

**MODERNISATION ACTION PLAN FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH  
FOR VERIFICATION PROCESS UNDER TOWARDS 2016 (Revised January 2007)**

**Role of the Department of the Taoiseach**

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. This entails:

- Supporting the efficient functioning of Government;
- Supporting policy direction and co-ordination (focusing on major national priorities); and
- Providing administrative support to the Taoiseach and his Ministers of State.

The capability and commitment of our staff is central to ensuring that we deliver on this mandate. Accordingly, the attraction/retention of high calibre individuals – and managing/developing them from induction onwards – is a major focus of our modernisation drive. Also important is the efficient and effective use of the financial resources placed at our disposal and the development of strategies/actions to support effective cross-departmental working. These priorities are reflected in the prioritisation ratings given to the actions in this plan. We have rated the actions as follows:

5 – Critical to our modernisation drive

3 – Important in terms of adhering to ‘best practice’

1 – Important, but not a major issue/concern for this Department.

The Department also plays a role in relation to the wider Civil Service Modernisation Programme under *Towards 2016* and contributes to a separate report on this, which is submitted to the PVG by the Department of Finance.

<b>Section of T201 6</b>	<b>Section/ Unit of DOT</b>	<b>Action No.</b>	<b>List Specific Initiatives/commitments and corresponding specific Actions to be taken during over the duration of the pay element of the agreement</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Target Date for completing Action -</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
27.1-3, 28.1-5 and 29.1			<p><b>1. Modernisation, Flexibility and Change</b></p> <p><b>Our Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To provide an excellent service to our customers</li> <li>○ To make efficient use of the resources available to us</li> <li>○ To meet ongoing changes in the external environment</li> <li>○ To maintain a strategic focus on the Department’s role and functions, ensuring in particular that we provide leadership and</li> </ul>			

			<p>co-ordination across key areas of Government policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o To work in partnership with staff to bring about the changes required</li> </ul> <p><b>Commitments/Actions</b></p>			
	Personnel	1	We will develop a new HR Strategy 2008 – 2010. The new strategy will take account of Civil Service wide developments in the HR area, as well as respond to HR issues of key importance to management and staff. This will involve a full consultation process	5	July 2007 (consultation completed) December 2007 (new strategy agreed)	New strategy in place. Employee alignment/ engagement as measured in employee surveys
	CMU/ Personnel	2	We will fully implement the new integrated PMDS/HR model. This will include measures to support its implementation such as revised (simpler) forms and a ‘short guide’ for staff on the key elements of the new model, as well as automated monitoring of ‘rating’ returns to assess compliance levels.	5	January 2007 (revised forms/ guide agreed) July/December 2007 (reports on ‘rating’ returns completed)	Level of ‘rating’ returns to Personnel from annual and interim reviews
	Training Unit	3	We will review our current training and development strategy.	5	January 2007	Review completed and report submitted to MAC
	Training Unit	4	In light of the review findings, we will develop proposals to ensure that the training we provide is timely and relevant, having regard to the needs of management and staff.	5	March 2007	Level of training take-up. Relevance of training provided.

Personnel	5	We will review our induction/probation processes in the light of the new Civil Service rule on the length of the probation period. We will develop proposals to maximise the benefit of the probation process for both managers and staff.	5	March 2007 (review completed) June 2007 (new procedures in place)	Number of staff successfully probated
Personnel	6	We will develop a 'Manager's Handbook' to assist managers in the performance of their duties, especially in managing and developing staff. This will be prepared when the interventions outlined above to assist performance management have been implemented.	5	December 2007	Handbook published. Employee alignment/engagement as measured in employee surveys
Personnel	7	We will update our 'Staff Handbook' to incorporate new developments and to complement the 'Manager's Handbook'.	5	March 2008	Handbook published. Staff satisfaction levels as measured in employee surveys
CMU	8	We will commission our 4 <sup>th</sup> Employee Opinion Survey, to assess the effectiveness of our HR policies and whether they are maximising employee engagement/alignment. We will develop appropriate responses to the survey findings	5	October 2007 (survey held) December 2007 (responses developed)	Employee engagement/alignment as measured in survey. Proposals to respond to findings developed
Finance Unit/ CMU	9	We will integrate our business planning/financial and non-financial reporting processes in the context of developing our Annual Output Statement	5	December 2006	Statement submitted to Select Committee on time
MSU	10	We will prepare a Procurement Analysis Report, which will seek to identify the scope for improving the procurement function within the Department	5	September 2006	Analysis report prepared

