



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Corporate Governance Framework

September 2019

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Introduction

The first Corporate Governance Framework for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine was published in April 2016. The Framework is a living document which evolves with experience and this is its first review. It is intended as a guide to everyone in the Department, and to the people we serve, on how we deliver our services and the organisation functions and structures in place to support that delivery. It seeks to provide a single reference point for governance arrangements in the Department and also helps promote good governance as a culture within the organisation.

Good governance supports and reinforces our already deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect. It enhances our capacity to work effectively as well as assist us in meeting the public's expectations of us. The governance systems that we have in place within the Department contribute to more effective and efficient policy development and delivery of our services and, ultimately, better outcomes for the people we serve.

This Framework is based on the Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service which was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in 2015 and set out the following five governance principles:

1. Good governance supports a culture and ethos which ensures behaviour with integrity, a strong commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law.

2. Good governance helps to define priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability.

3. Good governance means developing the Department's capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff.

4. Good governance means managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

5. Good governance ensures openness, effective public consultation processes and comprehensive engagement with domestic and international stakeholders.

Introduction

These principles support us in how we deliver on our mandate and achieve intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times. Governance is not just for the preserve of management. A culture of good governance is integral to all the Department's strategic and operational policies and practices. We all have an important role to play in collectively committing to the good governance of the Department and meeting expectations of how we deliver our services to the public. As an organisation, we strive through our values, our services and our people to achieve operational excellence in everything we do and this is underpinned by effective corporate governance.

Brendan Gleeson
Secretary General

Department Overview

Governance Principle - Good governance supports a culture and ethos which ensures behaviour with integrity, a strong commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law.

Mission/Purpose of the Department

The Department's mission is to lead, develop and regulate the sustainable development of the agri-food, forestry and marine sectors, to optimise their contribution to national economic and social development and to the natural environment and to the protection of public health. The Department is the national accredited Paying Agency for the disbursement of EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Pillar I and II funds which play a crucial role in supporting policy implementation and in underpinning efforts to achieve the objectives set out in industry development strategies.

The Department's Objectives are:

- To progress the economic development of the agri-food, forestry and marine sectors, including facilitating the achievement of Food Wise 2025;
- To promote and enhance, including through regulation and enforcement, the already high standards of food safety, consumer protection, animal health and welfare and plant health;
- To promote economic, social and environmentally sustainable farming, fishing and forestry;
- To deliver schemes and services effectively and efficiently, providing a quality service to all our clients.

The Department is the oldest Department in the State having been founded in 1900 following the enactment of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act 1899. The Department became the Department of Lands and Agriculture under section 1(vi) of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 which also provided that the Irish Land Commission (established under the Land Law (Ireland) Act 1881) came under the remit of the Minister. Since then there have been many changes in the name of the Department but the reference to Agriculture has always been retained.

Values, Behaviours and Culture

The Department supports and promotes:

- A deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect;
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money;
- The highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

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In order to support the successful implementation of our Statement of Strategy and goals, our Department's ethos includes the development of a positive working environment in which all staff are supported in developing their potential to contribute towards a more dynamic Department where excellence and productivity flourishes.

The core values to which the Department subscribes are aligned with the standards outlined in the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours, the Code of Ethics and the Civil Service Renewal Plan. The values are communicated to all managers and staff and they are expected to familiarise themselves with all the relevant codes, rules and legislation governing the Civil Service including the application of the requirements in relation to official secrecy. The requirements are also relevant to former staff of the Department and Special Advisers.

Integrity, fairness, respect, openness and accountability form the cornerstone of the Department's ethos and aligned to the Civil Service Renewal Plan, encourage a unified, professional and responsive Department which maximises the potential of all staff to provide the best possible service to internal and external stakeholders.

A Human Resources strategy is in place which enshrines these values in our corporate culture, and continues to promote clearly defined policies for the development of all staff.

The Department has arrangements in place to support staff awareness of the following:

Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour

The Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour, published by the Standards in Public Office Commission (www.sipo.gov.ie), is an important element of the overall framework within which all civil servants are expected to work. It sets out the standards required of civil servants in the discharge of their duties.

The Department promotes awareness of the Code among staff by:

- Ensuring that all newly recruited staff receive a copy of the Code in their induction packs;
- Circulating a message annually from the Secretary General to all staff on the conduct of business in the Department, which focuses on matters such as the Code, responsibilities under the Ethics Acts 1995 & 2001 and Conflict of Interest;
- Ensuring that the Code is always accessible to staff through the Department's intranet 'eZone'.

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Managing Conflicts of Interest

As part of the induction process, new staff are required to read the relevant material in connection with the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour. Relevant declarations must be signed and returned to HR Division for recording. All staff are obliged to return signed Conflict of Interest forms on an annual basis. In addition, staff at higher levels are obliged to return Ethics in Public Office declarations. HR Division also circulates relevant office notices and circulars by email to all staff on an on-going basis. The Department is putting enhanced arrangements in place to increase awareness and support compliance in respect of these obligations.

This Department has a clearly defined mission and a broad remit covering a wide range of economic, social, public health and environmental issues which require it to act as both a promoter and also a regulator of the agri-food, forestry and marine sectors. The Declaration Forms provide for potential conflicts of interest to be managed proactively by line management. Any official who feels conflicted when making a decision which requires the balancing of differing interests arising from the Department's mandate should refer to his/her line manager.

Official Secrets legislation

The Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour includes reference to the obligations of staff under the Official Secrets legislation.

The Department promotes awareness of staff obligations under the Official Secrets legislation by:

- Ensuring that all newly recruited staff receive a copy of the legislation in their induction packs ;
- Ensuring all newly recruited staff sign the Official Secrets Act declaration and return it to their line manager, who forwards it to HR Division;
- Ensuring that all contracts have a reference to the obligations of staff under the official secrets act and copies of the signed contracts are retained by HR Division;
- Ensuring that HR Policy documentation refers to all staff – both Department staff and Contractors are bound by the Official Secrets Act legislation.

Customer Complaints Procedure

The Department has in place a formal Customer Complaints Procedure for responding to complaints in relation to our service delivery and commitments. If a customer is unhappy with the quality of service they have received and the issue cannot be resolved to their satisfaction with the staff member they have been dealing with and subsequently with the Senior Officer in charge of the area, they can make a formal complaint to the Quality Service Unit.

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All complaints will be dealt with promptly and in an objective and courteous manner. If we make a mistake or fail to deliver a quality service we will apologise and try to rectify the situation without delay.

All complaints will be logged on receipt and will be acknowledged within 3 working days. Where possible, the complaint will be dealt with within 20 working days. If further research is needed in order to fully answer a complaint, the Quality Service Unit will let the complainant know.

Customers are advised that if they feel that they have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with the decision of the Quality Service Unit on their complaint, it is open to them to contact the Office of the Ombudsman. They are advised that, by law, the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any of our administrative actions or procedures as well as delays or inaction and that the Ombudsman provides a free, impartial and independent dispute resolution service. Contact details for the Ombudsman are provided to the customer.

Separate procedures operate in relation to decisions under scheme applications. A scheme applicant who remains dissatisfied with a decision of the Department in relation to certain designated schemes listed in the Schedule to the Agriculture Appeals Act 2001, may appeal that decision to the Agriculture Appeals Office. The Agriculture Appeals Office is an independent statutory agency providing a free, impartial appeals service to such scheme applicants.

Protected Disclosure Policy

The Department has a Protected Disclosure and Procedure Policy in place whereby any worker in the Department may report a concern regarding a potential wrongdoing to a confidential recipient. To facilitate workers who may not be comfortable reporting to an internal confidential recipient, the Department has engaged an independent service provider to also act as independent confidential recipient on its behalf. The Department has placed its policy on its internal eZone along with a copy of the governing legislation and a user friendly one page summary document. In addition, the Department engaged in a poster advertising campaign to create awareness among workers of its policy and procedures.

