

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

**Department of Community, Rural and
Gaeltacht Affairs**

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Mission Statement

‘To promote and support the development of communities and to advance the use of the Irish language’

Message from the Minister and Ministers of State

This the seventh Annual Report for the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, reports on progress made in the implementation of our high-level goals and targets set out in the Statement of Strategy 2008-2010. These high level goals were shaped by policy priorities set out in the Agreed Programme for Government, the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and *Towards 2016*.

During 2008, significant progress was achieved in working towards the simplification and enhancement of the delivery of our community and rural development programmes and services. A review commenced of the design of the Department's range of programmes to support communities to ensure that optimal benefit is realised from this expenditure. By the end of the year, integrated local development structures were in place in all of the 55 local development operational areas agreed by Government in 2007.

The formulation of a new National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016 was advanced considerably in 2008, with the completion of a major public consultation process.

At the end of the year, the LEADER funding allocations under Axes 3 and 4 of the EU Rural Development Programme were announced, which will greatly help development across rural communities. The first National Trails day was successfully launched in September 2008, in partnership with Coillte, Fáilte Ireland and the National Trails Office. Also in 2008, the inaugural National Famine Memorial Day was held to commemorate those who suffered and died during the Great Famine.

The Department's twenty-year strategic plan to promote the growth in the use of Irish and bilingualism progressed significantly and it is proposed to publish the strategy in 2009.

The Department remains fully committed to implementing a high quality customer service and our Customer Charter 2008-2010 and Customer Service Action Plan 2008-2010 were published during the year.

To all the staff of the Department, to those in the public bodies within our ambit, and to the many communities with whom we work, I along with the Minister of State John Curran, T.D., express our sincerest thanks for your commitment and achievements in 2008 and look forward to working together and delivering on the Programme for Government in the coming years.

Éamon Ó Cuív T.D.
Minister for Community, Rural &
Gaeltacht Affairs

John Curran T.D.
Minister of State with special
responsibility for Drugs Strategy and
Community Affairs

Foreward by the Secretary General

I remember coming to Dublin as a student in the mid 1970's, looking at O'Connell Bridge House which housed the Department of Local Government and thinking how opaque the business of the civil service was. Ministers and the buildings were visible but little else - people, processes, files were shielded from the public view.

Since then there has been significant change – the advent of the Ombudsman's Office, enhanced parliamentary oversight, legislation on access to records, judicial activism, and a strengthening role of the C&AG have brought significantly changed transparency and accountability to public bodies.

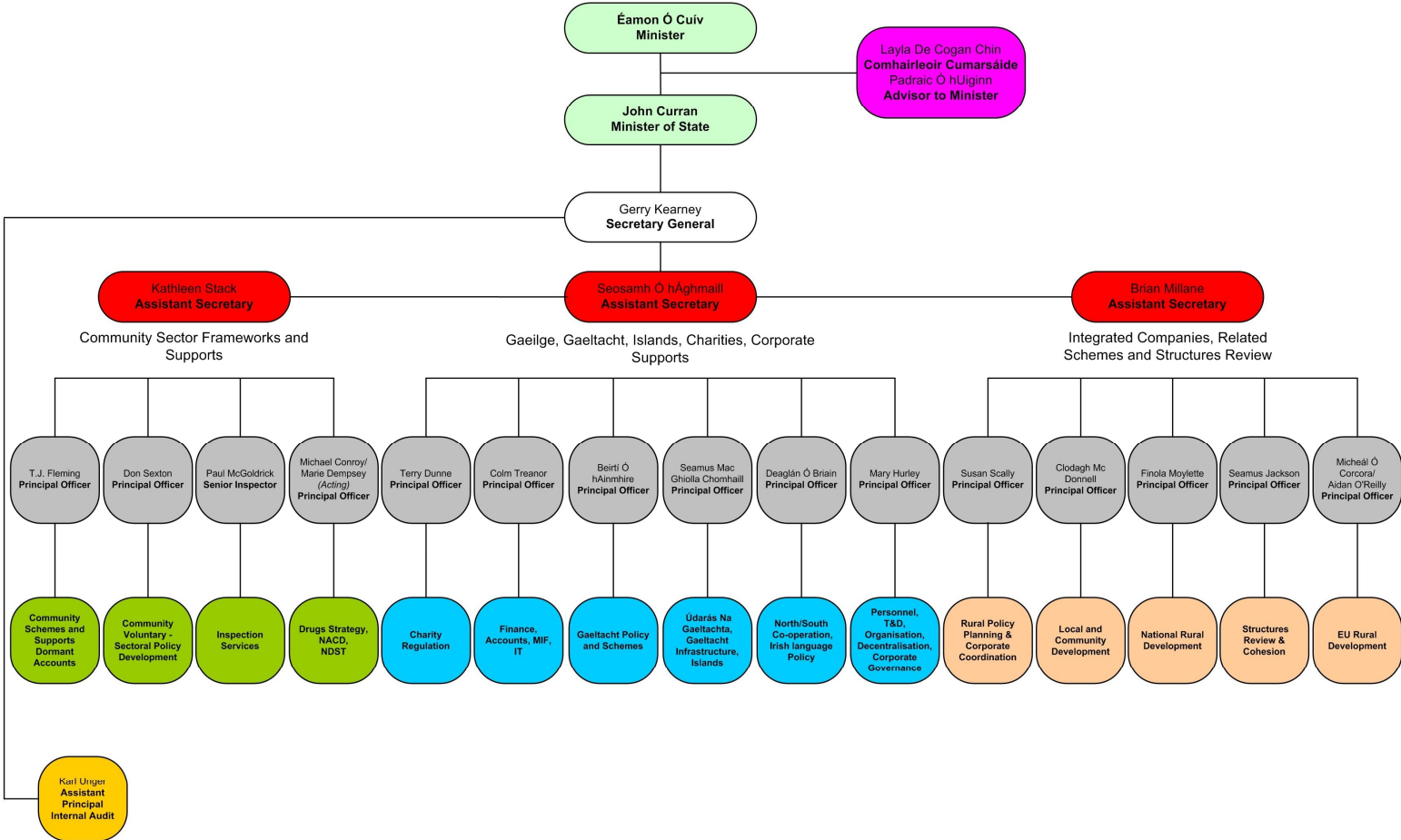
One piece of that accountability package that tends to be overlooked is annual reporting by public bodies on their activities. Taken in conjunction with the advent of Output Statements such reporting offers particular opportunity to link cash with results and to better understand policies, activities and deliverables by Departments.

True, this is an evolving process and thus practices vary. But the importance of such reporting stands. It supports follow up on spending, review of performance of public bodies and can help engage public understanding.

Against this background I am happy to present this the Annual Report for the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs for 2008. Significant progress has been made over the past year by the Department in delivering on its commitments in our Statement of Strategy. I want to thank all of those within our Department and the people we work with throughout the country. Their hard work, skills and commitment enabled us to deliver on a very challenging mandate. Thanks also to our Minister Eamon O Cuiv TD and Ministers of State Pat Carey TD and John Curran TD for their leadership and support.

Gerry Kearney
Secretary General

An Roinn Gnóthai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta/Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs (Chart 01)



Progress in 2008

In line with Section 4 of the Public Service Management Act 1997, this part reports on progress made in 2008 in respect of the high level goals set out in the Department's Statement of Strategy 2008–2010.

Goal 1 - Developing Communities

To encourage and facilitate communities to pursue social and economic progress

Strategy 1.1:

<i>To develop communities.</i>

The Community Development Programme (CDP) 2007-2013

The CDP provides financial assistance to community development projects in disadvantaged areas. It also provides support for specific target groups that experience disadvantage, for example, lone parents, travellers, people with disabilities and elderly people living in isolation.

In 2008, the Department allocated funding of approximately €26 million under the Programme. At the end of the year, 185 projects were in receipt of funding, and approximately 350,000 individuals and 4,075 groups benefited from the services provided under the programme.

The CDP is now being reviewed as part of the Department's wider review of the design of social inclusion programmes. In May 2008, funding to six Regional Support Agencies, who were contracted to provide finance, governance and other supports to the projects, ended. Savings arising, some €1.48m, were applied to frontline projects.

Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP)

The objective of the LDSIP is to counter disadvantage and to promote equality and social and economic inclusion. The programme provides assistance to groups in disadvantaged areas, as well as support for self-help work in specific target groups.

In 2008, an amount of €7.28 million was expended under the programme. During the year, over 27,000 adults were supported under the programme's 'Services for the Unemployed' measure and 51,000 children and young people were supported under the 'Community Based Youth Initiatives' measure. 2,291 community-based projects were also supported. The LDSIP is also being reviewed.

