



Strategy Statement

2005-2007

Director's Foreword

The Strategy Statement for Met Éireann sets out a vision for the Service for the period up to and including 2007. It also addresses the way in which that vision will be implemented, with specific objectives listed and, where possible, time-tabled.

Met Éireann has a continuing long-term goal of providing weather services to the people of Ireland in order to safeguard life and property and to contribute to economic development and to quality of life. There are, however, particular factors which we must take into account at this time and which influence the strategic direction of the Service.

Among these factors are:

- The need to fit our activities more into the wider national environmental framework and to contribute more effectively to the Government's objectives in this area and to develop greater synergy with relevant sections of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- Met Éireann continues to maintain a mix of public service and commercial activities, with the public service role being our primary one. We need to review our commercial activities during the next two years and to determine our priorities in this field.
- Continued growth in customer interest in weather products, in the variety of delivery mechanisms and in presentation quality, which modern technology makes possible, will require a response from us that will focus on making our production systems more efficient and our delivery methods more versatile.
- The implementation of the European Commission's policy for a Single European Sky poses particular challenges for our aviation services as it presents us with a new situation in which the regulation of aviation services will be separated from service provision and in which compliance with common requirements will be necessary in order to obtain certification as a service provider. In addition, pressure from the airlines to force costs down in the highly competitive situation they are in will continue.
- The further roll-out of the Civil Service Modernisation programme will involve Met Éireann in finding appropriate ways to exploit the benefits of these initiatives and to contribute to Government plans for the Civil Service.

The support and active engagement of all Met Éireann staff will continue to be crucial to the task of making this Statement a key working document for Met Éireann and in translating its vision into Business Plans and individual Role Profiles. A mechanism for the systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy Statement will be put in place

At all times the ultimate objective is to provide a better and more cost-effective service to the Irish people.

Declan Murphy
Director, Met Éireann

Met Éireann Strategy Statement 2005 – 2007

Introduction

Under the terms of the Public Service Management Act (1997), each Government Department and Office is required to prepare and publish a Strategy Statement at specified intervals. Met Éireann is a Division of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government but, because of the specialist nature of Met Éireann's functions and the degree of autonomy with which it operates within the Department, it is desirable that Met Éireann produce its own Strategy Statement.

The production of this Strategy Statement continues the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) in Met Éireann. With the introduction of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) in 2001, the landscape of Strategy Statement – Organisational Business Plan – Divisional Business Plans, PMDS is complete. The challenge now is to embed these processes in the culture and day-to-day thinking at all levels within the organisation.

Met Éireann, in common with society in general, is going through a time when the pace of change is increasing. We expect the environment in which we operate to be very different three years from now. This Strategy Statement sets out Met Éireann's expectations for change and planned responses. A great deal of flexibility and openness to new ideas will be required to achieve success and this includes a willingness to keep this Strategy Statement under continuing critical review and a preparedness to adapt our plans as required.

This Strategy Statement will be followed by Met Éireann's annual Business Plans for the years 2006 to 2007. Divisional Business Plans will then be produced in sufficient detail to allow each member of staff to identify his/her role in a thread running through the organisational Business Plan to the Strategy Statement.

Although the above represents the logical and time-sequenced production of the Strategy Statement and Business Plans, because of the high level of consultation and involvement of staff in the planning process and the size of the organisation, the reality is that there is a good deal of parallel evolution so that the completion of the Strategy Statement means that much of the work for the Business Plans is already done.

Mission Statement and Mandate

Mission Statement

Our mission is to monitor, analyse and predict Ireland's weather and climate, and to provide a range of high quality meteorological and related information to our customers.

Misean

Sé an misean atá againn ná, breathnú, miondealú agus réamhinsint a dhéanamh ar aimsir agus ar aeráid na hÉireann, agus chun raon seirbhísí meitéareolaíochta agus eolas gaolmhar den scoth a sholáthar d'ár gcustaiméirí.

Mandate

The Mission Statement implies that we, as the National Meteorological Service, will

- help to ensure the protection and safety of life and property by issuing timely public weather forecasts and warnings
- contribute effectively to national prosperity and to Government objectives by supplying relevant meteorological services to all sectors of the economy
- meet the State's obligations to provide meteorological services to the aviation sector
- ensure customer satisfaction by carefully analysing end-user feedback, and by continually improving the range and quality of our services, the cost-effectiveness of our operations and our overall standard of service
- foster a professional and supportive work environment which attracts, retains and develops committed employees
- ensure the continued maintenance and further improvement of a high-quality and cost-effective meteorological infrastructure, consistent with national requirements and resources
- enhance the quality of our climatological archives and provide easy and effective access to our databases
- participate in the on-going development of meteorological science and its applications in collaboration with our European meteorological partners and with the wider scientific community
- contribute to the effective monitoring and good management of the natural environment
- contribute scientifically to the climate change debate

Met Éireann Strategy Statement 2005 - 2007

The External Environment

Standing with the Irish public.

Met Éireann is the primary and authoritative source of weather information and services and is generally regarded as the provider likely to produce the highest quality output. Met Éireann's presence on RTÉ is a very important factor. However, the changing nature of mass communications poses challenges to Met Éireann to work to maintain its position and to communicate effectively with the public. The growth in popularity of our web site, as a source of weather-related information, and requests for information on matters of climate and weather from the media serve to illustrate the need to update continuously our methods of communication.

Economic Factors.

As a public body, Met Éireann relies heavily on government funding and is therefore subject to the impact of prevailing government policies on the funding and staffing of the public service. Economic conditions will always have an impact on the level of funding and human resources available.

Met Éireann has a requirement for staff with specialist scientific or technical knowledge and skills and must compete with all other employing sectors for these skills. The current strong state of the Irish economy offers many options for those with the skills that Met Éireann requires.

Increasing Demands for new Services and new Delivery Methods.

The level of demand for specialised weather related services continues to increase, examples being flood risk assessment and forecasting, wind energy, pollutant transport, crop disease modelling, increasingly sophisticated media products, advice and assistance with weather monitoring for environmental compliance with EPA licensing requirements. There is a continuing and increasing interest in Climate Change and Variability issues.

There is a demand for changes in the nature and methods of delivery of existing products and services and for the development of new services to exploit advances in technology. The increasing popularity of the Internet as a means for weather users in general to access weather information offers Met Éireann a powerful tool to reach its customers and to provide attractive products.

With other suppliers of weather services in the market, emphasis on Met Éireann product branding will become increasingly important in the future.

Comparison with other European National Meteorological Services (NMSs)

Even allowing for the differences of the scale of population and of GNP, Met Éireann is one of the smallest and most stretched of Western European NMSs. Met Éireann will need to continue to be innovative and introduce efficiencies in order to expand the range of products and services we deliver to our customers.

