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Foreword by Chief Executive

It is with great pleasure that I present this the second Strategy Statement of the Public Appointments Service. Looking back over the past three years I can say that the formative years of the new organisation were certainly not without their challenges but at all times stimulating and exciting. In these first years we handled in the region of a quarter of a million applications for a myriad of positions throughout the public service. Demand for our services continues to increase steadily each year. Of particular note has been the increasing numbers of smaller agencies and offices emerging, who need some assistance in coming to grips with, what is, an increasingly complex recruitment process.

Foremost in my mind, when drafting this strategy, is to address the many needs of our public service clients. I am only too well aware of the many pressures that are placed on managers and staff throughout the continuously modernising and transforming public service. I do not underestimate the demand for the highest quality staff when everyone is attempting to achieve higher levels of target delivery with restricted resources. Within this strategy the approach adopted places the needs of the client first while also recognising the importance of good candidate management systems.

Now enabling technologies afford us an opportunity to reach out in an increasingly efficient manner to wider pools of candidates. The use of the internet for advertising and testing presents many opportunities that, if handled carefully, will provide us with quality results. The increasingly diverse nature of Irish society is also likely to present challenges in the years ahead. While the public sector to date has not seen significant penetration by people from ethnic minority groups this is inevitable in the medium term. Such a change in the profile of the public service will require the Public Appointments Service to professionally examine how best to approach the testing and assessment of people from very disparate backgrounds.

The office’s partial decentralisation to Youghal, Co. Cork will be a unique and defining feature of the coming three years. Very careful planning and organisational restructuring will be required to ensure that service delivery to all our clients and candidates remains unhindered during this significant change process. Similarly we cannot ignore the fact that our facility in Youghal, Co. Cork will be staffed by a new staff cadre with effectively no experience of recruitment. These staff will require careful nurturing to ensure that they can play a central role in the recruitment process of the future.

Our role in providing a quality service to a more decentralised public service and taking a more regional approach to the delivery of the business is a growing
challenge. This strategy is designed to position this organisation to meet such new demands and to develop the agility and responsiveness to embrace positively the findings emerging from the OECD report.

Our commitment to research should also be evident in this strategy. It is important for the Public Appointments Service that a channel is developed to dispense the valuable insights on trends and developments gained through our central role in recruitment and selection to clients and policy makers throughout the public service system. Through a sharing of knowledge and skills it is my belief that the Public Appointments Service can assist significantly the raising of standards throughout the public service.

To attempt to deliver on such an ambitious strategy without the involvement and expertise of staff at all levels would be futile. During the lifetime of this strategy it is my intention that the organisation will further improve on its existing holistic approach to staff training and development and will use the Excellence through People Assessment as a benchmark for progress made. The central role of partnership is one that has also served the organisation well in recent years through the provision of a platform upon which everyone can play a role in influencing the shape of the workplace. Over the next three years the Public Appointments Service will work hard to ensure that this partnership approach is embedded further into the culture and psyche of the whole organisation and thus ensure that pro-active staff involvement and participation is the norm.

This strategy attempts to serve many masters and this will place many competing demands on our resources. Such pressures, however, are familiar bedfellows as we shape the new recruitment environment. With the support and guidance of Chairman Mr. Eddie Sullivan and his fellow Board members, I have no doubt much can be achieved in the future. I know that as a team the Public Appointments Service looks forward to the challenges ahead. With the aid of this strategy statement and with the continuing help of all those who shaped it I believe we can look forward with some confidence to the continued growth and professional development of this organisation over the next three years.

Bryan Andrews
Chief Executive
On behalf of the Board of the Public Appointments Service, I am pleased to present the Statement of Strategy covering the period 2008 to 2010.

This new strategy places much emphasis on change and the exploitation of new technologies to enhance services. It also continues to emphasise the traditional values strongly associated with public sector recruitment. These values of Fairness and Impartiality, Customer Service, Professionalism, Innovation, Partnership and Consultation are ones which underpin the excellent reputation of the Public Appointments Service and will continue to be nurtured.

Achievement of the high level goals set out in this strategy will be a great challenge to the management and staff of the Public Appointments Service. It will require the development of new skills and capabilities which will help in the delivery of the highest standard of service to both clients and applicants. It will also require a close working relationship with our key stakeholders, Government Departments/Offices, Local Authorities, the Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána and other Government Agencies.

