



Business Plan 2013-2014

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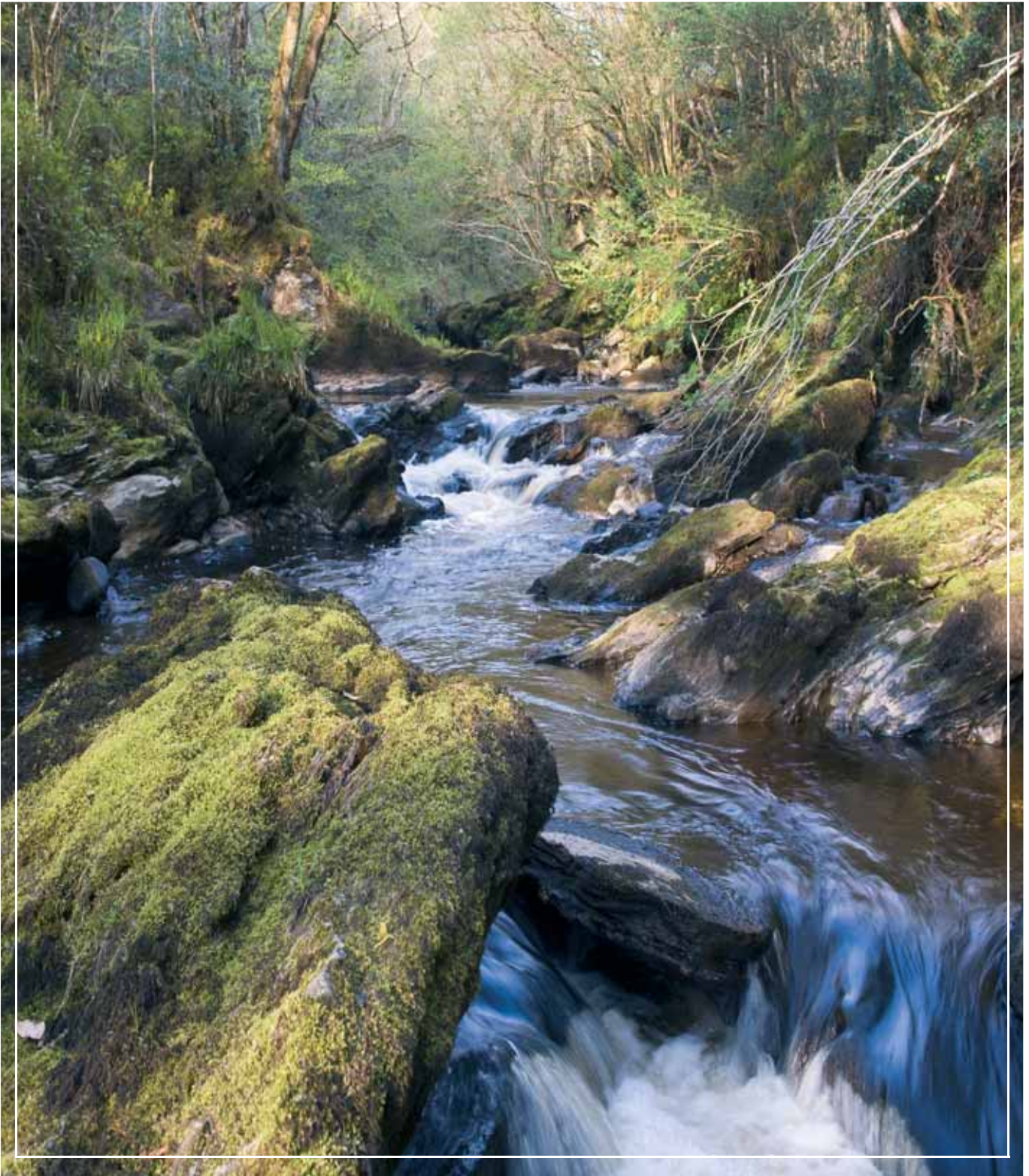


An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**
www.dardni.gov.uk



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Chief Executive's Foreword

I am pleased to present Rivers Agency's Business Plan for 2013 - 2014. The Plan sets out the Agency's priorities for the year ahead, along with the objectives and targets which will help us deliver those priorities.

The next 12 months will be another challenging period for the Agency as we continue to deliver a full maintenance programme, progress a number of significant capital projects, take forward Reservoirs legislation and continue with the implementation of the EU Floods Directive.

