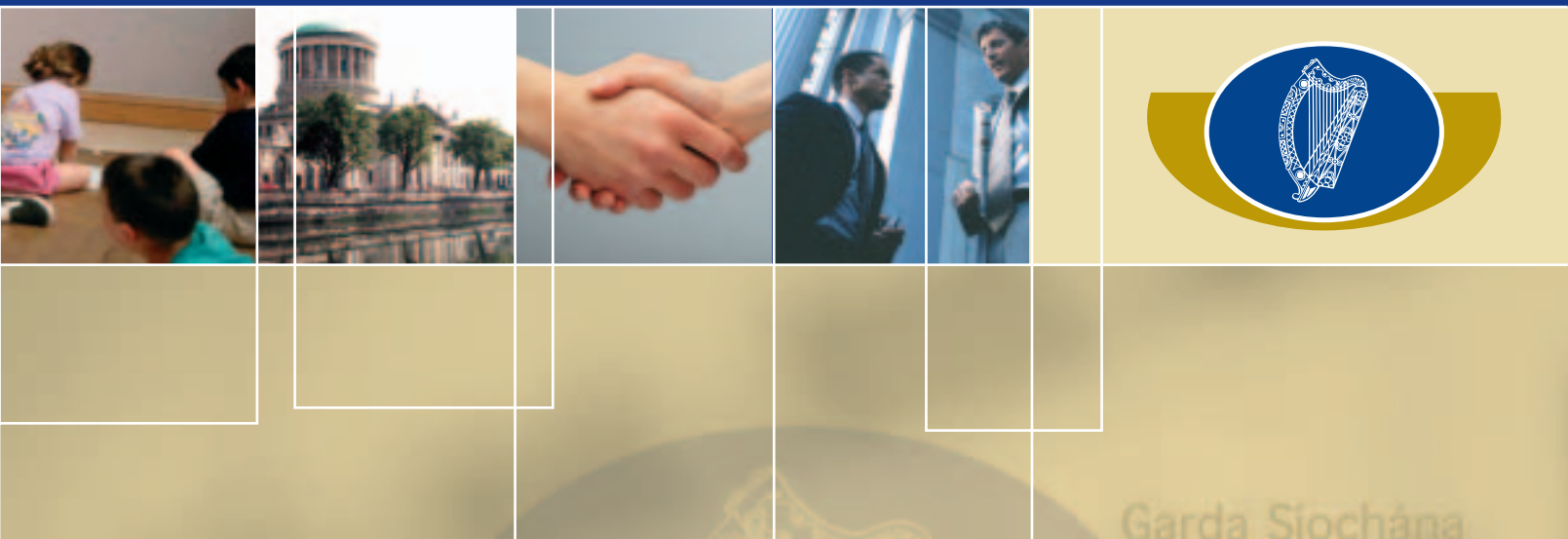


Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Strategy Statement 2005-2007



Courts

Legal Aid

Prisons and Probation and Welfare

Working for a Safer Fairer Ireland

Asylum Immigration and Citizenship

Garda Síochána

Security
Tackling Crime

Human Rights

Northern Ireland

European Union and International

Childcare

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OVERVIEW BY THE MINISTER



*Michael McDowell T.D.
Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform*

This Strategy Statement sets out a significant agenda of legal, administrative and policy reform for my Department over the next three years. This programme of reform is largely based on the commitments and targets set in the Agreed Programme for Government - a substantial portion of Agreed Programme commitments fall within my area of responsibility. A number of these commitments have already been implemented and we are making good progress on delivering many others.

As Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, I have embarked on an unprecedented programme of law reform since taking office and am responsible for introducing nearly one-third of the Government's legislative programme since June 2002. I have published 27 Bills and overseen the enactment of 29 Bills since I came to office. This legislation has dealt with such diverse policy areas as: law and order; personal injury claims; commissions of investigation; asylum and immigration; and equality.

Tackling crime, in all its forms, continues to be a priority for me. I will continue to take whatever actions are necessary to reduce the level of crime in our society and make our communities and streets safer places for us to live and go about our business.

I have tackled the upward trend in violent street crime head-on through the enactment of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2003, the Intoxicating Liquor Act 2003, and by increasing Garda resources. As a result of these and other decisive actions taken over the last two years the upward trend in crime has been reversed with significant decreases being recorded in both headline and non-headline crime. For example, the number of serious assaults and public order offences has decreased



*Frank Fahey T.D.
Minister of State*



*Brian Lenihan T.D.
Minister of State*

significantly. The Criminal Justice Bill 2004, currently before the Dáil, is a major piece of legislation which I expect to see enacted this year. The Bill contains a comprehensive package of anti-crime measures which will enhance the powers of the Gardaí in the investigation and prosecution of offences and generally provide for improvements to the operation of the criminal justice system.

In the case of the Garda Síochána, I have increased over the last two and a half years its human and financial resources to unprecedented levels. Its operational budget is now over €1.1 billion euro and membership of the force, at over 12,200, is at its highest level in the history of the State. The Government has also agreed to my proposals for the expansion of the force to 14,000 and we are recruiting nearly 1,100 new officers in each of the next three years to achieve this. I have also established a Traffic Corps and obtained Government approval for an additional Assistant Commissioner post to head the new Corps.

Significant organisational and structural reform is also contained in the Garda Síochána Act, 2005. The Act, which was signed into law by the President on 10 July, 2005, contains the most comprehensive legislative provisions on policing brought forward since the foundation of the State. The new Act provides for, among other things, the reform of Garda management structures and accountability arrangements; the establishment of a new, independent Garda Ombudsman Commission to investigate complaints from the public and; an independent Garda Síochána Inspectorate to examine operational practises and procedures within the Force. I have established an Implementation Advisory Group, under the Chairmanship of Senator Maurice Hayes, to ensure the timely implementation of the provisions of the Act. Already a

number of provisions of the Act have been commenced and further commencement orders bringing other sections of the Act into operation will be made as soon as possible.

In relation to the Courts, funding for 2005 has increased by 14% to almost €97 million and the State now has more sitting Judges than any other time in its history. I have also secured approval for a new Criminal Courts Complex, construction of which is to begin this year. This will be a state of the art criminal justice facility suited to the administration of criminal justice in twenty first century Ireland.

Funding for the Irish Prison Service for 2005 has also increased, by 18% to almost €369 million. Since taking up office I have also initiated a radical reform of the Irish Prison Service. I am replacing Mountjoy Prison with a new state of the art prison complex in North County Dublin and additional new prison places will be provided. I am also replacing Cork Prison with a new Southern Prison to be located at Spike Island. I will also be implementing shortly a Drugs Free policy for Irish Prisons and I am also addressing the chronic problem of excessive prison overtime.

Continued reform of asylum and immigration systems is another priority for me. Since I took office, substantial progress has been made in modernising the law, procedures and the governance of asylum and immigration matters in Ireland. The number of applications for asylum in Ireland decreased by 59% between 2002 and 2004 – from 11,634 applications in 2002 to 4,766 applications in 2004 and effective systems have been introduced to process applications speedily. The Government has also approved my proposals for establishment of an Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS). This service will provide a 'one stop shop', or single point of contact for applications for entry to the State, linking the current services provided by my Department and the work permits section of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the visa section of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Securing a lasting settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict and achieving a secure and peaceful society is of paramount importance to me. I will continue to play my role in Inter-Governmental and cross-party talks, and work with others towards resolving outstanding differences and reaching a lasting settlement, based on a total cessation of violence and the ending of paramilitary activity. I regard the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC), which was established following legislation which I brought forward in 2003, as playing a crucial role in the efforts to bring about

political progress and stability in the North. Co-operation between police forces North and South in the fight against crime on an all Ireland basis is also at an all time high, and has been enhanced further following the personnel exchanges between the two police forces implemented in 2005.

The programme of reform in relation to equality and disability areas is also progressing well. New equality and maternity protection legislation has been enacted, and Adoptive Leave and Parental Leave legislation will be strengthened in 2005. The Disability Act, 2005 is a key element of the Government's National Disability Strategy launched last year, and contains a range of positive action measures to support participation in society by people with disabilities and will complement the existing equality infrastructure. The National Action Plan Against Racism 2004-2008 was also launched by me in January 2005.

As with all public service organisations, it is vitally important that the financial resources allocated to my Department are properly managed and controlled. Across all its votes, my Department is responsible for an annual budget of almost €2 billion in 2005. In addition, my Department has received an allocation of almost €1.1 billion under the Capital Investment Framework (CIF) 2005 to 2009. Part of this allocation is to be sourced by way of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and the monies received will fund major capital investment projects to be completed over the next few years, such as the 'New Mountjoy', and Criminal Courts Complex. As Minister I will oversee delivery and spending on these major capital projects and other major programmes and ensure that all public monies are properly spent and accounted for and that value for money is achieved.

Finally, I would like to say that both I and my Department look forward to the challenge of implementing the ambitious agenda set out in this Strategy Statement. I would like to thank all who are working with me for the achievements to date and for their continued commitment to securing the delivery of ambitious, challenging but achievable goals.

Michael McDowell, T.D.

Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

INTRODUCTION BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL



Seán Aylward
Secretary-General

I am delighted to submit the Department's new Strategy Statement 2005-2007 to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr Michael McDowell, TD. This Statement overtakes our previous statement and has been prepared in compliance with section 4 of the Public Service Management Act and revised guidelines for the preparation of Strategy Statements.

This document represents much more than a simple updating of what went before. The layout and format of this Statement is different this time around, and, I hope, somewhat improved. In particular and more importantly, we have linked associated areas of the Department's work under a reduced number of High Level Goals (7), and we have set a single objective for each of the major policy areas. For instance our policing, road traffic, crime laws and youth justice objectives are all covered under the 'Tackling Crime' High Level Goal (1). We have then set out the specific commitments, actions and targets by which our organisation can be measured.

I believe these changes will provide our clients and interested readers with a clearer and more integrated picture of the various roles and responsibilities of the Department. This is not just a matter of presentation because I should add that we are currently reviewing our organisation structure to enhance internal cohesion in our approach to our activities and to better meeting the needs of the public we have the honour to serve.

I am anxious to ensure that the focus of our planning is kept firmly on delivery - delivering the Government's commitments across the range of policy areas for which we have responsibility. The revised format of the Statement will

help us achieve that. Delivery will easily be gauged - a clear high level performance indicator has been set for each major objective.

Driving the Department's strategies, policies and operations is, of course, the 2002 Agreed Programme for Government (APG) - the Department's 'share' of the Programme is very substantial, with almost 70 commitments to be implemented across the full range of the Department's activities. We have already implemented a number of APG commitments and we will continue to work towards the implementation of remaining commitments over the period of this Strategy Statement. The Department's progress on these commitments is reported in the Government's Agreed Programme Annual Progress Report.

Delivering on the Government's Programme will see us focusing on crime policy - including meeting the commitments under the National Drugs Strategy, further developing our response to public order issues and improving the state's criminal justice procedures. The Criminal Justice Bill will tackle a range of issues including updating the law in relation to drugs and firearms offences, ensuring that Garda search and detention provisions are effective and fair and addressing public order issues and anti-social behaviour problems.

A critical task for the Department, and indeed the Garda Síochána itself, will be accelerating recruitment to bring Garda strength up to the 14,000 mark. That task is well advanced.

We are giving major priority also to streamlining and improving our criminal justice structures to meet modern conditions. Ensuring value for money will also be a high priority. The Garda Síochána Act 2005 is the platform for the most radical and systematic reform of the Garda Síochána in its entire proud history. In the immediate period ahead, implementing the provisions of this Act will present a major challenge for us. I believe, however, that, together with our colleagues in the Garda Síochána, we will successfully meet that challenge.

Another special project for the Department will be on delivering a more modern, joined-up approach across government bodies in the area of youth justice - we have set up a dedicated unit in the Department to bring forward recommendations to the Minister and Government within the current year.

The Government Programme has also set the tone for our policies and programmes across the full range of our functions in other areas, including Asylum and Immigration, Equality, Disability and Childcare.

The Government has agreed to a significant restructuring and amalgamation of front-line immigration services with the establishment in 2005 of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), details of which are set out under High Level Goal 3. Again the emphasis is on drawing together various strands of government activities and operations and improving delivery of services.

The Department's legislative programme over the next 3 years is extensive and driven by the Government's legislative priorities and a heavy volume of EU, Council of Europe and UN instruments. The Department's programme accounts for almost one third of the Government's overall law reform programme. Included are reforms in the area of criminal law, asylum and immigration laws, equal status and disability reforms and comprehensive regulatory reform in areas such as Liquor Licensing and conveyancing. It is worth recording that the influence and extent of our international commitments continues to broaden and deepen in almost all of our policy and operational areas.

I have highlighted our commitment to improve inter-Departmental working on policies of major national importance. This progressive approach - whether it be in the area of anti-drugs, youth offending or immigration initiatives - will characterise our work over the next 3 years.

Joined-up, collaborative thinking and working within the Justice and Equality sector, or Justice 'family' of organisations is essential to ensure overall Government policy objectives are achieved. Our sector comprises 21 separate organisations each with their own regulatory, operational or administrative functions, and over 20,000 staff. It is a matter for the Department to ensure that these organisations are properly supported and resourced to deliver a high standard of services and that appropriate corporate governance arrangements apply in relation to the management of these organisations. This will be matched by greater cohesion internally as a result of our review of the Department's structure and its relationships with agencies.

Delivering the Department's Capital Investment Programme is another significant issue for us over the next few years. Under the Capital Investment Framework (CIF) 2005 to 2009 the Department has received an allocation of €1.095 billion for capital investment projects. This money will fund

significant projects such as the 'New Mountjoy', the Criminal Courts Complex and the new Munster Regional Prison. A National Projects Board, which we have recently established, chaired by the Minister, will oversee delivery on time and within budget of these projects and other major capital projects.

Effective implementation of the Government's decentralisation programme is a complex task where we have made some notable early progress. Nine existing organisations in the Justice family are affected by the programme - some being wholly decentralised - and over 1,000 jobs are to be relocated to various towns around the country. Plans are well advanced, for example, on the Irish Prison Service move to Longford, with construction of a new building expected to be completed by the end of 2006. In addition to the decentralised locations in the Government Programme, the Department has established the new Private Security Authority in Tipperary town and has secured Government approval to site the new National Property Services Regulatory Authority from day one in Navan.

The subject of the accommodation of Department Head Office staff also needs to be addressed in the short term. Staff are currently dispersed among many locations around Dublin city and this is far from ideal in running the Department's business. Work is well advanced in bringing the dispersed offices back together again in a city centre location.

We have made real progress in modernising our organisation in recent years with the magnificent support and co-operation of staff. There have been many tangible improvements in the way we conduct our business. We will be maintaining this momentum. Better financial management and more investment in our human resource and ICT systems will all lead to improved service to our unique set of stakeholders and the wider general public. The end result will be an enhanced capacity to deliver on the policy commitments set out in this Strategy Statement.

We have a very busy work schedule ahead of us. I look forward with confidence, Minister, to reporting progress to you on this new Strategy Statement year on year.

Seán Aylward
Secretary-General



Part 1

Introducing our Strategy Statement

Courts

Legal Aid

Prisons and Probation and Welfare

Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship

Garda Síochána
Security
Tackling Crime

Human Rights

Northern Ireland

European Union and International

Childcare

Introduction

1. This, our fifth Strategy Statement, sets out the main objectives of the Department and the commitments and actions to be implemented by us to achieve these objectives over the next three years. The primary focus of this Statement is on delivering the **2002 Agreed Programme for Government** commitments and other key Government and Ministerial policy commitments. Almost 70 separate commitments under 12 different policy headings in the Agreed Programme fall to be implemented by this Department, for the most part in a lead role. Commitments fully implemented prior to 2005 are excluded from the scope of the Statement.

The Department's legislative programme, which comprises a very large proportion, usually of the order of one quarter to one third of the overall Government programme, gives effect to a number of Agreed Programme commitments along with other Government policy commitments. Law reform measures aimed at tackling crime are set out in Part 2 under HLG 1 – Tackling Crime. Law reform measures in other specific policy areas such as Asylum/Immigration or Equality/Disability are set out under the relevant High Level Goal. High Level Goal 6 addresses other major civil law reform commitments.

The Department also has a role to play in delivering on a range of commitments under the current 'Sustaining Progress' Social Partnership Agreement. A central theme of the Agreement is the building of a fair and inclusive society and to ensure that people can live life with dignity and have access to quality public services. A broad range of strategies are included in our Strategy Statement which are aimed at promoting a fair and inclusive society, and commitments and actions addressing social inclusion issues and implementing the National Anti-Poverty Strategy are set out under relevant High Level Goals.

The Department is of course involved in other policy and operational activities which are not necessarily comprehended by the Agreed Programme or Sustaining Progress commitments, and these are also dealt with in the Statement.

The Strategy Statement provides an overall planning 'point of reference' for the agencies associated with the Department in the **Justice and Equality Sector**. It is intended that the Statement will help those organisations to develop their own strategic or corporate plans and ensure that there is a coherent approach to delivering Government commitments and programmes.

Statement Structure

2. **Part 1** introduces the strategy statement and describes our mandate and how the Department is organised and structured to deliver on this mandate. It also provides an overview of the way the Department works with agencies and other Departments to meet cross cutting commitments.

Part 2 sets out six High Level Goals (HLGs) covering policy and operations. We assess the policy environment under each HLG and then set out an overall policy objective supported by more specific commitments, actions and performance targets in each of the areas.

Part 3 (HLG 7) describes how the Department is organised and resourced to deliver on our business and service commitments, and covers our modernisation programme under Sustaining Progress.

Mission Statement

3. To maintain and enhance community security and promote a fair society through the development of a range of policies and high quality services which underpin:

- the protection and assertion of human rights and fundamental freedoms consistent with the common good;
- the security of the State;
- an effective and balanced approach to tackling crime;
- progress towards the elimination of discrimination, the promotion of equal opportunities and tolerance.

Values

4. In delivering on our mission statement, we are guided by the following core values: We seek to:

- ensure access to justice;
- apply fair and equal standards of treatment to all groups in society;
- demonstrate accountability for our actions;
- show courtesy, integrity and openness in our dealings;
- provide excellent services to the public, and;
- value the individual

Mandate

5. Our mandate - the business of the Department - is wide-ranging and complex and is determined by high level

Programmes and Strategies including the Agreed Programme for Government, the National Development Plan (NDP), Sustaining Progress, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy and the National Drugs Strategy.

Our main areas of responsibility include:

- Implementing Government policy on crime and reform of the law in this area;
- Providing policy advice in relation to the criminal justice system and supporting the operation of this system;
- Further developing national immigration policy and implementing the Government's asylum strategy;
- Developing and implementing policies to promote a fair, tolerant and caring society;
- Playing our part in building a secure and peaceful society;
- Continued reform of areas of the civil law.

Our High Level Goals (HLGs)

6. To reflect this policy and operational mandate, we have six HLGs. HLG 7 sets out our aims and commitments in relation to resource management and service delivery:

- We will continue to develop effective anti-crime policies, implement effective and balanced laws – in line with our human rights obligations – and work to ensure visible policing of our communities and enforcement of the law.
- We will further advance our structural and service reforms of An Garda Síochána, Courts, Prisons and Probation & Welfare Service to enable those agencies implement their mandates in the most effective and efficient way possible.
- We will continue to implement Government commitments in relation to asylum, immigration and citizenship matters in addition to updating, as necessary, the legislative base in this area, enhancing a 'whole of Government' approach.
- We will promote the development of a caring, tolerant and fair society through the implementation of appropriate policies.
- We will contribute to securing a lasting settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict and achieving a secure and peaceful society.
- We will continue to reform our civil laws and provide for improved regulatory systems where required.
- We will support the delivery of the Department's business objectives through the effective use of our

resources and the implementation of modernisation commitments under the "Sustaining Progress" Agreement.