Programme Realignment and Redesign

During 2008, the LDSIP was extended to provide nationwide coverage. This will enable communities and individuals to access supports available under the programme, irrespective of their location. Following from a value for money and policy review of the LDSIP, a process of reform also commenced during the year and it is intended that a redesigned programme will be operational from end of 2009. The new programme will have particular emphasis on the delivery of quantifiable and measurable outcomes and improved targeting, monitoring and evaluation processes to deliver greater value for money and enhanced service delivery.

To assist in this process, the Department has engaged the services of the Centre for Effective Services (CES), which is funded jointly by Atlantic Philanthropies, the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) and the Department. The CES will

1. Assist the Department with planning for future delivery and development of LDSIP and CDP by collating and making available international evidence of good practice and 'what works' in similar community-based initiatives, and review the design of the existing programme in the light of this evidence.
2. Inform policy and practice relating to LDSIP and CDP with the aim of maximising programme impact and effectiveness within existing funding parameters.
3. Promote access to expertise (including international expertise) for developing appropriate evaluation methodologies and measures for the evaluation of local services delivered under the programmes, and make recommendations for subsequent evaluation design(s).
4. Assist the Department to build internal and external capacity for evidence-based design and delivery of other related services and programmes.

As indicated, the work will focus on the review of the design of both the LDSIP and CDP.

Community Services Programme (CSP)

The purpose of the CSP is to support community businesses and social enterprises by funding local services and employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups in society. The Programme focuses on communities where public and private sector services are lacking, either through geographical or social isolation. The Programme can support economic and social regeneration for local communities and enables the use of community assets in the provision of quality services. It also provides employment opportunities to those who might otherwise face difficulty in securing work. The Programme supports the delivery of services under three broad categories:

- Management and Supervision of Community Halls and Facilities,
- Delivering Community Services, and
- Community Enterprises.

At the end of 2008, over 400 project proposals had been approved for access to the CSP with a total of 359 projects in receipt of funds. Approximately 2,100 people were employed in the funded projects with a total of €44.5 million being expended across the programme in 2008.

Scheme of Community Support for Older People (CSOP)

The CSOP encourages and assists local support for older people by means of a community based grant scheme to improve the security of its older members. The scheme provides grant aid to voluntary organisations for the purchase and installation of personal alarm systems and small items of physical security in the home. The scheme adheres to the principle of encouraging contact between older people and their local community organisations. During 2008, funding in excess of €4.3 million was expended and over 11,750 older people benefited from personal security devices under this scheme. This involved the co-operation of 522 community and voluntary organisations nationwide.

Programme of Grants for Locally Based Community and Voluntary Organisations

This Programme supports investment in community facilities by providing funding to offset the cost of refurbishment and equipment. A revised Programme was launched in 2008 following a review.

The main changes introduced in 2008 were:

- Increased level of grants available for refurbishment (from €40k to €60k);
- Increased focus and priority on disadvantaged;
- Simplified application process;
- Broadened eligibility of the Schemes; and
- Reduced number of schemes by amalgamating existing schemes.

The maximum grant for Refurbishment was set at €60,000 while between €10,000 and €50,000 became available under the other programme elements. Some €2m was committed to successful new applicants by the end of 2008.

By the end of the year, over €3.46 million was expended under the programme in respect of projects approved under the 2006-07 and 2008 Programmes.

White Paper Grants Scheme

A new scheme to support national organisations in the community and voluntary sector commenced in 2008. Almost €6.7 million was expended to support 71 national organisations; to support enhanced service delivery in the community; and to support those that contribute to policy-making via the Social Partnership process. The funding was provided to meet core costs and related overheads incurred by the organisations.

The Dormant Accounts Fund

Disbursements from the Dormant Accounts Fund support three broad categories of persons:

- Those affected by economic and social disadvantage;
- Those affected by educational disadvantage; and
- Persons with a disability.

In 2008, the Government approved an indicative allocation of €30 million from the fund for the purpose of supporting a series of funding programmes and measures under the above categories of disadvantage. Funding was allocated for the following purposes:

Economic and social disadvantage (€15 million)

- Supports for priority projects in RAPID areas
- Specific measures supporting priority themes including substance misuse, traveller initiatives, a recreation measure for disadvantaged young people, homelessness and suicide prevention

Educational disadvantage (€7.5 million)

- Additional capital funding for schools in disadvantaged areas
- Pre-school initiatives
- ICT Scheme for disadvantaged schools
- Wider community use of schools in disadvantaged areas

Persons with a disability (€7.5 million)

- Small scale building and enhancement grants for residential care units
- Small scale capital enhancement grants for respite services
- Grants for the provision of transport for people with disabilities
- Funding for sporting events for people with profound disabilities
- Funding for innovative ways of enabling people with severe disability to live independent lives

During 2008, Government approved disbursements of €46 million across all three funding categories on foot of programme allocations made in 2006 and 2007.

Strategy 1.2:

To support volunteering and active citizenship.

The 'Taskforce on Active Citizenship' report recommended that the Department should fund a network of volunteer centres nationwide. During 2008, the Department provided funding to support 20 volunteer centres and other active citizenship measures, including a cross border volunteering initiative. By the end of the year, in excess of 7,500 volunteers and 960 volunteer-involving organisations were registered

by the centres. 56% of registered volunteers had never previously volunteered and 70% were under 35 years of age.

The Department supported other practical activities to encourage greater active citizenship including the Young Social Innovators Initiative, the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Community Learning Programme, a project with Focus Ireland to support the placement of social science graduates within the organisation, and support for Boardmatch, an organisation which aims to strengthen boards of management and management committees of non-profit organisations.

In 2008, the Department commenced a cross-border volunteering initiative with the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland. The project involves three groups – the GAA, Voluntary Arts Ireland and the Church of Ireland. Its objective is to pilot action research in the area of the recruitment of volunteers. In all, the Department spent in excess of €3.71m in 2008 in support of such active citizenship measures.

Strategy 1.3:

To facilitate integrated development in areas of disadvantage.

The objective of this strategy is the alignment of local, community and rural development organisations so that the delivery of community and rural development programmes and services is simplified and enhanced.

At the end of 2008, integrated local development structures were in place in all of the 55 local development operational areas agreed by Government. As a result of the process, the number of companies involved in the delivery of related programmes has been reduced from 94 to 54.

Arrangements were also agreed for the transfer of functions in relation to the Department's programmes from the existing LEADER and Partnership groups to the new Integrated Local Development Companies from January 2009. The Department initiated contacts with other funding agencies with a view to the early transfer of these programmes during 2009.

Strategy 1.4:

Improve service delivery to communities.

RAPID Programme (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development)

The objective of the RAPID programme is to ensure that priority attention is given to tackling the spatial concentration of poverty and social exclusion within RAPID areas.

In 2008, €8.2 million was expended on projects in the 46 designated RAPID areas through the RAPID leverage schemes.

During the year, the programme focused on seven key strategic themes:

1. Community safety and anti-social behaviour
2. Family support
3. Youth supports
4. Physical environment
5. Education
6. Health
7. Employment/Training

During 2008, work commenced on reviewing the boundaries of RAPID areas. The objective of recent research is to focus on an analysis of recent Census data with a view to ensuring that the boundaries of existing RAPID areas remain appropriate. A key concern is to ensure that the effectiveness of the RAPID Programme is not diminished and that public bodies continue to prioritise and target communities with the greatest needs.

Strategy 1.5:

To comprehensively reform the law to ensure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud.

Charities Bill 2007

The Charities Bill is designed to increase public trust and confidence in charities operating in Ireland, by ensuring the accountability and transparency of such bodies. A number of amendments were made to the bill as originally published in 2007, which were broadly welcomed by the sector. It was passed by Dáil Éireann in November, and was subsequently passed by Seanad Éireann in December 2008. It was enacted in early 2009 following approval by the Dáil of some final amendments made in the Seanad.

Agreed Codes of Good Practice for charitable fundraising

During 2008, the feasibility of having non-statutory codes of practice to regulate the operational aspects of fundraising was explored by the Department, working in partnership with the sector, through Irish Charities Tax Research Ltd. A report, 'Regulation of Fundraising by Charities through Legislation and Codes of Practice', was published and it is anticipated that the implementation phase will begin in 2009.

GuideStar Feasibility Study

GuideStar, as it operates in a number of countries, is a comprehensive, up-to-date, online directory of not-for-profit organisations derived from regulatory compliance statements and voluntary additional disclosure by listed organisations.