We shall continue to work with our partners and stakeholders in dealing with some of the complexities of flood risk management, including the implementation of a number of recommendations arising from the Performance & Efficiency Delivery Unit (PEDU) report on the flooding of June 2012.

We shall continue to make Health & Safety a key priority and support and develop our staff by ensuring that they have the skills, expertise and professionalism required to deliver the Agency's work programmes.



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

Catherine McCallum
Chief Executive
Rivers Agency



Introduction

Rivers Agency is an Executive Agency of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

The Agency, through the Department, is the statutory drainage authority for Northern Ireland. The Department is also the competent authority for the implementation of the EU Floods Directive, which provides the legislative basis for the Agency's flood risk management role.

Under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973, the Department has discretionary powers to:

- Maintain watercourses and sea defences which have been designated by the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland.
- Construct and maintain drainage and sea defence structures.
- Administer advisory and enforcement procedures to protect the drainage function of all watercourses.

The Drainage (NI) Order 1973 relates mainly to land drainage and no longer reflects the full range of activity undertaken by the Agency. Its role has evolved significantly in recent years, with a shift in emphasis from agricultural drainage to flood risk management.

In terms of Department context, the Agency's business supports DARD's Strategic Goal 4 to deliver improved sustainable environmental outcomes.

Vision and Aims

The Agency's vision is ***“to manage flood risk to facilitate the social, economic and environmental development of Northern Ireland”***. The aims supporting the vision are ***“reducing risk to life and damage to property from flooding from rivers and the sea”*** and ***“undertaking watercourse and coastal flood management in a sustainable manner”***.



The Agency continues to provide secretariat and administrative support to the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland, whose role is to determine which watercourses should be designated for drainage works at public expense and to consider the Department's proposals for drainage schemes.

Details of the current membership of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland can be found in **Appendix I**.

Corporate Governance

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Minister for the Agency's operations and performance, and is the Agency Accounting Officer. The Chief Executive is supported and advised by a Management Board, comprising four Executive Directors and two Independent Members.

The Chief Executive is also advised by a Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, on business risks, internal control and governance. The Committee is chaired by a member of the Senior Civil Service (SCS) from the Department for Social Development and has two other members.

Organisation and Resources

The Agency has 170 non industrial and 232 industrial staff, located at the Agency's Headquarters at Hydebank in Belfast and in the Regional Offices in Lisburn and Omagh and Area Offices in Coleraine, Craigavon, Lisburn and Ballinamallard, which services the Fermanagh Sub-Area.

Details of the current Agency's organisational senior structure and Agency offices can be found in **Appendices 2 and 3**.

The Agency has an allocation of £24.555m for 2013/14 to cover running costs, staff salaries and wages and capital works. A breakdown of the opening baseline is attached at **Appendix 4**.



Monitoring and Reporting Performance

The Agency's Management Board is responsible for overseeing the delivery of this Business Plan. The Board receives monthly performance reports which set out progress against all the targets and progress is also reported to the Permanent Secretary through a series of business review meetings throughout the year.

Business Priorities

The Agency's key business priorities for 2013-14 are:

- Implementation of the EU Floods Directive,
- Maintenance of flood defence and drainage infrastructure,
- Flood alleviation,
- Advice to land use planners,
- Reservoir Safety.

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive

The EU Directive on the assessment and management of flood risk (2007/60/EC), more commonly known as the Floods Directive, was transposed into Northern Ireland Regulation in November 2009 and is known as 'The Water Environment (Floods Directive) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2009'.

Within the Directive there are 3 delivery milestones:

- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) – December 2011;
- Flood Hazard and Risk Maps – December 2013; and
- Flood Risk Management Plans – December 2015.

The Northern Ireland Regulations require a co-ordinated approach with other government departments, district councils, NI Water, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the public. The Agency will continue to work closely with these groups and other parties that have an interest in and represent those affected by flooding and with colleagues in the Office of Public Works in the Republic of Ireland to fulfil the obligations of the Directive in respect of trans-boundary catchments.



