

Corporate Governance Framework



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála**

**Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade**

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Foreword

The [Civil Service Renewal Plan](#) sets out an ambitious programme of reform and development for all Government Departments and Offices. One important aspect of this is the need for strong governance in our organisations.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has responsibility for supporting Irish citizens travelling and living abroad, for ensuring that Ireland's voice in Europe is a strong one, and for helping to promote our values and our prosperity on the global stage. We are supported in these tasks by a diverse, dedicated and skilled workforce operating in over 40 languages at 90 offices across 14 time zones. The scope and global reach of our work has shaped our structures and routines, placing a premium on a well-coordinated and integrated network with ready access to central guidance.

This Corporate Governance Framework describes - for the first time in one place - how we go about our work and fulfil our responsibilities. It sets out the values that we aspire to and that characterise our workforce at home and abroad. It sets out our obligations and the mechanisms that are in place to provide assurance and compliance with those obligations. It also describes our organisational structures, practices and routines. It will be complemented later this year by the publication of our first Compliance Framework.

The world around us is changing at a rapid pace, bringing new opportunities but also new challenges. The way we go about our work needs to be kept under review. In that sense, this is a living document which will be reviewed periodically. What will not change is our commitment to Civil Service Renewal and, through that process, to building the strongest possible systems to support performance, compliance and accountability.

Niall Burgess
Secretary General

Introduction

Good governance in Government Departments and Offices is about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest, and in ways that are consistent with legal, regulatory and Government policy obligations. It can make a tangible and lasting contribution to our performance and our ability to deliver positive outcomes for the people of Ireland. This Department is committed to working in an open and accountable manner, and to developing and embracing structures and behaviours which support that approach.

The development of robust governance systems to support our legislative framework has been at the heart of changes in the Civil Service for more than a decade. The clear guidance provided by, *inter alia*, the [Ministers and Secretaries Acts 1924-2013](#) and the [Public Services Management Act \(1997\)](#), has been reinforced over time by the frameworks provided by governance procedures such as the [Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour](#) and the [Public Spending Code](#). The [Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General](#) (the ‘Mullarkey Report’) and, more recently, the [Public Service Reform Plan](#) and the [Civil Service Renewal Plan](#) have all acknowledged and highlighted the critical role of robust and identifiable governance procedures in the Civil Service. The development of this Corporate Governance Framework is a necessary response to that momentum.

Purpose and Scope of Document

The Mission and Goals of this Department are well articulated, most recently through the [Global Island: Ireland’s Foreign Policy for a Changing World](#), and our staff have proved themselves able, professional and dedicated to the achievement of our objectives. However, we acknowledge that the systems and structures we use to facilitate the delivery of our goals have not always been set out clearly and in one place for our staff and stakeholders. The aim of this Framework is to do just that – to capture coherently our political and operational context, our obligations and responsibilities, our standards of conduct and our accountability mechanisms. Recognising the key role of leadership in governance, the Framework will also set out the statutory role of the Secretary General/Accounting Officer and the responsibilities of her/his senior management team in supporting her/him to drive performance and lead by example.

Systems alone cannot deliver good governance. Through the publication of this Framework, the Department clearly sets out the responsibility of staff at all levels of our organisation to operate to the standards set out. The Framework will therefore be a central pillar of our operational guidance. To ensure that it remains relevant and useful, the Framework will be regularly assessed and updated.

Governance Principles

Corporate Governance refers to the structures and processes in place to ensure that the Department is defining and achieving its intended outcomes for the citizens of Ireland and other stakeholders.

Good governance is underpinned by a set of core principles that help to guide the Department's work and to maintain the confidence of our stakeholders:

Governance Principles

1

Integrity: Good governance supports a culture and ethos which ensures behaviour with integrity, a strong commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law.

2

Responsibility: Good governance helps the Department to define its priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability.

3

Developing Capacity: Good governance means developing the Department's capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff.

4

Accountability: Good governance means increasing accountability by managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

5

Transparency: Good governance ensures openness, effective public consultation processes and comprehensive engagement with domestic and international stakeholders.

The following table outlines the overarching environment within which the Civil Service operates, and the context for Departments' governance arrangements.

Civil Service and Ministerial Accountability

- The legislative basis for this and all other Government Departments is the [Ministers and Secretaries Acts 1924-2013](#).
- The Minister is in charge of the Department and is responsible to the Oireachtas for all elements of the exercise of her/his Departmental responsibility.
- A Department's relationship and communication with the Minister and her/his advisers is a key governance process. The successful delivery of business priorities and programmes is contingent on these relationships operating effectively.
- The Accounting Officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is the Secretary General. She/he is personally responsible, and accountable to the Oireachtas, for regularity and propriety in the Department's accounts, the efficient and economical use of the Department's resources and for the control of assets held by the Department in accordance with [Comptroller and Auditor General Acts 1866 to 1998](#).
- The Secretary General of the Department is responsible and accountable for managing the Department, providing advice to the Minister, and monitoring and implementing Government policies appropriate to the Department in accordance with the [Public Service Management Act 1997](#).

Overview of DFAT Governance Framework

This Governance Framework is structured around four chapters, setting out the core elements which make up the governance and compliance framework in which the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade operates.

Chapter 1 sets out the Mission of the Department and its headline structure. It details the Values, Behaviours and Cultures, as well as the strategic planning processes which drive its effective operation. This Chapter also captures how the Department fosters strong internal communication and proactive and collaborative engagement with its external stakeholders.

Chapter 2 details the responsibilities of the Minister, Ministers of State, and how the Department interacts with them. It also sets out the role of the Secretary General/Accounting Officer and the governance responsibilities of senior management. Significant Departmental strategies which support governance and the Department's ability to deliver on its mandate are also identified.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the operation of the Department's Management Board and details the Sub-Committees and Taskforces which support its work and provide an important assurance function. The governance arrangements in place at Headquarters and at our network of Missions, as well as the relationship with the network of Honorary Consuls, are also set out.

Chapter 4 captures the audit, assurance and compliance arrangements which underpin the Department's governance approach, as well as detailing the implementing structures for this.

Appendix A contains the Terms of Reference for the Management Board and for its supporting Sub Committees and Task Forces.

Appendix B sets out the Audit Committee Charter.

Department Overview

Governance Principle:



Good governance supports a culture and ethos which ensures behaviour with integrity, a strong commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law.

Our Mission

The mission of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is to serve the Irish people, promote their values, advance their prosperity abroad, and to provide the Government with the capabilities, analysis and influence to ensure that Ireland derives the maximum benefit from all areas of its external engagement. These goals are rooted in the recent policy review [The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World](#)¹, and in our [Statement of Strategy for 2015-2017](#)². [One World, One Future \(Ireland's Policy for International Development\)](#) sets out our aims for the delivery of the Government's aid priorities.

The Department also has a Customer Charter³, which guides our efforts to provide a high quality service. The Customer Charter will be updated in 2016.

The legislative basis for this Department is the Ministers and Secretaries Acts 1924-2013.

Values, Behaviours and Culture

Our values underpin a strong culture of service in the Department and are a compass for our efforts to deliver high quality services and professional policy advice.

These values reflect the commitment set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to:

- a deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, honesty, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect;
- a culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money; and
- the highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

¹ The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World: <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/ourrolesandpolicies/ourwork/global-island/the-global-island-irelands-foreign-policy.pdf>

² DFAT Statement of Strategy 2015-2017: <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/aboutus/Department-of-Foreign-Affairs-and-Trade-Statement-of-Strategy-2015-17.pdf>

³ DFAT Customer Charter: <https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebsitemedia/aboutus/dfa-customer-charter.pdf>

The engagement of all staff is vital to making these values work for us and our stakeholders. Senior management leads on the communication of our values to our staff through regular engagement and the Department's strategic planning processes.

Our Values in Action	
Diversity:	We are committed to the principles of equality, impartiality and fairness, to valuing the contributions of all of our staff and to championing gender equality and diversity.
Integrity:	We approach our work with integrity, underpinned by the principles of independence and accountability.
Leadership:	We recognise the importance of our leadership role serving the Irish people, promoting their values, and advancing their prosperity on the global stage.
Service:	We are committed to providing Irish citizens travelling and living abroad with effective and responsive passport, consular and emigrant support services.
Excellence:	We aspire to excellence in the analysis and advice we provide to Government, in the service we provide to our citizens and to the public, and in the management and use of resources assigned to us.

All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the [Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours](#) and the [Ethics in Public Office Acts](#)⁴. Furthermore, staff, guided by the Department's leadership, should be aware of all the frameworks governing the Civil Service including the application of requirements in relation to official secrecy which also apply to former staff and Special Advisers. Incoming staff undergoing induction training are provided with clear guidance on their obligations as well as access to all related materials. Throughout their careers in the Department, staff are updated, primarily through training and development programmes, on their obligations and responsibilities.

Staff of the Department also have ready access to Circulars relating to [Conciliation and Arbitration](#), as well as to the [Grievance Procedure Circular 11/2001: Revised procedure for dealing with grievance problems](#). The Grievance Procedure is a process that seeks to deal in a fair, prompt and impartial manner with the complaints of individual members of staff that are within the scope of the procedure, but that are not appropriate for discussion under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme.

⁴ <http://hr.per.gov.ie/files/2011/06/Civil-Service-Code-of-Standards-and-Behaviour.pdf>
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1995/act/22/enacted/en/html>

Annual Returns of Statements of Interest

Under the terms of the [Ethics in Public Office Acts](#) officers in the Department who are serving in certain designated Civil Service positions are required to prepare and furnish an Annual Statement of registrable interests. Registrable interest forms must be completed in hard copy and returned to the Secretary General and forms with a nil interest must be completed in hard copy and returned to Human Resources. The deadline for return is generally January each year and the form should cover the previous year.

Regulation of Lobbying

The [Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015](#) commenced on 1 September 2015. The Act provides that the Standards in Public Office Commission establish and maintain an online Register of lobbying activity, making information available to the public on the identity of those communicating with designated public officials on specific policy, legislative matters or prospective decisions. Lobbyists must report on their interactions with the Designated Public Officials.

[Section 6\(4\) of the Act](#) requires each public body to publish a list of Designated Public Officials of that body. The list is a resource for lobbyists filing a return to the Register who may need to source a designated public official's details. The list of Designated Public Officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade can be found [here](#).

Protected Disclosures

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 provides statutory protections for workers in all sectors of the economy against reprisals in circumstances where they disclose information relating to wrongdoing that has come to their attention in the workplace. All public bodies, including this Department, are obliged under the Act to have internal procedures in place for dealing with protected disclosures and for these to be made available to their workers. The Management Board agreed and put in place the DFAT draft [Policy on Protected Disclosures in December 2015](#). Following further consultation with staff and with the Audit Committee, and taking account of the finalised [Guidance for Public Bodies on their implementation of the Protected Disclosures Act](#) prepared by D/PER, the Management Board will introduce a finalised policy in mid-2016. The Policy will set out the process by which a worker can make a disclosure, what will happen when a disclosure is made and what the Department will do to protect a discloser. Training on how to deal with protected disclosures and the practical issues that arise is being rolled out to officers of Counsellor and equivalent grades and higher.

