

Department of Social Protection



Annual Report 2012

Our mission is to promote active participation in society through the provision of income supports, employment services and other services.

An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



www.welfare.ie

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FOREWORD FROM THE MINISTER

I welcome the publication of the 2012 Annual Report which documents the scale of work undertaken by the Department in 2012 and the contribution that the Department is making to the country's fiscal and socio-economic recovery.

The scale of the economic crisis inherited by this Government demanded new and transformational approaches to solving the problems it caused. Social Welfare must be both a safety net and a springboard. Since taking office, my focus has been on transforming the Department from the passive benefits provider of old to one that actively engages with jobseekers to help them back to work.



The service traditionally provided by the Department, that of providing income supports to those in need, is still a major part of its operations, whether it is supporting families, jobseekers, people with disabilities, carers or retired and older people. That will not change, and international research has demonstrated that Ireland's system of social transfer is much more effective in preventing poverty than those of other EU countries.

But the Department also has a crucial part to play in getting people into work, through supporting education, training and work experience opportunities for jobseekers and through working with employers to unlock talent and help them find the people best suited for their organisations.

In October 2012, the Taoiseach and I formally launched Intreo, the Department's new integrated employment and support service to assist jobseekers in getting back to work. This "one-stop shop" approach means employment and income supports are now offered in the one place for the first time. This better reflects and addresses the individual needs of our customers and is in line with international best practice. The on-going rollout of the Intreo service across the country meets the key objective in the Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 to transform the Department into an integrated, activation-focused service provider which puts the customer at the centre.

I was very pleased to announce an extra 1,000 places on the JobBridge scheme in May 2012, and an independent evaluation of JobBridge has demonstrated that 61% of interns progress into employment on completion of their placements. This compares very favourably with European averages for work placement schemes.

In delivering its wide range of services, the Department has an obligation to ensure that fraud and error are minimised; the 2012 control savings target was exceeded by some €24m and this report describes actions and initiatives undertaken in this area over the year.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the staff of the Department. Following the largest merger in the history of the Irish public service, the Department is now one of the largest public service organisations in the country. I am proud of the manner in which the staff of the Department have smoothly implemented the changes this entailed; they have risen to the challenges involved in keeping with the very best traditions of the Irish public service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joan Burton T.D.
Minister for Social Protection

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

The 2012 Annual Report outlines the work carried out within the Department during the second year of our Statement of Strategy 2011-2014. A key aim of that Strategy is to transform our organisation into an integrated, activation-focused service provider which puts its customers at the centre of all its operations. A core objective is to do this whilst at the same time continuing to provide good service across the entire range of our schemes and services.



In October, An Taoiseach and the Minister launched Intreo - the Department's new Integrated Employment and Support Service. The Intreo approach gives us the opportunity to deal with our customers in a very different way, to work with employers, as new customers, in a new and positive manner.

Very considerable challenges were also faced by other areas of the Department's business from both a policy and operational perspective. The Department facilitated and supported a number of different analyses of different aspects of the social protection system. In addition, considerable progress was made in dealing with operational backlogs and the operational consequences of budget decisions.

The roll-out of the Public Services Card continued in 2012 with approximately 100,000 clients registered for cards before the end of the year. The card will allow individuals access public services more efficiently and minimise duplication of effort across the public service.

None of the changes outlined in this report could have happened without the commitment, co-operation and initiative displayed by staff across the Department. Having engaged with staff across the organisation through road-shows, meetings and surveys, we established a new Engagement and Innovation Programme which aims to encourage and support staff to become involved in and contribute to changes underway in the Department. I look forward to reviewing the outcomes of this process over the course of the next year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their contribution during 2012 and look forward to your continued co-operation and support as we embark on another exciting and challenging period for the Department.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Niamh O'Donoghue". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Niamh O'Donoghue
Secretary General

THE DEPARTMENT – ITS BUSINESS AND ORGANISATION

Mission Statement

“To promote active participation in society through the provision of income supports, employment services and other services”.

Main functions of the Department

The Department supports the Minister for Social Protection in the discharge of Governmental, Parliamentary and Departmental duties. Our main functions are to:

- advise Government and formulate appropriate social protection and social inclusion policies;
- design, develop and deliver effective and cost efficient income supports, activation and employment services, advice to customers and other related services;
- work towards providing seamless delivery of services in conjunction with other Departments, Agencies and bodies; and
- control fraud and abuse.

Scale of the Department’s Business

The Department serves a wide and diverse group of customers including families, people in employment, unemployed people, people with disabilities, carers, and older people. The Department also provides a range of services to employers who are an important customer group. The Department administers over 70 separate schemes and services which impact on the lives of almost every person in the State. Services include:

- Through the Intreo service, the integration of employment services and benefit payment services to ensure that the payment of income supports to people who do not have a job is directly linked to the equally important task of supporting such people in their pursuit of employment and related opportunities and improving their life chances;
- A wide range of social insurance and social assistance income support schemes such as child benefit payments, jobseeker payments, illness benefits payments and pensions;
- A range of employment supports, guidance and placement services to help jobseekers find and secure employment;
- A range of employer services including recruitment services, online vacancy publication, employment supports (e.g. wage subsidy schemes for people with disabilities) and redundancy and insolvency services;
- A range of community services to promote social inclusion and provide a pathway to employment for people who are unemployed;
- The development of appropriate social policies in areas such as pensions, child income support, activation and job seekers
- Promoting and supporting the incorporation of anti-poverty and social inclusion objectives in public policy development and monitoring the implementation of these strategies;
- The administration by the General Register Office (GRO) of the Civil Registration Service (for the registration of births, adoptions, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths in the State);
- The provision of social welfare information, directly and through the Citizens Information Board (CIB) and the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS);

- The regulation and governance of occupational and private pensions and the provision of pension information through the Pensions Board;
- The investigation of complaints of maladministration of pension schemes through the independent Office of the Pensions Ombudsman;
- The provision of an independent appeals system through the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the Social Welfare Tribunal.

Each week, nearly 1.5 million people receive a social welfare payment and, when qualified adults and children are included, almost 2.3 million people benefit from weekly payments. Some 600,000 families receive child benefit payments in respect of over 1.2 million children each month. The total expenditure by the Department in 2012 was €20.7 billion. In 2012 the activities of the Department included:

- 2 million applications processed;
- 87 million scheme payments made;
- more than 1 million control reviews carried out;
- 8.4 million telephone calls answered;
- 32,558 social welfare appeals finalised;
- 95,000 job opportunities advertised;
- over 154,000 PPS numbers allocated to customers from over 180 countries .

Organisation of the Department

The role and functions of the Department have been extended to include the Rural Social Scheme and Community Services Programme (from the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs), the Redundancy and Insolvency Payments schemes (from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation), the former Community Welfare Service (from the Health Service Executive) and Employment services and Community Employment Services (from FÁS), resulting in a new organisation with over 6,700 staff.

In May 2012, a new regional structure was put in place in the Department. This involved the setting up of 3 regions headed up at Assistant Secretary level and comprising 13 divisional areas overall. Thirteen divisional managers were appointed and they have responsibility for all of the day-to-day operational issues in the divisions across the three streams of the Department – the established social protection services, Community Welfare Services and former FÁS Community and Employment Services. The Regional Support Unit is responsible for the development and implementation of operational policy for the regions/divisions.

In addition to headquarters offices located throughout the country, there is a nationwide network of some 125 social welfare local and branch offices as well as 84 former FÁS and Community Welfare Services Offices which are now under the remit of the Department.

The General Register Office (GRO) manages the Civil Registration Service which provides for the registration of births, stillbirths, adoptions, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths in the State. Registration services are provided by Registrars appointed by the Health Service Executive at various locations across the State. The GRO also operates a genealogical research facility.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office is independently responsible for determining appeals against decisions on social welfare entitlements and insurability of employment.

Social Inclusion

The Department has overall responsibility for tackling poverty in the National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Irish contribution to the EU target is to lift a minimum of 200,000 people out of the risk of poverty or exclusion by 2020. This will be achieved through protecting the most vulnerable from the worst impact of the crisis, strengthening activation policy to support people back into work, reforming income supports for children and people of working age, and improving service delivery.

A Review of the National Poverty Target was completed and the Government agreed a number of revisions and enhancements to the target, now renamed the National Social Target for Poverty Reduction. The review, together with a policy briefing on the new target was published in November 2012 and debated at a national roundtable meeting with national and EU stakeholders. The target is to reduce consistent poverty from 7 per cent in 2006 to 4 per cent by 2016, and to 2 per cent or less by 2020 - a similar timeframe to the EU poverty target. For the first time, the Government will set sub-targets for reducing poverty among children and jobless households.

The Department also organised and managed Ireland's participation at the Annual EU Convention of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, which was held in Brussels in December 2012.

EU Presidency

With Ireland assuming the Presidency of the EU Council in the first half of 2013, 2012 was a busy year for EU business, particularly in the latter half of the year. Among the key tasks undertaken in 2012 were:

- Agreeing the agendas for two formal Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) meetings during the Presidency (in consultation with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, other Departments concerned, and the Permanent Representation in Brussels);
- Ministerial meetings with the EU Commission and with MEPs on the policy issues scheduled to arise during our Presidency;
- Planning for an Informal Ministerial EPSCO meeting to be held in Dublin in February 2013 – the first time the Department has taken the lead in hosting an informal Ministerial meeting;
- Planning for four other high-level EU events to be held in Dublin during the Presidency.

In addition to Presidency activities, the Department continued to participate actively in range of international activities, including:

- Attending and contributing to EU Ministerial Councils
- Contributing to official-level working groups and committees, both in the EU, OECD and Council of Europe.

Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare

In 2012, the Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare concluded its examination of the issue of child and family income supports and the Group's report on the matter was published in February 2013. It has been referred to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection for consideration.

The Advisory Group examined proposals concerning Disability Allowance and Domiciliary Care Allowance in Budget 2012 and this report was published in April 2013.

The Group's report on the extension of social insurance coverage to the self-employed has been submitted to the Minister.