MSU/ Finance Unit	11	In the light of this report, we will develop a Corporate Procurement Plan to achieve VFM in the way the Department acquires/pays for goods and services.	5	March 2007	Plan approved by NPPU
MSU/ Finance Unit	12	We will fully implement the recommendations in the Corporate Procurement Plan. [Note: It will be necessary to keep the plan under review in the light of proposals to examine the feasibility of moving to a 'shared financial services' platform – see action 51]	5	Specific target dates for each action to be included in the plan (phases 3 and 4)	Actions implemented. Efficiencies and economies achieved in procurement process
MSU/ Finance Unit	13	We will complete a programme of VFM reviews to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in our financial management, in line with the priorities outlined in our Corporate Procurement Plan	5	Specific target dates for each review to be outlined in the plan (phases 3 and 4)	Programme of reviews completed within specified timeframes. Efficiencies and economies achieved
CMU	14	We will amend the format of our Annual Report to focus on the relationship between our goals and the actions we take to achieve them	4	April 2007	Revised format used in production of 2006 Annual Report
MSU	15	We will conduct surveys of our key customer groups (including 'mystery shopping' exercises, etc.) to assess satisfaction levels with the quality of the services we provide	4	July 2007/2008	Surveys completed. Customer satisfaction levels as measured in surveys
MSU	16	We will continue to provide appropriate QCS training to staff, taking account of our customers' views as indicated in the surveys.	4	October 2007/2008	Training provided. Customer satisfaction levels
IT Unit	17	We will upgrade the Department's website tools to deliver new functionality and pilot this.	4	March 2007	Pilot system test accepted

IT Unit	18	We will roll out the enhanced system to the Department's websites.	4	June 2007	Ability to update websites devolved to Business Units throughout Department.
IT Unit	19	We will continue to make a number of enhancements to our websites (based on current best practice) to improve customer service.	4	Ongoing (phases 2, 3 and 4)	Continue to achieve sufficiently high level of website accessibility and customer satisfaction.
MSU	20	We will review our Customer Charter, with a view to publishing a new Charter for the period 2008-2010.	4	December 2007	New Charter in place
MSU	21	We will prepare our next Customer Action Plan 2008 – 2011.	4	March 2008	Plan prepared
Disability Sub Group	22	We will apply for the "Excellence through Accessibility" Award. This will involve an initial analysis to assess our readiness to compete for the award in terms of accessibility to the building and the accessibility of our websites and general services to the public, followed by a decision on when it would be appropriate to make an application.	4	March 2007 (analysis completed) May 2007 (decision on when to apply taken)	Receipt of award
MSU	23	We will continue to support the Customer Charter initiative, including participation in external evaluation and ensuring that bodies under our aegis comply with the provisions of the initiative	3	Ongoing	Compliance/ participation levels
Personnel	24	We will maintain staff numbers at their authorised levels.	3	Ongoing	No increase in staff numbers
Personnel	25	We will fully implement the new Civil Service Regulation Act and the new Disciplinary Code for the Civil Service.	3	March 2007 (review of procedures completed)	Full compliance with new Act and Code

MSU	26	We will update our Health and Safety Statement to take account of the most recent legislation/regulations. This will include carrying out a full safety audit within the Department	3	April 2007	Safety Statement updated
MSU	27	We will fully implement the new Statement, including the provision of appropriate health and safety training to staff	3	February 2008	Statement fully implemented and communicated to staff. Reductions in number of issues highlighted in Annual Safety Audit
Personnel / CMU	28	We will fully implement the new Civil Service Policy on Bullying and Harassment. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of appropriate training/awareness raising sessions for managers and staff;</li> <li>• An external review of our current strategies/interventions to address the issue of bullying and harassment; and</li> <li>• Full implementation of any recommendations arising from this review</li> </ul>	3	March 2007 July 2007 December 2007	Full compliance with new policy. Number of allegations/complaints received
Personnel	29	We will continue to meet Government targets in relation to the employment of women and of people with disabilities.	3	Ongoing	Government targets met
CMU	30	We will continue to implement our Official Languages Scheme to improve and enhance the quality of services delivered in Irish.	3	September 2008	Scheme implemented in full. Customer satisfaction levels with services through Irish
IT/CMU	31	The Department's websites (main pages) will be fully bilingual.	3	December 2007	Websites in full compliance with Official Language requirements

