

Department of the Taoiseach



Strategy Statement

2005-2007

Government Buildings, Dublin 2
Telephone: +353 1 6624888
Locall: 1890 227 227
Fax: +353 1 6789791
www.taoiseach.gov.ie



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Taoiseach	4
Foreword from the Secretary General	5
Mission Statement	6
Role of the Department	7
A Whole-of-Government Perspective	9
The Environment in Which We Operate	11
Our Stakeholders	17
Strategic Objectives and Priorities	19
Measuring Progress	35
Financial Resource Allocation and Value for Money	39
Translating Strategy into Action	41
The Capacity to Deliver	45
Monitoring/Reporting on Progress in Meeting Goals	53

APPENDICES

I Associated Bodies	55
II Organisation Chart	56
III Administrative Expenditure by Strategic Objective	57
IV Administrative Expenditure by Expense Type	58
V Programme Expenditure	59
VI Recast Estimate by Strategic Objective	60
VII Other Key Inputs: Staff Numbers	61
VIII Customer Charter	62
IX Glossary	63



MESSAGE FROM THE TAOISEACH



Bertie Ahern, TD
Taoiseach



Tom Kitt, TD
Minister of State with
special responsibility as
Government Chief
Whip and for the
Information Society



Noel Treacy, TD
Minister of State for
European Affairs

Ireland has been undergoing a process of profound economic and social transformation over the past number of years. It has been widely acknowledged that our education system, the social partnership agreements, prudent fiscal management, effective but light regulation, proactive participation at the heart of Europe, and a supportive enterprise environment have played key roles in Ireland's economic miracle. In turn, this has provided a solid platform for social development with regard to employment opportunities and living standards. As well as being a time of prosperity, it has also been a time of peace.

The Department of the Taoiseach's Strategy Statement for the period 2005-2007 clearly identifies the key role the Department will play in continuing to progress national priorities identified in the *Programme for Government* including:

- Sustaining a strong knowledge-based economy and ensuring balanced development
- Building a caring society
- Supporting civic life through good government
- Protecting and promoting our interests within the EU and the wider world and
- Our overriding priority of securing lasting peace in Ireland.

The period ahead will require that the Department is positioned to meet future challenges and create new opportunities and responses. I welcome the publication of this Strategy Statement and I am confident that it provides a robust foundation for my Department's contribution to meeting the challenges that now face us.

I am grateful to all of the individuals working in the Department for their support to me in fulfilling my duties as Taoiseach. I look forward to working with them and other stakeholders to progress the changes ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bertie Ahern". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bertie Ahern, TD
Taoiseach

FOREWORD FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



Dermot McCarthy
Secretary General

This Strategy Statement sets a clear direction for the Department's activities over the next few years and is based on a wide consultation process involving the staff of the Department and other key stakeholders.

This is the fifth Strategy Statement prepared by the Department under the *Public Services Management Act, 1997* and the third in just over three years. Each has proven to be a very useful process, helping us to identify those areas where we can add particular value.

While our overall strategic objectives remain constant - to support the Taoiseach, Ministers of State and Government - this Strategy Statement represents a significant development on previous ones. In particular, we have strengthened our efforts to show that maximum value is achieved from public expenditure in terms of defined outputs and outcomes. Given our policy co-ordination role, especially in relation to cross-cutting issues, the Department faces a unique challenge in terms of seeking to achieve outcomes for which, in many cases, it does not have direct responsibility.

Nonetheless, the links between inputs, outputs and outcomes is more clearly identified in this document than heretofore and will continue to be developed over the period of this Strategy Statement.

As a Department, we recognise that we need to be at the forefront of the reform process. This Strategy outlines our proposals for (a) the roll-out of a number of initiatives which are intended to have Service-wide effect and (b) contributing appropriately to making Ireland a better place in which to live and work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dermot McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Dermot McCarthy
Secretary General



MISSION STATEMENT

To provide the Government, Taoiseach and Ministers of State with the support, policy advice and information necessary for the effective conduct of Government and for the dynamic leadership, co-ordination and strategic direction of Government policy.

ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT

Our mandate is to support the Taoiseach in his constitutional and ceremonial role as Head of Government and to assist him in providing effective leadership, co-ordination and guidance across key policy areas. The staff of the Department conscientiously and impartially serve the Taoiseach and the Government of the day, the Ministers of State, the other institutions of State and the general public, always acting with diligence, efficiency and courtesy.

The Department provides three main kinds of support to the Taoiseach:

- **Supporting the efficient functioning of Government:** providing a Secretariat to the Government, liaison with the President and Houses of the Oireachtas, provision of Government Press and Information Services, and of Private Office, Corporate Support and Protocol Services to the Taoiseach
- **Supporting Government policy direction and Government co-ordination of major national priorities:** providing an overview of the key policy priorities of the Government of the day; providing timely and relevant information and advice on issues that arise; and providing a longer-term vision and approach. As the Taoiseach's concerns evolve and develop in response to new national priorities and changing circumstances, this is reflected in the policy development and co-ordination role of the Department. We support effective policy development and service delivery by fostering a whole-of-government approach, being outward-looking, bringing stakeholders together and facilitating them to contribute effectively. Supporting the Cabinet Committee system is central to meeting our objectives in this regard
- **Providing administrative support to the Taoiseach and Ministers of State,** including drafting speeches and messages, preparing replies for Parliamentary Questions and responding to Freedom of Information requests and other representations, often working directly with other Agencies and Departments.



A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

In a rapidly changing world where issues are becoming more complex and less delineated, our system of public management often requires an integrated response spanning a range of Government Departments and Agencies. Whether it is dealing with infrastructure, social inclusion, public service modernisation, European Affairs or the knowledge society, major policy issues now call for more collaborative means of problem solving. The ability to respond flexibly to emerging circumstances is critical.

The Department, operating at the heart of Government, is in a unique position to add value in this regard by:

- Providing advice to the Taoiseach on individual policy matters
- Supporting Government decision-making by providing a comprehensive and effective service both in advance of, and following, Cabinet meetings
- Continuing to ensure that Cabinet Committees established from time to time accomplish the tasks set for them by Government, particularly in the formulation and implementation of cross-cutting and complex policy issues
- Maximising complementarity across the Government agenda, including through bilateral contacts, ensuring that there is consistency and coherence between various policy objectives and interacting policies and that policies are translated into consistent, coherent and appropriate service provision and delivery
- Fostering a longer-term planning perspective and inter-agency co-operation in policy formulation/implementation
- Recognising the differing, and sometimes competing, interests in public policy and service provision, particularly through our work in relation to social partnership
- Recognising the growing interdependencies and complementary agendas between different policy areas. Examples include the impact of EU and international developments on the domestic arena and the increasing breadth and depth of the interaction and co-operation on the island of Ireland
- Supporting the Implementation Group of Secretaries General and other cross-Departmental initiatives to drive the implementation and future policy direction of the Public Service Modernisation Programme and to ensure the ongoing development of an efficient public service which delivers excellent services and strategies
- Developing collaborative relationships, with co-operation between Divisions within the Department and between the main players and policies in the broader environment
- Co-ordinating the development of e-Government across Government Departments and Agencies and working with stakeholders to build the capacity necessary to support inclusive knowledge society development, to facilitate access and to actively promote participation.



THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE OPERATE

The Department's strategic objectives and priorities are framed in the context of both the external and internal environment in which it operates and how we propose to anticipate, respond to, and influence changes in accordance with Government policy.

Governments, along with other sectors, have to operate in an environment of growing complexity and change at an accelerating pace. This next Section outlines the social, political, economic and demographic factors which the Department will need to consider in developing policies and programmes.

External Environment

The *Programme for Government* launched in June 2002, the social partnership Agreement *Sustaining Progress* and the Mid-term Review of the Agreement provide the over-arching context for all of our work and the direction for our strategies.

Other key factors around which our objectives will be based are the need:

- To continue to make progress towards the full implementation of the *Good Friday Agreement*. The situation in **Northern Ireland** remains at the top of the Government's agenda and is a key priority for the Department. Significant progress has been made towards the achievement of the goal of a peaceful, agreed settlement, which has benefited the whole island. However, some difficult issues have yet to be satisfactorily resolved and remain the focus of sustained efforts and initiatives. These issues include ending paramilitary and criminal activity; full weapons decommissioning; support for the policing service from all traditions; resolving the related issue of the transfer of justice and policing powers; and the full participation of all parties in inclusive government
- To manage Ireland's **economic and social progress** in an increasingly inter-connected world. Irish economic performance has been impressive over the last few years in the face of a difficult international environment. The IMF forecast GNP and GDP growth will reach 5% in 2005, though medium-term growth prospects are considered to be less buoyant than the unprecedented record of the late 1990s. A number of risks to the economic outlook remain, including the sustainability of the global economic recovery, exchange rate volatility and the impact of higher oil prices. The level and quality of public services and infrastructure delivery need to be continually improved, in tandem with sensible management of the public finances. Policy must address the short-term risks such as cost competitiveness and skills availability, while also providing a solid, long-term platform for the future success of our people and our economy. Implementation of the *National Development Plan*, the *National Spatial Strategy* and key sectoral strategies which have already resulted in unprecedented investment in people, infrastructure and services, are particularly important for future economic development
- To ensure that **employment** remains high. Irish unemployment has fallen from 17% in 1987 to just over 4% today. Our young educated workforce, net inflows of immigrants and the increased participation of women have been key factors in the labour market over the last few years. Maintaining the momentum will require moving up the value-chain, refocusing our education system and further encouraging foreign direct investment. Implementation of the new *Enterprise Strategy*, the *National Childcare Strategy*, the *Taskforce Report on Life-Long Learning* and the *National Employment Action Plan* are particularly relevant in this regard.

- On the basis of sustainable economic growth, to pursue the development of a **fair and inclusive society**. The structure of our society has changed significantly in recent years, including family structures. Ireland is now a more diverse and urbanised society. The challenge is to ensure that the strong legislative and policy frameworks in place to tackle inequalities and exclusion continue to address the needs of Irish society. This is of particular importance in relation to meeting the needs of vulnerable groups, so that people have access to the quality public services that underpin life chances and opportunities. The breadth and depth of attention to this area is shown by the focus on the *Health Service Reform Strategy*; the *National Anti-Poverty Strategy* and the strengthened focus on social inclusion at EU level; the *Integrated Strategy on Homelessness*; the *National Children's Strategy*, the *National Drugs Strategy*, the *National Action Plan Against Racism*; the *National Disability Strategy* and the work with social partners on the provisions of *Sustaining Progress* particularly in the context of the Special Initiatives. The continuing challenge is to ensure effective implementation through consistent and co-ordinated action to address the needs of the most vulnerable and ensure that everybody has the opportunity to live life with dignity
- To meet growing expectations of the consumer for new and higher quality **public services** while also achieving value for money. The public service today is more effective and flexible than ten years ago, with better business planning, customer focus and accountability. There have been considerable improvements in areas such as financial management and e-Government. However, challenges such as decentralisation and the importance of achieving value-for-money are driving deeper reforms across the public service. Fundamental reforms have begun in the health sector, while other sectors are also implementing tailored reform programmes. These changes are being delivered through a partnership approach facilitated by commitments agreed centrally in *Sustaining Progress* and any to be agreed in successor agreements
- To continue to maintain and develop **social partnership**. Our system of national-level social partnership agreements, dating back to 1987, has been a source of great strength in tackling the key economic and social challenges of the day. It provides us with the capacity to develop a shared analysis of strategic issues and a collective, coherent and sustained response to them on the part of the main economic and social actors in Ireland. As with previous Strategy Statements, maintaining and developing this system will be a priority for the period 2005-2007. In practical terms, this will involve supporting the system of social partnership; ensuring full implementation of the current Agreement, *Sustaining Progress*; and negotiating and implementing any successor agreement
- To give effect to ongoing work within the **European Union**, including achieving the aims of the Lisbon Agenda. Our membership of the EU remains fundamental to our future economic and social progress, while also providing us with an effective voice in the international arena. Communicating the aims, objectives and values of the European Union, and in particular informing the debate in advance of ratification of the Constitution for Europe, will be increasingly important. The Communicating Europe initiative and the work of the Forum on Europe will continue to provide information on how the EU works. In the coming years the EU will deal with a number of issues which have significant implications. These include the negotiations on the future financing of the Union from 2007-2013, further enlargement of the Union and the Union's external relations with its close neighbours in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean and with other major partners such as Latin America, Asia, Africa and the United States. We must ensure

that EU policies reflect our domestic interests and that our domestic policies support agreed EU goals

