

NISRA Annual Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2005



An Agency within the Department of

**Finance and
Personnel**

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NISRA Annual Report and Accounts For the year ended 31 March 2005

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this Annual Report on the performance of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) for 2004-05. The Report details the achievements of the Agency in a number of areas during the year.

Our customers continue to report high levels of satisfaction with the services and products that we provide. Notably, nearly one-third of our existing customers regarded the service as having improved on the previous year. Continuous improvement has been a key factor in driving forward all areas of the Agency's work. One example was the production of a statement indicating how we comply with the full range of National Statistics Protocols, designed to ensure the integrity and quality of our statistical outputs. The section on National Statistics included in this Annual Report also describes the work carried out by NISRA Statisticians under each of the National Statistics themes. It details the extensive range of the work undertaken by the Agency in providing an accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful picture of the economy and society in Northern Ireland, supporting the formulation and monitoring of policies by government at all levels.

This year we have undertaken a major modernisation of civil registration and certificate production systems in the General Register Office (GRO). A fully integrated system now links the GRO to local registration offices in all 26 District Council Areas. Other developments in the electronic delivery of services has also led to enhancement of our Neighbourhood Statistics, Central Survey Unit, Census Access and Equality web sites.

The Agency has continued to deliver and develop its products and services whilst at the same time keeping expenditure within approved plans, delivering efficiency savings and maintaining a high level of corporate governance.

Our staff have once again demonstrated that they are the Agency's most important asset. Through the provision of a high quality registration, statistics and research service across Government Departments, Government Agencies and other public sector bodies, they enable them to discharge public functions in an effective, efficient and accountable manner. At the same time Agency staff have increased their contribution to the wider community through their involvement in voluntary activities. I am particularly pleased, therefore, that the Agency has demonstrated its continued commitment to staff through retaining its status as an liP organisation.

I am also grateful to our colleagues, not only in the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP), but across all the Departments and within the statistics and research community in Northern Ireland, whose co-operation, advice and support has contributed to NISRA meeting its business objectives.



T N CAVEN
Registrar General and Chief Executive

THE ORGANISATION

Management

NISRA is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). During the period covered by this report Dr Norman Caven was the Registrar General and Chief Executive and was responsible to the Minister for the management of the Agency's performance and operations.

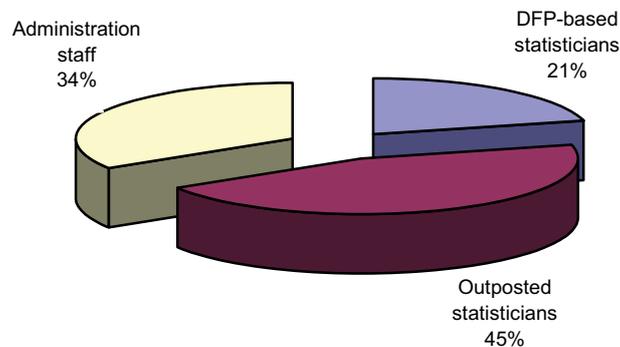
Dr Caven was assisted in the management of the Agency by two management groups:

- (a) a Senior Management Group (SMG) comprised of six Senior Principal Statisticians. The group advises the Chief Executive on strategy and major issues of Agency policy. SMG is responsible for ensuring the effective overall operation and performance of NISRA; and
- (b) a Management Board (MB) made up of SMG and grade 7 statistical/administrative Heads of Branches. The MB supports and advises the Chief Executive in the formulation, implementation and review of Agency policies. The MB is in turn supported by a series of working groups that deal with cross-Agency issues remitted to them by the Board. See Annex 1 for details of SMG and MB.

Staff

The number of staff employed by the Agency at the end of March 2005 was 366, of whom 124 were administrative grades and 242 were statistical grades. In addition, NISRA employed a field-force of 187 fee-paid survey interviewers and 13 other staff (inc. students) on a casual basis. Approximately one third of Agency statisticians and all NISRA administrative staff work in seven DFP-based Branches.

The remaining two-thirds of NISRA statisticians are located across the Northern Ireland Departments and in a number of Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies.



THE BUSINESS

NISRA is the principal source of official information on Northern Ireland's population and socio-economic conditions. The statistics produced by the Agency inform the policy process within Government, academic research and contribute to debate in the wider community. The Agency incorporates the General Register Office (GRO) for Northern Ireland, which provides a civil registration service and produces summary statistics relating to life events.

Core Purpose

The Core Purpose of NISRA is:

to provide a high quality, cost effective, registration, statistics and research service that informs policy and the democratic processes; and

to provide a window on Northern Ireland's society and its economy by providing evidence to inform decision making.

Vision

NISRA's vision is to be recognised as an organisation:

that is valued for innovation, integrity and independence, and recognised for first class service provided to government and the public;

whose expertise provides important and trusted information and advice, that has a beneficial impact on people's lives; and

that is known and respected within government and publicly for the comprehensive information that is collected to the highest professional standards, and provides an understanding of social and economic conditions and changes in Northern Ireland.

STRATEGIC GOALS

NISRA has used the balanced scorecard approach to provide a business focus which puts meaningful performance measurements in place. In 2004/2005 the Agency had four strategic themes and five associates outcomes.

FINANCE	CUSTOMERS
Manage resources economically and effectively and increase income-generating customers	Maintain our customer base and increase our level of customer satisfaction
PROCESSES	LEARNING AND GROWTH
Deliver a modernised registration service Manage the production and dissemination of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland in keeping with the National Statistics Code of Practice	Develop staff, consistent with the principles of IIP and the DFP Competence Framework, so that the Agency can deliver its business outputs

REVIEW OF THE 2004-2005 BUSINESS PLAN

Key Performance Results

Ministerial Targets

The Agency had three key Ministerial targets for the year 2004-2005. All three targets were achieved.

Target 1:	Have at least 96% of users who respond to the Customer Satisfaction Survey rate the service and products as satisfactory or better
Result:	Achieved 99% of customers who used NISRA's services or products during 2004-2005 said they were satisfied in the Customer Satisfaction Survey
Measures Used:	Customer Satisfaction Survey
Target 2:	Adhere to the principles of the National Statistics Code of Practice and the additional underlying Protocols
Result:	Achieved No breaches recorded
Measures Used:	Number of breaches recorded
Target 3:	Introduce a new integrated IT registration system to upgrade existing systems and link the General Register Office with the 26 Local Government District Registration Offices by March 2005
Result:	Achieved Infrastructure linking the General Register Office with the 26 Local Government Districts was in place prior to 7 March when the first local office went live.
Measures Used:	Infrastructure in place

Chief Executive's Targets

Target 1:	Secure revenue to achieve full cost recovery of staff and administrative costs
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	The Agency's income and expenditure for those areas not funded directly by DFP was measured against the approved budgetary plans.
Target 2:	Deliver efficiency savings of 2%
Result:	Achieved
Measures Used:	The net administration budget allocation for the 2003-2004 financial year was uplifted by the GDP deflator and administration expenditure for 2004-2005 was measured against 98% of the uplifted 2003-2004 figure.
Target 3:	Ensure that expenditure is within allocated plans such that under-spend does not exceed a maximum of 2%
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	The Agency's expenditure was measured against approved budgetary plans.
Target 4:	Improve accessibility to services by using electronic means of delivery to the customer
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	Number of electronic delivery services increased from five to eight : NISRA Website, National Statistics, NINIS, NICA, CSU, Demography, Equality/Disability, GRO
Target 5:	Inform government decisions through delivery of reliable and valid statistics and research
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	Policy colleagues confirm value of reliable evidence base through Customer Satisfaction Survey

Target 6:	Have effective communication/briefing arrangements in place within NISRA
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	Almost two thirds (62.1%) of respondents to the NISRA Staff Survey reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the effectiveness of communications within NISRA.
Target 7:	Secure a clear audit report on agency risk management
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	NISRA has received a clear audit report for 2004/05.
Target 8:	Safeguard resources against fraud by ensuring measures are in place
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	In accordance with established good practice, internal controls have been put in place to minimise the risk of fraud occurring. Senior managers sign stewardship statements identifying any weaknesses and confirming that the controls are in place and are operational. In addition, all NISRA staff have been advised of the procedures for reporting suspected fraud and have been provided with guidance on whistleblowing. In 2004/05 there were no reported cases of suspected fraud.
Target 9:	Prepare for implementation of Fol legislation in January 2005
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	Fol preparations made and systems in place for responding to Fol requests.
Target 10:	Implement the DFP Competence Framework
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	DFP Competence Framework implemented and used for staff reports in 2004/2005.

Target 11:	Improve staff overall satisfaction rating by 5 percentage points
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	Over three quarters of all respondents to the NISRA Staff Survey (78.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that NISRA is a good organisation to work for, with over four fifths (82%) satisfied or very satisfied with their current job
Target 12:	Update the Agency's Human Resources Strategy and take necessary actions
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	NISRA's Human Resources Strategy has been updated and an Action Plan drawn up
Target 13:	Retain IIP recognition by November 2004
Result:	Achieved
Measures used:	IIP re-accreditation achieved

NATIONAL STATISTICS

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is responsible for collecting, compiling, processing, analysing, interpreting, and disseminating a wide range of statistics. Some of our statistics are designated as 'National Statistics' which means that they are produced in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Framework for National Statistics and in line with the principles set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice and its 12 supporting Protocols.

As well as complying with the Code of Practice and its supporting Protocols, all of our National Statistics are also produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and policies (on Data Management, Publication, Release Practices, Revisions, Errors, Confidentiality and Access, Customer Service and Complaints), each of which forms an integral part of NISRA's National Statistics Compliance Statement.

This section reports on the progress against the planned National Statistics Work Programme, which was set out in the preceding NISRA Business Plan, by the 12 National Statistics themes.

