

Public Appointments Service

Statement of Strategy 2011 – 2013

Foreword by Chief Executive Officer

I am pleased to submit this, the third Strategy Statement of the Public Appointments Service, covering the period 2011 to 2013. In doing so, I am very conscious of the fact that the period covered by this strategy is encapsulated within the period of the National Recovery Plan. The new strategy statement recognises the new economic environment facing the country and the challenges that it poses for the Public Service. The Strategy Statement sets out to position the Public Appointments Service to play a key role in supporting the public service in achieving the key objectives of the National Recovery Plan.

The last Strategy Statement outlined a role for the Public Appointments Service in sourcing the highest quality people to meet the increasing demands of public service organisations for additional resources. We intended to meet these demands by working in partnership with our clients to understand their individual needs, by applying best in practice selection and assessment methodologies and by maximising the use of technology to attract the broadest possible pool of well qualified candidates and to manage the recruitment, assessment and selection process in the most efficient way. Considerable progress has been achieved, over the life of the strategy, on all of these ambitions.

In March, 2009 the Government introduced a moratorium on Public Service recruitment and promotions. The purpose of the moratorium was to reduce Public Service numbers and consequently the Public Service pay bill. The introduction of the moratorium meant that recruitment or promotions could not take place except where specifically sanctioned by the Minister for Finance. Certain areas of the Public Service, particularly within the Health Sector, were not covered by the moratorium. Overall, the introduction of the moratorium has had a very significant impact on our clients' demands.

In response, the management team, working closely with our Board and key external stakeholders, fundamentally re-examined our strategy to assess the extent to which the organisation could continue to add value to the Public Service, in the light of the changing circumstances. This exercise concluded that there continued to be a vital role for the Public Appointments Service to play in the development and transformation of the Public Service. However, we also concluded that we would have to significantly reduce our staffing and cost base, expand the range of services to be provided to clients, expand our customer base to other public service organisations and provide a more adaptable and flexible service to all clients. The Public Appointments Service was identified by Government as the organisation best equipped to take on the key inter-agency element of the Public Service Redeployment Scheme.

The Public Service Redeployment Scheme is a key part of the transformation agenda and aims to ensure that that all public service resources are fully engaged and that all essential services are adequately maintained. It is clear that over the life of this strategy every effort will be made to ensure that key positions across the Public Service, sanctioned by the Minister for Finance, will be filled by redeployment rather than recruitment, if at all possible. We will use all of the skills, processes and systems available within our organisation to support client organisations in managing the internal redeployment processes within their organisations. We have developed

and put in place the systems to support the inter-agency element of the redeployment process and over the life of this strategy we will, in conjunction with the client organisations and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, use these systems to fill sanctioned vacancies with the best-qualified people for the role.

While the scale of recruitment will undoubtedly be significantly lower than in recent years, we recognise that there will, over the life of this strategy, be some limited recruitment activity across the public service. We will market our services to all public service organisations to ensure that maximum use is made of the skills and systems of our organisation for whatever recruitment activity takes place. We will continue to work in partnership with the Health Service Executive to fill key front line positions within the Executive and, where agreed, for Voluntary Hospitals in the wider Health Sector environment. We intend to develop this partnership approach and extend it to other public service organisations to ensure that the limited recruitment activities which will take place are undertaken in the most efficient and cost effective manner.

Our investment in new technology has allowed us to very successfully manage a wide variety of recruitment campaigns for client organisation despite the significant reduction in our staffing levels. Over the life of this strategy, we will continue to leverage that investment and, in particular, further develop the client interface to allow client organisations greater ownership and involvement in campaigns. We will further develop our online website www.publicjobs.ie to enhance the value of the site to the wider range of public service clients we now cater for. At the same time, we want to significantly improve the value of the site to potential candidates through the provision of accurate and timely information, access to online assessments and ease of use in the application process.

During 2009 and 2010, the Public Appointments Service, for the first time, played a key role in the selection of people for nomination to Boards of State Bodies. In this new initiative, we supported the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in an open campaign to select people for nomination to the Boards of the RTE Authority, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, TG4 and Inland Fisheries Ireland. We have, through our involvement in these campaigns, displayed a capacity to take on and deliver on this challenging role. We would expect that, in conjunction with key stakeholders, we could develop and expand our involvement in this key task with a view to increasing the transparency of the overall corporate governance of State Bodies.

