

## SUMMARY OF THE DRIVER AND VEHICLE LICENSING NORTHERN IRELAND (DVLNI) MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10 and 23 April 2003

### In attendance:

Mr Magee	Chief Executive
Mr Evans	Director of Development
Mr Campbell	Director of Driver Licensing & Road Transport Licensing (23.4.03 only)
Mrs Cosgrove	IT Programme Director (23.4.03 only)
Mrs McCabe	Director of Vehicle Licensing (10.4.03 only)
Mr McClean	Director of Corporate Services
Ms O'Connor	Director of Finance
Janet Coleman	Health Works, Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association (NICSSA)
Mrs McAuley	Corporate Services Branch - Summary of Meeting

**Apologies** None

### **1. Health Works Presentation Action**

- 1.1** Janet Coleman, of the Health Works Programme, delivered a presentation to the Management Board on health in the workplace.

She explained that the programme was aimed at improving the health of employees through a package of services ranging from getting active, healthy eating, and managing stress through to smoking cessation and tackling alcoholism and drugs awareness.

Health Works aims to engage both management and staff on the programme. Everyone who takes part in the programme is asked to complete an evaluation report 3 months after completion to indicate how it has changed his/her lifestyle.

Following a question and answer session Mr Magee, on behalf of all the directors, thanked Janet for an interesting and informative presentation.

### **2. Summary of last meeting/Matters Arising**

- 2.1** The summary of the last meeting on 10 March 2003 was agreed.

- 2.2** The following matters arising from the meeting of 10 March were discussed:

2.2 Mrs McCabe stated that subsequent to the Audit Review, she would be considering the NIAO requirements and comparing them with those of DVLA. Ms O'Connor said that the Agency had received some criticism about procurement procedures. Mr McGinnis was looking at this

area again.

2.3 Mr Evans said that Drivers 90 cannot identify individual users against individual transactions. He referred to his paper to the Chief Executive about outstanding issues. Ms O'Connor reported that Ashley McGinnis is pursuing with DVLA if similar issues have been raised by their auditors

### **3. Departmental Management Group (DMG)**

3.1 Mr Magee said that the DMG had received a presentation from the Scottish Executive on environmentally friendly policies. Mr McClean said that he would remind the Premises Officer for Coleraine County Hall that "green" bins were to be provided.

**Mr McClean**

Mr Magee reported that initial scrutiny of Line Manager's Appraisals in respect of the Deputy Principal promotion board showed consistency in marks awarded within the department.

### **4. Corporate Services**

#### **4.1 Health Works/Sick Absence Review**

Mr McClean undertook to speak to other agencies/departments who have already tried the Health Works programme for feedback on how well it had met their expectations. He felt that the programme would tie in well with the work the Agency was doing to reduce sick absence, which had risen in the last month.

**Mr McClean**

The sick absence review which is being conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is almost complete – further interviews have still to be carried out with 2 offices following which their report should be available.

Mr McClean said that he is pursuing inefficiency procedures in tandem with sickness procedures, and will notify each director with an update of the situation in their respective business areas.

**Mr McClean**

#### **4.2 Business in the Community**

The Agency's involvement in community activity projects was discussed at a recent meeting with Mr Howell of Business in the Community. As a result of that meeting, a draft corporate social responsibility policy is being drafted for consideration by the Board.

**Mr McClean**

#### **4.3 Complaints Procedure**

Following a review of the Agency's complaints procedure, the Board felt that existing procedures would be adequate if observed, and these are to be relaunched. Two issues need further examination before finalizing plans for the way ahead, viz the use of a third party investigator and arrangements for a

recording system.

#### **4.4 Record Management**

Mrs McAuley told the meeting that, in preparation for the Freedom of Information Act 2000 coming into effect in January 2005, all Agencies and divisions within the department were undertaking an information audit of their existing records.

The Board approved the establishment of a focus group comprising members of staff nominated from each business area to look at DVLNI's record management systems in the run up to January 2005.

The Board discussed recent difficulties concerning the Agency's e-Registry system. Mr McClean asked if there was any point in continuing to scan documents on to the existing e-Registry system if it is not possible to transfer those documents electronically to the replacement system which will be introduced next year. Following further discussion Mr McClean offered to check if the two systems are or could be made compatible before any decision is reached about continuing to scan.

**Mr McClean**

#### **4.5 Return of papers**

Mrs McAuley asked Board members to remember to send a copy of any correspondence which they were dealing with on behalf of the Chief Executive to the Chief Executive's office for filing.

#### **4.6 Special Olympics**

Coleraine is hosting the team from Paraguay in the forthcoming Special Olympics, and the Agency has decided to sponsor an athlete from the Paraguayan team. To raise money, a sponsored walk has been arranged for Friday 9 May leaving County Hall, Coleraine at 4.00pm and finishing at Castlerock 6 miles away – a barbecue in Castlerock will follow the walk. A table quiz is also to be planned. It is hoped to raise £650 through these events.

#### **4.7 Training**

Meetings have taken place with line managers to gather ideas for training on Customer Service. This training will not only target specific areas of concern but will also be directed at individuals where this is considered appropriate.

#### **4.8 Recruitment**

It was noted that the aptitude test for recruitment into the Civil Service does not test interpersonal skills. Mr Magee agreed to write to Central Personnel at Rosepark House expressing concern that basic competencies for Agency staff are not included in the aptitude test, and as interviews are not conducted for AA/AO grades there is no way of assessing personal skills.

**Mr Magee**

**4.9 Overtime**

Mr McClean told the Board that he is planning to review the frequency and nature of work carried out by Computer Operations staff when they are called out during periods of overtime. He explained that it is not necessary for these staff to be on site every time overtime is being worked, and they are under a great deal of pressure to meet demand.

**Mr McClean**

Mr Magee agreed that an analysis of the problems would show if there was an imperative for computer operations staff to be on site during overtime, and if not there was the potential to make savings in this area.

Mrs McCabe expressed concern at the level of notice of system outage time when staff were planning to work overtime at weekends. From a business perspective it was very difficult trying to work around the system.

**4.10 Accommodation**

A review of the Agency’s accommodation needs to be carried out to take account of anticipated changes within the next 2 years, for example the introduction of e-business into areas such as re-licensing.

**All directors**

**4.11 Visits by Board Members**

The following offices will be visited by Board members on 15 April;

- Armagh..... Mrs Cosgrove
- Enforcements..... Ms O’Connor
- Downpatrick and
- Road Transport Licensing Division.....Mr McClean

**Mrs Cosgrove  
Ms O’Connor  
Mr McClean**

**5. Finance**

**5.1 Management Report**

The monthly Management Report covering financial and performance targets was presented to the members for consideration and discussion.

**5.2 Targets**

Ms O’Connor explained that because the rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased, the Agency may now be able to meet the efficiency target set for ‘vehicles’ transactions. The target for ‘drivers’ transactions is still likely to be missed. Sick absence continues to cost heavily.

Next year’s targets for drivers transactions have been increased by one day to reflect realistic but nonetheless challenging targets. Ms O’Connor stated that the Driver and Vehicle Licensing

Agency (DVLA) now publish targets in percentage terms rather than in terms of the time taken.

### **5.3 Data Cleansing**

Mr Evans expressed concern about the effect of forthcoming projects on the Drivers system, and added that a very substantial data cleansing exercise is needed. This may require some of the Agency's most experienced staff to be released to carry out this work. A discussion took place about staff moves but this falls under the early policy exemption.

### **5.4 Customer service**

Mr Magee asked if the changes to transactions following the introduction of new legislation such as Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) had impacted on waiting times in local offices. Ms O'Connor considered it was important to carry out a work measurement exercise to fully appreciate the changes to work procedures and to do a fair evaluation of what is actually involved now that the effects of SORN are being felt in the local offices.

Mrs Cosgrove said that the volume of telephone queries was up since SORN was introduced, and she thought that staff would benefit from intensive training rather than on-the-job mentoring. Especially at busy times, experienced staff did not have the time to sit with or oversee junior members of staff. Mr Campbell said that the problem was not just with new staff, rather that all staff had new things to learn and new things to do as a result of new legislation.

### **5.5 Correspondence**

Mr Campbell told the Board that he had received a letter about the use of Londonderry/Derry/City of Derry on DVLNI correspondence. He offered to write to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) for firm guidance on the city's official title on Government correspondence.

**Mr Campbell**

### **5.6 Northern Ireland Call Centre presentation**

Mr Evans told the Board that he had attended a presentation by Lagan Technology about the development of software for a Northern Ireland call centre. He queried whether the Agency should be exploring this option with Core and also whether the Agency should be expected to use this facility rather than follow DVLA's preference. Mr Magee said that he will have the opportunity to raise this matter at a Strategic Planning Day in May, and in the meantime Mr Evans will write to Core giving notice of the Agency's requirements and expectations of the call centre

**Mr Magee**

**Mr Evans**

## **6. Personnel**

### **6.1 Annual Reports**

Mr McClean reminded all directors that annual reports needed to be dealt with as soon as possible, and emphasised that this was an important aspect for consideration in Investors in People (IiP) accreditation.

**All directors**

### **6.2 Internet Access**

Mr McClean confirmed that access to the Internet has been rolled out to the majority of staff and he will check that a note has gone to all staff informing them accordingly.

**Mr McClean**

### **6.3 Equality Impact Assessments**

Of the five equality impact assessments to be carried out, one has now been completed (medical fitness to drive), one is out for consultation (age and race) and the remaining three are no longer necessary.

## **7. IT Development**

### **7.1 Programme of Work 2003/04**

Mr Evans told the Board that he was becoming increasingly concerned that there was not going to be sufficient time to do the necessary work on this year's programme of work. Irrespective of funding uncertainties, he needed to proceed now if the programme is to stay on schedule. There were 2 issues involved, funding and getting the right staff to do the work.

A discussion about staff resources took place and Mr McFlynn, Personnel Manager, was invited to join the meeting. It was agreed that for the time being, one Staff Officer (SO) would be transferred internally to Projects, one would be recruited externally (for Communications) and the following posts would be trawled internally –

- one SO post,
- two Executive Officer I posts,
- one Executive Officer II (EOII) post for Drivers and
- one Senior Systems Analyst.

Four EOII's would be appointed from the existing list

### **7.2 Migration of Drivers system to D90**

It was agreed that after migration, driving licences would be printed and dispatched by DVLA.

## **8. Quality**

### **8.1** Mr Magee said that following his recent meeting with Mr H Campbell a date is to be arranged for a further meeting.

## **9. Corporate and Business Plan**

### **9.1 Accuracy Project**

Mr McKillop is to be asked to provide a progress report on last year's Accuracy project. This project has been talked about for some years and there was general agreement that it should be taken on board and finalised as soon as possible. Mr McClean said that he would ask Mr McKillop to circulate the paper to all directors.

**Mr McClean**

### **9.2 Targets**

Targets for the Corporate and Business Plan are to be with Mr Magee early next week.

**All directors**

## **10. Any other business**

### **10.1 RTLD Accommodation**

Mr Campbell reported to the Board that he had been approached by DVTA regarding accommodation at the RTLD site. He explained that DVTA is planning to expand its enforcement complement and is looking to identify additional office accommodation. As RTLD still falls under Office Accommodation Branch, not DVLNI, he may come under pressure to relinquish space.

### **10.2 Meetings**

The Board looked at the frequency and variety of committees, steering/working groups, and board meetings at which Agency representation was essential throughout the year and agreed which director should attend which meeting.

### **10.3 Annual Report**

Mr McClean said that input to the Agency's Annual Report had already been commissioned and the first draft would be ready for the Policy Liaison Group meeting on 29 May.

**Mr McClean**

### **10.4 DVLNI's Top 10 Issues**

Ms O'Connor produced a list of the Agency's most important issues and recommended to the Board that this should be reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure that priority was given to areas of work where it was most justified.

## **11. Next Meeting**

**11.1** The date of the next meeting is 15 May 2003.

## **12. Distribution**

**12.1** Directors  
Local Office Service Manager

**LIZ McAULEY**  
**Corporate Services Branch**