Work Related Complaints:

- ***Communication***

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Effective communication is a key element in building and maintaining strong working relationships, in developing leadership capacity and in creating a positive workplace for all staff. Managers communicate with staff regarding performance on an on-going basis and promote a culture of communication and feedback in their area. Where work related complaints arise they are initially dealt with informally at local level. Where a work related issue cannot be resolved informally it is dealt with as part of PMDS and/or the “Upward Feedback” process.

- ***Grievance Procedure***

Procedures in the Civil Service for dealing with grievance problems are explained in the Grievance Procedure (*Circular 11/01 Revised procedure for dealing with grievance problems*). The Grievance Procedure is a process that seeks to deal in a fair, prompt and impartial manner with the complaints of individual members of staff that are within the scope of the procedure, but that are not appropriate for discussion under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme.

- ***Dignity at Work***

This policy aims to promote respect, dignity, safety and equality in the workplace and outlines the recommended procedures which should be followed by all parties to complaints regarding bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

- ***Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)***

The CSEAS provides a wide range of free and confidential supports to all civil servants, including line managers, designed to assist employees in managing work and life difficulties which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and/or quality of life.

- ***Mediation***

Mediation is a process available to staff whereby an agreed, impartial and suitably qualified mediator meets with both parties to try to help them to resolve the dispute, complaint or issue.

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Organisation Structures

Framework of Assignments

The most recent Department Organogram is at Appendix 1 and a regularly updated version can be found at this [link](#). The Department has input details of the responsibilities assigned to each Management Board member and Head of Division on whodoeswhat.gov.ie hosted by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The information is regularly updated.

Strategic Planning, Decision Making & Performance Management

The Programme for Government informs the Department's Statement of Strategy which sets out high level priorities agreed by the Minister. To bring clarity around roles and responsibilities at divisional level, the Department has a business planning framework which is managed, supported and directed by individual members of the Management Board and led by each Head of Division (Principal Officer or equivalent grade). Responsibilities at individual staff member level are articulated through the system of divisional business plans and the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). Each Head of Division reports to an individual member of the Management Board who in turn reports to the Secretary General.

Food Wise 2025 is the strategic plan for the Irish agri-food sector up to 2025. It sets out a vision for the industry to continue along the path of sustainable growth and recognises the strategic importance of specific market and consumer insights if emerging global opportunities are to be fully realised in the decade ahead. Food Wise 2025 identifies smarter and greener ways to deliver sustainable growth and recommends actions to best support the sector's development. It identifies the opportunities, challenges, advantages and constraints ahead and devises an enabling strategy that will allow the sector to grow and prosper. Food Wise 2025 includes more than 400 separate recommendations for action, spread across cross-cutting themes of innovation, human capital, market development, sustainability and competitiveness affecting the Irish agri-food sector.

Implementation of Food Wise is driven by the High Level Implementation Committee (HLIC), chaired by the Minister and with participation from Management Board members, other Government Departments and relevant State agencies. The HLIC meet quarterly to monitor progress on Food Wise's cross-cutting themes of sustainability, competitiveness, innovation, market development and human capital, as well as sectoral actions. An Environment Sustainability Sub-Committee of the HLIC

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has been established to monitor and drive the implementation of the sustainability actions. The agri-food and marine measures in the 2018 Action Plan for Jobs are aligned with Food Wise. The sectoral strategy outlined in Food Wise frames the policy environment for the Department's Statement of Strategy 2016 to 2019.

It should be noted that the Department is putting arrangements in place for the development of a new Statement of Strategy and a successor to the Food Wise Strategy in consultation with its stakeholders.

Each year, the business planning process commences in December with strategic priorities and orientations for the following year formulated by the Secretary General and the Management Board. Management Board members provide key deliverables and projected timeframes for their business areas following consultation with their Heads of Division (HOD). These priorities are discussed by the Management Board in early January to preview the year ahead and agreed with the Minister. HODs draft business plans via a formal consultation process with staff in their area(s). Draft business plans are then agreed with and signed off by individual Management Board members. HODs monitor progress of business plans with line managers on an on-going basis throughout the year through formal mid and end-of-year reviews as well as regular staff meetings. In addition, Economics and Planning Division co-ordinate and collate quarterly management reports from divisions on business plan progress.

Internal Communications

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is a diverse organisation with over 3,300 staff based in multiple locations across the country, from Raphoe to Wexford and from Galway to Dublin. Effective Communication with staff is therefore vital and takes many forms. The following is an overview.

Secretary General & Management Board

The statutory functions of the Secretary General are laid down in the Public Service Management Act 1997. Although based in the Department's Headquarters in Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin, the Secretary General communicates with staff on an on-going basis in a number of ways including visiting the Department's offices around the country, meeting and engaging with staff in these locations. The Secretary General also regularly communicates with staff across the wider department via email to provide updates on progress and matters affecting the whole Department e.g. major policy initiatives, projects, matters relating to the Civil Service Renewal Plan, etc.

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In addition to the Secretary General there are 12 Management Board members, a number of whom are based in locations outside of Headquarters. Our Head of Laboratories is based in the Department's Backweston Laboratory Campus in Celbridge Co. Kildare. The Assistant Secretary General with responsibility for Sea Fisheries is based in the Department's Office in Clonakilty, Co. Cork. The Assistant Secretary General with responsibility for Direct Payments is based in the Department's Office in Portlaoise, Co. Laois and the Assistant Secretary General with responsibility for Forestry and CAP Pillar II schemes is based in the Department's Office in Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford. Other Management Board members visit offices and meet with staff based outside of Dublin on a regular basis. Additionally, the Board periodically holds its meetings at DAFM offices around the country.

The minutes of Management Board meetings are placed on the Department's Intranet. Board members also brief Heads of Divisions (Principal Officer and equivalent grades) following **their** meetings.

Reviews/Projects/Strategies

The Department engages with and seeks input from all staff on matters directly affecting them including Organisational Reviews, HR Strategy, ISO projects, etc. The engagement takes a number of forms including attendance at workshops, information sessions, completing questionnaires, email correspondence, etc.

Conferences/Seminars

Every year the Department holds two Heads of Division (Principal Officer and equivalent grades) Seminars which are attended by the Secretary General and Management Board members. The Seminars provide both a networking opportunity and the chance for management at the most senior levels to engage on current issues and consider future developments which may impact on the Department and the wider agri-food sector. In addition, the Department organises staff seminars/town hall meetings as necessary but typically once a year. It also facilitates and encourages attendance by staff at centrally organised (DPER) town hall meetings on implementation of the Civil Service Renewal Plan.

Training/Courses

Department Overview

The Department has a dedicated HR Learning and Development Unit (LDU) which works closely with line Divisions in the identification of training and development needs for staff. LDU trainers deliver some courses and some are procured from external service providers or from *OneLearning* (the Learning and Development Shared Service), depending on the specific requirements. As part of its brief, LDU also organises Induction Courses for new staff members and facilitates Continuous Personal and Professional Development for staff across all grades, as part of our commitment to lifelong learning.

Publications

The Department produces a number of publications aimed at providing information about the Department, its schemes and services, policies, etc. All such publications are available to all staff via the Intranet (eZone). HR Division produces a quarterly newsletter aimed at keeping all staff updated on HR matters. In addition the Department's Press Office provides a media monitoring service, whereby all media coverage relevant to the Department and the agri-food sector are made available to staff on the eZone every morning.

Briefing material

Briefing material covering a wide range of areas/issues across the Department is available to all staff e.g. briefing for new Ministerial team.

Communication Tools

The Department avails of a number of communication tools including: email, telephone, conference calls, video conferencing, office notices, poster campaigns, open door policy, meetings, etc. The Department also has an Organisation Chart on its eZone and requires all staff members to record their contact details in the internal phone book facilitating internal communication. All staff can also be included in the circulation of Press Releases.

Departmental Council

HR Division meets the staff associations representing the different grade streams every two months through the Departmental Council process to discuss and resolve any Industrial Relations issues that may arise.

