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Enterprise Programmes, Science & Technology	Ronald Long	Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, NSAI, Shannon Development Science, Technology & Innovation Forfás State Aids and Structural Funds	Sean Gorman Mattie McCabe Michael Cunniffe	IDA Ireland Forfás NSAI Enterprise Ireland Shannon Development NET
Trade, Competition and Market Rights	Brian Whitney	Market Access Import/Export Licensing Unit /Export Credit Intellectual Property Competition Policy Consumer Protection Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs	Tony Joyce Tony McGrath Jack Thompson Jacob Rajan Barry Harte John Gleeson Mairead Redmond	Patents Office Competition Authority Director of Consumer Affairs
Enterprise Competitiveness Division	Michael McKenna	Small Business Local Enterprise EU Standards programme EU Industry Council Services & Competiveness Indigenous Foreign Direct Investment Policy	Sean Murray Michael O'Donnell Margo Monaghan Paul Cullen John P. Kelly	County Enterprise Boards
Labour Force Development	Seamus O'Morain	Policy Unit for Unemployment Human Resources Development EU Social Funds	Pat Nolan Ned Costello Michael English	Local Employment Service FÁS
Commercial Regulation	John Corcoran	Insurance Initiatives Insurance Solvency Insurance Market Company Law Administration Company Law/Legislation/EU Company Registration	Ronnie Sheehan Billy Hawkes Fionan Cronin Paul Appleby Vincent Madigan Paul Farrell	Companies Registration Office Office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies
Employment Rights and Industrial Relations	John Walsh	Employment Rights Redundancy, Insolvency, EAT, HSA Industrial Relations Labour Relations Commission	Bill Jestin Fergus McCafferty Maurice Cashell Declan Morrin Jim Palmer Raymond McGee	Employment Appeals Tribunal Health and Safety Authority Labour Relations Commission Labour Court
Corporate Services and Economic Policy	Rody Molloy	Finance Planning Consultancy Personnel Press & Information Office Organisation & Information Systems	Martin Lynch Padraig Cullinane Peter Fisher Paul Bennett Martin Territt Eamonn Laird	
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**Foreword by Tánaiste and Minister for
Enterprise, Trade and Employment**

Introduction by Secretary General

1998 was the first year of the Department's Statement of Strategy 1998 - 2000. This is our first annual report outlining progress made on the implementation of the Strategy Statement, as required under the Public Service Management Act, 1997. The format of the annual report is similar to that in the Strategy Statement and the focus is on key achievements made during the year. It is worth noting that many of the bodies and offices associated with the Department produce their own separate annual reports.

The key challenge for the Department is to continue to adapt successfully to the constantly changing environment which faces us in terms of the demands of Government and our wider client base. We will continue to work ourselves and with other Government Departments and State Bodies to implement the modernisation programme which is transforming the Civil Service and preparing it for the challenges of the twenty first century.

My thanks to the management and staff of the Department for their continuing commitment to achieving our corporate goals. I recognise the vital role our staff have played, working in partnership with management, in securing the achievements of 1998. Significant progress was made in the further development of this partnership by the establishment of a new Partnership Committee involving management, unions and staff. This provides a mechanism in which key issues affecting the way we do our business can be progressed.

We have put increased emphasis on customer service issues in the last year with the setting up of a new Information and Communications Unit to streamline a frontline service on all the Department's activities to our customers and to further develop our website and to drive the implementation of our Customer Service Plan. We will continue to look for ways to improve our service to our customers.

Paul Haran
Secretary General

Mission Statement

Promoting employment, enterprise, economic growth, employee welfare and consumer rights.

Strategic Goals

Business Goals

- 1. To promote the ongoing development of an environment within which enterprise can flourish.**
- 2. To foster a fair and effective business regulatory system which promotes and enforces competition and protects public and consumer interests.**
- 3. To promote fairness and efficiency in the labour market thereby maximising employment, protecting the welfare of workers and promoting social inclusion.**

Support goals

- 4. To implement the business goals of the Department within a culture which promotes openness and transparency towards customers, and which emphasises high quality service delivery.**
- 5. To further develop staff skills, support structures and systems to assist the Department in implementing a programme of change.**

STRATEGIC GOAL 1 TO PROMOTE THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENT WITHIN WHICH ENTERPRISE CAN FLOURISH

Objective 1(i)

To strengthen overall competitiveness by improving the business environment and reducing cost burdens on industry.

Conclusion of EU Regional Aid Guidelines.

Under the new Regional Aid Guidelines which come into effect generally from January, 2000, all of Ireland will continue to qualify for regional aid to enterprises, albeit at lower rates than at present. This is in line with the EU Commission's intention of both reducing aid to industry within the EU and with compelling greater concentration within Member States, intended to promote genuine regional development. The Department is at present negotiating with the Commission the aid limits to apply in each of the regions and the details of the aid schemes which we propose to operate post January, 2000.

Low Standard Rate of Corporation Tax Agreed

Following protracted negotiations in conjunction with the Department of Finance, agreement was reached with the EU Commission on arrangements for phasing in a 12.5% general rate of corporation tax for trading profits. This agreement both secured the continued inflow of investment and jobs into the Irish economy and addressed the concerns of the Commission about State aid aspects of Ireland's corporation tax regime. The single low tax rate on trading income will enable the industrial development agencies to plan for the future with the certainty required by an internationally competitive business environment. It will support the strong growth in jobs which is needed to cater for an expanding labour force. The new tax rate is being phased in during the five-year period up to January, 2003.

EMU Awareness Campaign

An EMU Business Campaign is being undertaken to prepare businesses for the changeover to the Euro. Participation in Monetary Union provides an economic landscape in which enterprises in Ireland can more efficiently develop markets. The Department also participates in the work of the Euro Changeover Board of Ireland, and the SCOT Group which oversees the arrangements associated with the introduction of the euro in the public service.

Year 2000 (Y2K)

The Department has been involved in a business awareness campaign to encourage companies to take action to ensure that their business equipment and systems will be compliant after the year 2000. A survey has shown very high levels of awareness but a strong degree of inaction, particularly among smaller businesses.

The Department is represented on the Y2K Monitoring Committee which is a Government appointed body composed of private and public service sector representatives charged with monitoring the preparedness of the public service electronic/computer systems applications for a smooth passage from 1999 in to the 21st Century.

In December, the Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce, Mr Noel Treacy TD launched a new Information Campaign on the issue, to be run by Enterprise Ireland. This new campaign will be geared towards small and medium sized enterprises as these are considered most vulnerable. The service includes a telephone helpline to provide general and technical advice and a detailed information pack has been published. Training workshops are being organised and a new website has been set up. The service will run until early 2000.

Industrial Land and Property

Significant advances were made by IDA Ireland during the past year in pioneering new public-private partnership approaches to provide advance buildings to attract new overseas investors, especially into regional locations. In a comprehensive programme of development, £45 million is being invested in 1998 and 1999 in new high quality property across the country.

Shannon Development Co. is involved with similar arrangements for the provision of industrial property. During 1998, Shannon Development spent over IR£11 million in developing significant parts of the infrastructure in the Mid West Region (including the Shannon Free Zone).

Technology Foresight

In March 1998, the Department asked the Irish Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (ICSTI) to undertake Ireland's first ever Technology Foresight Study. This is a process used by many industrially advanced countries to plan for their technological futures. It seeks to identify research and technology areas that will be key to long term national development and to present of plan of action to facilitate growth in these areas. ICSTI presented its final report in March 1999 to the Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce. The Department is currently examining its recommendations with a view to seeing how these might be implemented.

National Standards Authority of Ireland

The Department agreed a three-year development plan for the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). This includes a structured investment plan over the period 1999-2001 and a restructuring of systems and processes within the standards development function. The aim is to be in a position to meet changing requirements as the standardisation process becomes more globalised and to do so in the most cost-effective manner. Elements of the three-year plan have yet to be agreed with the Department of Finance.

North/South Trade and Business Development Body

The Department participated in the Implementation Bodies aspect of the Good Friday Agreement. The negotiations led to the political agreement of 18 December, 1998, which provided, inter alia, for the establishment of a North/South Body on Trade and Business Development. Arrangements in accordance with which the Body would exercise its functions and be structured remain to be negotiated in 1999.

National Competitiveness Council

The first Annual Competitiveness Report of the National Competitiveness Council was published in March 1998. In 1998, the Council's work focused particularly on the issues of skills, costs, the information society and telecommunications. Statements were produced on *Telecommunications : A Key Factor in Electronic Commerce & Competitiveness* (Nov. '98) and on *Skills* (Dec. '98).

An interdepartmental Group on Competitiveness, established by the Tánaiste to pursue follow-up action on the Council's recommendations, reported to the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Chairman of the Council in September on progress made in implementing the Council's recommendations. The Council's Work Plan for 1999 envisages examination of the following topics - Social Cohesion, People, Costs, Competition and regulation, Economic Infrastructure, Science & Technology, and E-commerce.

Electronic Commerce

The Department is concentrating on the following five key areas in relation to electronic commerce :-

(i) Implementation of Action Plan

During 1998, a number of policy papers and reports were published by various high level groups. The Department is driving, via the development agencies under its aegis, the implementation of some fifty recommendations

- The National Competitiveness Council Statement on Telecommunications entitled "*A Key Factor in Electronic Commerce and Competitiveness*" which can be found at the following website - www.forfas.ie
- The First Report of the Inter-Departmental Implementation Group on the Information Society entitled "*Information Society - A Framework for Action*" which is available at the following website - www.taoiseach.irlgov.ie
- The Information Society Commission document entitled "*Is the Business Community Ready?*" which can be found at www.infosocomm.ie
- The Report of the Advisory Committee on Telecommunications which is available at act.iol.ie
- A summary document setting out the recommendations has already been prepared and launched.

(ii) Connectivity to the global broadband Telecommunications Networks

The Government in November 1998 agreed to (1) support, in principle, a public/private partnership to develop high capacity fibre optic infrastructure to provide international connectivity from Ireland to Europe and Ireland and the United States, (2) establish a Government task force to negotiate an agreement for such connectivity in the first half of 1999, and (3) to negotiate and put into place the necessary legal structures for public/private participation in the Connectivity Project.

(iii) Electronic Commerce Directive

The proposal for an EU Directive, published in November 1998, aims to provide a common legal framework for e-commerce activities throughout

the Internal Market and will have significant implications for Internet users, businesses and consumers.

(iv) Policy Statement on Electronic Commerce

In response to a recommendation of the National Competitiveness Council's Statement on Telecommunications, the Tánaiste proposes to publish by June 1999 a Policy Statement on electronic commerce which will serve as a medium term compass for further action/policy in this area.

(v) Domestic Legislation

The Department intends by the end of 1999 to introduce legislation to put beyond doubt that contracts may be lawfully concluded electronically and to ensure that electronic evidence is admissible in civil court cases. This legislation will play a vital role in providing the necessary legal framework for e-commerce business to take place in Ireland.

Benchmarking for Competitiveness

Enterprise Ireland has developed the Irish Benchmarking Forum as the national focal point for benchmarking. The IBF is representative of business, academia and government and Northern Ireland interests (including IDB). In 1998 it drew up an agreed list of core metrics or standards by which companies can benchmark their performance. In November 1998, the IDB played host in Belfast to the 2nd European Benchmarking Forum, at which companies from both sides of the border made presentations before an international audience on the use of benchmarking as a tool to determine best practice. Enterprise Ireland and this Department also participated. In September 1998, the Department, at the invitation of the European Commission, formulated proposals to establish benchmarking on a formal footing as a tool to improve competitiveness. These proposals were generally welcomed by the other Member States and the Commission and are expected to be adopted by the Industry Council in April 1999.

National Advisory Council on Teleworking

A National Advisory Council on Teleworking was established in April 1998 to "advise the Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce on the development of Teleworking Employment opportunities in Ireland and to recommend attainable actions, which will contribute to the realisation of those opportunities." The Council includes representatives of the semi-state sector, private sector, universities, and unions and is expected to report to the Minister shortly.

EU Standards Programme

There was continued involvement in the EU Standards Programme for the elimination of technical barriers to trade, mainly in relation to engineering related products, including motor vehicles/components. During 1998, Regulations were made transposing EU Directives into Irish law in the areas of lifts, motor vehicles/components, and plastics and materials in contact with foodstuffs.

Retail Sector

The Irish retail/distribution industry has undergone major changes over the last number of years. The Department assists, through the development agencies,

businesses involved in the supply and distribution of goods to adapt to these changes and meet the standards now required in the retail sector.

The Supplier Development Programme, which was launched in early 1998 by Enterprise Ireland, is playing a central role in assisting Irish suppliers by bringing their performance up to best international standards. The Programme is targeted at suppliers who wish to do business with retailers over the next decade. Some of these are existing suppliers while others are seeking to do business in the Irish retail market for the first time. Food and non-food companies supplying both own label and branded products are covered. To date, 37 companies have expressed an interest in the Programme.

The Department of the Environment and Local Government engaged consultants to carry out a study on the implications of large scale retail development and to draft revised planning guidelines. This Department is represented on the steering committee which was established to oversee the study. The draft guidelines were issued on 15 April, 1999 for a period of two months for public comment. Further analysis is being carried out on the likely impact of the guidelines in relation to competition, prices, consumer choice and the supplier base. The outcome of this study will be taken into account in drawing up the Government policy position on retail development.

The Department, along with Enterprise Ireland and An Bord Bia, continues to have regular discussions with Tesco on the commitments given by the company regarding its purchases from Irish companies. The latest ESRI benchmarking study shows that purchases from Irish companies have increased by 12% in the year ended February, 1998.

Objective 1(ii)

To attract continuing high levels of foreign investment.

Impressive Job Creation Performance

A total of nearly 16,000 new jobs were created by IDA backed companies during 1998. This is the highest ever job-creation outcome in one year and means that overseas companies have more than doubled their annual rate of job creation in the last ten years. The 1998 experience continues the positive trend of recent years.

A total of 128 investment projects from overseas companies were negotiated during the year, 66 of these were new, greenfield projects, while the remaining 62 projects came as expansions of overseas companies already established here. In addition, 115 projects were secured for Dublin's International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). Overall, net growth in total employment in IDA backed companies, at 8,785 jobs, shows an 8.2% increase, with 115,846 people now employed in 1,137 companies.

Grants paid by IDA to its client companies was £124 million for the year. The average cost per jobs supported by IDA Ireland continued to decline and, in 1998, averaged £11,462 per job sustained over 7 years. The Corporation Tax contribution

by IDA backed companies reached about £800 million in 1998, up from over £600 million in 1997.

Shannon Development has responsibility for the development of foreign investment in the Shannon Free Zone while IDA Ireland has responsibility for foreign investment in the rest of the Shannon Region. In 1998 Shannon Development assisted in the creation of a record net gain of 761 jobs in the Free Zone, 740 of which were in foreign companies.

Regional Distribution

During 1998, IDA Ireland placed strong emphasis on achieving better distribution of overseas investment into the Regions. The impact of this is to be seen with good progress been made in locations such as Dundalk, Waterford, Tralee, Clonmel, Killarney, Tullamore and others. IDA's programme for property development is also geared towards facilitating the attraction of overseas companies to regional locations.

