

1. Brief on the GO Network 12 May 2010

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICE NETWORK INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This note introduces the Government Office Network and sets out how the Network can help you implement your policies.

INTRODUCTION

The Government Office Network was set up in 1994 to bring together the offices of individual central government Departments in each region and so provide a more efficient and integrated service. The Network now works for thirteen central government Departments, implementing policies and programmes on the ground, monitoring and reporting on local priorities and responding to civil emergencies.

The Network provides different services depending on the needs and wishes of each Department. Current tasks include implementing neighbourhood-based community programmes such as New Deal for Communities, managing the regional responses to emergencies such as the recent severe weather, improving the quality of local Safeguarding Children's Board serious case reviews, advising the Secretary of State on whether to call in major planning cases for decision, securing efficiencies by leading the Civil Service in the English Regions project and rationalising the public sector estate, and managing Ministerial correspondence and visits. The Network has a major role in shaping delivery of two major European Structural Fund programmes, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund.

The Network is used to change. Following an efficiency review, the Network has 1,700 staff in total, a reduction of 43 per cent from around 3,000 in 2004. The Network has also developed considerable expertise in performance monitoring and in supporting rationalisation and change amongst regional and local bodies. In 2010

an Ipsos Mori stakeholder survey rated the Network as in the top 25 per cent of public service organisations.

Annex A provides further organisational information.

THE RATIONALE FOR THE GO NETWORK

The Network provides central government with a flexible capacity - teams which support the local delivery of complex multi-agency programmes. The Network's remit changes over time, depending on the policies and priorities of the government of the day. It is staffed by Departmental civil servants from Whitehall and can respond quickly to new functions or requirements.

One of the strengths of the Network is the relationship it has built up with local authorities, voluntary groups, businesses, agencies and individual communities in the regions – all bodies that central government needs or wants to work with. The Network is able to align government programmes locally to improve their effectiveness and reduce costs and duplication. The Network also provides Ministers and officials with feedback on the impact and effectiveness of policies. In emergencies Government Offices co-ordinate responses to floods and other civil crises in support of COBR (Cabinet Office Briefing Room) meetings.

IMPLEMENTING YOUR COMMITMENTS

The Network works for Sponsor Departments to help implement manifesto commitments. Individual offices are experienced in customising implementation to reflect the characteristics of regions and localities.

Building on our understanding of your manifesto commitments there are a number of areas where we think we can help you.

Securing major **efficiencies** across the public sector by:

- streamlining the regional tier of Government – this includes abolition of the Government Office for London and rationalising the public sector including

economic development; quangos; regional planning and new arrangements on Regional Development Agencies

- joining up public services by ensuring effective collaboration between agencies at local levels and ensuring that national policies are firmly rooted in local reality
- rethinking performance management and intervention with fewer targets and less bureaucracy
- supporting the relocation of civil servants away from the expensive London estate, rationalising the civil estate, leading the Civil Service in the English Regions programme (which gets joint working and a common identity across Whitehall organisations)

Supporting **devolution** of services to:

- bring them closer to communities and users;
- extend powers to city regions;
- build the “Big Society”
- strengthen implementation capacity at the local and strategic levels

Acting flexibly to address Government priorities from across Whitehall, whether they are climate change, child protection or youth unemployment.

When you visit the regions, Government Offices, working with Departments, will provide briefing on the area and on policy issues and support from an experienced official who knows the patch.

ANNEX A: ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Governance

Ministerial responsibility for the GO network lies with the Minister of State, DCLG. Peter Housden, Permanent Secretary, DCLG is the Accounting Officer for the Network and Joe Montgomery, Director General, Regions and Communities acts as Additional Accounting Officer.

Sponsor departments

- Cabinet Office
- Communities and Local Government
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- Department of Energy and Climate Change
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Department of Health
- Department for Transport
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Her Majesty's Treasury
- Home Office
- Ministry of Justice