This Statement of Strategy also reflects the constant changes in the recruitment environment. The Public Appointments Service has to address the increasing demand across all sectors to recruit highly skilled and motivated staff to deliver public sector services. The constant demand for the provision of tailor made services to clients is one of the challenges facing the organisation as is the development of systems enabling easier and wider access to public sector jobs for an increasingly diverse and international candidate pool.

The advances made in the area of e-recruitment over the life of the last Statement of Strategy have been significant. This Strategy builds on those advances and provides commitments to ensuring that e-recruitment continues to develop and become a major channel for delivering recruitment business in the years ahead.

The Strategy contributes to the implementation of the agenda for modernisation as set out in the partnership agreement “Towards 2016”. It also addresses the implementation of the decentralisation programme aiming to ensure that the move of PAS to Youghal is managed as efficiently and effectively as possible, and in a manner which minimises disruption and maintains business continuity.
Without doubt the next three years will be challenging ones for the Public Appointments Service. The Board is well aware of the ambitious programme of work outlined in this Statement of Strategy. We look forward to working with the Chief Executive, the Management Team and the staff of the Public Appointments Service over the duration of this Strategy to ensure that the organisation can deliver on its important goals and in so doing, make a significant contribution to the development of a public service of the highest calibre.

Mr. Eddie Sullivan
Chairman, Public Appointments Service
Management Team

Mr. Bryan Andrews
Chief Executive

Mr. Padraig Love
Head of Operations

Mr. Martin Bourke
Head of Corporate Affairs

Mr. Niall Leavy
Head of Senior Executive Recruitment

Ms. Áine Gray
Head of Assessment Services

Ms. Mary Flynn
Head of Client Relations
The Board of the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service was established, under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004, on 19th October 2004.

The Tánaiste and Minister for Finance, Brian Cowen, T.D., following consultation with the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Minister for Health and Children and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, appointed nine people to the Board to serve for a three year period from 2008.
The Board of the Public Appointments Service is as follows:

Mr. Eddie Sullivan,
Chairman, former Secretary General, Public Service Management and Development,
Department of Finance

Mr. Bryan Andrews,
Chief Executive of the Public Appointments Service

Mr. Michael Errity,
Assistant Secretary, Department of Finance

Ms. Breda Power,
Assistant Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Mr. Des Dowling,
Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Mr. Bernard Carey,
Assistant Secretary, Department of Health and Children

Mr. Dan Murphy,
General Secretary, Public Service Executive Union

Ms. Bernie Gray,
Independent HR Consultant

Ms. Michelle Shannon,
National Director, Irish Youth Justice Service.
Our Mission

We will deliver the highest quality recruitment, selection and related human resource services that will support the growth of a world class public service
Values

Fairness and Impartiality

We are committed to providing recruitment solutions that recognise that all eligible people must be free to compete equally for a career in the public service. In this we recognise that we must ensure that all our candidates encounter fair procedures, free from any bias or discrimination.

Excellent Customer Service

We will provide to all our customers a quality service delivered to mutually agreed standards and in a climate of courtesy, mutual respect, trust and confidence.

Professionalism

We value the professional approach that all of our staff adopt in the provision of services to our wide range of customers and to their colleagues. We also recognise the need to continuously improve to maintain high, professional standards.

Innovation

We value change, fresh thinking and new approaches to the way we do our work. We welcome innovative thinking in the resolution of problems and in finding ways to improve our working environment and service.

Partnership and Consultation

We recognise the importance and value of working in partnership with all of our staff, representative bodies, customers and colleagues across the public service. Without such solid relationships we recognise that we could not continue to succeed.
### Strategy 2008 - 2010

**Highest Standard of Client Service Delivery & Satisfaction**

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- INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE
- HUMAN RESOURCE BEST PRACTICE AND SUPPORT FOR ALL STAFF
- CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND PROVISION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- DECENTRALISATION PROGRAMME
Overarching Goal

_The Public Appointments Service will provide to its clients throughout the public service, access to an international standard, professional recruitment system._

Objective

To ensure that public sector client organisations have access to the required standard of people who will enable them transact their business in an efficient and effective manner.

Strategies:

PAS will proactively engage with all clients at all stages of the recruitment process to ensure that a comprehensively identified recruitment need is delivered to a mutually agreed and highest standard.

