that compulsion was imposed for the implementation of the policy;
 - the involvement of (senior) officials and administrators and policy agencies and administration agencies and ICT experts and other experts such as legislation jurists;
 - the involvement of the central Government and authorities at other levels.
- This mixture of strategies ensured that the Programme Bureau remained both flexible and independent of the (progress of the) parties and themes.

Lesson 4: Responsibilities - the coach sets out the lines, the groundsman chalks them in

It has to happen on the field

From the very beginning of the Programme the Bureau endeavoured to arrive at transparent relationships between duties, responsibilities and powers. This was based on the conviction that the manner to ensure that collaboration became stranded would be to allow vagueness as to the duties, responsibilities and powers of those involved, thereby allowing everyone to point to each other. From the very beginning the implementation of the policy was perceived to be the individual responsibility of each ministry participating in the Programme; it will be self-explanatory that the effective implementation of the policy was possible only when each ministry appreciated and recognized its responsibilities with respect to the problems and challenges with which it was confronted, and then elaborated on the Programme to fulfil those needs.

The view from the sidelines is better

The Programme Bureau decided not to endeavour to achieve a more independent position than that required to act as the party which ordered the discussions and submitted the necessary facts, and which offered the opportunity to try and resolve any differences of opinion in discussions based on mutual respect. The Programme Bureau ensured that the development and the implementation of the policy progressed in the most transparent manner possible; it also kept close track of the extent to which any differences of opinion

were based on unfamiliarity with issues and/or confusion as to the meaning of concepts. It transpired that this approach was effective. In ensuring for the absence of a direct interest in the outcome of the discussions, adopting the role as a researcher and organizer, and devoting explicit attention to all contributions, the Programme Bureau was able to provide scope for the juxtaposition of perceptions and a comparison of their contents. This created the climate required to resolve issues that had been the subject of discussions for many years, as was clearly demonstrated by the resolution of the personal identification number issue.

Listen to the players

The Programme Bureau devoted a great deal of energy to listening to players directly involved in the subject (as well as those at a more remote distance). It was continually surprising to note how creative people can be when they are offered the scope to launch their ideas. Moreover it will be self-evident that the players’ willingness to make their contribution - and their enthusiasm in doing so - increases in proportion to the extent to which they perceive themselves to be taken seriously. In essence this requires the achievement of an appropriate blend of top-down control and bottom-up initiatives.

No dissatisfied players, and no prima donnas in the team

The Programme Bureau always reasoned that nothing was more important than the (interests of the) team. Organizations that did not wish to participate - or wished to participate solely to serve their own interests - were not put under pressure; they were simply ignored. This rapidly created a climate in which the participants felt that they were engaged in something special, in turn resulting in an increasingly close-knit group of participants. The urge to take part increases in proportion with the perception that not taking part doesn’t bother those who are already participating.

Lesson 5: Finances - don’t begin without a good case and well-filled club funds

Bonuses for winning are paid out only after the match

The Programme Bureau ensured for a substantiated cost/benefit analysis, since on its own a good idea is not enough. The efforts required to implement a programme need to be justifiable from an operational perspective - “Does it sell more soap?” Can you prove that? It is not possible to go on a world tour with nothing more than the loose change collected from various pockets.

Let everyone work for their money

The Programme was financed with funds reserved for the Electronic Government Action Programme from the budget for the National Electronic Government Action Plan managed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. More than EUR 15 million was available for the entire Programme. Within the scope of the distribution and delegation of (financial) responsibility each ministry participating in the Programme was responsible for providing for its personal subsidy from the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Pay everyone wages according to their work

One of the problems confronting the Streamlining Key Data Programme was the unequal distribution of the costs and benefits amongst all the parties involved. However the availability of central funds for the Programme ensured that the necessary investments were made.

