



BUSINESS STRATEGY



2001



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Preface

by Peter Small, Permanent Secretary
for Agriculture and Rural Development

I should first acknowledge the enormous effort which staff throughout the Department have made, in co-operation with the farming community and the wider public, to prevent the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease throughout Northern Ireland. That has been a considerable undertaking, which has of necessity diverted resources temporarily from the achievement of the objectives and targets set out in this Business Strategy. But at the time of writing, we have every reason to hope that we can continue to resist the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease, and refocus our work.

The targets in the Business Strategy are important to the public and our various client groups. They have been agreed with the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Executive Committee. It is essential therefore that we devote all of our energies to delivering on these commitments.

There are new programmes to be launched, and new projects to be approved. The necessary preparatory work and the appropriate appraisals will be conducted carefully and prudently before expenditure is undertaken. Our commitment to the highest standards of administration will be underpinned by strong corporate governance, delivered by our Departmental Management Board and our Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

The Department has a strong tradition of consulting openly with its customers, and the past year has seen a new understanding of the breadth of consultation necessary if we are to deliver on the Executive's commitment to equality and ensuring fair and inclusive delivery of services. The Department will be seeking opportunities to deliver services in a joined-up way, including by co-operation with other Departments, to improve services to customers. In particular, the Department will seek opportunities to promote social inclusion and focus attention on those who are most deprived.

We are also committed to raising service standards. For some time, we have used the European Foundation Quality Model as a diagnostic tool to assess performance and deliver tangible benefits for customers. We are proud too to have gained our Investor in People accreditation. We will be building on these approaches by undertaking a new programme of reviews to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of services. We will also be publishing a Counter Fraud Strategy, and drawing up a Departmental Investment Strategy to enhance our management of capital assets. We are confident that continued action in these areas will yield tangible benefits for our customers and the wider public.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Smith'.

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The Agri-Food Industry

Agriculture in Northern Ireland

The agricultural industry (including forestry and fishing) accounts for approximately 2½% of GDP and 5% of employment in Northern Ireland. If the output from wood and food processing industries and input supply to the agricultural industry are included, the combined agri-food and forestry sector accounts for 5½% of GDP and 8% of employment, generating approximately 17% of the manufacturing sector's total external sales. The food processing sector provides a valuable source of employment in rural areas and accounts for some 20,000 jobs throughout the region. However, in common with other developed and developing countries, the contribution of agriculture and its related industries to the regional economy has been declining in relative terms.

Northern Ireland agriculture is largely a grass-based industry. Over 90% of farms own some grazing livestock and this sector accounts for over 65% of gross agricultural output with intensive sectors such as pigs, eggs and poultry accounting for approximately 16%. However, given the dependence of the intensive sectors on imported feedstuffs, their contribution to the industry's added value is more modest, accounting for around 8% of aggregate gross margin.

Northern Ireland agriculture is characterised by owner-occupied family farms with almost 70% of the agricultural area in Less Favoured Areas (LFA) and 70% of farms having all or most of their area in an LFA. Although the average area of farms in the LFA is broadly the same as that in lowland farms, the average business size (in terms of European Size Units) is less than two-thirds of that of lowland farms with 54% of LFA farms not large enough to provide full-time employment for one person.

For the main agricultural commodities, the market is regulated under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and expenditure is incurred primarily by the Intervention Board with DARD acting as a paying agent. Measures operated under the CAP are partly or fully funded from the EU budget.

Forestry in Northern Ireland

Forests are under-represented compared with European averages and cover only 6% of the total land area in Northern Ireland compared with a European Union average of 35%. Forests are mainly State-owned coniferous plantations established since 1945. Current forestry policy in Northern Ireland is the sustainable management of existing woods and forests and the steady expansion of tree cover to increase the many diverse benefits that forests provide. Privately owned woodlands tend to be small, averaging less than 5 ha and are closely associated with farming. The forestry sector has a turnover of about £30m per year based on Northern Ireland grown timber.

While relatively small, the forest area produces social and environmental benefits throughout the region. With 2 million visits to State-owned forests per annum, they are an important means of access to the countryside and make a significant contribution to the ecology and landscape of Northern Ireland, providing food and shelter for a range of species adapted to woodland conditions.

Since the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, sustainable development has been an international commitment. In relation to forestry management this means the sensitive and balanced management of forests to protect their health, vigour, productive and regenerative capacity, and their ability to produce a variety of economic, environmental and social benefits for present and future generations. Sustainability in management and development will therefore be the one strategic goal which underpins all the work of the Forest Service for the foreseeable future.

Sea Fisheries in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Sea Fisheries Industry is based mainly in the three fishing ports of Ardglass, Kilkeel, and Portavogie. At the end of 2000 the fishing fleet comprised some 179 fishing vessels over 10 meters in length and 166 vessels 10 meters and under in length.

The Northern Ireland fishing fleet depends mainly on fishing opportunities in the Irish Sea and North Channel and is the main UK fishery interest in the Irish Sea. The estimated value of fish landed by Northern Ireland vessels in Northern Ireland and ports elsewhere in 2000 was £21.4 million, which is around 4% of the total landings of the UK fleet of £539.5 million.