Review of Ireland's FDI performance.

An expenditure review of IDA Ireland was completed in September, 1998. The review was undertaken by a Steering Group comprising Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (who chaired the group), the Department of Finance and IDA Ireland.

The overall conclusion of the Review was that IDA Ireland is achieving its objectives, is doing so in a cost efficient manner, and that its activities represent good value for money. The Review identified a number of areas where adjustments or improvements could be made and progress is ongoing in pursuing these areas.

Objective 1 (iii)

To strengthen the performance and competitiveness of individual firms, especially indigenous firms.

Establishment of Enterprise Ireland

Enterprise Ireland was established in July, 1998 to provide a development package specifically for indigenous firms. Its mission is "to help client companies develop a sustainable competitive advantage leading to profitable sales, exports and employment". Enterprise Ireland brings together the key marketing, technology, enterprise development, business training and science and innovation initiatives through which the Government supports the growth of Irish industry. It combines the resources of the former Forbairt, Irish Trade Board and the in-company training division of FÁS.

Enterprise Ireland - Performance

In 1998 another strong performance was achieved by Enterprise Ireland. It supported companies in terms of sales, exports and employment growth. Sales grew by 10% to £18.96 billion, exports were up 12% to £8.1 billion and 12,500 new jobs were created.

Enterprise Ireland in partnership with the EU and the private sector established six new venture funds with investment capital of £15.5 million. In addition, the Enterprise 2000 Fund - a joint initiative between Enterprise Ireland on behalf of the Department and Bank of Ireland was also established. This £10 million Fund provides equity and loan finance to early stage companies across most industry sectors.

Opportunity Ireland

Launched in March 1998, Opportunity Ireland is a joint initiative between the Department and Enterprise Ireland. It aims to raise the awareness of Ireland's high tech, fast growth, vibrant Irish software electronics industries and to encourage the return to Ireland of software and electronics graduates to meet the skills needs of these companies.

Shannon Development

Shannon Development achieved its employment targets through working with firms to enable them to expand employment and improve their capability through undertaking training programmes, quality improvement and research and development. As a result of legislation establishing Enterprise Ireland in July last year, Shannon Development will now assume responsibility for delivering the new Enterprise Ireland mandate in the Shannon Region and the Company will soon be in a position to offer a fully integrated service to its indigenous industry clients.

Clothing Sector Policy Review

The Department established a Group to develop and oversee the implementation of a revised strategy for the indigenous clothing sector. The Group is chaired by the Department and comprises representatives of Enterprise Ireland, FÁS and the Irish Clothing Manufacturers' Federation. The Group will publish a strategy document in 1999 in order to increase awareness in the clothing sector of the need for re-adjustment and to highlight the range of support programmes available for enhancing competitiveness in the clothing sector.

EU Tariff Suspension Scheme

The Tariff Suspension Scheme (TSS) is an EU scheme providing for the suspension of duties (the Common Customs Tariff) on imports from outside the EU of raw materials/components used in further processing by manufacturers in the micro-electronics and chemicals/pharmaceuticals sectors. A modification of the Scheme was introduced in 1998 which also allows for the importation duty-free of capital goods under certain conditions. In 1998, 19 applications on behalf of Irish industry were finalised in Brussels; these represented anticipated annual duty savings of IR£43m. In addition, ongoing duty savings of many millions accrued to Irish industry on foot of suspensions negotiated in previous years and still in force.

Task Forces for Job Losses

Task Forces/Inter Agency Groups set up in respect of Clonmel and Tullamore, following major job losses (Seagate and Atlantic Mills), completed their work in 1998 with substantial investment projects directed towards these towns, viz. *Guidant* in Clonmel and *LMS Beech* for Tullamore. Other similar groups are in operation for North Mayo, County Leitrim, County Donegal, Longford, Mullingar, Ballinrobe,

Limerick, County Laois and North Tipperary following significant closures in these areas. The main focus is on the attraction of new industry, the encouragement of existing industry and the provision of necessary re-training for workers affected.

Scheme of Tax Relief for Company Restructuring

The purpose of the scheme (Section 202 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997 (as amended by Section 10 of the Finance Act, 1998) is to provide for relief from income tax for certain lump sum payments made to employees under approved company restructuring schemes involving agreed substantial pay restructuring.

Amendments in 1998 re-defined the minimum proportion of the workforce to which agreed pay restructuring must apply for eligibility under the Scheme i.e. substantial reductions in pay covering 50% or more of the total workforce or more than 75% of a bona fide class or classes of employees of the company provided that the number of participating employees in that class or classes comprises at least 25% of all employees. During the year qualifying certificates were issued to four companies, three of whom availed of the 1998 amendments to the Scheme. In all, a total of 2015 employees were covered by the four certificates.

A new business-led Training Networks Programme

The Department facilitated the development of a framework for a new Training Networks Programme in 1998. The objective of the Programme is to assist companies in identifying and addressing their human resources development needs on a networked basis. The Programme will seek to promote innovative approaches to meeting the training needs of companies. It will also promote the exchange of experience and best practise between companies in the area of human resource development.

The Programme is business-led and is being implemented on a three-year pilot basis, commencing in 1999. A company called *Skillnets Ltd.* was established at the end of 1998 to administer the Programme.

New structures to identify future skills needs

Towards the end of 1997, the Government established a Business, Education and Training Partnership to develop national strategies to tackle the issue of skill needs, manpower needs estimation, and education and training for business. The key elements to the partnership are:

- The Business/Education and Training Partnership Forum
- The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
- The Management Implementation Group

The Business/Education and Training Partnership Forum meets once or twice a year with the objective of achieving a consensus among all interested parties on the policies required to meet the skills needs of the economy.

The Expert Group's first report, which focused on skills shortages in the electronics and software sectors, was presented jointly to the Tánaiste and to the Minister for Education and Science in June 1998. The report was also presented at the first

meeting of the Business, Education and Training Partnership Forum, which took place on 18th. June 1998. The report recommended, inter alia, that FÁS should provide additional training places for the electronics and software sectors. FÁS responded to the Expert Group's recommendation by re-focusing £1.2 million in 1998 to training places for these sectors. An additional £3.2 million was allocated to FÁS in 1999 to train an extra 730 people for the sectors.

The Management Implementation Group has the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the approved policies on skills supply. It comprises representatives of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Finance, the Higher Education Authority and Forfás.

Objective 1(iv)

To promote export growth.

The Internal Market

The Department co-ordinates Ireland's overall approach to the EU Internal Market, including representation at the Internal Market Council and associated fora. It pursues, on an ongoing basis, with the European Commission and Member States problems encountered by Irish companies and citizens in exercising their rights under Single Market rules.

The Single Market Action Plan, which was presented to the Amsterdam Council in June, 1997 expired on 31st December, 1998. The Action Plan outlined a number of actions to be implemented by that date to improve the functioning of the Single Market. In most cases, the progress sought by the Action Plan has been achieved. Three of the four legislative proposals identified as crucial to completion of the legislative framework have been adopted. New impetus has been given to the discussions on taxation. The Commission and Member States have begun to grapple with the task of effective enforcement and improving the quality of the legislative programme. Regular reports on progress in implementing the Action Plan were provided in the Single Market Scoreboard while co-operation between successive Presidencies on a rolling programme has helped to maintain momentum and ensure a large measure of success.

In December, 1998 the Internal Market Council formally adopted a Regulation on the functioning of the Internal Market in relation to the free movement of goods among Member States and a Resolution on the same subject, confirming the full commitment by Member States to take all necessary and appropriate actions to deal rapidly with serious disruptions to the free movement of goods. It will allow for rapid intervention by the European Commission, acting on its own initiative or at the request of a Member State, in disputes or protests which block international transporters' access to markets.

EU Common Commercial Policy

The Department pursued Ireland's national interests within the context of its EU commitments through participation in the EU's Article 113 Committee which formulates the EU's Trade Policy. Key achievements included:

- successful conclusion of market access negotiations and examination of market access issues in countries and regions including China, Taiwan, Russia, India, Brazil, Poland, Latvia, Mexico, Mercosur, North Africa and Central and Eastern Europe;
- negotiations on trade liberalisation with Mexico, the Mercosur countries of South America, and South Africa;
- negotiation of new accessions to the WTO (Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia), thereby increasing low-tariff markets for Irish exporters;
- negotiation of new round of tariff elimination for certain pharmaceutical products, directly benefiting Irish manufacturers;
- continued negotiations on expanding the international Information Technology Agreement.
- participation in 2nd WTO Ministerial Conference in May 1998, including reaching agreement on the continuing non-imposition of customs duties on e-commerce transactions.
- participation in the negotiation of a new Generalised System of Preferences scheme, assisting developing countries to export to the EU. The outcome of the negotiations reflected Ireland's interests both in securing new concessions for developing countries and in liberalising world markets in line with our commitment to free trade.
- representation at the EU's anti-dumping advisory committee, maintaining a position in favour of the freest trade consistent with protecting European industry against unfair competition. The outcome of several key cases reflected Ireland's success in winning support for its approach.

Bi-lateral Relations

In 1998, a major strategy report was prepared for Government setting a new strategic approach to develop Ireland's national economic interests in Asia. This Asia Strategy Group was led by the Department and brought together representatives of the private sector as well as the main state promotional agencies.

The Asia Strategy Report is very optimistic about the long term economic importance of Asia as an engine of the world economy. Accordingly, it sees that it is essential to increase the current levels of investment in developing political and economic relations with Asia, so that Irish enterprise does not miss out on the market growth opportunities that Asia will provide in the long term. A key

component for the success of such an approach is partnership between state and the private sector actors.

The Asia Strategy Group recommends that particular attention be paid to raising awareness of Ireland in Asia, developing a selective approach to markets and sectors, establishing a unified policy approach to tackle obstacles to success and resources for political relations and trade promotion. The recommendations are being brought forward to Government by the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment who intends for them to be followed up in an ongoing way by a top-level Implementation Group .

Transposition of Single Market directives.

The Single Market Action Plan called for, inter alia, all Member States to tackle urgently all delays in transposition and to ensure that deadlines for transposition falling before 1st January, 1999 are respected. By the end of 1998, Ireland was in 10th Position in the EU transposition table, having transposed 94.4% of Single Market Directives. By the beginning of March, 1999, Ireland's performance had improved to 8th position, with a transposition rate of 95.7%.

World Exposition, EXPO 2000.

The Government decided in February 1998 that Ireland should participate at the World Exposition, EXPO 2000, to be held in Hannover, Germany from June to October 2000. Since that time, a design competition for the Irish Pavilion at EXPO has taken place and a team has been selected to deliver both the building and its interpretative content. Work is at an advanced stage on the far reaching cultural programme which will run in tandem with the exhibition. The Department will shortly be launching a website dedicated to Ireland's presence at EXPO 2000.

Objective 1 (v)

To promote innovation and product development.

Science and Technology Development Programme

Funding under this Department's estimates for the Science and Technology Budget totalled £25.9m. in 1998. This supported the seven Programmes in Advanced Technology [PATs] and the National Microelectronics Research Centre which provide industry-orientated research programmes mainly in the universities and also the Regional Technology Centres. Funding is also provided for a range of other schemes such as basic, strategic and applied research programmes.

In-company Research and Development

In addition to Exchequer funded schemes mentioned above, the Department also administers the in-company R&D scheme, known as the Research, Technology and Innovation (RTI) scheme. This scheme is co-funded from EU Structural Funds and industry. The scheme was originally allocated EU funding of £105m for the duration of this round of Structural Funds (1994-1999) but such was the demand for the scheme that a further £23.4 was allocated. Since January 1998, there have been 16

competitive tranches for RTI projects costing over £50,000. 295 companies applied for funding and 166 were approved. In addition, 132 applications for grants of less than £50,000 were received and 72 of these were approved.

Science and Technology Awareness Programme

To encourage increased awareness of the benefits accruing to society from scientific and technological development the Department sponsored the Science, Technology and Innovation Awareness Programme. Key events during 1998 were the National Innovation Awards and Science Week Ireland. The Innovation Awards are presented to companies who develop commercially successful innovative products. Science Week, which was held in November, provided a framework for the S&T community to demonstrate the value of their research and to their share their expertise with the general public. During Science Week approximately 150 groups organised events nation-wide, compared to 50 in 1997.

Fifth EU Framework Programme for Research and Development.

The EU Council of Research Ministers agreed a budget of 14.96 billion for the fifth EU Framework Programme for Research and Development, which runs up to the end of 2002. This is a central fund which will be disbursed by the Commission through a competitive tendering process. There are no pre-set allocations to individual Member States. One of the key ways in which the Department through the Office of Science and Technology will seek to achieve optimum participation of Irish industry, third level institutes and other researchers is through a network of individuals, spanning semi-state agencies and government departments, who will be contact points for all would-be participants. In view of the potential importance of collaborative European research projects to a firm's internationalisation strategy, Enterprise Ireland, in particular, will be key in identifying potential industry participants in the context of its overall firm-level business development mission.

Cross Departmental Prioritisation of Science and Technology Spending

The Department provides secretariat to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Science and Technology, a high level group of civil servants from all S&T spending Departments, which is chaired by the Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce. This Committee consider matters relating to S&T priority setting across all Government Departments and will examine the introduction of a cross Departmental prioritisation fund, such as the one proposed by ICSTI in the Technology Foresight Report.

European Space Agency

Ireland has been a full member of the European Space Agency [ESA] since 1980 and currently contributes around £4.5m. per year to the Agency. ESA's annual budget is £2.5 billion, and our membership enables Irish companies to bid for R&D contracts in space-related fields. The aim of membership is to foster the development of key industrial sectors, including telecommunications equipment and services, electronics, software, and mechanical components.

Digital Parks

IDA Ireland has been working with the private sector to develop a Digital Park at Citywest in Dublin in order to stimulate the start up of new Electronic Commerce and

Internet-related businesses. E-Park, a joint development between Shannon Development and Esat Digifone, was initiated in 1998 at the National Technological Park, Limerick. It will offer a range of broadband services at preferential rates to Innovation Centre companies e.g. high speed Internet access, telephony and data services.

Objective 1 (vi)

To create an environment and develop supports which will ensure a dynamic and growing small business sector.

Seed and Venture Capital

Under the OP for Industry 1994/99 the EU made £33 million available for investment seed / venture capital to be matched by a similar amount funded by the private sector. Within the past year all the funds available to the initiative have been allocated (i.e. £66 million) with 16 funds now in operation.

Services Strategy

The Services Strategy had included a graduated system of agency support for services companies, ranging from a basic level of support, mainly information and advice, to all service firms to the full range of supports for internationally traded firms in “designated” sectors. A re-appraisal of the Strategy took place in 1998 in the context of drawing up the legislation to establish Enterprise Ireland. It was decided that Enterprise Ireland should concentrate solely on manufacturing and internationally traded services within the designated sectors and no role for the Agency outside these sectors was envisaged. In the context of the legislation to establish Enterprise Ireland, the opportunity was availed of to update the list of services within the “designated” sectors to include specifically new emerging sectors such as electronic commerce, multimedia, logistics and management services.