- To tackle the challenges and opportunities of globalisation through engagement with the **wider world**. Ireland's engagement with countries outside the European Union continues to grow, both through our membership of the Union and on a bilateral basis. We are continuing to develop our trade and investment links with other countries, in particular Asia and the Americas. Ambitious targets have been set globally to reduce greenhouse gases through the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. This will require action across all economic sectors and Departments, as outlined in the *National Climate Change Strategy*. The international threat of terrorism, trade regulation, international trafficking in drugs and people, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and hunger are all examples of reasons why Ireland must continue to play an active role in promoting development, human rights and democracy in the world
- To be at the forefront of **science and technology** internationally. In terms of investment in research, new patent applications and other innovation and technology indicators, Ireland is lagging behind leading countries. This will be a key priority for the Cabinet Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation. Public policy-making must be directed at building the competencies and infrastructure necessary to secure international investment, increased foreign trade and ensure that all sections of society can participate in the 'knowledge economy'
- Building on **knowledge society** developments during the last decade, which have seen a growing recent focus on a society supported by and supporting 'knowledge-based' economic activity, the thrust for the future will be to ensure that public policies are geared to exploit the innovation potential of technology and technology convergence in all sectors, including public administration. The *New Connections* action plan published in 2002 will have run its course by the end of 2005. The second Information Society Commission concluded its work in December 2004 with a final report on future policy directions. Building on the work of the Information Society Commission and achievements under the *New Connections* action plan, strategies will be developed which will also reflect the wider European thrust for the period 2006 to 2010 (i2010) to be agreed with the European Commission by the end of 2005
- By its very nature, the Department of the Taoiseach's Strategy must be heavily influenced by the **priorities of the Taoiseach and Government** of the day. Developments within the political system will continue to have a significant impact on the Department's work.



Internal Environment

In order to get the organisational conditions right for delivering on our Strategy we will need to address the following challenges, among others:

- Maintaining and improving the **range and quality of our services** within existing or even reduced resources. Staff numbers of December 2002 will be reduced by 4% by end 2005
- Meeting and exceeding the increasingly high **expectations of customers** and the demands arising from changing external factors, such as demographics. We need to ensure that a quality customer service ethos pervades the Department. We must also continue to consider the potential for electronic service delivery to provide a more effective and efficient customer experience
- Retaining the **confidence** of the Government, Oireachtas, the public and the media that our activities are undertaken in a proper manner, on a value -for-money basis and in the public interest. This requires excellent corporate governance through performance management, financial management and internal audit and controls, as well as enhanced information management systems
- Ensuring that we meet our **obligations** by anticipating and responding to the evolving legislative and administrative framework. As well as the national and EU legislative requirements on all employers in terms of equality, health and safety, working hours/conditions etc., recent and proposed Civil Service changes of note include the *Diversity Policy*, a revised *Code of Conduct for Civil Servants* and legislative changes in relation to recruitment, performance management and dismissal
- Meeting the challenges and maximising the benefit of opportunities emerging from the **Public Service Modernisation Programme**, such as the possibility of direct recruitment by individual Departments; the need to strike a balance between meeting the needs of the business and individual needs and preferences; the implementation of the Modernisation Action Plan within the Department across a broad range of headings to tight timeframes, including objectives in relation to better regulation
- The **decentralisation programme** will also be a key factor over the period of this Strategy, requiring the development of new approaches to knowledge management and dealing with cross-cutting issues
- Developing the **capability and commitment** of everyone who works in the Department, ensuring that they have the opportunity to give of their best and to improve continuously. It will be important to ensure that line managers have the necessary supports to implement the Department's *Human Resource Strategy*. Everyone should have the tools to do their jobs well, including the necessary data, and supportive partnership processes to aid collaborative working. The Performance Management and Development System underpins the Department's overall approach to people management and development.



OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The Department interacts with a broad spectrum of stakeholders including:

- The Taoiseach, the Government Chief Whip and The Minister of State for Europe, the Government, public representatives and other Government Departments, Offices and Agencies
- The institutions and parties in Northern Ireland, other Governments, international institutions
- A wide range of actors from outside the public service including the social partners - employers, trade unions, farmers' and other representative bodies, and community and voluntary groups.

We have links with the academic and research community, with business, with community and voluntary organisations, with the legal and other professions, and of course with the many individual citizens who interact with the Taoiseach or avail of the Department's services. We value these relationships, and remain conscious of the need to ensure that the contribution we make is professional, adds value and respects the responsibilities and expertise of others. Our *Customer Charter* (see appendix VIII) outlines our commitments to our customers and there are targets and monitoring mechanisms in place underpinning our principles in this regard. Ongoing evaluation, including annual customer surveys, is a central mechanism for ensuring that our customers' expectations and needs are assessed and responded to. This Strategy Statement has been developed in consultation with customers.

The Department is supported in its leadership role through the policy development and evaluation work of the National Economic and Social Development Office (NESDO). The constituent offices - the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), the National and Economic and Social Forum (NESF) and the National Centre for Partnership and Performance (NCPP) - form important component parts of the framework for developing national economic and social policy and supporting partnership at both national and local levels.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Overview: Having undertaken a thorough environmental analysis and review of the areas in which the Department can add value, the Department has identified the following as strategic objectives and priorities.

The Department's key Overall Strategic Objectives remain constant:

Overall Strategic Objective 1
Supporting the Government

Overall Strategic Objective 2
Supporting the Taoiseach

These Overall Strategic Objectives will be reflected in our work on the following Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority A
Northern Ireland

Strategic Priority B
European Union and International Affairs

Strategic Priority C
Economic and Social Policy

Strategic Priority D
Social Partnership

Strategic Priority E
Public Service Modernisation

Strategic Priority F
The Knowledge Society and e-Government

All of our work in these areas is supported by a further priority:

Strategic Priority G
Corporate Support Services

The key objectives in each area will evolve as circumstances change. The success of the Department's contribution in these areas is dependent on maintaining a close working relationship with other key stakeholders. The current key objectives for each strategic priority are set out overleaf.

Overall Strategic Objective I

Supporting the Government

Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
To provide a comprehensive and effective service to the Government and Cabinet Committees	<p>Necessary documents made available in advance of meetings and meetings of senior officials' teams held, as appropriate</p> <p>Deployment of information and communication technologies to modernise the Cabinet process and to support decentralisation</p>	<p>Speedy and efficient distribution of Cabinet documents</p> <p>Full implementation of the e-Cabinet Project</p> <p>Electronic management of Cabinet documents</p> <p>Provision of real time information to Cabinet members on evolving agenda</p> <p>Other benefits provided by e-Cabinet</p>
To inform, advise and support the President in the exercise of her constitutional duties, as appropriate	<p>Conveying of formal advice of the Government to the President where required by the Constitution or by law</p> <p>Preparation of briefing for the Taoiseach's meetings with the President</p>	<p>Appropriate high quality briefings, advice and draft speeches</p> <p>Effective and harmonious working relationship between the President and Government</p>
To develop a longer-term planning perspective and a closely co-ordinated approach across the Government system	Regular meetings of senior official groups and other formal and informal communications mechanisms in place	<p>High quality responses developed to meet future/emerging issues</p> <p>National needs and business needs of Departments met</p> <p>High level of co-operation with other Government Departments and Agencies</p>
To support the Government Chief Whip on matters relating to the Government's Legislative Programme	To effectively co-ordinate the Government's Legislative Programme prior to publication in order to brief the Chief Whip and Committee on progress of legislation, and to brief Taoiseach for questions at Dáil Order of Business regarding promised legislation	<p>Priorities and timelines established in the Legislative Programme, which take account of competing priorities, facilitate the optimal deployment of drafting resources by Parliamentary Counsel, and allow for up to date information on Bills in preparation available for Dáil and other uses</p> <p>Information on legislation in preparation fully up to date</p> <p>Presentation of the Sessional Parliamentary Programmes to Government for approval and publication</p>

Overall Strategic Objective I (continued)

Supporting the Government

Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
To manage relations with the Office of the Attorney General, Chief State Solicitor's Office, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Law Reform Commission	<p>Legal advice sought and presented to Government or Taoiseach as required</p> <p>Staff and other administrative issues addressed as necessary</p> <p>Periodic updating of the programme for law reform</p>	<p>Requests for advice prepared</p> <p>Appropriate briefings prepared</p> <p>Memoranda submitted to Government in relation to law reform</p> <p>Issues addressed and resolved as they arise</p> <p>Proposals for law reform implemented</p>
To provide a comprehensive information service to the national and international media and to the public, on behalf of the Government, the Taoiseach and his Department, and to promote a co-ordinated approach to media matters across Government Departments	<p>Daily contact with news desks</p> <p>24 hour access by media to a Government spokesperson</p> <p>Daily liaison and weekly meetings with Department Press Officers</p> <p>User-friendly website</p>	<p>More open Government – better public awareness of Government policies</p> <p>More co-ordinated and focused approach in the dissemination of Government information to the media</p>
To operate the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 in relation to records of the Department	<p>FOI Applications processed</p> <p>Section 25 Certificates reviewed</p>	<p>Number of FOI Applications processed</p> <p>FOI applications processed within statutory framework</p> <p>Section 25 Review to be undertaken within statutory timeframe</p> <p>Participation in Civil Service FOI Users Network</p> <p>Outcomes of reviews and appeals</p>
Ongoing review of the need for amendment(s) to the Constitution	<p>Strategic overview of desirable constitutional change, involving the periodic analysis of outstanding recommendations for changes to the Constitution and liaison with Departments on possibilities for implementing particular recommendations</p> <p>Monitoring of reports of the All Party Committee on the Constitution (APOCC)</p> <p>Identification of suitable opportunities for implementation of key APOCC recommendations</p>	<p>Liaison with Departments on possibilities for implementing particular recommendations</p> <p>Presentation of reports of APOCC to Government</p>

Overall Strategic Objective 2

Supporting the Taoiseach

Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
To support the Taoiseach in his role as Chair of Cabinet	Preparation of briefing on issues due to arise at Cabinet Resolution of issues in advance of meeting	Quality of briefs prepared for the Taoiseach Identification of outstanding issues
To effectively progress the policy priorities of the Taoiseach of the day	Quality policies, meeting customer needs, developed and implemented appropriately	Customer satisfaction as measured annually National needs met High level of co-operation with other Government Departments and Agencies
To support the process of bilateral consultation between the Taoiseach and Ministers	Facilitate and support communications between the Taoiseach and Ministers on policy priorities	Regular meetings held, as required Appropriate quality briefing prepared/ co-ordinated on timely basis
To provide a service of the highest quality and consistency to the Taoiseach, in order for him to carry out efficiently and effectively his roles, functions and duties, including domestic and foreign engagements	Organise the Taoiseach's programme of visits, both inward and outward Assist with co-ordination of Taoiseach's diary to ensure his time is used as efficiently and effectively as possible Ensure relevant documentation received on time by Taoiseach Provide effective and appropriate speeches for the Taoiseach	Taoiseach's programme of engagements, both domestic and foreign, planned to his satisfaction and executed as planned All documentation received in sufficient time by Taoiseach Satisfaction of Taoiseach and stakeholders with the quality of arrangements and speeches
To provide a protocol service of the highest quality to the Taoiseach, Government Chief Whip and the Minister of State for European Affairs	The efficient organisation of (a) State ceremonial and other functions (b) official functions involving the Taoiseach or his Department and (c) the involvement of the Taoiseach in events organised by third parties	Public and stakeholder satisfaction with the standard achieved on State ceremonial occasions Official functions and events well organised and serviced on the most cost efficient basis Requests for protocol advice processed

Strategic Priority A:

Northern Ireland

Overall Goal: To achieve lasting peace on the island of Ireland.