The current economic climate means that every publicly funded organisation needs to '*achieve more with less*' and continue to provide value-for-money services. Our new Strategy Statement addresses the issue of cost-effectiveness by radically overhauling our internal organisation. We will lead from the front, building a powerful efficient organisation, on par or better than anything which exists in the public sector in Ireland. I acknowledge the hard work and commitment of the staff in our organisation. To achieve the objectives set out in our new strategy statement, I will again be looking to our staff, at all levels across the organisation, to maintain their commitment to achieving excellence in the services we provide to candidates, clients and interview board members. For my part, I intend to continue our commitment to a holistic approach to the training and development of staff. I also intend to fully support the

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partnership approach that has become embedded in the organisation and that has allowed us to very successfully manage our way in these turbulent times.

I, and my management team, look to our Chairman Mr. Eddie Sullivan and his fellow Board members for guidance and support. We very much appreciate the support and guidance that they have provided over the past three years. We look forward to working with the new Board to deliver on the key objectives of our new Strategy Statement.

Bryan Andrews

Chief Executive Officer

Chairman's Statement

I am very pleased on behalf of the Board of the Public Appointments Service to present the Statement of Strategy for the period 2011 to 2013.

We are all aware that very significant changes have taken place in the public service recruitment environment since the last strategy was introduced in 2008. The Public Appointments Service has shown great adaptability and great flexibility, when working with client organisations, to address their needs in this ever-changing environment. At the same time the organisation has significantly reduced its resource level and its cost base.

The organisation has compensated for the reduction in demand for the typical recruitment services from key client organisation by attracting a wide range of new client organisations from across the public service to avail of their systems, skills and expertise in public service recruitment. Typically these organisations would have undertaken the recruitment themselves, at considerable inconvenience to the organisation or would have outsourced the recruitment to external recruitment organisations at considerable expense. For these new client organisations the services provided by the Public Appointments Service represents a very professional, value for money solution. Overall this approach has ensured that the capability and resources of the organisation are being used to best effect for the public service. It is clear that the Public Appointments Service will, over the life of this strategy statement, have to continue to be agile if it is to remain relevant to key stakeholders and public service client organisations.

Over the next three years redeployment will play a very significant role in public service manpower policies. It is expected that public service organisations will, through internal redeployment, satisfy much of their manpower needs. Redeployment between agencies and across the different sectors of the public service has been provided for through the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014. I was very pleased that the Public Appointments Service, because of their systems, skills and expertise, has been identified as the organisation to take on this pivotal role in the wider redeployment scheme. I know that the organisation will rise to this important challenge.

The Board were very pleased that the Public Appointments Service was able to support the Joint Oireachtas Committee in identifying people for appointment to the Boards of State Bodies. This role in one that "*fits well*" with the overall mission and purpose of the organisation. We would be very pleased to see this role developed further over the next three years.

There is a constant demand across the public service for highly skilled and highly motivated resources and this demand will continue into the future. This demand will be satisfied through redeployment or recruitment depending on the circumstances of the post and the organisation. The Public Appointments Service has the necessary systems, skills, processes and experience to support client organisations whichever option is chosen. It is essential that the Public Appointments Service continues to develop and enhance its core skills and processes to provide a value for money service to the widest possible range of public service organisations. The partnership approach adopted over the past three years with key public service client organisation will continue to ensure that the best possible use is made of the resources of the client organisation and the Public Appointments Service.

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I would like to express my appreciation to each member of the Board for their support and their commitment to the Public Appointments Service over the past three years. I would also like to express my appreciation to the staff of the Public Appointments Service, to the Chief Executive and his management team for their commitment and dedication. These have been difficult times and the organisation has displayed great agility and flexibility in meeting client needs during this difficult period. I, and my fellow board members, are confident that this new Strategy Statement is the right strategy for the Public Appointments Service in the current economic environment and the many challenges facing the public service. The implementation of this strategy will pose many challenges for the organisation but we are confident that the organisation will meet these challenges and will continue to make a significant contribution to the development of a public service of the highest calibre.

Mr. Eddie Sullivan

Chairman, Public Appointments Service.

Board of the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service was established under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 on 19th October, 2004.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr. Brendan Howlin, T.D., following consultation with the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, the Minister for Health, and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, appointed nine people to the Board to serve for a period of three years from 1st September, 2011.