The second major development, impacting on services since the publication of the Services Strategy, is the proposed phased introduction of a 12.5% Corporation Tax rate. This should improve the competitive position of many services firms (domestic services companies and those international services companies which do not qualify for the 10% corporation tax rate). The differential tax treatment of services in the past was cited as a major factor limiting the size of the sector and inhibiting employment performance.

A major study to determine ways and means of stimulating greater activity in services, and in particular, in internationally traded services throughout Ireland, is being funded under Measure 3 of the Small Business Operational Programme, which is administered by Enterprise Ireland. The study, which is to be completed by September 1999, will focus on the adaptation and development of services firms, particularly new innovative services, with particular reference to redressing the regional imbalance between Dublin/East region and the rest of the country.

Administrative Simplification

The commitment in Partnership 2000 to introduce a national strategy of administrative simplification to ease compliance burdens is being progressed through

the Strategic Management Initiative. The Department of the Taoiseach, in co-operation with this Department, has formulated proposals regarding implementation of this strategy based on a report from a working group.

Access to finance and public markets for Small Firms through the Small Business Operational Programme (EBOP)

- The Access to Finance Scheme continued in 1998 and the participating banks received subsidies of £ 4.6m. Consultants were appointed to evaluate the need and scope for introducing appropriate new finance mechanisms for small business. The Consultants Report was received at the end of March 1998 and its conclusions and recommendations are being considered.
- Small firms were assisted towards accessing public markets by the revision and updating of the Directory of Public Sector Buyers. Workshops, seminars and training courses were supported by the EU Operational Programme. North/South Public Procurement initiatives were developed by Enterprise Ireland.
- Seven studies were carried out with a view to improving the business and strategic focus of services firms. ‘The Franchise Option’ study was launched in 1998 and six further studies are due for completion/launch in 1999. Six companies in the services sector were approved for seed support under the SBOP. The Patron Programme, which utilises the expertise of multinational companies or large indigenous Irish companies to assist with the development of small business, was launched in 1998 and the first patron/client relationship was undertaken during the year.
- The “Starting Your Own Business” Guide was launched by the Tánaiste early in 1998 and a series of seminars were held nationwide. A second guide “How to... Finance Your Business” aimed at helping non-finance managers identify their requirements and how to source the most suitable type of finance was launched in early 1999.
- Limited funding continued to be available (under Measure 5) for innovative programmes for small business training.

City and County Enterprise Boards

The City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs), established in October 1993, continued to develop their range of services including grants and soft supports for small and micro-enterprises in 1998. The CEBs are co-financed by the Exchequer and the European Union under Sub-Programme I of the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development, 1994-99. From the inception of the CEBs to end 1998 :-

- £81 million in grants had been approved by the Boards for 10,000 projects; £60 million in grants have been drawn down.

- Over 14,000 full-time and 3,000 part-time jobs have been created (target of 8,000 jobs projected for the period 1995-99 under the programme).
- An Equity Participation Scheme representing a renewable source of funding, was introduced by the CEBs in March 1998 (following the operation of a successful pilot scheme by the Fingal Board). During 1998, four CEBs committed £437,140 in equity for fourteen projects.

Legislation was recently passed to increase the statutory financial threshold by £180m.

New Agenda for Small Business Sector

A review of the Small Business Task Force outstanding recommendations and identification of new issues is due for report to the Tánaiste shortly.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2
TO FOSTER A FAIR AND EFFECTIVE BUSINESS REGULATORY
SYSTEM WHICH PROMOTES AND ENFORCES COMPETITION AND
PROTECTS PUBLIC AND CONSUMER INTERESTS**

Objective 2 (i)

To provide and implement a more and effective statutory framework for the development and supervision of companies, co-operatives, and Credit Unions.

Companies (Amendment) Bill

The main provisions of the Companies (Amendment) Bill deal with Examinership, exemption from statutory audit for small companies and issues relating to Irish Registered Non-Resident Companies (IRNRs). IRNRs are companies which, although formed and regulated in Ireland, are tax resident outside Ireland. Drafting of the Bill was substantially completed during 1998 and submitted to Government for consideration in late December 1998. Some further aspects were considered by the Government and the Bill was published on 22 March, 1999.

European Company Statute

The overall purpose of the Statute is to make it easier for undertakings to operate across the EU. Efforts aimed at having proposals adopted for a Statute for a European Company continued during 1998 under the UK and Austrian Presidencies. Building on the progress made under the UK Presidency the Austrian Presidency almost succeeded in getting agreement at the Social Affairs Council in December 1998. The main problem area continues to be the worker involvement requirements that will apply to Statute companies. The German Presidency has signalled its interest in having the Statute adopted in their term of office.

Corporate Governance, Accounting Standards

The Company Law Reform Group (CLRG) made a number of recommendations in its report on corporate governance, accounting standards and related issues. In developing its recommendations, the CLRG had taken account of earlier recommendations made by the Ryan Commission. Legislation will be developed by the Department to take account of these recommendations.

13th Company Law Directive on Take-over Bids

This framework directive (providing for a minimum level of harmonisation) has been under active consideration at Council Working Group level since the beginning of the Austrian Presidency in 1998. The dossier remains a priority with the German Presidency who are aiming for a common position before the end of their term of office. Fundamental differences exist in relation to key aspects of the proposal and the Presidency has already begun the process of trying to broker a compromise in these areas. Ireland is participating actively in these negotiations. Ireland already has good quality legislation in the form of the Irish Take-Over Panel Act, 1997 and the intention is to retain the essence of this legislation in the context of the negotiations.

Abolition of legalisation requirements for foreign public documents

In December, 1998, Ireland ratified an EU Convention and a Council of Europe Convention abolishing the present formalities for the legalisation of Irish documents for acceptance in countries who are parties to those Conventions. The resulting new procedures should confer practical advantages of greater speed and less cost for Irish companies having dealings in the countries party to the Conventions. Documents from such countries will, likewise, no longer require legalisation to be accepted in Ireland. In addition, the Hague Convention was ratified on 8 January, 1999. This Convention abolished the legalisation of documents in countries parties to it, including those outside Europe, and substituted a simpler single stamp or apostille endorsed by one authority (the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland). All three Conventions will become effective simultaneously on 9 March 1999 for Ireland.

Companies (Forms) (Amendment) Order, 1999

Arising from the ratification and coming into force of these Conventions, certain consequential changes to the Companies (Forms) Order, 1964 became necessary. These changes have been made and are enshrined in the Companies (Forms) (Amendment) Order, 1999 (S.I. 14 of 1999). The Order came into operation on 9 March, 1999, the same date as the Conventions came into force. The effect of the changes will be to make it easier and less costly for businesses seeking to have documents legalised.

Economic and Monetary Union Act, 1998

Arising from Article 14 of EU Regulation 974/98 (one of two main EU Regulations which provide for the introduction of the euro), references in legal documents to national currency units will be read as references to the equivalent amount in euro units, with effect from 1 January 2002. Sections 24, 25 and 26 of the Economic and Monetary Union Act, 1998 deal with the redenomination of share capital into euros.

Section 24 provides that the redenomination of the share capital of a company will take place at the total issued or to be issued share capital, including each class of such capital, where separate classes exist. The overall effect of Sections 25 and 26 is to allow companies avail of renominatisation from the beginning of the euro transition period (1 Jan 1999 to 31 December, 2001) up to 18 months after the end of the transition period (up to 30 June, 2003).

Company Law Compliance

A Working Group on Company Law Compliance and Enforcement was established in August, 1998. The Group comprised of Government and independent members and was chaired by Mr Michael McDowell, SC. The Group's purpose was to advise on improving compliance with and the enforcement of company law. The Group submitted its report to the Tánaiste in December 1998. The report was published and was submitted to the Government in March 1999 for a decision on the Group's recommendations.

Price Stabilisation in relation to the issue or sale of securities

Towards the end of 1998 preliminary discussions were held with the Department of Public Enterprise regarding the possible amendment of Parts IV and V of the Companies Act, 1990. The proposed amendment is intended to permit stabilisation of

the share price in the context of initial public offerings, but specifically in relation to the proposed Telecom Initial Public Offering.

Company Law Investigations

Bula Resources (Holdings) Plc Section 14

On the 27 October 1997, Mr. Lyndon MacCann B.L. was appointed as Inspector into this company under Section 14 of the Companies Act 1990. Under Section 14 the Minister may appoint one or more competent inspectors to investigate and report on the membership of a company for the purpose of determining the true persons who are or have been financially interested in the success or failure (real or apparent) of the company or who are able to control or materially influence the policy of the company.

The report, which was published in July, 1998 was forwarded *inter alia* to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Irish Stock Exchange and the Central Bank. The responses of Bula and the Irish Stock Exchange to the issues raised are being considered.

National Irish Bank Ltd./NIB Financial Services Ltd.

Under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 1990 the High Court may appoint an inspector to investigate the affairs of a company on the application of the Minister if the Court is satisfied that there are, *inter alia*, circumstances suggesting fraud or unlawful activity. The inquiries arose following allegations that National Irish Bank Financial Services Limited had been involved in the execution of policies to facilitate tax evasion. An authorised officer was appointed under Section 59 of the Insurance Act, 1989 to investigate possible breaches of insurance legislation. The authorised officer submitted his report on the 4th June, 1998. Arising from this report the High Court, on the petition of the Tánaiste on 15th June, 1998, appointed Messrs John Blayney SC and Tom Grace FCA as inspectors to National Irish Bank Financial Services Limited.

On 25th March, 1998 further allegations were made in relation to National Irish Bank Limited itself. On 30th March, 1998 the High Court, on the application of the Tánaiste, appointed Messrs John Blayney and Tom Grace, FCA to investigate and report on the affairs of National Irish Bank Limited.

The inspectors submitted an interim report on National Irish Bank Limited in June, 1998 and on National Irish Bank Financial Services Limited in August, 1998. Further interim reports on National Irish Bank Limited/National Irish Bank Financial Services Limited were submitted in December, 1998.

A legal challenge to the inspectors work by certain National Irish Bank staff resulted in a High Court determination as to the inspectors methodology. An appeal to the Supreme Court was lodged and the case heard on the 21st January 1999.

The consequence of such legal actions has been to delay the inspectors in their investigation with the result that it will be some time before the Inspectors will be ready to submit their final report. The High Court will decide in due course whether and to what extent this report should be published. As at the 31st December, 1998 the

costs of this investigation amounted to circa £770,000. These costs are paid initially by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

In House Company Investigations

These inquiries are undertaken under Section 19 of the Companies Act 1990. Under Section 19, the Minister or an authorised officer may require the production of books or documents of a company or other body corporate carrying on business in the State. This process can be initiated if the Minister is of the opinion that specified circumstances exist such that it is necessary to determine if an investigation is warranted, that business is being conducted with intent to defraud or the body was formed for fraudulent or unlawful purposes. During 1998, ten inquiries under Section 19 were ongoing as follows:

COMPANY	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	REPORTS	STATUS
Celtic Helicopters Limited.	9th September, 1997	Interim reports were submitted in September, 1997 and the 8th January, 1998	Ongoing
Garuda Limited (T/A Streamline Enterprises Limited)	9th September, 1997	Final report submitted on the 14th December, 1998	Concluded
Irish Intercontinental Bank Ltd.	8th January, 1998	Interim Report on 2 June, 1998	Ongoing
Guinness & Mahon (Ireland) Ltd.	8th January, 1998	Interim Report on 6 June, 1998 and on 6 February, 1998	Ongoing
Ansbacher Cayman Ltd.	8th January, 1998	None	Ongoing
Hamilton Ross Co. Ltd.	23rd January, 1998	None	Ongoing
Kentford Securities Ltd.	9th June, 1998	None	Ongoing
Dunnes Stores Ireland Company	22nd July, 1998	None	Ongoing
Dunnes Stores (Ilac) Company Ltd.	22nd July, 1998	None	Ongoing
Faxhill Homes Ltd.	22nd July, 1998	Final Report on 22nd December, 1998	Concluded

Filing of company annual returns

In September, 1998 the Companies Registration Office adopted a policy designed to increase the compliance rate of companies filing their annual returns in a timely

manner by, (i) removing all those companies from the register of companies which are no longer trading, (ii) issuing reminders to those companies who were late in filing their returns, and (iii) prosecuting those companies who still were late in filing them, together with their directors if they were persistently late in filing. Staffing in the enforcement section was increased and new dedicated computer programmes designed to assist the enforcement regime were procured. Since the process commenced the number of companies filing returns has increased by over 50% on the same period in 1997.

Industrial and Provident Societies (Amendment) Bill

A draft Memorandum for the Government seeking approval for the draft Heads of a new Bill is at an advanced stage of preparation. The Bill is scheduled for enactment by end 1999.

Supervision/development of the credit union movement

The Department was represented on the Working Group on Taxation of Credit Union Savings which made recommendations to the Minister for Finance in October, 1998. The Department continues to support the implementation of these recommendations.

In conjunction with the Department of Finance, the Department submitted a rebuttal to a complaint received by the European Commission alleging that Irish credit unions are favoured by certain tax exemptions.

Objective 2(ii)

To promote the efficient and effective regulation of the insurance market and protect policy holders and claimants

Authorisation of insurance companies

During 1998, 15 applications were received for the authorisation of new insurance companies. These consisted of 8 non-life applications and 7 life applications. After examination, 8 companies were authorised in 1998 (7 non-life and 1 life). Work continued in 1999 on the examination of the remaining applications. A further 9 applications were received in the first quarter of 1999. The volume of recent applications is significantly higher than had been the case in the past because 1999 is the final year for companies to establish in the International Financial Services Centre and avail of the preferential corporation tax rate on trading profits.

Supervision of insurance companies

Insurance companies are required by legislation to submit annual returns to the Department showing the financial position including solvency, within a six month period from the end of their financial year. During the course of 1998, annual returns were submitted by 105 Irish authorised insurance companies in respect of financial years ending prior to 31 March 1998. A preliminary examination of these returns indicated that none of the companies face financial difficulties of a nature that would put at risk their ability to meet their obligations to policyholders. Detailed examination of the returns took place in 1998 and was ongoing in the first quarter of 1999.

The 1997 Insurance Annual Report was published in late 1998. The Annual Report provides information and statistical data on annual returns furnished by the insurance companies located in Ireland.

Insurance regulation

The Government decided in principle in October 1998 to establish a single regulatory authority for the financial services sector at the earliest date possible. It also agreed to the immediate establishment of an Implementation Advisory Group to progress the necessary work. The Group first met in November, 1998 and has indicated that it expects to furnish its report to the Tánaiste and to the Minister for Finance in April 1999. This Department is represented on the Group.

Insurance intermediaries regulation

The Government in February, 1998 approved the draft scheme of a Bill under which the Central Bank would take over responsibility for the regulation of insurance intermediaries using the powers available to the Bank under the Investment Intermediaries Act, 1995. Drafting of the final text of the Bill is proceeding in consultation with Parliamentary Draftsman. It is expected that the Bill will be published shortly.