Public Spending Code

All Irish public bodies are obliged to treat public funds with care, and to ensure that the best possible value for money is obtained whenever public money is being spent or invested. The Public Spending Code is the set of rules and procedures that apply to ensure that these standards are upheld across the Irish public service. The Code brings together in one place all of the elements of the value for money framework that has been in force up to now, updated and reformed in some respects. The Code is maintained on [this website](#) under the management of the [Central Expenditure Evaluation Unit \(CEEU\)](#) of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Code provides clear guidance for staff and outlines the standards of behaviour expected with regard to public funds.

Organisational Structures

With 80 diplomatic and consular offices abroad, 8 Divisions, and 5 standalone Units/Offices, clarity about individual roles and decision making structures is key to the efficient and accountable

functioning of the Department. This clarity is provided by the Management Board through the proper operation of the management procedures in this document. The Department's headline organisational structure can be viewed at [Appendix D](#).

The Department operates 8 Divisions led by Assistant Secretary level officers or above, all members of the Management Board. These Divisions have responsibility for a number of Business Units in their work area, and report to the Secretary General. A further five stand-alone Units, led at Counsellor level, report directly to the Secretary General.

The work of these Divisions and Units is detailed below and further information on their structures is available in the [Department's Framework of Assignments](#).

Divisions

Ireland, United Kingdom, and Americas Division works to promote peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland through full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The Division also has lead responsibility for bilateral relations with the UK, the US, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean. The Director General of Ireland, United Kingdom and Americas Division also has responsibility for **Consular Services**, which is responsible for delivering consular services to Irish citizens and for **Irish Abroad Unit**.

Development Cooperation Division manages and delivers the Government's overseas aid programme, Irish Aid. The Division also has responsibility for all aspects of Ireland's bilateral relations with Africa.

Trade Division is responsible for trade promotion strategy and coordination, the Export Trade Council, economic messaging and cultural relations. The Division's Director General also has oversight of **Asia Pacific Unit**, which manages bilateral relations with Asian and Pacific Island countries (including New Zealand and Australia).

Europe Division has responsibility for all aspects of bilateral relations with EU and other European countries, for EU Enlargement and EU External relations in the European and Central Asian space. It maintains close contact on all key EU matters with the EU Division in the Department of the Taoiseach. The Division is also the Departmental lead on migration issues.

Political Division manages the political aspects of foreign policy. It leads on human rights, disarmament and non-proliferation, international security policy, drugs and terrorism, UN issues, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. It is also responsible for coordination of Ireland's contribution to the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. The Political Director also has oversight of **Middle East and North Africa Unit**, which manages bilateral relations with Middle East, North African and Gulf countries.

Corporate Services Division provides Human Resource Management, Training and Development, Information Communications Technology, Facilities Management, Coordination, Compliance and Security, and other services to Headquarters and Missions. Corporate Services Division has responsibility for implementing the Public Service Reform Agenda across the Department, in cooperation with the Secretary General and the Strategy and Performance Unit. The Director General also manages the work of the **Passport Service**, which is responsible for delivering a secure passport facility to Irish citizens. The Passport Service is led by a Director at Counsellor level.

Finance Division has responsibility for all aspects of the Department's finance and budgetary functions, including the development and implementation of the Department's finance strategy, across both Votes 27 and 28. The Division is managed by the Chief Financial Officer.

Legal Division provides legal advice on public international law, human rights law and European Union law as it relates to foreign policy, and issues of domestic law particular to the Department; leads on international legal policy on international humanitarian law, international criminal justice

and the law of the sea; represents Ireland in international legal proceedings and in legal committees in international organisations; carries out functions with respect to extradition and mutual legal assistance; and administers the Department's Treaty Office.

Stand Alone Units⁵

Protocol is responsible for the preparation and organisation of visits abroad by the President and visits to Ireland at Head of State, Head of Government and Foreign Minister level. The Protocol service also facilitates the operation of diplomatic missions in Ireland in accordance with international and domestic legislation.

Communications Unit promotes and facilitates external communication of the Department's work and priorities. The Unit also manages the press, information and online presence of the Department.

Strategy and Performance Unit leads on the formulation of Departmental strategy, reviews the operations and systems of the Department, and makes recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department. It leads on business planning and risk management, as well as knowledge management, and supports the implementation of the Public Service Reform Agenda across the Department.

Evaluation and Audit Unit provides an independent evaluation and audit function to the Department. Audit helps identify strengths and weaknesses in our systems, and offers advice on how to improve controls, while Evaluation generates evidence in relation to performance in order to help inform how the work of the Department might be more effective.

Policy Planning Unit works to contribute to strategic policy formulation within DFAT by leading and coordinating analysis of longer-term trends in policy areas of priority interest within Ireland's external relations, to inform our future actions.

Vote Structure

The Department has responsibility for Vote 27 (International Cooperation, essentially Ireland's Official Development Assistance) and Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade). The Secretary General/Accounting Officer is responsible for both Votes, and is supported in this role by the Chief Financial Officer.

Strategic Planning & Performance Management

Strategic planning is the process by which the Department sets its medium-term high-level goals and outlines how it intends to achieve them. Our Statement of Strategy sets out how the Department implements the commitments assigned to it under the Programme for Government and the Statement of Government Priorities, as well as the foreign policy priorities outlined in 'The Global Island'. As

⁵ Functions reporting directly to the Secretary General

provided for in the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#), a new strategy statement is prepared every three years, or within 6 months of a new Minister taking office. The Act and the [Guidelines for Ministers on the Preparation of Strategy Statements](#) form the basis for the Department's approach to drafting a new Statement and the external and internal consultation processes.

Implementation of the [Statement of Strategy](#) is carried out through the preparation of Business Plans and Risk Registers at business unit level. This ensures that all of the Department's activities and resources are focused on the same set of clear priorities. Business Plans outline the priority outcomes and outputs for the year ahead and include critical success factors and performance indicators. They are formulated with the input of all staff from the respective unit and are created before the beginning of the relevant calendar year and updated as priorities dictate. Heads of Division are responsible for ensuring that the Business Plans of business units (including Missions) reporting to them are coherent with the Department's strategic objectives. The Management Board discusses HQ Business Plans before the beginning of each cycle.

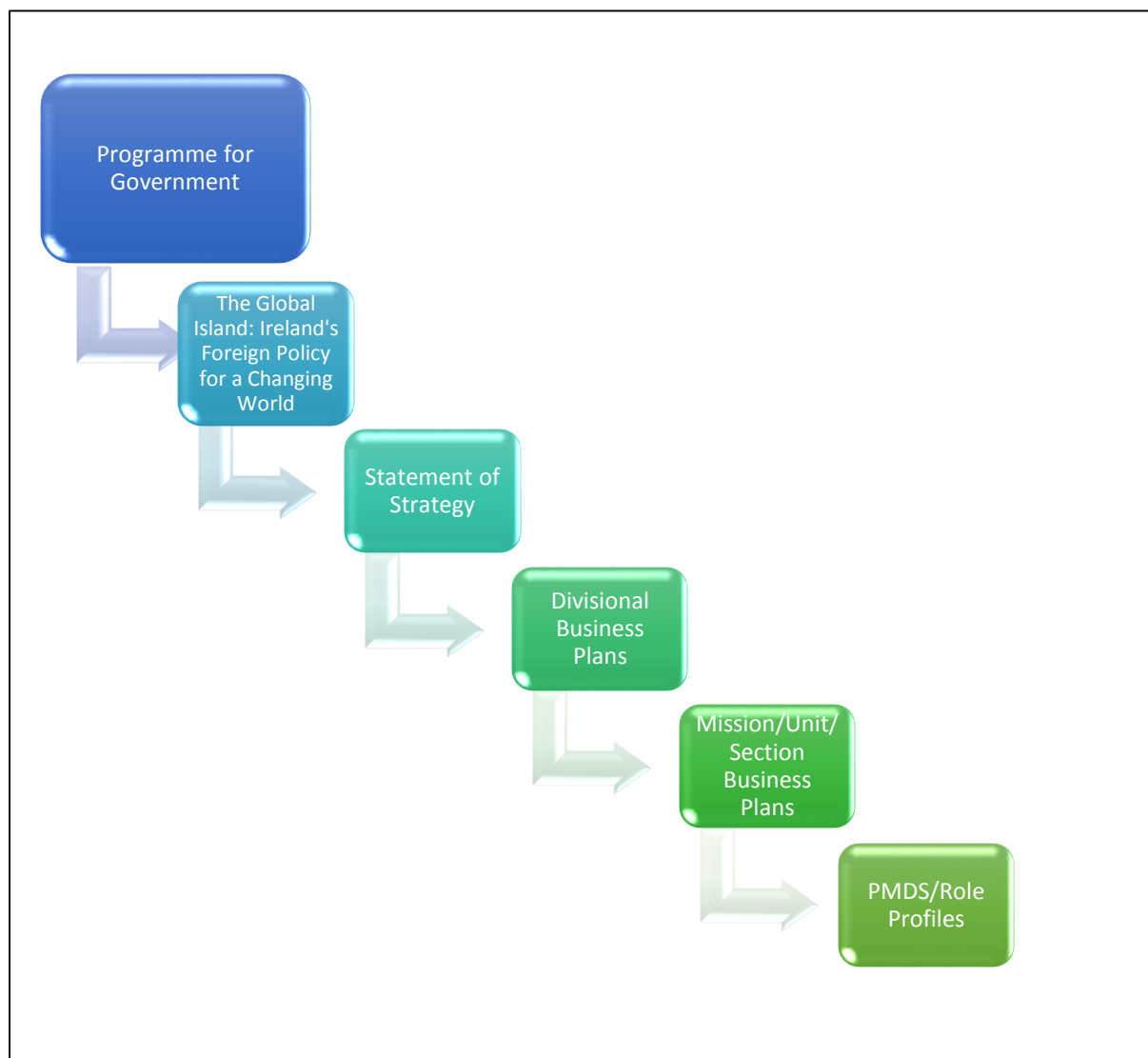


Figure 1 Strategic Planning Process

The **Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)** provides a framework for linking individual performance with the Business Plan objectives of the relevant Division, Unit or Mission. Staff in the Department complete a Role Profile form annually which links their individual role to priorities in their Division/Unit/Mission and plots their development needs and targets. Performance and development is monitored and managed during the year through ongoing informal dialogue and one formal interim review.