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Partnership

The Partnership process was relaunched in April/May 2018 to help reinvigorate communications across the organisation. Very effective Local Partnership committees are in operation in the Department's main locations, providing a forum for discussion of local non-IR issues. Local Partnership committees are also represented at the Central Partnership Committee that engages with HR Division and other relevant Divisions to exchange information and discuss best practice across a range of areas of mutual interest relevant to Partnership. New Regional Partnership Structures will also be put in place to encompass the offices that are not included in the local partnership arrangements.

Social

The Department has established a Wellbeing Guidance Committee to oversee and encourage initiatives that raise awareness about health and wellbeing for all employees and provide knowledge and opportunities to employees to motivate behavioural change and wellbeing.

The Committee works with and supports the many long established social clubs and networks in various locations who organise events around social outings, book clubs, golf societies, hiking/walking and mindfulness based activities such as yoga and pilates classes.

The Department also has its own Choir which rehearses regularly and performs at various gatherings/events throughout the year including: Christmas Carol service, retirement functions, remembrance Masses and special events.

DAFMag, our staff magazine, is published twice a year and is made up entirely of contributions from staff.

Engagement with External Stakeholders

The Department is very pro-active in engaging with its external stakeholders to progress the economic development of the agri-food, forestry and marine sectors. In view of the economic importance for Ireland of these sectors, the Department is very involved working with all stakeholders – other Government Departments, state agencies, producers, agri-food companies and processors – to capture their voice and contribution. The potential of these sectors to grow jobs, to increase exports, to enhance sustainable production, to innovate and develop new products and bring economic growth to all parts of the country represents an enormous opportunity for Ireland, an opportunity which can increase the wellbeing of the country exponentially. In order to achieve

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this potential, the Department acknowledges the vital contribution of its external stakeholders and is very open to engaging with them to achieve our common goal of economic and sustainable development.

An indication of the wide range of stakeholder engagement carried out by the Department is outlined by the following examples:

- Food Wise 2025 Consultation, High level Implementation Group and Environmental Sustainability Sub- Committee;
- The Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014 – 2020 Public Consultation;
- Presence at the annual National Ploughing Championships;
- Dairy Forum;
- Beef Roundtable;
- eGovernment/Digital Services to provide quality online services;
- International organisations, e.g. European Commission, UN World Food Programme, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation;
- Monthly Fisheries Quota Management Advisory Group;
- Sea Fisheries Liaison Group;
- Seafood Development Programme;
- National Inshore Fisheries Forum;
- Agriculture and Fisheries Attachés in Brussels and other key locations worldwide;
- Brexit Consultative Committee;
- TB 2030 Forum;
- Inter-Agency Fodder Group;
- Consultative Committee of Stakeholders on Brexit.

Other on-going fora in which the Department engages with citizens/stakeholders include the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC) which is independently chaired as well as the iNAP Animal Health Implementation Committee and the Equine Liaison Group which are both chaired by the Department's Chief Veterinary Officer.

Farmers' Charter of Rights

The *Farmers' Charter of Rights 2015-2020* was agreed following discussions with the farming organisations. The Charter sets out specific delivery targets to our farmer customers and covers the schemes operated by the Department. The Farmers' Charter continues our commitment to the

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principles of Quality Customer Service set out in our Customer Charter and Action Plan. Progress under the Charter is monitored by a review committee under an independent chairman. This Committee meets four times a year. The Committee is comprised of representatives of farm organisations and Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine staff.

Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan

A [Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan](#) is also in place. This Customer Charter is a clear statement describing the level of service our customers can expect from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Our Customer Action Plan which follows this Customer Charter describes in detail how the commitments and standards set out in our Customer Charter, and other customer service improvements, will be delivered and evaluated by the Department.

Review of Effectiveness of Governance Framework

This document will be reviewed every two years to ensure its continued fitness for purpose so the Department maintains an effective governance framework.

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

Governance Principle - Good governance helps to define priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability

Minister

The role of the Minister is set out in the Ministers and Secretaries Acts 1924 to 2013, section 4 of the Agriculture Act 1931 and section 3 of the Public Service Management Act 1997. The Minister has political responsibility for actions of the Department, however, under the Carltona legal principle, officials with the appropriate skills, competencies and status may also exercise Ministerial powers.

Relationship with the Minister

The Minister has political responsibility for the Department and the Secretary General manages the Department. The Minister sets the Department's strategy, makes policy decisions and accounts for these actions in the Oireachtas and publicly. The Secretary General has separate and direct accountability to the Oireachtas for the management of the Department's expenditure. These functions are outlined in the Section relating to the responsibilities of the **Secretary General & Accounting Officer** below.

On appointment, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine meets with Secretary General and Senior Management. The Minister is presented with a written comprehensive brief of the Department. The brief–

- Provides an outline of Department and the Agri-Food Sector
- Addresses Current Issues
- Outlines the role/responsibilities of each Division in the Department.

The Minister and Secretary General/Senior Management meet regularly to discuss Department's policies/strategy/priorities/implementation of policies/schemes.

A performance review process for Secretaries General, is overseen by the Civil Service Accountability Board performance review group. It is a three stage process which involves each Secretary General meeting with their Ministers at the start of the year to agree priority objectives for the year ahead which will be submitted collectively to Government for approval. They meet and review progress at the mid-year point and reprioritise objectives as required. The performance review group of the

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

Accountability Board formally review the performance of Secretaries General at end year with input from Ministers.

Recording of Ministerial Decisions

The assent of the Minister is needed where explicitly required by statute, or where significant issues of policy or strategy are in play. It is also prudent to keep the Minister apprised of matters of political or operational sensitivity. Functions are formally delegated to Ministers of State through secondary legislation.

When a decision from a Minister/Minister of State is required the formal process is as follows. A submission outlining proposal and decision requested is sent to the Minister through the Secretary General. When a decision is made formal, the assent of the Minister or Minister of State is recorded.

The Department has in place an electronic system – eSubmissions, which streamlines the procedures for submissions to the Secretary General’s office and to the Minister’s and Minister of State’s offices. This system records all relevant documentation, recommendations, decisions and notes in relation to submissions. The ePQ system provides a similar function for PQs but also facilitates the submission of the response directly to the PQ Office in the Houses of the Oireachtas.

The Department is examining the introduction of new electronic Records Management System - eDocs. The aim of eDocs is to provide a centralised system of records and information management. An adapted version of the existing file management system will remain in place for handling paper files which include documents that contain legally binding elements such as signatures or seals. The eDocs system will facilitate greater efficiencies in records management, particularly in relation to the retrieval of documents and increased security and accountability for official files.

Minister of State

The role of the Minister for State is normally set out in an Order made under section 2 of the Ministers and Secretaries Act (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 1977. However, in exceptional circumstances, where the Minister of State is tasked with a particular issue, the responsibilities are implemented on the basis of the relevant Government Decision.

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

Relationship with the Minister of State

The relationship between the Minister of State and the Department mirrors the relationship of the Minister and the Department. The Minister of State receives a comprehensive brief on appointment. Officials brief the Minister of State on the areas of responsibility that have been delegated to him/her and on request any other area that comes under remit of the Department. The Minister of State also attends the formal meetings between the Minister and the Management Board.

Secretary General & Accounting Officer

The Secretary General is the senior civil servant and non-political head of the Department. He or she is responsible for the effective and efficient management of the Department including particular financial responsibilities, non-political strategic planning and direction, providing policy advice to Ministers on all matters within the remit of the Department, delivering outputs and outcomes, addressing cross-cutting matters involving the Department, and being accountable before Oireachtas Committees as required. These statutory functions are laid down in the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 and the Public Service Management Act 1997.

The Secretary General for the Department is also its Accounting Officer. The role of Accounting Officers is laid down in 'Role and Responsibilities of Accounting Officers – A Memorandum for Accounting Officers (2011)'. The Accounting Officer is personally responsible for the safeguarding of public funds and property under his/her control; for the regularity and propriety of all the transactions in each Appropriation Account bearing his/her signature; and for the efficiency and economy of expenditure. The Secretary General, as Accounting Officer, reports to the Committee of Public Accounts on financial matters relating to the Department. In a separate and distinct role, the Secretary General is also the Head of the EU Paying Agency, as the Department is also the national accredited Paying Agency for the disbursement of EU funds.

