



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe  
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**  
Department of Communications,  
Climate Action & Environment

# Annual Report 2016



An Irish version and English version of the Annual Report may be downloaded from [www.dccae.gov.ie](http://www.dccae.gov.ie)

## Department's Mission Statement

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Our mission is to support economic and social progress and help the country reach its full potential by:

- facilitating the development of communications and energy infrastructure and markets;
- leading the national transition to a sustainable, low-carbon, resource-efficient economy;
- protecting and improving our high-quality natural environment;
- ensuring the sustainable and productive use of our natural resources; and
- promoting the development of the public and private broadcasting sectors.

## Our Values

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Delivery of the goals and objectives set out in this Statement of Strategy will be underpinned by the values set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan:

- A deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect;
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money;
- The highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

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## Ministerial Foreword

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I welcome the publication of this annual report which sets out the activities, achievements and performance of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment in 2016.

There was significant progress made in 2016 on a range of commitments set out in the Programme for Government including:

- Advancing the procurement process on the Government's National Broadband Plan State-funded intervention;
- Publishing the report of the mobile phone and broadband taskforce outlining a range of short-term actions designed to remedy deficiencies and improve service in these areas;
- Signing and ratifying the Paris Agreement, the world's first comprehensive, legally binding agreement on climate change;
- Formally establishing the Climate Change Advisory Council , an independent statutory body established under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015;
- Delivery of the first National Annual Transition Statement, required under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, to each House of the Oireachtas;
- Contributing €2 million to the Green Climate Fund;
- Expenditure of €55 million in Government grant support in the Better Energy Programme, supporting energy efficiency upgrades to more than 24,000 homes and 385 community and commercial buildings;
- A new "Warmth & Wellbeing" pilot scheme to provide deep energy efficiency upgrades to people suffering from acute respiratory conditions and living in poor quality homes.
- A new Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty which sets out how the Government will build on the achievements made to date in alleviating energy poverty.

There was also very significant progress on a range of other Departmental business priorities.

I wish to acknowledge the work of the staff of the Department throughout 2016. I look forward to continuing to work with Minister of State, Seán Kyne T.D., the Oireachtas, the staff in the Department and State bodies under its aegis, and other stakeholders in carrying through the challenging policy agenda set out in the Department's Statement of Strategy 2016-2019.

Denis Naughten T.D.

Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment

## Secretary General's Statement

The new Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment was established in May 2016 and now includes additional functions in the areas of climate change, waste management, resource efficiency, air quality and environmental policy.

The 2016 Annual Report sets out the major areas of activity and progress delivered across the sectors for which the Department is responsible. It provides a summary of the key outputs in 2016 along with highlights of the programmes under each of the high level objectives and strategies in the reconfigured Department's Statement of Strategy 2016 to 2019.

The Department is central to delivery of policies and programmes which have a significant strategic national importance, and which are essential to our national economic and sustainable development.

While the Programme for Government (PfG) underpins much of the work that the Department engages in, it is clear from the annual report that there are substantial additional areas of work underway in the Department:

- Supporting local enterprise through the Department's Trading Online Voucher Scheme. Overall, by end 2016, some 3,000 businesses had been awarded vouchers to invest in developing their online trading capabilities.
- Improving digital engagement. In late 2016, the Department introduced the Getting Citizens Online Programme which is focused on encouraging and empowering citizens to participate fully in a digital economy and society. The Programme includes the new Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme which replaces and builds on the BenefIT Programme.
- Ensuring a diverse and plural media. Six notifications of proposed media mergers were received during 2016. Of these, five were cleared by the Minister without conditions following the examination first phase stage. A sixth was undergoing the first phase examination at year end.

- Ensuring a sustainable funding model for An Post. The Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Bill 2016 was published in December 2016 and provides for the repeal of the price cap mechanism for universal postal services.
- Supporting a recycling society. The Minister approved End of Life Vehicles Environmental Services CLG as the new compliance scheme with effect from 1 January 2017.
- Ensuring sustainable exploitation of our natural resources. A total of 32 petroleum licensing options were awarded during 2016. Of these 28 were awarded on foot of the 2015 Atlantic Margin Licensing Round.

The above examples are a small subset of the Department's achievements in 2016. I would like to acknowledge the strong commitment and dedication of staff in the Department and express my appreciation for the good working relationships with the Department's agencies and State companies, who play a major role in delivering in key strategic and policy areas.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the ongoing support which the Department receives from Minister Denis Naughten T.D. and Minister of State Seán Kyne T.D.

**Mark Griffin**  
**Secretary General**



## Departmental Key Outputs in 2016

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### Communications

- Household broadband market penetration at end 2016 reached 1.7 million subscribers. Ireland's household broadband penetration rate (fixed + mobile) at 83% was higher than the EU28 average of 80% at the end of 2016.
- The commercial telecommunications sector has invested over €2.5 billion in network upgrades and enhanced services since 2012 with approximately 1.4 million of the 2.3 million premises in Ireland now having access to high speed services of at least 30Mbps.
- The Department continued to progress work on the Government's National Broadband Plan, which will include a State-funded intervention to ensure those parts of the country which are not covered by telecoms industry investment in high speed services, will also have access to a modern, reliable and high-speed broadband service.
- The report of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Task Force was published and includes 40 actions to address broadband and mobile phone coverage deficits and investigate how better services could be provided to consumers.
- The Department's Trading Online Voucher Scheme continued to support small businesses. Overall, by end 2016, some 3,000 businesses had been awarded vouchers to invest in developing their online trading capabilities. More than 7,000 businesses have benefitted from advice and peer-to-peer support through their participation in the information seminars delivered by the Local Enterprise Offices under the scheme.
- In late 2016, the Department introduced the Getting Citizens Online Programme which is focused on encouraging and empowering citizens to participate fully in a digital economy and society. The Programme includes the new Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme which replaces and builds on the BenefIT Programme. Overall, the BenefIT programme delivered almost 160,000 digital literacy training places, 16,000 of which were delivered in 2016.
- During 2016, the NDRC continued to invest in digital innovation initiatives, facilitating the creation of new ventures, through its investment and support programmes. The Digital Hub Development Agency provided office space and enterprise supports for 97 digital companies (representing a 95% occupancy rate), employing 707 people at the Digital Hub cluster.
- The Emergency Call Answering Service handled over 1.76 million calls in 2016, and continues to have one of the fastest response times in Europe. A public procurement for a new

Operator of the Emergency Call Answering Service commenced in Q3 2016 and dialogue with bidders for the contract was ongoing at year end.

- Fibre has been laid in ducting alongside the Galway Mayo gas pipeline and is available for use.

## Broadcasting/ Postal

- A total of €179.2 million was contributed through TV licence fee receipts to RTÉ to fund programme outputs.
- A total of €26.1 million of exchequer funding and TV licence fee funding of €9.3 million was provided to TG4 to deliver on programme commitments including 4.55 hours of new Irish language programming per day.
- €13.65 million in grants was provided from TV licence fee funding to the Broadcasting Fund and used to support projects in the audio and audio-visual media sector.
- Six notifications of proposed media mergers were received during 2016. Of these, five were cleared by the Minister without conditions following the examination first phase stage. A sixth was undergoing the first phase examination at year end.
- The Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Bill 2016 was published in December 2016. The Bill provides for the repeal of the price cap mechanism for universal postal services.
- Eircode is now integrated into Google Maps satnav products/ apps which helps to accurately locate addresses and get directions using a range of mobile devices and PCs.

## Environment

- The new regional waste enforcement structures, the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLAs), were consolidated during 2016. The WERLAs have responsibility for coordinating waste enforcement actions within their regions, and setting common objectives for waste enforcement. The work of the WERLAs is overseen by a National Steering Committee, which is chaired by the Department.
- Progress continued to be made in terms of Ireland becoming a recycling society. New criteria were developed for preparing for re-use of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) organisations to support the development of a vibrant re-use market in Ireland. The British Irish Council considered food waste and endorsed the need to take concrete steps towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal target to halve per capita food waste by 2030.

- The Minister approved End of Life Vehicles Environmental Services (ELVES) CLG as the new compliance scheme with effect from 1 January 2017. ELVES CLG has been given responsibility for the establishment of a national collection system for End of Live Vehicles (ELV) and for the achievement of the targets set down in the ELV Directive.
- To enable and support the enforcement of environmental provisions relating to solvents, paints and coal products, a series of fixed payment notices were introduced for breaches of the provisions of the Air Pollution Act.
- The Department published a report prepared by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment of the Netherlands (RIVM) on the current scientific knowledge on the possible effects of exposure to electro -magnetic fields. A report was also published, in November 2016 by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on the potential economic impact on Ireland of a nuclear accident.
- The Department organised a dedicated training event on AIE for public authority officials which was delivered to approximately 110 attendees from 41 public authorities in October 2016.
- Two public consultations were carried out in quarter four 2016 to complete National Implementation Reports for both the Aarhus Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register. The National Implementation Reports were submitted to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Aarhus Convention Secretariat and are available on the Department website.
- The Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grant Scheme (ALAGS) provides funding to local authorities to conduct public awareness and education initiatives at a local level in respect of both litter and graffiti. The Department allocated €690,000 in grants under ALAGS for 2016.
- The Local Environment Partnership Fund/Local Agenda 21 Scheme (LA21) supports environmental initiatives by communities, individuals and not-for-profit groups. The Department provided funding of €400,000 for the 2016 LA21 Scheme. Local authorities provide matching funding and private sources also make contributions. In 2016, when all three funding sources were combined, total funding leveraged through the LA21 Scheme amounted to in excess of €1.4 million and supported over 700 projects.

## Climate Action and Energy

- Ireland signed and ratified the Paris Agreement, the world's first comprehensive, legally binding agreement on climate change, on 22 April and 4 November 2016 respectively. The approval of Paris Agreement by the European Union enabled its entry into force on 4 November 2016.

- The Climate Change Advisory Council, an independent statutory body established under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, was formally established in January 2016. The role of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and recommendations to Ministers and to the Government on the formulation of climate change mitigation and adaptation policy.
- The Minister delivered his first National Annual Transition Statement, required under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, to each House of the Oireachtas in December 2016.
- In anticipation of developing Ireland's first statutory National Adaptation Framework, a public consultation on this process was carried out in March 2016 with a view to informing the ongoing development work on the framework.
- Local Authority Guidelines for developing climate adaptation strategies were published in May 2016. The purpose of these guidelines is to support local authorities in the development of a local climate change adaptation strategies with the aim of fostering coherence between strategies developed at local and national scale.
- The Department continued its engagement with International Climate Finance by making Ireland's first contribution (€2 million) to the Green Climate Fund.
- The Energy Act 2016 was passed by the Oireachtas in July 2016. It includes provisions to enhance the powers of the Commission for Energy Regulation and to facilitate the delivery of new wholesale electricity market rules for the Single Electricity Market across the island of Ireland.
- €55 million in Government grant support was invested in the Better Energy Programme, supporting energy efficiency upgrades to more than 24,000 homes and 385 community and commercial buildings. This delivered energy savings of 182 GWh reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 45 ktCO<sub>2</sub> and lowered energy bills by €11.6 million in 2016.
- A new "Warmth & Wellbeing" pilot scheme was launched to provide deep energy efficiency upgrades to people suffering from acute respiratory conditions and living in poor quality homes.
- The first period of the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (2014-2016) drew to a close with the energy industry having delivered energy savings of 1,868 GWh, comfortably exceeding the 1,650 GWh target. The savings delivered over this first phase of the scheme are equivalent to the energy consumption of approximately 100,000 homes.
- 350 MW approx. of renewable electricity capacity was installed during the year. A total of 174 million litres of sustainable biofuels were placed on the road transport fuel market and 638 new electric vehicles were grant aided in 2016.

- A new Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty was published which sets out how the Government will build on the achievements made to date in alleviating energy poverty.
- The Annual Report 2016 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance showed that by the end of 2015, public sector bodies had reported energy efficiency improvements amounting to 21% - 2,442 GWh. This Department provided €1.9 million in support in 2016 to help public sector organisations build on this. In December 2016 Ireland's first Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy was approved by the Government.
- €1.6 million in exchequer funding was provided to support businesses, large and small, who want to increase their energy efficiency.

