Research Paper Nº1

National non-commercial State Agencies in Ireland

Muiris MacCarthaigh

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**State of the Public
Service Series**

June 2010

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Contents

Dr. Muiris MacCarthaigh is a Research Officer with the Institute of Public Administration. A particular focus of his work concerns the role, autonomy and accountability of public sector organisations in Ireland. He has recently co-authored a book on this subject titled *Autonomy and Control of State Agencies: Comparing States & Agencies* (Palgrave, 2010).

Foreword

The Irish public service comprises a complex and multi-faceted system employing many thousands of people who are responsible for delivering countless services to citizens and communities on a daily basis throughout the country. Ensuring that our public service operates consistently to the highest standard is an ongoing challenge and also the subject of much current debate. Over the course of its history the Institute of Public Administration has sought to contribute to, and inform, debate on the performance of our public service.

In the State of the Public Service research series, we seek to provide evidence-informed research and commentary on key aspects of contemporary Irish public administration, including its organisational form, systems, people and processes. The authors of these reports bring their considerable expertise and practical knowledge to the topics selected so as to provide evidence, insights and recommendations to support future development. Our aim is that these reports will not only inform, but also challenge current thinking about how the Irish public service performs. It is intended that these short research reports will be of relevance and use not only to public servants, but also to policy-makers and the wider public.

In this first report in the series, we examine changes in the landscape of national non-commercial agencies in Ireland. The role, performance, and corporate governance of agencies have been major topics for discussion and debate in recent times, as has the number of agencies involved in public service provision. This study brings much needed evidence from national and international practice to inform this debate, and makes recommendations on how these issues can be addressed for the future.

Brian Cawley
Director-General

Executive Summary

Agencies in Ireland: background and context

State agencies have contributed much to Irish society and government and are an integral part of our system of public administration. Amongst other things, they enable the state to extend its capacity and respond in a flexible and responsive manner to citizens' needs. The rapid growth in the number of agencies in recent years, however, has led to concerns about when and in what circumstances agencies should be established, and how they should be managed.

The emergence of Irish state agencies over the last century is best characterised as one of gradual acceleration from a slow start. It is only since the 1990s that a 'wave' of agency establishment has occurred in Ireland, bringing with it challenges of coordination and control. The process of agency creation in Ireland has not occurred as part of a structured programme of delegation and decentralisation of authority as has happened as part of public sector reforms elsewhere. Instead, reforms in the Irish administrative system have coincided with an ad-hoc expansion in the organisational complexity of the state.

Since 2004 the Institute of Public Administration has carried out several studies into state agencies and their governance, and undertaken the first comprehensive mapping of the modern agency landscape. The focus of this current analysis is the *non-commercial national level* agencies, an aspect of Irish public administration that has received a lot of public attention in recent years. Much of the discussion about state agencies in Ireland is conducted in the absence of a shared understanding of their role, responsibilities and more significantly their numbers. In order to address this issue, this report adopts an internationally well-established definition of what constitutes a state agency to explore the agency population in Ireland and the trajectory of its recent development.

In total, we identify 249 such agencies in Ireland as of end-April 2010. In terms of gross numbers this represents a decrease of ten agencies since the last survey conducted in April 2007. In the interim, eight new agencies have been created, and eighteen agencies ceased to exist without their functions being transferred elsewhere. However, there has also been considerable transfer of responsibility for agencies between departments as well as agency mergers during this period.

Recent developments

The landscape of the state agency sector in Ireland is currently undergoing considerable transformation as a result of a number of reports, including the OECD review of the Irish public service in 2008; the subsequent Government policy statement on *Transforming Public Services;* the recommendations in the report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (also referred to as An Bord Snip Nua) and the statement on the rationalisation of state agencies contained in Budget 2009. A common theme linking these reports is the need for a more sophisticated and effective system for managing and overseeing agencies, as well as for 'joined-up' service delivery to the public.

In his Budget speech of October 2008, the Minister for Finance presented proposals for a reduction in the number of state agencies. In total, the proposals would have seen the actual number of agencies reduced by 33. To date, 15 of the identified agencies have ceased to function in their previous form, whilst progress is being made to reduce the number further. For some other rationalisations, progress has been limited and few of the suggested agency-related reforms proposed in the An Bord Snip Nua report have been fully implemented. However at time of writing a number of agency closures and mergers are imminent.

Agency governance

There is no clear relationship in Ireland between an agency's legal mandate, size, function and the form of governance adopted. Of the 249 agencies identified, 188 (75%) of them have some form of board or governing authority, ranging in size from 2 to 37 members. The remaining 61 organisations are mainly agencies operating within departmental structures.

For those state agencies operating outside of departmental structures, there is a combined board/ governing authority membership of over 2,300 persons with the average size of their boards and governing authorities being 12. The governing authorities assume a variety of forms, including statutory boards of directors, commissioners, advisory committees and councils, as well as executive boards. The mode of appointment to these authorities also varies considerably, from ministerial nomination to ex-officio and elected positions.

There are a variety of control and accountability mechanisms in use across government departments for the purpose of managing state agencies and work is underway to develop a common performance framework to govern these relationships. In terms of the public accountability of agencies, as well as ministers' responsibility for agencies under their respective remit, it is now also common for agency chief executives and management teams to appear before Oireachtas committees. However, given the large number of agencies and the multiple tasks performed by them, and an absence of metrics against which to measure productivity, it is near impossible for members of the Houses to monitor on a consistent or detailed basis the performance of agencies in order to pass judgment on their cost effectiveness and efficiency.

Challenges to agency rationalisation

During the course of this study, we identified a number of common challenges to progressing agency rationalisation:

· *Legislative provision for mergers.* The development and processing of legislation through parliament can take a considerable time to complete and in its absence, leaves a tremendous amount of uncertainty for the restructuring agencies.

· *Change process management.* There is uncertainty in many areas as to what management structures should be put in place for new organisations resulting from mergers. In cases where merging agencies have governing boards and authorities, this additional 'layer'

and associated corporate governance requirements poses further change management challenges.

· *Organisational infrastructure costs.* The process of merging or amalgamating organisations often necessitates an investment in information technology systems and restructuring of telephony and other internal communications systems as well as new logos, branding, stationery etc. Merging financial and quality management systems can also be problematic.

· *Variety in patterns of employment.* Different agencies have over time developed variety in the terms and conditions of staff employment, such as grading structures. Marrying these terms and conditions with those of another existing organisation or into a new organisation presents very difficult challenges for the managers charged with overseeing the change process.

Moving forward with agency re-organisation and governance – some conclusions and recommendations

Performance-related recommendations

There is a pressing need to move beyond generalised assessments of the state agency sector towards verifying the performance of individual agencies and the development of their reporting, efficiency and performance measures.

Based on good practice here and internationally, we agree with the move to make agencies subject to annual statements of their performance to be laid before the Oireachtas. Key items to be included in such performance statements are:

· High level information on the mission, goals and rationale of the organisation

· Expenditure plans & performance for the organisation

· Detailed information at programme/activity level combining expenditure information with a *small number* of key output and outcome indicators and

actual results achieved as tracked by these indicators. This more detailed performance information should ideally outline targets, baseline and trend data covering a number of years, and a short performance narrative to explain trends and variations in practice.

The proposed framework for advancing performance dialogues between government departments and their agencies is also a welcome development. Drawing on international experience, we can identify a number of factors which might usefully be considered for inclusion in a performance agreement:

· A shared interpretation and understanding of what is meant by performance

· The status, aims and objectives of the parties involved

· A delineation of responsibilities

· The nature and level of services to be provided

· The method of service delivery

· Values and/or principles underpinning service delivery

· The duration of the performance framework

· Accountability / monitoring for tasks and means through which accountability/monitoring is to be provided

· Means of resolving disputes

· Means of amending the framework

· Means of reward or sanction

Governance-related recommendations

For those agencies with boards and governing authorities, the performance of these governing structures is integral to the success of the agency. A number of recommendations with regard to boards are made. These include:

· Following best practice recommended in a review conducted in Australia, boards of between six and nine members are deemed to represent a reasonable size. However there are circumstances in which a larger board may be warranted.

· In respect of term limits for boards, three years is a common membership period in a number of countries. Subject to satisfactory performance, appointments should be renewed for a second term. Induction and where necessary mentoring should be available for new board members.

· The performance of boards is an underdeveloped issue in Ireland. The minister and chair of the board should jointly undertake a formal assessment of board performance. Such an assessment could include:

  · Subjecting the board collectively to annual evaluation against its performance framework

  · Using evaluations and appraisals to identify areas for future development to drive through performance improvements

· While practice in Ireland varies, the trend internationally is veering towards the position that departmental staff should not serve on boards. Equally, as the OECD identifies, there are growing tensions between the representative roles played by stakeholder appointees and their fiduciary, legal and other responsibilities as board members. The selective attendance of government representatives at board meetings is one way in which sponsoring departments may exercise input to the work of public bodies in the absence of having a permanent board member.

· Competency-based databases of potential board/ governing authority members have considerable appeal and are worthy of more considered study, but it should be noted that the experience elsewhere has been that it can take some time before appointments are finally made using this means.

Introduction

The role, number and governance of public service bodies or 'state agencies' has been a subject of intense discussion in Ireland in recent years. Much of the focus of this debate centres on the number of agencies now in existence, the extent to which they are performing their functions effectively and their political, administrative and financial accountability. This debate is, however, conducted in the absence of a common understanding of what constitutes a state agency or agreement on what constitutes good performance in respect of agencies. At time of writing the agency sector in Ireland is undergoing considerable change and reform, and measures are underway to develop an enhanced performance framework for guiding agency-department relations. The purpose of this paper is to provide evidence-informed commentary on these developments. To this end, we present here findings of a recent survey of the state agency population and examine some recent trends and developments as the sector undergoes reconfiguration.

Methodology & Population for the Study

In 2007, the Institute of Public Administration's research division carried out a survey of the complete agency population in Ireland, which updated a previous survey from 2004. These surveys, the first comprehensive mapping of the contemporary agency landscape in Ireland, formed the basis for a number of publications by the Institute[1]. The focus of this current analysis is the *non-commercial national level* organisations, offices and agencies performing public tasks in Ireland. As no strict or widely accepted definition exists as to what constitutes a 'state agency' in Ireland, considerable variety exists in terms of the basis for classification of public sector organisations which results in often sharply conflicting views as to how many public service organisations there are under the aegis of Irish government departments. The difficulty of classifying state agencies in Ireland was noted most recently by the OECD's (2008) report on the Irish public service, which drew attention to the consequences of this for their management and governance.

In reviewing the current landscape of agencies in Ireland we do not confine ourselves solely to those organisations that are formally statutorily independent of government, but include also those organisations that, by virtue of their remit and/or practical autonomy in the performance of their functions, are understood as operating with various degrees of independence from central controls. This is in keeping with previous research conducted by the Institute into commercial and non-commercial agencies, which considered as state agencies those organisations that display the following characteristics:

· They are structurally differentiated from other organisations,

· They have some capacity for autonomous decision making,

· They have some expectation of continuity over time,

· They perform some public function,

· They have some personnel and,

· They have some financial resources.

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[1] See for example McGauran, A-M.; Verhoest, K. & Humphreys, P. (2005) *The Corporate Governance of Agencies in Ireland: Non-commercial National Agencies* (IPA: CPMR Research Report N°6); MacCarthaigh, M. (2007) *The Corporate Governance of Regional and Local Public Service Bodies in Ireland* (IPA: CPMR Research Report N°8) and MacCarthaigh, M. (2009) *The Corporate Governance of Commercial State-owned Enterprises in Ireland* (IPA: CPMR Research Report N°9)

The study therefore includes not only those organisations existing at 'arm's length' from their parent department (and who operate with or without a governing authority or board) – but also bodies that operate within departmental structures but who enjoy some forms of autonomy not shared by other divisions of the department. As they are funded directly by their parent department and many are staffed by established civil servants, some of the organisations included here would not be considered as 'agencies' in day-to-day terms by their funding department. There are also other special cases – for example, the Referendum Commission appointed by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is in practice independent and has an intermittent existence.

Some further clarifications are necessary. The study does not consider as agencies important constitutional offices such as the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and also excludes offices under the remit of ministers of state, such as the Office of the Minister for Integration or the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. It also does not include those state-owned enterprises that are explicitly commercial in focus (including NAMA or any banks now under complete or majority state ownership), or third-level institutions. Nor does it include a number of private bodies that operate under public authority. It also excludes local and regional organisations. We have also excluded quasi-autonomous units of agencies except where they are of particular national importance and enjoy some autonomy e.g. the Irish National Accreditation Board (under the aegis of Forfás). Also, the report does not trace the movement of specific functional responsibilities between agencies or between agencies and departments. For example, under the recently announced changes in ministerial responsibility, a number of functions of the training agency FÁS have been transferred to various departments, but we are concerned here with overall responsibility for the agency, which in the case of FÁS has transferred to the Department of Education and Skills. The seven North/South bodies established as part of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement are included and allocated to the relevant responsible departments.

In total, we identify 249 national non-commercial state agencies in Ireland as of end-April 2010. In terms of numbers, this represents a decrease of ten agencies since the last survey conducted in April 2007. However, there has also been considerable transfer of agencies between departments as well as agency mergers during this period. The number of agencies is scheduled to decrease further in coming months with the implementation of plans to rationalise agencies in Ireland.

In conducting this study, as well as drawing upon our own research, communications were made with all government departments and a number of interviews conducted with senior personnel from state agencies. *However, all findings presented here are solely those of the author*. In the case of those departments which had their names changed by virtue of the reassignments announced to the Dáil by An Taoiseach on 23rd March 2010, the new title is used.