Key relationships for the Secretary General include the Minister and Ministers of State, managers and staff of the Department, statutory and other bodies within its remit, EU and other international bodies, a range of diverse sectoral interests, as well as other Departments and public bodies.

Special Adviser to the Minister

The primary function of Special Advisers is to secure the achievement of Government objectives and to ensure effective co-ordination in the implementation of the Programme for Government. The role and duties of Special Advisers are described in section 11 of the Public Service Management Act

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

1997. To underpin this work, and the interaction between Special Advisers and the permanent Civil Service it is important that there is clarity about how the Department operates as well as the how the Department can support Special Advisers to perform their functions effectively.

The appointment is subject to the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004, the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act 2001. The term of office of Special Adviser shall cease on the date on which the Minister ceases to be a Minister of the Government.

The Department issued an internal Office Notice setting out the particular governance arrangements, information flows, procedures and systems for decision making, administrative arrangements, etc. which are particular to the Department and which are of interest to or impact on the work of Special Advisers. The Office Notice also serves to notify staff of their responsibilities to comply with relevant circulation protocols, etc. and ensure that the Advisers are supported in quickly settling into their role.

Assignment of Senior Management Roles & Responsibilities

Section 4(1) and 9(2) of the Public Services Management Act empowers the Secretary General to assign responsibility to other officers of the Department for the performance of his/her functions. This procedure is carried out in accordance with guidelines from DPER.

The Secretary General assigns responsibility and accountability under the Public Service Management Act 1997 to each Management Board member. Board members make assignments as appropriate to each Head of Division. The assignments are in line with the Department's business plans which reflect the high level priorities and objectives of the Department as set out in the Statement of Strategy. Assignments also have regard to the assignment of functions in respect of appointments, performance and discipline of personnel under the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956-2005 which are made from time to time by the Secretary General.

Copies of signed declarations are recorded by HR Division. Regular checks are carried out to ensure these records are maintained correctly and are up to date. In addition, a performance management system is in place for Assistant Secretaries (eLeads) to support accountability for the delivery of these responsibilities.

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

Leadership and Organisational Capacity/Capability

The Department's **Management Services Division (MSD)** works under the direction of an Assistant Secretary and, as well as co-ordinating the Department's response to public service reform and Civil Service Renewal, provides the Department with analysis and advice on organisational development, business process improvement, resource deployment and change management. The Division is the 'Change Delivery Unit' for the Department and supports the Management Board in the implementation of innovation and change initiatives. MSD also supports and facilitates Line Divisions implementing organisational changes and responds to the views of staff emerging from successive Civil Service Employee Engagement Surveys.

The Department's HR Strategy was developed in consultation with all staff. It supports the achievement of the Department's strategic priorities as outlined in the Statement of Strategy by strengthening processes already in place, and developing new policies to support staff within the Department. It also forms the basis for the effective deployment of Human Resource capability and informs the way the Department manages, motivates and deploys resources, to facilitate the availability of skills and knowledge to underpin our success in delivering the Department's business strategy (workforce planning).

The Department has reconfigured the way in which the HR Function is delivered. Core HR functions have been consolidated and new units established focusing on a strategic approach to resource deployment and provision of specific expertise in the areas of recruitment, industrial relations, disciplinary and performance issues, employee support and development.

The Department is committed to providing an inclusive and diverse workplace for all employees and recently launched a Diversity, Equality and Inclusion policy. An active gender balance initiative is in place to address gender imbalance across the organisation including a Gender Balance Steering Committee that supports and informs the Department's approach to Gender Balance. A Management Board Action Plan is currently being implemented and includes measures to support new parents and staff availing of Maternity leave and other caring leave. The Department also monitors gender metrics to assist in identifying barriers to career opportunities for all staff. Events are held on International Women's and Men's days to support gender balance initiatives.

There is a **leadership programme** in place for senior managers which forms part of the Department's Learning and Development Strategy. After a very successful programme of mentoring was

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

completed in April 2015, a new permanent programme was put in place with over 200 staff currently participating.

The Department undertook a *programme of internal organisational reviews* across five broad business areas of the Department, namely:

1. Farm Support/Payments and Controls;
2. Strategy and Policy Co-ordination;
3. Food Safety and Animal/Plant Health & Animal Welfare;
4. Seafood; and,
5. Corporate Development.

This review focused on the key areas of Strategy, Delivery and People within the context of examining our capacity and capability to deliver on the Department's wide ranging remit and the implementation of the actions arising from the review is part of a process of continuous improvement and innovation.

The Economics and Planning Division undertakes regular evaluations of key spending areas through the *Value for Money and Spending Review Programme under the Public Spending Code*, and liaises with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on an on-going basis. The topics are generally selected in two ways: 1) suggestions by senior management 2) a focus on areas of significant expenditure. A draft programme is then submitted to the Management Board for approval and subsequent submission to DPER.

In 2018, the Agriculture Cash Flow Loan Support Scheme, the Beef Data Genomics Programme, the Competitive Agricultural Research Programme and the Forestry Programme were subject to a Spending Review.

The Department has comprehensive *Data Protection, Data Retention and Archiving policies* in place which are enhanced and supported by comprehensive staff guidelines.

ICT Governance

The Department has in place an ICT governance structure and project management guidelines, which include input and advice from the Department's Management Board members. For example,

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

all major ICT projects are prioritised and pre-approved by the IT Steering Committee (ITSC), which is chaired by the Department's Secretary General.

The Department uses an internally developed and formally documented project management methodology, based on PRINCE2, which is applied to all major ICT projects. In addition, a quarterly ICT project updates report is presented to the ITSC, which outlines the status of all of the Department's ICT projects.

All ICT projects are governed by project boards, comprising representatives from both the business and Information Management and Technology (IMT) sides. Project Boards for all medium- large size projects are chaired by the Assistant Secretary General from the appropriate business area. Individual projects are managed by an experienced IMT project manager who maintains the appropriate risk management and planning documentation.

Project teams are supported by the Department's IMT Programme Management Office, which is responsible for:

- Monitoring and implementation of the standardised Project Management guidelines and principles across the IMT Group;
- Provision of project management support/advice to project teams;
- Maintenance of a central repository for IMT related project management documents.

The Department is also increasing its activity in the area of Data Analytics, to maximise the benefits of the data sets available to it.

Information Security

The Department has achieved ISO 27001:2013 Information Security certification.

ISO 27001:2013 is an internationally recognised Information Security Standard. Information Security protects information from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, inspection, recording or destruction. The certification allows the Department to:

- Preserve the Department's good reputation with regards to information security and standing among industry leaders;
- Provide assurance to our customers and partners about the Department's commitment to protecting data;

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

- Ensure that the Department is adhering to all of its contractual and legislative requirements; and
- Ensure that the Department is following an internationally best practice standard for Information Security.

Management Board and other Governance Structures

Governance Principle - Good governance means developing the Department's capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff

Management Board Terms of Reference

Functions and Responsibilities of the Management Board

The function of the Management Board is to support the Minister in his/her role, and to advise the Secretary General on the overall management of the Department. In this context, the Board acts as a unified and unifying force that seeks to provide leadership and strategic direction to the Department.

Specific Role of the Management Board

- **Corporate management:** The Secretary General and the Management Board are responsible for the strategic and financial management of the Department. This includes the development and on-going monitoring of Statements of Strategy, annual business plans and overall corporate governance arrangements, including risk management processes and internal audit procedures, as well as oversight of the Department's State Bodies as appropriate. Also the Board regularly monitors the financial performance of the Department and assists and advises the Secretary General in relation to issues relevant to his/her role as Accounting Officer and Head of the EU Paying Agency.
- **Operational Management:** The Management Board is responsible, in support of the Secretary General, for the operational performance of the organisation in all its dimensions and in particular in its two largest operational areas – farm supports (farm & forestry payments and controls) and food safety & animal health. The Board ensures that it has access to appropriate management information to undertake this task effectively and to achieve the standards of operational excellence to which the Department aspires.
- **Policy Development:** The Secretary General and Management Board assist the Minister in putting in place an appropriate policy framework for the sustainable development of the agri-food sector. In this context the Board regularly reviews relevant national, EU and international policy and market developments and receive reports on key issues from Divisions.

