



The Civil Service Renewal Plan Second Progress Report

Progress achieved in 'Phase 2' of implementing the Vision and
Three Year Action Plan for the Civil Service



July 2016

Foreword

We are pleased to present the second progress report on the implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. Since the launch of the Plan in late 2014 significant progress has been made.

While reporting on the progress to date we continue to drive forward on all the actions. We made a commitment to deliver priority actions within the first two phases of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. Not only has this commitment been met but all 25 actions have now been initiated. This is a notable achievement and could not have been delivered without your support.

Every day the Civil Service makes a vital contribution to Irish life. Everything the Civil Service does – carrying out the work of Government and delivering frontline public services – impacts the citizens of Ireland in some way. By implementing the Renewal Plan and demonstrating an enduring commitment to public service, the Civil Service can create a more unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable organisation that inspires trust and confidence in Ireland and internationally.

Civil Service Management Board

July 2016

Martin Fraser
Secretary General to the
Government
Secretary General
Department of the Taoiseach

Robert Watt
Secretary General
Department of Public Expenditure and
Reform

Jim Breslin
Secretary General
Department of Health

Derek Moran
Secretary General
Department of Finance

Niall Burgess
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Department of Foreign Affairs and
Trade

Aidan O'Driscoll
Secretary General
Department of Agriculture, Food
and the Marine

Fergal Lynch
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Department of Children and Youth
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John Murphy
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Department of Jobs, Enterprise and
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Pádraig Dalton
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Liam O'Daly
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Niamh O'Donoghue
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Mark Griffin
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Department of Communications,
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Seán Ó Foghlú
Secretary General
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Joe Hamill
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Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional,
Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Graham Doyle
Secretary General
Department of Transport, Tourism
and Sport

John McCarthy
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Department of Housing, Planning
and Local Government

Maurice Quinn
Secretary General
Department of Defence

Clare McGrath
Chairman
Office of Public Works

Noel Waters
Secretary General
Department of Justice and Equality

Fiona Tierney
Chief Executive
Public Appointments Service

Summary of Progress

Purpose of this Report

This Report summarises progress achieved in Phase 2 of implementation of the [Civil Service Renewal Plan](#). This three-year Plan was launched in October 2014. It outlines 25 practical actions that will create a more **unified, professional, responsive, open** and **accountable** Civil Service that can provide a world-class service to the State and the people of Ireland. The Plan is being implemented in 4 phases.

Impact of Civil Service Renewal on Civil Servants

The Plan supports the development of the Civil Service to ensure its organisations and staff can meet existing and future challenges. Many of the changes that are being made directly impact on staff and we are beginning to see the benefits of the Renewal Plan. The benefits include the introduction of a simplified 2-point rating format for the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), more open recruitment and civil service wide mobility, which is in place at Assistant Secretary and Principal levels with plans to pilot at Clerical and Executive Officer levels shortly.

Progress Achieved in Phase 2

We are now midway through implementation of the Renewal Plan. Significant progress has been made to date with all 25 Actions initiated. Phase 1 of implementation focused on establishing governance structures, creating momentum and initiating a number of actions in the Plan. The challenge for Phase 2 was to translate this progress into tangible impact.

The Civil Service Management Board (CSMB) set 7 priority actions for Phase 2 of implementation. All priority actions are on track for successful delivery as follows:

Phase 2 Priority Actions

“Implement a common governance standard for the Civil Service” (Action 3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“Strengthen performance management for all civil servants” (Action 11)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“New performance review process for Secretaries General and an enhanced review process for Assistant Secretaries” (Action 12)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“Recognise staff excellence and innovation” (Action 13)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“Expand career and mobility opportunities for staff” (Action 15)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“Implement a programme of organisational capability reviews” (Action 20)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
“Improve internal Civil Service communications” (Action 23)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The following are the details of progress on the Actions that were prioritised in Phase 2 of implementation:

- The Government agreed a common governance standard for the Civil Service. Departments have published their governance frameworks in accordance with the Standard. This strengthens the accountability of the Civil Service as a unified organisation (Action 3).
- A new performance management policy has been developed with the introduction, in 2016, of a new 2-point rating format for the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) which identifies satisfactory and unsatisfactory performance. It provides an opportunity to review and develop high performance and to address underperformance where it occurs (Action 11).
- A new performance review process for Secretaries General is being developed and will be introduced. An enhanced performance review process for Assistant Secretaries, including 360 degree feedback, is being implemented this year following a successful pilot in 2015 (Action 12).
- The first ever Civil Service excellence and innovation awards ceremony was held in December 2015 recognising the achievements and innovations in policy and service delivery (Action 13).
- An interdepartmental Principal Officer Mobility Policy was implemented in July 2015. Guiding principles for the development of a Civil Service wide staff mobility scheme has been approved by the CSMB. Plans to pilot this scheme for Clerical Officers and Executive Officers are well advanced (Action 15).
- A new programme of organisational capability reviews has commenced with a pilot review of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Action 20).
- A programme of engagement and communications with staff has been framed around the results of the first ever Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey along with Town Hall meetings at various locations across the country, other Renewal related events and regular updates on our website <http://csvision.per.gov.ie/> (Action 23).