Agencies in Ireland: Context & Background

Systems of public administration are always evolving in response to pressures – be they social, political, economic or environmental. The desire to reform administrative systems and to identify the 'correct' structures for governing and implementing policy is a constant theme of public interest, despite the strong evidence that such a structure is unlikely to be found and that there is rarely consensus as to the optimal organisation of government in any state. In recent years, there has been particularly strong interest in the growth within public bureaucracies internationally of new organisational forms outside of traditional or core governing structures. This phenomenon has been felt quite acutely in Ireland. A number of terms have been used to capture these forms – including non-departmental public bodies, quangos, hybrids, and distributed public governance bodies. The most commonly used term is however 'agencies', and is used here as a catch-all term notwithstanding the variety of such organisations in Ireland.
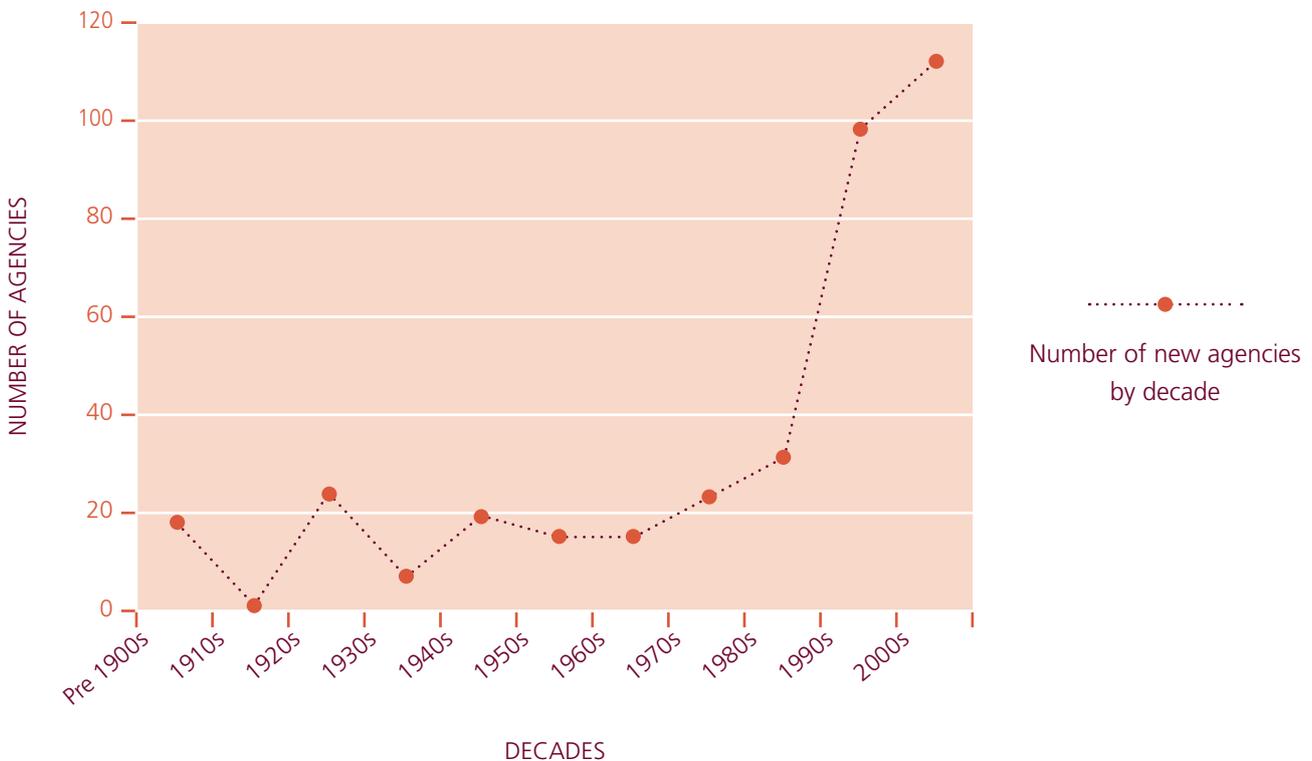
In fact, since independence, agencies have tended to appear and accumulate in an ad-hoc manner in Ireland. Also, the Whitehall common law administrative tradition inherited in Ireland has scope for a range of types of public organisation – such as commissions, advisory bodies, tribunals, statutory and non-statutory corporations, and companies limited by guarantee. They also perform a wide variety of tasks (e.g. service delivery, regulatory functions, research or contracting for services) across a multitude of policy arenas (agriculture, environment, social welfare etc). Therefore a defining characteristic of Irish agencies is their resistance to conceptual or formal classification.

A major issue in relation to the management of state agencies has been the 'lack of clarity in the role and relationship between line departments and their agencies' (Ryan 2008). The OECD note that insufficient governance mechanisms have been developed 'to ensure that [agencies] stay connected to the overarching strategic policy objectives of their parent department' (2008: 303). While some departments have now established 'corporate governance' units to provide some form of agency co-ordination, for many state agencies the principal conduit to their parent department has been an individual civil servant and the quality of their relationship can change should that person be promoted or moved to another section of the department. The variety of governance arrangements is also reflected in the management of human resources, with persons employed within state agencies doing so under a variety of terms and conditions, including many as tenured civil servants seconded to work in the agency, but also others as contract and non-permanent staff. This variety of staffing arrangements means that it is difficult to establish an accurate figure of the numbers of staff employed in state agencies. Allied to this, there has never been a clear pronouncement by an Irish government as to when or why an agency should be created. And contrary to popular opinion, agencies in Ireland do cease to function, normally through mergers with other organisations or absorptions by parent departments.

In general, recent research identifies the development of Irish agencies over the last century as one of gradual acceleration from a slow start (Verhoest et al. 2010: 84-8) and it is only since the 1990s that a 'wave' of agency establishment has occurred in Ireland. Indeed, a study by McGauran et al. (2005: 51) estimated that over 60% of national agencies were established post 1990 (the equivalent figure for this period for sub-national agencies rises to 80% (MacCarthaigh 2007: 24). In their analysis of state organisations, Hardiman and Scott (2010: 176) also identify this recent mushrooming in agency numbers (Figure 1). Briefly, a number of reasons can be attributed to this appreciation in numbers, including requirements of EU membership (particularly for regulatory bodies), public sector reforms and social partnership commitments. Political responsiveness also played an important role as governments in an expanding economy wished to demonstrate their commitment to addressing new emerging policy issues and public tasks by creating agencies.

Figure 1 Creation of new agencies in Ireland*

State agencies have contributed much to Irish society and government. In its review, the OECD states that,

> Agencies have given the Irish Public Service additional capacity and flexibility to deliver services during a time of major growth in public spending and increased citizen expectations. In addition, agencies have allowed governments to involve more stakeholders in participative management, to bring needed skills into the Public Service, and allowed the Government to increase the number of staff working in the Public Service without giving the impression of building up a "bureaucracy" (2008: 308).

Significantly, when compared with other states, most agencies in Ireland have thus been created *ex nihilo,* that is, to fulfil a new function (OECD 2008: 296). However, the process of agency creation in Ireland has not occurred as part of a structured programme of delegation and decentralisation of authority as has happened as part of public sector reforms elsewhere. Instead, reforms in the

Irish administrative system have coincided with an ad-hoc expansion in the organisational complexity of the state. No substantive ideological differences emerged over this until recently. This study identifies that the peak period of agency creation has passed and a process of agency consolidation or de-agencification has now begun.

*Source: Hardiman and Scott (2010). Note that in this analysis a broader interpretation of what constitutes a 'state agency' is used than that used in this report, but the overall pattern is consistent.

Recent developments

The landscape of the state agency sector in Ireland is currently undergoing considerable transformation as a result of a number of reports, including the OECD review of the Irish public service in 2008; the subsequent Government policy statement on *Transforming Public Services;* the recommendations in the report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (also referred to as An Bord Snip Nua) and the statement on the rationalisation of state agencies contained in Budget 2009. A common theme linking these reports is the need for more sophisticated and effective system for managing and overseeing agencies, as well as for 'joined-up' service delivery to the public. We consider here the principal implications of these reports for state agencies.

OECD review (2008)

In 2008, the OECD published its review of the Irish public service, titled *Ireland: Towards an Integrated Public Service.* State agencies come in for particular attention in the report, which criticises the ad-hoc manner in which they are established which it argues 'had decreased the overall accountability of the Public Service while increasing fragmentation and complexity' (OECD 2008: 39). The report argues that there is a need to have clear criteria for agency creation and to 'better match the purpose of existing agencies with their function in order to devise a more adequate governance structure' (2008: 309). Specifically, it queries the need for board structures where there are clearly stated outputs for an agency, proposing that boards should instead be used for agencies which require such representational inputs. A major recommendation of the report is the call for 'performance dialogues' between departments and agencies, as well as greater use of departmental or 'executive' agencies rather than non-departmental state agencies at arm's length from their parent departments.

Transforming Public Services (2008)

In November 2008 a Task Force appointed to consider the implementation of the OECD review published its final report, Transforming Public Services. The report follows the key themes of the OECD review and makes recommendations in relation to each. It recommends that all public bodies, including state agencies, be required to provide an integrated annual report that covered not only budgets and amounts spent but also what results and outputs are achieved by the organisation.

The Task Force recommends 'significant devolution of authority and responsibility between the different levels of Government' as well as between departments and agencies and within individual organisations. It also envisages a more performance-oriented culture in which resources would be allocated to agencies on the basis of outputs, as well as more collaborative activity between agencies. Also in relation to agencies, the Task Force proposes that new governance and performance frameworks be agreed with parent departments and that the OECD recommendation on 'performance dialogues' be advanced. As a result of this report, a working group was established to develop a framework for advancing the performance dialogues between government departments and agencies. It is due to report in 2010.

Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes

Following the *Transforming Public Services* report, a Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (popularly known as An Bord Snip Nua) was established to examine and make recommendations for reducing both expenditure programmes and the number of public service employees. In its examination of the public service, the Group make a number of recommendations for state agencies across all government departments. Many of these recommendations concern the transfer of functions between agencies as well as changes to commercial state-owned enterprises which are not considered here. In relation to the closure and full merger of agencies, the only public developments of note to date have been in the Department of the Taoiseach, with the closure of the Active Citizenship Office and the Irish Newfoundland Partnership.

Budget 2009: Proposals for Rationalisation of State Agencies

In his Budget speech for 2009 presented in October 2008, the Minister for Finance presented proposals for a reduction in the number of state agencies. These proposals envisage a range of options for agency rationalisation, including sharing of back office functions, amalgamations to create a new agency and the absorption of agencies by parent departments. In total, the proposals envisage the number of agencies being reduced by 33. To date, 15 of the identified agencies have ceased to function in their previous form, whilst definite progress is underway in several agencies to reduce the number further. For some rationalisations, however, progress has been limited.

At time of writing a number of further agency closures and mergers are imminent. For example, the recent and much publicised proposal to merge the governing structures of the Central Bank and the Irish Financial Regulatory Authority is due to occur during 2010, as is the merger of the Centre for Housing Research, the Affordable Homes Partnership, the National Building Agency and the Homeless Agency into a new organisation, the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency. Also, the Central Fisheries Board and seven Regional Fisheries Boards are due to be replaced by one agency, Inland Fisheries Ireland. Others mergers, such as that of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Office of Tobacco Control and the Irish Medicines Board into the Public Health and Medicines Safety Authority are due in 2011. The closure of some agencies, such as the Irish Council for Bioethics and the Children Acts Advisory Board, is also imminent.

State agency reorganisations and transfers: 2007 – 2010

Since a previous survey of the Irish agency landscape three years ago in April 2007, there has been a small overall decline in the agency population, with most changes occurring over the last 12 months. As Appendix 2 identifies, while 24 new agencies emerged in total for parent departments, two-thirds (16) of these were simply transfers between departments, meaning that only 8 new organisations emerged over the last three years. These agencies are:

· An Foras Orgánach

· Science Gallery

· Grangegorman Development Agency

· Management Development Council

· National Paediatric Hospital Development Board

· Office of Confidential Recipient

· Property Services Regulation Authority

· National Transport Authority

Similarly, of the 52 agencies who left the remit of their parent department as of April 2007, only 18 were the result of functions being stopped with the remainder (34) having their functions transferred to a department or another (existing or new) agency. The 18 agencies that ceased to exist over the period under question were:

· National Salmon Commission

· Coiste an Asgard

· Advisory Council for English Language Schools

· Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education

· Integrate Ireland Language and Training Centre

· International Education Board Ireland

· National Adult Learning Council

· Advisory Board for Irish Aid

· Board for the Employment of the Blind

· Poisons Council

· Garda Síochána Complaints Appeal Board

· National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

· National Crime Council

· NDP Gender Equality Unit

· Registration of Title Rules Committee

· National Forum on Europe

· Active Citizenship Office

· Irish Newfoundland Partnership

As a result of these changes, as of end-April 2010 there were 249 agencies shared across the 15 government departments and the Office of the Attorney General.

In terms of the concentration of agencies within departments, the departments which have the most national non-commercial agencies under their remit are the departments of Health and Children (34), Justice and Law Reform (31), Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (29) and Finance (29). The departments with the least number of national non-commercial agencies are Social Protection (5), Taoiseach (4), Foreign Affairs (4) and Defence (3).

The department that has gained the most agencies since 2007 is Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs which now has 6 new organisations under its remit as a result of transfers from other departments. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food gained 4 new agencies over the period, only one of which (An Foras Orgánach) was not a transfer from elsewhere.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (which also manages a large number of commercial state enterprises) saw a considerable reduction in the number of agencies under its remit during this period, 9 in total. Of these, 5 were transferred elsewhere while a further 2 (the Broadcasting Complaints Commission and the Broadcasting Commission) were merged to create a new body – the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. In the Department of Health, there has been further consolidation following the

amalgamation of over two dozen organisations into the largest agency in the state, the Health Services Executive (HSE). Since 2007 a further 3 agencies have merged into the HSE and 2 into the Department itself.

Similarly, the Department of Justice and Law Reform saw its agency numbers reduced by 10. This reduction included the closure of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, the National Crime Council and the NDP Gender Equality Unit. Of the 8 agencies which left the remit of the Department of Education and Skills, 5 were closed without being replaced or having all their functions transferred, including the National Adult Learning Council, the Integrate Ireland Language and Training Centre, and the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education.

Agency governance

There is no clear relationship in Ireland between an agency's legal mandate, size, function and the form of governance adopted. Of the 249 agencies presented in Appendix 1, 188 (75%) of them had some form of board or governing authority, ranging in size from 2 (Office of the Appeal Commissioners) to 37 (Teaching Council) members.

The remaining 61 organisations are mainly agencies operating within departmental structures but with some degree of autonomy over and above that normally afforded to other divisions of the department due to the nature of their work. Examples include the Education Inspectorate, the Office of Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government, Met Éireann, the Valuation Office, the Health Repayment Scheme Appeals Office and the Criminal Assets Bureau. As such these agencies are mainly staffed by civil servants though many must employ specialist or professional staff. They normally prepare accounts as a division of their department and are not audited separately from their parent department. Also, in most cases they tend not to have to present annual reports.

For those state agencies operating outside of departmental structures, the average size of their boards and governing authorities is 12. They take a variety of forms, including statutory boards of directors, commissioners, advisory committees and councils, as well as executive boards. The mode of appointment to these authorities also varies considerably, from ministerial nomination to ex-officio and elected positions (see also Clancy and Murphy 2006). Even where stakeholder groups have a right to nominate persons to these boards or governing authorities, formal appointment in many cases requires ministerial approval.

For each department, the combined number of agency board/governing authority positions increases in line with the number of agencies. Therefore, there are 397 persons on boards/governing authorities of agencies within the Department of Health and Children, 291 in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, 236 in the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport and 194 in the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. A full breakdown in presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Board/governing authority memberships

Department	Nº of board/governing authority members
Agriculture, Fisheries & Food	111
Communications, Energy & Natural Resources	63
Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs	155
Defence	17
Education & Skills	333
Enterprise, Trade & Innovation	291
Environment, Heritage & Local Government	194
Finance	128
Foreign Affairs	29
Health & Children	397
Justice & Law Reform	184
Social Protection	37
Taoiseach	43
Tourism, Culture & Sport	236
Transport	81
Office of the Attorney-General	5
Total	2,304

Where they exist, the boards of state agencies are subject to the stipulations of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, published by the Department of Finance. As well as detailing the requirements on board members and chairpersons individually and collectively, the code also recommends the development of performance frameworks between state bodies and departments. It proposes that 'such a framework provides an opportunity to:

· define the expectations that Government and Ministers have of the State body (and the body's own expectations);

· clarify the body's role in the policy sector; and

· define the parameters surrounding the body's resources/income.

(Department of Finance 2009: Section 11.1)

This is in keeping with the OECD's review of the Irish public service. In its report, the OECD draws particular attention to the wide range in role, type and capacity of agency boards in Ireland (2008: 299-304). It notes that 'informed discussions on how to best match organisational form and governance structure to the function of a new agency…do not seem to be taking place' (2008: 300). They also identify that while boards play important oversight and representation roles, they can also dilute the clarity necessary for an agency to perform its task and there can be tensions between a focus on agency performance and maximising stakeholder involvement through participation management. In their recommendations, they call for a more appropriate match between the governance structure used by an agency and its function. Where outputs are clear, they propose that representative boards are not necessary as the agency's performance can be enhanced by others means, including greater devolution of authority to agency management. They also suggest more use of departmental agencies i.e. organisations within departmental structures with no boards, but with enhanced policy autonomy and a clear strategic role.

Most, but not all, agencies come under the remit of Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation, the Office of the Ombudsman and audit by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. As noted above, parent departments also play a crucial role in monitoring performance, ensuring financial probity and assessing performance. The extent to which this is achieved in practice is, however, called into question by the OECD and in particular the absence of a verifiable performance framework

to measure progress. While government departments have considerable responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring agency performance, it must also be pointed out that the Houses of the Oireachtas also have a role to play in overseeing the wide range of state agencies in Ireland, including regulatory bodies.

Political responsibility for agencies ultimately falls to the relevant minister who may be questioned about an agency and its work in the Dáil and Oireachtas committees. As many administrative duties such as personnel management, procurement and budgetary control are conducted by agency chief executives and their management teams, it is common for them to now attend joint committees and answer questions from TDs and Senators on their work and objectives. However, given the large number of agencies and the multiple tasks performed by them, and an absence of metrics against which to measure productivity, it is near impossible for members of the Houses to monitor on a consistent or detailed basis the performance of agencies in order to pass judgment on their cost effectiveness and efficiency. Addressing this, *Transforming Public Services* recommends that:

> *All public bodies (Departments and agencies) should be required to provide an integrated Annual Report covering both input usage (expenditure) and output delivery with a focus on the achievements of the organisation. These reports would provide the basis for a comprehensive Oireachtas scrutiny i.e. moving away from the present focus on audited reports of input use alone. This will have legislative and operational implications for Oireachtas Committees, Ministers, and Accounting Officers, arising from new oversight arrangements for Departments (Department of the Taoiseach 2008: 11).*

There is a considerable gap to be bridged and this was reflected as recently as January this year when Minister Dempsey argued that 'our State and semi-State organisations are not scrutinised nearly enough' (Minihan 2010). A review in 2009 of various regulatory agencies in Ireland found that 'the ability of Oireachtas committees effectively to hold regulators to account [appeared] to be limited because they lack the specialist knowledge to do so' (Economist Intelligence Unit 2009: 54). Equally, the Houses do not fulfil the agenda-setting role performed by their counterparts in other jurisdictions, where the approval of parliament is necessary before a department and its various agencies can embark on a programme of work.

Challenges to implementation of agency rationalisation

In communication with senior staff within agencies undergoing a process of amalgamation and/or merging, a number of common issues have emerged that are playing an important role in the pace of rationalisation.

Legislative provision for mergers

In the absence of statutory authority for a new organisation which is expected to emerge as a result of merging organisations, the change process is severely and fundamentally inhibited. While the parties to a merger may be able to agree on new work programmes and means to marry their various policy objectives, the absence of legal personality for a new organisation means that business contracts cannot be signed, bank accounts opened or the terms of conditions for staff cannot be switched to the new organisation. The development and processing of legislation through parliament can take a considerable time to complete and in its absence, leaves a tremendous amount of uncertainty for the restructuring agencies.

Change process management

For agencies to merge, it is essential there is a clearly specified mission, set of objectives and work package in place for the new organisation, and pre-existing commitments of the merging organisations may not easily be withdrawn. Some agency mergers have also involved taking on new functions from their parent department. Interviews identify that a number of inter-agency working or steering groups have been established to identify how best to marry their policy goals. However, there is uncertainty in many areas as to what management structures should be put in place for new organisations resulting from mergers. In cases where agencies have governing boards and authorities, agreement must also be sought by these authorities whose members have various corporate governance responsibilities to ensure the integrity of their organisation. There is also a need to engage and explain to external stakeholders what the mergers, dissolutions and other restructuring mean for them.

Organisational infrastructure costs

The process of merging or amalgamating organisations necessitates an investment in information technology (IT) (often including a necessary upgrading of IT systems) and restructuring of telephony and other internal communications systems as well as new logos, branding, stationery etc. Merging financial and quality management systems can also be problematic where the nature of the agencies' tasks demands different systems. Also, for some agencies, their proposed merger with other organisations is not possible due to space constraints, with none of the premises of the merging agencies sufficiently large to cater for an intake of more staff in the new organisation. And while some organisations are quite a distance away as a result of the decentralisation programme, others are concerned about their ability to sell premises in the current property market or the costs associated with vacating premises that have signed rental leases. The National Procurement Service established within the Office of Public Works in 2009 is however playing a role in seeking to reduce the costs of procurement, including rental fees, across the public service.

Variety in patterns of employment

As might be expected, different agencies (and particularly those which are older) have different workplace cultures and over time have developed variety in the terms and conditions of staff employment, such as grading structures. Marrying these varying terms and conditions with those of another existing organisation or into a new organisation present very difficult challenges for the managers charged with overseeing the change process. Ongoing industrial action was also identified as inhibiting the progress of agency rationalisation.

Developments elsewhere

While many other states across Europe have also experienced agency proliferation since the 1980s, they have responded in different ways. For example, in countries like the Netherlands, semi-autonomous agencies have long formed an essential part of the civil service, and reforms have tend to reorganise and refocus their work rather than concentrate solely on reducing or increasing numbers. In Britain, concerns over accountability deficits and the regulation of agencies have been a primary focus of reform. However, few states do not face the challenges of managing a complex constellation of agencies which perform core tasks, including regulation, service delivery and policy implementation. We consider here some recent developments in small developed states which bear some useful comparisons for Ireland - New Zealand, Denmark and Norway.

New Zealand

In New Zealand, which was a source of inspiration for public sector reforms globally (including Ireland) in the early 1990s, considerable efforts have gone into reducing the number and type of agencies within the public service as a result of its perceived fragmentation. Part of this process has been a reclassification of the administrative structures so that currently, within New Zealand there are 41 departments and ministries, 84 statutory Crown entities, 11 Crown entity companies, 17 commercial state-owned enterprises, 31 third-level institutions as well as a range of public entities within a residual category of 'state organisations'. Following reviews by ministers of their portfolios, the government in Wellington is currently proposing to merge many of these organisations with a view to achieving a more efficient state sector, and envisages an investment of approximately €1.1 billion over the next two years in new technology (National Business Review 2010).

Three key documents underpin the current New Zealand approach to agency management and performance: a statement of intent, letter of expectations and memorandum of understanding. In broad terms, the statement of intent sets out the nature and scope of the agency's functions; what the agency is trying to achieve and how; and the main measures and standards (financial and non-financial) that the department intends to use to assess progress. It also describes the main outcomes, impacts and/or objectives that the agency is focused on, the goods and services (outputs) to be supplied, and plans for managing key aspects of capability. The letter of expectation is devised by the minister with departmental assistance, and informs the agency what he or she expects of it. The memorandum of understanding clarifies the services provided by the department and the basis of the department-agency relationship.

Denmark

In Denmark, agencies have since 1993 been obliged to draw up an annual report that evaluates performance both in relation to the budget and in relation to external targets associated with the agencies' core activities. This means that, *de facto,* all agencies have a performance contract. The performance-based contract system is not defined in law but in guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance. The performance of each agency is reported annually; and it is the decision of each ministry whether and how performance contracts will be used.

Contracts primarily focus on external targets i.e. targets concerned with results (outcomes) in the agency's environment. The contracts of agency chief executives are integrated with the contracts for agencies, in order to ensure coherence between the objectives of the agency and those of its chief executive. Similarly, the performance-related part of the chief executive's salary is related to the performance of the agency.

Norway

Norway has a longstanding tradition of extensively using state agencies, and consequently clear rationales for agency creation, such as professionalisation and the need for a strategic focus within parent departments. All Norwegian state agencies are within the civil service and belong to clearly defined agency types. Thus they lack their own legal identity and are instead under control of parent

departments. Since the 1980s, there have been several reforms affecting state agencies in Norway. Modernisation programmes from the mid-1980s emphasised better use of resources and increasing efficiency. This was followed by comprehensive budget reforms, resulting in a more flexible general budgetary framework for civil service organisations including greater discretion over the use of financial packages. A similar relaxation of central human resources (HR) controls also supported this.

More recently, a quasi-contractual control model was adopted, whereby parent departments allocate resources and specify targets and goals for the various agencies by means of an annual steering document known as the allocation letter. Any deviations from planned objectives or expenditure set out in the letter are notified to the ministry. As in most OECD states, there has been an increase in the devolution of tasks to various state agencies and in particular to highly independent regulatory agencies. This is combined with an emphasis on competitive tendering, efficiency measures, consumer choice and the decentralisation of service provision from central government.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Much of media and public commentary on state agencies in Ireland has been conducted not only in the absence of a clear idea of how many agencies there actually are, with estimates ranging from a few hundred up to a thousand, but also without clear parameters within which to assess their performance and effectiveness. Adopting an internationally accepted definition, this report has identified 249 national-level non-commercial state agencies in Ireland. While a process of consolidation is underway, it is clear that state agencies will continue to be a central and important part of Irish public administration and the cross-departmental nature of the challenges facing the state demands their more coherent use. This report suggests that there is a pressing need to move beyond generalised assessments of the state agency sector towards verifying the performance of individual agencies and the development of their reporting, efficiency and performance measures. To this end some recommendations are made below.

Accounting for agency outputs and performance

As noted above, *Transforming Public Services* recommends that annual 'output statements' should be produced by all agencies. In practice, these output statements are meant to cover outputs, outcomes and inputs and are better termed performance statements. The purpose of these statements is intended to relate the resources allocated to agencies with target achievements. Research conducted by the IPA (Boyle 2009) on output statements by government departments found that they have little reporting on outcomes achieved, a relatively small proportion of quantitative indicators, and a relatively large proportion of once-off indicators of activity that make it impossible to assess changes in performance over time. In particular, only around twenty per cent of the performance indicators in the output statements examined had a target connected to them. And less than ten per cent set out baseline information on previous years performance to enable future benchmarking of performance. The problem here is that without baseline data and targets, it is impossible to know how performance is changing over time. We know if departments delivered on what they said they would do in a particular year, but not if performance is getting better or worse.

Based on good practice here and internationally, key items to be included in performance statements for agencies are:

· High level information on the mission, goals and rationale of the organisation.

· Expenditure plans and performance for the organisation

· Detailed information at programme/activity level combining more detailed expenditure information with a small number of key output and outcome indicators and actual results achieved as tracked by these indicators. This more detailed performance information should ideally outline targets, baseline and trend data covering a number of years, and a short performance narrative to explain trends and variations in practice.

An example of good international practice regarding annual performance reports for parliamentarians and citizens is provided by the US Department of Transportation Performance and Accountability Report (http://www.dot.gov/par/2008/pdf/DOT_PAR_2008.pdf) which is regularly independently rated amongst the top performance reports produced by US federal agencies.

Whilst the organisation of the administrative system in the United States is very different to that of Ireland, it is interesting to note that the Obama administration, in one of its first moves on public management reform, launched a High-Priority Performance Goal initiative in June 2009. This initiative asks agency heads to identify and commit to a limited number of priority goals, generally three to eight, with high value to the public. The goals must have ambitious, but realistic, targets to achieve within 18 to 24 months without need for new resources or legislation, and well-defined, outcome-based measures of progress. Thus a focus on quality rather than quantity is driving the reform agenda within the federal bureaucracy.

Developing the performance dialogue

The forthcoming framework for advancing performance dialogues between government departments and their agencies should ensure that such dialogues are not conducted in isolation from objectives set by government to tackle the

various economic and social challenges facing the state. More specifically, and again drawing on international experience, we can discern a number of factors which might usefully be considered for a performance agreement, including:

· *A shared interpretation and understanding of what is meant by performance.* This applies not only to 'whole-of-government' performance goals but also to the relevant policy sector.

· *The status, aims and objectives of the parties involved.* Who the agreement is between should be clear i.e. is it between an agency board and a minister or between the chief executive and department? Clarity over an agency's purpose and objectives with regard to the services under contract is also necessary to ensure consistency with the work of the department.

· *A delineation of responsibilities.* The agreement should identify areas of individual and shared responsibility, and it may be necessary to identify the legal basis for this delineation.

· *The nature and level of services to be provided.* Parties to a performance agreement need to determine the level of detail required in this matter. A small number of outcome-oriented targets are normally set to define the level of service, and quality standards may be used.

· *The method of service delivery.* The method through which services are delivered can affect their quality. The agreement should specify whether services are to be delivered by the agency director, or through licensing, contracting or other indirect forms of delivery. Shared services may also be envisaged.

· *Values and/or principles underpinning service delivery.* While there might be divergence in organisational values, the agreed outcome and performance goals should be based on a shared understanding of the values determining the desired outcomes.

· *The duration of the performance framework.* Performance frameworks should be subject to a review after a 3-5 year period.

· *Accountability / monitoring for tasks and means through which accountability/monitoring is to be provided.* Accountability to whom, for what and how are core elements or any performance framework. Therefore,

any reports, audits, evaluations or reviews should be linked to this. Output statements will undoubtedly tie into this aspect of a performance framework. It is worth recalling the peer review of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, a report of which was published in 2008, which recommends that 'the Auditor General explore the possibility of assuming the role of auditing output statements' and that 'the Auditor General explore the possibility of proposing the extension of his statutory power to report to include the full range of reports on all of the public bodies subject to his audit.' (Office of the Comptroller and Auditor-General 2008: 33, 36)2

· *Means of resolving disputes.* This may involve arbitration by a third party, and, as per the recommendations of the 'An Bord Snip Nua' report, agencies should try to use state mediation services rather than private organisations.

· *Means of amending framework.* A mechanism for agreeing on any amendments to the framework is necessary. Such amendments that are made should be notified to the relevant minister and Oireachtas committee.

· *Means of reward or sanctions.* This may include reduced or increased resource allocations, policy autonomy, ability to retain income, participate in other activities with public bodies etc.

Achieving effective boards and governing authorities

For those agencies with boards and governing authorities, the performance of these governing structures is integral to the success of the agency. The aforementioned *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* provides a charter for good corporate governance of boards in commercial and non-commercial state organisations. However, a government commissioned review of the corporate governance of statutory authorities and office holders in Australia (Uhrig, 2003) also provides some food for thought applicable to the governance of Irish state agencies.

Noting that public sector boards tend to be large in size, Uhrig suggested that based on best practice in the private sector, a board of between 6 and 9 members (including a managing director if there is one) represents a reasonable size. However, the report also identified that there are

circumstances in which a larger board may be warranted, such as when management of the risks of an organisation demands a larger board membership.

Board committees are a commonly used mechanism for boards to enhance their effectiveness through further detailed oversight and supervision of areas of special risk that are critical to success. The report recommended that a director be appointed to chair each committee, and should be responsible for its operations reporting back to the full board. It is considered good practice that the chairman of the full board should not be the chairman of all committees.

In respect of term limits for boards, three years is a common membership period in a number of countries. Subject to satisfactory performance, appointments should be renewed for a second term. Induction and where necessary mentoring should be available for new board members.

The performance of boards is an underdeveloped issue in Ireland. In an Australian context, the Uhrig report suggested that a formal annual assessment of board performance between the minister and the chair of the board should take place. Such an assessment could include:

· Subjecting the board collectively to annual evaluation against its performance plan or overarching list of objectives, which may be externally facilitated

· Using evaluations and appraisals to identify areas for future development to drive through performance improvements (Barker 2004)

Theories as to what constitutes best practice in board composition and means of appointment are constantly evolving. While practice in Ireland varies, the trend internationally is tending towards the position that departmental staff should not serve on boards. Equally, as the OECD report identifies, there are growing tensions between the representative roles played by stakeholder appointees and their fiduciary, legal and other responsibilities as board members. The selective attendance of government representatives at board meetings is one way in which sponsoring departments may exercise input to the work of public bodies in the absence of having a permanent board member. Competency-based databases of potential board/governing authority members have considerable appeal and are worthy of more considered study, but it should be noted that the experience elsewhere has been that it can take some time before appointments are finally made using this means.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evidence presented here demonstrates that the state agency sector, as exemplified by the national non-commercial agencies, has entered a period of significant reconfiguration which is likely to continue for a number of years. While the overall number of agencies has peaked and is now in decline, it is also clear that they will remain an integral part of the Irish administrative system and with considerable responsibility for delivering, regulating and reforming public services. The challenge for agencies, government departments, and the Oireachtas, is to seek and apply the means of maximising their performance whilst ensuring public accountability.

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Appendix 1 National non-commercial State Agencies operating in Ireland as of end-April 2010

Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (11)

Agriculture Appeals Office

An Foras Orgánach

Aquaculture Licence Appeals Board

Bord Iascaigh Mhara - Irish Sea Fisheries Board

Bord Bia - Irish Food Board

COFORD (National Council for Forest Research and Development)

Marine Institute (Foras na Mara)

National Milk Agency

Sea Fisheries Protection Authority

Teagasc - Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Veterinary Council of Ireland

Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (9)

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

Central Fisheries Board

Commission for Communications Regulations (ComReg)

Commission for Energy Regulation

Digital Hub Development Agency

Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission

Irish National Petroleum Corporation

Mining Board

Sustainable Energy Ireland

Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (16)

An Coiminiséir Teanga / Language Commissioner

Pobal

Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests

Office of the Data Protection Commissioner

Dormant Accounts Fund Disbursements Board

Equality Authority

Equality Tribunal

Family Support Agency

Human Rights Commission

National Advisory Committee on Drugs

National Disability Authority

Placenames Commission / An Choimisiúin Logainmneacha

Údarás na Gaeltachta

Western Development Commission

Waterways Ireland

An Foras Teanga

Defence (3)

Army Pensions Board

Board of Civil Defence

Office of the Ombudsman for the Defence Forces

Education and Skills (26)