Insurance Market Transparency

Following intensive consultations with representatives of the insurance industry, consumer interests and other relevant parties, a draft of the proposed transparency Regulations on life assurance is under examination by the Parliamentary Draftsman. As soon as the draft of the Life Assurance Regulations has been legally approved, the pursuance of transparency Regulations in the non-life insurance area will be continued. The objective is that the Life Assurance Regulations will come into effect on 1 September, 1999.

Insurance investigations

During 1998 investigations were undertaken into the issues surrounding the selling of unauthorised life assurance products by National Irish Bank Financial Services Ltd. and the allegations of “churning” of policyholders by Irish Life. This involved the replacement of existing life assurance policies to the disadvantage of the consumer. The report on the Irish Life “churning” was published by the Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce in February, 1999. The recommendations of the report are being actively pursued by the Department.

Motor Insurance Cost Reduction Programme

The Minister for Science, Technology and Commerce re-established the Motor Insurance Advisory Board (MIAB) in September 1998 in order to monitor trends in the cost and availability of motor insurance, the factors which contribute to the cost including the frequency of motor insurance claims and to difference in cost between various categories of insured motorist. International comparisons with costs and key factors in other EU countries will also be examined.

Special Working Group on Personal Injury Compensation

The special working group published its first report in 1997 recommending the establishment of a personal injury Tribunal. The Group has now proceeded to Strand 2 of its remit to carry out a study of the personal injury compensation systems in operation in other countries and to advise on the merits of those systems as an alternative to Irish tort-based system.

Customer service: consumer complaints and queries

The Minister is not legally empowered to compel authorised insurance companies to accept or reject individual insurance risks, to set premiums at particular levels or to include or exclude conditions in insurance policies, subject to the overall consumer legislative framework. Nevertheless, while the Insurance Ombudsman deals with complaints and enquiries within set terms of reference, the Department continues to provide a service to the general public in relation to direct complaints and enquiries and to liaise with the insurance industry and others including the Insurance Ombudsman's office, where appropriate, in this regard.

Objective 2(iii)

To promote a legal and regulatory framework for Intellectual Property.

Copyright law reform

Copyright is the species of intellectual property law which protects legitimate interests in a wide range of products of the intellect. These include: literary works (including computer programs); musical works; dramatic works and artistic works. Protection for rights in related areas such as sound recordings, films, broadcasts, cable programme services and databases is also covered by this area of the law. A modern, effective and efficient copyright law is a necessity for any country participating in the modern information-based economy.

The first step in the programme of reform of Irish copyright law was taken with the enactment of the Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1998, which was signed into law in July, 1998. This Act, inter alia, increased penalties for criminal offences in the copyright field to levels proportionate to the seriousness of such offences in the modern technological economy, and shifted the evidentiary burden in civil cases for copyright infringement so as to facilitate plaintiffs in sustaining such actions without undue difficulty or expense.

The second step in this programme is the Copyright and Related Rights Bill. This Bill is designed to effect a comprehensive reform of Irish copyright law, which was last comprehensively reviewed in the context of the Copyright Act, 1963. The new legislation will bring Ireland into full compliance with its obligations under international intellectual property law, and transpose into Irish law a number of European Union directives in the area of copyright and related rights. Among the notable features of the Bill will be the provision, for the first time in Irish law, of comprehensive protection for performers' rights and rights in performances, and the enactment of a new regime of protection for databases. The Copyright and Related Rights Bill was published in March 1999 and is expected to be enacted later this year.

Patents Law reform

A draft scheme of a Bill was prepared in 1998 to bring the Patents Act, 1992 into line with the agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS Agreement).

Modernisation of the procedures and systems of the Patents Office

Approximately 95% of the Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) of the Patents Office was completed in advance of the Office's relocation to Kilkenny on schedule in September 1998. The remaining issues were subsequently resolved before end 1998. New offices and a modern working environment together with an enthusiastic staff complement are now facilitating the implementation of the BPR recommendations. The resulting modernisation of the procedures and systems of the Patents Office is an ongoing process with the bulk of the changes being introduced during the course of 1999. As a first step, a new Trade Marks search system has been introduced. Work is continuing in developing the new Trade Marks and Patents systems. These are scheduled to be installed and validated over the next 6 months and go live in the latter half of 1999.

Objective 2(iv)

To promote competition in all areas of the economy.

Competition Policy

During 1998 the Department continued the process of promoting competition policy and was actively involved in advising on competition law and in providing a competition input into the development of Government policy and other policy initiatives on which a competition perspective was required.

Arising from the Competition (Amendment) Act 1996, which gave the Competition Authority enforcement powers, complaints alleging anti-competitive practices continued at a significant level and were referred to the Competition Authority. In total during 1998 the Authority received over 160 complaints including those referred to them by the Department.

Competition and mergers

The Competition and Merger Review Group was set up in 1996 to examine and make appropriate recommendations of the effectiveness of competition legislation generally and mergers legislation in particular. The Group continued to make steady progress and during 1998 published a discussion document on merger law. The Group also published a separate discussion document on takeovers and media plurality in the newspaper industry in March 1999. The Group expects to present its final reports and recommendations to the Tánaiste late in 1999.

Merger Control

Notice of 233 merger and take-over proposals were received by the Department. In addition, two proposals were carried forward from 1997. Of these 235 cases, 83 were considered to be within the scope of the Mergers and Take-overs

(Control) Acts, 1978 to 1996 (“the Mergers Act”). However, two of these proposals were later withdrawn and 12 were carried forward into 1999. In total, therefore, 69 proposals were considered under the Mergers Act, 67 of which were allowed to proceed immediately.

Two proposals, Coillte Teoranta/Balcas Ltd and Ladbroke (Ireland) Ltd/Coral Leisure (Ireland) Ltd were referred to the Competition Authority for further investigation. Having considered the Competition Authority’s reports and the views of interested parties in both cases, the Tánaiste accepted the Competition Authority’s recommendations and permitted the Ladbroke (Ireland) Ltd/Coral Leisure (Ireland) Ltd proposal while she prohibited the take-over of Balcas Ltd by Coillte Teoranta.

A fee of £4,000 is payable in respect of each notification, to which the merger Act applies and fee income received in 1998 (net of refunds due to withdrawals or non-notifiability) totalled £308,000.

EU International Developments

The EU Mergers Control Regulation which applies to mergers which have a “community dimension” as defined in that Regulation was amended with effect from 1 March 1998 to give the EU Commission decision making powers to apply to smaller concentrations which have a significant impact in at least three Member States. These new arrangements were introduced with a view to reducing the need for business to make multiple applications for clearance at member state level.

Objective 2(v)

To promote and administer legislation to protect consumers

The process of developing consumer protection policy and legislation involves contacts at national and EU levels. During the course of 1998 the Department was involved in consultations and actions regarding a broad range of consumer protection issues:

- At EU level directives were adopted on the indication of prices of foodstuffs, consumer credit [APR] and the protection of consumers’ interests abroad.
- Resolutions were adopted on Consumers and the Information Society and Operating Instructions for Technical Consumer Goods. A five year (1999-2003) legal and financial framework for consumers at EU level.
- Recommendations were adopted by the European Commission in preparation for the introduction of the euro on the Dual Display of Prices; Bank Charges for Conversion to the Euro; and Dialogue, Monitoring and Information to Facilitate the Transition to the Euro. Work commenced on the preparation of a national code of practice on the Dual Display of Prices in response to the adoption of the Recommendation on the Dual Display of Prices.

- Work continued on amendments to the legislation on the hallmarking of precious metals. Discussion took place on the draft Directive on the Distance Marketing of Consumer Financial Services.
- In October, 1998, a conference entitled “Consumer Policy and the Amsterdam Treaty” was hosted by the Minister for Labour, Trade and Consumer Affairs.
- There was a review of legislation transposing Directives, specifically those concerning Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts and Timeshare Regulations.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

TO PROMOTE FAIRNESS AND EFFICIENCY IN THE LABOUR MARKET THEREBY MAXIMISING EMPLOYMENT, PROTECTING THE WELFARE OF WORKERS AND PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION.

Objective 3(i)

To secure the maximum reintegration of the unemployed into employment and to upgrade the skills of the labour force

Unemployment

In 1998, unemployment fell from 10.3% to 7.8%, despite the most rapid labour force growth ever experienced - the labour force grew by 95,000 in 1998. This compares to an annual increase of only 8,000 in the previous decade. Long-term unemployment (LTU) fell even more rapidly than overall unemployment, down from 5.6% to 3.9%. The Department is well on its way to meeting its target of reducing unemployment to 7% in the year 2000 and is already ahead of its target of reducing the rate of LTU below 4%.

The share of LTU, at 50% of total unemployment, and in particular its concentrations in "black spots" of disadvantage, remains a problem and remains an issue at the heart of policy development. The mix of measures being undertaken target the unemployed both directly through the provision of supports and interventions (training and employment support programmes), and indirectly through making employment a more attractive option for the unemployed. The thrust of recent successive Budgets has sought to enhance the incentives to take up or create a job vis a vis remaining on unemployment payments.

Employment Service

In 1998 there was substantial additional resourcing of the employment service, both through the national employment service provided by FAS and the Local Employment Service (LES) network.

At end 1998 the FAS employment service had a staff of 400 persons engaged in providing placement, guidance and information to the unemployed and other jobseekers. The LES had 270 persons providing their services. In 1998 the decision was taken to extend the LES from 18 to 25 areas and the 7 additional services, located in Bray, Canal Communities, Southside (in Dublin), Galway City, Monaghan, Tralee and Waterford City. During 1998 the Department initiated plans to bring both strands of the employment service together in a more integrated way.

Employment Action Plan

The Employment Action Plan is the implementation vehicle for commitments entered into by Government in November 1997 under the new EU Employment Guidelines. The guidelines cover four pillars - Employability, Adaptability, Entrepreneurship and Equal Opportunities and span the activities of a range of Departments. One important innovation which the Employment Guidelines bring to domestic employment policy is the introduction of a systematic preventative strategy aimed at stopping the drift to long-term unemployment.

Under the Guidelines the Government committed to:

- intervening with all young unemployed people before they reach six months of unemployment with a view to offering them a job, training or other employability support;
- intervening with all adult unemployed before they reach twelve months unemployment, with a view to making a similar offer to them.

The first phase of the Action Plan, for young adults, came into effect in September 1998. Each 18 to 25 year old approaching six months on the Live Register is invited to attend the local FAS office for a guidance interview aimed at offering them a job or providing quality supports to enhance their employment prospects. Failure to respond or to participate in a bona fide way in the activation process leads to a review by the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs of entitlement to ongoing unemployment payment. Implementation of this new initiative has involved close co-operation between FAS and the Employment Support Services of the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs.

The results so far from the new activation strategy have been extremely positive. By end February 1999, 78% of the original September 1998 cohort of 900 persons had left the Live Register. The activation strategy will be extended to other cohorts among the unemployed during 1999.

Community Employment Scheme

Community Employment (CE) has operated at a level of around 40,000 participants for the past several years. The appropriateness of maintaining participation at this level, at a time when labour shortages are beginning to emerge, was addressed in the Deloitte and Touche Evaluation of the programme, published in September, 1998. The evaluation recommended that the participation level should be reduced on a phased basis by 6,000 to 8,000 places. It also recommended a number of other reforms aimed at improving the targeting and outcomes of CE, for example, raising the eligible age of participation from 21 to 25, and reducing the incidence of carrouselling, i.e. doing repeated stints on Community Employment rather than moving into an open labour market job.

The Deloitte & Touche report assessed the degree to which CE is effectively targeted at those at greatest disadvantage in the labour market, and the related issues of the quality of training, development and progression supports for participants. The Tanaiste intends to proceed with a menu of reforms to the programme, taking account of the evaluation recommendations and on foot of consultation with the Social Partners.

The social economy

In July 1998 the Working Group on the Social Economy set up under Partnership 2000 produced its agreed report recommending the introduction and development of a dedicated social economy programme on a phased basis. Funding for the programme will be sourced primarily through a reallocation, on a phased basis, of a proportion of funding currently committed to Community Employment and a dedicated social

economy programme will be managed operationally at national and local level by FAS, in partnership with relevant interest groups. Development of the Social Economy Programme will be overseen by a National Co-ordination Committee representative of the social partners.

Training by FAS

Recognising the need for constant up-skilling in a rapidly changing and highly competitive global economy, the Department supported a number of actions in 1998 to promote greater investment in human resources development both for people in employment and those who are unemployed:

The Department provided £39.632 million to FÁS for Training for the Unemployed in 1998. Over 23,000 unemployed people completed FÁS training courses in 1998. This figure includes 1,270 people on Traineeships. The Traineeship programme was expanded significantly in 1998. It is finely attuned to the needs of the labour market, with employers involved in curriculum development, determination of standards and provision of Traineeship places. Of the 1,270 people who completed Traineeships in 1998, 1,016 (80%) were placed in employment.

A sum of £13.3 million was provided by the Department to FÁS in 1998 to fund training for people in employment. This included funding for training of a substantial number of new apprentices who were recruited by employers during 1998. At the end of 1998, 16,983 Apprentices were registered with FÁS, and increase of 3,005 on the number registered at the end of 1997.

European Social Fund (ESF)

During 1998 the drawdown of funds from the ESF was over £313m. This money is used to co-finance education, vocational training and employment programs and projects which are delivered both by public and private agencies as well as community and voluntary groups across the country.

One of the Department's main responsibilities as National Authority for the ESF is to monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of all Programmes that are co-financed by the fund. During 1998, three new Evaluation Reports were produced: The responsiveness of ESF Supported Education and Training to Skills Needs of Industry; ESF and the Long-Term Unemployed; and Training for Prisoners.

Operational Programmes

The bulk of support from the ESF is spent on the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 1994-1999. Over IR£222m of ESF support was received for this Operational Programme in 1998. The main priorities of the programme are to boost human capital in Ireland by enhancing education and skill levels and to improve the employment prospects of unemployed people, particularly the long term unemployed and people excluded from the labour market.

The remaining ESF expenditure provide for in the Community Support Framework for Ireland supports measures in five other Operational Programmes, namely Industrial Development; Tourism; Agriculture, Rural Development & Forestry; Local, Urban & Rural Development; and Fisheries.

ESF Information Function

As the National Authority, the Department is responsible for providing information on the ESF in Ireland. Specific initiatives in 1998, included:

- development of a logo-type for ESF;
- dissemination of leaflets providing general information about the ESF in Ireland;
- publication of a detailed booklet describing the various areas receiving assistance from the Fund including case studies and contact points;
- development of a website for the ESF in Ireland (www.esf.ie).

EU Employment Initiative Mainstreaming Forum

In 1998 the Department established a Mainstreaming Forum to encourage the dissemination of learning arising from the outcomes of pilot projects under the EU funded Employment Initiative. The Forum involves the participation of the Support Structures of the Employment Initiative, eight Government Departments and certain State Agencies e.g. FAS, to whom the outcomes are relevant. The Forum aims to allow policymakers in these Departments and Agencies to access and become familiar with the work undertaken in these innovative pilot projects and thus apply this learning in their own spheres.

Tax-Breaks Scheme

As an element in its policy of encouraging upskilling in the workplace, the Department was instrumental in introducing (under section 476 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997) a scheme of tax relief for fees paid in respect of certain approved courses in Information Technology and certain foreign languages. The scheme, commenced in March, 1998 and is operated by FAS.