Progress on other actions during Phase 2 includes the following:

The following are the details of the progress on other actions in the plan grouped into the following themes; unified, professional, responsive, open and accountable.

Unified

- The Civil Service Accountability Board has met twice to date and continues to have an overall governance role across the Civil Service and to advise on and support the development of the capacity and capability of the Civil Service (Action 1).
- Proposals have been developed for three pathfinder projects to pilot new models for delivering whole-of-Government projects (Action 5):
 - The Public Services Card;
 - National Cyber Security Strategy: Government systems and data element and;
 - National Framework for Suicide Prevention in Ireland: Youth element.

Professional

- The first Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service has been appointed. The Chief Human Resources Officer leads the central HR function for Civil Service and is responsible for developing strategic HR capability across the Civil Service, including implementation of the HR actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (Actions 7 and 14).
- Open recruitment campaigns have been held for most general service grades, in addition to a range of specialist posts. This builds on the existing arrangements for open competition at top management levels (Action 8).
- A shared Learning and Development model was agreed in Q2 2015. Design of a core common suite of learning and development programmes is nearing completion and development of a new skills matrix has commenced (Action 9).

Responsive

- A project management leaders/advisory service has been established, which will form the core of a broader Project Management Network for the Civil Service in Q3 2016 (Action 17).
- Sanction has been delegated to all Departments, with the exception of parts of the Departments of Health, Education and Skills and Justice and Equality. The sanction gives Departments more flexibility in terms of how they manage their staffing requirements by allowing Departments to manage their own staffing levels once they remain within their agreed multi-annual pay ceilings. (Action 18).

Open and Accountable

- The 'Transfer of Functions Guidelines and Best Practice Handbook' that provides a standardised approach for managing the efficient reorganisation of Departmental structures or functions when requested by Government was published in April 2016 (Action 21).
- An induction programme for special advisers has been developed (Action 21).

- 24 open policy debates have been held to date to engage policy networks of practitioners, academics and experts in a range of policy issues, including: Education Reform; The National Risk Assessment; The Labour Market Symposium; and Future Investment in Early Years Education (Action 22).
- The Inaugural Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey was held in Q3 2015 and full report published in Q1 2016. Over 15,500 civil servants from nearly 60 Civil Service organisations completed the survey. Results indicated that Employee Engagement is high at 70% which means that the majority of Civil Servants have a sense of connection and energy with their work, can cope with demands of the job and find their work fulfilling. Departments are developing and implementing initiatives that builds on the strengths of the Civil Service and addresses what needs to improve for the future (Action 25).

A summary update of progress on all of the actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan since it was launched is provided overleaf.

Progress Expected in Phase 3

The CSMB will identify the set of priorities for implementation during Phase 3.

The challenge will be to maintain momentum and ensure continued progress on all projects initiated in 2015 and ensure all remaining Civil Service Renewal Plan actions are initiated by December 2016 in order to facilitate delivery and completion of all actions by the end of the Plan's lifetime in December 2017.

The Civil Service Renewal agenda will continue to be anchored in future Public Service Reform Plans/Programmes.

Note

Press releases on Civil Service Renewal, minutes of CSMB meetings, reports and other relevant information are made available to the public on www.per.gov.ie and Civil Servants on <http://csvision.per.gov.ie/>.

