



Department of Communications,
Marine and Natural Resources

*An Roinn Cumarsáide,
Mara agus Acmhainní Nádurtha*

Statement of Strategy 2005-2007



Communications



Broadcasting



Energy



Marine



Natural Resources

Statement of Strategy 2005-2007
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FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER



Noel Dempsey, T.D.
*Minister for
Communications,
Marine and
Natural Resources*



Pat the Cope Gallagher, T.D.
Minister of State

This Statement of Strategy reflects Government priorities as set out in the *Agreed Programme for Government* and the shared agenda set out in the *Social Partnership Agreement Sustaining Progress*. It sets a challenging programme for my Department over the period to 2007. It is the keystone of the Department's business planning process and sets out the overall goals and objectives and the principal actions proposed to achieve them. It acts also as the reference point for evaluating progress in achieving strategic aims and targets.

The Department's economic remit spans communications, broadcasting and energy together with seafood, maritime transport, maritime safety and natural resources. As a driver of sustainable economic growth across many diverse sectors the Department has a key contribution to make towards improving productivity in the economy and to prosperity, competitiveness, sustainability and social cohesion.

Competitiveness is a key priority for the Government given the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. The need for greater focus on productivity growth across a wide spectrum of economic activity has emerged as a key immediate challenge. The Department has a pivotal role to play in overseeing delivery of the necessary capacity, connectivity and access to support economic and productivity growth and competitiveness. Competitiveness is also dependent on effective and efficient public service delivery. Priority is being given to best use of resources by the Department, focusing on outputs and outcomes, value for money and based on robust evaluation and planning. The productivity imperative for the public service is a key context.

Sustainability is also a key challenge in the midst of the economic growth and progress we are pursuing. We will ensure that there is a continuing focus on sustainability right across all our sectors whether it be in the exploitation of resources, such as energy, mining or fishing, or in the use of resources.

With more than 50 State bodies and agencies coming under the aegis of the Department, the need for a corporate governance regime is obvious. A recent review of the corporate governance structure in the Department will result in a more robust and interactive corporate governance regime.

Finally, the effectiveness of the Department is determined to a large extent by the capacity of the organisational structure to deliver on objectives. As part of this Statement of Strategy the structure of the Department will be reviewed and necessary changes will be implemented to ensure that the best organisational structure is in place to deliver on the policy, executive, regulatory and corporate governance roles across the sectors.

I look forward to working with my colleague, Pat the Cope Gallagher, T.D., Minister of State, with the Secretary General and the staff of the Department, the State bodies and the sectors in delivering significant change over the period between now and 2007. Our success will ultimately be measured in terms of the tangible contribution made to achieving economic and social objectives.



Noel Dempsey, T.D.
Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources
July 2005

INTRODUCTION BY SECRETARY GENERAL



This is the second Statement of Strategy for the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. It builds on our previous Statement of Strategy, which covered the period 2003-2005, and takes account also of developments in the meantime as reflected in the Department's Annual Reports, as well as changes in the general sectoral and policy environment in which the Department operates.

The goals, objectives, strategies and performance indicators set out in the Statement of Strategy have been formulated to deliver on policies and priorities as set by the Minister and the Government. Strategies have been fully informed in particular by the *Agreed Programme for Government and Sustaining Progress, the Social Partnership Agreement 2003-2006*.

The Statement of Strategy sets a challenging agenda over the next three years with the major emphasis on the Department's wide ranging economic remit across many diverse sectors. There is strong emphasis on the competitiveness imperative as well as sustainable development. It highlights the significant role and importance in EU matters and the drive to deliver the knowledge economy as well as sustainable development and environmental best practice.

It also gives particular focus to strategies to enhance governance and regulation. The enhancement of corporate governance standards, practices and procedures is a key priority for the Minister and the Department. Regulatory policy is a core element of Departmental strategy given the extent of our remit across a range of regulated sectors. Our approach is set against the backdrop of national, EU and wider international policy developments.

The diversity of business and the mix of policy, executive, regulatory and corporate governance roles we have presents challenges for the delivery of organisational and policy goals. Over the course of this Statement of Strategy we will review our organisational structure and make what changes are necessary in order to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery of our objectives.

We have also focused on the modernisation and change challenges for the organisation, reflecting the internal change management agenda and also the wider public service modernisation as articulated in Sustaining Progress. We aim to transform the Department into a fully knowledge based organisation characterised by devolved responsibility and accountability, continuous improvement and innovation, and best practice in financial and human resources management and technology. The Department's decentralisation programme over the coming years poses significant human and operational challenges for us. We aim to deliver an efficient and effective implementation of the Government's decentralisation policy.

The key performance indicators by which achievement will be measured over the period 2005-2007 are outlined in the Statement of Strategy. The Department's Annual Report for each of the years encompassed by this Statement of Strategy will report on our performance and delivery on the sectoral and corporate goals and strategies.

The development of this Statement of Strategy involved engagement with Ministers, with staff, consultation with the agencies and other stakeholders and an online process which resulted in over 40 submissions ranging across the Department's sectoral areas.

I look forward to working with all staff, under the guidance of the Minister, Noel Dempsey, T.D., and Minister of State, Pat the Cope Gallagher, T.D., in advancing the challenging agenda set out in the Statement of Strategy.

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

Brendan Tuohy
Secretary General
July 2005

MISSION AND HIGH LEVEL GOALS

MISSION

“To promote the sustainable development, management and regulation of the communications, energy, marine and natural resources sectors in support of national economic and social policy objectives”.

HIGH LEVEL GOALS

1. To optimise the contribution of the communications, energy, marine and natural resources sectors to growth, competitiveness, innovation, environmentally sustainable and regionally balanced development, and social inclusion;
2. To contribute to the cost effective provision of national and regional infrastructure priorities;
3. To deliver sustainable returns for the economy and communities from indigenous marine, renewable energy and natural resources;
4. To protect the consumer and society through high standard seafood and maritime safety services, marine emergency response and safe energy infrastructure and security of energy supply;
5. To deliver effectively on our corporate governance and shareholding responsibilities;
6. To provide best practice, legal, regulatory and business environments for our sectors;
7. To position the Department as a knowledge based and results focused organisation, operating to the highest public service values and standards of service delivery.

Section 1: Overview, External Context and Challenges

Regularly updated information on the Department can be accessed on our website at www.dcmnr.ie

Our Mission Statement aims to encapsulate the policy objectives for the Department which are delivered either directly or through associated State bodies and agencies.

Strategies are grounded in the Minister's policy priorities, the Programme for Government, the National Development Plan, the Government's legislative programme, the Budgetary Strategy and the Sustaining Progress and successive Partnership Agreements.

The Department's economic remit spans communications, broadcasting and energy together with seafood, maritime transport, maritime safety and natural resources. In recent years these sectors have been going through different stages of development. The communications and energy sectors are largely liberalised markets where policy is determined by the Minister and market operations are overseen by independent regulators. The Minister also has corporate governance responsibility for the commercial State bodies operating in these markets as well as for the commercial Port Companies.

By comparison, there is diversity and structural difference in the Marine and Natural Resources sectors where responsibility for both policy development and regulation is still directly exercised in many areas. Reviews are being undertaken on how best to deliver policy development and regulatory/executive responsibilities in a number of spheres including inland fisheries and the greater separation of functions in seafood/coastal zone and offshore and earth resources. We will give particular focus to the role of the State in the allocation, use and management of public resource assets and stewardship of the foreshore.

The Department, as a driver of sustainable economic growth across many diverse sectors, has a key contribution to make towards improving productivity in the economy and to prosperity, competitiveness and social cohesion.

Economic Backdrop

Economic growth is estimated to continue steadily up to 2010 allowing for the difficulties and uncertainties of the global economy. Competitiveness is the key priority for the Government given the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. The need for greater focus on productivity growth across a wide spectrum of economic activity has emerged as a key immediate challenge.

The Department has a pivotal role to play, with its agencies, in overseeing delivery of the necessary capacity, connectivity and access (energy, communications and maritime transport) to support economic and productivity growth and competitiveness. We are also working with all key players across Government, enterprise and education to lift Ireland's game in science and research technology and innovation, including the scale and effectiveness of investment in human capital which is crucial for the knowledge economy.

The European Union and the drive to deliver the knowledge economy (Lisbon Agenda) as well as sustainable development and environmental best practice is the context for much of the Department's responsibilities. Within the national strategic approach to the EU we will continue to work with all players to deliver on policy priorities at EU level to 2007 and beyond. The immediate term will see the outcome of negotiations on the future financial perspectives 2007 and on the EC 7th Framework Programme for Research (2007-2013).

The continued development and deepening of North/South cooperation is a key Government priority. The Department's wide ranging remit is reflected in the many areas of existing and potential North/South cooperation within the institutional framework established under the Good Friday Agreement as well as the economic dimension including energy and telecommunications.

Competitiveness is also dependent on effective and efficient public service delivery. Priority is being given to best use of resources by the Department and our Agencies, focusing on outputs and outcomes, value for money and based on robust evaluation and planning. The productivity imperative for the public service is a key context.

The Department is responsible in 2005 through its Vote for gross expenditure of €507 million. Of this, €55 million is accounted for by the Department's Administrative Budget. Appropriations in Aid receipts amount to €232 million including EU receipts and broadcasting licence fees. The Department's Multi Annual Capital expenditure over the period is geared to Government programme commitments and the achievement of sectoral policy goals. Expenditure will be underpinned by a new procurement strategy in 2005 and an enhanced expenditure review programme as well as the Management Information Framework. We are also undertaking a review of capital and current needs to 2010 based on medium term ESRI projections for the economy (as adjusted) and priority sectoral needs.

Structures and Staff/Decentralisation

There are over 700 staff employed in the Department currently located in Dublin, Castlebar, Cork, Malin and Valentia and in other coastal and regional locations. Our experience of regionalised structures and the challenges of dispersal is informing our approach to meeting the challenges of decentralisation. Phase One will see the Maritime Safety Directorate move to Drogheda, and the Coastal/Seafood Divisions (with BIM) to Clonakilty by 2007. In a later phase the Department HQ and Divisions are due to move to Cavan. Business continuity, service delivery and staff well-being are key priorities. The major challenges inherent in the decentralisation programme include the planning and management of high volumes of staff turnover and strategies for business continuity, risk management and sectoral business delivery. In light of decentralisation and within the overall context of public service numbers constraints, we are working to ensure the most effective recruitment, deployment and development of staff linked to business needs through the Department's HR strategies.

Our Quality Customer Service goals set out in the Customer Service Action Plan and Customer Charter reflect the Department's wide stakeholder base including consumers, enterprise, sectoral players and representative organisations, as well as environmental and community groups. In line with the Government's commitment to enhance the quality of consultation, we will keep our consultative processes under regular review and enhance them as necessary over the period of this Statement.

Meeting the challenge of delivery

The overall challenge 2005-2007 is to ensure that the Department, the State bodies and the sectors are strategically positioned to contribute effectively to economic and social objectives. Our strategic approach must be flexible and responsive to ongoing change in the external environment as well as achieving change through innovation and foresight.

Delivering on our organisational and policy goals poses challenges for the Department which is characterised by diversity of businesses and a mix of policy, executive, regulatory and corporate governance roles. The multiplicity of State bodies, both commercial and non-commercial, is a factor as well.

The Department is however characterised by common themes in terms of our contribution to growth and competitiveness, environmentally sustainable and regionally balanced development, economic infrastructure, public resource development, R & D, the knowledge economy and public safety. We will build the necessary internal synergies to reflect these themes.

The breadth of the Department's remit is also reflected in our approach to crosscutting thematic issues both within the Department and whole of Government.

We will also continue to cooperate in the delivery of key Government strategies including National Spatial Strategy, National Climate Change Strategy, the National Research and Development Action Plan and the White Paper on "Regulating Better".

Our organisational goals are set in the context of the public service modernisation agenda, the Department's modernisation Action Plan under Sustaining Progress and the Government's Decentralisation Programme. We are also continuing to deliver on the recommendations of the Mullarkey Report. Our thinking will also be informed by analysis and reports by NESC, the National Competitiveness Council, ESRI and other contributors to national policy debates.

Section 2: Sectoral Policy Goals and Strategies

COMMUNICATIONS

The communications sector is of fundamental importance to the economy and is a significant factor in determining national economic competitiveness. This is because technology enabled workforces are a key driver in improving productivity in the economy and a crucial component of knowledge economy enterprises. Communications networks are an essential tool of technology savvy and technology dependent workers.

The sector has been driven by enormous changes over the past decade due to technology development, regulatory reform and broader social and economic changes.

The mobile sector has come from nowhere at the beginning of the 1990s to dominate voice communications. Over the same period, satellite technology has been a hugely successful platform for the delivery of broadcasting services into the Irish market. Fixed line networks now see the bulk of traffic in the form of data and this reflects the growing penetration and usage of the internet in both business and everyday life. New technologies such as Voice Over Internet Protocol, the introduction of third generation mobile services, and continued growth of the wireless sector generally suggest that the pace of change in the sector is unlikely to diminish over the next 5 years. Telecommunications facilities now represent essential infrastructure for Governments, business and private individuals and the security of these networks in terms of resilience and access is of increasing national importance

Relative to a decade ago, a multiplicity of networks and devices using stand alone standards and technologies operate in the market today. We expect to see telecom operators focus on seamless delivery of services/content to fully reap benefits of advances in technology. While, technology moves quickly, changes are becoming increasingly difficult to predict – the *'nobody knows anything'* rule.

Arguably, most importantly, broadband services are becoming more generally available in the Irish market and their rate of diffusion, although very low by comparison with our closest EU neighbours, is accelerating very rapidly. The fact that the Irish economy has not, to date, been seen to suffer significant economic damage from our lateness to market in terms of broadband use is somewhat surprising. At least part of the explanation lies in the cost competitiveness and quality of telecommunications services available to the fastest growing sectors of the economy and, in addition, the exceptional competitiveness of international broadband services into and out of Ireland – driven by the Irish Government's investment in international broadband capacity at the end of the 1990s.

The exuberance of the late 1990s marked by vast over-investment in infrastructure, the dot com-driven equity boom and, perhaps most spectacularly, by the licensing processes for Third Generation mobile phone licences in Europe left a deep structural legacy of corporate failure and debt overhang. The sector emerged quite slowly from that downturn, the steepest in its history. However, it is clear that at this stage the financial condition of the sector is now better than it has been for some time.

The Challenges

We expect infrastructure and regulatory challenges to dominate the telecommunications policy agenda over the period of this Statement of Strategy. In Regulation, developments over the next three years will effectively dictate the longer term environment for competition, particularly in the mobile sector. On fixed line, there are continuing concerns over the capability of the market to meet the long-term needs of all parts of the Irish economy. Here we expect to see an acceleration of direct Government investment in long-term open access infrastructure. The task here will be to see Ireland's comparative advantage in terms of international connectivity extend to the regions through measured and strategic investment in open access capacity. The vision will be to have a single price open access broadband capacity available nationwide as a

means of eliminating the evident disadvantages associated with a purely market driven regional broadband roll-out. Those disadvantages have become apparent in the low initial rate of take-up of broadband services, the slow rate of unbundling of the local loop which is at the heart of introducing meaningful services based competition and significant divergences in access to broadband services between Dublin and the regions.

Ireland's capacity to benefit from these challenges depends crucially on our policy-making and implementation capability in this sector. In particular, the approach to be adopted in the medium term will need to be:

- *strategic* - driven by the achievement of key long term goals
- *focused* - where goal selection matches the capacity of the system to deliver
- *realistic* - where the goals selected are actually deliverable and consistent with the current and likely future condition of the sector
- *adaptable* - capable of being adjusted to a rapidly changing market environment and technological progress.

In broader economic terms, Ireland is increasingly becoming part of a wider European and global economy where it is necessary to compete at the highest level in a seamless communications environment in which business can be transacted with any part of the world in an instant. This means much bigger opportunities and challenges for Ireland. In a liberalised global capital market, investment flows to sectors where market entry is possible and where returns can be made. Without returns, capital flows for investment diminish and in conditions of capital scarcity and multi-national dominance of the sector, Ireland must effectively compete for capital against other investment locations. This has important implications for policy.

Modern communications networks can provide multiple services from a single platform – e.g. the same network can be used to provide a phone service, a TV service, and even an internet service. The full implications of this change, known as convergence, for business, regulation of the sector and policy for the sector are still emerging. But these will become more fully apparent over the period of this Strategy Statement. Determining the implications and making the necessary adjustments to policy and regulation will ensure we get the best out of the sector.

The Department will focus on the issues raised by:

- the economic condition of the sector
- the global market for capital
- technology convergence and the blurring of traditional boundaries in the sector
- the need to consult and communicate effectively with industry players and those in the general economy with an interest in the sector.

The priority is to create a legal, regulatory, trading and social environment, which provides the sector with the highest prospect of growth and profitability. A growing and profitable sector which is, crucially, delivering on strategic national objectives in ICT development and usage, is a pre-requisite to positioning Ireland as a globally-competitive information and knowledge society.