Our Objectives, Commitments, and Targets

7. The commitments to be delivered by us in 2005-2007 in relation to each of our HLGs are set out in tables, linked to an overall objective. [APG commitments are identified for reference purposes]. The Public Order Objective, for example, which is part of the Crime HLG 1, is supported by the commitments in the Table on page 19. We then set out for each commitment, the necessary actions to be taken, the targets to be met and any organisations involved with us in delivering on that commitment.

Environmental Analysis

8. The strategies contained in this Statement have been informed by an assessment of our policy and operating environment, including the major opportunities and threats around the key policies and programmes to be implemented, under each of our HLGs. Emerging crime issues, socio-economic influences on immigration policy and on equality and childcare policies, political and other relevant developments around such issues as the Peace Process, important developments at European Union (EU) and International level, and the continued demand for improved services in all areas are considered.

A number of the Department's agencies play a major part in delivering Government policy and strategy outcomes in the crime, equality and immigration areas. The task for the Department is to continue to support and develop the **Justice and Equality 'family'** to adapt and deliver an effective and responsive system. The way in which services are structured and delivered in the Justice and Equality area has been transformed in recent years, by devolving management responsibility and focusing on service delivery (see overall sector organisation – appendix 1). The sector now comprises some 21 organisations, each with a well defined administrative, regulatory or operational remit.

Sound **corporate governance** practices and performance and accountability requirements within the sector is a priority for the Department. We will continuously improve our capability to develop policy in consultation with the sector and to monitor performance and outcomes, particularly in the context of delivering on *Agreed Programme for Government and Sustaining Progress* commitments. This collaborative approach is supported

by formal structures such as the Justice and Equality sector Steering Group, which comprises the Heads of 15 agencies and senior officials of the Department, as well as informal networks and ongoing consultation.

Significant **cross-cutting issues** arise in virtually every one of our policy and operational areas. The organisations and agencies involved with us in delivering on commitments are identified in the tables under each HLG. We will pay particular attention to the need for cohesive actions across departments and agencies to ensure a 'cross cutting' approach is taken to progressing actions and meeting targets set.

The Department's strategies and priorities are also informed by the broader **international environment** in which we operate. The 'Hague Programme - Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union' - adopted by the European Council at its meeting in November 2004, is intended to provide the framework for the ongoing development of the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice over the next five years. Cooperation at international level is also pursued through a variety of other international fora including, in particular, the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe, the Hague Conference on International Private Law, and the International Labour Organisation. An analysis of the main influences and challenges facing us in relation to this area is provided under relevant HLGs.

The public service **modernisation and reform** programme has shaped our commitments and actions under HLG 7. Our programme of modernisation is driven by civil service wide improvements in financial management systems, and approaches to human resource management, developments in the IT area, and the requirement for regulatory reform.

Better Regulation is a key element of the modernisation agenda and involves an ongoing commitment to improving access to services – mostly the concern of the many front-line agencies under the aegis of the Department – and streamlining and modernising legislative and regulatory frameworks. Significant progress has been achieved by us in this area so far, and further progress will be made over the period of this Statement.

As with all public service organisations, implementation of policies and programmes must take account of the position of the public finances. Fiscal considerations require these policies and programmes to be implemented as effectively and efficiently as possible, so as to ensure value for money is achieved.

OUR ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Department Structure and Staffing (See Appendices 1 & 2)

9. There are just over 800 staff working in the Head Office areas of the Department. The Department is structured around the following ten areas comprising one or more Divisions, each headed by a member of the Management Advisory Committee:

- Crime, Security and Northern Ireland, Mutual Assistance and Extradition
- An Garda Síochána
- Prisons and Probation and Welfare Policy
- Criminal Law Reform and Human Rights
- Civil Law Reform, Equality, Disability, Equal Status and Courts Policy
- Childcare and Youth Justice
- International Policy
- Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship
- Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)
- Business Support, including HR and Finance.

Financial Allocation

10. Decisions as to how our financial resources are allocated and our services are provided is a critical part of strategic planning in the Department. Resources are allocated in accordance with Government priorities and operational needs. Across all its votes the Department is responsible for an annual budget of €1.965 billion in 2005 as compared to €1.863 billion in 2004. The Justice vote allocation in 2005 for the Head Office areas is €358 million. The net financial allocation for each of the Votes in the Justice Group for 2005 is as follows:

Justice, Equality & Law Reform - €358m

Garda - €1,110m

Prisons - €389m

Courts - €69m

Registries - €38m

Under the Capital Investment Framework (CIF) 2005 to 2009 the Department has received an allocation of €1.095 billion as its capital envelope. This is an unprecedented level of guaranteed capital funding for the Sector. Of this

amount, €715 million is by way of direct Exchequer funding, while the balance, €380 million is to be sourced by way of Public Private Partnerships (PPP). This PPP allocation is to fund significant projects such as the “New Mountjoy”, the Criminal Courts Complex and the new Munster Regional Prison. A National Projects Board, chaired by the Minister, will oversee delivery on time and within budget of these projects and other major capital projects.

Decentralisation

11. The Government's Decentralisation Programme announced by the Minister for Finance in December 2003 involves the relocation of 10,300 Civil and Public Service jobs to 53 centres in 25 counties. While the Headquarters of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will remain in Dublin, just over 1000 jobs in the Department and its agencies will be relocated as follows:

Garda HQ - Thurles - 203 (includes 89 members of An Garda Síochána)

Asylum Services - Tipperary Town - 186

Garda Síochána Complaints Board - Roscrea - 23

Equality Authority - Roscrea - 54

Land Registry - Roscommon - 230

Equality Tribunal – Portllington - 29^{1/2}

Data Protection Commissioners Office - Portllington - 22

Probation and Welfare Service - Navan - 20

Irish Prison Service - Longford - 162

Implementation Plans have been prepared for each area and progress has been made on the identification of suitable sites in most of the locations. Planning for the internal and external transfer of staff, the training of staff, and the management of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) needs of the offices to be decentralised is well underway.

Plans are well advanced on the Irish Prison Service move to Longford. A site for the new Headquarters has been identified, planning permission obtained, and the legal formalities are nearing completion. It is anticipated that construction of the new building will be completed by the end of 2006.

In addition to the decentralised locations in the Government Programme, the Department has established the new Private Security Authority in Tipperary town, following the enactment last year of the Private Security Services Bill.

CONSULTATION, DELIVERY AND REPORTING ON OUR STRATEGY STATEMENT

Consultation

12. This Statement was developed in consultation with the Minister, the Management Advisory Committee – the Department's high-level management team – and staff. We also consulted with organisations in the Justice and Equality sector, other Government Departments, our Partnership Committee and Customer Liaison Panel.

Delivery and Reporting

13. Delivery of our commitments will be tracked over the period of the Statement by monitoring the progress achieved on our organisations' 30 annual divisional business plans. We will publish timely annual reports which will record the progress and delivery of these commitments.



Part 2

High Level Goals 1 - 6

Courts

Legal Aid

Prisons and Probation and Welfare

Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship

Garda Síochána
Security
Tackling Crime

Human Rights

Northern Ireland

European Union and International

Childcare

HLG 1 - Tackling Crime

We will continue to develop effective anti-crime policies, implement effective and balanced laws – in line with our human rights obligations - and work to ensure visible policing of our communities and enforcement of the law.

Introduction

The Tackling Crime HLG brings together a number of strategies which have been framed to deliver Agreed Programme and other government policy commitments on crime in the period 2005-2007. The focus will be on:

- intensifying the fight against drugs and organised crime,
- continuing to enforce public order laws,
- ensuring effective and visible policing,
- implementing stronger anti-crime laws,
- giving effect to our international obligations to combat crime,
- examining the scope for restructuring the delivery of services in the area of youth justice,
- regulating and controlling the use of firearms and explosives,
- supporting victims of crime,
- road safety and implementation of traffic laws.

Policy overview

The provisional **headline crime figures for 2004** show an overall decrease of **4%** compared with 2003. This follows a decrease of **2%** in 2003 compared with 2002. Taking population increases into account, these figures show a significant reduction from a rate of 29 crimes per 1,000 of the population in 1995 to 25 crimes per 1,000 of the population in 2004. The 2004 figures show decreases over 2003 figures of **13%** in murder and manslaughter combined, of **28%** in sexual assault and of **14%** in each of the categories of aggravated burglary, theft from the person and robbery from the person, although there were increases in a number of categories.

In formulating anti-crime policies, reliable data on the incidence of crime is of course essential. Improved crime statistics and trends identification are a priority and the Minister has accepted a recommendation of the Expert Group on Crime Statistics to establish a **central crime statistics unit**. That Unit will be located within the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in the interests of the application of professional statistical standards and independence in

statistical matters. Work is underway to establish this unit.

In July 2003, the Government approved the Minister's proposal that a regular **national crime victimisation survey**, carried out biennially, would be a valuable and useful complement to the information on crime already available. The survey would complement available statistics on reported crime by contributing information on emerging trends and non-reported crime. Work on the survey will be undertaken by the CSO unit as part of its duties.

We recognise that we must continue to adapt our responses to emerging forms and changing patterns of criminal activity while keeping the focus firmly on areas of consistent concern, including the activities of drug traffickers and organised crime, public order and youth offending. The Government's commitments here are strong and unambiguous and our actions will be focused on delivering the desired outcomes. Stronger legislation, improved targeting of police resources and increased strategic use of forensic science, particularly in the area of drug analysis, will all play their part in delivering on commitments in these areas.

DNA profiling is an increasing valuable tool in the investigation of crime, particularly of the most serious offences such as murder and rape. Many other jurisdictions have established such databases. The Law Reform Commission published in 2004 a consultation paper on the subject and, following the consultation process, is currently developing proposals. It is the Minister's intention to draw up proposals for a database which would, having regard to constitutional requirements and the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights, permit as extensive a database as possible. When the Law Reform Commission publish their final recommendations they will be fully examined, with a view to bringing forward appropriate legislative proposals as soon as possible to give effect to any decision to establish a DNA database.

An immediate priority for us, to support the fight against crime, is implementing the Government's key commitment in the areas of policing, to increase **Garda strength** to 14,000. Further significant reform of the Garda Síochána organisation is dealt with under HLG 2.

As always, our work in the area of **criminal law reform** over the period ahead will be of the utmost importance as measures are developed to strengthen our criminal laws and procedures in a balanced way that is consistent with our human rights obligations. The Agreed Programme priorities and other significant factors which determine our output in this area are examined below on page 21.

We recognise that our communities are concerned about offending by young people and further development of effective responses to this complex issue is a priority. The scope for a more effective **youth justice policy**, and for a more cohesive approach across government departments and agencies is considered in our analysis of this issue (page 28).

Our response to crime is increasingly influenced by the **international dimension** – crime activity on an international scale, for example trafficking of persons across borders, is a growing threat. Equally, internationally co-ordinated responses, whether in the EU context or in other fora, is now a key influence on the development of crime policy. We are committed to enhancing international co-operation in this regard. In particular, at the EU level, the recently adopted 'Hague Programme – Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union', sets out a policy framework within which crime and other related issues are to be tackled over the next five years. We will continue to work closely with other Member States to and implement the policy framework in these areas.

Road traffic law enforcement continues to be a priority and increased resources will be allocated to this area, in particular through the establishment of a dedicated Traffic Corps. The provision and operation of speed cameras will also be outsourced, enabling Garda resources to be redirected to other activities.

DRUGS

In the fight against drugs, we will continue to contribute to the implementation of the **National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008**, working closely with other departments and agencies involved. We will focus on drug supply reduction, effective and proactive policing to deal with drug dealers, the targeting of the assets of drug criminals, strengthening drug trafficking offences and clearing our prisons of drugs.

On the EU level, we will work closely with other Member States to implement the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012 which was adopted by the European Council in December 2004. This strategy forms an intrinsic part of the Hague Programme and will be a key instrument to effectively confront drugs use and trafficking with a view to ensuring a

high level of health protection, wellbeing and social cohesion, as well as a high level of security for the general public.

1.1 - DRUGS OBJECTIVE: *We will extend the State's capacity to tackle the problem of drugs in our communities and in our prisons under the National Drugs Strategy, with a special focus on supply reduction.*

DRUGS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Delivery of relevant targets and actions/measures set out in Government's National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 for the Department.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Continue to develop and implement Department Policy in relation to the problem of drug misuse in our society	Continue to develop measures to tackle drug-related criminal activity	Measures in place to meet emerging trends in supply	An Garda Síochána
Continue to contribute to implementation of the Government's National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008	Continue to be represented on and contribute to the work of the Inter - Departmental Group on Drugs, the National Drugs strategy team, the National Assessment Committee for the Young People's Facilities and Services Programme and the National Advisory Committee on Drugs Through this multi-agency approach, continue to develop appropriate responses to tackle drug misuse in a coherent and integrated fashion	Ongoing progress in implementation of the Government's National Drugs Strategy	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
We will provide for compulsory drugs testing of prisoners where appropriate (APG – Crime)	The new Prison Rules include specific provision for mandatory drug testing in all prisons and places of detention	The new Prison Rules will be signed into law with effect from November 2005	Office of the Attorney General, Irish Prison Service

We will require convicted drug dealers to register with the Gardaí after leaving prison (APG – Crime)	Relevant provisions to be brought forward by way of an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill 2004	Bill expected to be enacted in 2005	
By end-2002 we will publish a plan to completely end all heroin use in Irish prisons. This will include the availability of treatment and rehabilitation for all who need them and the introduction of compulsory drug testing for prisoners where necessary. (APG – Tackling Drug Abuse)	A new Prison Drugs Policy that will facilitate consistent regulatory and operational structures in pursuing both supply and demand reduction will be published	Additional Psychologists, Consultant Psychiatrist sessions and Addiction Counsellors to be in place Improved searching procedures, physical security, CCTV and visitor procedures to be in place Enhanced Demand Reduction measures to be in place	Irish Prison Service Health Service Executive Community Agencies
Where a person has been found to be involved in the supply of drugs to a prisoner we will introduce a new stiffer penalty (APG – Crime)	Criminal Justice Bill 2004 will create a new offence of supplying drugs to prisoners	Bill is expected to be enacted in 2005	An Garda Síochána Irish Prison Service
We will strengthen provisions of the law that impose 10 year jail sentences for drug traffickers	Criminal Justice Bill 2004 will strengthen the provisions relating to the imposition of a 10 year minimum sentence for trafficking in drugs with a value of €13,000 or more	Bill is expected to be enacted in 2005	

ORGANISED CRIME

The Department will continue to concentrate on ensuring the Garda Síochána have the resources to deal with organised crime and that the law is strengthened to tackle this problem. Law Reform measures being pursued, and elsewhere referred to under HLG 1, include admissibility of witness statements, criminalisation of participation in a criminal organisation, minimum mandatory sentences for drug trafficking and increased controls on firearms. We will

also continue to work with EU and other partners to combat international organised crime.

1.2 - ORGANISED CRIME OBJECTIVE: *We will continue to take the measures necessary to combat organised crime.*

ORGANISED CRIME PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Increased capacity to tackle the problem of organised crime.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Continue to develop and implement Department policy in relation to combating organised crime	Continue to develop measures to curb the activities of serious criminals Continue to engage in consultation with the relevant Garda units responsible for combating organised crime Continue to support and ensure that the necessary resources are provided to the Criminal Assets Bureau	Measures in place to meet emerging trend Within means available, adequately resourced and staffed Criminal Assets Bureau	An Garda Síochána
Continue to participate in the development and implementation of international policy to combat organised crime, including drug trafficking	Continue to participate in relevant EU and other international fora	National policy reflects international developments and trends Improved knowledge base of best practice in combating organised crime internationally	An Garda Síochána

PUBLIC ORDER

Public order offences have been decreasing. The figures for 2003 (the most recent year for which figures are available) show decreases in intoxicating liquor and public order offences, minor assaults and possession of offensive weapons of 4%, 23% and 16% respectively over the previous year. The number of the more serious offence of assault causing harm was down by 1% in 2004 following on from a decrease of 22% in 2003. Nevertheless, public

order remains an area of concern. Strong legislative provisions are in place to combat anti-social behaviour and public order offending, including offending to which the abuse of alcohol contributes. In addition the Criminal Justice Bill 2004 provides for a fixed charge procedure to deal with certain lesser public order offences and it is proposed to provide for anti-social behaviour orders by way of amendment to that Bill. We will keep these provisions under continuous review and strengthen these laws if that is considered necessary.

An Garda Síochána are treating as a priority the enforcement of the liquor licensing and public order laws including the provisions relating to mandatory closure of licensed premises and other premises.

CCTV systems are effective in terms of the prevention, policing and detection of public order incidents. We are committed to extending CCTV – the following 11 locations throughout the country are set to receive Town Centre CCTV systems: Athlone, Ballyfermot, Carlow, Castlebar, Clondalkin, Clonmel, Ennis, Kilkenny, Sligo, Tallaght and Waterford. In addition, a Community Based CCTV Scheme was launched in June 2005. The purpose of the Scheme is to support local communities who wish to install and maintain CCTV security systems in their area, with the aim

of increasing public safety and reducing the risk of anti-social and criminal activity. The Scheme is designed to provide financial assistance to qualifying local organisations, towards meeting the capital costs associated with the establishment of local community CCTV systems. Under this Scheme, individual communities will be able to avail of grant aid funding of up to €100,000 from the Department to install a CCTV system in their area. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has given a commitment to provide successful applicants from RAPID areas with a further grant to a maximum of €100,000 subject to the total grant aid from both Departments not exceeding €200,000 or 100% of the capital costs of the project, whichever is the lesser.

1.3 - PUBLIC ORDER OBJECTIVE: *We will keep public order laws under review and provide resources to reduce the threat of street crime*

PUBLIC ORDER PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The types and levels of public order offences reported.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will enforce the measures in the licensing laws that ensure mandatory temporary closures of licensed premises - pubs, clubs and off-licenses - where there have been convictions for allowing underage drinking (APG – Crime)	Monitor, in accordance with the provisions of An Garda Síochána Act 2005, the achievement of priorities set by the Minister for An Garda Síochána using performance indicators established and Corporate Strategies and Policing Plans published by the Garda Commissioner	A high level strategic goal in the Garda Síochána Corporate Strategy 2005 - 2007 is to ensure public safety by reducing the incidence of public disorder and anti-social behaviour The Garda Síochána Policing Plan 2005 sets out a wide range of performance indicators including numbers of incidents, proceedings, prosecutions of license holders and applications for closure orders Perceptions of public safety arising from Garda Public Attitude Survey 2005	An Garda Síochána
We will extend the use of CCTV cameras and also grant aid and local communities to provide them (APG – Crime)	Accelerate the implementation of Garda CCTV systems Maximise outsourcing at all stages of the project Monitor operation of Community based CCTV Scheme launched in June, 2005	Plan in place and progress towards implementation of Garda CCTV systems in priority locations by 2007 Community based CCTV Scheme in operation in 2005	An Garda Síochána, Finance, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (local authorities) Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, An Garda Síochána

POLICING RESOURCES

Provision of resources to An Garda Síochána and the effective and efficient use of these resources is a priority in our efforts to tackle crime in our communities, in all its forms. We will increase the strength of the Force to 14,000 over the life of this strategy, in line with the Agreed Programme commitment and the Government decision of October 2004, and, in conjunction with Garda management, target those additional resources effectively, efficiently and visibly in the areas of greatest need. Under HLG 2, we set out other related commitments on Garda structures and organisation.