PAS will maintain a system of client satisfaction measurement that will ensure quality information on performance and customer service delivery levels.

PAS will provide to licensed public sector recruiters a range of advisory services pertaining to recruitment and selection issues.

Performance Indicators:

1. 95% of all recruitment campaigns to result in the successful filling of the relevant vacancies.
2. 80% client satisfaction level with services provided.
3. 80% of all positions to be filled within a timeframe agreed in advance of the commencement of the recruitment campaign between PAS and the relevant client.
Goal 1: Highest Standard of Recruitment and Selection Systems

To ensure the highest standard and most effective recruitment solutions that will attract and select the best people to positions in the Public Service.

Context

The sourcing and identification of suitably qualified people with appropriate experience to occupy positions at all levels is critical to the future effectiveness and success of the Irish Public Service. The public service, however, does not have a monopoly when sourcing the best people. The public service has to compete directly with all other major employers to get its proportion of the emerging pool of talented people. This pool of candidates has also been redefined with the increasing diversification of Irish society. Issues such as language skills and cultural identity have placed a sharp focus on how any recruiter approaches the selection process. Clients also have raised their expectations in recent years with an increasing demand for more targeted recruitment that is tailored to their own unique needs. These pressures coupled with an ever present requirement to deliver all services in a more efficient and cost effective manner requires the Public Appointments Service to examine carefully all of its approaches and systems. Emerging technologies offer many solutions in the drive towards greater efficiencies with the internet becoming the most significant player of all when reaching out to, and processing, large volumes of applicants. Opportunities for greater collaboration with other recruiters both nationally and internationally are something that cannot be ignored given the need to ensure the greatest exposure to the various candidate pools in the most efficient manner.

Objectives:

1. To fully identify the needs of individual clients and to agree a tailored service to efficiently meet those needs.

2. To establish systems that target the most suitably qualified people for jobs throughout the public service at all levels and specialisations.

3. To enhance existing selection methodologies and develop new delivery systems for the selection of people for public service careers.

4. To ensure that senior positions in the public service are accessible to the widest possible, quality candidate pool.

The following strategies are some of those that the Public Appointments Service will pursue to ensure that the highest quality candidates are attracted to the wide variety of positions available in the public service.
Strategies

To ensure the highest standards in recruitment and selection the Public Appointments Service will:

IDENTIFYING THE CLIENTS’ NEEDS
• Proactively engage with all clients at all stages of the recruitment process to ensure that a comprehensively identified recruitment need is delivered to a mutually agreed and highest standard. The use of service level agreements and post recruitment evaluations will provide the basis for these discussions.

• Provide a comprehensive testing service to all civil service clients who wish to retain its services for the completion of internal promotions.

• Place the client organisation as the public facing brand of each recruitment campaign.

• Provide public sector recruiters with a comprehensive range of advisory services pertaining to recruitment and selection issues.

• Provide public service agencies who do not fall within the immediate remit of the office with access to an advisory service on issues relating to recruitment and selection.

• Establish an appropriate costing mechanism to facilitate atypical service requirements for offices and agencies not currently within our remit.

TARGETING THE BEST PEOPLE FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE
• Pursue a service delivery model that will see the office establish a presence in those areas of the country where there is a critical mass of client offices or candidate numbers thus ensuring maximum efficiency of service provision to all clients.

• Through its marketing activities, adopt a strategy for promoting the public service as an employer of choice.

• Through extensive market analysis, identifying trends in specific employment categories both nationally and internationally which are of future strategic importance to the Irish Public Service.

ENHANCING AND EXPANDING OUR SELECTION METHODOLOGIES
• Actively investigate the emergence of new methodologies that would be appropriate for use in the assessment of candidates for public service positions and will deploy all such methods that can further professionalise the recruitment process.

• Extend the use of on-line internet testing to large volume recruitment campaigns.*

• Establish a comprehensive library of tests that can support a highly flexible test programme.

• Extend its use of the ‘rolling campaign’* approach to general service civil service grades over the lifetime of this strategy.

• Validate its processes through the establishment of a continuous improvement cycle.

*See “Emerging Recruitment Approaches”; page 32.
DEVELOPING OUR SERVICE IN EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT*

• Ensure that the Government’s policy to encourage open access to positions at all levels in the public service is pursued for all executive campaigns.

