

Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 (Croke Park Agreement)

**PART B – SAVINGS VERIFICATION
PENSIONS BOARD**

1. Better human resource management: *Actions to include under this heading include reductions in numbers, redeployment, reconfiguration of service delivery, revisions in attendance arrangements, better attendance and absence management etc.*

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (ref to relevant paragraph) | Action IMPLEMENTED | Specific Target Date | Description of Benefits Achieved: <i>this should include, where possible, a qualitative description including (i) Reduction in numbers (WTE) employed on activity (ii) Paybill savings (iii) Non-Pay Savings and/or (iv) Actual Costs Avoided</i> |
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| <i>Better attendance and absence management</i> 4.10 | The Board aims to reduce sick leave by 10% by the end of 2011. HR will circulate quarterly absence reports to all senior managers. Year end absence reports will be completed with comparisons against previous years to highlight any potential trends. The provisions of Circular 09/2010: Management of Sick Leave will be brought to the attention of all staff members. Employees on long-term sick leave will be referred to the Board's occupational health providers within four weeks, if appropriate. Sick leave review meetings and return to work meetings will be conducted throughout the lifetime of the Agreement. | 10% reduction in days lost by end 2011. | |
| <i>Attendance Patterns</i> 1.4 4.4 | Bank time will be eliminated and attendance patterns at holiday periods will be reviewed. A revised policy will be circulated. | Bank time eliminated from end 2010. Q2-Q3 2011 | |
| <i>Recording attendance</i> 4.1 | The Board will utilise an electronic Time Management System in order to record attendance patterns of all staff and allow leave etc. to be monitored and recorded electronically without the need for paper or duplication of effort. | Q1 2011 | |

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| <p>PMDS</p> <p>4.12</p> <p>4.1</p> | <p>A number of measures to address the main issues arising from the PMDS review required under General Council 1452 have been identified and implemented prior to the end of 2010 with further measures to be implemented during the course of this agreement:</p> <p>The Board aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce further measures to strengthen the links between PMDS and the disciplinary process and to strengthen the approach to tackling underperformance. This includes revising the disciplinary procedure and providing training to managers in relation to the managing underperformance. • Proactive monitoring of and promotion of the electronic PMDS system which the Board has introduced for the completion of PMDS. This will allow for central monitoring of completion rates and allocated ratings for staff members to ensure consistency. • Increase the links between PMDS and other HR processes such as payment of increments, eligibility for promotion etc. <p>The Board will tackle underperformance, strengthen management of individual performance and use quantitative objectives with the aim of increasing performance in the context of lower staff numbers.</p> | <p>Q1- Q2 2011</p> <p>Q1 2011</p> <p>Lifetime of the Agreement</p> | |
| <p><i>Redeployment of Staff within the Board.</i></p> <p>1.7</p> <p>1.8</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> | <p>The Board will continue to reorganise and redeploy staff according to operational requirements. Staff members will be moved within the organisation according to their skills and expertise in order to maximise productivity and to focus on the key objectives of the Board. This will enhance efficiency and service delivery.</p> | <p>With effect from 2010</p> | |
| <p>1.4</p> | <p>Deductions of pay for all days of absence will be standardised at a 1/5 of weekly pay, in the interests of equity and consistency across all staff taking unpaid leave or availing of reduced hours working patterns.</p> | <p>With effect from January 2011.</p> | |

2. Better Business processes: *Actions under this heading would include efficiency measures and improvements to the processes by which your Department/Body delivers its services to the public, including changes to the technology used, better data management, including around identity, and so on.*

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| <i>Service Delivery Options</i> 1.4 4.3 | The Pensions Board is introducing a new on-line data portal for pension schemes. This system will handle the payment of scheme fees, amendments, new registrations and the submission of annual scheme information on-line. Currently amendments in the Pensions Board are carried out through a manual process. When the system is operational, amendments will be done on-line for all pension schemes. This will result in significant administrative savings for the Pensions Board and also efficiencies for all the Board's stakeholders. The system is currently in the final stages of testing and will be launched in the 1 st quarter of 2011. | The project will be operational in the first quarter of 2011. | |
| <i>Accounts payments and receipts</i> 1.4 1.10 4.13 4.16 | Introduce the use of Electronic Fund Transfer for 100% of payments to staff and suppliers. Introduce payment from fee managers by Electronic Fund Transfer/Credit card payments. Greater efficiencies will be sought in payroll and pensions administration, including through reviewing the frequency of payments. | Q1 2011 Q2 2011 Q2 2011 frequency of payments monthly. | |
| <i>ICT maintenance and support</i> 4.15 | Review the existing ICT maintenance and support arrangements with a view to achieving savings and more efficient delivery of services. Communicate with the Department regarding the possibility of the Department undertaking the ICT maintenance and support on behalf of the Pensions Board or to share ICT services. | Q2 2011 | |

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| <p><i>Procurement</i></p> <p>1.10 1.11 4.15</p> | <p>Corporate Procurement Plan developed, continue to review and implement appropriate procurement strategies for high spend categories and maintain a central register for all contracts entered into by the Pensions Board.</p> <p>Detailed purchases rules and authorisation thresholds to be reviewed and revised.</p> | <p>Commenced 2010 and will continue throughout the lifetime of the agreement.</p> <p>Q3 2011</p> | |
| <p><i>Revisions to regulatory actions</i></p> <p>1.10 1.12 4.4 4.14</p> <p>1.10 4.14</p> | <p>1. Construction Workers Pension Scheme (CWPS): The CWPS scheme is designed to enable employers in the construction industry to discharge their obligation under an employment agreement relating to pensions life assurance and sick pay. The Pensions Board has been in receipt of a large number of reports in respect of failure by employers participating in the CWPs to remit member contributions to the scheme, as required by Section 58A of the Pensions Act, Currently, the Board has over 230 cases under active investigation. The investigation and prosecution of these cases is highly specialised, labour intensive and the Board has limited resources. Against this backdrop and with the downturn in the economy and less co-operation from defaulting employers, the Board reviewed its strategy towards dealing with CWPS cases in Q2 2010. The Board's revised strategy and prosecution guidelines have been affirmed by Senior Counsel. All cases are now being reviewed and progressed to prosecution in line with that strategy. The strategy also takes into account a legislative amendment sought by the Board whereby it can prosecute cases on the basis of employee payslip evidence alone thereby obviating the need for a full on-site investigation of employers' premises with all of its attendant legalities and related costs for specialist resources e.g. forensic accounting and IT expertise. Furthermore, the Board's regulatory activity in this area has resulted in approx €5m being returned to the CWPS by offending employers.</p> <p>2. Inspections of Registered Administrators (RAs): Since 2008 RAs are statutorily obliged to register with the Pensions Board where they perform certain core administration functions on behalf of scheme trustees. The core administration functions are the preparation of annual scheme reports, annual benefit statements</p> | <p>The revised strategy for processing CWPS reports is in train. 8 prosecutions were initiated by the Board in 2010 with another 20 prosecutions being initiated in 2011 for offences related to CWPS. It is anticipated that in the region of 15-20 prosecutions per annum will be taken by the Board.</p> <p>On-site inspections of RAs will be accelerated throughout 2011 and beyond. The Board carried out 5 such inspections in</p> | |

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| <p>1.10 4.11</p> | <p>and maintenance of sufficient and accurate records of members and their entitlements. The Board assess levels of compliance with RA obligations through a process of direct engagement with these entities, which until the second half of 2010, had been through a series of meetings with RAs on Board premises. Through the provisions of the Act introducing the RA regime, the Board sought jurisdiction to investigate/inspect the activities of RAs on the premises of the said RAs. Since September 2010 the Board has been carrying out on-site inspections of RAs in order to assess their competence and capacity to discharge their RA core administration functions and their levels of compliance with the Pensions Act.</p> | <p>2011 and intends to inspect a further 14 such entities in 2011 with that number increasing on a yearly basis.</p> | |
| <p>1.10 4.1 4.14</p> | <p>3. Inspections training for Regulation Team Staff: As RA on-site inspection was a new area of regulatory activity for the Regulation Team, the Board sought an external resource in 2010 to assist it in the development of appropriate procedures and methodology for such inspections. The specific deliverables for this Inspection Services project included a training programme for the Regulation Team to ensure its capacity to verify the competence of and capacity of RAs to maintain sufficient records to undertake specified core administration functions as certified in their application to the Board for RA registration.</p> <p>4. Pensions Board approach to Regulation: the Board continues to develop a pro-active approach to regulation which utilises a risk-based model based on a hierarchy of risk priorities. Regulatory activity is directed to most suitable areas to ensure that regulatory practices are efficient.</p> | <p>RA on-site inspection training was delivered to senior members of the Regulation Team in 2010 both on the Board's premises and in the field, i.e. as part of actual RA inspections. This training will be delivered to all Team members throughout 2011 and onwards as the entire Team will be involved in the inspection process.</p> <p>The pro-active risk-based approach to supervising the operation of the Pensions Act will be in place for the duration of the Agreement.</p> | |

3. Delivering for the Citizen: *Actions under this heading would include efficiency measures and improvements to the processes by which your Department/Body delivers its services to the public, including changes to the technology used, better data management, including around identity, and so on.*

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| <i>Provision of information to pension scheme members and the public generally.</i> 4.1 4.4 4.13 | Information Services - Development and deployment of online information services to facilitate more efficient and cost effective access for all Pensions Board stakeholders. | Ongoing commitment to maximise use of ICT to deliver this service. | |
| 4.1 4.4 4.13 | The Pensions Board singular website www.pensionsboard.ie is constantly promoted as the optimum point of contact for the Board and as a central educational and information resource. | | |
| 4.1 4.4 4.13 | Annual Report is only published and available online. Policy Reports are only published and available online. Information booklets are published, updated and available online – very limited print runs and only of certain booklets. Information checklists are published, updated and available online. | This publishing policy was commenced in 2008 and each year it is enhanced further. | |
| 4.1 4.4 4.13 | | Commenced in 2007 when all newsletter requirements transferred on line. | |
| 4.1 4.4 4.13 | | Commenced in 2010 and ongoing promotion. | |

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| <p>4.1 4.4 4.13</p> | <p>Free online trustee training e-learning system to support the mandatory requirement for pension scheme trustees to receive trustee training.</p> | <p>Commenced in January 2010. This training will be an ongoing service provided by the Board.</p> | |
| <p>4.1 4.4 4.13</p> | <p>The Board publishes on its website a list of registered trustee trainers to support the mandatory requirement for pension scheme trustees to receive trustee training. The Board operates a self-certification process for the trustee trainers availing of this facility.</p> | <p>Commenced in June 2010.</p> | |