1.4 - POLICING RESOURCES OBJECTIVE: *We will deliver the Government commitment to increase Garda numbers to 14,000 by 2007 and work with An Garda Síochána to ensure optimal use of the extra manpower.*

POLICING RESOURCES PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Achievement of a Garda Force strength of 14,000 members with the additional manpower deployed by the Garda Commissioner into frontline, operational, high-visibility policing to address the areas of greatest need.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will complete the current expansion of An Garda Síochána and increase recruitment so that the numbers will increase by a further 2,000 (APG – Crime)	Provide for an average annual intake of 1,096 recruits from 2005 to 2007 and expansion (by early 2006), redevelopment and optimal use of training facilities at the Garda College	Achieve target strength of 14,000 by 2007 Have external facilities in place for the outsourcing of in-service training Complete the building programme within the college to cater for additional recruits by early 2006	An Garda Síochána, Department of Finance, Public Appointments Service, Office of Public Works (OPW)
	Review An Garda Síochána entry criteria to ensure that the needs of the Force and society are met	Prompt implementation of changes to the criteria in advance of the next recruitment competition	An Garda Síochána, Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
These additional Gardai will be targeted at those areas of greatest need, especially areas experiencing a significant drugs problem and a large number of public order offences (APG – Crime)	Approval and effective implementation oversight of An Garda Síochána Policing Plans and any other strategies required to ensure that sufficient additional Gardai will be assigned to areas with significant drugs and public order problems		

<p>To provide sufficient resources to enable An Garda Síochána to carry out its functions as efficiently and effectively as possible</p>	<p>Continue to ensure that financial and other resources are made available to the force</p> <p>Provide for capital projects including the delivery of a new National Digital Radio System and significant computer projects</p> <p>In conjunction with the OPW ensure that the Garda Building Programme is advanced</p>	<p>Delivery of a new National Digital Radio System and significant computer projects</p> <p>Garda Building Programme is advanced</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána, Department of Finance, OPW</p>
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CRIMINAL LAW REFORM

The Department's Law Reform Programme comprises a very large proportion, usually of the order of one quarter to one third, of the overall Government legislative programme. Legislation to reform the criminal law accounts for a significant proportion of that output. There is of course a major emphasis on implementing criminal law reform commitments in the Agreed Programme and other Government policy commitments. The programme is 'organic' in the sense that it is adjusted from time to time to take account of developments most notably in the area of international judicial co-operation at EU and International level.

One of the Department's ongoing tasks is to keep the criminal law under review so as to identify potential reforms for consideration by Government. As part of this process, we engage in and promote research, assess reports or submissions from advisory or research bodies, notably from the Law Reform Commission, and consult with relevant interest groups. Reform of the criminal law must always have regard to the need to maintain an appropriate balance as between the rights of individuals and the needs of society.

Here we briefly touch on some key aspects of the law reform programme.

The Criminal Justice Bill 2004, expected to be enacted in 2005 will see substantial reforms of criminal law and procedure, developed in the light of the recommendations of the Expert Group on Criminal Law. It will strengthen Garda powers of investigation and prosecution by providing for a statutory power to preserve a crime scene, a general power

in relation to the issue of search warrants and increased detention powers up to 24 hours for arrestable offences. Other provisions include extending the power of the prosecution to appeal in limited circumstances, in particular, in relation to points of law and provision on the admissibility of statements by witnesses, who subsequently refuse to testify or retract their original statements.

Further measures are being examined for inclusion in the Bill including provisions to strengthen our laws dealing with –

- anti-social behaviour, new provisions to enable the Gardaí to apply to the Courts for anti-social behaviour orders to deal with anti-social behaviour;
- organised crime, including the creation of a new offence in relation to participation in criminal organisations;
- drugs, including strengthening the provisions on the imposition of the 10 year minimum mandatory sentence for drug trafficking, creating a new offence of supplying drugs to prisoners and providing for a drug offenders register;
- firearms, including new controls around certification for possession and the use and carriage of firearms and ammunition and stiffer penalties for firearm offences.

The Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Act 2005 will considerably strengthen the powers of the Criminal Assets Bureau in the fight against white collar crime and corruption.

The Criminal Law Insanity Bill will modernise the law, providing for extensive new rules dealing with a person's fitness to be tried; a restatement of the test for criminal insanity; a new verdict of "not guilty by reason of insanity" to replace the existing "guilty but insane" verdict; and a new

plea of "guilty but with diminished responsibility" in cases of murder. The Bill also establishes a Mental Health Review Board - whose function it will be to review the cases of persons detained under these provisions. Amendments to the Bill will be brought forward in the Seanad to modernise and clarify the current arrangements relating to the certification/de-certification and transfer of persons detained for psychiatric treatment in the Central Mental Hospital. It is expected that the Bill will be enacted in 2005.

International Criminal Court Bill will provide for the practical implementation of Ireland's obligations under the UN Statute establishing the International Criminal Court. This legislation will create new offences of crimes against humanity and war crimes and consolidate the existing offence of genocide. It will also enable Ireland to co-operate with investigations by the International Criminal Court. It is expected that the Bill will be enacted in 2005.

1.5 - CRIMINAL LAW REFORM OBJECTIVE: *We will complete the programme of criminal law reform contained in the Government's legislative programme including our EU and international commitments.*

Transfer of Execution of Sentences Bill will give effect to provisions in Article 2 of the Additional Protocol to the 1983 Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and Articles 67-69 of the Schengen Convention on the transfer of the execution of sentences where the sentenced person has fled from the sentencing state to his/her state of nationality. In such cases, it will be possible to ensure the carrying out of the sentence by the person's state of nationality.

Criminal Justice (Mutual Assistance) Bill - formerly referred to as the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Bill - which is expected to be published in mid 2005 will give effect to a number of EU mutual legal assistance instruments/agreements and a Council of Europe mutual legal assistance instrument. Provision will also be made for amendments to the Criminal Justice Act 1994 in the light of operational experience.

CRIMINAL LAW REFORM PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Delivery of the Government's legislative programme in the area of criminal law.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will introduce a Proceeds of Corruption Act modelled on the Proceeds of Crime legislation, to further target white collar crime and corruption in public and private sectors (APG – Crime)	The proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Act 2005 incorporates the proposals for a Proceeds of Corruption Bill	Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Bill enacted in January 2005	
We will extend the power to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to appeal against lenient sentences in serious cases before the District Court (APG – Crime)	This matter was referred by the AG to the Law Reform Commission for consideration as a matter of urgent public interest. The Law Reform Commission (LRC) launched a consultation paper on the subject in 2004. Their final report is awaited.	Prompt consideration following publication of the Report	Law Reform Commission, Office of the AG, Parliamentary Counsel, Office of the DPP

<p>We will ensure all substantive criminal law will be codified into a single Crimes Act</p> <p>We will publish this criminal code and ensure it is kept up to date by means of the Statute Law Restatement legislation (APG – Crime)</p>	<p>Following Government approval and publication of the Report of the Expert Group on the Codification of substantive criminal law, a statutory group to be known as the Criminal Law Codification Advisory Committee is to be established to oversee the codification process and ultimately, once that goal is attained, to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the code and its internal logic. Pending the enactment of the necessary legislation the Group is to be established on a non-statutory basis.</p>	<p>Establishment of the Criminal Law Codification Advisory Committee</p> <p>Appointment of the necessary research resources for the Committee</p> <p>Publication by the Committee of a first phase report on the Criminal Code</p>	<p>In addition to Departmental representation, membership of the Group will be drawn from the Offices of the AG and the DPP, together with practising and academic members of the wider Criminal Law community in Ireland</p>
Criminal Justice Bill 2004	Completion of passage of the Bill through Oireachtas	Enactment in 2005	
Criminal Law Insanity Bill	Completion of passage of the Bill through Oireachtas	Commencement of the Act by end 2005/early 2006	Houses of the Oireachtas, Irish Prison Service, Department of Health and Children & its agencies
International Criminal Court Bill	Completion of passage of the Bill through Oireachtas	Enactment in 2005	
Transfer of Execution of Sentences Bill	Completion of passage of the Bill through the Oireachtas	Enactment in 2005	
Criminal Justice (Mutual Assistance) Bill - formerly referred to as the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Bill	The Bill will be published in mid 2005	Enactment in 2005	
Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill	Completion of passage of the Bill through the Oireachtas	Publication of Bill in early 2006. Enactment in 2006	

Legislation arising from the 3rd EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive	Assessment of criminal law legislative requirements in conjunction with AG. Drafting of legislation and passage through Oireachtas	Assessment to take place in second half of 2005. Publication of Bill in 2006. Enactment in 2006/7	Office of the AG, Department of Finance, Money Laundering Steering Committee
Legislation arising from EU/Swiss Agreement to counter fraud	Assessment of criminal law legislative requirements in conjunction with AG. Drafting of legislation and passage through Oireachtas	Assessment to take place in second half of 2005. Publication of Bill early 2006. Enactment in 2006.	Office of the AG, Department of Finance, Department of Foreign Affairs, Other relevant Departments
Criminal Justice (Protection of Confidential Information) Bill	Completion of passage of the Bill through the Oireachtas	Enactment in 2006	
Legislation arising from revised Council of Europe Convention on Money Laundering	Assessment of criminal law legislative requirements in conjunction with AG. Drafting of legislation and passage through Oireachtas	Assessment to take place in second half of 2005. Publication of Bill in 2006. Enactment in 2006/7	Office of the AG, Department of Finance, Money Laundering Steering Committee
We will complete a review of the laws on incitement to hatred and ensure that people who incite racial hatred have no place in Irish society (APG – Supporting Diversity and Tolerance)	Complete the review and, if a need for legislation is identified, Government approval for a Bill will be sought. Completion date will be influenced by progress on an EU Framework Decision on incitement to hatred.	Review completed	Members of the European Union

HUMAN RIGHTS

Under the terms of the Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations on Northern Ireland in 1998, the Government has taken action on two fronts to further strengthen the protection of human rights in this jurisdiction. The first action was to establish a Human Rights Commission equivalent to the Commission operating in Northern Ireland and this was put in place in 2001 under the provisions of the Human Rights Commission Act 2000. The Commission has a wide-ranging and overarching jurisdiction in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Department deals with matters arising under the Act including the Commissions' finances and staff and reports made by the Commission to the Minister and the Government.

The second action was the incorporation of the European

Convention on Human Rights into domestic Irish law under the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003. Our focus will be on keeping under review and, where necessary, revising the human rights aspects of criminal law and practice.

1.6 - HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVE: *We will provide support to the Human Rights Commission to enable it carry out its mandate and we will develop and review, where necessary the criminal law to take account of our human rights obligations.*

HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Human Rights Commission adequately resourced and Irish criminal law and practice developed in conformity with our human rights obligations.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Continue to ensure the operational effectiveness of the Human Rights Commission – the independent National Human Rights Institution established under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement	To support the effective operation of the Human Rights Commission by providing the necessary staffing, financial and logistical resources to the Commission in accordance with statutory requirements in the Human Rights Commission Acts 2000 and 2001	The Human Rights Commission adequately resourced to undertake its statutory responsibilities	Department of Finance
Ensure that legislative proposals in the criminal law area take account of human rights obligations	To monitor the possible effects on criminal law and practice in so far as the Department's sphere of responsibilities is concerned	Irish criminal law is developed in conformity with our human rights obligations	Offices of the Attorney General and Parliamentary Counsel, the Human Rights Commission (in accordance with its statutory functions)
Keep up to date on developments in ECHR Jurisprudence affecting criminal law and practice and where necessary, review existing arrangements in the light of those developments	Develop appropriate legislative proposals in the criminal law area in response to our international human rights commitments, taking account of recommendations of the Human Rights Commission and of other rights organisations	Timely revision of legislation and submission of draft legislative proposals as agreed by the Minister.	
Ensure that channels of communication are maintained with the Human Rights Commission in relation to developments in the criminal law area	Consult, as appropriate, with the Human Rights Commission on draft proposals in the criminal law area		

INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL CO-OPERATION ON CRIME

Many of the areas of crime that we are targeting have an international dimension, whether it is trafficking of drugs or people, or the insidious threat of internet crime. We will continue to work in partnership with our EU partners and in other international fora, confronting these threats. The recently adopted EU Drugs strategy 2005-2012, will reinforce our efforts internationally to defeat drug activity and organised crime.

We will continue to participate in the negotiation of proposals on the European Evidence Warrant, procedural safeguards in criminal matters, the fight against organised crime, racism and xenophobia, data retention, recognition and enforcement of prohibitions arising from convictions for sexual offences against children, preparation of responses to a Commission Green Paper on mutual recognition of non-custodial pre-trial orders and other EU initiatives as they arise.

1.7 - INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL CO-OPERATION ON CRIME OBJECTIVE: *We will work with international partners to confront the threat of cross-border crime and, as part of this, we will strengthen our mutual assistance and extradition arrangements with other states.*

Our support for and implementation of mutual assistance and extradition arrangements between states is an important aspect of our international commitment to fight crime. The period covered by the Strategy Statement will see co-operation extending in the areas of mutual recognition of judicial decisions and the enforcement of decisions. Co-operation will also be enhanced under the European Arrest Warrant Act, 2003. On the bi-lateral front, mutual assistance and extradition agreements with the United States will be concluded and negotiations are nearly concluded with Hong Kong on an extradition agreement.

We are working towards participation in the Schengen Convention which provides for a wide range of international cooperation measures in the area of law enforcement and this will require the introduction of new systems and measures to facilitate exchanges of information at international level.

INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL CO-OPERATION PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Measures taken to confront the threat of cross-border crime, an effective response provided to requests for mutual assistance and extradition and the streamlining of procedures for improved co-operation.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
To take forward the implementation of Ireland's Schengen obligations under the Council Decision of February 2002	Undertake the tasks required to enable Ireland to participate in the Schengen Convention in the areas in which Ireland applied to participate	Enactment of necessary legislation, provision of technical facilities and other steps leading to EU Council Decision approving Ireland's implementation measures	Parliamentary Counsel, An Garda Síochána, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, EU Commission and Council
To implement the provisions of the Hague Programme on Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union and any Action Plan	Work with partners at EU level to develop and implement the provisions of the Hague Programme and any Action Plan	Meet the relevant deadlines in any Action Plan (subject to agreement at EU level)	Council of European Union, European Commission, relevant Government Departments and agencies

Continue to participate in the development and implementation of international policy to combat organised crime, including drug trafficking	Continue to participate in international fora on these issues	National Policy reflects international developments and trends Knowledge base of best practice	An Garda Síochána, Forensic Science Laboratory
Continue to participate in the development and implementation of EU policy in relation to crime prevention	Continue to participate in the European Crime Prevention Network	Gain knowledge of best practice at European level in crime prevention	
To continue to develop effective operational procedures for the Central Authority for Mutual Assistance, the Central Authority for the European Arrest Warrant and for Extradition	Process requests for mutual assistance and extradition with regard to international standards of good practice and legislative and procedural requirements	Timeliness and efficiency in responding to mutual assistance and extradition requests	Central Authorities and other relevant authorities in other States, the Office of the Chief State Solicitor, the Office of the Attorney General, An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service and the Revenue Commissioners
To participate in developments at national and international level in relation to mutual assistance and extradition to enhance operational procedures between Ireland and other jurisdictions	Attend and contribute to meetings/seminars at the Council of the European Union, the Council of Europe and other international fora in relation to mutual assistance and extradition	To enhance operational procedures in relation to mutual assistance and extradition	Member States of the EU and of the Council of Europe, and other countries
To participate in negotiations on bilateral arrangements for mutual assistance and extradition	Attend and contribute to negotiations in relation to the bilateral agreements with (1) the United States (2) a range of territories following enactment of the Criminal Justice (Mutual Assistance) Bill	Greater effectiveness in the operation of Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition procedures	Office of the Attorney General, Office of the Chief State Solicitor, the Council of the European Union, and other authorities
To participate in the work of the European Judicial Network aimed at facilitating judicial co-operation between EU Member States	Attend and contribute to the meetings of the European Judicial Network	Improvements in the operation of Mutual Assistance in the EU	European Judicial Network, Eurojust and Members of the EU

YOUTH JUSTICE

There has been much media coverage in recent years about offending and anti-social behaviour by young people. Unfortunately, public debate following such coverage is not necessarily founded on hard facts. Indeed, the qualitative data available on youth offending needs to be strengthened. This will help us to further develop robust policies for an effective and comprehensive youth justice system.

The vast majority of young people are responsible and law-abiding citizens. Nevertheless, there is significant public concern about young people's involvement in criminal behaviour relative, for example, to white collar and other types of "adult crime" (Garda Research Unit 2002). At the same time, the public view on the State's response to offending by young people is that it should incorporate rehabilitation and counselling, and not lean towards punishment alone. Irish people want protection from all crime, including criminal and anti-social behaviour by young people. However, it is clear too that they want the State, in its youth justice system, to respond in a particular way to the needs and deeds of a vulnerable and not yet fully mature sector of society.

Young people who engage in crime and anti-social behaviour must, of course, be held accountable. However, an effective justice system must be capable of responding as appropriate to the broad range of offending by young people. Different approaches are often necessary depending on the seriousness and circumstances of a specific crime. A youth justice system, to be comprehensive and effective, must, therefore, involve in an integrated way more than just the criminal justice sector. Criminological research would suggest that socio-economic factors - such as poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities - contribute to persistent juvenile offending. These broadly defined factors tend to be compounded by personal or family based issues, such as drug or alcohol abuse, poor or inadequate parenting and educational failure.

A major strategic process involving the social partners is in place to tackle social exclusion. It incorporates measures which tackle the root causes of crime and youth offending. Other measures, which are crime prevention specific, are also in place. All of these involve a wide variety of agencies and structures and large levels of public expenditure. From the youth justice perspective, this raises an issue of overarching co-ordination and strategic linkage of services, especially at a local level.

While the Children Act 2001 establishes a new statutory framework for a modern youth justice system, legislation is but one element in an overall and comprehensive response to the issue. The youth justice system must build on the cross-cutting nature of the issue - there is a need to examine the scope for rationalising and restructuring the delivery of the various State services in the area with the target of achieving improved governance arrangements.

This examination will address the issue of joined-up governance in an area with divided responsibilities and a consequential leadership demand in establishing integrated objectives, performance indicators and evaluation tools. The focus of the examination will be on the delivery of services, with potential implications for possible institutional change. We have established a dedicated internal project team, headed by an Assistant Secretary, to carry out the necessary examination. The team is consulting with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. A wider public consultation process is also taking place and the team, in addition, will examine international best practice. We expect that the team will report to the Minister by Summer 2005.

1.8 - YOUTH JUSTICE OBJECTIVE: *We will strengthen the youth justice system by enhancing co-ordination and linkage of services and by providing clear strategic leadership in this policy area.*

YOUTH JUSTICE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Completion of strategic overview of the youth justice system by July 2005, with a view to identifying the leadership and co-ordination mechanisms necessary for effective service delivery in this area.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Continue to focus on youth and crime by supporting and developing evidence-based preventative measures and interventions aimed at young offenders and those most at risk of offending	<p>Continue to support and strengthen the network of Garda youth diversion projects</p> <p>Assist with the ongoing implementation of the Garda juvenile diversion programme established under the Children Act 2001</p> <p>Participate in National Advisory Committee</p> <p>Liasise with stakeholders</p>	<p>Monitor Garda administration of the projects on the basis of the agreed Guidelines and data provided by the Garda and project managers</p> <p>Number of juveniles participating in the programme</p>	An Garda Síochána Community Relations Section
We will strengthen the youth system to improve the delivery of the States's services	Prepare report for the Minister outlining possible recommendations to achieve the objective of an enhanced youth justice system	It is intended that the report will be finalised by Summer 2005	Other Departments and agencies involved in the delivery of services to children at risk of offending
We will provide places in line with provisions of the Children Act 2001	Provide accommodation for 16-17 year-old males and females as required by provisions of the Children Act 2001	In 2005, identify locations in the greater Dublin area for such places of accommodation	OPW, Department of Health and Children, Department of Education and Science, Irish Prison Service, Probation and Welfare Service

FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES

We have responsibility for legislation and policy on the regulation and control of firearms and explosives. Recent years have witnessed an increase in criminal possession and use of firearms - our priority is to tackle that. We are working closely with An Garda Síochána to develop policies and legislation aimed at reducing the availability of illegal firearms. New legislation currently being prepared is aimed at strengthening the law in this area.