Around 1,674 people, both full-time and part-time, are employed in the industry: 612 in the catching sector, 890 in processing and marketing, and 172 in other areas including harbours, boat repairs and chandlery supply.

There are around 40 companies in the processing and marketing sector with an estimated gross turnover of £70 million. Great Britain is the main market outlet accounting for about 50% of the production. The home market accounts for about 20% of sales with the remainder sold in other EU countries and further afield.

The Aquaculture sector employs around 155 people, both full-time and part-time. Trout and salmon production from licensed farms is valued at around £3 million per annum and shellfish production is valued at over £1 million per annum.

Rural Development

At the last census, just under 688,000 people (i.e. 43.6% of the population) lived in the rural* areas of Northern Ireland. Rural communities are very important to the overall economy and society of Northern Ireland, and it is important that their development is supported.

The Northern Ireland Executive Committee's Programme for Government recognises the importance of rural society and that the rural economy has been neglected in the past. The Programme for Government contains commitments to **regenerate rural areas**, particularly the most disadvantaged and **sustain rural life and the countryside** for the future.

The rural population is younger than the Northern Ireland average and also there are fewer people in the over 65 age bracket. Because the rural population is younger and growing comparatively more quickly, the demand for jobs will increase more quickly in rural areas.

Overall economic activity rates in rural areas are slightly lower than the Northern Ireland average. The difference is more marked for rural women, due to fewer women in rural areas taking jobs outside the home than in urban areas.

There was a significant decrease (48%) in the numbers of people unemployed in rural areas between 1990 and 1999. Currently, unemployment rates in rural areas are marginally higher than in urban areas, but again the difference is more pronounced for women than for men.

The tourism industry of Northern Ireland's rural areas has not developed as much as in similar areas in the Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Wales because of the past thirty years of unrest in the region. The countryside, combined with a rich historic and cultural heritage and the renowned hospitality of the people, is regarded as a major resource and because of the conflict the tourism potential of rural areas has remained largely untapped.

* For the purposes of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme, rural areas are defined as all parts of Northern Ireland outside the Belfast metropolitan area, the city of Derry/Londonderry and towns of populations greater than 5000.



The Department's Rural Development Programme subscribes to the view that

"people locally are best placed to identify their needs and decide on the best solutions."

Building community capacity through a community development process has proven to be a central pillar in the regeneration of rural areas.



Challenges faced by the Agri-Food Industry

The adjustments required to meet the challenges of further reform of the CAP to accommodate eastward enlargement of the EU and a new WTO agreement will require a response from the agri-food industry. This will require improved competitiveness and even greater attention to environmental, food safety and animal welfare concerns which are now high on the public agenda. The sector will come under increasing pressure to find an appropriate balance between the need to retain and improve its global competitiveness and the wider demand for increased standards of animal welfare and conservation and enhancement of the region's rich natural heritage. In this context, it will need to address the issue of the transparency of links between claims of a "clean green" image and agricultural production practices.

An increased appreciation of the benefits of working together across the community divide within Northern Ireland and on a North - South basis on the island of Ireland has the potential to be translated into positive action. There is now a window of opportunity and the challenge is to exploit this for the benefit of rural communities and the agri-food industry.

The Information Age provides a further opportunity to reduce isolation of rural communities and to assist the rural economy to become more competitive. Information and Communications Technology is particularly suited to developing the skills of people in small and medium-sized businesses and strengthening the economies of the more remote rural areas which have traditionally experienced disadvantage because of their physical location.



Against this background, the main challenges can be summarised as:

- the need for a recovery plan for the industry following foot and mouth disease and for a review of the Department's handling of the outbreak;
- the need to adapt to further changes in the CAP;
- the need to maintain and develop the infrastructure and regulatory framework to support a sustainable sea fishing industry;
- the need to develop the marketing of products by encouraging co-operation and collaboration along the whole food chain and by improving the structure and efficiency of the processing sector;
- the need to maintain a balance between the drive for increasing competitiveness and the demand for conservation and enhancement of the region's natural resources and heritage, including maintaining the family farm structure of the Less Favoured Areas;
- the need to develop the capacity of those in rural areas to take advantage of changing employment needs and opportunities and to provide rural people with the skills, advice and financial assistance they need to plan a full role in the development of their areas;
- the need to increase employment opportunities for those living in rural areas;
- the need to improve economic, environmental and social conditions in some rural communities;
- the need to diversify, develop and strengthen new or alternative sectors of the rural economy and to increase the contribution which tourism makes to the rural economy; and
- the need to respond positively to new structures of Government, developing positive North/South and East/West relationships.

Challenges faced by Rural Society

Agriculture and, to a lesser degree, its ancillary industries have been going through a period of considerable pressure in recent years because of:

- the impact of sterling's appreciation on foreign exchange markets which has led to a significant fall in producer returns;
- a downturn in international agricultural commodity market prices in the late 1990s; and
- the onset of the BSE crisis in March 1996, which still adversely affects producer returns despite the limited lifting of the export ban on United Kingdom beef.

