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GCHQ IT RELOCATION PROJECT WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Work undertaken by a team from PA Consulting Group and staff at GCHQ to design and manage an extremely complex IT relocation project has been recognised in the form of a major award.

PA Consulting Group, the leading international management, systems and technology consulting firm, has picked up an award at the seventh annual Management Consultancies Association (MCA) Best Management Practice Awards for its work with a team from GCHQ, designing and managing Europe's most complex IT relocation. An independent jury of senior business figures and experts selected the best client assignments, and PA's work with GCHQ won a 'Bronze Award' in the Operational Performance category.

The award is in recognition of PA's work with GCHQ on the relocation of GCHQ's 4,000-strong workforce, together with IT systems, from two older sites to a new hi-tech building. The relocation was one of the most complex ever undertaken in Europe. The work, in support of GCHQ's New Accommodation Programme (NAP) was far more than a logistical exercise. The scale and nature of the IT facilities, combined with GCHQ's importance to national security, made NAP an enormously complex undertaking. There were over 60 highly independent IT, relocation and change projects with a combined value exceeding £300 million.

Mel Lockie, New Accommodation Programme Manager, GCHQ, said: "PA's contribution has been critical to progress on GCHQ's complex, hybrid New Accommodation Programme. The consultants' knowledge and experience of systems engineering has brought structure and discipline to systems design, systems integration and programme sequencing."

As well as a huge logistical endeavour, GCHQ was determined to bring about an organisational transformation towards a more open and flexible culture. The project met the aggressive self-imposed schedule within budget and maintained the continuity of GCHQ's critical intelligence operations.

The Management Consultancies Association (MCA) was formed in 1956 and represents the leading UK-based consulting firms, which employ around 28,000 consultants and generate £5bn in annual fee income. MCA members work for most

of the top FTSE 100 companies and all government departments. Management consultancy is an increasingly important industry for the UK economy with revenues for 2003 estimated at £10 bn, contributing well over £1bn to the UK balance of payments.

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