Leonardo da Vinci Vocational Training Programme

Under the 1998 programme, 60 Irish projects involving EU co-financing of in excess of £2 million were selected for support. Approximately half this funding relates to transnational training and work-based placements for trainees, young workers, job seekers, students and staff. The balance involves the support of training-based pilot projects involving developments in the field of vocational training, including social partner and university/enterprise joint ventures to up-skill and re-skill workers, and promoting the transparency of qualifications in Europe. In addition, some £340,000 was provided by the EU to co-fund national support services and other activities undertaken in Ireland such as the organisation of training related European Seminars held here.

Promotion of European pathways in work-linked training (“Europass”).

In December, 1998 the European Council adopted a Decision on the promotion of European pathways in work-linked training, including apprenticeship known as “Europass”. The Decision provides for the formal recognition under the scheme, which comes into effect in January, 2000, of periods of training which a person undergoing work-linked training (i.e. in the Irish context the Apprenticeship and

Traineeship Programmes) has followed in a Member State other than that in which his/her training is based. It involves the granting of a validating document to be called the "EUROPASS Training". The use of this record and participation in a "European pathway" are voluntary.

Labour market opportunities for people with disabilities

The Department and FÁS began the preparation for the assumption of responsibility for the training and employment of people with disabilities in 1998.

A pilot initiative was set up in three FÁS regions in 1998 for people with disabilities who want to move into paid employment. The initiative is being piloted in the FÁS regions of Dublin North, Dublin South & Wicklow and South-West. A co-ordinator was appointed in each region to provide one-to-one support to help people with disabilities to integrate into mainstream training or employment programmes.

FÁS had all its Training Centres and Employment Services Offices audited in 1998 from the point of view of accessibility for people with disabilities. Additional funding was provided to FÁS in the 1999 Budget towards improving the accessibility of premises.

In 1998, 11 multi-national companies agreed to participate in a pilot project aimed at improving the employment opportunities of people with disabilities. The project, which will continue throughout 1999, will identify barriers to the recruitment of people with disabilities and will identify ways to overcome these barriers. It will also refer people with disabilities to participating companies with suitable vacancies. IDA Ireland is being assisted in the administration of this project by the Association of Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD).

Objective 3(ii)

To promote and safeguard the employment rights and occupational safety and health of workers.

Health and Safety

A review of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, Act, 1989 was announced and initiated. The resources of the Health and Safety Authority were strengthened with the sanctioning of additional staff. The following areas of occupational health and safety received particular prominence during the year:

Construction Safety: Construction Action Programme launched in June 1998

Psycho-social issues: Guidelines addressing the issue of workplace bullying launched in October 1998

Preparing for the Year 2000: Information brochure on dealing with the "Millennium Bug" as it impacts on workplace health and safety launched in January 1999.

Enforcement of Worker Protection Legislation

The Department is responsible for the enforcement of a range of protection labour law in such areas as holiday entitlements; minimum notice; unfair dismissals and protection of young persons. The Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment is empowered to act on behalf of an employee whose employer has failed to implement a determination of the Employment Appeals Tribunal relating to minimum notice, unfair dismissals and terms of employment. Under the Holidays Acts, 1973-1991 (now repealed) the Minister could also act on behalf of an employee whose employer has failed to honour statutory entitlements. In 1998, the Minister intervened on behalf of employees in 237 new cases of this nature. A total of 97 cases were referred to the Chief State Solicitor to consider the institution of legal proceedings.

178 cases were finalised in 1998 following referral to the Chief State Solicitor for institution of legal proceedings and 266 complaints were resolved without the need for legal proceedings. A total of £124,227 due to employees was recovered in 1998.

Labour Inspectorate

The Department's Labour Inspectorate is primarily responsible for the enforcement of statutory minimum rates of pay and other conditions of employment of workers in certain sectors covered by Employment Regulation Orders (ERO's) and Registered Employment Agreements (REA's). The Inspectorate also undertakes inspections in connection with the enforcement of other areas of labour law.

It is estimated that approximately 162,000 workers in 15 different sectors are covered by ERO's and approximately 80,000 other workers are covered by REA's. These Orders and Agreements, which are provided for under the Industrial Relations Acts 1946-1990, prescribe statutory minimum rates of pay and other conditions of employment for these workers. During 1998 the Inspectorate carried out 5,512 inspections of premises covered by these Orders, Agreements and other employment rights legislation. These inspections resulted in the recovery of IR £167,058 (€ 212,120) in arrears of wages for workers. Overall, the Labour Inspectorate directly assisted 513 employees in the recovery of arrears of pay.

Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997

The Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 came into operation on a phased basis commencing on 30th September, 1997 and took full effect on 1st March, 1998. In 1998 a Monitoring Group on the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 was set up to oversee the operation of the Act, to consider possible solutions to any widespread problems encountered in its operation and to propose recommendations.

Employment Rights Information Unit

The Employment Rights Information Unit of the Department operates an information service to answer enquiries about employment rights legislation and to inform people of the rights and obligations of employees and employers under the legislation. The number of telephone enquiries received during 1998 was over 81,539 or an average of 327 per day (an 8.5% increase on 1997). The Unit also provides a range of explanatory leaflets on different entitlements under employment rights legislation as well as a Guide to Labour Law. *The Unit may be contacted at the Department of*

*Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Davitt House, 65A Adelaide Road, Dublin 2
Tel:(01) 631 2121 or Lo-call: 1890 220222 (from outside 01 area), Fax: (01)
6769047*

Employment Appeals Tribunal

In 1998, the Employment Appeals Tribunal succeeded in reducing the length of time between the date of receipt of claims and appeals and the date of hearing to a target average of 4 months for the whole country. The number of cases disposed of under the various Acts during the year was 3,644.

Protection of Employment Act, 1977

A total of 83 collective redundancies was notified to the Minister during 1998 under the Act. The stated number of workers affected was 4,707. This compares with 77 notifications in 1997 where 5,468 workers were affected.

Employment Agency Act, 1971

329 employment agency licences were issued in 1998. This compares with 272 licences issued in 1997.

International Labour Organisation

Ireland was represented at the 86th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 1998 by a tripartite delegation, representing the Government, Trade Unions and Employers. The Conference adopted the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up and a Recommendation (No.189) concerning General Conditions to stimulate Job Creation in Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

In June, 1998, Ireland ratified Convention No.172 concerning Working Conditions in Hotels and Restaurants and Convention No. 176 concerning Safety and Health in Mines.

Redundancy Payments Scheme 1998 *(figures for 1997 are given in brackets)*

Proposed redundancies notified to the Department under the Redundancy Payments Acts during 1998 totalled 12,893 *(11,780)*. This represents an increase of 9.5% on the total for 1997. Rebates of statutory redundancy lump sums paid from the Fund to employers 1998 totalled IR£12.7 million *(IR£14.9 m.)*. During the year, IR£1.2 million *(IR£1.8 m)* was paid direct to workers where employers had failed to pay statutory redundancy lump sums. In these cases the Department, on behalf of the Fund, claims and endeavours to recover the appropriate amounts due from the employers concerned. In 1998 a total of approximately IR£256,000 *(IR£280,000)* was recovered from employers in respect of monies owed to the Fund by way of redundancy lump sums paid directly to employees.

It is important to recognise the limitations of the figures of notified redundancies. They relate to proposed redundancies not to actual redundancies. Redundancies notified during a month may relate to cases which on examination by the Department are found not to be qualified redundancies. The notifications may not include redundancies arising from lay-off and short-time working and redundancies which are in dispute between employer and employee and which require to be resolved by reference to the Employment Appeals Tribunal. They do not include the following categories of employees who do not come within the scope of the

Redundancy Payments Acts: employees with less than two years' eligible service with an employer, employees who are under 16 years of age or who have reached the qualifying age for old age pension.

Insolvency Payments Scheme 1998 (*figures for 1997 are given in brackets*)

In 1998, over 3,400 (3,200) applications for entitlements were processed from 1,932 (1,875) employees involving 167 (205) employers who had become insolvent for the purposes of the Protection of Employees (Employers' Insolvency) Acts.

Payments totalled almost £1.7m (*over £1.9m*). The principal components of these payments were minimum notice - £0.65m (£0.74m): arrears of holiday pay - £0.59m (£0.57m): and arrears of wages - £0.33m (£0.41m). The amount recovered, mainly through priority debts, was over £500,000 (*over £350,000*).

Work Permits

Official policy in relation to work permits is to ensure that job opportunities are, as far as possible, reserved for Irish or European Economic Area (EEA) nationals. The total number of work permits issued in respect of non-EEA nationals in 1998 was 5775.

This compares with 4,491 issued in 1997.

National Minimum Wage

Arising out of the Programme for Government, the Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment established the National Minimum Wage Commission in July, 1997. The Commission having obtained evidence from several bodies and individuals and having consulted the social partners submitted its final report to the Tánaiste at the end of March, 1998 which was published in April, 1998.

In order to progress implementation following on from the report of the National Minimum Wage Commission an Inter-Departmental Group was established by the Government with the task of formulating proposals and a plan of action. The Group submitted an interim report to the Tánaiste which was published in November 1998 and which is available from the Government Publications Sales Office.

The legislation to introduce a national minimum wage will be published in late 1999.

Objective 3 (iii)

To foster a good industrial relations environment

Trade Union Recognition

In March, 1998, in consultation with the Social Partners, an Enquiry (under Section 38(2) of the Industrial Relations Act, 1990) into the Dispute at Dublin Airport was established. The Enquiry Report was submitted in July, 1998. Discussions were subsequently entered into with the Social Partners.

In December, 1998, the Minister for Labour Affairs reconvened the High Level Group on Trade Union Recognition and requested that the Group consider three issues: collective representation, individual representation and disputes of special importance. The Group was chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach and included representatives from Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Department of Finance, ICTU, IBEC, the IDA and Enterprise Ireland. In March, 1999 the Group

adopted a report which included proposals to address the three issues put to the Group. The proposals are now under consideration with a view to their ratification and implementation.

Industrial Disputes

During 1998, 37,374 work days were lost due to industrial disputes. This was the second lowest loss on record and continued the improving trend which began in 1988 following on the advent of national, economic and social partnership. However, the incidence, albeit limited, of high-profile industrial action, especially in the public sector and certain parts of the services sector, continues to give cause for concern.

Dispute Settling Services

The Labour Court issued 586 recommendations/decisions in 1998, compared with 522 in 1996. There were 1563 referrals of dispute to the Labour Relation Commission's Conciliation Service in 1998 (1997 - 1588). Settlement rate at 82% was a little down on the 1997 rate of 83%. There were 1946 meetings of the Conciliation Service in 1998. Work has commenced in conjunction with the LRC on the development of methodology for an more in-dept ongoing assessment of trends in industrial relations.

Section 23(5) of the Industrial Relations Act, 1990 was amended by Government Order to provide access to the LRC and the Labour Court for local authority workers, and health services employees, who previously had access only to dedicated conciliation and arbitration schemes. The change was implemented on foot of agreement between the relevant management representatives and trade unions.

The appointment of additional key staff to the LRC has now been completed. A programme of upgrading facilities generally i.e. computerisation and accommodation is well underway. The improved staffing situation and ongoing development of facilities will enhance the Commission's capacity to deliver its services and also cope with an anticipated growth in demand.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 TO PROMOTE QUALITY, OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF OUR BUSINESS GOALS TO CUSTOMERS.

Objective 4 (i):

To provide openness and ease of access for the public to the activities and records of the Department.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI), came into force on 21 April, 1998. The Act established a right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right of privacy. The Department has implemented the actions necessary to ensure the public can exercise their FOI rights with ease. The Department also ensures that the great majority of our customers and clients can access information without having to make a formal FOI request. The Department has a dedicated Information and Communications Unit to handle information requests of a general nature and a dedicated Employment Rights Information Unit.

The Department has established a dedicated FOI Unit as a first point of contact for all requesters under the FOI Act. The Unit also works with all Divisions of the Department to ensure FOI decisions are taken on an informed and consistent basis.

Publications

As a first step in ensuring the public can access information held by the Department, a comprehensive 'Guide to Functions, Records, Rules and Practices' of the Department was published to coincide with the launch of the FOI Act in April. This reference book to the Department explains the structure of the Department and its mission, and gives a detailed account of functions, records, rules, schemes and practices of each section of the Department. It also details how an FOI application can be made and explains how requests will be processed and spells out requesters' rights of appeal. The Guide has been circulated to all public libraries and Citizens Information Centres and placed on the Department's web site (<http://www.irlgov.ie/entemp>).

Training and Awareness of Staff

An unprecedented programme of training was put in place to ensure that all the Department's staff understood the basic requirements of the FOI Act and were empowered to deliver a professional service to our customers. Over 680 staff attended overview training provided internally while approximately 100 key decision-makers and appeals officers have received more advanced training by the Centre for Management and Organisation Development (CMOD).

Records Management

The rights provided by the Act highlight the need for all Government bodies to have modern and efficient records management systems. This Department designed a new records management system and secured its implementation from the date of commencement of the Act. All records created since 21 April, 1998 are held on files which have been opened under the new filing system and are easily accessible.

FOI activity in 1998

From April, 1998 to the end of the year the Department received 286 FOI requests. This level of request activity places the Department in third position below the Department of Justice (306) and the Revenue Commissioners (305) and equal with the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs in terms of numbers received. If, however, requests from Departments' own staff are excluded, of all Departments, Enterprise, Trade and Employment received the greatest number of requests from the public in 1998. The Department has adopted a totally open policy in terms of staff access to their personnel files.

The sources of requests received by the Department is greatly distorted by the fact that a single requester has been responsible for 141 of the FOI requests received by the Department. Excluding this requester, the remaining 145 requests break down as follows:

- 79 requests (54%) from journalists;
- 18 (12%) from business;
- 5 requests (3%) from Members of the Oireachtas;
- 4 requests (3%) from staff
- 39 requests (27%) from members of the public not within any of these categories.

In 58 cases, requesters have sought internal review of decisions made by the Department and have made 20 appeals to the Information Commissioner. Again it is necessary to point out that one requester, has been responsible for 48 of 58 internal reviews and 17 of 20 appeals to the Information Commissioner. Put simply, except for this requester the Department would only have 141 FOI requests, 10 internal reviews and 3 appeals to the information Commissioner.

Resources attributable to FOI

This Department has invested considerable resources to ensure an efficient and competent FOI service to requesters and processing of FOI requests has significant cost implications. An analysis of requests handled by the Department suggests an average cost of almost £650 per request and a total cost of handling FOI requests in 1998 in excess of £180,000. Given that a single individual is responsible for almost 50% of requests, 83% of internal reviews and 85% of appeals to the Commissioner a significant proportion of this cost can be attributed accordingly.

Total income from FOI fees in 1998 came to £107.00.

Objective 4 (ii)

To integrate customer service issues into all the Department's activities and improve the Department's information services and communication systems.

Customer Service Plan

A Customer Service Plan was produced in late 1997. An internal Working Group is monitoring the implementation of the two year Plan and is seeking further improvements in the area of customer service. Part of the Group's work programme

for 1998 was the design and introduction of ID badges for all staff; the upgrading of reception areas; and the introduction of comment cards for use by our customers.