The Department part-funded a study to examine the feasibility of establishing a GuideStar, or a similar service, in Ireland on a non-profit basis. The study was completed by the end of 2008 and its outcome will be considered during 2009.

Goal 2 – Tackling Problem Drugs Use

To facilitate a more integrated and co-ordinated response by State Agencies and the Community and Voluntary Sectors to tackle problem drug use with the aim of significantly reducing the harm caused to individuals and society

Strategy 2.1:

To co-ordinate an overall strategy to tackle problem drug use in Ireland.

National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008

The implementation of the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 continued in 2008, with progress being monitored through regular meetings of the Inter-Departmental Group on Drugs and with updates being provided during the year on key issues to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, Children & Integration.

Proposed new National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016

During 2008, a Steering Group, comprising representatives of the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, worked to develop proposals and to make recommendations on a new National Drugs Strategy. This work included an extensive consultation process involving 15 public consultation meetings across the country, meetings with relevant Government Departments and agencies, key sectoral representatives and organisations and targeted focus groups. Submissions were also received from the public and there was engagement with Oireachtas Members through the Joint Committee on Arts, Sport, Tourism, Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs and Seanad Éireann. Work on developing the Strategy was ongoing at the end of the year.

EU Drugs Action Plan 2009-2012

The Action Plan was negotiated and agreed during 2008 and the Irish input was co-ordinated by the Drugs Strategy Unit of the Department. The plan identifies demand reduction and supply reduction among its priorities.

Drugs Rehabilitation

Arising from the recommendations of the Report of the Working Group on Drugs Rehabilitation, a Senior Rehabilitation Co-ordinator was appointed by the Health Services Executive in 2008 and a National Drugs Rehabilitation Implementation Committee, chaired by the Co-ordinator, was established.

The Department is represented on this Committee and the implementation of the recommendations of the Report is being pursued.

National Drugs Strategy Team

The National Drugs Strategy Team comprises representatives from Departments and Agencies in the drugs field, as well as community and voluntary sector representatives. In 2008, it continued to work in support of the co-ordination of the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy through its interactions with Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces and by contributing to the development of drugs policy.

National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD)

The National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) advises the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of drug misuse.

Among the reports published by the NACD in 2008 were:

“Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland - 2006/2007 Drug Prevalence Survey:

- Bulletin 1 - First Results from the 2006/2007 Drug Prevalence Survey
- Bulletin 2 - Regional Drugs Task Force (Ireland) & Health and Social Service Board (Northern Ireland) Results
- Bulletin 3 - Cannabis Results
- Bulletin 4 - Cocaine Results

Other reports published included the “Research Outcome Study In Ireland” and “Needle Exchange Provision in Ireland”, a joint report from the NACD and National Drugs Strategy Team.

Strategy 2.2:

To target the provision of services and facilities to optimise their effect in areas of high problem drug use.

Local Drugs Task Forces (LDTFs)

In 2008, the Department allocated €19.7 million in current funding to support nearly 300 projects in two rounds of plans of the 14 LDTFs. The projects focus on the areas of treatment, rehabilitation, education, prevention, awareness and curbing local supply and employ over 300 people. An evaluation of over 280 interim-funded LDTF

projects was completed, and decisions regarding the mainstreaming of projects commenced following the Evaluation Report.

Regional Drugs Task Forces (RDTFs)

The ten RDTFs continued to implement their strategic plans during 2008. By the end of the year, in excess of €10 million was expended to support over 170 projects. The projects focus on the areas of treatment, rehabilitation, education, prevention, awareness and curbing local supply.

Emerging Needs Fund

The Emerging Needs Fund was introduced to provide a flexible response to emerging needs in LDTF areas. The Department spent €3.3 million in 2008 to support 52 projects.

Cocaine Fund

In 2008, the Department allocated funding of almost €1.7 million to initiatives to address cocaine usage. The funding was provided for locally based cocaine awareness campaigns run by the Drugs Task Forces that dovetailed with the national HSE campaign. In addition, new initiatives aimed at tackling cocaine use in local communities were developed. Additional funding was allocated to support existing cocaine specific projects in LDTF areas and also other projects aimed at polydrug/cocaine use.

Rehabilitation Fund

Following on from the recommendations of the 2007 Report of the Working Group on Drugs Rehabilitation, funding in excess of €750,000 was allocated to support the development of rehabilitation initiatives through the Task Forces. Funding of €400,000 was also approved for three drugs related projects dealing with homeless people.

Premises Initiative Fund

The aim of the Premises Initiative Fund is to address the accommodation needs of community based drugs projects in Drugs Task Force areas. In 2008, capital funding of nearly €4 million was allocated to 6 LDTF and 9 RDTF projects under the initiative.

Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF)

The YPFSF aims to develop youth facilities, (including sport and recreational facilities) and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop. Its primary focus is LDTF areas, as well as the cities of Galway, Limerick and Waterford and Carlow town. In 2008, the Fund was extended to 4 new towns in Leinster - Arklow, Dundalk, Wexford and Athlone.

In 2008, capital funding of €4.9 million and current funding in the region of approximately €16 million was spent on YPFSF initiatives. Dedicated funding of almost €400,000 was approved in 2008 towards the provision of 10 new Youth Sports Development Officers to serve the Northside and Southside Regeneration areas in Limerick City.

The Government also decided during 2008 that the YPFSF should transfer to the newly formed Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and the transfer has been effected.

Regional Youth Initiative

The Regional Youth Initiative was a once-off funding allocation announced in April 2008 to facilitate capital projects targeted at young people in RDTF areas who are not covered by the YPFSF. Sixteen projects were approved, valued at €2.3 million with 15 of them drawing down full or part-funding in 2008.

Dial to Stop Drug Dealing

The Department allocated once off funding of €100,000 for the “Dial-to-Stop Drug Dealing Campaign”, which was launched in 4 LDTF and 1 RDTF areas in 2008. The campaigns aimed to encourage people to provide any information that they may have had concerning drug dealing by using a confidential telephone line. The information was then forwarded to An Garda Síochána for appropriate follow-up action. Work on identifying and developing separate campaigns supported by Dormant Accounts funding commenced in 2008.

Limerick City Initiative

During 2008, the Department made available a dedicated additional fund of €1.3 million to the Mid-West Regional Drugs Task Force to support appropriate drug focused proposals. Eight current projects were funded and, at the end of the year, one major capital proposal was being finalised.

British-Irish Council

Meetings of the British-Irish Sectoral Group on the Misuse of Drugs, which is chaired by the Department, focused on the following issues during the year:

- The use of advances in prevention science to guide substance misuse prevention in communities (Northern Ireland);
- The experience of the Jersey administration in engaging with young substance misusers through its well-developed youth services and initiatives; and
- Engaging with communities around drug misuse (UK).

At the BIC Summit meeting held in Dublin on 14th February 2008, the challenges and opportunities with respect to families and problem drug use was a main agenda item.

Goal 3 – Rural Development

To promote and maintain living and working populations in rural areas by helping to foster sustainable and culturally vibrant communities there

Strategy 3.1:

To co-ordinate the implementation of actions for the development of rural communities arising from both national and EU policies.

LEADER 2000-2006

LEADER is the EU community initiative for rural development that provides approved local action groups with public funding, both EU and National, to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas. LEADER funding under the 2000-2006 programme was available in all rural areas of the country until March 2008. The closure process for the LEADER programme 2000-2006 was advanced during 2008.

EU Rural Development Programme 2007-2013

The Rural Development Programme Ireland 2007-2013 was approved by the European Commission in 2007. The LEADER elements will be delivered through Axes 3 and 4 of the programme and funding of €425 million will be available. This funding allocation is almost treble that of the previous programme.

In accordance with EU requirements, the Department undertook an open competitive process for the selection of local action groups in 2008. Applications were invited from community and rural development groups for contracts to deliver the programme for agreed operational areas. Following the conclusion of an independent evaluation process, the Minister announced the LEADER funding allocations under Axes 3 and 4 for each of the successful 36 Local Area Groups (LAGs) in November 2008.

Each LAG will distribute funding to community groups and individuals in rural areas for a range of activities to be funded under this programme. The activities include the following:

- Diversification into non-agricultural activities
- Support for business creation and development
- Encouragement of tourism activities
- Basic services for the economy and rural population
- Village renewal and development
- Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage
- Training

- Skills acquisition and animation for the preparation and implementation of a local development strategy

Significant changes in the new round of funding include increased rates of aid available from 50% to 75% for community projects and an increase in the aid ceilings for capital projects from €100,000 to €200,000 in most cases. In exceptional circumstances, provision has been made for grant aid up to €500,000 for non-commercial community flagship projects.