## Natural Resources

- In 2015, Ireland sourced just 3% of its natural gas needs from indigenous production. In 2016, following the first full year of production from the Corrib gas field, operated by the Corrib Partners, that figure rose to in excess of 55%. In the short term, Corrib will supply over half of the State's natural gas needs.
- A total of 32 petroleum licensing options were awarded during 2016. Of these 28 were awarded on foot of the 2015 Atlantic Margin Licensing Round. This is by far the largest number of licensing options awarded in any year or in any licensing round held in the Irish Offshore.
- In November 2016, the EPA published a Joint Research Programme report on the potential impacts of unconventional gas exploration on the environment and human health. The EPA-led research outlined that issues remain unresolved, including concerns regarding groundwater and air quality. The moratorium on the use of Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction (UGEE) declared in 2011 remains in place.
- Ireland was the third largest producer of zinc in Europe during 2016. Tara mine itself, which employs about 600 people, is Europe's largest zinc mine and also one of the largest in a global comparison.
- There was an active mineral exploration sector operating in Ireland in 2016, with 567 prospecting licences extant at end-2016.
- Lisheen Mine ceased production at the end of 2015. During 2016 the Department continued working closely with the Environmental Protection Agency and Tipperary County Council to ensure compliance with all the necessary environmental and planning conditions associated with the closure of the mine, as well as the obligations under the Minerals Development Acts.

- Remediating historic mine site legacy issues continued through 2016 at Avoca, with the continuation of a programme of priority public health and safety works. The Department spent €1.3 million on these works in 2016.
- There was a positive external review in 2016 of Phase 1 of the National Seabed Mapping project (INFOMAR) and commencement of Phase 2 which will complete the mapping of all Irish waters. The Tellus mapping Programme was extended with airborne surveying of Galway and South Mayo. A new programme of monitoring and modelling of groundwater and turlough flooding commenced in response to the 2015/16 floods. The GSI also reported further progress through the Geoscience Ireland business cluster, with 179 net new jobs added by members.
- In 2016, the new Science Foundation Ireland, Industry and DCCAE supported Irish Centre for Research in Applied Geosciences (iCRAG) recruited over 70 researchers, while GSI commenced research collaborations with Fulbright and supported 40 SME and academic projects.
- The Department provided €26.8 million to Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) in 2016 to support the protection, conservation and development of Ireland's inland fisheries resource, the fish and their habitats. In 2016, IFI allocated over 188,000 man hours to safeguarding Ireland's fisheries resource in its fisheries protection programme, which comprised planned day and night patrols, covert patrols and intelligence led surveillance operations.
- In support of the National Strategy for Angling Development (NSAD), which was launched in 2015, the Department provided €500,000 to IFI specifically for 50 community-based projects nationwide.



## High Level Objective 1

### Communications

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To contribute to the ongoing growth and development of Irish economy and society by continuing to develop a stable, innovative and secure digital communications and services infrastructure.

The Department supports economic growth, jobs, competitiveness and social inclusion through a range of policies and regulation designed to facilitate a more digitally connected society. This includes plans to ensure that high quality broadband is available to all citizens, promoting the use of digital technologies by citizens and businesses, and through support for digital entrepreneurship.

#### National Broadband Plan

The National Broadband Plan aims to ensure that every citizen and business, regardless of location, has access to a high quality, high speed broadband service. This is being achieved through a combination of commercial investment by telecommunications companies, and a State-funded network build in areas where investment by commercial companies has not materialised.

The commercial telecommunications sector has invested over €2.5 billion in network upgrades (€3.3 billion including mobile spectrum auction) and enhanced services since 2012 with approximately 1.4 million of the 2.3 million premises in Ireland now having access to high speed services of at least 30mbps. These very significant investments represent a step-change in the quality of services available. These investments are not confined to urban areas, as towns in every county in Ireland have been upgraded in the last three years in particular.

The procurement process for the National Broadband Plan State Intervention which had commenced in December 2015, with the publication of a Pre-qualification Questionnaire and Project Information Memorandum, continued in 2016 and a number of stages of the procurement process were successfully concluded. The Pre-Qualification stage concluded in June with three of five bidders being shortlisted to continue to the competitive dialogue stage of the process. Also in June, the Government made a decision on the ownership model choosing to go with the commercial stimulus model (the “Gap Funding” model). At end 2016 the intensive competitive dialogue with the three shortlisted bidders was ongoing.

The Department's monitoring of progress by commercial operators in rolling out high speed broadband services resulted in a decision by the Minister in November 2016 to bring 84,500 premises back into the State Intervention area where intended investment by commercial operators had not materialised. At year end, the Department was continuing its evaluation of a proposal it had received from eir in October to build out high speed broadband to a further 300,000 premises in rural Ireland on a commercial basis.

## Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce

Pending rollout of the National Broadband Plan, a number of initiatives are in train to enhance the quality of mobile phone and data services across Ireland and particularly in rural Ireland.

Following inclusion in the Programme for Government of a commitment for a Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce, in July 2016, the Minister established a Task Force to identify immediate solutions to broadband and mobile phone coverage deficits and investigate how better services could be provided to consumers prior to the full build and roll-out of the network planned under the NBP State intervention. The report of the Task Force which contains 40 actions was published in December 2016 and is available on the Department's website.

Other initiatives are underway to enhance services across the State. The Minister signed regulations allowing ComReg to proceed with a 2017 allocation of spectrum in the 3.6 GHz radio spectrum band. This will provide an 86% increase in total spectrum available for mobile and fixed wireless services.

In the Department's Estimates for 2017, the Minister also secured an €8 million provision for RTE to allow it to free up the 700 MHz spectrum band. ComReg in turn will make plans to allocate this spectrum to provide for significantly enhanced mobile coverage. The 700 MHz band is particularly suited to rural environments where the signal can travel long distances.

## EU Digital Single Market Strategy

The EU Digital Single Market (DSM) strategy was adopted on 6 May 2015 by the European Commission. The Commission's aim is to create a DSM where the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured — and where citizens and businesses can seamlessly and fairly access online goods and services, whatever their nationality, and wherever they live. The Commission believes that the DSM could contribute €415 billion to the European economy, boosting jobs, growth, competition, investment and innovation.

The DSM is coordinated in Ireland through the Department of the Taoiseach and the Interdepartmental Committee on the Digital Single Market. This Department is responsible for



progressing files across the areas of telecommunications, cybersecurity, broadcasting, postal services and ePrivacy. In 2016 agreement was achieved on the definition of Fair Use Policy for EU Roam Like at Home which will commence on 15 June 2017, as well as the 700Mhz spectrum file. 2017 should see agreement on WiFi4EU and the new European Electronic Communications Code.

## Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs)

The State-owned Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) consist of wholesale fibre networks located in 94 regional cities and towns throughout Ireland. The Department continued to oversee the activities of enet, the Management Services Entity which manages, maintains and operates the MANs on behalf of the State. At the end of 2016, 85 of the 88 MANs were being used by some 65 commercial communications operators, enabling the provision of telecommunications and broadband services to customers using the MANs fibre network.

In late 2016, the Department concluded an internal review of the MANs Programme which involved a retrospective review of the performance of the MANs in terms of the achievement of their policy objectives, and an assessment of their future role and governance arrangements. The review found that the MANs have played, and continue to play, an important role in making the regions competitive and attractive for foreign direct investment. The creation of the MANs fibre network facilitates internet service providers, large and small, in responding to the ongoing growth in demand for bandwidth capacity. Continuity in the delivery of MANs services is important for the ongoing provision of competitive high capacity broadband services in the regions.

## Galway Mayo Fibre Project

The Galway Mayo Fibre Project runs alongside the gas pipeline connecting the Corrib Gas terminal in North Mayo to the National Grid, at Craughwell in Co Galway. The project will provide high speed connectivity to support improved broadband services for businesses and individuals in a part of the State historically underserved by fibre. Fibre laying, funded and arranged by Shell E and P Ireland, was largely completed in 2016 and dark fibre services are available between Ballymoneen, Co Galway and Crossmolina, Co Mayo.

## Emergency Call Answering Service

The Emergency Call Answering Service handled over 1.76 million calls in 2016, and continues to have one of the fastest response times in Europe. A public procurement for a new Operator of the Emergency Call Answering Service was commenced in Q3 of 2016 and dialogue with bidders for the contract was ongoing at year end.



## National Digital Strategy

The Department continued to promote digital adoption and implement initiatives under the National Digital Strategy in three key areas - enterprise, citizens and education.

## Trading Online

In 2016, the Department published two reports which show the critical importance of digital to economic growth and prosperity in Ireland and highlight the significant growth opportunities for businesses that engage in digital trade. Indecon's "Assessment of the macro-economic impact of the internet and digital on the Irish economy" showed that the digital economy represents 6% (€12.3 billion) of Ireland's GDP and is growing fast, estimated to expand to over €21 billion by 2020. With Irish consumers spending around €850,000 per hour online, 24 hours a day, supporting Irish businesses to trade online is a key economic and jobs imperative.

The Department's Trading Online Voucher Scheme continued to support small businesses to sell their goods and services online. The scheme is administered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices. 1,159 businesses were awarded vouchers in 2016 to invest in developing their online trading capabilities. Some 3,300 businesses benefitted from advice and peer-to-peer support through their participation in the information seminars delivered by the LEOs under the scheme.

According to the Department's second report into the enterprise impacts of the scheme, it is helping small businesses grow on average by 21%, increase employment by 35%, and 60% export for the first time. Digital trade is contributing to sustainable regional economic development, with urban and rural based businesses benefitting equally from the online opportunity.

In 2016, the Department conducted an operational review of the scheme, and commenced consideration of initiatives to significantly scale the scheme so that more businesses can avail of the opportunities of digital. The Department also embarked on a series of regional events, in collaboration with the LEOs, to showcase the benefits of trading online, provide training and increase awareness of the Government support available.

## Citizen Skills & Engagement

The Department's new Getting Citizens Online Programme is focussed on encouraging and empowering citizens to participate fully in a digital economy and society. The Programme includes the new Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme which replaces and builds on the BenefIT Programme which provided over 16,000 digital literacy training places in 2016.

In December 2016, following the conclusion of a competitive call for proposals, 15 community voluntary and not-for-profit organisations were awarded grant funding under the Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme to provide digital skills training in 2017 to some 26,000 citizens who have never used the internet. Training is provided, free of charge, across all counties and is targeted at people aged over 45, farming communities, small business owners, the unemployed, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged groups.

During 2017, the Department will establish a partnership framework, with both public and private sector stakeholders, to provide digital assistance to support citizens to "do more with digital" in their everyday life. In addition, increased promotion and awareness of the benefits of digital will be pursued in collaboration with partners.

## Schools Digital Champion Programme

The Department continued to encourage the use of digital in education following the successful rollout of 100Mbps broadband to every second level school in Ireland.

The School Digital Champion Programme was rolled out nationally in September 2016 following the success of the pilot programme in 2015/2016. A total of 68 schools from 23 Counties, representing over 300 students are participating in the 2016/17 Programme.

The programme provides a platform for greater integration of ICT and greater collaboration between teachers and their students through valuable project-based learning. It enables students to develop their creativity, critical-thinking and communications skills and allows students to make a real difference to their school, local business and wider community through the productive use of digital technology and data sources.

The School Digital Champion Programme leverages the expertise and goodwill of industry, and involves targeted training for students and teachers as well as opportunities to meet with leading technology companies.

## Digital Entrepreneurship

The Department continued to support a growing and vibrant digital start-up community in Ireland through both the NDRC and the Digital Hub Development Agency.

## National Digital Research Centre (NDRC)

NDRC continued to fund digital innovation initiatives and facilitate the creation of new ventures through its principal investment and accelerator programmes:

- **VentureLab:** a 6 month programme with the objective of getting start-ups based on novel, defensible science and technology to market and ready for seed investment
- **Catalyser:** a 6 month accelerator programme aimed at start-ups and founder teams with deep know-how and technology that addresses a significant unmet market need
- **LaunchPad:** a 3 month accelerator programme to enable entrepreneurial teams to transform solid ideas into commercially viable start-ups.

During 2016, NDRC invested in 15 LaunchPad digital accelerator projects, 3 Catalyser companies and had 2 science-based VentureLab projects under development. Furthermore, it invested in 10 companies under Female Founders, a programme designed to support female entrepreneurs to take their idea and craft a scalable business model to encourage further investment.

NDRC estimates that, by the end of 2016, companies in its portfolio had created more than 680 high value full-time jobs in Ireland along with 127 full-time jobs overseas, and had attracted follow-on investment of €152 million.

## Digital Hub Development Agency (DHDA)

The Digital Hub Development Agency continued to provide flexible office space solutions and supports for emerging digital enterprises at the Digital Hub cluster. At end 2016, 97 companies (representing a 95% occupancy rate), employing 707 people, were located in the Digital Hub cluster. To date, some 300 digital companies have outgrown the office space at the Digital Hub campus, and gone on to expand their businesses elsewhere.

The Agency’s strategy envisages a significant expansion of its office capacity through the development and refurbishment of its properties. The Agency has made significant progress in recent years in terms of developing its campus, in turn contributing to urban regeneration in the Dublin 8 area.