Website

The Department's website has been undergoing redevelopment since late 1998 with the aim of providing relevant information to our clients in the most user friendly format possible. Key features of the newly restructured site include:

- A comprehensive guide to the services of the Department
- The ability to print down publications and application forms and contact staff directly by e-mail
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Up-to-date information about the Department's ongoing activities and events
- Feedback facility whereby users can submit their evaluation of the site.

Restructured Press and Information Service

In June 1998, the Information and Communications Unit was formed which comprises the Press and Publicity Office, the telephonist service, the Department's Library and a new Information Office. The Information Office provides a front line information service on all of the Department's activities to members of the public and other key client groups.

The Information Office also has responsibility for the development of Customer Service, the Department's Website and all aspects of advertising and publicity, including co-ordination of the Department's attendance at exhibitions and events. The telephonist and Library services staff have received additional training and are fully integrated into the work of the new Unit, whilst the development of the Information Office has allowed the Press Office to concentrate on its core business of dealing with media related issues.

Phone charges

The Lo-call facility was made available during 1998 as was a direct dial facility whereby members of the public can dial directly to staff thereby avoiding queuing up for the operator service.

Accessibility of buildings

Construction of an entrance at street level with lift facilities for people with disabilities to the main building in Kildare Street is underway. All of the Department's other buildings are accessible to people with disabilities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5 TO FURTHER DEVELOP STAFF SKILLS, SUPPORT STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAMME OF CHANGE

Objective 5(i)

To implement, under the Strategic Management Initiative, a programme of change which will focus on increasing our contribution to national development, the provision of an excellent service to the public and the most efficient and effective use of resources.

Strategy Statement

The Department's Strategy Statement as required under the Public Service Management Act 1997 was published in April 1998. A critical element in the production of the Statement was the process of preparation itself. The preparation involved staff at all levels and this helped to encourage ownership of the goals and objectives of the Statement. The Strategy Statement is not regarded as a once-off exercise but a first step in an ongoing programme of change in order to achieve greater levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of the wider democratic process, the Secretary General, along with representatives of the Management Board, appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Enterprise and Small Business to consider the Strategy Statement. The meeting was a welcome opportunity for the Department to talk through the Statement with the Committee and it was informative and constructive from both perspectives.

Business Plans

The next phase of work was the deepening of the planning process by linking the goals and objectives of the Strategy Statement to the day to day work of the Department. This involved the development of Business Plans at Division and Section level.

Again the process of preparation was very important: the Plans were prepared in a highly participative manner involving all staff. The Plans include the key tasks to be achieved at section level; the link back of each key task to specific objectives in the Strategy Statement; and the identification of performance indicators to measure progress made.

Delegation of assignments

A framework for the assignments of authority, responsibility and accountability under the Public Service Management Act was devised and assignments to Assistant Secretaries and Principal Officers have been completed. Assignments to other grades is provided through the Business Plans.

Partnership Committee

Another development in 1998 was the establishment in the Department of the Partnership Committee in order to achieve joint ownership by management, unions and staff of the change process. The Committee, which is chaired by the Secretary General, comprises five members each from management and staff and six from the unions. The Committee has drawn-up an Action Programme and this will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Committee to verify progress made.

Staff Seminars

The Department has placed increasing emphasis on communicating with staff on issues which arise under the programme of change. This is a major challenge in such a large Department. Seminars for all staff in the Department took place during the year. The sessions provided an overview on change programme issues in general, and with particular emphasis on managing performance and the Partnership Committee.

Resource allocation

One of the key areas for reform included identifying priorities within the Department and allocating better resources to those priorities. On the basis of a Priorities and Resources exercise carried out in the Department in late 1997, a new Unit known as the Organisation Review Unit was established. The Unit is currently running with the agreed programme and it is expected that this will yield efficiencies in relation to certain processes in the Department.

Personnel developments

One of the key areas for reform is the updating of the personnel management function, so that day to day staff management functions are devolved to local management and the Personnel Unit concentrates more on strategic human resource issues and becomes a source of professional human resource advice for managers in the Department.

The following action was taken in 1998 to begin that process of reform:

- a major training programme for senior managers (Assistant Principals and Principals) began in September.
- the devolution of certain functions (staff assignments, approval of overtime) from Personnel to line divisions.

The Departmental Council, comprised of union representatives and management, was reestablished.

Objective 5 (ii)

To provide a programme of training and development for the Department's staff

Senior Management Development Programme

A senior management development programme for all Assistant Principals, Principals and equivalent grades was arranged. The Programme was designed by the IMI in conjunction with the Department. The Programme, which is geared to addressing both individual management development needs as well as corporate change needs, is intensive and involves

- workshops of the Management Board
- three 2 day development modules for all Assistant Principals and Principals.
- Divisional meetings of all staff
- Cross-divisional project teams addressing key corporate issues.

Module 1 of the Programme was undertaken in 1998 and covered the business planning process focusing on the actual implementation of the Business Plans and on improving and developing performance indicators to measure progress made. The Programme is due to run until June, 1999.

Staff Training

A management development programme for Higher Executive Officers, Administrative Officers and Executive Officers designed to develop communication and staff management skills was introduced. The development programme is in modular form with Module 1 focusing on role profile, and personal/ interpersonal communication skills.

The Personal Development course for Clerical grades continued in 1998 and was extended to include Service Officers, Service Attendants and Cleaners. The course is designed to develop personal effectiveness, confidence, self awareness and communication skills.

34 briefing sessions on the “Changeover to the EURO” were held in the Department during the months of November and December and were attended by over 600 staff.

IT Training

Whilst the IT Unit organise on a systematic basis courses on specific applications in use in the Department, a “refresher” programme has been developed to explain particular features of some of the more common Office Applications. This programme is aimed at all staff with a view to increasing the level of proficiency with computer applications.

Objective 5 (iii)

To continue to improve and streamline our financial controls and upgrade our Financial Management Systems

Financial Management Systems

In 1998 the Department upgraded its computerised Financial Management System (FMS). In order to support greater delegation and enable line management to improve monitoring and budget control read only access to the FMS has been extended to selected areas of the Department on a pilot basis and will be extended throughout the Department in 1999.

The delegation of administrative responsibility to Offices of this Department was continued in 1998 by providing the necessary financial framework to operate autonomous budgets.

New more efficient arrangements were introduced to meet the travel needs of the Department.

Financial Outturn and Administration Budgets

Provisional figures for 1998 indicate that the Department had a gross outturn of £783.265m and income of £16.511m leaving the net outturn at £766,754m. The total cost of administration was £21.859m of which salaries cost £16.790m amounting to 76.81% of the total cost.

Internal Audit

The following audit projects were completed and internal audit reports presented to management during 1998:

Incidental Expenses - Subhead A03 (financial/regularity/economy audit).

Tax Clearance (compliance with procedures)

Level of overtime worked in connection with the EAT Database Review (compliance / efficiency / management control)

EU Structural Funds Audit

Formal bilateral agreements have been drawn up between the Financial Controller of the European Commission and the equivalent services in Member States, relating to the financial control over EU Structural Funds. The intention is that the audit function of the EU Commission will be devolved down to the designated authorities for each of the structural funds.

The Secretary General and the Head of the EU Structure Funds Audit Unit signed a bilateral agreement with the EU Commission, for the audit of ESF operations, in July, 1998. This Unit became operational in November, 1998.

The first annual audit programme has been agreed with the Financial Controller of the Commission. All Internal Audit Units of the implementing bodies have been fully informed of their responsibilities and obligations under this process. This Unit will shortly commence audit assignments within this Department, and will continue to monitor the progress of the audit programme devolved to the chain of implementing bodies.

Appendix One

Estimate for the Department

	Subhead Description	1998 Provisional Outturn			1999 Estimate		
		Current	Capital	Total	Current	Capital	Total
	ADMINISTRATION	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
A.1	Salaries, Wages & Allowances	16,084	-	16,084	17,145	-	17,145
A.2	Travel and Subsistence	1,009	-	1,009	1,004	-	1,004
A.3	Incidental Expenses	524	-	524	774	-	774
A.4	Postal & Telecommunications Services	727	-	727	735	-	735
A.5	Office Machinery and other Office supplies	1,407	-	1,407	2,258	-	2,258
A.6	Office Premises Expenses	860	-	860	662	-	662
A.7	Consultancy Services	304	-	304	570	-	570
A.8	Advertising and Publicity	119	-	119	124	-	124
A.9	Competition Authority	825	-	825	1,083	-	1,083
	SUB TOTAL -	21,859	-	21,859	24,355	-	24,355
	ENTERPRISE PROGRAMMES, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY						
B	FORFAS - Grant for Administration	10,550	-	10,550	12,330	-	12,330
C.1	I.D.A. Ireland - Grant for Administration	11,200	-	11,200	13,150	-	13,150
C.2	I.D.A. Ireland - Grants to Industry	-	124,400	124,400	-	140,000	140,000
C.3	I.D.A. Ireland - Grant for Building Operations	-	13,530	13,530	-	4,000	4,000
D.1	Enterprise Ireland - Grant for Administration (a)	21,525	-	21,525	55,396	-	55,396
D.2	Enterprise Ireland - Grants to Industry	-	49,632	49,632	-	60,500	60,500
D.3	Enterprise Ireland - Grant for Building Operations	-	1,530	1,530	-	1,564	1,564
E.1	Shannon Development - Grant for Administration	-	-	-	100	-	100
E.2	Shannon Development - Grants to Industry (b)	-	6,380	6,380	-	7,500	7,500
F.1	Science And Technology Development Programme	22,199	3,690	25,889	21,723	4,191	25,914
F.2	Dublin Innovation & Technology Centre Ltd	-	1,800	1,800	-	200	200
G.1	County Enterprise Development	5,027	17,702	22,729	5,127	16,634	21,761
H.1	Loan Subsidy for Small Business Expansion Scheme - payments to ICC Bank plc	1,416	-	1,416	1,250	-	1,250
H.2	EU Support Measures for Small Business	4,621	-	4,621	6,921	-	6,921
I.1	Monitoring and Evaluation of EU Programmes	144	-	144	404	372	776
I.2	Interreg II - Community Initiative	-	991	991	40	2,651	2,691
J	National Standards Authority of Ireland - grant for administration and general expenses	988	-	988	1,947	-	1,947
	SUB TOTAL -	77,670	219,655	297,325	118,388	237,612	356,000

(a) The 1988 outturn for subhead D.1 relates only to Forbairt and the 1999 Estimate takes account of the establishment of Enterprise Ireland with the amalgamation on 23 July 1998 of Forbairt and An Bord Tráchtála (subhead Q.1 in 1998)

(b) Non-voted capital expenditure on industrial promotion by the Company, estimated at £2,500,000 in 1999, will be met by way of advances from the Central Fund.

	Subhead Description	1998			1999 Estimate	
		1998 Provisional		Outturn	Current	Capital
		Current	Capital	Outturn	Current	Capital
	LABOUR FORCE DEVELOPMENT	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
K1.	FAS - Grant for Administration and General Expenses (a)	46,668	-	46,668	44,890	-
K.2	FAS - Training for the Employed	13,300	-	13,300	24,530	-
K.3	FAS - Training for the Unemployed	39,632	-	39,632	53,914	-
K.4	FAS - Grant for Community Employment	297,000	-	297,000	308,386	-
K.5	FAS - Capital expenditure	-	6,842	6,842	-	13,727
K.6	FÁS - Grant for Jobstart	3,700	-	3,700	8,198	-
K.7	FÁS - Grant for Workplace	108	-	108	500	-
K.8	FAS - Training Networks	-	-	-	3,000	-
K.9	FAS - Social Economy Programme	-	-	-	500	500
L.1	Local Employment Service	7,250	-	7,250	14,000	-
L.2	Grant to Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed	38	-	38	34	-
M.1	Support Structures for Employment & Adapt Community Initiatives	97	-	97	157	-
M.2	Employment Community Initiative	130	-	130	62	-
M.3	Adapt Community Initiative	43	-	43	31	-
M.4	Operational Programme for Human Resources Development - Technical Assistance	129	-	129	587	-
M.5	Peace & Reconciliation Support Programme	-	-	-	84	-
M.6	Leonardo Programme	-	-	-	35	-
	- National Employment Service Board (a)	-	-	-	-	-
	SUB TOTAL -	408,095	6,842	414,937	458,908	14,227
	INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS					
N	Labour Relations Commission - Grant for Administration	1,652	-	1,652	1,790	-
O	Grants for Trade Union Education and Advisory Services	731	-	731	746	-
P	Trade Union Amalgamations	49	-	49	103	-
	SUB TOTAL -	2,432		2,432	2,639	
	TRADE, COMPETITION & MARKET RIGHTS					
Q.1	Credit Financing of certain Capital Goods Export	95	-	95	55	-
Q.2	Participation in World Exposition in Hannover-EXPO 2000 (Natural Lottery Funded)	83	-	83	2,500	-
	<i>Irish Productivity Centre -Administration and General Expenses (Grant-in-aid)</i>	150	-	150	-	-
	<i>An Bord Trachtála -Administration and General Expenses (b)</i>	34,001	-	34,001	-	-
	SUB TOTAL -	34,329		34,329	2,555	

	Subhead Description	1998			1999 Estimate	
		1998 Provisional	Outturn		Current	Capital
		Current	Capital	Outturn	Current	Capital
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
	COMMERCIAL REGULATION (a)					
R	Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs - Grant for Administration	1,709	-	1,709	1,979	-
S	Companies Registration Office - Grant for Administration	3,351	-	3,351	4,000	-
	SUB TOTAL -	5,060	-	5,060	5,979	-
	HEALTH & SAFETY					
T	National Authority for Occupational Health & Safety - Grant for Administration	4,827	-	4,827	5,414	-
	SUB TOTAL -	4,827	-	4,827	5,414	-
	OTHER SERVICES					
U	Research, including manpower surveys	135	-	135	203	-
V	DION - Committee on Welfare Services abroad - Grants for Emigrant Advisory Services	613	-	613	750	-
W	Subscriptions to International Organisations	795	-	795	5,846	-
X.1	Commissions , Committees & Special Inquiries	426	-	426	490	-
X.2	Miscellaneous Payments	273	-	273	355	-
X.3	Superannuation & Pensions for members of the Labour Court, the Restrictive Practices Commission and the Competition Authority.	254	-	254	350	-
	SUB TOTAL -	2,496	-	2,496	7,994	-
	GROSS TOTAL -	556,768	226,497	783,265	626,232	251,839
	Deduct -					
Y	Appropriations in Aid	16,511	-	16,511	14,226	-
	NET TOTAL -	540,257	226,497	766,754	612,006	251,839

(a) Expenditure and Receipts in relation to Insurance Supervision, Registry of Friendly Societies and Competition Authority are included in subhead A.1 to A.9 and parts of subheads W, X.1, X.2, X.3 and Y.