The Department will also address more specific priority public policy issues including the digital divide, environment issues, research and development and spatial planning.

The Department will also continue to play a proactive role in cross-Departmental issues vital to the achievement of a leading information society. These include:

- Infrastructure development

- Spatial strategy
- Regional development and
- EU developments.

The Department has a central role in promoting a climate for investment that will continue to develop the sector in Ireland. The Department's legislative and infrastructure support programmes are key elements in promoting the development of the sector, allowing the construction of an open market for growth in the provision of communications services.

The regulatory environment that provides for independent regulation of the sector must continue to evolve in line with the needs of the market while at the same time ensuring that the interests of stakeholders are protected. The current regulatory framework for both the communications and postal sectors is based on European law. It has been created to facilitate the transition of the sector from a monopoly status to a liberalised marketplace. Recent legislative reform provided for a more active role of the Minister in constructing a policy framework in which regulation takes place and the strategy of issuing policy directions as needs arise will continue. This has worked to ensure congruity between Government policy and the work of the Commission for Communications Regulation (CCR) and has assisted in strengthening the strategic focus of the Regulator in the market.

In relation to direct Exchequer investment in the open access capacity in the sector, the following points are relevant. Today the telecommunications industry is the only utility sector in Ireland which is largely privately owned. The sector is also now largely in foreign rather than indigenous ownership and this has important implications for the long term prospects of the sector. Networks and devices are increasingly owned and operated by large trans-national firms – decisions are taken on a global basis – with important long term implications for the nation state. The scale of the Irish market is an important influence on investment decisions. Notwithstanding this, the sector in Ireland is still characterised by large incumbents with numerous small scale fringe competitors. There are, and will continue to be, inevitable discontinuity between public and private objectives and, in particular, a trade off between facilities (or network) competition and services competition.

Core Policy Goal

To contribute to sustained macro-economic growth and competitiveness and to ensure that Ireland is best placed to avail of the emerging opportunities provided by the information and knowledge society, by promoting investment in state-of-art infrastructures, by providing a supportive legislative and regulatory environment, and by developing a leading edge research and development reputation in the information, communications and digital technologies sectors.

Strategic Objective ONE

To place Ireland on a competitive par with key comparator OECD economies in terms of key Internet and communications benchmarks, including price, quality and choice.

Strategy for Implementation

- Promoting a flexible regulatory policy that is supportive of the development of the information and knowledge society in Ireland while protecting stakeholder interests.
- Promoting new infrastructure development, encompassing access as well as backhaul capacity on a commercial basis throughout the country.

- Promoting investment in next generation research networks.
- Participating and influencing developments in the EU and the OECD that affect the development of e-business in Ireland.
- Ensuring that Irish infrastructure is developed in such a way as to support broader information and knowledge society objectives.
- Further enhancing Ireland's international competitiveness in the e-business sector through consultation, legislation and partnership with other Government Departments, industry and with international bodies.
- Participate actively in the developing United Nations work on the international digital divide through the UN ICT Task Force.
- Implement in full the emerging EU regulatory framework in the area of network security.
- Upgrading broadband capacity in all schools throughout Ireland to ensure equality of access in the educational sector to the information society.

Performance Indicator

- Have a competitive communications sector in place by the year 2007 which is on a competitive par with the key comparator OECD economies in terms of network penetration, investment, price, choice and quality, across all platforms.

Strategic Objective TWO

To create a legislative framework that provides for strategically focused, competitive and commercially-aware regulation of the communications sector and a flexible legal environment to meet business and public service requirements.

Strategy for Implementation

- Regular review of the powers and structures of the regulatory regime to take account of the rapidly changing sectoral and international environment.
- Address changes arising from technology innovation, globalisation and convergence.
- Enable the Commission for Communications Regulation to carry out its functions effectively in accordance with the European regulatory framework.
- Undertake a public consultation and review the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1926 and enact a new Radio Communications Bill.
- Further develop a national spectrum strategy taking account of technology development and convergence.

Performance Indicators

- Enact Telecommunications Bill to enhance powers of Regulator during 2006.
- Continue to strengthen the independent Commission for Communications Regulation empowered to deliver on the regulatory objectives of the Communications Regulation Act, 2002.
- Publication of draft legislation to update and consolidate existing measures relating to wireless telegraphy.

Strategic Objective THREE

Promote increased Information Society inclusion at both the regional and community-based levels.

Strategy for Implementation

- Support implementation of “New Connections” – the Government’s framework document covering policy in the area of the information society.
- Further enhance international and cross-border connectivity and cooperation on information society and communications initiatives.
- Promote the provision of open access regional broadband infrastructure in association with public and private sector partners under the Group Broadband Scheme.
- Implement the broadband strategy for schools agreed with industry in 2004.

Performance Indicators

- Provision of open access regional broadband infrastructure between 2005 and 2010.
- Promote a number of demonstration initiatives in respect of technologies and applications.
- Completion of contracted regional broadband infrastructure projects.
- Completion of schools broadband programme.
- Implementation of Interreg III programmes in association with cross-border partners.

Strategic Objective FOUR

To support the creation of a research entity and a vibrant digital media content industry based around DMDL (Digital Media District Ltd).

Strategy for Implementation

- Facilitate the implementation of the Development Plan for the Digital Hub.
- Procure a new research facility to replace digital research facilities at the Digital Hub.

Performance Indicators

- Enterprise activity in the Hub.
- Research activity at the Hub.
- Delivery of social programmes at the Hub.

BROADCASTING

The period of the Statement of Strategy will be dominated in the broadcasting sector by work on the drafting and passage of legislation providing for a comprehensive reform of the sector including, but not limited to, the role of the public service broadcaster, regulation of the sector and the rights of broadcast consumers in the market. The objective will be to design and implement public policy measures which take account of the rapid changes in the sector, in particular the internationalisation of broadcasting and the growth of competition in the international and national marketplace.

The maintenance and development of the public service broadcast ethos as a core principle of broadcast policy requires a continuous process of modernisation. A number of important reforms were introduced by Government in 2002 as part of a process under which public service broadcasting in Ireland received a very significant increase in resources. However, these measures require to be underpinned and strengthened in legislation to provide the standards of transparency, accountability and equity which will be required going forward.

In the case of television, Irish broadcasters operate in a market that is exposed to global competition. In radio, Irish broadcasters face little international competition to date. Traditionally Irish television audiences have demonstrated a high level of interest in UK terrestrial channels and this was the principal driver of multi-channel subscription services in Ireland (over 70% of homes). The roll-out of digital television at a little over 30% of television households (mainly on satellite) is widening the competition base. The two national television broadcasters – RTÉ and TV3 – continue to consistently attract an audience share in the region of over 50%.

There is limited competition in the market for the provision of multi-channel television services. Almost 70% of the population have a choice of platform operator, primarily between satellite and cable or between satellite and MMDS.

Irish broadcasters are subject to content regulation at EU and at national level. The RTÉ Authority is the regulator for RTÉ's services and the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland regulates the independent sector. The BCI has reach over all broadcasters in respect of certain codes and rules such as programming, advertising and access rules. In both television and radio there are only two national broadcasters, RTÉ along with one independent television and one independent radio operator, i.e. TV3 and Today FM. While a strong local and community sector has been a feature of radio for a number of years local television services have not yet emerged in any meaningful way. The Broadcasting Commission of Ireland has the power to licence additional television services.

At EU level, all Member States are required to put national plans in place to implement switchover to digital television broadcasting. While in Ireland, a significant proportion of the market now accesses digital services, progress in the development of digital terrestrial television needs significant acceleration if we are to keep pace with developments in the EU generally.

Core Policy Goals

- **To create an environment that encourages the maintenance of high quality Irish radio and television services by both independent broadcasters and RTÉ.**
- **To secure a viable future for high quality public service broadcasting in the Irish market.**
- **To seek to retain access to a range of quality programming in analogue and digital form, on a universal and free-to-air basis.**

Strategic Objective ONE

To develop a regulatory framework appropriate to the establishment and maintenance of high quality Irish radio and television services.

Strategy for Implementation

- To implement a range of policy measures arising from decisions taken by the Minister and the Government against the backdrop of a rapidly changing broadcast marketplace, including the recommendations of the Forum on Broadcasting published in August 2002.
- Development of legislative proposals and implementation strategies to give effect to the decisions taken by Government late in 2002 as well as more recent developments in relation to broadcasting. Foremost among these are the decisions to set up a single content regulator for public sector and private sector broadcasters and to restructure RTÉ from a corporate point of view.

Performance Indicators

- Legislation enacted.
- Achievement of programme output commitments by RTÉ.
- Growth of domestic broadcasting output.

Strategic Objective TWO

To ensure continued access to a comprehensive range of programming, in the English and Irish languages, on a universal and free-to-air basis.

Strategy for Implementation

- Ensuring that an appropriately structured RTÉ operates effectively and efficiently in carrying out the public service mandate laid upon it under the Broadcasting Authority Acts.
- Facilitating the establishment of TG4 as an independent statutory body.
- Incorporation into the Broadcasting Bill of new method for adjustment of television licence fee.

Performance Indicators

- Timely proposals made to Government.
- TG4 established as a separate entity.

Strategic Objective THREE

To oversee the introduction of digital broadcasting in Ireland.

Strategy for Implementation

- Facilitate the successful establishment of a digital terrestrial television (DTT) platform in Ireland on a pilot basis in 2006.
- Develop a national policy for the introduction of digital radio in Ireland during 2006.

Performance Indicators

- Decisions taken on how to proceed.
- Strategy and policy developed.
- Pilot programme and licensing processes in place during 2006.

Strategic Objective FOUR

To ensure that Ireland's position in relation to the development of European broadcasting policy is clearly and actively articulated.

Strategy for Implementation

- Ensure that issues of concern to Ireland with regard to developments at European Union level, particularly in relation to the review of the Television Without Frontiers Directive, are actively pursued.

Performance Indicators

- Continued and active engagement with the European Commission and other Member States.
- Ireland's policy position clearly communicated.

POSTAL

The postal sector comprises providers and operators of local, regional, national and international postal services that produce, collect, sort, transport and deliver physical information and goods. The European Commission continues the process of liberalising the monopolies enjoyed by the universal service providers across the Union. In doing this, it is following the same policy principles as in the telecoms, airlines and utilities sectors and is being driven by the same factors of globalisation, consolidation and technological change in the industry. These factors pose serious challenges for An Post and require it to devise strategies to successfully adapt to a changing market environment.

By 2007, we expect to see substantial changes in the postal sector. The most important ones are:

- Letter post volume growth to continue to lag GDP growth on foot of electronic substitution.
- Private sector share of the overall market to increase on foot of liberalisation and increased importance of the parcels business.
- Technology and customer drift continuing to impact on the viability of the post office counters business.

Like the telecommunications sector, it is important in regulating postal matters that we avoid any tendency on the part of regulatory authorities to intervene excessively in the market. Significant private operators already exist in the liberalised area of the postal market and it is important that liberalisation is not used as a pretext to increase the regulatory burden on these companies. The use of regulatory impact assessment and clear consultation with interested parties should be a feature of the regulation of the postal sector.

Core Policy Goals

- **To ensure Irish industry and domestic customers enjoy competitively priced, high-quality postal services on a par with the highest quality standards in key comparator economics elsewhere in the EU**
- **to maintain the nation-wide postal services and network, with uniform tariffs applying throughout the State, where required by regulation, and**
- **to develop the Irish postal sector in such a way that it will underpin the key economic objective of Ireland becoming a knowledge economy.**

Strategic Objectives

- **To develop an effective policy for the Irish postal sector based on open market principles and in conjunction with EU initiatives.**
- **To exercise effective corporate governance functions in relation to An Post.**

Strategy for Implementation

- Continue to develop a light handed and competitive regulatory environment to facilitate the development of an efficient and competitive postal industry.
- Facilitate the transformation of An Post from a monopolist provider to a profitable player in a competitive market, while maintaining a high quality nationwide postal service.
- Effective Irish input into the development and consideration of EU Commission proposals for further postal liberalisation Directives, with timely transposition of any adopted directives into Irish law.
- Effective corporate governance measures in place and implemented for An Post.

- Facilitate, where possible, support measures to assist An Post with the modernisation of the Post Office network with a particular focus on the provision of Government services, including eGovernment, through the network.
- Introduce an Irish postcodes system.

Performance Indicators

- Adopted EU Directives on postal liberalisation reflect, to the maximum extent possible, Irish negotiations positions.
- EU Directives successfully transposed into Irish law.
- An Post complies with corporate governance guidelines.
- In depth knowledge of progress by An Post management in advancing the recovery strategy to facilitate effective and timely reporting to the Shareholder.
- Introduction of a staged plan to ensure the strengthening of the Post Office network.
- Implementation in conjunction with all stakeholders of a business plan which will ensure the success of An Post in an open liberalised market.
- Additional Government services to come on stream through the Post Office network.

ENERGY

Ireland's energy policy closely mirrors that of our EU and OECD neighbours. It is based on three main policy pillars viz.

- Safeguarding security of supply
- Developing a sustainable energy future
- The development of competitive, efficient and properly regulated energy markets.

The energy sector directly employs 12,400 people with a turnover of €7.2 billion and contributes 1.4% (€1.78 billion)¹ directly to national GDP. While this contribution might seem small in absolute terms, the ability of the economy to perform depends on energy supply, electricity in particular, so the impact of the performance of the energy sector reaches right across the economy. Security of supply is a critical factor in terms of our ability to maintain economic growth.

Over the period 2005-2010 the ESRI expects economic growth to be 5.7% per annum. This would result in an increase in projected energy demand of 1.6% per annum over the same period. Within this overall growth figure, electricity demand is expected to grow by 3.1% annually and gas demand by 6.5%.

This mirrors an international shift towards safeguarding security of supply and ensuring a sustainable energy future. The developed world's growing dependence on imported fossil fuels (with the consequent growth in greenhouse gas emissions) highlights the need to mitigate the economic, social and environmental problems arising from the pursuit of current policies. The advent of the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme ties the economic and environmental aspects of these policies closer together and involves financial penalties for those failing to live within their Kyoto emissions targets.

The on-going volatility in world oil and gas prices (these commodities are closely correlated in terms of price) gives cause for future economic uncertainty. Thus far, economic activity and demand do not appear to have been adversely affected by the recent surge in fossil fuel prices. While low inflation is to some extent responsible, much of it is because many OECD countries, including Ireland, have become significantly less energy intensive with a shift away from manufacturing towards services.

However, major questions exist about Ireland's collective ability to withstand sustained high prices for oil and gas without there being some adverse effects on our economic well-being.

Security of Energy Supply

In terms of confronting the challenges posed by safeguarding security of supply, a number of policy options can be addressed:

Statutory responsibility for security of electricity supply rests with the independent regulator, the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) which is empowered to take any measures necessary to protect security of supply. In this context Ireland needs to concentrate policy and strategy on fuel diversity for power generation purposes. In common with many of our neighbours we are becoming increasingly reliant on imported piped gas – much of which will be sourced from areas of considerable geopolitical volatility. Over-reliance on one fuel could leave our economy vulnerable particularly through the risk of price shocks or physical interruption. We need to look at practical alternatives to piped gas, being mindful of carbon constraints. This could include clean-coal technology, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and new renewable technologies. Furthermore, this situation highlights the importance and significance of us continuing to promote and secure indigenous gas supplies.

¹ Excluding oil refining, sales of oil and solid fuels

Maximising the potential of renewable energy can help towards mitigating security of supply risks as well as helping build a sustainable energy future. Because of its intermittent nature and the need to have fossil fuel as standby generation, wind energy on its own is not the answer to security of supply. There is a need to fully explore the potential offered by other renewable technologies in this regard.

Security of supply depends critically on investment in infrastructure guided by the annual statutory reports on electricity generation adequacy and transmission capacity/loading and the gas capacity statement. These include gas pipelines, electricity networks, interconnectors and new generation. The Government has a critical role to play in putting in place the frameworks that encourage and facilitate such investments to take place. The Government, in line with EU policy, is currently supporting new electricity interconnection between North and South and between Ireland and Britain. Shareholder support also continues for ESB's network investment programme, aimed at modernising the country's transmission and distribution system. On the gas side, the pipeline linking North and South, expected to be completed in 2006, will, together with the two interconnectors (IC and IC2) and the Scotland-Northern Ireland Pipeline (SNIP), bolster security of supply for the whole island.

The investment in new power generation as well as demand side measures and energy conservation also have a significant role to play in managing security of supply.

Developing a sustainable energy future

The world's growing reliance on fossil fuel is unsustainable in the long term and we must change our behaviour. This can be achieved in a number of ways.