Strategy 3.2:

To implement various measures designed to improve the economic, social, cultural and physical conditions in rural areas.

Western Development Commission (WDC)

The WDC fosters and supports the economic and social development of the Western Region (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). The Commission is also responsible for the operation of the Western Investment Fund, which contributes to the development of the region by investing through equity or loans (but not grants) in business start-up, growth-oriented small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and in community-based measures to encourage enterprise development.

In 2008, the WDC provided investment funds totalling €5.7 million across a range of sectors and business types by way of loan finance and/or venture capital, which in turn leveraged a total of €11.3 million in additional investment into the region. Further details of the Commission's activities are available on its website at www.wdc.ie.

CLÁR Programme

In 2008, the CLÁR programme invested almost €24.18 million to support physical, economic and social infrastructure across a variety of measures. The CLÁR measures cover a wide variety of developments, including village, housing and schools enhancement; electricity conversion/installation; roads; water supply and sewerage schemes; and health, coastal, sports and community projects. In 2008, CLÁR allocated funding to 245 roads schemes, 127 water and sewerage schemes and 125 sports clubs. 126 schools received funding towards the cost of enhancing their outdoor play facilities.

In 2008, a new health programme, which is co-funded with the HSE and with an overall value of € million, was introduced. Of this €million, € million was provided under the CLÁR programme and € million was provided by the HSE.

The Rural Social Scheme (RSS)

The aims of the RSS are to provide income support to farmers and fisherpersons who are in receipt of specified social welfare payments and to provide particular services of benefit to rural communities. The total expenditure under the RSS in 2008 amounted to just over €49.3 million, which included €16 million from the Dormant Accounts Fund. During 2008, 2,600 places were fully taken up on the scheme at participant level and 130 at supervisor level. In addition, a new measure called 'Community Administration/Clerical Duties' was introduced, to complement the other community focussed measures facilitated under the scheme.

Rural Recreation supports

The Department works to implement the National Countryside Recreation Strategy and supports Comhairle na Tuaithe.

Comhairle na Tuaithe was established to address the three priority issues of:

- Access to the countryside,
- Development of a countryside code, and
- Development of a countryside recreation strategy.

Progress made during 2008 included the following:

- The successful introduction of the Walks Scheme on 13 trails with 607 landholders participating.
- Twelve Rural Recreation Officers (RROs) were appointed in 2008 to promote walking tourism in areas where there are clusters of suitable accessible walks and to assist in the introduction of the Walks Scheme. These RROs are

employed by local development companies but funded mainly by the Department with a contribution from Fáilte Ireland.

- The Department provided funding of €1.5 million to Coillte to support its rural recreation strategy allowing it to expand its recreational sites countrywide and to support the maintenance of trails across its 13 districts, including car parks, picnic areas, access routes and signage.
- Funding of €0.5 million was provided to Fáilte Ireland to assist in the expansion of its looped walks network to 98 and in support of various walking festivals nationwide.
- The first National Trails Day was successfully launched in September 2008 in partnership with Coillte, Fáilte Ireland and the National Trails Office and approximately 70 events were held nationwide.

Goal 4 – Gaeltacht and Islands Development

To support Gaeltacht and island communities through the development of infrastructure and the provision of essential services

Strategy 4.1:

Tackling critical infrastructural deficiencies in the Gaeltacht and enhancing the social, cultural and economic fabric of the region.

Improvement Schemes in the Gaeltacht

The Department operates a number of Gaeltacht Improvement Schemes to support the development of infrastructure in the Gaeltacht. Funding is provided to local authorities to develop marine works, strategic roads, accommodation roads, and group water schemes. Expenditure of €5.85 million in 2008 facilitated the improvement of 12 Gaeltacht strategic roads and other minor roads, including €348,000 on marine works and €433,000 on group water schemes.

Under the Gaeltacht Housing Scheme, the Department pays grants to qualified applicants for the building of new houses in the Gaeltacht or the renovation of their existing houses. Usually this grant is paid to residents in Gaeltacht areas who use Irish as their everyday family language. During 2008 grant funding of almost €1.1 million was paid in respect of 182 new houses in the Gaeltacht. €3.9 million was spent on the renovation of 904 Gaeltacht houses.

Under the Sports and Leisure Facilities Scheme, capital grants are provided to develop or improve sport and leisure facilities in the Gaeltacht, (e.g. community halls, playing pitches and other public facilities). The aim of this scheme is to improve the social, cultural and economic life of Gaeltacht areas as well as strengthening Irish as the community language in these areas. In 2008, almost €4.87 million was expended to assist in the provision or improvement of 44 community and leisure facilities in the Gaeltacht, (including Irish colleges).

Following publication of the major socio-linguistic study of the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht, a Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht was established. The Committee is currently developing actions to secure the future of Irish as the principal community language in the Gaeltacht within the context of the drafting of a national 20-year Strategy for Irish (see 5.1 below).

Strategy 4.2:

Promoting employment and enterprise, fostering community development and developing the Gaeltacht economy in order to support Irish as the principal community language.

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a non-commercial State body, which comes under the aegis of the Department and receives funding to develop the Gaeltacht economy for the purposes of encouraging the preservation and expansion of Irish as the principal community language. To this end, an tÚdarás promotes employment and enterprise in the Gaeltacht through the development of local natural resources and the enhancement of skills and entrepreneurial abilities, in addition to promoting external investment to the Gaeltacht. It also promotes and supports community development initiatives and a wide range of language and cultural schemes.

In 2008, the overall Exchequer provision for Údarás na Gaeltachta was €44.05 million, i.e., €13.88 million in respect of administration, €4.67 million in respect of current programmes and €25.5 million in respect of capital expenditure. By the end of 2008, 8,193 people were employed on a full-time equivalent basis in enterprises supported by An tÚdarás. Further details on the operations of Údarás na Gaeltachta are available at www.udaras.ie.

Strategy 4.3:

Afford recognition to the distinctive heritage and culture of populated islands through a range of support programmes and schemes, including funding for capital and current projects, designed to enhance access services and infrastructure.

Our islands have a valuable natural and man-made heritage, as well as rich cultural and linguistic traditions. The maintenance and development of strong communities on the islands is a particular challenge. During 2008, the Department supported island communities by:

- The provision of safe, regular high quality access to islands.
- Funding a wide range of capital projects, from the construction of airstrips to major pier improvements and the implementation of small island programmes. These works were carried out in co-operation with the relevant local authorities and local communities.
- Promoting and coordinating Government policies in respect of island communities.
- Engaging directly with key community and development interests.

Expenditure of €33 million was directed towards the improvement of infrastructure facilities for the islands in 2008. This included pier and harbour improvements,

upgrading of road and water systems, environmental protection works, and provision of community facilities such as playing pitches and refurbishment of community centres.

Key infrastructural projects progressed and completed in 2008 include:

- Completion of Cé an Chaladh Móir, Inis Meáin.
- Completion of coastal protection works, pier and harbour improvements and progression of the airstrip development on Inishbofin Island, Co. Galway.
- Commencement of construction works on Clifden Airstrip.
- Commencement of a major redevelopment of Cill Rónáin pier.
- Continuation of the pier development at Ros an Mhíl.

Expenditure of €5.10 million was directed towards financing island transport and air services and supporting the provision of other projects, including:

- An administration grant provided to Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann (Irish Islands Federation) to cover the cost of employing a full-time manager.
- Co-funding a BA (Hons) degree programme on Sherkin Island in conjunction with the Dublin Institute of Technology.
- Co-funding with Fáilte Ireland a tourism marketing campaign designed to market Ireland's islands world wide as a niche tourism destination.

Goal 5 – Promotion and Maintenance of the Irish Language

To increase the use of the Irish language countrywide and to support it as the everyday community language in the Gaeltacht

Strategy 5.1:

To develop a 20 year Strategic Plan for the growth in the use of Irish and in bilingualism.

The Government's *Statement on the Irish Language 2006* includes a commitment to develop a 20-year national Strategy for the Irish language, which is intended to provide the foundation for practical action for supporting and promoting the language by adopting a modern, integrated approach.

In 2008, the Department, with the assistance of consultants, commenced preparatory work by undertaking a widescale public consultation process. A discussion document was subsequently published, based on the views and recommendations received. A further series of public meetings was then undertaken to give people the opportunity to express their views on this document.

In addition to the public consultation, the recommendations of other key stakeholders in the public and voluntary sectors were sought for inclusion in the Strategy.

Work on the drafting of the new 20-year Strategy is being brought forward by the Cabinet Committee on Irish and the Gaeltacht. It is proposed to publish the Strategy during 2009.