You'll have to work hard as well

The central funds available for the Programme never covered more than part of the costs; the contribution decreased in inverse proportion to the detailing of the business case, since this was the time for the litmus test to assess whether those involved really believed that their project was of value. This approach was based on the conviction that a lower priority is assigned to results management when the necessary funds are provided by a third party rather than from the personal budget.

Watch out for rules that stop the game

Financing from central funds is conducive to ensuring that the objects and content of the project remain in the foreground, and that they are not submerged during a series of consultations and negotiations on the contribution to be made by each party. However it transpired that the procedures involved in central funding from the Streamlining Key Data Programme did not result in the intended acceleration of the implementation of the projects; in actual practice they were of a stringency that increased the thresholds and delayed the projects. Procedures need to be implemented that provide for the responsible and justifiable allocation of the funds without requiring a disproportionate amount of the Programme's time for their completion.

Lesson 6: Implementation - i.e. the actual match

If 4-4-2 doesn't work ...

In effect, the Streamlining Key Data Programme was one major change project. The need to operate on such a large number of fronts and to perform simultaneously in so many theatres resulted in the Programme Bureau's adoption of a variety of change strategies. Pursuant to this approach the Bureau worked on business cases so as to arrive at rational considerations for investments, whilst it also introduced the norm stipulating that governmental departments should not request data from the public and the business community that is already available from colleague departments - and, last but not least, there was the threat of legislation; the introduction of legislation in the form of a Once-off Data Request Act that would render this norm mandatory and, moreover, specify a deadline for compliance...

Make sure the play uses the entire pitch

The Programme Bureau ensured that at all echelons groups that had not previously met with each other (at least, not on this issue) entered into discussions with each other, such as ICT experts, directors-general, legislation jurists, etc. This approach was based on each of these disciplines possessing its own specific rationality. Once the communications had begun self-supporting cells emerged that supported the cases. At the same time the Programme Bureau expressly created tension between the lines: the Bureau invested a great deal of time in its contacts with administrative agencies (autonomous administrative bodies, agencies, and inspectorates), and the resultant pressure the administrative agencies exerted on the ministries was conducive to the implementation of the plans.

Self-confidence creates confidence

From the very beginning the Programme was confronted with scepticism with respect to the presumed overly-ambitious plans. For this reason the Programme Bureau repeatedly demonstrated that the Streamlining Key Data Programme would work, and that it was feasible; in so doing the Bureau was able to overcome the prevailing impression that although the intentions of the Programme were noble, it nevertheless amounted to nothing more than castles in the air. In addition, the joint visits to examples of similar projects both at home and abroad was also found to be beneficial: seeing really is believing.

Always stay at the front, not the rear

All the Programme Bureau's work was based on the principle 'the only certainty is that there is no certainty'. Since all participants worked their project on the basis of their situation - which, moreover, could change every day - the legitimacy of a project was not a fact, but was subject to wear. For this reason it was anything but easy to make sure that everyone, from high to low, remained on board. The Programme Bureau always made every endeavour to ensure that the entire pack crossed the finishing line - a goal that can be achieved only by staying at the front, since only then is it possible to see who escapes. Anyone at the rear will see only those who drop out - and investing energy in these players is pointless when the objective is to win.

Fair play

Throughout the match the Programme Bureau was always open with respect to its intentions and its approach. In spite of the occasional inevitable tension the lines (with the client and the participants) were never broken, and the communications about everything and with everyone were maintained under all conditions. Demands were made only in the last instance; in addition, and above all, the work was carried out on the basis of the principle that agreed is agreed - and on no account were side-agreements permitted with one party at the cost of the other parties. As a result of this consistent conduct it proved possible to get the real problems on the table.

Lesson 7: Results - head in your own shot

Penalties without a goalkeeper

In the midst of the overall policy lines and the major implementation projects it was also necessary to achieve tangible results with short-term projects. For this reason the Stimuleringsregeling Gegevenshergebruik ('Re-use of Data Incentive Scheme') was employed to provide a minor financial injection (EUR 1 million) for the completion of eight projects that not only resulted in the acquisition of a great deal of knowledge but which were of also great value to the communications. This incentive scheme made it possible to pluck 'low-hanging fruit', and generate commitment.