• Establish a targeted approach to expanding its knowledge of potential candidates for senior positions throughout the public service. Through the use of internally trained staff and a network of third party providers the PAS will actively widen candidate pools through the gathering of intelligence both nationally and internationally.

• Through the use of multiple instruments and methodologies, broaden the level of information and the quality of candidate profiles available to assessment boards.

Performance Indicators

PAS will establish, by mid 2009, a regionalised recruitment and selection service to support the recruitment, assessment and selection needs of decentralised departments and offices.

PAS will ensure that all clients, during the life of this strategy statement, will have access to lists of suitably qualified applicants to fill general service grade vacancies in the civil service.

PAS will, on receipt of a request from a client to fill a general service vacancy in the civil service, provide the details of the candidate to be assigned within 5 working days.

PAS will launch the STAR programme by mid 2009.

PAS will have in place a functioning customer service centre by December 2008.

PAS will increase by 100% the number of test items available for use by 2010.

PAS will have an appropriate staff complement in place in its new office in Youghal, Co. Cork by end 2009.

PAS will, by early 2009, appoint a Public Service Agencies Relationship Manager to assist the wider public service community with their recruitment needs.

*See “Emerging Recruitment Approaches”, page 32.
Goal 2: Focused Candidate Relationship Management

To provide all aspiring applicants for positions in the public sector with a service that will meet and exceed their expectations.

Context

In any professional recruitment organisation the interface between the recruiter and the candidate is one that has to be carefully nurtured and managed. Access to high quality candidates is increasingly seen as an asset that needs to be cultivated. Depending on their work experience, career aspirations and even nationality, candidates have a wide variety of expectations from a recruiter. School leavers traditionally will expect a high level of basic information to prepare them for the selection process while persons from ethnic minority backgrounds will have many questions regarding the nature of tests and issues relating to language. Meanwhile people applying for executive positions are more likely to have an expectation of significant levels of confidentiality surrounding the recruitment process. In brief, people’s requirements from the recruitment process are as varied as the jobs available in the public sector. With such a disparity of expectations comes a need for the professional management of this key strategic relationship.

Objectives:

1. To accurately identify the needs of applicants and aspiring applicants contemplating a career in the public service.

2. To establish systems that will enable ease and frequency of communication between the applicant and the recruiter.

3. To measure the applicants’ level of satisfaction with the service provided.

4. To establish self service systems that will enable ease and frequency of communication between the applicant and the recruiter.

Strategies

• Establish publicjobs.ie as the primary, one stop shop for information on careers in the public service. Through collaboration with clients in the wider public service the site will be used to showcase careers throughout the sector. It will also be used as a portal whereby potential applicants can interact with the testing environment and establish their preparedness for particular public sector positions.

• Through the use of publicjobs.ie and other office technologies, routinely inform candidates of the progress of various recruitment campaigns and in
particular, provide them with up-to-date information on their own individual application and results.

- Establish the candidate database as a key strategic asset whereby the retained data is updated and routinely analysed to ensure the availability of the most current, active job seekers’ database.

- Through a system of continuous improvement, ensure that all its services are fully accessible to people of varying abilities and disabilities. An intrinsic part of this process will be to work with various representative bodies and accreditation systems to ensure the highest of standards when dealing with all customers.

- Ensure that all aspects of diversity are measured and monitored and that the organisation has systems in place to allow for the accurate validation of all diversity related interactions.

- Establish a project to identify means of significantly expanding the level of meaningful feedback available to all candidates following their participation in the assessment process and to establish an acceptable approach to partnering with candidates who wish to actively use that feedback to develop their own, future career potential in the public service.

**Performance Indicators**

- PAS will aim for 80% satisfaction rating by candidates with recruitment process

- PAS will complete an Annual Diversity Audit relating to candidates in the recruitment process

- PAS will complete an Annual Accessibility Audit of its recruitment website

- PAS will increase the number of registered candidates on the publicjobs.ie website by 20% per annum
Goal 3: Education, Research, Development & Benchmarking

To ensure that an education and research service is in place to provide relevant and timely information that will expand the human resource knowledge base in the public service.

Context

The world of recruitment and selection is constantly evolving. As society becomes more diverse, and as legislation becomes more complex, so too does the work of all those involved in management. The need to track these changes and, more importantly, people’s reaction to these changes will increasingly be an important function. The Public Appointments Service, from its frontline position handling many thousands of applicants, has a unique opportunity to analyse emerging trends on equality, educational qualifications and skill profiles. Similarly there exists an opportunity to examine in some detail people’s changing attitudes to work and careers. It is increasingly important that this knowledge and these trends are known to clients and employees as they shape their own approaches to recruitment and the workplace generally.