In 2016, the Agency completed the dialogue stage of a competitive process aimed at redeveloping a site (approximately 1.1 hectares), known as the Vathouse 7 site to the south of Thomas Street. It is expected that the development could result in the addition of a significant amount of commercial office capacity for the DHDA, as well as making an important contribution to economic and social activity in the area through a number of mixed-use developments.



### Cyber Security

The National Cyber Security Centre saw further development in 2016, particularly in its capacity to deal with large-scale cyber incidents. Final arrangements are being made to facilitate the transfer of cyber security operations to the new facility in UCD with the move expected to take place in Q2 2017. A permanent

Head of Incident Response was appointed, and a programme of recruitment through 2017 was agreed. CSIRT-IE has also been developing capacity by launching its own bespoke infrastructure equipped to deal with Governmental and National cybersecurity incidents. The new infrastructure, staff and premises are all key components in the development of a National Competent Authority for Cyber security that will be a requirement under the upcoming Network and Information Security Directive.

From a policy perspective the work in 2016 was largely focused on the creation of Heads of Bill to enable the enactment of the NISD in 2018 and maintaining ongoing engagement with the various working groups in Europe to ensure clarity is sought surrounding certain aspects of the directive such as the definition of Digital Service Providers and the designation of Operator of Essential Services.



## High Level Objective 2

### Broadcasting and Media

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To promote, support and protect a diverse and plural media sector, including the provision of high quality public service broadcasting, and a broadcasting sector underpinned by a proportionate and effective regulatory regime.

#### Funding of Public Service Broadcasting

Public Service Broadcasters continue to face serious funding issues with reductions in advertising and commercial revenue and high levels of TV Licence evasion.

At the request of the Minister, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications, Climate Action & Environment commenced an examination of the longer term issue of the future funding of public service media. The Committee launched a public and stakeholder consultation. The result of this review will help inform future funding policy for public service media in Ireland. In addition, a number of proposals were developed for the amendment of the Broadcasting Act 2009.

#### Migration from 700 MHz Band

In December, RTÉ was formally entrusted with the task of migrating its national digital terrestrial television services from the 700MHz band. In consultation with ComReg and 2RN, the Department worked on a range of issues aimed at delivering a managed migration of broadcasting services from this band in advance of the deadline of June 2020, in co-ordination with the UK. In addition, €8 million was secured in Budget 2017 to fund the necessary work required on the transmission network.

#### RTÉ/TG4

The Department completed the regulatory process which gave RTÉ consent to launch a new Oireachtas television service on Saorview, making this service available to 186,000 households where Saorview is the only means of receiving television services. €6 million of current funding was restored to RTÉ and TG4 under Budget 2017, contributing to the financial sustainability of both broadcasters.

The Department engaged with RTÉ on a Review of its Digital Services and approved the continuation of the RTÉ digital channels and services approved in 2011.

In July 2016, Ms Dee Forbes was appointed as Director General of RTÉ. In October 2016, Mr Alan Esslemont was appointed as Director General of TG4.

A total of €24 million of exchequer funding and TV licence fee funding of €9.3 million was provided to TG4 to deliver on programme commitments including 4.55 hours of new Irish language programming per day.

## Designation of Major Events

The Audio-Visual Media Services (AVMS) Directive allows Member States to designate certain sporting and cultural events as being of major importance to society and to provide that events so designated should continue to be available on free television services.

The Broadcasting Act 2009 sets out the relevant provisions for designating such events in Ireland and includes an obligation to review the list every three years. The most recent review was initiated by the Department in 2014. Following this review, the Minister decided to designate two additional events, the Senior Ladies Football and Camogie Finals. These proposals have been formally submitted to the EU for approval.

## Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI)

### Sound and Vision

Under Section 158 of the Broadcasting Act 2009, the BAI operate the Sound and Vision Scheme which supports the production and transmission of high quality programming based on Irish culture and heritage. The fund is financed from 7% of net television licence fee receipts.

Following Departmental approval, Sound and Vision III was introduced in January 2015 and will run for five years (2015–2019). Funding of €16.7 million was allocated during 2016 for 91 TV and 407 radio projects.

### Archiving Scheme

The Archiving Scheme is also funded through television licence fee receipts. The scheme provides funding support for the development of an archiving culture in the Irish broadcasting sector which will contribute to the preservation of broadcasting heritage.

Since the Schemes launch in 2012, €5.12 million has been awarded to support 23 projects. €1 million of funding was allocated during 2016.

The Scheme closed in April 2016 and is currently under review. This review will inform the basis for any future scheme.

## Media Mergers/Media Plurality

Under the Competition Act 2002 (as amended), the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, has statutory responsibility for examining proposed mergers, acquisitions and transactions between media businesses to determine if they are compatible with the public interest in protecting media plurality in Ireland.

Six notifications of proposed media mergers were received during 2016. Of these, five were cleared by the Minister without conditions following an initial, phase 1, examination. The sixth was still undergoing an initial examination at year end. Subsequently in early January 2017, this media merger was referred to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) for a full, phase 2, examination.

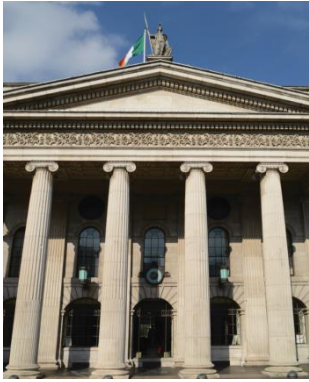
The BAI Report on Ownership and Control of Media Businesses in Ireland 2012-2014, which the Authority is required to produce every three years under the Competition Act 2002 (as amended), was published by the Minister in June 2016.

## ICGAG

In 2014, the Internet Content Governance Advisory Group, an independent expert group was established to advise the Government on certain high profile internet issues, submitted its report and accompanying recommendations to Government. The report contained 30 structural, legislative and administrative recommendations, the responsibility for which falls across a number of Government Departments. Subsequent to the report, a cross-Departmental Implementation Group was established. This Group is chaired by this Department and comprises representatives from the Department of Health, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Department of Justice (Office of Internet Safety), and the Department of Education and Skills.

The Department has committed to reporting to Government by the end of 2017 on the implementation of the report's recommendations.





## High Level Objective 3

### Postal

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To ensure Irish customers, both business and residential, enjoy competitively priced, high quality postal services on a par with the highest quality standards in key comparator EU economies.

#### An Post

The Department continued to work with An Post in 2016 to ensure that effective corporate governance was in place. It engaged regularly with the company in relation to its financial position.

The mails business is undergoing a profound structural change both here and internationally. Electronic substitution is having a significant impact on the letters business for the company in terms of decline in mail volumes. The trend which has been evident for some years accelerated in 2016 resulting in a serious financial impact for An Post. Given the difficult financial situation facing An Post, Government agreed to introduce legislation to repeal the price cap mechanism for universal postal services as a matter of urgency. The Communications Regulation (Postal Services) (Amendment) Bill 2016 was published in December 2016 and was enacted in March 2017. This enables An Post to increase prices in the short term and generate much needed cash flow.

In order to cope with the rapidly changing environment in which it operates, An Post announced in December 2016 that it was undertaking a major strategic review which will consider the scale, scope and structure of the company for the long-term, taking into account major technology and market shifts. The review will identify the strategic changes and restructuring necessary to maintain the company on a sound financial footing. The Government fully supports the undertaking of this review, the outcome of which is expected in Q2 2017.

The Programme for a Partnership Government commits to acting on the recommendations in the report of the Post Office Network Business Development Group. On foot of a reconfiguration of Government Departments in July 2016, responsibility for the post office network and the implementation of the recommendations of the Post Office Network Business Development Group, transferred to the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. As of May 2017 arrangements are in hand to reassign responsibility for the post office network back to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment given this Department's overall responsibility for An Post.

## Postcodes

The Department continues to oversee the Eircode Service Provider to ensure a fully operational postcode system realising the benefits to the public, public sector bodies and private sector (including online services) from locating all addresses in the State and use of geospatial analysis.

Since the launch of Eircode in July 2015 there have been over 10 million lookups on the Eircode finder, with average daily hits running at almost 19,500. Since July of 2016, members of the public and businesses can now look up Eircodes for both Geographic and Postal addresses. The addition of Geographic addresses will assist many people in showing an address variation they may be more familiar with rather than the Postal address which was previously the only address displayed on the Eircode Finder website.

Eircode is now integrated in Google Maps satnav products/apps which allow members of the public and businesses to use Google Maps satnav devices/apps to accurately locate addresses and get directions using a range of mobile devices and desktop PCs.

The Department continued to work with Public Service Bodies (PSBs) and has developed and published a number of case studies which identify exemplars across the Public Sector and set out the tangible benefits that each body has realised through implementing Eircodes into their business systems and processes. During 2016 the Department hosted and attended a number of workshops and Public Sector fora at which the exemplars gave practical demonstrations to other PSBs on how they and their customers have benefited from the implementation of Eircodes.



## High Level Objective 4

### Environment

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To promote the protection of our natural environment, the health and well-being of our citizens and the transition to a resource-efficient circular economy in support of ecologically sustainable development, growth and jobs.

### Waste Enforcement

The Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA), established in late 2015, have responsibility for coordinating waste enforcement actions within their regions, and setting common objectives for waste enforcement. The work of the WERLAs is overseen by a National Steering Committee, which is chaired by the Department. Throughout 2016, the Department worked with the new offices to facilitate a transformation from process-driven enforcement, structured around separate implementation of individual regulations, to one that focuses greatest effort on the waste problems and issues that matter most and to take swift, proportionate and effective action. The focus of the WERLAs work programme was based on the agreed national waste enforcement priorities for 2016, which included:

- Roll out of the Pay By Weight Household Waste Collection System,
- Implementation of the enhanced Waste Tyres Producer Responsibility Initiative,
- Illegal Dumping (including fuel laundering waste dumping), and
- Implementation of the Household Food Waste Regulations and associated roll-out of the Brown Bin.

The enforcement structure complements the existing regionalised waste management planning group structure and the cooperative multi-agency approach of the Network for Ireland's Environmental Compliance and Enforcement. The establishment of lead regional enforcement authorities also facilitates more streamlining of the tasks currently undertaken in the waste enforcement area.

## Producer Responsibility Initiatives – WEEE, Batteries & End-of-Life Vehicles

### WEEE Reuse System

The Department continues to monitor the development of the waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) preparing for reuse system throughout 2016. The Producer Register Limited (PRL) assists producer companies in meeting their obligations for the responsible management of WEEE. The criteria developed by the PRL for preparing for re-use of WEEE organisations marks the most significant development in the re-use of electrical and electronic equipment sector since the introduction of the WEEE system in Ireland in 2005. The development of a vibrant re-use market in Ireland will offer many potential social, environmental and economic benefits and the appropriate regulatory environment has been created to ensure that all stakeholders are in a position to play a full and active role in the development of re-use in Ireland.

### Batteries

The Batteries Directive (2006/66/EC) outlines the method and timeframes for calculating the amount of waste batteries that have been collected for recovery and recycling annually. Article 10 of the Directive requires that Member States shall achieve minimum collection rates for waste portable batteries of 45% by 26 September 2016, which is due to be reported to the European Commission in Q2 2017. During 2016, the Department continued to engage with the compliance schemes to ensure the necessary measures and resources were in place to enable Ireland to meet the target. Preliminary data indicates that Ireland will meet the target for 2016.

### End of Life Vehicles

New regulations, enabling the appointment of an approved body to act as a compliance scheme for the End of Vehicle (ELV) Sector in Ireland, were signed by the Minister in November 2016 and End of Life Vehicles Environmental Services (ELVES) CLG was formally approved as the new compliance scheme with effect from 1 January 2017. ELVES CLG represents all producers (as defined under the ELV Directive) in the marketplace and has been given responsibility for the establishment of a national collection system for ELVs and for the achievement of the targets set down in the ELV Directive (2000/53/EC).

## North/South

The twenty-second North South Ministerial Council Environment meeting was held on 14 September 2016. Minister Naughten attended the meeting where items under discussion included waste management, cross border movements of waste and the environmental impact of fuel laundering.

## Food Waste

At the 2016 Ministerial Meeting of the British Irish Council, Ministers endorsed the need to take concrete steps towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal target to halve per capita global food waste. Ministers committed to working together to share experiences of policy interventions to support each administration's ambitions on food waste. The paper prepared by the work sector can be viewed on the British-Irish Council website: [www.britishirishcouncil.org](http://www.britishirishcouncil.org). A sub-group of officials was subsequently established in 2017 to work together to progress the food waste prevention agenda.