Chomhairle um Oideachais Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta

Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse

Commission on School Accommodation Needs

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies

Education Finance Board

FÁS

Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC)

(Education and Skills)

Grangegorman Development Agency

Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

Higher Education Authority

Inspectorate (Education)

Irish Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET) (incl. Embark)

Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Science

Léargas - The Exchange Bureau

National Centre for Guidance in Education

National Centre for Technology in Education

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

National Council for Special Education

National Education Welfare Board

National Educational Psychological Service

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

Teaching Council

Residential Institutions Redress Board

Royal Irish Academy

Royal Irish Academy of Music

State Examinations Commission

Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (29)

Advisory Council for Science, Technology and Innovation

Crafts Council of Ireland

Companies Registration Office

Company Law Review Group

Competition Authority

Employment Appeals Tribunal

Enterprise Ireland

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs

Forfás

Health and Safety Authority

IDA Ireland

Injuries Board

Intertrade Ireland

Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority

Irish Council for Bioethics

Irish National Accreditation Board

Irish Takeover Panel

Labour Court – An Chúirt Oibreachais

Labour Relations Commission

Management Development Council

National Competitiveness Council

National Consumer Agency

National Employment Rights Authority

National Standards Authority of Ireland

Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government

Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement

Office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies

Patents Office

Science Foundation Ireland

Environment, Heritage and Local Government (17)

Affordable Homes Partnership

Bord Pleanála

Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB)

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna - Library Council

Centre for Housing Research

Comhar-National Sustainable Development Partnership

Designated Area Appeals Advisory Board

Environmental Protection Agency

Heritage Council

Irish Water Safety

(Environment, Heritage and Local Government)

Local Government Computer Services Board

Local Government Management Services Board

Met Éireann

National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee

Private Residential Tenancies Board

Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland

Referendum Commission

Finance (29)

Central Bank of Ireland and Financial Services Authority of Ireland

Commission on Public Service Appointments

Committee on Top-Level Appointments in the Civil Service

Economic and Social Research Institute

Financial Services Ombudsman's Bureau

Irish Financial Services Appeals Tribunal

Financial Regulator

Central Bank of Ireland

Institute of Public Administration

National Development Finance Agency

National Pensions Reserve Fund Commission

National Treasury Management Agency (including State Claims Agency)

Office of Public Works

Office of the Appeal Commissioners

Office of the Chief Medical Officer for the Civil Service

Office of the Information Commissioner

Office of the Ombudsman

Office of the Revenue Commissioners

Public Appointments Service

REACH

Special European Union Programmes Body

Standards in Public Office Commission

State Laboratory

Valuation Office

Valuation Tribunal

ERDF and Cohesion Fund Financial Control Unit

NDP/CSF Evaluation Unit

NDP/CSF Information Office

NDP/CSF IT Unit

Foreign Affairs (4)

Development Education Advisory Committee

Government Emigrant Services Advisory Committee

North/South Ministerial Council - Joint Secretariat

The Ireland-United States Commission for Educational Exchange (The Fulbright Commission)

Health and Children (34)

Bord Altranais - Nursing Board

Bord na Radharcmhastoiri - Opticians Board

Údarás Uchtála na h Éireann – Adoption Authority of Ireland

Children Acts Advisory Board

Consultative Council on Hepatitis C

Dental Council

Drug Treatment Centre Board

Dublin Dental Hospital Board

Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Gaisce (National Challenge Award)

Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Health Insurance Authority

Health Repayment Scheme Appeals Office

Health Research Board

Health Services Executive

(Health and Children)

Irish Blood Transfusion Service

Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health

Health Information and Quality Authority

Irish Medicines Board

Medical Council

Mental Health Commission

National Cancer Registry Board

National Children's Advisory Council

National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery

National Haemophilia Council

National Paediatric Hospital Development Board

National Social Work Qualifications Board

National Treatment Purchase Fund

Office of the Ombudsman for Children

Office of Tobacco Control

Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland

Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council

Safefood: Food Safety Promotion Board

Institute of Public Health in Ireland

Justice and Law Reform (31)

Censorship of Films Appeal Board

Censorship of Publications Appeal Board

Censorship of Publications Board

Courts Service

Criminal Assets Bureau

Criminal Law Codification Advisory Committee

Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal

Forensic Science Laboratory

Garda Síochána Complaints Board

Garda Inspectorate

Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission

Inspector of Prisons

Irish Film Classification Office

Irish Prison Service

Irish Youth Justice Service

Judicial Appointments Advisory Board

Judicial Studies Institute

Legal Aid Board (incl. Refugee Legal Service)

Property Services Regulation Authority

COSC

Office of Confidential Recipient

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner

Parole Board

Private Security Authority

Probation Service

Reception and Integration Agency

Refugee Appeals Tribunal

Property Registration Authority

State Pathology Service

Commission for the support of victims of crime

Office of the Attorney-General (2)

Chief State Solicitor's Office

Law Reform Commission

Social Protection (5)

Bord Pinsean - Pensions Board

Citizens Information Board

Pensions Ombudsman

Social Welfare Appeals Office

Social Welfare Tribunal

Taoiseach (4)

Central Statistics Office

National Economic and Social Council

National Economic and Social Development Office

National Statistics Board

Tourism, Culture and Sport (20)

Abbey Theatre Ltd

Archbishop Marsh's Library

Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaion

Bord Scannan na hEireann - Irish Film Board

Chester Beatty Library

Culture Ireland

Fáilte Ireland - National Tourism Development Authority

Hunt Museum

Irish Manuscripts Commission

Irish Museum of Modern Art

Irish Sports Council

National Archives

National Campus and Stadium Development Authority

National Concert Hall

National Gallery of Ireland (including Crawford Gallery)

National Library of Ireland

National Museum of Ireland

Science Gallery

Shannon Development (Fáilte Ireland)

Tourism Ireland (N/S Body)

Transport (9)

Marine Casualty Investigation Board

Commission for Aviation Regulation

Commission for Taxi Regulation

Commissioners of Irish Lights

Medical Bureau of Road Safety

National Roads Authority

National Transport Authority

Road Safety Authority

Railway Safety Commission

Appendix 2 Agency Births, Deaths and Transfers: April 2007 – April 2010

DEPARTMENT	number of new agencies	of which functions are transfers from parent or other departments or result of merger	number of agency reductions	of which functions are transferred from parent or other departments or result of merger
Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	4	3	–	–
Communications, Energy and Natural Resources	1	1	9	8
Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs	6	6	1	1
Defence	–	–	1	–
Education and Skills	2	1	8	3
Enterprise, Trade and Innovation	2	1	2	2
Environment, Heritage and Local Government	–	–	2	2
Finance	1	1	–	–
Foreign Affairs	1	1	1	–
Health and Children	2	1	7	5
Justice and Law Reform	2	–	10	5
Social Protection	–	–	3	3
Taoiseach	–	–	6	3
Tourism, Culture and Sport	1	–	1	1
Transport	2	1	1	1
Office of the Attorney- General	–	–	–	–
TOTAL	24	16	52	34