

Lead topic: Public Service Reform	Sub-topic: Delivery of Reform	Contact: Marian Beakey Ext: 5320
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FAST FACTS

Public Service Reform Programme

- Public Service Reform continues to play a key role in our recovery. Significant progress has been made since the publication of the Government's first Public Service Reform Plan in November, 2011.
- Key areas of progress include Public Procurement, Shared Services, External Service Delivery, Digital Government and Property Asset Management.
- Two Progress Reports on the first Reform Plan have been published. The first in September 2012 and the second in January 2014.
- A second Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 was published in January, 2014. This Plan has a strong focus on improving service delivery while maintaining an emphasis on efficiency measures by concentrating on the key priorities of:
 - improved outcomes for service users;
 - using the 'reform dividend' to invest in new or improved services;
 - embracing digitalisation and open data; and
 - greater openness, transparency and accountability.
- The first Progress Report on this Reform Plan was published in March 2015.
- Integrated Reform Delivery Plans are completed by all Departments and major Offices at the start of each year. These Plans set out the actions and milestones for the implementation of priority areas of organisational, sectoral and cross-cutting reform, as well as actions to implement the Haddington Road Agreement. It is intended that each Department/Office will publish their respective Plans online from 2016 onwards.
- The Lansdowne Road Agreement, which runs to September 2018, will continue to be a key enabler of reform and driver of cost reduction.

Civil Service Renewal Plan

- The Civil Service Renewal Plan, published in October 2014, sets out a vision for the Civil Service and a 3 year action plan to achieve a more unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable Civil Service that can provide a world-class Service to the State and the people of Ireland.
- The Civil Service Management Board is driving implementation of the Plan and a

Programme Management Office has been established in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to support the implementation of the actions on a phased basis.

- On 8 July 2015, the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform published the First Progress Report on The Civil Service Renewal Plan setting out the progress achieved in the "first 200 days" of implementing the Plan.
- The second phase of delivery (i.e. the next '200 days') is now underway and will take the Civil Service Renewal Programme implementation cycle up to May 2016.

Q&A

Public Service Reform

Q1. Why is Public Service Reform needed?

Sustainable reform of the Public Service continues to be an important part of the Government's strategy for economic recovery. To end 2014 staff numbers were reduced by approximately 10% since 2008, and the Public Service pay-bill reduced by approximately 20% since 2009. This has been done at a time of increased demands on our public services, arising from demographic changes as well as from the crisis itself.

The performance and reputation of our public institutions is critical to Ireland's attractiveness for business investment and employment creation. In addition, the efficiency with which public services are delivered and the cost of their provision also impacts on taxation levels and the State's funding requirements.

Q2. What progress was made on the Government's first Public Service Reform Plan?

The Government's first Public Service Reform Plan was published in November, 2011. Progress reports were published in September 2012 and in January 2014.

Strong progress was made in terms of reducing costs; improving productivity; more online delivery of services; development of shared services; and putting in place the structures to reform public procurement and property asset management, to name just some areas.

Q3. What progress has been made on the main areas of cross-cutting reform?

A strong governance model has been created to ensure that there is an appropriate emphasis on the implementation of reform. Some of the key areas where progress has been made include:

- *Reduced Public Service Numbers:* Between 2008 and end 2014, the number of staff working in the Public Service has been reduced by 10%.
- *Public Procurement:* The procurement reform programme is implementing a new centralised model for public procurement to generate significant savings in non-pay expenditure.
- *Shared Services:* PeoplePoint (Civil Service HR and Pensions Shared Services Centre) and the Payroll Shared Service Centre have been established. Shared Services are also being rolled out in other Sectors such as 'My Pay' in the local government sector.
- *External Service Delivery:* Major external service delivery initiatives are being implemented,

such as JobPath and the call centre for the Local Property Tax.

- *Digital Government*: A new Public Service ICT Strategy was published in January 2015 to create a new model for ICT delivery across the Public Service.
- *Property Asset Management*: An Action Plan setting out a broad range of measures to deliver efficiencies in the State's extensive property portfolio is being implemented. A Progress Report on its implementation was published in June 2015.

Q4. What are the priorities in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016?

The Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 outlines the key cross-cutting and sectoral reform initiatives that will be implemented over the next three years. It also looks further ahead to address the ambition for reform towards 2020. While maintaining the drive for greater efficiencies, the Reform Plan has a stronger focus on improving the overall outcomes achieved for service users. This means a change in the way the Public Service designs and delivers services. There are four high-level themes in the Reform Plan:

- i. Strengthened focus on the delivery of improved outcomes for service users - through a focus on service users, on efficiency (continued) and on openness and accountability, underpinned by a strong emphasis on leadership, capability and delivery;
- ii. 'Reform Dividend' – emphasis on 'saving to invest', allowing the freeing up of resources and using the savings to invest in new or improved services;
- iii. Embracing technology and making maximum use of new technologies, digitalisation and open data to deliver services in innovative ways; and
- iv. Delivering more openness and accountability to rebuild trust in government and public services.

Q5. How is the Reform Programme being implemented?

The delivery of the ambitious reforms set out in the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 requires a continued strong emphasis on implementation, including effective programme management and governance arrangements, both centrally and within each of the main sectors. This is led by the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform.

Integrated Reform Delivery Plans for 2015 were completed by all Departments and major Offices early in 2015. These plans set out how those organisations will implement the cross-cutting reforms set out in the new Reform Plan, alongside sector-specific reforms and actions under the Haddington Road Agreement. It is intended that each Department/Office will publish their respective Plans online from 2016 onwards. The main sectors (health, education, justice and local government) are required to report on progress on the implementation of these plans at the end of each quarter, while other Departments and major Offices report on progress every six months.

Civil Service Renewal

Q6. What Progress has been achieved since the publication of the Renewal Plan

6 priorities were identified in the "first 200 days" of the Plan and these have been delivered:

- An Accountability Board, chaired by the Taoiseach, has been established to bring together Civil Service, Ministerial and external perspectives to oversee Civil Service performance for the first time. The Board met has met twice to date;
- A Civil Service Management Board (CSMB) has been established to bring together all Heads of Departments and major Offices into a cohesive whole-of-Government executive management team for the first time. It meets regularly and its minutes are published on the website of the D/Public Expenditure and Reform;
- A performance review process for Secretaries General has been developed and will be introduced in the next performance year, January 2016;
- Options to strengthen the Disciplinary Code have been identified and a revised code has been drafted which is subject to the normal consultation processes;
- Open recruitment campaigns have been held for Principal, Assistant Principal, Administrative Officer, Executive Officer, and Clerical Officer grades in the Civil Service and other specialist positions;
- The first Civil Service wide employee engagement survey issued to all staff in September 2015 and the headline results are expected to be available next month.

Q7. What progress has been made to date in implementing other actions in the Plan

23 of the 25 Actions in the Renewal Plan have been initiated. Significant progress has been made on actions which have been initiated including:

- A common corporate governance standard for Government Departments and Offices has been developed for the first time and is being finalised following public consultation. Once approved by Government it will be implemented across the system;
- A proposed model for learning and development to improve capability through enhanced procurement and shared delivery of training across the Civil Service has been agreed;
- An ICT Strategy to deliver better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT was published by D/PER in Q1 2015 and implementation is underway;
- 18 Open Policy Debates have taken place since commencing the series in March 2015. The aim of these debates is to promote regular open discussion involving networks of practitioners, academics and experts in developing and debating policy options at an early stage;
- Minister Howlin published the results of a Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey in May.

Q8. How is the Renewal Plan being communicated to Civil Servants

There have been targeted efforts to communicate the Renewal Plan to staff in the Civil Service nationally through Town Hall meetings and presentations by the Renewal PMO to various professional networks (Management Boards, Partnership Committees, Finance Officers, Personnel Officers and so on). Since the launch of the Renewal Plan in October 2014, 12 implementation Town Hall meetings have been held at various venues across the country. Over 1,100 staff have attended these meetings. This is in addition to engaging with 2,000 staff and

stakeholders during the development of the Renewal Plan.

Q. 9 What are the priorities for the next phase of delivery in the ‘second 200 days’

The following Actions have been prioritised by the CSMB over the next 200 days:

- Common Governance Standard (Action 3)
- PMDS (Action 11)
- Performance Management for Secretaries General and Assistant Secretaries (Action 12)
- Recognising Excellence (Action 13)
- Mobility (action 15)
- Organisational Capability Reviews (Action 20)
- Internal Civil Service Communications (Action 23)