The Board of the Public Appointments Service is as follows:

Mr. Eddie Sullivan,
Chairman, former Secretary General, Public Service Management and Development, Department of Finance

Mr. Bryan Andrews (*since replaced by Ms. Fiona Tierney*)
Chief Executive Officer, Public Appointments Service

Mr. Des Dowling,
Assistant Secretary, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government

Ms. Patricia Coleman,
Director, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Dr. Eddie Molloy,
Management Consultant

Mr. Dan Murphy,
Former General Secretary, Public Service Executive Union

Ms. Judith Eve,
Former Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners

Dr. Deirdre O’Keeffe,
Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice and Equality

Mr Seán McGrath,
National Director of HR, Health Service Executive (*since resigned*)

Management Team

Mr. Bryan Andrews (since replaced by Ms. Fiona Tierney)
Chief Executive

Mr. Tommy Quinn
Head of Corporate Services

Ms. Mary Flynn
Head of Recruitment Services

Ms. Aine Gray
Head of Assessment Services

Mr. Padraig Love
Corporate Services

Mr. Niall Leavy
Principal Psychologist

Our Mission:

In developing our new strategy statement, we consulted extensively with key stakeholders, with client organisations and with staff at all levels across the organisation. Our deliberations were influenced by:-

- the requirements of the National Recovery Plan 2011 to 2014;
- the objectives of the Public Service Agreement 2010 to 2014;
- the anticipated requirements of key client organisations;
- the knowledge that our services can provide a value for money proposition for public service clients;
- the knowledge that our systems and processes are well tried and tested;
- the skills / experience of the staff of the organisation and their continued strong commitment to the public service ethos of the organisation;
- the knowledge that these systems, skills and experiences can support organisations in implementing the Public Service Redeployment Scheme;
- the reductions in staffing levels introduced by the Employment Control Framework; and
- the anticipated reductions in funding over the life of the strategy.

We have defined our mission as:-

We will source the highest quality candidates for positions in the civil and public service and we will facilitate the movement of public servants within and between sectors in accordance with the needs of clients ensuring a more efficient and appropriate resourcing of essential services.

The following three high level goals have been identified to enable us to deliver on our mission:-

Goal 1 – Redeployment
Goal 2 – Building on our Core Selection Competence
Goal 3 – Developing the Selection Competence across the Public Service

Values

Fairness and Impartiality

Value for Money

Excellent Customer Service

Professionalism

Innovation

Partnership and Consultation

Fairness and Impartiality

We are committed to providing redeployment and recruitment solutions that recognise that all eligible people must be able to compete equally for posts across the public service. We will ensure that our processes are fair and are free from any bias or discrimination.

Value for Money

We will ensure that all of our processes and systems are both efficient and effective and that we provide a value for money service to our clients.

Excellent Customer Service

We will treat all of our customers with dignity and respect and will provide a quality service to mutually agreed service standards.

Professionalism

Our clients, our candidates and our colleagues expect and deserve a professional service. We will continue to provide a professional service and seek every opportunity to improve the quality of the service we provide.

Innovation

We will constantly examine our approach to service provision and look for fresh new ways of delivering our services to external and internal clients.

Partnership and Consultation

The value of working in partnership with our clients and our staff has never been more obvious than over the past three years. We will use every opportunity to enhance this partnership approach over the life of this strategy.

Goal 1:

Redeployment

Context

Government policy is to achieve a significant reduction in public service numbers while at the same time enhancing or maintaining the level of service provided by public service organisations. The terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 provide for the redeployment of resources to areas of greatest need across the public service. It is envisaged that the initial focus of redeployment will be internal within individual organisations i.e. redeployment of resources from one part of the organisation to another. It is also envisaged that through:-

- the review and closure of programs;
- the closure or amalgamation of State Bodies; and
- the implementation of the Employment Control Frameworks

resources will be identified for redeployment to other organisations either within the sector or between public service sectors.

The Public Appointments Service, because of our skills, experience and systems in selection, testing and placements, has been identified as the organisation to play a key pivotal role in the inter-organisation and intra-sectoral elements of the redeployment process.

Objectives

1. To use our existing skills, experience, systems and resources to fully support the Public Service Redeployment Scheme.
2. To use our expertise to provide clear advice, guidance and support to client organisations across a range of human resource issues to inspire trust and confidence in the scheme.
3. To ensure that inter-agency redeployment processes are conducted in an open and transparent manner.
4. To endeavour to match the skills and experiences of resources available for redeployment with the skills requirements of sanctioned posts.

