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Maldives Post Limited

IS Audit of Xpress Money



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AUDITOR GENERAL'S OFFICE

Maldives Post Limited
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Abbreviations

AGO	Auditor General's Office
APPU	Asia Pacific Postal Union
DRP	Disaster Recovery Plan
IT	Information Technology
MPL	Maldives Post Limited
UPU	Universal Postal Union
XM	Xpress Money

1 AUDIT OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND APPROACH

1.1 Background

Maldives Post Limited (MPL) is a 100% government owned company with a network of 14 Atoll Post offices and 170 agency post offices across the nation providing access to postal service in all inhabited islands. MPL has started its postal service and introduced its first, temporary postage during 1906. The vision of MPL is to provide a high quality mail service and other services at a standard and quality acceptable to all citizens and postal customers.

Maldives Post Limited have played a vital role as a basic communication medium and has evolved, over the course of 109 years in the country. Maldives Post Limited plays the role of National Postal Operator in the country as mandated by the Postal Law. The company operates in a competitive market facing great many challenges owing to the rapid changes being taken place in the communication market. This is mainly due to technological advancements and improvement in mobile communication. Maldives Post Limited is a privileged member of Universal Postal Union (UPU) since 1967 and is also a member of Asia Pacific Postal Union (APPU).

Xpress Money is an International Money Transfer Service with a vision to make international money transfers more convenient for the expats around the world with a global network of over 200,000 agent locations across 165 countries. For convenience, Xpress Money offer transfer of money in different forms, including cash transfer, bank account, mobile money & door delivery.

1.2 Objectives and Scope

This audit was planned to be carried out as an Information Systems audit by the AGO focusing on General IT environment and the usage of Xpress Money software, reviewing the controls and security features implemented within MPL and the software, by analysing user feedback and hands-on testing of the software and related documentation.

The primary purpose of the audit is to assess the controls related to Xpress Money and general controls established within the premises.

The auditor defined the following objectives related to Xpress Money, in the audit plan:

- To determine whether MPL has a mechanism for security management;
- To assess whether the access controls and application Security are in accordance with acceptable guidelines;
- To assess the level MPL take Segregation of Duties;
- How MPL use Contingency Planning;
- Data Management.

1.3 Caveats and Assumptions

In this study, the use of Xpress Money worldwide is not considered. Moreover, this review does not seek to make a judgement of best to use for the purpose or the performance measures. Neither did the study consider the acquisition, implementation and the backend of the software.

2 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of our review, we conclude that MPL has been using the software to its maximum. Being one of the many global agents of Xpress Money, MPL has limited rights to the software. The software is maintained by Xpress Money Services Limited and we were unable to carry as a full-fledged IS audit due to the limited administrative options available (options given to MPL) within Xpress Money, other than the general usage.

However, we have few points to highlight during our study.

2.1 Express Money

2.1.1 User Agreement

In case unauthorised access or fraudulent activity, it is important to make the responsible user accountable, which is not possible without a contractual agreement binding the user to a specific standard of conduct thereby prohibiting such activities. Thus, user agreements should be made with the users (staff members) of the system.

2.1.2 Insurance

According to the XM Transfer agreement, (7.b) MPL is liable to bear losses faced while using the system. In order to mitigate such loss MPL must insure against unforeseeable losses.

2.2 General Information System

2.2.1 Server Users

The server user lists included names other than the names specified on the functional units lists and several other generic names (e.g. guest, test, admin) posing the risk of unauthorised users accessing the system at the time of audit.

We found during the audit, that MPL lacks a proper mechanism to hold users accountable for the access and usage of MPL's data. Thus, MPL does not ensure the users understand the severity of misuse as MPL fails to sign user agreements detailing the usage terms. As the server users review showed non-existing users and generic usernames, it is evident that should there be an instance of data misuse, the company will be unable to make the actual user accountable thereby easily allowing the perpetrator to evade responsibilities. Upon our finding, management has removed the names of non-existing users and generic names.