Strategy 5.2:

To secure better provision of public services through Irish through phased implementation of the Official Languages Act and other measures.

Official Languages Act 2003

The process of implementing the Official Languages Act on a phased basis continued in 2008. 11 additional language schemes covering 24 public bodies were confirmed by the Minister and published on the website of An Coimisinéir Teanga. By the end of the year, a total of 85 schemes covering 155 public bodies had been confirmed and published.

In addition, a total of 31 draft inaugural schemes covering 55 public bodies were in the course of preparation. Furthermore, by the end of 2008, the Minister had issued a notice to 22 public bodies requesting them to conduct a review of the operation of their existing schemes and to prepare and present for confirmation a new draft “second” scheme.

On 1 October 2008, following an extensive consultation process with public bodies, Regulations were made under section 9(1) of the Act relating to the use of Irish and of Irish and English together on stationary, signage and pre-recorded oral announcements. The Department subsequently wrote to all public bodies covered by the Act to advise them in relation to the Regulations. The Regulations take effect from 1 March 2009.

Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla

The role of the Coimisinéir Teanga is to supervise and monitor the Act and to ensure that it is implemented. The Coimisinéir is independent in the performance of his functions.

Strategy 5.3:

Promote the availability of qualified persons with Irish language skills to meet EU recruitment needs and the needs of public bodies in Ireland.

Irish Language Skills Initiative

Irish became an official and working language of the EU with effect from 1 January 2007. This was a very significant development, which presents both opportunities and challenges.

During 2008, funding continued to be made available under a dedicated fund to facilitate the accelerated provision of specified 3rd level Irish language courses to help to meet requirements arising from the recognition by the EU of Irish as a full working language, as well as the implementation of the Official Languages Act 2003. By the end of 2008, 7 full-time courses and one intensive short-term course were in operation.

The accreditation system for translators developed by Foras na Gaeilge continued. 125 individual translators were accredited under the system by the end of 2008. Work also commenced on translation of priority areas of the EU terminology database into Irish by Fiontar DCU, with assistance from the Department.

Ciste na Gaeilge

Funding is provided from Ciste na Gaeilge to support a range of Irish language organisations and initiatives. During 2008, a total of €5.21 million was paid from the Ciste. This included grants paid to various Irish language organisations operating outside the Gaeltacht, for example Gael Taca, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe.

In recent years, a number of sub-funds were initiated under Ciste na Gaeilge. The above figure of €5.21 million includes the following amounts paid out under these sub-funds during 2008:

- *Fo-Chiste Tríú Leibhéal* to support the teaching of Irish at third level institutions abroad - €760,848 was provided to 31 institutions.
- *Fo-Chiste Gnó* to support the Irish language in the business community - €434,596 was paid to 3 organisations.
- *Fo-Chiste Logainmneacha* - €462,073 was paid to support research on Irish language placenames.
- *Fo-Chiste DVDanna* - €110,084 was paid to provide Irish Language DVDs for children.

Strategy 5.4:

To promote strategic and language planning initiatives to meet the linguistic requirements of the Gaeltacht.

Language planning initiatives give Gaeltacht communities the opportunity to keep Irish as the daily spoken language and to support its adoption by the next generation. €400,500 was spent on these schemes during 2008.

In 2008, there were 8 local communities involved with the Local Language Support Schemes in the following areas:

- Gaoth Dobhair, Gleann Cholmcille and Na Dúnaibh (Donegal)
- Na Déise (Waterford)
- Ráth Cairn (Meath)

- Corr na Móna/Tuar Mhic Éadaigh, Cois Fharráige and Inis Mór (Galway/Mayo)

Strategy 5.5:

To foster the language and the culture of the Gaeltacht so as to consolidate Irish as its principal community language.

One of the Department's key objectives is to promote the maintenance of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht as its most important community resource and its principal means of communication. The Department operates a number of schemes and programmes aimed at the maintenance, promotion and strengthening of the language in the Gaeltacht.

Cultural Schemes in the Gaeltacht

During 2008, the Department provided funding in excess of €0.7 million to various organisations that are working to maintain Irish in the Gaeltacht, with a special emphasis on projects and events that are language-centred. Grants are provided for cultural events in which Irish plays a central part, as well as enhancing the social and cultural life of the Gaeltacht areas. The Gaeltacht organisations that received support from the Department in 2008 included Gael Uladh, Gaoth Dobhair; Oideas Gael, Gleann Cholmáille; Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne, Corca Dhuibhne; and An Ghael-Acadamh, An Spidéal.

Gaeltacht Summer Camps

The Department provided funding of €543,790 under this scheme to 190 summer camps in the Gaeltacht, which were attended by 7,000 children between 6 and 18 years of age. The aim of this scheme is to help to maintain Irish in the Gaeltacht and especially to strengthen it as the spoken language among the younger people in the Gaeltacht.

Language Assistants in Gaeltacht Schools

The Department pays grants under this scheme to provide children in Gaeltacht schools, for whom Irish is not their first language or who require extra assistance, with expert Irish teachers. €726,367 was spent under this scheme in 2008.

Third-Level Activities

The Department provided financial assistance in excess of €3 million in 2008 to Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, University College Galway, towards the development and management of third level training courses in Irish in the Gaeltacht. This funding is made available in order to protect and foster the language as a valuable asset through the provision of training and development opportunities to the Gaeltacht and the Irish language communities. It also helps to provide high-level employment opportunities by amalgamating new media and technology with traditional media such as cultural tourism.

Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge

Under this scheme, the Department pays a grant to Gaeltacht families with children attending primary or secondary school that use Irish as their everyday family language. In 2008, €703,560 was spent under this scheme and 3,176 Gaeltacht households received funding.

Irish Summer Colleges

In 2008 grants of almost €5.6 million in total were paid to families in the Gaeltacht who were accredited by the Department to keep Irish language students in their homes while they attend Irish courses in recognised Irish colleges. This scheme gives young people, from outside of the Gaeltacht, an opportunity to attain a fluency in the Irish language by living in the Gaeltacht.

During 2008, the Department provided support under the scheme to 26,907 students who were accommodated in 663 houses in the Gaeltacht. A small amount of students attended boarding colleges. The Department also operates a scheme for adult learners. €26,006 was spent under this scheme in 2008 and 1,205 students benefited from it.

Goal 6 – North/South Co-operation

To maintain, develop and foster North/South co-operation

Strategy 6.1:

To support Waterways Ireland, the North/South Waterways body.

This Department, together with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, supports and funds Waterways Ireland in the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland waterways.

In 2008 the Department provided funding of €38.1 million to Waterways Ireland. Significant outputs during the year included:

- Completion of the new Waterways Ireland headquarters in Enniskillen and subsequent relocation of staff to the new accommodation;
- Continuation of its maintenance programme so that 95% of the navigable waterways are kept open and available for navigation from April to October;
- Ongoing development of the waterways with the completion of additional moorings totalling 554metres.

Waterways Ireland continued its programme of capital works aimed at reintegrating the waterways network, including:

- Completion of the construction of the third bridge at Mosstown and the commencement of construction on the final bridge to reconnect the Royal Canal to the Shannon;
- The successful removal of the old swivel bridge and installation of a new bridge over the Shannon navigation at Portumna, County Galway.

Waterways Ireland is progressing the restoration of the Ulster Canal between Upper Lough Erne and Clones with the commencement of the preliminary stages of the project. In 2008, the preliminary design stage commenced internally and meetings were held with a wide range of statutory agencies and landowners.

Waterways Ireland promotes the use of the waterways through its sponsorship, advertising, public relations and direct marketing programmes to build awareness of the waterways. Three publications promoting and supporting the use of navigations, the “What’s On Guide 2008”, the “Waterways Ireland Angling Guide” and the Lower Bann Chart were completed in 2008. Over 50 events were sponsored by Waterways Ireland during the year. It continued to invest in organisational development performance, staff recruitment and training to enable it to deliver on its business objectives.

Strategy 6.2:

To support An Foras Teanga, the North South Language body.

The Department supports and funds An Foras Teanga in promoting the Irish language and the Ulster-Scots language and culture, in co-operation with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland. During 2008, funding of €18.7 million was provided by the Department to An Foras Teanga to carry out its work.

Foras na Gaeilge activities in relation to the Irish language include facilitating and promoting the development of Irish in the public and private arena. Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch has responsibility for the development of the Ulster-Scots language, including the promotion of greater awareness and use of the language in addition to cultural issues.

Foras na Gaeilge and Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch collaborated on a range of projects during 2008 including:

- Production of a film in Irish about the Ulster-Scots language and culture for broadcast on TG4;
- Sponsorship of the Belfast International Horse Show;

- Organisation of the young ambassadors scheme whereby young people from the United States engage with the agencies in language and culture research;
- Joint funding with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland of two posts of ‘Arts Development Officer for Language Arts’.