There has also been a significant increase in ownership of firearms for hunting and competitive target shooting in

1.9 - FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES OBJECTIVE: *To implement effective policies and laws to regulate and control firearms and explosives.*

recent years. In parallel with this there has been increasing pressure from hunting and sporting representative bodies for reform of the firearms law. We will continue to liaise with these representative bodies in formulating new firearms control policies and legislation that will impact on the wider sport shooting community.

The requirements for explosives under the NDP for road building and other construction purposes has lead to a dramatic rise in the importation, transportation, manufacture and use of explosives within the State. The implementation and effectiveness of legislation and policy in this area is kept under regular review.

FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The introduction of a range of legislative measures to update the law on firearms and explosives which will address modern requirements.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
To keep under review the effectiveness of the law and policy for the regulation and control of firearms	Prepare amendment to the Firearms Acts 1925 to 2000 for inclusion, at Committee Stage, in the Criminal Justice Bill, 2004	Enactment of new firearms provisions before the end of 2005	Office of the Attorney General and Parliamentary Counsel, An Garda Síochána, Inspectors of Explosives, Government Departments and Agencies, Representative Bodies
Review current law and policy governing the control of fireworks	Evaluate submissions on "Fireworks Policy Review – Discussion Document" published in March 2005	Prepare final policy document and draft amendments to Explosives Act to take account of new arrangements before end October 2005	
Review provisions relating to fines and penalties in the Explosives Acts, 1875	Complete the review with a view to introducing amendments to the Explosives Act 1875, at Committee Stage of the Criminal Justice Bill, 2004	Enactment of new provisions before end 2005	
Review the Explosives Act, 1875	Carry out an indepth review of the law and policy on the control of explosives. Prepare consolidated and updated legislative proposals and seek Government approval for updating the 1875 Act and regulations.	Publish new Explosives Bill by the end of 2006	
Regulate and control the use of firearms and the manufacture, importation and storage of explosives	Continue to engage in regular contact with An Garda Síochána on the regulation and control of firearms. Consider advice from the Government Inspectors of Explosives. Engage in consultation with representative and interested bodies and consider their views.	Maintain ongoing control of the manufacture of explosives and the importation, use and storage of firearms	

VICTIMS OF CRIME

The Minister has established the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime for a term of 3 years to devise an appropriate support framework for victims of crime into the future and disburse funding for victim support and assistance measures. Its work will include a review of the Victims Charter which set out the obligations of the agencies in the criminal justice system to the victims of crime.

We will also keep under review the effectiveness of supports in place to tackle domestic violence and to assist victims of serious sexual offences, including rape. The Department will establish in accordance with the Commissions of Investigation Act 2004 a Commission of Investigation to examine the handling of allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy operating under the aegis of the Catholic Archdiocese

of Dublin and will assist the Commission in its work.

The Department will continue to support the work of the Internet Advisory Board which has been effective in raising awareness about illegal and harmful uses of the Internet, and in 2005, five years after the establishment of the Board, will review its terms of reference and structure.

1.10 - VICTIMS OF CRIME OBJECTIVE: *We will ensure that the supports we provide for victims of crime are directed to achieve the greatest possible benefits for victims.*

VICTIMS OF CRIME PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Supports for victims targeted more effectively and domestic violence awareness programmes funded.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will guarantee funding of Victim Support as a cornerstone of Government policy in victim care and review existing funding levels in the light of proposed reviews	Review Government provision in this area and implement any changes considered necessary	Supports directed at effective front-line victim services	
We will support the work of the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime established by the Minister to coordinate supports for crime victims into the future	Provide secretariat for the Commission and support its activities	Supports directed at effective front-line victim services	
We will ensure that any changes to Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme will involve consultation with Victim Support and we will examine the feasibility of recompensing crime victims for injuries and non-insured loss. An agency will be designated to recover fines for this purpose (APG – Crime)	Complete the review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme currently underway. The review will include an examination of how best to implement the new EU Directive dealing with compensation to victims of crime, which is due to come into effect from January 2006.	Review of Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme completed.	Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime

<p>We will ensure annual funding for awareness programmes to tackle domestic violence and ensure that housing and shelter programmes fully address the needs of those who have experienced domestic violence (APG – Crime)</p>	<p>[Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government have lead role in relation to 'housing and shelter' part of this commitment]</p> <p>Co-ordinate the work of the National Steering Committee on Violence against women and assist in the development of policies in relation to this issue.</p> <p>Co-ordinate the development of a strategy which will aim to raise awareness amongst the general public of the various aspects of violence against women, and which includes annual awareness campaigns</p>	<p>Raised awareness of the issue</p> <p>Strategy developed by 2006</p>	<p>Health and Children, Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Education and Science, Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs, An Garda Síochána, Probation and Welfare Service, Courts Service, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)</p>
<p>Commission of Investigation into the handling of allegations of child sexual abuse against clergy operating under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Dublin</p>	<p>A Commission will be established under the Commissions of Investigation Act 2004, to investigate the handling of allegations of child sexual abuse against clergy operating under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Dublin</p>	<p>Commission established in 2005</p> <p>Submission of Commission's final Report to the Minister</p>	<p>Representatives of victims, Archdiocese of Dublin, Department of Finance</p>

ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC LAWS

Implementation of commitments in our areas of responsibility under the Road Safety Strategy 2004-2006 will be a priority. Effective cross-Department and agency collaboration will be essential for the delivery of the road safety targets.

The introduction of the penalty points system has had a proven effect on the behaviour of motorists. The number of road fatalities in 2003, the first full year of penalty points, was the lowest for 40 years. There are also indications of a reduction in some serious traffic-related admissions to Accident and Emergency departments. However, fatalities in 2004 show an increase with the number of deaths at 374. An Garda Síochána have increased their enforcement

activities with the focus on high risk locations and times. With the increase in the overall strength of An Garda Síochána to 14,000, the allocation to the Garda Corps will increase from approximately 520 to 1200 on a phased basis. A new post of Assistant Commissioner with responsibility for all traffic related matters, including the Garda National Traffic Bureau, has been created.

Implementation of the new computerised penalty points system is being piloted and will then be rolled out across the entire Garda organisation. It will be extended to cater for all penalty point offences as quickly as possible thereafter. A manual system dealing with the offences of speeding, non-wearing of seat belts and driving without insurance is in operation.

1.11 - ROAD SAFETY OBJECTIVE: *We will work closely with Departments and Agencies to ensure that the necessary traffic policing resources, systems and structures are in place to reduce road fatalities and injuries.*

ROAD SAFETY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Delivery of relevant targets and actions/measures set out in the Government Road Safety Strategy 2004-2006 for the Department.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
A renewed three-year Road Safety strategy will be introduced to target speeding, drink driving, seat belt wearing and pedestrian safety in order to significantly reduce road deaths and injuries (APG – Insurance and Road Safety)	Take forward along with An Garda Síochána implementation of the enforcement targets in the second Road Safety Strategy 2004-2006. This includes the outsourcing of the provision, maintenance and operation of speed cameras.	Delivery of targets and actions/measures set out in the Road Safety Strategy	An Garda Síochána, Department of Transport, High Level Group on Road Safety
A dedicated Traffic Corps with its own staff and ring-fenced budget will be established following a six-month consultation process (APG – Insurance and Road Safety)	With the increase in the overall strength of An Garda Síochána to 14,000, the allocation to the Garda Corps will increase (from approximately 520) to 1200 on a phased basis. A new post of Assistant Commissioner with responsibility for all traffic related matters, including the Garda National Traffic Bureau, has been created and a new Assistant Commissioner has been appointed.	Personnel strength of Traffic Corps increased, appropriate budgetary arrangements in place and Garda traffic policing strategy developed	An Garda Síochána
Work on the penalty points system will be completed to ensure its implementation at an early date (APG – Insurance and Road Safety)	Develop fully computerised Fixed Charge Processing System	Garda Fixed Charge Processing System to be implemented in 2005 together with outsourced collection of payments for all fixed charge processing system	An Garda Síochána, Courts Service, Department of Transport, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of Finance

HLG 2 - Developing Criminal Justice Services

We will further advance our structural and service reforms of An Garda Síochána, Courts, Prisons and Probation & Welfare Service to enable those agencies implement their mandates in the most effective and efficient way possible.

Introduction

Over the past seven or eight years, the Department has implemented an ambitious organisation change programme which has devolved front-line services and management responsibility for these services to new, dedicated agencies. This is now a feature of service provision in our major areas of activity – in the criminal justice system where functions have transferred to the Irish Prison Service and been assigned to the Courts Service, in the refugee/immigration area (**HLG 2**) where functions have been assigned to the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) and the Equality area (**HLG 4**) where functions have been assigned to the Equality Authority and the Equality Tribunal.

HLG 2 focuses on the Department's interaction with key organisations in our area of responsibility within the criminal justice system – An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, the Prisons Service and the Probation and Welfare Service. The effectiveness of our policies and actions here have a direct bearing on our ability and that of the criminal justice agencies to deliver on the Government/Minister's comprehensive anti-crime programme set out under HLG 1.

Policy Overview

Organisation reform geared to delivering best practice operations and services across the criminal justice system will continue to be a priority for the Department. This will include very significant law reforms to strengthen management processes and independent oversight of the Garda Síochána, a review of the Probation and Welfare Service to identify the type of services that may be required in the future, and implementation of policies aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Prison Service. We will continue to develop and strengthen corporate governance across the system with a special focus on organisation performance and accountability at all levels.

A particular emphasis will be placed on our interaction with the agencies on the need to ensure delivery of Agreed programme commitments, many of which fall to the Services for implementation. In this context, and also with a view to implementation of the Sustaining Progress

commitments on modernisation, we will further develop systems and processes to strengthen collaboration and a joined up approach to delivery of targets in the criminal justice system.

Across the board, the Department will fulfil the critical and ongoing function of providing financial resources to the criminal justice bodies, within tight management and accountability frameworks.

GARDA ORGANISATION AND REFORM

Under HLG 1, we have set out strategies dealing with targeted resourcing of policing and Garda enforcement issues. Here, our focus is on system and structural reform of the policing service.

The Department has the key role of developing the regulatory and structural framework within which An Garda Síochána operates and to promote measures designed to provide greater accountability, economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Department must also ensure that the Minister is in a position to account to the Government and the Houses of the Oireachtas for the performance of An Garda Síochána.

Greater accountability will be achieved through the implementation of the Agreed Programme commitments in The Garda Síochána Act 2005. The Act contains the most comprehensive legislative provisions on policing brought forward to date. When fully commenced it will replace, with only one or two exceptions, all of An Garda Síochána Acts dating back to 1924. The Act:-

- Reforms the legislative structure for the management of An Garda Síochána, in particular by clarifying the role and objectives of the Force and defining its relationship with the Minister and Government of the day. The Act reflects the outcome of a review of An Garda Síochána under the Government's Strategic Management Initiative.
- Will establish a new independent body to be known as the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission to replace the existing Garda Síochána Complaints Board. The Ombudsman Commission will have comprehensive

powers of civil and criminal investigation and will have ultimate control and oversight of complaints.

- Will establish an independent Garda Síochána Inspectorate as a means of improving democratic accountability for the actions of An Garda Síochána. The Garda Síochána Inspectorate will examine standards, practice and performance and benchmark these to comparable international policing experiences.
- Provides that the Commissioner will have enhanced responsibilities in preparing proposals for organisational

reform. Under the legislation, the Commissioner will become Accounting Officer for the Force.

2.1 - GARDA ORGANISATION OBJECTIVE: *We will continue to develop Garda structures and - processes so as to ensure maximum possible effectiveness, efficiency and transparency and accountability of the Force.*

GARDA ORGANISATION PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Timely implementation of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will establish an independent Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission, which will have the power to investigate complaints against members of An Garda Síochána (APG – Crime)	Appointment of Ombudsman Commissioners and provision of staff and premises	Establishment of Ombudsman Commission	Houses of the Oireachtas, Garda Commissioner, Garda Representative Associations, Staff Associations, Garda Complaints Board
We will establish an independent Garda Inspectorate to provide independent advice and to promote efficiency and effectiveness in An Garda Síochána (APG – Crime)	Appointment of members of Garda Inspectorate and provision of staff and premises	Establishment of Garda Síochána Inspectorate	Houses of the Oireachtas
We will review the structures and arrangements for dealing with the administration/ management of An Garda Síochána (APG – Crime)	Examine the working arrangements and organisational structures of the Department in light of the Garda Síochána Act 2005	Any necessary revision of structures will be put in place by the end of 2005	
We will examine the potential of the Community Warden service to enforce existing and new functions so ensuring that more trained police officers are released to operational duties tackling crime and defending our citizens (APG – Crime)	[Environment, Heritage and Local Government leading on this commitment] The evaluation of a pilot scheme has recently been completed and the Department will contribute to the implementation of agreed arrangements in this area		Environment, Heritage and Local Government, An Garda Síochána

We will continue to support the work of the Morris and Barr Tribunals	Continue to support and service work of the Morris and Barr Tribunals Consider fully recommendations of the Tribunals; prompt introduction of any changes, statutory or otherwise, that may be necessary	Tribunals fully resourced and facilitated Consideration of the reports of the Tribunals as they are received	Garda Commissioner, Garda Representative Associations, Staff Associations
We will develop and finalise proposals for reform of An Garda Síochána (Compensation) Acts 1941 and 1945	Prepare legislative proposals on reform of An Garda Síochána (Compensation) Acts	Garda Síochána Compensation Tribunal established to handle the majority of applications under the Garda Síochána (Compensation) Acts	CSSO, Office of the Attorney General
We will implement the terms of the revised Scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration (C&A) for An Garda Síochána	Engage in intensive negotiations with the staff side with a view to implementing all terms of revised C&A Scheme	Revised Scheme implemented	Department of Finance, Garda Management, Garda Staff Associations

COURTS SERVICES, ORGANISATION AND REFORM

The primary focus in this area is to ensure that all courts related policy objectives of the Minister and the Government and Ministerial functions are effectively discharged. The co-ordination and integration of policy objectives for the wider criminal justice system with those of the courts system is a priority.

We will underpin the delivery through the courts system of a high quality service by providing appropriate resources and a particular focus will be on improving buildings and accommodation and reductions in case waiting times. We will also monitor the impact of the additional resources provided to the courts system in recent years, including the significant increase in judicial resources provided in 2004, especially in relation to the continued reduction in delays in the Central Criminal Court. We will ensure that delays in trials coming before the Special Criminal Court are reduced by establishing a second Special Criminal Court in 2005.

2.2 - COURTS OBJECTIVE: *To support the Courts Service in the implementation of key Government and Ministerial commitments which relate to the courts system and in delivering a high quality service to persons who come before the courts system.*

COURTS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Courts Service adequately funded and supported and has capability to fulfil the commitments in its strategic plan.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will work closely with the Courts Service to ensure that the courts system delivers a high quality service and, in particular, that delays in cases coming to trial before the Central Criminal Court and Special Criminal Court are reduced	Monitor impact of additional resources provided to the courts system, including additional judges provided in 2004 Second Special Criminal Court to be established in 2005 Support and underpin the measures taken to provide for specialisation within the High Court	Reduction in delays in the Central Criminal Court New cases coming before the Special Criminal Court are heard without undue delay	Courts Service
We will work closely with the Courts Service in considering how best the Drug Court might be developed	Courts Service to evaluate in 2005 operation of drug court to enable informed decision to be made on its further expansion	The development of a model providing for an integrated cross service strategic response involving court supervised treatment programmes as an alternative to custodial sentences	Courts Service, An Garda Síochána, Probation & Welfare Service
We will ensure that judicial vacancies are filled as soon as possible	Ensure that the appointments process is activated in good time	Vacancies filled	Judicial Appointments Advisory Board, Courts Service
We will manage the administration of the Criminal Legal Aid and Advice Schemes in a cost-effective manner	Liaise with the Courts Service, DPP, Bar Council and Law Society to ensure the successful operation of the Schemes	No backlog of claims No industrial relations problems	Courts Service, DPP, Bar Council, Law Society
We will legislate to provide effective remedies for complaints about judicial misbehaviour, including lay participation in the investigation of complaints (APG – Equality and Law Reform)	The Judicial Council Bill will establish a judicial council, which will have such functions as setting out a code of judicial ethics and conduct, investigating allegations of judicial misconduct and determining disciplinary action	Bill expected to be published in 2005	
We will assist the Courts Service in their development of a Criminal Courts Complex	Participate in the Project Monitoring Board	Provision of Criminal Courts Complex within agreed timeframe and budget (yet to be agreed)	Courts Service, OPW, Department of Finance

PRISONS SERVICE, ORGANISATION AND REFORM

The Department will continue to focus on ensuring that the Prison Service and the Probation and Welfare Service support the aims and objectives of the Minister and Government in relation to the management of offenders with particular emphasis on delivering on relevant Agreed Programme for Government commitments.

We will continue to modernise and reform the Prison Service – the emphasis here will be on continuing to improve the physical infrastructure and to modernise prison procedures and work processes. Major improvements at Limerick and Portlaoise prisons will be followed by the development of a new Mountjoy complex at a site in North County Dublin, additional accommodation at Wheatfield Prison is under consideration and the provision of modern prison accommodation for the Munster region in Cork.

A Prison Bill, providing for various reforms such as the video-conferencing of certain pre-trial hearings, was published in May 2005.

We had anticipated the elimination of conventional overtime working by prison officers in 2005 and replacing it with an additional hours system following the completion of negotiations at the Labour Relations Commission and a subsequent Arbitration process. However, staff rejected the Proposal for Organisational Change which emerged from that process. Consequently, it has become necessary to revisit alternative measures for delivering an efficient and effective service into the future. At the time of going to print the staff are preparing to re-ballot on a slightly revised Proposal which the Minister has offered following representations from the staff association concerned.

A number of measures to remove drugs from prisons are in place and other initiatives are on the way, such as the mandatory drug testing of prisoners. [see commitments under Drugs Objective, page 16].

We will continue to treat the reintegration of prisoners into the community as a priority with a focus on initiatives in the areas of literacy and other educational needs and vocational training. Participation in Prison Education continues to be greater than 50% which is high by international standards. At end 2004, the participation rate was 51%; almost half of the participants were intensively involved (i.e., for more than 10 hours per week of classes). Prison Education in Ireland - A Review of the Curriculum, which was published in 2004, continues to inform the future

development of the prison education curriculum. A Prison Adult Literacy Survey and Guidelines for Quality Literacy Work in Prisons were published in 2003; implementation of the Survey recommendations and the Guidelines is ongoing. For example, the Prison Education Service will be co-ordinating the introduction for the prisoner population of the literacy assessment tool 'Mapping the Learning Journey' to be launched by the National Adult Literacy Agency in 2005. This tool will provide the first national framework for monitoring and recording the progress of literacy learners.

We will continue to support the work of the Prisons Inspectorate which provides independent scrutiny of the custodial management of prisons and the Parole Board which advises the Minister on the management of long term sentences.

The Prison Service will continue to work towards the development of positive sentence management. A Scoping Group to examine Positive Sentence Management will present their report to the Prisons Authority Interim Board in 2005.

