

Summary of DVLNI Management Board Meeting 26 January 2005

Time: 9.15 – 17.00

Venue: Conference Room, County Hall, Coleraine

Attendees:

Mr B Magee	Chief Executive (Chair)
Mr C Campbell	Director of Driver Licensing & RTLD
Mrs B Cosgrove	Programme Manager (& Director of IT)
Mr T Evans	Director of Development
Mr S McClean	Director of Corporate Services
Mr A McGinnis	Acting Director of Vehicle Licensing
Ms. L O'Connor	Director of Finance
Mr S Peover	Permanent Secretary, DOE
Mrs L McAuley	Secretary

Apologies: Mrs A McCabe Director of Vehicle Licensing

Ref. No	Item	Action
1.	Introduction	
1.1	Mr Magee welcomed DOE's Permanent Secretary, Stephen Peover, to the meeting. Mr Peover said he was visiting all Senior Management Board meetings in DOE to get a feel for the nature of the business and to meet people. These visits will continue once or twice each year.	
1.2	Mr Magee said he attended the DVLA Executive Programme Board and 3 points arose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is continuing on the Transformation Plan and a final draft is awaited. • The Board has seen the draft Business Plan and is satisfied with the content. • Leadership seminars are to be held within the next few months and all Management Board members are to attend. 	
2.	Performance Review	
2.1	<u>Policy Development</u> <i>Use of Irish Language</i> The Board discussed the implications for DVLNI of using Regional or Minority Languages on official documents. The major difficulty is that the computer system does not have enough space to allow addresses to be entered in 2 or 3 different languages. The cost of redesigning the system will be substantial, and there will be the added difficulty that the electronic checker, which verifies post town against postcode, will not recognise other languages. Mr Campbell stated that ID checking 2 documents in 2 different languages was difficult, and	

	<p>added that the ID check must not be compromised. Mr Evans agreed to draft a paper to Core setting out the Agency's concerns, and asking for absolute guidance on this matter. Mr McClean will investigate whether language awareness training is available for relevant staff.</p> <p><i>Local Office Review</i> Mr Peover agreed to speak to the Minister next week about getting a decision on the Local Office Review.</p> <p><i>Continuous Registration late licensing supplement and ability to enforce</i> Mr McGinnis explained that the penalty for a CR offence is £1,000, and magistrates have expressed the view that this is too harsh and that as most people cannot afford to pay the fine, it is tantamount to sending them to prison. Mr McGinnis will investigate further and report further to the Board.</p> <p><i>Fee for Taxi Driver Licence</i> Ms O'Connor said that the Agency still had not decided whether a consultation on the proposed fee increase for a taxi driver licence was needed.</p> <p><i>ID checking in LVLO of other EU nationals</i> DVLNI may face enforcement action by the Equality Commission if ID documentation for only UK and ROI nationals is accepted at LVLOs. To avoid being accused of discrimination it may be necessary to revert to just Coleraine and Belfast offices offering this facility.</p>	<p>Mr Evans Mr McClean</p> <p>Mr McGinnis</p>
2.2	<p><u>Deliver improved customer services</u></p> <p><i>Waiting time targets</i> Several LVLOs met their targets during December. The lack of office accommodation in Armagh continues to be a problem and Mr McClean is investigating the possibility of getting more space made available.</p> <p><i>Driver Licensing ID checking</i> Two staff have been dedicated to ID checking in Belfast LVLO, which has resulted in an increase of applications checked on the previous year.</p> <p><i>Automated First Registration and Licensing (AFRL)</i> An increase in the uptake of this facility is expected by the end of January 2005.</p> <p><i>Taxi Driver Licensing</i> Mr Campbell said that a lot more vehicles than had been anticipated, nearly double the number on record, were now being licensed as taxis, which showed just how successful this project has been.</p>	<p>Mr McClean</p>