Publication of the material in this report, when included in the [UK] National Statistics Annual Report, also meets one of the key responsibilities assigned to the National Statistician in the Framework for National Statistics, namely : 'To prepare an annual report on the performance of National Statistics to the Chancellor, as Minister for National Statistics.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

This theme brings together information and statistics about the agriculture, fishing, food and forestry sectors in Northern Ireland. In 2004/2005, DARD and NISRA staff:

-  collected, collated, analysed and published statistical data on agriculture and related industries in Northern Ireland, as required to meet the needs of DARD, other Northern Ireland Departments, DEFRA and the EU;
-  introduced new legislation for the conduct of the Agricultural and Horticultural Census;
-  introduced e-forms for the 2005 EU Farm Structures Survey;
-  published Northern Ireland statistics on food consumption and expenditure as collected in the Expenditure and Food Survey;
-  introduced a new system of classifying farms by size and type;
-  extended the use of scanning technology to increase the speed at which survey form queries are investigated; and
-  added agri-environmental statistics to the portfolio of products provided by DARD.

Commerce, Energy and Industry

This theme covers the full range of micro-economic data (i.e. data at detailed sectoral or industrial level). During 2004/05 DETI staff:

-  introduced improved survey validation procedures, resulting in improved consistency of estimates from surveys. A revised back series for the Manufacturing Sales and Exports Survey was published in November 2004;
-  produced a final report on “Measuring Tradeable Services” in Northern Ireland with recommendations for the way forward;
-  commenced fieldwork for the Community Innovation Survey in Spring 2005. Subject to adequate response rates the survey design will allow separate analysis of Northern Ireland results;
-  made results available from an existing survey, to report on broadband uptake; and
-  introduced a new Departmental house style for all statistical publications.

Crime and Justice

Crime and justice statistics cover both the impact of crime on the public and the working of the criminal and civil justice systems. In 2004/2005 the NIO:

-  published findings from the 2003/04 Northern Ireland Crime Survey including Research and Statistical Bulletin 6/2004 - Perceptions of and Concern About Crime in Northern Ireland - and Research and Statistical Bulletin 4/2005 - Crime Victimization in Northern Ireland;
-  published the Research and Statistical Bulletin 2/2004 - The Northern Ireland Prison Population in 2003;
-  developed a system for using the Northern Ireland Prison Service Prisoner Record Information System as a means of providing population and reception statistics;
-  undertook an internal NIO review of the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) after which a decision was taken to increase the sample size and move to an annual survey;
-  commenced continuous fieldwork for the 2005 NICS in January; and
-  published The Commentary on Northern Ireland Crime Statistics.

The Northern Ireland Court Service :

-  continued to develop The ICOS system; and
-  published Judicial Statistics in July 2004.

PSNI staff:

-  published the annual recorded crime statistics for 2003/2004 in May 2004;

-  conducted an audit to examine the crime recording process during April to September 2004, with recommendations being implemented through a PSNI steering group; and
-  published the annual security statistics for 2003/2004 in May 2004.

Economy

The economy theme covers statistics about economic accounts, government expenditure and revenues, prices and measures of inflation, short-term economic indicators and regional macro-economic statistics. During 2004/2005 DETI:

-  produced results of the ABI for 2003 using the DETI data collection and analysis system and Northern Ireland results were integrated into the UK Regional ABI system;
-  developed an e-survey facility for the ABI which was made available for respondents to the 2004 survey in January 2005; and
-  published a chain linked version of the Northern Ireland Index of Production re-based to 2001 in January 2005.

NISRA's Regional Reporting and European Programmes Branch:

-  input to the UK wide quality assurance of ONS estimates of regional Gross Value Added and Household Income, including commenting on the methodologies used to produce the estimates; and
-  contributed to the Atkinson Review of the Measurement of Government Productivity within the context of the National Accounts.

Education and Training

The Education and Training Theme covers statistics about learners, learning progression, qualifications and skills, and the workforce and providers that deliver learning. During 2004/2005 DENI staff:

-  published the Compendium of NI Education Statistics in April 2004;
-  published statistical press releases on the school census (April & December 2004, and February 2005), pupil: teacher ratios (June 2004), and participation in full-time education by 16 and 17 year olds (November 2004); and
-  completed the 2004-2005 School Census, the 2003-2004 Summary of Annual Examination Results, and the 2003-2004 School Leavers' Survey.

DEL staff:

-  published a report on Student Enrolments on Higher Education Courses - 2003/04;
-  published a report on First Destinations of Students Gaining Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions, Northern Ireland - 2002/03; and
-  published a report on Northern Ireland Students gaining Higher Education Qualifications - 2003/04.

Health and Care

The Health and Care theme brings together statistics about health, health services and social care. DHSSPS staff in 2004-2005:

-  were instrumental in publishing, consulting on and implementing the Fourth Capitation Formula Review Group Report in order to further improve the sensitivity of the main DHSSPS allocation formula to need;
-  continued to provide analytical support to the UK-wide Review of the new GP Workload Formula and assisted with the calculation of disease prevalence payments as per the new GMS contract;
-  implemented the GP Workload Formula and calculated the payment for practices – circa £85m;
-  published an update report from the Health and Social Care Inequalities System in December 2004, summarising progress in tackling inequalities across a range of selected morbidity, utilisation and service access indicators;
-  commissioned a study to develop a predictive hospital catchment population model to assist with evaluating future hospital configurations such as envisaged under ‘Developing Better Services’;
-  merged and validated a range of dental data prior to modelling the cost impact of adopting various payment scenarios resulting in changes to the standard dental contract;
-  continued to support the DHSSPS programme of workforce planning reviews including Mental Health/Learning Disability, Nursing, and Pharmacy;
-  developed a new Health Cost Weighted Activity Index (CWA) in support of the cross-Departmental Atkinson Review and which was also considered by the Independent Appleby Review of Health and Social Care Services in NI;
-  provided data and advice for a number of key DHSSPS initiatives and strategies such as the Performance Assessment and Reporting Framework (now called “Regional Indicators”) and the new 20 year Regional Strategy for the HPSS;
-  provided monitoring information in relation to Priorities for Action targets – high level public targets;
-  developed internet based information in relation to primary care;
-  estimated the level of patient exemption fraud due to failure to pay dental, ophthalmic and prescriptions charges;

-  monitored mortality rates in primary care;
-  enhanced the information published on waiting list statistics to include a breakdown by all available time bands, specialties and programmes of care;
-  implemented a review of aggregate information returns;
-  introduced monitoring and evaluation arrangements for Substitute Prescribing in April 2004 to coincide with the introduction of new guidelines;
-  carried out a review of the Drug Misuse Database and introduced new data collection forms from April 2004;
-  completed an 'external' review of the Drug and Alcohol Strategies and carried out a statistical review of patterns and trends of drug and alcohol use in Northern Ireland;
-  conducted initial research to scope the nature and extent of drug use among young vulnerable groups as part of a wider 'needs assessment' exercise;
-  developed and issued a tool to collect information on delays in adoption;
-  published 'Key indicators of Personal Social Services in Northern Ireland' in July 2004;
-  published a 'Children Order Bulletin' in July 2004;
-  published 'Northern Ireland Care Leavers' in October 2004;
-  published 'Outcome Indicators for Looked After Children' in September 2004;
-  published 'Inspection of Social Work in Mental Health Services: Summary of Survey Results' in June 2004;
-  published 'Community Statistics' in February 2005;
-  provided methodological support and conducted surveys to supported SSI inspections of: Child Protection in Northern Ireland; Social Work and related services for adults with sensory loss; and Carers in Northern Ireland; and
-  issued a collection tool for unmet need in relation to children's services in March 2004.

Labour Market

The Labour Market theme includes statistics about working lives, including characteristics of people who have a job and those who do not, occupations and industries in which people work, pay and earnings from employment. In 2004/2005 DETI staff:

-  published results for the 2003 NI Census of Employment in December 2004 including data disaggregated by District Council and industry using 1992 wards and the 2003 Standard Industrial Classification;
-  following user consultation released a substantially revised web based Monthly Labour Market Report in January 2005;
-  published LFS results to the pre-announced schedule and in line with ONS developments; and

-  introduced the new Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings methodology and published results in October 2004 including a back series.

NISRA's Central Survey Unit :

-  carried out a Labour Force Survey.

Natural and built environment

This theme covers the natural environment, housing, construction, land use and planning. In 2004/05, DRD staff:

-  developed a data repository for environment statistics;
-  continued to support the development of the waste management monitoring indicators collected through the 'dataflow' system;
-  continued to develop an approach to future surveying of attitudes to the environment
-  Continued development of the house completion database system including geographical referencing; and
-  published Northern Ireland Household Projections in January 2005.

NISRA's Central Survey Unit :

-  carried out the Northern Ireland Construction Survey.

Population and Migration

The Population and Migration theme brings together essential information about the characteristics, structure and dynamics of the population. The theme brings together statistics on population estimates and projections and statistics on births, deaths, marriages and divorce.

In 2004-2005 NISRA published:

-  population estimates for 2003 for Northern Ireland and part areas;
-  population projections for the period 2002-2017 for Northern Ireland and part areas;
-  the Registrar General's Annual and Quarterly Reports with finalised vital statistics for 2003 and provisional statistics for 2004; and
-  demographic statistics based household projections for Northern Ireland and sub-areas.

Further work in 2004-2005 included:

- 
 the development of the basis for a Longitudinal Study in Northern Ireland which will provide an anonymised dataset comprising linked Census of Population, births, deaths and migration information – research access to this new resource will begin in 2005-2006;
- 
 a review of migration statistics in the light of the National Statistics Quality Review on International Migration and the results of the 2001 Census of Population – the results of this review are planned for publication in early 2005-2006; and
- 
 the publication of a consultation document on the strategy for future Censuses and the provision of demographic statistics in Northern Ireland.

Throughout 2004-2005 work in NISRA's Census Office was focused on the development and provision of outputs from the 2001 Census for the specialist user as well as development of a strategy for future Censuses. In 2004-2005 Census Office:

- 
 produced a further Key Statistics product in the form of:
 - 
 a published report - Northern Ireland Census 2001 Key Statistics for Settlements - which provides a statistical profile of each settlement with a population of 1000 or more usual residents; and
 - 
 a web based release of - Key Statistics for Settlements with a usually resident population of between 500 and 999 persons - and household and population counts for smaller settlements with less than 500 usual residents;
- 
 developed two additional CD ROM packages to complement the Northern Ireland Census Access (NICA) web site for those users who wish to access the full range of 2001 Census results without accessing the internet;
- 
 released the Origin-Destination Product, which is a UK wide product detailing the movement of people and households from a specific origin to a specific destination, via the NISRA website;
- 
 held NICA Awareness Training Seminars throughout Northern Ireland with the broad aims of (i) providing users with an overview of the range of output available from the 2001 Census and (ii) demonstrating and advising users on how to access the results and the supporting information; and
- 
 continued development of strategy for the next Census planned for 2011, with specific focus on the development of a UK wide procurement strategy, an initial user consultation exercise and consideration of the enumeration methodology.