Staffing

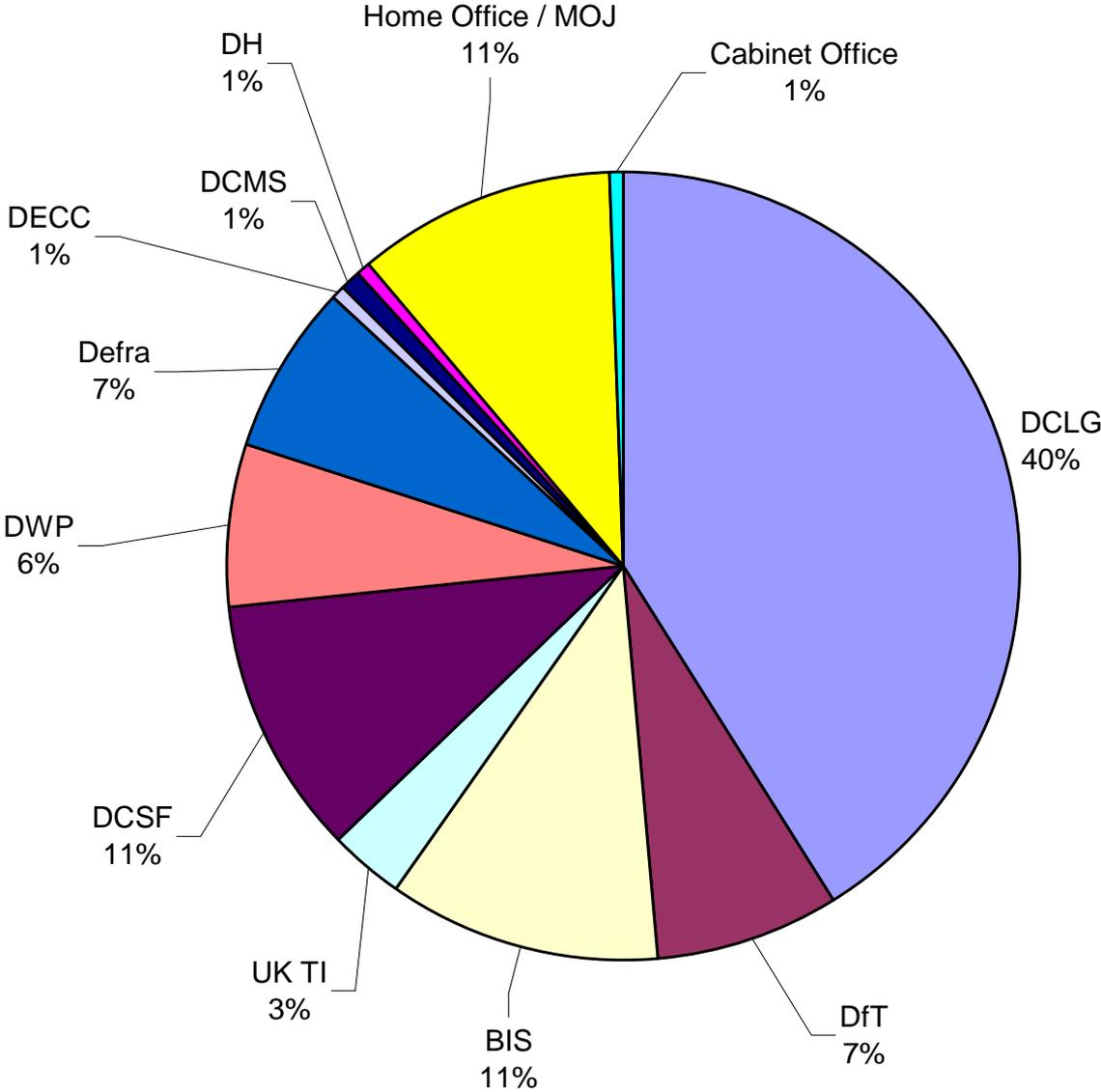
The Government Office Network has 1,700 staff (FTE), down from around 3,000 in 2004. Staff are drawn from, and remain, citizens of seven of the Sponsor Departments.

Funding

The Network is funded through a single mechanism with 11 of the Sponsor Departments pooling resources. In addition to their resource contribution, DCLG provide finance, HR and estate services to the Network.