Key Objectives

To achieve lasting peace on the island of Ireland through the implementation of an agreed settlement founded on consent, and encompassing arrangements within Northern Ireland, for the whole island of Ireland, and between the islands of Ireland and Britain, as provided for in the *Good Friday Agreement*

Actions

Progress on Implementation of *Good Friday Agreement*

Indicators

Divisional Reports to Management Advisory Committee (MAC).

Annual Progress Report

Strategic Priority B:

European and International Affairs

Overall Goal: To strengthen our role in Europe and the wider world.



Key Objectives

To support the Taoiseach in his role as a member of the European Council and in his European and international engagements

Actions

Ensure that Taoiseach has full support necessary to participate effectively in European Council meetings

Indicators

Quality of policy advice and briefing to Taoiseach on European Council agenda items

European Council conclusions that reflect Irish input

To identify Ireland's key objectives in the enlarged EU and to develop a strategy for meeting these objectives through effective cross-Government co-ordination structures

Ensure clear cross-Government agreement on key objectives and on strategies for achieving these objectives

Regular meetings of co-ordination groups to handle cross-cutting policy issues

Publication of third edition of Key Objectives paper

To continue to develop and strengthen our bilateral relations and alliances with our EU partners at political and official level, to promote our national objectives and the EU's agreed agenda

Engage in effective bilateral relations with EU Member States and effective interaction with EU Institutions

Taoiseach's programme of bilateral visits and foreign visits to Ireland

Positive perception of our approach to EU's agreed agenda, measured by Member States' reactions and responses

To communicate to the public the importance of our role in the EU to our future prosperity, security and development

Ensure public understanding of EU issues, as reflected in opinion polls etc.

Speeches, publications, press releases and appropriate media material

To engage in effective relationships with international bodies and organisations and with non-EU states, in the area of bilateral trade.

Promote effective participation, both with key multilateral bodies and bilaterally in relation to trade and investment

Number of multilateral and bilateral contacts at official and political levels

Regular meetings with key Departments and Agencies to oversee and monitor strategy

Strategic Priority C: Economic and Social Policy

Overall Goal: To achieve the correct balance between the needs of our economy and the development of a fair and inclusive society.



SOCIAL POLICY		
Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
<p>To provide effective briefing, policy advice and information on economic and social affairs so as to lead a whole-of-government perspective in the policy formulation and national implementation process, adopting a longer-term perspective within which key strategic challenges can be met</p>	<p>Briefing Notes</p> <p>Review of Government Memoranda</p> <p>PQs</p> <p>Speeches</p>	<p>High quality briefing and speech material</p> <p>Feedback from Taoiseach</p> <p>Strategies in place to address key economic and social issues</p>
<p>To achieve an outcomes-focused approach to addressing social policy issues through the work of the Cabinet Committees on Social Inclusion, Children and Health</p>	<p>Work Programme for the Cabinet Committees</p> <p>Agreed options and recommendations from Senior Officials' Group to Cabinet Committees on priority issues in Work Programme</p> <p>Liaison with Departments and Taoiseach and support to the Cabinet Committee</p>	<p>Work Programme agreed by Cabinet Committee and completed</p> <p>Committee's Annual Progress Report to Government</p> <p>Policy change or adjustments to Strategies resulting from cross-Departmental work</p> <p>Evaluations of individual Strategies and Programmes</p> <p>Continuing effective operation of Cabinet Committees</p>
<p>To focus in particular on social inclusion, through implementation of the <i>National Anti-Poverty Strategy</i>, and to work with Government Departments and social partners to ensure progress on the social inclusion provisions set out in <i>Sustaining Progress</i></p>	<p>Representation on NAPS implementation mechanisms to ensure focus on key NAPS objectives and informed discussion at Cabinet Committee</p> <p>Key Actions for Special Initiatives agreed by Departments and Social Partners</p>	<p>Effective involvement in NAPS implementation mechanisms</p> <p>Critical appraisal by Cabinet Committee</p> <p>Mid-Term review and Progress Reports for <i>Sustaining Progress</i></p> <p>Progress on provisions of <i>Sustaining Progress</i>, particularly the special initiatives</p>

Strategic Priority C: Economic and Social Policy *(continued)*

Overall Goal: To achieve the correct balance between the needs of our economy and the development of a fair and inclusive society.



INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

Key Objectives

To ensure the continued development and success of the International Financial Services Industry in Ireland, with the support of Government Agencies and the industry, through the mechanism of the Clearing House Group and the various working Groups and Sub-Groups which operate under the aegis of the Department

Actions

Implement the initiatives being undertaken in the Groups with the purpose of progressing the future development of the industry

Identify future strategies, both legislative and regulatory, to maintain the continuing success of the industry

Indicators

Progress outlined in Annual Report

Successful implementation of the Pensions Directive into Irish Law

Co-operating with the follow-up to the Deloitte/IDA Ireland consultative study of the international financial services industry

Engagement with IFSRA on all regulatory and legislative matters

Actions taken by the Groups to further the key objectives for the industry

Speed of legislative implementation, increase in the numbers employed in the industry, increase in service providers and investment managers, and other measurements such as the efficiency of regulatory decision-making

ECONOMIC POLICY

To provide effective briefing, policy advice and information on economic and social affairs so as to lead a whole-of-government perspective in the policy formulation and national implementation process, adopting a longer term perspective within which key strategic challenges can be met

Briefing notes

Review of relevant draft Government Memoranda

Cabinet Committee Work Programme

Work Programmes of Sectoral Committees

Contribution to external foresight exercises, e.g. NESC reports, technology foresight etc.

Development of internal foresight capability

Production of timely, high quality briefing, reports etc.

Completion of Work Programmes

Informed Government decisions on individual issues where required

Feedback from Taoiseach, Government, other Departments and external stakeholders

Completion of external and internal foresight exercises

Strategic Priority C: Economic and Social Policy *(continued)*

Overall Goal: To achieve the correct balance between the needs of our economy and the development of a fair and inclusive society.

Key Objectives

To contribute to the consolidation of the progress of recent years and the achievement of a medium term growth rate capable of sustaining high levels of employment and facilitating the evolution of a more equal society, in line with *Sustaining Progress*. Policies that secure national competitiveness, lower inflation, sustainable public finances, a fair and effective tax system and environmental sustainability are central to this objective

To ensure that Ireland is provided with a level of physical infrastructure that is affordable, provides value for money, underpins national development and is environmentally sustainable. The Cabinet Committee on Housing, Infrastructure and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) is the key mechanism for achieving this objective

To ensure that domestic economic and social policy responds to international developments, especially at EU level, in a manner appropriate to our national objectives

ECONOMIC POLICY *(continued)*

Actions

Economic policy briefs
Cabinet Committee Work Programmes
Contribution to inter-Departmental and other policy processes
Government decisions on sectoral policy issues, as required

Cabinet Committee Work Programme
Government decisions on key projects and issues (including funding, legal issues, PPPs, project management, public transport, communications, energy, environment, housing)
Sectoral/Agency progress in delivery

Contribution to implementation of the Lisbon Agenda, including through the social partners' role as National Reform Partnership
Contribution to sectoral policy processes/groups

Indicators

Production of timely, high quality briefing, reports etc.
Completion of Work Programmes
Informed Government decisions on individual issues, as required
Key economic indicators, i.e. national income, employment, unemployment, inflation, public finances etc.

Completion of Work Programme
Government decisions on key projects and issues, as required
Removal of obstacles to delivery
Internal and external reviews, e.g. Cabinet Committee progress reports, Department/Agency reports, external National Development Plan reviews, professional bodies submissions, etc.
Progress in delivery on time, on budget, with value for money

Reports from sectoral policy processes/groups
Informed Government decisions on individual issues, as required
Domestic policy objectives met in EU and international policy-making
EU and international comparisons of Ireland's performance, e.g. reports from EU Commission, OECD, IMF, independent bodies
Compliance with EU and international obligations

Strategic Priority C: Economic and Social Policy *(continued)*

Overall Goal: To achieve the correct balance between the needs of our economy and the development of a fair and inclusive society.

ECONOMIC POLICY *(continued)*

Key Objectives

To support the provision of timely, credible and relevant data and statistics to inform the policy-making process including through the work of the National Statistics Board and the Central Statistics Office.

Actions

Implementation of National Statistics Strategy

National Progress Indicators Report (Central Statistics Office)

Indicators

Timely publication of reports

Progress report on implementation of National Statistics Strategy

Improvement in quality and use of statistics/evidence in policy-making

Strategic Priority D: Social Partnership/Social Dialogue (Industrial Relations and Workplace Change)

Overall Goals: - To maximise the level of industrial relations peace and stability
- To help adapt the world of work in line with Ireland's competitive and social vision.

Key Objectives

To support the process of social partnership through the implementation of *Sustaining Progress*, and of a successor agreement, and to maintain and develop the structures of social partnership

Actions

Provide an efficient and effective secretariat to support the social partnership process

Ensure smooth running of formal structures of partnership, including Plenary meetings of the social partners, Steering Group meetings and other subordinate structures

Ongoing and effective communication with social partners

Engage with social partners, key Departments and agencies so as to promote the implementation of *Sustaining Progress*

Promote continuing development of the social partnership model and its structures

Indicators

Efficient functioning of the structures of partnership

Timely provision of information for meetings and regular formal updating of the social partners on progress

Development of appropriate responses to evolving needs of the partnership process

Progressive implementation of Special Initiatives and wider policy framework of *Sustaining Progress*

To develop a successor agreement to *Sustaining Progress*

Review achievements under and operation of *Sustaining Progress* and engage with the social partners so as to identify key issues for a new agreement, and optimum structures for its implementation

Successful negotiation and agreement of a successor agreement to *Sustaining Progress*

Development of appropriate structures to ensure implementation of a successor agreement

Strategic Priority D:

Social Partnership/Social Dialogue (Industrial Relations and Workplace Change) (*continued*)

Overall Goals: - To maximise the level of industrial relations peace and stability
 - To help adapt the world of work in line with Ireland's competitive and social vision.

Key Objectives

To facilitate the negotiation and implementation of agreements between employers and trade unions on pay and workplace change, as part of our system of national level social partnership agreements

(A) INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

To support dialogue at national level aimed at ensuring industrial relations peace and stability

(B) EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS SYSTEM

To promote the development of a coherent and user-friendly framework of employment rights bodies and the application of the principles of Regulatory Reform to the body of employment rights legislation

Actions

Successful implementation of Part Two (Pay and the Workplace) of *Sustaining Progress*

Negotiation of a pay and workplace agreement to succeed that provided for in *Sustaining Progress* and the Mid-Term Review.

Resolution of relevant issues involving employer and trade union bodies

Interaction with Consumer Strategy Group

Development of work of Anti-Inflation Group.

Successful meetings of the National Implementation Body

Successful interaction with the review of employment rights bodies being led by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Indicators

Regular progress reports on implementation

Resolution of implementation difficulties arising

Publication and ratification of a new pay and workplace agreement, as part of a successor to *Sustaining Progress*

Positive feedback and continued support by employer and trade union bodies for social partnership

Greater awareness of the inflation imperative amongst policy makers and parties to the pay agreement

Reduced inflationary effects of public policy

Resolution of major disputes

Low levels of days lost through industrial disputes

An industrial relations climate conducive to investment and employment

Realignment of industrial relations bodies and modernisation of employment rights legislation and codes

An efficient and user-friendly system of employment rights

Feedback from Government, employers and trade unions

Strategic Priority D:

Social Partnership/Social Dialogue (Industrial Relations and Workplace Change) (*continued*)

Overall Goals: - To maximise the level of industrial relations peace and stability
- To help adapt the world of work in line with Ireland's competitive and social vision.