Management Board and other Governance Structures

- **Leadership:** The Management Board ensures that all staff are deployed and managed effectively and that the Department offers them a positive and encouraging work environment.
- **Communication:** The Management Board has a key role to play in ensuring effective communication throughout the organisation to enable all staff to develop a rounded, multi-dimensional view of the Department's operations and policy perspectives. The members of the Board ensure that the key points from its deliberations and decisions are disseminated throughout the Department.

Membership of Management Board

Membership of the Management Board comprises the Secretary General (who serves as Chair), all (8) Assistant Secretary Generals (including the Chief Financial Officer), the Chief Veterinary Officer, the Chief Inspector, the Head of Laboratories, and the Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer/ Chair of the Gender Balance Committee. This membership provides the Board with the range of skills and experience appropriate to fulfilling its responsibilities. Membership of the Board may be changed from time to time by the Secretary General with the advice of the Board.

Relationship with Minister

Ministerial Management Board meetings are held from time to time as decided by the Minister. The Minister may decide to attend any Board meeting or to appoint a Special Adviser to attend. In addition, the Secretary General and/or relevant member of the Board brief the Minister (and, as appropriate, Minister of State) on issues arising at Board meetings, as appropriate.

Functioning of the Management Board

In general, Board meetings are held every week; a schedule of dates will be provided by the Secretary to the Board at least 3 months in advance. If a meeting cannot be held on the relevant day as much notice as possible will be given.

The Board regularly holds its meetings at DAFM offices around the country.

Sub-Committees of the Board are set up from time to time to discuss and report on particular issues; these committees are set up with Terms of Reference and report directly to the Management Board/ Secretary General.

Management Board and other Governance Structures

The Management Board is supported by a Secretary to the Board, who is normally the Private Secretary to the Secretary General, and a Secretariat, who:

- Prepare the Agenda in consultation with Secretary General / Management Board /Divisions;
- Arrange to collate and circulate papers for meetings. Write reports as soon as possible after the meeting and arrange for publication of these on the Department's intranet;
- Communicate with /assist Divisions in the process of providing papers for Management Board meetings.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually or as required.

Communications

These and any new Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Management Board, will be brought to the attention of the Minister and Minister of State and all staff of the Department, and will be placed on the Department's intranet.

Reports of all Management Board meetings are agreed by and circulated to the members of the Board and placed on the Department's intranet for the information of staff as soon as possible after each meeting.

Management Structures

IT Steering Committee

High quality ICT services are critical to the successful day-to-day operation of the Department and are also a key facilitator in allowing for increases in efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. The IT Steering Committee is the main mechanism for the Department's senior management to be informed about ICT related issues that affect both their own functions and functions of the Department in general. It also provides a formal mechanism for their input into the on-going operation and delivery of ICT services and in ensuring that these are in line with overall Department's Strategy.

The IT Steering Committee (ITSC) is responsible for approving major project elements such as:

- Prioritisation of objectives, deliverables and outcomes as identified in the project;
- Business Case approval and prioritisation;

Management Board and other Governance Structures

- Ensuring that effort, expenditures and changes are appropriate to stakeholder expectation and in line with Department Strategy;
- Ensuring that strategies to address potential threats to the projects' success have been identified, estimated and approved, and that the threats are regularly re-assessed.

The ITSC meets on a quarterly basis. Meetings are chaired by the Secretary General and include the relevant Management Board members, the Director of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and the ICT Heads of Division.

Laboratory Services Advisory Board (LSAB)

The LSAB is a sub-group of the Management Board. It was established to ensure close co-operation and coordination of activities between the Department's Laboratories and other Divisions and the continued strategic development and improvement of the Laboratories.

The Board is chaired by the Head of Laboratories and comprises the Chief Inspector, the Chief Veterinary Officer, the Assistant Secretary responsible for Corporate Affairs and HR, and two other Management Board members.

One of the key functions of this Board over the next few years will be to monitor and advise on progress in implementation of organisational change in the Laboratories. The LSAB will also advise the Head of Laboratories on prioritisation of laboratory services and allocation of resources.

Governance across Organisational Boundaries

The Department is very involved in various programmes across the Civil Service. Departmental officials service cross-Departmental official level groups and support the work of relevant Cabinet Committees. The interdependent and collegiate nature of this cross-Departmental work is vital for the achievement of the Department's mission.

Ireland's EU membership, and its implementation of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), has an enormous influence on the work of the Department and on the development of the agri-food sector in Ireland. The EU dimension affects the full spectrum of Department activities, including those relating to animal welfare and food safety issues, the distribution of direct payments, the implementation of rural development programmes, the common organisation of the markets in agricultural products, and control and auditing requirements

Management Board and other Governance Structures

and fisheries. CAP and CFP policy development and implementation involves extensive consultation with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the other Member States, and implementation in particular involves compliance with a wide range of EU primary and secondary legislation.

The Department is also the national accredited Paying Agency for the disbursement of EU funds, which play a crucial role in supporting policy implementation and in underpinning efforts to achieve the objectives set out in industry development strategies. EU payments worth approximately €1.2 billion are processed annually by the Department and paid to farmers under the Basic Payments Scheme and the various schemes under Ireland's Rural Development Programme. Significant staffing resources are assigned to the processing of applications, to cross compliance and other control activities, and to the development and support of the information technology systems that underpin all of these schemes.

An indication of our cross-Departmental engagement is outlined by the following examples:

- Civil Service Management Board (CSMB);
- Shared Services Reform Programme;
- Public Service Leadership Board and Public Service Management Group for the delivery of the Our Public Service 2020 Reform Plan;
- Heads of Internal Audit Forum;
- Climate Action and Low Carbon National Mitigation Plan Steering Group;
- North/South Ministerial Council.

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

Governance Principle - Good governance means managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

One of the key targets of the Department is to maintain the highest standards of financial management as verified by reports of its various monitoring authorities (Audit Committee, Certifying Body of the EU, EU Commission and Court of Auditors and C&AG). To this end it is the policy of the Department to maintain and support a quality internal audit function. The adequacy and effectiveness of the management system and procedures, the control culture and control environment are under continuing review from the Department's Internal Audit Unit, as well as the Audit Committee, external review agencies on behalf of the EU, and the Comptroller and Auditor General. Individual managers and staff in the business areas of the Department all contribute to ensuring effective management and maintaining and developing control systems. The Department's Risk Management System is an important tool for assisting management in this task.

Audit Committee

The Department's Audit Committee was established to independently advise the Secretary General on the internal audit policies and the management of risk, appropriate to the functioning of the Department. Its membership is mainly comprised of suitably experienced individuals who are external to the management and staff of the Department.

The Audit Committee is independent of the Department and is objective in its considerations. It operates under an agreed Charter.

The Committee has three broad roles:

- To advise on the suitability and robustness of the Department's internal control systems;
- To advise on the operation of the internal audit function within the Department;
- To examine and monitor the implementation of the Department's risk management strategy.

Within the framework of the broad roles referred to above, the Committee has the following specific functions:

- Reviewing and advising on the proposed programme of work for internal audit within the Department;

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

- Assessing the results of completed internal audit reports, evaluating the effectiveness of internal control systems and procedures and advising the Secretary General of its conclusions thereon;
- Approving, and periodically reviewing, a charter for internal audit which clearly defines the purpose, authority, roles and responsibilities and reporting relationships of the Audit Committee, Internal Audit Unit and relevant management of the Department;
- Advising the Secretary General on the effectiveness of the internal control systems and procedures;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the internal audit function and the implementation of the audit plan;
- Assisting the Director of Internal Audit in judging priorities;
- Requesting special reports from internal audit as considered appropriate;
- Monitoring and assessing the implementation of agreed corrective actions by management, including by reference to follow-up audits;
- Advising on whether adequate resources and skills are available for the internal audit function of the Department and making recommendations on the allocation of resources, where it considers this desirable;
- Fostering the development of best practice in the internal audit function;
- Promoting understanding of the internal audit function and status within the Department;
- Monitoring the implementation of the Department's risk management strategy and advising the Secretary General on the effectiveness of this process.