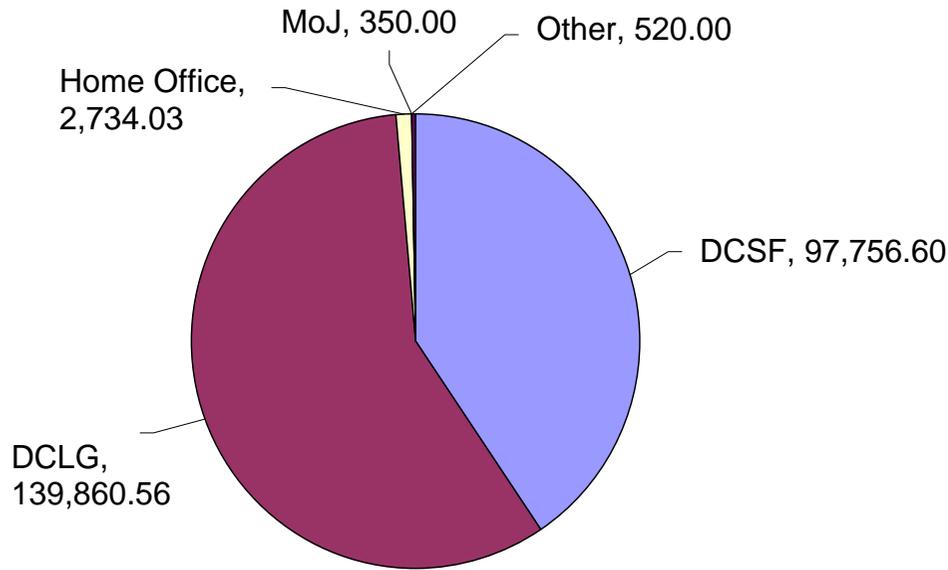
Administration budget: In 2010-11, the Network's overall administration budget is £118m (reduced from £139m in 2004 – a reduction of 15 per cent) made up from contributions from its Sponsor Departments.

Departmental contributions to GOs in 2010-11



Programme budget: In 2009-10 the Network oversees the expenditure of £241m of programme money for sponsor departments. This is broken down as follows:

Programme management in 2009-10 - £m



- DCLG Programmes**
- Preventing Violent Extremism
 - New Deal for Communities
 - PSA16 Challenge Fund
 - GLA Grant
 - Regional Chambers Fund

- DCSF Programmes**
- GO Networking
 - CSA Support
 - CSA Seconded Costs
 - Young London Matters
 - Manchester City Region
 - Child Poverty
 - Childcare Regional Networks
 - Youth Opportunities Fund
 - Youth Capital Fund
 - Youth Capital Fund Plus
 - Teenage Pregnancy
 - Quality Protects and Education Protects
 - Community Cohesion Unit (Preventing)
 - Sustainable Schools
 - Parenting Regional Conferences
 - Child Health Strategy Regional
 - Community Sports Leadership Award Pilots
 - Children & Learners Strategic Advisor
 - NEET Hotspots (Telford and the Wrekin)
 - Information, Advice and Guidance Pilot
 - Healthy Schools
 - Child Sufficiency
 - Early Learning – two-year-olds offer
 - Early Learning – Under fives free offer

2. Papers around assumptions 2 June 2010

The GO transformation programme ran from 2006-2009. This achieved a reduction in the Network's headcount by 30 per cent.

3. Notes from meetings between GONCS and departments between 20 June and 1 July 2010

DCLG has some 500 citizens in the network, contributed 40 per cent of funding and provide the Network's corporate support services.

CO has no citizens in the GON. It contributes £0.6m for the Office for Civil Society, but also communications and ministerial support for Number 10 and Cabinet Office visits to the regions and regional resilience co-ordination.

DEFRA has approx 130 GON citizens and contributes 7 per cent of GON funding.

There are c. 200 people in the GON doing DFE work, about 50 per cent of whom are DfE citizens. There are also some 30-40 strategic advisers (who are not civil servants) and 50-60 secondees working on specialist areas.

DfT currently has approx. 100 citizens in GON and contributes 7 per cent of funding.

DH regional teams, lead by an RDPH, currently consist of two Deputy Regional Director led Directorates – Public Health and Social Care. These teams are funded through a combination of administration and programme monies (with the majority of the Social Care team programme funded).

HO/MOJ currently have approx. 160 GON citizens, most but not all working on the HO/MOJ agenda.

4. Note from DCLG Director General on Staffing implications of abolishing the GO Network 1 July 2010

The latest staffing figures taken on the last day of May show that the Network has 1726 people, of which 554 are DCLG citizens.

5. Spending Review Submission 12 July 2010

Government Offices were created in 1994 to manage four departments' spending programmes in the regions. Since that time they have grown to represent the interests of 12 government departments in developing regional strategies, performance managing local authorities, managing programme expenditure and European Funds and supporting Government business in regions. Now that two of these key roles are disappearing (regional strategies and LA performance monitoring), the question is whether the residual functions justify the Network's continuous existence.

DCLG hosts the Network, and contributes some 40 per cent of its funds.