## Air Quality

The main focus in this area was on enacting secondary legislation to transpose EU Directives and provide required support for stakeholders. In total 7 Statutory Instruments were introduced including:

- 2 transpositions of amending directives
- Introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices for breaches of the Air Pollution Act
- Identification of biomass blend fuels

To highlight the importance of air quality as a major environmental issue, a Clean Air Award was included for the first time as part of the Tidy Towns competition.

Preparatory work was undertaken towards the end of the year for the preparation of the Clean Air Strategy consultation paper and for the Clean Air Dialogue with the EU Commission.

Ireland was one of only sixteen countries which pledged to contribute an additional amount of €160,000 to a fund established under the Montreal Protocol to assist developing countries in the fight against Hydro fluorocarbon gases (HFCs).

## Radiation Protection

The Department published a report prepared by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment of the Netherlands (RIVM) on the current scientific knowledge on the possible effects of exposure to electro-magnetic fields. The report also examined how this issue is dealt with in a number of other countries and the research will serve to inform future policy in this area.

A report prepared by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on the economic impact on Ireland of a nuclear accident was published in November 2016.

The National Radon Control Strategy Year 2 report was published in October 2016 and detailed progress made including the launch of a dedicated website, rollout of a targeted training course in radon remediation for local authorities and an agreement reached with the Law Society for radon related information to be included as part of the conveyancing process.



## Environment policy and awareness

In 2016, the Department continued its efforts to advance the protection of the environment by seeking to ensure that environmental considerations are embedded across other policy areas, and this is achieved in particular allocations from the Environment Fund, which consists of revenues generated from the plastic bag levy and the landfill levy.

The total allocated from the fund in 2016 was €39.35 million, and the allocations included:

- €5.4 million to Met Éireann;
- €2.3 million to the National Waste Prevention Programme;
- €1.5 million to the operational costs of recycling;
- €1 million to Anti-Litter Initiatives, including the Anti-Litter Awareness Grant Scheme, the National Spring Clean, and the PURE Initiative covering South County Dublin/Wicklow; and
- €195,000 for the operation of the Green Schools and Green Campus Programmes. Over 3,800 primary, secondary and special schools in Ireland (more than 93% of all Irish schools) participated in the programme in 2016, and over 3,100 schools have successfully been awarded the Green Flag. The Irish Green-Schools Programme is one of the most successful within the international network.

The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report for 2015 was published in 2016. It reflected a general and continued improvement in litter pollution levels nationally. In summary:

- there has been an increase in the number of areas surveyed deemed to be litter free from 12.3% in 2014 to 16.4% in 2015, the highest level ever achieved;
- 62.8% of all areas surveyed were slightly polluted, a decrease of 1.6% on 2014 levels;
- the percentage of areas deemed to be moderately polluted fell by 3.2% to 19.9% when compared to 2014 results for the same category; and
- the percentages of significantly polluted and grossly polluted areas remained at similar levels to 2014.

The above findings demonstrate the success of the Department's waste and environmental awareness programmes.

The Department also coordinated the national implementation of the Aarhus Convention and its Protocols in Ireland, and supported the State's intervention in international discussions and proceedings on the Convention. We also continued to raise awareness of the Convention through the provision of training to public authority staff.



## High Level Objective 5

### Climate Action and Energy

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To enable the State, within EU and global frameworks, to pursue and achieve transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy, underpinned by a secure and competitive energy supply, in the period to 2050.

#### Climate Action

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change was signed and ratified by Ireland in 2016 facilitating its entry into force less than a year after it was agreed at the UN climate change conference of December 2015. This Agreement sets out a long-term goal to put the world on track to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees.

Ireland will contribute to the Paris Agreement via the commitment made by the EU on behalf of its Member States, which commits to a reduction of at least a 40% in EU-wide emissions by 2030 (compared to 1990 levels). The European Commission published a proposal in July 2016 on how this commitment would translate into individual Member State action. Negotiations in this regard are ongoing.

Engagement with the key sectors in 2016 on the development of Ireland's first National Mitigation Plan (NMP) will be followed up in 2017 by a public consultation on the draft plan, and subsequently the submission to Government of the final NMP. This process, given statutory underpinning by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, is the first step in an iterative process which will provide the framework for action towards meeting Ireland's 2020 and 2030 emission reduction targets and, in the longer term, driving Ireland's transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. The scale of this challenge can be seen in the projections produced by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The projections of March 2016 indicated that Ireland's emissions in 2020 could be in the range of 6-11% below 2005 levels. The likely outcome is closer to 6%, representing a significant shortfall in terms of reaching the 20% reduction in 2020. This reflects both Ireland's reduced investment capacity over the period of the economic downturn.

Implementation work under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework, published in December 2012, is being co-ordinated by the Department through a National Adaptation Steering Committee. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 now provides a statutory



basis for the development of a new National Adaptation Framework which will set out the key requirements for sectors, including local government, in terms of developing their own sectoral adaptation plans. A consultation document inviting views from interested stakeholders and the general public on the development of Ireland's first statutory National Adaptation Framework (NAF) was published in March 2016 while work on developing the framework itself was also progressed last year.

The Programme for Government recognises the need for greater citizen and community engagement in the development of the policies required in order to fulfil Ireland's transition objective.

Accordingly, this Department committed in 2016 to establishing a National Dialogue on Climate Action. The launch of this Dialogue in 2017 will engage wider society more generally with the climate challenge, motivate changes in behaviour and create structures at local, regional and national levels to support the generation of ideas and their translation into appropriate cost-effective actions.

In line with a commitment in the Programme for Partnership Government, and a pledge given by the Taoiseach to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to scale up climate finance, Ireland committed to provide at least €175 million in public funding to climate finance by 2020, mainly for adaptation in developing countries. Ireland made a €2 million contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in 2016 with further contributions to follow in 2017 and subsequent years.

A Technical Research and Modelling (TRAM) Group was established in order to develop and manage key operational elements in the national climate and energy policy process. TRAM comprises of experts from a cross-section of relevant Government Departments and State Agencies, as well as representation from academic institutions. It reports to the Senior Officials' Group to the Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Action. In 2016, TRAM co-funded two EPA modelling programmes. These will inform ongoing development of national policy in these areas.

The Climate Change Advisory Council was established by Ministerial Order on 18 January 2016 under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015. The role of the Council, which is independent in the performance of its functions, is to provide advice and recommendations to the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment in relation to the preparation of NMPs and NAFs; the submission by a relevant Minister of sectoral mitigation measures; the making by a relevant Minister of a sectoral adaptation plan; and the approval by the Government of an NMP and NAF. In accordance with its functions under the 2015 Act, the Council published its First Report in November 2016.

In accordance with the 2015 Act, the Minister submitted his first National Transition Statement to each House of the Oireachtas in December 2016. The Annual Transition Statement included an overview of climate change mitigation and adaptation policy measures adopted to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and to adapt to the effects of climate change in order to enable the achievement of the ‘national transition objective’. It also contains a record of emissions of GHGs set out in the most recent inventory prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a projection of future emissions, together with a report on compliance with obligations of the State under EU law or an international agreement referred to in section 2 of the 2015 Act.

## International & European Energy Policy

In November 2016, the European Commission published the Clean Energy for All Europeans package of legislative proposals. Analysis and initial negotiations have commenced in relation to the ‘Clean Energy Package’. A public consultation on all of the proposals is due to conclude in May 2017.

The Department continues to take an active role in the International Energy Agency (IEA) participating in a range of policy and technology groups, and at the Governing Board. Ireland’s next in-depth country review is due to take place in mid-2018.

## Brexit

Following the UK vote to leave the European Union in June 2016, detailed analysis and planning has been undertaken across the Department in relation to Brexit.

Working within the Government’s Brexit Contingency Framework, a Departmental Group led by the Assistant Secretary over the Energy area and including representation from all key sectors has been set up to coordinate all Brexit related work. Extensive consultations have taken place including meetings with European, Northern Ireland and UK counterparts at Ministerial and official level.

Energy has been identified as a key priority for the Department and as a result an all-island civic dialogue on Brexit and its potential impacts on the energy sector was held in February 2017.

## Electricity and Gas Legislation

The Energy Act 2016 was passed by the Oireachtas in July. It includes provisions to enhance the powers of the Commission for Energy Regulation [CER], to change its name and to facilitate the delivery of new wholesale electricity market rules for the Single Electricity Market across the island of Ireland.

## Progress on Policy paper regulatory commitments

On 1 December 2016, the Minister opened a seminar for energy regulation stakeholders on progress on the Energy Policy Paper regulatory commitments. At the seminar, the CER announced that it had requested the OECD to carry out a peer review which will focus on the CER's internal and external governance arrangements. This OECD review will significantly inform the longer term review of the legal and institutional framework for the regulation of electricity and natural gas markets. The commitment to the latter review was made in the policy paper in light of the nature and complexity of the framework for the regulation of natural gas and electricity markets in Ireland. The OECD peer review will take approximately 18 months to complete.

The Minister also launched the first Regulatory Legislative Overview (RLO) at the seminar which is available on the Department's website. It covers a range of areas including EU developments on energy regulation, Government positions, actions and decisions on various policy issues in the regulation of electricity and gas markets. The RLO, intended for periodic publication, provides stakeholders with advance signals of regulatory policy initiatives and forthcoming consultations, to enable them better plan and resource their participation, and ultimately should assist and improve the quality and transparency of regulatory policy and legislation.



### Energy Cost Competitiveness Indicators

The Energy Cost Competitiveness Working Group was established in the first half of 2016 and included representation from DCCAE, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the SEAI, in order to progress work on the commitment in the policy paper to develop measures of energy cost competitiveness. During the year, the Group developed a set of quantitative and qualitative measures and indicators, designed to be compatible with the evolving EU framework on electricity and gas price statistics, to allow for enhanced comparison across EU member states. The headline indicators developed by the Group are now being included in the SEAI's biannual publication on Irish electricity and gas prices and were first published in SEAI's "Electricity & Gas Prices in Ireland, 2nd Semester (July – December) 2015", published in June 2016.

### All Island Single Electricity Market (SEM)

2016 saw continued efficient operation, in cooperation with the Regulators North and South, of the All Island Single Electricity Market (SEM), the all island wholesale electricity market. This ensured the continued provision of cost reflective wholesale electricity, competition, transparency, consumer

choice, diversity of generation and increased renewable penetration, in the context of full implementation of the EU Energy Third Package.

With ongoing energy market development and EU legislative obligations, work commenced in 2012 on a new market design called the Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM). This work is led by a committee (SEM Committee) comprising the Regulators North and South and independent international energy experts. Due to a requirement for further market trialling of the new systems that will underpin the market, the Minister approved revised timing for “go live” of the new market arrangements. The new market arrangements will now be in place in 2018.

## EU Gas and Electricity Network Codes

The Department continued to participate in the discussions of the final two Gas Network Codes (Tariffing and Capacity Allocation Mechanism) under the EU Energy Third Package legislation. These Codes underpin the delivery of a pan-European electricity and gas markets. In 2016 the Department participated with other Member States and the European Commission in the adoption and entry into force of four electricity “network codes/guidelines”. These are the Forward Capacity Allocation guideline; the Demand Connection network code; the Requirements for Generators network code; and the High Voltage Direct Current network. The Department participated in positive votes on three more “network codes/guidelines” and they will come into force in 2017 following scrutiny by the European Parliament. These are the Balancing guideline; the System Operation guideline; and the Emergency and Restoration network code.

## Ensuring security of supply and Emergency Management

The Department continued to input into the development of the new National Framework for Strategic Emergency Management by the Office of Emergency Planning (Department of Defence), which is now finalised and expected to be presented to Government in mid-2017. This will provide greater clarity and guidance to Departments on emergency management matters and their roles and responsibilities.

The Department regularly participates in various fora and exercises in relation to security of electricity and gas, both National and International.

The Department also liaises with the Department of the Economy, Northern Ireland, on the all-island dimensions of oil security.

Ensuring security of energy stocks (oil) is an ongoing priority and the National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) continues to progress the rebalancing of emergency oil stocks held on the island of Ireland (rather than holding these in other EU Member States) to enhance security of supply. At the end of 2016, 67% of stocks were held on the island of Ireland.

The Department, along with NORA, works with the Irish oil industry (through IPIA – the Irish Petroleum Industry Association) on the development of oil emergency management policies and procedures, including the preparation of a Fuel Emergency Plan in the event of a significant oil shortage. NORA updates its stock drawdown procedure at least annually, and holds regular joint exercises with the industry.

