



LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY

BUSINESS PLAN

2013/14

INTRODUCTION

This Business Plan sets out the work that the Labour Relations Agency (the Agency) will undertake during the 2013-14 financial year. The Plan covers the third performance year of the three year Agency Corporate Plan 2011-14.

PERFORMANCE CONTINUITY 2011-14

Table 1 provides an indication of the continuity and change relating to the Agency's performance 2011-13 against the Corporate Plan 2011-14 objectives.

As indicated at Table 1 in some areas performance has exceeded the objectives set whilst in others work remains ongoing.

Where performance has exceeded the Corporate Plan objectives new objectives, not in the Corporate Plan, have been introduced. Other objectives have remained but are adjusted to reflect realistic time lines.

DEVELOPMENTS 2012-13

A Achievements

During the performance year 2012-13 the following strategic objectives were met:

- 1 Following discussions with stakeholders a NI Employment Relations Roundtable was established 12 October 2012.
- 2 A generic statutory arbitration scheme was launched 27 September 2012 and was promoted throughout the year. Arbitrator training was undertaken prior to the introduction of the new Scheme.
- 3 The feasibility of a LRA neutral assessment (i.e. early neutral evaluation) service was assessed. Work commenced on developing a suitable process.
- 4 Preliminary consideration was given to the re-routing of tribunal claims, in the first instance, to the Agency. Work commenced on developing a suitable proposal.
- 5 Evaluations of the LRA Collective Conciliation and Mediation services were completed.
- 6 The NI Omnibus survey reported a 50% level of public awareness of the LRA.
- 7 The LRA public annual lecture and an employment law seminar were held.
- 8 An action plan aimed at achieving liP silver status was introduced.
- 9 Corporate Governance Policies and Procedures were reviewed and updated.
- 10 Social Return on Investment methodology was in process.
- 11 The LRA achieved ISO 27001 security accreditation.

B Outstanding Work

There remains work to be carried forward into 2012-13:

- 1 The replacement of the Individual Conciliation Management System.
- 2 The finalising of Value for Money indicators.
- 3 The wider implementation of the ER stakeholder engagement strategy

C Policy Agenda on Employment Law

An announcement by the Westminster Business Secretary Vince Cable in November 2011 set out the beginning of what has become an ongoing review of employment law in GB. On 5 November 2012 the DEL Minister Dr. Stephen Farry made a statement in relation to the key elements of a NI employment law review. In December 2012 those employment matters that required legislative change were put to the NI Executive. In February 2013 the Minister initiated preparatory work for a wider public consultation exercise which sought, amongst other matters, views on (a) a Review of OITFET rules (b) the initial submission of claims to the LRA in order to enhance the use of ADR (c) the extension of eligibility to claim unfair dismissal from one to two years (d) the development of the early neutral evaluation and (d) the consolidation of employment law regulations.

In February 2012 the Agency held a seminar on the consultation agenda and is facilitating the NI Employment Relations Roundtable (comprising the NI social partners) in discussions relating to potential changes in NI employment law and the wider NI employment relations agenda. The DEL policy agenda has instigated a debate in Northern Ireland. The issues raised by this debate have set a fresh agenda that the Agency is to address, from a strategic perspective, during 2013-14.

OVERVIEW

From a strategic perspective this business plan addresses the work of the Agency in relation to:

1. The development of employment law and employment relations that meet Northern Ireland's needs taking into account, where relevant, wider good practice.
2. The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) Review of Workplace Dispute Resolution 2010 and subsequent reviews of NI employment law and employment relations.
3. Concluding the implementation of recommendations made through the DEL Review of the Agency 2010.
4. Improving the delivery of Agency services on a value for money basis.

Throughout this coming year the Agency will continue to work in partnership with the social partners and key stakeholders in supporting employers, employees and their representatives in improving employment relations throughout Northern Ireland.

In line with the recommendations of the DEL Review of the Agency 2010 and the Agency's commitment to delivering value for money services we will continue to develop a more systemic approach to demonstrating the effectiveness, efficiency and economy achieved by the Agency.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The strategic objectives requiring action 2013-14 are set out below. They derive from the Corporate Plan 2011-14 and the current debate on the further development of Northern Ireland employment law and employment relations.