Examination of the final work module under its Terms of Reference, on working age supports is underway.

MANAGEMENT BOARD



Department of Social Protection Management Board, May 2013

Left to right: Clement Leech, Kathleen Stack, Oliver Egan, Teresa Leonard, John McKeon, Simonetta Ryan, Niall Barry, Niamh O'Donoghue, John Conlon, Anne Vaughan, Helen Faughnan, Orlaigh Quinn, Geraldine Gleeson.

Absent from Photo: Tim Duggan

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Whilst the global economic environment remains challenging the outlook for the Irish economy over the short and medium term is improving with the correction of our public finances on track with 90% of the fiscal consolidation complete. Our economy has seen growth of 1.4% in 2011 and 0.9% in 2012. In terms of projected growth the economy is expected to grow again in 2013 and the pace of economic expansion is expected to strengthen in 2014.

Employment growth has resumed in the second half of 2012 and the unemployment rate is falling, though it remains at a still too-high a level. Domestic demand is expected to strengthen gradually which, combined with an assumed recovery in our main export markets is expected to result in average growth of about 2.5 per cent per annum over the medium term. This should have positive implications for the labour market, with annual employment growth of around 1.25 per cent anticipated over the medium term.

BUDGET 2013

A wide range of social welfare supports were maintained at 2012 levels for 2013, including:

- The level of weekly pensions and other payments to people aged 66 years and over, including payments for qualified adults and children.
- The level of weekly payments to people under 66 years, including payments for qualified adults and children.
- The weekly value and duration of the Fuel Allowance.
- The level of the extra allowances paid to pensioners and people with disabilities who live alone and those who are aged 80 years and over.
- The Free Travel Pass available to people aged 66 or over and people aged under 66 who are getting Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Carer's Allowance or Invalidity Pension.
- Half-rate payments of Carer's Allowance to persons in receipt of another welfare payment.
- The Family Income Supplement scheme which benefits lower income families with children.
- The Bereavement Grant and the Widowed Parent Grant.

The following changes were introduced in Budget 2013 as part of the overall expenditure reduction requirements and to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the social protection system:

Working Age – Income Supports

- The 15% employer rebate of statutory redundancy payments was discontinued.
- The duration for which Jobseeker's Benefit is paid was reduced from 12 months to 9 months for recipients with 260 or more contributions paid and from 9 months to 6 months for recipients with less than 260 PRSI contributions paid, from April 2013.
- The rate of assessment of means from self-employment for the Farm Assist payment was raised from 85% to 100% and the deductions from income for children (previously €127

per year for each of the first two dependent children and €190.50 per year for each subsequent child) were discontinued from April 2013.

Working Age – Employment Supports

- The Cost of Education Allowance, the annual grant which accompanied the Back to Education Allowance, was discontinued.
- For new participants, the up-rating of the Back to Education Allowance payable rate where the person was on a reduced rate of a qualifying payment because of means was discontinued.
- For new participants, the up-rating of the Back to Education Allowance payable rate where the person was on a reduced age related rate of Jobseeker's Allowance (€100 or €144 per week) was reduced from €188 per week to €160 per week.

Expansion of Employment Programmes

- A portion of the savings from the Budget change to the Jobseekers payment measure has been reinvested in an expansion of employment and internship programmes. An additional 10,000 places will be available as follows:
 - 2,500 additional places for JobBridge internships
 - 2,500 additional Tús places
 - 2,000 additional Community Employment Scheme places
- A new Local Authority Social Employment Scheme offering an initial 3,000 places will be introduced in 2013

Illness, Disability and Carers

- The Respite Care Grant, paid annually in June was reduced by €325 from €1,700 to €1,375.

Children

- Child Benefit rates applying to the first, second and third child were reduced by €10 per month, from €140 to €130 from January 2013. From January 2014, the monthly rate for fourth and subsequent children will be reduced by €10, from €140 to €130.
- The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance payment was reduced from €250 to €200 for children aged 12 years or more and from €150 to €100 for children aged 4-11 years.

Targeted Measures to Benefit Families with Children

A total of €18.5 million was provided to child related supports and services:

- €14 million was provided to the Children Plus Initiative for afterschool childcare places.
- An additional €2 million was provided for the School Meals Programme.
- €2.5 million was provided to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs for an Area Based Child Poverty Initiative.

Supplementary Payments

- The Electricity/Gas Allowance element of the Household Benefits package will be set at a single rate from January 2013, based on the average market rate across all suppliers currently available (for an unchanged 150 units per month). The new rate of €35 per month will show as a cash credit for those who receive a bill or be paid as a cash allowance.

- The monthly value of the Telephone Allowance element of the Household Benefits package was reduced from €22.60 per month to €9.50 per month for new and existing recipients.

Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI)

The following changes to PRSI were included in Budget 2013 to expand the Social Insurance Fund:

- For employees earning over €352 per week and paying PRSI, the employee's PRSI-Free Allowance of €127 per week (for those paying PRSI Class A, E and H) and €26 per week (for those paying PRSI Class B, C and D) was abolished with effect from January 2013.
- Employees paying PRSI at Classes B, C and D (civil and public sector employees recruited before April 1995) had been exempt from PRSI in respect of self-employed earned income (from a profession or trade) and any other unearned income e.g. rental income. This exemption was abolished in 2013 and all such income become liable to PRSI at the rate of 4%. However, no entitlement to social insurance benefits will be payable notwithstanding the payment of this contribution.
- In 2014, the exemption from PRSI applying to all employees who have no additional self-employed earned income but who do have unearned income only, will be abolished.
- The minimum annual PRSI contribution for people with annual self-employed income over €5,000 will increase from €253 per annum to €500 per annum.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – BUDGET 2013

The Department of Social Protection, which is responsible for the welfare component of the Budget, has prepared and published a social impact assessment of the main welfare and direct tax components of Budget 2013.

Social impact assessment is an evidence-based methodology to estimate the likely distributive effects of policy proposals on income and social inequality. Assessing the social consequences of budgetary policy is of particular importance in order to protect the most vulnerable in society and to monitor the crucial role of social transfers in preventing welfare and other recipients from falling into poverty.

The principal finding of the assessment was that the main welfare and direct tax measures in Budget 2013 have led to no significant change in the at-risk-of-poverty rate. This confirmed the continuing strong poverty reduction effect of social transfers during the period of fiscal consolidation. The assessment also details the effect of the main measures by income groups (five quintiles ranked by equivalised income) as well as by household composition and economic status. The full report is available on the [Department's website](#).

One of the purposes of the publication of this assessment is to inform public discourse generally about budgetary choices, and to contribute to the policy making process for Budget 2014.

THE DEPARTMENT'S OBJECTIVES

The Department's Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 identifies three strategic objectives:

Department Services and Policies

Objective 1: Put the Client at the Centre of Services and Policies

Efficiency and Effectiveness

Objective 2: Drive Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

Operational Capabilities

Objective 3: Develop Staff, Structures and Processes

DEPARTMENT SERVICES AND POLICIES

OBJECTIVE 1 - PUT THE CLIENT AT THE CENTRE OF SERVICES AND POLICIES

OVERVIEW

The Department aims, at all times, to put the customer at the centre of its services and policies in an effort to provide:

- Customer services;
- Reduced poverty rates;
- Improvement in employability and engagement with employers;
- Reduction in welfare dependency.

In order to achieve this, the Department administers over 70 separate schemes and services which impact on the lives of almost every person in the State; with total Social Welfare expenditure in 2012 of €21.08 million, an increase of 0.53% over 2011 levels.

During the course of the year, in excess of 2 million customer claims were processed in the various scheme areas. The Department is committed to ensuring that claims are processed as expeditiously as possible. As part of the programme of service delivery modernisation, a range of initiatives aimed at streamlining the processing of claims, supported by modern technology, have been implemented in recent years. Operational processes, procedures and the organisation of work are continually reviewed to ensure that processing capability is maximised.

A number of key developments in 2012 in the Department's services and policies are outlined hereunder.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Expansion of the School Meals Programme

The School Meals Programme includes the Urban School Meals Scheme, operated by local authorities and part-financed by the Department, and the School Meals Local Projects Scheme, which provide funding directly to schools and local groups. The budget for the School Meals Programme was maintained at €35 million for 2012. Priority for funding is given to schools in the Department of Education and Skills' initiative for disadvantaged schools, delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS). Schools which applied to join the 2012/2013 Schools Meals scheme were included and an additional 20 DEIS schools participated. Budget 2013 has provided an additional €2 million for the School Meals Programme for 2013.

Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

Similar to the arrangement in 2011, in 2012 the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance (BSCFA) scheme was administered directly by the Department with the majority of BSCFA entitlements being fully automated with no application form required from customers. The automated process identified approximately 115,000 households (205,000 children) that on the basis of the information available were qualified under the scheme and these payments were made in July 2012. Overall some 187,000 families, (340,000 children) were assisted under the scheme in 2012 at a cost of €65.7 million.

One Parent Family Payment

The changes to the One Parent Family Payment (OFP) announced in Budget 2012 were introduced in legislation in 2012. These changes reduce the OFP earnings disregard from €146.50 to €130 per week in January, 2012 with further reductions being implemented on a phased basis so that by 2016 the OFP earnings disregard will be reduced to €60 per week.

Changes to reduce the maximum age threshold of the youngest child for receipt of the OFP were contained in the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012. These changes reduce the maximum age threshold of the youngest child, on a phased basis to 7 years of age by 2015.

These changes move the OFP scheme closer towards the jobseeker schemes. Once the youngest child turns 7 years, an individual may make a claim for Jobseekers Assistance and will, depending on their individual capacities and requirements, be directed to the supports and services that they need in order to take up employment, training or educational opportunities.

Budget 2013 also contained a €14 million joint childcare initiative between this Department and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) to provide approximately 6,000 new school age childcare places. These places will be targeted at Department customers who take up low income employment.