Strategies

The strategies we will employ to deliver on these objectives include:-

- **Resource Panel Database**

Maximising the use of our existing ICT, we will continue to develop a ¹Resource Panel Database to record details of people who have been identified by their parent organisation

¹ The Resource Panel database and data upload program has been developed for the Civil Service and the Non-Commercial State Sponsored Bodies Sectors. Work is underway on the database and upload programs for the Local Authority and Health sectors.

as being available for redeployment. Panels will be developed for each public service sector. Each public service organisation will be responsible for uploading of the data in respect of their own resources and keeping it current.

- **Redeployment Toolkit**

The initial focus of redeployment will be internal within the individual organisations. As part of this redeployment process, the Public Appointments Service can support organisations by providing a practical toolkit to enable managers to manage the change process and to focus on the optimal use of resources and processes to achieve organisational objectives in challenging times.

The Redeployment Toolkit will be a guide for managers on how redeployment will work in practice e.g. determining numbers to be redeployed, review of roles, assessment and work re-organisation following change. Tools and methodologies will be developed to enable managers to analyse resources and define roles and requirements in a consistent and transparent way. In addition the toolkit will contain practical steps on securing staff engagement throughout the transition process.

Seminars and training in the use of the toolkit will be provided.

- **Redeployment Assessment**

To fill sanctioned posts by redeployment, the Public Appointments Service will search the database to identify individuals suitable for the post using the criteria set out in the sectoral agreements. Where appropriate, the Public Appointments Service will conduct focussed assessments to ensure that the individuals have the necessary skills, competencies and / or qualifications to undertake the role.

- **Redeployment Consulting**

In addition to the work on the Resource Database and the Redeployment Toolkit we can provide direct support to clients in relation to their particular circumstances and needs arising from organisational changes. In some circumstances, a targeted coaching intervention can be provided by the Public Appointments Service to facilitated individuals / groups in organisations undergoing transition.

Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1.	Complete the development of the Resource Panel Database for all public service sectors	Quarter 1, 2011
2.	Support Civil Service Departments, other public sector organisations and Non-commercial State Sponsored Bodies in the process of uploading data	Ongoing

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	in respect of their resources available for redeployment.	
3.	For sanctioned posts, the Public Appointments Service will provide a timely search of the Resource Panel database to identify suitably qualified individuals.	Ongoing
4.	Publish the Redeployment Toolkit.	Quarter 2, 2011
5.	Market the Redeployment Toolkit and our expertise in this area.	Quarter 2 and 3 2011
6.	Provide seminars and training in the use of the Redeployment Toolkit.	Ongoing, as required
7.	Assess individual's skills and suitability for redeployment to certain posts, where appropriate.	Ongoing, as required
8.	Provide Redeployment Consultancy services and support, as required.	Ongoing

Goal 2:

Building on our Core Selection Expertise

Context:

The Public Appointments Service has a proud tradition of independent merit based public service recruitment and selection. We provide a professional service to a wide range of public service clients. Our systems and processes are robust and are well tried and tested. They are fully compliant with both the spirit and letter of the Commission for Public Service Appointment's Codes of Practice.

The Public Appointments Service has been seen as expert in providing large volume recruitment to the public service. However, since the implementation of the Government's Moratorium on Recruitment and Promotion, only key front line posts are being filled. Filling of these posts requires the specific sanction of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Recruitment by the Public Appointments Service to other key front line posts, not covered by the moratorium particularly across the Health Sector, continues.

Over the past twelve to eighteen months we have encouraged and attracted many new public service organisations to make use of our shared service. The service we have provided to these organisations has been to the highest professional standards and represents considerable cost savings to these organisations and to the exchequer. During the life of this strategy we will continue to encourage public sector organisations to utilise the shared service expertise available in the Public Appointments Service.

We will continue to develop strategic partnerships with key client organisations, such as that built with the Health Service Executive. This has enabled us to address their frontline recruitment requirements in a manner that maximises benefit to both organisations.

We recognise the benefits of providing a tailored service to our clients in order to most effectively meet their specific needs. We adapt and develop our systems and processes to facilitate the provision of flexible and responsive solutions for clients, be it offering a full recruitment and selection service from job analysis to placement, or just a particular element of the selection process e.g. advertising their vacancies on www.publicjobs.ie

In a new initiative, the Public Appointments Service worked with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications, Energy and Natural Resources to hold an open and transparent process to identify people for recommendation to serve on the Boards of the RTE Authority, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, TG4 and Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Objectives:

- To promote the Public Appointments Service as the centre of expertise and advice in the assessment and selection of the most suitably qualified candidates for public service appointments.
- To identify the needs of individual clients and tailor our services to specifically meet their needs.
- To continue to attract new public service clients for our recruitment, selection and placement services as part of the *shared services* agenda.
- To provide support for the development of the Senior Public Service.
- To provide support for senior Civil Service appointments.
- To develop the role the Public Appointments Service could play in the appointment of persons to Boards of State Bodies.
- To continue to develop and enhance our selection methodologies.
- To continue to develop our ICT applications to the benefit of all of our customers.
- To develop strategic partnerships with key client organisations.

Strategies:

To achieve our objectives PAS will engage the following strategies:-

Meeting Client Needs and Expectations

- We will actively engage with our clients to understand their requirements and to tailor our services to fully meet their needs.
- We will work with clients to identify skills gaps and to decide on how best to address client needs in this area.
- We will, where possible, make maximum use of internal client resources to ensure client engagement and commitment to the process and the outcome.
- In the context of the development of the *shared recruitment services agenda*, we will market our services widely across the public service to attract new public service clients.
- We will offer new and existing clients a flexible range of services from advertisement only to full management of a campaign.
- We will develop strategic partnerships internally within the public service to ensure that resources are used to maximum effect and value for money is achieved in each campaign.
- We will work with the Department of the Taoiseach to create an awareness of our skills, expertise and capability to ensure that it can be used to maximum effect in the development of the Senior Public Service.

- We will engage with the new Top Level Appointments Committee to create an awareness of our ability to provide a professional recruitment service, across the public and private sectors, to attract the most suitably qualified people for senior civil service appointments.
- We will engage with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and other relevant agencies to develop the role the Public Appointments Service could play in the appointment of persons to Boards of State Bodies.
- On an ongoing basis, we will review and improve our assessment systems to make sure that they accurately reflect the needs and challenges of the job(s). We will continue to benchmark these methodologies against key public service recruiters worldwide.
- Adapt our tools and techniques, where necessary, to meet the needs of the redeployment process.
- We will enhance the range of bespoke assessment materials available for use by the Public Appointments Service in order to maintain the cost-effectiveness and flexibility of our assessment and placement solutions and ensure candidate engagement throughout the process.
- We will extend our use of assessment centre type methodology, comprising the use of a number of different selection tools and techniques, as we seek to gain a comprehensive account of the skills and qualities of each candidate to best match the most suitable person(s) to the job.
- We will develop our executive search capability and develop strategic partnerships externally to ensure that we can attract the widest possible pool of quality candidates from the public and private sectors.
- We will enhance our systems and processes and continue to roll out our e-testing strategy to ensure that we can meet client needs by using technology to improve the efficiency and cost – effectiveness of assessment.

Meeting Candidates Needs and Expectations

- We will market our services appropriately to the widest possible pool of potential candidates from both the public and private sectors.
- We will continue to develop the **publicjobs** website to make it the primary Irish Public Sector recruitment website.
- We will maximize the availability of online assessment tools and promote the concept of self-selection by candidates in advance of making an application.
- We will endeavour to make our systems and processes candidate friendly.
- We will continue to provide advice and support to applicants considering public service posts.

- We will continually examine the range of supports provided to potential candidates and update, where necessary.

Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1.	Ensure that all existing and potential clients have an understanding of the skills, expertise and capability of our organisation as a shared recruitment service.	Ongoing
2.	Develop key strategic internal and external partnerships to provide a value for money service to clients.	Ongoing
3.	Engage with Department of the Taoiseach to determine how our capability can be used in the development of the Senior Public Service.	Quarter 1, 2011
4.	Engage with the new Top Level Appointments Committee to create an awareness of how the Public Appointments Service can support them in their task.	Within one month of its appointment by Government.
5.	Executive search capability developed and operating effectively.	Quarter 2 2011
6.	Enhance the Client Portal of our Core Recruitment System to facilitate client organisations in managing their own campaigns.	Quarter 2 2011
7.	Improve www.publicjobs.ie website by providing focused information on job opportunities by sector and facilitate client branding.	Quarter 4 2011
8.	Continue to develop self-assessment tools to allow candidates to assess their own skills and qualities.	Ongoing
9.	Enhance the range of assessment instruments (including online) available for use by PAS.	Ongoing
10.	Review and improve our assessment systems to make sure they accurately reflect the needs and challenges of the job(s).	Ongoing

Goal 3:

“Development of Selection Competence across the Public Service”

Context:

We recognise that the Public Service will play a key role in the overall national recovery. Having highly suitable people at all levels will be key to the success and effectiveness of the Public Service in achieving the objectives of the recovery plan. Therefore, limited recruitment and promotions are likely to continue in public service organisations over the lifetime of this strategy. It must be recognised that the Public Appointments Service has limited resource capacity. Within our existing, and indeed shrinking resource levels, we cannot provide a recruitment, selection and placement shared service for the entire public sector. However, for organisations undertaking recruitment, selection or promotion campaigns in their own right, it is incumbent on PAS to provide professional support to these organisations. We also recognise that the skills and expertise employed in the selection and placement of people has applicability in the redeployment process.

Our goal is to embed assessment and selection skills and expertise across the public sector, improving the quality and suitability of people who are who are internally redeployed or who are recruited. The Public Appointments Service will develop an integrated range of training resources that can be deployed to achieve this goal.

Objectives:

- The Public Appointments Service will provide an integrated range of training services, materials and resources for public service clients in the area of recruitment, selection and placements.
- We will offer a consultancy service to our partners across the public sector, guiding on best-practice recruitment.
- We will maximize the use of the facilities available in Chapter House by other public service organisations.

Strategies:

To enable us to achieve our objectives we will engage the following strategies:-

- We will actively market the services available from the Public Appointments Service to public service organisations.
- We will provide advice on best practice recruitment processes to public service client organisations.

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- In providing advice on public service recruitment, we will create an awareness of legal and other obligations on the employer e.g. equality obligations and obligations under the CPSA Codes of Practice.
- We will review existing training programs and ensure they reflect best practice in the areas of recruitment, selection and placement.
- We will re-examine the most cost effective delivery options for these programmes.
- We will actively market the availability of these training programs to public service organisations.
- We will lead on the development of resources to facilitate client organisations in meeting their needs in relation to assessment, placement and assignment of people.
- We will provide, or source, training for potential interview board members as required.
- We will provide, or source, job analysis training for client personnel, as required, to assist with both selection and effective deployment of staff.
- We will increase our assessment capabilities by training existing resources in the identification and use of appropriate assessment tools. We will provide or source this training for client personnel, as appropriate.
- We will market the facilities available in Chapter House viz. Interview rooms, video and audio conferencing facilities, etc. to public service organisations.

Performance Indicators

	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1.	We will complete the review of training materials including the delivery approach and the marketing to public service organisations.	Q3, 2011
2.	We will provide training for interview board members using the most cost effective delivery mechanisms available.	Ongoing
3.	We will market the range of services and facilities we can provide to public service organisations.	Quarter 3, 2011
4.	We will provide best practice recruitment advice to organisations across the public service.	Ongoing

Supporting Internal Strategies

HR Strategy

We rely on our resources, at all levels across the organisation, to deliver our Strategy Statement goals. We aim to develop a culture in the organisation which encourages professionalism, innovation, flexibility and participation and which values respect and diversity.

To achieve this culture, the Public Appointments Service will:

- foster in our staff a commitment to the goals of the organisation and its public service ethos, a commitment to delivering an excellent service to all customers and a commitment to flexibility and innovation;
- provide the leadership, at all levels across the organisation, to enthuse and motivate staff, to provide clear direction, inspiration and support in ensuring continuous improvement in the services we deliver;
- maintain a highly effective performance management system that ensures staff are aware of what is expected from them, are equipped to deliver on their objectives and are measured against challenging performance indicators. We will address any underperformance issues in a proactive and strategic manner;
- provide the training and development for staff to allow them to meet their objectives and ensure personal development; this training will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure value for money is being achieved;
- develop an innovative culture which will lead to process improvements and the delivery of services more effectively, using fewer resources;
- develop a strategy on knowledge management to ensure that the tacit knowledge built up on recruitment and selection processes is not lost to the organisation through the redeployment of staff;
- through the partnership process, continue to provide a work environment that is challenging, stimulating and enjoyable for all staff;
- actively promote the need for a healthy and safe environment through training, effective management, provision of equipment and monitoring to ensure all statutory checks are conducted;
- ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to ensure maximum attendance from staff including additional flexible working arrangements and measures to improve attendance levels on an ongoing basis;
- strive to maintain the Excellence Through People accreditation as a benchmark of our internal human resources systems;
- promote equality and diversity and train our staff in related areas; and

- strive to maintain the Excellence Through Accessibility Award from the National Disability Authority in order to ensure that our customer service, ICT and facilities are accessible to all.