Objectives:

1. To ensure that relevant trends in recruitment are researched and analysed and the results available for use within the wider public service.

2. To give client organisations access to the extensive recruitment knowledge base held in the PAS to enable the maintenance of high standards in their own organisations.

3. To ensure that a detailed analysis is available on all recruitment campaigns run by the Public Appointments Service so as to better inform decision and policy making within the public service.

Strategies

To ensure that the highest standards of research and education are in place to support the public service the Public Appointments Service will:

TRENDS IN RECRUITMENT ARE RESEARCHED AND ANALYSED

- Establish a systematic means of gathering, analysing and publishing relevant human resource related intelligence that will benefit central policy makers and individual clients.

- Commission research in areas of human resources relevant to the operations of the recruitment
process in the Irish Public Service. This will include the identification of trends in specific employment categories and professions nationally and internationally.

• Establish a high quality and responsive research capacity in the area of mapping and profiling executive talent markets both nationally and internationally.

• Actively seek national and international collaborative arrangements that would be mutually beneficial in furthering the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment and assessment process.

ACCESS TO EXTENSIVE RECRUITMENT KNOWLEDGE

• Assist clients in the upskilling of their staff in interview techniques and various other aspects of the recruitment process.

• Establish a series of national and international benchmarking partners to ensure that it maintains the highest standards in its approach to recruitment.

• Through the use of conferences, seminars and workshops provide a platform for the sharing of relevant information on recruitment and selection to a wide and diverse audience.

• Share its knowledge of recruitment, selection and human resources with the wider European Union and international communities in a professional manner that will reflect positively on both the organisation and Ireland.

Performance Indicators

PAS will deliver two major seminars each year that will broaden the knowledge base of clients and other invited parties in areas relating to the employment of people in the public service.

PAS will publish four major pieces of research on recruitment and selection related issues in the lifetime of this strategy.

PAS will host, in conjunction with the Employers’ Diversity Network, a major conference in 2008 on the subject of diversity in the recruitment and selection process.

PAS from 2008 will strengthen its contact with the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO).
Internal Supporting Strategies

• Information and Communication Technology
• Human Resource Best Practice and Support for all Staff
• Finance & Corporate Governance
• Decentralisation Programme
Statement of Strategy
2008 - 2010
Internal Supporting Strategies that will assist in delivering these Goals

Information and Communication Technology
The need to develop and maintain information technology that can support the business of the office is critical. The Public Appointments Service is an organisation that sees that the use of appropriate technologies is the only way in which a recruitment business can be efficiently run - particularly in the context of very high volumes of applicants for campaigns.

The following ICT strategies will be pursued to support the overall business goals of the office:

- PAS will investigate emerging technologies to explore their applicability and appropriate deployment throughout the recruitment process.
- PAS will establish relationships with various 3rd party providers to ensure that the security and maintenance of the IT infrastructure is supported.
- In partnership with the Department of Finance, PAS will develop the Central Application Facility (CAF) as a facility to enable ease of mobility between civil servants in a decentralised environment.
- PAS will enter into a formal, service level agreement with a 3rd party government agency to host the publicjobs.ie website thus establishing a business continuity and disaster recovery contingency plan.

Human Resource Best Practice and support for all staff
Central to the delivery of the work of the Public Appointments Service are the staff at all levels who maintain the facilities, run the recruitment campaigns, look after the candidates and set up the testing systems. The need to properly recruit, develop and support these people is key to our continuing success.

The following Human Resource strategies will strive to foster this critical aspect of our organisation:

- PAS will retain and recruit the best people to ensure that we can successfully operate a professional recruitment business that can service all clients and geographic regions.
- PAS will, through its partnership process, establish a work environment that is enjoyable and stimulating for all staff.
- PAS will adopt an holistic approach to the training and development of its staff that will equip them to deliver advice and services of the highest standards possible to clients.
- PAS will actively promote the need for a healthy and safe environment through training, management activity, provision of equipment and necessary drills and exercises.
- PAS will actively promote the expansion of the number of people available to work on interview/assessment boards and exercises. Through increased publicity and targeting of specific groups PAS will seek to increase this valuable resource.
• PAS will maintain a fully functioning performance management system which ensures that all staff are suitably equipped to complete their duties to a high standard, and which is closely aligned with all other human resource and business activities.

• PAS will strive to maintain the Excellence Through People accreditation as a benchmark of our internal human resource systems.

Finance and Corporate Governance
The need to ensure that the organisation professionally and efficiently utilises the monies entrusted to it by the Houses of the Oireachtas is essential.

In addition to the normal financial management controls and procedures:

• PAS will ensure that all aspects of significant expenditure are subject to appropriate audit within a three year period.

• PAS will establish an appropriate costing mechanism to facilitate atypical service requirements from clients and agencies not currently within the remit of the organisation.

• PAS will profile and monitor all areas of expenditure on a monthly basis and take appropriate actions in the event of deviations from anticipated patterns.

• PAS will maintain a proactive approach to all aspects of risk management.

Decentralisation Programme
The need to plan and prepare professionally for the decentralisation of PAS to Youghal will be recognised by management and staff in PAS.

The following strategies will assist in this most critical of events:

• PAS will implement a multi faceted Decentralisation Plan that will allow it maintain levels of service throughout the decentralisation process.

• PAS, with the assistance of the Office of Public Works, will establish an advance decentralisation office in Youghal Co. Cork.

• PAS will establish a training team to support the establishment of new recruitment structures in the decentralised office in Youghal Co. Cork.

• PAS will establish a culture development programme to ensure that staff in both Dublin and Youghal offices work together in a fashion that ensures a consistent experience for customers regardless of which office they are dealing with.
Emerging Recruitment Approaches
Rolling Recruitment Campaigns

The concept of a campaign of rolling recruitment is one that has been evolving successfully in the Public Appointments Service since early 2007. This approach to recruitment moves away from the traditional large scale, one off recruitment campaigns that would typically see many thousands of candidates attend for tests in large venues around the country. While this traditional approach has served the system quite well for many years it was not always seen as the most efficient or effective. Expensive by nature, a significant drawback with the traditional model of recruitment is that, due to the lapse of time between the various stages in the process, there is a significant fall off in numbers of candidates moving from one stage of the recruitment campaign to another.

The rolling approach to recruitment addresses this issue of a fall off in numbers by adopting a more ‘immediate’ approach to the task. By calling forward, from registered, interested applicants, groups of candidates in smaller numbers with a view to assigning those successful to positions quickly the issue of rapid fall off in numbers can be avoided. This exercise can be repeated several times during a year, thus ensuring that applicants are readily available for assignment. The rolling approach to recruitment has worked very successfully when applied to both the Clerical Officer recruitment campaigns in the Civil Service and An Garda Síochána Trainee campaigns.

Executive Recruitment

One trend that has emerged in public sector recruitment in recent years has been the clear demand by clients, when seeking to fill a vacancy, particularly at senior executive levels, for a greater level of targeted contact with the best possible candidate pool. Based on the principle that the best possible candidates are frequently not actively seeking a career change themselves it becomes incumbent on the recruiter to reach out and stimulate a level of interest.

Through the use of specially trained staff and focused marketing the Public Appointments Service has been reaching out to experienced managers, professionals and specialists to determine their level of interest in a career in the public service. Such activity can lead a recruiter into contact with people residing outside of Ireland who may not have been actively considering a career in this country let alone one in the public service. While this search activity has the benefit of attracting a larger candidate pool, each candidate nonetheless must be prepared to compete on an equal footing with all others.

In future years the Public Appointments Service will, in partnership with its clients and other specialist recruiters, formalise processes for the active identification of relevant, high quality candidate pools.
E Recruitment

The possibilities afforded to any recruiter by advances in technology are often limited only by available resources. The Public Appointments Service has, where possible, exploited these advances to its own and its clients’ advantage. The single biggest development in this area has been the development of the publicjobs.ie web site that has seen almost 500,000 applicants applying for public sector positions on-line. The next stage of these developments will, most likely, rest in the area of the testing of candidates on-line. This development is an important one for an organisation such as the Public Appointments Service that traditionally has to cope with very large volumes of applications while maintaining consistency and a professional approach. Through the use of on-line testing the Public Appointments Service will be able to quickly focus on that proportion of the candidate pool that is most suitably qualified for positions at particular levels. This process, when fully developed, is more efficient when compared with the traditional approach to large volume testing.