2.3	<p><u>Improve our efficiency and effectiveness</u></p> <p><i>Central Office Telephone Enquiries</i> The numbers of missed telephone calls continues to be a major issue – there are 2 choices available to address the problem - either to employ more staff or to outsource the work.</p> <p><i>Image</i> Mr McGinnis reported that the backlog of Image work has increased to 27 days – this is partly due to the holiday period and partly due to testing of the new system. He has introduced a change to the process and will be monitoring this to see if it makes any improvement.</p> <p>Ms O’Connor said that she discussed with Internal Audit Branch ceasing to image V11s, and if IAB agrees to this it will mean a 20% volume reduction in documents to be imaged.</p>	
3.	Update Feasibility study on merger/LVLO Review	
3.1	Mr Evans delivered an up-to-date positional report regarding merger and the Local Vehicle Licensing Office Review. It was agreed that there was a need to prepare a paper identifying options and implications. Mr Evans to draft paper.	Mr Evans
4.	Program Board Update	
4.1	Mrs Cosgrove provided a brief explanation of the projects within the programme of work for both Driver and Vehicle Licensing, reporting on current project status and highlighting areas of concern e.g. impact of industrial action in DVTA on effectiveness of Continuous Registration.	
5.	Impact of Industrial Action	
5.1	<p>Mr McGinnis explained to the Board that industrial action taken by DVLNI staff and also DVTA staff impacted on the Agency in a number of areas.</p> <p><i>Vehicle Excise Duty</i> There was a significant reduction in the amount of Vehicle Excise Duty collected compared to the same period in 2003, and this has not returned to pre-industrial action levels. The percentage of unlicensed vehicles has increased, and additional costs arose from contingency arrangements with Post Office Counters Ltd.</p> <p><i>Enforcement</i> Fewer enforcement cases were taken against motorists who were detected using /keeping an unlicensed vehicle on the public road providing this could be solely attributed to industrial action, consequently some £50k less has been collected in mitigated penalties.</p> <p>The Continuous Registration Scheme, which only commenced in January 2004, was severely curtailed during the period of industrial</p>	

	<p>action.</p> <p><i>Enquiries</i> During April to August, an increase of over 30% of telephone enquiries was recorded when compared to 2003 figures. A contributory factor to this was the continued use of Certificates of Temporary Exemption.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that Department of Finance and Personnel should be apprised of the financial impact of industrial action on the Agency. Mr McGinnis to draft a paper.</p>	Mr McGinnis
6.	Enforcement Strategy	
6.1	In preparation for the Northern Ireland Enforcement Summit which DVLA has arranged for 23 February 2005, Mr McGinnis delivered a presentation to the Board outlining the Agency's initial thoughts on how to address tax evasion.	
7.	Risk Management/Corporate Governance	
7.1	<p>The Board reviewed the Corporate Risk Register and noted new risks which had been reported during December 2004 and January 2005. It was agreed that Directorate Registers would be discussed at the next Programme 8 Board meeting, and all directors should progress their registers towards a stage of adequate control.</p> <p>Mr McGinnis is to arrange for the key risks in the Corporate Register to go onto the website by the end of January. Also a copy of DVLNI Risk Guidance/Key Questions is to be included in a future edition of Keynotes, the staff magazine.</p>	<p>All directors</p> <p>Mr McGinnis</p>
8.	Previous Minutes and Matters Arising	
8.1	The minutes of the previous meeting on 21 December 2004 were agreed and the actions were reviewed.	
9.	Business Plan Progress Report	
9.1	The Business Plan progress report was reviewed and updated. Mr Magee suggested that there was a need to put into the public domain what the implications of the merger are.	
10.	Drivers Peak Renewal Update	
10.1	<p>Steady progress has been made on Drivers Peak Renewals, and gaps are being filled from the old driving licence system to the new system. Some time is needed for review against Internal Audit Branch requirements, and a report is due by mid April.</p> <p>On the accommodation side, the Driver Licence counter has been moved and now shares the same space as Coleraine Local Office. A meeting is taking place this week to discuss concerns about delays in electrical work, which will result in computer downtime, missed targets, complaints, etc. and also a delay in introducing Northern</p>	

	Ireland Driver Licensing System (NIDLS).	
11.	Customer Survey Presentation	
11.1	<p>Mrs MacLennan delivered a Customer Survey presentation to the Board based on the most recent survey carried out. The summary of key findings is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost nine in ten (87%) are satisfied with the service that they received when they last renewed their motor tax. Satisfaction is very high (96%) for processing of applications. • Of those who are dissatisfied, queuing time, opening times and helpfulness of staff are the main issues. • In comparison to other Public Services, over a third (35%) feel DVLNI performs better. Only 4% feel DVLNI does not perform as well as other Public Services. • The efficiency of the application process and the professionalism of staff are regarded highly. • Four out of five respondents do not have any cause to complain to DVLNI. <p>Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fewer than half of all respondents feel there was something about the service that was particularly good. This is a potential area of improvement for DVLNI. 2. High proportions of respondents who feel they could complain did not make a complaint. DVLNI could encourage respondents to air a complaint (if they have one) and make the process of complaining more open and transparent. 3. The top mention in terms of improving customer service is to provide more facilities at local offices of Post Offices. <p>The Board discussed the findings of the survey and the following actions were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - steps have already been taken to encourage customers to make a complaint. A new system was introduced on 1 December 2004 and has been widely used. - the number of Post Offices which can process relicensing transactions has increased to over 80 during the last year. 	
12.	Business Impact Assessment highlight report	
12.1	Directors were asked to read this and be prepared to discuss at the next Programme 8 Board meeting.	All directors
13.	Corporate and Business Plan 2005-2007	
13.1	A meeting has been arranged for 11 February in Chief Executive's	