Social and welfare

The Social and Welfare Theme brings together information and statistics about the domestic, financial and social living arrangements of individuals and families. In 2004/2005 DSD:

-  published the Northern Ireland Summary of Social Security Statistics in June 2004. This publication is intended to provide a single source of information on claimants of all social security benefits;
-  published the Northern Ireland Client Group Analysis in May 2004, August 2004, November 2004 and February 2005. This publication concentrates on the three major social security client groups - persons of working age, families with children and persons of pensionable age;
-  re-developed the Social Welfare ONE database. This database will assist in the future analysis of benefit customers who move between benefits and in and out of work; and
-  carried out the Family Resources Survey.

NISRA's Central Survey Unit :

-  carried out an Expenditure and Food Survey;
-  carried out a Family Resources Survey; and
-  carried out the Continuous Household Survey.

Transport, Travel and Tourism

Transport, travel and tourism statistics cover a range of topics from traffic counts and surveys of road freight operators to statistics about the relative safety of different transport modes. In 2004-2005 DRD :

-  published the NI Transport Statistics Annual publication in September 2004 and four quarterly bulletins in March, June and October 2004 and January 2005;
-  developed EC Rail Statistics;
-  continued to provide data to monitor progress towards targets in the NI Road Safety Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy;
-  continued to participate in the NI GI Strategy Transport sub-group. The development of data on access to public transport was not completed in time to inform NIMDM 2003;
-  developed Driver Vehicle Licensing data via ad hoc contact with DVLNI;
-  continued to work with Translink to develop spatial data on access to public transport; and
-  continued to investigate the administrative integrated ticketing information system for useful public transport data.

PSNI staff:

-  published the annual injury road traffic collision statistics for 2003/2004 in May 2004;
-  published the Road Traffic Collision Statistics Annual Report for 2003 in December 2004; and
-  commenced the review of the T1 form used to collect injury road traffic collision statistics.

DETI staff:

-  contributed to the DCMS Review of UK Tourism Statistics and a first steps project was undertaken to produce prototype Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This optimised the use of existing data sources and identified data needs for full TSA compliance.

Other National Statistics

This theme covers a wide range of topics including compendia publications. The Agency has responsibility for producing a number of compendia publications which summarise social and economic statistics on Northern Ireland. In 2004-2005 NISRA's Regional Reporting and European Programmes Branch:

-  published The Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics 2004 as a hard copy and web-based publication; and
-  NISRA staff also provided significant input to the production of UK wide statistical compendia such as Social Trends and the Focus On series of publications.

Cross-cutting Statistics

In 2004-2005 NISRA DMB staff also:

-  made significant progress in the development of new measures of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland - a consultation paper and blueprint document were published and the final results are planned for early 2005-2006;
-  published a new statistical classification of settlements in Northern Ireland – this was accompanied by detailed 2001 Census statistics for settlements in Northern Ireland; and
-  developed the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Statistics website to include more detailed small area statistics for Northern Ireland.

Infrastructure

DETI is responsible for the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR).
During 2004/2004 DETI staff:

-  Revised the annual report on the Northern Ireland element of the Inter Departmental Business Register to better meet users' information needs.

CUSTOMERS

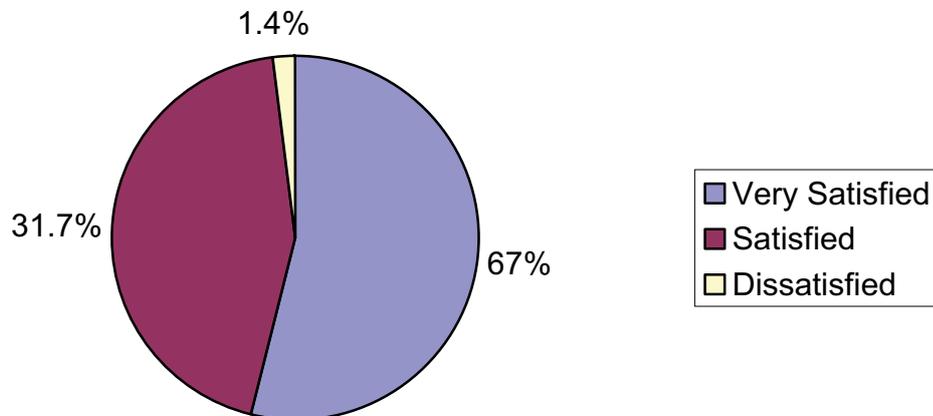
NISRA is committed to improving its service to customers, including other Northern Ireland Departments, and this is monitored through a series of Service Level Agreements (SLAs)/Concordats.

Customer Satisfaction

NISRA Customer Satisfaction Survey questionnaires were administered to key customers to ascertain whether Agency staff had delivered the service and products required to a satisfactory standard. The results of the survey showed that 31.7% of customers were satisfied with the service and products provided, with 67.0% reporting they were very satisfied.

Customers were also asked how the service that they had received this year compared to that of the previous year. Nearly a third (32.4%) reported an improved service from the previous year.

NISRA Customer Satisfaction Survey Results



REVIEW OF CIVIL REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Review of the Registration Service

Following a public consultation process, work has been progressing on the formulation of future policy for the registration of births and deaths. Draft proposals will be put forward for ministerial approval in the near future. These proposals address a wide range of issues aimed at modernisation and covers three main areas i.e. the process of registering events, access to information and new services. Significant legislative changes will be required to implement future improvements.

Registration Modernisation Project

In July 2003, GRO embarked on a procurement process for the modernisation of internal GRO and registration systems. The contract was awarded to an external supplier in July 2004. The new system, which was introduced in March this year, encompasses a fully integrated registration and certificate production system with direct electronic communication to local registration offices in all 26 Local Government Districts. The system also provides statistics and management information and is an enabler to both future citizen-facing service provision and cross-cutting initiatives within the NI public sector.

Gender Recognition Registration

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 was passed on 1 July 2004 and extends to Northern Ireland. The new legislation establishes a Gender Recognition Panel that will determine applications from people living in the UK who wish to change their gender (transsexuals).

The Gender Recognition Panel will issue Gender Recognition Certificates to those who have satisfactorily proved that they have been living in the new gender. The certificates will be sent to the Registrar General who will re-register the births showing the new gender in the Gender Recognition Register.

Marriages Of Non EEA Nationals

The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004 was passed in November 2004 and extends to Northern Ireland. Sections 19-25 contain provisions that are aimed at preventing “sham marriages” and were introduced from 1 February 2005.

From that date any person subject to immigration control cannot give notice of marriage in Northern Ireland unless:

-  they have an entry clearance (fiancee/marriage tourist visa) granted expressly for the purpose of marriage in the UK;
-  they have the written Home Office permission to marry in the UK – this will take the form of a Certificate of Approval which can be obtained from the Immigration & Nationality Department; or
-  they have settled status in the UK.

The General Register Office provided training to Registrars to ensure that the proper procedures are followed in line with the new provisions and this included guidance on forged documents and identity fraud.

Civil Partnerships

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 was passed on 18 November 2004 and will enable same sex couples to form civil partnerships.

The aim of civil partnership registration is to provide legal recognition of the relationship between same-sex couples and to confer rights and responsibilities flowing from registration of the relationship similar to those rights and responsibilities that attach to marriage under the current law.

COMMUNICATION

Websites

During 2004-2005 NISRA commissioned the development of new internet and intranet sites. The new internet site, which encompasses a number of specific sub-sites (NINIS, NICA, National Statistics, CSU, Equality/Disability, Demography, GRO) provides NISRA with a 'shop window' to the world and a means of disseminating its products and services within government and to the public alike.

The new intranet site, which is accessible by all Agency staff, addresses many of the communication issues highlighted in the Human Resources Strategy, the Staff Survey and the IIP Assessor's report and meets many of the improvements recommended by the NISRA Communication Sub-Group.

Agency Publications

The Agency has continued to disseminate official statistics and research findings through the publication of reports and press releases in both hard copy and electronic formats. Consistent with our strategic objective to disseminate official statistics on Northern Ireland, during 2004-2005 the Agency has produced 118 statistical publications and 19 research publications.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

NISRA is an information-based business. The service it delivers to its customers, whether internal or external, depends on how well it can create and use information to aid decision-making and analysis, and thereby meet its business objectives. This information needs to be recorded and stored in a shared area which allows easy access.

The Agency, in common with many organisations, is seeking to manage its information resources more effectively. It is essential that the Agency continues to commit resources into managing this information and this is especially important since the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act requires NISRA to make its information assets more accessible to the public and will place increased demands on staff to search and retrieve information within very tight timescales.

The Information Manager (IM) together with representatives from each business area, namely Support Information Managers (SIM), have been and will be in future, working on a number of projects to help improve records management within the Agency, e.g. A Disposal and Retention Schedule has been produced. This document will be included in the Publication Scheme and will be used to carry out file reviews on an annual basis.

The Agency have also provided the Department of Finance and Personnel with a fileplan which will be integrated with all the other business areas within the Department. The categories within the fileplan will be used for both the File Management System for registered files and the Document Management System for the storage of electronic records.

As a result of introducing systems such as these, NISRA will be in a much better position to deal with the transition to the Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS), which is proposed for implementation across the N.I. Civil Service in 2006/07

HUMAN RESOURCES

NISRA recognises how critical getting the right staff is to the success of meeting customer needs and maximising the performance of the Agency. Over the past year the following approaches have been used to ensure that this happens.

Recruitment

In order to heighten awareness of NISRA as an employer NISRA has continued to attend a number of career fairs and Universities to inform students about a career within NISRA.

During 2004-2005 two recruitment competitions were held for Assistant Statisticians. Twenty new Assistant Statisticians joined NISRA during the year. A review of the recruitment process for statistical staff is now underway. A Grade 6 Statistician selection board was also held.

Staff Movement

NISRA continues to operate a transfer system for statistical staff. Allied to this the intranet is used to advertise vacancies within the Agency so staff can identify work areas of interest to them.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Throughout 2004-2005 NISRA continued to demonstrate its commitment to meeting the development needs of its staff thereby ensuring that all staff have the necessary skills to perform their duties competently.

Corporate Training

The nature of the work in NISRA necessitates delivery of specialist training, in addition to training that is on offer from NICS Training & Development Units. The 2004/05 NISRA Training and Development Plan was designed to be proactive and in this respect the NISRA Staff Development (SD) Group kept a watching brief for courses, which could be beneficial to colleagues; and where appropriate, investigated ways of organising, brokering, and delivering these courses to NISRA staff. The SD Group also identified staff within NISRA with expertise in specialist areas and by arranging for them to deliver training exclusively in-house, achieved better value for money.

Corporate Training and Development for 2004/05 included programmes such as:

-  Statistics Refresher.
-  Written Communication skills for Specialists.
-  SPSS.
-  Media Skills.
-  Management Development Training.

Departmental Training & Development

In addition to corporate training and development, staff have training and development needs, which are specific to their job/branch/department and are detailed in branch training plans. Concordats between NISRA and NICS Departments specify that Departments have responsibility for funding all departmental specific training and development.

Through the provision of effective training and development, NISRA aims to link all training and development objectives with its core business aims. This is achieved through the completion of agreed Personal Development Plans (PDP's) for each member of staff, informed by their Personal Performance Agreement (PPA).

NISRA staff attended a variety of Departmental training courses during 2005/05 and these included:

-  Manual Handling Techniques
-  Criterion Based Interviewing
-  Managing Attendance
-  Government Finance & Accounts
-  Performance Appraisal

-  Telephone Techniques
-  Customer Care
-  Project Management

On-line Training Courses

NISRA continues to encourage staff to use online training and staff availed of the following courses during the period of this report:

-  Lotus Notes.
-  Word 2000 Proficient User.
-  Access 2000 Fundamentals.
-  Access 2000 Proficient User.
-  European Computer Driving License.
-  Excel 2000 Expert User.
-  Excel 2000 Fundamentals.
-  Excel 2000 Proficient User

Post Training & Development Evaluation

A new evaluation system has been put in place during the period of this report. This will provide information on how new knowledge and skills from training and development activities are transferred and used in the workplace, and the impact they have on individual, team, and Agency performance. This will provide further information on the value of investing in training and development.

NISRA Staff Conference

'Delivering Services' was the theme of the NISRA Staff Conference, which was held on 11-12 October 2004. The conference featured presentations from a number of NISRA branches and guest speakers.

The presentations by NISRA branches demonstrated the breadth of services NISRA has to offer. Presentations included:

-  the Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland;
-  the General Register Office Modernisation Programme and the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003;
-  NISRA input to DSD Urban Regeneration Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy; and
-  NISRA assisting the Valuation and Lands Agency in the creation of a new, fairer and more explainable property tax.

NISRA Staff Induction Training

Following evaluation of the NISRA staff induction programme a new improved programme was delivered in 2004. Induction is now delivered on a 'rolling' basis and new staff should be offered induction training within a month of joining the Agency.

In line with NISRA's ethos of continuous improvement, a focus group was set-up to review the effectiveness of the new induction programme, and as a result a number of minor adjustments were made to further improve the programme.

The NISRA induction programme supplements the Departmental induction programme.

Lunchtime Seminars

Three lunchtime seminars were organised and delivered during the period covered by this report. The seminar topics were as follows:

-  Professor Heather Joshi, from the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, presented 'The Millennium Cohort Study'. The presentation focused on the study group of babies born in Northern Ireland, the key results so far, and plans for the next surveys when the children are 5 and 7 years old. (June 2004)
-  Nikki Bennet and Alison Blackwell, from Office for National Statistics (ONS), presented 'The Continuous Population Survey' (CPS). The presentation reviewed progress so far and outline plans for the development of CPS. (September 2004)
-  Roeland Bennet and Alison Blackwell, from ONS, presented 'The European Survey of Income and Living Conditions' (EU-SILC). The presentation focused on the core contents of income, poverty and housing, and cross-sectional questions on various topics (such as detailed poverty and social capital). The presentation also included a discussion on the innovative methodologies involved (such as the longitudinal rotating panel). (January 2005)

European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM)

The Agency compiled a report on the potential for using EFQM as a business improvement tool within NISRA. The report listed various options for utilising the EFQM Excellence Model within NISRA. It was decided that EFQM would not be used in 2005/06; however, the EFQM options report would be reviewed in 2005/06, with a view to possible implementation of one of the EFQM options listed in the report, during 2006/07.

Investors in People (IiP)

The Northern Ireland Quality Centre carried out an IiP review of NISRA during November 2004 and the Assessors Report confirmed that NISRA had been successful in retaining its status as an IiP organisation.

The IiP award benchmarks the organisation against set standards and recognises the Agency's contribution and commitment to its staff. Among the 19 strengths listed in the IiP Assessors Report was that learning and development had resulted in better quality statistics, reports and presentations.

A further review will be required before November 2007.

EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEER SCHEME

NISRA continued to support the Employer Supported Volunteer (ESV) Scheme throughout 2004-2005. ESV is organised by the Voluntary Service Bureau and aims to help organisations to contribute to their community by involving employees as volunteers to complete 'Challenges' for local voluntary and community organisations.

In 2004-2005 NISRA staff participated in the following events:

-  staff in Corporate Services went to the Wildflower Nursery at Knockbracken Health Trust and helped out by making the structure for a compost heap, planting seeds, and clearing a pond;
-  a total of £115 was collected for the 'Jeans for Genes' Appeal in McAuley House;
-  at the NISRA Conference £815 for the Royal Maternity Regional Neonatal Unit was collected during a ballot;
-  Census Branch and Demography & Methodology Branch contributed a total of 19 Christmas presents for patients at the Marie Curie Cancer Care;
-  staff donated enough food items to make 45 Christmas foods hampers for communities in need;
-  Jonathan Smith in CSU raised £215 by shaving his head for Comic Relief;
-  Regional Reporting and EU Programmes Branch organised the 'Big Breakfast' in aid of Cancer Research this year and raised a total of £430.70;
-  Easter egg collections for communities in need;
-  Northern Ireland Office staff organised several events raising £912.70 for Comic Relief; and
-  the General Register Office held a raffle and raised £106 also for Comic Relief.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Health and Safety Risk Assessments

NISRA Health and Safety committee met twice, as required, in the past twelve months to discuss H&S issues affecting all NISRA staff. All issues identified have been resolved or are currently under consideration.

Two planned practice fire evacuations and one false alarm took place in the past year, evacuation of all staff was completed satisfactorily.

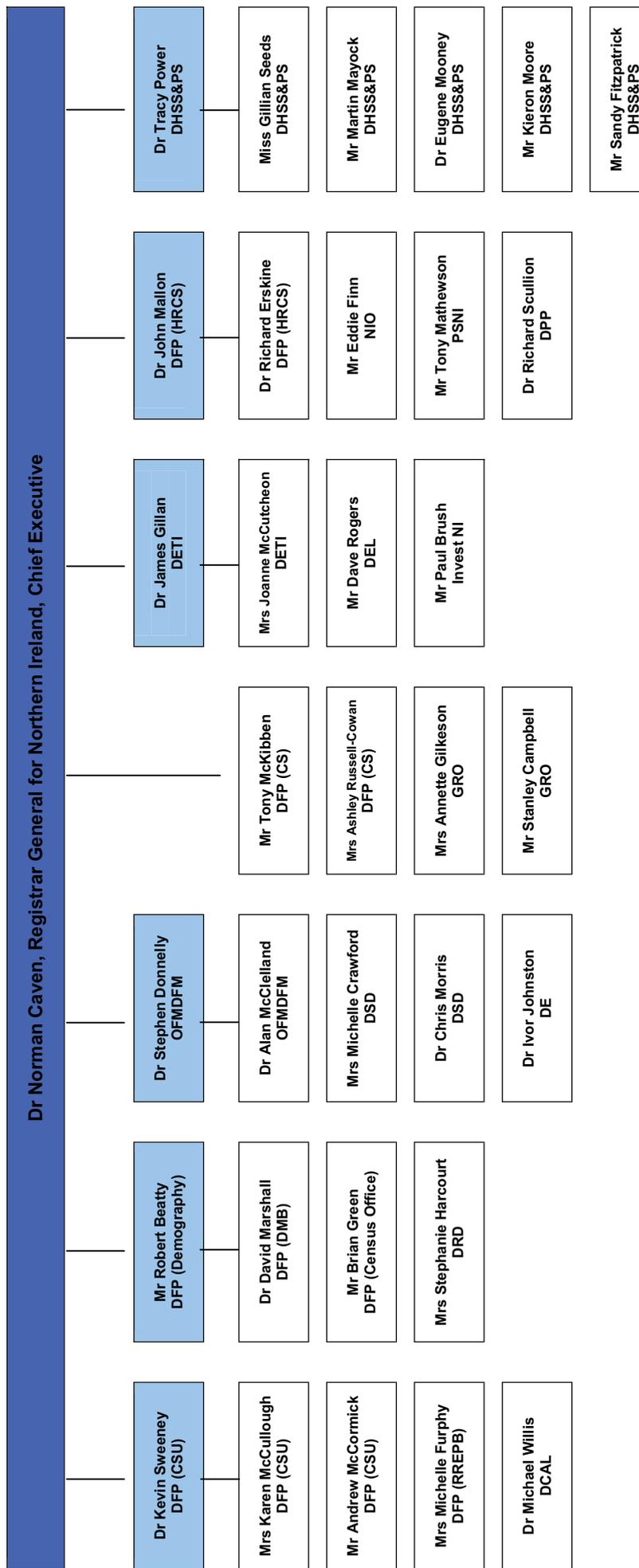
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Agency has developed its corporate governance arrangements and is fully committed to achieving compliance with HM Treasury requirements and any guidance issued by Accountability and Accountancy Services Division (AASD), within the prescribed timescales. The system of internal control in NISRA is based on an ongoing process that identifies the principle risks on the achievement of Agency and Departmental policies, aims and objectives. It is designed to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and manages them efficiently, effectively and economically.

