

**Candidate
Information
Booklet**

**IRC184907
Unified Grade 5
Director of Digital Services (2 posts)**

**Department of Agriculture and Rural
Development (DARD) and
Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)**

**Completed Application Forms
must be returned to HRConnect
no later than 12 noon (UK time)
on
*Friday 4th October 2013***

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
Background	4
Job Specification	8
Terms and Conditions	13
Main Duties and Responsibilities	15
Eligibility Criteria	17
Person Specification	19
Selection Process	21
Application Process	24
General Information	29
Annex A Nationality	36
Annex B Civil Service Commissioners	37

FOREWORD

DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL SERVICES (UNIFIED GRADE 5) - DARD and DFP

Thank you for your interest in these important and challenging posts as Director of Digital Services within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). We are seeking experienced, enthusiastic and committed professionals who enjoy working at a strategic level and solving demanding, practical problems with a proven track record of achievement in the information technology and information management sphere. The Northern Ireland Civil Service is engaged in a major programme of reform and modernisation to meet the challenges of increased efficiency and value for money at a time of budgetary pressure.

The successful candidates will also ensure that we fulfil our obligations, using best practice, in the creation, retrieval, storage, preservation and destruction of both paper and electronic records in line with the requirements of legislation governing data protection, environmental information and freedom of information.

Directors at Grade 5 level are members of the Senior Civil Service. The post holders will be able to coordinate and deliver the strategic support both DARD and DFP need during a period of significant change, and will play a key role in advising Ministers and Departmental Boards.

If you are looking for a position with real challenge and opportunity where the ambit of the organisation stretches from high level strategy to detailed operations, then we would like to hear from you.

We hope that the information in this booklet meets your needs and encourages you to apply for these important senior positions. Applications are very welcome from eligible candidates from the public, private and voluntary sectors. As women are currently under represented within this occupational group across NICS, applications from women would be particularly welcome.

Noel Lavery
Permanent Secretary
DARD

Stephen Peover
Permanent Secretary
DFP

BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT - DARD

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is one of the largest of the twelve Departments in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. It is a multidisciplinary organisation employing approximately 3,000 people, with a resource and capital allocation of £235 million for 2013/14. It also administers £276 million of European Funds under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The Minister with responsibility for DARD is Michelle O'Neill, MLA.

VISION

A thriving and sustainable rural economy, community and environment and to promote social and economic equality.

AIM

To be a Department that works with stakeholders, builds partnerships, tackles disadvantage and values its staff; strives to work efficiently, responds quickly to change and focuses on achieving sustainable outcomes.

STRATEGIC GOALS OF DARD

In pursuit of this aim, DARD has established five strategic goals, namely:-

1. To help the agri-food industry prepare for future market opportunities and economic challenges;
2. To improve the lives of farmers and other rural dwellers, targeting resources where they are most needed;
3. To enhance, animal, fish and plant health and animal welfare on an all Ireland basis;
4. To help deliver improved sustainable environmental outcomes; and
5. To manage our business and deliver services to our customers in a cost effective way.

DARD'S PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS 2011 – 2015

The Programme for Government (PfG) is a visible commitment by the NI Executive to provide the groundwork for economic and social recovery. There are 82 commitments for NICS and the following 4 relate specifically to DARD:

- To bring forward a £13m package to tackle rural poverty and social and economic isolation in the next 3 years;
- To eradicate brucellosis in cattle by March 2014;
- To develop a strategic plan for the Agri-Food sector; and

- To advance the relocation of the headquarters of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to a rural area by 2015.

There are currently four top management groups within DARD – Central Policy Group, Service Delivery Group, Veterinary Service and Central Services Group. The main areas of responsibility are farm, food and environmental policy; sea fisheries; scientific advice to Ministers; veterinary issues; further and higher education and lifelong learning; and management of the rural development programme and of rural payments.

DARD also has responsibility for rivers in Northern Ireland under the management of Rivers Agency, and forests as managed by the Forest Service. The Department also sponsors five Non-Departmental Public Bodies:-

- The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute;
- The Agriculture Wages Board;
- The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority;
- The Livestock and Meat Commission;
- The Drainage Council,

and one North/South body:-

- The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission.