2.2.2 Backup

At the time of the audit, it was noticed that MPL does not take back up on a regular basis. Considering the sensitive nature of the data it is essential to back up the data. MPL should adopt the practice of taking backup data on a regular basis. Management has addressed this matter upon our finding and now takes auto backup daily.

2.2.3 Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)

MPL does not have a disaster recovery plan. A DRP is essential for an entity as it documents policies, processes and procedures to ensure business continuity in case of a catastrophe. The impact of data loss, corruption or theft from hardware failure, human error, hacking or malware could be significant. A plan for data backup and restoration of information is vital for the continuity of the business.

With reference to 2.2.2, the lack of backup practices is detrimental for an entity. In addition, maintaining an offline backup system that is in a separate location from the existing building is integral, especially in case a fire hazard or a natural disaster were to occur.

2.2.4 Information Technology Policy

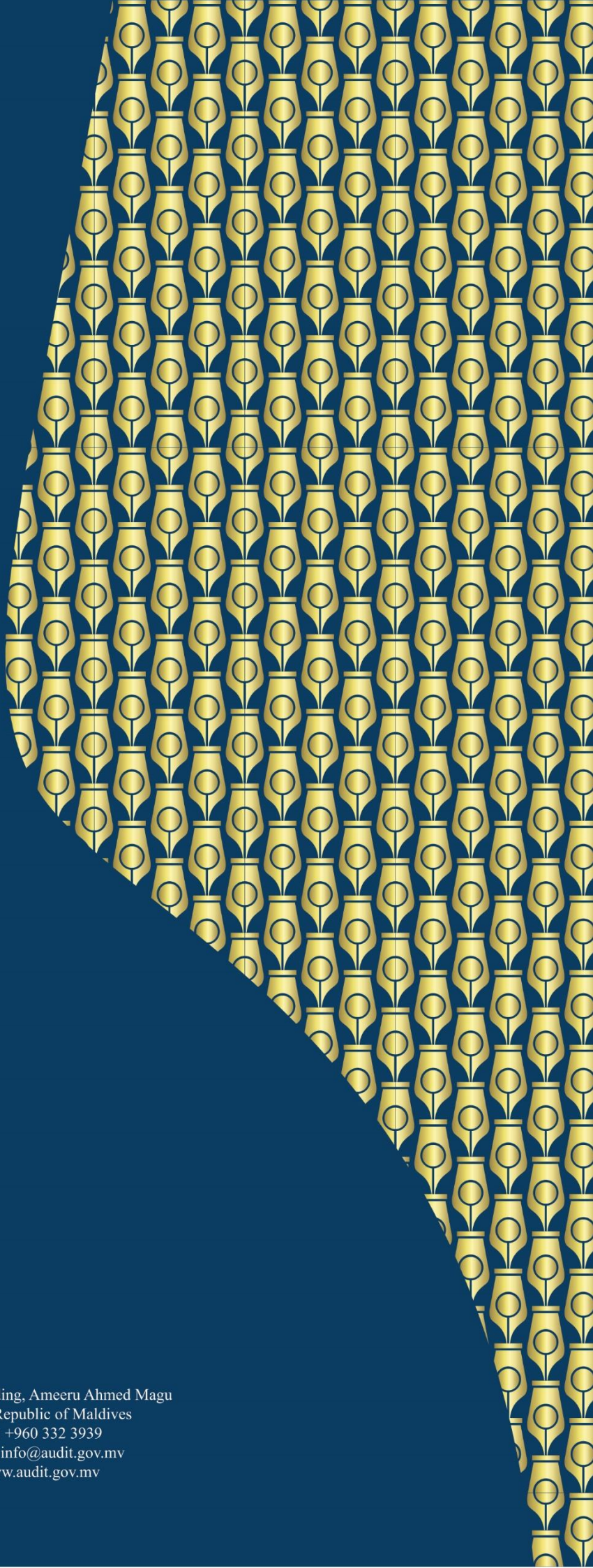
MPL currently does not have a formal information technology policy but is in the process of drafting one.

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