More emphasis and attention needs to be paid to better managing demand side issues. Ireland has had a high degree of success in breaking the link between economic growth and growth in energy demand but much more can and must be done in this respect. In common with our partners in the EU and the International Energy Agency, Ireland is committed to putting this aspect of energy policy at the top of its agenda. The Department will work closely with other Government Departments and relevant agencies on developing more rigorous integrated sustainable and renewable policy instruments. This will involve areas such as the Buildings Directive, combined heat and power (CHP) and biofuels.

The Department has already published a discussion document on sharpening the focus and structure around energy Research and Development and we are committed to putting this on a proper footing so as to maximise the benefits and potential arising from research into future energy sustainability.

In terms of climate change, the pilot phase of the EU's Emission Trading Scheme is now up and running. It is unlikely that the relatively benign structure and operation of this scheme will last. The Kyoto phase (2008-2012) will see a reduced level of free allowances and more stringent penalties for non-compliance. It is imperative, therefore, that entities operating in the trading sector start addressing the implications of this now. In this regard, the energy sector must be enabled and encouraged to meet its target in the least cost manner, using all tools available under the Kyoto Protocol. This also poses serious issues for the Government in terms of how to manage the non-trading sector. This might involve having to examine the issue of appropriate environmental taxation instruments. It will be necessary to work with other Departments and other sectors to ensure Ireland can meet the anticipated much more stringent targets post 2012 and work to gain competitive advantage in this area now.

Energy efficiency has a significant role to play in reducing energy demand and is often described as the cheapest and cleanest method of meeting the objective of reducing energy demand in the economy. A general indicator used to measure overall energy efficiency trends is primary energy intensity (the ratio of

primary energy consumption over GDP). Between 1990 and 2003 primary energy intensity fell by 33% (3% per annum)². Contributory factors include technological efficiency, choice of fuel and structure of the economy. Ireland scores well in comparison to our European counterparts where we are second only to Luxembourg in final energy intensity gains in the period 1990-1999³. ⁴In the course of formulating the statement of Government Energy Policy for the period to 2025 and developing Ireland's response to EU Commission⁵ and IEA initiatives on energy efficiency the Department will consider the setting of energy efficiency targets for the Irish economy: it may be possible to do this for the island as a whole, in the context of the all-island approach to energy.

Competitive energy markets

Since 19 February 2005 Ireland's electricity market has been fully open to competition. The Gas market will follow suit before the end of 2005. In both cases this is well ahead of the EU's July 2007 deadline for market opening. In addition, the unbundling of the transmission and distribution networks, in line with EU Directive requirements, represents a key tool to deliver open and competitive electricity and gas markets to the benefit of consumers and the national economy.

In terms of pricing, while there has been significant price increases in the energy sector, the need to invest in energy network infrastructure, geographic location and fossil fuel dependence are factors which influence heavily and which fall outside the scope of policy adjustment. Independent regulation of end user prices for energy is an essential part of the transition to a fully liberalised market. While the Department is responsible for approving overall capital expenditure in the State energy companies, which takes account of, *inter alia*, the interests of consumers, the Commission for Energy Regulation will continue to have responsibility for setting appropriate energy prices which will ensure the long-term stability of the electricity and gas markets.

The Energy Regulators North and South have jointly published high-level proposals for the development of a single electricity market on the island of Ireland (SEM). This will replace the temporary transitional market arrangements put in place here in 2000. In addition, the two system operators, ESB National Grid and the System Operator Northern Ireland, have agreed to establish the Single Market Operator which will be central to the development of the all-island market.

The Department welcomes this initiative and believes that the proposals represent a very real step towards creating the right environment for a truly competitive electricity market. The proposals are very much aimed at encouraging both competition and the timely investment in new generation and should lead to competitive prices which will benefit all customers.

The Department is committed to ensuring that the SEM proposals will be under-pinned by the necessary legislative measures to give effect to the all-island market.

Core Policy Goals

- **Safeguarding security of energy supply**
- **Developing a sustainable energy future**
- **The development of competitive, efficient and properly regulated energy markets.**

² *Energy in Ireland 1990-2003. Sustainable Energy Ireland (Energy Policy Statistical Support Unit (EPSSU))*
http://www.sei.ie/uploads/documents/upload/publications/Energy_in_Ireland_1990-2003_Final.pdf

³ *Energy and the Environment in the European Union, 2002.*

⁴ *Energy and the Environment in the European Union, 2002.*

⁵ "Green Paper on Energy Efficiency, or doing more with less" (EU Commission COM(2005)265 final) June 2005
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy/efficiency/doc/2005_06_green_paper_text_en.pdf

Strategic Objective ONE

Ensure effective measures to protect security of energy supply are in place.

Strategy for Implementation

- Develop the regulatory framework to ensure that security of supply is protected.
- Support decisions to increase electricity interconnection.
- Assess gas infrastructure requirements, having regard to the National Spatial Strategy and the role of gas, if any, in regional development.
- Develop policy on fuel diversity for the purpose of electricity generation.
- Maintain the State's capability to respond to major international and national disruptions to physical oil supplies.

Performance Indicators

- CER statutorily empowered to deal with security of supply issues.
- Energy investment informed by annual Generation Adequacy and Capacity Statement and Gas Capacity Statement.
- Clear policy regarding further extensions to the gas network.
- Emergency planning procedures in place so as to maintain critical supply.
- On-going compliance with IEA obligations in respect of maintaining national oil reserves.
- Establishment of the National Oil Reserves Agency on a statutory basis.

Strategic Objective TWO

Ensure sustainable supply and usage of energy.

Strategy for Implementation

- Coordinate market response for the deployment of renewable energy technologies through the Renewable Energy Development Group.
- Support for SEI in carrying out its mandate.
- Conclude performance contract (and renew annually) with SEI to assist it in carrying out its mandate.
- Increase in energy statistical information and improved analysis of the economic and environmental effects of energy production and consumption.
- Improved energy efficiency standards in buildings.
- Set a programme of energy efficiency targets for the Irish economy.

Performance Indicators

- More comprehensive energy statistics available for the economy.
- An overall more energy efficient economy.
- Energy savings through achieving energy efficiency targets.

Strategic Objective THREE

Ensure that Ireland meets its target of 13.2% of electricity consumption to be produced from renewable energy sources by 2010.

Strategy for Implementation

- Promote increased production of electricity from renewable sources.
- Ensure implementation of the energy measures in the National Development Plan.
- Ensure development of a range of appropriate renewable energy technologies.

Performance Indicators

- Renewable Energy at least 13.2% of consumption in 2010.
- A mix of different renewable technologies being utilised and deployed in Ireland.

Strategic Objective FOUR

Ensure that appropriate national capacity for energy research, development and demonstration (R, D & D) is established and maintained in order to support national energy policy for the medium and long term.

Strategy for Implementation

- Create structure for strong national coordination and international linkages.
- Monitor current domestic energy research capacity and activity on an ongoing basis.
- Support enhanced capacity through partnerships and capital measures.
- Ensure energy R, D & D develops in line with the objectives of the All-Island Development Framework.
- Establish an all-island register of R&D in the energy sector and foster cooperation North/South and between public and private sectors.
- Participate actively in research and development fora domestically and at EU level.

Performance Indicator

- Strong, vibrant R, D & D capacity aligned to national policy requirements.

Strategic Objective FIVE

The delivery of an all-island energy market.

Strategy for Implementation

- Continue to work closely with relevant authorities, North and South, to ensure that the objectives set out in the All-Island Energy Market Development Framework are met within the timescales identified.
- Integrate the all-island dimension into all aspects of the Department's policy making process in respect of the energy sector.

Performance Indicator

- Meeting the deadlines set out in the all-island Framework including establishment of Single Electricity Market by July 2007.

Strategic Objective SIX

Completion of the regulatory framework to support competitive, efficient and effectively regulated energy markets.

Strategy for Implementation

- Prepare proposals for Government based on the outcome of the 2005 review of the electricity sector.
- In parallel, develop a medium and long term (2025) policy paper for the energy sector.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of electricity and gas industry regulation.
- Continue to develop policy measures to support the completion of the liberalisation of the electricity and gas markets in an all-island context.
- Advance Ireland's interests in the negotiation of European Union measures to develop electricity and gas liberalisation.

Performance Indicators

- Choice of supplier for all consumers through functioning, fully liberalised all-island electricity and gas markets that are effectively regulated and structured.
- Unbundled Transmission and Distribution System Operators in the electricity and gas sectors.

Strategic Objective SEVEN

Effective corporate governance of the energy State bodies.

Strategy for Implementation

- Liaise with the energy State companies in the development and delivery of their strategic and corporate plans.
- Develop clear shareholder mandates and performance contracts, as appropriate, for each of the energy State companies and agencies.
- Convert BGÉ and ESB into public limited companies.

Performance Indicators

- Compliance by energy State companies and agencies with corporate governance requirements.
- Corporate/Strategic Plans and Performance Contracts (as appropriate) in place for each State company and agency.
- Agreed shareholder mandates in place.
- Publication of PLC legislation for BGÉ and ESB.

MARITIME SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Marine Safety

The Department, through the Maritime Safety Directorate and the Irish Coast Guard, is the regulatory authority in Ireland for marine safety and security, maritime and inland waters, mountains and caves emergency response. It is also responsible for providing marine safety information and radio communication networks.

The main focus of the Directorate is on accident prevention through an appropriate combination of regulation and a heightening of safety awareness and enforcement. The Coast Guard seeks to prevent, as far as possible, the loss of life at sea and in inland waters and others areas, through a comprehensive emergency response service. Over the past three years the Coast Guard has responded to an average 1,700 incidents with up to 6,500 persons assisted. In the same period there has been, on average, 34 accidental drownings per year, with up to a third of these directly related to boating accidents.

Developments at international level influence the policy and regulatory framework for safety, security and environment standards on seagoing vessels.

A key deliverable under this Statement of Strategy will be the bringing together of the Directorate, Coast Guard and Mercantile Marine Office as a stand-alone body and the introduction of new organisational structures and operational arrangements. The decentralisation of the office to Drogheda will also feature strongly on the agenda.

During the period of this Statement of Strategy the focus will in particular be on the promotion of fishing vessel safety; the enhancement of the passenger vessel safety regime; the encouragement of best practise in the recreational/leisure sector, to include compliance with the statutory provisions, and the introduction of measures to further strengthen the national emergency response framework.

Marine Environment

The Department also has a key responsibility for the protection and enhancement of the marine environment, including preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents. Other Government Departments and State bodies also have responsibilities relating to the marine environment. Therefore effective coordination between all services to maintain a high quality marine environment in accordance with international benchmarks and standards is also a priority.

Due to the international nature of shipping and other factors relating to the marine environment any actions at a national level must complement those undertaken at EU and other international fora. Therefore, participation with relevant organisations and cooperation in areas of mutual interest with other States is an essential part of the Department's strategy.

During the period of this Statement of Strategy the Department will continue to monitor the status of the marine environment, it will promote an awareness of marine pollution issues, it will address port waste management issues as part of the introduction of a new EU wide regime to deal with waste generated by ships and it will implement policies for the safe transportation of nuclear materials at sea in cooperation with other Departments and agencies. The Department will publish a national marine pollution contingency plan and will establish a national oil pollution response and coordination committee comprising agencies and bodies with responsibility for oil pollution response.

Core Policy Goals

Marine Safety

- To establish, promote and enforce safety and security standards, and by doing so, prevent, as far as possible, the loss of life at sea and on inland waters and other areas, and to provide effective emergency response services.

Marine Environment

- To safeguard the quality of the marine environment.

Strategic Objective ONE

To put in place appropriate organisation structures and arrangements to deliver coordinated and cost-effective marine safety services.

Strategy for Implementation

- Develop the combined office of the Maritime Safety Directorate, Coast Guard and Mercantile Marine Office as an efficient and effective stand-alone body.
- Review of operational structures and service delivery arrangements to plan and deliver the decentralisation of services to Drogheda and other regional offices and develop the marine emergency rescue coordination centres based on two stations.
- Promote and support effective communication and coordination arrangements between all relevant State agencies and sectoral and voluntary groups.
- Review and develop the Irish Coast Guard Volunteer services.

Performance Indicators

- Headquarters for maritime safety and emergency response services located in Drogheda and other regional offices fully established and operational.
- Service level arrangements with State and voluntary agencies in place during 2005 and 2006.
- Marine surveying services carried out electronically by the end of 2006.
- Levels and trends in marine casualties.
- National Search and Rescue Plan in place.

Strategic Objective TWO

To continuously improve marine safety culture and awareness.

Strategy for Implementation

- Promote awareness of the maritime safety agenda with high risk groups.
- Maximise the use of eGovernment and communications technology in bringing maritime safety information to the public.
- Support structures that bring key State agencies and voluntary organisations together to cooperate and coordinate the delivery of safety messages to the public.
- Develop a safety education programme targeted at school-going children.
- Continue to support and develop maritime training.

Performance Indicators

- Completion of public consultation process on a Code of Practice for recreational craft and publication of the Code of Practice.
- Completion of baseline survey of attitudes to maritime safety issues in respect of the general public and targeted risk groups. A second survey will be carried out two years after the baseline survey to establish the trend.
- Heightened levels of awareness of marine safety by way of a public consultation forum.
- Improved web based access to safety information and services.
- An "at sea" and slipway awareness and compliance programme by the Irish Coast Guard.
- Focused safety awareness campaign directed at high risk groups and an education programme for school children.
- Statistics on accidents and incidents.
- Approval of courses delivered by the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI), BIM Fishery Colleges and others.

Strategic Objective THREE

To develop and implement international and domestic safety standards.

Strategy for Implementation

- Participation in international fora dealing with maritime safety issues to ensure that Irish interests are effectively represented.
- Supporting the adoption of suitable international safety standards and regulations by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the European Union (EU), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other relevant organisations.
- Implementation of maritime safety legislation.
- Implementing an effective enforcement regime ensuring compliance with EU and domestic requirements, including Port State Control obligations.
- Maintaining close cooperation on cross cutting and North/South issues with other relevant Government Departments and agencies.

Performance Indicators

- Development of the fishing vessel safety regulatory framework.
- The introduction of new regulations on standards of training for operators of passenger boats and vessels.
- Development of a programme to monitor compliance with selected regulatory regimes.
- Review and provision of Irish hydrographic service delivery options to comply with SOLAS obligations.
- Enhanced safety regime with better construction, design and operation of vessels.
- An on-going programme of security measures for ships and ports in accordance with regulations and the establishment of a National Monitoring Committee.
- Positive indicators credited to Ireland on the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) Flag State Performance Table.
- Successful prosecutions for non-compliance with regulations.

- Trend in numbers of vessel accidents.
- Review of fees and charges by the Department for surveying and other services and implementation of a revised Fees Order in 2006.
- Corporate governance and consultation with the Commissioner of Irish Lights on aids to navigation issues.

Strategic Objective FOUR

To provide efficient and effective emergency Search and Rescue services in the marine environment and on mountains and caves and lakes and inland waters.

Strategy for Implementation

- Providing emergency Search and Rescue services through public and voluntary bodies, coordinating those services and cooperating with other States in the operation of emergency services.
- Review and develop a provision and coverage criteria for Coast Guard helicopter services.
- Review expansion of Ireland's Search and Rescue (SAR) region to coincide with the Exclusive Fishery Limits and the Irish Pollution Responsibility Zone.

Performance Indicators

- Nationwide Coast Guard services and communications networks (including in relation to inland rivers, lakes and waterways and mountain and cave rescue) in place.
- Search and rescue service delivery arrangements with other State agencies and voluntary bodies in place.
- Coast Guard emergency preparedness, response and cooperation plan in place and publication of the National Search and Rescue Plan covering all Coast Guard functions by end 2005.
- Responses to emergency call outs within response times set out in the Department's "Customer Service Action Plan" .
- Trends and consequences in marine, inland, coastline, mountain and cave accidents.
- New helicopter service contracts in place by 2006.

Strategic Objective FIVE

To safeguard the quality of the marine environment through the provision of an efficient and effective response to casualty, salvage and wreck and marine pollution incidents from vessels and off-shore platforms in the Irish Pollution Responsibility Zone.

Strategy for Implementation

- Monitoring of the status of the marine environment in accordance with relevant EU and international standards.
- Participation in international fora to establish appropriate marine environmental standards.
- Promoting awareness of the marine environment with relevant high risk groups.
- Promoting and implementing international standards in relation to preparedness and response to marine pollution, casualty and salvage incidents.
- Ensuring all ports and harbours, local authorities and off shore installations have preparedness, response and cooperation plans in place to deal with pollution.
- Introduction of aerial surveillance programme for oil pollution monitoring.

Performance Indicators

- Comparative analysis on the quality of the Irish marine environment to international benchmarks.
- Trends in the number of callouts to pollution incidents.
- National Marine Pollution and Salvage, Preparedness, Response and Cooperation Plan published and in place.
- Ports and harbours, local authorities and offshore oil installation preparedness, response and cooperation plan in place.
- Appropriate exercises at all levels to test for pollution response preparedness undertaken.
- Effective and efficient response to pollution and salvage incidents in accordance with the standards set out in the provisions of agreed national and local emergency response plans.