Increased International Co-operation

The degree of co-operation among the meteorological services of Europe continues to increase and to provide Met Éireann with opportunities for improving its services. Examples are the new EUMETSAT satellite and SAF programmes; improved products from ECMWF and , HIRLAM; benefits gained from the EUMETNET programmes such as EUCOS. A recent development has been the establishment of the Met Alliance, a group comprising Austria, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland, set up to promote co-operation in aviation meteorology.

Scientific and Technological Advances

International and national research effort, allied to developments in ICT, continue to provide means of improving computer-based forecasts. Advances in meteorological instrumentation offer new or more effective ways of gathering primary meteorological information.

Increasing Competition in Commercial Activity.

The trend over the last few years has been for private meteorological companies, based in Ireland or abroad, to become more active in the Irish market and to gain in credibility. This poses a challenge to Met Éireann to compete more effectively and to focus on those commercial sectors which it considers most important to its mandate. Developing competition in the provision of weather services has also led to a stricter requirement for accounting transparency.

Services to Aviation.

The main drivers for change in meteorological services to aviation relate to continued pressures on the cost base and to changes at the regulatory level deriving from the Single European Sky (SES) initiative. At all times, of course, the primary principle of safety prevails. The nature of the highly competitive airline business exerts continuing pressure on suppliers to that industry (including meteorological service providers) to reduce costs. To respond to this, Met Éireann must continue to research and implement efficiencies in its

services to aviation, to assess and deploy new technologies resulting in a more efficient service. These developments must be benchmarked against best international practice, utilising Met Éireann's contacts with, and participation in, relevant international bodies. The opportunities offered by the Met Alliance group should be of significant benefit in this regard.

At the regulatory level, the main development is the continued implementation of the SES policy to improve the safety and efficiency of air transport in Europe. When fully implemented, this policy will, for the first time, make Met Éireann answerable to an outside body with respect to its service to aviation. The complex legislative structure implementing SES is under continuous review by the organisation, in coordination with our partner services in the Met Alliance and in Europe generally, and through detailed consultation with the Department of Transport. As part of SES, the Aviation Services Division of Met Éireann has achieved certification in the ISO 9001:2000 quality management system.

In addition, the development of more efficient airspace structures, possibly leading to combined airspace blocks, will require detailed consultation with the UK Met Office.

SES will continue to require transparency in charges relating to aviation services and the implementation of a common charging scheme for meteorological services to aviation throughout the European Union.

These developments pose great challenges for Met Éireann,

Political Context

As with all public bodies, Met Éireann must continue to find ways of contributing further to North-South and British-Irish co-operation.

Met Éireann Strategy Statement 2005 - 2007

Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities

- The increasing demand for weather services and new products presents Met Éireann with an opportunity to increase its customer base and its range of products and services.
- Continuing developments in technology and in meteorological science bring about the possibility to develop new types of product, to improve the quality and usefulness of existing products, to deliver both existing and new products in a variety of ways which are more customer-friendly and to improve the efficiency of production.
- The implementation of better management systems and improved management information flow coming as a result of the Strategic Management Initiative provides an opportunity to target resources in support of the organisation's strategic objectives.
- Increasing international co-operation offers the prospect of improving the quality of products through enhancements to the international meteorological infrastructure, of expanding the range of services and improving efficiency through bilateral or multilateral arrangements.

Threats

- Met Éireann competes with private commercial companies for the provision of some services. Loss of position in market segments such as media, Internet, telephone/mobile services etc. could have a serious impact on Met Éireann's profile and therefore on its capability to deliver its basic mandate of providing public weather forecasts and warnings.
- Reduced, or even static funding levels, would have a negative impact on much needed investment in new technology and infrastructure and on the continued delivery of a high standard of service.
- The continuing downward pressure on aviation revenue and the uncertainties associated with the future implementation of the Single European Sky policy pose particular challenges for Met Éireann's aviation activities.
- The strength of the employment market in Ireland may pose difficulties for Met Éireann in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified and/or experienced scientific and technical staff and may therefore inhibit Met Éireann from capitalising on the continuing developments in technology and in meteorological science, with resultant impact on its services to customers.

Met Éireann Strategy Statement 2005 – 2007

The Internal Environment

Operational Activities

Every day of the year Met Éireann produces and makes available to its customers a wide range of high quality meteorological services, delivered on time to a demanding schedule. The growth in the range and volume of services required, coupled with the staff reduction that Met Éireann has experienced over the past decade or so, has resulted in an overstretched situation, both in the operational divisions and in the support units which play an increasingly important role in helping the Service to meet its commitments.

However, opportunities for increasing efficiency continue to be identified and are being pursued. An example of this is use of automatic weather stations to replace the traditional staffed stations. A major project to replace all staffed stations other than the airports and Valentia Observatory with automatic equipment is underway. The efficiency of forecast production is another area that is currently the focus of attention.

Technical Infrastructure

To enable it to create its output products, Met Éireann, in common with all other National Meteorological Services, needs a high quality infrastructure of ICT and meteorological facilities. Met Éireann's infrastructure, consisting of networks of synoptic and climatological stations, weather radar and satellite equipment, sophisticated ICT hardware and software systems, laboratory analysis facilities, etc. positions it to produce outputs of a standard comparable with that of our European partners.

Skills Base

Met Éireann benefits from a highly skilled staff, covering a wide range of meteorology and technology. The staff have contributed not only to the development and service delivery of Met Éireann's products, but also to international developments and to meteorological science. The externally funded C4I Project is an example of how Met Éireann has helped to enhance Ireland's capability in the area of climate change prediction.

Efforts to maintain skills levels in a rapidly changing world are as difficult for Met Éireann as for all other professional/technical organisations. However the commitment of our staff to up-skill continuously in the various fields of expertise helps us to keep apace of developments.

The growing challenges to the organisation, coupled with the opportunities presented by technological and scientific developments, emphasise the importance of ensuring that the capacity of Met Éireann to maintain and enhance the technical infrastructure is increased and that human resources policy is adapted to this end.

The Civil Service Modernisation Programme

In common with all parts of the Civil Service, Met Éireann has adopted the innovations which stem from the Strategic Management Initiative. These include the development of Strategy Statements and Business Plans, Partnership, Quality Customer Service, Management Information Framework and PMDS. While it takes time for all the benefits of these initiatives to become apparent (and the resources committed to them can further exacerbate an already strained human resources situation), the positive impacts are already evident in many ways.