These factors combined to produce a sharp reduction in aggregate agricultural income with total income from farming falling by 73% between 1995 and 1999, taking it to its lowest level in real terms since 1980. This sharp downturn followed a period of strong income growth during the first half of the 1990s, peaking in 1995 when incomes reached their highest level since the period immediately prior to the UK's accession to the EC in 1973. Although income improved marginally, by 3% in real terms in 2000, it remained the second lowest in real terms since 1980.

The reduction in incomes in recent years has affected virtually all of the farming enterprises in Northern Ireland. On average, lowland cattle and sheep farms have returned negative net farm incomes in each of the past five years, and LFA cattle and sheep, general cropping, pigs and poultry and mixed farms incurred losses in 1999/00. In 2000/01, all but cereals farmers are expected to have had an improvement in income. The low level of income has had the knock-on effect of restricting the capacity of the farming sector to invest capital in its businesses directly or through part funding of grant-aided capital investment.

While progress has been made in improving the economic performance of the food-processing sector, the essential issue is whether the industry is able to meet the challenges and exploit the opportunities that lie ahead. There remains an over-reliance on commodity type products. This type of production will continue to be significant but progress along the value-added chain requires to be accelerated. The sector continues to suffer from scale related difficulties which have inhibited cost competitiveness and access to markets. This has also been a barrier to investment in product and processing innovation and in the development of human resources. The sector also faces increasing demands to attain the highest standards of quality and food safety.

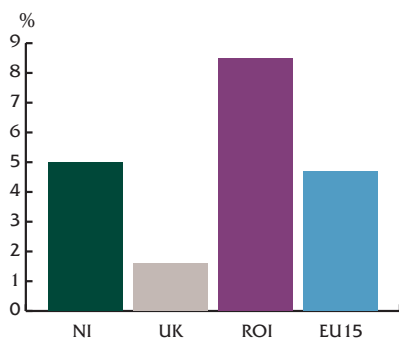
Relatively few people working in the agri-food industry have vocational qualifications appropriate to their responsibilities in employment. The problem is particularly acute at the higher levels associated with management. This deficiency restricts the ability of owners, managers and workers to respond to changing demands. Against this background, disadvantaged rural areas exhibit more extreme problems - economic activity rates in disadvantaged rural areas are lower than the Northern Ireland average and this difference is particularly marked for women in rural areas.

Community divisions have a considerable impact on economic and social activity in rural areas and a high percentage of the rural population lives in single identity communities. Studies on the impact of 30 years of violence have revealed increasing polarisation in the composition of and relationships within rural communities. This has led to a strengthening of the perceptions of isolation and vulnerability and an entrenchment of attitudes, which has promoted segregation in commerce, leisure and friendships. Prior to the emergence of more peaceful conditions, avoidance had become a key characteristic in community relations, attitudes and patterns of behaviour.

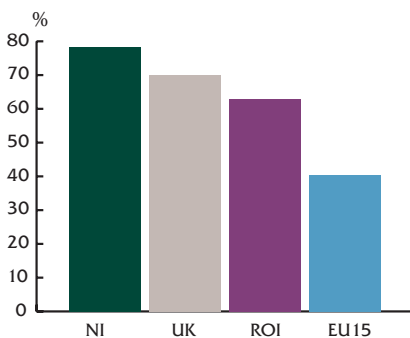
The tourism industry in Northern Ireland's rural areas is underdeveloped as a consequence of the conflict in the region. The industry contributes only around 1 ½ % of GDP in Northern Ireland compared to between 6% and 7% in Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland which are comparable in terms of landscape, climate and culture.

Like Agriculture, the fishing industry is going through a difficult period. The industry has been faced by reductions in fish quotas, closures of traditional fishing grounds because of cod recovery plans and increases in fuel prices. The effect of these has not only been to decrease incomes to fishermen but also had an adverse socio-economic effect on those communities such as Portavogie, Ardglass and Kilkeel which have a dependence on fishing.

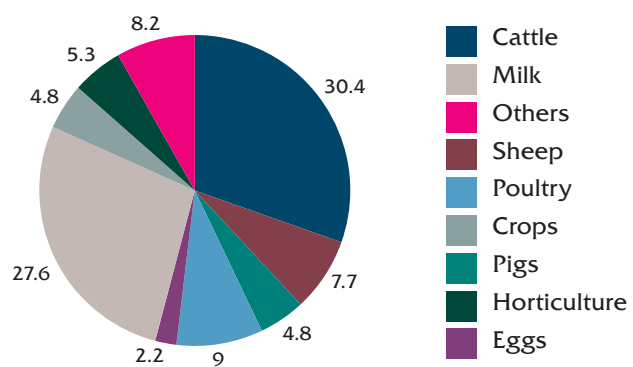
Agriculture as % of total employment in Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland and EU15