In 2012, One Parent Family Payment claims in respect of nine local offices (Achill, Belmullet, Caherciveen, Castlebar, Clifden, Cobh, Dunfanaghy, Kenmare, and Westport) were transferred from Social Welfare Services headquarters (SWS) in Sligo to the local social welfare office.

The remaining claims will be transferred to the relevant local offices in 2013.

PEOPLE OF WORKING AGE

Pathways to Work

Pathways to Work provides for the establishment of an integrated employment and income support service with an intensified activation focus. This integration of two previously separate services is in line with international best practice and involves a number of key actions.

- More on-going and intensive engagement with those who are unemployed

- Greater targeting of activation places and opportunities for those on the live register
- Incentivising unemployed people to take-up employment and other opportunities
- Incentivising employers to provide more jobs for those who are unemployed
- Reforming institutions to deliver better services.

Together these actions are designed to help achieve a number of key 'outcome' targets by the end of 2015:

- Ensuring that 75,000 of those currently unemployed will be in employment by 2015.
- Stemming the drift to long-term unemployment and reducing the average time spent on the live register from 21 months today to 12 months in 2015.
- Increasing the proportion of vacancies filled by clients taken off the live register
- Ensuring that people who are unemployed engage with the employment supports offered by the State as a pre-condition for receipt of their welfare services.

Progress in 2012 is summarised below:

Strand 1: More on-going and intensive engagement with those who are unemployed

An integrated activation and income support service model was specified and developed including:

- The provision of an integrated 'one-stop-shop' service - Intreo - for clients – one place where they can come for benefit and employment services.
- The implementation of a single integrated benefits decision process (where there were previously at least two and possibly up to three separate processes)
- The profiling of clients to identify those people most in need of employment support/activation.
- A Group Engagement process in which clients with similar profiles will receive a briefing on the options and supports available to them.
- A follow up one-to-one meeting between clients and case workers based on the results of the profiling exercise.
- The development of a personal progression plan (PPP) – a pathway back to employment – for each person attending a one-to-one meeting with a case worker.
- A series of follow up one-to-one meetings to review progress against the PPP and to amend the PPP as appropriate
- Closer engagement between Department local offices and their corresponding vocational education/skills training agency to improve the planning and scheduling of courses for unemployed people.

Intreo

The new Intreo service, is currently being rolled-out and implemented on a phased basis as part of the Government's commitments under the Pathways to Work policy. This new one-stop shop service integrates employment and income supports and provides for a streamlined and personalized service to customers in accessing job opportunities and availing of supports to enable them to get back to work at the earliest possible opportunity.

An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny and the Minister for Social Protection formally launched the new service in Sligo on the 15th of October 2012.

The Intreo Service was introduced in 10 offices by the end of 2012 as follows: Sligo, Kings Inn/Parnell Street, Tallaght, Arklow, Ballymun, Buncrana, Coolock, Dundalk, Finglas and Killarney. Work will continue on the roll out of Intreo services and the full Intreo service will be available in all of the Department's local offices nationwide by the end of 2014.

The Intreo service provides for more regular and ongoing engagement with those on the Live Register, and greater targeting of activation places and opportunities for jobseekers.

As part of the Intreo service, the previously separate processes, involving jobseekers entitlement, investigation and decision have been brought together in a single decisions team. Early indications are that, for the customer, this reform can reduce the time between the making of the claim and the decision and payment of the claim to within 7 days if all documentation is in order. For the Department, the reform has reduced service demands at the local offices through reduction in footfall and phone queries.

Through the Department's new profiling model customers who are most likely to become long-term unemployed are identified. They are given early targeted support and are placed on appropriate personal development programmes.

The profiling of all new claimants is now operational in all Department offices. Under the Pathways to Work programme, the Department profiled some 54,000 new claimants to the end of 2012.

In addition, as part of the case management approach:

- Almost 70,000 customers had participated in group engagements by the end of 2012.
- 158,000 one-to-one initial interviews were conducted by the end of 2012.
- A further 134,000 follow-up meetings were held by the end of 2012.
- All new customers in Intreo offices now sign a social contract, known as a Record of Mutual Commitments, between the Department and the customer. This sets out the customer's rights with regard to the type and quality of services to be provided by the Department but also sets out the customer's responsibility to engage with these services and actively seek employment.

Strand 2: Greater targeting of activation places and opportunities for those on the live register

The Department has, during the past year, rolled out two new work programmes – JobBridge and TÚS with 10,000 places. Take-up on both schemes is ahead of target. TÚS (5,000 places in 2012) is designed to address acknowledged deficiencies in the related Community Employment scheme. Places on TÚS are reserved for long term unemployed people with selection of participants determined by the Department and durations are managed to be no more than 12 months.

JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme, provides internship opportunities of either six or nine months for unemployed individuals on the Live Register, in organisations in the private, public and community voluntary sectors. The JobBridge Scheme has made significant progress since it came into operation. At the end of 2012, 13,232 internships had commenced with 5,532 participants then participating on internship and 2,083 internship opportunities advertised on www.jobbridge.ie.

The number of available places was increased from 5,000 to 6,000 in May 2012 and eligibility criteria was widened to include Disability Allowance and One Parent Family Payment scheme claimants. Based on the success of the scheme, the number of available places was increased further to 8,500 in Budget 2013.

As employers can specify work placements and select candidates, participation on the scheme is biased slightly towards younger people. Although the scheme is available to people who have been unemployed for at least three months in practice 39% of participants were unemployed for more than 12 months prior to commencing on the scheme. The Department commissioned Indecon to conduct an independent evaluation of the JobBridge scheme in order to evaluate its impact on improving the job prospects of participants. The Indecon report indicates that feedback from participants and host organisations is very positive (in excess of 90% satisfaction levels) and that progression rate into employment at 61% is ahead of European norms. Of particular note is the fact that progression rates into employment for participants who were more than 2 years unemployed were 38%. Progression rates into employment for the general cohort of greater than 2 years unemployed is 7%.

During the year the Department also finalised and published a review of activation schemes (e.g. CE, TÚS, BTEA) proposing changes that will improve their effectiveness as an activation tool. One of the main findings from the review has already been implemented – placement of new participants on CE is now only by referral from the Department and all participants must be unemployed for at least 12 months.

With regard to education/training placements the Department retains the sole power to refer clients to training interventions. It co-ordinates this activity closely with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and education/training providers.

Momentum

The Regional Support Unit (RSU) of the Department played a key role in the implementation and support of Momentum, a new Government initiative committed under Pathways to Work. RSU in conjunction with Activation and Employment Support Services designed and implemented an income support model and recruitment processes.

The purpose of the Momentum fund is to help enhance the collaboration and engagement between employers / enterprise with education and training providers so as to design and deliver a range of innovative and relevant projects for up to 6,500 individuals who have been unemployed for 12 months or more with 25% reserved for young unemployed people. Momentum provides free education and training projects for long-term unemployed jobseekers and includes on-the-job training in the form of work experience modules, as well as the development of the workplace skills required to obtain and retain employment.

The Labour Market Education & Training Fund is being used to deliver this initiative. It is a €20m fund under the Department of Education & Skills and is part of the Government's 2012 Action Plan for Jobs and the National Skills Strategy.

Partial Capacity Benefit

The Partial Capacity Benefit scheme was introduced in February 2012. The introduction of the scheme marks a notable advancement in how the social welfare system caters for the real situations facing many people with disability. The traditional welfare system was inflexible in how it addressed the issue of employment capacity – people were categorised as 'fit for work' or 'unfit for work'. The Partial Capacity Benefit scheme seeks to recognise the reality that many people do not fall neatly into one or other category. Many people with a disability have a capacity to engage in the open labour market and the scheme provides an opportunity for recipients of Invalidity Pension or those in receipt of Illness Benefit for at least six months to have their capacity to work assessed and to receive an ongoing income support payment based on this assessment. The scheme is voluntary. There are no limitations to earnings from employment or to the number of hours worked. In the event that the work does not continue, the participant can revert to his or her underlying payment. The participant may remain on the scheme provided there continues to be an underlying entitlement to either Illness Benefit or Invalidity Pension.

At the end of February 2013 there are 802 people in receipt of a partial capacity benefit.

Strand 3: Incentivising unemployed people to take-up employment and other opportunities

The single biggest factor in encouraging unemployed people to take up activation/ progression/employment opportunities is the more intensive case management approach outlined above.

In addition a number of scheme/policy changes have been implemented to improve incentives.

- A new penalty rate of payment was introduced for those people who do not engage in the activation process. To the end of 2012 1,807 people have had their personal payments reduced by some 23%. More importantly, however, participation of clients

at Group Engagement sessions and subsequent one-to-one meetings with case managers has improved with attendance rates of some 90% at on-to-one interviews up from less than 60% in the previous 12 months.

- In addition changes were made to the definition of the working week and for the inclusion of Sunday working in the calculation of Jobseeker's Benefit/Allowance payable. These changes help towards a reduction in the reliance on the welfare system and makes the Jobseeker schemes more relevant to the modern labour market. Changes have also been made to the eligibility terms for One Parent Family Payments and Back to Education Payments to increase the relative value of work for people on these schemes.

Strand 4: Reforming institutions to deliver better services

Organisation Mergers

Good progress was made through the year with regard to the reform of institutions – approximately 2,000 staff from FÁS and the HSE Community Welfare Service were transferred into the Department on time and within budget by the beginning of 2012 and a new integrated regional structure was implemented within the Department.

New governance arrangements were put in place between the Department and the State training/education sector including representation on management boards and formal protocols.

Local Office Process Modernisation (LOPM)

The downturn in the Irish economy since 2007 led to a sharp increase in unemployment with the live register rising from just under 200,000 in March 2008 to 455,000 in August 2010. The sharp rise in the level of Jobseeker claims put considerable pressure on staff and facilities in our system of Local Offices which manage these claims. The LOPM project was set up to help to address this situation by developing IT facilities to assist staff in dealing with jobseeker claims.