## Electricity Infrastructure

In July 2016, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the transmission system operators of France (RTE) and Ireland (EirGrid) to progress the Celtic Interconnector to the next stage of development. The Celtic Interconnector is a circa 700MW electricity interconnector that will connect Ireland directly to the continental European electricity grid in France. Following the completion of feasibility studies over the previous five years, EirGrid and RTE agreed to progress the project to the next phase of its development which includes initial design and pre-consultation.

In December 2016, the section of the North-South Interconnector in Ireland was granted planning permission by An Bord Pleanála. This project will improve security of supply and reduce electricity transmission costs across in the all-island Single Electricity Market. The planning process for the section in Northern Ireland is currently underway.

2016 saw EirGrid carry out extensive preparatory work and public consultation around the development of its new grid development strategy. This strategy had been published in draft form in March 2015 with a view to seeking feedback from all interested parties. The new strategy, due to be published early in 2017, will set out how Ireland's electricity infrastructure will be developed into the future. A key feature of the strategy will be a firm commitment to enhance public participation and community engagement in electricity grid development.

A detailed re-planning process on the National Smart Metering Programme was undertaken by the Commission for Energy Regulation. The outcome of this process, due in mid-2017, will provide a comprehensive plan that will determine the scope, scale and timing of the programme.

## Renewable Energy

The amount of energy from renewable sources continued to grow in 2016. At the end of the year the total amount of renewable generation connected to the grid was 3,120 MW of which 2,796 MW is wind generation. Work on the development of a new Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) and a new Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) continued in 2016. Economic assessments on the viability and cost effectiveness of supporting a range of renewable technologies were commenced for both schemes. The RHI is being developed as a cost effective means of reducing the emerging gap to our 2020 renewable heat target. The RESS measure will ensure that an appropriate mix of our electricity demand will be met by electricity from renewable sources. Completion of the economic analysis for the RHI and RESS will be followed by public consultations in the first half of 2017.

Since December 2016, wind energy developers have committed to implementing the Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland for community engagement which emphasises full and transparent engagement with local communities.

In 2016, through the Ocean Energy Programme funded by the Department and administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), capital expenditure of €3.58 million funded various applied energy research and demonstration programmes and projects. This included the funding of 18 offshore renewable energy projects through the Prototype Development Fund and the continued development of energy test site infrastructure including the granting of planning permission for the Substation at AMETS. 2016 also saw the ongoing commissioning and operation of the LIR National Ocean Test Facility in Cork.

In December 2016 a Low Emission Vehicles (LEV) Task Force involving relevant Government Departments and agencies was established. This Task Force is being co-chaired by the Department and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. The work of the task force has been divided into two phases with the first phase focusing solely on electric vehicles. The Task Force expects to report on an interim basis to Government on the first phase by June 2017, with associated recommendations. These recommendations will suggest a range of options for facilitating greater uptake of electric vehicles in the coming years.



## Better Energy Programme

The Better Energy Programme is operated on behalf of the Department by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). It provides grant aid to householders, communities and people at risk of energy poverty to make energy efficiency improvements.

In 2016, €55 million was spent under the programme:

- 6,743 homes of those in energy poverty received free upgrades under the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme at a cost of €20.7 million.
- 37 projects were completed under the Better Energy Communities Programme, delivering energy upgrades to 2,013 homes and 385 public, private and community buildings at a cost of €16.7 million.
- 15,265 homes received grant aid under the Better Energy Homes Scheme resulting in 36,000 energy efficiency measures being carried out at a cost of €17 million.
- 72 homes were completed under the initial phase Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme at a cost of €0.55 million.
- 93,000 Building Energy Ratings were published.
- €500,000 in capital funding has been made available to support the Sustainable Energy Communities network.

## Sustainable Energy Communities

In 2016 the Sustainable Energy Communities Programme was launched. A Sustainable Energy Community aims to be energy efficient, to use renewable energy where feasible and to develop decentralised energy supplies. The community can include all the different energy users in the community from homes to sports clubs, community centres, churches and businesses.

Some 26 community groups became founding members of the Sustainable Energy Communities support network in 2016 and 100 more have expressed an interest in becoming members.

Each community will be encouraged to enter into a 3 year partnership agreement and SEAI will fund and provide a variety of supports to these communities to help them identify, plan, implement and review a tailored programme of energy saving activities for their community. The scheme will build capacity in communities and encourage them to take on more ambitious sustainable energy projects and projects of scale in the coming years.

## Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme

Since 2014, all major energy suppliers in Ireland have been required to deliver annual energy savings. They can do this by working with energy consumers in the commercial and residential sectors, including households in energy poverty.

In the first phase of the scheme, which ran from 2014 to 2016, obligated energy suppliers collectively delivered energy efficiency savings of 1,868.8 GWh, exceeding the 1,650 GWh target for the three year period. This means that in just three years the Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme has resulted in energy savings equivalent to the total annual energy consumption of approximately 100,000 homes.

A review of the operation of the scheme took place in Q3 2016, along with a full public consultation on the scheme. As a result, some changes have been made to the operation of the scheme for the second phase, which will now run from 2017-2020. Most notably the amount of energy savings the energy industry is required to deliver will be progressively increased in the second phase of the scheme.

## Energy Poverty

On 2 February 2016, a new Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty in Ireland was launched. The strategy sets out the actions that will be taken over the next three years to alleviate the burden of energy poverty on the most vulnerable in society. The strategy focuses on a small number of high impact actions that will make a real difference to the lives of those in energy poverty. It establishes new governance structures that better integrate action on energy poverty with decision making across Government and provide independent, expert advice to Government on energy poverty matters.

The new strategy maintains the objective set out in the first Government strategy on affordable energy, published in 2011, that everyone should be able to afford to adequately heat and power their home. It also reflects the progress made in understanding the nature of energy poverty in Ireland, along with the views received from a stakeholder consultation exercise on energy poverty conducted in February 2015.





## Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme

The Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme is a new pilot scheme that was introduced in 2016 as part of the implementation of the Government's new Energy Poverty Strategy. The scheme will provide deep energy efficiency upgrades to people suffering from acute respiratory conditions and living in poor quality homes. By retrofitting homes, the Warmth & Wellbeing scheme aims to improve the internal air temperature and air quality in the homes of people living with these conditions. This should ease the symptoms of people with respiratory conditions and potentially reduce their need to access health services.

The pilot scheme is available completely free of charge to people in Dublin 12 & 24 who are in energy poverty and living with a chronic respiratory condition. The scheme was originally targeted at over-55s but in December 2016, the Minister announced the expansion of the scheme to Dublin 8, 10 & 22 and broadened the eligibility to criteria to include families with young children.

The Scheme is a joint policy initiative between this Department and the Department of Health under the Healthy Ireland initiative and is jointly operated by SEAI and the HSE.

## Public Sector Energy Efficiency

All public sector bodies are required to improve their energy efficiency by 33% by 2020. The most recent SEAI Monitoring & Reporting assessment of performance published in 2016 shows that significant progress has been made towards this target. By the end of 2015 public sector bodies had reported energy efficiency improvements amounting to 21% - 2,442 GWh.

In December 2016 Ireland's first [Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy](#) was approved by the Government and public sector bodies have been mandated to implement its provisions. The Strategy identifies where further potential for savings exist and provides guidance on effective approaches to energy management as well as case studies of successful approaches. It outlines the range of supports available to public sector bodies and makes provision to further enhance those supports. One of the key provisions of the strategy is a new governance structure which includes the

designation of a senior official in each body – Energy Performance Officers - to be responsible for achievement and reporting on energy management objectives.

## Energy Labelling and Eco-Design

To ensure Compliance with the Energy Labelling, Eco-design and Labelling of Tyres Directives each EU Member State is required to carry out market surveillance activities. As the designated Market Surveillance Authority, this Department is responsible for the enforcement of this legislation.

To enable the service to be enhanced, while availing of synergies within SEAI, the operational responsibility for market surveillance functions (including inspections) was transferred by this Department to SEAI in 2016. It is intended that SEAI will take over the remaining market surveillance (enforcement) functions during 2017.

During 2016, 90 market surveillance inspections were conducted to monitor compliance and ensure retailers and importers are informed of their obligations under legislation with follow up action where necessary.



## High Level Objective 6

### Natural Resources

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To exploit and manage our inland fisheries, mineral, hydrocarbon and other geological resources in a sustainable and productive manner.

The Department is charged with managing the country's Natural Resources in a sustainable and productive manner. The sector is a key source of wealth creation, a significant source of employment and makes a real contribution to our economic welfare and revenue base.

#### Minerals

Ireland was the third largest producer for zinc in Europe during 2016. Following on from the closure of Lisheen Mine in 2015, Boliden Tara Mines underground zinc-lead operation at Navan is currently the only base metal mine in production in Ireland. However, mineral exploration activity in Ireland remained buoyant in 2016.

The Minerals Development Bill, which was published in 2015, is expected to be enacted in 2017. The Bill seeks to consolidate and modernise legislation on exploration and extraction of minerals (lead, zinc, gypsum, etc., but not petroleum), replacing a compendium of legislation from 1940 to 2006. The Bill will make better provisions for the prospecting for, and development, management and control of, the mineral resources in the State.

In 2016, the Department continued to monitor mining activities to ensure compliance with the conditions of State Mining Licences and Leases and adherence to best practice. This regulatory activity included regular physical inspections of mining operations, both on surface and underground.

There were 567 active mineral prospecting licences as of 31 December, compared with 575 licences at the end of 2015. Licences were held by a broad mixture of indigenous and international

exploration companies. Direct expenditure invested by prospecting licence holders in working these licences amounted to €10.9 million.

Ireland's mining policies and administration have once again been recognized in an international benchmark report of the Canadian based Fraser Institute. The most recent annual survey for 2016, based on responses from the industry, ranked Ireland first in the world among 104 jurisdictions for good mining policy for the fourth year in a row.

## Corrib Gas Field

2016 saw the first full year of production from the Corrib gas field, which lies some 83 km off the north west coast of Ireland. The gas produced from the field is supplied to the national grid via the 149 km pipeline constructed by Bord Gáis Networks, which runs from the gas terminal in Bellanaboy Co Mayo to Ballymoneen outside of Galway city.

The economic benefits of the Corrib gas field include the substitution of gas imports by indigenous production, the direct return to the Exchequer, the significant economic activity generated from the development stage of the project together with a strengthening of Ireland's security of energy supply. It is estimated that Corrib will have an operating life span of between 15 to 20 years.

## Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration

The Department continues to actively promote exploration and development opportunities offshore Ireland to the international oil and gas industry. Industry activity in 2016 included four 3D seismic acquisition surveys located primarily in the Porcupine Basin. There was no drilling activity during 2016. As at the end of 2016, there were 3 Petroleum leases, 2 Lease Undertakings, 27 Exploration Licences and 35 Licensing Options active in respect of the Irish offshore. The number of exploration authorisations in place is running at the highest levels ever since exploration began in the Irish offshore four decades ago.

## Atlantic Margin Licensing Round

During 2016, 28 Licensing Options were awarded following on from the very positive response to the 2015 Atlantic Margin Oil and Gas Exploration Licensing Round, which opened for licensing all of Ireland's major Atlantic basins: Porcupine, Goban Spur, Slyne, Erris, Donegal and Rockall. The form of petroleum authorisation on offer was two year Licensing Options, although the actual duration of each Licensing Option offered was determined by the quality of the agreed work programme. Where holders of Licensing Options wish to move forward to seek an exploration licence, the licence on offer will be a Frontier Exploration Licence of fifteen years duration, with a first phase of three years,

and three subsequent phases of four years. This is by far the largest number of awards in any licensing round held in the Irish Offshore. At a time of very low oil prices, the strong interest in the response to the Round is very positive. Evaluation of applications was split into two phases given the large number and complexity of overlapping competing bids. Following conclusion in February 2016 of the evaluation of the first phase applications, fourteen Licensing Options were awarded. A further fourteen Licensing Options were awarded in June 2016 when the evaluation of the second phase applications concluded.

## ObSERVE Programme

The ObSERVE Programme, which is being undertaken by the Department in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs over the period 2015 to 2018, is a significant data acquisition programme designed to acquire new environmental baseline data, with the aim of filling existing data gaps regarding protected marine species and sites in key offshore basins. It comprises both acoustic surveys with respect to cetaceans in selected Atlantic Margin waters, and a series of aerial surveys for both cetaceans and seabirds. The ObSERVE Programme, which commenced in mid-2015, is unique to Ireland in terms of its proactive approach to ensuring a clear understanding of animal occurrence, distribution, and density within a defined offshore area, based on the data acquired.