2.3 PRISONS OBJECTIVE: *We will seek appropriate resources for the development of the prison infrastructure and support services to ensure that prison accommodation and services develop in line with best practice.*

PRISONS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Level of infrastructural and service improvements arising in the Irish Prison Service.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will complete our programme of modernising prisons and providing extra places, so as to avoid overcrowding and the reopening of the “revolving door” (APG – Crime)	<p>Initiate PPP to develop the replacement complex for Mountjoy Prison on site acquired in North Dublin</p> <p>Examine the provision of additional accommodation at Wheatfield Prison</p> <p>Commence replacement prison for the Munster Region</p> <p>Construct new accommodation for 150 prisoners at Portlaoise Prison</p> <p>Construct new facilities at Limerick Prison to provide new educational and medical services</p>	<p>Business Case for PPP to be completed in 2005</p> <p>New prison complex to be constructed by 2009</p> <p>Plans for replacement of Cork Prison to be substantially completed in 2005</p> <p>Contract to be awarded in 2005 and additional Portlaoise Prison accommodation to be ready for occupation in 2007</p> <p>New facilities at Limerick Prison to be completed in 2006</p>	Department of Finance, Irish Prison Service, OPW
We will tackle the high level of illiteracy and lack of educational accomplishment prevalent in many prisoners by supporting enhanced educational programmes within prisons (APG – Crime)	Planning is ongoing to structure literacy provision in the prison education curriculum in line with ‘A Prison Adult Literacy Survey and Guidelines for Quality Literacy Work in Prisons’, which were published in 2003	<p>Continued development of literacy curriculum.</p> <p>Introduction in the prisons of the literacy assessment tool ‘Mapping the Learning Journey’ which was launched by the National Adult Literacy Agency in 2005</p>	Irish Prison Service

<p>We will provide skills training courses to enhance employment prospects for prisoners on release (APG – Crime)</p>	<p>The Irish Prison Service will continue to work with FAS and other vocational training bodies to review and update, where appropriate, work and training activities and courses to ensure that prisoners can access marketable skills and vocational qualifications to improve their prospects of employability in the labour market on their release</p> <p>The Irish Prison Service is working in partnership with FETAC to increase the number of work training courses which can be pursued to certification levels</p> <p>To assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the work and training services to prisoners, the Irish Prison Service will develop a work/training database which will facilitate the tracking of prisoners' participation and progress in work and training activities and courses during the course of their time in custody</p>	<p>Work training activities and courses updated, as appropriate, to reflect labour market opportunities for ex-prisoners</p> <p>Increased number of prisoners participating on accredited courses and achieving accredited qualifications</p> <p>The database will be rolled out to all institutions during 2005</p>	<p>Irish Prison Service FAS FETAC</p>
<p>In line with the Minister's commitments, we will deliver services in the prison system in a cost effective manner</p>	<p>The IR process regarding the introduction of new working arrangements has stalled following the rejection by staff of an arbitrated offer and we are now pursuing alternative means of delivering cost effectiveness</p>	<p>Delivery of cost effective services</p>	<p>Irish Prison Service, Staff Associations</p>

<p>Implement positive sentence management in all prisons</p>	<p>A Scoping Group to examine Positive Sentence Management (PSM) will present their report to the Prisons Authority Interim Board in 2005.</p> <p>Enhanced Risk/Needs Assessment process to be rolled out to all Institutions.</p> <p>PSM piloted in two institutions</p>	<p>Scoping Group Report endorsed by PAIB during 2005</p> <p>New Assessment process in place in all institutions by mid 2007</p> <p>PSM successfully piloted in two institutions by end 2007</p>	<p>Irish Prison Service Community Agencies Probation & Welfare Service An Garda Síochána Courts Service</p>
<p>Development of more reliable statistics</p>	<p>A research project on recidivism by the Institute of Criminology in UCD is being facilitated by the Irish Prison Service</p> <p>Continue to enhance computerised systems in Irish Prisons</p>	<p>Findings of the research project are expected in late 2006</p>	<p>Irish Prison Service</p>

PROBATION AND WELFARE SERVICE REFORM

The Department's role in this area is to provide policy direction to the Probation and Welfare Service and monitor the performance of the Service in line with agreed policy objectives. The Service plays an important role in the Government's approach to the management of offenders – the objective of the Service is to reduce re-offending and protect the public.

The Probation and Welfare Service prepares pre-sanction reports for the courts to assist judges in determining appropriate sentences, and prepares reports for the Parole Board, Irish Prison Service, the Department, and other authorities. At any one time, the Probation and Welfare Service is supervising, in the community, approximately 5,500 offenders, including life sentence prisoners on temporary release and offenders subject to supervision under the Sex Offenders Act 2001. Over 50 Probation and

Welfare Service personnel work in the Prisons and Places of Detention as well as the Children Detention Schools and Centres to address offending and related issues and to assist in the settlement, in their community, of prisoners on release. The Department, through the Service, funds 75 community and voluntary bodies which work in association with the Service, in the provision of services to offenders on supervision in the community, at risk of re-offending or on release from custody.

2.4 - PROBATION AND WELFARE OBJECTIVE: *We will provide policy direction to the Probation and Welfare Service and monitor the performance of the Service in line with agreed policy objectives.*

PROBATION AND WELFARE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Set of policy objectives agreed for the Probation and Welfare Service and the level of progress achieved on their implementation.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
To enable full use to be made of the Probation and Welfare Service where appropriate as an alternative to custody (APG – Crime)	Working group will review Probation and Welfare Service to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the type of services that may be required in the future; - their relative priority; - the resource implications and different methods of providing the services; - the research /evaluation necessary to examine options identified. 	We expect that the Group will bring forward recommendations in 2005. We are committed to early implementation of measures likely to support more effectively the rehabilitation and re-integration of offenders.	Probation and Welfare Service, Prison Service & Courts Service

HLG 3 - Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship

We will continue to implement Government commitments in relation to asylum, immigration and citizenship matters in addition to updating, as necessary, the legislative base in this area, enhancing a 'whole of Government' approach.

Introduction

The period covered by this Strategy Statement will continue to see a prioritisation of asylum, immigration and citizenship issues. Policy will focus on addressing the growth in legal migration, asylum processing objectives, the need to modernise our laws in the immigration area, streamlining the State's services and developing our reception, accommodation and integration arrangements.

Policy overview

Legal Migration: The growth of the Irish economy in recent years has resulted in a significant increase of legal migration to Ireland, mainly for the purposes of employment and study and it is clear that this trend will continue in the future. The demand for foreign labour is evident from the increase in the number of work permits issued by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, up from approx. 6,000 in 1999 to in the region of 34,000 in 2004. The international education services sector is one of the fastest growing business sectors in the world and Ireland is currently enjoying considerable growth in the area with some 200,000 persons travelling to the State in 2003 in order to study English alone.

The number of non-EEA nationals registered in 2004 by the immigration registration system operated by the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) was over 130,000. These increases place a significant additional workload on the Department, for example, in the processing of visa applications, applications for family reunification, applications for permission to remain in the State and also naturalisation cases.

The CSO report "*Population and Labour Force Projections 2006-2036*" indicates a substantial upward revision in the projected impact of migration on future population growth. The report underlines that the country has moved from a long-standing pattern of emigration to a new pattern of relatively strong immigration which is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

The *Enterprise Strategy Group Report* of July 2004 estimates that demand for new workers over the period

up to 2010 could be in the region of 420,000 and it is clear that apart from immigration, other sources of additional labour supply are reducing. There will therefore be an ongoing requirement for significant immigration levels, particularly of people with higher level qualifications.

In this regard, and having full cognisance of the fact that our immigration function is a key element in safeguarding the security of the State, every effort will be made to ensure that the services provided by the Department in the immigration area are delivered in a cohesive manner and continue, as far as practicable, to keep pace with customer demand and also that our immigration laws and procedures are respected, upheld and enforced.

Asylum and Refugee Protection: Emphasis will also continue to be placed on meeting the State's obligations to refugees under national and international law while at the same time ensuring that our refugee determination process can deal speedily but fairly with unfounded asylum claims.

In the area of asylum, the number of asylum claims fell by some 40% in 2004 as compared to 2003. Considerable progress continues to be made in relation to asylum processing with 3,696 cases on hand in the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) at end of 2004 as compared to 7,390 at end December 2003. Some 1,144 of these cases were over 6 months old as compared to some 6,500 such cases at the end of September 2001. This improvement has resulted from our strategies to enhance the capacity of the asylum determination process to increase the number of decisions issued and to speed up processing timescales.

Faster processing has been introduced for new asylum applications, in particular, which are the subject of a Ministerial Prioritisation Directive. This caseload, which at the end of 2004 covered nationals from *Nigeria, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria and South Africa*, accounts for some 47% of current applications and these are being provided with a first instance decision in the ORAC within around three weeks of application with an appeal, where applicable, being processed by the RAT also in three weeks.

In terms of recommendations/decisions made, 7,121 recommendations were made by the ORAC in 2004. 6,520 decisions were issued by the RAT in 2004 which is an increase of some 30% on the number in 2003. Emphasis over the period of this Strategy Statement will continue to be on the maximisation of scheduling and decision making in both ORAC and RAT.

Returns: In order to protect the integrity of the asylum and immigration process, it is recognised that persons who have no protection needs and no legal right of residence in the State should be returned to their country of origin. In this regard, the number of returns both voluntary and on the basis of deportation orders continues to increase. For example, in 2004, 2,796 deportation orders were signed, of which 598 were effected. Some 611 voluntary returns took place in 2004, 398 of which were under the auspices of a number of programmes operated by the International Organization for Migration.

In line with Government priorities, over the period covered by this Strategy Statement, the number of persons without legal status in the State and with no protection needs returned to their countries of origin will be increased.

IOM Operations: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) operates a number of voluntary return programmes on behalf of the Department. The Department, in conjunction with IOM, operates a voluntary return programme to assist unaccompanied minors living in Ireland to return to their country of origin while two new programmes commenced in 2004 for Sub-Saharan Africa and Non-EEA nationals. From 2001 to the end of 2004, a total of 938 individuals returned to their countries of origin under the IOM's programmes. We will continue to develop and evaluate the voluntary return option.

Tackling Illegal Immigration: The projected migration figures only show part of the overall migration picture as illegal immigration does not feature in such projections. All modern thriving economies have very large numbers of illegally resident foreign nationals. It is not possible to measure the scale of the illegal immigration phenomenon as those who are illegally resident rarely make themselves known to the immigration authorities. Tackling illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings will continue to be key priorities.

Irish Born Child: The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Bill, 2004, the purpose of which was to give effect to the decision of the people in the citizenship referendum, held in June

2004, was enacted on 15 December 2004 and commenced with effect from 1 January 2005. Its primary effect was to make the Irish citizenship entitlements of every child born on the island of Ireland on or after 1 January 2005 dependent on the citizenship of one of his or her parents at the time of the child's birth, and, subject to exceptions, on the duration of such parent's lawful residence at that time. There are exceptions to ensure that the relevant provisions of the British-Irish Agreement are respected. In addition the 2004 Act contains provisions which, inter alia, would prevent the re-introduction of the Investment Based Naturalisation Scheme.

On 14 January 2005 details of revised arrangements were announced for the processing of claims for permission to remain from the non-national parents of Irish born children who were born before 1 January 2005. A separate unit has been established to handle the resulting applications.

Visas: We also aim to process visa applications in an efficient and timely manner and to ensure that the decisions in this regard are of the highest quality. Additional resources have been allocated to this area with a view to enhancing the service provided to customers and reducing the timeframe for processing applications. We are also undertaking an in depth examination of practices and procedures in the visa area with a view to improving the overall service provided to customers.

The Department, in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs, is currently in the process of upgrading the current visa database. The new database will greatly improve the existing visa system.

Following the establishment of visa offices in Beijing and Moscow in June 2000, it is intended to establish an additional visa office in New Delhi in autumn 2005.

Resource Distribution and Information Technology: Another key challenge will be to oversee the movement of staff and resources to strengthen customer service in area of immigration, citizenship and visas. The enhancement of information technology to support service provision in the areas of asylum, immigration and citizenship and visas as well as the development of a new electronic fingerprinting system for asylum seekers and non-nationals on registration with the GNIB will also be important priorities.

Reception/Accommodation: The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) will continue to develop and enhance its operations to ensure that the reception and

accommodation needs of asylum seekers are met and that refugees are supported in integrating into Irish society. It will also continue to promote and develop cross-Department/Agency supports for reception and accommodation of asylum seekers and meeting the integration needs of refugees.

The RIA is now operating 74 centres in 25 counties. This includes 9 large Regional Centres where services can be provided in a more streamlined and cost effective manner while also improving the quality of life of residents, and 9 self catering facilities for those with serious medical conditions or social problems or who have spent over 2 years in Direct Provision.

There has been an increase of over 65% in the numbers being accommodated by the RIA over the last 2 years, from 4,100 in January 2003 to 6,300 at the end of December 2003 (increase of 53% over that year) and almost 6,800 at the end of December 2004. This is attributable in large measure to the withdrawal of Rent Supplements to asylum seekers with effect from 27th May, 2003. Despite the introduction of cost saving measures by the RIA, the outturn for 2004 will be of the order of €83.6 million compared to a 2003 outturn of €76.5 million. The RIA will continue its task of co-ordinating and promoting integration services for refugees through intensive engagement with all service providers and NGOs.

Service Reform: On a 'whole of Government' basis, co-operation between our Department and other Departments and agencies, in particular the Departments of Social and Family Affairs and Enterprise, Trade and Employment and with the GNIB is being strengthened on an ongoing basis.

Government approval has been received for the establishment of an Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), as a "one stop shop", or single contact point for applications for entry to the State linking the current services provided by the Department and the current work permit and visa application process. The aim is to provide a streamlined admission application process for customers and improve customer service. The Service will also include a new immigrant integration unit to promote and co-ordinate social and organisational measures across the whole spectrum of Government for the acceptance of lawful immigrants into Irish economic and cultural life.

Immigration Law Reform: The Department is preparing an Immigration and Residence Bill, giving effect to a key

Government commitment in this area, which will result in a complete overhaul of our current immigration legislation and will replace completely the Aliens Act 1935 and the Immigration Act 2004, which is currently the principal basis for immigration controls. This will result in a system which will give greater clarity and certainty to migrants while at the same time safeguarding the needs of Irish society and ensuring that our immigration process is not open to abuse. A discussion document was published in April 2005 and draft legislation will be produced during 2005. We will also continue to keep our legislation dealing with asylum and deportations under review.

EU/International: On the International front, the Department will continue to work in close co-operation with EU and other partners by contributing to the formulation of asylum and immigration policy in international fora and giving effect to recently adopted EU Directives. In particular, we will work closely with our EU partners to develop and implement the relevant provisions of the recently adopted 'Hague Programme – Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union', which sets out a policy framework within which important issues in the areas of asylum and immigration will be tackled over the next five years. In the area of legal migration, work on the Green Paper on an EU approach to managing economic migration will also be progressed at the EU level throughout 2005.

3.1 - ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION OBJECTIVE: *To ensure asylum and immigration services are delivered efficiently and effectively.*

ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Enhanced asylum/immigration legislative base, improved IT systems, reduced processing times and improved quality of customer service provision.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
<p>We will seek to increase the rate of repatriation of failed asylum applicants, whose applications have been processed to finality, in order to maintain the integrity of asylum policy (APG – Asylum and Immigration)</p>	<p>We plan to process over 2,800 deportation orders in 2005 and will continue to closely liaise with the GNIB in effecting as many of these orders as possible by means of providing charter aircraft and arranging flights on commercial airlines</p>	<p>Improvement in the processing times of cases, i.e. for deportations or leave to remain</p> <p>A framework contract with a panel of aircraft providers in place to enable flexible use of charter air removals</p> <p>Improved rates of Voluntary return of those who are illegally in the State</p> <p>Implementation of report on Business Analysis and Review of Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship process</p> <p>Implementation of Information Technology Plan for Asylum sector</p>	<p>IOM, GNIB, Department of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Embassies</p>
<p>We will work with the International Office of Migration to devise a voluntary repatriation programme for illegal immigrants (APG – Asylum and Immigration)</p>	<p>Continue to develop the scope for the voluntary return of asylum seekers and illegal immigrants through the voluntary return programme with IOM</p> <p>It is planned to return 80 individuals under the Sub-Saharan programme and 450 under the General VARP and 50 unaccompanied minors in 2005</p>	<p>An increase in the numbers availing of the voluntary return option to their countries of origin</p> <p>The promotion of a humane and dignified form of departure from the State, with a high level of co-operation between the IOM and the Department</p> <p>Evaluation of, and possible extensions to, the voluntary return programmes in operation</p>	<p>IOM</p>

<p>We will ensure that new asylum applicants are dealt with within six months and that other applications which are currently outstanding can be dealt with quickly (APG – Asylum and Immigration)</p>	<p>Continuously review and streamline asylum processing arrangements to ensure that scheduling and decision making is maximised</p> <p>Put in place optimum level of approved staff resources in the Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship areas and ensure the most efficient and effective use of these resources</p> <p>Support the ORAC and the RAT, where appropriate, in fulfilling their mandates</p> <p>Continue to provide the legal assistance scheme for asylum seekers</p> <p>Continue to enhance co-operation with the UNHCR on asylum matters</p> <p>Keep our laws and procedures in relation to the processing of applications for refugee status under review</p>	<p>Extent to which new asylum applications are dealt with within six months timeframe and applications subject to Ministerial prioritisation orders dealt with speedily and cases on hands kept to a minimum</p> <p>Effectiveness of asylum framework in delivering the Government's strategy and priorities in the asylum area</p> <p>Implementation of report on Business Analysis and Review of Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship process</p> <p>Implementation of Information Technology Plan for Asylum sector</p>	<p>ORAC, RAT, Office of the Attorney General, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government.</p>
<p>We will implement and monitor the revised arrangements for the processing of applications from non-nationals to remain in the State on the basis of parentage of an Irish born child born prior to 1 January 2005</p>	<p>A revised arrangements scheme for the processing of such applications was announced in January 2005. The closing date for the receipt of applications was 31 March 2005</p>	<p>The aim is to have the majority of applications processed to completion in 2005</p>	
<p>We will ensure that the Reception & Integration Agency works effectively to fulfil its mandate (APG – Asylum and Immigration)</p>	<p>We will ensure that appropriate coordinating and liaison structures are in place so as to (a) maximise the mainstreaming of statutory services for both convention and quota refugees and (b) facilitate effective contributions to integration services from the NGO sector</p>	<p>New coordinating structures implemented and existing structures reviewed and maintained</p> <p>Continued development of common agendas between RIA and NGOs</p> <p>Pilot projects extended at County and City Board level to implement integrated services</p> <p>Continued direct supports for quota refugees provided</p>	<p>Relevant Government Departments NGOs</p>

	We will ensure a sufficient supply of suitable accommodation throughout the State to house asylum seekers and that their ancillary needs are met	All accommodation and ancillary needs of asylum seekers met	Relevant Government Departments, NGO's
	The RIA will continue to work with the Health Services Executive (HSE) to: (i) develop health services for asylum seekers and refugees and (ii) to promote training and understanding across the health services of the many issues involved in providing services to a multi-ethnic cohort	Existing pilot projects e.g. Health Information Programme (HIP) and other projects completed HIP project developed among the HSE Regions Health information transfer and statistical systems mechanisms among HSE regions reviewed Computerised systems developed to support all the processes in providing health care processes Methods of service delivery reviewed and developed, particularly in the context of cultural and language differences Progress in HSE regions on health care reviewed	Relevant Government Departments, the HSE and NGOs
We will prepare a new Immigration and Residence Bill which will consolidate legislation in the area and provide for future developments (APG – Asylum and Immigration)	A discussion document was published in April 2005. Comments made in response to the document will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the legislation for publication in 2005.	To develop a consolidated and comprehensive framework within which immigration policy can be developed and implemented	Attorney General's Office, other relevant Government Departments, especially Enterprise, Trade and Employment
We will review processing arrangements for work visas, including greater integration of consular and commercial reviews to ensure both speedy processing and reasonable safeguards	Decisions on visa applications are currently taking 4-6 weeks to process, due to the high volume of applications received. Every effort is being made to reduce this processing time to provide an improved service to customers.	Visa applications to be processed in a timely and efficient manner	Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, and the GNIB

<p>To work towards the development of a streamlined immigration and citizenship process within the framework of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) in cooperation with other Departments</p>	<p>To bring proposals to Government and to implement the Government's decision regarding the new services structure</p> <p>To develop and implement, with the assistance of a consultancy study, a management information and IT Strategy framework for the Immigration and Citizenship areas</p> <p>To develop an electronic fingerprinting system for asylum seekers and non-EEA nationals on registration in the State</p>	<p>To develop proposals and liaise with relevant Departments on the establishment of the INIS</p> <p>IT Strategy in place for Immigration and Citizenship area and implementation underway as far as possible during the time period of the Strategy Statement - in view of the complexity of the preparatory and design framework</p> <p>To carry out all necessary work including tendering process with a view to introduction of electronic fingerprinting system for asylum seekers and non EEA nationals on registration in 2006/2007</p>	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Relevant agencies and Departments</p> <p>ORAC, An Garda Síochána</p>
<p>Ensure that the State's arrangements on migration, asylum and related policy issues are developed and represented in harmony with our partners in the EU, Council of Europe and other relevant international groupings</p>	<p>Participate in the development of immigration and asylum policy at EU level, and at discussions of the Council of Europe and other international bodies</p> <p>Work with partners at EU level to develop and implement the provisions of the Hague Programme and any Action Plan</p>	<p>Policy and legal reforms at EU and other international levels which adequately reflect the concerns of the State and which can be implemented effectively at national level</p> <p>Meet the relevant deadlines in any Action Plan (subject to agreement at EU level)</p>	<p>Council of European Union, European Commission, relevant Government Departments and agencies</p>

HLG 4 – Promoting a Fair, Tolerant and Caring Society

We will promote the development of a caring, tolerant and fair society through the implementation of appropriate policies.