The main focus of the LOPM project is to reduce footfall in the Local Offices to provide time and space to enable staff to interact with customers in a more focused manner. Work completed under LOPM is set out below;

- **Unemployed Customers**

The Department has developed the capability of capturing a customer's normal signature for fulltime certification purposes on an electronic pad. The process is more flexible as it means offices can respond immediately to queues by opening and closing counters as required rather than being limited to having a set number open at any given time.

Another feature of this initiative is that customers now receive a text (SMS) the day before they are due to sign to remind them to do so. Customers are finding this aspect of the service to be useful and it is helping to eliminate some unnecessary work in local offices.

Following a trial of this initiative in 3 local offices in Quarter 4 2011, it was successfully extended to a further 30 offices during 2012.

About 140,000 cases have now been certified through the new functionality and over 700,000 certifications have taken place to end 2012. Roll out of the initiative will continue in 2013.

- **Casual/Part-time Workers**

The streamlined process for certifying casual/part-time workers electronically was rolled out to 44 Branch Offices during 2012. In total, 112 offices are now updating the weekly certification patterns of almost 80,000 customers in this way. Roll out will be completed by end Quarter 1 2013.

- **Scanning of casual part-time workers docket**

The trial of a scanning solution to process casual certification patterns began in Ballymun local office in November 2012. Subject to the outcome of an evaluation, it is planned to extend this facility to other offices during 2013. Anticipated benefits include:

- Enhanced control as the employer must confirm the pattern declared by the customer prior to payment;
- Facilitates an environment for all employers to operate on an equal administrative footing;
- The administrative overhead associated with manual input of data, adjusting records, dealing with overpayments, etc. will be reduced;
- Paper will be reduced in the office as the image is stored electronically.

- **On-line services**

A new facility was introduced during 2011 which allows customers to submit their Jobseekers claim on line. This service also issues the customer with an appointment to attend the local office to register their jobseekers claim.

This facility has been rolled out in all local and branch offices and just over 1,000 customers submitted their Jobseeker claim online in 2012. A marked increase in this figure is expected during 2013.

Strand 5: Employer Engagement & Client Services

Employer Engagement and Client Services Unit

In parallel with the development of an integrated service for jobseekers, the Department is increasing its engagement with employers.

An Employer Engagement and Client Services Unit was established to develop and implement an integrated approach to engagement with employers, to place the Intreo service as a partner of choice, promote the utilisation of Intreo, and increase recruitment from the live register. An Employer Engagement Manager is available in each region to support and advise employers at each stage of the employment process including the advertisement of opportunities and sourcing potential candidates from the Live Register.

As well as providing information to employers on the grants and assistance schemes available through the Department, and on workplace support schemes for the employment

of people with disabilities, the services and supports available to employers under the Employer Engagement Unit include the following:

- **Jobs Ireland – National Contact Centre**

The Department's National Contact Centre, operating as *Jobs Ireland*, provides jobseekers and employers alike with information and profiles about prospective jobs and staff in Ireland and across Europe through:

- Internet www.jobsireland.ie or www.welfare.ie
- European Jobseekers and Employers via <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/home.jsp?lang=en>
- Smart phone Applications
- Self-service kiosks in Employment Service Offices nationwide
- FREEPHONE service 1800 611 116
- Validation of all JobBridge Host Organisation Applications.
- Verification of all JobBridge Intern Eligibility Applications.

All vacancies advertised on Jobs Ireland are validated before publishing on the public website and a support is provided to employers regarding their vacancies.

Registered job seekers/job changers can also contact (via the free phone number) an experienced member of staff in order to get up-to-date advice on current job vacancies, career and/or course information.

In 2012 the National Contact Centre:

- Advertised a total of 95,000 vacancy positions
- Processed 1,500+ work placement applications
- Processed 20,000 JobBridge positions with employers
- Processed 10,000 JobBridge Intern applications from interested parties

Recent surveys continue to indicate a strong level of satisfaction with the Department's employer services with 88% of employers positively rating the overall service provided by the National Contact Centre.

- **European Employment Services**

European Employment Service (EURES) provide an international recruitment service to employers, who experience difficulties in recruiting staff in Ireland, and assist Irish based jobseekers interested in employment opportunities in Europe. Specially trained EURES Advisers, of which the Department have 17, provide advice, guidance and counselling to mobile workers in Ireland and to those intending to move to Ireland.

In 2012, EURES Ireland worked together with the construction and engineering sectors of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands sourcing numerous vacancies of interest to unemployed Irish workers. Also, despite the current difficulties in the Irish Labour Market, EURES worked closely with a number

of Irish based companies, including Apple Inc., McAfee, Blizzard, to help satisfy their specific skills needs which included language skills.

Three National and International Employment and Advice Fairs were held in 2012 in Dublin, Wexford and Galway, bringing together European and Irish employers, European EURES Advisers and advice agencies and providing over 17,000 jobseekers with thousands of job opportunities and information on business start-up, training and education options in Ireland and Europe.

EURES Ireland continues to develop the DIALOG platform, addressing labour market related issues of non-Irish jobseekers in Ireland and helping them with integration. The DIALOG Project is engaged in developing a network of service providers covering all aspects of the migration process as it affects migrant workers.

- **Employer Roadshows**

During October and early November 2012, in line with commitments made under Pathways to Work and the Intreo service, the Minister hosted a series of seven employer briefings or roadshows throughout the country; in Limerick, Sligo, Galway, Athlone, Waterford, Cork and Dublin.

The aim was to promote the Employer Engagement Unit and to provide employers with practical advice and assistance on the full range of employment and financial supports available to them from the Department. The main theme was to incentivise employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed and to enhance engagement with employers and to support them in growing their workforce.

Approximately 2,000 people attended the events and learned about the Department's services and supports and how their organisations could benefit from engaging with our services

OLDER PEOPLE

PENSIONS CHANGES

OECD Review of the Irish Pensions System

In March 2012 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) began a review of the Irish pension system to consider how pension reform in the light of the continuing economic circumstances.

The terms of reference for the review call for a comprehensive analysis, covering all parts of Ireland's retirement-income provision (the state scheme and other public benefits, personal and occupational plans and schemes for public sector workers). The review process, which is being co-ordinated by the Department's Pension Policy Unit, included a number of consultation events involving the full range of stakeholders. It is anticipated that the OECD will present the final report to the Minister by the end of the first quarter 2013.

State Pension Reforms

In recent years there has been a particular focus on the sustainability of the pension system because of:

- (i) the demographic issues Ireland faces and the associated increases in pension (and other age related) costs; and
- (ii) the deterioration in the public finances since the recession.

Demographic Challenges facing the Irish Pension System

- The number of older people is increasing – 12% of the population were over 65 in 2012 and this is projected to increase to 23% in 2050 (numbers will more than double).
- Life expectancy is increasing. In the mid-1990s, life expectancy for males was 73 and for females, 78.5. For men and women born in 2041, it will be 86.5 and 88.3 respectively.
- It is estimated that State expenditure on pensions (including public sector occupational pensions) will increase from approximately 7.5% of GDP in 2010 to 11.7 % in 2060. It is important to note in this context that GDP declined significantly over the period 2008 to 2010.
- Labour force participation rates drop dramatically at 65 years of age. The CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey (Q4 2010) showed that 77.2% of people aged 45-54 years were in the labour force. This drops to 64.3% for 55-64 year olds, to 43.6% for 60-64 year olds and to just 8.7% % for people aged 65 years or older.

With the changing demographics and sustainability issues in mind, a number of significant reforms to State pensions have recently been introduced and more will be implemented in the years ahead.

With effect from April 2012:

- the number of paid social insurance contributions required to qualify for a State Contributory/Transition Pension increased from 260 paid social insurance contributions to 520 paid social insurance contributions; and
- the period for which a claim for State pension can be backdated is six months.

From September 2012:

- new payment rate bands for State Contributory/Transition Pension were introduced. These additional payment rate bands more accurately reflect the social insurance history of a person and ensure that those who contribute more during a working life benefit more in retirement than those with fewer contributions.

Supplementary and Private Pensions

Following a review of the defined benefit model which involved consultation with stakeholder representatives, the Pensions Act was amended in 2012 to require defined benefit pension schemes to hold additional assets in the form of a risk reserve. The risk reserve requirement will provide a buffer to assist schemes absorb financial shocks in the future and in this regard will enhance the protection of the pension entitlements of scheme members. This requirement will apply from 2016 and can be accommodated in funding proposals which can be extended up to the end of 2023. Measures were also introduced which schemes can consider in adjusting their asset base to satisfy the risk reserve requirement such as, the provision of credit under the Funding Standard for the purchase of bonds, sovereign annuities or an employer undertaking. These measures facilitated the re-introduction of the Funding Standard which had been in abeyance.

Ten statutory instruments and statutory guidance were promulgated in 2012.

Pension Charges Report 2012

In October 2012 the Pension Charges Report 2012, which had been commissioned by the Department, was published.

The purpose of the report, which was the first comprehensive Government report on this subject, was to gather information on the level of pension charges levied, to assess whether charges are reasonable and transparent, to report on the findings and make recommendations. The report obtained information from occupational pension scheme trustees, pension providers, pension advisors and investment managers.

The report highlights a wide range of issues in relation to pension charges and identifies a number of serious concerns. While the provision of pension schemes cannot be cost free, it is clear that there are major challenges to be addressed in the two main areas of reasonableness and transparency of charges.

During 2013 the recommendations outlined in the report will be progressed.

Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund

The Social Insurance Fund (SIF) is core to Ireland's system of social insurance. Social insurance contributions (PRSI) are paid into the SIF, which finances a broad range of payment benefits including short term benefits such as maternity, job seekers, carers benefit or illness benefit as well as long term benefits such as pensions and other payments

Under Social Welfare legislation, regular Actuarial Reviews of the Social Insurance Fund are required to be undertaken at five-yearly intervals. The review aims to establish the medium and longer-term financial situation of the Fund.

The Actuarial Review of the Social Insurance Fund as at 31st December 2010 was published in September 2012.