SERVICES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION 2013-14
<p>1. By 31 March 2014 to have contributed to improving employment relations by influencing the future employment landscape of Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>1.1 To facilitate the agenda of the NI ER Roundtable 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. 1.2 To further develop Agency stakeholder relations. 1.3 Facilitate stakeholder debate. 1.4 Promote the Agency's strategic perspective. 1.5 As required, respond to Government consultations.</p>
<p>2. By 31 January 2014 to have in place arrangements that will support the launch of a neutral assessment process for disputes referred to the Agency.</p>	<p>2.1 To submit neutral assessment proposals to the Board by 30 June 2013. 2.2 To have operational guidelines developed, have trained personnel in place in support of a neutral assessment process in line with the requirements of legislative timescales.</p>
<p>3. By 31 March 2014 to be operationally prepared to manage the direct receipt of claims to the Agency.</p>	<p>3.1 To have developed a draft management model for the routing of claims to the Agency by April 2013. 3.2 To respond to DEL public consultation on changes to NI employment law by the due date. 3.3 To respond to the outcomes of DEL public consultation by the due date. 3.4 To prepare a communications /promotion programme in advance of the launch of the new process. 3.5 To have developed administration processes, revised operational guidelines and undertaken appropriate staff training by the required date of implementation.</p>

4. By 31 March 2014 to have determined the Agency's approach to the role of ombudsperson.	4.1 To submit a review/feasibility paper to the Board by 31 October 2013.
	4.2 Subject to feasibility to have proposals on an Agency approach with the Board by February 2014.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Helpline
a) The average Helpline waiting time is to be less than 1 min 10 secs
b) The Helpline lost call rate is to be less than 11%
c) The level of customer satisfaction is to be no less than 75%
d) At least 70% of callers report that they took clear action following a call to the Helpline
e) At least 1% of Helpline calls are referred for PCC
Advisory Cases
a) At least 75% of cases received are to be completed within 3 months of receipt
b) The level of customer satisfaction is to be no less than 75%
c) At least 60% of customers report that they amended documentation following Agency assistance
Good Practice Seminars
a) The level of customer satisfaction is to be no less than 90%
b) At least 90% of delegates report that their learning requirements had been met
c) At least 75% of delegates report that attendance at a seminar resulted in them gaining the knowledge to review or change a policy, procedure or practice
d) At least 25% of delegates are to be from organisations who have not previously attended an Agency good practice seminar.
Advisory Workshops
a) The level of customer satisfaction is to be no less than 85%
b) At least 70% of attendees report that attendance at a workshop resulted in them gaining the knowledge to introduce or amend employment documents.
Individual Conciliation
c) No more than 20% of individual rights claims referred to the Agency are to be dealt with by Tribunals the measure of success being the number of days saved by the remaining 80% avoiding Tribunal proceedings.
d) No less than 60% of pre claim referrals from the Helpline agree to conciliation within 3 months of receipt.
Collective Conciliation
a) Involvement of Agency in 70% of reported disputes.
b) Promotion of a settlement in 70% of disputes in which the LRA is involved.
Mediation
a) Promotion of a settlement in 70% of mediation referrals to the LRA and where mediation takes place.
Arbitration/Independent Appeal Hearings
a) 80% of Arbitrations/Independent Appeal hearings undertaken within agreed timescales agreed in operational guidelines.

PROMOTION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION 2013-14
<p>5. By 31 March 2014 to have contributed to raising the public profile of employment relations in Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>5.1 To hold an International Employment Relations conference 2 August 2013. 5.2 To hold the annual LRA seminar. 5.3. To implement a promotional programme for Agency services and in particular, pre-claim conciliation and generic statutory arbitration.</p>

PROMOTION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Utilisation of Agency Services

- a) A two percentage points rise in the utilisation of Agency Advisory services.

Customer Base

- a) A two percentage points growth in our Advisory Services customer base.

Impact of Conference/Seminars

- a) At least 75% of conference/seminar delegates reporting that their thinking on employment relations had been influenced.

PEOPLE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION 2013-14
<p>6. To have developed and implemented a framework for leadership and management (L&M) development by 28 February 2014.</p>	<p>6.1 Paper submitted to Board on L&M framework by June 2013. 6.2 L&M Framework is financed and included in the 2013/14 Learning and Development Plan (Aug 2013).</p>
<p>7. To have introduced a structured programme designed to maintain good internal employment relations and enabled effective employee voice by 31 March 2014.</p>	<p>7.1 Stress Risk Assessment completed by June 2013. 7.2 Suggestion Scheme in place by September 2013. 7.3 First Special JNCC to self assess effectiveness by December 2013.</p>

8. To have introduced enhanced mechanisms for internal communications facilitated by effective information systems by 31 March 2014	8.1	To have an internal communications strategy in place by September 2013.
	8.2	An upgraded Staff Recognition process is operational by December 2013.
	8.3	A staff conference underpinned by engagement and recognition is organised by March 2014;
	8.4	An intranet is in operation by March 2014 that supports staff engagement and Board meetings.