Appendix Two

Legislation administered by the Department

Health and Safety at Work

Boiler Explosions Acts, 1882 and 1890
Safety in Industry Acts, 1955 and 1980
Mines and Quarries Act, 1965
Dangerous Substances Act, 1972 and 1979
Safety, Health and Welfare (Offshore Installations) Act, 1987
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, Act, 1989
Chemical Weapons Act, 1997

Employment Rights

Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act, 1973
Protection of Employment Act, 1977
Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977 - 1993
Protection of Employees (Employers Insolvency) Acts, 1984 - 1991
Worker Protection (Regular Part-time Employees) Act, 1991
Payment of Wages Act, 1991
Terms of Employment (Information) Act, 1994
Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act, 1996
Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997

Industry

Trade and Marketing Promotion Acts, 1959 to 1994
Industrial Development Act, 1986
Industrial Development (Amendment) Act, 1991
Industrial Development Act, 1993
Industrial Development Act, 1995
Industrial Research and Standards Act, 1961
Science and Technology Act, 1987
NET Acts, 1963 - 1993
Shannon Free Airport Development Company Limited Acts 1959 - 1991
Custom Free Airport Acts, 1947 and 1958 (parts of)
Irish Steel Limited Act, 1996
National Standards Authority of Ireland Act, 1996
Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

Insurance and Company Law

Insurance Acts 1909 - 1990
Companies Acts 1963 - 1990
Registration of Business Names Act, 1963
Credit Union Act, 1997
Limited Partnership Act, 1907
Irish Takeover Panel Act, 1997
Partnership Act, 1890
Assurance Companies Act, 1909
Local Authorities (Mutual Assurance) Act, 1926
Industrial Assurance Amalgamation (Acquisition of Shares) Act, 1947
Investment Limited Partnership Act, 1994
Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1994
Unit Trusts Act, 1990
Friendly Societies Acts 1896 - 1997

Intellectual Property Rights

Patents Acts, 1964 - 1992

Trade Marks Acts, 1963 - 1996

Copyright Acts, 1963-1987

Performers' Protection Act, 1968

Industrial and Commercial Property (Protection) Act, 1927 insofar as it relates to Industrial Designs

Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1998

Trade

Control of Exports Act, 1983

Control of Imports Acts, 1934-1964

Restriction of Imports Act, 1962

Insurance (Export Guarantee) Act, 1988

Trade Union and Industrial Relations

Trade Union Acts, 1871 - 1990

Industrial relations Act, 1946 - 1990

Worker Participation (State Enterprises) Acts, 1977 - 1993

Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Act, 1996

Section 202 of the Finance Act 1998

Employment and Training

Industrial Training Act, 1967

Youth Employment Agency Act, 1981

Labour Services Act, 1987

Industrial Training (Apprenticeship Levy) Act, 1994

Consumer Protection and Competition Policy

Mergers and Take-Over (Control) Acts, 1978 to 1996 as amended by the Competition (Amendment) Act, 1996

Occasional Trading Act, 1979

Casual Trading Acts, 1980 and 1995

Competition Act, 1991

Competition (Amendment) Act, 1996

Pyramid Selling Act, 1979

Shop/Hours of Trading Act, 1938

Prices Acts, 1958-1972

Merchandise marks Acts, 1887-1970

Sale of Goods Act, 1893

Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act, 1980

Consumer Information Act, 1978

Liability for Defective Products Act, 1991

Trading Stamps Act, 1980

Pawnbrokers Act, 1964

Charter of the Company of Goldsmiths of Dublin, 1637

Plate Assay Act, 1783

Plate Assay (Ireland) Act, 1807

Hallmarking of Foreign Plate Act, 1904

Plate Assay (Amendment) Act, 1931

Hallmarking Act, 1981

Packaged goods (Quantity Control) Act, 1980

Restrictive Practices (Amendment Act) Act, 1987

Market and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1887

Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle (Amendment)) Act, 1891

Consumer Credit Act, 1995

Scientific Societies Act, 1843

Metrology Act, 1996

Appendix Three Legislation enacted in 1998

The Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act, 1998 was enacted in June 1998. The Act came into force on 23 July, 1998 with the exceptions of Sections 18, 19, 20, 36, 37, 38, 40, and 50.

Intellectual Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1998

Appendix Four

Statutory Instruments made during 1998

No. 20 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (Exemption of Transport Activities) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations exempt certain transport activities as defined in the Schedule to the Regulations from the application of certain provisions in the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

No. 21 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (General Exemptions) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations exempt persons employed in the activities specified in the Schedule to the Regulations from the application of certain provisions in the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

No. 44 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (Code of Practice on Compensatory Rest and Related Matters) (Declaration) Order, 1998. This Order declares the code of practice set out in the Schedule to the Order to be a code of practice on compensatory rest periods for the purposes of section 6 of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

No. 49 of 1998

Terms of Employment (Additional Information) Order, 1998. This Order provides that where, under the Terms of Employment (Information) Act, 1994, an employer is required to provide an employee with a written statement of certain particulars of his or her terms of employment, such statement shall, after 1st March, 1998, include details of the times and duration of (and any other terms and conditions relating to) the rest periods and breaks referred to in sections 11, 12, and 13 of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 that are being allowed to the employee.

No. 52 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (Exemption of Civil Protection Services) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations provide that persons employed in the activities in the civil protection services specified in the Schedule to the Regulations shall be exempt from the application of certain provisions in the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

No. 57 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (Breaks at Work for Shop Employees) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations provide that shop employees whose hours of work include the period from 11.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. shall, after 6 hours work, be allowed a break of one hour which must commence between those hours (provided such commencement would not result in the break occurring at the end of the working day).

S.I. No. 102 of 1998

The Proposed Merger or Take-over Prohibition Order, 1998. This Order prohibited the proposed acquisition by Coillte Teoranta of a majority of the issued share capital of Balcas Limited, the Northern Ireland sawmilling company. The Tánaiste had concluded that the proposal would be likely to restrict competition and thus operate against the common good. The Order was made under Section 9 of the Mergers, Take-overs and Monopolies (Control) Act, 1978, (as amended).

No. 155 of 1998

Credit Union Act, 1997 (Fees) Regulations, 1998. The Regulations set a revised level of fees to be paid to the Registrar of Friendly Societies by credit unions and other specified persons,

in connection with the services provided by his Office under the Credit Union Act, 1997. The revised fees came into effect on 1 June, 1998.

No. 245 of 1998

European Communities (Names and Labelling of Textile Products) Regulations, 1998. These composite regulations revoke and replace previous regulations and implement a Commission directive which was adopted to provide for technical progress. Three new permissible fibres for use in textiles have been provided for in the regulations. Amendments to the descriptions of a further three listed fibres are also provided for in the regulations.

No. 246 of 1998

European Communities (Lifts) Regulations, 1998. The Regulations lay down requirements with which lifts must comply before being placed on the market or put into service. They also provide for “type approval” of lifts to ensure free circulation in the Community of lifts complying with the Directive’s requirements.

No. 248 of 1998

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Biological Agents) (Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations transpose the provisions of Commission Directive 95/30/EC, Commission Directive 97/59/EC and Commission Directive 97/65/EC on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work.

No. 252 of 1998

Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act, 1998 (Establishment Day) Order, 1998. The order appointed the 23rd July, 1998 as the establishment day for the purposes of the Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act, 1998.

No. 253 of 1998

Industrial Development (Services Industries) Order, 1998. The order sets out the service industries which are eligible for assistance under the Industrial Development Acts, 1986 - 1998.

No. 278 of 1998

European Communities (Materials and Articles Intended to come into Contact with Foodstuffs)(Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations give legal effect to Commission Directive 97/48/EC amending Council Directive 82/711/EEC relating to plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs.

S.I. No. 312 of 1998

European Communities (Reduction of Certain Economic Relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations provide for penalties for breaches of the partial EU/UN trade embargo introduced against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

No. 317 of 1998

European Communities (Classification, Packaging, Labelling and Notification of Dangerous Substances)(Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations implement Council Directive 95/56/EC on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.

S.I. No. 318 of 1998

European Communities (Authorised Agencies) (Issue of Certificates of Origin) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations give effect to Commission Regulation 2454/93 regarding the issuing of certificates of origin.

No. 354 of 1998

European Communities (Classification, Packaging and Labelling of Dangerous Preparations)(Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations implement Commission Directive 96/65/EC on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous preparations.

No. 355 of 1998

European Communities (Electrical Equipment for Use in Potentially Explosive Atmospheres)(Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations implement Commission Directives 94/26/EC and 97/53/EC regarding electrical equipment for use in potentially explosive atmospheres. They also amend the 1981, 1986 and 1991 European Communities Electrical Equipment for Use in Potentially Explosive Atmospheres Regulations.

No. 371 of 1998

European Communities (Motor Vehicles Type Approval) Regulations, 1998. The Regulations implemented a number of European Community Directives which deal with type-approval of motor vehicles, their trailers and components.

No. 377 of 1998

Security Industry Joint Labour Committee Establishment Order, 1998

This instrument establishes, as from 16th October 1998, a JLC with the powers specified in part 4 of the Industrial Relations Act 1946 and Sections 44 to 50 of the Industrial Relations Act 1990, regarding the fixing of the minimum rates of remuneration and the regulation of conditions if employment of certain workers employed as Security Operatives.

No. 444 of 1998

Organisation of Working Time (Code of Practice on Sunday Working in the Retail Trade and Related Matters) (Declaration) Order, 1998. This Order declares the code of practice set out in the Schedule to the Order to be a code of practice on Sunday working in the retail trade for the purposes of section 14 of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

No. 462 of 1998

European Communities (Dangerous Substances and Preparations)(Marketing and Use) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations implement a number of Council Directives dealing with restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations.

No. 485 of 1998

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Night Work and Shift Work) Regulations, 1998.

The purpose of these Regulations is to give effect, in respect of night workers and shift workers, to the safety and health protection provisions of Article 9 of EU Directive 93/104/EC of 23 November, 1993 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time. Inter alia they require employers, who employ nightworkers, to carry out - for the purposes of the maximum hours of night working permitted under sections 16(2)(a) and 16(2)(b) of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 (i.e., the Act by which the main provisions of the Directive have been implemented domestically) - an assessment of the health and safety risks attaching to the work of night workers whom they employ with a view to determining whether that work involves special hazards or a heavy physical or mental strain. They also require employers, whose night workers become ill or exhibit symptoms of ill-health as a result of performing night work, to re-assign such workers to day work suited to them whenever possible.

No. 504 of 1998

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Children and Young Persons) Regulations, 1998.

The purpose of these Regulations is to implement the health and safety aspects i.e. sections 6 and 7 of Council Directive 94/33/EC on the Protection of Young People at Work.

S.I. No. 503 of 1998

European Communities (Interruption of Certain Economic Relations with Angola) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations provide for penalties for breaches of the partial EU/UN trade embargo introduced against Angola.

S.I. No. 510 of 1998

European Communities (Units of Measurement) (Amendment) Regulations, 1998. These regulations provide for a further extension of the time during which the conversion of road distance and speed measurement signs to units of the metric system must be carried out.

No. 513 of 1998

European Communities (Classification, Packaging, Labelling and Notification of Dangerous Substances)(Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1998. These Regulations implement Commission Directive 97/69/EC and deal with the classification, packaging, labelling and notification of certain substances intended to be placed on the market either on their own or in a preparation.

Appendix Five

EU Directives adopted at EU level during 1998

98/12/EC of 27/01/98	Commission Directive adapting to technical progress Council Directive 71/320/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the member states relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles.
98/14/EC of 6/02/98	Commission Directive adapting to technical progress Council Directive 70/156/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the member states relating to the type approval of motor vehicles.
98/37/EC of 22/06/98	Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to machinery.
98/69/EC of 13/10/98	Council Directive relating to the measures to be taken against air pollution by emissions from motor vehicles and amending Council Directive 70/220/EEC.
98/77/EC of 02/10/98	Commission Directive adapting to technical progress Council Directive 70/220/EEC relating to measures to be taken against air pollution by emissions from motor vehicles.
98/90/EC of 30/11/98	Commission Directive adapting to technical progress Council Directive 70/387/EEC relating to the doors of motor vehicles and their trailers.
98/24/EC of	Protection of the Health and Safety of Workers from the risks related to Chemical Agents at Work (14th Individual Directive within the meaning of Article 6(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).
98/50/EC of	Amending Directive 77/187/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of businesses.
98/73/EC of	Adapting to Technical Progress for the 24th time Council Directive 67/548/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.
98/--/EC of	Adapting to Technical Progress for the 25th time Council Directive 67/548/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.
98/6/EC of 16/2/1999	European Parliament and Council Directive on consumer

protection in the indication of the prices of products offered to consumers.

- 98/7/EC of 16/2/1998** European Parliament and Council Directive amending Directive 87/102/EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning consumer credit.
- 98/27/EC of 19/5/1998** European Parliament and Council Directive on injunctions for the protection of consumers' interest.
- 98/44/EC of 6/7/1998** Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Legal Protection of Biotechnological Inventions
- 98/71/EC of 13/10/1998** Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Legal Protection of Designs
- 98/78/EC of 27/10/1998** Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the supplementary supervision of insurance undertakings in an insurance group.

Appendix Six Employment Regulation Orders made during 1998

The following EROs were made in 1998 fixing minimum rates of pay and regulating conditions of employment in the industries concerned.

1. ERO (Tailoring Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 8 of 1998
2. ERO (Handkerchief and Household Piece Goods Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 9 of 1998
3. ERO (Shirtmaking Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 10 of 1998
4. ERO (Women's Clothing and Millinery Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 11 of 1998
5. ERO (Retail Grocery and Allied Trades Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 18 of 1998
6. ERO (Contract Cleaning Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 176 of 1998
7. ERO (Law Clerks Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 181 of 1998
8. ERO (Provender Milling Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 197 of 1998
9. ERO (Agricultural Workers Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 221 of 1998
10. ERO (Handkerchief and Household Piece Goods Joint Labour Committee) (No. 2), S.I. No. 276 of 1998
11. ERO (Tailoring Joint Labour Committee) (No. 2), S.I. No. 277 of 1998
12. ERO (Hairdressing (Dublin) Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 308 of 1998
13. ERO (Retail Grocery and Allied Trades Joint Labour Committee) (No. 2), S.I. No. 313 of 1998
14. ERO (Catering Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 329 of 1998
15. ERO (Hotels Joint Labour Committee), S.I. No. 330 of 1998
16. ERO (Shirtmaking Joint Labour Committee) (No. 2), S.I. No. 508 of 1998
17. ERO (Women's Clothing and Millinery Joint Labour Committee) (No. 2), S.I. No. 509 of 1998

Appendix Seven **Díon Committee 1998**

Chairperson	Leo Sheedy
Secretary	Emer Deane
Committee Members	Ms Vicki Somers, Cllr. George Meehan, Dr. Theresa Joyce, Ms. Breda Gray, Mr. Jim O'Hara

Díon Grants 1998

Organisation	IR£
Action Group for Irish Youth	20,000
Action Group for Irish Youth & Federation of Irish Societies (Joint)	2,500
Acton Homeless Concern	17,000
Arlington Care Association	10,000
Brent Irish Advisory Service (BIAS)	18,000
Blackfriars Advice Centre	10,000
Irish Support and Advice Service	40,000
Camden Irish Elderly Network	5,000
Cricklewood Homeless Concern	21,000
Federation of Irish Societies	25,000
Haringey Irish Community Care Centre	40,000
Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas - Dublin	10,000
Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas - London	25,000
Irish Community Advisory & Resource Group	16,000
Irish Community Care Manchester	28,000
Irish Community Care Merseyside	25,000
Irish Employment and Training Consortium	23,000
Irish Welfare and Information Centre	24,000
Irish Centre Housing/Job Powerhouse	19,000
Leeds Irish Health and Homes	6,000
Luton Day Centre for the Homeless	15,000
New Horizon Youth Centre	10,000
Lewisham Irish Community Centre	21,000
The London Connection	10,000
London Irish Centre Charity	43,000
London Irish Elders Forum	4,500
London Irish Womens Centre	8,000
Safe Start Foundation	18,000
Sólás Anois	21,000
South London Family Service Unit	5,000
Southwark Irish Pensioners Project	8,000
West London Travellers Project	9,000
Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre	20,000
University of Manchester	25,000
University of North London	11,000
Total	<u>£613,000</u>

Appendix Eight Bodies and offices associated with the Department

PART 1 *State-Sponsored Bodies and their Boards*

FORFÁS

Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2. Telephone 01-607 3000

This body provides policy co-ordination and advice.