In 2008, Foras na Gaeilge organised a further examination under the Quality Assurance Scheme for translators to address the increasing demand for high quality translators at national and European level. Significant advances were made during the year with the development of a memory-assisted translation software package, as well as the second phase of the Irish-English dictionary project. Financial assistance was provided to 19 Irish language or educational organisation and 17 community projects.

In the case of Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch, its summer schools project was expanded in 2008 to 37 schools and 2000 young children. The Ulster-Scots touring drama "*Fair Faa Ye*" was delivered to 200 schools and 45,000 children over a two year period. Three pilot Ulster-Scots radio stations were operated, four editions of the Ulster-Scots newspaper were published and support was provided to 30 festivals during the year.

Strategy 6.3:

To promote North/South co-operation in other areas of activity within the Department's remit.

Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE II)

The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, known as the PEACE II programme, is a joint Northern Ireland/Ireland programme. The overall strategic aim of the programme is to reinforce progress towards a more peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation. The PEACE II programme is being delivered through five main priorities. These are:

- Economic Renewal;
- Social Integration, Inclusion and Reconciliation;
- Locally Based Regeneration and Development Strategies;
- Outward and Forward Looking Region; and
- Cross-border Co-operation.

The implementation of the various programme measures on behalf of the Department is overseen by the Special European Union Programmes Body and delivered by Border Action. In 2008, a total of €10.47 million was provided and 293 projects were supported under the PEACE II programme.

INTERREG IIIA

INTERREG is an EU-funded community initiative to assist border populations to overcome special development problems and deficit arising from isolation within national economies, so that national barriers are not be obstacles to balanced development and integration of the European territory.

The programme aims to promote the creation of cross border networks of co-operation involving local communities, and to promote economic and social development. During 2008, the Department provided funding of almost €0.8 million towards rural development and community networking initiatives, which supported 46 projects under this programme.

Peace III Programme

Approval for the PEACE III (2007–2013) programme was received from the EU in October 2008. The new programme will carry forward key aspects of the previous PEACE I and PEACE II programmes and will have a renewed emphasis on reconciliation.

Under Priority 1, Theme 1.2, of the programme, which addresses the theme of ‘Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past’, €50 million will be distributed to projects located in Northern Ireland and also in the 6 Border Counties. The Department will contribute €18.13 million towards this over the life of the programme. At the end of December 2008, a total of 38 projects were approved for funding under this theme.

Goal 7 – Corporate Support Services

To provide corporate support structures to support the line divisions delivering on the Department’s mission, mandate and structures

Strategy 7.1:

Effectively manage the decentralisation of the Department to the advance offices in Tubbercurry, Co Sligo and the new headquarters at Charlestown, Co Mayo.

The Department’s decentralisation programme continued during 2008. Additional accommodation in Tubbercurry for a further 30 staff, which was identified in 2007, was renovated and completed for occupation in July 2008. 100 staff are now located in interim accommodation in Tubbercurry, which represents in excess of 70% of the total number of posts due to decentralise to Charlestown. The OPW continues to liaise with the relevant authorities in relation to a site that has been identified in Charlestown, Co. Mayo, as a potential location for the permanent departmental headquarters.

Strategy 7.2:

To advance and facilitate public service modernisation in the Department and in the bodies under its aegis.

The Department continues to implement its action plan, which advances and facilitates modernisation of the public service under *Towards 2016*.

Strategy 7.3

To deliver the highest quality service to our customers by implementing the customer service standards established in our Customer Service Charter.

The Department’s Customer Charter 2008-2010 and Customer Service Action Plan 2008-2010 were published in July 2008, and they build on the progress made under our previous Charter and Action Plan for the period 2004-2007. Delivering a high standard of service to our customers and engaging more strongly with the citizen as a user of services remain key priorities for the Department. The Charter and the Action Plan set out the standards of service our customers can expect in their dealings with us. The Action Plan also sets out a series of actions and measures to progress and ensure the implementation of the principles of quality customer service (QCS) in the future.

At the end of 2008, a subgroup was established from the Department's QCS Steering Group to specifically look at how customer service can be enhanced in bodies within the ambit of the Department.

Strategy 7.4

To develop a data strategy that will enable the timely availability of data to support evidence-based policy-making and to enable staff to use data more effectively in terms of policy formulation and evaluation.

In line with National Statistics Board guidelines, a Departmental Data Strategy Committee was established in 2008 to develop and prepare the required Data Strategy. The work of this Committee is ongoing.

Strategy 7.5:

To build on the Management Information Framework (MIF) to meet the evolving financial and information needs of management.

Strategy 7.6:

To provide a comprehensive accounting service and promote best practice in financial management.

Strategy 7.7

To build on the progress made on e-payment, in line with government policy.

The Management Information Framework (MIF) is embedded in the Department, supporting financial reporting as well as providing enhanced information for managers, using new, customised monthly reports. During 2008, there was an increase in the use of electronic fund transfers (EFT), with all payments in respect of salaries, travel and subsistence being made by EFT, and with 98.6% of payments to suppliers and 99% of grant payments being made by EFT.

The Department continued to foster a culture of ongoing evaluation. During 2008, two *Value for Money* reviews were completed and published – one concerning Ciste na Gaeilge and another in relation to the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme.

Strategy 7.8:

The delivery of quality IT facilities across the Department to support its business objectives, including decentralisation.

Additional ICT facilities were provided in 2008 for the Department's second office in Tubbercurry, which was established during the year and also for the extension of facilities in the Department's offices in Na Forbacha.

In addition, progress was made in undertaking a programme of necessary upgrades to the Department's ICT infrastructure, including the replacement of particular servers and PC desktops, the upgrade of anti-virus and anti-spyware software and the encryption of laptop computers.

Strategy 7.9:

Effective management of the human resources function.

A new HR Strategy 2008-2010 was published in May 2008. This strategy continues to update HR practices and consolidates the Department's integrated PMDS/HR system.

In 2008 work advanced on the development of a Training and Development Strategy for 2009 –2011. It is envisaged that this Strategy document will be published in early 2009.

Strategy 7.10:

To provide a systems-based internal audit function as a service to the Department and to ensure that robust corporate governance arrangements are embedded in the Department and in the bodies that are funded from the Department's vote.

The Internal Audit Unit continues to play a key role in the evaluation of the effectiveness of corporate governance structures and processes within the Department and providing assurance in this regard. The work of the internal audit function is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which the Department is exposed and its annual audit plans are based on this analysis. These plans cover the key controls on a rolling basis over a reasonable period, and the Department's Audit Committee periodically reviews the work of the Internal Audit Unit. The 2008 Audit Plan was implemented in consultation with the Department's Audit Committee.

In 2008 the work of Internal Audit Unit focused on the following main areas:

- The closure of the EU Rural Development Programmes, including the completion of 22 'Article 10' audit checks on 2007 expenditure under the LEADER+ and Area Based Rural Development Initiatives;

- Advising on the accreditation process for the new rural programmes; and
- The provision of wider advisory, audit and review processes of programmes across the Department.

Strategy 7.11:

To promote quality procurement management within the Department and in the bodies under its aegis.

The Department has a Corporate Procurement Plan, consistent with the programme of procurement management reform prescribed by the National Procurement Policy Framework document, published by the Department of Finance. It provides that the Department's procurement function conforms to the core principles of accountability, competitiveness, non-discrimination, transparency and fairness, and integrity and it aims to achieve real savings and value for money outcomes from more effective procurement practices and policies across the organisation. The plan makes a number of recommendations and work on implementing these advanced during 2008 and is continuing.

Corporate Matters

Freedom of Information

During the year, the Department received 53 requests under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003. Of these 17 were granted, 15 were part-granted, and 11 were refused. A total of 3 applications were withdrawn or handled outside of the FOI Act, and no cases were transferred to another body. 7 cases remained live at the end of the year. The categories of requesters during 2008 were as follows:

Journalists	24
Business	13
Oireachtas members	2
Others	14
Total	53

Bodies within the ambit of the Department, which were subject to FOI at the end of 2008, were:

- Pobal
- Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland
- Western Development Commission
- National Advisory Committee on Drugs
- National Drugs Strategy Team
- An Coimisiún Logainmneacha
- Údarás na Gaeltachta

Quality Customer Service

The Department's Customer Charter 2008-2010 and Customer Service Action Plan 2008-2010 were published in July 2008, and they build on the progress made under our previous Charter and Action Plan for the period 2004-2007. The Customer Charter is displayed in our offices through posters and on our website, www.pobail.ie.

The Charter and the Action Plan set out the standards of service our customers can expect in their dealings with us. The Action Plan also sets out a series of actions and measures to progress and ensure the implementation of the principles of quality customer service (QCS).

Legislative Activity

The Department supported the following legislative measures in 2008:

Bills presented to Dáil Éireann and passed:

No.	Title	Description	RIA
31B	Charities Bill	To regulate charities so as to secure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud	Yes

Bills presented to Seanad Éireann and passed:

No.	Title	Description	RIA
31B	Charities Bill	To regulate charities so as to ensure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud	Yes

Statutory Instruments prepared by the Department:

The Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (Delegation of Ministerial Functions) Order 2008 (SI No. 218 of 2008) was signed by the Taoiseach on the 24th June 2008.

The Official Languages Act 2003 (Section 9) Regulations 2008 (SI No. 391 of 2008) were made by the Minister on 1 October 2008.

National Famine Memorial Day

The inaugural National Famine Memorial Day was commemorated on 25th May 2008, with an official reception in the Custom House, Dublin. The ceremony arose out of the Government's decision to join with local and regional initiatives towards remembering the Great Famine with an annual national day of commemoration.

A National Famine Commemoration Committee was subsequently established, chaired by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, to consider the most appropriate arrangements for the national commemoration in future years and to commence preparations for the 2009 commemorative event.

Appendix 1:

Contacting the Department and its agencies and other bodies

Information on the work of the Department may be obtained from our website at www.pobail.ie, or by e-mailing or telephoning the Department's offices as listed below.

1. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Dún Aimhirgin
43-49 Mespil Road
Dublin 4

Lo-Call: 1890 474 847
Main Switchboard: 01 647 3000
Fax: 01 647 3051
Information/Press Office: 01 647 3130 e-mail: eolas@pobail.ie
Department FOI Officer: 01 647 3147 e-mail: foi@pobail.ie

Office of the Minister; Office of the Minister of State; Secretary General's Office, Irish Language Policy (Part of); Drugs Strategy Unit; North/South Co-operation; Charities Regulation; Schemes Review Division; Corporate Services (Part of).

2. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Teeling St.
Tubbercurry
Co. Sligo

Main Switchboard: 071 918 6700
Fax: 071 918 6750

CLÁR, Rural Social Scheme; LEADER; Rural Development Policy; Comhairle na Tuaithe; Community and Local Development Programme; LDSIP and RAPID Programmes; Community and Voluntary Supports Division; Community Services Programme; Corporate Services (Part of); Accounts.

3. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Na Forbacha
Co. Galway

Lo-Call: 1890 201 401
Main Switchboard: 091 592 555/503 700
Fax: 091 592 595
E-mail: gaeltachtnaforbacha@pobail.ie

Gaeltacht Schemes; Gaeltacht Policy; Irish Language Policy (Part of); Islands.

4. Gaeltacht Regional Offices

Parc Ghnó
Gaobh Dobhair
Na Doirí Beaga
Leitir Ceanainn

Phone: 074 953 1598

Tithe an Rialtais
Trá Lí:

Phone: 066 712 1303

Agencies and other bodies:

An Coimisinéir Teanga is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Official Languages Act and investigating complaints from members of the public.

An Coimisinéir Teanga
An Spidéal
Co Galway

Phone: 091 504 006
Lo-call: 1890 504 006
Fax: 091 504 036
Email: eolas@coimisineir.ie
Website: www.coimisineir.ie

Coimisinéir: Seán Ó Cuirreáin

An Coimisiún Logainmneacha (The Placenames Commission) advises on the research of the placenames of Ireland and on providing authoritative Irish forms of those names for official and public use.

An Coimisiún Logainmneacha
Dún Aimhirgin,
43-49 Bóthar Mespil
Baile Átha Cliath 4

Phone: 01 647 3000
Fax: 01 647 3270
E-mail: placenames@pobail.ie

Chief Placenames Officer: Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

The Board of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland is mandated under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973 to provide services to trustees of charities and to carry out the intentions of persons making donations and bequests to charities.

Office of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland
12 Clare Street
Dublin 2
Phone: 01 676 6095
Fax: 01 676 6001
E-mail: charities@eircom.net

Secretary to the Board: Orla Barry Murphy

The Dormant Accounts Board was established on 4 January 2006. The Board is responsible for preparing the Disbursement Plan, which provides the framework under which Government decisions are made in relation to disbursements from the Fund. The Board also reviews and assesses the impact and effectiveness of disbursements from the Fund.

Dormant Accounts Board
P.O Box 10457
Dublin 4

Phone: 01 647 3000
Fax: 01 647 3158
E-mail: info@dormantaccounts.ie
Website: www.dormantaccounts.ie

An Foras Teanga is one of the Cross-Border Implementation Bodies established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and is comprised of **Foras na Gaeilge** and the Ulster-Scots Agency-**Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch**. Foras na Gaeilge has the objective of promoting the Irish language on an all-island basis. Its responsibilities include support of community-based projects, education initiatives, as well as provision of dictionaries, terminology and other resources for the language. Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch has responsibility for the promotion of greater awareness and the use of Ullans and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island.

Foras na Gaeilge
7 Merrion Square
Dublin 2
Phone: 01 639 8400/1850 325 325
Fax: 01 639 8401

Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch
68 – 70 Muckle Victoria Rae
Bilfawst BT2 7BB
Phone: 028 9023 1113
Phone: 028 9023 1113

Chief Executive: Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh
E-mail: eolas@forasnagaeilge.ie
Website: www.forasnagaeilge.ie

Chief Executive: George Patton
E-mail: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk
Website: www.ulsterscotsagency.com

National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) was established in July 2000 to advise the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland based on analysis of research, findings and information available to it.

National Advisory Committee on Drugs
3rd Floor
Shelbourne House
Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4

Phone: 01 667 0760/0765/0781/0832
Fax: 01 667 0828
E-mail: info@nacd.ie
Website: www.nacd.ie

Interim Director:

Susan Scally

The **National Drugs Strategy Team (NDST)** is a cross-departmental team from departments and agencies involved in the drugs field. It also includes representatives from the community and voluntary sectors. With effect from 1 May 2009, the NDST no longer exists. The functions of the NDST have been absorbed into the Department's Drugs Office on an interim basis.

Pobal is a not-for-profit company with charitable status that manages the implementation of Exchequer and EU Funded programmes on behalf of Government Departments.

Pobal Chief Executive:
Website:

Mr Denis Leamy
www.pobal.ie

Head Office:
Holbrook House
Holles Street
Dublin 2
Phone: 01 240 0700
Fax: 01 661 0411
E-mail: enquiries@pobal.ie

Cork Office:
Building 1000
Unit 1102
Citygate Business Park
Mahon
Cork
Phone: 01 240 0700
Fax: 021 435 0873

Sligo Office:
Harbour View House
16 Holborn Street
Sligo
Phone: 071 9145373
Fax: 071 9145316

Galway Office:
Millar Building
The Fairgreen
Clifden
Co Galway
Phone: 01 448 4845
Fax: 095 30740

Monaghan Office:
M: TEK II Building
Armagh Road
Monaghan
Co Monaghan
Phone: 047 71340
Fax: 047 7134
Email: info@borderaction.ie
Website: www.borderaction.ie

Limerick Office:
1st Floor, River Front
Lower Shannon Street
Howlen's Quay
Limerick
Phone: 061 408523

Dundalk Office:
Partnership Court
Park Street
Dundalk
Co. Louth
Phone: 042 932 9330
Fax: 042 995 7712

Donegal Office:
1 Millenium Court
Pearse Street
Letterkenny
Donegal
Phone: 074 912 8639
Fax: 074 912 1527

Údarás na Gaeltachta, established in 1980, is a regional development agency that combines an economic development role - that of creating sustainable jobs and attracting investment to the Gaeltacht regions - with community, cultural and language development activities, working in partnership with local communities and organisations.

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Phone: 091 503100

Na Forbacha
Gaillimh

Fax: 091 503101
E-mail: colas@udaras.ie
Website: www.udaras.ie

Chief Executive:

Pádraig Ó hAoláin

Waterways Ireland is a Cross-Border Implementation Body established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999. Waterways Ireland's primary function is the management, maintenance and development, principally for recreation purposes, of the majority of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island.

Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Road
Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh
BT74 7JY

Phone: 028 6632 3004
Fax: 048 6634 6237
E-mail: info@waterwaysireland.org
Website: www.waterwaysireland.org

Chief Executive:

John Martin

The **Western Development Commission (WDC)** is a statutory body promoting economic and social development in the Western Region (defined as the counties of Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare). Its three principal activities focus on ensuring that economic and social policy effectively meets the development needs of the Western Region, fostering and promoting regional development initiatives, and managing the Western Investment Fund. This Fund provides risk capital by way of equity and loans on a commercial basis to projects and businesses.

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Chief Executive Officer:

Lisa McAllister

Appendix 2:

Glossary of Terms

AIT	Area Implementation Team
BMW	Border, Midland & Western
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CE	Community Employment Scheme
CDB	County/City Development Board
CDP	Community Development Programme
CLÁR	Ceantair Laga Ard-Riachtanais
CSOP	Scheme of Community Support for Older People
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
HR	Human Resource
ILSU	Irish LEADER Support Unit
IDG	Inter-Departmental Group on Drugs
INTERREG	Community initiative for interregional cooperation which assists border regions and promotes joint projects between beneficiaries in different Member States
IT	Information Technology
LDSIP	Local Development Social Inclusion Programme
LDTF	Local Drugs Task Force
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale (Links between the rural economy and development actions)
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
MIF	Management Information Framework
NACD	National Advisory Committee on Drugs
NDP	National Development Plan
NDST	National Drugs Strategy Team
PEACE II	EU Funding Programme to reinforce progress towards a peaceful stable environment and to promote reconciliation
Pobal	Formerly ADM Ltd.

RDTF	Regional Drugs Task Force
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
RIA	Regulatory Impact Analysis
RSS	Rural Social Scheme
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
WDC	Western Development Commission
YPFSF	Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund

Appendix 3:

Expenditure in 2008

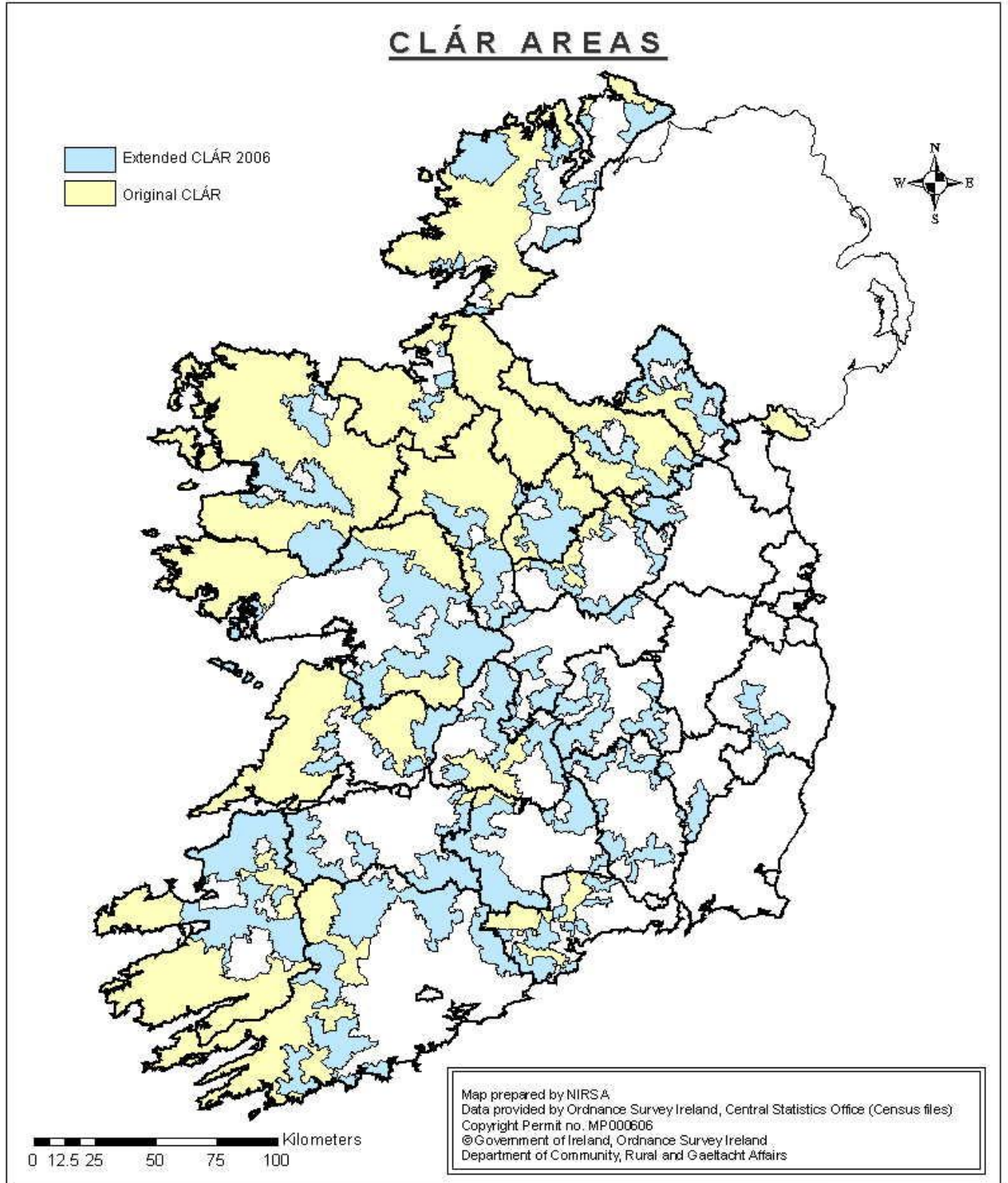
*The Outturn here is provisional and at the time of compiling this report, the Comptroller and Auditor General had not completed the Department's 2008 Appropriation Account.

Subhead	Expenditure in 2008	
	Service	Outturn
		€000
	Administration	
A.1.	Salaries, Wages and Allowances	14,840
A.2.	Travel and Subsistence	873
A.3.	Incidental Expenses	1,174
A.4.	Postal and Telecommunications Services	487
A.5.	Office Machinery and Other Office Supplies and Related Services	1,794
A.6.	Office Premises Expenses	595
A.7.	Consultancy Services	273
A.8.	Value for Money and Policy Reviews	198
	Developing Communities	
B.1.	Supports for Community and Voluntary Sector (Part funded by National Lottery)	18,875
B.2.	Community Services Programme	47,233
B.3.	Local and Community Development Programmes (Part funded by National Lottery)	83,139
B.4.	Improved Co-ordination of Local and Community Development Schemes	1,720
B.5.	RAPID	9,578
B.6.	Dormant Accounts - Administration	2,000
B.7.	Initiatives Tackling Economic and Social Disadvantage (Dormant Accounts Funded)	8,521
B.8.	Charities Regulation	76
	Tackling Drugs Misuse	
C.	Drugs Initiative/Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund	65,207

	Rural Development	
D.1.	Western Development Commission	2,516
D.2.	Western Investment Fund	3,995
D.3.	Rural Recreation and Rural Development Schemes	5,241
D.4.	Rural Social Scheme	33,311
D.5.	Rural Social Scheme (Dormant Accounts Funded)	16,000
D.6.	Ceantair Laga Ard-Riachtanais (CLÁR)	24,179
D.7.	LEADER – Rural Economy Sub-Programme 2007-2013	1,351
D.8.	LEADER/ National Rural Development Programme 2000-2006	10,518
	Gaeltacht and Islands Development	
E.1.	Gaeltacht Housing – Grants under the Housing (Gaeltacht) Acts 1929 to 2001	5,000
E.2.	Gaeltacht Cultural and Social Schemes	12,664
E.3.	Gaeltacht Community and Recreational Facilities	4,867
E.4.	Gaeltacht Improvement Schemes	6,633
E.5.	Islands – Transport and Other Services	5,100
E.6.	Islands – Infrastructure	32,978
E.7.	Údarás na Gaeltachta – Administration	13,881
E.8.	Údarás na Gaeltachta - Current Programme Expenditure	4,673
E.9.	Údarás na Gaeltachta – Grants for Projects and Capital Expenditure on Premises	25,500
E.10.	Údarás na Gaeltachta - Election	
	Promotion and Maintenance of the Irish Language	
F.1.	Payments to Ciste na Gaeilge (Part funded by National Lottery)	5,216
F.2.	An Coimisinéir Teanga	831
F.3.	Advanced Irish Language Skills Initiative	1,373
	North-South Co-Operation	
G.1.	An Foras Teanga	18,670
G.2.	Waterways Ireland	38,140
G.3.	Programme for Peace and Reconciliation/Interreg	11,201
	Gross Total	540,421

Appendix 4:

CLÁR Areas



Appendix 5:

RAPID Areas