For example, the level of internal communications has improved and a variety of communication methods are being used to inform staff, such as the Met Éireann Intranet and the well-regarded staff magazine, SPLANC. The Met Éireann website has been the subject of favourable comment from our customers. The Partnership concept has taken root very successfully in the Service, while the Strategy Statements, Business Plans and PMDS offer a good framework upon which to develop corporate and personal planning and reporting. Further developments such as the incorporation of upward feedback into the PMDS process will add further benefits.

Funding and Financial Management

Met Éireann's budget forms part of DEHLG's Vote. For some time, Met Éireann has operated on the basis of internal Administrative Budget Agreements between the Secretary General and the Director. These agreements set out a baseline of financial allocations over a three year period and defined the degree of delegated authority for expenditure. It is in the interests of good financial management and planning for Met Éireann to have such an arrangement continue.

Most of Met Éireann's expenditure is recurring (e.g. salaries and other running costs) and the amount of discretionary spending is therefore limited and as a consequence the budget tends to be quite stretched. The requirements for capital expenditure on new meteorological and ICT equipment can vary from one year to another and the funding arrangements with the Department should reflect that.

Financial-management services are provided to Met Éireann by its parent Department. A new FMS, based on an Oracle accounts package, was implemented by DEHLG in January 2004. This enables the production of accounts on both a cash and accruals basis and will facilitate greater

accountability and devolution of financial responsibility in accordance with SMI. It will also provide improved reports and financial analysis for management. However, the realisation of these benefits has been rather slow.

Met Éireann has special accounting requirements related to its commercial activities and to the necessity of calculating charges to civil aviation in a transparent manner. For this reason an unofficial Interim Accounts System has been in operation since 2001, in parallel with the official Appropriation Accounts. It had been hoped that the Department's new accruals-based FMS would make the interim system redundant. However, up to now, the Department's system has not met all of Met Éireann's requirements.

Relationship with the Department

Since the transfer of Met Éireann to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2002, there has been a growth in mutual understanding and, in the case of Met Éireann, an increased awareness of its role within the wider environmental framework. The synergies with certain parts of the Department's functions such as climate change, air quality and environmental monitoring are gradually being exploited. A recent positive development has been the agreement with the Department of an official definition of Met Éireann's public service duties. Such a definition will help to differentiate clearly between public service activity and commercial operations.

Human Resource Issues

The prevailing ethos in Met Éireann is that of a strong commitment to public service, coupled with an appreciation and understanding of the role that commercial activity plays in defraying the net cost of the Service to the Exchequer and in enabling the Service to contribute to the economy and to quality of life in a manner that is consistent with competition law.

There is a very high retention rate of staff in Met Éireann, indicating that staff satisfaction is high. There is a good relationship between all categories of staff, as exemplified by the peaceful status of industrial relations and the manner in which the Partnership approach continues to be embraced.

As can be expected, there are a number of issues where some improvement is sought. One of these issues is the grade structure. At present, there are two meteorological grade streams and a clerical stream. This can lead to inflexibility in the options available to staff and management. A review, begun in 2004 to address this matter, has made only slow progress.

Another area of concern is that the role of the support units (both technical and administrative) is growing and while some increase in staffing levels of these units has been achieved, it is difficult to keep pace with demand.

Staff mobility is very desirable but is inhibited by the geographical dispersion of staff and by the shift premium, which renders it financially unattractive for staff to make a lateral move from a shift position to a non-shift one.

The standard of accommodation in the Service is good at some locations and there have been some significant improvement projects undertaken, such as that in Valentia Observatory. However, some deficiencies are also evident; for example, the Met Éireann Headquarters building in Glasnevin needs a major refurbishment, internally and externally.

The ongoing requirement for new staff and for contract staff requires an efficient and responsive procedure for sanctioning and recruitment and delays and inflexibility can sometimes be encountered in the process. The acknowledgement in the Sustaining Progress Agreement of the need to utilise more flexible recruitment processes is welcome.

As a scientific organisation there is a clear need to ensure a proper facility for skills transfer as staff move, are promoted or retire. There is a need for a significant overlap between incoming and outgoing personnel. A succession planning policy to minimise the loss of momentum brought about by such staff movements should be built into manpower planning.

Met Éireann Strategy Statement

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Met Éireann is widely regarded as the “official” and authoritative source of meteorological services and expertise in Ireland. The Met Éireann “brand” carries great value.
- Met Éireann has a highly skilled and experienced complement of staff.
- There is a very high level of staff commitment to the organisation with a very high staff retention rate.
- A good level of “esprit de corps” exists among staff at all levels. An example of this is the success of the Partnership Council.
- Met Éireann has established an extensive weather observation network, including many stations run by other organisations and by voluntary observers. The completion of the TUCSON automatic weather station project will further enhance our observation network.
- Met Éireann maintains the national Climatological Database of weather observations going back over 60 years and is the custodian of the National Climatological Archives for Ireland.
- The Directorate and Management are all expert in the core business.
- Met Éireann maintains good links with other European Meteorological Institutes.

Weaknesses

- Civil Service procedures can have a constraining influence. For example, commercial activity can be inhibited by the fact that the income generated by commercial activity does not go into Met Éireann’s budget and therefore removes incentive. Public Service procurement, recruitment and decision-making procedures can inhibit swift responses to new or changing situations.
- There are a number of Human Resource issues which require attention. These include:
 - The devolution of the HR function to line managers
 - Need to increase staffing in the support areas
 - Work/Life Balance measures, while welcome, add to the staffing pressures
 - The grading structure

- Met Éireann does not enjoy the same economies of scale as some of its competitors and other national meteorological services in the provision of products.
- Production costs are high relative to those of our competitors partly due to overheads and to production processes being, in some instances, less efficient than they might be.
- Although Met Éireann is aware of the users' requirements it is not always possible to respond rapidly to changing needs due to lack of resources.
- There is over-dependence on undocumented knowledge residing with individual staff members who have been in a particular work area for a long time.
- There has been an under-investment in training and development.

Organisational Objectives and Strategies

The foregoing sections have set out the environment in which we operate, the challenges we face and the factors affecting our ability to meet those challenges. We now set out the specific objectives which we will pursue over the three-year period of this Strategy Statement and the strategies which we will employ in their pursuit.