The ObSERVE Programme will be of benefit to the regulatory regime in assessing petroleum activities applications in compliance with environmental law. It will also benefit Industry in planning petroleum activities to be carried out in the Irish offshore and understanding what mitigations will need to be employed. During 2016, a significant amount of survey work was carried out which is still ongoing and is due to run until late 2017. It is already clear, however, that robust, high-quality data on seabird and cetacean distribution and abundance in the Irish offshore is being gathered by the two survey methods being employed.

## Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction

The moratorium on the use of Unconventional Gas Exploration and Extraction (UGEE) declared in 2011 has been continued by successive Ministers and remains in place. Therefore, there is no unconventional gas exploration or extraction in Ireland.

In November 2016, the EPA published a Joint Research Programme report on the potential impacts of unconventional gas exploration on the environment and human health. The EPA-led research outlined that issues remain unresolved, including concerns regarding groundwater and air quality.

In 2016, a Private Members Bill to prohibit the use of hydraulic fracturing was introduced by Deputy Tony McLoughlin. The Bill passed the second stage reading on 27 October 2016.

## Geoscience Development & Research

The Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) continues to develop the Geoscience Sector through its role in the provision of geological data, information, partnering and planning tools and research support and is the lead for a number of specific initiatives. In 2016, GSI commissioned a scoping study for a National Geological Data Centre and implemented the first steps with a redevelopment of digital data viewers online.

## Groundwater & Turlough Flooding Programme

In direct response to the 2015/2016 winter flooding and the 2016 Programme for Government, funding has been provided to the Geological Survey to undertake a survey of turloughs in Roscommon, Longford, Mayo, Clare and Galway over the next 3 years. The work commenced with the installation of 40 instrumented stations to monitor current water levels within turloughs as well as historic analysis of rainfall and flooding using records and satellite data to develop accurate behaviour models. The work is being undertaken in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin, building on extensive research and GSI's groundwater expertise.



### INFOMAR

INFOMAR is the flagship national programme to map all of our valuable marine territory, which is almost ten times Ireland's landmass. INFOMAR is funded by the Department and is being undertaken by GSI, in conjunction with the Marine Institute. The INFOMAR programme is a key enabler of the Irish Integrated Marine Action Plan, "Harnessing our Ocean Wealth". Previous external economic studies have shown that the return on investment for INFOMAR is over four times the cost of data acquisition; and this return is spread across multiple sectors, public and private, including SMEs and research organisations.

Having completed Phase 1 Operations in 2015, including mapping of all 26 priority bays and 3 priority offshore areas, on-time and on-budget, 2016 saw the commencement of INFOMAR Phase 2. An external review of Phase 1 was extremely positive and also provided clear guidance for INFOMAR Phase 2, which consists of the completion of mapping of all Irish marine territory, ensuring this data is utilised to the maximum benefit and development of derived products and services. In 2016, INFOMAR mapped 3,861 km<sup>2</sup> of shelf area, including mapping in the Celtic Sea and Atlantic west of

Mayo and completion of inshore mapping in an area from Greystones to North Wexford. The data and knowledge being gathered under the INFOMAR programme is utilised in a range of areas including: marine safety/charting; offshore energy; aquaculture; coastal protection; environmental protection; shipwreck heritage; marine tourism and research.

## Geoscience Initiatives

These are a series of targeted measures managed by GSI, to support planning and develop the role and application of Geoscience/Geology in Ireland. A number of multiannual projects, based on stakeholder demand and newly available datasets are being undertaken. These include Integrated Land mapping, combining surficial and deeper geological mapping in response to new Tellus datasets, and Groundwater 3D mapping of complex aquifers such as in karst areas, sand and gravels, and where particular water quality issues exist.

Groundwater projects were also initiated in the critical areas of hydrochemistry and transition zone mapping, with ongoing support of geothermal initiatives. LIDAR data for groundwater/karst feature mapping was progressed through a cost saving collaboration with Coillte. In addition, a National Landslide Susceptibility Map was completed and made available online and GSI continue to support the Global UNESCO Geopark network, which includes three Irish sites, Copper Coast (Waterford), Burren/Cliffs of Moher (Clare) and Marble Arch (Cavan/Fermanagh).

## Tellus

Tellus is the award winning GSI programme of scientific data collection on soils, water and rocks by ground geochemical sampling and airborne geophysical surveys. To date, Tellus has been completed in Northern Ireland, the border counties and North Midlands. In 2016, Tellus surveys were carried out mainly in Galway and Mayo, as well as an airborne survey in Waterford in collaboration with industry stakeholders. Data was released throughout the year, including at an outreach event hosted by the Copper Coast Geopark in Waterford. In the autumn, Tellus held a stakeholder forum coincident with the launch of the book “Unearthed; impacts of the Tellus surveys of the north of Ireland”, produced with Geological Survey of Northern Ireland and the Royal Irish Academy.

By end 2016, Tellus remained on track to complete 50% coverage of Ireland for airborne surveys by end 2017, with ground sampling completed by 2018. The Tellus programme continued to work closely with stakeholders on outputs and to sponsor applied research projects across a wide range of sectors from agriculture to environment and mineral exploration.

## Geoscience Ireland

GSI have continued to work with Enterprise Ireland and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to develop the business cluster Geoscience Ireland (GI) as a high productivity, self-sustaining enterprise and export-led sector. There is an acknowledged need to internationalise the skills and services provided by the wider geological community, and to diversify their markets. In 2016, the cluster expanded to 28 companies with a turnover of more than €310 million. Member companies have to date provided over 470 new jobs since joining, operating in over 50 countries, with 69% of revenue from overseas. In 2016 alone, the members added 179 net new high skilled jobs.

## Research

GSI support geoscience research through data provision, partnering and financial assistance. In 2016, GSI published a Research Roadmap outlining proposed initiatives in this area and received extensive consultation and positive feedback. In 2016, GSI also received final reports from 40 Short Research Call projects, each for up to 1 year, with a maximum cost of €30,000, with 18 projects lead by industry/SMEs and 22 by academics. This year also saw the first ever GSI sponsored Fulbright with two recipients travelling to the US and two approved to travel to Ireland. Research collaborations were also agreed with SFI, IRC and EPA. By end 2016, GSI had research commitments of €2.5 million, leveraging a total of €7.8 million in funding.

In addition, 2016 marked the second year of operation of the new Irish Centre for Research in Applied Geoscience (iCrag), which involves all Irish Third Level Geoscience Departments, has SFI funding of €18 million along with €8 million from industry partners, and will run for a six year period to end 2020. iCrag is strongly supported by DCCAE and GSI and will have a significant role for Irish geoscience in research, understanding and societal impact.



## Inland Fisheries

The Department continued to implement Government policy to fully align the management of the wild salmon fishery with scientific advice and, to this end, a total of seven Bye-laws and two Statutory Instruments were introduced taking cognisance of individual stock levels. A suite of regulations ahead of the 2017 salmon season was put in place by the end of 2016.

Implementation of the national eel management plan, to comply with EU Council Regulation 1100/2007, continued. Measures undertaken included operations for the trapping and transporting



of eels around ESB hydro-stations on the Shannon, the Lee and the Erne and the undertaking of scientific sampling. The Conservation of Eel Fishing Bye-law, which prohibits fishing for eel, or possessing or selling eel caught in a river in the State, remains in force until 2018. Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) have been provided funding for a new collaborative research initiative involving IFI scientists and a number of former eel fishermen to further develop national knowledge of the species and its medium to longer term potential for recovery. This scientific fishery was commenced in 2016 and is expected to continue for three years to increase data and knowledge ahead of further review of eel management measures, as required by the EU Regulation, in 2018.

The Department exercised corporate governance over Inland Fisheries Ireland and the Loughs Agency (as a co-sponsor Department) ensuring compliance with the relevant codes of practice, adherence to budgetary profiles and the achievement of statutory requirements.

The Department worked closely with IFI in 2016 to ensure continued progress on efficiencies, property rationalisation and innovation in terms of fisheries protection to increase effectiveness in the deployment of resources. Stage 1 of the fit-out of IFI's new warehousing, laboratory and archiving facilities (a property near its HQ in Citywest) has been completed and stages 2 and 3 of the fit-out are ongoing. This continues IFI's strategy of exiting from expensive long term leases, in line with Government policy and the rationalisation of operations.

Development for the Angling sector was to the fore in 2016. The sector is estimated to contribute €836 million to the Irish economy every year, supporting 11,000 Irish jobs, often in rural and peripheral communities. The National Strategy for Angling Development (NSAD) is the first comprehensive national framework for the development of our angling resource. It aims to increase the economic contribution of angling to €932 million per year and increase employment by over 1,800 jobs. The Department provided €500,000 for funding support for the NSAD in 2016 and IFI reviewed project applications based on this funding. Approval for the first €500,000 of investment for 50 community-based projects nationwide was given in December 2016.

In addition, IFI has secured funding, in 2016, of €536,000 from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under the Action Plan for Rural Development, with which the NSAD is aligned.

In recognition of the need for a complete overhaul of the legislation governing the inland fisheries sector, the Department continued the detailed review of the Fisheries Acts 1959-2010, along with wide range of associated secondary legislation, with a view to producing one modern statute for the sector.

The Minister and Minister of State attended a meeting of the North South Ministerial Council (Aquaculture and Marine Sector) under which the Loughs Agency of the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) operates in September 2016.



## High Level Objective 7

### Governance and Operations

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To promote and operate a culture of value for money and continual evaluation of our performance in a measureable, transparent and accountable manner. To develop our staff and deliver the public service reform agenda and Civil Service Renewal Plan whilst providing a high quality service to our customers and stakeholders.

## Human Resources

### Strategic HR

The implementation of the Department's HR Strategy continued in 2016. There are six key components to the strategy with priority areas of activity and implementation targets identified within each strand. The key elements of the strategy are:

- HR Service Delivery
- Career Development & Employee Mobility
- Organisational Development
- Talent Management
- Learning & Development
- Communications & Consultation

### Resourcing

The Department currently employs 333 staff which equates to 311 FTEs (full time equivalents). This includes the transfer of 57 staff following the assignment of functions from the former Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2016.

### Organisational Development

There was a successful HR Business Partner pilot initiative and subsequent roll out to the Natural Resources and Communication sectors in the Department. By working closely with Divisions, HR is better informed of the key challenges across each sector and in a position to align closely with Divisions to enable them to deliver on the Department's strategy.

## Workforce Planning

The 2016 Workforce Plan formed the basis of recent recruitment and promotion competitions which were designed to ensure that the Department can deliver key priorities in accordance with agreed timescales.

The Department has continued to pro-actively engage with Civil Service Renewal and Reform in terms of HR initiatives, shared services and ICT enhancements. This has included management of service level agreements with shared services for HR and Payroll.

## Talent Management

There was a successful pilot mentoring scheme in 2016, in support of talent management activities open to all employees. The intention of the pilot was to create a programme that will assist in on-boarding new hire employees into the Department. On foot of the success of the pilot, HR will introduce a formal Mentoring Programme in 2017.

## Attendance Management Policy

The Department's lost time rate for sick leave of 3.05% is within the overall target rate of 3.5% across the Civil Service.

## Performance Management

A change to the operation of PMDS was introduced in 2016 with the previous five-point PMDS rating system being replaced with a two-point system, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. HR continues to work to support line managers in relation to the changes and the completion rate for PMDS within the Department in 2016 was 92%.

## Civil Service Mobility

This Department has participated in the CS Pilot scheme for Regional Mobility in Wexford.

## Learning and Development

The Department has begun the implementation of a new systematic approach to the analysis of L&D needs and to the prioritisation, planning, recording and evaluation of L&D solutions, including close collaboration with the new evolving L&D Centre and new Shared L&D Model for the Civil Service.

## ICT

The Department continued to operate shared services with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on ICT. During 2016, the Department's Information Systems function has:

- facilitated the integration of transferring staff from the former Department of Environment into DCCAE
- extended DCCAE network to connect new offices in Wexford and the Custom House
- redesigned, developed and installed the new DCCAE website following the transfer of functions
- redesigned and developed a new website for GSI
- facilitated the inclusion of new coverage data into the NBP maps
- procured and installed a new Storage Area Network (SAN) to replace the server and storage infrastructure of the Department
- procured and installed and configured new backup hardware and software
- upgraded the core network infrastructure to facilitate the installation of the new SAN and an IP telephony solution across the Department.

## Corporate Governance

A Corporate Governance Division was established in 2015 to provide a cohesive approach to the governance of State bodies under the Department's remit and has responsibility for the oversight of An Post, ESB, Bord na Móna, EirGrid, RTÉ, TG4, BAI and SEAI. The Department has implemented a streamlined approach across a number of areas relevant to State bodies including appointments to State Boards, processing requests for Ministerial consents, developing shareholder letters of expectation and financial monitoring. A new Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016 and the Corporate Governance Division is working with all the State bodies to ensure that it is fully implemented within given timeframes.