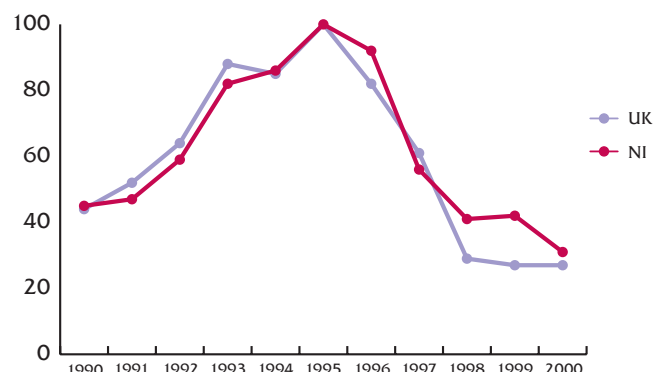
Agriculture as % of total area of Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland and EU15



Gross output of NI Agriculture, 2000



NI and UK total income from farming in real terms (1995 = 100)



The DARD Role

DARD is responsible for the administration of the National economic support for the agriculture industry in Northern Ireland and the implementation of EU policies, including price support and the payment of production subsidies and capital grants to farmers.

In addition DARD is responsible for all other aspects of the development of agriculture including education, research, analytical and diagnostic work and special support measures, as well as rural development, sea fisheries and aquaculture, forestry, land drainage and flood defences. The Department's role includes helping to ensure the economic and social well-being of rural communities.

The Department's remit is essentially an economic one, concerned with the success of all sectors of the NI agri-food industry. However, economic activity must also take full account of the wider interests of the community. There is a need to balance an efficient and sustainable agri-food industry with the conservation and enhancement of the countryside and the marine environment and to stimulate and react to consumer demands for safe and wholesome food produced in an ethical manner, with proper regard for animal welfare.



Aim, Strategic Priorities and Outcomes

The Department's aim is:

To promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside in Northern Ireland by assisting the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors, being both proactive and responsive to the needs of consumers for safe and wholesome food, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

In pursuit of this aim, the Department's Strategic Priorities and Desired Outcomes are:

Priority 1: To improve the economic performance of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors.

Desired Outcomes:

- Adaptation of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors to cope with changing market forces;
- Improvement in efficiency and quality in the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors.

Priority 2: To protect the public, animals and property.

Desired Outcomes:

- The food chain within DARD's remit is as safe as possible;
- The welfare of animals is safeguarded;
- The risk of flooding is reduced.

Priority 3: To conserve and enhance the rural environment.

Desired Outcomes:

- Damage to the rural and marine environments is reduced;
- The amenity value of the rural and marine environments is increased.

Priority 4: To strengthen the economy and social infrastructure of disadvantaged rural areas.

Desired Outcomes:

- The differential in economic performance between disadvantaged rural areas and other rural areas is reduced;
- Social disadvantage is reduced compared with other rural areas.

Internal Management Priority: To make efficient use of all resources available to the Department.

Desired Outcomes:

The Department exhibits business excellence in pursuing its goals.

The DARD Strategy

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is not only concerned with those engaged in the agri-food industry – it has a broader remit to strengthen the economy and social infrastructure of rural areas with a particular emphasis on disadvantage. It also has a responsibility to conserve and enhance the rural environment through the promotion of environmentally responsible management of agri-food, fishing, forestry and drainage activities. The Department has a diverse portfolio and in this paper the agri-food sector includes farming, fishing and food processing; and the rural economy embraces all these and forestry. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is also committed to strengthening its relationship with the Irish authorities through the Foyle and Carlingford Lough and Irish Lights Commission and the North South Ministerial Council. Other areas for co-operation have been identified. The relationship with the United Kingdom government and the new devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales also present opportunities for enhanced co-operation on a range of issues.

It is acknowledged that the delivery of the DARD Aim is not entirely within the Department's gift. Factors such as the response of the agri-food industry, climate, image, remoteness etc. circumscribe the Department's opportunities. Not least among these is the fact that most of the policy framework within which DARD must operate in pursuit of its Aim is set in Brussels or London. These factors must be acknowledged both as parameters in the exercise of the Department's discretion and often as the source of radical change to, or departure from, established corporate goals.

A further factor which affects the Department's business is the extent to which full delivery of its Aims depends on collaboration and co-operation with other Departments and agencies. Examples can be seen in the close work with DHSSPS on food safety and zoonotic diseases; with DETI, IDB and LEDU on support to the agri-food industry; with DOE on pollution control and environmental matters; with the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment and the universities on education and research and development.