NISRA's Corporate Governance includes:

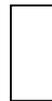
-  Business planning;
-  Risk management;
-  the Audit and Risk Committee;
-  Audits – internal and external;
-  a Statement of Internal Control;
-  Stewardship statements; and
-  Fraud and Whistleblowing policies.

NISRA MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Chief Executive 

Senior Management Group  

Management Board   

STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS

1	Labour Market Report – Contains Claimant Count & Monthly Estimates
2	Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry
3	Index of Production – Quarter 1
4	Index of Production – Quarter 2
5	Index of Production – Quarter 3
6	Index of Production – Quarter 4
7	Labour Force Survey - Quarterly Supplement 1
8	Labour Force Survey - Quarterly Supplement 2
9	Labour Force Survey - Quarterly Supplement 3
10	Labour Force Survey - Quarterly Supplement 4
11	Enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education 2003-2004
12	Compendium of Northern Ireland Education Statistics 1990-1991 – 2002-2003
13	Applications for Repossession for Default of Mortgage Payments
14	Inter-Departmental Business Register – Facts and Figures
15	Summary Social Security Statistics
16	Client Group Analysis
17	Quarterly Employment Survey – Quarter 1
18	Quarterly Employment Survey – Quarter 2
19	Quarterly Employment Survey – Quarter 3
20	Quarterly Employment Survey – Quarter 4
21	Northern Ireland Manufacturing Sales and Exports Survey 2002/03-2003/04
22	Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – Quarterly Release 1

23	Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – Quarterly Release 2
24	Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – Quarterly Release 3
25	Northern Ireland Waiting Lists – Quarterly Release 4
26	Northern Ireland Road and Rail Transport Statistics
27	Pupil: Teacher Ratios in Grant-Aided Schools 2003-2004
28	Notifiable Offences
29	Security Statistics
30	Northern Ireland Construction Bulletins – Quarter 1
31	Northern Ireland Construction Bulletins – Quarter 2
32	Northern Ireland Construction Bulletins – Quarter 3
33	Northern Ireland Construction Bulletins – Quarter 4
34	Northern Ireland Census 2001 Standard Tables (Ward Level)
35	Mid-year Population Estimates 2004
36	Migration Estimates 2003-04
37	Baby Names 2004 Bulletin
38	Births and Deaths in Northern Ireland 2004
39	Marriages and Divorces in Northern Ireland 2004
40	Northern Ireland Census 2001 Census Area Statistics
41	Northern Ireland Transport Statistics
42	Participation in Full-Time Education by 16 and 17 Year Olds 2003-2004
43	First Destinations of Students Gaining Qualifications from Higher Education Institutions: Northern Ireland 2002-03
44	The Northern Ireland Prison Population in 2002
45	The Northern Ireland Prison Population Projections 2003-2007

46	Community Statistics
47	Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics
48	Northern Ireland Census 2001: Univariate Tables
49	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
50	Northern Ireland Research & Development Survey
51	Annual Business Inquiry
52	Northern Ireland Ports Traffic 2003
53	CHS Bulletin 2003-2004 – Summary of Results
54	Northern Ireland Population Projections (2004 Based)
55	Northern Ireland Household Projections (2001-2005)
56	Annual Report of the Registrar General Northern Ireland 2004
57	Enrolment in Grant-Aided Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2003-2004: Basic Statistics
58	Northern Ireland Census 2001: Migration, Travel to Work and Workplace Population Tables
59	Women in Northern Ireland
60	Baby Names 2005 (Press Release)
61	Northern Ireland Census 2001: Theme Tables
62	Northern Ireland Coal Inquiry
63	Children in Funded Pre-School Education, and Enrolments at Special, Hospital and Independent Schools 2004-2005: Basic Statistics
64	Student Enrolments on Higher Education Courses: Northern Ireland 2003-2004
65	Students Gaining Higher Education Qualifications: Northern Ireland 2003-04
66	Digest of Information on the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System
67	Pesticides (Data on Pesticide Usage on Crops in Northern Ireland)

68	Statistical Review of Northern Ireland Agriculture
69	EU Farm Structure Survey 2003
70	Retirement Pension Survey Statistics
71	Northern Ireland Housing Bulletins – Quarter 1
72	Northern Ireland Housing Bulletins – Quarter 2
73	Northern Ireland Housing Bulletins – Quarter 3
74	Northern Ireland Housing Bulletins – Quarter 4
75	Persons of Pensionable Age on Key Benefits
76	Graduates in the Labour Market in Northern Ireland 2004
77	Northern Ireland Health and Personal Social Services Workforce Census September 2004
78	Hospital Statistics 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004 Volume 2a: Inpatient Speciality Tables
79	Hospital Statistics 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004 Volume 1: Programme of Care
80	Hospital Statistics 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004 Volume 2b: Outpatient Speciality Tables
81	Northern Ireland Statistics on the Operation of the Terrorism Act 2000: Annual Statistics 2002
82	Experience of Domestic Violence in Northern Ireland: Findings from the 2001 Northern Ireland Crime Survey
83	Public Perceptions of the Police and the Northern Ireland Policing Board Report based on the Northern Ireland Policing Board Module of the April 2004 Omnibus Survey
84	Public Perceptions of the Police and the Northern Ireland Policing Board Report based on the Northern Ireland Policing Board Module of the October 2004 Omnibus Survey
85	District Policing Partnership (DPP) Public Consultation Survey May 2004
86	Judicial Statistics 2003
87	Statistical Classification and Delineation of settlements 2005 – Report of the

	Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group
88	Statistics from the Northern Ireland Drug Addicts Index 2004
89	Statistics from the Northern Ireland Drug Misuse Database: 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004
90	Statistics from the Northern Ireland Needle and Syringe Exchange Scheme: 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004
91	New Deal for 18 to 24 Year Olds in Northern Ireland - Statistics from April 1998 to December 2004
92	New Deal 25+ in Northern Ireland - Statistics from June 1998 to December 2004
93	Key Indicators for Personal Social Services for Northern Ireland 2003
94	Children Order Statistical Bulletin 2003
95	Northern Ireland Seat Belt Survey 2004
96	Disability Living Allowance (Summary of Statistics)
97	Attendance Allowance (Summary of Statistics)
98	Carers Allowance (Summary of Statistics)
99	Retirement Pension (Summary of Statistics)
100	Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance (Summary of Statistics)
101	Income Support (Summary of Statistics)
102	Pension Credit (Summary of Statistics)
103	Jobseekers Allowance (Summary of Statistics)
104	Social Security Bulletin of Statistics
105	Northern Ireland Census of Employment 2003
106	Labour Force Survey – Households in Northern Ireland
107	Labour Force Survey – Self-employment in Northern Ireland
108	Labour Force Survey – Local Area Database

109	Labour Force Survey – Historical Supplement
110	Petroleum Products
111	Northern Ireland Fireworks Injuries Statistical Release
112	Statistics on Smoking Cessation Services in Northern Ireland: Quarter Summary Report 1 st April 2003 to 30 th June 2003
113	Statistics on Smoking Cessation Services in Northern Ireland: Quarter Summary Report 1 st July 2003 to 30 th September 2003
114	Statistics on Smoking Cessation Services in Northern Ireland: Quarter Summary Report 1 st October 2003 to 31 st December 2003
115	Statistics on Smoking Cessation Services in Northern Ireland: Quarter Summary Report 1 st January 2004 to 31 st March 2004
116	Statistics on Smoking Cessation Services in Northern Ireland: 2003/2004
117	New Deal for 18 to 24 year olds in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Statistics from April 1998 to March 2005
118	New Deal 25+ in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Statistics from June 1998 to March 2005

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

1	DOE Road Safety Monitor
2	Who are Victims? Self-assessed Victimhood and the Northern Irish Conflict
3	Views on Equity Monitoring the Criminal Justice System Findings from the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey
4	The Detention and Questioning of Young Persons by the Police in Northern Ireland
5	The Use of Proxy Measures of Religion (and other Section 75 Categories) in Relation to the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System
6	The Education Experience of Young People in Juvenile Justice Centres
7	Review of Information on People in Northern Ireland with a Disability
8	Drug Use and Risk Behaviours among Injecting Drug Users
9	Research into Homelessness and Substance Misuse
10	The Professional Development of Teachers and Principals in Irish Medium Education
11	Traveller Children's Experiences in Mainstream Post-Primary Schools in Northern Ireland: A Qualitative Study
12	Local Identity: Findings from Focus Groups with the General Public and Structured Interviews with Elected Representatives
13	Local Identity Omnibus Survey Bulletin (Jan 05)
14	Impact on, and Distribution of, the Regional Rate
15	Investigation into the Relative Domestic Property Wealth Base
16	Identification of New Administrative Zones Using Districts as a base
17	Review of Public Administration: Comparative Study – Northern Ireland and Scotland
18	Review of Public Administration: Results from the NI Omnibus Survey (Jun 04)

19	Views on Public Services: Public Sector Staff Focus Groups

GLOSSARY

BSP	Building Sustainable Prosperity
CAI	Computer Assisted Interviewing
CAMA	Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal
CB	Corporate Branch
CONI	Census Office Northern Ireland
CSA	Central Services Agency
CSO	Central Statistical Office (Dublin)
CSU	Central Survey Unit
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DE	Department of Education
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DMB	Demography and Methodology Branch

DRD	Department for Rural Development
DSD	Department for Social Development
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
ESV	Employer Supported Volunteering
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographical Information System
GRO	General Register Office
GSR	Government Social Research
GVA	Gross Value Added
HPSS	Health and Personal Social Services
HR	Human Resources
HRREB	Human Resource Research and Evaluation Branch
IDBR	Inter-Departmental Business Register
IIP	Investors in People
IT	Information Technology

MB	Management Board
NAS	Needs Assessment Survey
NCRS	National Crime Recording System
New TSN	New Targeting Social Need
NI	Northern Ireland
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NICtS	Northern Ireland Court Service
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NITB	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
NS	National Statistics
OFMDFM	Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PRONI	Public Records Office Northern Ireland
PSAB	Project Support Analysis Branch
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland

RREB	Regional Reporting and Expenditure Branch
RSS	Royal Statistical Society
SAC	Statistics Advisory Committee
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMG	Senior Management Group
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SSPPR	Special Support Programme for Peace & Reconciliation
UK	United Kingdom
VLA	Valuation and Lands Agency



NISRA Accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2005

Laid before the Houses of Parliament,
by the Department of Finance and Personnel,
in accordance with Paragraph 12(2) and (4) of the Schedule to the
Northern Ireland Act 2000 and Paragraph 36 of the Schedule to the
Northern Ireland Act 2000 (Prescribed Documents) Order 2004

7 July 2005

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
under section 11(3)(c) of the Government Resources
and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
by the Department of Finance and Personnel

7 July 2005

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed
7 July 2005

An Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel

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FOREWORD TO THE ACCOUNTS

Background Information

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), which is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP), was established on 1 April 1996 under the Government's Next Steps Initiative.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with a direction given by the Department of Finance and Personnel in accordance with Section 11(2) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Principal Activities

The Agency's principal functions, consistent with its business areas are to:

- be the principle advisory body on statistics and social research for Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office and their respective Ministers;
- provide and co-ordinate professional statistics and research services, and provide advice to Northern Ireland Departments, Agencies and non-Departmental Public Bodies;
- collect, analyse and make available official statistics which describe Northern Ireland's society, economy, population and public service;
- provide high quality demographic information to enable the number and condition of the population to be monitored and changes over time to be identified;
- support, facilitate and contribute to the development of economic and social policies in Northern Ireland;
- ensure that statistical and research standards are adhered to and that best methodological practice is employed in official statistics and social research;
- provide NI statistics required for United Kingdom, European Union and international statistical series; and
- administer the marriage laws and provide an efficient and effective system for the registration of births, marriages, adoptions and deaths in Northern Ireland.

Business Review

A full review of the Agency's activities is given on pages 8 to 37 of the Annual Report.

The net cost of operations for the year was £5,667k.

Important Events Occurring After the Year End

There have been no significant events since the year-end that would affect these Accounts.

Future Developments

The Agency previously secured funding for the General Register Office (GRO) Registration and Certificate Modernisation project. The roll out of the service to the District Registration Offices is now complete. GRO will be seeking further funding in 2005/06 to add a new module to the system to facilitate the introduction of Civil Partnership legislation. In addition, GRO is now exploring the way forward for the computerising of all registration records prior to 1997. This would involve a major digitisation exercise and additional funding. A business case is being prepared.

Following a public consultation process, work has been progressing on the formulation of future policy for the registration of births and deaths. Draft proposals will be put forward for ministerial approval. These proposals address a wide range of issues aimed at modernisation and cover three main areas: the process of registering events, access to information, and new services. Significant legislative changes will be required to implement future improvements.

Fixed Assets

Details in the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the Accounts.

The Agency does not believe that there is any material difference between the market and book value of its fixed assets, as at 31 March 2005.

Charitable Donations

The Agency aims to encourage and support the voluntary work of staff that will bring benefit to the community. During 2004/2005, staff participated in 8 projects:

Cancer Research	-	The Big Breakfast
Marie Curie	-	Collection of presents
Jeans for Genes	-	Collection Boxes
The Royal Maternity Regional Neo-natal Unit	-	Ballot
Comic Relief	-	Various activities
Wildflower Nursery	-	Voluntary work
Various Local groups	-	Food Hamper Collection
Two Youth Clubs)	
Welcome Trust)	- Easter Eggs
Several Local charities)	
Barnardos Leaving Care Programme)	

The cost of the time granted off amounted to approximately £500.

Payment to Suppliers

The Agency is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Better Payment Practice Code and British Standard BS7890 - *Achieving Good Payment Performance in Commercial Transactions*. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of receipt of the goods or performance of the services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later.

The prompt payment performance for year was 93%.

During this period NISRA did not make any interest payments under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest Act 1988).

Disabled Persons

The Agency follows the NI Civil Service Code of Practice on the Employment of Disabled People. The Agency aims to ensure that disablement is not a bar to recruitment or advancement.

Equality of Opportunity

The Agency follows the NI Civil Service policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement on the basis of ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work.

Employee Involvement

The Agency recognises the benefit of keeping employees informed of the progress of the business and of involving them in the Agency's performance. During the period employees were regularly provided with information regarding the financial and economic factors affecting the performance of NISRA and on other matters of concern to them, as employees, through meetings, notices and the Agency Brief.

Health and Safety

The Agency is committed to adhering to all existing legislation on health and safety at work to ensure that staff and customers enjoy the benefits of a safe environment.

Management

Dr Norman Caven was appointed Acting Chief Executive on 3 June 2002 by the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance and Personnel. The appointment is for an indefinite term under the *Senior Civil Service Management Code*.

The Chief Executive's pay is determined by the Permanent Secretary in accordance with the rules set out in Chapter 7.1 Annex A of the *Civil Service Management Code* and pay of senior staff, is determined by the Senior Salaries Review Board.

Details of the remuneration of the Acting Chief Executive and senior staff within the Agency, in salary bands, is provided in note 4.3 of these accounts together with details on pension entitlements and liabilities.

Senior Management Group

The Registrar and Acting Chief Executive, Dr T.N. Caven, is assisted in the management of the Agency by a Senior Management Group comprised of the six Senior Principal Statisticians - Dr E McWhirter, Dr J Mallon, Dr K Sweeney, Mr R Beatty, Dr J Gillan and Dr S Donnelly. The group advises the Acting Chief Executive on strategy and major issues of Agency policy and assists in ensuring the effective overall operation and performance of NISRA.

All members of the Senior Management Group have signed undertakings requiring them to disclose significant interests or anything that may conflict with their management responsibilities.

Management Board

The Management Board is made up of the Senior Management Group and the Principal Heads of Branches (see page 29 of the Annual Report) . The Management Board supports and advises the Chief Executive in the formulation, implementation and review of the Agency policies.

Audit Details

The financial statements are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland (C&AG) in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. He is head of the Northern Ireland Audit Office and he and his staff are wholly independent of the Agency and reports his findings to Parliament.

The audit of the financial statements for 2004-05 resulted in a notional audit fee of £6,000 and is included in the administration costs in the operating cost statement.



Dr T N Caven
Registrar General
Acting Chief Executive
30 June 2005

STATEMENT OF AGENCY'S AND ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Section 11(2) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, the Department of Finance and Personnel have directed the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis set out in the accounts direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Agency's state of affairs at the end of the year and of its income and expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Agency is required to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in NIRAM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Agency will continue in business.

The Accounting Officer for the Department of Finance and Personnel has appointed the Acting Chief Executive of Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency as the Accounting Officer for the Agency. The Acting Chief Executive's relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including his responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which he is answerable and for the keeping of proper records, are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum published in *Government Accounting Northern Ireland* issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel.



Dr T N Caven
Registrar General
Acting Chief Executive
30 June 2005

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

1. Scope of Responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Government Accounting Northern Ireland.

NISRA is an executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel and as such consults and takes direction from the departmental Minister. I report to the Minister about major issues affecting the Agency including actual and potential risks.

On an annual basis I provide the Departmental Accounting Officer with a written statement (Stewardship Statement) that risks remain appropriate and that controls identified are adequate, effective and have operated throughout the period.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Agency's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in the Agency for the year ended 31 March 2005 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with DFP guidance.

3. Capacity to Handle Risk

I, as Accounting Officer recognise the importance of managing risks effectively and take the lead in the continued development of a risk management framework. The Agency has identified all significant risks to its business and has developed a NISRA Risk Register. The Risk Register complements the Agency's Corporate Plan, Business Plan and financial management, and together these provide the systems to manage the Agency's resources whilst minimising the risks to achieving business outputs.

The Risk Register is managed in the first instance by the Senior Management Group (SMG), which reviews actions and considers appropriate future actions. Each SMG member is responsible for managing risks within their areas of responsibility and provide assurance to the Acting Chief Executive that risks are being actively managed and minimised. This involves close liaison with respective Heads of Branches. In line with DFP guidance, NISRA continues to include appropriate assurances in subsequent Annual Report and Accounts publications.

4. The Risk and Control Framework

I subscribe to the process leading to the production of the Statement of Internal Control that is an annual hierarchical stewardship reporting arrangement. This is a bottom-up process and key risk owners as identified in Risk Control Frameworks provide a written statement (Stewardship Statement) that risks remain appropriate and that controls identified are adequate, effective and have operated throughout the period. Risk owners are required to highlight areas where deficiencies are possible or breakdowns in control have actually occurred.

An Audit and Risk Committee is established consisting of members of the NISRA Senior Management Group and representatives of the departmental Internal Audit and the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

For the period this Statement of Internal Control covers, five key business risks were identified and were as follows:

- Internal/external factors damage the quality, integrity and independence of official statistics and research;
- Failure to recruit and retain statistical staff with appropriate skills/competences;
- Failure to manage financial resources effectively;
- Failure to maintain or improve customer service; and
- Failure to manage information effectively and respond to National Statistics and new Freedom of Information requirements.

The risk owner was identified for each risk and an evaluation carried out of how the risk was currently being managed, the effectiveness of those controls and what additional actions were required to fully manage it. Risks were assessed for degree of impact (on a scale from minor to catastrophic) and likelihood of occurrence (on a scale from unlikely to almost certain). Risks were formally reviewed twice during year by the Audit & Risk Committee.

5. Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the Agency who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications, of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Senior Management Group and the Audit and Risk Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system in place.

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee is to manage and direct the risk management process and enable assurances to be provided. The Committee has responsibility for assessing the adequacy of audit arrangements (internal and external) and assessing the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control across the Agency.

As Chief Executive I provided the Committee with a mid-year Stewardship Statement for 2004/05 which covered the review of the Agency risk register and the adequacy of risk management and internal control within the Agency.

The remit of the Committee includes due consideration of the adequacy of risk management and internal control. The Committee focuses on the NISRA Business Risk Register. At each meeting written reports are submitted by each member providing a balanced assessment of the system of control utilised to manage the risks for which they are directly responsible. Any significant control failings or weaknesses identified are discussed, including the impact that they have had, could have had, or may have and the actions being taken to rectify them. Other Committee members and attendees provide the challenge function. In general, the range of issues that are considered include:

- Have any new significant risks been identified?
- Are risks previously identified still acceptable?
- Do risks need to be promoted or relegated in the NISRA Risk Register or the DFP Corporate Risk Register?
- Do control strategies need to be changed?
- Do amendments need to be made to procedures?
- Is additional monitoring of the system required?
- Are the communication channels throughout NISRA effective, or do amendments need to be made?

In addition, the Committee is responsible for reviewing:

- The mechanisms for the assessment and management of risk;
- The planned activity of internal audit;
- The results of internal audit activity;
- The planned activity of external audit;
- The results of external audit activity;
- Adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit;
- The arrangements made for co-operation between internal audit, external audit and other review bodies; and
- Activity assurances relating to the corporate governance requirements for NISRA.



Dr T N Caven
Registrar General
Acting Chief Executive
30 June 2005

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

I certify that I have audited the financial statements on pages 55 to 72 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets and the accounting policies set out on pages 59 and 60.

Respective responsibilities of the Agency, the Acting Chief Executive and Auditor

As described on page 48, the Agency and Acting Chief Executive are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and Department of Finance and Personnel directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. The Agency and Acting Chief Executive are also responsible for the preparation of the other contents of the Accounts. My responsibilities, as independent auditor, are established by statute and I have regard to the standards and guidance issued by the Auditing Practices Board and the ethical guidance applicable to the auditing profession.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and Department of Finance and Personnel directions made thereunder, and whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. I also report if, in my opinion, the Foreword is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Agency has not kept proper accounting records, or if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my certificate if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements.

I review whether the statement on pages 49 to 52 reflects the Agency's compliance with the Department of Finance and Personnel's guidance on the Statement on Internal Control. I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by the Department of Finance and Personnel, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements. I am not required to consider, nor have I considered whether the Accounting Officer's Statement on Internal Control covers all risks and controls. I am also not required to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Agency's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Agency and Acting Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Agency's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by error, or by fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency at 31 March 2005 and of the net cost of operations, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and directions made thereunder by the Department of Finance and Personnel; and
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



J M Dowdall CB
Comptroller and Auditor General

Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast BT7 1EU

5th July 2005

The maintenance and integrity of NISRA's website is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer; the work carried out by the auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and accordingly the auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
For the Year Ended 31 March 2005

	Notes	2005 £000	2004 £000
Income	2	9,846	8,710
 Expenditure			
Staff Costs	4	10,857	10,068
Depreciation	7	155	361
Other operating costs	5	4,448	4,504
 Total Expenditure		15,460	14,933
 Cost of Operations Before Interest		(5,614)	(6,223)
Interest on Capital Employed	8	(53)	(21)
 NET COST OF OPERATIONS		(5,667)	(6,244)

The net cost of operations arises wholly from continuing operations and are administrative in nature.

The notes on pages 59 to 72 form part of these accounts.

STATEMENT OF RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES

For the Year Ended 31 March 2005

	Notes	2005 £000	2004 £000
Unrealised surplus/ (deficit) on revaluation of fixed assets	11	-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Recognised Gains and Losses for the year		-	-
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The notes on pages 59 to 72 form part of these accounts.

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31 March 2005

	Notes	2005 £000	2004 £000
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	7	1,714	661
Current Assets			
CSU Bank A/c		331	
Work in Progress		93	25
Debtors	9	1,769	943
		2,193	968
Current Liabilities			
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	10	(1,370)	(1,157)
Net Current Assets (Liabilities)		823	(189)
Total Assets less Liabilities		2,537	472
Financed by:			
Revaluation Reserve	11	3	2
General Fund	11	2,534	470
		2,537	472

N. Caven

Dr TN Caven
Registrar General
Acting Chief Executive
30 June 2005

The notes on pages 59 to 72 form part of these accounts.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

For the Year ended 31 March 2005

	Notes	2005 £000	2004 £000
Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities	12.1	(4,661)	(4,512)
Capital Expenditure	12.2	<u>(1,273)</u>	<u>(251)</u>
		(5,934)	(4,763)
Cash Inflow from Financing	12.3	<u>6,265</u>	<u>4,763</u>
Increase /(decrease) in cash		<u><u>331</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

The notes on pages 59 to 72 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Northern Ireland Resource Accounting Manual*.

Without limiting the information given, the accounts comply with the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board and accounting disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel insofar as those requirements are appropriate.

1.2 Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are capitalised at their cost of acquisition and installation and are revalued annually by reference to appropriate indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

The threshold for capitalisation for computer equipment is £500 and for all other fixed assets £1,000. Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis in order to write-off the valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset over its expected useful life, or lease period if shorter. The base useful lives of assets, which are reviewed regularly, are as follows:

Computer equipment and software	3-6 years
Office Equipment	5-10 years
Telecoms Equipment	5-10 years

The Agency does not own the property it occupies, but incurs a notional charge for accommodation costs, which is included in the Income and Expenditure Account.

1.3 Pension Costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) which is a defined benefit scheme and is unfunded and non-contributory. The agency recognises the expected cost of providing pensions on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS.

1.4 Value Added Tax

Apart from VAT which is taken into account for all trade debtors and trade creditors, all the other items in these accounts are exclusive of VAT which is recovered on a departmental basis.

1.5 Work in Progress

Work in progress is valued at the lower cost and net realisable value.

2. INCOME

	2005 £000	2004 £000
GRO	1,876	1,385
Statistical & Research Services	7,970	7,325
	<u>9,846</u>	<u>8,710</u>

3. SEGMENTAL ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS ATTRACTING FEES AND CHARGES

General Register Office

In setting fees for certificates, the General Register Office (GRO) aims to recover 100% of costs directly attributable to the estimated volume of produced certificates. In 2004/2005, GRO estimated that it would recover £1,032k (2003/2004: £1,190k) from the supply of certificates. The actual cost recovery for the year was £1,876k (2003/2004: £1,385k).

Central Survey Unit

In 2004/2005 Central Survey Unit (CSU) estimated that it would recover £2.1m (2003/2004: £2.2m) from carrying out surveys on behalf of Government Departments and Non Departmental Public Bodies. The actual cost recovery for the year was £2.4m (2003/2004: £2.4m).

	2005 £000	2004 £000
a) GRO		
Income	1,876	1,385
Expenditure	<u>(4,243)</u>	<u>(3,442)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	(2,367)	(2,057)
b) CSU		
Income	2,407	2,357
Expenditure	<u>(3,648)</u>	<u>(3,437)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,241)	(1,080)

c) OTHER			
Income	5,563		4,968
Expenditure	<u>(7,622)</u>		<u>(8,075)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)		<u>(2,059)</u>	<u>(3,107)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		<u>(5,667)</u>	<u>(6,244)</u>

Estimated income for future years is shown in Corporate Plan (Estimated Income) in Corporate and Business Plan 2005 – 2008.

4. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS

4.1 The average number of full-time equivalent persons employed during the year on each of the objectives of the Department of Finance and Personnel, plus NISRA staff outposted to other Departments, was:

	2005 No.	2004 No.
Statistical & Research Services	137	135
GRO	58	57
Outposted Staff	137	127
Other (Interviewers)	65	68
	<u>397</u>	<u>387</u>

4.2 The costs incurred in respect of these employees were:

	2005 £000					2004 £000
	TOTAL	STAT & RESEARCH	GRO	OUT POSTED	OTHER	TOTAL
Salaries & Wages	9,170	3,192	851	3,856	1,271	8,538
Social Security Costs	684	246	55	309	74	606
Other Pension Costs	1,003	405	94	504	-	924
	<u>10,857</u>	<u>3,843</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>4,669</u>	<u>1,345</u>	<u>10,068</u>

4.3 The salary, pension entitlements and the value of any taxable benefits in kind of the Agency's Senior Management Group were as follows:

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8
	Salary, including performance pay	Benefits in kind	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60	Total accrued pension at age 60 at 31/03/05 and related lump sum	CETV at 31/03/04 or at date of leaving	CETV at 31/03/05 or at date of leaving	Real increase in CETV after adjustment for inflation and changes in market investment factors	Employer contribution to partnership pension account including risk benefit cover
	£k	(rounded to nearest £100)	£k	£k	(nearest £k)	(nearest £k)	(nearest £k)	(to nearest £100)
Dr TN Caven								
(Registrar General & Acting Chief Executive)	75-80	-	0 – 2.5 plus 5 – 7.5 lump sum	25 – 30 plus 85 – 90 lump sum	441	493	36	-
Dr E McWhirter *								
(Director of Information & Analysis Unit)	50-55	-	0 – 2.5 plus 2.5 – 5 lump sum	20 – 25 plus 70 – 75 lump sum	432	461	17	-
Mr R Beatty								
(Head of Census & Demography Methodology)	40-45	-	2.5 – 5.0 **	10 – 15 **	119	137	9	-

Dr S Donnelly (Head of Equality Unit Research Branch)	50-55	-	0 – 2.5 plus 2.5 – 5 lump sum	10 – 15 plus 35 – 40 lump sum	151	185	24	-
Dr J Mallon (Head of Human Resources Consultancy Services)								
Dr K Sweeney (Head of Central Survey Unit)								
Dr J Gillan (Head of Statistics Research Branch)								

Consent to disclose withheld

Consent to disclose withheld

Consent to disclose withheld

* Member retired on 28 March 2005
 ** Member of Premium Scheme. No automatic lump sum.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the Inland Revenue as a taxable emolument. None of the Agency's employees received any benefits in kind (2004: nil).

Pension

Pension benefits are provided through the CSP arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based "final salary" defined benefit schemes (*classic*, *premium*, and *classic plus*). The Schemes are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions are payable under classic, premium and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index. New entrants after 1 October 2002 may choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality "money purchase" stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (*partnership pension account*).

Employee contributions are set at the rate 1.5% of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5% for premium and classic plus. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year in service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the CSP arrangements can be found at the web-site www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk.