## Corporate Governance Framework for the Department

In April 2016 the Department published its Governance Framework. The preparation of the Framework derives from Action 3 of the Civil Service Renewal Plan and is based on a template issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform late in 2015.

Good governance is central to the effective operation of the Department. It is essential in discharging our statutory and policy obligations, in achieving our objectives, and in delivering our priorities efficiently and effectively. It ensures that a framework of structures, policies and processes are in place to achieve these outcomes. Our Governance Framework aims to provide an overview on who we are, what we do and our mission and values.



## External Stakeholder Engagement

Effectively communicating with citizens and organisations, as part of normal business operations, ensures that policies are developed with a full understanding of stakeholder needs, and a better public understanding of their scope to influence those policies. It also helps build consensus and understanding of the rationale for certain policy decisions, in which there can be intense public interest.

DCCAIE staff are also regularly required to undertake formal stakeholder engagement as a statutory requirement through Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) or the Aarhus Convention.

The Department has developed guidance for staff which is designed to assist in completing these stakeholder processes.

## DCCAIE Website

In 2016, following the transfer of functions, this Department created and delivered a new website to meet our stakeholder needs. The DCCAIE website provides our stakeholders with informative and relevant information in a clear and accessible manner, including the use of plain language.

The website is now accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. We are constantly working to increase the accessibility and usability of our website.

## Finance

Gross Expenditure for 2016 was €438.895 million, which funded key measures in the Communications, Broadcasting and Energy, Climate Action and Environment areas.

## Overview of Energy Usage in 2016

In 2016, the Department consumed 3,500GWh of energy which is a 10.4% increase in Total Energy Consumption over the baseline period 2006 – 2008. The Department's energy consumption in terms of electricity and gas was significantly down on 2015. However, increased business activity,

particularly in the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) has resulted in increased fuel consumption with the Department now moving to a position where the Department's Energy Performance Indicator is 15.5% below the baseline period 2006 – 2008 as we approach our 2020 energy saving target.

During the year, the GSI increased the amount of field work it carried out under the Tellus Programme, Drinking Water Protection and the new Turlough/Groundwater Flood Programme. This led to a significant increase in transport fuel consumption. The GSI's new drilling rig, purchased in 2015, has a greater depth capacity and is also contributing to this overall increase.

An Energy Audit which commenced in the Department in 2016 is underway at present.

## Appendix A: Structure of the Department - at end 2016

**MARK GRIFFIN**  
**SECRETARY GENERAL**

<b>Katherine Licken Assistant Secretary</b>	<b>Michael Manley Assistant Secretary</b>	<b>Brian Carroll Assistant Secretary</b>	<b>Patricia Cronin Assistant Secretary</b>	<b>Matt Collins Assistant Secretary</b>
Telecoms Policy and Regulation	Energy Efficiency and Affordability	Environmental Policy and Awareness	Human Resources/ Information Systems	Exploration & Mining
National Broadband Plan	Strategic Energy Policy Division	Climate Policy	Internet Policy	Exploration & Mining Technical
National Digital Strategy and Telecoms Market Contracts	Electricity & Gas Regulation	EU and International Environment Policy	Broadcasting Policy	Geological Survey Ireland
Comms Business and Technology	Energy Security	Air Quality / Environmental Radiation Policy	Corporate Support	Inland Fisheries
Chief Technical Advisor	Decarbonisation Policy and Coordination	Environment Advisory Unit	Eircodes	Petroleum Development
Cyber Security	Chief Technical Advisor's Office		Corporate Governance	Petroleum Exploration
			Finance and Corporate Affairs	Petroleum Affairs Technical
			Internal Audit	Waste Policy & Resource Efficiency
			Press Office	
			Economic / Legal Units	
			Strategic Development and Communications	



## Appendix B: Vote 29 - 2016 Estimates and Provisional

### Outturn

Subhead	2016 Estimate €000	2016 Provisional Outturn €000
<b>Communications</b>		
A.1 - Administrative Pay	4,524	4,030
A.2 - Admin Non Pay	1,869	1,310
A.3 - Information and Communications Technology	16,750	5,392
A.4 - Multimedia Developments (including capital carryover)	5,438	4,654
A.5 - Information Society & eInclusion (including capital carryover)	5,664	3,664
A.6 - Other Services	500	-
Sub-total	34,745	19,050
<b>Broadcasting</b>		
B.1 - Admin Pay	959	855
B.2 - Admin Non Pay	639	440
B.3 - Grant to RTE	185,724	179,285
B.4 - Payment to an Post	12,457	11,494
B.5 - Grant to TG4	34,860	35,360
B.6 - Broadcasting Fund	14,704	13,657
Sub-total	249,343	241,091
<b>Energy</b>		
C.1 - Admin Pay	4,425	3,942
C.2 - Admin Non Pay	2,261	1,544
C.3 - SEAI Admin & General Expenses	7,351	7,165
C.4 - Sustainable Energy Programmes (incl capital carryover)	69,187	66,262
C.5 - Energy Research Programmes	10,561	6,321
C.7 - Gas Services	32	23
C.8 - Subscriptions to International Organisations	290	254
Sub-total	94,107	85,511
<b>Natural Resources</b>		
D.1 - Admin Pay	6,262	5,578
D.2 - Admin Non Pay	3,341	2,414
D.3 - Petroleum Services	441	191
D.4 - Mining Services	3,585	1,560
D.5 - GSI Services	9,584	9,817
D.7 - Subscriptions to International Organisations	135	120
Sub-total	23,348	19,680

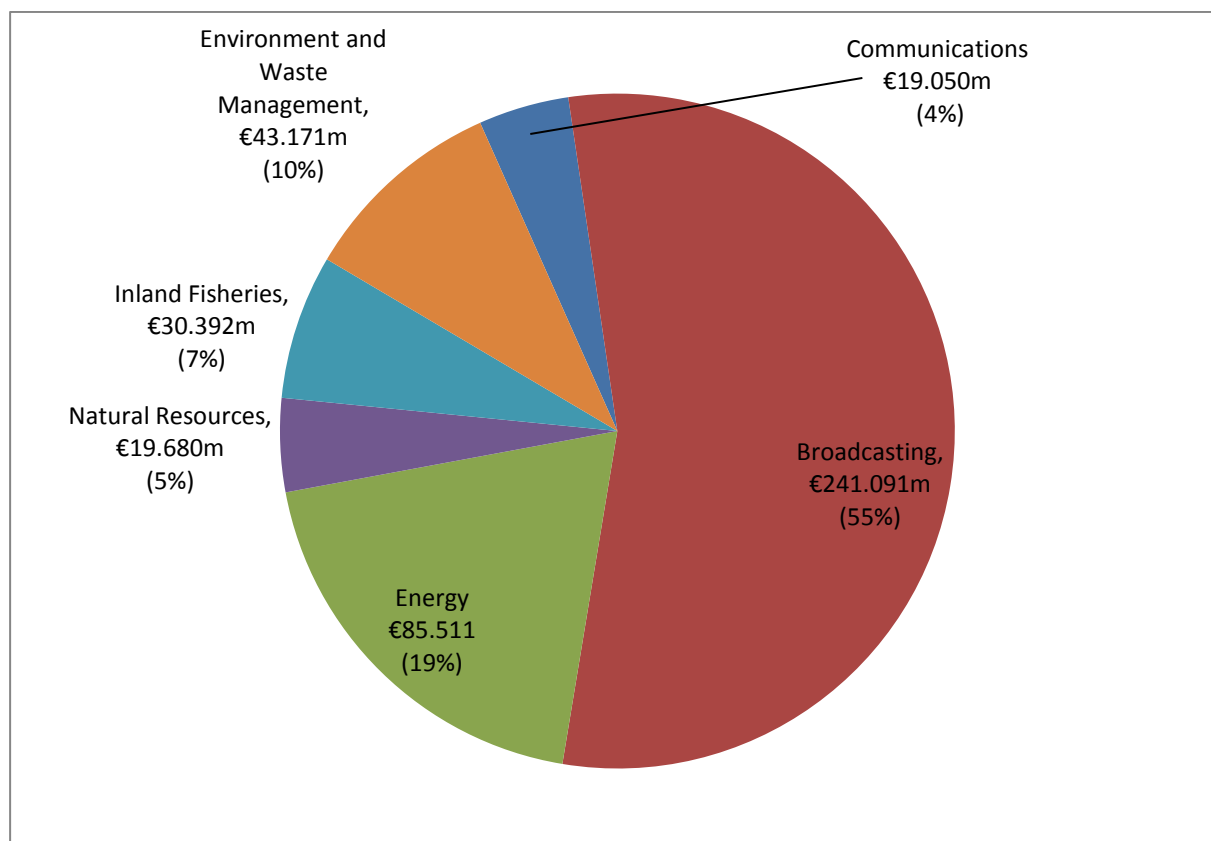
Subhead	2016 Estimate €000	2016 Provisional Outturn €000
<b>Inland Fisheries</b>		
E.1 - Admin Pay	869	774
E.2 - Admin Non Pay	442	296
E.3 - Inland Fisheries	27,053	29,322
Sub-total	28,364	30,392
<b>Environment and Waste Management</b>		
F.1 - Admin Pay	3,843	3,629
F.2 - Admin Non Pay	2,183	1,315
F.3 - Environmental Protection Agency	24,932	24,932
F.4 - Carbon Fund	470	423
F.5 - International Climate change Commitments	2,000	2,000
F.6 - Landfill Remediation	13,180	7,816
F.7 - Technical Research and Modelling	1,250	335
F.8 - Subscriptions to International Organisations	3,000	2,721
F.9 - Other Services	47	-
Sub-total	50,905	43,171
Gross Total	480,812	438,895

<b>Appropriations-in-Aid</b>		
F.1 - Proceeds of Fines & Forfeitures for fishery offences	50	19
F.2 - Mineral & Petroleum Receipts	8,795	8,056
F.3 - Petroleum Infrastructure Support Group	437	192
F.4 - Broadcasting Licence Fees	222,130	213,681
F.5 - Geological Survey Receipts	300	185
F.6 - Rent on properties in GPO	223	204
F.7 - Miscellaneous Receipts	1,280	1,879
F.8 - Pension Contributions from Agencies	694	641
F.9 - Receipts from pension-related deduction on public service remuneration	4,089	3,678
Appropriations-in-Aid Total	237,998	228,535
Net Total	242,814	210,360

## 2016 Provisional Outturn Summary

Programme	Outturn €000
Communications	19,050
Broadcasting	241,091
Energy Sector	85,511
Natural Resources	19,680
Inland Fisheries	30,392
Environment and Waste Management	43,171
<b>Total</b>	<b>438,895</b>

## 2016 Provisional Outturn



## Appendix C: Legislation

### Acts Enacted and Other Bills

#### ACTS

Energy Act 2016, enacted on 21st July 2016 and signed by the President on 30th July 2016.