The Department's vision for agriculture and rural development is for:

- a more efficient and competitive agri-food sector, better able to meet the needs of all those in the food chain, from producer to consumer;
- the retention of Northern Ireland's image as an extensive, environmentally-friendly farming region;
- a healthy and diverse economic and social environment where the quality of life is enhanced by quality of opportunity;
- an animal population whose health standards are such that NI producers have the maximum opportunities to penetrate overseas markets with their animals and animal products;
- a rural population that possesses the knowledge, skills and experience it requires to cope with changes in the rural economy and rural society and to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise;
- a more diversified and buoyant rural economy with increased opportunities for activities on- and off-farm;
- a rural society which is able to generate new ideas and opportunities;
- rural areas which are able to make a contribution to the economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of Northern Ireland as a whole;
- a sea fishing industry which competes successfully internationally and provides sustainable employment in traditional fisheries dependent areas;
- a Department which co-operates on North/South and East/West axes to ensure that Northern Ireland interest groups are treated as favourably as their counterparts elsewhere; and
- a well-managed network of rivers and inland waterways to provide appropriate drainage and enhance rural areas.



In pursuit of this vision, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive Committee's New Targeting Social Need Policy. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary community sectors, as appropriate.



Delivering the Strategy

Organisational Structure

The Head of the Department is its Permanent Secretary. Reporting to him directly are five senior officials responsible, respectively, for Food, Farming and Environmental Policy, Central Services, Fisheries and Rural Development, the Science Service, the Veterinary Service and the Agri-Food Development Service. Each of these senior officials is responsible for a number of Senior Management Units (SMUs) and together form the Departmental Management Board. The Chief Executives of the Rivers Agency and Forest Service, each of which is a single SMU, also report to the Permanent Secretary. SMUs are the core business units of the Department and under these are brigaded all the Department's activities.

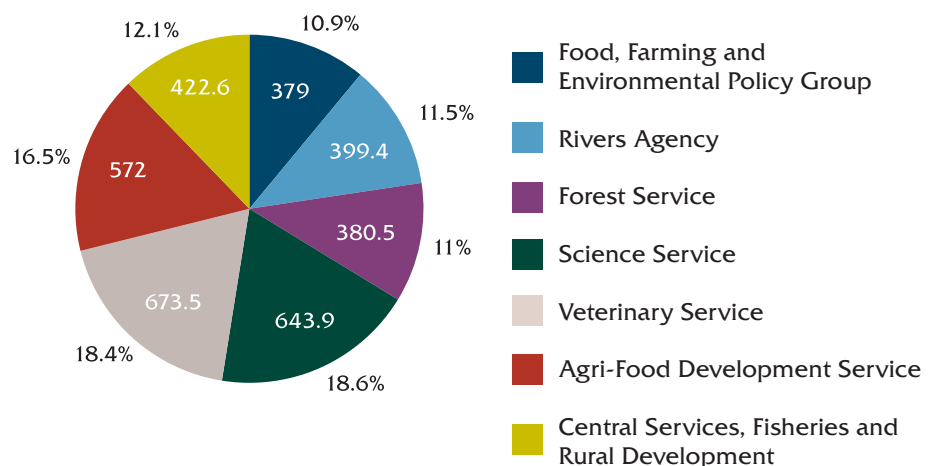
An organisation chart for the Department is shown at the Appendix.

Resources

The Department's resources are managed in 2 blocks – **agriculture and rural development** and **forestry, rivers and fisheries**. Under Resource Accounting conventions, each block gives rise to a resource requirement and each budget is managed to deliver an objective and associated targets (see the Public Service Agreement on page 25).

The Table at the end of the Public Service Agreement details, on a cash basis, the Departmental Expenditure Limit and Annually Managed Expenditure Allocations for 2001/02 to 2003/04 resulting from the 2000 Spending Review.

The estimated Departmental Running Costs for 2001/02, including the Department's education function, are £110 million. Some 84% of this relates to staff salaries and wages. Staff numbers, excluding casual employees, have been reduced from 5,179 in 1980 to 3,962 in 1990 to 3,471 at 1 April 2001. Staff distribution, including staff engaged in agency services, according to main business areas is indicated in the chart below:



Human Resource Strategy

High on the Department's internal management agenda is the continuing development of its corporate Human Resource Strategy. The key to this is the establishment of a Performance Management Strategy which focuses appraisal and staff development on the specific competences needed to deliver the Department's business. Maintenance of the Department's Investors in People accreditation will be a central plank in training and development and staff will be trained in the new equality agenda.

Additionally, the Department will be working to enhance efficiency and value for money and making continuing use of the Business Excellence Model as an assessment tool. Electronic transaction delivery will be increased to meet specific Government targets.

The Department will continue to improve its internal Communications Strategy and will review its external Communications Strategy focusing on strengthening relationships with external stakeholders.

Public Service Agreement

The Northern Ireland Executive Committee has published its Programme for Government setting out the Executive's priorities for tackling problems and improving public services over the next few years. The Programme for Government is supplemented by a Public Service Agreement agreed with each Northern Ireland Department and this links the Department's budget, Actions and Targets to the priorities set out in the Programme for Government.

The DARD Public Service Agreement, included in the Programme for Government, is the high level business plan of the Department for 2001/02 and defines the key targets that the Department has planned to achieve over the period 1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002.

