

Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (Croke Park Agreement)

* Integrated Action Plan for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (no agencies involved) *

1. Better human resource management

To include, for example, actions around the reduction of staff numbers; the redeployment of staff to areas of greatest need; the restructuring/reconfiguration of service delivery; changes to work practices; revisions in attendance arrangements; absence management; performance management etc.

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 | Action/commitment | Target Date for Implementation |
|---|---|--|
| Resources 1.5 | <p>Meet Employment Control Framework Staffing Reduction Targets</p> <p><i>[Current target indicates 221 fewer staff by end 2015, a reduction of 14% over March 2009; 3 Missions will be closed during 2012]</i></p> <p><small>For comparison purposes, all figures opposite reduced by 18 to take account of transfer of EU coordination function to the D/Taoiseach w.e.f. 1/1/2012. Temporary add-ons in 2012/13 for EU Presidency purposes not reflected in figs.</small></p> | <p>March 2009: 1569 End-2010 : 1478 End-2011: 1420 End-2012: 1402 End-2013: 1384 End-2014: 1368 End-2015: 1348</p> |
| Redeployment 1.7 | <p>Continue internal redeployment of staff in accordance with priority needs and changing demands on Department. Further consolidation of functions as necessary and flattening of reporting structures.</p> <p><i>[Internal redeployments made and others planned in the context of Ireland's chairmanship of the OSCE during 2012 and Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2013]</i></p> | Ongoing as required |
| Redeployment 6.3.11 | <p>Continue to seek to avail of PSA mechanisms to fill identified specialist ICT, Finance, Auditor and Evaluator vacancies as well as vacancies arising in Irish Aid, Limerick.</p> <p><i>[2 new POs from other Departments due to commence in Limerick in February 2012]</i></p> | Ongoing |

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| Resource management 4.3, 4.4 | <p>Early and adequate intake of temporary staff needed to meet seasonal and other temporary peaks in service demand and business requirements.</p> <p><i>[A total of 128 temporary clerical officers will be recruited for the Passport Offices in Dublin, Balbriggan and Cork by early February 2012, which should result in substantial savings in overtime costs]</i></p> | Seasonal and annually recurrent |
| Attendance Patterns & Management 4.7 | <p>Continue to facilitate work life balance consistent with overriding business needs of the Department, in accordance with provisions of Department of Finance Circular 11/2010.</p> <p><i>[Work-sharing arrangements of 169 staff were reviewed, and renewed, in November/December 2011]</i></p> | Ongoing |
| Attendance Patterns & Management 1.4, 1.8, 4.9 | <p>More effective management of sick leave in accordance with Department of Finance Circular 9/2010 with a view to achieving further reductions in working-days lost.</p> <p><i>[New attendance management policy will be issued by Q 3, 2012 with a new emphasis on reducing absences due to sick leave]</i></p> | Ongoing |
| Performance & Skills 1.13 | <p>Review with a view to expanding departmental mentoring programme.</p> <p><i>[Pilot launched in early 2011 has been successful]</i></p> | Q4 2012 |
| Performance & Skills 4.12 | <p>Further enhance staff skills and strengthen performance management by continuing to leverage the PMDS process and training supports.</p> <p><i>[New integrated PMDS form and guidelines for managing underperformance launched in January 2012, supported by provision of appropriate training]</i></p> | Q 1, 2012 |
| Performance & Skills 4.11 | <p>Hold professional quality, merit-based, promotion competitions to fill all relevant vacancies.</p> <p><i>[Internal Counsellor competition being held in January/February 2012; candidates serving abroad (70) as well as at HQ including in Limerick being interviewed using the Department's own video conferencing technology, resulting in considerable savings on T+S]</i></p> | Ongoing |

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| Resource management 4.3, 4.4 | Issue updated HR strategy and related new attendance management, promotion and planned postings policies in consultation with the Staff Side. | Q 3, 2012 |
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2. Better Business Processes

To include, for example actions to increase efficiency and productivity; rationalise core structures, business processes, accommodation requirements etc; establish shared service approaches, establish cross-functional teams/ new work structures, optimise the potential of new technology to streamline operations and generate efficiencies etc.

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action/commitment | Target Date as per Current Action Plan |
|---|--|--|
| Business Process 1. 10 | Extend roll-out of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to more diplomatic and consular missions abroad. Sites added to service in last Q 2011 and January 2012: PMUN New York; Consulate General New York; Embassy Pretoria | Ongoing |
| Business Process 1. 10 | Extend the use of video conferencing facilities, including for the purposes of business interaction with Missions abroad and conducting interviews in promotion competitions. <i>[Internal Counsellor competition being held in January/February 2012; candidates serving abroad (70) as well as at HQ including in Limerick being interviewed using the Department's own video conferencing technology, resulting in considerable savings on T+S]</i> | Ongoing |
| Business Process 1.7 | Major re-structuring of HQ Divisions completed in January 2012. Lighter model of Diplomatic and Consular representation (missions staffed by one diplomat) extended to an 8th mission in 2012; closure of three Embassies during 2012. | Q3 2012 |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action/commitment | Target Date as per Current Action Plan |
|---|--|--|
| Shared services 1.11 | Participation in proposed civil service shared services initiatives where appropriate. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is actively involved in the current planning phase. <i>[Projects including HR shared services ongoing, with full input from this Department]</i> | Being set centrally |
| Business Process 1.7 | Develop range of Knowledge Management initiatives such as unified methods of classifying, storing and sharing information and enhanced handover processes. | Q 4, 2012 |
| Business Process 1.7 | Implementation of Departmental Organisational Review Programme (ORP) Action Plan. | End 2012 |

3. Delivering for the Citizen

| <i>To include, for example, actions to enhance service delivery to the public, including changes to the technology used, more online services, service integration, efforts to reduce information burdens on citizens through better data management/sharing of data, including around identity etc</i> | | |
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| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action/commitment | Target Date as per Current Action Plan |
| New Technology 1.10, 4.13 | Proposed new simplified adult renewal application with a view to an online passport renewal service (subject to the availability of project financial and staffing resources) | Feasibility study to be completed by end Q4 2012 |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action/commitment | Target Date as per Current Action Plan |
|---|---|--|
| Customer centred Delivery 1.10, 4.4 | Extension of Passport Office opening hours coupled with an appointments system | If proceeding, a pilot to be in place by Q3 2012 |
| Customer centred Delivery 1.10 | Improvement of physical facilities for passport office customers including availability of PCs with access to relevant web-sites which would help speed up service delivery | Q3, 2012 |
| Customer centred Delivery 1. 10 2. | Development of computerised system to improve Foreign Births Registration (FBRs: Citizenship through ancestry) process | Q 4, 2012 |
| Customer centred Delivery 1. 10, 4.13 | Development of computerised system to support authentication of Irish documents for use abroad (including Irish marriages abroad). | Q 4, 2012 |
| Customer centred Delivery 1. 10, 4.13 | Programme to re-develop department websites. All sites will be restructured and updated, incorporating online tools to improve access to information, reduce communication costs, increase productivity and automate on-line services to the greatest extent possible in order to free up staff resources. Savings will be achieved by consolidating all web-hosting services including the main Departmental website and those of Irish Aid and individual Mission sites so that they are hosted and supported together. | Q 4, 2012 |