Reporting on our Performance

The Department is committed to providing regular and accurate reporting which provides our stakeholders with a measurable account of our progress against our goals. Our headline reporting cycle is set out in the below table. The Department also contributes other reporting data across the breadth of its work.

Framework	Frequency of Reporting/Mechanism	Lead Division/Unit
Programme for Government; Statement of Government Priorities	Annual and as requested by Government	Strategy and Performance Unit
Statement of Strategy	Reporting to Minister; Annual Report; Annual Revised Estimates	Management Board; Communications Unit; Strategy and Performance Unit
Comprehensive Review of Expenditure	Every three years	Finance Division
Ireland Stat	Annual	Strategy and Performance Unit
Open Data	Framework under discussion	Corporate Services Division
Integrated Reform Delivery Plan	Q2 and Q4: DPER online reporting tool	Strategy and Performance Unit

Internal Communications

Communication is a particular priority for this Department, allowing our staff in 80 Missions, and at 10 locations in Ireland, to engage with one another effectively and in an open and transparent manner. The Department is committed to fostering broad, inclusive communication practices, which are innovative and reflect the breadth of interaction across the organisation. In this regard, the Department recognises that senior management sets the tone, ensuring the optimum flow of information throughout the organisation, through formal structures and through informal contacts. Examples of some of the formal and informal structures for communication in the Department are set out in the below table.

Formal and Informal Structures for Communication

- A user friendly **Intranet**, regularly updated, which captures all the Department's current and historic activities, as well as all the key documents, internal contacts, and circulars which inform staff actions and behaviours
- Twice weekly meetings of representatives from all Divisions ("Coordination") chaired by the Secretary General, followed by a short report circulated to all staff
- The circulation of minutes of Management Board meetings to all staff, via Intranet
- Annual or biannual Department Conferences bringing together Heads of Missions with key domestic stakeholders. Sessions from the Conference are recorded and shared internally
- Regional Heads of Mission meetings to discuss coherence and share best practice
- Annual or bi-annual management 'away days' to communicate and develop strategy
- Regular videoconference meetings between 'lead' HQ Divisions and Missions, and between Missions within regions
- 'Town Hall' style staff meetings
- Staff engagement in strategic planning through the Business Planning process
- One to one communication in the PMDS structure
- Departmental Council meetings with representatives of staff side
- Email bulletins from Strategy and Performance Unit on developments in Civil Service Renewal and in cross cutting areas like gender equality, knowledge management and risk management.

Engagement with External Stakeholders

This Department is committed to ensuring that it delivers on its responsibilities in an open and transparent manner.

The Department accounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas in the first instance, through parliamentary questions, the Oireachtas Scrutiny process (as set out in the [European Union \(Scrutiny\) Act 2002 as amended](#)) and through these Oireachtas committees:

- Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Joint Committee on European Affairs
- Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement

The Secretary General of the Department also appears before the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee.

The Department is accountable to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for our progress in implementation of the Public Service Reform Programme. The Department reports on this progress on a bi-annual basis, via the Integrated Reform Delivery Plan.

This Department participates in the [Quality Public Service Initiative](#) and is an active member of the associated Network. The Department will update its Customer Charter in 2016. The process by which members of the public may record a comment or concern about customer service are set out in the current [Customer Charter](#), which is available online and in the Department's public offices.

The Department recognises that it is ultimately accountable to the citizens of Ireland for the efficient and effective delivery of services. In this regard, the office of the Minister coordinates the response to representations from the public on behalf of the Minister. Procedures for dealing with Ministerial correspondence are available to all staff.

We advertise public consultations on a frequent basis, publishing draft policy papers online and inviting submissions from civil society and individual members of the public.

The Department applies an open approach to policy making in a number of different ways. These allow the Department to involve a wide range of stakeholders at the early stages of policy-making and to take various perspectives into account, thereby increasing the quality of its policies. The Department also regularly hosts open policy debates which aim to involve networks of practitioners, academics and experts in developing and debating policy options.

The Department represents Ireland in certain functions relating to its membership of the European Union, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. In this regard, the Department is committed to rules based engagement which enhances our partner organisations and Ireland's peace and prosperity. The Department is committed to ensuring that obligations following from membership of international organisations are fully complied with.

The Department, particularly Europe Division, has a key role in relation to the formation and delivery of EU policy. Europe Division has responsibility for all aspects of bilateral relations with EU countries and the Division manages the work of our network of Missions in the EU, including Ireland's Permanent Representation to the European Union. It also leads on Ireland's contribution to EU enlargement, neighbourhood and external relations policies.

Review of Effectiveness of Governance Framework

This Governance Framework is a living document and its content is subject to review to ensure that it is the most effective and current framework from which to deliver and oversee good governance practice in this Department. Implementation of governance obligations is overseen annually by the Management Board, or as needed, with a view to ensuring that the Framework remains fit for purpose.

Ministerial and Senior Management Roles & Assignment of Responsibilities

Governance Principle:

2

Good governance helps to define priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability.

This chapter sets out the senior management roles and responsibilities from the Minister to the level of Counsellor or equivalent. The purpose of this chapter is to bring clarity to the individual roles of key senior management positions, both in Headquarters and at the Department's Missions abroad.

The Chapter also contains a description of the key operational policies which support the effective operation of this Department.

The Role of Leadership

The way in which managers behave and exercise their decision making authority is critical to creating the kind of workplace which fosters commitment, cooperation, and engagement. This Department aims to deliver strong, visible and energetic leadership, which is transparent, fair and professional, and which is anchored in effective performance management. Furthermore the Department underlines that all members of senior management should take a 'whole of Department' approach to their positions and not limit their corporate function to their specific work areas.

It is the responsibility of senior management, led by the Secretary General and the Management Board, to set the tone by embracing and promoting best practice and good behaviours. It is expected that leadership will actively communicate its commitment to achieving Government objectives through accountable processes, thereby setting a clear example for all staff. The roles of those in leadership positions are set out below.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Minister is in charge of the Department and is responsible to Dáil Éireann for all elements of the exercise of her/his Departmental responsibility. This responsibility ranges from significant political decision-making on major policy issues to routine administrative responsibilities discharged by civil servants on the Minister's behalf. This Governance Standard does not replace or usurp the Carltona Doctrine whereby powers vested in the Minister may be exercised, without any express act of delegation, by officials of certain seniority and responsibility. As corporation sole for the Department, the Minister is legally responsible for every action of the Department⁶. Where, at the request of

⁶ Article 28.4.2 of the Constitution provides that the Government shall be collectively responsible for Departments of State 'administered' by the Members of the Government. Under Article 28.12 of the Constitution Ministers are 'in charge of Departments of State. The principal legislative provisions governing the

Government, functions are transferred from one Minister to another, regard should be had to the guidelines on managing the efficient reorganisation of Departmental structures or functions (request link DPER).

Relationship with the Minister

The relationship and communication between the Minister and the Department are at the heart of good governance. The successful delivery of business priorities and programmes is contingent on these relationships operating effectively.

The Management Board of the Department meets formally with the Minister on a quarterly basis, and more often if required, to consider strategic policy and management direction. Such meetings are in addition to, and do not replace, routine and on-going interaction between Ministers, members of the Board and other senior officials on the day to day business of the Department. This interaction may not always be limited to working hours or to normal office arrangements. It is the responsibility of the Management Board to ensure that the Minister's office is kept informed and updated on the division of responsibilities among senior management, including in relation to cross cutting issues, in order to ensure clarity and effective communication.

Further to this, the Minister meets once per week with the Secretary General to discuss the work and management of the Department.

Recording of Ministerial Decisions

All submissions for Ministerial decision are submitted in paper format via the office of the Secretary General. An explanatory note for the decision, clearly outlining the reason behind the request for approval and/or signature is included. The submission is cleared by the relevant Head of Division and the Secretary General prior to being submitted to the Minister's Office for clearance by the Minister. Following approval/signature by the Minister, the decision sheet is returned to the requesting Division for filing. In 2016, it is intended to introduce *eSubmissions*, to replace the paper format for decision making.

Ministers of State

The Minister retains full responsibility for all areas of the Department's work but may choose to assign certain duties to Ministers of State, subject to his/her supervision. Such duties may therefore be performed by either the Minister or Minister of State. Officials in the Department support the work of the Ministers of State in the achievement of their functions.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade is supported by three Ministers of State: the Minister of State for Development, Trade and North-South Co-operation; the Minister of State for the Diaspora (who is also assigned to the Department of the Taoiseach); and the Minister of State for European Affairs and Data Protection (who is also assigned to the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Justice and Equality).

Minister's powers are the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924-2013 and the Public Services Management Act 1997.

Secretary General and Accounting Officer

The Secretary General is the administrative head of the Department and Accounting Officer and has overall management responsibility for the quality of advice submitted to the Minister.

The [Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924-2013](#) and the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#) outline the statutory responsibilities of the Secretary General. Under the 1997 Act, certain duties are assigned to the Secretary General within the Department (section 4 (1), 9 (1) and 9 (2)), including but not limited to:

- Managing the Department
- Implementing Government policies appropriate to the Department
- Preparing and submitting the Statement of Strategy to the Minister and providing progress reports on its implementation
- Delivering outputs as determined with the Minister
- Providing advice to the Minister and using resources so as to meet the requirements of the [Comptroller and Auditor General \(Amendment\) Act 1993](#) in relation to regularity and propriety as well as economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Ensuring proper use of resources and the provision of cost-effective public services;
- Making sure arrangements are in place to maximise efficiency in cross Departmental matters;
- Preparing an outline of how specific responsibilities are to be assigned so as to ensure that the functions performed on behalf of the Minister are performed by an appropriate officer, or an officer of appropriate grade or rank, of the Department, in line with the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#)
- Managing matters relating to appointments, performance, discipline and dismissal of civil servants below the grade of Principal or its equivalent.

The Secretary General may also be required, under the umbrella of the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#), to carry out other functions on behalf of the Minister.

Accounting Officer (Secretary General)

The Secretary General serves as Accounting Officer for the Department. The role of the Accounting Officer is outlined in detail in the [Role and Responsibilities of Accounting Officers – A Memorandum for Accounting Officers \(2011\)](#), as well as in the [Comptroller and Auditor General Acts 1866 to 1998](#) and the [Public Financial Procedure](#).

The Accounting Officer is personally responsible for the safeguarding of public funds and property under his or her control; for the regularity and propriety of all the transactions in each Appropriation Account bearing her or his signature; and for the efficiency and economy of administration in her or his Department. In this regard, the Accounting Officer is personally answerable to the Oireachtas Committee of Public Accounts (PAC) for regularity, propriety and value for money through rigorous post factum examination of the manner in which Accounting Officers have discharged their

responsibilities by means of independent audit and examinations by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Every year, the Accounting Officer must prepare the appropriation account (an account of expenditure and receipts) for each 'Vote' for which she or he is responsible. The Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is responsible for Vote 27 (International Co-operation) and Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade).

Special Advisers

The primary functions of Special Advisers are to secure the achievement of Government objectives and to ensure effective co-ordination in the implementation of the Programme for Government.

The role and duties of Special Advisers⁷ are to assist the Minister or the Minister of State by providing advice; monitoring, facilitating and securing the achievement of Government objectives that relate to the Department, as requested; and performing such other advisory functions as may be directed while being accountable to the Minister or the Minister of State in the performance of those functions. The Special Adviser performs her or his role alongside the senior Civil Service in collectively supporting the Minister and the Government of the day.

Assignment of Senior Management Roles and Responsibilities

The Secretary General is responsible for the assignment of responsibility for the performance of functions by individual officers, or grade or grades of officer, at Counsellor level and equivalent or above, in accordance with Section 4 (1) and 9 (2) of the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#). These appointments are set out in the Department's [Framework of Assignments](#). Appointments are aligned with the priorities as set out in the Department's Statement of Strategy and reflect the business needs of the Department at the time of appointment, both at home and at our Missions abroad. As outlined in Section 9 (2) of the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#), officers to whom the responsibility for the performance of functions has been assigned shall be accountable for the performance of those functions to the Secretary General and to such other officers (if any) as may be specified under the assignment.

Assistant Secretary

Specific responsibilities are assigned to officers at Assistant Secretary⁸ level or above in their function as Heads of Division or as a Head of Mission serving abroad. Their role includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Support the Secretary General/Accounting Officer in the fulfilment of her/his statutory role
- Play a full and active role in the Management Board and its subcommittees (where appropriate)
- Prepare the Department's Statement of Strategy, contributing to the vision for the organisation

⁷ As set out in section 11 of the [Public Services Management Act 1997](#)

⁸ The Assistant Secretary competency model can be found at http://www.publicjobs.ie/publicjobs/publication/document/Assistant_Secretary_Competencies_October_2013.pdf

- Agree Business Plans for the Department and guide and implement the Department's Risk Management Policy
- Deliver the outputs determined by the Minister, Secretary General, and Management Board

As Head of Division

- Undertake strategic planning for the Division in line with the objectives of the Department
- Manage the Division's performance, notably in relation to delivery of policies, objectives and outputs determined by the Minister, Secretary General, and Management Board
- Report to the Management Board on Divisional activities and operations
- Manage the network of Missions under the Division's area of responsibility
- Ensure all advice provided to the Ministerial team is evidence based, politically neutral and impartial
- Manage and lead staff and assign specific responsibilities
- Manage and lead overall performance, including PMDS, HR and operations
- Ensure the proper allocation and use of resources and compliance with all financial and other obligations related to the post.
- Integrate risk management into policy advice and operations
- Identify opportunities for reform and improvements within the Division
- Brief staff within Divisions, and in Regional Units or Missions reporting to the Division, on the context of decisions taken at the Management Board;
- Facilitate collaboration, partnerships and networks with other Departments to strengthen dialogue and performance
- Lead Ireland's external engagement by participating at EU and international fora

Chief Financial Officer

The Department has a Chief Financial Officer, at Assistant Secretary grade. In addition to overseeing the budget process for both Votes and improving the routine financial management of the Department, the Chief Financial Officer contributes to reforms by *inter alia*:

- Monitoring performance to budget and identifying opportunities for further cost saving and efficiency
- Continuously reviewing and improving the policies, internal controls, accounting standards and procedures operating throughout the Department
- Providing analytical support to the Department's management team, including further development of internal management reporting capabilities;
- Acting as the Department's representative in relation to Civil Service-wide shared service initiatives in financial management, payroll (including travel and subsistence) and other areas;
- Contributing to the development and implementation of all of the Department's strategic goals including through membership of the Management Board.

Counsellor or equivalent

Responsibility is assigned to an officer at Counsellor or equivalent level as Head of Unit or Section or Head of Mission. Their role includes, but is not limited to, the following:

All Counsellors or equivalent

- Support wider management to achieve the objectives of the Department
- Contribute strategically to other senior management fora and the development of Department wide policy including by playing a full and active role in the Management Board and its subcommittees (where assigned)

As Director/Head of Unit

- Manage the Division's performance, notably in relation to delivery of policies, objectives and outputs determined by the Minister, Secretary General, Management Board and relevant Head of Division
- Ensure all advice from the Unit is evidence based, politically neutral and impartial
- Manage and lead overall performance of the Unit, including in relation to PMDS, HR and operations
- Ensure the proper allocation and use of resources and compliance with all financial and other obligations related to the post
- Integrate risk management into policy advice and operations
- Ensure coordination with other related Units and contribute to dialogue with other Departments and stakeholders

Heads of Mission

The Government approves the nominations for Head of Mission appointments throughout Ireland's network of offices abroad based on nominations submitted by the Minister. It should also be noted that the nomination of certain Heads of Mission are subject to the approval (*agrément*) of the authorities of the receiving States and appointments are not formally confirmed until this approval is forthcoming. Currently, Heads of Mission positions can be filled by officers from First Secretary grade and above. At present there are 80 serving Heads of Mission.

In addition to the senior management responsibilities assigned to their grade, the role of a Head of Mission includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Acting as the representative of Ireland in her or his country of accreditation and/or at a multilateral organisation
- Providing expert policy input and guidance on countries or areas of accreditation, ensuring that this is evidence based and impartial
- Building networks in countries/areas of accreditation to advance Ireland's interests
- Leading on agreed strategic objectives and integrating these effectively into Business Planning, with due regard to the Business Plans of relevant Divisions and Units at Headquarters

- Leading at Mission level on key Health and Safety obligations as well as identifying local Risk factors and integrating these into Mission Business Planning and day to day engagement
- Additional regional responsibilities as set out by the Management Board
- Working with State Agencies to pursue opportunities that will deliver economic growth and jobs for Ireland and, where relevant, leading Local Market Teams in priority markets⁹ and reporting to the Export Trade Council
- Directing the Mission's public and media engagement
- Managing, leading and developing staff in the Mission, including locally engaged staff, within the PMDS structures
- Providing assurance to the Accounting Office by ensuring the proper allocation and use of resources, including: effective financial management; compliance with all financial and other obligations relevant to the post; the provision of cost effective public services, including a high standard consular service for Irish citizens in line with the Customer Charter and an efficient visa service; identifying opportunities for reform and improvements within the Mission; ensuring the security of the Mission

Organisational capacity and capability

The Department recognises the need for adaptability and flexibility to ensure that it has the capacity to deliver on its mission. Structures may change from time to time to reflect the changing national and international environment that determines our objectives. However, we as an organisation must continue to maintain the high standards required of all public servants while continually adapting and learning. To guarantee that we are in a position to do that, the Department engages in workforce planning, including in relation to assignments overseas, to ensure that management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. This work is complemented by a series of operational policies, detailed below, which reinforce the Department's ability to deliver on its goals in an effective manner.

Human Resources

The Department plans to develop a new Human Resources Strategy in 2016. This Strategy will complement an updated Planned Postings Policy, which sets out the modalities for the assignment of officers abroad. These changes are a recognition that just as the Department must adapt to the evolving environment in which it operates, the way in which we manage and support our people and Mission network must also be constantly reviewed and renewed. A Management Board Human Resources Sub-Committee, chaired by the Director General of Corporate Services Division, is in place and provides guidance on the development of Human Resources approaches (see Chapter 3).

Training, Development, and Organisational Learning

We recognise the role that training and development plays in increasing organisational effectiveness and improving staff satisfaction, morale and motivation. While Training and Development is the responsibility of all staff and managers, guidance at senior management level is provided by the Management Board Sub-Committee on Training and Development, chaired by a member of the

Management Board. To ensure we continue to review and develop training and development opportunities for all staff we have put in place a framework for the Training and Development which includes:

- A dedicated Training and Development Unit which aims to ensure that staff have access to the necessary supports to enable them to engage in professional development and deliver their goals. The Unit is also actively engaged in the development of the shared model of training, as initiated by the Civil Service Renewal Action Plan
- A MAC Sub-Committee on Training and Development, chaired by a member of the Management Board, which meets bi-annually to assess requirements, develop strategies, oversee implementation and monitor expenditure. The Committee will oversee the creation of a new Training and Development Policy for the Department, to be completed in 2016.

ICT Policy

The Department has developed an *ICT Security Policy* and an *Appropriate Use of ICT Policy* which govern the Department's approach to information security and the ground rules for implementing it. The ICT Unit's activities are directly in service of the Department's [Statement of Strategy 2015-2017](#). The ICT Unit is currently preparing an internal statement of strategy which will outline the broad aims of the ICT Unit over the same period. The Unit is also undergoing an audit in the specific area of governance. On completion of this process, it is envisaged that new structures and reporting arrangements for ICT will be put in place in the course of 2016. These include a new Management Board Sub Committee on ICT, to be chaired by the Director General of Corporate Services Division, which will provide a clear assurance mechanism for the Board in this area.

Communications Policy

A Communications Unit was established in the Department in 2015, combining the Department's Press Relations and Web & Digital Sections with the Public Outreach Section of Irish Aid. The role of the Unit is to:

- Provide support to the Minister and Ministers of State and wider Government on all issues affecting Irish interests that have an international communications/public diplomacy dimension, including vis-à-vis Irish audiences;
- Strengthen the Department's and Missions' abilities to deliver our communication and public diplomacy goals;
- Strengthen communication to the Irish public of the role, services and activities of the Department and our overseas missions; and
- Enhance public awareness and understanding of Ireland's aid programme, Irish Aid, and of global development issues.

The Unit provides written guidance and support to Department staff at home and abroad on engaging with key audiences through traditional and social media channels and on the development, design and use of the Department's 84 websites. These comprise an overarching the main DFAT website, 80 Mission websites and further dedicated websites for Irish Aid, the Africa Ireland Economic Forum, and the Global Irish Hub. A Web Project Board, chaired by a member of the Management Board, has overseen the development of the websites.

Records Management

Strong governance procedures are also recognised as key to the Department's policy on records and information management and guidance has been developed in both these areas. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with their obligations in relation to this Department's obligations and policy on records and information management, including the [National Archives Act](#)¹⁰. Records Management is under review by the Department's Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce (see below).

Data Management

The Department is committed to protecting personal data in line with its obligations under the [Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003](#). Policy drawn from those Acts stipulates that any personal information submitted to the Department is only used for its intended purposes and is destroyed when no longer needed. Any other processing or disclosure of personal data is not allowed other than in the exceptional circumstances provided for under the Data Protection Acts.

A data controller is the individual or legal person who controls and is responsible for the keeping and use of personal information electronically or in hard copy files. The Head of Corporate Services Division serves as the Department's Data Controller.