OTHER POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Rent Supplement – Maximum Rent Limit Review

Revised maximum rent limits for Rent Supplement were implemented from 1st of January 2012. The purpose of the rent limit review was to establish new maximum rent limits which were in line with the most up to date market data available ensuring that value for money was achieved and that persons who require rent supplement were not priced out of the market for private rented accommodation.

Rent Supplement – Transfer of tenant to local authorities

In March 2012, the Government approved in principle the transfer of responsibility for the provision of rental assistance to persons with a long term housing need from the Department of Social Protection to housing authorities using a new Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). A multi-agency steering group has been established to develop proposals to give effect to this transfer. The group is chaired by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and consists of representatives from this Department; Public Expenditure and Reform; Office of the Revenue Commissioners; the County and City Managers Association, and the Housing Agency.

Mortgage Interest Supplement (MIS)

In line with the recommendations of both the Department's "Review of the Mortgage Interest Supplement Scheme" published in July 2010 and the "Mortgage Arrears and Personal Debt Group" chaired by Mr. Hugh Cooney published in November 2010, Budget 2012 provided for the curtailment of access to the MIS scheme for the first 12 months, while the person is involved in the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP). The underlying principle of this change is to ensure that MIS eligibility criteria reflect the forbearance arrangements set out in the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process.

A further amendment was introduced in December 2012 removing the condition which provided that MIS shall not be payable where the residence in respect of which the loan is payable is offered for sale. The removal of this condition will allow persons who wish to downsize, or to engage in selling their property for whatever reason to do so and remain eligible for mortgage interest supplement.

Gender Recognition

The Report of the interdepartmental Gender Recognition Advisory Group which recommended a scheme for the legal recognition, including birth registration, of the acquired gender of transgender people was published in July 2011.

Since the publication of the Report the Department has been working on developing draft Heads of a Gender Recognition Bill. In this context it is engaging in discussions with relevant stakeholders including medical health professionals and representatives from interested NGOs.

INFORMATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Department places great emphasis on customer service and greatly values the input and

feedback received from the various consultative fora and channels.

Online Information

In September 2012, the Department commenced work on the redesign of the www.welfare.ie website, to more properly reflect the full range of services the Department now delivers. It is the first public presence setting out the Department's expanded responsibilities and organisation and more closely aligns the site with the Department's priorities (activation of jobseekers, information and services for employers, etc.).

The new design provides improved navigation features for all users, as well as a dedicated Intreo area, through which employers and jobseekers can access all existing information and services in relation to supports, training and entitlements. The new site also includes a new 'Find a Job' service which is integrated with the Jobs Ireland site, as well as links to many of the country's leading recruitment agencies.

The site has been designed to be clearly laid out and to comply with accessibility guidelines, to ensure that all users, including those using assistive technologies, can access information and services.

The new infrastructure put in place as part of the redevelopment will also give the Department greater flexibility in the way in which it can provide information and services to its online customers and will also facilitate the development and delivery of enhanced online services to the public in the future.

Customer Charter and Action Plan 2013-2015 – consultation

Work commenced on a new Customer Charter and Action Plan during 2012. To help inform the Customer Charter and Action Plan a number of customer and staff surveys and consultations were conducted during the year. The consultation process involved

- a targeted survey of 1,000 randomly selected customers across 5 scheme areas;
- a targeted survey of 570 customers who had previously made complaints to the Department;
- an invitation to the Department's website visitors to comment on levels of satisfaction in dealing with the Department;
- a staff survey;
- an invitation for observations issued to all business areas;
- a meeting with representatives of business areas for further discussion and revision;
- the circulation of the draft Plan to some 50 customer representative groups for comment

The Customer Charter and Action Plan 2013-2015 will be published in Quarter 1 2013.

Customer Panels and Customer Representative Groups

Briefing was provided throughout the year to customer panels and customer representative groups on topical issues including the following:

- The Rent Allowance Scheme
- Employment Support Services
- Fraud Control
- The role of the Social Welfare Inspectorate
- Changes to the Contributory State Pension
- Changes to the Widows Pension
- Website redesign

Comments and Complaints

The Department's comments and complaints system facilitates the processing of complaints in a timely and efficient manner. During the year 1,566 complaints were addressed. Of these, over 95% were resolved within 15 working days, which is the target set for resolution of complaints.

Providing Services through Irish

In accordance with the requirements of the Official Languages Act, 2003, a comprehensive service through Irish was provided to customers. The Department has an official language scheme in place, the purpose of which is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish.

Translations

During 2012, the Department arranged for the translation of 372 documents to and from Irish. In addition, there were 2,619 translations into other languages; 547 customers were provided with assistance from language interpretation services; and 7 customers requested the assistance of sign language interpreters.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

OBJECTIVE 2 - DRIVE COST EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

BETTER BUSINESS PROCESSES

A continuous and coordinated programme of business process and organisation improvements, targeted at delivering sustained improvements in efficiency, is supported by the office system modernisation project and the Department's on-going Service Delivery Modernisation programme. The Department is engaged in a multi-annual transformation programme of business change in keeping with its expanded mandate and vision, with the objective of developing a new service model for the Department. The initial focus is on the provision of more effective services and joined-up approach, leading to the full integration of employment, activation and other supports. The new service is customer-centric rather than scheme-based and takes account of policy and operational developments in the areas of customer profiling, case management, service, employment and income supports.

Business Process Improvement projects were undertaken in a number of areas across the Department:

- **Invalidity Pension**

New structures and processes were put in place from June 2012 to enable the normal weekly intake of Invalidity Pension claims to be processed promptly upon receipt. A programme to eliminate the backlog of approximately 7,300 claims which had built up was introduced. As at the end of December 2012, all the backlogged claims had been actioned and were either awaiting further information from the claimant or a medical assessment before being ready for decision. The target to process all new claims promptly upon receipt was achieved and this has continued into 2013.

- **Carer's Allowance**

In July 2012 a new structure was set up to deal with the normal weekly intake of new claims along with a dedicated team to clear the backlog of claims that had built up over the course of some 18 months. Progress in Carer's Allowance scheme area has been very positive with the backlog of new claims reducing from approx. 11,600 at mid-June 2012 to approx. 8,550 at the end of December 2012. The backlog elimination effort continues with a target of having the full backlog actioned by Quarter 2, 2012.

- **Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and Tús – Community Work Placement Initiative**

Financial reviews of the RSS and Tús schemes were initiated in 2012 with the Implementing Bodies which oversee the daily operation of each scheme. Similar reviews will be undertaken at fixed intervals in the future, designed to monitor areas of under/over expenditure, enabling funding to be channelled to where there is most need and streamline the processes for both RSS and Tús.

In addition, a number of meetings and information sessions were organised by the Tús Unit, with a view to promoting greater awareness of the initiative both across the Department and amongst external stakeholders.

Regional Support Unit

During 2012 the Regional Support Unit (RSU) co-ordinated and provided on-going support for the implementation of a significant range of changes to the Jobseeker, Farm Assist and One-Parent Family Payment schemes. This programme of work involved:

- The centralised issue of some 100,000 customer communications;
- The design of automated procedures for the recording of means data using scanning technology;
- The design and testing of computerised payment systems for these schemes;
- The development of operational procedures; and
- The delivery of training to some 1,000 staff.

IDENTITY MANAGEMENT AND SECURE ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Department's client identity services (CIS) unit is responsible for providing a range of identity management functions internally to the Department and, increasingly, to other public bodies. It issues and manages the Personal Public Service (PPS) number and provides related data matching services to over 100 public bodies specified in legislation. The Department liaises closely with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and other public service agencies in the development and implementation of identity management policy.

- **Personal Public Service Number**

The Department provides identity management services to public service agencies, facilitating the wider use of the PPS number in the delivery of public services, the development of eGovernment services and enhancing systems for control of fraud and abuse. A total of 154,657 PPS numbers were allocated in 2012.

- **Public Services Card Project / SAFE Registration**

The Department has developed, in conjunction with a number of other Government Departments, a rules based standard for establishing and authenticating an individual's identity for the purposes of access to public services. This programme of work, which is known as the Standard Authentication Framework Environment or SAFE for short, also provided for the introduction of a Public Services Card (PSC) to enable individuals to gain access to public services more efficiently and with a minimum of duplication of effort, while at the same time preserving their privacy to the maximum extent possible.

Since June 2012, the roll-out of SAFE registration functionality for the provision of PSCs began on a national basis.

The majority of cards issued were to the Department's customers on the Jobseeker and One Parent Family Payment schemes. This involved the verification of customer identity and the taking of the customer's photograph and the capture of their signature electronically.

The creation of a SAFE registration environment in a local office involves improving the technical connectivity, installing new equipment and training staff in those offices to support the registration process. By the end of 2012, this process had been completed in 45 locations around the country with 74 dedicated SAFE stations including a multi-station PSC registration centre in Gandon House, Dublin 1 which alone is capable of registering 1,200 customers each week. A total of 457 staff members have been trained to carry out SAFE registrations in these locations.

The service will be extended further to other offices on the Departmental network in 2013.

In addition, a centralised operation to support a 'reduced registration' process using data already on record with the Passport Office was established in Ballybay, Co. Monaghan with staff redeployed from the Department of Agriculture. Communications with over 64,000 low risk customers were commenced through this process and it is envisaged that this facility will support the issuance of the PSC to a significant proportion of the Department's customers when the Free Travel Variant of the PSC becomes available in 2013.

The Department and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform are engaged with multiple public bodies on the programme of registration and issue of Public Services Card and will continue to do so.

At the end of 2012, some 100,000 people had initiated SAFE registration.

- **Authentication of Documentation**

During 2012, authentication of documentation led to the detection of 71 invalid identity documents which had been presented by applicants for services and to the arrest of 6 individuals. In addition, CIS activities led to the detection of 278 suspect PPS records. Investigations into such detected cases by the Special Investigation Unit and by the Revenue Commissioners have led to very substantial financial savings for the exchequer.

- **Freedom of Information**

During 2012, the Department of Social Protection handled 1,700 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. 1,581 (92.8%) of requests received were from members of the public requesting copies of personal details held by the Department. 103 non-personal FOI requests were received, requesting records and details of how the Department conducts its business. Some 68.6% were granted in full, with 3.8% refused. The balance represents requests that were partially granted, withdrawn or handled outside of FOI.