Key Objectives

(C) WORKPLACE MODERNISATION

To promote partnership in the public and private sectors aimed at modernising the workplace and improving performance and service delivery

Actions

Development and implementation of a work programme for the National Centre for Partnership and Performance

Implementation of the Report of the Forum on the Workplace of the Future

Inclusion of commitments to workplace modernisation – covering the Private Sector (including Commercial State-sponsored Bodies) and the public service – in a successor agreement to *Sustaining Progress*

Indicators

High performing workplaces in both the private and public sectors

Implementation of the Report's Recommendations

Employer and employee surveys (similar to surveys carried out in 2004)

Feedback from Government, employers and trade unions

Relevant economic indicators and surveys

(D) SOCIAL DIALOGUE AT EU LEVEL

To promote social dialogue at EU level in line with (a) agenda set out at Tripartite Social Summit held during Irish Presidency of EU in March, 2004 and (b) agreement at the March 2004 European Council on the development of European Reform Partnerships

Contributing to planning for Tripartite Social Summits held over the period 2005 to 2007

Briefing EU colleagues about Ireland's system of social partnership

Promoting social dialogue at EU level through appropriate speaking opportunities

Supporting the European Commission in promoting social dialogue amongst newer Member States and candidate countries

The continuing development of partnership as a key theme in European discourse

Partnership focus meetings and problem solving at EU level

The development of social dialogue as a source of competitive advantage for the EU

Strategic Priority E:

Public Service Modernisation

Overall Goal: To provide a more efficient and effective service to the Government and to the citizen.



Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
<p>To formulate and co-ordinate policy on Public Service Modernisation</p>	<p>Support the Implementation Group of Secretaries General in its leadership and co-ordination role</p> <p>Develop policy proposals and initiatives following appropriate analysis and consultation</p> <p>Identify and respond to synergies between the modernisation programme and decentralisation</p>	<p>Evidence of improvements to public service effectiveness through external evaluations, including the Performance Verification process under <i>Sustaining Progress</i></p> <p>Effective operation of the Implementation Group and its Sub-Groups (e.g. HRM Sub-Group, Financial Management Sub-Group)</p> <p>Agreement and implementation of new policies and initiatives</p>
<p>To ensure negotiation and implementation of modernisation programmes for the public service as part of social partnership agreements</p>	<p>Monitor and actively promote implementation of modernisation commitments in <i>Sustaining Progress</i>, including an integrated Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)</p> <p>Develop an updated modernisation agenda, particularly in relation to HR policies, in advance of negotiations on a new national pay agreement and next Benchmarking exercise</p>	<p>Progress reports on implementation of <i>Sustaining Progress</i></p> <p>Agreement and implementation of an integrated Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)</p> <p>Modernisation commitments included in next national pay agreement</p>
<p>To support public service organisations in their implementation of modernisation programmes</p>	<p>Facilitate sharing of good practice and exchange of information through the Change Management Network, other relevant networks/groups, seminars and training</p> <p>Recognise and promote innovation across the public service, in particular through national public service excellence awards in advance of the EU 4QC Conference</p>	<p>Feedback on operation of the Change Management Network, other relevant networks/groups, seminars and training</p> <p>Successful organisation of public service excellence public service excellence associated conference(s)</p>
<p>To promote improved quality of regulation through implementation of the Government's <i>White Paper on Better Regulation</i></p>	<p>Promote and monitor progress through the Better Regulation Group (BRG)</p> <p>Implement, in co-operation with the BRG and other relevant parties, specific commitments including (i) Guidelines on Consultation (ii) Statute Law Revision (iii) mapping of the regulatory framework (iv) policies on sectoral regulation</p>	<p>Progress on implementation of White Paper commitments as reflected in progress reports to Government</p> <p>Evidence of improved quality of Regulation, e.g. from external evaluations or the Performance Verification process</p>

Strategic Priority E (continued)

Public Service Modernisation

Overall Goal: To provide a more efficient and effective service to the Government and to the citizen.



Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
	<p>Contribute to the development and implementation of Better Regulation policies at EU level and to the sharing of good practice amongst Member States</p> <p>Raise capability for Better Regulation within the Civil Service, including through support for training</p>	<p>Influence the evolution of Better Regulation policies at EU level as part of the wider Lisbon Agenda</p> <p>Feedback on training and other Better Regulation activities supported</p>
<p>To introduce an appropriate model of Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) as a tool for evidence-based policy-making</p>	<p>Support the piloting of RIA in a number of Departments</p> <p>On completion of the pilot phase, develop proposals for mainstreaming an appropriate model of RIA</p>	<p>Successful completion of RIA pilot phase and implementation of proposals for mainstreaming RIA</p>
<p>To develop and deepen the Quality Customer Service (QCS) initiative</p>	<p>Promote effective implementation of Customer Charters across the Civil Service</p> <p>Develop new policies to reinforce a customer focus in organisations</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction levels as recorded by surveys and other mechanisms</p> <p>Evidence of quality and impact of Customer Charters, e.g. through external evaluation of Charters</p>
<p>To promote effective communication of the Modernisation Programme across the Civil Service</p>	<p>Publish LINK magazine on a regular basis</p> <p>Maintain the Bettergov.ie website as an information resource</p> <p>Develop innovative communication activities and strategies, including in response to the challenges posed by decentralisation</p>	<p>Feedback on LINK magazine and Bettergov.ie website, including through reader/user surveys</p> <p>Evidence of impact of communication activities and strategies, e.g. through awareness levels of modernisation initiatives</p>

Strategic Priority F :

The Knowledge Society

Overall Goal : To build and develop a knowledge society.

Key Objectives

To ensure that there is a strategic policy framework for Ireland to build and develop a knowledge society to underpin the emerging knowledge economy

To support the work of the Government Chief Whip on knowledge society and related issues

Ownership, participation and inclusion in the knowledge society

To have adequate implementation mechanisms for relevant public policies

Actions

To engage with all relevant stakeholders in order to ensure continuous relevance and responsiveness to emerging needs and circumstances

To focus on the specific areas of:

- Innovation through technology in Government, and
- Greater exploitation of technologies in communities

Effective progression of priority policies in keeping with Government decisions and timeframes

To promote stakeholder acceptance of roles and responsibilities in building the knowledge society

Promote e-Inclusion through existing structures for public intervention

Promote Lifelong Learning through engagement with relevant Government Departments

To prepare and agree implementation plans with timescales and agreed monitoring/reporting arrangements

Indicators

Revised strategy documents to reflect emerging policy needs

Annual progress reports

International comparative reports showing Ireland in a strong position

Public perception of the existence of strong leadership and engagement with the issues to be addressed

Public acceptance that there are policies to address the issues

Sectoral acknowledgement of the importance of policies

Increase in engagement with and participation in the knowledge society as reflected by annual surveys such as the Household Budget Survey by the Central Statistics Office

Published plans and implementation schedules

Progress reports

International benchmark reports

Strategic Priority G:

Corporate Support Services

Overall Goal: To provide corporate support services to the Department.

Key Objectives	Actions	Indicators
<p>To manage the Department's human resources so as to contribute to the Department's goals while also promoting the personal development goals of individuals</p>	<p>HR Strategy reviewed and updated to take account of new developments</p> <p>New Strategy to be implemented within set timeframes</p> <p>Annual training programme developed and implemented, using PMDS to identify training needs</p>	<p>Employee alignment/ engagement, as measured through employee opinion surveys</p> <p>Evaluation of training initiatives and feedback from trainees/ managers</p> <p>Amount of staff training received (measured in days)</p> <p>% of payroll spent on training</p>
<p>To deliver a financial management service that promotes and contributes to the effective use of the Department's financial resources through the delivery of economy, efficiency, value for money and promptness in all expenditure</p>	<p>Expenditure trends to be reviewed monthly by senior management</p> <p>A programme of VFM Reviews to be completed annually</p> <p>MIF to be implemented in full and within set timeframes</p> <p>Mullarkey Report to be implemented in full and within set timeframes</p> <p>Planned programme of internal audits to be completed annually</p>	<p>No excess on Vote</p> <p>Level of economies and efficiencies achieved, while continuing to deliver high quality outputs</p> <p>No adverse findings in the C&AG's Report on the Appropriation Account</p> <p>Audits completed on schedule and approved by Internal Audit Committee</p>
<p>To provide a reliable and effective information and communications technology service that meets the Department's existing and future needs</p>	<p>ICT Strategy developed to cover the period 2005-2007, implemented within set timeframes and on budget</p>	<p>Business needs of Divisions met, as indicated in feedback from Employee Opinion Surveys</p> <p>Economies and efficiencies achieved through new technologies</p> <p>Reduction in down-time on ICT systems</p>
<p>To ensure that the Department continues to meet its corporate legal responsibilities</p>	<p>All necessary actions taken to comply with Department's corporate legal responsibilities</p>	<p>Full compliance achieved in respect of each legislative measure</p>
<p>To support the provision of a high level of service to the Department's customers, both internal and external</p> <p>To provide efficient and effective library, registry, archives and other support services</p>	<p>Commitments in Customer Charter met</p> <p>Ongoing delivery of effective and efficient service from registry, library, etc.</p>	<p>External customer satisfaction levels, as measured through annual customer surveys</p> <p>Staff satisfaction levels with internal support services, as measured through employee opinion surveys</p>
<p>To implement a Modernisation Programme that supports the achievement of the Department's goals and is aligned with the broader Civil Service Modernisation Programme and models of best practice</p>	<p>Modernisation Action Plan implemented within set timeframes</p>	<p>Progress verified externally by CSPVG</p> <p>External customer satisfaction levels, as measured through annual customer surveys</p> <p>Efficiencies and economies achieved</p>
<p>To support and develop the partnership process in the Department</p>	<p>To hold an appropriate number of meetings</p> <p>To secure high participation levels by staff on the Committee and its Sub-Groups</p> <p>An appropriate range of issues to be agreed through partnership process</p>	<p>Staff alignment/engagement, as measured through Employee Opinion Surveys</p> <p>No disputes with staff unions</p>



MEASURING PROGRESS

Outputs and Outcomes

Delivering Better Government set out a vision of a Civil Service focused on results, delivering the highest quality services and responsive to the changing needs of Government and the citizen. The framework to achieve this objective included a more strategic approach to business planning, financial management reforms and a greater focus on outputs and results at individual, team and organisational level.

This Strategy Statement outlines our objectives, actions and performance indicators. These will be integrated into Divisional business plans and individual role profiles. A framework has been agreed recently for incorporating formal risk management into the business planning process.

Our Annual Report on the Strategy Statement will clarify what benefits are derived from the resources we use, and if these benefits are contributing to progress. Measuring progress in the public service is not without difficulties. Customers and stakeholders are diffuse; outputs are sometimes intangible; timescales for impact are uncertain; outcomes are, by definition, highly contestable and often produced as a joint effort between the public and government. The outputs and outcomes of this Department are often more long term and related to sectoral/national objectives for which, in many cases, we do not have direct responsibility within Government e.g. social inclusion measures.

Notwithstanding these issues, this Department is considerably advanced in terms of implementing the Management Information Framework, which has ensured that the quality of information available to management continues to improve, and with it the quality of decision-making. Considerable work has been done by an internal Performance Indicators Group in developing performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, that are easily understandable, focused on priority issues and analytically

sound. It was also important to ensure coherence across indicators and alignment with Strategic Objectives and the work of the Performance Indicator Group was critical in this regard. The Management Advisory Committee will keep the indicators under review to ensure that they remain relevant throughout the timescale of this Strategy Statement and, where necessary, corrective action is taken in a timely manner. In addition, the performance of Divisions and individuals is monitored on a continuing basis.