Strategic Objective SIX

To develop and implement domestic, EU and international environmental standards.

Strategy for Implementation

- Supporting the adoption of marine environmental standards and regulations.
- Implementing and enforcing marine environmental legislation.
- Cooperation on cross cutting issues (e.g. OSPAR etc.) with relevant government departments and agencies.
- Participating in the development of the new European Marine Strategy.
- Review of current statutory requirements to ensure that pollution incidents occurring in the Irish Pollution Responsibility Zone may be prosecuted.

Performance Indicators

- Implementation of the "Prestige" and Erica packages as adopted at E.U. level.
- Implement national policy in cooperation with relevant departments and agencies in relation to the safe transportation of nuclear materials at sea.
- The Protocol to the Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Convention (OPRC) extended to include Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) and other International conventions are given effect in Irish law.
- Compliance with OSPAR information reporting systems.
- Trends in marine environment pollution incidents.
- Application of the "polluter pays principle" to pollution incidents.

MARITIME TRANSPORT (PORTS AND SHIPPING)

Commercial Ports

Ireland's commercial ports are vital transport arteries, carrying 99% by volume of the island's external trade. The value of these imports and exports through seaports in the Republic was €120 billion for 2004, compared to a figure of €14 billion through airports.

The Department acts on behalf of the Minister as shareholder in terms of the corporate governance of the State owned commercial port companies and is also responsible for policy development for the ports sector as a whole.

In May 2003, the High Level Review of the State Commercial Ports operating under the Harbours Acts 1996 to 2000 was published. The remit of the review was to critically examine the current model for the governance of the State commercial ports established under the Harbours Act 1996.

The subsequent public consultation process informed the Government's policy statement on ports published in 2005. The review identifies the key challenge for the ports as the timely provision of capacity to service the growing economy, particularly in unitised trade. Meeting that challenge is the strategic priority going forward.

The Department will address the key projects identified by the commercial ports as essential to deal with anticipated capacity deficiencies to 2007 and beyond, including the sources of future funding. The Department will also consult with current and prospective private sector providers on the potential for and/or constraints on entry to the ports services sector and on an optimal framework to deliver private sector investment in the ports.

The Department works closely with the Department of Transport on matters relating to transport policy, particularly those issues which have a direct or indirect effect on port services.

Developments at EU and international level, for example, in relation to environmental protection and maritime security, have increased the regulatory and operational challenges for ports. The Department recognises the need to consult the ports in relation to future developments in these areas.

The delivery of efficient and competitive infrastructure to support our open economy is a public policy priority. The seaports sector is characterised by high barriers to entry which can place significant market power in the hands of existing players. This creates a risk of anti-competitive practices resulting in higher port charges, which can mask underlying inefficiencies in the delivery of port services. A similar risk exists in relation to private sector service providers within ports.

Historically, ports have suffered from restrictive practices, notably in cargo handling. Efforts are continuing at EU level to address Market Access to Port Services.

Harbour Authorities

The continued operation of many of the regional harbours under the outdated provisions of the Harbours Act 1946 is unsustainable on the grounds of good governance. The Government is of the view that most of these harbours would best achieve their potential through transfer to local authority ownership or, where this is not possible, through sale to the private sector. In harbours where significant commercial traffic exists, consideration will be given to bringing them under the control of a port company. The Department is currently liaising with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the potential and process for transfer of the regional harbours concerned to local authority control.

Shipping

The significance of adequate shipping services to the island economy is self-evident. The shipping and maritime commerce sectors in Ireland, with over 8,000 employees, contributed about €1.45 billion to the economy in 2004. Some 53 commercial vessels are currently registered under the Irish flag. These are mainly bulk carriers and passenger/ro-ro ferries. The shipping services sector provides employment in many support areas such as freight forwarding, ship broking and agency services, insurance, financial and legal services. Industry regeneration/development is a policy priority.

Current EU transport policy is focused on an integrated transport network, with short sea shipping a priority to decongest roads and minimise environmental impacts. The Commission's White Paper "European Transport Policy for 2010: time to decide", which introduced the "Motorways of the Sea" concept underlined the vital importance of short sea shipping routes for the EU.

The National Maritime College of Ireland is based at Ringaskiddy in County Cork. Students pursuing careers at sea can now obtain qualifications or degrees in Europe's most modern nautical college. Together with the National College of Ireland's International Maritime Studies Institute (based in the Irish Financial Services Centre, Dublin) the new maritime college will help Ireland to develop as a choice location for maritime activity.

The IMDO (Irish Maritime Development Office) is the sector's statutory development and promotional agency, which operates within the Marine Institute, guided by an expert Advisory Group, made up of sectoral and Departmental representatives.

A range of beneficial fiscal reliefs, with EU State aid approval, is in place for the shipping sector:

- Full refund of employer's PRSI (subject to EU State aid approval currently being sought),
- A unique €6,350 income tax allowance for seafarers,
- A flat rate tonnage tax (an alternative to corporation tax).

Core Policy Goals

Ports

- **To provide a framework for the provision of port infrastructure and services which are efficient, effective and adequate for the needs of our trading economy.**

Harbour Authorities

- **As provided for in the Harbours Act 1996, to oversee the transfer to alternative uses under local control, of those remaining regional ports and harbours which do not form part of the national maritime transport system for trade and travel while maintaining, in transition, an appropriate corporate governance regime.**

Shipping

- **To encourage the growth of Irish based shipping sector activity and employment.**

Strategic Objective ONE

To facilitate the availability of commercial port services which are effective, competitive and cost efficient.

Strategy for Implementation

- Prepare a programme of action and timeframe for implementation of the Government's ports policy statement.
- Devise a framework for the adoption of EU measures to liberalise market access for port service providers.
- Assess the performance of ports through the corporate governance process, without imposing unnecessary burdens.
- Keep competition under review both within and between ports.
- Benchmark port companies with ports of similar size and type internationally in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and financial performance.

Performance Indicators

- Progress on implementation of ports policy statement against the timeframe set out in the action plan over the period to 2007.
- Trends in port charges, turnover, costs, profitability, asset utilisation and rates of return.
- Compliance with statutory requirements laid down by the Harbours Acts.

Strategic Objective TWO

To ensure adequate and timely infrastructure at ports to cope with growing throughput and facilitate competitive services for ships and goods in line with assessments of national seaport capacity to 2014.

Strategy for Implementation

- Continuous assessment of proposals to provide on time additional capacity in line with national and regional needs.
- Progress available support under the National Development Plan for strategic and other seaport infrastructure needs.
- Seek to ensure that port companies are positioned to attract capital investment.
- Facilitate any infrastructure funding opportunities presented by the EU motorways of the sea initiative as part of the Trans- European Transport Network.
- Intervene through provision of State funding, where necessary, to ensure adequate in time capacity.

Performance Indicators

- Port infrastructure and capacity adequate to accommodate trade and sea passengers.
- NDP seaports investment programme progressed to completion.

Strategic Objective THREE

To facilitate the coordination and integration of maritime transport within the total transport chain.

Strategy for Implementation

- Cross-departmental communication and cooperation in relation to transport planning and spatial strategy.
- Structured dialogue with port companies and industry representative bodies.

Performance Indicator

- Transport policy coordination and intermodal efficiency of transport chain.

Strategic Objective FOUR

To implement the general strategic development framework for State regional ports and harbours through transfer of ownership to port companies or local authorities.

Strategy for Implementation

- Progress policy on transfer of regional ports and harbours to port companies or local authorities.
- Maintain corporate governance of harbour authorities in accordance with the Harbours Act 1946.
- Invest available funding in essential safety works at regional harbours.
- Encourage and facilitate involvement of local authorities in planning for transfer to local control of small regional harbours, in cooperation with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- Devolve ownership to port companies where appropriate.

Performance Indicator

- By end 2007, decisions taken on transfer of all Harbour Authorities operating under the Harbours Act 1946 to new ownership.

Strategic Objective FIVE

To maintain and increase Irish based ship ownership/management.

Strategy for Implementation

- Maintain/develop appropriate beneficial fiscal regime for ship owners and operators.
- Support IMDO promotion/marketing of industry.
- Participate in review of ship registration legislation.

Performance Indicator

- Growth in Irish based shipping sector activity by 5% annually.

Strategic Objective SIX

To foster an environment supportive of Irish seafarer and onshore maritime sector employment.

Strategy for Implementation

- Support IMDO promotion/marketing of industry.
- Pursue, with IMDO, EU opportunities for funding of new services/facilities.
- Maintain/develop appropriate fiscal regime for the Irish shipping and shipping services sector.
- IMDO promotion of maritime education/careers.
- Discuss development opportunities with National Maritime College.
- Review State aid regime.

Performance Indicators

- Development of Irish seafarer and shipping services sector employment.
- Flexible/responsive training supports in place.
- Enhanced opportunities for sectoral professional qualifications.

MARINE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Seafood Sector

Introduction

Predominantly concentrated on the Western and Southern Seaboard, the seafood sector comprises the catching, processing and aquaculture industries. The sector encompasses the commercial sea fishing fleet (2,000 vessels catching 260,000 tonnes of fish per annum), the aquaculture industry (697 licensed production sites), the seafood processing industry (215 seafood processing establishments, 69 shellfish handling establishments) and technical support, marketing/exporting, retailing and supply industries. This sector is based on renewable indigenous resources which, if sustainably managed and conserved, will continue to generate employment and development opportunities in peripheral coastal and island areas, where few real economic alternatives exist. The value at the final point of sale of seafood sold in Ireland or exported from Ireland is almost €700 million annually. The seafood sector is estimated to be responsible for 15,000 jobs directly and indirectly in the catching, processing and aquaculture industries. The sector is a niche sector generating primary wealth in areas where there is little other primary wealth creation and the wealth created has a high multiplier in the local economies. Growth of the seafood sector fits with the national spatial and regional development strategies and has strong development potential as part of a high quality, value added, national food industry.

Fishing Fleet and Processing

The Seafood sector is entering a period of significant change. Fish stocks are under significant pressure. With sustainable management they can be rebuilt. Subject to effective and enforced conservation measures there is no reason why Ireland cannot retain and develop its seafood industry. The structure and operation of the fishing fleet is going through a process of transformation, driven by reduced resource availability, high energy costs and labour market changes. That transformation requires management in the medium term to ensure that a modern, viable, safe, competitive, profitable, whitefish fleet is in place. Integrated measures for fleet and resource management are required to ensure that the fleet rationalisation process is targeted and results in balanced regional, economic and social impacts. The processing industry must move up the value chain, with enhanced product research and development and an increased focus on high value markets. Targeted public and private sector investment is required over the medium term to ensure that the fleet and the processing sector adapt to meet the viability and sustainability challenge.

Infrastructure Development

There is substantial scope for increasing fishing activity operating out of Irish fishery harbours through exploiting our geographical competitive advantage. As energy costs increase the global fishing industry will have to change patterns of travelling long distances to fish off Ireland. There is an opportunity to capitalise on location and to attract a much greater proportion of EU landings and downstream activity through Irish fishing ports. These include landings of pelagic species into the North West from Scottish and Norwegian vessels and landings of whitefish into the West and South West from United Kingdom, French and Spanish vessels. We also need to ensure that landings from the increasingly mobile Irish fleet are attracted back to Ireland for processing and value added rather than going elsewhere. This points to the need for integrated seafood industry support centres with good harbour infrastructure, competitive purchasing structures and logistics services at the fishery harbour centres. Purchasing and marketing strategies also have to be developed to attract the additional landings from vessels operating off the Irish coast. The focus will be on value added from supply/support services to those vessels and processing the catches of those vessels. This

would also put Ireland in a more pivotal position in relation to the sustainable management of the fishing activity of those vessels if a higher proportion of landings by such vessels can be attracted.

A key policy objective is therefore to develop the infrastructure, operational efficiency and range of supply and support services at the five Fishery Harbour Centres and other key fishery harbours with a view to maximising the levels of economic activity and returns from these facilities. In this scenario, fishery harbour centres can become drivers of economic development in their coastal hinterlands. This integrated approach to maximising the throughput of supply through the fishery harbours is vital to the Irish processing industry and fleet support industries.

Seafood Market

85% of Irish exports are sold within the European Union. The EU market is almost two thirds reliant on imports and demand for EU sourced seafood is continually increasing. Unlike many agrifood products, seafood trade within and outside the EU is, by and large, transacted at world market prices with no EU export supports.

Enlargement has seen the emergence of an expanded market for seafood with an estimated self-sufficiency as low as 36% with third country imports providing the balance. There is a growing market for fresh and chilled seafood in convenience form. The challenge for the Irish sector (especially in the shellfish, whitefish and aquaculture sectors) will be to differentiate products on the basis of quality, convenience and environmental status to discerning consumers.

Sustainability, Regulation and Fleet Restructuring

Scientific assessment of the state of the fish stocks suggests that EU quotas will remain constrained or will be further reduced in the medium term. The conservation challenge is likely to continue to dominate the Common Fisheries Policy Agenda to 2007. The industry will remain volume restricted in output terms over the period. Conservation measures are the key imperative in securing the medium term future of the industry. Rising demand for fish coupled with supply constraints would suggest that whitefish markets will remain reasonably strong. Provided that capacity and resources are in balance and that fuel costs settle down in real terms, the potential for profitable fishing remains, within the necessary regulatory constraints. The introduction of safer, more competitive and technically advanced vessels means that owners require higher earnings to meet higher overall operating costs. This factor coupled with ongoing conservation measures is likely to lead to rationalisation of older whitefish vessels in the fleet over the period. Fishing opportunities for the pelagic fleet are also likely to remain volume restricted but continuing high prices may contribute positively to viability. The key challenges going forward relate to regulating fishing activity so as to ensure the conservation of pelagic stocks coupled with generating added-value from Irish pelagic processing activity. Such additional added-value would enhance the potential of attracting landings and securing Irish based employment and wealth creation from the pelagic industry.

Effective, transparent, even handed regulation is vital to the success of the industry in the medium term. Under the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2003 the functions of sea-fishing boat licensing and registration were transferred from the Minister to the Licensing Authority for Sea-Fishing Boats which operates on an independent basis subject to criteria set out in that Act, including a published licensing policy by the Minister. The Licensing Authority carries out licensing and registration of sea-fishing boats in accordance with this policy and ensures compliance with EU-determined fishing fleet capacity limits and reporting requirements. The estimated market value of the fleet capacity managed by the Licensing Authority is €500 million. Further

clarification and legislative separation of policy from executive/regulatory functions will be progressed in the medium term.

Inshore Fisheries

Specific strategies for conservation and management of the inshore sector are being developed involving BIM and the sectoral players. The Scheme for the Licensing of Traditional Pot-Fishing Boats is reaching its final stages of implementation. Proposals are being brought forward for a network of "Inshore Fisheries Local Advisory Committees" to develop local management plans for the inshore sector.

Aquaculture

With global farmed production now totalling almost 42 million tonnes, the FAO estimates that by 2030 aquaculture will supply over half of all fish consumed worldwide. The challenge for the Irish aquaculture sector is to capitalise on the opportunities presented by global trends. The shellfish aquaculture industry is developing value added products sold in high value outlets in the EU markets. These shellfish aquaculture operations are model companies in terms of value added in the food industry assisted by the State run biotoxin monitoring system.

Irish aquaculture has significant development potential capitalising on strong European and global demand. The aquaculture sector provides a stable source of raw material for the processing sector. The sector has grown rapidly over the last decade and represents some 30% of the total value of Irish Seafood output.

The salmon farming sector underwent a decline in production in both 2003 and 2004. This is due to a number of factors, including fish health issues, below cost imports to the European Union and the impact of individual mortality incidents. An integrated response by the EU, the Department, industry and State agencies is being progressed.

The key challenges for the aquaculture sector remain the achievement of critical mass in production to compete in international markets, diversification into new species and attainment of best practice in line with environmental guidelines and quality assurance standards. Investment support programmes have been fine tuned to support achievement of these objectives. The expansion of primary aquaculture output will support the development of high value seafood products for the export market.

Core Policy Goal

To maximise the contribution of the seafood sector to the economies of coastal regions.

Strategic Objective ONE

To implement national policies, negotiated within the CFP framework, which support a long-term sustainable fishing industry for Ireland's coastal communities.

Strategy for Implementation

- Working closely with industry, negotiate key priorities for Ireland in the development of the Common Fisheries Policy in the period to 2007.
- Effectively represent Ireland's interests in fishing negotiations at EU and international level.

Performance Indicators

- Fishing opportunities available to the Irish catching sector.
- Trends in volume and value of landings.

Strategic Objective TWO

To promote sustainable development of the seafood sector.

Strategy for Implementation

- Implement effective investment programmes under the NDP for the seafood sector covering support for the catching sector, aquaculture, marketing, processing and training.
- Negotiate key priorities for Ireland under the European Fisheries Fund and secure appropriate funding for the period 2007-2013.
- Work with BIM to implement Seafood Development Strategies.
- Finalise a long-term strategy for the sustainable development of our whitefish fleet. Progress sustainable management and development measures for inshore fisheries.