PEOPLE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Staffing	
a)	Leadership and management effectiveness indices show improvement through regular staff surveys and three yearly liP re-assessments.
b)	Team continuous improvement action plan reports by March 2014 are backed by L&M effectiveness statistics from Staff Survey.
c)	SMT has committed to a Stress Risk Action Plan by September 2013 that has been through union consultation.
d)	Board participates in a revised recognition process that reflects staff as well as management judgements on excellence and creativity and recognises contribution to the business as well as accredited training achievement.
e)	An evaluation of the annual staff conference is provide for Board information by June 2014.
f)	Sickness absence reduces each year by 10% of prior year out turn average (i.e. if 6% is prior year out turn average, then new target is 5.40%)
g)	The effectiveness of consultation is measured through JNCC self assessment and the time taken to clear policies through the consultation process.

RESOURCES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION 2013-14
9. Develop Agency corporate governance capability by 31 March 2014.	9.1 To have reviewed and revised Corporate Governance documentation such as the Management Statement: Financial Memorandum: Annual Report and Accounts: Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Statement: Code of Conduct for Staff : Bribery Act Guidelines and developed a Board Induction Pack.
	9.3 To have reviewed and revised the following HR policies and procedures: Equal Opportunities; Discipline; Health & Safety.
	9.4 To submit an agreed LRA Corporate Plan 2014-17 and Business Plan 2014-15 to DEL for approval by 28 February 2014.
10. Demonstrate Agency value for money by 31 March 2014	10.1 To submit 31 March 2014 an LRA value for money status report to the Board.

<p>11. Enhance Agency performance and efficiency through the achievements in milestones in the IS strategy by 31 March 2014.</p>	<p>11.1 To have implemented the new IS Managed Services contract by August 2013.</p> <p>11.2. To have approved a revised IS Strategy Action Plan by September 2013.</p> <p>11.3 Tender published for replacement Individual Conciliation Management System by October 2013.</p>
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RESOURCES AND ACCOUNTABILITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Finance
a) Supplier payments are better than 95% within 30 days and 70% within 10 days
b) Bank balances at year end are fully covered by accruals and tangible commitments
Audit
a) At least "satisfactory" ratings in internal and external audit assurances
b) Full compliance recorded in stewardship statements (e.g. Permanent Secretary)
IT
a) 95% uptime within ICT (Information and Communications Technology) infrastructure
b) Test plan for IS Continuity is fully achieved or variances approved and achieved in 2013-14.
c) Full compliance with standards and legislation in IS Managed Services contract
Facilities
a) Percentage of staff reporting satisfaction in staff attitude surveys with regard to accommodation and facilities improves 10% on prior survey results.
b) No reportable accidents arise for inclusion in the Health and Safety Accident Book in 2013-14

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 2013-14

Background

DEL on 10 January 2011 published its consultative document on the 2011 to 2015 funding allocations. Following consultation the Agency was informed that there would be a significant fixed reduction in its baseline of £3,745k in each of the four years 2011-15. The reduction in the Agency's budget was confirmed as a reduction from £3,745k to £3,545k. The budget allocation, therefore, for the financial year 2013-14 is £3,545k. A profile of the estimated budget expenditure is provided (see Table 2).

During the 2012-13 the Agency maintained a full staffing establishment. It is Agency policy to maintain this position during 2013-14. As at January 2013 the Agency employs 62.8 full time equivalent staff (see Table 3).

Unavoidable Spend

Table 2 and Table 3 below reflect current steady state business requirements that assume no change in the nature and extent of the Agency's statutory duties and powers, operational delivery, support service requirements including IS/IT demands and support provision.

The Agency is in the process of replacing its computer systems support contract which has been, until now, working off a 2002 specification. The 2002 specification needs to be significantly enhanced to match current business need. In this respect, the new supplier will have to upgrade the infrastructure in order to provide the necessary facilities and performance. This is an absolute necessity and cannot be avoided. Best estimates see the introduction of this new service resulting in an increase, approximately £40k per annum, from 2013/14 to 2018/19.

With this uplift in IS/IT costs and the application of central pay agreements, it is clear from the negative variances, shown in "red" at Table 1, that the Agency will be facing radical cost cutting measures in order to maintain its staffing establishment and thereby existing services.