Columns 5 and 6 of the above table show the member's cash equivalent transfer value (CETV) accrued at the beginning and the end of the reporting period. Column 7 reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements and for which the CS Vote has received a transfer payment commensurate to the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

Pension Costs

The PCSPS(NI) is an unfunded defined benefit scheme which produces its own resource accounts, but NISRA is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up to date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2003 and details of this valuation are available in the PCSPS(NI) resource accounts.

For 2004-05, employers' contributions of £1,003k were payable to the PCSPS(NI) (2003-04 £924k) at one of four rates in the range 12 to 18 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. From 1 April 2005 these rates have increased as a result of the latest actuarial valuation to between 16.5% and 23.5%. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Employees joining after 1 October 2002 could opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution.

Employers' contributions were paid to one or more of a panel of four appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 3 to 12.5 per cent of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3 per cent of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of 0.8 per cent of pensionable pay, were payable to the PCSPS(NI) to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees.

Ill-health retirement

During the year 2004-05 there were no ill-health retirements.

5. OTHER OPERATING COSTS

	2005	2004
	£000	£000
General Administrative Expenses	1,214	1,169
District Registration Office's costs	1,630	1,611
Computer Charges	108	364
Research	0	84
Notional Costs (Note 6)	1,413	1,199
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	0	3
Diminution in Value of Fixed Assets	83	74
	<u>4,448</u>	<u>4,504</u>

6. NOTIONAL COSTS

These costs relate to services received for which no actual payment is made. They are included in the accounts so as to reflect the full economic cost of provision.

	2005	2004
	£000	£000
Services provided by parent department		
Common Service Charge	2	2
Telecoms	25	29
Recruitment	14	24
ISU	319	272
Internal Audit	14	19
BDS – Training/Consultancy Services	25	-
Accommodation	973	842
VLA	1	-
	<u>1,373</u>	<u>1,188</u>
Other Notional Costs		
OSNI	-	-
NIAO	6	6
DRD – Graphic Design Unit	5	5
– Stats	29	-
	<u>40</u>	<u>11</u>
Total	<u>1,413</u>	<u>1,199</u>

7. FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £000	Office Machinery £000	Total £000
Cost or Valuation			
At 1 April 2004	1,475	94	1,569
Additions	1,271	2	1,273
Transfers in	62	-	62
Transfers out	(50)	-	(50)
Disposals	(132)	-	(132)
Revaluations	(176)	3	(173)
At 31 March 2005	2,450	99	2,549
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2004	840	68	908
Transfers in	40	-	40
Charge for year	153	2	155
Transfers out	(45)	-	(45)
Disposals	(131)	-	(131)
Revaluation	(94)	2	(92)
At 31 March 2005	763	72	835
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2005	1,687	27	1,714
At 31 March 2004	635	26	661

Included within fixed assets are additions totalling £987k relating to 'assets under construction'. No depreciation has been charged against these assets.

8. INTEREST ON CAPITAL EMPLOYED

	2005 £000	2004 £000
Interest on Capital	53	21

The Income and Expenditure Account bears a non-cash charge for interest relating to the use of capital by the Agency. The basis of the charge is 3.5% of the average capital employed, defined as total assets less liabilities.

9. DEBTORS (amounts due within one year)

	2005 £000	2004 £000
Trade debtors	1,391	628
Prepayments and accrued income	378	315
	<u>1,769</u>	<u>943</u>

10. CREDITORS (amounts falling due within one year)

	2005 £000	2004 £000
Accruals	1,370	1,157
	<u>1,370</u>	<u>1,157</u>

11. RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES AND GOVERNMENT FUNDS

	Notes	General Fund £000	Revaluation Reserve £000	Total £000
At 1 April 2004		470	2	472
Net Grant	12.3	6,265		6,265
Net cost of Operations		(5,667)	1	(5,666)
Notional costs	6	1,413		1,413
Interest on capital		53		53
		<u>2,534</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2,537</u>
Balance at 31 March 2005		<u>2,534</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2,537</u>

12. NOTES TO CASH FLOW STATEMENT

12.1 Reconciliation of net cost of operations to net cash flow from operating activities

	2005 £000	2004 £000
Net cost of operations before interest	(5,614)	(6,223)
Adjustment for non cash transactions		
Diminution in value of fixed assets	83	73
Depreciation	155	361
(Profit) / loss on disposal of assets	-	3
Notional costs	1,413	1,199
Transfer of fixed assets	(17)	(47)
Adjustments for movements in working capital		
Decrease / (Increase) WIP	(68)	25
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(826)	40
Increase in creditors	213	57
Net cash outflow from operating activities	<u>(4,661)</u>	<u>(4,512)</u>

12.2 Capital expenditure and financial investment

	Note	2005 £000	2004 £000
Purchase of fixed assets	7	1,273	251
Sale of fixed assets		-	-
		<u>1,273</u>	<u>251</u>

12.3 Reconciliation of financing

	Note	2005 £000	2004 £000
Gross Grant			
- DFP Resource Account		15,288	13,486
Accruing Resources applied		<u>(9,023)</u>	<u>(8,723)</u>
Net Grant	11	<u>6,265</u>	<u>4,763</u>

When these accounts were drawn up, the DFP Resource Account for 2005 had not been finalised and the final figures for the amount appropriated were not available. Reconciliation will be made in the 2006 accounts if required.

13. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2005 NISRA had a capital commitment of £204k in respect of the Registration and Certificate Modernisation project. NISRA has requested the carry over of capital from 2004/2005 into 2005/2006 via the DFP End Year Flexibility Scheme (2004:Nil).

14. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

NISRA has a potential liability with regard to the pension rights of Central Survey Unit Interviewers. No figures have been calculated yet as to the value of this liability.

15. KEY CORPORATE FINANCIAL TARGET

The Agency's key corporate financial target was to operate within the running costs cash allocation and to achieve at least 2% efficiency saving on the 2003/2004 allocation (2004: 2% on the 2002/2003 allocation).

This target was achieved through economic and effective use of resources. However, it is not possible to measure the achievement of these targets from the accounts as the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and these targets were set on a cash basis.

16. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The Department of Finance and Personnel is regarded as a related party. During the year, the Agency has had a number of material transactions with the Department, and with Government Purchasing Agency, another executive agency for which the Department is regarded as the parent Department.

In addition, NISRA had a number of material transactions with other Government Departments and other central Government bodies. Most of these have been with Department of Enterprise and Investment, Department of Environment, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and its executive agencies.

During the year, none of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with the Agency.

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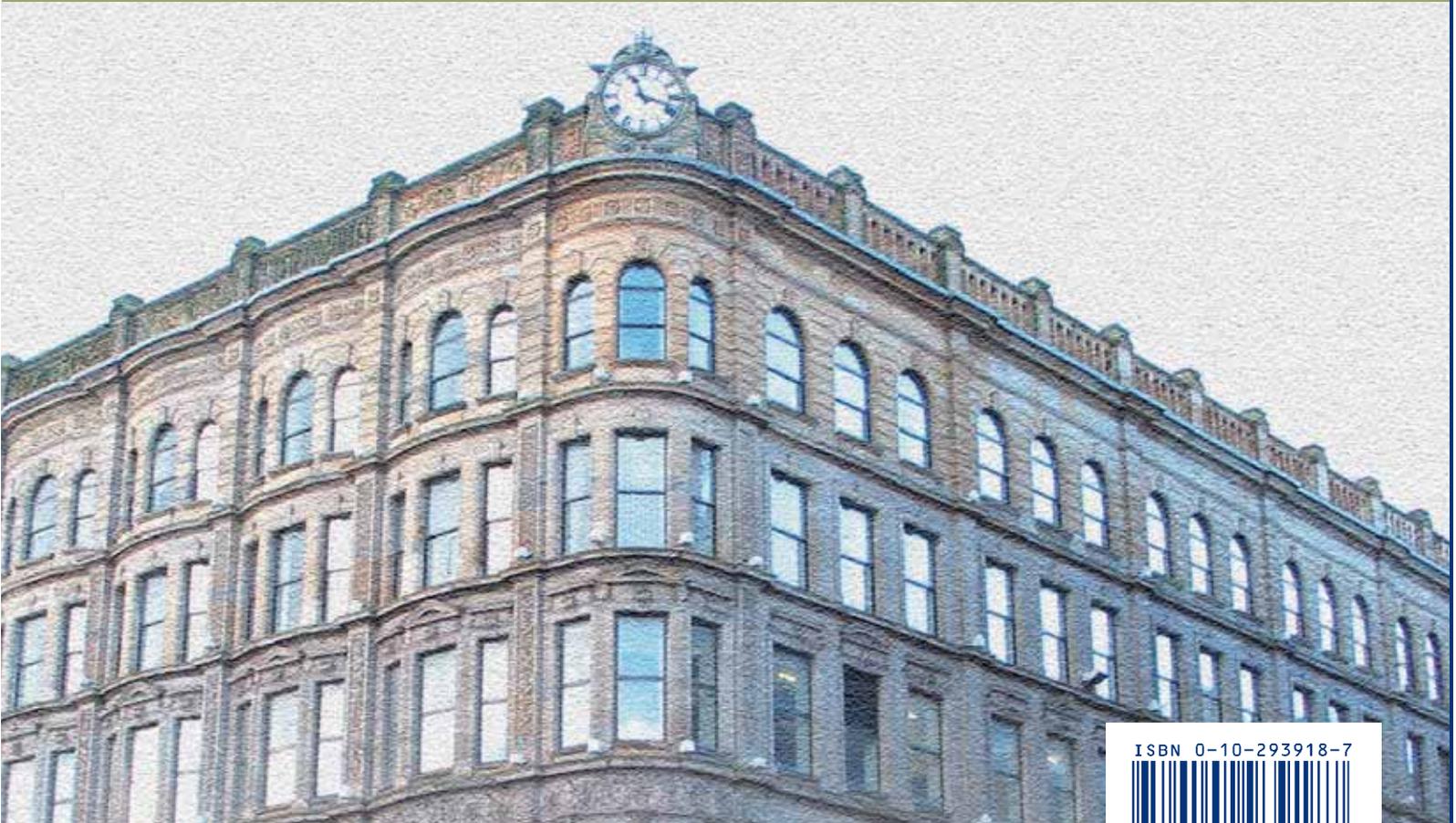
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