

PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT 2010-2014

INTERIM ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH

ACTIONS	PARAGRAPH OF AGREEMENT	BENEFITS	TIMEFRAME
REDUCTION IN PUBLIC SERVICE NUMBERS			
<p><u>Reduction In Numbers</u> The Department has reduced its core staff numbers by over 18%, and total overall staff (core and contract) by 10%, since January 2008. We will continue to reduce numbers, while maintaining high quality services, by a further 2% below the ECF by the end of 2014.</p>	1.5		
REDEPLOYMENT IN THE INTEGRATED PUBLIC SERVICE			
<p><u>Redeployment</u> 35 staff have been redeployed to other Departments since January 2008. We will continue to actively facilitate the reallocation of staff to areas of greatest need, in accordance with the redeployment arrangements set out in the Agreement.</p>	1.7		
RECONFIGURING THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES			
<p><u>Organisational Rationalisation and Restructuring</u> The Department has already discontinued 5 of the 6 bodies under its direct control. The remaining body – the NESC/NESDO – will continue to be subject to positive transformation (see below). The Department has also reduced the size of its senior management team (by 16% in the case of the Management Committee), while maintaining and improving services.</p>	1.10		
<u>Shared Services</u> – See below	1.10-1.11		

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PERFORMANCE AND SKILLS			
<u>External recruitment of skilled personnel</u> Vacancies at Assistant Secretary level will continue to be filled by open competition and consideration will be given to open competition for posts at other grades, where appropriate, eg where specialist skills or qualifications are required. The Department has traditionally employed a relatively large number of contract staff, including political appointees and other personnel with specialist skills, who are recruited externally. 18% of the current staff were recruited on that basis and this will continue to be an important source of staff in the future.	1.13		
<u>Merit-based, competitive promotion policies</u> Merit-based competitions are already used for the vast majority of promotions and they will be the norm for all future promotions.	1.13		
GREATER FLEXIBILITY			
<u>Restricted Mobility</u> The Department is based on one location and comprises mainly general service grades so there are no restrictions on mobility.	4.4		
<u>Staffing Levels and Structures, Office Opening and Closing hours & Shift Patterns</u> Staffing levels and structures will be reviewed, in consultation with staff. The Department operates very extensive opening hours – standard 6.00am to 7.00pm with 24-hour opening as required and these will be maintained in the context of that review. Overtime will be reduced by 7.5% with no loss of services.	4.4		
<u>Cross-stream reporting</u> Because of the grade structure of the Department, this issue does not arise.	4.4		

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<p><u>Reduced budgets and overall numbers employed</u> Between 2007 and 2010, the total budget was reduced by 18.2%¹, including a reduction of 8.3% in the pay budget. The total core numbers employed was reduced by 18.5%. In the period 2011-2014, we will achieve further reductions of: - 14.4 % in the total budget (including -11.4% in 2011) - 4.2 % in the pay budget (including -1.2 % in 2011) - 2 % in the total numbers employed</p>	4.4		
<p><u>Work-life Balance & e-Working</u> We will continue to facilitate work-life balance, taking into account the provisions of the revised circular issued by the Department of Finance on 22 September 2010. We will conduct a review of work-life balance arrangements, including the potential for further use of e-working, by the end of 2010.</p>	4.7, 4.8		
<p><u>Sick Leave</u> We will introduced a more active system of absence management, taking into account the provisions of the revised circular issued by the Department of Finance on 30 July 2010. We will aim to reduce the number of days lost to sick leave by 10% per annum.</p>	4.10		
<p><u>Merit-based promotions & Open Recruitment</u> Merit-based competitions are already used for the vast majority of promotions and they will be the norm for all future promotions. Vacancies at Assistant Secretary level will continue to be filled by open competition</p>	4.11		

¹ There is an underlying liability with regard to the final cost of the Moriarty Tribunal which is entirely outside the Department's control and cannot be quantified until the Tribunal completes its work. The annual administrative cost of the Tribunal has been reduced.

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<p><u>Performance Management & Underperformance</u> PMDS is linked in all cases to promotion and incremental progression. The Department will participate in any service wide review.</p>	4.12		
BETTER BUSINESS PROCESSES			
<p><u>Online Services & Use of New Technology</u> While it offers relatively few services directly to the public, the Department will expand the provision of services online to the greatest extent possible, including through the new <i>merrionstreet.ie</i> website.</p> <p>New technology will continue to be introduced on an ongoing basis.</p>	4.13		
	4.13		
<p><u>Risk Management</u> Risk management is a formal part of the annual divisional business planning process as well as an ongoing responsibility for all staff of the Department. The Audit Committee monitors risk on an ongoing basis. The Management Committee will formally review internal and external risks twice a year, in December and in June.</p>	4.14		
<p>Shared Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR: Services currently provided internally. - Pensions: the Department uses the Department of Finance shared service 			

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<p>facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payroll: the Department uses the Department of Justice shared service facility - Financial management: the Department uses the Department of Justice shared service facility - Procurement: The Department uses shared procurement frameworks provided by OPW, the Department of Finance, CMOD - ICT: We have recently introduced a modern online government news service, including use of social networks for all Government Ministers. - We will explore the potential for further shared services with other Departments and Offices in the wider Government Buildings complex - Other: we will continue to provide a shared library service with the Department of Finance <p>We will also actively support the central initiative to implement shared services across the civil service.</p>			
NON-COMMERCIAL STATE-SPONSORED BODIES (NCSSBs)			
<p>The Department has one body under its aegis – the National Economic and Social Development Office (NESDO). Where appropriate, that body will meet the same targets as the Department itself, e.g. with regard to pay, numbers, improved services.</p>			