The key responsibilities of Departmental staff in relation to citizens' data are to:

- Obtain and process personal information fairly
- Only keep it for one or more specified and lawful purpose(s)
- Only process it in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially
- Keep it safe and secure
- Keep it accurate and up-to-date
- Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes
- On request, provide an individual with a copy of their personal data within 40 days.
- Comply with the provision governing the handling of categories of "sensitive personal information"

Freedom of Information and the FOI Publication Scheme

Freedom of Information (FOI) is fundamental to the overall framework of open Government. The [FOI Act 2014](#) allows members of the public to access information that is in the public interest and is safe to disclose. It plays a significant role in developing a greater understanding of how decisions are taken by the Department. Since January 2014, it has been the policy of the Department to publish non personal FOI requests and responses on the Department's [website](#).

Detailed guidance for deciding officers is available at foi.gov.ie, on the Department's Intranet, and from our FOI Officer who is based in the Coordination and Compliance Unit.

¹⁰ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1986/act/11/enacted/en/html>

In addition to processing FOI requests, and in line with Section 8 of the Act, this Department has designed a publication scheme for the proactive, routine publication of certain information on the Department's websites. The information covered by the scheme will be accessible directly on the Department's websites.

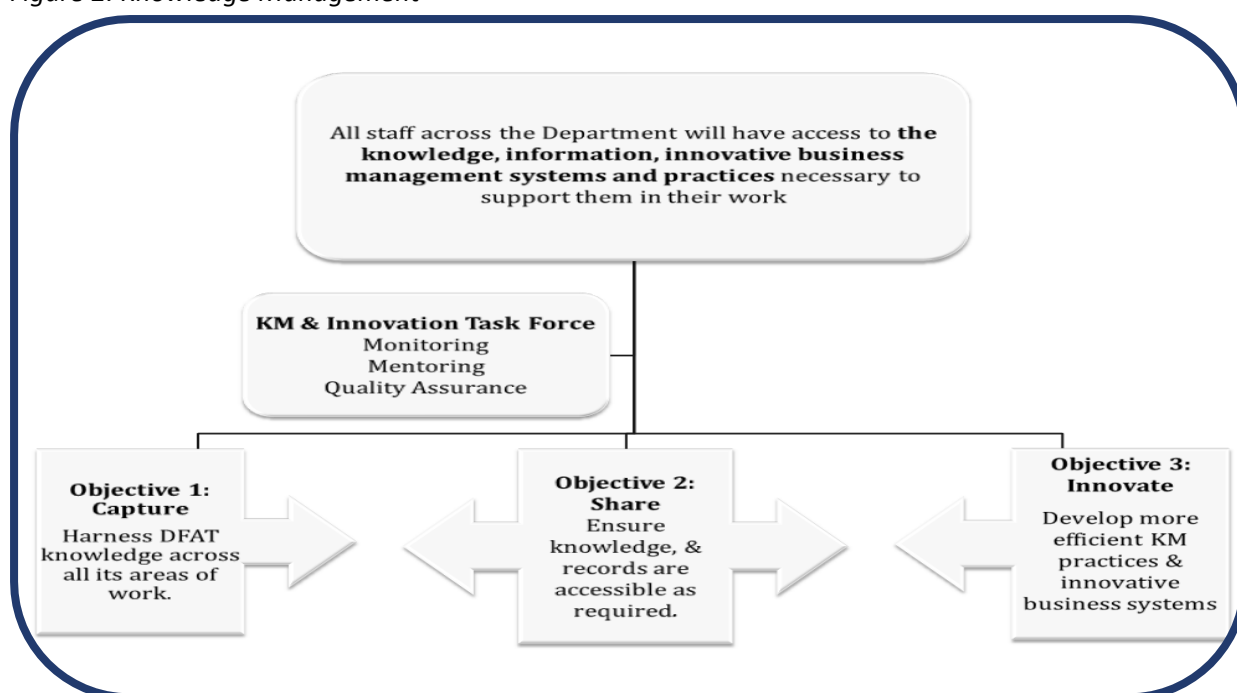
Passport Service Reform Programme

The delivery of a prompt and effective passport service to our citizens at home and abroad remains a cornerstone of the Department's work. In order to respond to increasing application volumes and the requirement to provide more modern, efficient services, as well as to ensure robust security standards, a Passport Service Reform Programme was launched in 2015. The Reform Programme is led by a Programme Board chaired by a member of Management Board, and implemented by a Programme Team. The Programme has a strong governance framework, in accordance with the Public Spending Code. The Chair reports to the Management Board on progress. The Management Board also has a supervisory role in relation to transition through Programme stages, as well as oversight of budget and timelines. It is anticipated that this significant reform programme, which is central to the Department's goals and service delivery ethos, will be complete by 2018.

Knowledge Management

The Department set out a *Vision for Knowledge Management* to ensure that it can build robust and innovative methods of sharing and managing information. This policy is implemented by a *Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce*, chaired by the Chief Financial Officer, who is a member of the Management Board, and consists of a series of projects designed to help the Department capture knowledge across our work, share information and best practices efficiently, and innovate to create new and better systems. Recognising that project management capability is key to the successful delivery of objectives¹¹, the Department has created a single set of templates to streamline significant projects, including those under the remit of the Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce. It is intended that the Department will grow its project management capabilities on an ongoing basis.

Figure 2: Knowledge Management



Governance Role of all Staff

Regardless of role or function in the Department, all staff have a role to play in collectively committing to the good governance of the Department through the requirements of this Framework, as well as by adhering to the *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours* in the performance of their duties, corporate policies, procedures, circulars and Office Notices. These guiding documents are accessible to all staff.

¹¹ As set out in Action 17 of the Civil Service Renewal Action Plan

Management Board and other Governance Structures

Governance Principle:

3

Good governance means developing the Department's capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff.

This chapter sets out the management structures and procedures. It focuses on the purpose, function and composition of the Management Board and of the Sub-Committees, Taskforces and Ad Hoc Working Groups which support and reinforce the work of the Board. Terms of Reference for the Management Board can be found at Appendix A.

This Framework also sets out the structures and procedures governing the relationship between lead Units at Headquarters and Missions abroad.

Management Board

The Management Board operates to the principles of shared participation and personal and corporate responsibility for the operational success of the entire Department in support of the Minister and Secretary General in the fulfilment of their statutory roles. The Management Board acts as a leadership and management team for the whole Department. It provides strategic leadership, direction and oversight in achieving Department corporate goals. It acts as a clearing house for major Departmental management issues and the coordination of policy considerations where they cut across more than one area of the Department. The Board also has a key role in overseeing the development and performance of the Department as a whole, including in relation to recognising key opportunities for change and driving the reform agenda.

Board members have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the Department and are expected to take a wider corporate view of issues as well as specific Divisional matters. Decisions at the Management Board should generally be reached by consensus. Where a consensus is not possible, the Secretary General will determine a course of action. Full details on the purpose, roles, composition and procedures of the Management Board, as set out in its Terms of Reference, can be found at [Appendix A](#). These Terms of Reference are updated at least once annually.

Sub-Committees of the Management Board

To support the operations of the Management Board and to provide an important assurance function, a number of Subcommittees or Taskforces have been established. These are:

- Senior Management Group (Development Cooperation Division)
- Risk Management Sub-Committee
- Gender Equality Sub-Committee
- Human Resources Sub-Committee
- Accommodation Sub-Committee

- Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce
- Training Sub-Committee
- ICT Sub-Committee

These Sub-Committees or Taskforces are chaired by one or more Members of the Management Board nominated by the Secretary General. Membership is drawn from the wider Department, taking into account business needs. From time to time, the Management Board may also establish *ad-hoc* and timebound MAC Sub-Committees or working groups to drive particular strategic or policy work. Such groups currently in operation include:

- Web Project Board
- Civil Service Renewal and Corporate Governance
- Passport Reform Board

Management Engagement

It is the responsibility of all members of the Management Board to communicate the context of decisions taken at the Management Board to staff reporting to them. In addition, management ‘away days’ provide an opportunity for the Management Board to engage with the wider management team based at HQ. Officers based at Headquarters, from the level of First Secretary or equivalent and above, attend an annual or bi-annual meeting where Departmental progress is reviewed. Managers can provide their views on the strategic direction of the Department and discuss key Departmental business objectives. Officers at Counsellor level and equivalent may also apply to serve on the Management Board and, in line with the agreed [competency framework](#), are expected to lead on significant change or reform, and contribute to the corporate agenda of the Department.

Governance at Missions and between Missions and Headquarters

Ireland’s diplomatic network comprises 61 Embassies, 7 multilateral Missions and 12 Consulates General and other offices, through which the Department maintains diplomatic relations with 178 States.

Good governance at Missions is critical to the Department’s ability to deliver on its objectives in the context of a highly dispersed workforce. Each office of the Department abroad is led by a Head of Mission, who is responsible for ensuring that the Mission meets its strategic and operational objectives and that its day to day work is coherent with that of the Department and the Government as a whole¹². Each Mission reports to a lead Division or Unit at Headquarters which has overall responsibility for ensuring coherence and a unified approach to policy implementation.

Assistant Secretaries serving abroad fulfil Head of Mission functions in major bilateral assignments and, in other instances, in addition to their Head of Mission roles, also oversee the work of Embassies within their respective regions. This regional approach will be implemented and adapted in light of the Department’s evolving business needs.

¹² Detail on the role of a Head of Mission is set out in Chapter 2

Heads of Mission meet annually on a regional basis, where discussions on strategic direction and performance are often led by an Ambassador at Assistant Secretary level or above. Members of the HQ Management Board also attend these regional meetings.

While Assistant Secretary and Counsellor and equivalent level staff abroad do not generally serve on the Management Board¹³, they are expected to contribute to the corporate governance of the Department in line with the role descriptions as set out in Chapter 2. In addition to the ongoing contact between Missions and Headquarters, Heads of Mission attend an annual or biennial conference in Dublin which brings together more than 90 Irish Ambassadors, Consuls General and senior diplomats with senior Government figures, as well as representatives of Irish companies, other Government Departments, the State Agencies, third level institutions and the creative sectors. The aim of this conference¹⁴ is to explore and develop how the Department can best deliver on the Government's priorities. In addition to this, it provides an important opportunity for key management figures to share best practice and promote the coherence and integration of all Departmental offices.

Relationships with Honorary Consuls

An Honorary Consul is an official representative of the Irish Government in a particular designated territory. The functions, privileges and immunities of Honorary Consuls are set out in the [*Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963*](#)¹⁵. Appointments are made by the Government through the Minister in consultation with the relevant Mission. The Government of the host State must also agree to an appointment.

The primary function of an Honorary Consul is to develop relations and trade between the host country and Ireland and to assist and protect the citizens of Ireland through the provision of consular services and assistance.