During the next three years the Public Appointments Service is committed to fully utilising the opportunities afforded to it through the on-line testing approach.
Monitoring and Accounting for our Performance
Monitoring and Accounting for our Performance

In this Statement of Strategy we have set out our approach to developing our services in line with the needs of the modern public service. We have moved into a new era of Public Sector recruitment that will see fundamental changes in the type of recruitment and selection services demanded by Public Service client organisations and the manner in which these services are provided.

We are strongly focused on achieving our high level goals over the next three years. It is essential however, that to ensure progress is achieved on these goals a robust system of monitoring is established and maintained. The vehicles for ensuring that this strategy is fully delivered to a superior level will include:

Board of the Public Appointments Service
Through the execution of its duties as laid down in the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 the Board will have a crucial role in overseeing the roll out of this strategy and advising the organisation on future strategic direction.

Management Advisory Committee (MAC)
The MAC will regularly review progress against this strategy and will ensure that all necessary resources are in place to ensure delivery. Periodic reviews of the strategy will be completed with a minimum of one major mid session review being completed to ensure that the strategy continues to be a real and living document.

Business Planning Process
The well established business planning process will serve as an ongoing monitoring device for progress against this strategy. All divisional business plans will be monitored to ensure a tight alignment with the strategic objectives of the organisation. Emerging business needs and evolving public service modernisation issues will be immediately integrated into both the business plans and the wider strategy.

Annual divisional business plans will be reviewed after six months and at year-end. Progress reports will issue to the Senior Management team and the Partnership Committee. Progress on achieving our strategic objectives will be reported on in our Annual Reports.

Strategic Project Management
A formal project management structure is in place to ensure proper governance of the implementation of key strategic programmes and projects. The Project Board, which includes the membership of the Management Advisory Committee, meets monthly to monitor the progress on all aspects of key strategic programmes and projects to ensure their effective implementation in line with corporate strategy.

Partnership Committee
The well established Partnership Committee will play a major role in the delivery of major aspects of this Statement of Strategy. Consultation and direct action by this committee will be a major driver for successful delivery of all strategic activities.
Audit Committee

The advice and support afforded by this independent committee will be an invaluable resource to the Accounting Officer when ensuring that all change and resource commitments are carefully considered and executed in an appropriate manner.

All Staff and Managers

A challenging strategy of this magnitude can only be delivered with the full assistance and participation of every staff member in the organisation. Through a willingness to adopt new practices and procedures and to maintain an innovative approach to our business everyone can play a full role in the successful delivery of this strategy.
Appendices
Appendix 1