Overview of Progress Implementing the Actions

Action 1	Establish an Accountability Board for the Civil Service
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Martin Fraser, Department of the Taoiseach
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Civil Service Accountability Board, chaired by An Taoiseach, includes Civil Service, Ministerial and external perspectives on performance and accountability with a particular emphasis on governance and the capacity and capability of the Civil Service. The Board has met twice to date in Q2 and Q3 2015. Membership of the Civil Service Accountability Board to be decided following the formation of the new Government.
PHASE 1 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 2	Establish a Civil Service Management Board (CSMB)
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Martin Fraser, Department of the Taoiseach
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CSMB met for the first time in Q4 2014 and has held 16 meetings to date. The CSMB includes all Heads of Government Departments and major Offices, totalling 21 members and meetings are chaired by the Secretary General to the Government. The CSMB has been assigned collective responsibility for implementing the Civil Service Renewal Plan and each member of the CSMB has been assigned responsibility to lead and act as sponsor for one or more Actions in the Civil Service Renewal Plan.
PHASE 1 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 3	Set a common governance standard
CSMB Sponsors	Derek Moran, Department of Finance Mark Griffin, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment John Murphy, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Common Governance Standard for the Civil Service was developed by the CSMB and approved by the Government last November. Departments have developed and published their governance frameworks in accordance with the Standard.
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 4	
Strengthen strategic planning and business planning processes	
CSMB Sponsors	Martin Fraser, Department of the Taoiseach Derek Moran, Department of Finance John Murphy, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2016 the CSMB will consider and contribute to the annual National Risk Assessment process and will undertake a review of Departmental Strategy Statements.

Action 5	
Improve the delivery of shared whole-of-Government projects	
CSMB Sponsors	Mark Griffin, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment Fergal Lynch, Department of Children and Youth Affairs Seán Ó Foghlú, Department of Education and Skills
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed model for pathfinder projects have been developed. The three pathfinder projects to pilot new models for delivering whole-of-Government projects are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Services Card National Cyber Security Strategy: Government systems and data element National Framework for Suicide Prevention in Ireland: Youth element

Action 6	
Expand the model of sharing services and expertise across organisations	
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A programme of sharing service is underway through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Shared Services Office The Office of Government Procurement The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer Proposals to develop the 'Build to Share' stream of the Public Service ICT Strategy were progressed during 2015.

Action 7	
Significantly develop Strategic HR capability	
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service has been appointed. A cross-departmental Strategic Human Resources Steering Group has been established and is working on developing an overarching HR strategy for the Civil Service.

Action 8	
Open up recruitment and promotion processes at all levels	
CSMB Sponsors	Niamh O'Donoghue, Department of Social Protection Maurice Quinn, Department of Defence Fiona Tierney, Public Appointments Service
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open recruitment campaigns have been undertaken at Clerical Officer, Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Assistant Principal and Principal levels. A Graduate Development Programme was established in Q2 2015 with 220 Administrative Officers currently enrolled. Recruitment at Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General level continue to be filled by open competition via the Top Level Appointments Committee.
PHASE 1 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 9	
Establish a new shared model for delivering learning and development (L&D)	
CSMB Sponsors	John McCarthy, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government Niall Cody, Office of the Revenue Commissioners
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A shared L&D model to improve capability through enhanced procurement and shared delivery of training across the Civil Service was agreed in Q2 2015. Independent economic appraisal to assess the risks, costs, implications and benefits of the new shared model has been completed. A new core common suite of L&D programmes is nearing completion and the design of a new skills matrix has commenced.

Action 10	
Introduce structured and transparent talent management programmes to develop future leaders	
CSMB Sponsors	John Murphy, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Joe Hamill, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Noel Waters, Department of Justice and Equality
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A talent management pilot programme for Assistant Secretary Level will commence in Q3 2016 and work has been progressed on the Principal Officer programme.

Action 11	
Strengthen the performance management process	
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Graham Doyle, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport Liam O'Daly, Office of the Attorney General
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The framework for managing performance has been strengthened, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of a new 2 point ratings format for the Performance Management Development System commencing with the 2016 year cycle. A stronger framework for managing underperformance and disciplinary issues will come into effect. The Disciplinary Code will come into effect in September 2016 and the new Management of Underperformance Policy from January 2017.
PHASE 1 & 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 12	Design and implement a robust performance review process for Secretaries General and Assistant Secretaries
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Martin Fraser, Department of the Taoiseach Jim Breslin, Department of Health Niall Burgess, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced performance review process for Assistant Secretaries, including 360 degree feedback, is being implemented this year following a successful pilot in 2015. • A new performance review process for Secretaries General is being developed and will be introduced.
PHASE 1 & 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 13	Publicly recognise staff excellence and innovation
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Niall Burgess, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaugural Civil Service excellence and innovation awards were held in Q4 2015. Awards were presented by An Taoiseach and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to winners in 10 categories. 94 projects were submitted with 32 shortlisted from nearly 30 Departments/Offices across the Civil Service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leading Civil Service Renewal – Digital Excellence – Insight and Analysis – Excellence in Policy – Excellence in Customer Service – Excellence in Innovation – Excellence in Skills Development – Excellence through Collaboration – Word-Class Civil Service – Outstanding contribution • Preparations have begun for the 2016 Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards.
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 14	Strengthen professional expertise within corporate functions
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ongoing professionalisation of the Human Resources function is being developed as part of the overarching HR strategy. • A Chief HR Officer for the Civil Service has been appointed as “Head of Profession” for HR. • Discussions have been initiated in relation to the development of the ICT profession and to address the challenges of recruitment, retention, and mobility across ICT functions in the Civil Service. • The Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) is now an essential part of the economic and policy framework.