Honorary Consuls are subject to the terms of appointment set out by the Minister which include obligations on financial management and data protection. Honorary Consuls report regularly to the Ambassador of Ireland who is accredited to the State where the Consulate is located or Headquarters, as appropriate.

Governance across organisational boundaries

Members of the Management Board, and other Department staff, also contribute to broader Civil Service management. The Secretary General is a member of the Civil Service Management Board and is a lead sponsor of various Actions under Civil Service Renewal. Additionally, other Management Board members participate in senior civil service management fora, as appointed by the Secretary General.

¹³ One AS level or above Head of Mission serves on the Management Board, at the discretion of the Secretary General. At present, a Counsellor level Head of Mission also serves on the Board

¹⁴ In 2015 the Conference 'Representing the Global Island' took place between 12- 14 January

¹⁵ Text of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1963) can be found here - http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_2_1963.pdf

The Director General of Europe Division attends and supports the work of the Cabinet Committee on EU Affairs. The Director General of Trade Division supports the Minister in her/his chairing of the Export Trade Council.

The Department is represented on relevant cross-Departmental senior officials groups. The Department emphasises the importance of this engagement in delivering broader Government priorities and commits to an interdependent and collegiate approach in all its dealings, structured or not, with other Government Departments and Agencies. The Department also hosts the Inter-Departmental Committee on Human Rights and the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development.

The Department recognises that its work is particularly interlinked with that of the Department of the Taoiseach on matters relating to EU Policy, Northern Ireland, and Ireland's relationship with the United Kingdom, and, in its trade function, with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Governance Principle:

4

Good governance means managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

Accountability

Dáil Éireann votes funds every year for Government Departments and Offices to spend on the provision of public services and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is accountable to the Dáil for those allocated funds, including through the Oireachtas Committees on Foreign Affairs and Trade, European Affairs, and the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The Secretary General of the Department appears before the Public Accounts Committee as requested.

The Department's accounts are audited and reported on by the **Comptroller and Auditor General** who provides independent assurance that public money is properly managed, spent to good effect and is contributing to improvements in public administration.

Role of Internal Finance Division

Finance Division, led by the Chief Financial Officer, reports directly to the Secretary General/Accounting Officer and oversees the management of Votes 27 and 28. The Division maintains a Financial Policy and Procedures Manual which reflects the Department's obligations under the [Public Financial Procedures](#), with a view to supporting and informing officers with responsibility for accounting, budgetary control and financial management.

At the end of each financial year, the Department is required to report spend in the form of an Appropriation Account, which is submitted for review and audit to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. This Account must be delivered by the 31st March. The Accounting Officer is required to supply a signed Statement of Internal Financial Control with this Annual Appropriation Account. The Statement of Internal Financial Control is the means by which the Accounting Officer declares his or her approach to, and responsibility for, risk management, internal control and corporate governance. It is also the vehicle for highlighting weaknesses which exist in the internal control system within the organisation.

The Accounting Officer is responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Department. The objective of the Department's system of internal control is to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance that assets are safeguarded, that transactions are authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the Department's system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

Evaluation and Audit Unit

The Evaluation and Audit Unit provides both evaluation and internal audit functions to the Department. The Unit reports directly to the Secretary General who must approve the annual evaluation and audit work plan. The work of the Unit is also overseen by the Department's independent Audit Committee.

Evaluations typically assess programmes with respect to the internationally recognised criteria of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. Evaluations include Value for Money and Policy Reviews that are undertaken under the Public Spending Code.

The audit work plan is risk-based; assignments focus on the internal controls established by the Department to manage risk and examine programme interventions to assess whether funds have been properly accounted for and used for the purposes intended. The Unit alerts management to weaknesses in internal control systems and advises on improvements. Procedures are in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

Mission Reviews

Strategy and Performance Unit has responsibility, as directed by the Management Board, for periodically reviewing the performance at the Department's Missions abroad. Mission Reviews provide an assessment of the performance of Missions in delivering on the Department's High Level Goals and make recommendations for the consideration of the Management Board to address any issues arising and promote best practice. It is the intention of the Management Board that Missions will be reviewed once every ten years. Outcomes of Mission Reviews are shared with the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG)¹⁶.

Role of Coordination and Compliance Unit

The Coordination and Compliance Unit is part of Corporate Services Division and plays an important role in governance. The Unit has responsibility for the coordination of all cross-Departmental Reps and PQs, the use of e-Cabinet, Freedom of Information, data protection, customer service, and the Official Languages Act. The Unit also has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Department's Registry, Library <http://dfai/SupportServices/thelibrary/default.aspx> and Archive functions.

The Passport Service will establish shortly a Compliance and Coordination Section which will oversee the effective application of policies, procedures and guidelines and will enhance the audit function within the Service.

Management of Risk

The Department's risk management approach is governed by a Risk Management Policy, updated in 2014. The overall objective of the Policy is to ensure that awareness of pertinent risks and of the importance of prevention and protection should inform all aspects of the Department's organisation

¹⁶ This was also the case with the outcome of the previous system for performance assessment at Missions, Inspection Reports.

and work practices and that appropriate actions are taken by management and staff throughout the Department to identify and effectively manage the risks to which the Department is exposed. The Department maintains a Risk Reporting Register and a Management Board High Level Risk Register which capture the fullest possible risk picture. The Management Board considers risk every two months as a regular agenda item.

A Management Board Member acts as Chief Risk Officer. The Chief Risk Officer (CRO) promotes active risk management in the Department and chairs the **Risk Management Committee**, acting as a reporting channel between the Committee and the Management Board. Full details of Risk Management roles and responsibilities can be found at [Appendix C](#).

Health and Safety

This Department is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all staff in the Department and its Offices, including customers, visitors, contractors and members of the public in accordance with the [Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) and the [Safety, Health & Welfare at Work \(General Application\) Regulations 2007](#) and other relevant legislation.

Health & Safety Unit are currently conducting a complete review of its Health & Safety practices and plans to actively promote and support employee involvement in all aspects of safety and health management in its operation. We are committed to identifying and then, as far as is reasonably practicable, eliminating, reducing and controlling risks and protecting the staff of the Department and its offices and others who may be involved with the Department and its Offices.

Security

Coordination and Compliance Unit have responsibility for security matters, both in our Missions abroad and at Headquarters. The Department is fully committed to managing the security risks facing staff, many of whom operate in challenging circumstances. To mitigate the risks which exist, a proactive and practical approach is taken. All Missions prepare a Mission Security Plan based on central guidance from the Department's Security Unit. Staff at Headquarters are also required to follow set procedures in relation to their own security and the security of office premises.

The Department also implements security procedures for the sharing and handling of EU and other sensitive documentation, working closely with the Department of Justice and Equality.

Public Procurement

Procurement governance in the Department refers to the policies and processes by which the department holds itself accountable for its procurement activities. The Department administers the governance structure of the Government's procurement framework, and the rules and policies made under it. The Secretary General, as Accounting Officer, is accountable for the Department's procurement activity and delegates responsibility for the contracting of all types of goods and services, including ICT, to separate Heads of Business Units in the Department at home and abroad. Where this occurs, the Heads of Business Units ensure the application of appropriate governance mechanisms to manage all categories of goods and services procurement. Elements of this governance structure include the assignment of a Procurement Officer, effective procurement planning, robust internal procurement systems, efficient approval processes, and the appropriate delegation of authority.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is a ‘contracting authority’, defined under EU Directives as a body governed by public law. As a contracting authority, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade procurement is governed by the [Department of Finance Guidelines on Competitive Tendering \(2004\)](#) and the revised EU public procurement Directive, 2004/18/EC of 31 March 2004, as transposed into Irish law by [SI 329 of 20 June 2006](#); the 2001 [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#), issued by the Department of Finance; and [Guidelines for the Engagement of Consultants by the Civil Service 2006](#).

The Department’s procurement governance objectives are to:

- implement Government and EU procurement regulation and guidelines;
- obtain value for money in the exercise of procurement functions;
- improve competition and facilitate access to the Department’s procurement business by the private sector, especially by SMEs;
- identification and management of conflicts of interest;
- Ethical and fair treatment to participants; and
- administer a procurement processes ensuring full transparency.

The Department has set procedures for competitive processes depending on the level of expenditure to be incurred. These comply with Irish and EU procurement regulations. These competitive processes are set out in the Department’s Procurement Procedures which are available to all staff via the Intranet.

[Audit Committee](#)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has an independent Audit Committee that advises the Secretary General.

The Audit Committee provides an independent appraisal of the Department’s:

- Risk management and internal control systems
- Audit and evaluation arrangements

The Committee is comprised of six members, whose backgrounds include audit, risk management, overseas development assistance, and public administration. The Committee meets at least six times a year. The Audit Committee’s annual reports are published on the Department’s website. The Charter for the Audit Committee can be found at [Appendix B](#).

[Role of Irish Aid’s Expert Advisory Group](#)

The Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group provides independent advice on the aid programme to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Minister of State for Trade and Development. The Group consists of a Chair, five Ordinary Members and one senior official from the [Department of Finance](#) serving in an *ex officio* capacity. The Ordinary Members and the Chair are appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and have a broad knowledge of the development and international affairs agendas. Appointments are made for a period of three years with the possibility of this term being extended up to a maximum of a total of five years.

The Group provides advice to the Ministers on the overall orientation and strategic direction of the aid programme. It may also analyse, review, report and make recommendations on specific, discrete areas of the aid programme at the request of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade or the Minister of State for Trade and Development. Work carried out by the Group is submitted directly to the Ministers.

Compliance Framework

In order to underpin the principles of good governance, a compliance process based on good knowledge management as well as monitoring and review will be developed following publication of this Governance Framework and published in Q2 2016. It will provide an overview of all compliance assurance activity in the Department, and identify who within the Department is responsible for each activity. It will exist as a separate framework to provide greater detail of the subset of governance standards that are required to be met by statute, or on foot of government decisions or significant administrative or external commitments.

Appendix A – Terms of Reference for the Management Board and associated Sub-Committees

Management Board

Terms of Reference

1. Vision and Purpose

The mission of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is as set out in its Statement of Strategy.

In pursuance of this mission, the Management Board supports the Minister and Secretary General in the fulfilment of their statutory roles.

The Department and the Management Board are guided in their work by the core values of the Department and by the Civil Service Vision as set out in the Corporate Governance Framework. The Board operates to the principles of shared participation and personal and corporate responsibility for the operational success of the entire Department.

2. Department's Approach to Policy Making

The policies pursued by the Department are set at the direction of the Minister, within the framework laid down by the *Programme for Government*. They are further articulated in the Government's statement of foreign policy, the [Global Island](#), while the Departmental [Statement of Strategy](#) sets out how these policies will be implemented and their goals achieved over a three year period. The Management Board supports the Secretary General in the effective implementation of policy, having regard also to budget and resource considerations. It ensures an appropriate process of engagement and coordination on policy issues across the Department, and with other Government Departments and agencies, as well as external stakeholders.

