

PERMANENT SECRETARY INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES 2014/15

BRONWYN HILL, DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD & RURAL AFFAIRS

Role

Permanent Secretaries are responsible for supporting their Secretary of State on the implementation of the Government's priorities in their Department and for responding effectively to new challenges. The Coalition Agreement and Structural Reform Plans set out the Government priorities in detail.

Working to the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service, Permanent Secretaries are collectively responsible for supporting proper and effective decision making and effective implementation of the Government's overall priorities. They also have an individual responsibility to maintain the underlying capability and responsiveness of the departments they lead.

Permanent Secretaries are also responsible for the long-term health and stewardship of their Departments, in particular for ensuring the maintenance of an impartial Civil Service that commands the confidence of Ministers and MPs of all political parties. They have particularly to pay attention to the overall capability of their Departments, including through talent management, succession planning and the effective implementation of the Departmental Improvement Plan.

Bronwyn Hill is appointed by the Treasury as Accounting Officer with responsibilities to Parliament for financial management, value for money and the running of the Department as set out in Managing Public Money.

2014/15 Priorities

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) priorities for 2014/15 are to deliver Ministerial priorities to grow the rural economy, improve the environment, safeguard animal health and safeguard plant health and the Department's Business Plan. This includes implementation of Defra's Growth Plan and major projects, including digital Common Agricultural Policy payments, the strategy to eradicate Bovine TB in England and Environment Agency flood defence schemes.

Corporate and Capability Management

Permanent Secretaries are also required to contribute to the corporate leadership of the Civil Service and support Civil Service Reform. Bronwyn Hill is a member of the Capabilities Board.

In addition to these generic responsibilities, Permanent Secretaries – like all other civil servants – have specific objectives to achieve during the course of each year. And like all other civil servants, they have responsibilities to learn, develop and acquire new skills needed to discharge their roles. Bronwyn Hill's specific objectives for 2014/15 are set out overleaf.

Objective	How progress will be judged
<p><i>Business objectives</i></p> <p>(a) Effective implementation of digital Common Agricultural Policy payments</p> <p>(b) Effective implementation of Bovine Tuberculosis (BtB) Strategy for England</p> <p>(c) Ensure delivery of Defra's flood recovery schemes, including repairs and investment in flood defences</p> <p>(d) Implement the plastic bag levy in England</p>	<p>Overall: feedback from Secretary of State and lead Non Executive Director (NED), 360 feedback and People Survey</p> <p>(a) Key programme milestones met; positive customer feedback; policy decisions support medium term ambition of reducing scheme costs and European Union (EU) disallowance penalties</p> <p>(b) BtB Strategy published April 14; effective implementation of programme milestones for 2014/15</p> <p>(c) Measured by take up of Defra recovery schemes; delivery of Environment Agency (EA) flood defence repairs; work on long term investment by Autumn statement 2014</p> <p>(d) Consult and agree policy details to inform secondary legislation (January 2015); to enable commencement (October 2015)</p>
<p><i>Cross Government Working and Civil Service Reform</i></p> <p>(e) Consolidate corporate services in line with civil service reform through integrating their delivery across the whole of Defra and its Network, starting in 14/15.</p> <p>(f) Pilot a more flexible approach to pay bill control over three years, starting in 2014/15</p>	<p>(e) New corporate services directorate for the Defra Network established by December 2014, underpinned by clear benefits plan. Positive feedback from customer organisations, service users, affected staff and Cabinet Office</p> <p>(f) annual progress reports and lessons learned to HM Treasury and Cabinet Office, shared with other Government departments</p>
<p><i>Capability</i></p> <p>(f) Effective leadership of Defra's Improvement Plan delivers services to farmers, business and other customers at lower cost and in line with better regulation principles</p>	<p>(f) Ensure benefits are secured from Defra's portfolio of projects, in particular to make it easier and simpler for farmers, business and other customers to operate</p>