Building Pressures

In September 2012, the Minister for Employment and Learning launched the Agency's enhanced Statutory Arbitration Scheme emphasising that this *"now offers a viable alternative to employment tribunals. This is a service which is not available in the rest of the UK. It confirms my commitment to deliver upon early intervention and prevention in government."*

On 5 November 2012, the Minister for Employment and Learning addressed the Assembly Committee indicating that he would be *"asking the Labour Relations Agency to undertake the following early resolution projects:*

- *the development of a detailed delivery model for routing all claims through the Agency;*
- *enhanced promotion of the Agency's pre-claim conciliation and arbitration services with a view to substantially increasing the uptake of these services; and*
- *a study to determine the feasibility of introducing Early Neutral Evaluation as part of the Agency's package of early resolution services."*

In successfully addressing the above initiatives the Agency will face additional financial pressures relating to;

- a requirement for increased staffing;
- an increase in the cost of the arbitration service;
- opportunity costs associated with the business planning resource necessary to evaluate revised delivery mechanisms for Tribunal claims and the feasibility of introducing early neutral evaluation;
- advertising and promotion costs associated with pre-claim conciliation and arbitration;
- increasing need to upgrade IS/IT support systems:

The current business pressures are set out in the Agency's Risk Register. It is clear that the increased and accelerating operational and management pressures will necessitate funding that is additional to the steady state position indicated in Table 2 and Table 3.

Budget Shortfall 2013-14

In 2013-14 the Agency budget will require either injections of capital to allow the adequate evolution of IS Systems to maintain VFM or a continuing reliance on suboptimal and fragile systems for operation.

Notwithstanding the above dilemma, funding is now barely adequate to maintain the current staffing establishment in the face of rising salary costs. A rent review due for Agency Headquarters in 2014/15 can only exacerbate matters. In this scenario, the Agency's policies and practices in terms of filling vacancies are under review. This is an inadequate resource position given that the Agency is willing to make a positive response to the DEL Ministers suggestions for the further improvement of employment relations in Northern Ireland.

Reputational Risk / Opportunity Loss

Three critical opportunities arise during 2013 -14.

- 1 The Agency is presently in discussions with ACAS to examine the ramifications of employment relations claims coming first to ACAS rather than the tribunals. If this change in process is to be introduced to Northern Ireland, additional funding would be needed by the Agency; if a reduction in cost to the overall public purse is to be realised.

- 2 Northern Ireland is fortunate in being the (part) host of an international meeting of agencies that resolve employment disputes (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, Britain and Ireland). An opportunity exists to organise a conference in Northern Ireland on foot of the presence of senior personnel from these organisations. The current proposal is for a one day conference in early August 2013. Expected costs are circa £30,000. These monies cannot be found within the steady state allocation.

- 3 The Agency's core IT application is a client database (Individual Case Management System – ICMS) which has been in operation since 2002. ICMS is no longer fit for purpose because the software platform is obsolescent. Applications can no longer be developed or supported on it. The specification for a replacement system is now partially drafted and early indications are that approximately £80k will have to be found in each of the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 to enable the procurement of a replacement application. These monies cannot be found within the steady state allocation.

Conclusion

Without added capital and revenue funding for the 2013-14 financial year the Agency will begin to see its contribution to the improvement of employment relations dilute. The real opportunities for improvement, evidenced by the interest of the DEL Minister, will most likely be lost. Business cases will be submitted to DEL as and went appropriate in respect of the Agency's requirements for additional capital and revenue funding.

TABLE 2 EXPENDITURE BUDGET 2013-2014

	2013/14	2012/13	Variance
		(Forecast)	
OTHER RESOURCE			
Administration	£278,000	£352,000	-£74,000
Training	£30,000	£55,000	-£25,000
Premises	£415,000	£415,000	£0
IS Managed Services Support	£90,000	£60,000	£30,000
Certification Office	<u>£12,000</u>	<u>£25,000</u>	<u>-£13,000</u>
S/TOT	£825,000	£907,000	-£82,000
CONSULTANCY			
SROI Predictive Study	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£0</u>
S/TOT	£10,000	£10,000	£0
FRONT LINE RESOURCE			
Staff Salaries	£2,525,000	£2,437,000	£88,000
Board Salaries	<u>£75,000</u>	<u>£75,000</u>	<u>£0</u>
S/TOT	£2,600,000	£2,512,000	£88,000
CAPITAL			
Fixtures & fittings	£5,000	£11,000	-£6,000
IT Hardware/equipment	£60,000	£9,000	£51,000
Land & buildings	£35,000	£80,000	-£45,000
Software	<u>£110,000</u>	<u>£16,000</u>	<u>£94,000</u>
S/TOT	£210,000	£116,000	£94,000
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT	£3,645,000	£3,545,000	£100,000