Introduction

The Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PfG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and pursuing the actions and targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive Committee's New Targeting Social Need policy. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

Aim

To promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside in NI by assisting the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors, being both proactive and responsive to the needs of consumers for safe and wholesome food, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

Objectives

1. To promote sustainable development of the agri-food industry and the countryside and stimulate the economic and social revitalisation of disadvantaged rural areas.
2. To reduce the risk to life and property from flooding, promote sustainable development of the sea fishing industry and maintain, protect and expand forests in a sustainable way.

Relevance to PfG Priorities

Growing as a community.
Investing in education and skills.
Securing a competitive economy.
Developing North/South, East/West and International relations.

Growing as a community.
Securing a competitive economy.
Developing North/South, East/West and International relations.

Objective 1

To promote sustainable development of the agri-food industry and the countryside and stimulate the economic and social revitalisation of disadvantaged rural areas

<i>Target</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Budget 2001/02 £m</i>	<i>PfG Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an action plan in respect of recommendations arising from the Vision for the Future of the Agri-Food Industry exercise. • Process all payments within the requisite timescale to eligible farmers (c£152m in CAP and c£22m in National expenditure). • Pay £4m in Agriculture Processing and Marketing Grants to eligible applicants within the requisite timescale. 	Develop and administer policies to maintain or improve the sustainable economic performance of the agri-food industry.	30.2 (+ AME 152.0*)	5.4.1
	Conduct on-farm inspections.		5.4.1
	Approve grant and subsidy applications and process claims in line with scheme regulations.		5.4.1 5.3.1

* AME (Annually Managed Expenditure) figure relates to funding from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

<i>Target</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Budget 2001/02 £m</i>	<i>PfG Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 31/3/02, develop joint strategies for the improvement of animal health on both sides of the border. • By 31/3/02 meet and maintain requirements for EU recognition of Northern Ireland's low incidence of BSE in order to maximise the prospects of seeking EU approval for this status. • Maintain the increased level of Brucellosis testing (c800,000 per annum) in 2001/02 with the objective of reducing the number of outbreaks to the 1990-1995 levels of approximately 10 per annum by April 2004. • Maintain a level of TB testing of approximately 2m animals in 2001/02 with an objective of reducing the incidence of bovine TB so that the number of confirmed reactors is reduced, by 2004, from the current level of at least 8,000 per annum to less than 7,000 per annum. • Put in place, by 31/3/02, a scrapie eradication plan. 	Develop and administer policies to protect public and animal health and welfare.	32.0	3.3
	Control animal movements.		3.3
	Process animal disease compensation payments to eligible applicants.		3.3
	Control and eradicate animal diseases through testing and investigation.		3.3
	Establish baseline information on scrapie.		3.3

Target	Action	Budget 2001/02 £m	PfG Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31/3/02 have 175 participants in the Organic Farming Scheme and 650 participants in the Countryside Management Scheme, compared with 75 and 400 respectively at 31/3/01. Under the Beef Quality Initiative, 1,500 pedigree and commercial producers to attend training courses on breeding and cattle management programmes by 31/3/02 with a view to increasing, by 2006/07, the number of clean cattle achieving E/U/R grades to at least 180,000 per annum. Meet all annual food safety targets agreed annually with the Food Standards Agency (FSA). 	Develop and administer policies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and the rural environment.	7.3 (+ AME 5.1 *)	5.5.1
	Implement a programme of audits, management plan development, inspections and guidance in relation to agri-environment schemes.		5.5.1
	Approve scheme applications and process claims in line with regulations.	2.0	5.5.1
	Implement the Beef Quality Initiative through provision of training courses on breeding and cattle management programmes to pedigree and commercial producers.		5.4.1
	Provide a meat inspection service to meet national and international standards.	0.7 *	3.3
	Implement a programme of inspection, sampling, enforcement, licensing and guidance in relation to food safety.		3.3

* Excludes cost of Vets meat inspection service which is to be carried on FSA budget.

* AME figure relates to CAP funding

Target	Action	Budget 2001/02 £m	PfG Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31/3/02, increase the proportion of the agriculture workforce, 49,000, holding vocational qualifications at NVQ level 3 or higher to 9% compared to the 1997/98 base position of 6.6%. 	<p>Provide a programme of Higher and Further Education courses.</p>	19.6 (of which 5.5 relates to Lifelong Learning)	4.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31/3/02, 2,200 businesses to have "People/ Competence Development Plans" linked to identified business needs, an increase of 25% on the 1999/00 figure of 1,765. 	<p>Deliver a programme of Lifelong Learning through short courses.</p>		4.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31/3/02, 1,600 businesses to have, for the first time, "People/ Competence Development Plans" linked to identified environmental improvements. 	<p>Deliver a programme of Lifelong Learning to enhance competitiveness throughout the agri-food industry and to develop environmentally responsible farming and rural enterprise.</p>		4.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 31/3/02, 5,000 business development training places and 5,000 environmental training places for Less Favoured Area (LFA) farmers, an increase of 3,500 in each case from the position at 31/3/01. 	<p>Provide technical support and guidance.</p>		5.4.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet allocation and expenditure targets to achieve agreed impacts under EU Structural Funds and the Peace Package (details in operational programmes governing the Building Sustainable Prosperity and Peace II Programmes). 	<p>Establish necessary legislation to implement new schemes under the EU Structural Funds and Peace Package and promote the schemes.</p>	9.7	5.4.1 2.4.1