ICT Strategy

The ICT Strategy supports the organisation in conducting its core business. It ensures that the staff have appropriate policies, technologies, systems and processes to enable them to conduct the business efficiently and effectively, while at the same time protecting the integrity of the sensitive data being processed.

This strategy is built on four pillars:-

People

- Staff – we will provide guidance to staff through policies covering the acceptable use of the available technology in processing tasks and data. We will also ensure that staff obtain maximum benefits from office applications and systems through ongoing training;
- Management – will be supported through the provision of relevant and timely statistics on how the business is performing and how it can gain further market share;
- Clients/Partners – will be encouraged to take more ownership in the delivery of their services through greater participation in the Client/Board Members Portals of the core recruitment application;
- Customers/Candidates – will be empowered through the further development of the self-service features of the Candidate Portal, which will reduce processing times and costs, and pave the way for the organisation to take on more and more business.

Processes

- The driving principles behind the ICT Strategy in relation to processes will be to simplify, standardise and streamline processes across all business areas.

Technologies

- The technologies in use will be fit for purpose and driven by the business development needs of the organisation. All options will continue to be considered when it comes to products and licensing and the in-sourcing or out-sourcing of skills and services. The determining factors for selecting an option will be driven by central policy, budget, available skills level / development opportunities, cost and the need to realise the maximum benefit from any investment to-date.

Information

- Information is recognised as one of the organisation's key assets. Policies and procedures will be maintained and developed to ensure that the data is accurate, available, audited, timely, secure, documented and restorable. The drivers for this aspect of the Strategy include the Business Continuity Plan and the Disaster Recovery plan which are maintained under regular review.

Monitoring and Accounting for our Performance

In this Statement of Strategy we have set out our approach to developing our services to meet the needs of the public service in these difficult economic times. Government policy is to reduce public service numbers and the moratorium on recruitment and promotions is likely to remain in force for the foreseeable future. When filling vacancies across the public service, redeployment is likely to be the first option considered. It is likely that recruitment will only be considered if redeployment cannot identify a suitably qualified candidate for the post. The Public Appointments Service is very well equipped to utilise either the redeployment or recruitment options and we are fully committed to supporting public service organisations in sourcing high calibre people to fill sanctioned vacancies.

The structures outlined beneath will be used to ensure that we deliver on the high level goals identified in the statement of Strategy:

Board of the Public Appointments Service

Through the execution of its duties as laid down in the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 the Board will play a crucial role in overseeing the roll out of this strategy and advising on the future strategic direction for the organisation.

Management Advisory Committee (MAC)

The MAC will regularly review progress on achieving the high level goals set out in the Statement of Strategy. Working with key stakeholders, MAC will ensure that all necessary resources are in place to ensure delivery of the strategy. MAC will monitor closely changes in public service environment and will, in consultation with the Board and key stakeholders, adjust the strategy, as necessary, to ensure that we remain relevant to the changing needs of the public service. At a minimum MAC will conduct a major review of the strategy annually.

Business Planning Process

The Statement of Strategy will inform the well established business planning process conducted by each of the business units. Divisional business plans will be monitored regularly to ensure a tight alignment with the strategic objectives of the organisation. Emerging business needs will be integrated into both the business plans and the strategy statement.

Annual divisional business plans will be reviewed twice yearly. Progress reports will issue to the MAC, the Senior Management team and the Partnership Committee. Progress will be reported in our Annual Reports.

Partnership Committee

We will again look to the Partnership Committee to play a major role in the successful delivery of this Statement of Strategy. An ongoing consultation process and engagement by the Committee will assist in the delivery of our strategic goals.

Audit Committee

The advice and support afforded by this independent committee will be an invaluable resource to the Accounting Officer in ensuring that resource commitments are carefully considered and are executed in an appropriate manner.

All Staff and Managers

The period ahead will be a very challenging time for the public service. The successful implementation of this strategy will only be achieved with the full assistance and participation of every staff member in the organisation. Through a willingness to adopt new practices and procedures and to maintain an innovative approach to our business, everyone can play a full role in the successful delivery of this strategy.