The primary thrust is the fulfilment of the national requirement for Public Service weather forecasts, warnings, meteorological and environmental observations and climatological products and services, along with the research and other functions necessary to support these. These are the functions which define a National Meteorological Service. In support of this, we will endeavour to put in place appropriate funding arrangements with our parent Department.. We will work to retain our main product dissemination channels and improve communications with the media. Substantial changes will be set in motion in the use of staffing resources, coupled with increased levels of automation and greater use of technology. We will seek to make the best use of available staff through changes in grading structures and the implementation of our 2005-2007 Human Resources Strategy. We will continue to pursue commercial opportunities while striving to deliver all our products and services in a cost-effective manner. The challenge is to maintain and improve on the quality of service provided to our many customers. We expect to see major changes, both in the “marketplace” for weather services and in the way Met Éireann operates. The implementation of the Single European Sky policy will be a significant development which will affect Met Éireann.

A theme which must be emphasised in all that follows is that Met Éireann’s core business involves the provision of a large range of products and services to customers and that continuing to serve our customers is the first priority. While aspiring to improve the efficiency associated with the provision of these products and services and to introduce new developments, emphasis will be placed on maintaining the level of service to customers. This will require a close contact with our customers and an ongoing awareness of and a prompt response to their changing needs. It will require feedback mechanisms through the Met Éireann web site and through direct contact with staff at the National Ploughing Championships and the Boat Show.

We now set out, under ten main headings, the organisational objectives and strategies over the 2005 to 2007 timeframe. Where possible, objectives and measures of success are well defined and specific. However, not all objectives lend themselves to such a formulation. This does not take from their importance and it would be wrong to omit such an objective merely because it was difficult or impossible to formulate it in a particular way. The lead Divisions have been identified for each objective. This does not mean that staff in other Divisions will not be involved, but that the initiative will come from the named Divisions. In this context, the Met Éireann Partnership Council has been named as playing a lead role in achieving some objectives.

1. Public Service Forecasting Function

1. High Level Goal

To make available to the general public of Ireland an excellent service of high quality general weather forecasts, warnings of hazardous weather and other information helpful in the prevention or mitigation of environmental disasters.

1.1 Objective: Continue to cater for the national requirements for warnings of hazardous weather.

Strategies:

- Identify on an ongoing basis weather events which could endanger life or property and issue warnings through established mechanisms.
- Review with the relevant public authorities the thresholds for defining weather warnings and the methods (particularly modern electronic methods) for their promulgation.
- Ensure effective communication of weather warnings through cooperation with appropriate media.

Key Performance Indicators:

- A warning system with well-defined and up-to-date definitions of warning thresholds coupled with an efficient system for warning dissemination.
- Accuracy of the warnings as measured by a rigorous verification system.

Lead Division(s) Involved: General Forecasting.

1.2 Objective: Continue to cater for the national requirements for general public forecasts.

Strategy:

- Continue to produce accurate forecasts and disseminate them via the media and the Met Éireann web site.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Continued output of mainstream forecast products.
- Accuracy of the forecasts as measured by a rigorous verification system.

Lead Division(s) Involved: General Forecasting.

1.3 Objective: Provide appropriate meteorological input into national emergency planning and into the handling of actual emergencies.

Strategies:

- Maintain effective liaison with national agencies and local authorities on emergency planning.
- Carry out occasional checks of the operational meteorological services required for emergencies.
- Accord highest priority to assisting in actual emergencies.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Effectiveness of meteorological assistance provided.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *General Forecasting, Research and Applications.*

1.4 Objective: Contribute to national flood forecasting strategies

Strategies:

- Provide comprehensive meteorological guidance to local authorities and the public in relation to flooding.
- Co-operate with the OPW in the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Group on Flooding and ensure that Met Éireann influences and contributes to relevant aspects.
- Update the Flood Studies Report.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Accuracy of guidance issued by Met Éireann in relation to floods.
- Appropriate contribution by Met Éireann to flood forecasting strategies.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *C&O Division, General Forecasting, Research & Applications*

1.5 Objective: Maintain an informative and well-designed public web site

Strategies:

- Enhance the website by extending the range of products available on it and by improving the navigation of the site.
- Harness internal talent to support this site and its ongoing development

- Improve internal procedures for management of the site.
- Ensure that static content of web site is available in both Irish and English in accordance with the Official Languages Act, 2003, scheme

Key Performance Indicators:

- Redesigned site implemented by end Q2 2006
- Support and development group identified Q3 2005
- Modus operandi of support and development group agreed by Q1 2006
- Increased public usage of the web site.
- Static content in Irish and English available by the end of 2007.

Lead Division(s) Involved: General Forecasting, Research & Applications, Commercial and IT

1.6 Objective: Maintain a well-targeted meteorological research programme aimed at improving forecasts through further development of Numerical Weather Prediction systems and their application.

Strategies:

- Continue to play a very active part in the HIRLAM research programme in co-operation with the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Spain and France; contribute to the development of a non-hydrostatic, mesoscale model.
- Ensure that the benefits of the HIRLAM and ECMWF forecasting suites are fully exploited through collaboration between research and forecasting personnel.
- Develop a comprehensive range of products

Key Performance Indicators:

- Continued involvement with HIRLAM and ECMWF and continued exploitation of their products.
- Verified improvement in the accuracy of NWP output.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications, General Forecasting, Aviation Services

1.7 Objective: Formalise the provision of meteorological data and services to Government Departments, State Bodies, Academic and Research Interests etc.

Strategy:

- Draft a standard Agreement covering provision of data and services as part of Met Éireann's public service responsibilities, for teaching / research purposes etc. – in general, when no information charge applies.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Agreement in place by mid 2006

Lead Division(s) Involved: Commercial Division, C&O Division

2. Aviation Programme

2. High Level Goal

To fulfil the State's obligations to provide meteorological services to aviation and to influence future developments in this area in order to achieve the best long-term result for the State and for the aviation sector.

2.1 Objective: As the Meteorological Service Provider for aviation in Ireland, provide the services defined in Annex 3 to the Chicago Convention, Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS) and Air Navigation Plan Publications in an effective and efficient manner.

Strategies:

- Continually monitor the quality and nature of service provided and keep up to date with requirements as laid down by ICAO.
- Continue the pursuit of efficiencies in order to produce the most cost-effective services to civil aviation.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Continued provision of services to aviation as defined by ICAO.
- Accuracy of forecast information supplied.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Aviation Services.

2.2 Objective: Implement the recommendations of the Department of Transport Working Group on meteorological charges to aviation.

Strategies:

- Calculate charges to civil aviation on the basis of transparent accounts and in accordance with the agreed methodology.
- Arrange administrative matters regarding notification and collection of charges to civil aviation directly with the IAA.
- Engage with aviation user organisations as per Objective 2.3.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Aviation charges notified and collected on schedule.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Aviation Services, Administration & Training.

2.3 Objective: Maintain effective liaison with aviation users of Met Éireann services and use feedback obtained to improve services.

