

**SUMMARY OF THE DRIVER AND VEHICLE LICENSING NORTHERN IRELAND
- DVLNI - MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING HELD ON
20 February 2003**

Present:

Mr Magee	Chief Executive
Mr Evans	Director of Development
Mr Campbell	Director of Driver Licensing and Road Transport Licensing
Mrs Cosgrove	IT Programme Director
Mrs McCabe	Director of Vehicle Licensing
Mr McClean	Director of Corporate Services
Ms O'Connor	Director of Finance
Mrs McAuley	Corporate Services Branch - Summary of Meeting
Mrs McConville	DOE Freedom of Information Officer (12.30pm – 2.45pm only)
Mr McGinnis	DVLNI Risk Management Unit (2.45pm – 3.15pm only)

Apologies: No apologies

1. Presentation – Freedom of Information

- 1.1** Mrs McConville delivered a presentation on the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and the work carried out by the Department to date. This was followed by a useful question and answer session which helped to clarify several areas of concern to directors. **Action**

Mr Magee on behalf of the Management Board thanked Mrs McConville for an interesting and informative presentation.

2. Presentation – Risk Management Process

- 2.1** Mr McGinnis gave a short presentation to the Management Board in relation to the Agency's Risk Management Process. The presentation concentrated on the Agency's current position and suggested a process for the roll out of risk management across the Agency. Management Board approval was sought for this process before Mr McGinnis would proceed further.

It was agreed that Risk Management should be discussed at all future Management Board meetings until it is embedded into the awareness of staff in each Division.

3. Summary of last meeting/Matters Arising

- 3.1** The summary of the last meeting on 16 January 2003 was agreed.
- 3.2** The following matters arising from the meeting of 16 January 2003 were discussed:

3.3

Efficiency Plans

Mr Evans offered to find out the if the capital cost of installing the Queue Management System in Ballymena Local Office could be found from existing budgets to allow installation before the end of this financial year.

Mr Evans

Green Audit

Mr McClean reported that he had referred the matter of recycling bins to the House Committee to take forward.

Staffing Structures

Mr McClean told the meeting that any new posts created within the Agency which were expected to last for three months or longer needed to be validated. It would be necessary to establish internal procedures whereby such new posts could be created, assessed and authorized. Posts likely to last for under 3 months needed only Finance Branch clearance that they were within budgetary restraints.

Mr McClean undertook to contact Business Development Service to ensure appropriate training for staff involved in the validation process.

Computer Operations

The Northern Ireland Civil Service policy on private use of the Internet will soon be available and the Department will issue its own policy shortly. The Agency will follow the Departmental policy, and upon implementation of the policy, the Chief Executive will give blanket Internet access approval.

Procurement

Ms O'Connor told the Board that she had decided it was more sensible to work with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency on securing contracts, and she estimated potential savings in the region of £100k by following this course. A working group is to be set up to look at the necessary arrangements.

Ms O'Connor

NIVIS (Northern Ireland Vehicle Information System)

Mrs Cosgrove said that the NIVIS system performance over the network to local offices was still being monitored. Mr Evans reported that only 10% of the network's capacity was being used in some areas. Local office staff are to report any difficulties with the system which will allow remedial action to be taken.

4. Audit/Corporate Governance

- 4.1** The Chief Executive asked Ms O'Connor to let him have notification of any issues affecting the Agency before his

meeting with the Departmental Audit Committee meeting on Friday 7 March. The length of time taken by the Audit Committee to report on audit investigations was the cause of some concern.

Ms O'Connor

5. Review of Accommodation

5.1 Mr McClean said that some of the recommendations in the review had already been implemented. The most pressing issue was in connection with accommodation at one of the local offices and Mr McKillop was already looking at this.

Mr McClean

5.2 Relocation of staff to Beresford House

Mr McClean reported that the move to Beresford House is going according to plan thanks to Mr McKillop's efficient management of the arrangements.

5.3 Training

Two-day courses on report writing are being arranged for staff involved in the reporting process.

5.4 IIP Questionnaire

There has been a good response to the IIP questionnaire. When the analysis of the responses has been completed a report will be presented to the Management Board.

5.5 Welfare Branch

Mr McClean met with the Department's Welfare Officers to consider the benefits of regular liaison to gain more clarity both on individual cases and in the main. Welfare Branch Officers agreed to visit the County Hall on a quarterly basis for staff to consult.

5.6 Computer Operations

Due to the work involved with the relocation of staff, it will not be possible to commence the rollout programme for all PCs until towards the end of April. Mr McClean asked if Internet access would be available on all PCs. Mr Magee agreed that everyone should have access to the Internet as there would be no additional charge to the Agency. Usage would be monitored in line with Agency policy, which has not yet been published.

5.6 Sick Absence Review

Dr Mallon is continuing the review and has completed the initial examination of statistics. Structured group interviews will be arranged during the next month and any staff who are selected to participate will be encouraged to attend.

Mr McClean met with staff from the Department of Regional Development to discuss the pursuance of inefficiency procedures with regard to sick absence. These meetings will continue on a

6-weekly frequency. There would also be case conferences with the Management Board, and the Agency would try every means possible to reduce sickness levels among staff. The Chief Executive and Mr McClean will meet with Whitley council next week to discuss further.

Mr McClean also told the meeting that, where a member of staff receives a formal warning in connection with sickness absence, he/she may not go on promotion boards.

5.7 Anonymous Letter

Discussion took place regarding an offensive, anonymous letter received by the editor of the staff magazine. The Board agreed that such material would be accepted but they would prefer it to be signed.

5.8 Local Office Visits

The visits to local offices by directors were well accepted by staff. In particular they appreciated details of various projects being explained and how these might eventually impact on their work. It was agreed that these visits would continue.

6 Policy Issues

6.1 Dual Notification

Mr Evans expressed concern that there was a high level of non-compliance in Great Britain with Dual Notification and asked if the DVLA regulations should be extended to Northern Ireland. Mrs McCabe asked if DVLNI should follow DVLA policy in its entirety or deviate from it where this was more appropriate.

Mr Magee decided that there was no option but to follow DVLA policy but that the Agency's concerns should be flagged up about the level of non-compliance. Mr Evans agreed to draft a letter to DVLA along these lines.

Mr Evans

7 Finance

- 7.1** A discussion took place about driving licence fees but this falls under the early policy exemption.

Ms OConnor

8 IT Development

- 8.1** A discussion about the Agency's ongoing IT projects took place but this falls under the 'commercial-in-confidence' exemption.

9 Performance

- 9.1** The board noted that several targets would be missed again this month. Difficulties arose with the introduction of the Vehicle Identity Check scheme (VIC) and the local offices were under pressure to cope with the additional work.

Mrs McCabe expressed concern that the introduction of the Harmonized Registration Certificate in January 2004 would further increase the demands on staff time, and asked could some of the existing work be carried out by the Post Offices. There was discussion about why drivers and vehicle owners did not make more use of the Post Office service, and it was agreed that a customer survey should be carried out at all local offices to identify why this might be.

Mrs McCabe

10 Next Meeting

10.1 The date of the next meeting is 10 March 2003.

11 Distribution

11.1 Directors
Local Office Service Manager

LIZ McAULEY
Corporate Services Branch