Standards of Service Delivery from our Customer Action Plan

*Our Standards of Service Delivery, which will be reported on in our Annual reports provide quantitative measures of how efficiently we are delivering our services.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Method and Frequency of Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of administrative staff on request to Clients</td>
<td>Panels in place for all general service grades for 80% of locations</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment of administrative staff to Dublin posts</td>
<td>Assignee details conveyed to client within 5 working days for 80% of vacancies</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment to Senior Management and Professional/Technical positions</td>
<td>80% of campaigns to be completed within the timescale agreed with Client (as part of a Service Level Agreement) 95% of campaigns to result in successful filling of vacancies</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of other recruitment and selection related services (e.g. Job Analysis, part recruitment and selection options)</td>
<td>Timescale to be agreed with Client on receipt of request as part of a Service Level Agreement</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a Quality Service to Clients</td>
<td>80% satisfaction ratings with: Our understanding of client recruitment needs; Recruitment process timescales; Quality of staff assigned/recommended</td>
<td>Annual Client Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPLICANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Method and Frequency of Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a Quality Service to Applicants</td>
<td>Satisfaction with quality of the recruitment process to exceed 80%</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of timely notice and results for each stage of the assessment process</td>
<td>80% satisfaction rating with the provision of notice and results</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of meaningful and timely feedback following each stage of the assessment process</td>
<td>80% satisfaction rating with the quality and timeliness of feedback</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of appeals/request for review process in line with timescales set out in the CPSA Code of Practice</td>
<td>Acknowledgement issued within 3 working days Outcome notified within 20 working days Outcome of appeal to Decision Arbitrator within 10 working days</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of Regular Campaign Updates</td>
<td>Campaign updates will be provided on publicjobs.ie twice weekly for all large volume campaigns</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## BOARD MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Method and Frequency of Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of board papers/ materials</td>
<td>Papers will be provided in time to adequately prepare for the Board</td>
<td>Annual Board Member Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a Quality Service to Board Members</td>
<td>80% satisfaction rating with: Information/Briefings/Facilities; Overall service provided by the Staff of PAS</td>
<td>Annual Board Member Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of timely payment of fees and expenses</td>
<td>Fees processed fortnightly Expenses processed weekly</td>
<td>Annual Board Member Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INTERNAL CUSTOMERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Method and Frequency of Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of comprehensive quality learning and development programmes for all staff</td>
<td>Implementation of annual Learning and Development Plan Excellence Through People Accreditation retained</td>
<td>Annual Plan in place Accreditation by FAS every two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of the necessary IT support to staff</td>
<td>80% staff satisfaction levels with this area</td>
<td>Annual Staff Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a Quality Service to Internal Customers</td>
<td>80% staff satisfaction levels with this area</td>
<td>Annual Staff Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a healthy and safe place to work</td>
<td>80% staff satisfaction levels with this area</td>
<td>Annual Staff Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## ALL CUSTOMERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Method and Frequency of Monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a suitable, accessible and informative Website - publicjobs.ie</td>
<td>99% uptime; Service restored within 2 hours of interruption being notified; Publicjobs.ie fully WAI AAA compliant by end of 2008; 80% satisfaction with: Clarity of information on publicjobs.ie; Ease of use of publicjobs.ie; Quality of information on publicjobs.ie</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly Reports Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys and Annual Client Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of timely service in relation to telephone Queries</td>
<td>Calls answered promptly (aim - 10 secs. during office hours)</td>
<td>Internal Quarterly reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a quality service in relation to correspondence</td>
<td>Routine queries dealt with within 3 days Non routine queries dealt with within 10 days All correspondence in clear and simple language</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys and Annual Client Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a service through Irish where required</td>
<td>All key publications available in Irish All requested services through Irish provided in line with our commitments in Official Languages Scheme</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys and Annual Client Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ALL CUSTOMERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Standard</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a quality service to all groups covered by the Equality Legislation and to applicants with special needs</td>
<td>Investigation of all requests for accommodations and agreed accommodations provided All campaigns conducted in line with best practice in relation to equality and diversity Accessibility Action Plan fully implemented</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a quality service by PAS staff to all customers</td>
<td>80% satisfaction level with: Courtesy of staff; Knowledge levels of staff; Helpfulness of staff; Staff efficiency/speed of service; Availability of staff to handle queries; Quality of advice received from staff</td>
<td>Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys Annual Client and Board Member Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of suitable accommodation for all customers which is clean, safe, comfortable and accessible</td>
<td>80% satisfaction level with the facilities provided in PAS</td>
<td>NDA Excellence Through Accessibility Award retained Twice Yearly Applicant Surveys and Annual Client and Board Member Surveys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix II

### Cross Departmental Activities & Strategic Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Key Organisational Links</th>
<th>Our Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Sector Recruitment</strong></td>
<td>Government Departments, Health Service Executive, Local Authorities and other public bodies</td>
<td>To provide customised recruitment assessment and related advisory services tailored to the needs of individual clients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Public Service Modernisation Programme**  | Department of the Taoiseach Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.)  
Civil Service Performance Verification Group (C.SP.V.G.) | To Implement the agreed Civil Service change agenda within our organisation  
To contribute to policy formulation, particularly in the key area of HR policy  
To participate proactively in cross-departmental working groups |
| **Personnel Officer Network**               | Department of Finance Client Organisations                                                | To support, in partnership with the Department of Finance, this important forum for addressing matters of mutual interest |
| **REACH Initiative (Integrated delivery of all public services)** | REACH                                                                                     | To work closely with the REACH organisation to ensure that we participate fully in the progression of integrated and accessible public services |
| **Equality/Disability Policy**              | Department of Finance and all client organisations                                        | To proactively support, in partnership with the Department of Finance, all Government departments in providing equal employment opportunities |
| **Cross Border Cooperation with Northern Ireland** | Civil Service Commissioners (Northern Ireland)  
Local Government Staff Commission (Northern Ireland) | To exchange information and share best practice on areas of matters of common interest in the domain of Public Sector Recruitment |