Further information on DARD can be found on the DARD website:
www.dardni.gov.uk.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT – DFP

The Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) has a wide range of functions including the strategic management of public expenditure and the delivery of a range of central services to NI Departments comprising human resources, accounting, financial management, IT, training, procurement, accommodation and legal services.

The Minister responsible for DFP is Simon Hamilton MP MLA.

The Department has six Directorates and one Agency plus the Departmental Solicitors Office. It has approximately 3400 staff who are located in the Greater Belfast area and in Londonderry.

The Directorates are Central Finance Division, Corporate Human Resources, Central Procurement Directorate, Corporate Services Group, Enterprise Shared Services and Land & Property Services. The Agency is the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

The Executive Budget 2011-15 set out the allocations for NI Departments to continue to improve the provision of public services while continuing to deliver challenging savings delivery targets. DFP was provided with net current expenditure funding which reduces from £190.6m in 2011-12 to £183.1m by the end of 2014-15

VISION

Leading Reform, Delivering Value and Promoting Sustainability

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To help the Executive secure the most appropriate and effective use of resources and services for the benefit of the community.

In pursuing this aim, the key objective of the Department is to deliver quality, cost effective and efficient public services and administration in the Department's areas of executive responsibility

DFP'S PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS 2011 – 2015

As the Department with responsibility for securing and allocating the resources available through the block grant, DFP will play a crucial role in addressing the stated aim of the Executive of rebalancing and rebuilding the NI economy.

The Department will take forward a number of important commitments in this regard, including: continuing to work with the UK government to examine the administrative arrangements and full financial consequences for devolution of the powers to vary the rate of Corporation Tax; eliminating Air Passenger

Duty on long haul flights from Northern Ireland and; implementing proposals for the rating of commercial properties which include enhancements to the Small Business Rates Relief scheme and the introduction of a Large Retail Levy.

In addition to these important economic measures, DFP will also take forward further commitments within the Programme for Government such as: providing guidance to Departments on the inclusion of social clauses in procurement contracts for supplies, services and construction; further reductions in the levels of sickness absence across the Northern Ireland Civil Service and; improving online access to government services by the citizen.

More details on the role of, and services provided by, the Department of Finance and Personnel can be found on www.dfpni.gov.uk

DIGITAL SERVICES - STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In September 2012, the Head of the Civil Service emphasised the vital role that the NICS has in delivering the key commitments of the NI Executive's Programme for Government (PfG). One of the five priorities outlined in the PfG is to "deliver high quality, efficient and effective services to the citizen, NICS Departments and the wider public sector". One of the key commitments outlined in the PfG is to "improve online access to government services". Enterprise Shared Services (ESS) now has responsibility for delivering this commitment through nidirect.

To give strategic direction for this commitment and ensure that there is a unified and consistent approach to online interaction with our citizens, the Permanent Secretaries' Group (PSG) agreed the following Online Services Mandate:

Digital First: When developing new services or new programmes, or reviewing existing services, Departments/Agencies must seek to ensure that digital online services/transactions are the primary means of interacting with citizens or businesses.

NI Direct Preferred: When Departments/Agencies are developing or refreshing programmes involving online or telephone interaction with citizens or businesses services, there should be a presumption in favour of using the NI Direct programme unless the approved business case determines an alternative option.

NI Direct Portal: Citizens must be able to use the NI Direct web portal to access all online services provided by Departments/Agencies, even if (exceptionally) such services are hosted elsewhere.

These principles in the Online Services Mandate are now mandatory for all NICS Departments and their Agencies. This provides a clear direction to the NICS to accelerate the use of online service delivery, using NI Direct as the key delivery agent.

The NI Direct programme comprises four strands:

- Development of online transactions to support the PfG commitments through oversight and management of the Strategic Partnership with BT;
- Business As Usual – management and development of information and content;
- Website consolidation – to reduce the significant number of web sites and consolidate them into the nidirect domain;
- Phone number consolidation – to reduce the significant number of phone numbers and consolidate them into the nidirect contact centre.

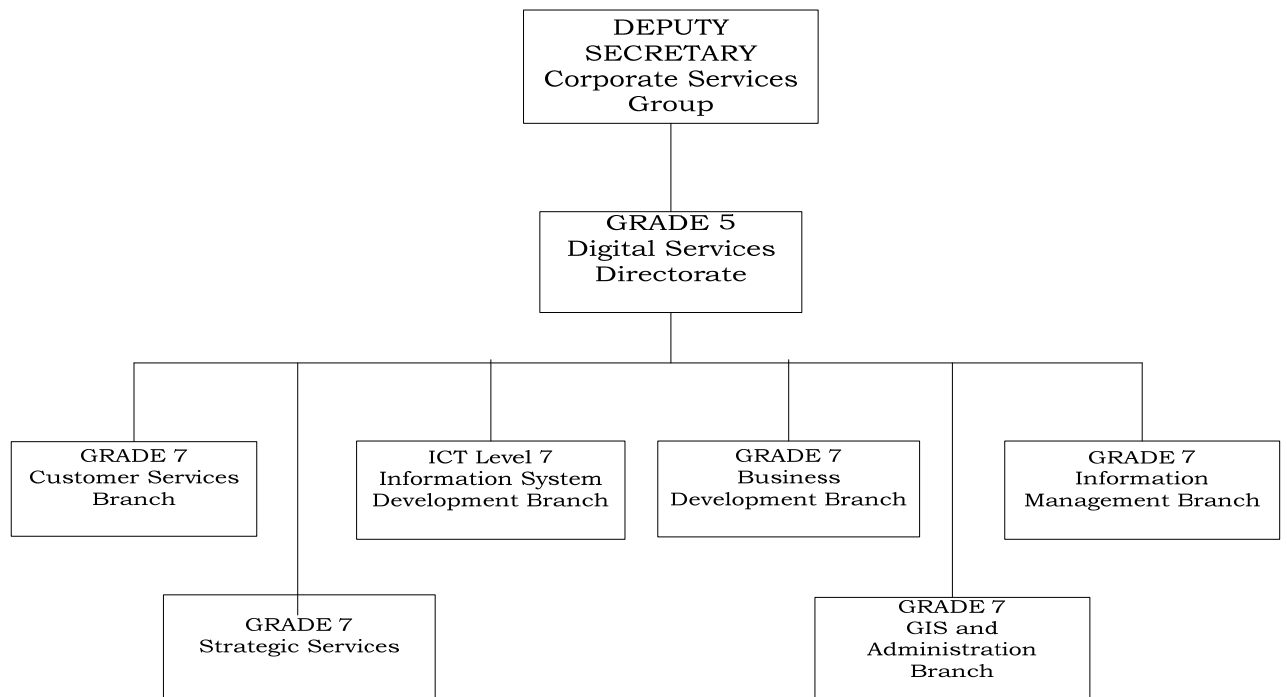
JOB SPECIFICATION - DARD

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Director of Digital Services is a new Senior Civil Service Grade 5 post located with the Central Services Group. The successful candidate will be responsible for all aspects of the organisation's information technology (IT) and information systems (IS) strategies and services including IT infrastructure, Internet, intranet and telecommunication systems and records management.

The Director of Digital Services will report to the Senior Finance Director, whose role is that of Chief Operating Officer for the Department with overall responsibility for delivery of DARD's Strategic Goal 5 as outlined above. The Digital Services Directorate will comprise six Branches with over 100 staff.

The proposed organisational chart is attached below:



KEY OBJECTIVE: DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING DIGITAL SERVICES

DARD's existing IT processes and systems have to date served the Department well, however over the next several years, the Common Agricultural Policy will be reformed, with consequences for area based schemes; the Rural Development Programme will be redrawn, with implications for the measures that operate and the support arrangements; the Department's Animal and Public Health Information System will have to be re-tendered; and the Department will wish to continue to integrate its

administration and controls, including through the adoption of a standard geographical information system.

The Director of Digital Services will therefore focus on the delivery of services for our customers primarily by electronic means through integrated, relevant, secure and accessible systems linked to effective and efficient processes. This will further facilitate the simplification of processes to allow the industry to comply with the minimum bureaucracy possible and ensure that digital services are well designed to be quicker and more convenient for users and potentially lead to significant savings for the Department.

The postholder will also ensure that the Department fulfils its obligations, using best practice, in the creation, retrieval, storage, preservation and destruction of both paper and electronic records in line with the requirements of legislation governing data protection, environmental information and freedom of information.

The Director of Digital Services will be required to demonstrate leadership, strategic thinking and planning, problem-solving ability, interpersonal skills, innovation and experience of programme and project management.

JOB SPECIFICATION - DFP

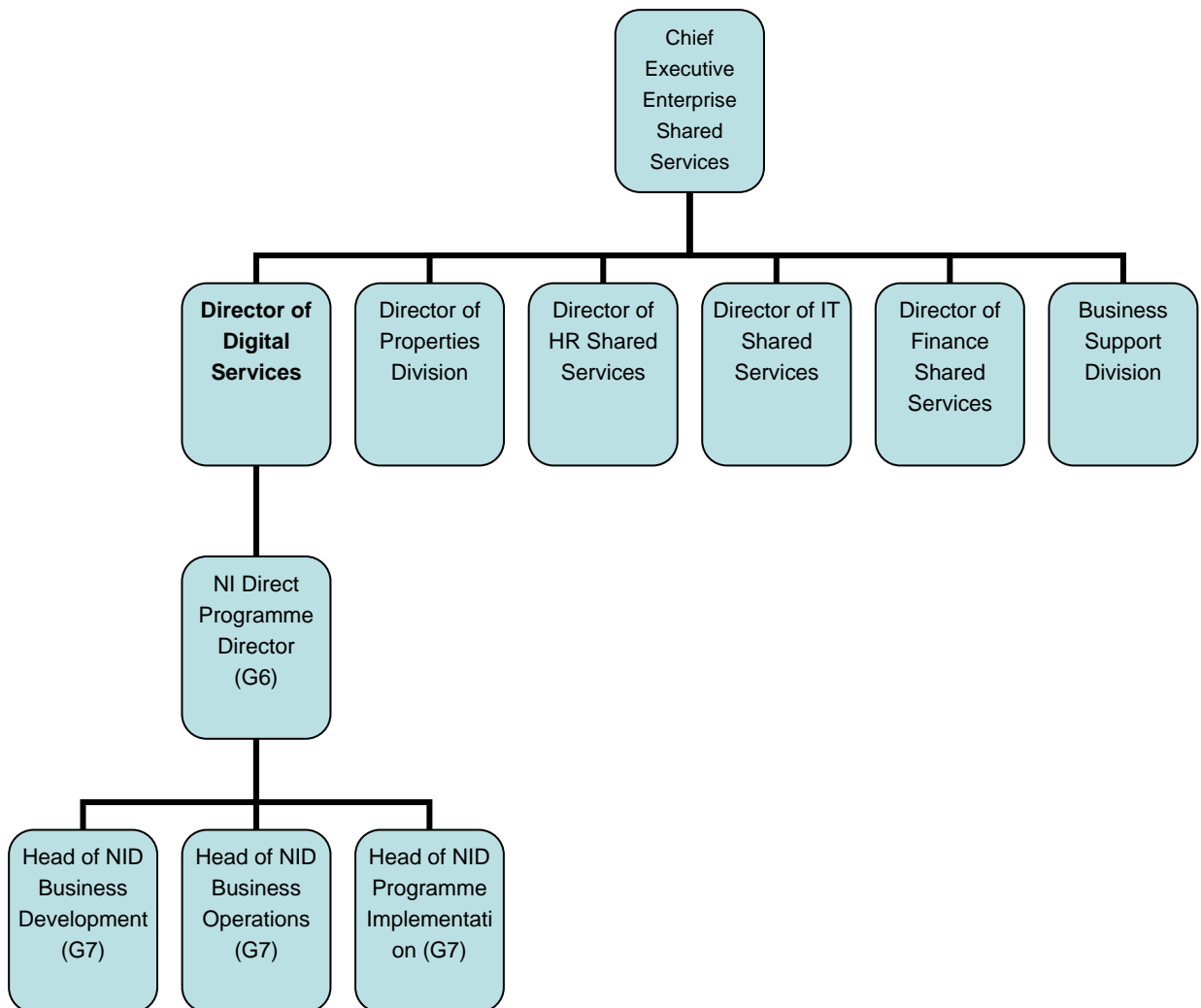
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Director of Digital Services Grade 5 post is located in the Enterprise Shared Services (ESS) Directorate. The post holder will have primary responsibility for the strategic leadership of the NI Direct programme.

The role will involve close collaboration with the senior staff across the 12 NI Departments and other stakeholders.

The Director of Digital Services will report to the Chief Executive of Enterprise Shared Services (ESS).

The organisational chart is below:



KEY OBJECTIVE: TRANSFORMING DIGITAL SERVICES

Over the past few years the NICS has delivered a huge transformation programme of delivering common corporate services across the NICS. These services include HR, finance, IT and training functions. Previously such work areas were the responsibility of individual Departments, however the reform programme has resulted in brigading these common services into specific Shared Service centres, and then into a multi-functional Shared Services organisation known as **Enterprise Shared Services (ESS)**. The delivery of the services is underpinned by multi-million pound contracts. The development of the Shared Services programme is seen as a means of delivering a more customer focused, efficient and effective common service across the whole organisation. ESS delivers a number of Shared Services – HR Connect, Centre for Applied Learning (CAL), Business Consultancy Service, Properties, Account NI, IT Assist, Network NI and Records NI staffed by a complement of around 950 staff in total.

A major programme of work has successfully delivered nidirect.gov.uk – the citizen facing website and contact centre for the NICS. A contract for a major strategic partnership has just been awarded to deliver the next phase of NI Direct. ESS is now also responsible for development of digital services policies and delivery of the NI Direct programme

The post holder will provide advice to stakeholders on the implications of changes in online services policy through the Citizen Contact Strategy. The post holder will:

- Develop and manage joined up governance roles, responsibilities, workloads and forward planning in conjunction with other ESS directors;
- Exploit the knowledge and understanding of online transactions and the NI Direct online context generally, including the strategic questions and policy issues that need to be addressed in advance of development work;
- Develop a sound “Intelligent Customer” role to define and own business needs both technical and user-facing, to exercise expert robust challenge and on-board new transactions;
- Develop a strong central digital team with the right skills and a strong business analysis team;
- Assume responsibility for all online standards and their enforcement NICS-wide.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These are permanent appointments at Grade 5 level to the Senior Civil Service (SCS), the Northern Ireland Civil Service top leadership and management resource.

A successful candidate who is an existing civil servant and not already a member of the Northern Ireland Senior Civil Service will, on appointment, become a member of the Northern Ireland Senior Civil Service. As a member of the Senior Civil Service the postholders may be transferred to other posts at the same level.

SECONDMENT

Alternatively, these posts may be filled by the secondment of successful candidates from their current posts. The duration will be agreed by all parties at a later stage, prior to the start of any secondment. Secondment would be on a candidate's current terms and conditions of service. It is advisable that candidates interested in the secondment option make their employers aware that under the NICS secondment arrangements the successful candidate will remain an employee of their current employer. The necessary administration arrangements will be agreed between DARD/DFP and the employer before a secondment arrangement commences.

"Secondment" means a voluntary transfer from a permanent employer for a fixed period which does not sever the employment relationship of the person seconded with the permanent employer.

SALARY SCALE

Salary for the post will be within the Unified Grade 5 Band range (currently £63,994 - £78,275) within which annual pay progression will be in line with the NICS Senior Civil Service pay policy.

The successful applicants can expect to be placed at the minimum of the range, although a higher starting salary may be available if they have exceptionally relevant skills/experience. If the successful candidate is an existing NICS civil servant, normal pay on promotion/regarding arrangements will apply.

In order to comply with DFP guidance, salaries of the Senior Civil Servants are disclosable, including any taxable benefits in kind and pension, in Departmental annual accounts. Additional information may also have to be disclosed should DFP guidance change. As a condition of appointment, the successful candidate must agree to this disclosure.

PENSIONS

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. Further details of this can be found on page 29 of this booklet.

LOCATION

In relation to the DARD post, candidates are advised that a Programme for Government commitment to advance the relocation of the DARD headquarters to a rural area by 2015 is being taken forward. This follows the announcement of the Minister's decision that the new DARD Headquarters will be in Ballykelly. The postholder will be expected to transfer as necessary, but in the interim will be based in the Greater Belfast area.

The DFP post will be based in the Greater Belfast area.

ANNUAL LEAVE

In addition to the 12 public and privilege holidays, there is an annual leave allowance of 30 days.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

The post holders will be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland and, on occasion, Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere. The successful candidates must therefore have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post and be prepared to travel throughout Northern Ireland and elsewhere, as required. This may include overnight stays.

TRAINING

DARD is an accredited Investors in People organisation. Both Departments recognise that the skills of our people are our greatest asset and we will continually seek to train and develop them in line with our business goals.

FUTURE VACANCIES

This competition may be used to fill further permanent appointments at this grade with similar duties and responsibilities that may arise again within one year from date of the merit list being established.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Applicants wishing to learn more about the posts before deciding to apply should contact **Valerie Noble (DARD)** by telephone: **02890 765872** or via email: valerie.noble@dardni.gov.uk or **Angela Barratt (DFP)** by telephone: **02891 858226** or via email: angela.barratt@dfpni.gov.uk

If you have any queries about the competition process you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330, or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the main management challenges for the post holders will be to establish and motivate the Digital Services team to deliver what is likely to be a particularly challenging remit especially over the next 4 to 5 years. He/she will be required to develop team capability in line with the Departmental business plans and organisational vision, managing and responding to change effectively, promoting best practice across the relevant specialisms.

Of particular significance, the Director of Digital Services will be responsible for:

- Directing the planning and implementation of enterprise IT systems in support of business operations in order to improve cost effectiveness, service quality and business development.
- Making a substantive personal contribution to the further development of the Department's ICT, Channel Management and Information Management Strategies, together with their on-going implementation and review (*DARD only*).
- Developing an integrated suite of adaptable customer facing services that can be delivered by a dispersed Department, generating efficiency gains and quality improvements for both the Department and its customers (*DARD only*).
- Oversee the financial arrangements for management of the NIDirect contract, as well as monitoring the performance of the services delivered by the private sector partner and leading action to secure improvements where required (*DFP only*).
- Providing the primary support to the business for the management of information and the supporting technology, systems and policies necessary to deliver the Department's objectives including its project/programme portfolio.
- The management and day-to-day running of the Directorate and of the successful management, control and delivery of IT enabled change projects.
- In DARD, the Director of Digital Services will be accountable for an administrative/resource budget (excluding staff) of £4m and for a Capital budget expenditure of up to £2.1m. In DFP, the post holder will be accountable for an administrative/ resource budget (excluding staff) of £2.5m and a Capital budget expenditure of up to £2m.
- Aligning the Directorate's capability with the needs of the wider business and building a flexible and dynamic organisation that will be responsive to changes in policy and strategic direction.

- Undertaking the role of Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) for the Department (*DARD only*).
- Providing advice to the Departmental Board and Minister on issues relating to Digital Services.
- Driving the better regulation and simplification agenda within the Department (*DARD only*).
- Improving access to information.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications, provide evidence in their application form which demonstrates that they personally satisfy the following eligibility criteria:

1. At least 2 years' senior management* experience gained within the last 5 years in ICT strategic planning and policy development;
2. A proven track record of experience in whole life cycle ICT programme and project management from assessing options and recommending solutions, through to implementation and delivery with expertise in programme governance techniques;
3. A proven track record of successful ICT enabled change management in a challenging environment, using strong business transformation skills;
4. The ability, gained at executive level,** to achieve value for money services and challenging objectives within constrained budgets; and
5. Highly developed interpersonal, communication and negotiation skills with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders in a team-oriented, collaborative environment.

The following additional clarification is provided:

****Senior Management'** is defined as providing detailed advice on, or being party to decisions affecting, strategic issues concerning the corporate body or organisation with which an individual is working, either as an employee or advisor.

*****Executive level'** is defined as the corresponding level within an organisation which entails working and reporting directly to individuals at Board or Director level.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (i.e. employment history and eligibility criteria) together with the fully cited bibliography will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**
- **The selection panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to evidence the skills and competencies set out under Eligibility Criteria above. In addition, they will also be required to evidence the skills and competencies set out in the Professional Skills for Government (PSG), which the NICS has adopted as a framework for the purpose of personal and professional development.

What is the PSG competency framework?

The Professional Skills for Government (PSG) competency framework is a structured way of thinking about jobs and careers for Civil Service staff at all grades. It sets out the skills you need to do your job well as a member of the Civil Service, no matter what grade you are or where you work.

How does the PSG framework look?

The PSG competency framework is divided into the following separate but supporting areas:

1. Leadership - Civil Service leadership qualities sit at the centre of the framework. These are to:

- Provide direction for the organisation;
- Deliver results;
- Build capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges; and
- Act with integrity.

2. Core skills - Every civil servant needs certain core skills to work effectively.

At Senior Civil Service level the core skills are:

- **People management** - evidence of developing team capability in line with the business plan and organisational vision; managing change effectively and promoting best practice;
- **Financial management** – evidence of planning, agreeing and monitoring the delivery of financial targets, and of identifying and implementing innovative ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets;
- **Analysis and use of evidence** – evidence of ensuring that the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders;
- **Programme and project management** – evidence of responsibility for the definition and successful delivery of programme/project benefits, managing risks and communicating effectively with stakeholders;

- **Strategic thinking** – evidence of influencing the organisation’s strategy and priorities, and managing the tensions arising from conflicting organisational priorities, wider policy environment and operational constraints; and
- **Communications and marketing** – evidence of aligning policy and delivery with clear communications objectives, taking into account the wider organisational communications agenda.

3. Professional skills

Job-specific professional skills are related to the work you do. Everyone in the Civil Service requires some professional skills to do their job, whether they work in policy development, operational delivery or corporate services, or provide expert advice (for example, scientists, economists and communicators). This area of the PSG competency framework is supported by Heads of Profession, who set standards for all professions in the Civil Service.

Further information on the Professional Skills for Government framework can be obtained by accessing:

www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk

When the NICS Recruitment website is displayed, please click on

“Professional Skills for Government”, and then:

“Professional Skills for Government – Leadership and Core Skills for NICS Grade 5”.

If you have any queries related to accessing the Professional Skills for Government framework, contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the core competences of the role as listed on the above website and be aware that they will form the basis of the assessment / interview.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will include a presentation and a competence based interview.

PRESENTATION

Before the competence based interview, candidates will be required to deliver a presentation, lasting no more than 7 minutes. Following the presentation the panel may elect to ask clarification questions on the presentation. The presentation topic will be provided on the day of interview and 30 minutes preparation time will be given. A flipchart and writing materials will be provided for candidates' use. No other materials or visual aids will be permitted. No personal documentation may be brought in to the pre-interview room. The only materials candidates will be permitted to bring into interview will be those prepared in the pre-interview room.

COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW

The selection panel will design questions to test the applicants' knowledge and experience in each of the following areas, linking that knowledge and experience to the requirements of the post as set out in the eligibility criteria on page 17 and award marks accordingly.

INTERVIEW CRITERIA

1. Professional Knowledge and Skills

Evidence of developing and applying relevant expertise at a senior management strategic level across a wide range of information technology and information management issues.

2. Programme and Project Management

Evidence of agreeing the definition of a programme's benefits, defining success criteria to assess performance, ensuring cost-effective measurement processes are in place and managing risks.

3. Leadership Skills

Evidence of providing direction for the organisation, delivering results, building capacity for the organisation to address current and future challenges and acting with integrity.

4. Strategic Thinking

Evidence of contributing to the organisation's strategy and priorities and identifying trade-offs, tensions and conflicts that have to be managed.

5. Analysis and use of Evidence

Evidence of working, guided and informed by robust analysis and evidence and communicating effectively with stakeholders about the evidence base.

6. Communications and Marketing

Evidence of identifying and sharing information on issues affecting stakeholders in a continuous two-way dialogue.

7. People Management

Evidence of achieving organisational aims through the engagement, development and leadership of staff and influencing key stakeholders and partners.

8. Financial Management

Evidence of setting goals and budgets for your business area that are directly linked to the long- and short-term corporate plan and of managing resources effectively.

The selection panel will design questions which particularly address the eligibility criteria and the Professional Skills for Government core competences as detailed above, to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the areas and award marks accordingly.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 18 November 2013.

Interview Guidance for Applicants

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

Making your application

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

Guidance for Applicants

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet, e.g. an organisational chart.
- Should an organisational chart be required this must be submitted to HRConnect by the closing date for applications.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, script using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

Application Form Submission

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.
- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- Please note - the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

Changes in personal circumstances

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible; you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

Disability Requirements

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 31.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer

As women are currently known to be under represented in this grade across the NICS, applications from women would be particularly welcome.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Assessment Information

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria (*if applicable*) and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Director of Digital Services post is classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (i) A UK national; or
- (ii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (iii) A British Protected Person; or
- (iv) An EEA national; or
- (v) A Swiss National; or
- (vi) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Vetting Procedures

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

The level of vetting is a Baseline Standard Check. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport **OR**
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) *AND* your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) Other acceptable documents are listed on www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

Basic Disclosure Certificate

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: <http://www.accessni.gov.uk/>. Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. This can be downloaded from the AccessNI website. Guidance notes of the completion of the form are also included on the website. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to complete the above form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

Order of Merit

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed subject to Ministerial endorsement. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for one year.

Feedback

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners' Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pensions:

The NICS offers all new employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/index/new-members.htm>

or

if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions as follows:

Civil Service Pensions
Waterside House
75 Duke Street
Londonderry
BT47 6FP
Tel: 02871 319000
Email: cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Please return completed form to:

HRConnect Recruitment Team

Post: HRConnect
PO Box 1089
2nd Floor
The Metro Building
6-9 Donegall Square South
Belfast
BT1 9EW

NOTE: Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.

Contact Details:

If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:

Email: Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net
Tel: 0800 1 300 330
Fax: 028 9024 1665

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equal Opportunities Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. This right is protected in many instances by legislation.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to recruit, retain and promote the best available people. Our equal opportunities policy is central to this strategy. We aim to foster a culture which encourages every member of staff to develop his or her full potential and which rewards achievement. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

The NICS seeks to maintain the confidence of the whole community. It will continue to promote equality of opportunity and fair participation within the framework of the law and will strive to achieve a workforce that is broadly representative of the society which it serves.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.”

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Legislative Context

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

Gender

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also necessary to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different age.

Community Background

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The information requested in the Community Background section of the monitoring form is required in connection with the requirements of the above Order and to enable the completion of the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission for NI.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

Disability

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

Physical Impairment: this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

Mental Impairment: this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability.

Substantial: put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

Long-term adverse effect: the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

A normal day to day activity: this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

What sort of effect must there be?

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

Are any conditions not covered?

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

What if someone has recovered from a disability?

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Race

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

Marital Status & Dependants

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Use of Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used to enable the NICS to assess the effectiveness of its EO policies and to determine the impact (if any) of various policies and procedures on different categories of staff. In addition to this internal focus community background and gender information on both staff and applicants is used to complete the annual statutory monitoring return to the Equality Commission.

Confidentiality of Monitoring Information

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The confidentiality of community background information is also protected through regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained or used for the purposes of monitoring under FETO.

The release of an individual's monitoring information is permitted by legislation as part of prospective or actual proceedings under equality legislation, e.g. where another individual has made a complaint of alleged discrimination.

Many people from all backgrounds in Northern Ireland and beyond are interested in the profile of the NICS workforce and the candidates who apply for jobs. For this reason the NICS regularly publishes data in the form of statistical summaries, graphs etc. On occasions it may also be necessary to use monitoring information to answer questions from Assembly Members, MPs and Maps or to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. In all cases where information is made public, the format of presentation will be such that it will not be possible to identify any individual's information.

ANNEX A

Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	France	Liechtenstein	**Romania
Belgium	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
**Bulgaria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA national' means:

- (i) That national's spouse*; or
- (ii) A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- (iii) A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

*Note: 'Spouse' does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students; family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only.

** Non-exempt Bulgarian and Romanian nationals are required to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme prior to appointment. Guidance on this can be obtained from the Home Office website www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

ANNEX B

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

CSC NI

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

AN INTRODUCTION

Ensuring appointment on merit
And safeguarding ethics

WHO ARE WE?

Mr Brian Rowntree, CBE (Chairperson)
Mrs Vilma Patterson, MBE
Dr Raymond Mullan, OBE
Ms Marion Matchett, CBE
Mr Jim Scholes

LOCATION

Our Office is in Stormont House.
The full address is:

Room 105
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

OPENING HOURS

The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,
Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.

How to contact us

- write to us at the address at the top of the page
- telephone us on 028 9052 3599
- fax us at 028 9052 7705
- visit us at www.nicscommissioners.org

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: www.nicscommissioners.org
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.

- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.
- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.