Strategy:

- Consult aviation users and develop and implement plans on service provision and improvement.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Meetings and consultations held with aviation customers.
- An improved service provided to Regional Airports.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Aviation Services, Administration & Training.

2.4 Objective: Monitor the implementation of the Single European Sky initiative and ensure that the interests of Met Éireann and of meteorology are well understood so as to ensure the best service to the aviation users.

Strategies:

- Keep abreast of developments and attempt to influence outcomes at both national and international level.
- Attain designation as aviation meteorological service provider for Ireland.
- Maintain good relations and communications with the Department of Transport and the Irish Aviation Authority and co-operate with the Authority on issues of mutual concern.
- Monitor developments with regard to the issue of Functional Airspace Blocks and liaise, as necessary, with the Irish Aviation Authority and with the UK Met Office.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Satisfactory outcomes attained to developments at both national and international levels.
- Designation of Met Éireann as service provider to aviation.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Aviation Services, Administration & Training.

3. Climate Services

3. High Level Goal

To provide a comprehensive range of climate services to all sectors based on a high quality, up-to-date national climate archive, and, in collaboration with other centres of expertise, provide an authoritative voice on future climate trends in Ireland.

3.1 Objective: Provide an appropriate range of climate services to the public and to specialised users of such information.

Strategies:

- Continue to provide a range of climatological information and services to both Public Service and Commercial customers.
- Pursue improvements in the climate infrastructure by utilisation of the new TUCSON automatic weather stations in the climate network.
- Explore ways of making the processing of climate data and production of end products more efficient.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Timely response provided to external requests as set out in Customer Charter
- TUCSON data quality controlled and fully incorporated in database tables.
- Timely availability and continued good quality of products and data.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Climatology & Observations.*

3.2 Objective: Maximise the use of Met Éireann's climate data holdings.

Strategy:

- Make basic measured climate data available to the greatest extent possible while remaining consistent with commercial and cost-recovery policy and with general European practice.
- Promote use of the data by the research community and other sectors.

Key Performance Indicators:

- High availability of appropriate basic data on the Met Éireann web site.
- Increased level of use of climate data by others.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Climatology & Observations, Commercial.

3.3 Objective: Increase the level of involvement of Met Éireann in the area of climate change studies.

Strategies:

- Give full support to the C4I Project, and help to ensure the continuation of the project and to realise its targets.
- Allocate suitable staff and adequate training resources to the Climatology and Observations Division so as to enhance its capability in this area;

Key Performance Indicators:

- Annual targets of the C4I project achieved.
- Identifiable increased involvement by Met Éireann in climate change issues.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Climatology & Observations, Research & Applications.

4. Specialist Applications of Meteorology

4. High Level Goal

To maintain a high level of expertise and involvement in specialised areas such as agricultural, environmental and marine meteorology and to use this expertise to provide forecast guidance and decision support.

4.1 Objective: Provide guidance to the agricultural and environmental sectors on the impact of weather on operations.

Strategies:

- Provide specialised forecasts and other products tailored to the needs of the farming community.
- Provide information and guidance on current and past meteorological conditions and their effect on agricultural practices to assist modelling the development of crops and of crop and animal diseases.
- Maintain a high level of expertise in agricultural and environmental meteorology.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Availability of good quality guidance to decision makers in the agricultural and environmental areas.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications.

4.2 Objective: Assist in the national preparedness for a potential outbreak of foot and mouth disease and other weather-borne threats.

Strategies:

- Maintain sufficient information gathering and weather modelling resources to provide input for the foot and mouth disease dispersion model.
- Maintain expertise in the spread of weather-borne foot and mouth disease and maintain the capacity to model this spread.
- Maintain close co-operation with the Department of Agriculture and Food and participate in simulation exercises.

- Examine other potential weather-borne threats to public safety and wellbeing, e.g. nuclear fallout, and develop strategies to deal with them.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ability to respond to an outbreak of foot and mouth disease by providing necessary guidance in a timely manner.
- Participation in exercises.
- Other weather-borne threats identified and essential training undertaken by end 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications, General Forecasting.

4.3 Objective: Provide marine forecasts and guidance both for safety at sea and for commercial interests.

Strategies:

- Provide forecasts tailored to the needs of the Marine Community.
- Further develop the WAM wave model during the period and reduce the grid spacing to give more local guidance.
- Support the development of an ocean model for waters around Ireland and co-operate as necessary with departments and agencies involved in marine monitoring in Irish waters.
- Collaborate at national level in research in storm surge and in pollution monitoring/forecasting.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Accurate marine and inshore forecasts issued in a timely manner.
- Continued membership of the Marine Safety Working Group.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications, General Forecasting.

4.4 Objective: Monitor the marine environment

Strategies:

- Give high priority to the Irish Marine Data Buoy Network and to fulfilling Met Éireann's role in this co-operative project.
- Promote the integration of the M1 buoy into the EUCOS/SURFMAR programme.
- Investigate alternative and/or enhanced facilities for coastal observations.
- Maintain commitment to collect marine observations from our voluntary observing ships – with Port Meteorological Officers training crews and supplying instruments as required.
- Increase the capacity to collect and quality control marine observations from agencies outside Met Éireann, namely the Commissioners of Irish Lights, Port and Harbour Authorities, and offshore wind and wave energy companies.
- Maintain commitment to EUCOS Surface Marine programmes.

Key Performance Indicator:

- All marine observations collected and made available in time for use by the forecasters and in NWP.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications, General Forecasting.

4.5 Objective: Provide a climatology of Irish Waters.

Strategies:

- Develop a data-base of marine observations as part of the basis for a marine atlas of Irish Waters and the provision of marine weather reports.
- Quality control, and store in Met Éireann's climate data-base, marine observations collected by either Met Éireann or outside agencies.
- Seek funding during the period for the production of an Irish Marine Atlas.
- Provide reports and statistics of current and past meteorological conditions in the Irish Marine Area as required.

Key Performance Indicators:

- More comprehensive archive of marine data available.
- Timely response to requests for reports on marine meteorological conditions.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Research & Applications.

5. Commercial Services

5. High Level Goal

To undertake commercial meteorological activity in a way that is consistent with competition law and with our other mandates so as to reduce the overall cost of Met Éireann to the Exchequer.