Introduction

In the period 2005-2007, the Department will continue to advance gender equality, to address discrimination in the employment and other spheres, to implement the Disability Bill, to bring forward anti-racism policies and to support childcare programmes and initiatives. Much of our work programme in this area arises from Agreed Programme commitments which, for example, in the area of childcare, are comprehensive. Obligations in these areas which derive from Ireland's membership of the EU, Council of Europe, UN and the International Labour Organisation are important in this context and require input, follow through and monitoring at national level.

Policy overview

A policy overview is provided separately under each of the objective areas – Gender Equality, Employment Equality, Disability, Supporting Diversity and Tolerance and Childcare – under this HLG.

GENDER EQUALITY

In relation to Gender Equality, Sustaining Progress provides

for the development of a National Women's Strategy (NWS). The drafting of the NWS during 2005, and its implementation in the coming years, will be the major development on gender equality over the period of this Strategy. The NWS will cover the key areas of national life affecting women, including: employment, health, education and training, childcare, decision-making, violence against women, and poverty and social inclusion, as well as the institutional structures and supports in place to advance equality for women. An Interdepartmental Committee, chaired by an Assistant Secretary has been established and a Consultation Group, comprising the Social Partners and the National Women's Council of Ireland will support the development of the Strategy. It is intended that the Strategy will be completed during 2005.

4.1 - GENDER EQUALITY OBJECTIVE: *To promote equality of opportunity between women and men through the development, implementation, and monitoring of appropriate policies.*

GENDER EQUALITY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The National Women's Strategy published and other national and international gender equality commitments implemented.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will implement the commitment in Sustaining Progress to develop a National Women's Strategy (NWS)	Chair and provide secretarial support to the Inter-Departmental Committee and Consultation Group Draft the strategy	Publication of NWS by end 2005 Annual reporting of progress on implementation of strategy	All relevant Government Departments, Social Partners, National Women's Council of Ireland
We will report on the implementation of the Government's commitment to ensure that a minimum of 40% of state board nominations are from each gender (APG – Equality and Law Reform)	Preparation of six monthly reports to Government on the gender share of representatives on State Boards, including recent nominees	Submission of six monthly reports to Government	All Government Departments

We will support the implementation of the NDP including the commitments on gender mainstreaming and positive action measures for women	Supports offered by the NDP Gender Equality Unit to implementing bodies involved in the NDP	Monitor gender share of relevant outputs reported to NDP Monitoring Committees	Relevant Government Departments, relevant Social Partners
	Support the work of and participate in relevant NDP committees	Submit progress reports in Spring and Autumn each year and attend NDP Monitoring Committees	NDP Structures, Departments of Finance and Enterprise, Trade and Employment
	Manage NDP Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee	Organise two meetings of Committee each year and report to NDP Monitoring Committees	Relevant Government Departments, State Bodies, NDP Monitoring Committees, Social Partners
	Roll-out of Phase 11 of the Equality for Women Measure in Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) areas	All projects approved for funding to be operational by end 2005 and completed by mid 2007	Relevant State Bodies, Social Partners, Women's Groups
	Plan and implement mainstreaming of learning from Phase I projects	Pilot mainstreaming during 2005 and extend implementation in 2006-2007	Relevant Government Departments and State Bodies
	Promote awareness of gender equality issues	Arrange International Women's Day event; participate in relevant conferences etc	The public and media
We will continue to positively influence policy making at national, EU and other international levels	Oversee the implementation of the report to Government on the Gender Pay Gap	Publication of research on the gender pay gap among graduates	Steering Group, ESRI
		Monitor national data on the gender pay gap	CSO
	Prepare Ireland's sixth periodic report under CEDAW	Commence drafting report in 2007	All Government Departments
	Service relevant EU/UN/ Council of Europe committees on gender equality	Ireland's position represented at EU/UN/CoE	Relevant Government Departments
	Input to National Employment Action Plan and National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion	Prepare and submit material	Equality Authority, Dept of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY

The Department continues to progress the enactment and implementation of “family friendly” legislation. Improvements in maternity protection were implemented by the enactment of the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004 while we will strengthen the Adoptive Leave and Parental Leave legislation in 2005.

The Equality Act 2004 implemented three new EU equality Directives having implications for employment and also provided for improvements to the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts, including the transfer of jurisdiction in discriminatory dismissal cases from the Labour Court to the Equality Tribunal. The Equality Tribunal has also been given a more extensive role in relation to equal treatment in occupational pension schemes cases. It is anticipated that

the next three years will see the development of new case law in these areas. Acknowledging the importance of easily accessible information and fora for redress and to promote work/life balance as well as equal treatment and non-discrimination, work on restatement of the legislation in this area will be carried out during 2005 and 2006.

4.2 - EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY OBJECTIVE: *We aim to enhance the existing statutory foundation for equality in employment and to support the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities.*

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Parental Leave legislation amended and certified restatements of the amended Parental Leave, Adoptive Leave, Maternity Protection and Employment Equality Acts published by end 2006.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will strengthen the parental leave scheme in line with the recommendations of the social partners (APG – Childcare and Children)	Amendment of the Parental Leave Legislation	Amendments to Parental Leave Legislation completed by 2005	Oireachtas
We will enhance the existing statutory foundation for equality	Restatement of the Maternity Protection Acts 1994 and 2004, the Adoptive Leave Acts 1995 and 2005, the Parental Leave Acts 1998 and 2005 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004	Certification and publication of restatements by end of 2006	Office of the Attorney General
We will develop and pursue equal opportunity and equal access policies	Participate in the development and adoption of the Recast Directive dealing with gender equality issues Monitor the progress of and prepare inputs as appropriate to EU policy on anti-discrimination for 2006 onwards	Represent Ireland in the relevant Working Group in relation to the Directive EU proposal expected late 2005, early 2006	Perm. Rep., EU Commission, other Government Departments, the Equality Authority and the Social Partners

We will publish regular reviews of the operation of equality legislation and ensure that the enforcement authorities are in a position to effectively carry out their duties (APG – Equality and Law Reform)	Monitor and review the operation of the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 with a view to assessing whether there is a need to add to the anti-discrimination grounds	Review completed by mid 2005	Office of the Attorney General, Equality Authority, Equality Tribunal, Human Rights Commission, Civil Society/NGOs
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DISABILITY

The Disability Act 2005 contains a range of positive action measures to support participation in society by people with disabilities and will complement the existing equality infrastructure. The Act is a key element of the **National Disability Strategy** launched by the Taoiseach on 21 September, 2004. The Strategy also comprises the Comhairle (Amendment) Bill [Department of Social and Family Affairs], six outline Sectoral Plans and a multi-annual investment programme for disability

support services. The Act follows extensive negotiations with a Consultation Group representative of people with disabilities.

4.3 - DISABILITY OBJECTIVE: *We will develop the legal framework in line with Government policy to support the equal participation in society of people with disabilities.*

DISABILITY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Disability Bill enacted in 2005.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will support the Disability Bill as it goes through the Oireachtas (APG – Disability and Caring)	Undertake all preparatory and support work connected with the enactment of the legislation	By end 2005 - Bill enacted July, 2005	Department of Health and Children, Department of Finance, Department of An Taoiseach, other Government Departments, Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, National Disability Authority (NDA) and Disability NGO's, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, other interests as appropriate
Establish a National Centre for Universal Design to support the ongoing development of universal access and usability (APG – Disability and Caring)	Statutory basis for Centre provided in the Disability Act 2005	Establish centre by 1 January, 2007	NDA

Legislate to put an employment target for people with disabilities on a statutory basis in the civil and public service	Statutory basis for target provided in Disability Act 2005	Commencement of statutory obligations by 1 July, 2006	All Government Departments and Public Bodies
Raise Awareness of disability equality and access issues	Support a National Information Day and other awareness raising projects	November 2005 Ongoing throughout 2005	
We will continue to ensure effective participation in the development of disability equality policy in an international context	Participation in the work of relevant International Bodies and in particular EU, Council of Europe and UN fora	Ongoing	Council of Europe, European Commission, Dept of Foreign Affairs
To support, with the NDA, the development of a public service accessibility programme	Continue to assist in the implementation of the programme and guidelines for Government Departments and public service bodies	2006	NDA

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

The increasing diversity of Irish society is a source of economic, social and cultural enrichment. It also presents challenges and issues to be tackled in a mature and sensible fashion. The National Plan against Racism (NPAR) provides a strategic direction for policy and practical action in the area of combating racism. It will run from 2005 to 2008. A Strategic Monitoring Group (SMG), representative of Government, Social Partners and Civil Society will oversee the implementation of the NPAR. The Department has a central co-ordinating role in the implementation process and will support the SMG.

We will co-ordinate steps to increase the effectiveness of policies to improve the situation of Travellers in Irish society. We will also continue to monitor and evaluate the operation of the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004, which prohibit both direct and indirect discrimination in the area of

provision of and access to goods and services on nine grounds; gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community. There will also be an emphasis on developing measures to mainstream equality in public policy and public service delivery.

4.4 - SUPPORTING DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

OBJECTIVE: *We will work towards advancing equal opportunities in the area of provision of and access to goods, facilities and services and we will promote respect for diversity and cultural differences by implementing policies in particular to combat racism and discrimination.*

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The National Action Plan against Racism (NPAR) and the Traveller initiative programmes to be implemented, and the required review and updating of Equal Status legislation carried out.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
We will uphold the entitlement of all people to equal treatment before the law (APG – Supporting Diversity and Tolerance)	Monitor and review the operation of the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004, in particular, assess whether there is a need to add to the anti-discrimination grounds	November 2005	Attorney General, Equality Authority, Equality Tribunal, Human Rights Commission, Civil Society / NGOs
	Re-statement of Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004	End 2006	Attorney General's Office
	Develop mechanisms for the proofing of policies and services in the public sector for impact on any of the groups protected by equality legislation	Submit Report of Equality Working Group to Plenary on Sustaining Progress and Cabinet in 2005	Equality Proofing Working Group, relevant Departments, Equality Authority, Civil Society / NGOs
	Commence transposition of EC Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services into national law by amending the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004	Transposition into national law must be completed by 21 December, 2007	Civil Society / NGOs, relevant Departments, Insurance Companies, CSO, Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority (IFSRA), Motor Advisory Board, Equality Authority, Human Rights Commission, Attorney General

<p>We will undertake an annual review of the Anti-Racism campaign in order to identify new avenues to combat racism (APG – Supporting Diversity and Tolerance)</p>	<p>The Know Racism programme has been evaluated and the lessons learnt have been incorporated into the NPAR (see below)</p> <p>We will continue to support anti-racist awareness raising initiatives such as Anti-Racist Workplace Week and Holocaust Memorial Day</p>	<p>Anti-racist awareness initiatives supported</p>	<p>Equality Bodies / Government Departments and other relevant participants</p>
<p>The National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) will be published and measures agreed by Government implemented</p>	<p>Publish NPAR</p> <p>Establish Strategic Management Group (SMG) to oversee implementation of agreed measures (note period of NPAR is 2005 - 2008)</p>	<p>NPAR published January, 2005</p> <p>SMG in place - early 2005</p> <p>SMG assisted in overseeing implementation agreed measures in accordance with targets and timescales of NPAR</p>	<p>Relevant Departments/Offices, An Garda Síochána, The Equality Authority, National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), State Agencies, Local Government bodies, Civil Society Groups</p>
<p>We will appoint an expert group on managing cultural change to advise Government on strategic issues and integrated approach to this complex issue (APG – Supporting Diversity and Tolerance)</p>	<p>In line with the agreed measures in the NPAR we will advise the Minister on the role of the expert group on managing cultural change which is to advise Government on strategic issues and integrated approach to such issues</p>	<p>Completed within the timescales decided under NPAR</p>	<p>Relevant Departments/Agencies</p>
<p>We will co-ordinate steps to increase the effectiveness of policies to improve the situation of Travellers in Irish society</p>	<p>Support the High Level Group on Traveller issues</p> <p>Piloting of an inter-agency approach to delivery of services to meet the needs of Travellers</p> <p>Support the Traveller Monitoring Committee in the co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations of the Report of the Task Force on Travelling Community (1995)</p>	<p>Report to Cabinet Committee by Autumn 2005</p> <p>Proposals for a general funding scheme to be presented during 2005</p> <p>Publish 2nd Progress Report during 2005</p>	

We will review campaigns designed to promote tolerance and understanding between the settled and travelling communities (APG – Supporting Diversity and Tolerance)	Develop a programme to improve relations between Travellers and the settled community	Proposal to Minister by end 2005	Traveller Organisations, relevant Departments / Agencies
We will continue to ensure effective participation at EU and international level	<p>Monitor the progress of and prepare inputs to EU policy on Anti discrimination for 2006 onwards</p> <p>Promote and participate in the implementation of the EU Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination 2001-2006</p> <p>Participate in meetings at EU level as appropriate and contribute to policy deliberations</p> <p>Prepare for and participate in Ireland's first report to UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Committee in March 2005</p> <p>To provide assistance and information to the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a Council of Europe body, in the preparation of its 3rd Report on Racism</p>	<p>EU proposal expected late 2005, early 2006</p> <p>Regular attendance at meetings with policy input being made to post 2006 proposed Programme</p> <p>Adoption of instruments and policies which reflect the concerns of the State</p> <p>Ireland's first report was submitted to CERD Committee in March 2004. The Report was examined in March 2005. Arrangements in place for follow-up with CERD Co-ordinator</p> <p>Ireland to be examined in 2006 with report published possibly by 2007</p>	<p>National Working Group on Implementation of Programme, Civil Society / NGOs, Equality Authority</p> <p>Council of the European Union</p> <p>Relevant Departments/Offices, An Garda Síochána, The Equality Authority</p> <p>Relevant Departments / Offices, Equality Bodies and Civil Society</p>
Each relevant Government Department will allocate specific staff whose principal duty will be to ensure that the Department is effectively engaged with the RAPID communities along the lines of the final report of the Integrated Services Process (APG – Regenerating Disadvantaged Communities)	A Departmental official has been appointed to support the implementation of the RAPID programme by the Department and associated agencies	Continued contribution to the work of the RAPID National Monitoring Committee and effective support and co-ordination provided for the implementation of RAPID by the Department and associated agencies	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, ADM, An Garda Síochána, Probation and Welfare Service

<p>Each Department will publish as part of its annual report a statement of the work undertaken to support Integrated Services work in these areas (APG – Regenerating Disadvantaged Communities)</p>	<p>The Integrated Services Process was replaced by the Rapid programme. The Department's annual reports will report on the ongoing implementation of RAPID.</p>	<p>Implementation of RAPID reported in Department's Annual Report</p>	<p>Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, ADM, An Garda Síochána, Probation and Welfare Service</p>
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CHILDCARE

The implementation of the €499.3 million Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000 - 2006 (EOCP) is led by the Childcare Directorate of the Department and continues to progress well. The Programme receives EU support of nearly €180 million and aims to increase further the supply of childcare places to support the childcare needs of parents in employment, education and training. The EOCP also aims to contribute to the staffing costs of services in areas of significant disadvantage, to enhance the quality of childcare in Ireland and to co-ordinate services to meet local needs.

The 2005 Budget brought increases in capital funding totalling €50 million for the development of childcare services under the Programme for the period 2005 to 2007 and a further increase of €40 million over two years for the next phase of the EOCP. This will facilitate the creation of additional community based, not-for-profit childcare services to meet childcare needs at local level.

The EOCP originally set a target to increase the supply of centre based childcare places by 50 per cent (equal to 28,300 new places) by programme end. This target was revised upwards to 55 per cent and 31,300 places following the mid term review of the NDP.

Funding commitments to date will actually deliver over 33,500 new places and, of these, over 20,500 have already been created (mid 2004) while about 20,600 existing childcare places also benefit from support under the EOCP. During 2005 and thereafter, the allocation of the additional capital funding provided under the 2005 Budget will continue to be made to those groups which fill proven gaps in service availability, which offer a range of services to meet the childcare needs of parents and which offer good value for money invested. This will lead to a further increase in the supply of childcare places.

The Department actively supported the implementation of the mid-term review of the NDP which agreed greater prioritisation of the Government commitment on equality and social impacts and increased funding for the Programme.

The EOCP will also assist the Government to meet the targets on female labour market participation set at the EU Lisbon Summit and the targets on childcare provision for the 0 - 3 year age group set at the EU Barcelona Summit.