Maintenance of flood defence and drainage infrastructure

Rivers Agency carries out cyclical inspections to designated watercourses, and culvert inlet grilles. The timing of these inspections is dependent on the likely maintenance requirements, drainage impact and flood risk. For example, high risk inlet grilles are inspected on a weekly basis and rural watercourses are generally on a six yearly programme. Maintenance works identified during these inspections are programmed and carried out by the Agency's industrial staff, using in house plant, contractors or by using site specific repair and maintenance contracts. The maintenance programme is evaluated using environmental and cost-benefit criteria prior to the inclusion of proposals in the annual works programme.

Recent flooding events have provided a real test of the Agency's flood defence assets and highlighted the need to ensure that they continue to perform effectively. The replacement value of the Agency's assets is over £600m and include 90 kilometres of raised flood defences, 26 kilometres of sea defences and 385 kilometres of culverts. The Agency manages its assets through a suite of Asset Management Plans for its

culverts, sea and river defences and an ongoing cycle of inspection, assessment and intervention will ensure the effective functioning of assets.

Flood Alleviation

While investment in flood alleviation has reduced the risk of flooding to people and property, there still remains a significant element of risk. This risk has materialised in recent years, demonstrating the very real cost of flooding to society and highlighting the need for flood alleviation schemes to protect people and property. The Agency delivers an ongoing programme of flood alleviation schemes which seek to maximise the benefit to people and property from available resources. In delivering flood alleviation works, the risk of flooding to new and existing development is also taken into account.

There are a number of capital projects being taken forward by the Agency this year. One of the most significant is the flood alleviation work associated with the Greenway Project in East Belfast, which, when completed, will provide protection to some 1700 properties.



Advice to land use planners

A key aspect of sustainable development is to ensure that the risk of flooding to new and existing development is appropriately managed. The Agency plays a key role in providing information and advice to DOE Planning NI on the drainage and flood protection aspects of development plans and planning applications in line with the Planning Policy Statement 15 - Planning and Flood Risk. The Agency is actively involved in supporting Planning NI with a review of Planning Policy Statement 15 in order to bring it into line with the Floods Directive and to update policies related to all sources of flooding.

Reservoir Safety

The Agency is progressing legislation to introduce regulation of reservoir safety. This need was identified in the policy framework document “Living with Rivers and the Sea” and the Agency has been developing the policy over the past 2 years.

In November 2012, the NI Executive agreed to the final Reservoir Safety policy as a basis for the Reservoirs Bill and to the drafting of the Bill. This legislation will start the Assembly process during 2013.



Business Plan Targets

Under the five key business priorities for 2013/14 the Agency has identified the following targets:

Table 1: Business Priorities and Supporting Business Targets.

Business Priorities	Business Targets
Implementation of the EU Floods Directive.	1.1 Complete 100% of the maps and continue to develop 3 Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) as the year 5 actions in a 6 year plan to implement the EU Floods Directive by 2015.
Maintenance of flood defence and drainage infrastructure.	2.1 Maintain infrastructure to provide enhanced flood protection to 15,500 properties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88% Culverts in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better; • 98% Sea Defences in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better; and • 74% Fluvial Defences in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better. 2.2 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated urban open watercourses in accordance with the Maintenance Manual. 2.3 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated culvert inlet grilles in accordance with the Maintenance Manual. 2.4 Maintain a minimum of 460 designated rural watercourses as part of the Agency's scheduled programme.



Business Priorities	Business Targets
Flood alleviation.	3.1 Construct infrastructure to offer enhanced flood protection to 92 properties. 3.2 Ensure response to 90% of requests to Rivers Agency for assistance within 3 hours during flooding events up to and including a level defined as significant.
Advice to land use planners and the public.	4.1 Respond to 98% of Schedule 6 applications within 3 months of receipt. 4.2 Respond to 80% of planning application consultations within 21 working days of receipt. 4.3 Issue substantive replies to 95% of written enquiries within 15 working days of receipt.
Reservoir Safety.	5.1 Progress the Reservoirs Bill through the NI Assembly to gain Royal Assent in 2014/15.