Chairperson: Tom Toner

Other Board Members: John Travers (Chief Executive), Kieran McGowan, Dan Flinter, William Scally, Yvonne Scannell, Professor Michael Hillary, William Murphy, Feargal O'Rourke, John Lynch, Peter Cassells, Paul Haran

Enterprise Ireland

Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2. Telephone 01 808 2000:

Merrion Hall, Strand Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4. Telephone 01 808 2000:

Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Telephone 01 808 2000.

Enterprise Ireland, which was established in July, 1998, has responsibility for helping to grow the sales, exports and employment of Irish companies. Enterprise Ireland brings together the key marketing, technology, enterprise development, business training and science and innovation initiatives through which the Government supports the growth of Irish industry. It combines the resources of the former Irish Trade Board, Forbairt and the in-company training division of FÁS.

Chairperson: Pat Molloy

Other Board Members: Dan Flinter (Chief Executive), Kieran Mc Gowan, Barry O'Halloran, Miriam O'Callaghan, Brian Kearney, Veronica Perdisatt, David Dilger, Timothy Collins, Heather McSharry, Gus Fitzpatrick, Ned Costello

IDA IRELAND

Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2. Telephone 01-603 4000

This body is responsible for the attraction to and development of overseas industry within Ireland.

Chairperson: Denis Hanrahan

Other Board Members: Sean Dorgan (Chief Executive), Pat Dineen, Gary Kennedy, Nial Ring, Dr. Eleanor O'Higgins, John O'Shaughnessy, Professor Proinsias Breathnach, Brid Horan, Kieran Corrigan, Gary Duffy, Ronald Long

National Standards Authority of Ireland

Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Telephone 01-807 3800

The National Standards Authority of Ireland is responsible for the development and certification of new standards.

Chairperson : Dan Tierney

Other Board Members : Mary Carroll, Dr. Ursula MacEvilly, Jackie Fitzgerald, Sean Wallace, E Frank Dawe, John Coady, Douglas Burns, Brian Griffin, Neil Buckley, Annemarie O'Connor, Ann-Christin Cederlund

Chief Executive : Simon Kelly

NITRIGIN EIREANN TEO

Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2. Telephone 01-661 2221

Established by Government in 1961 as a private limited company to set up a nitrogenous fertiliser industry in Ireland - NET is now a 51% shareholder in Irish Fertiliser Industries Ltd., which operates fertiliser manufacturing facilities.

Chairperson: Niall Welch

Other Board Members: Philip Furlong, Ronald Long, Jeannette McDonnell , Liam Coughlan, Helen McKenna, Seamus Shiels, Gerry Murphy, Thomas Morrissey, Thomas Hickson, David Morris, Stephen O'Riordan

General Manager: Damien White

SHANNON FREE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD.

Town Centre, Shannon, Co. Clare. Telephone 061-361 555.

Its objectives are to initiate and support integrated development that will achieve sustained economic growth throughout the Shannon region.

Chairperson: Liam McElligott

Other Board Members: Agnes Aylward, Brian O'Connell, Dr. Edward Walsh, Tim Butler, Brendan Dineen, Bryan Murphy, Michael McKenna, Morgan Stack, Kieran Keenaghan, John Griffin, Patricia Collins

Chief Executive: Paul Sheane

FÁS

27-33 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4. Telephone 01-607 0500.

The functions of FÁS include the operation of training and employment programmes, the provision of a placement service for industry and support for co-operative and community-based enterprises.

Chairperson: Patrick Lynch

Other Board Members: William Attley, Bernadette Corridan, Robert Byrne, Gerard Fleming, Alice Prendergast, Owen Wills, Joe Morgan, Plev Ellis, Brian Geoghegan, Cathy Crowley, Dermot Lacey, Colm Breslin, John Hynes, Paddy Mc Donagh, Seamus O'Morain, Cllr. Dermot O'Callaghan.

Director General: John J. Lynch

HEALTH AND SAFETY AUTHORITY (NATIONAL AUTHORITY OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH)

10 Hogan Place, Dublin 2. Telephone 01-662 0400.

The Authority has responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the occupational safety and health legislation. It provides information, advice and guidance for employers, workers, the self-employed and others to whom safety and health legislation applies.

Chairperson: Frank Cunneen

Vice-Chairperson: Joe Hegarty

Other Board Members: Fergus McCafferty, Mary Dorgan, Seamus Daly, Tony Briscoe, Marie Rock, Patrick Walsh, Sylvester Cronin, Fergus Whelan, Lenore Mrkwicka

Director General: Tom Walsh

PART 2 *Offices Associated with the Department*

LABOUR COURT

Tom Johnson House, Haddington Road, Dublin 4. Telephone 01-660 8444.

The Labour Court provides machinery for the resolution of industrial disputes. Among its other functions, the Court makes Employment Regulation Orders prescribing legally enforceable minimum rates of pay and conditions of employment in those sectors covered by Joint Labour Committees.

Chairman: Finbarr Flood

Deputy Chairman: Kevin Duffy, Caroline Jenkinson

Employers' Members: Cormac P. McHenry, Vincent Keogh, Pat Pierce

Workers' Members: Noel O'Neill, Pdraigin Ni Mhurchu, Bernard Rorke

Registrar: Hugh O'Neill

LABOUR RELATIONS COMMISSION

Tom Johnson House, Haddington Road, Dublin 4. Telephone 01-660 9662

The Labour Relations Commission has overall responsibility for the promotion of good industrial relations, including the provision of conciliation and advisory services.

- Chairperson:** Catherine Forde
- Trade Union Nominees:** Kevin Duffy, Jimmy Somers
- Employer Nominees:** Liam Downey, Turlough O'Sullivan
- Other Members:** Dr. Mary Redmond, Dr. Joyce O'Connor
- Chief Executive:** Kieran Mulvey

RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

Tom Johnson House, Haddington Road, Dublin 4. Telephone 01-660 9662

The Rights Commissioner Service is a service of the Labour Relations Commission. Rights Commissioners investigate trade disputes other than disputes relating to pay, hours or times of work or annual holidays involving a body of workers. Rights Commissioners mainly deal with disputes involving individuals. They also investigate cases under the Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977 to 1993; the Payment of Wages Act, 1991; the Maternity Protection Act, 1994; and the Terms of Employment (Information) Act, 1994.

Rights Commissioners: Janet Hughes, Gerry Fleming, Michael Rooney, Colin Walker

EMPLOYMENT APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Davitt House, Adelaide Road, Dublin 2. Telephone 01- 631 2121.

The purpose of the Tribunal is to determine matters in disputes arising from the legislation on redundancy and insolvency payments; minimum notice; terms of employment; maternity and adoptive leave; unfair dismissals; part-time employment; young persons employment; payment of wages; and organisation of working time.

- Chairman:** Mary Faherty, B.A., L.L.B., B.L.
- Vice-Chairmen:** Sarah Berkeley, B.L. Conor Bowman, B.L., Gerard Brady, Solicitor, Anne Bunni, B.L., Dympna Cusack, Emile Daly, B.L., Tony Halpin, B.L., Maureen Harewood, B.L., Dan Horan, Dermott McCarthy, B.L., Declan McHugh, B.L., Michael Moloney, Rosemary O'Connell, Peter J.O'Leary, B.L., Kate O'Mahony, B.L., Moya Quinlan, Joe Revington, Patricia Ryan, Elva Kearney, B.L., Thomas Ryan, Solicitor, Michael Mulcahy.
- Employer's Nominees:** Harry J. Baird, Patrick Bracken, Clare Carroll, Pat Harrington, Ann Delahunt, Ann Griffin, Michael C. Hennigan, John J. Jennings, Richard

Keating, Richard Keenan, Desmond Morrison, Paul O'Leary,
Margaret O'Leary, James A. Power, Jim
Redmond, Edmond Sheehy, Declan F.
Winston, Mary Cromer, Michael Dunne,
Carl Fay, T.P. Flood, Michael Forde,
Ben Keely, Patrick McKeown, Billy
O'Carroll, Paul O'Grady, James O'Neill,
Robert D.E. Prole, John Reid, C.A. Ormond.

Trade Union Nominees: Edmund D. Browne, Paul Clarke, Breda Fell, Noirin
Greene, Aidan McCormack, Lenore Mrkwicka,
Tom Murphy, Claire O'Connor, Seamus O'Donnell,
Paddy O'Shaughnessy, Jerry Shanahan, Paddy
Woods, Eveta Brezina, Nick Broughall,
Mary Burke, Anne Clune, Marie Corcoran, Edward Cronin,
Michael Crowe, James Dorney, Sean Galavan, Phil
Harrington, Michael Hayes, Nuala Keher, Tony Kennelly,
Michael McGarry, Sam Nolan, Sean Redmond, Catherine
Warnock.

Secretary: Breda Coady

COMPETITION AUTHORITY

Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Telephone 01 804 5400

The Competition's Authority principal function is to consider requests for licences or certificates in respect of agreements notified to it under the Competition Acts, 1991. The Authority may also carry out studies and investigations at the request of the Minister.

Chairman: Professor P. McNutt

Director of Enforcement: Patrick Massey

Members: Isolde Goggin, Dr. William Prasifka, Declan
Purcell

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

4/5 Harcourt Road, Dublin 2. Telephone 01 402 5500.

The office of the Director of Consumer Affairs is responsible, inter alia, for the enforcement of a wide range of consumer protection legislation, including legislation on deceptive trading practices, consumer credit, package travel and consumer safety (mandatory standards). The Director is also responsible for providing advice and information to consumers.

Director of Consumer Affairs: Carmel Foley

COMPANIES REGISTRATION OFFICE

Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Telephone 01 804 5200

The Companies Registration Office is the central depository of public statutory information on Irish companies. Its main functions include the incorporation of companies; the registration of business names; the registration of post- incorporation documents and changes in business name particulars; enforcement, prosecutions, and striking companies off the companies register; and the provision of information to the public.

Registrar: Paul Farrell

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Telephone 01 804 5499

The Office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies is a statutory independent office responsible for the registration and general regulation of friendly societies, trade unions and industrial and provident societies (co-operatives). The Office is also responsible for the registration, regulation and financial supervision of credit unions.

Registrar: Martin Sisk

COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARDS

CARLOW Ronan Fitzgerald, Acting CEO, Carlow County Enterprise Board,
98, Tullow Street, Carlow
TEL NO..0503 30880.... FAX.. 0503 30717
E-Mail...cceb@indigo.ie

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17 Farnham St., Cavan
TEL NO. 049 32427.....FAX..049 31384
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Enterprise House, Mill Road, Ennis, Co Clare
PHONE...065 41922.... FAX.... 065 41887
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CORK CITY Dave Cody, Cork City Enterprise Board,
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PHONE..021 961828/961839... FAX... 021 961869
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26 Bank Place, Mallow, Co Cork
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8 Kent Street, Clonakilty, Co Cork
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1 Main Street, Wicklow
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Website: www.wicklow.ie

Appendix Nine Addresses of Offices of the Department

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

Tel No: (01) 631 2121. Fax No: (01) 676 2654.

Lo-Call Telephone service for outside (01) area: 1890 220 222.

Corporate Services & Economic Policy Division; Enterprise Programmes, Science & Technology Division; Employment Rights & Industrial Relations Division (Industrial Relations Section; Enterprise Competitiveness Division; Trade, Competition & Market Rights Division.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment,

Davitt House, Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.

Tel No: (01) 631 2121. Fax No: (01) 676 9047.

Lo-Call Telephone service for outside (01) area: 1890 220 222.

Employment Rights & Industrial Relations Division; Labour Force Development Division; Corporate Services & Economic Policy Division (Finance Unit); Enterprise Competitiveness Division (Local Enterprise and Small Business Section).

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Setanta Centre,

South Frederick Street, Dublin 2.

Tel No: (01) 631 2121. Fax No: (01) 679 5710.

Lo-Call Telephone service for outside (01) area: 1890 220 222.

Commercial Regulation Division; Trade, Competition and Market Rights Division (Consumer Protection and Competition Policy Sections).

Office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies,

Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Tel No: (01) 804 5499. Fax No: (01) 804 5498.

Companies Registration Office,

Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Tel No: (01) 804 5200. Information Unit: (01) 804 520. Fax No: (01) 679 5254.

Labour Relations Commission,

Tom Johnson House, Beggars Bush, Dublin 4.

Tel No: (01) 660 9662. Fax No: (01) 668 5069.

Labour Court,

Tom Johnson House, Beggars Bush, Dublin 4.

Tel No: (01) 660 8444. Fax No: (01) 660 8437.

Employment Appeals Tribunal,

Davitt House, Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.

Tel No: (01) 631 2121.

**Competition Authority,
Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.
Tel No: (01) 804 5400. Fax No: (01) 804 5401.**

**Patents Office,
Government Buildings, Hebron Road, Kilkenny.
Tel No: (056) 20111 Lo-Call Tel No: 1890 220 223
Fax No: (056) 20100 Lo-Call Fax No: 1890 220 120**

**Dublin Patents Information Centre,
Setanta Centre, South Frederick Street, Dublin 2.
Tel No: (01) 6312603 Lo-Call Tel No: 1890 220 222 ext.2603
Fax No: (01) 6760416**

**Patents Examination Branch,
Irish Life Centre, Talbot Street, Dublin 1.
Tel No: (01) 6312121 Lo-Call Tel No: 1890 220 222
Fax No: (01) 8788180**

**Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs,
4-5 Harcourt Road, Dublin 2.
Tel No: (01) 402 5500. Fax No: (01) 402 5501.
Complaints/enquiries Tel No: (01) 402 5555 and (01) 402 5585.**

**Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs, (Cork Office)
Norwich Union House, 89-90 South Mall, Cork.
Tel No: (021) 274 099. Fax No: (021) 274 109.**

**European Consumer Information Centre,
13A Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin 1.
Tel No: (01) 809 0600/0602/0606. Fax No: (01) 809 0601.**