5.1 Objective: Engage in profitable commercial activity in the field of Meteorology.

Strategies:

- Retain existing commercial customers and seek to attract new customers.
- Grow revenues and improve profitability through enhanced product development, improved marketing and the achievement of efficiencies in production and delivery methods.
- Limit or reduce the expenses of commercial activity so as to produce a positive impact on profitability.
- Improve customer service through implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software systems.
- Promote a customer-centred ethos in all aspects of Met Éireann's activities.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Average annual increase of 5% in real terms in commercial revenue over the period 2005-2007.
- A significant and measurable improvement in profitability.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Commercial, General Forecasting.*

5.2 Objective: Review commercial strategy

Strategy:

- Examine current and potential commercial activity and identify activities which should be given highest priority in the period and devise an implementation plan.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Review conducted and implementation plan compiled by end of 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Commercial.*

5.3 Objective: Continue to expand the range of products and services delivered to customers.

Strategy:

- Expand the range of products and make them and existing services available electronically.

Key Performance Indicators:

- New and existing services provided electronically.
- Growth of revenue from new e-media channels.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *General Forecasting, Aviation Services, Climatology & Observations, Information Technology, Commercial.*

5.4 Objective: Explore co-operative arrangements with other European meteorological services on commercial activity.

Strategy:

- Investigate suitable commercial projects for collaboration with the UK Met Office and other European services and pursue any opportunities identified.

Lead Division Involved: *Commercial*

6. Environmental and Geophysical Monitoring

6. High Level Goal

In association with our meteorological functions, carry out an appropriate and relevant set of environmental monitoring and geophysical programmes.

6.1 Objective: Carry out appropriate environmental monitoring programmes.

Strategies:

- In the light of the 2005 WMO review of Met Éireann's Global Atmospheric Watch contribution, review current environmental monitoring programme with EPA and other bodies and amend programme as necessary.
- Develop the laboratory analysis aspect of the programme in line with national requirements and international guidelines.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Increased level of interest among national and international users of the data.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Instrumentation & Environmental Monitoring.*

6.2 Objective: Carry out a programme of geophysical monitoring.

Strategies:

- Continue the measurement programmes of solar radiation, earth magnetics, seismology and phenology.
- Keep abreast of national and international developments in these fields.
- Seek appropriate collaborative arrangements with other centres.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Increased level of interest among national and international users of the data.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Instrumentation & Environmental Monitoring.*

7. Meteorological Infrastructure

7. High Level Goal

Maintain and enhance a technical infrastructure for Met Éireann that supports the production of its outputs.

7.1 Objective: Continue the automation of the manned weather observing network.

Strategies:

- Refine, by end of Q1, 2006, in consultation with all stakeholders, a detailed Implementation Plan for the automation of the manned synoptic network (excluding the airports and Valentia Observatory), taking all technical aspects into account.
- Make final decisions regarding the sites for the automatic stations (Q1, 2006).
- Install the necessary equipment in the agreed locations, to be completed by end of 2007.
- Produce in Q2, 2006, a plan for the devolution of work to the staff remaining in the network locations.
- Use staff resources, released through the automation programme, to provide additional necessary resources to support Divisions.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Existence, by Q1, 2006, of an Implementation Plan
- Final decisions on sites and on the HR aspects made by the end of Q1 2006.
- Completion of the necessary technical tasks to enable the installation to be completed by the end of 2007.
- Installation and commissioning of the Automatic Weather Stations throughout 2006 and 2007.
- No interruptions to the supply of data from stations as systems are replaced.
- Devolution of work plan produced by end Q2 2006

Lead Division(s) Involved: Directorate.

7.2 Objective: Maintain and improve the quantity, quality and cost-efficiency of atmospheric measurements carried out by Met Éireann's network of observing stations in support of the requirements of real-time forecasting and of climatology.

Strategies:

- Continue operational programmes of upper-air and surface weather reporting.
- Maintain, as far as possible, the progress of the TUCSON project for the deployment of automatic weather stations.
- Maintain the network of co-operating and voluntary observing stations.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Rollout of TUCSON stations at a rate consistent with the higher priority given to the automation of the synoptic network.
- Availability of high quality data from synoptic, voluntary and co-operating station network, meeting agreed standards.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Instrumentation & Environmental monitoring, Climatology & Observations.

7.3 Objective: Develop a new ICT Strategy for Met Éireann for period 2006-2007.

Strategies:

- Define the objectives of the ICT strategy and establish the ICT strategy body with clear terms of reference by the end of Q2, 2006.
- Place strong emphasis in the strategy document on the views and requirements of ICT users and on the role of ICT as a service to both internal and external customers.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Objectives set and ICT strategy body established by mid 2006.
- ICT strategy document completed by end 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Information Technology.

7.4 Objective: Implement a programme of updating the ICT infrastructure of Met Éireann.

Strategies:

- Identify ICT staffing requirements in all areas of Met Éireann and fill all vacancies identified.
- Devise and implement a capital expenditure programme for ICT, based on the objectives of the ICT Strategy (2006-2007) mentioned in 7.3 above.
- Prepare and implement a National plan for migration to table-driven code formats (M-TDCF) in accordance with recommendations and timetables of WMO.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Programme devised by mid 2006 with implementation begun by end 2006.
- M-TDCF Plan prepared and agreed with stakeholders by end Q2, 2006
- M-TDCF Plan implemented for all Irish observation data by end 2007 at the latest.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Information Technology.

7.5 Objective: Implement a programme of updating the meteorological and geophysical instrumentation infrastructure of Met Éireann.

Strategy:

- Devise and implement a capital expenditure programme for meteorological, environmental and geophysical instrumentation in Met Éireann.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Demonstrable contribution of the programme to the effectiveness and efficiency of Met Éireann.
- Equipment installed as scheduled and meeting agreed performance standards.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Instrumentation & Environmental Monitoring.

7.6 Objective: Identify all infrastructural risks and determine the requirements for Business Continuity Plans and/or Disaster Recovery Plans for the organisation.

Strategy:

- Establish a Working Group in Met Éireann to identify risks associated with the increasing dependence on technology and centralised automated systems and to determine the requirements for Business Continuity Plans or Disaster Recovery Plans for the organisation.
- Identify potential “Single Points of Failure” (SPOFs) and provide guidance to staff on what to do when such failures occur.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Infrastructural deficiencies identified and clear guidelines provided for staff on what to do when mission critical facilities (e.g. HQ building inaccessible) are unavailable for extended periods.
- Business Continuity Plans and/or Disaster Recovery Plans agreed with stakeholders.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Directorate.

8. Met Éireann's Mission, Status and Relationship with DEHLG and Government

8. High Level Goal

To position Met Éireann so as to make the most effective contribution to the achievement of Government objectives in the general environmental area.

8.1 Objective: Ensure that Met Éireann contributes effectively by providing required information and advice to the Government and by operating in support of Government policies.

Strategy:

- Take steps to ensure that the implications of all relevant Government policies are understood and incorporated into planning processes.

Key Performance Indicator:

- All Government policies incorporated in planning processes.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Directorate.