The Management Board supports the provision to the Minister of quality, coordinated and timely advice on policy issues, and on strategic matters affecting the Department.

3. Responsibilities of the Management Board

The following issues are ordinarily dealt with at the Management Board:

- Consideration of, and reporting on, the Statement of Strategy
- Business Planning for the Department
- Operational strategies, as appropriate, for effective Departmental implementation of Government policies
- Risk Management for the Department
- Consideration of major strategic challenges confronting the Department (including in the areas of IT, financial and Human Resource allocation, Human Resources strategies)

- Consideration and debate of major policy challenges facing the Department, and wider external issues of significance
- Ensuring that cross-cutting and longer term issues are fully accounted for in resource planning, policy formulation and advice
- Overview of Budget allocation and performance
- Internal Communications (i.e. ensuring effective communication throughout the organisation, including dissemination of information on the role and decisions of the Management Board where appropriate, driving engagement with staff) and communication with external stakeholders
- High-level review of significant management and investment decisions made
- Ensuring Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Capacity & Capability Reviews are conducted periodically
- Driving use of technology and innovation to transform how services are delivered
- Certain assignments at HQ and abroad
- Governance arrangements

Other issues for discussion by Management Board will include:

- Review of spending against budget profile
- Progress and status of major legislative initiatives being undertaken within the Department
- Progress and status of major projects against expected timeframes and budget
- Review of certain documents prior to publication, such as the Annual Report, or Department's contribution to the Estimates Process.

4. Membership

The Management Board currently comprises the Secretary General (Chair), the Second Secretary General (or the officer appointed Deputy Chair by the Secretary General, a position held at the level of Assistant Secretary or above), and all Assistant Secretaries serving at Headquarters. One officer at AS level or above serving in a Mission abroad is also appointed to the Management Board. This latter appointment is made by the Secretary General with due consideration for the need to ensure a balance of skills and responsibilities, notably reflecting the number of senior management personnel serving abroad.

Four officers at Counsellor or equivalent level, serving at home or abroad, serve on the Board. Appointments at Counsellor level are made by the Secretary General for a period of one year, following a call for expressions of interest to those in the grade (or equivalent grades). Specific weight is given to achieving gender balance on the Management Board, as well as to relevant experience, in selecting candidates. Counsellor level Members have the full rights and responsibilities of Board members during their tenure and are expected to contribute fully to the work of the Board.

The Private Secretary to the Secretary General serves as Secretary to the Board, and attends its meetings.

The Management Board is also regularly attended by other officials in the Department who deliver presentations on major policy and management issues for the consideration of the Board.

5. Relationship with Minister, Minister of State and Special Advisor

The Management Board meets with the Minister on a quarterly basis, and more often if required. Matters for discussion with the Minister at these meetings include, but are not limited to:

- Government priorities and Programme for Government implementation
- Strategic Policy setting
- Current policy or management issues of strategic importance
- Department performance and performance reporting

Such meetings are in addition to, and do not replace, on-going interaction between Ministers, members of the Board and other senior officials.

While not members, the Special Advisers to the Minister may participate in Management Board meetings in discussions relating to Government priorities, strategic policy and overall Departmental performance.

The Minister and his Special Advisers are briefed on Management Board outcomes by the Secretary General or by the officer designated as Deputy Chair of the Management Board.

6. Roles

The role of the **Chair** (Secretary General) includes:

- Scheduling and chairing twice monthly meetings
- Setting the agenda for these meetings with input from Management Board Members
- Ensuring that the Management Board considers any matters that threaten the propriety with which the Department carries out its business, or the value for money achieved by the Department
- Ensuring that the Management Board considers any significant issues which may impact on the Department's medium term capacity, capability or significant risks to delivery on its objectives, together with details of mitigating actions proposed or taken

The Chair may delegate chairing functions to the **Deputy Chair** when necessary.

The role of **Board Members**, complementary to that of the Secretary General/Accounting Officer includes, but is not limited to:

- Regular attendance and active participation at meetings of the Board
- Specific responsibilities assigned to them by the Secretary General or Management Board
- Participating proactively in the management of the whole Department and not focusing only on their own functions in providing leadership and strategic direction, and driving and overseeing the implementation of Departmental strategies
- Using their experience to challenge and critically examine items under discussion by the Board
- Notifying the Board of any matters that threaten the propriety or value for money with which the Department carries out its business

- Active participation in building consensus
- The Board will also identify the Member who will lead on the provision of advice relating to cross-cutting issues.
- Chairing of Sub-Committees and Taskforces established by the Board

The role of the **Secretary** includes, but is not limited to:

- Assisting the Chair with preparing the meeting agenda
- Timely circulation of papers
- Drafting, circulating and publishing the Minutes
- Tracking implementation of Management Board Decisions and following up, where necessary

7. Frequency of Meetings

The Management Board meets twice per month or more frequently if required.

8. Support Committees

To support the operations of the Management Board, a number of Sub-Committees or Taskforces have been established. The groups currently in operation are:

- Senior Management Group (Development Cooperation Division)
- Risk Management Sub-Committee
- Gender Equality Sub-Committee
- Human Resources Sub-Committee
- Accommodation Sub-Committee
- ICT Sub-Committee
- Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce
- Training Sub-Committee

These Sub-Committees or Taskforces are chaired by one or more Members of the Management Board as nominated by the Secretary General. Membership of the groups is drawn from the wider Department, taking into account business needs. Terms of Reference for these Committees are appended.

From time to time, the Management Board may also establish ad-hoc and timebound MAC Sub-Committees or working groups to drive particular strategic or policy work. Such groups currently in operation include:

- Web Project Board
- Civil Service Renewal and Corporate Governance
- Passport Reform Board

9. Management Board Information / Documentation

Papers for Management Board meetings should ordinarily be circulated to members of the Board by the Secretary three working days before the meeting. Papers for discussion should include a clear

summary of the issue to be addressed and its potential implications or consequences, as well as clear timelines for action. Papers for decision are to be accompanied by a decision sheet, which sets out the issue for decision, the context/background, resource implications, and any subsequent actions required. Decisions are taken by consensus. Where consensus is not possible, the Secretary General will determine a course of action.

10. Communications

The Management Board is central to the delivery of effective internal communication and is responsible for ensuring efficient and appropriate dissemination of information throughout the organisation. Where appropriate, Members are expected to share information circulated at the Board with Heads of Unit reporting to them, to help ensure organisational awareness and buy-in. It is the responsibility of Management Board to communicate the context of decisions taken to staff.

Minutes of Management Board meetings are prepared by the Secretary to the Board and are published to the Department's Intranet as soon as possible, following their approval by the Board. Minutes include a summary of items discussed, decisions reached, and action points, including timeframes.

11. Performance and Evaluation

The Management Board is subject to a periodic review to measure delivery, performance and effectiveness against its terms of reference, with the modalities to be defined by the Management Board in advance of the first review.

Terms of Reference

Senior Management Group of Development Cooperation Division

Mandate and context

1. The Development Cooperation Division is a division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Its Senior Management Group is a Sub-Committee of the Management Board of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
2. The Development Cooperation Division manages Vote 27 and comprises a series of HQ-based Business Units. It is the lead Division for all missions in sub-Saharan Africa and also oversees development programmes in Palestine and south-east Asia. The HR complement of the Division comprises diplomatic, general service and development specialist streams with the additional assignation of temporary internships.
3. The Division is headed by a Director General.

Role

The Senior Management Group:

4. Supports the Director General in the management and administration of Development Cooperation resources allocated to the Department of Foreign Affairs (Vote 27); the development and delivery of Ireland's policy for international development as defined in *One World One Future, Ireland's Policy for International Development*; and the management of all aspects of Ireland's relations with sub-Saharan Africa, as articulated in Ireland's Foreign Policy and in the Africa Strategy.
5. Supports the Director General in assigning and managing the human resources allocated to the Division.
6. Approves the annual allocation of Vote 27 across the programme (prior to its submission to the Management Board and the Inter Departmental Committee); monitors and controls expenditure against approved budget lines; and authorizes transfers within budget lines in accordance with defined procedures.
7. Approves all consultancy contracts above €25,000.
8. Approves, monitors (and reviews as necessary) the Division's business plan and risk register.
9. Approves operational policy documents and Multi-annual strategic plans prior to submission to the Secretary General and Minister.
10. Considers and responds to Audit Committee reports, evaluation reports, mid-term reviews, and other relevant reports.
11. Approves decisions with regards to the day to day management and administration of the programme, as well as any reallocation of resources across the programme.

Membership and Participation

12. The Senior Management Group comprises the head of each business unit in the Development Cooperation Division. The Department's Chief Financial Officer is also a member of the Senior Management Group and the Head of the Evaluation and Audit Unit attends in an observer capacity.
13. The Senior Management Group is chaired by the Director General.

14. In the event that a Senior Management Group member is unable to attend a meeting at which his/her Unit wishes to table an item for decision or discussion, another representative of that Unit may attend for the duration of that agenda item.
15. Other Unit representatives may also be invited to accompany the Unit Head in order to present, or take questions, on specific agenda items.
16. With the permission of the Chair, guest speakers may be invited to address the Senior Management Group on specific issues.
17. The Senior Management Group may establish sub-groups or task teams to take forward particular areas of work.

Procedures

18. Meetings are held on a fortnightly basis (in Limerick or Dublin). A calendar for meetings is prepared on a six monthly basis. Additional meetings may be convened at the request of the Director General.
19. The agenda is managed by the Director General's office with items being proposed in advance by members
20. Items are confirmed for inclusion on the agenda five working days prior to the meeting and supporting documentation is circulated via the Director General's office a minimum of 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting.
21. Documents should include an opening paragraph setting out the action which the Senior Management Group is being asked to take (take note, endorse, approve etc.)
22. The minutes of the meeting are taken by members on a rotating basis.
23. The meeting record is cleared by the Director General and the group's members prior to being made available, on a dedicated site on the intranet.

Silent Procedure

24. In exceptional circumstances, the approval by the Senior Management Group of programme expenditure not in excess of €300,000 can be carried out by silent procedure.
25. In such cases, a proposal will be circulated with a note outlining the proposal, the amount involved, the justification for the expenditure and the budget line from which the funds could be drawn.
26. The member proposing such expenditure will set a deadline within which any objections can be raised but which should not be less than 48 hours from the time of circulation.
27. At the meeting following the approval of expenditure by silent procedure, the Senior Management Group will note the outcome and include it in the minutes of the meeting.

Reporting

28. Members routinely provide updates on the discussions and decisions at Senior Management Group meetings to their teams as part of their regular Unit meetings.
29. The agenda and decisions of Senior Management Group meetings are available on the dedicated area of the intranet
30. The Director General as chair routinely reports on the matters arising to the Secretary General and reports to the Management Board on key issues.