Celebrate every goal as a victory

The Programme Bureau always took small steps, and defined interim milestones; this approach ensured that all those involved could see that progress was being made - progress which was in turn conducive to the internal and external involvement in the projects, to the participants' belief in the capabilities, and to the enthusiasm for the project. It transpired that the celebration of interim results constituted an excellent manner of achieving and maintaining consensus.

Don't act like a school team

There is a continual temptation to focus on the issue of the day - everyone goes where the ball is. Behaving like a school team will result in the match being lost. Management requires foresight.

Don't just go with the crowd; keep true to yourself

In surroundings in which such a large number of interests compete with each other for hegemony there is a great temptation to thin the wine with water. The Programme Bureau was convinced that yielding to this temptation would ultimately cause problems - when all was said and done the content of the Programme would ultimately determine its success; an amiable disposition would not, on its own, be sufficient.

You won't win if you do nothing more than keep the ball in the midfield

In formal terms the Programme incorporated only restricted opportunities for intervention in the event that parties failed to keep their agreements, and the opportunities that were available were used only sporadically. The question remains as to the effect that would have been achieved with a more stringent approach based on naming and shaming.

Lesson 8: Timing - jump into the air in time; and land in time as well

Game strategies work on the pitch, not on the drawing table

Since the government required a great deal of time for the full integration of far-reaching changes the Programme Bureau decided to carry out the development and the implementation of the policy in parallel with each other. This parallelism proved beneficial to both: as a result of this approach the development of the policy addressed problems

encountered in practice, whilst the implementation of the policy was readily able to rise above the level of a trial-and-error process. As a result it was possible to create visible links between the long term and the short term.

Step by step, but focused on the goal

At the same time the approach to implementation work was characterized by the stringent phasing of the activities, i.e. a step-by-step approach with an explicit go/no go point before each following phase. Where necessary the implementation began with an exploratory study (Phase 1) to assess whether the idea of an authentic register for specific (clusters of) data was, as such, worthwhile. If so, then the next step was to carry out a targeted feasibility study (Phase 2) to obtain the information required for a sound business case and the acquisition of an insight into the efforts that would be involved and the risks associated with failure. This was followed by the submission of the plans for approval (where relevant) prior to beginning the actual implementation project (Phase 3).

Take a time-out on time

A decision on the content of the policy at the very highest level was essential to the achievement of a pan-government focus on the policy's implementation. For this reason the Government's formal decision taken midway through the Programme stipulating the priorities for the projects was of great importance to the further implementation of the policy. This decision, requiring the introduction of six key registers, resulted in an explicit focus on this objective; without these marching orders the implementation would possibly have been less successful.

It is important to realize that you won't always be playing against the wind

Obviously during the course of the Programmes there were a large number of occasions at which there was a threat of the work coming to a standstill, or reaching an impasse. The knack is to turn every disadvantage into an advantage - which is achieved by not making an issue of everything, but instead bending and then springing back.

Lesson 9: Communications - the public constitutes the 12th man

Every match is one big discussion

From the very beginning the Programme Bureau appreciate that the Streamlining Key Data Programme was also - and certainly not last - a communications issue. Communications and the provision of information constituted an integral element of all Programme activities. Pursuant to the philosophy adopted by the Programme Bureau communications and the provision of information were not the responsibilities of one person, but were the shared responsibilities of all those involved. Continual - personal - contacts and frequent plenary consultations ensured that all those involved clearly understood the lines of reasoning, a situation which was highly conducive to the level of acceptance and the familiarity with the policy.

Like a boxing match: constant renewal

It was necessary to communicate that the Streamlining Key Data Programme was an integral element of the endeavours to improve the quality of the public administration - a system primarily characterized by its political-strategic, socio-organizational, and financial and legal facets. The Programme Bureau was aware of its intrinsic weakness: as such, streamlining key data is not a sexy issue that will more or less automatically receive the necessary attention. Moreover once attention has been drawn to the subject it needs to be retained, for which purpose *frappez toujours* ('constant renewal') is essential.

Broad, often, and frequently

The Programme Bureau deployed a relatively large range of means of communications, certainly in relationship to the Bureau's size and its resources. Every possible form of media was used to reach every layer in the government apparatus. The Streamlining Key Data Programme was presented as something in which participation was absolutely necessary - an approach which was found to be effective, since the Bureau succeeded in reaching virtually every department, all the provinces, all the water control authorities, and 70% of the municipalities.

Watch out for pandemonium

The Streamlining Key Data Programme was in competition with numerous other innovation projects, some of which included a significant ICT element. In some instances this created enormous confusion amongst the target group(s): the proponent of one project had hardly left before the next turned up. This resulted in widespread requests for the messages conveyed for the various programmes to at least be geared to each other. The Programme Bureau was concerned that this would be detrimental to the transparency of the message; the search for an appropriate equilibrium continued until the last day of the Programme.

Lesson 10: Winning - allow everyone their personal celebration

Get to know the big shots, and what they want

Pursuant to the nature of the issue the highest echelons of policy-makers needed to come to the table (and not, or at least not in the first instance, the ICT experts). It was realized that officials would continue to attend the meetings only if they perceived the programme to offer them benefits. In these communications the emphasis was not placed on the wide variety of benefits offered to all those ultimately involved (the public and the business community), but on the convergent interests of the ministries and the risks they would run in the event they did not participate¹⁸.

Let everyone adopt the position in which they feel most at home

During both the performance of the cost/benefit analyses and, for example, the discussions with legislation jurists it transpired that there was a major gulf between mind-frames of the managers, general policy-makers, information scientists, economists and jurists. For this reason the Programme Bureau needed to be very skilled in controlling the meetings so

18) It was expected – justifiably so, it was later established – that at some point during the programme the interests of the public and the business community would come to the surface of their own accord, and subsequently be incorporated in the programme. It is difficult to get government agencies to act when only their customers will benefit, and they will not benefit. For this reason the Programme Bureau deliberately decided to refrain almost entirely from the self-evident discussion as to whether authentic registers would be of interest to third parties and, if so, which conditions (financial and other) would be attached to public access to the registers.

as to avoid the discussions from becoming bogged down in methodological disagreements, misunderstandings and inconsistencies that would ultimately result in bland presentations for all the target groups.

Don't exclude people - include them

The Programme Bureau took continual care to ensure that it did not claim the credit. In fact it adopted the reverse approach: on periodic occasions others received suitable attention for their achievements. This was effected by means of the newsletter, articles on the web site, the web site's links, and the attention given to everyone at the concluding ceremony. This approach proved extremely successful - anyone placed in the spotlight on the achievement of a success feels flattered, and is motivated to carry on with the following phases.

Don't talk about each other, but with each other

Above all, the Programme Bureau wished to create a platform where people could enter into dialogue with each other and jointly discover which opportunities were open to them. It was noted that many organizations exhibit a tendency to avoid dialogue rather than seek it - they appear to believe that they feel more comfortable talking about each other than with each other. It takes some time for them to realize that the reverse is the case.

Summary of publications

A large number of publications appeared during the course of the Programme. The following list is as comprehensive as possible summary of the publications. The list begins with a summary of the Programme Bureau's two series of publications, the series of Guidelines and the Streamlining Key Data series of Bulletins, and continues with a complete list of all publications in alphabetical order.

The Programme Bureau has also published a CD-ROM with electronic copies of all the publications. The Streamlining Key Data Programme publications can also be downloaded from the web site www.stroomlijningbasisgegevens.nl.

A Publications from the Programme Bureau (only available in Dutch)

Guidelines

Guideline # 1, Dirk Schravendeel and Steven Luitjens, Een intelligente, geen alwetende overheid. Het beleid achter Stroomlijning Basisgegevens, ('An intelligent, not omniscient, government. The underlying policy of the Streamlining Key Data Programme'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 2, Marcel Rietdijk, Kwaliteitsborging, ('Quality assurance'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 3, Kees van der Steen, Catalogus Authentieke Registraties ('Catalogue of Authentic Registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 4, Patty Heemskerck, Gebruikersinbreng. Invloed van gebruikers bij de inrichting en het beheer van authentieke registraties ('The users' contribution. The influence of users on the design and management of authentic registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 5, Xander van der Linde, Financiering van de investering ('Financing the investment'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 6, Xander van der Linde, Financiering van de exploitatie ('Financing the operation'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 7, Udo Pijpker, Systematiek stroomlijning ('Systematics of streamlining'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 8, Arre Zuurmond and Marc de Vries, Ars creendi - de kunst van het scheppen ('Ars creendi - the art of creation'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 9, Dirk Schravendeel and Jeroen Takkenberg, Waarop kan ik worden aangesproken? Over aansprakelijkheid voor authentieke registraties ('What can I be called to account for? On liability for authentic registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Guideline # 10, Victor de Pous, Het recht op stroomlijning basisgegevens. Juridisch kader voor authentieke registraties ('The law of streamlining of key data. The legal framework for authentic registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Bulletins

Bulletin # 1, Victor Bekkers, Steven Luitjens and Anneke van den Berg, De productieve harmonie. Lessen in ICT-procesmanagement ('Productive harmony. Lessons in ICT process management'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Bulletin # 2, Rob Schoemaker, Delen is vermenigvuldigen. Door hergebruik van gegevens zorgen dat twee meer weten dan één ('Sharing is multiplication. Re-using data to ensure that the sum is greater than the parts'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Bulletin # 3, Dirk Schravendeel, Iedere reis begint met de eerste stap; stroomlijning van basisgegevens loont! ('Every journey begins with the first step; the streamlining of key data is worthwhile!'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Bulletin # 4, Steven Luitjens and Pieter Wisse, De klacht van de Keten; een Erasmiaans perspectief op Stroomlijning Basisgegevens ('The Chain's complaint: streamlining of key data from an Erasmian perspective'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Bulletin # 5, Steven Luitjens and Hans Boom, Vijftig manieren om de boot te missen; ervaringen met weerbaar maken wat weerloos is ('Fifty ways of missing the boat; experience with making the defenceless defensible'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

B List of all publications, in alphabetical order (only available in Dutch)

BBR Project Group, De som der delen! Basisbedrijvenregister Informatieplan 2005 ('The sum of the parts! Key Business Register Information Plan 2005'), The Hague, 2002

Bekkers, V.J.J.M., Casevergelijking Praktijkervaringen Basisregistraties ('Case comparisons of practical experience with key registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2001

Bekkers, V., S. Luitjens and A. van den Berg, De productieve harmonie. Lessen in ICT-procesmanagement ('Productive harmony. Lessons in ICT process management'), Bulletin # 1 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Berends, J., G.A. van Duijn, E.J.M. Weesie and R.B.M. ten Kroode, Van kraamkamer tot sloophamer Rapportage haalbaarheidsstudie authentic register van gegevens over gebouwen, in het kader van het project Gebouwen in woord en beeld ('From delivery to demolition; report of the feasibility study for an authentic register for buildings within the scope of the Illustrated Description of Buildings project'), RAVI/VNG, Amersfoort, 2001

Commissie Kosten van authentieke registraties ('Cost of authentic registers Committee', the Barten Committee), Advies inzake de financiering van authentieke registraties ('Recommendations on the funding of authentic registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2001

Ducastel, N., Stroomlijning Basisgegevens; een internationale verkenning ('Streamlining Key Data; an international study'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2001

Duivenboden, H.P.M. van and A.G.C. Leijser, Verkenning Publieke Organisaties in het Basisbedrijvenregister - het inkleuren van witte vlekken ('An investigation of public organizations in the Key Business register - colouring in the white areas'), Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, Utrecht, 2002

Duivenboden, H.P.M. van, J.R. During, H.H. de Vries, N. Wisman, J.C. Frowein, J. van Arkel and L. van Steen in collaboration with D. Schravendeel and U.O. Pijpker, Persoonsnummerbeleid in het kader van identiteitsmanagement. Bijlage bij Advies Tafel Persoonsnummerbeleid ('Personal identification number policy within the scope of identity management. Appendix to the Personal identification number Advisory Committee'), Amersfoort, 2002

Engelen, P. and G. Miltenburg, Van Brievenbus tot Inbox. Het presteren van de VVW-uitwisseling. ('From letter-box to in-box. The performance of the 'Employer's Insurance Statement' exchange') Research Report, VVW-uitwisseling Project Group, 2002

Heemskerck, P., Gebruikersinbreng. Invloed van gebruikers bij de inrichting en het beheer van authentieke registraties ('The users' contribution. The influence of users on the design and management of authentic registers'), Guideline # 4 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Heemskerck, P., M. Rietdijk, K. van der Steen in collaboration with N. Ducastel, C. van Oogen and D. Schravendeel, Meer doen met minder gegevens. Een onderzoek naar een stelsel rond authentieke registraties ('Doing more with less data. An investigation of a system based on authentic registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, 2001

Heij, A.J., D.J. van der Net, A.J. Overbeek and M.W. Sturm, Rapport van een verkenning naar mogelijke toekomst scenario's voor de registratie vennoot ('Report of a study of possible future scenarios for the register partner'), Ministry of Justice, The Hague, 2002

Hulsker, W., G. van Bork, J. Gesink, M. Arents, F. van Zutphen and N. Brusse, Kosten-batenanalyse van een stelsel van basisregistraties ('Cost/benefit analysis for a system of key registers'), ECORYS/NEI, 2002

Landelijk Samenwerkingsverband ('National Collaborative Arrangement') the GBKN, GBKN op weg naar Authentieke Registratie? ('The GBKN on route to an authentic register?'), Apeldoorn, 2002

Linde, X. van der, Financiering van de investering ('Financing the investment'), Guideline # 5 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002a

Linde, X. van der, Financiering van de exploitatie ('Financing the operation'), Guideline # 6 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002b

Luitjens, S.B. and P.E. Wisse, De klacht van de Keten; een Erasmiaans perspectief op Streamlining Key Data ('The Chain's complaint: streamlining of key data from an Erasmian perspective'), Bulletin # 4 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Luitjens, S.B. en H. Boom, Vijftig manieren om de boot te missen; ervaringen met weerbaar maken wat weerloos is ('Fifty ways of missing the boat; experience with making the defenceless defensible'), Bulletin # 5 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Besluit Informatievoorziening in de Rijksdienst 1990 ('Provision of Information in the Government Departments Decree'), The Hague, 1990

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Terug naar de toekomst. Over het gebruik van informatie- en communicatietechnologie in de openbare sector ('Back to the future. On the use of Information and Communication Technology in the public sector'). Public Sector Information Policy Document no. 3, The Hague, 1995

M&I Partners, Stroomlijning Basisgegevens ('Streamlining Key Data'), Amersfoort, 1997

Oogen., J.H. van, Verkenning stroomlijning Adresgegevens ('An investigation of the streamlining of address data'). A review of the address' role in the system of authentic registers and the need to design an Address Register governed by the same regulations as applicable to authentic registers, RAVI, 2001

Overkleeft-Verburg, G., De bestuursrechtelijke aspecten van het programma Stroomlijning Basisgegevens ('The administrative-law issues associated with the Streamlining Key Data Programme'), Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 1999-2000, 26 387, no. 7, Naar optimale beschikbaarheid van overheidsinformatie ('Towards an optimum availability of government information'), 2000

Parliamentary Documents II, 2000-2001, 26 387, no. 9, Document on the Electronic Government at the beginning of the 21st century from the Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities, 2000

Parliamentary Documents II, 2000-2001, 27 510, no. 1, Incorporation of the ICTU Foundation, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2000-2001, 26 643, no. 29, Letter from the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries on ICT, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 27 859, no. 1, The Government's response to the recommendations from the Modernization of the GBA Committee, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 26 643 and 26 387, no. 31, Letter from the Minister of Economic Affairs to the House of Representatives for a profile of the Key Business Register, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 28 319, no. 3, Legislative proposal for the reduction of the administrative burden and the simplification of social security legislation

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 26 387, no. 11, Letter from the Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities to the House of Representatives on the progress of the Streamlining Key Data Programme, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 27 859 and 26387, no. 2, Report of general consultations on the modernization of the GBA and the progress of the Streamlining Key Data Programme, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 28 218, no. 1, Legislative proposal on the recognizability of public-law restrictions on real estate, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 17 050, no. 234, Letter from the Ministry of Justice on the approach to misuse and improper use in relationship to taxes, social security, and benefits, 2002

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 26 643, no. 32, Building-block document from the Minister of Economic Affairs, the Minister for Urban Policy and the Integration of Ethnic Minorities, the Minister of Education, Science and Cultural Affairs, the State Secretary of Transport, Public Works and Water Management and the State Secretary of Education, Science and Cultural Affairs, 2001

Parliamentary Documents II, 2001-2002, 28 000 XI, no. 60, letter from the State Secretary of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment on the geographical-information policy, 2002

Parliamentary Documents II, 2002-2003, 28 600 VI, no. 21, Letter from the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration, the State Secretary of Social Affairs and Employment and the State Secretary of Finance on the Government's response to the Personal identification policy within the scope of identity management, 2002

Parliamentary Documents II, 2002-2003, Letter from the State Secretary of Economic Affairs on the commencement of the ICT & Administrative Burden Programme, 2003 - 2006, 2003

Parliamentary Documents II, 2002-2003, 26 387, no. 18, Letter from the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the State Secretary of Economic Affairs on the completion of the Streamlining Key Data Programme, 2003

Pels Rijcken & Drooglever Fortuijn and Tilburg University, Aansprakelijkheid voor overheidsinformatie ('Liability for government information'), Pels Rijcken & Drooglever Fortuijn and Tilburg University, 2001

Pijpker, U.O., Systematiek stroomlijning ('Systematics of streamlining'), Guideline # 7 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Pous, V. de, Het recht op Streamlining Key Data. Juridisch kader voor authentieke registraties ('The law of streamlining of key data. The legal framework for authentic registers'), Guideline # 10 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Prins, C., E. Schreuders, W. Voermans and A. Zuurmond, with the cooperation of S. Nouwt and S. Zouridis, Juridische aspecten van authentieke registraties ('Legal aspects of authentic registers'), Tilburg University, Tilburg, 2001

Rietdijk, M., Kwaliteitsborging ('Quality assurance'), Guideline # 2 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Rietdijk, M and J.J. Verhoef, Adres onbekend Het ontwerp van een Basisregistratie Adressen beproefd. ('Address unknown. Testing of the design for a Key Address Register'), Report of the feasibility studies for the Key Address Register trial projects, RAVI network for GEO-information Foundation, Amersfoort, 2002

Schoemaker, R., Delen is vermenigvuldigen. Door hergebruik van gegevens zorgen dat twee meer weten dan één ('Sharing is multiplication. Re-using data to ensure that the sum is greater than the parts'), Bulletin # 2 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Schravendeel, D., Iedere reis begint met de eerste stap; stroomlijning van basisgegevens loont! ('Every journey begins with the first step; the streamlining of key data is worthwhile!'), Bulletin # 3 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Schravendeel, D. and S.B. Luitjens, A renewed information infrastructure for the government. The objectives, content and procedure for the Streamlining Key Data Programme, in: H.P.M. van Duivenboden and A.M.B. Lips (Editors), Klantgericht werken in de publieke sector. Inrichting van de elektronische overheid ('A customer-oriented approach in the public sector. The design of the electronic government'), Utrecht: Lemma, 2001, pp. 347-362

Schravendeel, D. and S.B. Luitjens, Een intelligente, geen alwetende overheid. Het beleid achter Stroomlijning Basisgegevens, ('An intelligent, not omniscient, government. The underlying policy of the Streamlining Key Data Programme'), Guideline #1 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Schravendeel, D. and J. Takkenberg, Waarop kan ik worden aangesproken? Over aansprakelijkheid voor authentieke registraties, ('What can I be called to account for? On liability for authentic registers'), Guideline # 9 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Schreuders, E. and C. Prins, Met recht gestroomlijnd. Juridische normen voor authentieke gegevens, authentieke registraties en het gebruik van de daarin opgenomen gegevens ('Legally streamlined. Legal standards for authentic data, authentic registers and the data therein'), Tilburg University, Tilburg, 2002

Steen, K. van der, Catalogus authentieke registraties ('Catalogue of Authentic Registers'), Guideline # 3 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Steen, K. van der and A. Wentink in collaboration with U.O. Pijpker, Analyse Datamodellen Onderzoek. Een onderzoek naar mogelijke inconsistenties tussen vijf basisregistraties ('An analysis of the Data Models Investigation. An investigation of possible inconsistencies between five key registers'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Voorstel voor de inrichting van de realisatiefase van het programma Stroomlijning Basisgegevens, ('Proposal for the design of the implementation phase of the Streamlining Key Data Programme'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2000

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Convenanten gegevens hergebruik ('Re-use of data covenants'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2000

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Werkplan 2001 ('Work Plan 2001'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2001

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Werkplan 2002 ('Work Plan 2002'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Werkdocument Eisen aan een authentic register ('Working Document on the requirements imposed on an authentic register'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 19 December 2002

Streamlining Key Data Programme, Werken aan een geïnformeerde overheid; eindverslag Programme Bureau Stroomlijning Basisgegevens, ('Working towards an informed government; Final report from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, December 2002

Tafel Persoonsnummerbeleid in het kader van identiteitsmanagement ('Personal identification number Advisory Committee within the scope of identity management, the Van Thijn Committee), Advies van de Tafel Persoonsnummerbeleid in het kader van identiteitsmanagement ('Recommendations from the Personal identification number Advisory Committee within the scope of identity management'), Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Zuurmond, A. and M. de Vries, Ars creendi - de kunst van het scheppen ('Ars creendi - the art of creation'), Guideline # 8 from the Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau, The Hague, 2002

Colophon

Upstream! is the last publication from the former Streamlining Key Data Programme Bureau. This chronicle of the Programme was edited by Dr H.P.M. van Duivenboden of Cap Gemini Ernst & Young and Mr M. de Vries BA from Citadel Consulting on the basis of articles contributed by Messrs X. van der Linde, S.B. Luitjens, U.O. Pijpker, R. Schoemaker, D. Schravendeel and J.C.J. Takkenberg, all members of the Programme Bureau until 1 January 2003.

Upstream was translated from the original Dutch Stroomopwaarts publication by Concorde Vertalingen B.V.

Additional information is available from www.stroomlijningbasisgegevens.nl

ISBN 90-77227-06-7

Design: Idiotmedia [BNO], Enschede

Cover: William Arthur Philip Louis Windsor (ceramic object: 320 x 320 cm.)

Printed by: Smeink, Amsterdam

1st edition: May 2003, 1500 copies