Action 15	Expand career and mobility opportunities for staff across geographic, organisational and sectoral boundaries
CSMB Sponsors	Niamh O'Donoghue, Department of Social Protection Maurice Quinn, Department of Defence Fiona Tierney, Public Appointments Service
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Interdepartmental Principal Officer Mobility Policy was implemented in July 2015. • Guiding principles for the development of a Civil Service wide staff mobility scheme has been approved by the CSMB. Plans to pilot this scheme for Clerical Officers and Executive Officers are well advanced.
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 16	Re-design organisational and grade structures
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions are underway on proposals to merge the Staff Officer and Executive Officer grades.

Action 17	Improve project management capacity
CSMB Sponsors	Clare McGrath, Office of Public Works Aidan O'Driscoll, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Graham Doyle, Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Civil Service project management leaders/advisory service has been established, which will form the core of a broader Project Management Network for the Civil Service in Q3 2016. • A set of standardised Project Management principles will be agreed along with a code of practice in Q4 2016.

Action 18	Increase the authority, flexibility and accountability for managing staff resources by delegating more responsibility to Departments
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanction for staffing has now been delegated to all Departments, with the exception of parts of the Health, Education and Skills and Justice and Equality Sectors. • Introduction of these arrangements allow Departments greater flexibility in managing their staffing resources.

Action 19	Expand the ICT capacity of Departments and increase efficiencies by creating common systems and infrastructure
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in conjunction with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Public Service ICT Strategy, to deliver better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT, was published in Q1 2015 and implementation is underway. • Proposals to develop the various strands under the 'Build to Share' pillar were progressed during 2015. • Opportunities have been progressed for a suite of common applications to be developed centrally for use by all Departments to drive efficiencies and savings.

Action 20	Implement a programme of Organisational Capability Reviews
CSMB Sponsors	Maurice Quinn, Department of Defence Seán Ó Foghlú, Department of Education and Skills Mark Griffin, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new model for conducting Organisational Capability Reviews, aimed at assessing a Department's capacity, has been developed and a pilot review of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport is underway.
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION	

Action 21	Publish the framework for assignment of responsibilities for all Departments
CSMB Sponsors	Jim Breslin, Department of Health Maurice Quinn, Department of Defence
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The www.whodoeswhat.gov.ie website has been launched with Departments/Offices detailing their assignments of responsibility. • 'Transfer of Functions Guidelines and Best Practice Handbook' has been published. • An induction programme for Special Advisers has been developed.

Action 22	Strengthen policy-making skills and develop more open approaches to policy-making
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Martin Fraser, Department of the Taoiseach
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 open policy debates held to date on a range of policy issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National Cultural Policy – Education Provision in Gaeltacht Areas – Human Rights • Extensive information on each of the policy debates is available on csvision.per.gov.ie.

Action 23		Nominate a Civil Service Spokesperson to communicate on behalf of the Civil Service	
CSMB Sponsors	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Niall Burgess, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade		
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, was appointed as Civil Service Spokesperson in Q4 2014. A continuous programme of internal communication and engagement includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Hall events Blogs on the Civil Service Renewal website: CSVision.per.gov.ie Events in Departments including lunch and learn sessions on Civil Service Renewal Network of designated 'Single Points of Contact' for Civil Service Renewal in all Departments and Offices. 		
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION			

Action 24		Improve how data is collected, managed and shared	
CSMB Sponsor	Robert Watt, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform		
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant progress made on the Open Data Initiative with 4,317 high quality datasets linked to the portal https://data.gov.ie/data. Work continues with the National Archives on reform of digital records management. A Public Service ICT Strategy was published in Q1 2015 and implementation is advancing. 		
PHASE 2 - PRIORITY ACTION			

Action 25		Introduce an annual Employee Engagement Survey to involve staff at all levels in ongoing organisational improvement	
CSMB Sponsor	Pádraig Dalton, Central Statistics Office		
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 15,500 civil servants completed the inaugural survey in Q3 2015. Results were published in Q1 2016. Nearly 60 Civil Service organisations took part in the survey. The results are positive and compare well internationally. Overall Employee Engagement is high at 70%. The vast majority of staff feel skilful at work, and that the work they do is important in serving the public and the State. Departments/Offices are developing and implementing initiatives that build on their strengths and address areas that need improvement. The next Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey will be issued in 2017. 		
PHASE 1 - PRIORITY ACTION			

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