TABLE 3 STAFFING 2013-14**Staffing Complement as at 1 April 2013**

Post/Grade	LRA	Cert. Office	Total
Chief Executive	1		1
Directors (Grade 7)	3		3
Employment Relations Managers (DP)	9.8	1	10.8
EROs, Finance Officer (SO)	22		22
EOI		1	1
EOIIs	14	1	15
Clerical Officers (AO)	10	1	11
Typists (AA)	3		3
TOTAL:	62.8	4	66.8

LRA Corporate Plan 2011-14 – Progress against Business Plan

Objective	Progress		
	Year 1 (April 2011-March 2012)	Year 2 (April 2012-March 2013)	Year 3 Business Plan Objectives 2013/14
<p>SERVICES Develop and promote an enhanced pre-claim conciliation service by March 2012</p>	<p>2.1 The PCC service was launched on the 4 April 2011. Booklets were published and the scheme promoted at a number of events. 2.2 Helpline and Conciliation members of staff completed training on the PCC process. Refresher training was undertaken in early October 2011. 2.3 Conciliation and Advisory operational guidelines were revised. During the year 124 cases have been referred from the Helpline to the Conciliation service. 2.4 The PCC service is being informally reviewed on a monthly basis. The first formal internal review took place on 7th September 2011 involving staff from both the Helpline and the Conciliation team. The strategic objective has been fully met with assessment ongoing.</p>	<p>4.1 Work is currently underway with the development of a pilot evaluation process for individual conciliation including the PCC service. 4.2 An assessment has been made of the mediation service. A report will be submitted to the Board in December 2012. The outcome of the Collective Conciliation assessment will be submitted to the November Board. 4.3 A Cross Directorate Working Group is using the Customer Service Excellence Model to identify improvements areas in service delivery.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES 1. By 31 March 2014 to have contributed to improving employment relations by influencing the future employment landscape of Northern Ireland. 1.1 To facilitate the agenda of the NI ER Roundtable 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. 1.2 To further develop Agency stakeholder relations. 1.3 Facilitate stakeholder debate. 1.4 Promote the Agency’s strategic perspective. 1.5 As required, respond to Government consultations. 2. By 31 January 2014 to have in place a neutral assessment process for disputes referred to the Agency. 2.1 To submit neutral assessment proposals to the Board by 30 June 2013. 2.2 To have operational guidelines developed, have trained personnel in place and have launched a neutral assessment process in line with the requirements of legislative timescales. 3. By 31 March 2014 (or by the appropriate legislative effective date) to be operationally prepared to manage the direct receipt of claims to the Agency. 3.1 To have developed a draft management model for the routing of claims to the Agency by April 2013. 3.2 To respond to DEL public consultation</p>
<p>Have in place a generic statutory arbitration scheme by March 2012.</p>	<p>1.1 A generic arbitration scheme was submitted to DEL 6 May 2011. Discussions with DEL and DSO are nearing completion. Legal work was progressing to meet the launch date of 11 April 2012. 1.2 PR work will now be being given consideration in advance of September 2012. 1.3 Preparatory work on internal documentation is ongoing with a view to meeting the September 2012 target. 1.4 Following interviews 22 and 28 June 2011 6 new arbitrator appointments were approved at the August 2011 Board. Induction commenced with a meeting with the Chair 30 September. A training session on the conduct of a hearing was held 6 December. 1.5 Development of the</p>	<p>2.1 Due to a legislative delay the Scheme was passed in the NIA in early July 2012. The scheme was launched on 27 September 2012. 2.2 A promotional programme has been in place from 27 September. 2.3 A process to establish why parties decline arbitration is in place. The full evaluation scheme is under development. 2.4 & 2.5 As from 27 September and given a suitable period to embed, feedback will be obtained from stakeholders. Half-year and full year (as from 27 September) reports will be submitted to the Board. 2.6 Arbitrator training was undertaken 9 & 24 October 2012. All staff training has been completed.</p>	