The Audit Committee has the authority:

- To seek such information, documents and presentations by Departmental officials which, in the Committee's opinion, are relevant to matters falling within its terms of reference;
- To meet with external auditors or consultants operating within the Department.

Internal Audit Unit

The purpose of the Internal Audit Unit is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the Department's operations by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes within the Department. The Unit must also carry out an audit programme in accordance with a number of EU Regulations in respect of EU Funds. In addition the Unit provides all necessary support to the Department's Audit Committee.

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

Authority

The Department's Internal Audit Unit derives its authority from the Secretary General in his/her capacity as Accounting Officer, to whom the Director of Internal Audit directly reports. The Internal Audit Unit is authorised to:

- Have unrestricted access, in the course of its audit work, to all functions, records, property and personnel of the Department;
- Have full and free access to the Audit Committee;
- Allocate resources and determine scope of work required to accomplish audit objectives;
- Request and receive all the information and explanations it requires for the proper performance of its duties.

Role and Responsibilities

The primary role of the Internal Audit Unit is to give assurance to the Secretary General, the Audit Committee and senior management as to the adequacy of the Department's risk management, control and governance processes. The Internal Audit Unit may advise line managers on the operation of internal controls, including in some instances where systems are under development. The Internal Audit Unit also has separate responsibilities under certain EU Regulations. The Internal Audit Unit also has a role in providing assurance that the Department has systems and procedures in place to fulfil Value for Money responsibilities.

Independence

The Internal Audit Unit will not engage in line functions in order to preserve its independence, which is essential in its provision of impartial advice to management. Where the Internal Audit Unit reviews systems under development and gives advice on appropriate controls this does not prejudice its right to subsequently audit such systems.

Audit Methodology

The Internal Audit Unit produces an annual work plan for all the areas under its remit using an appropriate risk-based methodology and includes any risks or control concerns identified by management. The plan is agreed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Management Board. Audit work is carried out in accordance with the standards and guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and best practice of organisations such as the Institute of Internal Auditors and the Information Systems Audit and Control Association.

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

Reporting Arrangements

The Director of Internal Audit reports to the Secretary General, as Accounting Officer, and regularly to the Management Board and also on a quarterly basis to the Audit Committee.

Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Financial Officer is at Assistant Secretary level and a member of the Management Board. Responsibilities include management of the financial affairs and budgetary matters of the Department.

Finance Division

The role of the Finance Unit is to manage the financial affairs of the Department. This includes operating a system of financial delegation and monitoring, analysing and reporting on expenditure of voted funds against agreed budgets to Management Board and to DPER in line with requirements. It liaises, as required, with the Comptroller and Auditor General. On a day-to-day basis, it provides fund management support to Divisions.

Finance Division is also responsible for coordinating and monitoring EU Commission and Court of Auditor audits and liaising with both organisations in that regard. The Division prepares the EU Annual Account and Statement of Assurance, for EAGF, EAFRD and EMFF with all supporting reconciliations required for audit purposes and to maintain the Department's status as Ireland's accredited paying agency and ensures conformity with European Commission European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) Irregularity Reporting. It is also responsible for the preparation and submission of the annual Composite Account to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). It is responsible for the accurate preparation, certification and submission to the Commission of both EAGF, EAFRD and EMFF Annual/Monthly/Quarterly accounts and accurate Debt reporting within time limits set down by EU. Furthermore it coordinates the publication of CAP beneficiary information in line with regulatory requirements and functions as the Certifying Authority for the European Fisheries Fund.

The Risk Management System (see below) is maintained, monitored and managed by Finance Division.

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

Risk Management

Risk management has been prioritised by the Management Board. The objective of the Department's Risk Management Programme is to assess the key risks facing the Department in achieving its objectives and to outline measures, at Department and divisional level, to minimise and manage such risks. As part of this programme each division within the Department identifies its major risks and reports on a regular basis on the management of these risks to the Department's Risk and Audit Committees.

A centralised Risk Management system is maintained by the Finance Division. The primary purpose of the Risk Management database is to log and record the risks that have been identified by the divisions within the Department and to facilitate a tracking and reporting system on these risks for the Department's Risk and Audit Committees. The system can also be used as an internal management tool by the divisions to track divisional risk issues.

Debt Management

The Central Debt Management Group, chaired by Assistant Secretary Smyth and comprising of representatives from Accounts, Finance and Legal Services Divisions meets regularly to examine and improve debt management and collection processes across all areas of the Department.

A debt collection tracking system has been rolled out to all of the debtor units responsible for the collection of fees and the recovery of over payments and penalties under the Department schemes. A Central Debt Monitoring Unit is in place to oversee and report on all debt collection in the Department. This Unit is responsible for overseeing the debt collection tracking system, reviewing debt management procedures, and reporting quarterly to the Management Board and to the Audit Committee on the current debt position.

Central Procurement Unit

The Central Procurement Unit (CPU) oversees and monitors all aspects of all Department procurement including category management and procurement policy. It ensures that procurement processes are implemented consistently throughout the Department in accordance with procurement rules and guidelines and that Divisions are complying with procurement rules with a view to ensuring that the Department achieves efficiencies and obtains optimum value for money. It also liaises with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and facilitates implementation of OGP policies and procedures in line with Public Sector Reform of procurement. The CPU maintains an up-

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

to-date register of contracts on SAP and ensures that procurement expenditure is recorded accurately in Accounts records.

Accounts Division

Accounts Division processes and maintains all appropriate accounting records of the Department's financial transactions, by executing all Department payment and receipt transactions promptly and accurately maintaining the integrity of the Accounts and the Corporate Customer Systems, while also assessing and managing changing business requirements and processes including engagement with the Financial Shared Services Project. The Division also prepares the Department's Appropriation Account and the Fishery Harbour Centres Account and coordinates the annual audit of these Accounts by the C&AG.

Appropriation Account

At the end of each financial year, the Department is required to report spend and receipts in the form of an Appropriation Account to be delivered to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) by the 31st March in the year following the year of account. The Accounting Officer is required to supply a signed Statement of Internal Financial Control to the Comptroller and Auditor General with the Account in which he or she declares their approach to, and responsibility for, risk management, internal control and corporate governance. It also highlights any weaknesses which may exist in the internal control system within the organisation.

To support the Statement of Internal Financial Control included within the Appropriation Account, Budget Managers are formally requested (on a monthly basis) to confirm that they have reviewed spend and receipts for accuracy and correctness. At the end of the accounting year, the Budget Manager is formally requested to complete and sign-off on an Appropriation Account questionnaire in relation to the financial activities in their Division. In addition, the Heads of Finance, Information Management and Technology (IMT) and Internal Audit Divisions review the Statement of Internal Financial Control to ensure it accurately reflects corporate governance arrangements in place within the Department.

EU Expenditure

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is the accredited paying agency for the disbursement of EU funds under EU Regulation No. 1306/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financing, management and monitoring of the Common Agricultural Policy. The

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

Secretary General is the Head of the Paying Agency. The Department's EU Accounts are audited annually by an independent certifying body, and are also subject to audit by the EU Commission and the EU Court of Auditors.

Fraud Policy

The Department has a Fraud Policy in place, implemented by the Finance Division.

Food Safety and Food Authenticity

The Department and its Agencies seek to promote the highest levels of legal compliance to protect the health of consumers and to promote and sustain a vibrant Agri-food and Seafood industry in Ireland. This is vital to Ireland's reputation internationally. The Department's and its Agencies' strategy for providing assurance with regard to food safety and food authenticity is to maintain and develop the most effective monitoring and control programmes at primary, producer and processing levels and to ensure effective implementation of appropriate legislation across all the Department's areas of operation. For the most part, compliance with legislative requirements is achieved through a combination of guidelines issued from the Department and its Agencies and the adherence to the requirements by stakeholders.