Performance indicators

- Trends in seafood sector outputs and exports (volume and value).
- Trends in employment.

Strategic Objective THREE

To contribute to the conservation of fish stocks through effective fisheries management systems.

Strategy for Implementation

- Coordinated deployment of the fishery protection resources of the State.
- Using the Service Level Agreement agreed between the DCMNR and the Department of Defence for the provision of Sea Fishery Protection Services by the Department, the Naval Service and the Air Corps.
- Employment of new technologies to add efficiency to the control effort through the automated monitoring of enforcement data and the exchange of information between control agencies.
- Implementation of quota management measures that optimise quota utilisation and the equitable distribution of fishing opportunities.
- Create a coherent structure of Fishery Enforcement in the ports.
- Maintenance of effective statistical databases of fishing activities.

Performance Indicators

- Statistical profiles of inspection activities and the results of these control operations.
- European Commission Audit results following audit missions to Ireland.
- Quota utilisation rates.
- EU Commission Compliance Scoreboard Report.

Strategic Objective FOUR

To ensure that the State's continually increasing regulatory obligations under European law in respect of fisheries control are met.

Strategy for Implementation

- Use the recently developed IFIS system for recording fishery statistics.
- Develop data transmission links between central and regional offices.

Performance Indicators

- Timely and accurate reports facilitating effective decision making in regard to fisheries management regimes.
- EU Commission Compliance Scoreboard Report.

Strategic Objective FIVE

To provide transparent, equitable and user-friendly licensing and registration arrangements for sea fishing boats and ensure compliance with EU-determined fishing fleet capacity limits and reporting requirements.

Strategy for Implementation

- Implementation of policy on sea-fishing boat licensing and registration and ensuring effective arrangements for timely processing of applications.

Performance Indicator

- Time taken to process sea-fishing boat licence and registration applications.

Coastal Zone Management, Infrastructure and Engineering Services

At present almost two thirds of the Irish population (63%) live within 10 kilometres of the coast and population is expected to continue to grow. This coupled with the increasing range of activities taking place in the marine coastal zone is likely to create ongoing requirements for improved coastal zone management and regulation.

Studies have suggested that approximately 27% of the national coastline is at risk from coastal erosion. There is a continuing need to use modern technology to more accurately map, quantify and manage the risks associated with coastal erosion.

The licensing and regulation of aquaculture, and the control of foreshore development and dumping at sea, are central elements of the management of the marine coastal zone. The role of the regulatory process will be to ensure that any development of the industry is founded on sustainable projects, appropriately located and carried on in accordance with high standards of environmental and ecological protection.

The foreshore also contains a range of other important economic activities, public infrastructure and recreational uses. Foreshore areas have experienced increasing development pressures over the recent past. Against this background, the regulatory processes under the Foreshore Acts must see to it that the appropriate balance is struck between competing demands on the State's foreshore resource, and between development needs and conservation imperatives.

There is a need also for a streamlining and updating of the law relating to foreshore management that takes account of the changed circumstances, and for the development of strategies and processes that support a more integrated and coordinated approach to planning for and managing the coastal zone. The developing concept of forward looking marine spatial planning holds particular potential in this area. Work in the latter area will be progressed taking account, in particular, of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Dumping at sea is now confined in the main to dredge spoil. The aim underlying the administration of the Dumping at Sea Acts 1996 and 2004 will be to ensure that such dumping is allowed only where it is established that the material is suitable for disposal at sea, that there is no suitable alternative for the disposal or use of the material, and that any dumping that is permitted takes place at a location, and subject to terms and conditions, that minimise environmental impacts.

Most marine engineering work is undertaken by the State or takes place on State property. The Engineering Division provides an advisory and design and construction service on all aspects of marine engineering, fishery harbours and coast protection and an advisory and inspectoral function on coastal zone developments and inland fisheries. The expansion of the Fishery Harbour Development Programme, the Coast Protection Programme, foreshore development generally and the aquaculture industry has led to increased demand for the services of the Division. A research based national strategy will be developed for the management of the risks from intensified coastal erosion and coastal flooding. The finalisation of this national Strategy will enable informed decision making on resource allocation and associated measures to address coastal erosion and coastal flooding.

Core Policy Goal

To support and manage the sustainable use and development of Ireland's marine territory.

Strategic Objective ONE (Aquaculture)

To ensure the efficient and effective regulation of aquaculture, so that the development of the sector is on a sustainable basis and in accordance with high standards of environmental protection.

Strategy for Implementation

- Timely and effective operation of the aquaculture licensing processes under the Fisheries Acts.
- Ongoing development of the processes for monitoring and regulation of licensed aquaculture.
- Ongoing implementation, in association with the Marine Institute, of the programme for minimising sea lice levels at marine finfish farms.
- Finalise implementation of the EU Shellfish Waters Directive (79/923), in respect of existing designated areas and further areas to be designated.

Performance Indicators

- Ministerial decisions on licence applications within six months generally, and eight months for more complex cases, provided that all required information is supplied in a timely manner and that other permitting aspects do not cause delay.
- Enhanced post-licensing procedures for monitoring, inspection and oversight of aquaculture operations, leading to high levels of compliance with licence conditions.
- Levels of lice recorded at fish farms by the Marine Institute's monitoring programme.
- Action plans for existing areas designated under the Shellfish Waters Directive finalised during 2005. Further areas designated and action plans in place also by end 2005.

Strategic Objective TWO (Foreshore)

To ensure the efficient and effective regulation of foreshore in the interests of its sustainable development, and to secure a fair commercial return from the State's foreshore estate.

Strategy for Implementation

- Effective and efficient operation of the authorisation (i.e. leasing, licensing and consent) processes under the Foreshore Acts, and effective participation as a statutory consultee in respect of local authority development covered by Part XV of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

- Consolidation and modernisation of the Foreshore Acts, taking account, inter alia, of the need for more integrated and coordinated approaches to the management of coastal areas.
- Preparation or updating of policy guidelines on specific uses of the coastal zone.

Performance Indicators

- Decisions within four to five months on strategic/priority applications, and ten to twelve months on other applications, provided that all required information is supplied in a timely manner and that other permitting aspects do not cause delay. Submissions to An Bord Pleanála within statutory deadlines.
- Proposals for amendment of Foreshore Acts to Government by Quarter 1, 2006.
- Updated policy guidelines on the development of offshore energy installations by end 2005. Strategic study on offshore aggregates extraction issues completed by 2007.

Strategic Objective THREE (Dumping at Sea)

To ensure the effective regulation of dumping at sea.

Strategy for Implementation

- Effective and expeditious operation of the permitting process controlling dumping at sea.
- Preparation of revised guidelines document on the permitting process, in light of the procedural and operational changes introduced by the Dumping at Sea (Amendment) Act 2004.

Performance Indicators

- Decisions on annual permits within four to five months, and on five yearly permits for port companies within six months, provided that all required information is supplied in a timely manner, and that other permitting aspects do not cause delay.
- Revised guidance material finalised by the end of 2005.

Strategic Objective FOUR (Coastal Zone Management)

To work, in the context of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, towards the development of more integrated and coordinated approaches to coastal zone management.

Strategy for Implementation

- Inclusion in legislation proposed to streamline and modernise the Foreshore Acts of any provisions that may be required to underpin the operation of coordinated and collaborative approaches by public bodies to the management of coastal areas.
- Preparation of a national coastal zone stocktaking and strategy/strategies, in accordance with the principles of the EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Performance Indicators

- Proposals for amendment of Foreshore Acts to Government by Quarter 1, 2006.
- Work on stocktaking and consequential strategy/strategies to be progressed as other priorities permit.

Strategy Objective FIVE

To develop a National Coastal Protection Strategy for management of the risk represented by coastal erosion and coastal flooding.

Strategy for Implementation

- Quantification of risks and assets at risk.
- Examination of range of policy options.

Performance Indicator

- Progress in strategy development.

Strategic Objective SIX

To provide technical advice to the Department and other public bodies in exercising stewardship over State foreshore and in protecting the aquatic environment.

Strategy for Implementation

- Development of standard of performance systems for inspectoral work to quantify and improve service delivery.
- Increased utilisation of electronic geographic information systems in aquaculture and foreshore areas.
- Ongoing engagement in the National implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

Performance Indicators

- Number of Engineering reports generated.
- Percentage inspection requests processed within specific time periods.

Strategic Objective SEVEN

To improve structures, operational efficiency and safety of the five Fishery Harbour Centres (Castletownbere, Dunmore East, Howth, Killybegs and Rossaveal) and other key fishery harbours (e.g. Clogherhead, Dingle, Greencastle and Kilmore Quay).

Strategy for Implementation

- Implementation of maintenance and development programmes subject to Exchequer and value for money (VFM) constraints.
- Ensuring that the Fishery Harbour Centres operate on a sound financial basis through best-practice financial management and cost recovery arrangements.
- The provision of facilities for e-auctioning, grading or distribution will be considered on a case by case basis when implementing the Fishery Harbours Development Programme.

Performance Indicators

- Progress, subject to Exchequer and VFM constraints, in implementation of priority fishery harbour development programmes.
- Fishery Harbour Centres Fund to break even by end 2005 in regard to operating costs and to contribute towards development costs of the five Fishery Harbour Centres.
- Proportion of property rentals at FHC's at prevailing commercial rates.

MARINE LEISURE AND RESEARCH

Marine Leisure

With the exception of the Inland Fisheries area, the Department currently has no direct role in the provision of Exchequer assistance in the Marine Tourism and Leisure area. The Department recognises that the current range of its activities in the marine area has the potential to impinge on marine tourism and by reason of the locus of its activities and its expertise across these activities, is well positioned to assist. It intends to consult closely with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and the Marine Institute early in the period of this Statement with a view to identifying any assistance within overall national tourism policy which the Department and the Institute can provide.

Core Policy Goal

The integration of a Departmental and Marine Institute contribution to marine and angling tourism and leisure within the overall national tourism policy framework with a view to adding value to the national effort.

Strategic Objective ONE

To ensure that marine and angling tourism and leisure policy development, including funding, is aligned and integrated with policy implementation on tourism, sport and leisure within the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and its agencies.

Strategy for Implementation

- The putting in place of a structured interaction with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism to ensure that investment in marine and angling tourism is assessed within the overall context of State support for tourism.
- The identification, in consultation with the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, of assistance which the Department may be able to provide across the range of its activities to support the national tourism effort.

Performance Indicators

- Measures to support marine and angling tourism firmly embedded within decision and strategy making on the national tourism effort
- Effective action by relevant business areas of the Department, subject to overriding sectoral priorities, to support the national tourism effort.

Marine Research

The Programme for Government commits to the establishment of a centre of excellence in Ireland in the area of Marine Research. The provision of a world class new headquarters for the Marine Institute in Galway and the equipping of the Institute with modern laboratories and research platforms creates the necessary infrastructure to support this objective.

The Department will ensure, through the Marine Institute, the continued delivery of coordinated national marine research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI) programmes that inform and underpin policy objectives and management and development strategies for the marine sector. The corporate governance by the Department of the Marine Institute includes the development of annual Performance Contracts.

In line with the principles of international declarations and agreements on global ocean governance, the Institute will continue to develop the integrated science and advice required to implement the ecosystem approach to ocean management.

Under the national Framework for Research, Development and Innovation, marine research has significant potential to contribute to the Knowledge Economy. This will entail the development of programmes of Marine Research and Innovation, as part of the National R&D Action Plans focused on key growth areas such as

Biodiscovery, Ocean Energy and Advanced Marine Technologies as well as supporting the competitiveness and innovation drives required in the traditional marine sectors.

Particular focus will be given to the promotion of horizontal Marine Research and Innovation measures under the EC 7th Framework Programme.

The objective is to build upon the excellent marine R&I infrastructures created in recent years, and develop and utilise our scientific capabilities and strategic geographic position in the context of emerging EU/global marine research/infrastructures initiatives.

Core Policy Goal

To deliver national marine research capability which supports the innovation and sustainable development of the marine sector and the protection of the marine environment.

Strategic Objective ONE

To promote Ireland as a centre of excellence for marine research and innovation.

Strategy for Implementation

- Ensure that the Marine Research and Innovation infrastructure is appropriately maintained and enhanced as a global level centre of excellence.
- Ensure that coherent and productive linkages and capacities are developed between the Marine Institute, other public bodies, the private sector and Third level institutions.

Performance Indicators

- International benchmarking against outputs of other marine Research and Innovation efforts.
- Extent of take-up and added value by Third Level/private sector.

Strategic Objective TWO

To ensure that the marine RTDI capabilities are developed in the context of national research and innovation strategies in support of the Knowledge Economy.

Strategy for Implementation

- Optimise the potential of marine Research and Innovations positioning within the national strategy on the research and innovation input to the development of a Knowledge Economy.

Performance Indicator

- Extent of research capability and competitive research projects in marine research and related funding.

Strategic Objective THREE

To ensure that the Marine Institute delivers effective and value-for-money marine research and development services to the Department and the marine sector.

Strategy for Implementation

- Ensure that the quality, timeliness and quantum of service delivery is assessed and benchmarked on a continuous basis.

Performance Indicators

- Quality delivery in accordance with the targets set in annual Performance Contracts.
- Effective corporate governance of the Marine Institute in place delivering 'joined-up' delivery of services consistent with clearly articulated policy/strategies.

INLAND FISHERIES

The Department has overall policy responsibility for the conservation, management, regulation and development of the inland fisheries resource. The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards are responsible for policy advice, coordination, services and implementation. The Loughs Agency is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) established under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 to provide the effective conservation, management, promotion and development of the fisheries and marine resources of the Foyle and Carlingford areas.

Apart from the economic value of the Irish inland fisheries sector, there is an ecological imperative to conserve and protect this unique resource in its own right. The resource makes a qualitative contribution to local life as a recreational activity and a traditional socio-economic contribution to local communities in terms of tourism-angling and commercial fishing for salmon, trout and eels.

The sector is characterised by a regionalised management structure with strong involvement by local interests in decision-making, complex issues of ownership, reliance on State funding and tensions between different stakeholders. Our fish stocks are a national asset, which must be conserved and protected, as well as being exploited as a resource, by all on an equitable and sustainable basis. Fish habitats are under threat particularly from a variety of adverse environmental and water quality pressures. The Government has accepted the scientific advice that continues to maintain that reductions in the overall fishing effort are required in order to sustain and rebuild stocks. For this reason, current Government policy has been designed to bring spawning escapement up to the level of the scientifically advised conservation limits by 2007. Only with full alignment of catch on the scientific advice can we have confidence that a sustainable management regime is in place. This calls for a critical examination of traditional activities and a focus on new thinking and innovative approaches to inland fisheries management in the future.

The main challenges are in giving order and clarity to objectives, decision-making and resource allocation. A change of focus and emphasis is warranted, necessitated by changing circumstances in the sector. A delicate balancing exercise is necessary between the needs of the coastal and rural communities who depend on fishing resources for their livelihood and the recreational users, including tourists.

Against this backdrop, the development and advancement of effective strategies to protect habitats and stocks, which attract a broad degree of consensus among stakeholders, is essential. There are also significant opportunities for synergistic benefits in coordinating these initiatives on a North-South basis. The Department is working towards publication and enactment of the Foyle Carlingford Fisheries Bill in order to equip the Foyle and Carlingford Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency) with the statutory powers to deliver on its full mandate.

The Minister's decision to conduct a fundamental review of the relationship between Government and the sector has been broadly welcomed and many organisations have participated in the review process. We will address the future role of Government in relation to the inland fisheries resource and the adequacy of the current model for the governance of the inland fisheries sector and implement appropriate new structures during the period of the review.

Core Policy Goal

To conserve the inland fisheries resource in its own right and to facilitate exploitation of the resource on an equitable and sustainable basis.

Strategic Objective ONE

Ensure the effective conservation, primarily through the fisheries boards, the Loughs Agency and the Marine Institute, of inland fish habitats and stocks.

Strategy for Implementation

- Ensure that the scientific advice and management practices are the best available and form an appropriate platform to achieve conservation, having regard to the precautionary principle.
- Ensure, through effective alignment of policies/services on the work of the appropriate authorities, the maintenance of high water quality as the essential supporting environment for aquatic life.
- Ensure the alignment of catch on the scientific advice by 2007, having regard to the socio-economic impact of consequently reduced commercial and recreational fishing efforts.

Performance Indicators

- Best practice scientific advice and supportive management measures.
- Contribution to high water quality, consistent with the WF Directive targets.
- Salmonids fishery managed in accordance with best scientific and management principles.

Strategic Objective TWO

Deliver effective legislative and regulatory framework and value for money management for the inland fisheries sector.

Strategy for Implementation

- Review the role of the State in the sector.
- Identify a best practice legislative and regulatory model for the sector.
- Reduce the role of the Department in the governance of the sector.