TABLE 1

	<p>evaluation documentation begins on receipt the final draft of the Scheme.</p>		<p>on changes to NI employment law by the due date.</p>
<p>Be able to demonstrate the economic and social value of Agency services by March 2012</p>	<p>9.1 A VfM programme was agreed by the Board in April 2012. 9.2 An SROI business case was submitted to DEL on 15 August and re-submitted 8 November. The SROI business case was subsequently approved by DEL in March 2012 and is with CPD for tendering. 9.3 Unit costs produced by the Agency on an annual basis now allow a comparison with ACAS unit costs produced in their annual report. 9.4 In keeping with best practice the LRA has made considerable progress in completing the work needed for the organisation to attain accreditation against both the Government InfoSec and ISO 27001 information security standards. By year end the Agency was in a position for the formal processes to be undertaken with the ISO 27001 Stage 1 and Stage 2 audits scheduled for May and July 2012 respectively. 9.5 Having reduced the operational risks carried by the live production ICMS System, a project group was established to begin work on the specifications needed for a replacement case management and reporting capability. This work is progressing well and the Agency is on target to produce an initial design document by the end of this year. The resulting design will deliver an enhanced data capture and reporting capability covering a wider scope of activities undertaken by the organisation.</p>	<p>11.1 Work on Customer Service Improvement is ongoing. SMT to review efficiencies/economies by December 2012. IS/IT VFM impact measures are to be in place by November 2012. 11.2 The SROI tender was awarded to 'Just Economics'. An initial meeting has taken place and a scheme of work devised to allow a forecasted SROI study to be completed by March 2013.</p>	<p>3.3 To respond to the outcomes of DEL public consultation by the due date. 3.4 To prepare a communications /promotion programme in advance of the launch of the new process. 3.5 To have developed administration processes, revised operational guidelines and undertaken appropriate staff training by the required date of implementation.</p> <p>4. By 31 March 2014 to have determined the Agency's approach to the role of ombudsperson. 4.1 To submit a review/feasibility paper to the Board by 31 October 2013. 4.2 Subject to feasibility to have proposals on an Agency approach with the Board by February 2014.</p>
<p>Have implemented and evaluated a customer focus strategy by September 2012.</p>	<p>3.1 The CEO and DCS held a benchmarking meeting with Nigel Elliot of the NI Court Service on 20 June. In November 2011 the Board adopted the Customer Services Excellence Model as a strategic way forward</p>	<p>4.1 Work is progressing with the development of a pilot evaluation process for individual conciliation including the PCC service. 4.2 The outcome of the Collective Conciliation evaluation was submitted to the</p>	

TABLE 1

	<p>– work has commenced on implementation through a cross directorate working group chaired by the DAS. It is noted that each Directorate is at a different stage with regard to customer focus.</p> <p>3.2 Work commenced on identifying the impact of services in July/August 2011. Work on the evaluation and impact assessment of collective conciliation is being undertaken in conjunction with ACAS. A separate LRA report will be provided. The work was undertaken in Feb/Mar 2012. A LRA report is awaited.</p> <p>An evaluation survey of mediation was undertaken in March 2012. The evaluation of Arbitration Services will now take place during 2013 to include the generic arbitration scheme to be launched September 2012. 3.3 Revised evaluation forms to include impact assessment for Workshops and Seminars have been designed and were introduced in September and further refined in February. 3.4 A comprehensive customer focus programme was underway at the year end and a document setting out the strategy has been provided to the CEO. A “Guide to Services” has been drafted for the General Office with other functions to follow suit in 2012-13.</p> <p>The strategic objective is fully met with implementation work now ongoing.</p>	<p>November Board. An assessment has been made of the mediation service. A report is with the Board December 2012. 4.3 A Cross Directorate Working Group is using the Customer Service Excellence Model to identify improvements areas in service delivery.</p>	
<p>To have improved service delivery through the development, implementation and assessment of measures to assess the impact of core services by March 2014</p>			