Training in FOI legislation and procedures and practices to be followed in dealing with FOI requests was provided to 62 staff in 2012.

CONTROL AND SAVINGS

The Department's Fraud Initiative 2011-2013 aims to significantly reduce fraud and abuse and reinforces the rights and responsibilities of customers as well as improving public perceptions about the security of the social welfare system.

The combination of elements of the plan is leading to lead to a more focused and efficient activity and to more trust in, and credibility of, the social protection system.

Since the launch of the Initiative significant progress has been made across a number of fronts, as outlined below:

Control savings and reviews in 2012

Control savings are an estimate of savings from various control activities across the schemes in payment. Control savings are not actual monies recovered by the Department. If this control work did not take place, social welfare expenditure would increase by this level over time.

The integration of the Community Welfare Service and FÁS business structures into the Department comprehensively seeks to activate and review customers, where up to now three separate agencies had this role. Arising from this, a more integrated approach to fraud control can be realised.

The control savings target for 2012 was €645 million. An amount of €669m in control savings were recorded as achieved at the end of 2012 and over 1m control reviews were carried out.

Control activity is also focused on the prevention of fraud and error at new claim stage. This is the most cost effective mechanism of reducing losses through fraud and error in social welfare schemes. Savings made from the prevention of fraud and error at application stage cannot be estimated as the claims in question do not go into payment.

Anonymous reports

Enhanced access channels - both online and dedicated phone lines - are available to citizens who wish to report incidences of welfare fraud. All anonymous or confidential reports are examined and where relevant, are referred for follow-up action. A payment is not suspended or stopped solely on the basis of an anonymous report. It may, however, be a "trigger" for the instigation of a review of a customer's entitlement.

A total of 28,022 reports were dealt with by the Department's Control Division from January to December 2012, compared to 16,917 in 2011.

Data Matching

The Department engages in data matching with other Government Departments and public bodies for control purposes. Systematic and regular data matching exercises on both internal systems and with external agencies are on-going. These matches include data from the Revenue Commissioners, Irish Prison Service, Third Level Institutions, General Register Office (GRO), Commission on Taxi Regulation, Department of Work & Pensions (UK State Pensions Match) and the Probate Office. Data matching is an efficient and effective mechanism to target control-related activity. During 2012 104,000 data matches were carried out for external agencies.

Fraud and Error Surveys

Fraud and Error surveys were completed and published for three schemes in 2012 - One Parent Family Payment, Disability Allowance and Jobseeker's Benefit. The various recommendations from the surveys are being implemented by the relevant scheme areas.

Enhanced Control Legislation

The Social Welfare & Pension Act 2012 included three specific provisions to enhance and support fraud and control measures as follows:

- Provision was made to allow for social welfare inspectors to exercise certain functions at ports and airports so as to identify individuals who are suspected of entering the jurisdiction solely for the purposes of continuing to claim social welfare payments to which they are not entitled (known as 'welfare tourism'). A power of enquiry to landlords by social welfare inspectors and designated persons (former community welfare officers) where a rent supplement is being paid was provided. The measure is designed to ensure an enhanced level of control of the rent supplement scheme.
- Provision was also made for the introduction of additional identity and authentication measures for the purposes of making a claim for a social welfare payment or an application for a PPS number or a Public Services Card.

The 2012 Act also included a provision to increase the recovery amounts from individuals who have a social welfare debt and are in receipt of a payment from the Department.

Special Investigation Unit (SIU)

The Unit's function is to investigate social welfare fraud. Its operations are targeted towards planned and systematic control activity and projects. The approach taken is frequently reviewed and is regularly adjusted to concentrate on the areas of greatest risk, based on operational experience and credible information received from industry and business sectors. The Unit works jointly with Revenue, National Employment Rights Authority (NERA), and the Gardaí. High visibility operations by the Unit are regularly and systematically undertaken. Control savings in excess of €63 million were generated from the Unit's fraud control activities in 2012.

During the year, a series of national projects were undertaken by the unit, including:

- A project targeting persons who were suspected of no longer being resident in the State and claiming social welfare payments, yielding €5m and 466 detections;
- A project focusing on identity and multiple claiming of social welfare payments yielded €1.2m in savings; and
- A project focusing on self-employed operatives resulted in 50 detections and savings of €750,000.

Court Proceedings

It is the Department's policy to consider for prosecution all cases of fraud against the social welfare system. All cases that merit prosecution are forwarded for consideration of legal proceedings. In considering, or when referring, cases of social welfare fraud for legal proceedings the Department applies defined and recognised best practice standards. This includes the duration of the fraud, amount overpaid, previous incidences of social welfare fraud etc.

There were 675 cases taken in the courts system (i.e. on hand with the Chief State Solicitor/Local State Solicitor) at end of 2012, at various stages of the process.

During 2012, 161 were referred to Chief State Solicitor's Office (CSSO) for criminal prosecution and a further 84 cases were referred to An Garda Síochána for consideration of prosecution under Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud) Act 2001.

OTHER CONTROL AND SAVINGS MEASURES

Reduced rates of payment for Jobseekers (Penalty Rates)

Following the introduction of legislation for the reduction of payments to jobseekers who do not engage with the Employment Action Plan or who refuse offers of training, the Department continued to review and strengthen measures to support the consistent application of penalty rates nationally, including running a seminar for the key operational and policy staff. To the end of 2012, the number of penalty rates imposed was 1,807.

Internal Control

The role of the Department's Internal Control Support Unit (ICSU) is to:

- Monitor compliance with internal control procedures and investigate any suspected breaches of these procedures; and
- Investigate any internal fraud in the Divisions and investigate any reported breaches of data protection in the Department.

During 2012 this role was expanded to include former FÁS and Community Welfare Service operations now integrated into the Department. The investigation process was also extended to include internal work under the Civil Service Disciplinary Code for the Personnel Officer.

During 2012, 29 inspections were completed by ICSU. Any internal control issues identified were highlighted to local management and recommendations were made to strengthen control measures.

Throughout the year, 35 complaints were received by ICSU for investigation which, when added to the 21 open cases at the beginning of 2012, brought the total to 56. Nineteen cases were closed in 2012. Of the 37 cases remaining, 12 were pending investigation at year end.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- **Change Jobseeker's Benefit payment week from 6 to 5 days**

Budget 2012 provided for a change to the Jobseeker's Benefit scheme where a jobseeker's benefit recipient is working for part of a week. From July 2012 payment entitlement is based on a 5 day week rather than a 6 day week.

This change affects people who work part-time or are in casual employment and who also claim jobseeker's benefit for the days they are not working. Persons who are fully unemployed are not affected by this change.

This measure will help towards a reduction in the reliance on the welfare system among those who currently avail of a mix of welfare and earned income.

- **Sunday Working**

Budget 2012 provided for the inclusion of Sunday working when calculating the amount of Jobseeker's Benefit (JB)/Jobseeker's Allowance (JA) payable. This measure will come into effect from February 2013.

The change will impact on jobseeker recipients where Sunday is either one of the days worked or the only day worked. Customers who work on a Sunday will lose one day of payment (JB) or have means (JA) in respect of the day's employment deducted from their weekly payment.

In order to implement this change, the 3 in 6 rule has been amended to become the 4 in 7 rule with effect from 20/21 February 2013. The central effect of the change will be to increase equity across the jobseeker schemes and make them more relevant to the modern labour market.

OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

OBJECTIVE 3 - DEVELOP STAFF, STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Over the course of 2012, the Department continued to foster an environment to encourage motivation, flexibility and upskilling of staff. This has led to the streamlining of processes and procedures together with the provision of appropriate technological and organisational supports in order to deliver seamless services to clients in a pro-active, efficient and effective manner.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM PLAN

The Department is committed to meeting the objectives of the Public Service Reform Plan published by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (D/PER) on 17th November 2011. The Department's high level integrated reform delivery plan was developed and submitted to D/PER in January 2012. The plan outlines the key Departmental milestones under the various reform programmes and contains a wide range of organisational specific reform commitments, as well as cross-cutting elements of reform. The integrated plan aligns key elements from the Programme for Government, the Comprehensive Review of Expenditure and the Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement.

Main Progress Achieved in 2012:

The Programme for Government determined that Intreo should provide an integrated service which would deliver a One-Stop-Shop for people seeking to establish their benefit entitlement, looking for a job and seeking advice about their education and training options. Integrated processes have been developed for reception, assessment/decisions and an activation model. Ten Intreo offices are now in operation. The Public Service Agreement (PSA) has provided the overarching framework which facilitated the following service improvements:

- As part of Intreo, the previously separate processes involving entitlement, investigation and decision have been brought together in a single decisions team. This reform has significantly reduced the time between the making of the claim and the decision and payment of the claim.
- The extension of Local Office opening hours in its Intreo offices means that a range of services will be provided to customers between 9.15am and 5.00pm.
- The PSA also provided the framework which enabled the Department to proceed with some significant process and systems improvement in its claim processing areas.

Examples of developments in the provision of activation supports are as follows:

- A recent independent evaluation of the JobBridge Internship Scheme, conducted by Indecon Economic Consultants, found that 61% of placements had progressed into employment on completion of their internship, equating to over 4,300 interns who have progressed into employment by the end of November 2012. In excess of 7,500 companies have participated in the scheme to date

- The new Departmental website, www.welfare.ie went live to the public on 10th January 2013 and the new site now includes dedicated Jobseeker and Employer areas.