8.2 Objective: Ensure that Cross-Departmental issues pertinent to Met Éireann are identified and addressed.

Strategy:

- Identify services provided to or received from other Departments and agencies and rationalise as necessary.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Completion of this task by the end of 2007.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training.

8.3 Objective: Continue to develop an effective working relationship with DEHLG.

Strategies:

- Foster a greater understanding of the relationship between Met Éireann and the rest of the Department and seek to have this understood by staff on both sides.
- Enhance co-operation at all levels on matters such as Human Resource Management, Finance and Accounts, ICT and the approach to environmental issues.
- Seek to establish synergies in appropriate areas such as climate change and environmental monitoring.

Key Performance Indicators:

- A smooth working relationship between the relevant units.
- Increased cooperation
- Appropriate links established

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Directorate, Administration & Training, Climatology & Observations, Information Technology.*

8.4 Objective: Continue to review the appropriateness of the current status of Met Éireann as a line Division of a Government Department.

Strategies:

- Based on previous investigations, updated information and new developments such as the Single European Sky, update the Met Éireann position by the middle of 2006.
- Engage with DEHLG, as necessary, on the outcome of the above exercise.

Key Performance Indicator:

- The production of a report by the middle of 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Directorate, Administration & Training.*

8.5 Objective: Make the funding arrangements for Met Éireann through the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government more appropriate to the operational nature of the Service.

Strategy:

Formulate, by the end of Q1, 2006, proposals for funding arrangements, including delegated sanction, and attempt to have such agreed with DEHLG.

Key Performance Indicators:

- The production of a proposal by the end of Q1, 2006.

- An agreement on new budgetary arrangements concluded by Q3 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Directorate, Administration & Training.

9. North-South Issues and International Co-operation

9. High Level Goal

Actively seek collaboration with UK and other European meteorological services in order to improve the effectiveness of Met Éireann and to pursue Government objectives in relation to the British-Irish Agreement.

9.1 Objective: Continue the close level of co-operation which exists between Met Éireann and the UK Meteorological Office.

Strategy:

- Maintain and enhance existing links and data exchanges and exploit any new opportunities where further co-operation might bring benefits.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Continued good relations and co-operation with our colleagues in Northern Ireland and in the UK Met Office HQ.

Lead Division(s) Involved: All.

9.2 Objective: Investigate the possibilities for bilateral collaboration with the UK Met Office and other European meteorological services.

Strategies:

- Explore opportunities for collaborative projects.
- Promote a joint approach by European National Meteorological Services towards implementation of the Single European Sky initiative.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Continued exploration of pertinent projects
- Promotion of joint European approach to SES at every appropriate opportunity

Lead Division(s) Involved: Commercial, Aviation Services.

9.3 Objective: Benefit from and contribute to international collaboration and co-operation in the field of meteorology.

Strategies:

- Maintain active membership of WMO, ECMWF, EUMETSAT, EUMETNET, HIRLAM and other international initiatives which may be appropriate.
- Work actively to secure the success of the EUMETSAT MSG and EPS satellite programmes.
- Maintain involvement in the process of ratification by Ireland of the new ECMWF Convention.
- Contribute to the successful implementation of the EUMETNET programmes and obtain appropriate sanction for Met Éireann membership of the new EUMETNET EIG.
- Utilise the Met Alliance to achieve further efficiencies in aviation services.

Key Performance Indicator:

- Continued involvement in the mainstream international meteorological organisations and initiatives and continued benefits from such involvement.

Lead Division(s) Involved: All.

10. The Civil Service Modernisation Programme and Building Internal Capacity

10. High Level Goal

To utilise the Civil Service modernisation programme in all its aspects to improve the efficiency of Met Éireann and to develop the potential of its staff.

10.1 Objective: Implement, by agreement with the unions, a new “unified” grading structure within Met Éireann, to include both Departmental and General Service grades.

Strategies:

- Continue to explore this issue through all possible methods including the normal IR channels and Partnership Council.
- Appoint a high-level working group to progress this objective.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Working group established by the end of Q1 2006.
- Working group report Q4 2006 with implementation begun Q3 2007

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Administration & Training, Partnership Council.*

10.2 Objective: Continue the development and implementation of modernisation initiatives.

Strategies:

- Enhance the efficient and effective use of staff resources to further the objectives of Met Éireann through the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy.
- Ensure that implementation of Work/Life Balance measures is carried out with due regard to the requirements of both staff and the Service.
- Continue to develop the PMDS system and introduce upward feedback as an integral part of the process by Q1 2006.
- Implement the integration of PMDS and HRM as set out in the Agreed Report 1452.

- Ensure that the PMDS process becomes embedded in the strategic planning of the organisation.
- Keep the Met Éireann Strategy Statement up to date as circumstances change and produce annual Business Plans for the organisation as a whole and for the individual Divisions.
- Continue to develop the Partnership concept in Met Éireann so that it contributes to the effectiveness of the organisation. Maintain a vibrant Partnership Council, working within the partnership framework in DEHLG and involve the partnership process in all key areas of Met Éireann's development.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Measurable progress in the implementation of the HR strategy.
- Work/Life Balance measures implemented without reduction in outputs.
- Full participation by all staff in the PMDS process.
- A Strategy Statement and Business Plans which truly reflect the up-to-date situation and are available to all staff.
- Recognition that time devoted to the Partnership Council represents a useful contribution to the organisation.
- Upward feedback integrated with PMDS Q1 2006.
- AR 1452 fully implemented in 2007

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training, Partnership Council.

10.3 Objective: Continue to improve communications, both externally and within Met Éireann.

Strategies:

- Strengthen the communications function within Met Éireann so as to improve the effectiveness of internal and external communications.
- Improve the co-ordination of Met Éireann contact with the media and with the outside world in general and become more proactive in such contacts where weather information is of relevance.

- By the end of 2006, establish a single Met Éireann web service for the dissemination of information to all staff.
- Maintain and update the Met Éireann library facilities as a valuable research, information and communications asset to staff and as a National Meteorological Library for Ireland.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Improved communications with the media and improved presentation of Met Éireann's output.
- The existence of an actively managed internal web service for the flow of information.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training, Research & Applications, Information Technology, General Forecasting, Commercial.

10.4 Objective: Rationalise the forecasting function in Met Éireann with a view to improving all forecasting services, to improve output quality, to achieve efficiencies and to achieve a profitable commercial forecasting operation.

Strategy:

- Take steps to improve the efficiency of the forecasting function in GFD and ASD offices and to achieve a separation of functions within GFD forecasting.
- Enhance co-operation and interoperability between the GFD and ASD forecasting offices.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Specific measures implemented by end 2006.
- Continued development of the initiative to achieve further efficiency in the forecast function.