TABLE 1

<p>PROMOTION Have a public relations strategy in place by December 2011</p>	<p>4.1 The November Board agreed the strategic way forward for PR during 2012. 4.2 The Research Committee has agreed to insert a number of questions into the NISRA Omnibus Survey to establish baseline levels of awareness of the Agency. LRA questions will be included in the June 2012 survey. 4.3 A seminar 16 February on the future of employment law in Northern Ireland was successfully promoted had excellent attendance, received good media coverage and attendee feedback has been obtained for future seminar planning. The strategic objective has been fully met with baseline levels of awareness awaiting the outcome of the NISRA survey.</p>	<p>5.1 The Agency commissioned 3 questions relating to public awareness in the NI Omnibus Survey of June 2012. The results of the survey were reported to the Board at the September meeting and a Marketing and PR strategy is being prepared utilising the survey findings. 5.2 The Annual LRA lecture is to be given by John Taylor CEO ACAS 25 October. The Board has agreed to hold an ER Law update seminar in Jan/Feb 2013. 5.3 It is confirmed that the Agency will host an international conference 2 August 2013. The Board November 2012 established a sub – group to oversee the conference arrangements.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES 5. By 31 March 2014 to have contributed to raising the public profile of employment relations in Northern Ireland. 5.1 To hold an International Employment Relations conference 2 August 2013. 5.2 To hold the annual LRA seminar. 5.3. To implement a promotional programme for Agency services and in particular, pre-claim conciliation and generic statutory arbitration.</p>
<p>Have in place an Agency Stakeholder Engagement Strategy by September 2012</p>	<p>5.1 The CEO 6 June met the ACAS Director of Strategy. Information has been exchanged between the Agency and ACAS on stakeholder engagement 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 Following analysis of the ACAS experience meetings an approach to stakeholder engagement was agreed by the Board in April 2012. 5.5 This will be best followed up through the International Agencies Meeting July 2012. The strategic objective was fully met by 16 April 2012 with further work on action 5.5 awaiting the International Agencies meeting July 2012.</p>	<p>6.1 to 6.4 A stakeholder framework was agreed by the Board 19 April 2012. This objective was discussed at the Roundtable 7 December. Roundtable Management indicated that the Agency should proceed to contact employer bodies/employers. ICTU requested a copy of the Strategy which has been forwarded. Comment has been forwarded to the NICS on their review of the NICS Internal Appeals Board. It has been suggested that we meet with NICS to discuss the position of and potential development of ADR within NICS. 6.5 The DAS is to inform the Roundtable of the NZ ADR system. Other relevant papers (e.g. John Purcell’s work and the Euro foundation) are to be collated to inform discussion. International presentations will be sought for the Agency Conference Aug 13.</p>	
<p>Raise awareness of good practice and the supporting role of the Agency by holding a</p>			

TABLE 1

<p>regional conference 2013 and annual seminars 2011-14</p>			
<p>By March of each year determine an international programme to bring employment relations policy and best practice to Northern Ireland</p>			
<p>Have assessed the effectiveness of the Pre Claim Conciliation service by March 2014</p>			
<p>Have assessed the effectiveness of a generic statutory arbitration scheme by March 2014</p>			
<p>PEOPLE By March 2012 have enhanced cross-directorate communication and working through the implementation of an employee engagement and recognition strategy</p>	<p>An engagement and reward framework was provided to the Senior Management Team in November 2011. However, the view was that it did not fully meet the requirements of a strategy. The position was to be reviewed by the year end. Following further research in the HR Section, it was decided that the only way to take a more strategy driven approach was to develop an engagement strategy as a baseline initiative that would be fundamental to the attainment of liP "Silver". A Recognition Strategy would require careful consideration of what would be acceptable to the culture of the organisation and what would be permissible as reward in the public sector. Both of these strategies were determined by the year end and are now with the CEO for further discussion. Given understaffing in the HR section in the latter half of the year, the accredited training</p>	<p>8.1 Revised separate engagement and recognition strategies were reviewed by the SMT in August. 8.2 Further revisions have been reviewed by an administration committee (set up in July). 8.3 Engagement and Recognition now embedded in a draft HR Strategy - discussed by the Finance and Personnel (F&P) Committee in September. 8.4 The HR Strategy has been revised in view of F&P comments and was issued to the union in mid November. A recognition event will be held in December 2012.</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES 6. To have developed and implemented a framework for leadership and management (L&M) development by 28 February 2014. 6.1 Paper submitted to Board on L&M framework by June 2013. 6.2 L&M Framework is financed and included in the 2013/14 Learning and Development Plan (Aug 2013) 7. To have introduced a structured programme designed to maintain good employment relations and enabled effective employee voice by 31 March 2014 7.1 Stress Risk Assessment completed by June 2013. 7.2 Suggestion Scheme in place by September 2013. 7.3 First Special JNCC to self assess effectiveness by December 2013. 8. To have introduced enhanced</p>