In addition to the roll of the new integrated Intreo offices the following improvements have been made:

- The rollout of the Public Services Card continued with a significant increase in numbers averaging 1,100 registrations per day in the latter half of 2012;
- The re-organisation of regional structures to reflect the integration of services was completed in May 2012 with the establishment of three regional structures comprising thirteen divisions nationwide;
- The modernisation of the Department's office processes continues and initiatives have been implemented in Illness /Disability scheme areas;
- Streamlining of services, a number of joint initiatives are underway with the Offices of the Revenue Commissioners, for example sharing of data in relation to self-employed PRSI contributors;
- The review and rationalisation of accommodation is on-going with closures of former HSE offices, former FÁS employment offices and co-location of CIB, CIS and MABS offices underway in a number of locations

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Staff Survey

During 2011 and early 2012 the Department conducted a major staff survey to capture the experiences of staff in relation to communications, participation, teamwork and trust in the organisation and to get a sense of their views on change and how they manage and cope with change. In addition the survey was concerned with their experience of work including human resource practices and job design and their experience of work engagement and wellbeing.

The vast majority of staff who responded to the survey indicated that they feel happy when they are fully engaged with their work, are proud of the work that they do and willingly give up their time to help others with work-related problems. However, the survey feedback also points to key areas where improvement is required in order to make the Department a better place in which to work and to improve the services that we deliver to our customers. These include the need for improved information sharing and communication; enhanced teamwork and trust; a greater focus on the opinions of staff and the goals and values of the organisation; more transparency in the promotions process and more effective management of performance and underperformance.

The Department's Management Board is committed to addressing the issues raised by staff in the survey. An action plan has been developed which involves a collaborative engagement and innovation process for all staff. Progress on the action plan targets will be monitored and communicated to all staff of the Department on an on-going basis.

Engagement and Innovation Programme

An Engagement and Innovation Programme was developed to engage and empower staff and to facilitate organisation-wide innovation. The programme aims to encourage and support staff to become involved in it and to contribute to the changes that affect their everyday work and the

work of the Department. The first meeting of the programme's Strategic Leadership Team took place in December 2012.

HR Shared Service

Work intensified on developing the HR Shared Service for the civil service which is one of the commitments in the Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement 2010–2014. The new service, which involves the centralisation of HR transactional activity for all government departments will be a key enabler to shift the focus of HR activity from compliance and administrative personnel activity to work that is strategic and of higher value. The Department played a lead role in the development of the new service during 2012 through its membership of two of the project's key oversight committees – its Management Board and Design Authority. In addition, experts from the Department's HR Team contributed to focus groups which developed the new standardised HR processes to be delivered through the shared service. The first tranche of Departments is due to transition to the shared service in March 2013 and the Department of Social Protection is due to move in 2014.

Centralised Employee Assistance Service

A centralised Employee Assistance Service for the Civil Service was introduced in early 2012 as an important shared service element of the human resource structure in the Civil Service. Operating on a regional basis, Employee Assistance Officers (EAOs) provide a wide range of confidential supports to staff and management designed to assist employees in managing work and/or life difficulties. The HR Division has worked closely with the new service aims and has achieved positive results in minimising sick leave absences, helping in return to work interventions and enhancing/maintaining performance. The Department plays a strong role on the Management Board which oversees this shared services project.

Review of Performance Management and Development System

The Department's HR Division is also involved in the Performance Management and Development system (PMDS) Sub-Committee of General Council which is reviewing performance management in the Civil Service. Significant changes took place in 2012 aimed at strengthening performance and managing underperformance.

Staff Training and Development

The Department is committed to providing continuous support and development opportunities to all staff. In 2012, significant resources were invested in the development and provision of training to staff. The Staff Development Unit (SDU) delivered 7,567 man days of training with 6,660 attendees on an extensive range of courses from basic computer skills to a professional Development Programme for newly-appointed Principal Officers.

The existing Management Development programme for mid-level managers continues to mature, with new elements being added every year. With new and evolving work practices emerging through Pathways to Work and with the integration with staff and functions from Fás and the Community Welfare Service, SDU continues to provide high levels of support and training for all staff involved in the roll out of Intreo. Some of the courses provided now include change management training, group engagement presentation skills and critical incident prevention training. SDU continues to support Basic Deciding Officer training throughout the Divisions.

SDU have added a number of new and innovative programmes to their suite of courses this year. Among some of the new programmes was the aforementioned Professional Development Programme for newly-appointed Principal Officers. This programme includes such elements as information sessions delivered by policy and strategy experts, psychometric assessments, mentoring, and experiential learning.

Given the number of new projects in the Department, Staff Development Unit, in conjunction with the Project Office, organised DSP-tailored project management training, delivered by the Institute of Public Administration. 23 staff involved in managing projects received this two-day course in November and December 2012.

Organisational Performance

A new Statement of Strategy 2011 – 2014 was published in March 2012. This sets out the priorities for the organisation in the coming years.

A review of the Department's organisational structure was completed in March 2012 and the new structures are in place since 1 May 2012. Organisational restructuring and redeployment of staff was undertaken as a result of the expanded functions of the Department and the integration of almost 3,000 additional staff since 2009. In addition a number of developmental initiatives have begun to develop the culture and values of the new integrated organisation

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES DEVELOPMENT

Modernisation of Service Delivery

The modernisation of service delivery systems and processes continued during the year.

A number of projects were implemented to provide functionality on the Department's modern integrated system, the business object model implementation (BOMi), with the aim of delivering key business benefits and supporting the delivery of quality services to our customers. During 2012, the following key milestones were achieved:

- In March 2012 the Overpayment and Debt Management (ODM) process was introduced for the redundancy and insolvency payments schemes. This reflects the requirement for the service delivery system to manage employer debt and well as customer debt whereby, following the award of a statutory redundancy lump sum payment or a payment under the insolvency payments scheme, a debt to the Social Insurance Fund (SIF) is levelled against the employer concerned. These new procedures mean that that initial contact with an employer in relation to any debt raised occurs at the earliest possible stage. This will be very beneficial in terms of recouping monies owed to the SIF.
- In response to measures announced in Budget 2012, which reduced the income disregard in respect of One-Parent Family Payments for 2012 and for subsequent years, it was necessary to establish a process of capturing, processing and utilising the means information gathered. This project was commenced on 2nd March 2012.
- Activation: Customer Profiling & Case Management [APCM] - A project was undertaken in 2011 in relation to the selection and referral of jobseekers from this Department to FÁS under the National Employment Action Plan [NEAP]. This Department and FÁS worked together on the specific measures approved in respect of this revised process which supported the introduction of customer profiling, selection, referral and case

management based on profile data for jobseeker customers. This project involved both technical delivery of functionality as well as organisational change.

- Development work to enable processing of new Carer's Allowance (CA) applications and new Disability Allowance (DA) applications on the BOMi commenced in 2012, with CA systems becoming operational in June 2012. DA systems will be fully operational in early 2013.

In Quarter 4, 2012, development work commenced on systems to enable all Department schemes to be paid on one platform. This will also include functionality to allow deductions to be made from social welfare payments in respect of Local Property Tax. In addition, in 2012, development work commenced to enable the Department to decommission its legacy pensions payments system, and is targeted for implementation in October 2013.

Building In-House Capacity

The Department's business transformation and modernisation initiatives continue to provide opportunities for the development and expansion of the skills and capacity of Departmental staff. Department staff are involved in all aspects of the development of new systems and on the migration of schemes from legacy systems. In 2012, a new software engineering competency development programme focusing on developing in-house IT design and build capabilities on the BOMi platform completed the first cycle of training. This programme will form the basis for staff development in this area in the coming years.

The Information Systems Division (ISD) has a dedicated training and development unit that organises information and communications technology (ICT) specific training courses and seminars, maintains a comprehensive technical library, and provides access for ISD staff to research services and events. The annual conference for all ISD staff was held in November 2012 and focussed on the way forward, including cloud computing and internet security. Some 40 separate technology training courses were arranged for 227 ISD staff during the year totalling 557 training days. The ISD staff development unit also supports system training for frontline staff and in 2012 facilitated 125 training events for some 1,750 people including BOMi platform training and training to staff engaged in the Public Services Card rollout.

INTRANET STÓR

Department of Social Protection Intranet

During 2012 the Department's corporate portal – Stór – continued to be developed to support communication across the organisation and provide a space for shared work and collaboration. Developments during the year included:

- A redesign of the home page;
- An upgrade of the application infrastructure;
- An enhanced search engine;
- Use of video presentations from senior management to support communication of the Department's transformation programme;
- Additional customised team sites with report libraries and associated document templates;
- Further conference and meeting room booking facilities added;

- Redesign of significant corporate sites such as the management board site with consolidated access to board minutes and public service reform plans etc.;
- Enhancement of the PQ tracking application to support parliamentary questions for oral answer;
- A new preferred bidder and contracts award notification application;
- A new application to support maintenance recovery from liable relatives and communication with local offices and scheme areas;
- A new absence & resumption notice application to support management of staff sick leave.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Payment Strategy

During 2012, a considerable amount of work was undertaken on the development of a Department Payment Strategy which is expected to be brought to Government for consideration in mid-2013. The Strategy envisages a future environment where all payments to customers are paid electronically. A Request for Tender for the provision of cash services was published in December 2012 with a service provider expected to be in place to ensure continuity in cash payments to customers are maintained uninterrupted from 2014. In addition, a Prior Information Notice for the procurement of a new electronic payment service was also published to complement existing arrangements for direct payments into customer accounts in financial institutions.

Prompt Payments

During 2012, there were 75 late payments which amounted to 0.003% of payments. Prompt payment interest amounted to €1,900.68

Payment by Electronic Information Transfer/Electronic Funds Transfer

Customers can choose from a wide range of payment options offered by the Department including electronic payment to a local post office, bank or building society account and credit unions which have financial regulatory approval. Some 92% of customers received their scheme payment electronically by the end of 2012.

Project Governance and Procurement Policy

The Department has in place a structured project prioritisation and governance process. The Project Governance Committee (PGC), a committee of the Management Board, approves programmes and projects and monitors project progress and expenditure. The PGC exercises an oversight role to ensure best practice is applied in the management of programmes and projects and in all procurement matters.