Investigations Steering Group and the Investigations Division

Where serious non-compliance with legislative requirements is suspected the matter may be referred to Department's Investigations Division for investigation and appropriate follow-up. The Investigations Division is overseen by the Investigations Steering Group. The Investigations Steering Group is chaired by the Assistant Secretary General responsible for HR and Corporate Affairs and comprises the Chief Veterinary Officer, the Assistant Secretary General with responsibility for direct payments, and the Heads of Legal Services, Internal Audit and HR.

Accreditation Review Group

The Accreditation Review Group (ARG) monitors Department activities in regard to European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) programmes. The ARG meets at least quarterly under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Department and includes representation by the senior management of the Department. The main function of the ARG is to ensure compliance with the accreditation criteria with particular regard to ensuring that all recommendations contained in the Report of the Certifying Body are

Audit, Assurance & Compliance Arrangements

brought to the attention of the Assistant Secretary, are reviewed by the relevant Principal Officer(s) and are implemented on a timely basis.

In addition to monitoring the follow-up to the Certifying Body findings, the ARG monitors the progress of all audit recommendations and the responses to all audit findings in respect of substantive issues reported by the European Commission, European Court of Auditors and the Comptroller and Auditor General. Reports on the position regarding outstanding debts are also submitted to the ARG.

Compliance Framework

As an accompaniment to the Department's Governance Framework, a compliance framework will be developed by the end of Quarter 4, 2019. The compliance framework will provide an overview of all compliance assurance activity in the Department, and identifies who within the Department is responsible for each activity. It will exist as a separate framework to focus on and provide greater detail of the subset of governance standards that are required to be met by statute, or on foot of government decisions or significant administrative or external commitments.

State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

Governance Principle - Good governance ensures openness, effective public consultation processes and comprehensive engagement with domestic and international stakeholders

External Governance and Oversight of Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016

There are twelve State Bodies under the aegis of the Department. These bodies are established by statute and their Directors/CEOs have specific responsibility for day to day operations. In the case of some of these bodies the Chief Executive is directly accountable to the Oireachtas under the statutes establishing the body, while for others the Chief Executive may be required to report to relevant Oireachtas Committees in accordance with the Houses of the Oireachtas (Inquiries, Privileges and Procedures) Act, 2013.

In general the accounts of such bodies are audited by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and they are bound, in their procedures and practices, to have regard both to the provisions of the statutes establishing them and to the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*. The Department has a role in guiding policy and in seeking assurance in relation to compliance with the provisions of the *Code of Practices*. In addition to the monitoring by the line divisions, Corporate Affairs Division has an oversight role in relation to corporate governance. Details of the State Bodies under the aegis of the Department are outlined in Appendix 2.

Performance Framework Arrangement

The Department has a Performance Framework Arrangement which was approved by the Management Board for use in relation to its State Bodies. The document derives from the requirements on Departmental Oversight in the 2016 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The objective of the Arrangement is to define the Department's performance expectations for a State Body.

The Arrangement outlines the process for setting the performance expectations of a State Body, the procedure for reviewing their achievement and the respective responsibilities of the State Body and the Department in this regard. The Arrangement is also to facilitate performance evaluation between a State Body and the Department whilst respecting the operational independence of the Body. The document can be amended by Line Divisions as circumstances require in relation to the

State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

individual State Bodies. The Arrangement envisages a six-monthly or annual meeting, as appropriate, between officials and the Department and the State Body.

In relation to two of the four Commercial bodies, Coillte and the Irish National Stud, the format of an Oversight and Performance Agreement does not apply. A Shareholder Letter of Expectation, developed by DPER, is deemed by the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* to be the Oversight Agreement with these bodies.

Coillte is the sole New Economy and Recovery Authority (NewERA) body under DAFM auspices. The NewERA approach is to facilitate an enhanced level of active ownership by the State as shareholder via the Shareholder Letter of Expectation. Under its legislation, NewERA has specific responsibility to provide financial and commercial advice to the Minister in relation to Coillte.

Appointments to the Boards of State Bodies under the aegis of the Department

The arrangements for the appointment of members to the Boards of State Bodies are set out in the *Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards* published in 2014. In accordance with the Guidelines, all vacancies (subject to specified exceptions) are advertised openly on the State Boards portal, www.stateboards.ie, operated by the Public Appointments Service (PAS). Applications are then processed by way of a transparent assessment system designed and implemented by PAS to support the Minister in making appointments to State Boards under his/her remit. Applicants are shortlisted through this process for Ministerial appointment. Appointments meet specific and detailed criteria determined in consultation with key stakeholders (such as the current Chair of the State Board concerned and the Public Appointments Service) as necessary for the effective performance of the relevant role(s). However, in some instances, representative or other bodies may have the right, either statutory or by convention, to nominate Board Members. Currently, there is a particular focus on enhancing gender balance on the boards of State Bodies, to support greater diversity and effectiveness.

Delegated Sanction Measures

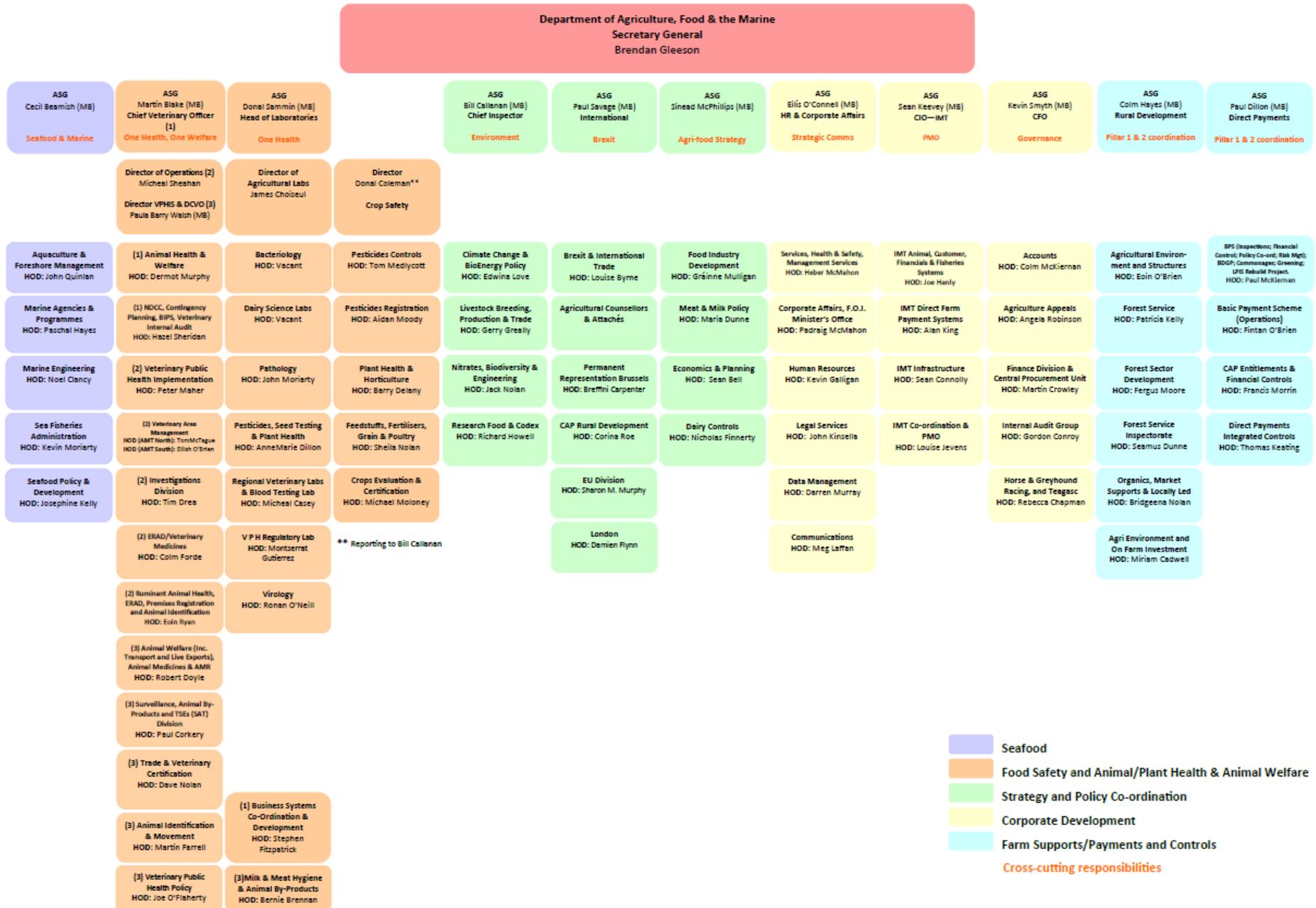
HR Division will continue to liaise with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in actively managing the operation of delegated sanction measures for both the Department and the State Bodies operating under its aegis and provide quarterly returns to DPER in the required format.