Performance Indicators

- Clearly identified and implemented new role for the State.
- More streamlined, effective and accountable structures, management and legislation in place.
- Reduced Departmental role, while maintaining best practice corporate governance of the inland fisheries structures (including the Loughs agency) supported by clear and comprehensive Performance Contracts.

EARTH AND HYDROCARBON RESOURCES

The Earth and Hydrocarbon Sector is promoted and regulated within the Petroleum Affairs and Exploration and Mining Divisions and the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) of the Department. The latter also fulfils an important research role within the Geoscience area.

The Department will assess, over the period of this Statement, how best to provide for the public policy roles of promotion and regulation of hydrocarbon and mining development and also how best to position the GSI to make a significant contribution to the Knowledge Economy. The exploitation of the data and skills bases achieved in the context of the Irish National Seabed Survey will be an important input to Irish competitiveness in this area over the next 2 years and beyond.

The strategy for implementation of a reform of the structures will be to identify and assess best practice models for the delivery of natural resource promotion and regulation as respective and quite distinct public policy roles. This will entail identifying whether the current juxtaposition of these roles within existing structures holds the potential for conflict in their implementation. The Department would wish to see this issue addressed and any necessary adjustments to current practices, processes or organisation carried through during the period of this Statement.

The scope for a geoscience input into national R&D Frameworks will be promoted through the current priorities structures and processes aimed at identifying and implementing priority programmes for research and innovation.

Minerals Exploration and Mining

The exclusive right to work all minerals except stone, gravel, sand and clay is vested in the Minister, and undertaken by private enterprise under permit. The Exploration and Mining Division (EMD) is charged with the promotion, regulation and policy development of minerals exploration and extraction. Current Prospecting Licences cover some 12,500 km² and are operated by multinationals and by small Irish companies. The main mines of metallic minerals are the three zinc and lead mines – Navan, Galmoy and Lisheen. These employ 1,200 persons in mainly rural areas with little alternative industry, and had a gross output in 2002 of €191 million.

Consultation with key stakeholders shows support for our strategy of seeking partnerships with outside agencies to exploit synergies. Our contribution to public-private partnership (PPP) activity can include data from exploration and publication and distribution of products.

The key challenge is to maintain a sustainable minerals industry in the face of economic uncertainties and increasing environmental regulation, especially EU driven. To meet this challenge requires:

- Making Ireland's fiscal and regulatory regime attractive for exploration, and promoting its attractiveness for inward investment.
- Ensuring the survival of existing metal mines and continued success of others against a background of uncertain metal prices and currency fluctuations.
- Providing a regulatory environment conducive to the development of new discoveries.
- Addressing the legacy of old mine sites, one of which is in State ownership.
- Influencing EU policy on sustainable use of natural resources and regulation of the sector, to ensure that it maintains the competitiveness of the European mining industry while having due regard for avoiding or mitigating impacts on the environment.

- Ability to act flexibly and quickly in a rapidly changing business environment, recognising the requirements of our key external stakeholders: operating mining companies; developers of new mines; exploration companies; major shareholders in these sectoral companies; and the EU institutions.

Core Policy Goal

To stimulate discovery of economic mineral deposits and to maximise the contribution of the mining sector to the national economy, with due regard to its social and environmental impact.

Strategic Objective ONE

Maximise the level of exploration for minerals.

Strategy for Implementation

- Promote and market Ireland's attractiveness for exploration and development.
- Maintain existing exploration effort.
- Provide free access to all publicly available electronic data sets held by EMD.
- Deliver e-enabled service where feasible and appropriate.

Performance Indicators

- Number of publications on schedule.
- Number of Prospecting Licences held.
- Achieve exploration expenditure in Ireland @ 0.2% of world budget.

Strategic Objective TWO

Equitable permitting regime for prospecting (Prospecting Licences) and mining (State Mining Facilities – leases and licences).

Strategy for Implementation

- Maintain an efficient and effective Prospecting Licence regime.
- Continue to negotiate State Mining Facilities based on an individual circumstances until alternative system is put in place under updated legislation.

Performance Indicators

- Trend in receipts from Prospecting Licences (PLs) and State Mining Facilities (SMFs) against budget and previous year.
- Amount and proportion of revenue from rents and royalties received on time.
- Number and proportion of SMF applications processed within agreed time scales.
- Proportion of PL applications, reviews and renewals processed to decision within 4 months.
- Comparative ranking by client companies of Ireland against other countries.

Strategic Objective THREE

To require and facilitate sustainable development in the minerals sector.

Strategy for Implementation

- Foster, promote and regulate the sector.
- Consolidate and update the Minerals Development Acts.
- Actively work to ensure a realistic EU policy for sustainable development of minerals.
- Liaise with other Government Departments, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Local Authorities and other stakeholders in their policy development.
- Coordinate permitting processes with those of Local Authorities and the EPA.
- Partnerships with GSI and with external agencies to exploit synergies.
- Liaison with local communities.
- Address the need to mitigate the environmental problems from closed mines.
- Monitor performance under State Mining Facilities.

Performance Indicators

- Updated legislation in place 2006.
- Proportion of Irish proposals taken up by EU and other international bodies.
- Number of effective responses within time frame.
- Number of complaints and expressions of satisfaction from stakeholders.
- Quality and number of joint products or outcomes with GSI and other State agencies.
- Proportion of proposals submitted by public bodies which are examined.

Petroleum Exploration Development and Production

The importance of the Department continuing to promote, regulate and monitor exploration for and development of oil and gas onshore and offshore Ireland must be seen in the context of the challenges posed by the need to safeguard security of energy supply. This involves the promotion of acreage, either through open access or by a Round system, agreeing appropriate work programmes and the allocation of acreage to exploration companies under various types of licences.

The Department acts as coordinator of all the State's requirements relating to the operations of exploration and production (E&P) companies in Ireland. As licensing authority it is concerned to ensure that the hydrocarbon potential is effectively evaluated and exploited and that an inclusive and effective safety regime and appropriate management systems are in place. It must be satisfied also that all operations are conducted with due regard to the protection of the environment, in accordance with agreed national and international standards and procedures. It promotes and coordinates investment by the E&P industry in infrastructure, applied research and joint-industry projects related to all aspects of oil and gas exploration and production in Ireland.

The challenge at this point and for the foreseeable future is to sustain interest in the Irish offshore with a view to establishing the presence of hydrocarbons on a significant scale. This will require continuous strong promotion (of which the 2003/2004 Porcupine Basin Licensing Initiative is a specific example), stability and competitiveness of the fiscal and licensing framework. A related objective is to maximise the potential opportunities for the use of Irish goods and services on a value for money basis. The combined licensing and taxation terms recognise the operational characteristics of the sector while the regime as a whole achieves a risk/reward balance which reflects Ireland's circumstances and acknowledges the realities of competition for internationally mobile exploration/production investment.

Core Policy Goal

To maximise the benefits to the national economy from exploration for, and production of, indigenous oil and gas resources, while ensuring that activities are conducted safely and with due regard to their impact on the environment and other land/sea users.

Strategic Objective ONE

To maximise the level of petroleum exploration and production activities in Ireland and optimise the returns to the State.

Strategy for Implementation

- Develop and maintain licensing and fiscal terms which secure optimal levels of exploration, development and production activity and balance the interests of the State and the E&P sector.
- Seek commitments from E&P companies to provide opportunities in the sector for participation by Irish business/institutions.
- Maximise knowledge of Ireland's petroleum resource and the environment in which the E&P industry operates e.g. through the Petroleum Exploration & Production Promotion & Support joint Government/Industry programme.

Performance Indicators

- The level, quality and geographic spread of petroleum exploration and production in Ireland, taking account of external factors and trends.
- The number of exploration and production companies already, or actively considering, operating in Ireland, taking account of external factors and trends.
- Share of gas market supplied from indigenous sources.
- Level and trends in income to the State from leases, licences (fees/rentals, royalties, tax) and data sales.
- Continuing improvement of the knowledge-base regarding the national petroleum resource.
- Enhanced level of local involvement in petroleum E&P activities through support for training, scholarship, equipment purchase, support infrastructure etc. through the Petroleum and Exploration Production Promotion and Support Programme.

Strategic Objective TWO

To ensure that exploration, development and production operations are carried out both efficiently and effectively and in accordance with Good Industry Practice, including with regard to health, safety and the environment.

Strategy for Implementation

- Review, update and modernise the legislative framework.
- Establish and maintain effective and efficient State and regulatory processes including health, safety and environmental aspects.
- Periodic review and application of goal-setting regulations in relation to exploration, development and production operations in offshore Ireland.
- Progress the recommendations in the Offshore Safety Report.

Performance Indicators

- Plan of Development approvals issued within target timeframe.
- Targets for publication of updated Rules and Procedures for Production Operations.
- Target of end-2005 for Heads of Bill to update Continental Shelf Act 1968 achieved.

Strategic Objective THREE

To maximise the area of Continental Shelf under Irish jurisdiction.

Strategy for Implementation

- Collect and analyse all relevant geophysical and bathymetric data required for an extended continental shelf claim beyond 200 nautical miles (essentially complete but kept under review as new data becomes available from time to time).
- Prepare a submission defining the outer limits of the extended continental shelf in accordance with the Scientific & Technical Guidelines of the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UNCLCS).
- At the same time, progress multilateral discussions with neighbouring States regarding disputed areas (in coordination with Department of Foreign Affairs).

Performance Indicators

- Progress in multilateral negotiations with neighbouring States.
- Nature of submission (partial, joint or complete).
- Target date for submission met.
- UNCLCS recommendations to approve outer limits as submitted.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND

Because of the specialist nature of its services, the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) draws up a separate Statement of Strategy. This is a summary outline of key strategic issues.

The GSI contributes to sustainable development and environmental protection by providing decision-makers and stakeholders with best available geological information from comprehensive and up-to-date national geological databases. GSI does this by

- providing easily accessible and accurate geological information,
- supporting sustainable development, environmental protection and the National Development Plan,
- mapping Ireland's earth resources, and
- promoting public understanding of the role of GSI and geology in Irish society.

Businesses, public bodies, local authorities and citizens increasingly require information and knowledge of geology as the foundation for infrastructure, the pathway for the migration of contaminants, and the source of aggregates, minerals and groundwater resources. In addition the information requirement can relate to developmental projects or the heritage and history of the landscape. Thus, there is a need for a national store of existing geological information and knowledge to provide a large-scale overview, which will help guide the location and design of future developments in the context also of the National Spatial Strategy.

The GSI, as a National Archive agency, exists to provide geological information and knowledge. Its primary task is to acquire and maintain the currency and validity of geoscience data in order to provide timely, authoritative, impartial and up to date information and advice to assist relevant sectors of the economy to develop and prosper. GSI will serve its customer needs through a range of operational programmes and support services. It will contribute to developing the national infrastructure through the maps GSI produces, as well as its wide range of databases.

Future components will include web based mapping and an integrated spatial database and will be progressively completed in line with available resources.

Key Strategies

- Delivering geological information to all customers, in particular, the acquisition of information and the production of maps and reports used directly by a wide range of external customers, through the continuation of long-term surveying programmes (Bedrock Geology, Quaternary Geology, Marine Geology and Geophysics).
- Completing the National Seabed Survey project in 2005 to map the very extensive Irish seabed area; and maximising the value derived from the survey by producing a series of topographic and geological maps of the seabed, suitable for studying seabed resources (both mineral and biological), natural hazards and the seabed environment; work with the Marine Institute to develop proposals for further work.
- Providing solutions to specific customer needs, supporting their various activities and helping to build their respective databases through applied project-oriented programmes (Groundwater, Minerals, Geotechnical, Geological Heritage and Landscape Geology) through continued cooperation with other bodies as appropriate.
- Providing high-level Information Technology, Cartography, Central Technical Services and Administration, Information and Marketing support to the above programmes.
- Supporting the Government's action plan for implementing the Information Society in Ireland through the Document Management System so that information is accessible in an easy and interactive way.

- Expanding the range of electronic services available, including web-based map publishing, catalogues of metadata and online invoicing.

Key Performance Indicators

- Completion of maps (depth to bedrock, contour map depth, bedrock contour map) for Geotechnical Database Programme for major cities.
- Complete quaternary geology maps for Counties Louth, Westmeath and Offaly in both standard format and customised to specific needs. Quaternary maps for Counties Tipperary, Sligo and Kerry digitised and available for sale to clients in both standard format and customised to specific needs.
- Completion of Groundwater Protection Scheme for Co. Donegal. Initiation and commencement of new projects in Counties Cavan, Wexford and other counties.
- Completion of aquifer map and report. Updating of databases.
- In respect of Minerals Programme, completion of Ireliothos Phase 1. Completion of Aggregates Potential Maps of Co. Cavan and other Local Authorities. Update databases.
- In regard to the Bedrock Programme complete prototype map of 1:50,000 for County Wexford, 1:50,000 map of Co. Monaghan, 1: 500,000 bedrock map in paper and GIS versions, 100k seamless geology to 1:50,000 base maps, 1:50,000 Burren Geotourist map, 1:50,000 for Co. Dublin. Start 1:50,000 for Co. Waterford. Updating Bedrock databases.
- Development of Educational, Geotourist and IGH products in the IGH Programme. Continued work on Copper Coast and other Geotourism projects.
- Completion of Phase 1 of National Seabed Survey.

Section 3: **Crosscutting Priorities**

The Department is involved in a wide range of cross Departmental interactions on social, economic and regulatory policy as well as on public service modernisation and change.

In addition to the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Finance, and the Office of the Attorney General and Parliamentary Counsel, the Department has important links with other Departments and offices on a range of bilateral and cross Departmental matters.

Our own remits underscore the need for effective team working within the Department on crosscutting issues and the development of collective thinking on issues such as regulatory policy frameworks, Corporate Governance, Research Development and Innovation, economic infrastructure, and the allocation and utilisation of public resources. We will engage in a process of ongoing review to ensure quality contributions to integrated policy delivery at all levels.

Areas of particular cross-Departmental focus over the period of this Strategy Statement include the following:

European Union

We will continue to work with all players within the overall strategic approach to EU to deliver on national policy priorities including the Lisbon Agenda. The Department's businesses means that we are pivotally linked to EU frameworks in economic, transport, energy, communications and environmental policy, the Common Fisheries Policy, food safety, State aid and competition and regulatory policies. We will continue to contribute to the work of cross Departmental fora on EU matters and the Cabinet Committee as well as providing timely and quality briefing to the Oireachtas Scrutiny Committee. Underpinned by our sectoral objectives and strategies, our goal is to position Ireland to benefit from, and contribute to, EU policies through robust and proactive engagement and effective working relations with Member States and EU Institutions.

Research, Development and Innovation

In support of the national competitiveness and knowledge economy goals, our objective is to deliver R & D capabilities and programmes which are coherent with overall national targets for the knowledge economy and deliver on EU and international opportunities. Optimising the opportunities for Irish research and development in the context of the EC 7th Framework Programme is a key priority and is reflected in our sectoral goals and strategies. Our own strategies will link into developments in the educational system in terms of developing capability and capacity at all levels.

We have established an internal forum to oversee a cohesive approach to progressing the sectoral R & D priorities (Energy, ICTs, digital, marine and geosciences). We will continue to work with the Interdepartmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation and the Cabinet Committee and the Chief Science Advisor in implementation of the National R & D Action Plan, the overall Science and Technology Agenda and the EC 7th Framework Programme Opportunities 2006-2010. The development and implementation of national marine and energy R & D strategies in 2005 will set the objectives in these sectors for the period.

Infrastructure

We will continue to actively participate with other key Departments in the work of the cross Departmental Group on Infrastructure and the Cabinet Committee on national infrastructure priorities. We are reviewing capital needs to underpin policy goals in relation to communications, energy, maritime transport and coastal infrastructure 2006-2009 in the context of the new National Development Plan.

Sustainability/Environmental Integration

Our sectoral strategies reflect the need to integrate environmental considerations with sustainable growth objectives. We will continue to collaborate in the delivery of the National Climate Change Strategy and sustainable development goals at national and EU level.

Transport

We are working with the Department of Transport through agreed mechanisms to ensure that Maritime Transport policy objectives are reflected in integrated transport policy frameworks. The integration dimensions require coherence within and between transport modes, complementary with other Government policies (e.g. sustainable development and national spatial strategy) and common approaches to EU policy developments. We will also develop closer links with transport policy in relation to energy efficiency imperatives.

Emergency Planning

The Department works through the nationally coordinated structures to contribute to and support national emergency planning and preparedness with particular reference to Communications, Energy Infrastructure and Supply and Marine Emergency.

Better Regulation

We are contributing to the work of the Better Regulation Group which is overseeing the implementation of the action programme to give effect to the core principles of Better Regulation set out in the Government's White Paper. The mainstreaming of Regulatory Impact Analysis across the Department's business areas is a key priority and progressive rollout of RIA will be reflected in annual business plans from 2006.