<i>Target</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Budget 2001/02 £m</i>	<i>PfG Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete at least 90% of plant and animal tests within requisite timescales. • Undertake a comprehensive review of the arrangements for the provision of undergraduate and postgraduate education and research and development in agriculture and food science and make recommendations by 31 December 2001. • 39 students to successfully attain undergraduate degrees and 37 students to successfully attain postgraduate degrees. • By 31/12/01, initiate a Natural Resource Rural Tourism Programme targeted at disadvantaged areas. • Launch a Rural Development Programme 2001-2006 strategy document by 30 May 2001. • Initiate and publicise a series of programmes within the Rural Development Strategy by 31 December 2001. • Implement Rural Proofing with effect from 1/4/01. 	<p>Conduct analytical and diagnostic testing.</p> <p>Review the long established link between DARD and the School of Agriculture and Food Science at the Queen's University of Belfast.</p> <p>Provide teaching and support for the School of Agriculture and Food Science, of the Queen's University of Belfast (QUB).</p> <p>Promote comprehensive and integrated action towards the sustainable and equitable development of disadvantaged rural areas.</p> <p>Establish a Ministerial-led Group to proof all government policies for their rural impact.</p>	<p>11.7</p> <p>7.7</p> <p>0.1</p>	<p>3.3 4.3 4.4</p> <p>5.4.1 2.4.1</p> <p>5.4.1</p>

Objective 2

To reduce the risk to life and property from flooding, promote sustainable development of the sea fishing industry and maintain, protect and expand forests in a sustainable way.

<i>Target</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Budget 2001/02 £m</i>	<i>PfG Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct or refurbish, by 31/3/02, 2.25km of urban flood defences. • Replace /refurbish 2.9km of dangerous culverts. • Implement and review, by 31/3/02, stage 2 of the Irish Sea Cod Recovery Plan which aims to increase the cod stock biomass from 6,000 tonnes to 12-14,000 tonnes. • Introduce, by 31/3/02, a fishing vessel decommissioning scheme for the fishing fleet. • Ensure the Loughs Agency meets the objectives set for it by the North/South Ministerial Council. • Maintain NI's fish health status as a disease free area. 	Identify and assess flooding risks.	20.7	5.5.1
	Implement a programme of prioritised works to minimise flooding risks.		5.5.1
	Conserve and protect sea fisheries.	8.1	5.4.1
	Implement the EU Common Fisheries Policy.		5.4.1
	Implement UK and local fisheries policies.		5.4.1
	Assist the development of an efficient commercial fisheries sector.		5.4.1
	Work with the Irish Authorities to support the operation of the Loughs Agency of the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission.		6.2
	Conduct 150-200 fish health inspections and check fish farm compliance with licence conditions.		3.3