### Bills Progressed or Initiated

- Prohibition of the Exploration and Extraction of Onshore Petroleum Bill 2016
- Communications Regulation (Postal Services)(Amendment) Bill 2016

### Statutory Instruments

The following Statutory Instruments were made in 2016:

S.I. No.	Title
24 of 2016	<i>Waste Management (Collection Permit)(Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
42 of 2016	<i>European Union (Restriction of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical And Electronic Equipment)(Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
115 of 2016	<i>Control of Fishing for Salmon Order S.I. No. 115, 2016</i>
128 of 2016	<i>Air Pollution Act (Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels)(Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
129 of 2016	<i>European Union (Stage II Petrol Vapour recovery during refuelling of motor vehicles at service stations) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
225 of 2016	<i>National Oil Reserves Agency Act 2007 (Biofuel Obligation Rate) Order 2016</i>
315 of 2016	<i>European Union (Waste Directive) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
346 of 2016	<i>Waste Management (Collection Permit) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2016</i>
347 of 2016	<i>Air Pollution Act (Fixed Payment Notice) (Solvents) Regulations 2016</i>
348 of 2016	<i>Air Pollution Act (Fixed Payment Notice) (Paints) Regulations 2016</i>
372 of 2016	<i>European Union (Waste Directive) (Recovery Operations) Regulations 2016</i>
373 of 2016	<i>Waste Management (Fixed Payment Notice) (Producer Responsibility) Regulations 2016</i>
391 of 2016	<i>European Union (Reduction of cost of deploying Highspeed Public</i>

<i>Communications Networks) Regulations 2016</i>	
<i>S.I. No.</i>	<i>Title</i>
<i>446 of 2016</i>	<i>Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (Accelerated Capital Allowances for Energy Efficient Equipment) (Amendment) (No. 1) Order 2016</i>
<i>509 of 2016</i>	<i>Energy Act 2016 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) Order 2016</i>
<i>566 of 2016</i>	<i>European Union (End Of Life Vehicles) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
<i>571 of 2016</i>	<i>Air Pollution Act 1987 (Registration of Fuel Bagging Operators and Suppliers, and Marketing, Sale, Distribution and Burning of Specified Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
<i>572 of 2016</i>	<i>Energy Act 2016 (Commencement of Certain Provisions) (No. 2) Order 2016</i>
<i>581 of 2016</i>	<i>European Union (Renewable Energy) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
<i>600 of 2016</i>	<i>Electricity regulation Act 1999 (Public Service Obligations) (Amendment) Order 2016</i>
<i>626 of 2016</i>	<i>Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (Accelerated Capital Allowances for Energy Efficient Equipment) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2016</i>
<i>634 of 2016</i>	<i>European Union (Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.</i>
<i>636 of 2016</i>	<i>Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Tagging Scheme (Amendment) Regulations Order S.I. No. 636, 2016</i>
<i>646 of 2016</i>	<i>European Union (Energy Efficiency) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>
<i>658 of 2016</i>	<i>European Union (Fluorinated Greenhouse Gas) Regulations 2016</i>
<i>659 of 2016</i>	<i>Air Quality Standards (Amendment) and Arsenic, Cadmium, Mercury, Nickel and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Ambient Air (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i>

## Inland Fisheries bye-laws

Bye-Law No.	Title
940	<i>Conservation of Salmon and Sea Trout (Draft Nets and Snap Nets) Bye-law No. 940, 2016</i>
941	Bass Fishing Conservation Bye-law No. 941, 2016
943	<i>Angling Bye-law No. 943, 2016</i>
944	<i>Conservation of Salmon and Sea Trout (Bag Limits) Bye-law No. 944, 2016</i>
945	<i>Conservation of Salmon and Sea Trout (Catch and Release) Bye-law No. 945, 2016</i>
946	<i>Conservation of Sea Trout Bye-law No. 946, 2016.</i>
321	<i>Conservation of Salmon and Sea Trout (Closed Rivers) Bye-law No. C.S. 321, 2016</i>

## Appendix D: Petroleum Authorisations granted

A total of 85 petroleum authorisations were extant at 31 December 2016. These included

- 3 Petroleum Leases
- 2 Lease Undertakings
- 35 Licensing Options (of which 2 were subject to follow-on applications),
- 27 Exploration Licenses (of which 2 were subject to follow-on applications)
- 18 Petroleum Prospecting Licences (of which 1 was surrendered).

Forty nine new authorisations were granted during 2016. These included two lease undertakings, 32 offshore licensing options and fifteen petroleum prospecting licences. Details of these new authorisations are set out in the following table:

Authorisation No.	Authorisation Type	Licensee	Area
<b>Dunmore Lease Undertaking</b>	Lease Undertaking	Providence Resources PLC Atlantic Petroleum (Ireland) Limited Sosina Exploration Limited	Offshore
<b>Helvick Lease Undertaking</b>	Lease Undertaking	Providence Resources PLC Atlantic Petroleum (Ireland) Limited Sosina Exploration Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/1</b>	Licensing Option	Eni Ireland B.V. BP Exploration Operating Company Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/2</b>	Licensing Option	Europa Oil & Gas (Holdings) Plc	Offshore
<b>LO 16/3</b>	Licensing Option	ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/4</b>	Licensing Option	ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited	Offshore

Authorisation No.	Authorisation Type	Licensee	Area
<b>LO 16/5</b>	Licensing Option	Nexen Petroleum UK Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/6</b>	Licensing Option	Nexen Petroleum UK Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/7</b>	Licensing Option	Nexen Petroleum UK Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/8</b>	Licensing Option	Nexen Petroleum UK Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/9</b>	Licensing Option	Scotia Oil & Gas Exploration Ltd	Offshore
<b>LO 16/10</b>	Licensing Option	Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/11</b>	Licensing Option	Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/12</b>	Licensing Option	Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/13</b>	Licensing Option	Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/14</b>	Licensing Option	Woodside Energy (Ireland) Pty Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/15</b>	Licensing Option	Theseus Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/16</b>	Licensing Option	AzEire Limited	Offshore



Authorisation No.	Authorisation Type	Licensee	Area
<b>LO 16/17</b>	Licensing Option	AzEire Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/18</b>	Licensing Option	Capricorn Ireland Ltd	Offshore
<b>LO 16/19</b>	Licensing Option	Europa Oil and Gas (Holdings) PLC	Offshore
<b>LO 16/20</b>	Licensing Option	Europa Oil and Gas (Holdings) PLC	Offshore
<b>LO 16/21</b>	Licensing Option	Europa Oil and Gas (Holdings) PLC	Offshore
<b>LO 16/22</b>	Licensing Option	Europa Oil and Gas (Holdings) PLC	Offshore
<b>LO 16/23</b>	Licensing Option	Faroe Petroleum (U.K.) Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/24</b>	Licensing Option	Petrel Resources Plc	Offshore
<b>LO 16/25</b>	Licensing Option	Petrel Resources Plc	Offshore
<b>LO 16/26</b>	Licensing Option	Predator Oil and Gas Ventures Limited Theseus Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/27</b>	Licensing Option	Providence Resources Plc Sosina Exploration Ltd	Offshore
<b>LO 16/28</b>	Licensing Option	Ratio Petroleum Limited	Offshore

Authorisation No.	Authorisation Type	Licensee	Area
<b>LO 16/29</b>	Licensing Option	Scotia Oil and Gas Exploration Ltd	Offshore
<b>LO 16/30</b>	Licensing Option	Predator Oil and Gas Ventures Limited Theseus Limited	Offshore
<b>LO 16/31</b>	Licensing Option	AzEire Ltd	Offshore
<b>LO 16/32</b>	Licensing Option	AzEire Ltd	Offshore
<b>PPL 1/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Electromagnetic Geoservices ASA	Offshore
<b>PPL 2/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Woodside Energy (Ireland) Pty Ltd	Offshore
<b>PPL 3/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Providence Resources Plc	Offshore
<b>PPL 4/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Polarcus MC Ltd	Offshore
<b>PPL 5/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	CGG Services SA	Offshore
<b>PPL 6/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Ireland (Offshore South) Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 7/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Nexen Petroleum U.K. Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 8/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	TGS-NOPEC Geophysical Company ASA	Offshore

Authorisation No.	Authorisation Type	Licensee	Area
<b>PPL 9/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Statoil Exploration (Ireland) Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 10/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	PGS Exploration (UK) Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 11/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Europa Oil and Gas (Holdings) PLC	Offshore
<b>PPL 12/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	ENI Ireland B.V.	Offshore
<b>PPL 13/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Predator Oil and Gas Ventures Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 15/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	AzEire Limited	Offshore
<b>PPL 17/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Petrel Resources PLC	Offshore
<b>PPL 18/16</b>	Petroleum Prospecting Licence	Faroe Petroleum (U.K.) Limited	Offshore

## Appendix E: Bodies under the aegis of the Department

The Department was responsible for 18 commercial, non-commercial and regulatory State bodies in 2016 as outlined below:

Body	Main Role
An Post	Ireland's national postal service provider.
Commission for Communications Regulation	The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) is the statutory body responsible for the regulation of the electronic communications sector (telecommunications, radio communications, broadcasting transmission and premium rate services) and the postal sector. Its remit covers all kinds of transmission networks including the traditional telephone wire service, operators providing TV services, mobile phone networks and the postal service
Digital Hub Development Agency	Established under the Digital Hub Development Act 2003 to oversee the development of the Digital Hub.
Raidió Teilifís Éireann	RTÉ is a public service broadcasting corporation and a statutorily independent body.
TG4	TG4 is an Irish language public service broadcasting corporation and a statutorily independent body.
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI)	The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) was established on 1 October 2009, as an independent regulator for radio and television broadcasters in Ireland. The BAI has a range of objectives and functions. In carrying out its functions, the BAI must make sure that its approach to regulation is proportionate and takes into account the range and type of broadcasting services in Ireland. The BAI has a responsibility to ensure that broadcast regulation is stable. The Authority also has a role to play in encouraging technological development in the broadcasting sector.

Body	Main Role
Electricity Supply Board	The ESB is a statutory corporation established under the Electricity (Supply) Act 1927. It is a vertically integrated utility involved in the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity.
EirGrid plc	EirGRID plc. was established to act as the independent Transmission System Operator (TSO), in line with the requirements of the EU Electricity Directive and became operational as the TSO on 1 July 2006.
Commission for Energy Regulation	<p>The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) is Ireland's independent energy regulator with a range of economic, customer and safety functions. The CER is also the economic regulator of Ireland's public water system.</p> <p>The CER is responsible for the licensing and authorisation of energy undertakings, ensuring security of electricity and gas supplies, regulation of certain tariffs and the development of national and regional electricity and gas markets in line with its statutory functions and national and EU requirements, and safety regulation in respect of upstream petroleum extraction and exploration activities.</p>
Irish National Petroleum Corporation	Following the sale of its business and commercial assets (Whitegate Refinery and Bantry storage terminal) in July 2001, the INPC has no operational capacity/ employees. Its current activities are limited to its rights and obligations under the Sale and Purchase Agreement attaching to the 2001 transaction.
Bord na Móna plc.	Bord na Móna plc is a supplier of products and services based principally on peat. The Company is also providing products and services in environmental, renewable energy, electricity generation and waste management business sectors. In June 2014, the Government decided to streamline and refocus the commercial operations of Bord na Móna and Coillte, primarily in the bioenergy and wind energy sectors. The decision requires Bord na Móna and Coillte to cooperate in four key areas: wind; biomass; tourism and recreation; and shared services.

Body	Main Role
National Oil Reserves Agency	The National Oil Reserves Agency (NORA) was established in 1995. Originally set up as a subsidiary of Irish National Petroleum Corporation Limited (INPC), it was established as a stand-alone State body in 2007 under the provisions of the National Oil Reserves Agency Act. NORA maintains Ireland's strategic oil stocks in line with the State's oil stockholding obligations to the EU and the International Energy Agency (IEA). NORA also administers Ireland's Biofuels Obligation Scheme.
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), formerly the SEI, was established in 2002 to promote and assist the development of sustainable energy.
Environmental Protection Agency	The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is an independent public body established under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. It fulfils its statutory functions through a combination of environmental licencing, monitoring, regulation, enforcement, research, and education.
Inland Fisheries Ireland	Inland Fisheries Ireland is responsible for the protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries resource and sea angling across the country.
Mining Board	An independent board set up under the Minerals Development Act 1940, its function is to determine compensation in various cases. It is also charged with deciding what minerals are to be excepted from the State's exclusive right to work minerals under that Act.
Loughs Agency of the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	The Agency is a North South Body established under the British Irish Agreement Act 1999, responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the promotion and development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters;</li> <li>(b) the management, conservation and protection, improvement and development of inland fisheries;</li> <li>(c) the development and licensing of aquaculture; and</li> <li>(d) the development of marine tourism.</li> </ul>

## Appendix F: Commercial State Sponsored Bodies

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The Department's accounts do not consolidate the accounts of the State Sponsored Bodies under its aegis. However the Minister and through him the Department, had responsibility in 2016 on behalf of the State for five commercial State Sponsored Bodies and financial details in relation to these Bodies are available on the following websites.

- [www.anpost.ie](http://www.anpost.ie)
- [www.esb.ie](http://www.esb.ie)
- [www.bordnamona.ie](http://www.bordnamona.ie)
- [www.rte.ie](http://www.rte.ie)
- [www.eirgrid.com](http://www.eirgrid.com)

## Appendix G: Acronym Index

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AVMS	Audio-visual Media Services
BAI	Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
CER	Commission for Energy Regulation
COMREG	Commission for Communications Regulation
DCCA	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DCENR	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
DHDA	Digital Hub Development Agency
DSM	EU Digital Single Market
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
EuroDIG	European Dialogue on Internet Governance
FCILC	Loughs Agency of the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission
GPO	General Post Office
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICGAG	Internet Content Governance Advisory Group
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INFOMAR	The National Seabed Mapping project
INPC	Irish National Petroleum Corporation
I-SEM	Single Electricity Market Project
MANs	Metropolitan Area Networks
Mbps	Megabits per second
MW	Megawatt
NBP	National Broadband Plan
NGA	Next Generation Access
NDRC	National Digital Research Centre
PCI	Projects of Common Interest
PSB	Public Service Body
RTÉ	Raidió Teilifís Éireann
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SEM	Single Electricity Market
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
S.I.	Statutory Instrument
TG4	Teilifís na Gaeilge
TSO	Transmission System Operator