North/South

We are working with the Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Foreign Affairs and other Departments to support and enhance all-island cooperation within overall political and institutional frameworks. The areas of existing and potential all-island cooperation are considerable ranging from inland fisheries, energy, telecommunications, broadcasting, marine and seafood, geoscience, marine search and rescue and maritime transport issues. The creation of the all-island electricity market by 2007 is a key objective. We will maintain the momentum of cooperation on energy matters generally including the progressive building of Energy R, D & D programmes and the sustainable energy agenda. Increased cooperation in the telecommunications sector during the period will include enhanced links between the telecoms regulators.

Jointly with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, we will oversee and support the operation of the Loughs Agency, the North/South Body responsible for the development of inland fisheries and marine resources in Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough. Following the publication and enactment of the Foyle Carlingford Fisheries Bill in 2005 the full rollout of the Agency's functions in relation to aquaculture and marine tourism will be jointly progressed.

Overall we will continue to actively seek out and develop opportunities for North/South cooperation both within and outside of the formal North/South institutional framework established under the Good Friday Agreement.

Disability

The Department is committed to continuous improvement of the accessibility of its services as an organisation and across its Agencies and sectors including broadcasting, communications and maritime transport.

Particular priority will continue to be given by the Department to ICT accessibility and issues relating to the built environment. We will continue to consult regularly with the National Disability Authority on accessibility issues over the period 2005-2007.

Data Strategy

In line with Government strategy and the National Statistics Board's own objective to develop the Irish statistical system to support evidenced-based policy making, the Department is developing an integrated data strategy 2006 -2008. The data strategy will be a key part of the Department's information and knowledge management strategies as well as sectoral business planning.

Following completion (with CSO assistance) of the current evaluation of data holdings in the Department and Agencies, a Data Strategy Committee is being established, bringing together data users and producers (including where appropriate, our Agencies, and outside expertise) to oversee development and implementation of the strategy over the period. We will also develop systematic linkages between data held with the Department and with our Agencies and other relevant Departments.

Procurement Policy

In line with the overall commitment to reform public service procurement policy and practice, the Department, working with the National Procurement Policy Unit, is rolling out a Procurement Action Plan. The Plan, driven by the Procurement Unit, is designed to build organisational capacity and to strategically manage procurement to maximise measurable savings and efficiency dividends in relation to expenditure on goods and services. We will continue to work with the Department of Finance in ongoing development of the Department's Procurement Action Plan which includes the targeted use of cost effective technologies to deliver e-procurement effectively. Value for money outcomes and improvements in procurement procedures and practices will be reported on in the Department's Annual Report.

Partnership

The Partnership process supports and underpins the change management agenda and will continue to play a pivotal role in overseeing delivery on Sustaining Progress Action Plan commitments as well as in relation to the Decentralisation Programme. The well established Central Partnership Group and the Partnership Groups dealing with specific issues will continue to make a positive and committed contribution to change in all senses throughout the Department. The working of the Partnership process is being externally reviewed with a view to further enhancing the ethos and practice of partnership across the Department. A key deliverable identified by the Partnership Group for 2005 is greater involvement and participation by staff in the Partnership Groups, an improved communication strategy and an expanded working agenda. The enhanced involvement of our staff based in the regions will be given particular priority over the period of this Statement.

Section 4: Corporate Governance and Regulatory Policy

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE OF STATE BODIES

The Department is responsible for a wide range of public bodies, including commercial and non-commercial State bodies. Our governance of these bodies centres on our relationship with each of the bodies, and our internal procedures to manage our corporate governance responsibilities.

The enhancement of corporate governance standards, practices and procedures is a key priority for the Minister and the Department. We have completed a review of internal procedures and capacity in the Department to manage our corporate governance functions and we are implementing recommended changes. These include improving and streamlining processes in and across relevant divisions and building capabilities and expertise to meet the growing challenge of ensuring effective corporate governance of the bodies.

We are also progressing a fundamental review of corporate governance issues in relation to the commercial State bodies encompassing shareholder mandates, performance monitoring and reporting, and legislative and financial issues. In the case of non-commercial State bodies we are putting in place performance contracts that underpin service delivery and provide for systematic monitoring of performance. We will continue to contribute to ongoing central debates on governance structures and continued reform of corporate governance at all levels.

Sectoral strategies for the governance of individual bodies are set out in Section 2. The crosscutting strategy for the overall management of the corporate governance function throughout the Department is set out below.

Strategic Objective

To enhance and strengthen the standards, practices, procedures and skills in the Department for the corporate governance of commercial and non-commercial State bodies and agencies.

Strategy for Implementation

- Complete the review of Corporate Governance issues in relation to commercial State-sponsored bodies and implement recommendations aimed at enhancing performance monitoring and reporting.
- Review the framework and scope of performance contracts with the non-commercial bodies.
- Continue to contribute to central developments on governance structures.

Performance Indicators

- A robust corporate governance framework and skilled resources in place in the Department providing for efficient and effective governance of the commercial and non-commercial State bodies and agencies.
- Effective and timely reporting by the commercial bodies.
- Performance contracts in place with the non-commercial bodies.

REGULATORY POLICY

Regulatory policy is a core element of Departmental Strategy given the extent of our remit across a significant range of regulated sectors. Our overall approach to regulation takes account of the obvious differences between the sectors while reflecting the common principles inherent in regulation. Our approach is set against the backdrop of national, EU and wider international policy developments. The sectoral strategies (Section 2) cover the regulatory agenda specific to the different business areas.

Strategic Objective

To ensure effective regulation of the sectors under our remit.

Strategy for Implementation

- To maintain sectoral regulatory frameworks in accordance with the White Paper *Regulating Better*.
- Review and development of effective regulatory frameworks to address the management and allocation of, and access to, public resources (spectrum, fisheries, foreshore, offshore and mineral resources).
- Contributing to central developments in relation to regulatory policies and practices and more structured collaboration and consultation with other Departments and Agencies on regulatory policy issues.

Performance Indicators

- Effective regulatory frameworks in place.
- Enhanced arrangements for regulation and management of public resources.
- Quality of contribution and collaboration leading to enhanced policies and practices.

Section 5: Corporate Management, Development and Modernisation

The public service modernisation agenda together with decentralisation pose significant challenges for the Department over the period. We will continue to progress the change management agenda which aims to deliver on all strands of modernisation in an integrated way. This modernisation programme is being allied to delivery of the Government's decentralisation programme. The Department's Action Plan under Sustaining Progress and its successor will continue to be the framework for delivery of change. We are also supporting the non commercial State bodies to deliver on their own modernisation plans underpinned by a Change Management and Innovation Fund. Enterprise-wide risk strategies will be implemented in 2005 and regularly reviewed.

The period to 2007 is one of transition during which we aim to transform the Department into a fully knowledge based organisation characterised by devolved responsibility and accountability, continuous improvement and innovation, and best practice in financial and human resources management, and technology. Business continuity and risk mitigation strategies, in the context of decentralisation, will be allied with ongoing review of organisational structures and business processes. These reviews will consider the need to shift the organisation from operational and service functions and enable the Department to focus on policy delivery, programme evaluation and corporate governance and regulation.

Organisational strategies will focus on resource deployment and budgetary planning, and the use of information technology to achieve greater productivity, efficiency and flexibility. The quality of customer service delivery, both external and internal customers, will continue to be given priority attention. Roll-out of the Departmental Knowledge Management Strategy is a priority for the period.

The Corporate Divisions work together to ensure that the Department is equipped to deliver effectively on its wide ranging remits. In addition to providing specialist support and services, they also aim to be the drivers of change through better financial planning, evaluation, knowledge management, training and development, information technology and HR strategies as well as overseeing the Action Plan commitments and implementing the decentralisation programme.

High Level Goal

To position the Department as a knowledge based, inclusive and results focused organisation, operating to the highest public service values and standards of service delivery characterised by continuous improvement and innovation.

To achieve this goal by 2007 we have a range of high level objectives and strategic actions under key organisational themes. These are underpinned by annual Business Plans and reflect our Sustaining Progress Action Plan commitments.

Strategic Objective ONE: Knowledge, Change and Innovation

To complete transition to a fully knowledge based organisation by 2007 which ensures that business processes are structured and staff are empowered to deliver key priorities, outputs and outcomes.

Strategic Actions

- Progressive roll-out of the Knowledge Management plan to target across business areas 2005-2007.
- Implementation of Training and Development Strategy 2005-2007.

- Business process and structural reviews undertaken to ensure business continuity in the context of decentralisation and to move from operational to policy delivery.
- Implementation to target of Sustaining Progress Action Plan modernisation commitments.
- Introduction of a Fund in 2006 to foster change management and innovation in the Department.

Performance Indicators

- Targets for Knowledge Management Plan met quarterly and knowledge management embedded as a core element of organisational practice by 2006.
- Annual Training and Development priorities achieved measured by levels of participation and evaluation of organisational and individual performance and capability.
- Business process reviews undertaken and structural changes implemented.
- Change Management Fund in place underpinning innovation.

Strategic Objective TWO: Planning and Evaluation

To support organisational effectiveness and evidence based policy making with robust business and financial planning, evaluation and foresight.

Strategic Actions

- Timely delivery of annual/multi-annual business and strategic planning by Divisions and the Department.
- Progressive development of policy analysis, evaluation and foresight capabilities.
- Management Information Framework comprehensively rolled out 2005/2006 and delivering real time Management Information and a Key Performance Indicator Framework in support of strategic planning and reporting.
- Data Strategy in support of evidence based policy making developed 2005 and fully implemented 2006.

Performance Indicators

- Annual Business Plans (including risk assessment) completed and quarterly reviews to schedule. Annual Reports on outputs and strategic results to schedule.
- Numbers of MScs in public policy analysis and other up-skilling achieved and utilised in key areas.
- Policy evaluation and foresight exercises undertaken and implemented.
- Benefits realisation of Management Information Framework in terms of enhanced business and strategic planning and quality of KPIs.
- Data Strategy 2006-2008 finalised and statistical data systems and indicators in place 2006.

Strategic Objective THREE: Value for Money, Efficiency and Effectiveness

To ensure deployment and prioritisation of financial resources to best effect delivering agreed outputs and value for money.

Strategic Actions

- Build best practice financial management capability systems and culture which delivers results and outputs and underpins accountability.
- Implement Procurement Action Plan 2005 to deliver strategic procurement practice and annual efficiency dividends.

- Continuous improvement in internal financial management and control procedures.
- Risk Management Plan/Risk Register completed and integrated with business planning by 2006.
- Asset Management Strategy rolled out and reviewed annually.
- Strategic Audit Plan 2004-2007 implemented to schedule.
- Performance Contracts linked to outputs in place for NCSSBs in 2005.
- Strategy for income generation/user charging 2005-2007 in place.

Performance Indicators

- Current and Capital expenditure and Appropriations-in-Aid to annual target and profiles.
- Timely and comprehensive financial information monthly and quarterly.
- Procurement savings and efficiencies delivered annually.
- Findings of C & A G and internal audit reports.
- Results of evaluation of internal financial control procedures.
- Assets Register complete 2005/reviewed annually.
- Expenditure Reviews delivered to target and implemented 2005-2007.

Strategic Objective FOUR: Human Resources

To deliver integrated HR Strategic actions and procedures which support the motivation and well being of staff and underpin organisational performance and continuous improvement.

Strategic Actions

- New HR Strategy 2005-2007 aligned to business planning and training and development which supports transition to knowledge based organisation, meets decentralisation challenges and reflects legislative developments in recruitment and performance management.
- HR and IR services and policies in place 2005 to ensure smooth implementation of transfers (internal and external) in the context of decentralisation.
- Strategic HRMS implemented in line with central timeframe 2005/2007.
- Devolution of responsibilities and accountability to managers underpinned by specialist support.
- Performance Management and Development System fully embedded, quality assured and enhanced.
- Equality and diversity and disability goals met through continued implementation of Equality and Disability Action Plans to 2007.

Performance Indicators

- Effectiveness of HR strategy and procedures as measured by organisational performance and satisfaction.
- Compliance with PMDS cycle and Quality Assurance Standards linked to Business Plans.
- Decentralisation-related staff moves 2005-2007 achieved efficiently in line with business continuity, priorities and staff needs.
- Percentage of IR issues resolved each year/industrial relations climate.
- Improved individual and organisational performance under new performance management codes and procedures.
- Equality, diversity and disability services as benchmarked by NDA/Equality Authority.

Strategic Objective FIVE: Decentralisation

The efficient and effective implementation of the Government's decentralisation programme in line with central developments, risk management, business continuity, service delivery and staff needs.

Strategic Actions

- Implementation of the Department's Decentralisation Action Plan 2005-2007 taking account of, and contributing to, central developments.
- Organisational and business specific Risk Assessment and Risk Management Strategies in place 2005 and reviewed regularly.
- Delivering effective project management supported by internal structures, Divisional teamwork and Partnership and Departmental Council, reporting to the Management Committee and to Ministers.
- Effective liaison with OPW, Department of Finance and the Government's Decentralisation Implementation Group.
- Alignment of decentralisation programme (Phase 1 and subsequent phases) with change and modernisation objectives.
- Communication and Consultation Strategies in place.
- Ensuring delivery of Action Plans by Agencies (BIM, SEI, CFB).

Performance Indicators

- Business continuity and service delivery maintained and risk identified and mitigated.
- Staff transfers (external and internal) achieved in line with individual needs and business requirements.
- Targets met for site acquisition and high quality accommodation facilities provision in line with centrally agreed principles.
- Business continuity, service delivery maintained/enhanced.
- Goals of Department Action Plan met.
- Phase 1 of decentralisation programme achieved to schedule for Department and Agencies.

Strategic Objective SIX: Openness, Transparency and Accountability

To deliver the highest standards of openness, transparency and financial and administrative accountability.

Strategic Actions

- Implement commitments under Customer Service Action Plan and Charter 2004-2007.
- Internal Customer Charter in place 2005.
- Ongoing provisions of quality information to staff, the public and the stakeholders on the Departmental website (internet/intranet), meeting the spirit as well as the letter of the FOI Act.
- Meeting our Oireachtas Scrutiny and Accountability requirements on a timely and comprehensive basis.
- Ongoing review to ensure open, fair and impartial decision making processes informed by the Ombudsman, Information Commissioner and Data Protection Commissioner.
- Partnership Review carried out and recommendations implemented 2005 to enhance the effectiveness of the Partnership process.
- Regular review and enhancement of public consultative processes with stakeholders taking account of Better Consultation guidelines.

Performance Indicators

- Targets in Customer Service Action Plan met; levels of satisfaction of internal and external customers as measured by surveys.
- Reports of Comptroller and Auditor General, the Ombudsman/Information Commissioner.
- Trends in FOI requests.
- Availability/accessibility of information on website.
- Partnership process strengthened as demonstrated by extent of staff participation and quality outcomes.
- Intranet and internet improvements/standards of user friendly content.
- Deadlines and requirements of Oireachtas Committees met in full.
- Effectiveness of consultation processes/stakeholder satisfaction.

Strategic Objective SEVEN: Technology

To provide high quality stable and secure Information and Communications infrastructure, technologies and systems in support of eGovernment and the Department's sectoral and organisational priorities.

Strategic Actions

- Develop new ICT Strategy 2006-2008 which will build on investment to date, consolidate and improve capabilities, e-services and systems.
- Undertake project reviews 2005 and each forward year to measure benefits realisation and to optimise impact of new technologies and systems in terms of efficiency, productivity and customer service.
- Disaster Recovery, Security and Risk Management Strategies fully rolled out.

Performance Indicators

- Security and stability of ICT environment.
- New ICT strategy implemented to benchmarks over the period.
- Compliance with IT policies and maintenance of standards for infrastructure and services.
- Organisational productivity and efficiency as measured in project reviews.
- Utilisation by customers of e-services.
- Internal customer satisfaction trends.
- Percentage of Helpdesk calls resolved within agreed service standards.

Strategic Objective EIGHT: Work Environment

To provide a high quality, safe working environment and the highest standards of service delivery to Ministers, Secretary General and staff at all Department offices.

Strategic Actions

- To ensure provision (with OPW) of quality accommodation for Department's decentralised staff in Clonakilty and Drogheda by 2007.
- To provide, over the period, required facilities and equipment at all offices together with maintenance and refurbishment programmes to target and to budget.
- To fully implement new procurement policy procedures and practices by end 2005 delivering better value for money and annual efficiency dividends.

- To fully meet obligations under Health and Safety Acts.
- To audit/update Health and Safety Statements 2005/2006 for all Department locations.
- Effective and timely services for Minister, Minister of State and coordination of Department external reporting requirements.

Performance Indicators

- Decentralised facilities in place in line with agreed standards and principles and to budget in 2007.
- Accommodation, equipment and maintenance programmes delivered to target and to budget for all Department offices.
- Savings and efficiency dividends of procurement policy and practices.
- Compliance with Health and Safety Standards and obligations as measured by internal and Health and Safety Authority reports.
- Compliance with external deadlines and Ministerial satisfaction in regard to service delivery.