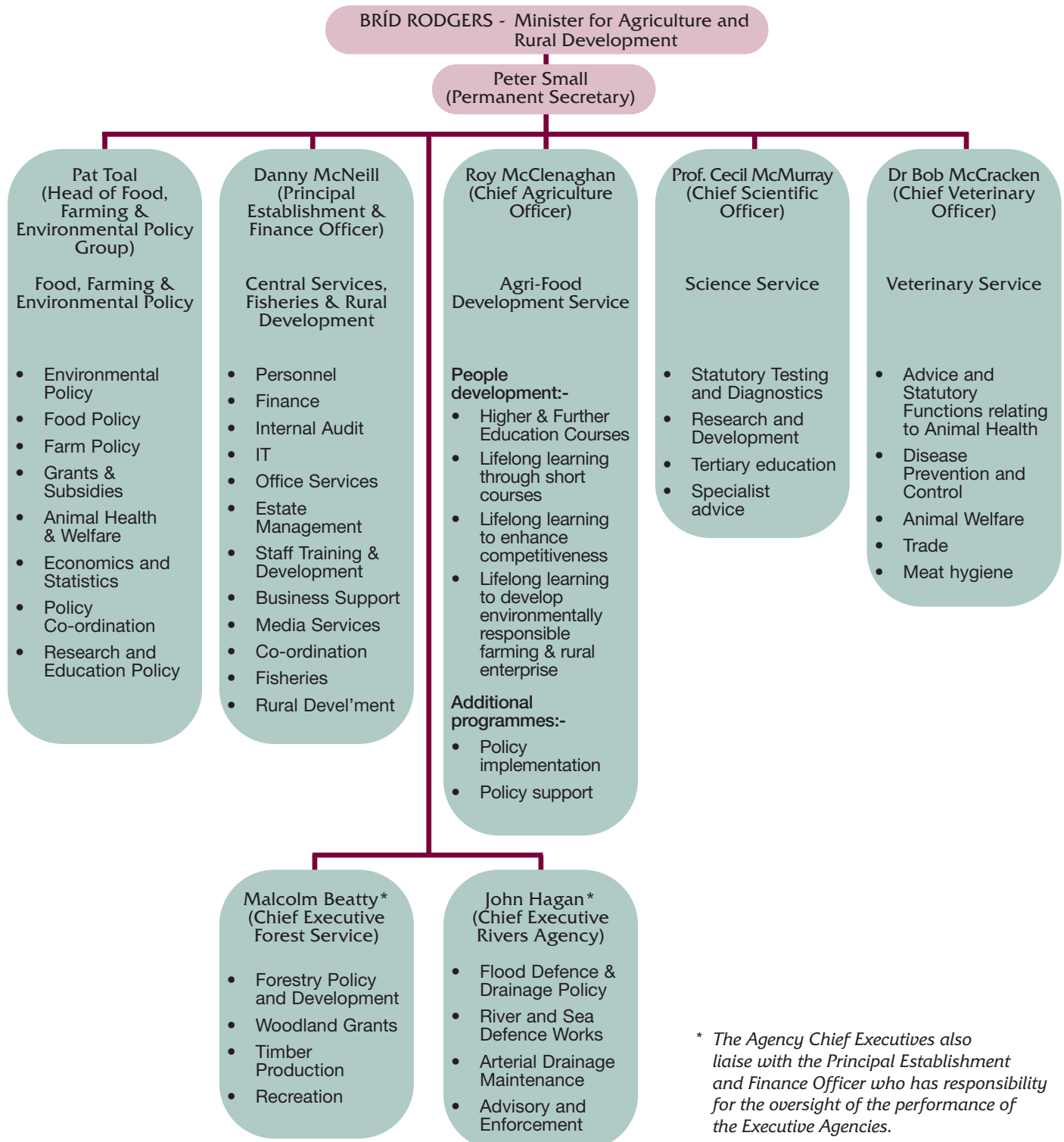
Target	Action	Budget 2001/02 £m	PfG Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet allocation and expenditure targets agreed with the European Commission under the Structural Funds and Peace Package with a view to achieving agreed impacts <i>(full details set out in operational programmes governing the Building Sustainable Prosperity and Peace II Programmes)</i>. • Achieve 700 hectares of new planting in public and private sectors combined. • Offer for sale 360,000m³ of timber, an increase of 6% on the 2000/01 figure of 340,000m³. • Achieve 440,000 paying visitors to forests. 	<p>Establish necessary Structural Funds and Peace Package legislation and schemes and promote the schemes to meet target uptake.</p> <p>Encourage the extension of the area of woodland, including the payment of £1.7m in grants per annum.</p> <p>Continue to manage woodlands sustainably.</p> <p>Promote access to and use of forests for recreational purposes.</p>	<p>6.7 (+ AME 1.1 *)</p>	<p>5.4.1 2.4.1</p> <p>5.5.1</p> <p>5.5.1</p>

* AME figure relates to CAP funding

Public Expenditure Plans 2001/02-2003/04

Spending Area	2001/02			2002/03			2003/04		
	Resource	Capital	Total	Resource	Capital	Total	Resource	Capital	Total
Agri-Food Development Service	22.8	2.4	25.2	23.2	2.4	25.6	23.4	2.4	25.8
Science Service	27.2	3.5	30.7	27.9	4.4	32.3	28.6	2.0	30.6
Veterinary Service	22.2	0.0	22.2	23.0	0.0	23.0	23.8	0.0	23.8
Food & Farm Policy	26.4	4.0	30.4	26.4	4.0	30.4	26.7	4.0	30.7
Rural Development	8.7	0.0	8.7	8.7	0.0	8.7	8.8	0.0	8.8
Rivers Agency	12.0	9.0	21.0	12.3	9.0	21.3	12.7	9.0	21.7
Fisheries	1.4	6.3	7.7	1.4	3.6	5.0	1.5	3.6	5.1
Forest Service	5.5	1.0	6.5	5.6	1.0	6.6	5.8	1.0	6.8
Executive Programme Funds	0.8	1.6	2.4	0.8	1.6	2.4	1.8	3.0	4.8
Domestic Agriculture Policy	23.7	0.5	24.2	24.2	0.5	24.7	24.4	0.5	24.9
North/South Body: Foyle, Carlingford & Irish Lights	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.9	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	1.0
EU Structural Funds (ERDF/Non ERDF)	2.0	0.0	2.0	2.7	0.0	2.7	2.7	0.0	2.7
Central Administration & Misc. Services	14.1	3.4	17.5	14.6	3.4	18.0	15.2	3.4	18.6
Total Departmental DEL	167.4	31.7	199.1	171.7	29.9	201.6	176.4	28.9	205.3
EU Peace Programme	9.6	0.0	9.6	9.4	0.0	9.4	9.4	0.0	9.4
Total Other DEL	9.6	0.0	9.6	9.4	0.0	9.4	9.4	0.0	9.4
Total DEL - DARD	177.0	31.7	208.7	181.1	29.9	211.0	185.8	28.9	214.7

Appendix



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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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