Workforce Plans

State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

The Department and six of the State Bodies operating under its aegis implement workforce planning processes to facilitate effective deployment of resources. In this regard, the Department and the State Bodies operate within parameters laid down by the Department and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform as part of delegated sanction arrangements. The Department monitors implementation of the workforce plans to ensure that the Department and its State Bodies operate within the agreed parameters.

Appendix 1 – DAFM Organogram



Appendix 2 – State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

Body	Accountable Person (i.e. Head of Office)	Principal Officer in Dept. liaising with Body	Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions	Exchequer Funding Source	Governing Legislation
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board	Imelda Reynolds Chairperson	Josephine Kelly	The Board provides an independent authority for the determination of appeals against decisions of the relevant Minister on aquaculture licence applications	Vote	Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997
Bord Bia	Tara McCarthy Chief Executive Officer	Grainne Mulligan	To drive, through market insight, and, in partnership with industry, the commercial success of a world-class food, drink and horticulture industry.	Vote	An Bord Bia Acts 1994 to 2004
Bord na gCon	Gerard Dollard Chief Executive Officer	Rebecca Chapman	Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine has control over the body as set out in legislation. The Departments function is the continuing monitoring of BNG's compliance with statutory and other obligations.	Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund as laid out in the Horse and Greyhound Racing Act, 2001 and associated Statutory Instruments	Greyhound Industry Act 1958, Greyhound Industry (Amendment) Act 1993, Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010, Welfare of Greyhounds Act 2011. Horse and Greyhound Racing Act, 2001
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Jim O'Toole Chief Executive Officer	Josephine Kelly	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), the Irish Sea Fisheries Board, is the Irish State agency with responsibility for developing sustainable Irish Sea Fishing and Aquaculture industries.	Vote	Sea Fisheries Act 1952

Appendix 2 – State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

			<p>BIM provides a range of services including advisory, financial, technical, developmental and training supports to all sectors of the Irish seafood industry.</p> <p>BIM's primary objective is to expand the volume, quality and value of output from the seafish and aquaculture sectors by focusing on the opportunities for growth in these sectors.</p>		
Coillte	Fergal Leamy Chief Executive Officer	Patricia Kelly	<p>Agreement of Programme for sale & acquisition of land and sale of timber, whether standing or felled, by the company [Section 14]; Appointment, with consent of MPER, of Directors to Board [Section 15] Approval, with consent of MPER, for establishment & acquisition of subsidiaries [Section 15 & Code of Practice (CoP)] Approval, with consent of MPER, for investment (in excess of a stated aggregate) in undertakings [Section 15 and CoP] Approval, with consent of MPER, of any alteration to Articles or Memo of Association [Section 16]; Consent, with consent of MPER given with consent of MFin, for borrowings [Section 24] Laying of Annual Report before the Houses of the Oireachtas [Section 31] Determination, with the consent of the MPER, of terms and conditions in relation to employment of CEO [Section 35]; Making of bye-laws to regulate access to or use of any land owned, managed or used by the company [Section 37]; Issue of certain directions, with consent of MPER, to the company [Section 38] Approval, with concurrence of MPER, of superannuation, pension schemes, etc. [Section 44] Principal Departmental functions: Monitoring of Coillte's compliance with the Forestry Act 1988 and</p>	Coillte does not receive any Exchequer funding, other than as an applicant under certain forestry schemes	Forestry Act 1988, as amended; Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies; Also falls within the remit of NewERA in accordance with the National Treasury Management Agency (Amendment) Act 2014

Appendix 2 – State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

			<p>CoP; Consideration of requests submitted under the various statutory provisions outlined above; Monitoring, in conjunction with NewERA, of Coillte's financial performance Consideration of Annual Accounts Responding to representations, PQs, queries, etc. in relation to Coillte Liaising with Coillte in relation to the completion of certain Statutory returns e.g. under the Disability Act</p>		
Horse Racing Ireland	Brian Kavanagh Chief Executive Officer	Rebecca Chapman	<p>Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine has control over the body as set out in legislation.</p> <p>The Department's function is the continuing monitoring of HRI's compliance with statutory and other obligations.</p>	Horse and Greyhound Racing Fund as laid out in the Horse and Greyhound Racing Act, 2001 and associated Statutory Instruments	Horse Racing Ireland Act 2016 Irish Horseracing Industry Act 1994, Horse and Greyhound Racing Act 2001, Horse Racing Ireland (Membership) Act 2001, Horse and Greyhound Racing (Betting Charges and Levies) Act 1999. Horse and Greyhound Racing Act, 2001
Irish National Stud	Cathal Beale Chief Executive Officer	Rebecca Chapman	<p>Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine has control over the body as set out in legislation.</p> <p>The Department's function is the continuing monitoring of the INS compliance with statutory and other obligations.</p>	Not funded by the Exchequer	National Stud Act, 1945, National Stud Act 1976, National Stud (Amendment) Act 1993, National

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					Stud (Amendment) Act 2000
Marine Institute	Peter Heffernan Chief Executive Officer	Josephine Kelly	The general function of the Institute is to undertake, co-ordinate, promote and to assist in marine research and development and to provide such services related to marine research and development, that in the opinion of the Institute, will promote economic development and create employment and protect the marine environment.	Vote	Marine Institute Act 1991
National Milk Agency	Muiris O’Céidigh Chief Executive Officer	Bernie Brennan	<p>It is a requirement under the 1994 Act that the Agency submit its Annual Report and Accounts to the Minister who then lays the report before both Houses of the Oireachtas. It also has a Code of Governance review by the Department, a strategic 5 year plan agreed with the Department and a Performance Framework Agreement with the Department. Bi-annual meetings between the NMA and the Department.</p> <p>The Agency is self-financing to the extent that the Act provides for it to impose a levy on every litre of milk produced under a contract it has registered. The rate of levy is determined by the Agency itself but is subject to the approval of the Minister. The chairman of the Agency is appointed by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The 5 members of the Agency representing producers are directly elected by registered producers while the other members – processors (4), distributors (1), retailers (1) and consumers (2) are appointed by the Minister following nomination from designated organisations.</p>	Not funded by the Exchequer	Milk (Regulation of Supply) Act, 1994

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Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	Susan Steele Chair	Josephine Kelly	The SFPA is Ireland's Competent Authority for the enforcement of sea fisheries protection legislation and an official agency of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) for the enforcement of food safety legislation in the seafood sector.	Vote	Sea Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction act 2006
Teagasc	Gerry Boyle Director	Rebecca Chapman	<p>Ministerial functions as prescribed in Teagasc's governing legislation connected with the delivery of research, advice and education services to the Agricultural sector.</p> <p>Minister may confer additional functions on Teagasc as provided for in legislation.</p> <p>Departmental functions concern oversight and monitoring of Teagasc activities.</p>	Vote	Agriculture (Research, Training and Advice) Act, 1988.
Veterinary Council of Ireland	Niamh Muldoon Registrar/CEO	Colm Forde	<p>The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine is the sponsor for the Veterinary Practice Act 2005. Under Section 15 of the Act, the Minister may give general policy directions to the Council in writing in relation to performance by the Council of its functions and the Council shall comply with any such directions.</p> <p>The Department under the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies has oversight in relation to governance of the VCI</p>	Not funded by the Exchequer	Veterinary Practice Act 2005