Strategic Objective NINE: Better Regulation

To deliver, in association with line Divisions, the Department's priority legislative and regulatory reform programme 2005-2007 in line with commitments under the Programme for Government and the White Paper "Regulating Better".

Strategic Actions

- Delivery to schedule of Bills under the legislative programme 2005-2007.
- Progressive Statute Law Revision, repeal, consolidation and restatement.
- Transposition of EU Directives to deadline.
- Regulatory Impact Analysis pilot project undertaken 2005/2006 and RIA mainstreamed 2006-2007.
- Continued capacity building to underpin evidence based policy making supported by training and recruitment strategies.

Performance Indicators

- Number of Bills enacted and Statutory Instruments made.
- EU Directives transposed 2005-2007.
- Level of compliance with the 6 principles of "Better Regulation" as measured against the Action Programme.
- Regulatory Impact Analysis fully mainstreamed across Department by 2007.
- Internal capacity developed underpinning RIA, quality legislative delivery and evidence based policy making.

Section 6: Consultation, Implementation and Review

Consultation

The development of this Statement of Strategy for the Department involved engagement with Ministers, with staff and consultation with the agencies and other stakeholders.

The preparation by Heads of Functions, in conjunction with their staff, of sectoral analysis, goals and strategies was informed by consultations with other Departments and the Department's agencies. The process was overseen by the Management Committee which will review progress on a quarterly basis with the Minister and Minister of State and in consultation with Heads of Function.

The Department advertised a call for views in December 2004 in the national newspapers and on the Website. Over 40 submissions were received ranging across the Department's sectoral areas. A list of submissions is at Appendix D and the submissions received can be accessed on the Department's website www.dcmnr.ie. This public consultation initiative will be built on with stakeholders over the lifetime of the Statement as set out in our Quality Customer Service Action Plan and in line with the Government's guidelines for better consultation by the Public Service.

Implementation and Review

The goals and strategies set out in this Statement represent a challenging agenda up to 2007. They underline the need for a rigorous approach to resource deployment and prioritisation. We will ensure the necessary flexibility to respond to change but also to lead change in our sectors and to deliver on key Government and Ministerial objectives and priorities.

The Statement of Strategy is the framework for the Divisional Business Plans which set the annual targets for each of our business areas taking a multi-annual perspective.

The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) is firmly aligned to the Divisional Business Planning process. Each annual PMDS cycle will ensure that individual performance is measured by reference to agreed targets and that associated training and development needs are met.

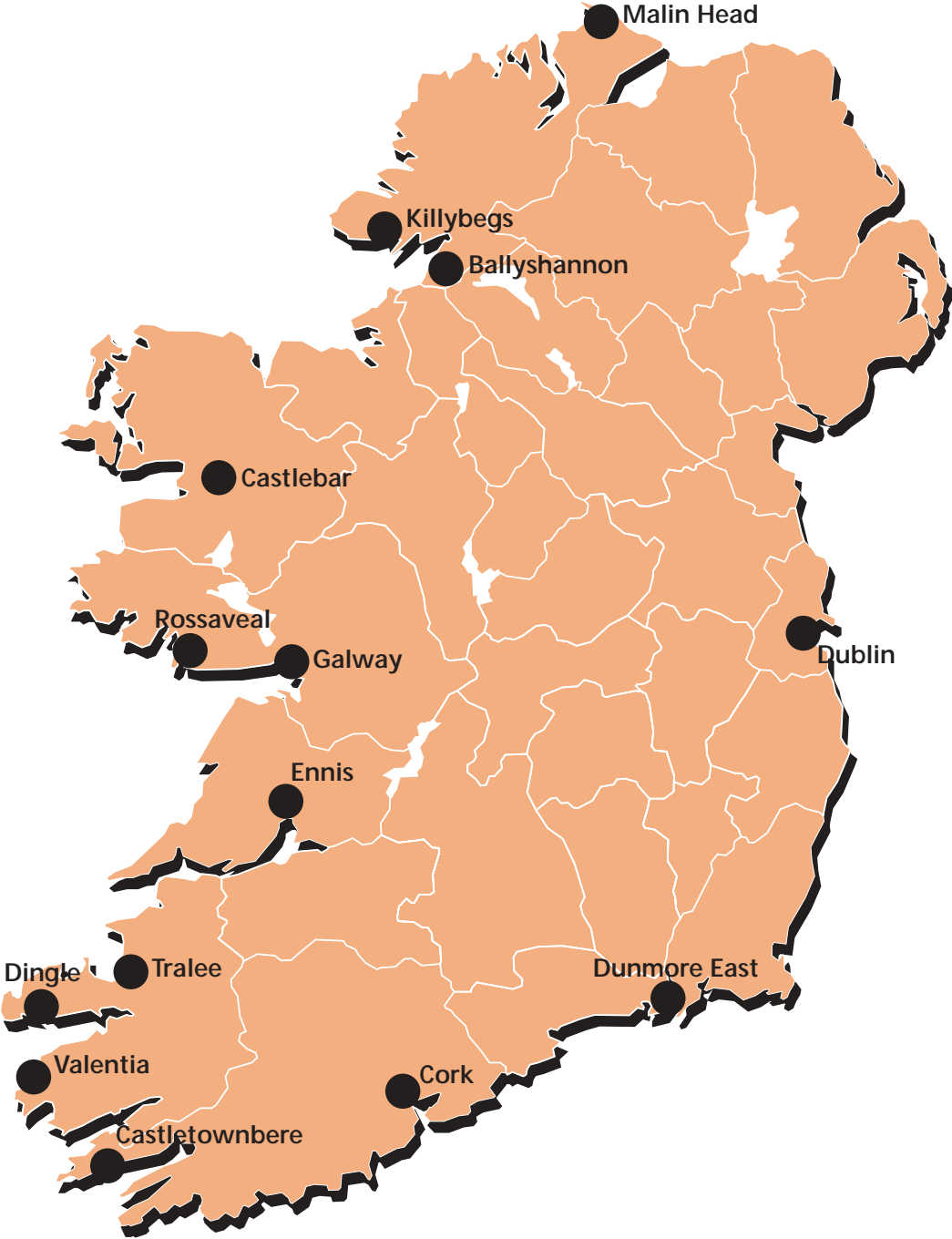
Primary responsibility for implementing Divisional Business Plans and PMDS will, in accordance with formal assignments of responsibility made under the Public Service Management Act, rest with Heads of Functions. Progress on the Divisional Business Plans will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Management Committee.

The Department's Annual Report for each of the years encompassed by this Statement of Strategy will report on our performance and delivery on the sectoral and corporate goals and strategies. Ongoing monitoring of delivery will also be informed by policy evaluation reviews, our Risk Management Strategy, the Management Information Framework and the Multi-annual programme of expenditure reviews. We also intend to take the strategic process further by the progressive development of sectoral foresight exercises over the period.

Appendix A: Structure of the Department



Appendix B: Location of Department's Offices



Appendix C: **The Department's Agencies**

The Department is responsible for 30 commercial, non-commercial and regulatory State bodies, 10 Port Companies and 14 Harbour Authorities, as outlined below.

BODY	MAIN ROLE
COMMUNICATIONS	
An Post	Ireland's national postal service provider.
Commission for Communications Regulation	Statutory body charged with the regulation of the communications market in Ireland. Its remit covers all kinds of transmission networks from the traditional telephone wire service through to operators providing TV services and from mobile phone networks to the postal service.
Digital Hub Development Agency	Established under the Digital Hub Development Act 2003 to oversee the development of the Digital Hub, Ireland's flagship in the digital media sector.
BROADCASTING	
Radio Telefís Éireann	The national public service broadcaster and a statutorily independent body. RTÉ operates three national television services (RTÉ 1, RTÉ 2 and TG4) and four national radio services (RTÉ 1, 2FM, Radio na Gaeltachta and Lyric FM).
Broadcasting Commission of Ireland	Responsible for the licensing and regulation of the independent television and radio sector. The Commission is also responsible for licensing certain new digital television services and for the development of codes of programming and advertising standards on television and radio.
Broadcasting Complaints Commission	Deals with complaints made relating to programme material and advertising on RTÉ and independent television and radio services.
ENERGY	
Electricity Supply Board	ESB has generation, transmission and distribution assets and provides electricity services to 1.6 million customers throughout the country.
EirGrid plc	Licensed by the CER (Commission for Energy Regulation) as the independent electricity transmission system operator.

BODY	MAIN ROLE
ENERGY (Cont.)	
Bord Gáis Éireann	Has grown from primarily a transmission pipeline business into a vast and extensive supplier of an efficient, economic and environmentally friendly fuel to over 400,000 customers.
Commission for Energy Regulation	Established on 14 July 1999 as the Commission for Electricity Regulation under the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 to underpin an open, transparent and accountable regulatory process for the electricity industry in Ireland. Commission's jurisdiction expanded under the Gas (Interim) (Regulation) Act 2002 to that of energy regulator, incorporating both gas and electricity. The Commission has been renamed as the Commission for Energy Regulation to reflect its increased role.
Bord na Móna plc	Supplier of products and services based principally on peat.
National Oil Reserves Agency	On 16 July 2001 the commercial assets and businesses of the INPC (i.e. the Company's two commercial subsidiaries – the Irish Refining Company and Bantry Terminals Ltd) were sold to Tosco Corporation, a major US oil refiner and marketer. The INPCs remaining non-commercial subsidiary – the National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) – is the body responsible for maintaining Ireland's strategic oil reserves.
Sustainable Energy Ireland	Statutory body responsible for implementing Government policy on energy efficiency and renewable energy.
MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES	
Central Fisheries Board	Promotion, support and coordination of inland fisheries and development and coordination and direction of the activities of the seven Regional Fisheries Boards.
Regional Fisheries Boards (7)	Conservation, protection and development of inland fisheries.

BODY	MAIN ROLE
MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (Cont.)	
National Salmon Commission	Advises the Minister on the management, protection and development of the inland fisheries resource.
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Promotion and development of the sea fishing and aquaculture industries.
Marine Institute	Undertaking, coordinating and promoting marine research and development in Ireland.
Irish Maritime Development Office	Responsible for the promotion, assistance and development of the Irish Shipping and Shipping Services sectors.
Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission *	Responsible for fisheries and marine tourism and leisure in the Foyle and Carlingford areas.
Port Companies (10)	Management and development of main commercial ports, under Harbours Acts, 1996 to 2000.
Harbour Authorities (14)	Management and development of harbours under Harbours Acts, 1946 to 2000.
Commissioners of Irish Lights	Provision and maintenance of aids to navigation around the island of Ireland.
Marine Casualty Investigation Board	An independent Board established under the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000. Its function is to investigate marine casualties.
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board (ALAB)	An independent appellate body in respect of aquaculture licensing.
Mining Board	An independent board set up under the Minerals Development Act 1940. Its function is to determine compensation in various cases. It is also charged with deciding what minerals are to be excepted from the State's exclusive right to work minerals under that Act.

* Implementation Body under the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999.

Appendix D: List of Submissions Received

1	Alto	22	Irish Association of International Express Carriers
2	Burke, Raymond	23	Irish Mining and Exploration Group
3	Chorus	24	Irish Underwater Council
4	Coastal Unit Advisory Group	25	Irish Wind Energy Association
5	Comreg	26	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
6	Cork County Council	27	Louth County Council
7	Dublin Port Company	28	Magnet Networks
8	Dun Laoghaire IADT	29	National College of Ireland
9	Dundalk Institute of Technology	30	National Disability Authority
10	Edenderry Power	31	North West Charter Skippers Association
11	Eircom	32	Peril, Patsy
12	EirGrid	33	Scouting Ireland
13	Erin Marine Consultants & Ship Surveyors Ltd	34	Sligo County Council
14	ESB	35	Trinity College Dublin
15	ESB National Grid	36	University College Cork
16	Health & Safety Authority	37	University College Dublin, Electronic & Electrical Engineering Department
17	Healy, Grattan	38	Viridian Energy Ltd
18	Hearne, Declan	39	Waterford Institute of Technology
19	Heritage Council	40	WiFi Projects Ltd
20	Hewat, A	41	Wilson, J
21	Hewat, Richard		

Appendix E: Programme for Government Commitments

Government commitments relevant to the Department as contained in “An Agreed Programme for Government between Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats” (June 2002)

Communications

- We will ensure the putting in place of open-access broadband on a national basis.
- We will create real competition for local phone services by ensuring the unbundling of the local loop.
- We will ensure that the full range of options, including wireless technologies, are utilised to expand broadband access in rural areas.
- We will review available fiscal instruments for the support of advanced connectivity.
- We will provide broadband technology to offshore islands.
- We will support rural post offices and seek to develop commercial services in rural areas with specific investment being made in developing the Government Services Agency approach to provide additional services.
- We will consider with urgency the recommendations that will be made by the recently established Forum on Broadcasting.
- We will continue to support the development of Irish language broadcasting. In line with legislation which we have already enacted, we will establish TG4 as a separate statutory body.
- A West Coast Digital Corridor will be developed to provide high-quality broadband telecommunications facilities for both Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht communities from Donegal to Cork.

Energy

- We will extend the gas grid and ensure that significant investment is made in developing the electricity grid in the regions.
- We will improve the tax incentives for investment in renewable energy in order to reduce our dependence on CO₂-emitting fossil fuels.

Marine and Natural Resources

We believe strongly in the need to support, protect and develop our marine and natural resources.

- We will press for fundamental reform of the Common Fisheries Policy with the aim of sustainable development, better governance, stakeholder involvement, conservation, stock building and maximising Ireland's access to fisheries.
- We will introduce a new fleet licensing policy to ensure equity, transparency and an independent appeals process.
- We will set out a long-term strategy for the sustainable development of our fishing industry.
- We will establish efficient management structures and develop our fishery harbours, including electronic auctioning, new distribution networks and completion of investment programmes for harbours.
- We will develop new devolved service structures to support the sustainable management, development and protection of the marine coastal zone and seafood resources.
- We will ensure that our ports are equipped for the demands of our growing economy, through investment and the development of seamless transport systems between road, rail and ports and best utilisation of property assets.
- We will work to develop Ireland as a centre of excellence for marine research.
- We will consolidate the Minerals Development Acts.
- We will encourage further exploration for hydrocarbons and minerals while maximising the value added to the Irish economy.
- We will increase the opportunities for offshore wind and wave energy generation.

Appendix F: **Glossary of Abbreviations Used**

AER	Alternative Energy Requirement	ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
ALAB	Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board	EU	European Union
BCI	Broadcasting Commission of Ireland	FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
BGE	Bord Gáis Éireann	FCILC	Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission
BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara	FHC	Fishery Harbour Centre
C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General	FOI	Freedom of Information
CCR	Commission for Communications Regulation	GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
CER	Commission for Energy Regulation	GDP	Gross Domestic Product
CFB	Central Fisheries Board	HQ	Head Quarters
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy	HNS	Hazardous and Noxious Substances
CHP	Combined Heat and Power	HR	Human Resource
CSO	Central Statistics Office	HRM	Human Resource Management
DCMNR	Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	HRMS	Human Resource Management System
DMDL	Digital Media Development Ltd	IC	Interconnector
DTT	Digital Terrestrial Television	ICT	Information and Communications Technology
E&M	Exploration and Mining	ICS	International Chamber of Shipping
EMD	Exploration and Mining Division	IEA	International Energy Agency
EMG	Environmental Monitoring Group	IFIS	Integrated Fisheries Information System
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency	IHO	International Hydrographic Organisation
E&P	Exploration and Production	ILO	International Labour Organisation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency		
ESB	Electricity Supply Board		

IMDO	Irish Maritime Development Office	PL	Prospecting Licence
IMO	International Maritime Organisation	PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
INPC	Irish National Petroleum Corporation	PPP	Public Private Partnership
IOOA	Irish Offshore Operators Association	PRSI	Pay Related Social Insurance
IR	Industrial Relations	R&D	Research and Development
IT	Information Technology	R,D&D	Research, Development and Demonstration
KPI	Key Performance Indicator	R&I	Research and Innovation
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas	RIA	Regulatory Impact Analysis
MLE	MediaLabEurope	Ro-Ro	Roll-on/Roll-off
MSc	Master of Science	RTDI	Research, Technology, Development and Innovation
NCSSB	Non Commercial State-Sponsored Body	RTÉ	Radio Telefis Éireann
NDA	National Disability Authority	SAR	Search and Rescue
NDP	National Development Plan	SEI	Sustainable Energy Ireland
NESC	National Economic and Social Council	SEM	Single Electricity Market
NMCI	National Maritime College of Ireland	SMF	State Mining Facility
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	SNIP	Scotland-Northern Ireland Pipeline
OPRC	Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Cooperation	UK	United Kingdom
OPW	Office of Public Works	UN	United Nations
OSPAR	Oslo-Paris Convention for the protection of the marine environment of the North East Atlantic	UNCLCS	United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
		VFM	Value for Money
		WF	Water Framework

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