TABLE 1

	requirement has been deferred and is now expected to be incorporated in the 2012/13 Learning and Development Plan which is provided after the main appraisal run each year.		<p>mechanisms for internal communications facilitated by effective information systems by 31 March 2014.</p> <p>8.1 To have an internal communications strategy in place by September 2013.</p> <p>8.2 An upgraded Staff Recognition process is operational by December 2013.</p> <p>8.3 A staff conference underpinned by engagement and recognition is organised by March 2014;</p> <p>8.4 An intranet is in operation by March 2014 that supports staff engagement and Board meetings.</p>
Have in place accredited training for each grade by March 2012			
Have reviewed and revised performance management systems in relation to value for money and staff motivation by September 2012		<p>7.1The staff survey was issued 30 July 2012.</p> <p>7.2 The evaluation report was completed in September 2012. 7.3 The survey closure report was issued to the SMT for discussion. A revised performance management process has been documented and is now with the SMT for feedback.</p>	
By March 2013 have personal development plans prioritised on the basis of training for the job, promotion and personal development			
Have retained liP bronze accreditation by November 2011 and achieved silver accreditation by November 2014	<p>6.1 Completed on target mainly through an awareness and coaching initiative for staff.</p> <p>6.2 Work not yet commenced. 6.3 The pilot assessment was undertaken through self assessment in August 2011. 6.4 A revised Learning and Development Plan was published on staff shared folders August 2011.</p>	<p>9.1 The liP Report was assessed by the SMT to target date. 9.2 The approach was discussed with a Consumer Council contact</p> <p>9.3 The SWOT analysis has been completed and is now a working document. 9.4 Achieved - an action plan for liP is contained in the HR Strategy;</p> <p>9.5 Remains on schedule.</p> <p>Ahead of target. The draft liP action plan will be updated through feedback from the business planning process.</p>	
To have evaluated and revised our training and development provision by October of each year			
RESOURCES & ACCOUNTABILITY Review Board capability in relation to corporate	<p>8.1 The LRA/OITFET MoU has been agreed and signed by both parties. A draft MoU with the Industrial Court was approved by</p>	<p>10.1 Underway with emphasis on new member training and anti fraud training 31 October. The Board discussed the CIPFA</p>	

TABLE 1

<p>governance by March of each year</p>	<p>the Board 24 November and was discussed with the Court 13 February but a response was not received by year end. 8.2 A Board workshop was held 11 October 'Facilitation of Board Performance.' Follow-up discussion was undertaken at the Board away day 15 March 2012. The strategic objective is fully met. The LRA contribution to action 8.1 allowed for a 31 March completion. The Board on 31 March 2012 was close to finalising the capability review.</p>	<p>"Striving for Excellence" model. A self assessment checklist was referred to the Audit Committee November 2012 for comment. 10.2 The MSFM has been reviewed. A Gifts and Hospitality Policy; a revised Code of Conduct for Board Members and a revised Whistleblowing Policy have been approved by the Board. A revised Board Practice and Standing Orders is with the Board December 2012. 10.3 Grievance and Redundancy procedures have been revised by SMT. The Grievance Procedure is with TUS and the Redundancy Procedure with the SMT. An Anti-fraud policy is being re-drafted. Absence procedures are under review. The Bribery Act is being subsumed into relevant policies and procedures. To date the strategic objective is on target. Board is to finalise appropriate interventions in respect of 10.1.</p>	<p>9.1 To have reviewed and revised Corporate Governance documentation such as the Management Statement: Financial Memorandum: Annual Report and Accounts: Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Statement: Code of Conduct for Staff : Bribery Act Guidelines and developed a Board Induction Pack. 9.2 To have reviewed and revised the following HR policies and procedures: Equal Opportunities; Discipline; Health & Safety. 9.3 To submit an agreed LRA Corporate Plan 2014-17 and Business Plan 2014-15 to DEL for approval by 28 February 2014. 10. Demonstrate Agency value for money by 31 March 2014. 10.1 To submit 31 March 2014 an LRA value for money status report to the Board.</p>
<p>Have fully implemented and assessed the benefits of the Agency IS Strategy by March 2013</p>		<p>12.1 Work has commenced. The PPE delivery is on schedule. 12.2 The Agency achieved formal security accreditation ISO/IEC 27001:2005 on 27 November 2012. 12.3 A draft ICMS specification is to be in place by April 2013.</p>	<p>11. Enhance Agency performance and efficiency through the achievements in milestones in the IS strategy by 31 March 2014. 11.1 To have implemented the new IS Managed Services contract by August 2013. 11.2 To have approved a revised IS Strategy Action Plan by September 2013. 11.3 Tender published for replacement Individual Conciliation Management System by October 2013.</p>
<p>Have embedded diversity, sustainability and social responsibility as part of the Agency ethos and decision-making processes by March 2013</p>			
<p>Be demonstrating the value for money of LRA services by March 2014</p>		<p>11.1 Work on Customer Service Improvement is ongoing. SMT to review efficiencies/economies by December 2012. 11.2 The SROI tender was awarded to 'Just Economics'. A scheme of work has been devised to allow a forecasted SROI study to</p>	

TABLE 1

		be completed by March 2013.	
Have a replacement “fit for purpose” case management system operational by March 2014			