	Govt. Press Office	32	20% of the Department's press releases will issue in Irish.	3	December 2007	Target achieved.
	MSU	33	We will develop a formal Eco-Friendly Policy for the Department.	3	March 2008	New policy in place
	MSU	34	We will fully implement the new Eco-Friendly Policy	3	September 2008	Full compliance with Government eco-policies. Efficiencies achieved in the use of resources.
	Personnel	35	We will use the provisions of <i>Sustaining Progress</i> and <i>Towards 2016</i> to recruit/deploy staff in a manner that enables us to meet existing and emerging business demands within our allocated resources.	2	Ongoing	Divisional business plans implemented in full
	Dept.	36	Where the Department is responsible for introducing changes to the legislative framework, we will ensure that RIA is conducted in line with the relevant Government decision	2	As required	Full compliance with Government decision
27.4-7 and 28.13			<p><b>2. Stable Industrial Relations/Managing Change</b></p> <p><b>Our Objectives:</b>  To foster and maintain stable and co-operative relationships with employees that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Minimise conflict;</li> <li>o Recognise employees' stake in the organisation;</li> <li>o Emphasise fairness and transparency;</li> <li>o Achieve commitment through involvement and the development of mutual interests and values;</li> <li>o Involve working in partnership with unions and staff to introduce change and new developments.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commitments/Actions:</b></p>			

	CMU	37	We will review the Partnership structures within the Department in order to develop their potential (1) as an instrument for implementing co-operative change and (2) as a forum for enhanced communication across the Department.	5	June 2007 (review completed). September 2007 (response to findings implemented)	Revised Partnership structures in place
	Personnel	38	We will continue to give unions sufficient notice of all new, significant workplace-related initiatives, thereby allowing time for discussions, if necessary.	3	Ongoing	Union and other stakeholder co-operation with new initiatives.
28.6			<p><b>3. Team/Cross Functional Working</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> A key function of the Department is to support the development, implementation and co-ordination of Government policy. To this end, the Department supports a number of Cabinet Committees on key policy areas (e.g. Northern Ireland, Social Inclusion, Infrastructure), as well as participating in a number of cross-departmental teams that support the work of these committees</p> <p><b>Our Objective:</b> To provide leadership and support co-ordination across key areas of Government policy</p> <p><b>Commitments /Actions:</b></p>			
	eCabinet/ IT Unit	39	<p>We will extend the eCabinet system to the Cabinet Committees. This will enhance the effectiveness of these Committees by ensuring a secure document authoring and distribution system. The actions necessary before this measure can be fully implemented include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarisation for selected users</li> <li>• Holding a pilot exercise</li> <li>• Feedback from the pilot and final changes to the system</li> </ul>	5	February 2007 March 2007 April 2007	Completion of pilot and feedback from users. Actual use of the system to securely manage documents for meetings

	IT Unit/ EU Division	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarisation for users</li> <li>Full implementation</li> </ul> <p>We will pilot an EU Directives Extranet – an online access point for all Government Departments to track transposition of EU Directives.</p>	3	May 2007 May 2007  March 2007	Pilot completed
	IT Unit/ EU Division	41	Following the pilot, we will roll out the EU Directives Extranet to all Departments.	3	June, 2007	Improved monitoring/ reporting of performance on transposition
<b>28.7-8</b>	IT / Dept. Subgroup	42	<p><b>4. New Technology/eGovernment</b> <b>Our Objective:</b> To maximise the benefits of technology, so as to provide an efficient and effective service for our customers and further the Department's business objectives</p> <p><b>Commitments/Actions:</b></p> <p>We will complete a Knowledge Management project to ensure the security, integrity and uniform availability of corporate information. This will involve the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A decision on the most appropriate way to implement the project</li> <li>An analysis of the Department's information structures/needs</li> <li>Taking on board the results of this analysis, the development of a new Knowledge Management Policy for the Department</li> <li>The design/build of appropriate information structures to implement the new policy (commence in 2008)</li> </ul>	4	March 2007 Sept. 2007 January 2008 December 2008	Project methodology agreed Analysis completed  Policy agreed  Designed agreed. Work on build commenced.

Better Reg.	43	Through the Working Group on Electronic Statutory Instruments, we will pilot revised procedures for the making of Statutory Instruments (SIs) across all Departments and report to Government on the findings of that pilot with recommendations for further action. Training support and guidelines will be developed and delivered to officials using the new system.	4	February 2007 (pilot run in all Departments) April 2007 (report on findings and outcomes, with proposals for future action)	Volume of SIs made using new system. Faster availability of SIs in printed and electronic format. Number of officials trained in new system.
ISPU	44	We will launch "Knowledge Society News". This eMagazine (which will have 4/5 issues per annum) will promote Knowledge Management initiatives, national and international, to both the public and private sectors and will be hosted on a free-to-access web facility.	4	December 2006	Magazine launched. Number of 'subscriptions'.
ISPU	45	We will support the Local Government Computer Service Board in developing a proof of concept to test the feasibility of establishing a central policy repository for all government policies and a spatial representation of these policies	4	December 2007	Proof concept exercise completed. Decision made on feasibility of portal. Broader stakeholder group.
Personnel	46	We will move our Peoplesoft HR system to CMOD's shared service platform for the Civil Service.	3	September 2006	Project completed. Increased efficiency and functionality across a range of HR processes
Better Reg.	47	We will update our eCabinet procedures to take account of the RIA requirement. An electronic RIA template will be developed and made available to all Departments through a link on the eCabinet system.	3	June, 2007	Electronic template developed and made available through eCabinet.

28.9-10 and 29.7			<p><b>5. Service Delivery/Service Channels/Shared Services</b></p> <p><b>Our Objectives:</b>          To investigate and implement other service delivery options and utilise all available channels, to ensure the most effective delivery of services.</p> <p>To co-operate with the introduction of shared services between public service and related organisations, where this gives rise to efficiencies or economies</p> <p><b>Commitments/Actions:</b></p>			
Finance/IT Units	48	In exploring options for our planned upgrade of Oracle FMS, we will complete a feasibility study on moving to a 'shared financial services platform' with other Government Departments, to achieve increased efficiencies and economies of scale in the management of our financial resources	5	May 2007	Decision made on preferred option	
Finance/IT Units	49	We will procure an appropriate financial management system (FMS), if required, to complete the upgrade	5	July 2007	Supplier selected	
Finance/IT Units	50	We will implement the Software upgrade (as required)	5	December 2007	Software upgraded	
Finance Unit/MSU	51	We will implement any changes required to our financial processes and procedures in the light of the upgrade (including appropriate revision of our Corporate Procurement Plan)	5	March 2008	Changes implemented	
Finance Unit/MSU	52	We will provide timely and relevant training to staff on any revised procedures arising from the upgrade.	5	June 2008 (and ongoing)	Training provided. Level of compliance with new procedures.	

	MSU/ Finance Unit	53	In the development of our new Corporate Procurement Plan (see actions 1.11 and 1.12) and the subsequent procurement of services, we will explore opportunities for outsourcing/sharing services with other Departments.	5	Ongoing	Level of aggregated demand for goods and services. Efficiencies and economies realised
28.11 and 29.8			<b>6. Attendance Patterns</b> <b>Our Objective:</b> To manage attendance patterns in such a way as to ensure the provision of an excellent, cost-effective service to our customers  <b>Commitments/Actions:</b>			
	IT Unit	54	We will reach agreement with IT staff on the provision of 'out of hours' IT services to Departmental staff.	3	March, 2007	Agreement reached on service to be provided.
	IT Unit Dept.	55	We will implement the agreed 'out of hours' IT service.	3	June, 2007	Service implemented.
		56	We will continue to provide a range of out-of-hours services to our customers, including private office services, government press service, etc.	3	Ongoing	Business plans of various Divisions implemented. Customer satisfaction levels.
28.12 and 29.5			<b>7. Redeployment of Staff</b> <b>Our Objective:</b> To manage the deployment of staff in such a way as to ensure the provision of an excellent, cost-effective service to our customers  <b>Commitments/Actions:</b>			
	Personnel	57	We will ensure that our staff recruitment/deployment policies are fully aligned to the business needs of the Department.	3	Ongoing	Divisional business plans fully implemented

29.4	Personnel	58	We will, where appropriate, employ temporary or specialist staff to meet specific business needs, particularly in areas such as IT. This will be done in line with the provisions of <i>Sustaining Progress and Towards 2016</i>	3	As required	Divisional business plans fully implemented
	Personnel	59	We will continue to make the full range of 'work sharing' options available to staff.	3	Ongoing	Staff satisfaction levels as measured in employee surveys
	Personnel	60	We will fully support the Government's decentralisation programme by releasing staff in a timely manner.	2	Ongoing	Timely release of staff due to decentralise
			<p><b>8. Competitive Merit Based Promotions</b></p> <p><b>Our objective:</b> To ensure that our internal promotion processes are fair and transparent and that the best people are promoted</p> <p><b>Commitments/Actions:</b></p>			
	Personnel	61	We will continue to move towards 100% competitive promotions. Rather than a move based on percentages, this will be achieved over a fixed (limited) number of promotions.	5	Dependent of promotion opportunities arising	Move to 100% competitive promotions achieved
	Personnel	62	We will continue to keep our promotion processes and procedures under review to ensure that they are fair and transparent and in line with the CPSA Code of Practice. The first such review will be completed by March 2007.	5	March 2007 (and ongoing)	Satisfaction levels with our promotion processes as measured in employee surveys