In line with government policy to advance opportunities for the SME sector to compete for government contracts, all Department procurements in excess of €25,000 are now advertised on e-tenders. Further information about the Department's procurement policy and contracts is available on www.welfare.ie.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy Awareness Campaign

During 2012, 33 of the Department's offices continued to be involved in the Office of Public Works (OPW) Energy Campaign – Optimising Power @ Work. The 33 offices include the largest DSP offices and therefore represent a high proportion of the Department's overall energy consumption. The campaign involves the active and continued monitoring by local management of office energy audits and the introduction of changes where possible to reduce energy usage.

The Department also continued to raise the awareness of staff in all locations of the need to minimise energy consumption and to introduce energy saving initiatives where possible.

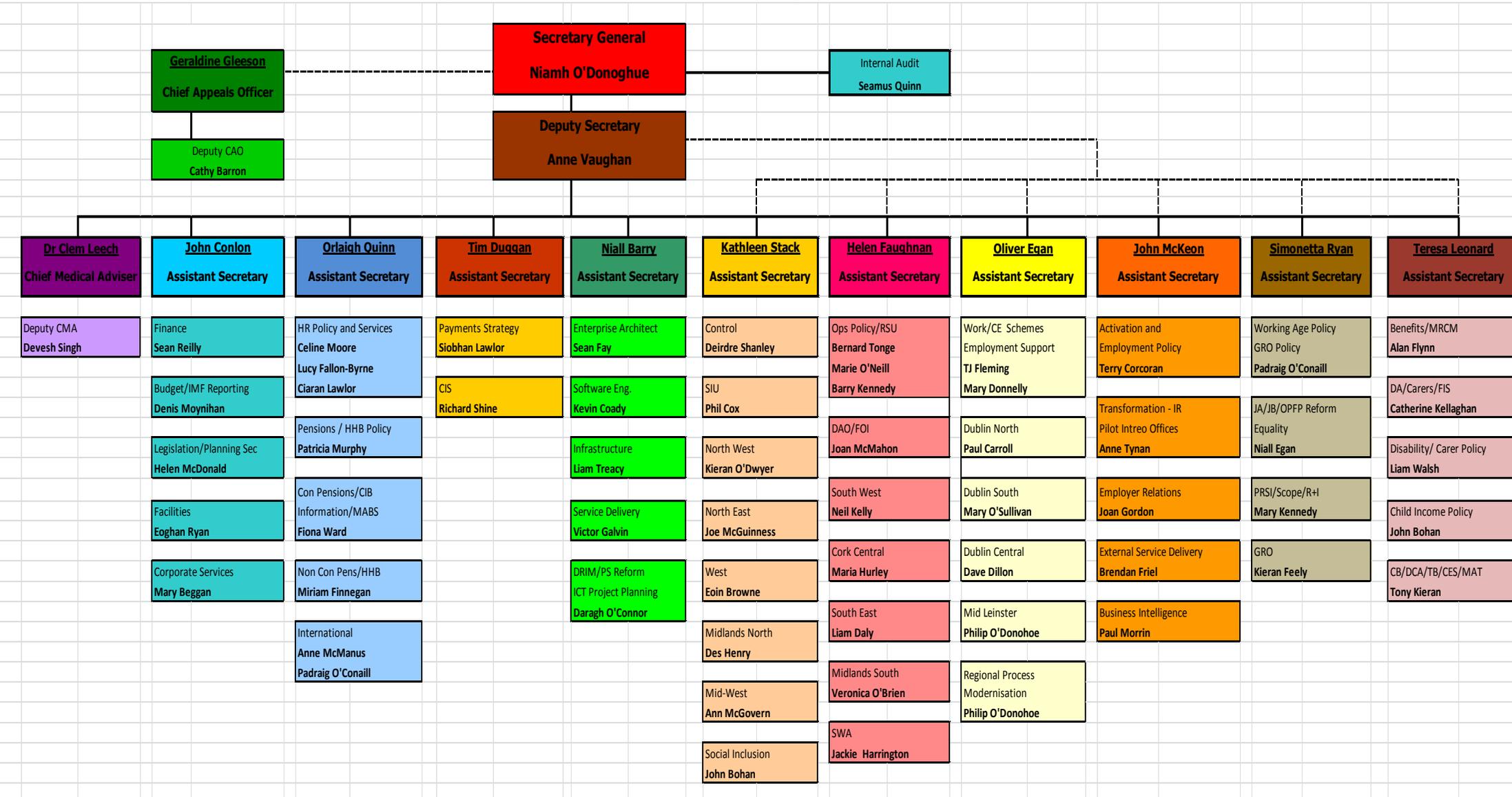
Energy Consumption Reporting

The Department delivers services from almost 1,000 locations nationwide. Energy is procured from a relatively large number of providers and the Department does not directly pay the energy costs in respect of all locations. As a result, accurate reporting on energy consumption has presented a significant challenge in recent years.

In 2012, the Department cooperated and supported Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's project to enable public sector bodies to better meet their obligations in relation to reporting on energy consumption. The initial outputs, which are expected to be published in early 2013, will provide the Department with access to detailed accurate information in relation to its energy consumption. It will allow us to monitor our progress towards the Government's aim to reduce public sector energy consumption by 33% in 2020 and compare our progress against other similar public sector bodies in that regard.

Appendix 1

Department of Social Protection Organisation Structure – May 2013



| SOCIAL WELFARE ACTS 2012 | |
|--|---|
| Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012 - No. 12 of 2012 | |
| Social Welfare Act 2012 – No. 43 of 2012 | |
| CIVIL REGISTRATION ACTS 2012 | |
| Civil Registration (Amendment) Act 2012 – No. 48 of 2012 | |
| STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS 2012 | |
| S.I. No. 5/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 6/2012 | Pensions Act (Register and Database of Certified Policies or Contracts of Assurance) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 38/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 1) (Overlapping Benefits) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 42/2012 | Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2010 (Sections 12 and 13) (Commencement) Order 2012 |
| S.I. No. 43/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 2) (Partial Capacity Benefit) Regulations 2012. |
| S.I. No. 48/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Revaluation) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 70/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 102/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 3) (Claims) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 141/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 4) (One-Parent Family Payment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 188/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Funding Standard) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 195/2012 | Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012 (Sections 14, 15 and 17) (Commencement) Order 2012 |
| S.I. No. 196/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 5) (Prescribed Time) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 197/2012 | Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2010 (Section 4) (Commencement) Order 2012 |
| S.I. No. 202/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Professional Guidance) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 203/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2012 |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| S.I. No. 204/2012 | Occupational Pension Schemes (Cross-Border) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 206/2012 | Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012 (Section 12) (Commencement) Order 2012 |
| S.I. No. 218/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 6) (Qualified Child Increase) Regulations 2012. |
| S.I. No. 229/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Contributions and Insurability) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 230/2012 | Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2012 (Sections 9 and 16) (Commencement) Order 2012 |
| S.I. No. 250/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 7) (Proving Unemployment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 254/2012 | Pension Schemes (Family Law) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 321/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 8) (Reduced Rates) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 333/2012 | Social Welfare (Employers' Pay-Related Social Insurance Exemption Scheme) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 373/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 9) (Information) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 386/2012 | Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (Exempt Unit Trust Charges) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 447/2011 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 10) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 448/2012 | Social Welfare (Rent Allowance) (Amendment) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 478/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No. 1) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 479/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Occupational Injuries) (Amendment) (No. 1) (Prescribed Courses) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 509/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Contributions and Insurability) (Amendment) (No. 2) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 567/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 11) (Homemakers) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 568/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Supplementary Welfare Allowance) (Amendment) (No. 2) (Rent and Mortgage Supplement) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 569/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Contributions and Insurability) (Amendment) (No. 3) (Modifications of Insurance) Regulations 2012 |
| S.I. No. 573/2012 | Social Welfare (Consolidated Claims, Payments and Control) (Amendment) (No. 12) (Reduced Rates) Regulations 2012 |

Appendix 3

Ministers in Charge of the Department since 1947

| | <u>From</u> | <u>To</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| James Ryan | 22 January 1947 | 18 February 1948 |
| William Norton | 18 February 1948 | 14 June 1951 |
| James Ryan | 14 June 1951 | 2 June 1954 |
| Brendan Corish | 2 June 1954 | 20 March 1957 |
| Patrick Smyth | 20 March 1957 | 27 November 1957 |
| Sean McEntee | 27 November 1957 | 24 June 1959 |
| Sean McEntee | 24 June 1959 | 12 October 1961 |
| Kevin Boland | 12 October 1961 | 21 April 1965 |
| Kevin Boland | 21 April 1965 | 16 November 1966 |
| Joseph Brennan | 16 November 1966 | 2 July 1969 |
| Kevin Boland | 2 July 1969 | 6 May 1970 |
| Joseph Brennan | 6 May 1970 | 14 March 1973 |
| Brendan Corish | 14 March 1973 | 5 July 1977 |
| Charles J Haughey | 5 July 1977 | 12 December 1979 |
| Michael Woods | 12 December 1979 | 30 June 1981 |
| Eileen Desmond | 30 June 1981 | 9 March 1982 |
| Michael Woods | 9 March 1982 | 14 December 1982 |
| Barry Desmond | 14 December 1982 | 14 February 1986 |
| Gemma Hussey | 14 February 1986 | 10 March 1987 |
| Michael Woods | 10 March 1987 | 18 July 1989 |
| Michael Woods | 18 July 1989 | 13 November 1991 |
| Brendan Daly | 13 November 1991 | 11 February 1992 |
| Charlie McCreevy | 11 February 1992 | 12 January 1993 |
| Michael Woods | 12 January 1993 | 15 December 1994 |
| Proinsias De Rossa | 15 December 1994 | 26 June 1997 |
| Dermot Ahern | 26 June 1997 | 17 June 2002 |
| Mary Coughlan | 17 June 2002 | 29 September 2004 |
| Seamus Brennan | 29 September 2004 | 15 June 2007 |
| Martin Cullen | 15 June 2007 | 7 May 2008 |
| Mary Hanafin | 7 May 2008 | 23 March 2010 |
| Éamon Ó Cuív | 23 March 2010 | 9 March 2011 |
| Joan Burton | 9 March 2011 | |