Additional Key Priorities

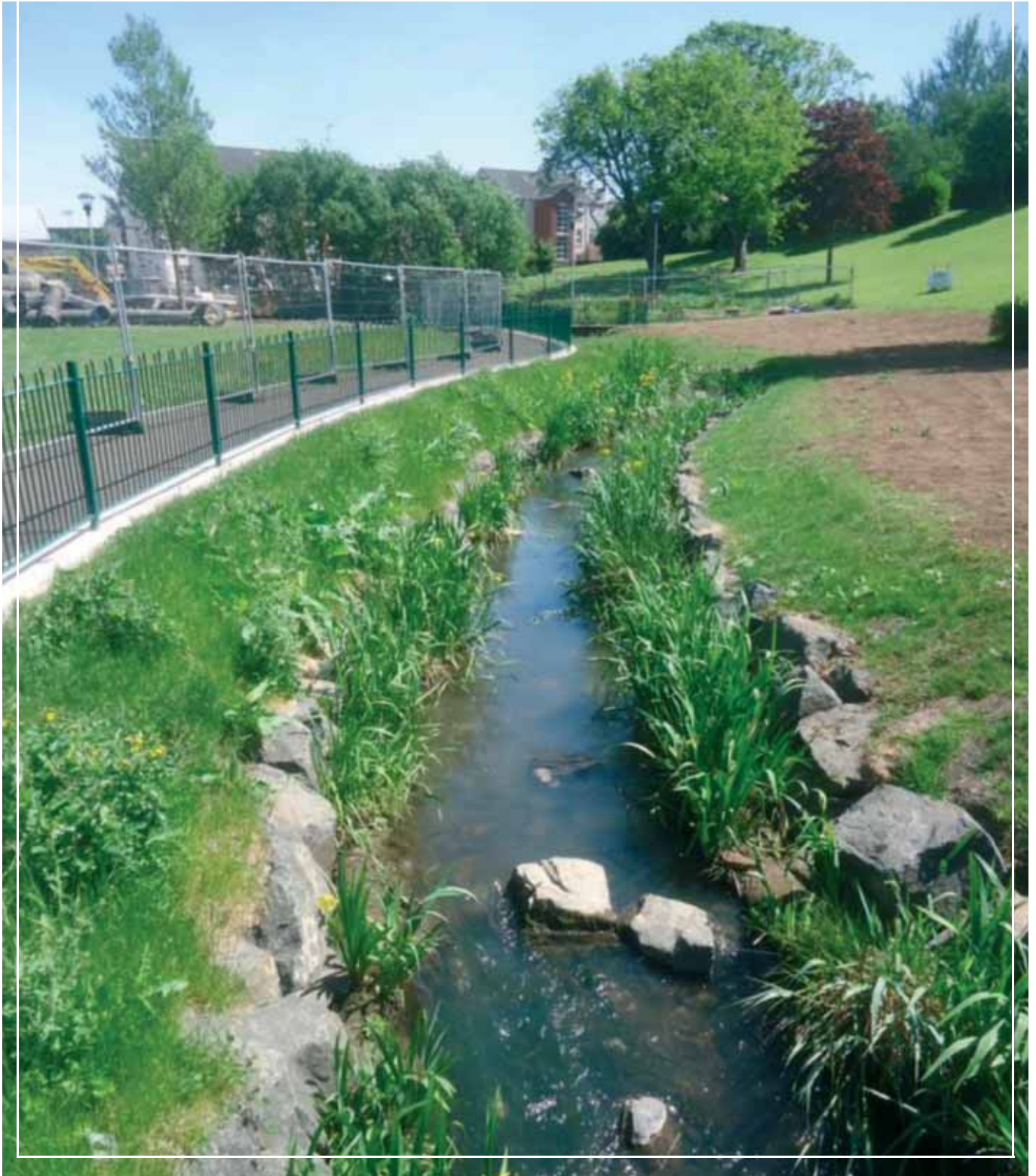
In addition to the commitments set out in the targets, the Agency has a number of additional priorities which will support improvement in performance across the organisation. These are:

- **Managing our financial resources** – we will ensure that our provisional capital and resource outturn will be within acceptable tolerance levels of 0% overspend and 1.5 underspend.



- **Maintain a sound system of internal control** – we will ensure that controls are in place throughout the Agency to provide a satisfactory assurance level of governance and control.
- **Absence Management** – we will manage average annual level of absenteeism due to sickness for all industrial and non-industrial staff to meet targets of 9.1 days and 8.2 days respectively.
- **Learning & Development** – we will develop and support staff to enable them to carry out their duties effectively, deliver the Agency’s objectives and achieve their potential.
- **Communications Strategy** – we will develop a communications strategy in order to improve the effectiveness of our communications, both internal and external.
- **Floods Bill** – We shall begin scoping work for the Floods Bill.
- **Workforce Planning** – We will aim to have 95% of posts filled and endeavour to retain this level of resourcing in order to deliver our business.
- **Health & Safety** – We shall continue to demonstrate our commitment to maintaining high levels of health & safety across the Agency by:
 - Continuing to roll out our health & safety training programme;
 - Carrying out risk assessments as appropriate;
 - Carrying out audits and implementing any associated recommendations; and
 - Aiming to reduce the number of accidents resulting in lost time off work.

Appendices



Appendix I

Agency Offices Membership of the Drainage Council

Name	Interest Represented
Dr. Harold Johnston (Chair)	Drainage Specialist
Councillor William King, MBE (Vice-Chair)	Coleraine Borough Council
Alderman Roy Beggs	Larne Borough Council
Councillor Sean Clarke	Cookstown District Council
Councillor Brian Hanvey	Castlereagh Borough Council
Councillor Olive Mercer	Banbridge District Council
Councillor Connaire McGreevy	Newry and Mourne District Council
Councillor Allan Rainey	Omagh District Council
Councillor Willis Robinson	Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Councillor Bernice Swift	Fermanagh District Council
Councillor Roy Thompson	Antrim Borough Council
Vacant	Conservation
Mr Trevor Hinds	Industry
Mr Brendan Kerr	Fishery
Dr. Bernie Lafferty	Tourism
Mr Andrew Wilson	Agriculture
Ms Mary MacIntyre	DOE Planning NI
Mrs Catherine McCallum	Rivers Agency



Appendix 2

Agency Organisational Senior Structure

Chief Executive
Mrs. Catherine McCallum

Director of Engineering
Mr Pat Aldridge

Programme of Capital Works and Design; Construction Procurement; Hydrometrics; Asset Management; Planning Advisory; and Professional Development.

Director of Operations
Mr Philip Mehaffey

Operational Management of the Eastern Region; Operational Management of the Western Region; Operations Support Unit; Health and Safety; Environment; and Emergency Planning.

Director of Development
Mr David Porter

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive; Mapping and Modeling; Strategic Planning; and Bill Team.

Director of Corporate Services

Mr Shaun Donnelly

Finance; Corporate Support and Training; Corporate Co-ordination; IT; and Communications.



Appendix 3

Agency Offices

Agency Headquarters

Hydebank
 4 Hospital Road
 Ballydollahan
 BELFAST BT8 8JP
 Tel: 028 9025 3355
 Fax: 028 9025 3455

Western Region

Regional Office
 Woodside Avenue
 Gortin Road
 Lisnamallard
 OMAGH BT79 7BS
 Tel: 028 8225 4900
 Fax: 028 8225 4901

Eastern Region

Regional Office
 Ravarnet House
 Altona Road
 Largymore
 LISBURN BT27 5QB
 Tel: 028 9260 6100
 Fax: 028 9260 6111

Coleraine Office

37 Castleroe Road
 Castleroe
 COLERAINE BT51 3RL
 Tel: 028 7034 2357
 Fax: 028 7032 0628

Armagh Office

44 Seagoe Industrial Estate
 Seagoe Lower
 CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE
 Tel: 028 3839 9111
 Fax: 028 3839 9113

Fermanagh Office

Riversdale
 Ballinamallard
 Tullylone
 ENNISKILLEN BT94 2NA
 Tel: 028 6638 8529
 Fax: 028 6638 8972

Plant Unit

44 Seagoe Industrial Estate
 Seagoe Lower
 CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE
 Tel: 028 3839 9100
 Fax: 028 3839 9112

Appendix 4

Agency Opening Baseline 2013/14

Agency Opening Baseline 2013/14

Description	Opening Baseline £'000	
	2012/13	2013/14
Salaries	6,294	6,485
Wages	5,743	5,934
GAE	895	895
Current	2,785	2,885
Current receipts	(210)	(210)
Total Resource	15,507	15,989
Flood Risk Management	420	1,320
Recurrent capital PV&M	150	396
Omagh Building	0	700
Drainage infrastructure	1,220	1,500
Capitalisation of running costs	930	850
Flood Alleviation	1,259	3,800
Total Capital	3,979	8,566
Total Allocation	*19,486	24,555

* Note – The closing allocation in 2012/13 was increased to £22,075K as a result of in-year bidding.

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