Management Board Sub-Committee on Accommodation

Mandate: The MAC Sub-Committee on accommodation was established on the basis of an Evaluation and Audit Unit recommendation arising from an audit in 2012.

The Scope: The Sub-Committee's role is:

- To oversee and approve accommodation projects' scheduling
- To preview and assess major projects, their scope and budgets
- To review procurement arrangements and practice and define expenditure authority limits
- To monitor project progress and costs.

Membership: Secretary General, Head of Corporate Services, Director General Ireland, UK, Americas, Director General Irish Aid. The Chief Finance Officer, Director of Accommodation Unit, and Senior Architect also attend. Architectural Services Unit provide secretarial support.

Frequency of Meeting: Two meetings annually

Reporting Arrangements: Report to MAC after each Sub-Committee meeting.

**Management Board Sub-Committee on
Training & Development in the Department of Foreign Affairs
Terms of Reference**

- The Sub-Committee was established in November 2010 to monitor training and development within the Department.
- It meets bi-annually, as necessary, to assess requirements, develop strategies, oversee implementation and monitor expenditure.
- The Sub-Committee will oversee the preparation of a new Training & Development Strategy for the Department, including a review of current language training policies.
- The Sub-Committee will meet with, and take views from, those with an interest in the areas under its remit.
- The Sub-Committee may invite guest speakers and/or additional members to attend meetings, where useful and relevant.
- The Chair of the Sub-Committee will make a progress report to the MAC on a regular basis.

MEMBERSHIP

Chair - Director General, Europe Division
Director General, Corporate Services
Head of Training and Development Unit
Chief of Protocol
Director Emergency and Recovery Unit
Director, Strategy and Performance

Management Board Sub-Committee on Human Resources

Terms of Reference

The role of this Sub-Committee is to consider and advise on the Department's long-term strategic Human Resource requirements and developments, including the preparation of a new HR Strategy for DFAT.

The sub-committee considers both Human Resources matters at home and abroad (HRI and HRII), as well as specific HR issues relating to Development Cooperation Division pending the establishment of a fully integrated Departmental HR structure.

The sub-committee meets bi-annually, with reports to the Management Board after each Sub-Committee meeting.

Membership:

- Chair: DG Corporate Services
- Two other MAC members
- Directors, HR I and HR II Units
- Representative, HR-DCD
- Two-three other interested members of Departmental Staff

MAC Sub-Committee on Gender

Terms of Reference

Mandate

The Sub-Committee was established in 2012 and has been tasked with taking forward follow-up to and implementation of the Department's Gender Equality Action Plan, in cooperation with the relevant units (in particular Human Resources Unit, Training & Development Unit and Strategy & Performance Unit).

The Sub-Committee's immediate priority is to consider gender equality within the Department, but other related issues, especially multiple forms of discrimination, should not be overlooked. The work of the Sub-Committee should focus on all genders, grades and streams.

Role/Scope

The Gender Equality Action Plan aims to contribute to achieving equal treatment and working conditions for all employees; fairness in career and personal development; retention of talent; and thus a more efficient and effective Department.

The ongoing objectives of the Sub-Committee are:

- (i) to monitor and provide assistance in the implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan;
- (ii) to promote and encourage engagement with the Action Plan within the Department;
- (iii) to keep the Action Plan under review and make further recommendations to the Management Board as appropriate.

Membership

Membership of the Sub-Committee is open to everyone in the Department regardless of grade, stream or gender. Colleagues can register as members through the Subcommittee's intranet page.

The Sub-Committee is jointly chaired by a male and a female member of the Management Board. Strategy and Performance Unit serve as secretariat to the Sub-Committee.

Frequency of Meetings

The Management Board has committed to considering the issue of gender equality in DFAT on a six-monthly basis; the Sub-Committee always meets in advance of this to review progress on implementation of the Department's Gender Equality Action Plan and, where necessary, to make recommendations. Additional meetings may also be held. Meetings alternate between mornings and afternoons to facilitate colleagues abroad in different time zones.

Reporting Arrangements

The Sub-Committee reports to the Management Board at its six-monthly discussion on gender equality. Minutes of each Sub-Committee meeting are drafted by Strategy and Performance Unit and published on the Sub-Committee's intranet site.

Terms of Reference for the Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce

The Vision for Knowledge Management and Innovation, approved in April 2013, is implemented via the Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce, which was established in 2012.

The Taskforce is chaired by the Chief Financial Officer, with the Secretariat provided by Strategy and Performance Unit (SPU). The Taskforce includes representatives from ICT Unit and Project Leaders. All Management Board members are invited to attend each meeting of the Taskforce.

The primary purpose of the Taskforce is to review, approve, direct and monitor progress across a programme of projects with the ultimate aim of improving the knowledge management capacity of the Department. The Taskforce drives reform and change and seeks and suggests opportunities for improvements in our business processes. It also identifies and secures the resources, both human and financial, needed to effect change. The Taskforce has the authority to direct Divisions/Business Units/Missions to undertake particular programmes or projects under its auspices.

In its role as Secretariat to the Taskforce, Strategy and Performance Unit provides Project Management support to the Taskforce, records and shares minutes of the Taskforce meetings, manages the Taskforce intranet space and ensures projects remain in line with the Department's Statement of Strategy. An agenda is circulated in advance of every committee meeting and minutes are recorded and shared via the Knowledge Management intranet page.

Each Knowledge Management Project is supported by a dedicated intranet page which is managed by the Project Leader for the respective project and includes an up-to-date business case, workplan and communication plan for each project. Project leaders are responsible for ensuring that projects are sufficiently publicised across the Department to ensure buy-in to the projects is maximised and to ensure staff across the Department have access to progress across projects.

The Taskforce meets bi-monthly to review progress across projects and to review and approve resources (both financial and human) required to deliver the projects. At each meeting of the Taskforce, Project Leaders are required to update the Taskforce on the project milestones, costs (financial and human) and stakeholder engagement plans for the quarter ahead.

The Taskforce may invite guest speakers and/or additional members to attend meetings, where useful and relevant. The Taskforce acts as an Advisory Group to the Management Board and reports to the Board on a regular basis.

Risk Management Committee Terms of Reference

The Risk Management Committee was established in 2004 to take forward Risk Management Policy in the Department.

Membership

The Risk Management Committee comprises the Chief Risk Officer, who acts as Chair, and a nominee from each Division and Stand Alone Unit. Divisions with Business Units with discrete areas of responsibility e.g. Human Resources Unit and ICT within Corporate Services Division may nominate more than one representative.

Where a member is unable to attend a meeting, the Head of Division/Stand Alone Unit may nominate an alternate.

Strategy and Performance Division provide the Secretariat.

Evaluation and Audit Unit attend meetings in an observer capacity

Functions

The Committee will:

Support the Chief Risk Officer in overseeing the implementation of the Department's Risk Management Policy.

Advise on the Department's risk management policy, methodology and standards and provide feedback on its operation at Divisional and Business Unit level in order to improve and refine the Department's approach.

Lead on risk management for their Division/Stand Alone Unit and other Business Units for which they have lead responsibility.

Identify cross-cutting risks

Review the Risk Register and propose amendments and improvements to the Management Board through the Chief Risk Officer.

Meetings

The Committee meets quarterly

A quorum consists of the Chair and a minimum of five members

Approved minutes are circulated to the Management Board and to Evaluation and Audit Unit.

Appendix B – Audit Committee

The Audit Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Department) is formally appointed by, and reports to, the Secretary General of the Department, who is the accounting officer for Votes 28 (Foreign Affairs) and 27 (International Cooperation). As appropriate, it advises the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Minister of State for Trade and Development.

The Committee has a Chair and at least four ordinary members who drawn from outside the Department (the quorum for meetings will be three members). At least two members of the Committee will be qualified accountants and some members will have professional experience in the area of development cooperation and the evaluation of aid programmes. Additional experience may be co-opted on a consultancy basis. The members normally serve for at least two years. The Committee usually meet at least six times each year.

The Committee provides an independent appraisal of the audit and evaluation arrangements, with a view to strengthening internal controls and risk management as well as enhancing the effective operation of the audit and evaluation function within the Department.

The Committee provides an annual report to the Secretary General. This is based, *inter alia*, on:

- A review of the Department's evaluation and audit strategy and the annual work.
- Programmes arising from this.
- A review of the implementation of these programmes.
- A review of the resources available for this purpose.
- Monitoring reviews of the internal control systems.
- Monitoring reviews of the risk management systems.

The Committee will invite the Comptroller and Auditor General, or his/her representative, to meet with it at least once a year.

The Audit Committee has an advisory role with no executive functions, responsibilities or powers and has no role in approving evaluation and audit reports.

Appendix C – Risk Management

The **Secretary General and Management Board** approve and implement the Risk Management Policy; ensure risk is managed across all activities in the Department; identify, assess and manage external and internal key strategic risks faced by the Department in pursuit of its objectives; review and approve actions proposed in respect of any risks arising from Divisions and Business Units that are above a certain threshold; are Risk Owners for key strategic or cross cutting risks facing the Department.

The **Chief Risk Officer (CRO)** promotes active risk management in the Department and ensures there is a robust process to identify significant internal and external risks and put in place strategies to manage risk; oversees the implementation of the Department's risk management policy; chairs the Risk Management Committee and acts as the reporting channel between the Committee and the Management Board; and represents the Department in communications with Internal Audit and the Audit Committee. The CRO is supported in his work by the Risk Management Secretariat in Strategy and Performance Unit, which also has responsibility for managing the risk reporting process in the Department.

The **Risk Management Committee**, which meets every two months, support the Chief Risk Officer in overseeing the implementation of the Department's Risk Management Policy; advises on the Department's risk management policy, methodology and standards and provides feedback on its operation at Divisional and Business Unit level in order to improve and refine the Department's approach; leads on risk management for their Division/Stand Alone Unit and other Business Units for which they have lead responsibility; identifies cross-cutting risks; reviews the Risk Register and proposes amendments and improvements to the Management Board through the Chief Risk Officer. Terms of Reference for the Risk Management Committee can be found at Appendix B.

Heads of Business Units implement Risk Management in the Business Unit; identify, evaluate and sign off on risks at Business Unit level; ensure that there is ownership of the risks and that the risks are managed within the Business Unit on a day to day basis; ensure clear roles and responsibilities are defined within their areas; ensure compliance with the formal risk reporting requirements on an on-going basis; ensure risk management awareness throughout the Business Unit; and are Risk Owners for risks within their Business Unit's area of responsibility.

Individual staff members also bear responsibility for risk management. Staff should proactively identify risks and bring these to the attention of management in a timely and effective manner. They should also contribute, as appropriate, to specific planned actions to mitigate risk as detailed in their Business Unit's Risk Register.

Appendix