4.5 - CHILDCARE OBJECTIVE: *To continue to deliver the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000 to 2006, develop proposals for a successor to the present Programme, and work with the childcare sector and other social partners to develop the sector to meet the childcare needs of parents who are in employment, education and training.*

CHILDCARE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *31,000 new centre based childcare places provided by end of 2007.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
<p>The Childcare Directorate will continue to oversee the delivery of the NDP/CSF supported Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000 - 2006 (EOCP)</p>	<p>The Childcare Directorate has overall responsibility for the delivery of the following actions under the EOCP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme Planning - Grant applications - Appraisals - Approvals - Financial management - Monitoring - Reporting - Programme Evaluation 	<p>Management of Expenditure within the annual Estimates provision and on track to meet with the targets set for the Programme</p> <p>Prompt turn around of fully completed grant applications</p> <p>Timely appraisal process</p> <p>Sound financial management</p> <p>Timely and satisfactory achievement of all the Programme's targets and indicators (subject to externalities)</p>	<p>ADM Ltd which undertakes much of the day to day operational work on behalf of the Department</p> <p>Other key linkages include: Regional Assemblies as managing authorities for the NDP Regional Operational Programmes; Departments of Finance and Enterprise, Trade and Employment, as paying authorities for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) funds; Department of Finance (Public Expenditure Division) as provider of Exchequer funding</p>
<p>We will continue to support the County Childcare Committees in the delivery of their five year County Childcare Strategies which provide the planning and funding basis to significantly increase local childcare provision (APG – Childcare and Children)</p>	<p>The provision of EOCP funding (currently almost €8 million) to support the work of the CCCs in the delivery of their Five Year Strategies through annual Action Plans</p>	<p>Dynamic annual action plans</p> <p>High local profile for childcare</p> <p>Strong linkages with County Development Plans</p>	<p>County Childcare Committees, County Development Boards</p>
<p>We will seek to significantly expand the number of new childcare places supported by state funding, to contribute to the staffing costs of services which support childcare needs of disadvantaged parents to help them to break the cycle of disadvantage and to enhance quality awareness within the childcare sector (APG – Childcare and Children)</p>	<p>The Programme provides capital grant assistance to community based not for profit groups and to private childcare providers to create new and quality enhanced childcare places</p> <p>Grant assistance is also available towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staffing costs of community based not for profit childcare groups which have a focus on significantly disadvantaged families; - improving quality; - enhancing co-ordination within the childcare sector 	<p>Increase by 55 per cent (equal to 31,300 places) the number of centre based childcare places available nationally</p> <p>Support 2,800 childcare practitioners working in services with a focus on disadvantage</p> <p>20 collaborative actions between CCCs and NVCOs</p>	<p>Community based not for profit childcare providers, Private childcare providers, ADM Ltd., County Childcare Committees, National Voluntary Childcare Organisations, Other Government Departments and Agencies with an involvement in Childcare sector, Social Partners</p>

<p>We will ensure that there is a network of supports in place for child minders (APG – Childcare and Children)</p>	<p>EOCP funds training, networking and information for childminders</p> <p>Implement childminders small grant scheme to participants in Quality Awareness Programme (€2.8 million available for this initiative annually, subject to demand)</p>	<p>Increase in the number of childminders who are voluntarily notified under the Child Care Regulations 1996 and 1997</p>	<p>City and County Childcare Committees, Health Authorities</p>
<p>We will expand support for the provision of out-of-hours childcare programmes based in schools (APG – Childcare and Children)</p>	<p>Encourage Community and private childcare providers to offer integrated childcare services, combining the needs of pre-school children and care for school going children outside school hours</p> <p>Explore development of school age childcare services on school premises</p>	<p>Increased provision of school aged childcare</p>	<p>Department of Education and Science, Schools' Trustees, School Managing Authorities</p>
<p>We will continue to engage with the childcare sector, with the social partners and with other Government Departments to foster the development of the sector to meet the childcare needs of parents who are in employment, education and training and to ensure that childcare continues to develop to address the National Anti-Poverty Strategy</p>	<p>We will continue to work through the National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee to further develop the sector</p> <p>We will actively participate in the work of the various fora aimed at the support of parents who may be in employment, education and training or parents who are otherwise seeking to break the cycle of disadvantage for their families</p> <p>We will contribute actively to the development of quality childcare places being supported under the EOCP and strive to meet best international standards</p>	<p>Active programme of work</p> <p>Awareness across Government Departments and the social partners of the key issues in relation to childcare</p> <p>Awareness of the role and achievements of the EOCP</p>	<p>Department of Health and Children, Department of Education and Science, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Social and Family Affairs, Department of the Taoiseach, National Children's Office, Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), National Economic and Social Forum, National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee and its members</p>
<p>We will develop well informed proposals for the next phase of the EOCP as an element of the successor to the National Development Plan 2000 - 2006</p>	<p>Review National Childcare Strategy</p> <p>Review current EOCP phase</p> <p>Identify service gaps</p> <p>Consult / agree on new Programme</p>	<p>A well formulated and timely programme/ strategy based on clearly stated policy objectives following consultation process</p>	<p>Key players in childcare sector, Department of Finance, Other relevant Government Departments</p>

HLG 5 – Contributing to a Secure and Peaceful Society

We will contribute to securing a lasting settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict and achieving a secure and peaceful society.

Policy overview

Securing a lasting settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict is central to achieving our goal of a secure and peaceful society. The Department, therefore, plays an active role in the Northern Ireland Peace Process, together with the Departments of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs. The Department has responsibilities in relation to particular matters within our competence such as decommissioning, paramilitarism, prisoners and security.

A primary function of the Department is to ensure that, through appropriate policies and measures, and with the active involvement of An Garda Síochána, the security of the State is guaranteed. This means confronting the terrorist threat, whether that threat is posed by domestic or by international terrorism. The Department must ensure that the capacity exists to respond swiftly to combat any such threat. At EU level, the recently adopted 'Hague Programme – Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union', sets out a policy framework within which such threats are to be tackled over the next five years. Ireland has responsibilities to its EU partners and the wider international community and participation in international cooperation initiatives is essential to ensure that we fully play our role.

NORTHERN IRELAND AND PARAMILITARISM

A priority going forward will be on the delivery of Government commitments as set out in the Agreed Programme either in a lead capacity or through our contribution where other Government Departments have a lead role.

Areas to be progressed include; North/South and British/Irish institutions and processes, the establishment of key public inquiries, structured cooperation on criminal justice matters, supporting the work of the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning and the Independent Monitoring Commission and working with An Garda Síochána, the Northern Ireland Office and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) on police co-operation including personnel exchanges and secondments and the Remembrance Commission, and PROTECT N&S, the joint

initiative between the Probation and Welfare Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.

The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) continues to play a pivotal role in the peace process. As decommissioning is such a crucial issue in the negotiations, the IICD will have a vital role if a comprehensive settlement is to be achieved.

The Independent Monitoring Commission was established on 25 November 2003 under enacting legislation that became effective on 7 January, 2004. The Commission's role, agreed by both Governments, is to monitor and report on the carrying out of commitments relating to the ending of paramilitary activity and the programme of security normalisation in Northern Ireland and to consider claims that any party in the Northern Ireland Assembly was in breach of the requirements of the Good Friday Agreement. In 2004, the Commission produced three reports, two of which were submitted to both Governments in relation to paramilitary activity on the Island of Ireland.

The Remembrance Commission's role is to administer the Scheme of Acknowledgement, Remembrance and Assistance for Victims in this Jurisdiction of the Conflict in Northern Ireland. The original Scheme was amended to widen the criteria for eligibility of family members of victims fatally injured for an acknowledgement payment.

As of 22 December 2004, the Commission had provided assistance totalling €620,334 to individuals and €1,476,650 to victim support organisations (including Justice for the Forgotten and the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund).

5.1 - PEACE OBJECTIVE *Contribute to the resolution of outstanding issues in the Peace Process, principally through securing an end to all forms of paramilitarism on the island of Ireland and the restoration of democratic representative institutions in Northern Ireland.*

PEACE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The Government is satisfied that the Department continues to make a meaningful contribution to the peace process.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Support the Government in relation to their role in the Northern Ireland Political Talks	Provide briefing and advice to the Minister and the Government in formulating and implementing policy as requested	Appropriate briefing and advice is provided in a timely manner	Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Foreign Affairs
Facilitate the work of the IICD, and the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC)	Cooperation with the Northern Ireland Office to ensure that all necessary financial and staffing resources are in place	Ensure both Commissions are adequately resourced to carry out their functions	Northern Ireland Office
Facilitate the work of the Remembrance Commission	Provision of the necessary financial and staffing resources to allow the Commission complete its work	Provision of resources in a timely manner	
North/South Structured Cooperation in Criminal Justice Matters	Work with the Northern Ireland Office to identify important areas where North/South cooperation will be mutually beneficial	The signing of an International Agreement on Structured cooperation by the British and Irish Governments	Northern Ireland Office, PSNI, An Garda Síochána
We will encourage maximum co-operation between police forces North and South (APG – Building Peace and Justice)	Ongoing engagement with An Garda Síochána, the Northern Office, the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the PSNI with a view to implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on police co-operation between An Garda Síochána and the PSNI	Personnel exchanges and Secondments between An Garda Síochána and the PSNI implemented in 2005 Lateral entry between the An Garda Síochána and the PSNI implemented by 2007	Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Finance, An Garda Síochána, PSNI, Northern Ireland Office, Northern Ireland Policing Board

TERRORISM

It has been and continues to be the case that the principal terrorist threat arises from indigenous terrorist organisations, and a substantial body of legislation in the form of the Offences against the State Acts 1939-1998 has been developed to counter this threat. Although the Good Friday Agreement has resulted in a cessation of terrorist activities by a number of terrorist organisations, most notably, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), dissident republican groups, namely, the Real IRA and the Continuity IRA, continue to pose a real and substantial threat.

The Good Friday Agreement has also brought the benefit of enhanced co-operation between authorities North and South in a range of criminal justice matters, and further progress will be made in this regard.

Increasingly the focus of anti-terrorist policy is on the international context. Following the Madrid bombings on 11 March 2004, the EU response resulted in the European Council Declaration on Combating Terrorism. This and the follow-up EU Plan of Action on combating terrorism will be the main instruments, within the framework of the EU, influencing actions in this area over the coming period. Anti-terrorism work is also taking place in other international fora such as the Council of Europe and the UN. We will continue to participate in the important work of these bodies.

We will publish the Criminal Justice (Mutual Assistance) Bill (formerly referred to as the Criminal Justice (International Co-operation) Bill) in mid 2005. The Bill will, inter alia, give effect to six mutual assistance instruments, three of which have been identified for implementation as a matter of priority in the Declaration.

The Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2005 enables the State to play its part in the fight against international terrorism. The Act gives effect in our law to the European Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism by making provision for terrorist offences as a separate and distinct category of offences, and by providing for the application of relevant provisions of our existing anti-terrorist legislation to terrorist groups who commit terrorist offences whether based inside or outside the State. The Act will also enable effect to be given to four UN Conventions directed at terrorism.

5.2 - ANTI-TERRORISM OBJECTIVE: *To combat the threat to the security of the State or to the international community posed by terrorism.*

ANTI-TERRORISM PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *All threats to the security of the State are identified in a timely manner and appropriate counter-measures taken.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
To keep under review and identify appropriate responses to threats posed by terrorism to the Security of the State or the international community	Consult regularly with An Garda Síochána on security matters. Provide briefing and advice to the Minister on the terrorist threat. Keep under review security legislation and make any necessary proposals for legislative and operational changes. Continue to participate in EU and UN fora	Compliance with international obligations The Minister and the Government are advised in good time of developments affecting the domestic and international security situation and of any steps necessary to ensure the security of the State	European Union, UN, Bilateral cooperation with other Governments, An Garda Síochána, Defence Forces
Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Bill 2002	The Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2005 was enacted in early 2005	Enactment of the Bill	Office of the Attorney General, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel

We will deploy the full weight of the State, including the post-Omagh legislation against any organisation that seeks to continue the violence of the last 30 years (APG – Crime)	An Garda Síochána continues to take action against dissident republican groups. The Criminal Justice (Terrorist Offences) Act 2005 strengthens the law for this purpose.	Enactment of the Bill	
Criminal Justice (Mutual Assistance) Bill formerly referred to as the Criminal Justice (International Cooperation) Bill	This Bill is scheduled to be published by mid 2005	Enactment of the Bill	Office of the Attorney General, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel Other Government Departments/Offices

EMERGENCY PLANNING

An effective and coordinated response to a major emergency, whether arising from a terrorist attack or otherwise, is a critical element of national policy, including national anti-terrorism policy. Under the oversight of the Office of Emergency Planning, Department of Defence, we are developing strategic emergency planning guidance which documents our responsibilities in this area, including our responsibilities to An Garda Síochána and the Coroner Service. We will also continue to contribute to the emergency planning functions of other State organisations in the context of existing national emergency planning arrangements, including the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning, Inter-Departmental Working Group on Emergency Planning and the ad hoc Inter-Departmental

Committee on the Review of the Framework for Coordinated Response to Major Emergency. At the EU level, the recently adopted 'Hague Programme – Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union', sets out a policy framework within which the public order and security aspects of crises of a cross-border nature are to be addressed. We will continue to participate in deliberations at EU level on these issues as appropriate.

5.3 - EMERGENCY PLANNING OBJECTIVE: *To ensure an appropriate departmental response in the event of a national emergency.*

EMERGENCY PLANNING PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *The Department to maintain up-to-date Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
To maintain excellence in and keep under review the emergency planning function	Prepare and review strategic emergency planning guidance for Minister and Department Contribute to national emergency planning arrangements Contribute to review of Framework for Co-ordinated Response to Major Emergency	Maintain up-to-date strategic emergency planning guidance document Ensure Departmental issues are reflected Ensure Departmental issues are reflected	Office of Emergency Planning Office of Emergency Planning, Government Task Force on Emergency Planning and Inter-Departmental Working Group on Emergency Planning Inter-Departmental Committee on Review of Framework for Co-ordinated Response to Major Emergency

HLG 6 – Civil Law Reform

We will continue to reform our civil laws and provide for improved regulatory systems where required.

Policy overview

Legislation to reform specific areas of civil law and administrative law accounts for a significant proportion of the Department's substantial law reform output. Some of these reforms arise from Agreed Programme commitments - proposals to give effect to some of these commitments are set out earlier in this Strategy Statement under their relevant High Level Goal: for example the Immigration and Residence Bill is dealt with under HLG 3, and the Disability Bill under HLG 4.

Invariably, this law reform programme falls to be adjusted from time to time in response to changing circumstances. For example, co-operation in the area of civil law at EU and International level can lead to new priorities and international obligations which lead in turn to a re-ordering of priorities within the law reform programme.

One of the tasks of the Department is to keep the civil law under review so as to identify potential reforms for consideration by Government. As part of this process, we engage in and promote research, assess reports or submissions from advisory or research bodies, notably from the Law Reform Commission, and consult with relevant interest groups. Another feature of work in this area is close cooperation with other Government Departments in relation to policy development, and the implementation and monitoring of legislation.

There are a number of factors that shape and give substance to proposals to reform the civil law. These include the need to update and clarify the law as it recognises and protects individual rights and maintains an appropriate balance of rights as between individuals and, where applicable, between the rights of individuals and the needs of society. Reform of defamation law and the licensing laws comes under this heading. The need to update and modernise statute law on the legal status of individuals in order to respond to societal and institutional changes in areas such as nationality and citizenship law, immigration law and family law is another influencing factor.

Reform of courts administration and jurisdiction and the judicial and legal process is addressed on an ongoing basis (e.g. Judicial Council Bill – HLG 2). In recent times amendments to tribunals of inquiry procedure have also been brought forward and the current programme will

address the regulation of costs and other matters relating to tribunals (Tribunal of Inquiry (Evidence) (Amendment) Bill). The law relating to coroners and the coroners service will be modernised.

We will also respond to the need to create an appropriate regulatory environment that meets the changing needs both of society and of a competitive market economy in areas for which the Department has policy responsibility. The work of the expert review group established by the Minister to examine the practice of auctioneering and estate agency, particularly in relation to residential property transactions and lettings, is progressing and any necessary legislative changes will be progressed.

We will continue to update and codify complex areas of the law in order to make them clearer and more suited to modern conditions. The Intoxicating Liquor Bill, for example, will provide for a thorough and comprehensive codification of the liquor licensing code. We will also review and modernise land and conveyancing law. The Department has allocated research funds to support these projects.

Arrangements for property title registration will be modernised, in particular to facilitate digital mapping and the registration of records on computer in the Registry of Deeds and Land Registry and preparing the way for an electronic conveyancing system (e-conveyancing).

Emphasis will be given to addressing present and future initiatives advanced by the EU Commission in the area of judicial cooperation in civil law matters where the parameters for ongoing action have most recently been established in the Hague Programme which was approved by the European Council in November 2004. We will represent the national position in an informed and structured way and respond in a timely way to concluded instruments - whether by primary legislation, secondary legislation or administrative action.

6.1 - CIVIL LAW REFORM OBJECTIVE: *To complete the programme of civil law reform contained in the Government's Legislative Programme and to continue to keep the civil law under review.*

CIVIL LAW REFORM PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: *Delivery of the Government's Legislative Programme in the area of civil law.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Modernise property registration systems	Completion of passage of Registration of Deeds and Title Bill, 2004 through the Oireachtas	Enactment of Bill	Land Registry and Registry of Deeds
Regulate certain costs of tribunals	Completion of passage of Tribunals of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Reform of the Coroner Service	Completion of passage of Coroners Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Codification of licensing laws	Completion of passage of Intoxicating Liquor Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Reform of the law relating to auctioneers and estate agents	Publication of report of review group; prepare legislation if necessary	Give effect to review group recommendations	
Modernise land and conveyancing law	Completion of passage of Land and Conveyancing (Reform) Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	Law Reform Commission
Reform certain areas of family law	Completion of passage of Family Law Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Reform of defamation law	Completion of passage of Defamation Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Give effect to certain reforms in civil law areas, including gaming; landlord and tenant; and courts and court officers	Completion of passage of Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill through the Oireachtas	Publish and enact legislation	
Keep civil law under review and promote research in areas in need of reform. Areas currently under review include trust law; civil partnerships; and legal capacity/wards of court.	Identify areas of civil law in need of reform; maintain and develop channels of communication with research bodies and other jurisdictions	Reports; research projects; and proposals for legislation	Law Reform Commission and other research bodies
Contribute to policy development in EU and other international fora in civil law area	Participate in the development and negotiation of EU and other international instruments	Concluded instruments reflective of any specific Irish concerns	EU Commission, EU member states, other international bodies

Private Security Services

The Private Security Services Act, 2004 established the Private Security Authority to control and supervise the private security industry including the granting and renewal of licences, the specification of standards in the provision of security services, specification of qualification and training requirements and monitoring of the services and service providers in the industry generally. A priority will be to ensure that the private security industry introduces positive fundamental change to the security industry so as to instil industry and public confidence in this multifaceted business and to do so in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the market.

6.2 - PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES OBJECTIVE:

To ensure that the Private Security Industry introduces positive fundamental change to the security industry so as to instil industry and public confidence in this multifaceted business and to do so in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the market.

PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES PERFORMANCE

INDICATOR: *The Private Security Authority is provided with adequate supports to enable it to discharge its statutory functions.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
That the Department will support the Private Security Authority in introducing a standards driven licensing system for all companies and individuals involved in the security industry	To provide timely and adequate financial, staffing, legislative and logistical resources to the Authority to enable it fulfil its statutory obligations	Recruitment of staff of the Authority Drafting of the necessary statutory regulations Refurbishment of the Authority's accommodation Adequate finances available to the Authority	Private Security Authority, Department of Finance, Office of the Attorney General, An Garda Síochána & the Industry
	To fulfil Oireachtas reporting arrangements under the legislation	Oireachtas informed of the activities of the Authority	Oireachtas



Part 3

High Level Goal 7 – Business Delivery and Modernisation

Courts

Legal Aid

Prisons and Probation and Welfare

Asylum, Immigration and Citizenship

Human Rights

Northern Ireland

European Union and International

Tackling Crime

Childcare

Garda Síochána

Security

HLG 7 – Business Delivery and Modernisation

We will support the delivery of the Department's business objectives through the effective use of our resources and the implementation of modernisation commitments under the 'Sustaining Progress' Agreement.

Overview

In this part of our Strategy Statement we concentrate on organisation performance, our business support activities and the modernisation programme that we are implementing under Sustaining Progress. This strategy statement, combined with our annual business planning process and performance management system provides the planning framework for the effective and efficient management of our business and resources. The actions set out here will support the Department in delivering on its business commitments and providing a quality service to our customers.

A wide range of activities are covered here such as managing our human and financial resources, promoting equal opportunities for staff, developing partnership structures and processes, ensuring that the ICT needs of staff are provided and a suitable working environment exists for staff. Many aspects of this support work extends to agencies in the Justice and Equality 'family'.

Other key issues to be addressed by us in the short term include the development of a Departmental Risk Management Strategy and Data Strategy. The former will be aimed towards mitigating the risks that threaten the achievement of business objectives and the latter will set out the statistical data needs of the Department in the context of delivering on our high level goals.

Our Modernisation Programme

The civil service has undergone a period of significant modernisation and reform in recent years and pressure for change is likely to intensify with demands for more efficient use of resources, improved access to and delivery of services, increased flexibility and adaptability, and greater openness and accountability. Significant change initiatives have been implemented in areas such as information and communications technology, financial management systems and procedures, performance management and human resource practices.