	Office to discuss progress on the Corporate and Business Plan.	
14.	Service First Targets	
14.1	At the moment Service First targets are not being monitored as there is no mechanism to track general correspondence and/or emails. Directors were asked to consider how this could be achieved and this will be discussed in more depth at a future meeting.	
15.	Any Other Business	
15.1	<u>Subject Access Request Fee</u> Mr McClean asked the Board to confirm that DVLNI wished to continue to charge £10 for a Subject Access Request made under Data Protection Act provisions. DVLA also charge a fee for this information, but most if not all NICS departments and agencies provide this free of charge. Directors to consider.	
15.2	<u>Staff rotation</u> Some time ago the Board considered the rotation of staff within the Agency. This matter has been kept under review and recent difficulties in operational sections would indicate that staff rotation within sections would build a solid base of expertise. Mr McClean proposed that line managers should ensure that staff rotation occurs within their section as a matter of routine. Directors to consider.	
15.3	<u>Staff conference</u> The Board needs to consider the best time to hold the Agency conference as well as the most appropriate format. Directors to consider.	

Outstanding Actions

Ref.	Action	Who	When	Review / Comments
20041123 - 001	Compare EO2 and AO responsibilities in DVLA	S.McC	Ongoing	Still awaiting DVLA correspondence
20041123 - 002	Investigate Travel and Subsistence regulations	L.O'C	Ongoing	Complete
20041123 - 003	Resource Road Freight Licensing project requirements	C.C/ T.E	A dedicated SO is to be resourced for this project	Closed – included in business case being made by Core
20041123 - 004	Follow up correspondence with Internal Audit Branch re imaging V11 forms	L.O'C	Ongoing	Ongoing discussion with IAB
20041123 - 005	Check that details of taxis licensed have been supplied	C.C	Ongoing	Outstanding
20041123 - 006	Obtain clear guidance on use of Irish language	T.E	A meeting was held with Core in Dec 04	Complete – see Action Pt. 20050126 - 001
20041123 - 007	Check that numbers of licensed taxi drivers, freight and bus operators and valid driver licences have been supplied	C.C	Ongoing	Outstanding
20041123 - 008	Review productivity of Drivers Enquiry Team	C.C	Ongoing	Completed
20041123 - 009	Report findings of investigation into SORN system	A.McG		Closed
20041221 - 001	Work in operational office “Back to the Floor”	All directors	Timetable of visits prepared	Outstanding
20041221 - 002	Visit Focus Group to discuss Corporate and Business Plan with Mrs Casey and Mrs Scott	B.M L.O'C	Next meeting is on 28.1.05.	Completed
20041221 - 003	Present a paper to the Management Board on tax evasion.	A.McG	To be delivered on 26 January	Completed
20041221 - 004	Make business case to upgrade Sale of Marks system	T.E	February 2005	Completed - internal solution found

Actions

Ref.	Action	Who	When	Review / Comments
20050126 – 001	Draft a paper to Core regarding use of Regional/Minority language, asking for absolute guidance	T.E	November 2004	Completed
20050126 – 002	Investigate whether language awareness training is available for relevant staff	S.McC	Ongoing	
20050126 – 003	Investigate Continuous Registration late licensing supplement and ability to enforce	A.McG	Ongoing	A number of cases to be selected, however RM issue on £1000 fine to be resolved first.
20050126 – 004	Investigate the possibility of getting more space made available at Armagh LVLO	S.McC	Ongoing	Ongoing
20050126 – 005	Prepare a paper identifying options and implications of merger.	T.E	08.02.2005	Completed
20050126 – 006	Draft a paper to DFP apprising of financial impact of industrial action on the Agency	A.McG	To be discussed at board meeting	Paper submitted to MB 26.01.05. Should this now go to DFP?
20050126 – 007	Progress risk registers towards a stage of adequate control	All directors	Next Programme 8 meeting	
20050126 – 008	Key risks in Corporate Register to go onto the website	A.McG	31 Jan 05	
20050126 – 009	Copy of DVLNI Risk Guidance/Key Questions to be included in Keynotes	A.McG	To be included in next issue	
20050126 – 010	Read Business Impact Assessment Report	All directors	Next Programme 8 meeting	