All of the Department's activities are expected to achieve satisfactory results in terms of:

- An assessment of outputs - including quality and timeliness - against Divisional business plans and individual performance assessments
- The degree of satisfaction of the Taoiseach, Ministers of State and the Government.

Inputs

The Department has neither programme nor capital expenditure in the accepted traditional sense. We have no discretion in relation to aspects of our expenditure (e.g. Tribunals or Commissions of Enquiry). This presents challenges in terms of matching resources to the achievement of our high-level objectives. The charts in the appendices to this Strategy Statement provide information on the inputs available to us to progress our objectives in terms of:

- Current financial resources, which vary from year to year in line with the annual estimates process, and
- Staff numbers, which will be reduced by 4% on 2002 levels by end 2005, in keeping with a Government decision in this regard.

The Department is also participating in a pilot programme, led by the Department of Finance, to develop a system for measuring trends in activity and output, relative to the resources consumed in their delivery.



Next Steps

In terms of next steps, the Department is also:

- Progressing the implementation plan for the next stage of MIF
- Further developing our data strategy to meet the Department's priority needs for evidence-based policy making
- Working with the Department of Finance to examine all aspects of interoperability (including technical, data exchange and organisational process issues) across the public service i.e. interlinking systems, information and ways of working.

Progress in relation to each of these will be reported in our Annual Reports.

Other Aspects of Accountability Framework

As well as the measurement mechanisms outlined above, it is important to note that the Taoiseach and the Department are accountable for their actions, and their outcomes, via a wide variety of other channels. These include:

- The Oireachtas – through Committees, Parliamentary Questions, etc.
- The media
- The social partnership monitoring framework
- Regulatory and oversight bodies (e.g. the Ombudsman, Standards in Public Office Commission, the Comptroller and Auditor General)
- The Performance Verification Group (twice-yearly reports)

- Evaluation by academic and other non-governmental institutions, and groups in civil society, trade and industry bodies, commentators etc.
- International institutions such as the IMF, OECD, other governments and the EU
- Reports on policy outcome indicators e.g. CSO *Measuring Ireland's Progress*; NESC Progress Indicators and Indicators for Benchmarking the PPF; National Competitiveness Council Annual Competitiveness Report etc.
- Staff and their representatives
- The Internal Audit Committee and Internal Audit function
- Customers/citizens through freedom of information and other democratic machinery and
- Annual reporting of progress against Customer Charter targets.

These ensure close scrutiny of the work of the Department at all levels on an ongoing basis.



FINANCIAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The achievement of optimum resource allocation and value for money is an important priority for the Department in the years ahead. The Department is committed to achieving this without compromising on the quality of service we provide.

At the macro level, resource allocation is a matter for negotiation with the Department of Finance and ultimately for decision by the Government. Save in exceptional circumstances, such as the commencement of a major national project, the Department has operated within the overall limits for expenditure increases set by the Minister for Finance. Although the Department's budget is small in absolute terms, we are conscious of the need to provide a lead in expenditure management. This priority is reflected in the 2005 Estimates allocation for the Department, which shows no increase (and in fact a small reduction) over the 2004 provision. Expenditure management practices in the Department are geared to find the best available value-for-money, to realise savings where possible and to ensure the most productive use of the Department's resources.

The Department has positioned itself to manage its financial resources more effectively by introducing a new, modern financial management system as part of the implementation of the Management Information Framework. The new system went live in July 2002 and incorporates modern accounting and financial management facilities which accord with best practice and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in areas such as accrual accounting, asset management, management reporting, costing, budgeting and purchasing.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken to improve financial management in recent years, including:

- The modernisation of management processes in the Finance Unit
- The implementation of a modern Financial Management System

- The setting up of an Internal Audit function within the Department
- The recruitment of professional accountants to key positions in the Finance function
- An internal programme of Value For Money reviews
- The introduction of new purchase order processing procedures
- The development of a wide range of management reports
- The use of technology to streamline, and where possible replace, manual processes.

Future plans include:

- The introduction of a targeted budgeting framework, aimed at controlling expenditure in key items of discretionary spending
- The leveraging of improved management processes and information to achieve better value-for-money
- Closer integration between financial management and the broader strategic management of the Department
- The introduction of online expense processing for staff
- The introduction of electronic payments to staff and suppliers
- An Expenditure Review Programme, as agreed with the Department of Finance.

Future resource allocation will be determined by developments in the public finances. Through improved management and a clear focus on value for money, we intend to continue to provide an excellent service within the resources available to us.

A breakdown of both current and projected resource allocations, and recent expenditure trends, is provided in the charts in the appendices.



TRANSLATING STRATEGY INTO ACTION – GETTING THE ORGANISATIONAL CONDITIONS RIGHT

In operationalising this Strategy Statement, the Department will have regard to the need:

- For good governance – promoting ethical values and appropriate guiding principles, developing supportive structures to show what we can do together and help colleagues succeed, including strategic and financial management mechanisms
- To ensure that we have the capacity to make our goals happen - financial, technological and intellectual - and that those resources are managed appropriately
- To continuously improve, to deliver on our promises and to anticipate and be prepared for the needs of tomorrow
- To keep our customers as a central focus of our work and the people to whom we are accountable
- To ensure that progress on implementing the Strategy Statement is evaluated appropriately, in a transparent fashion, that risks are anticipated and managed and corrective action taken as necessary.

The sections below provide more information on each of these aspects of translating our strategy into action.

Good Governance: Mission, Ethics and Values

The Department has high standards of conduct that characterise our service and enable us to carry out our Mission. In keeping with the *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour* and other relevant Civil Service and Departmental policies, officers of the Department are expected to behave ethically and:

- Maintain high standards of service delivery by conscientiously, honestly, fairly and impartially serving the Government of the day, the other institutions of State and the public; always acting within the law and performing duties with efficiency, diligence and courtesy. The principles of quality customer service inform our work
- Observe appropriate behaviour at work, including dealing with stakeholders fairly and promptly, treating colleagues with respect, and having proper regard for State resources
- Maintain the highest standards of probity by acting with integrity at all times.

Good Governance: Internal Management Processes

The priorities of the Department are set by the Taoiseach, the Government Chief Whip and the Minister of State for European Affairs. These are informed by the *Programme for Government*, the Partnership Agreement *Sustaining Progress* and other Government Decisions and processes.

The Secretary General is assisted in this role by the Management Advisory Committee (MAC). The Second Secretary General has particular responsibility for matters related to Anglo-Irish, European Union and International Affairs. Each Assistant Secretary and (in one case) Director has overall responsibility for the management of one or more Divisions, as set out in the Organisation Chart at Appendix II.

Each Division is headed by a Principal Officer. The Department has a Principal Officer Network which discusses matters of mutual interest, as well as preparing proposals on matters that may be referred to it from time to time by the MAC. One of their achievements over the last 12 months has been in progressing the development of performance indicators for the Department's Strategy Statement/business plans.

Other mechanisms to improve cross-Divisional understanding include working groups e.g. on risk management; staff mobility; regular staff presentations on topics of mutual interest; communications programmes e.g. circulation and launch of *Customer Charter* and active engagement of staff at all levels in developments such as the career development programme. Close co-operation between Divisions of the Department, internal structures and the main players in the broader environment, is essential to the effective discharge of the Department's functions.

The Department's Partnership Committee, and its associated Sub-Groups, provide a forum for involving staff in matters of importance to the Department. It has a particular role in assisting the implementation of the Department's modernisation programme and making recommendations to the Management Advisory Committee. 40% of staff in the Department are currently serving on the Committee and Sub-Groups - a high level of engagement reflecting the quality of the debates and belief in the processes as configured within the Department. An annual report on Partnership within the Department is prepared and reviewed by the Committee at the end of each year. Partnership processes will continue to be reviewed and developed over the period of this Strategy.

Good Governance: Strategic Management Processes

This Strategy Statement provides the overall direction and framework for the Department's activities and sets out key objectives for each area. These in turn are translated into Divisional business plans which are reviewed on a regular basis by the MAC.

The Performance Management and Development System contributes to continuous improvement in performance by:

- Aligning individual and team performance with the goals of the Department as set out in business plans
- Providing greater clarity in objective setting and related performance targets for individuals and teams and
- Monitoring progress on their achievement.

It is a process for establishing shared understanding about what is to be achieved and how it is to be achieved.

All management processes are, of course, designed to be flexible in responding to changed circumstances and the emerging priorities of the Taoiseach and Government of the day.

Good Governance: Principles of Good Regulation

The Department plays a major role in developing and promoting principles of regulatory policy and better governance across the public service. While the Department generally does not have significant legislative responsibilities in terms of initiating Bills and Statutory Instruments, we are committed to promoting internally the principles of good regulation. Our objective is to ensure that, whenever regulation is justified, it is prepared in a fully transparent way which maximises public participation in its formulation. We also seek to ensure that it:

- Is clear
- Achieves its objectives
- Is not overly burdensome
- Is properly enforced
- Has no unintended effects and
- Is reviewed regularly.

Key actions will include promotion of the Regulatory Impact Assessment tool internally, building the capacity and resources to apply RIA successfully and an examination of the scope of its potential application; building regulatory objectives into Divisional business plans; and keeping legislation under review, with a view to identifying areas where statute law revision may be possible.



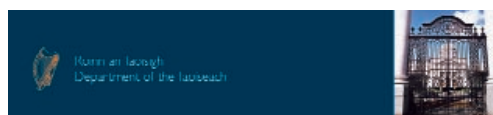
THE CAPACITY TO DELIVER: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Operating at the heart of Government, the Department has identified the ability to have a whole-of-government perspective as one of its core competencies.

The attributes of this competency are:

- The capacity to have an appreciation of the broader agenda and external environment
- The ability to focus on aspects of policies which are of key strategic value at a national level
- The ability to co-ordinate, lead and progress key cross-Departmental issues.

In addition, managing and developing people, good decision-making/judgement and teamwork are critical skills and behaviours for our people. The Department's day-to-day activities and its strategic human resource and staff development policies are driven by these key competencies.



Core Competencies



Even more than the appropriate deployment of its financial and technological assets, the performance of the Department is dependent on the quality of the intellectual capital available to it. A highly motivated workforce, aligned with the Department's objectives, equipped with the skills and presented with the opportunity to make a full contribution towards the attainment of the Department's goals, as well as further their own career development, is essential in ensuring the delivery of quality results.

Everyone who works in the Department is asked to take responsibility, to innovate, to challenge themselves and learn. In return, our staff can expect:

- Fair pay and conditions
- Equitable people management processes
- Opportunities for skills development and career progression
- Reasonable opportunities for flexible working patterns
- Clarity regarding roles and contributions
- A pleasant, safe and supportive working environment
- Respectful treatment and dignity at work.

Line managers have a key role in implementing people management policies, in fostering an environment conducive to learning and in managing performance. Particular attention will be paid over the course of this Strategy Statement to developing supports for managers in relation to this role.

Over the period of this Strategy Statement the Department will review its integrated Human Resource Strategy and Staff Development Plan to reflect new central developments including:

- Further PMDS developments including its integration with other HR processes
- New staff management provisions arising from the *Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Bill*, and
- The new recruitment arrangements under the *Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act*.

We will also continue to survey staff to measure employee alignment, commitment and satisfaction.

Detailed HR measures have been developed and were identified in a recent Institute of Public Administration publication as an example of good practice in implementing Strategic HR in the Civil Service. These measures will continue to be developed and reported on as part of the Annual Report to allow for a comparison of progress over time as well as with suitable benchmarks, where available. These include HR costs and strategic focus, management credibility, employee satisfaction and the levels of performance problems (where relevant) as well as targets in relation to training (4% of payroll); the 3% equality target for employment of people with disabilities (which the Department currently exceeds) and the targets underpinning our *Gender Equality Policy* as set out below.

"Subject to the over-riding condition of the merit principle for all promotions, the following strategic objectives are proposed, with an indicative time scale of 2010:

- PO: to increase the proportion of female representatives in the PO grade from 27% to 40%

- AP: to monitor flows from the HEO/AO grades, with the ultimate objective of maintaining overall gender balance, as is the case at present
- In discussion with the Civil Service Commission, and other relevant agencies, to seek to promote equality at recruitment level."

The Department has actively progressed the equality and diversity agenda through its HR policies, training programmes and communications with staff and will continue this process over the lifetime of this Strategy as a key means of valuing and benefiting from everyone's contributions.

Financial

In supporting the Departmental objective of enhancing our ability to work productively with minimum wasted effort and expense, Corporate Services Division delivers a financial management service that promotes and contributes to the effective use of the Department's financial resources through the delivery of economy, efficiency, value-for-money and promptness in all expenditure.

Resources are allocated to the Department through the Estimates process in negotiations conducted with the Department of Finance and are determined by achieving a balance between our requirements and developments in the public finances. Within the Department, resources are allocated to individual Divisions and Programmes by senior management, in co-operation with line managers and Corporate Services Division.

The Division will continue to support the Secretary General in his role as Accounting Officer over the period of this Strategy Statement, ensuring that a robust system of internal financial controls is in place and that the Department's financial responsibilities are properly discharged. The Internal Audit function and Internal Audit Committee also have key roles to play, providing assurance to

the Secretary General and line managers of the adequacy of the internal control system and participating in the development of a risk management framework in the Department.

The continued development of the Management Information Framework is vital. It aims to ensure more efficient processing of financial transactions and accounts and to provide better information about the use of resources. This will inform better decision-making around the allocation of resources; more efficient and effective management of resources, once allocated; and greater transparency in and accountability for the use of resources, which in turn will provide more clarity about performance, outputs and outcomes. Actions to achieve better value-for-money (without compromising on the quality of service we provide), including:

- Improving the quality of information available to managers
- More closely integrating financial management with the broader strategic management of the Department
- Undertaking a programme of value-for-money reviews, and
- Developing a more strategic approach to procurement

will be progressed over the period of the Strategy.

Information on the deployment of financial resources is provided in charts as appendices to this document.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The Department aims to maximise the benefits of technology to facilitate effective and efficient customer service and strategy delivery over the course of this Strategy by:

- Providing a flexible, reliable, efficient and effective information and communications technology service which supports current and future business needs - focusing particularly on providing resilience and business continuity
- Further developing value added systems such as e-Cabinet – a unique solution aimed at improving service to the Government and Government Departments – and the multi-site library application, as well as continuing to deliver important added functionality to all systems
- Improving accessibility to information for internal and external customers - improving internet, intranet and website facilities and providing a set of reliable, cost effective and secure fixed remote and mobile solutions to support the changing business requirements of the Department.

In line with the Department's Strategic Review (2002-2005):

- The ICT function has become more strategically focussed
- The Department has been connected to the Government Virtual Private Network, ensuring that business conducted with other Departments is over a direct, secure, centrally managed network.

Work has also commenced on an Information and Knowledge Management project to support the varied information requirements of the Department. This project is expected to be delivered in four stages, the first of which is the development of an Information Strategy.

Statistics/Data Strategy

In recent years, a number of important developments have occurred that have combined to emphasise the need for quality data/information, including the demands of evidence-based policymaking. Important Government actions underlining this approach have included the recent decision to develop data/statistics strategies in each Government Department, beginning with this round of Strategy Statements.

The Department has asked the PO Network to design and deliver its statistics strategy including:

- Determining how the Department's priority data needs can be best met
- Examining data needs in respect of complex and cross-cutting issues, and
- Identifying relevant staff skills and skills gaps.

The Network will report back to MAC in the near future.

Environmental Sustainability

Our energy costs are shared with the other occupants of the Government Buildings complex and discussions are continuing to take place with them and with the Office of Public Works to identify further possibilities for energy savings.

The Department continues to seek out and avail of opportunities to recycle waste and whenever possible to use recycled paper.

Improving for Today, Preparing for Tomorrow: Organisational Renewal

In accordance with the terms of *Sustaining Progress*, the Department has submitted two Modernisation Action Plans to the independent Civil Service Performance Verification Group and reported on progress four times to date.

The main aims of our modernisation programme are:

- To provide an excellent service to our customers
- To maintain a strategic focus on the Department's role and functions to ensure that we provide leadership and co-ordination across key areas of Government policy
- To position the Department to meet the ongoing changes in the external environment
- To work in partnership with staff to bring about changes required.

The current Plan - which covers the period until June 2006 - includes a range of actions under each of the key modernisation themes that can be broadly categorised as actions aimed at:

- Demonstrating the commitment of the Government to be at the forefront of the knowledge society internationally and improving services through progressing and consolidating technological responses to business needs, e.g. e-Cabinet and knowledge society developments
- Developing better policies through improved planning, for example, further integration of new developments into business planning such as performance indicators and risk management
- Ensuring that the quality of delivery of our services and strategies continues to satisfy our customers' changing expectations and meets their needs through ongoing monitoring of customer satisfaction and annual reporting of progress against customer service targets
- Heightening our focus on value-for-money, accountability and efficiency
- Ensuring that strategic human resource management practices support the Department's overall strategy and maximising productivity through active people management, including developing new plans to further embed performance management in the Department.

The change programme has made a significant impact on the way the Department conducts its business. Progress has been demonstrated in a number of areas such as staff flexibility and improved capacity to respond effectively to changed circumstances and external pressures; more productivity and accountability, with the introduction of expenditure and business plan reviews; and more focused responses to customer needs. Aspects of the modernisation programme receive support from the Change Management Fund, co-ordinated by the Department of Finance.

The Department also has an active role in monitoring progress of the National Economic and Social Development Office in achieving its modernisation objectives.

Overall the impact of the programme has been to improve performance by accelerating change in an environment of industrial peace.

Decentralisation

Enhanced corporate governance systems, which have been, and are being, put in place under the Public Service Modernisation Programme, provide a good foundation for the implementation of decentralisation. Decentralisation, which involves the relocation of over ten thousand civil and public service jobs to fifty-three locations, also provides a strong stimulus for the accelerated implementation of the Modernisation Programme. It offers opportunities and incentives to:

- Re-engineer business processes
- Change structures, systems and work practices
- Strengthen financial and performance management systems
- Maximise the potential of modern communications technology
- Introduce more flexibility into the system

- Change organisational culture; and
- Develop innovative new methods of service delivery.

While this Department itself is not due to be decentralised, it is expected that it will result in turnover of at least 20% of staff over the next few years as many of our staff will opt to move with other Departments and will need to be replaced.

We are committed to putting appropriate plans in place at an early juncture to ensure that this will not have adverse impacts on the continuity and high quality of service expected by our external and internal customers, as well as to avail of the opportunity to have a fresh look at how we do our business.

In addition, the Department is actively involved in ensuring the delivery of joined-up government under the new circumstances. The structures and institutions which warrant particular attention in this regard include the various Cabinet Sub-Committees, Social Partnership, and the Strategic Management Initiative Implementation Group and its various Sub-Groups. A review of the existing collaborative cross-Departmental structures and processes underpinning these three areas and the estimates/budget process is being undertaken by this Department and the Department of Finance in this context. The e-Cabinet system developed by the Department is an example of the type of ICT solution which will support effective collaboration in a decentralised Civil Service.



Delivering a Quality Customer Service

Although we are not involved in the delivery of programmes or services directly to the general public to any significant extent, the Department has developed a *Customer Charter* which sets out a range of commitments across all aspects of the services the Department provides. The Charter:

- Provides a focus for prioritising the Department's activities and resources by highlighting areas of service most in need of attention and areas which are of priority to our customers (e.g. other Departments and Agencies, representative bodies such as the social partners, etc.)
- Will lead to an improvement in the service the Department provides to its customers, through providing clarity regarding expectations of service standards, monitoring and evaluation of progress in implementing the targets set and delivering training to staff.

Everyone who works in the Department has a role to play in implementing the *Customer Charter*, with those working in management services, library, registry, archive and service support roles playing a particularly important role.

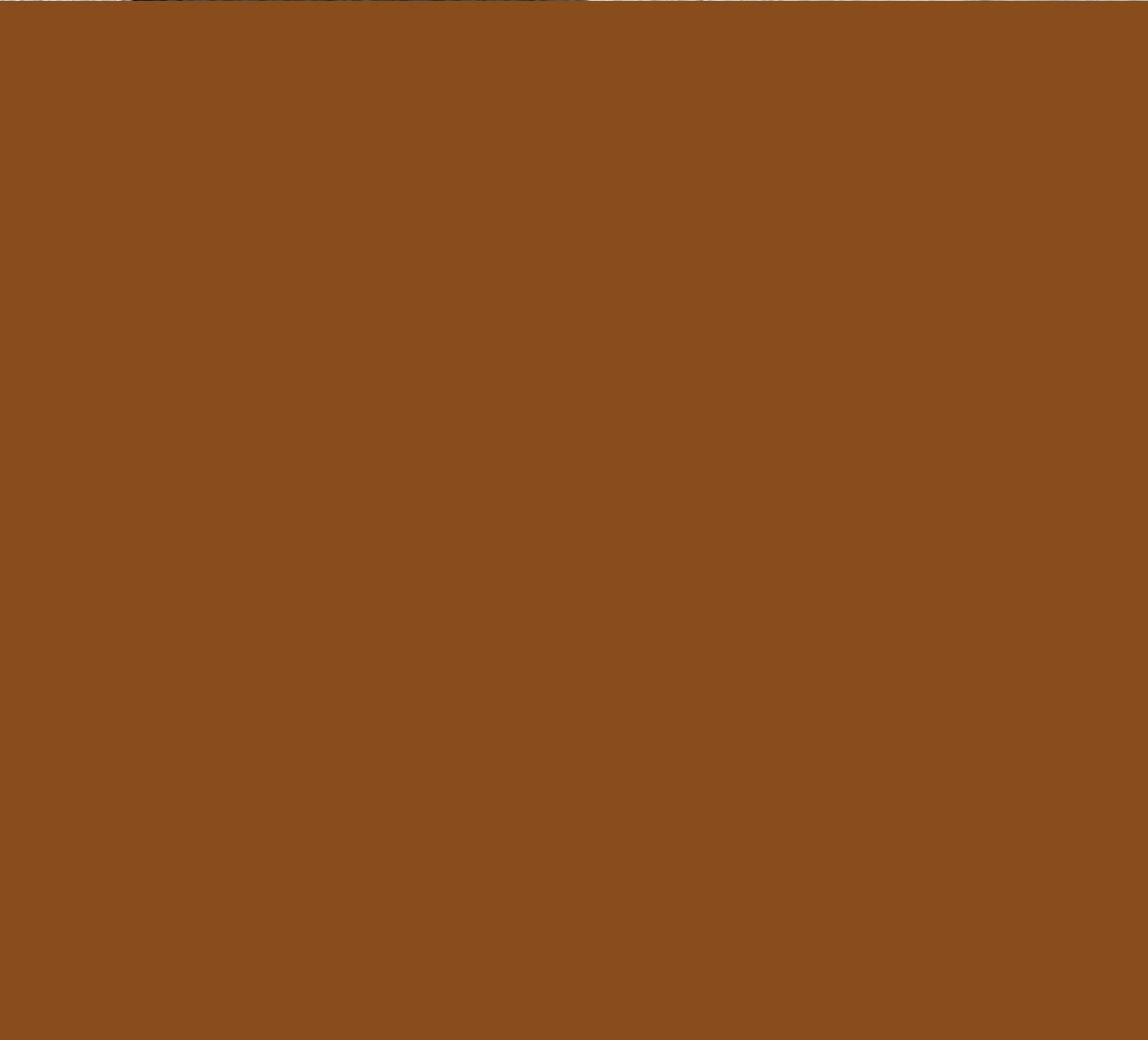
Progress under the Charter will be reported on in our Annual Reports. One of the principal methods of assessing progress will be customer surveys, to be conducted annually, asking customers to indicate to what extent we have met the targets set out in the Charter. To date our customer surveys have shown that the Department is considered by customers to be a high performer in both public and private sector terms.

Open Government

The *Freedom of Information Act, 1997*, and the *Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act, 2003*, assert the rights of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest, and the right to privacy of individuals. Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are co-ordinated by the FOI Officer, Ms. Patricia Williams (email: foi@taoiseach.gov.ie; telephone 6194154). A manual which provides a guide to the structures of the Department to help access information under the FOI Acts is available at www.gov.ie/taoiseach/publication/

In addition to information provided through the FOI process, it is worth noting that information is made available to stakeholders in a number of other ways including:

- Responses to representations and Parliamentary Questions – almost 1,000 Parliamentary Questions were responded to in 2004 for example
- The release of files to the National Archives – approximately 675 files or file parts were transferred to the National Archives in 2004
- Meetings, seminars and other fora e.g. recent knowledge society seminar on impact of new technology on education sector
- The Departmental websites and publications such as this Strategy Statement.



MONITORING/REPORTING ON PROGRESS IN MEETING GOALS

This Strategy Statement outlines the overall role, direction and priorities of the Department at a high level over the period 2005-2007. The Strategy is designed to be flexible, so that the Department can anticipate and respond to evolving needs. This is particularly important as the Department is subject to frequent changes in its roles and responsibilities as national priorities change.

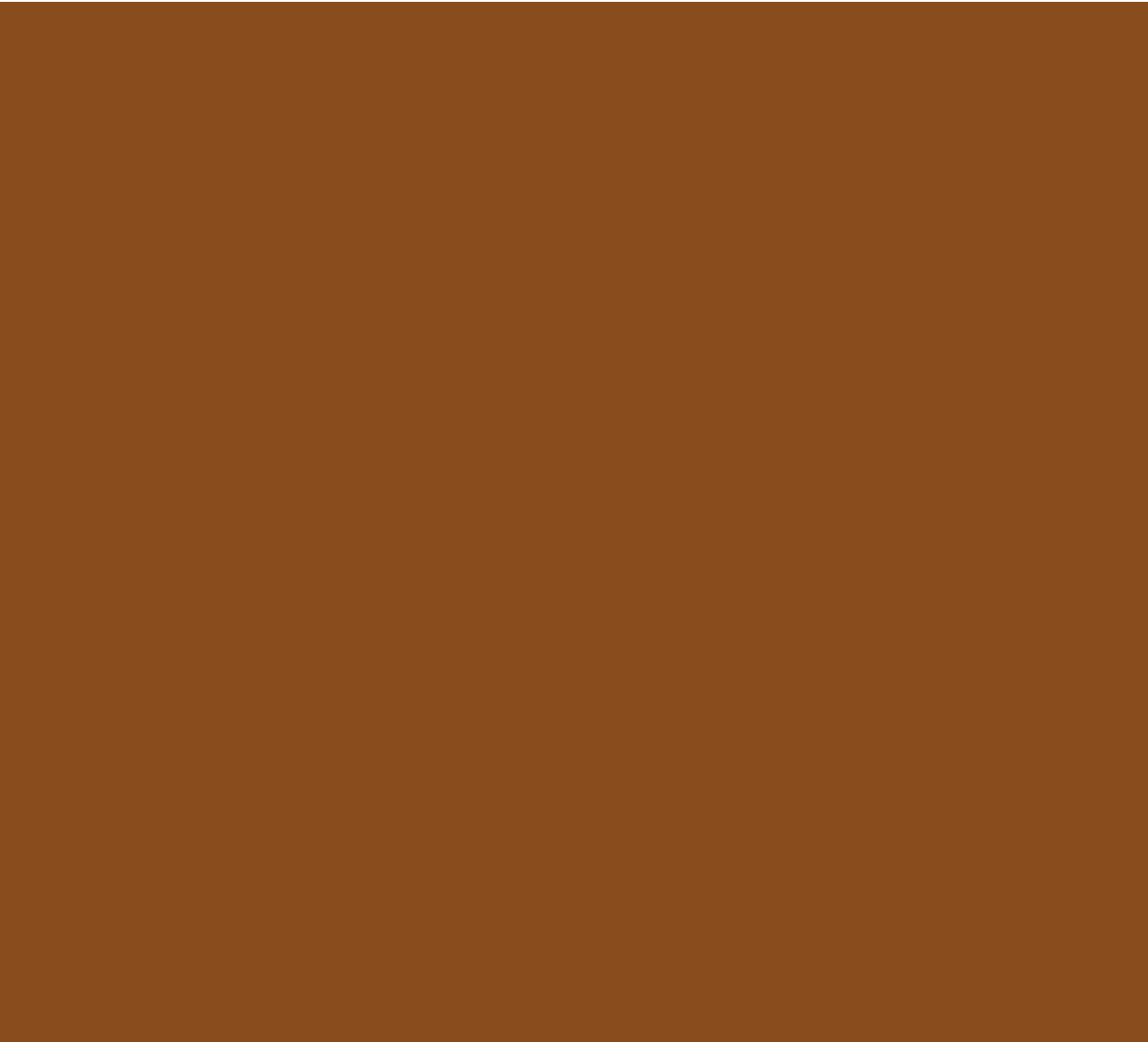
Each Division of the Department prepares an annual business plan to assist in the delivery of strategic objectives. This is prepared in conjunction with all staff, and reviewed twice yearly by the Management Advisory Committee to ensure that progress remains on track, that risks are appropriately assessed and managed and that corrective actions are taken as necessary.

The business plans contain specific targets for each Division to achieve in a given year, based on the Strategy Statement and other relevant targets e.g. the targets we have set for ourselves under the *Customer Charter* which are monitored through regular customer surveys etc. Where possible, these targets are benchmarked against suitable comparable organisations.

These objectives are, in turn, reflected in personal work objectives and performance targets for each officer through the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), so that everyone is clear where their contribution as individuals and as team members is aligned with the goals of the Department. All staff are encouraged, supported and expected to strive for the highest standards of performance in delivering on the Department's goals.

In keeping with the provisions of the *Public Service Management Act, 1997*, an Annual Progress Report on the Strategy Statement is published by the Department and made available on our website (www.taoiseach.gov.ie) in both Irish and English.

This Strategy Statement, and the associated strategic management processes outlined above, forms the basis for a continuously improving service to the Government, Taoiseach, Ministers of State and all citizens.



The following bodies are under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach:

National Economic and Social Development Office
National Economic and Social Council
National Economic and Social Forum
National Centre for Partnership and Performance

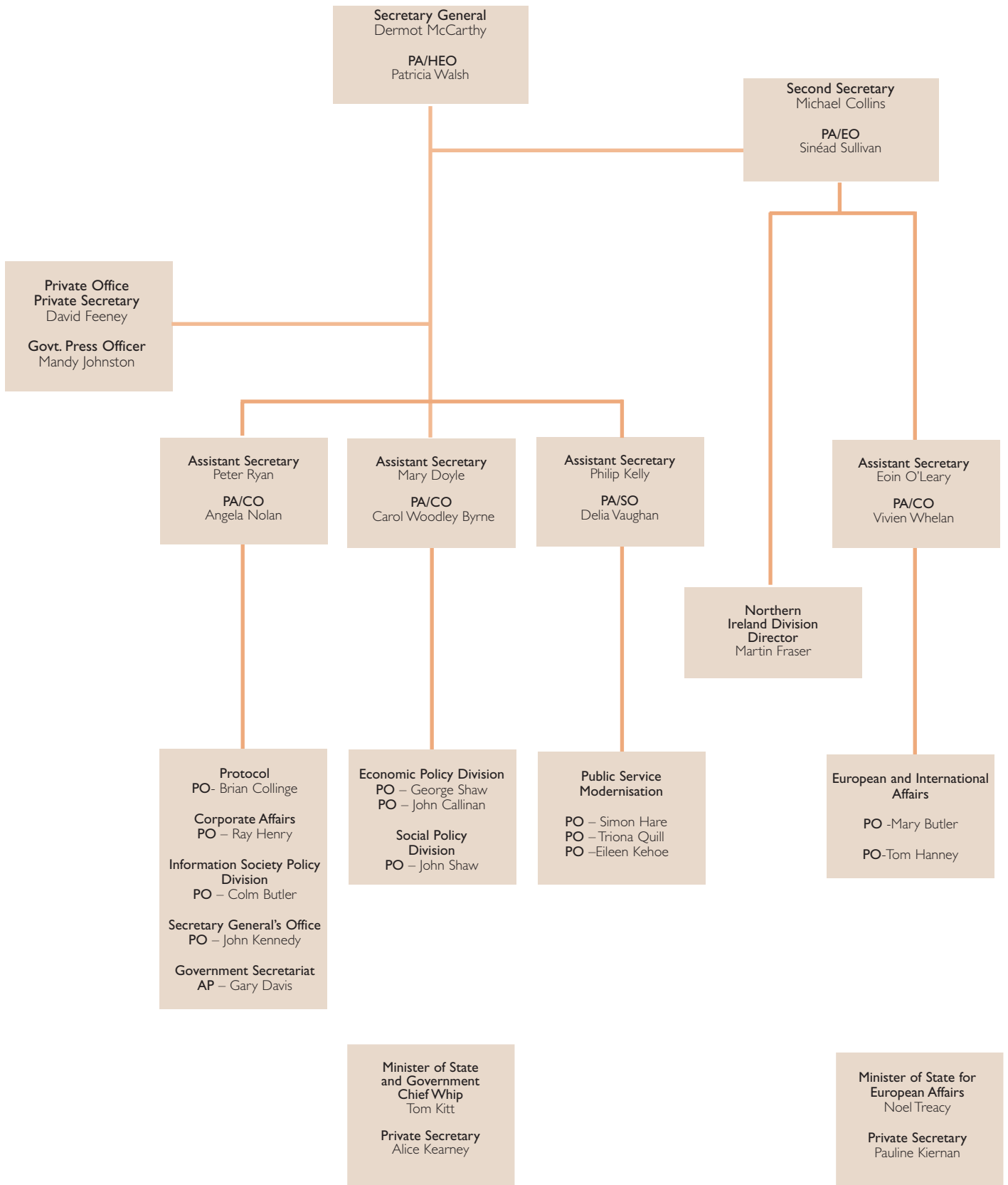
The following bodies operate independently but are funded from the Department's Vote:

National Forum on Europe
Forum for Peace and Reconciliation
All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution
The Independent Commission of Inquiry into the Bombings in Dublin, Monaghan and Dundalk
The Moriarty Tribunal

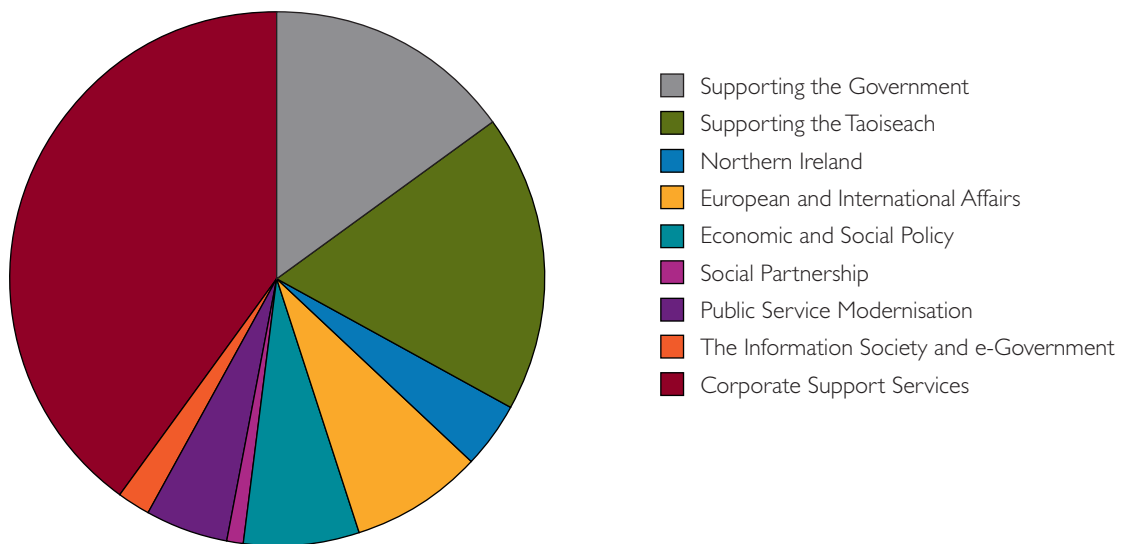
In addition, the Taoiseach and/or Ministers of State have ministerial responsibility for certain administrative matters in the following independent Offices:

Central Statistics Office
Office of the Attorney General
Office of the Chief State Solicitor
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
Law Reform Commission

APPENDIX II: ORGANISATION CHART



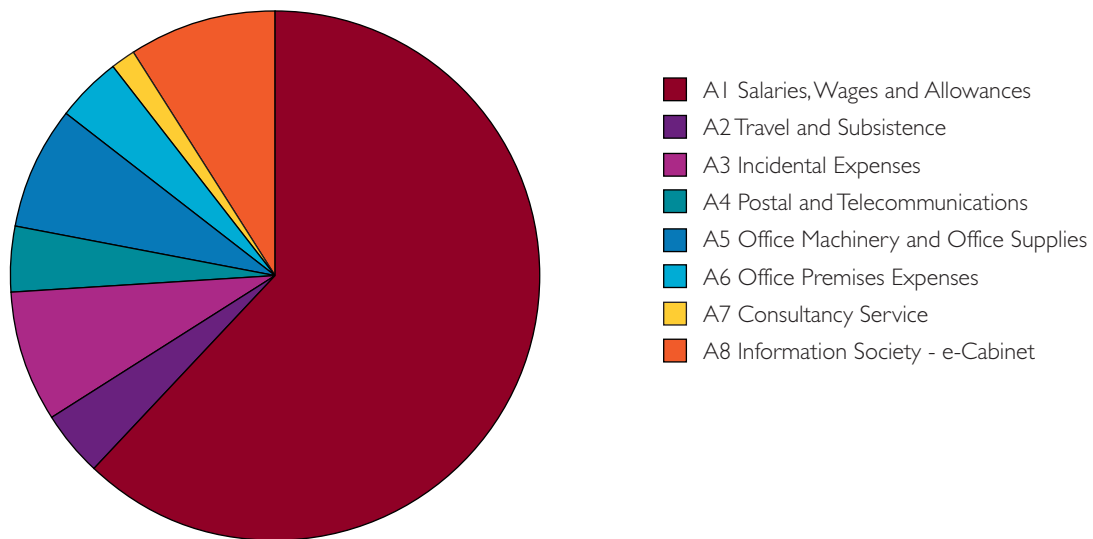
Administrative Expenditure by Strategic Objective



Total Allocation 2005: 18.867m Euro

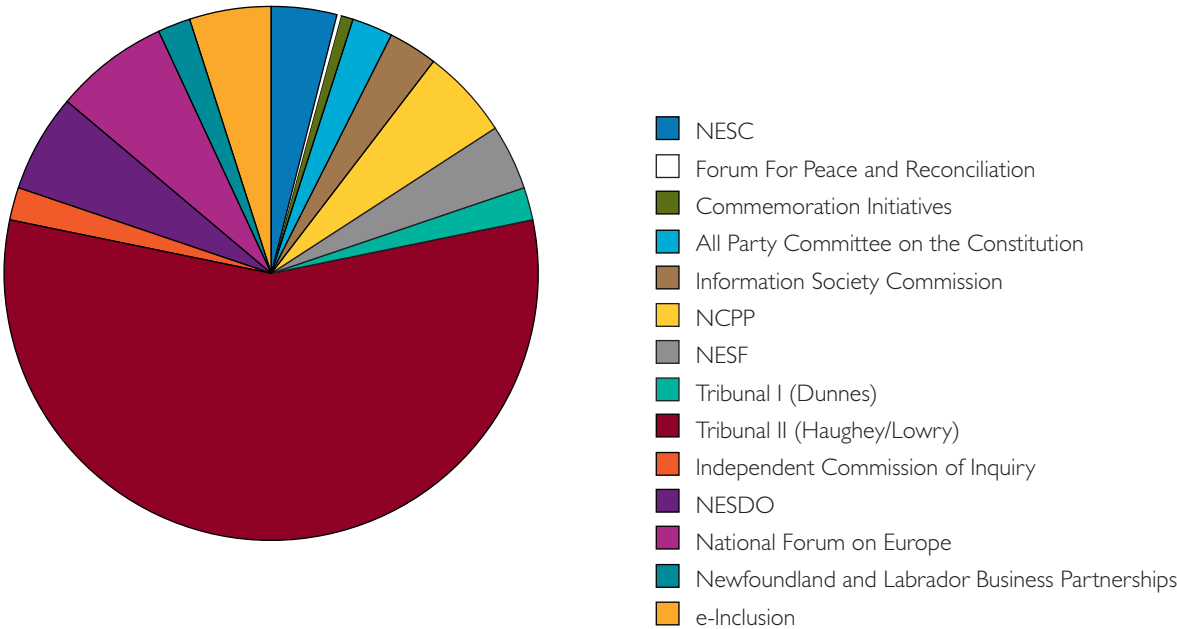
APPENDIX IV:
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE BY EXPENSE TYPE

Administrative Expenditure by Expense Type



Total Allocation 2005: 18.869m Euro

Programme Expenditure



Total Allocation 2005: 20.364m Euro

APPENDIX VI:

RECAST ESTIMATE BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE - BASED ON 2005 ABRIDGED ESTIMATES

Department of the Taoiseach			
Resource Allocation by Strategic Objective			
	Estimate 2005		
Strategic Objectives/Priorities	Administrative	Programme	Total
1 Supporting the Government	2,541,707		2,541,707
2 Supporting the Taoiseach	2,852,845		2,852,845
a Northern Ireland	788,441		
Subhead C: Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust Act		1,000	
Subhead D: Forum for Peace and Reconciliation		51,000	
Subhead E: Commemoration Initiatives		65,000	
Subhead L: Independent Commission of Inquiry		257,000	
Subhead O: Newfoundland and Labrador Business Partnerships		321,000	1,483,441
b European and International Affairs	1,283,342		
Subhead N: National Forum on Europe		1,300,000	2,583,342
c Economic and Social Policy	1,202,795		
Subhead B: National Economic and Social Council		790,000	
Subhead I: National Economic and Social Forum		689,000	
Subhead M: National Economic and Social Development Office		1,168,000	3,849,795
d Social Partnership	253,174		
Subhead H: National Centre for Partnership and Performance		1,041,000	1,294,174
e Public Service Modernisation	981,237		981,237
f The Knowledge Society and e-Government	483,547		
Subhead A8: Knowledge Society - e-Cabinet and other Initiatives		1,738,000	
Subhead G: Information Society Commission		716,000	
Subhead P: e-Inclusion		1,025,000	3,962,547
g Corporate Support Services	6,743,911		
Subhead F: All Party Committee on the Constitution		399,000	
Subhead J: Tribunal of Inquiry (Dunnes Payments)		250,000	
Subhead K: Tribunal of Inquiry (Payments to Haughey/Lowry)		10,553,000	17,945,911
Total 2005 Abridged Estimate (gross)	17,131,000	20,364,000	37,495,000

Note This is based on the 2005 gross Abridged Estimate for Vote 2 -Department of the Taoiseach and is prepared for indicative purposes only.

APPENDIX VII:
OTHER KEY INPUTS: STAFF NUMBERS

Grade	No of Staff	Male	Female	% of Women
Secretary General	1	1	0	0
Second Secretary	1	1	0	0
Assistant Secretary	4	3	1	25
Principal Officer - PO	13	9	4	31
Assistant Principal - AP	30	15	15	50
Higher Executive Officer - HEO	20	7	13	65
Administrative Officer - AO	17	8	9	53
Executive Officer - EO	28	4	24	86
Staff Officer - SO	12	2	10	83
Clerical Officer - CO	52	10	42	81
Service Officers/Service Attendants	13	13	0	0
Cleaners	9	0	9	100
Totals	200	73	127	64

Note: Work sharers are counted as one person. People on secondment or on contract to this Department/or who are currently on career break are not included. Figures reflect the position as at 31st December, 2004

APPENDIX VIII: DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH CUSTOMER CHARTER

The Department of the Taoiseach is committed to providing a professional, efficient and courteous service to all our customers.

Our mandate is to support the Taoiseach in his constitutional and ceremonial role as Head of Government and to assist him in providing effective leadership, co-ordination and guidance across key policy areas. The staff of the Department conscientiously and impartially serve the Taoiseach and Government of the day, the Ministers of State, the other institutions of State and the general public, always acting with diligence, efficiency and courtesy.

Our Commitments to our Customers

We aim to provide an excellent service that reflects your needs and expectations. To achieve this, we make the following commitments:

Policy Development and Implementation

We will aim to ensure that our contribution to the development and implementation of Government policy adds value to the achievement of our national and international goals.

Contacting the Department

We will provide details of the role/function of staff in relevant publications and on the websites and specific contact information in all correspondence.

Responding to You

You will receive clear, timely and concise replies to all correspondence, including e-mails. If your correspondence relates to a matter that comes within the remit of another public body, we will direct the correspondence to that body and inform you accordingly. If you contact us by telephone, courteous and helpful staff will deal with your query without delay or, if they are unable to respond to the query, arrange for someone to do so.

Meetings

Meetings will be organised and conducted efficiently and effectively. You can expect excellent meeting facilities, timely notification and advance circulation of clear and concise documentation for each meeting.

Visitors to the Department

All visitors to the Department will be treated in

a courteous manner and directed to their correct destination quickly. High quality reception facilities will be provided, including appropriate provision for people with disabilities.

Media Services

We will provide members of the media with comprehensive and timely briefings on Government policies and activities. Appropriate staff will also be available to ensure that you receive a prompt and satisfactory response to your queries.

The Irish Language

We will ensure that customers who wish to conduct their business through Irish can do so.

Websites and Publications

We will provide accessible, informative and usable websites. We will ensure that our publications are clear and concise, address user needs and are available on our websites.

Tours of Government Buildings

We will provide informative tours of Government Buildings conducted by qualified guides, to make your visit a positive experience.

Diversity and Equality

We will respect the principles of equality and the diversity of our customers in the delivery of all services.

Suppliers

We will operate clear, impartial and transparent tendering/purchasing procedures.

Evaluation and reporting

This Charter has been developed following consultation with a wide range of our customers. We have defined criteria by which we will assess our performance against each of our commitments and will regularly survey our customers on the quality of the services we provide. We will report on our performance against each of these criteria in our Annual Report.

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this Charter, or on any of the services we provide. We also have a procedure for responding to any complaints you may have.

In return, we expect our staff to be treated with courtesy and respect.

APPENDIX IX:
GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

AO	Administrative Officer
AP	Assistant Principal
C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General
CO	Clerical Officer
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSPVG	Civil Service Performance Verification Group
EO	Executive Officer
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HEO	Higher Executive Officer
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IR	Industrial Relations
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
MIF	Management Information Framework
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NCPP	National Centre for Partnership and Performance
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESDO	National Economic and Social Development Office
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIs	Performance Indicators
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PO	Principal Officer
PPF	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness
PPPs	Public Private Partnerships
PVG	Performance Verification Group
SO	Staff Officer
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
VFM	Value for money