This programme of change in the civil service has been supported by successive Social Partnership Agreements

and significant progress has been achieved by the Department and Justice and Equality sector organisations on modernisation under these Agreements to date. In particular, good progress has been achieved in areas such as the delivery of financial services - with the implementation of a Shared Services Centre - the more efficient use of Human Resources (HR) and Information and Communication Technologies, regulatory reform and partnership. The improvements being made in these areas are supporting the achievement of the Department's business objectives and are driving improvements in service levels and outputs.

The current Sustaining Progress Agreement sets out a range of modernisation commitments to be implemented by Government Departments and Offices in the period to mid-2006. Modernisation Action Plans have been developed by the Department and the agencies and progress made is subject to rigorous assessment and verification by independent performance verification groups established under Sustaining Progress.

The Department's programme of modernisation which is set out below reflects key influences and ongoing developments in this area in the civil service and underpins our commitment to change and flexibility over the period of this Strategy Statement.

7.1 - BUSINESS DELIVERY AND MODERNISATION

OBJECTIVE: *To effectively manage our organisation and resources so as to support the implementation of the Department's business objectives.*

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MODERNISATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: *Level of progress reported in Department's Annual Report on the implementation of Strategy Statement Objectives.*

Our Commitments:

Commitments	Actions	Performance Targets/Indicators	Linkages
Corporate/Strategic Planning			
Strengthen our corporate governance arrangements (APG – Employment and Enterprise)	<p>Ensure coherence in strategic planning and implementation of Government commitments across the Justice and Equality sector</p> <p>Work closely with our sectoral organisations on implementation of modernisation programme commitments</p>	Coherence on strategic planning achieved, APG and Sustaining Progress commitments implemented	Justice & Equality sector organisations
Strengthen the strategic planning and performance management framework of the Department	<p>Further develop our business planning process and performance management system</p> <p>Develop a Departmental Data Strategy</p> <p>Develop a Risk Management Strategy</p> <p>Monitor and report progress on strategic objectives and performance targets</p>	<p>Devolved budgeting integrated into Business Planning process in 2006</p> <p>PMDS Upward Feedback implemented by 2006</p> <p>Draft Data Strategy developed in 2005</p> <p>Corporate level risk register and strategy in place in 2005</p> <p>Annual report on implementation of Strategy Statement published promptly</p>	

Customer Service			
Provide a professional and quality service to our customers	<p>Implement Customer Charter and report on performance in annual reports</p> <p>Implement the Official Languages Act 2003</p> <p>Process all requests for information promptly and efficiently</p> <p>Ensure prompt processing of all payments for goods and services provided</p> <p>Ensure office accommodation is safe and suitable for customers and staff</p>	<p>Charter to be published in March 2005</p> <p>Department to be in compliance with the requirements of the Act</p> <p>Requests for information dealt with promptly</p> <p>Payments issued promptly and in accordance with service level agreements</p> <p>All office accommodation to be suitable, accessible and to meet appropriate health and safety standards</p>	<p>Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs</p>
Financial Management			
Provide quality financial services in an effective and efficient manner for the Department and its Agencies and associated offices	<p>Introduce effective procedures to monitor and maintain service delivery in accordance to the standards set in the Service Level Agreements between the Department's Financial Shared Services Centre and its Client Organisations</p>	<p>Review and refine existing Service Level Agreements by December, 2005</p> <p>Financial Services delivered in accordance with agreed standards 2005-2007</p>	<p>The Courts Service, Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána, Land Registry/Registry of Deeds, Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism, Department of Finance</p>
Continue to develop the Department's Financial Shared Services Centre in order to facilitate the delivery of high quality financial services	<p>Introduce new organisation structures, business processes and systems in the Department's Financial Shared Services Centre in accordance with best practice under the general framework of the Shared Services business model</p>	<p>Customer Service Help Desk implemented by July, 2005</p> <p>Customer Relationship Management system introduced by December, 2005</p> <p>Electronic Funds Transfer implemented for the majority of payments by December, 2005</p>	<p>The Courts Service, Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána, Land Registry/Registry of Deeds, Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism, Department of Finance (Centre for Management, Organisation & Development - CMOD), Other Government Departments/Organisations</p>

	Explore with other Government Departments and Organisations the potential for the provision of their financial service requirements on a more cost effective basis by the Financial Shared Services centre	Provide financial services to the Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism by March, 2005 Complete consultations with CMOD and selected Government Departments and Offices by December, 2005 Follow up action on any new business to be implemented during 2006-2007	
Continue with the implementation and enhancement of the core features of the Management Information Framework (MIF) throughout the Department and its associated offices	Embed and enhance the Oracle Financial System throughout the Department	Enable on-line self service travel and subsistence to all core Departmental staff in 2005 Provide on-line financial enquiry to managers in 2005 Develop procurement capabilities by 2007	
	Continue to develop the use of Performance Indicators (PI's) to enable the Department monitor, and where appropriate, improve performance	To have an effective set of PI's in place by 2005	
	Develop and establish a Departmental Costing Framework as an aid to managerial decision making	To have a completed set of standard costing models in place by 2006	
	Develop a revised range of relevant management reports	Devolved budgets to cost centre and subhead item level by 2006 Reports designed, tested and available to managers	
Internal Audit			
Operate an efficient and effective internal audit function	Meet commitments set out in Internal Audit Charter	Assist in safeguarding the assets of the organisation in accordance with the commitments set out in the Charter	Controller & Auditor General (C&AG)

	Continue to embed relevant recommendations of Mullarkey Report	Continued professional development of Unit and promotion of culture of control and self-assessment within the organisation	
	Implementation of recommendations of external review of internal audit function	Increased effectiveness of Unit, and increased resourcing and/or outsourcing of activities as appropriate	
Human Resources			
Further develop the Department's HR capability and promote and develop opportunities for staff aimed at supporting the achievement of the Department's business objectives	Recruit and deploy staff promptly	Planned recruitment programme in place and assignments to have regard to individual skills and organisational needs	Public Appointments Service
	Devolve HR functions to managers as part of business planning process	HR functions devolved by 2007	
	Strengthen the linkages between our HR policies and the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)	Further integration of HR policies and PMDS	Department of Finance
	Develop annual training programmes in accordance with the Department's Training and Development Strategy 2005-2008	Staff training and development needs identified and met within the PMDS cycle	Civil Service Training and Development Framework 2004-2008
	Make maximum possible use of competitive merit-based promotions	All internal promotions to be at least 75% merit-based	Staff Associations
	Promote and support the wide range of family friendly and flexible working arrangements available to staff	Increased numbers of staff availing of family friendly and flexible working arrangements	Department of Finance
	Promote equality of opportunity for all staff in keeping with Civil Service gender equality and diversity policy	Awareness of equality issues raised Measures and policies being implemented on achieving gender balance and promoting a positive working environment monitored	
	Promote a positive attitude to the health and well-being of staff	Monitor measures aimed at promoting a positive working environment	Employee Assistance Officer, Office of the Chief Medical Officer

Partnership			
Continue to develop and enhance Partnership structures	Encourage maximum involvement of staff in Partnership process and broaden out range of issues to be discussed	Partnership further developed	
Industrial Relations			
Maintain a well-managed industrial relations environment	Continue to maintain good relations with unions and consult on significant work-place related initiatives as required	Unions consulted on issues as required and good relations with unions maintained	Developments at central level e.g. decentralisation
Regulatory Reform			
The Department will have regard to the 'better regulation' principles set out in the White Paper 'Regulating Better' when developing proposals for regulation	<p>Continue to contribute to the work of the High Level Group on Regulation and its subsidiary committees and groups</p> <p>Continue to develop consultation mechanisms and procedures with stakeholders and the public</p> <p>Develop use of tools such as the 'regulatory impact assessment' in line with Government policy of promoting evidence-based policy making</p>	<p>Attendance and participation at meetings</p> <p>Extent of consultations undertaken</p> <p>Regulatory Impact Assessment developed in line with Government policy</p>	Department of the Taoiseach
Update and codify statute law	<p>Codify areas of the statute law in order to make the law more suited to modern conditions</p> <p>Publish restatements of statute law in order to make it more accessible and transparent</p> <p>Repeal pre-1922 statutes that are spent or no longer suited to modern conditions</p>	<p>Number of areas of law being codified</p> <p>Number of restatements published</p> <p>Number of statutes repealed</p>	

New Technology			
Make our existing services more flexible, more available, more secure	<p>Continue to develop our existing approach to delivering internal services</p> <p>Develop resilience on all aspects of our network</p> <p>Converge telephony, video and data networks</p>	<p>Systems available from any location, at any time on any device by early 2006</p> <p>Second data site to provide business recovery capacity by end 2005</p> <p>No building out of commission for more than 2 hours</p> <p>Achievement of turnaround times for administrative tasks</p> <p>Single managed virtual network 2007</p>	Availability of Central Government data centre
Share resources wherever possible to get better value for money	<p>Deploy or migrate to centrally delivered services wherever available</p> <p>Deliver shared services for Sector where central Government Services not available</p> <p>Reuse systems and components where possible</p>	<p>Central HR system deployed 2005</p> <p>Migrate Data network to Government Virtual Private Network (VPN) 2005</p> <p>Migrate Video Conferencing to Government VPN when available</p> <p>Negotiate delivery of network services direct to Agencies of the sector</p>	New Government VPN contracts in place
Add services for our internal and external clients	<p>Continued development of correspondence tracking to include all incoming material (email, phone, fax etc)</p> <p>Link improved online forms to the systems behind them</p>	<p>Quicker service to client</p> <p>Capacity to track query or request for service from start to finish by 2006</p> <p>Film Censors Office, Private Security Authority online forms by 2005</p>	Delivery of Public Service Broker by Reach

Contribute to policy making	Promote discussion and development of policies on e-Government issues, such as identity protection, with other Divisions and agencies	Departmental policy in line with developments elsewhere on public service identity and public service cards.	Acting with other agencies of the sector and with other public service organisations e.g. CMOD E-Government developments in other countries, in particular within the EU
Join up existing services inside the Department and across the sector in a useful way	Participate in pilot and follow on Courts-Garda information exchange project Develop and promote project on integrating existing information and support systems for staff and clients of the Department Follow through on current projects in Immigration and Asylum areas	Implementation of electronic dissemination of Court Outcomes to Garda and other public service agencies Improved process within organisations and improved service to public Clarity of processes Improved capacity of internal and external clients to get a consistently good service from the Department. Either a single or a series of tightly linked systems to provide improved services to all stakeholders by 2007/2008	Delivery of the Public Service Broker, continued active participation by Criminal Justice organisations
Improve the Department's communication effort both internally and externally	Further development of Department's website and other channels of communication Develop awareness of all staff of capacity of technologies to improve services	Improved website, capacity for online consultations, capacity to respond to queries - 2005 Department wide training in newly developed and emerging systems - 2005/2006	

Procurement			
Develop an effective procurement strategy for the Department in line with best practice	Establish a centralised Departmental Procurement Unit	Central Procurement Unit in place and operational in 2005	National Public Procurement Policy Unit (NPPPU), Department of Finance
	Establish best practice purchasing and procurement processes for the Department	Purchasing procedures and procurement planning processes in place by 2006	
	Implement mechanisms through which the effectiveness of the Department's procurement objectives will be measured	Develop a supplier performance management programme and benchmark the efficiency of internal procurement processes and systems in 2006	NPPPU, Department of Finance
Policy Planning and Research			
Develop our policy analysis capability through the procurement of objective, quality research	Continue to commission and fund research relevant to Justice and Equality areas	Relevant research projects funded	
	Evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of research funded by the Department	Extent to which research has contributed to policy development in the Department	

Appendix 1

Minister Michael McDowell, T.D.

Brian Lenihan, T.D.
Minister of State

Frank Fahey, T.D.
Minister of State

Secretary General
Mr Seán Aylward

Crime Security & Northern Ireland Mutual Assistance and Extradition	An Garda Síochána	Prisons Probation & Welfare	Civil Law Reform Equality Disability Courts Policy	Criminal Law Reform Human Rights	International Policy	Asylum Immigration Citizenship	Reception & Integration Agency	Childcare Youth Justice	Business Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime 1 • Crime 2 (Drugs and Organised Crime) • Security & Northern Ireland • Firearms & Explosives Administration • Mutual Assistance & Extradition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garda 1 (Administration) • Garda 2 (Planning) • Garda 3 (SML, Conciliation and Arbitration & Compensation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prisons, Probation & Welfare Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Law Reform • Employment Equality • Disability Equality • Gender Equality • Equal Status • Courts Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Law Reform • Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Policy • Permanent Representation - Brussels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship • Repatriation • Irish Born Child Unit • Immigration Policy • Asylum Policy • Ministerial Decisions Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception & Integration Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare Directorate • Youth Justice Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Financial Shared Services Centre • IT • Personnel • Organisation Development Unit • Project Development • Press & Communications • Freedom of Information (FOI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Crime Council • Private Security Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Garda Síochána • Garda Síochána Complaints Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Prison Service • Probation & Welfare Service • Parole Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courts Service • Equality Tribunal • Equality Authority • National Disability Authority 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner • Refugee Appeals Tribunal 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Film Censor • Censorship of Publications Office • Office of the Data Protection Commissioner • Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal • Forensic Science Laboratory • State Pathology Service • Legal Aid Board • Land Registry / Registry of Deeds

Assistant Secretary Areas	Divisions of Department	Associated Bodies
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Appendix 2

Department and Justice & Equality Sector Staffing and Financial Allocation

	Staffing 31/12/04	Financial Allocation 2005 € (000's)†
Head Office	504	172,036
Financial Shared Services	154	11,001
National Crime Council	4	497
An Garda Síochána (1586 Civilian Staff)	13019	1,110,107
Garda Síochána Complaints Board	21	3,538
Private Security Authority	1	1,000
Irish Prison Service	3311	346,379
Probation and Welfare Service	368	42,799
Parole Board	3	436
Courts Service	1018	69,326
Office of Refugee Applications Commissioner	252	Total Allocation Asylum Seekers 125,171*
Refugee Appeals Tribunal	130	
Reception & Integration Agency	55	
Equality Tribunal	31	1,970
Equality Authority	53	5,451
National Disability Authority	42	4,983
Office of the Film Censor	10	1,000
Censorship of Publications Office	1	Included in Justice Vote
Office of the Data Protection Commissioner	21	1,089
Criminally Inflicted Compensation Tribunal	4	3,384
Forensic Science Laboratory	68	4,710
State Pathology Service	5	550
Legal Aid Board	370	21,362
Land Registry/Registry of Deeds	720	38,048
Totals	20,277	1,964,837

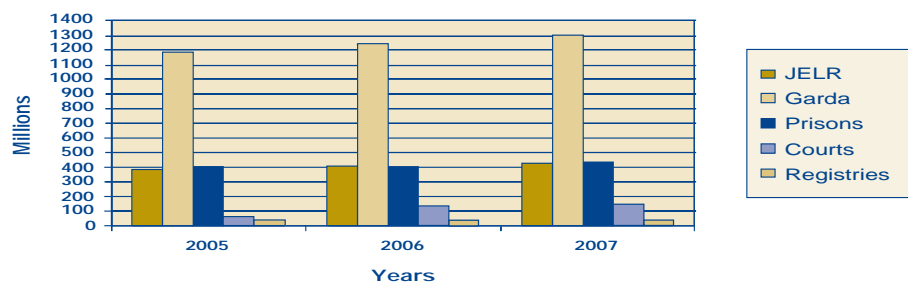
† The figures quoted for 2005 are as per revised book of estimates 2005

* Funding for Asylum Seekers includes Asylum Seekers Task Force, Legal Aid, European Refugee Fund and Asylum Seekers Accommodation.

Appendix 3

Financial Allocation 2005 - 2007

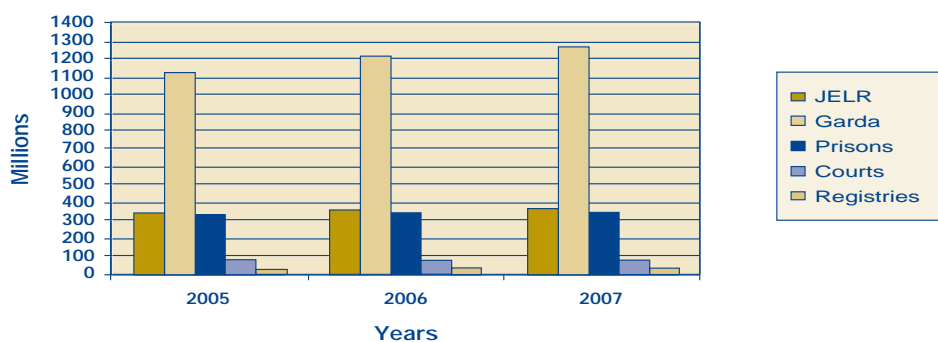
Justice Group Total Gross Allocation



The figures quoted for 2005 are as per revised book of estimates 2005 and those for 2006 and 2007 are projected estimates as at January 2005

Financial Allocation 2005 - 2007

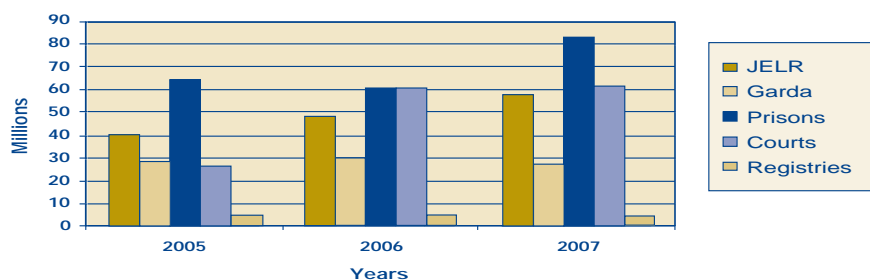
Justice Group Total Current Allocation



The figures quoted for 2005 are as per revised book of estimates 2005 and those for 2006 and 2007 are projected estimates as at January 2005

Financial Allocation 2005 - 2007

Justice Group Capital Allocation



The figures quoted for 2005 are as per revised book of estimates 2005 and those for 2006 and 2007 are projected estimates as at January 2005

Appendix 4 - List of Abbreviations

AG	Attorney General
ADM	Area Development Management Ltd
APG	Agreed Programme for Government
C&A	Conciliation and Arbitration
C&AG	Controller and Auditor General
CCC	County Childcare Committee
CEDAW	Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CERD	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination
CIF	Capital Investment Framework
CMOD	Centre for Management, Organisation & Development
CoE	Council of Europe
CSF	Community Support Framework
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSSO	Chief State Solicitor's Office
Dept. of EHLG	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
DIG	Decentralisation Implementation Group
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
ECRI	European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance
EEA	European Economic Area
EOCP	Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESRI	European and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
FAS	Foras Aiseanna Saothair
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
FOI	Freedom of Information
GNIB	Garda National Immigration Bureau
HIP	Health Information Programme
HLG	High Level Goal
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Services Executive
IBC	Irish Born Child
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFSRA	Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority
IICD	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
IMC	Independent Monitoring Commission

INIS	Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPS	Irish Prison Service
IR	Industrial Relations
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JELR	Justice, Equality and Law Reform
LRC	Law Reform Commission
MIF	Management Information Framework
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCCRI	National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NPAR	National Plan Against Racism
NPPPU	National Public Procurement Policy Unit
NVCO	National Voluntary Childcare Organisation
NWS	National Women's Strategy
ODEI	Office of Director of Equality Investigations (Equality Tribunal)
OPW	Office of Public Works
ORAC	Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner
P&WS	Probation and Welfare Service
PAIB	Prisons Authority Interim Board
PI	Performance Indicator
PMDS	Performance Management & Development System
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PSA	Private Security Authority
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RAPID	Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development
RAT	Refugee Appeals Tribunal
RIA	Reception and Integration Agency
SMG	Strategic Monitoring Group
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
UCD	University College Dublin
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VARP	Voluntary Return Programme
VPN	Virtual Private Network