Lead Division(s) Involved: General Forecasting, Information Technology, Research & Applications.

10.5 Objective: Introduce up-to-date technology and improve organisation in the financial and staff management areas.

Strategies:

- Co-operate with DEHLG in the efficient operation and development of the financial management and Human Resources management systems, ensuring that Met Éireann's particular requirements in these areas are met.
- Determine staffing resources required in Met Éireann to support and maintain all aspects of the MIF system.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Improved financial reports available to management by Q1 2006.
- AL and SL records on PeopleSoft by September 2005
- Historical staff records on PeopleSoft verified by end Q1 2006
- Met Éireann local financial procedures reviewed; amended procedures fully implemented and documented by Q2, 2006.
- All aspects of the MIF operational by the end of 2006
- Accounts Section resources strengthened to reflect the increased workload brought about by the introduction of the MIF system

Lead Division(s) Involved: *Administration & Training, Information Technology.*

10.6 Objective: Ensure a suitable standard of staff accommodation at all Met Éireann locations.

Strategies:

- In 2006, examine the quality of the working environment in terms of cleanliness, décor, comfort and safety levels.
- Identify gaps between the current accommodation and the desired standards; produce, by end of 2006, a timetable for the elimination of the gaps.
- Produce, on an ongoing basis, an annual plan for accommodation maintenance and improvement.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Inspection completed and timetable defined by end 2006.
- Production of annual plans.
- Measurable progress on implementing the timetable.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training, Partnership Council.

10.7 Objective: Match training effort to the requirements of the organisation and widen both the availability and the awareness of training and development opportunities.

Strategies:

- Produce an annual Training Plan based on the training and development requirements identified in the PMDS process; this plan should address all aspects of training relevant to the business needs of Met Éireann.
- Allocate a full training budget each year, including provision for course fees, travel and subsistence and any overtime generated.
- Introduce a wider awareness of training possibilities for Met Éireann Staff by circulating information on the availability of training and how to access it.
- Achieve the target of allocating a sum of 4% of the annual payroll cost towards training and development as envisaged within the Sustaining Progress Agreement.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ongoing training plans which reflect the requirements of the organisation and a good level of implementation of these plans.
- Awareness among all staff of training possibilities.
- The existence of a mechanism for allocating time for training, self-development or increased participation.
- Training and development expenditure at 4% of payroll.
- Provision of the specialist training required within divisions to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training.

10.8 Objective: Ongoing co-operation with the Centre for Meteorology and Climate in University College Dublin with a view to ensuring the availability of academic courses in meteorology, so as to benefit Met Éireann recruitment, training and collaborative projects.

Strategies:

- Continue the co-operative agreement with UCD to ensure that the needs of Met Éireann are met.

- Continue to employ undergraduate students on short-term projects through participation in appropriate work placement schemes coordinated by third-level colleges.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Meetings held with UCD annually to review the activities of the Centre.

- Benefits from training of Met Éireann personnel and from collaborative projects.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Directorate, Research & Applications.

10.9 Objective: Ensure that Met Éireann provides equality of treatment for all staff and customers.

Strategy:

- Implement the civil service policy on Equality/Diversity, “*A Positive Working Environment*”

- Provide training for all staff in Equality/Diversity

Key Performance Indicators:

- An atmosphere which promotes equality and embraces diversity.

- All staff trained by end Q1 2006.

Lead Division(s) Involved: Administration & Training, Partnership Council.

Critical Success Factors

Several factors are critically important to the successful pursuit of the above strategies and to the achievement of the key performance indicators.

The maintenance of appropriate staffing numbers and funding levels is an important requirement as is the continued efficient management of these resources. It is the job of Met Éireann management to optimise the use of those resources which are available. New unresourced demands on the organisation could have a negative impact, although, of course, every effort will be made to accommodate urgent demands.

Achievement of objectives will be hampered if clear and officially accepted definitions of Met Éireann's Public Service role, commercial role and organisational status are not forthcoming within a reasonably short timescale.

Effective liaison with customers and an ability and willingness to respond to their requirements will be essential if quality and relevance of outputs are to be maintained.

Increasing efficiencies in the generation of products and services will be necessary, along with high quality commercial information if the growth in commercial revenues is to be achieved.

A major project will be the automation of the manned meteorological station network. For this project to succeed sufficient staff resources in the technical areas must be available and a high level of co-operation among all Met Éireann stakeholders must be forthcoming. Flexible and innovative ways must be found to deal with all of the HR and technical issues involved. Favourable outcome of planning applications will also be required as will co-operation from OPW, DEHLG and other state agencies.

Part of this strategy involves improvements in communications, both external and internal and the continued implementation of the PMDS process. These will require willingness at all levels in the organisation to accept the need for greater information exchange and will require support for PMDS, particularly at the higher levels.

Many of the above strategies will require good levels of communication and co-operation with other organisations, ranging from the DEHLG and other Government Departments to international meteorological organisations such as WMO and ECMWF. Their success will require that people within these other organisations are open to consideration of co-operative ventures and different ways of operating.

As important as maintaining staff numbers is the maintenance and enhancement of skills levels. This will require willingness on the part of staff and management both in pursuing various ways of acquiring new skills and in helping to pass on their skills to others.

One strategy is to change the existing grading structure within Met Éireann. This notion has been around for some time and has made little headway. To bring it to a successful conclusion will require a willingness on the part of management, unions and staff to explore new ideas openly in a spirit of partnership.

Met Éireann Strategy Statement 2005 – 2007

Glossary of Acronyms

C4I	Community Climate Change Consortium for Ireland
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
ECMWF	European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts
EGOS	European Group on Ocean Stations
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU INTERREG	EU Inter-Regional Funding
EUCOS	EUMETNET Composite Observing System
EUMETNET	The Network of European Meteorological Services
EUMETSAT	European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites
FIR	Flight Information Region
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
HIRLAM	High Resolution Limited Area Model
IAA	Irish Aviation Authority
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
INTRA	Integrated Training
M-TDCF	Migration to table-driven code formats
MIF	Management Information Framework
MMS	Multi-Media Messaging
MSG	Meteosat Second Generation (satellite)
NMS	National Meteorological Service
NWP	Numerical Weather Prediction
PAS	Public Appointments Service
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PRISM	Predictive Irish Sea Model
PRWS	Premium Rate Weather Service
SAF	Satellite Application Facility
SES	Single European Sky
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
SMS	Short Message System
SPOFs	Single Points of Failure
TUCSON	The Unified Climatological and Synoptic Observing Network
WAM	Wave Model
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation