

Department of the Taoiseach Modernisation Plan

Second Progress Report (October 2006 – March 2007)

1. Modernisation, Flexibility and Change Our Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide an excellent service to our customers ○ To make efficient use of the resources available to us ○ To meet ongoing changes in the external environment ○ To maintain a strategic focus on the Department's role and functions, ensuring in particular that we provide leadership and co-ordination across key areas of Government policy ○ To work in partnership with staff to bring about the changes required 					
No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
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 in this Department. The strategy will be developed in full consultation with staff.	5	July 2007 (consultation completed) December 2007 (Strategy agreed)	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period. However, analysis of HR environment in which Department operates was considered at MAC, along with proposals to respond to key issues of concern. This will form basis of consultation process with staff interests.	HR Strategy to be finalised by target date. Subsequent measurement of effectiveness of HR policies and employee engagement/alignment will be made through bi-annual employee surveys, benchmarked with previous surveys.
2.	We will fully implement the new integrated PMDS/HR model. This will include measures to support its implementation such as revised (simpler) review 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	Target met. Short guide and revised PMDS forms developed and circulated to staff. Training/awareness sessions held. PMDS database developed to receive automated rating returns.	The key performance indicator will be compliance levels with the new model. These will be monitored through the rating returns on the PMDS database. We will report on compliance levels in the next phase, when returns have been analysed.

3.	We will review our current training and development strategy.	5	January 2007	Both targets met. Review completed and proposals to ensure greater involvement by managers in assessing staff training needs have been developed. These include an annual survey of managers to identify training priorities for the year ahead.	The key indicator will be the level of training take-up and its relevance to the business needs of the Department. The training surveys (the first of which will be conducted in April 2007) will identify training priorities for the year ahead. We then propose to monitor staff take-up of priority training, as well as evaluate its effectiveness through a rolling programme of evaluations.
4	In light of the review findings, we will develop proposals to ensure that the training we provide to staff is timely and relevant, having regard to the needs of management and staff.	5	March 2007		
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 the Department and inductees.	5	March 2007 (review completed) June 2007 (new procedures in place)	Target met. Review of induction/ probation processes completed. The next step will be to re-design our induction/probation processes in the light of the findings.	We will measure our performance by the number of recruits successfully probated (or, where they are not probated, the early identification of problems).
6.	We will develop a 'Manager's Handbook' to assist managers in the performance of their duties, especially in managing and developing their staff. This will be prepared when the above interventions to assist performance management have been finalised.	5	December 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	Handbook produced by target date. We will subsequently measure whether it is contributing to more effective performance management through employee surveys and the number of problems reported to Personnel.
7.	We will update our 'Staff Handbook' to incorporate new developments and to complement the 'Manager's Handbook'.	5	March 2008	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	Handbook produced. We will subsequently measure employee satisfaction with usefulness of the handbook to staff through employee surveys.

8.	We will commission our 4 th Employee Opinion Survey, to review progress in the implementation of our HR policies and assess 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)	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	4 th Survey completed by target date. We will measure the effectiveness of our HR policies through these bi-annual surveys and develop appropriate response to the findings.
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	Target met. We have rationalised our reporting processes. Material from line divisions for our Annual Report and Annual Output Statement focuses on linking outputs to outcomes.	The key indicators will be the submission of the Annual Output Statement to the Select Committee within deadline and their satisfaction with it, and the production of shorter (more focused) Annual Reports.
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	Targets met. Analysis report and the Corporate Procurement Plan were prepared by deadline. The plan contains a series of measures to improve the procurement function within the Department.	Deadlines for preparation of analysis report and plan met.
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		The key performance indicator will be the economies and efficiencies achieved through the implementation of the plan (see action 12 and 13 below), and compliance with NCPP guidelines in the procurement of goods and services.
12.	We will fully implement the recommendations in the Corporate Procurement Plan. [Note: It will be necessary to keep the plan under	5	Specific date for each action to be included in plan	Target met. Implementation of Plan has commenced on a prioritised basis.	Between Oct 2006 and March 2007, two Department of the Taoiseach contracts have been formalised after VFM reviews

13.	review in the light of proposals to examine the feasibility of moving to a 'shared financial services' platform – see action 51] 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			and competitive tenders. Between 5-10 suppliers have been contacted with a view to reducing administration costs and rationalising billing arrangements.
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	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period. However, material received from line divisions for the 2006 Annual Report focuses on linking outputs to outcomes and work on the drafting of the report is well advanced.	The key indicators will be the preparation of a revised (more focused) Annual Report for 2006.
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	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period, although funding for the annual customer surveys and a 'mystery shopping' exercise has been secured through the Change Management Fund.	Surveys completed. We will benchmark the results of the surveys against those of previous surveys and develop appropriate responses to the findings.
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	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	We will measure the effectiveness of our training from the results of the customer surveys.
17.	We will upgrade the Department's website tools to deliver new functionality and pilot this.	4	March 2007	Target met. Meeting held with liaison officers for the three main websites. Approach agreed on upgrade. The Better Gov website has been selected for the	The Key indicator is that the additional functionality, and more intuitive interface of the new tool, will allow users to easily maintain the Better Gov

				pilot upgrade. This work is currently being undertaken.	site.
18.	We will roll out the enhanced system to the Departments websites.	4	July 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	The key indicator will be the ability of line divisions to update material on the websites relating to their area of responsibility. We will subsequently measure customer satisfaction levels with the quality of our websites.
19.	We will continue to make a number of enhancements to our websites (based on current best practice) to improve customer service.	4	Ongoing	Ongoing. In this reporting period we have implemented a new search feature based on the Google search engine. We have also applied security enhancements to our websites to keep pace with best practice. We have held discussions with the LGCSB regarding updating the servers on which our sites are hosted. We have reached agreement on the approach that will be taken and will put a plan in place during the next reporting period.	We will subsequently measure customer satisfaction levels with the quality of our websites.
20.	We will review our Customer Charter, with a view to publishing a revised Charter for the period 2008-2010.	4	December 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	New charter in place by deadline. We will measure performance against the commitments in the charter through annual customer surveys and other evaluation techniques e.g. 'mystery shopping' etc.

21.	We will prepare our next Customer Action Plan 2008 – 2010.	4	March 2008	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	Plan in place by deadline. We will measure the effectiveness of the plan through the annual customer surveys and other evaluation techniques e.g. ‘mystery shopping’ etc.
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 physical accessibility to the building and the accessibility of websites and general services to the public and a decision on when it is appropriate to make an application.	4	March 2007 (analysis completed) May 2007 (decision taken on when to apply)	Target met. Analysis completed and decision made to proceed with application. Analysis identified a programme of works to be completed (including proposed timeframes) in order to enhance prospects of receiving award.	The key performance indicator will be the receipt of this award, which recognises excellence in the provision of services to people with disabilities.
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	During this reporting period the Department participated in an external review of the customer charter initiative. The National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) is the only body under our aegis which requires a separate charter and this requirement has been fulfilled.	The key indicator will be customer satisfaction levels with our performance, as measured in annual surveys and other evaluation techniques.
24.	We will maintain staff numbers at their authorised levels.	3	Ongoing	Despite increased business demands, we continue to comply with the requirement to maintain staff numbers at authorised levels.	No unauthorised increase in numbers. [Note: We reduced our staff numbers by 4% between 2003-2005 in compliance with a Government decision.]
25.	We will fully implement the new Civil Service Regulation Act and the new Disciplinary Code for the Civil Service.	3	March 2007	Target met. We reviewed our internal procedures to ensure that we are compliant with the new Act and Code. We will	Our key performance indicator will be the absence of any infringements of the Act or Code.

				eventually incorporate information for managers and staff on these procedures into the new Managers and Staff Handbooks [see actions 6 and 7]	
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 assessment within the Department	3	April 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period, although the safety audit has been completed and the Safety Statement is currently being finalised.	Statement updated by deadline. Our key indicator will be the number of safety issues highlighted in the annual safety audit.
27.	We will fully implement the new Statement, including the provision of appropriate health and safety training to staff	3	February 2008	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	
28.	We will fully implement the new Civil Service Policy on Bullying and Harassment. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of appropriate training/awareness raising sessions for managers and staff; • An external review of our current strategies/interventions to address the issue of bullying and harassment; and • Full implementation of any recommendations arising from this review 	3	<p>March 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p> <p>December 2007</p>	Target met. During the current reporting period we ran fifteen awareness sessions/workshops with over 150 staff members in attendance. All grades were given the opportunity to attend the sessions, which included a session for the MAC. We will continue to offer this training and encourage staff to avail of it. We have also engaged a consultant to conduct the external review of our policies and procedures to address the issue of bullying & harassment.	Our key indicator will be the number of complaints received.
29.	We will continue to meet Government targets in relation to the percentage of AP posts filled by women and the employment of	3	Ongoing	61% of the Assistant Principal level posts in the Department are filled by women, which exceeds the Government target	Our key indicator will be that Government targets are met in both instances.

	people with disabilities.			of 33%. The 3% target of employment of people with disabilities has also been exceeded.	
30.	We will continue to implement our Official Languages Scheme to improve and enhance the quality of services delivered in Irish.	3	September 2008	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period, although the Coimisinéir Teanga, in a report on the progress being made by Departments in implementing their schemes, indicated that he was satisfied by the progress being made by this Department.	Our key performance indicator will be that the scheme is implemented to the satisfaction of An Coimisineir Teanga. We will also measure customer satisfaction levels through our annual surveys.
31.	The Department's websites (main pages) will be fully bilingual.	3	December 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period, although preparatory work on this has already commenced.	Our key indicator will be that our websites are in compliance with Official Language requirements
32.	20% of the Department's press releases will issue in Irish.	3	December 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period, although agreement has been reached with the Press Office on how the target will be achieved.	Target of 20% met or, if possible, exceeded.
33.	We will develop a formal Eco-Friendly Policy for the Department.	3	March 2008	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	We propose to include in the plan specific indicators for each action.
34.	We will fully implement the new Eco-Friendly Policy	3	September 2008		
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	Ongoing. During the current reporting period we ran a special internal competition for a new post of Administrator to the eCabinet system with the support of the relevant staff union.	Business needs of the Department met.

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	In conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, an RIA was conducted on a proposal to repeal outdated legislation (the Statute Law Revision Bill 2007)	The key indicator will be full compliance with the Government decision in preparing legislation.
2. Stable Industrial Relations/Managing Change Our Objectives: To foster and maintain stable and co-operative relationships with employees that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimise conflict; ○ Recognise employees' stake in the organisation; ○ Emphasise fairness and transparency; ○ Achieve commitment through involvement and the development of mutual interests and values; ○ Involve working in partnership with unions and staff to introduce change and new developments. 					
No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
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 (responses to findings implemented)	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	The key indicator will be the development of revised Partnership structures to drive the modernisation process within the Department and the full implementation of our modernisation programme within the specified timeframes.
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	Ongoing. We continued to apprise staff unions of all new initiatives during the reporting period (e.g. new eCabinet Administrator)	Stable industrial relations maintained.

3. Team/Cross Functional Working

Note: 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

Our Objective:

To provide leadership and support co-ordination across key areas of Government policy

No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
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"> • Familiarisation for selected users • Holding a pilot exercise • Feedback from the pilot and final changes to the system • Familiarisation for users • Full implementation 	5	<p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>When new Cabinet Committees are appointed.</p>	<p>The software for the system extension has been built and tested. Deployment and associated actions are being deferred until after Easter when traffic in the system is expected to be lighter and in anticipation of a general election when existing Cabinet Committees will lapse.</p> <p>In the meantime other eCabinet enhancements of an administrative nature are being deployed to manage any changes of Departments that may occur after the election.</p>	Holding of familiarisation, pilot exercise and full implementation.
40.	We will pilot an EU Directives Extranet – an online access point for all Government Departments to track transposition of EU Directives.	3	March 2007	The new EU Directives Extranet Application has been developed and deployed. It is being tested in UAT and early pilot mode at present.	The Key Indicator here will be improved monitoring and reporting capability on performance of transposition
41.	Following the pilot, we will roll out the EU Directives Extranet to all Departments.	3	June 2007	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period.	The key indicator will be improved monitoring/reporting on performance on transposition.

4. New Technology/eGovernment

Our Objective:

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

No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
42.	<p>We will complete a Knowledge Management project to ensure the security, integrity and uniform availability of corporate information/ knowledge within the Department. This will involve the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A decision on the most appropriate way to implement the project• An analysis of the Department's information structures/needs• Taking on board the results of this analysis, the development of a new Knowledge Management Policy for the Department; and• The design/build of appropriate information structures to implement the new policy (commence in 2008)	4	<p>March 2007</p> <p>September 2007</p> <p>January 2008</p> <p>December 2008</p>	<p>The Department carried out an analysis of the Knowledge Management environment in which it must operate and has identified a number of key drivers that will underpin this project. The next step will be to prepare a paper for MAC setting out and seeking approval for the proposed approach to the project.</p>	<p>The key indicators will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better corporate governance• Improved processes• Increased business efficiencies.
43.	<p>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.</p>	4	<p>February 2007 (pilot run)</p> <p>April 2007 (report on findings and proposals for future action)</p>	<p>Target met. Detailed guidelines on the new system have been developed and issued to all users of the system. Training/information sessions have also been developed and advertised through the Training Officers Network, with six such</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Over 160 officials from across the public service trained in the new system.▪ Material incorporated into the CSTDC course on 'Legislative Processes'.

	Training support and guidelines will be developed and delivered to officials using the new system.			sessions held since January.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guidelines further developed on foot of user comments. ▪ Report is in preparation for the Implementation Group of Secretaries General: will be informed by results from a questionnaire survey of users.
44.	We will launch “Knowledge Society News”. This eMagazine (which will have 4/5 issues per annum) will promote Knowledge Society initiatives, national and international, to both the public and private sectors and will be hosted on a free-to-access web facility.	4	Launched. Next publication due May 2007	Targets met. Most recent edition published 1 March 2007. KSN is available online at www.ispu.ie	Meet publication targets. Key indicators will be number of subscriptions (currently 2,500) and feedback from subscribers.
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	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	The key indicator will be the completion of the exercise and the making of a decision on the feasibility of the portal.
46.	We will move our Peoplesoft HR system to CMOD’s shared service platform for the Civil Service.	3	September 2006	Target met. The Department’s HR Peoplesoft system has moved to a single Human Resource Management System (HRMS) platform.	Business needs met. The system transition is complete and user acceptance of the system finalised. The system provides more efficient access to a range of HR information for planning and reporting purposes.
47.	We will update our eCabinet	3	June 2007	Action does not have to be	The key indicator will be the

	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.			completed in this reporting period	development of the template and its availability through the eCabinet system.
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5. Service Delivery/Service Channels/Shared Services

Our Objectives:

To investigate and implement other service delivery options and utilise all available channels, to ensure the most effective delivery of services.

To co-operate with the introduction of shared services between public service and related organisations, where this gives rise to efficiencies or economies

No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
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	Action does not have to be completed in this reporting period	The key indicator will be the completion of the upgrade and the level of compliance with financial procedures across the Department. If a decision is taken to move to a shared service platform, we will measure the potential economies and efficiencies arising from this.
49.	We will procure an appropriate financial management system (FMS), if required, to complete the upgrade	5	July 2007		
50.	We will implement the Software upgrade (as required)	5	December 2007		
51.	We will implement any changes required to our financial processes and procedures in the light of the upgrade (including appropriate	5	March 2008		

52.	revision of our Corporate Procurement Plan) We will provide timely and relevant training to staff on any revised procedures arising from the upgrade.	5	June 2008 (and ongoing)		
53.	In the development of our new Corporate Procurement Plan (see actions 11 and 12) and the subsequent procurement of services, we will explore opportunities for outsourcing/sharing services with other Departments.	5	Ongoing	We have put arrangements in place to share information with other Departments/Offices in the Government Buildings complex when tendering/contracting services, with a view to maximising the benefit of lower prices through joint “bulk buying”. For legal/financial administration reasons, however, we still need to enter into separate contracts.	Between Oct 2006 and March 2007 we have engaged 2 suppliers on the same terms as Leinster House, to provide services to Department of the Taoiseach (sanitary services and cooler maintenance).

6. Attendance Patterns

Our Objective:

To manage attendance patterns in such a way as to ensure the provision of an excellent, cost-effective service to our customers

No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
54.	We will reach agreement with IT staff on the provision of ‘out of hours’ IT services to Departmental staff.	3	March 2007	Agreement in principal has been reached. IT Unit have commenced outlining the options for providing this service with limited numbers. IT have commenced drafting a document outlining the level of additional cover which could be provided as part of this service.	Support of business provided outside of regular hours.
55.	We will implement the agreed ‘out of hours’ IT service.	3	June 2007		
56.	We will continue to provide a range of out-of-hours services to our	3	Ongoing	Ongoing. We continued to provide a range of out-of-hours	Business needs met. We also monitor customer satisfaction

	customers, including private office services, government press service, etc.			services, as required, during the current reporting period e.g. Private Office, Press Office etc.	levels through our internal and external customer surveys.
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7. Redeployment of Staff

Our Objective:

To manage the deployment of staff in such a way as to ensure the provision of an excellent, cost-effective service to our customers

No.	Action	Priority Rating	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
57.	We will ensure that our staff recruitment/ deployment policies are fully aligned to the business needs of the Department.	3	Ongoing	Ongoing. We continued to provide a full range of work sharing options to staff during the reporting period. We also co-operated fully with decentralisation in the release of staff. 39 staff applied to relocate under the Decentralisation Programme and a total of 10 staff members have been decentralised to date. We ran a special competition, in agreement with the union, to fill the post of eCabinet Administrator.	The key indicators are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business needs met • Staff satisfaction levels
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		
59.	We will continue to make the full range of 'work sharing' options available to staff.	3	Ongoing		
60.	We will fully support the Government's decentralisation programme by releasing staff in a timely manner.	2	Ongoing		

8. Competitive Merit Based Promotions

Our objective:

To ensure that our internal promotion processes are fair and transparent and that the best people are promoted

No.	Action	Priority	Target Date	Progress Made	Measurement
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		Rating			
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 on promotion opportunities arising	We continued to move towards 100% competitive processes. At senior level, there is only a very limited number of promotions remaining to be made on the basis of seniority/suitability.	100% competitive processes in place.
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)	Target met. We completed a review of our promotion processes and incorporated changes to enhance the fairness of these processes into our internal promotions framework. This was done in agreement with the branch unions.	The key indicator will be satisfaction levels among management and staff with our promotion processes.