



Department of

Finance

An Roinn

Airgeadais

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**DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
SPONSORED BODIES
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Introduction

The Department of Finance (DoF) has responsibility for a number of bodies, including an executive agency, a north/south body and advisory NDPBs.

The terms “sponsored body”, “arm’s length body” and “quango” are all used frequently when referring to such bodies. These terms all mean the same thing. From this point onwards the term “sponsored body” will be used.

This paper aims to answer a number of key questions:

- What is a “Sponsored Body”?
- What is the difference between a “Sponsored Body” and a “Public Body”?
- Which bodies does DoF currently sponsor?
- Which bodies did DoF previously sponsor?
- What are the functions and costs of DoF, its agencies and sponsored bodies?

If you require further information on the contents of this document please contact Janis Marynowski, DoF Finance Division (Tel: 02890 254725 or email: Janis.marynowski@finance-ni.gov.uk) in the first instance. Detailed queries may need to be referred to the responsible business area within DoF.

What is a Sponsored Body?

A sponsored body is not part of a government department, but carries out its functions to a greater or lesser extent at “arm’s length” from the ‘parent’ government department that acts as its sponsor. For this reason executive agencies are not sponsored bodies, as they are an integral part of the department with which they are associated.

The term ‘**sponsored body**’ includes:

- Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs);
- Advisory Bodies, including Stakeholder Groups and Forums;
- Statutory Office Holders; and
- North/South Bodies.

NDPBs are the most common sponsored bodies and there are three main types:

- **Executive NDPBs** – usually established in bespoke legislation or under the Companies Act. They carry out administrative, commercial, executive and regulatory or technical functions. They normally employ their own staff, who are not usually civil servants, are accountable for their own budgets and publish their own annual report and accounts.
- **Advisory NDPBs** – provide independent, expert advice to Ministers on an ongoing basis. They do not usually have their own staff, incur expenditure on their own account or prepare their own accounts. Instead they are usually supported by civil servants from their sponsoring department and any expenditure is recorded in the accounts of the sponsoring department.

- **Tribunal NDPBs** – usually concerned with the rights and obligations of individuals in relation to a specific branch of government or other public authority. Like advisory NDPBs, they do not usually have their own staff, incur expenditure on their own account or prepare their own accounts. Instead they are usually supported by civil servants from their sponsoring department and any expenditure is recorded in the accounts of the sponsoring department.

What is the difference between a “Sponsored Body” and a “Public Body”?

All sponsored bodies are public bodies. However, the term “public body” can also be used to refer to all government organisations, including government departments and agencies.

More normally, the term is used to refer to “a department’s public bodies”. In this context, it should be interpreted to mean the same thing as the term “sponsored body”.

Agency and Bodies Currently Sponsored by DoF

The table below provides a matrix setting out those bodies that DoF currently sponsors, together with its current agency, identifying their classification.

Agency/Body	Executive Agency	Sponsored Bodies				
		North/ South Body	Advisory NDPB	Stakeholder Group/ Forum	Public Sector Working Group	Statutory Office Holder
NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Gníomhaireacht Staitisticí agus Taighde Thuaisceart Éireann	X					
Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) An Foras um Chláir Speisialta an AE		X				
NI Building Regulations Advisory Committee (NIBRAC) Coiste Comhairleach um Rialacháin Fhoirgníochta Thuaisceart Éireann			X			
Statistics Advisory Committee (SAC) Coiste Comhairleach Staitisticí			X			
Legal Services Oversight Commissioner (LSOC) Coimisinéir Maoirseachta um Sheirbhísí Dlí						X
Construction Industry Forum NI (CIFNI) Fóram do Thionscal Foirgníochta TÉ				X		
NI Civil Service Pension Board (NICSPB) Bord Pinsean Státseirbhís TÉ					X	

Agency and Bodies Previously Sponsored by DoF

The table below identifies previous agencies and bodies that DoF previously sponsored, which have now ceased to exist, or where responsibility has transferred to another department to assist with the answering of questions that cover a number of years.

Agency/Body	Status	Executive Agency	Sponsored Bodies					
			North/South Body	Advisory NDPB	Tribunal NDPB	Stakeholder Group/Forum	Statutory Office Holder	Temporary Advisory Body
Land and Property Services (LPS) ¹	Ceased to be an agency from 1 April 2013	X						
NI Law Commission ²	Established in April 2007. Became the sole responsibility of the Department of Justice from 12 April 2010			X				
Lands Tribunal for NI	Transferred to the Department of Justice from 1 April 2011				X			
NI Valuation Tribunal	Transferred to the Department of Justice from 1 April 2011				X			
Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) Governance Group ³	Established in February 2010. Ceased to exist December 2012					X		
Public Service Commission for NI (PSC)	Established 8 March 2006. Ceased to exist 31 March 2016			X				
Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Sector Reform	Established September 2014. Ceased to Exist September 2016							X

¹ Land and Property Services ceased to be an Executive Agency on 1 April 2013. At that point it became part of the Core Department.

² Prior to devolution of Policing and Justice on 12 April 2010, the NI Law Commission was jointly funded by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and DoF. NIO was regarded as the primary sponsoring body.

³ Due to changes as a result of the Reform of Public Service Pensions, the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) was wound up in December 2012, with agreement from all parties.

Lay Observer NI	Established under the Solicitors (Northern Ireland) Order 1976. Replaced in July 2017 by the Legal Services Oversight Commissioner.						X	
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The Functions and Costs of DoF, its Agency and Sponsored Bodies

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
Core Department	December 1999 as part of the Northern Ireland Executive by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Departments (Northern Ireland) Order	To secure the most appropriate and effective use of resources and services for the benefit of the community and deliver quality, cost effective and efficient public services and administration in the department's areas of executive responsibility.	2015-16 £185.6 2016-17 £162.7m 2017-18 £187.1m	2015-16 £26.7 2016-17 £33.5 2017-18 £25.2	2017-18 Average FTE 3,115	Staffed by Civil Servants	Departmental Resource Accounts
NISRA	1 April 1996 under the Government's Next Steps Initiative	To provide a high quality, cost effective, registration, statistics and research service that informs the policy and the democratic processes. To provide a window on Northern Ireland's society and its economy by providing evidence to inform decision-making.	2015-16 £10.6 2016-17 £9.4m 2017-18 £10.5m	2015-16 £2.6 2016-17 £0.5 2017-18 £0.7	2017-18 Average FTE 474	Staffed by Civil Servants	Departmental Resource Accounts and separate Agency Accounts

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
SEUPB	8 March 1999 under the Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the Agreement). The Agreement stipulates that the SEUPB will implement the policies directed by the North South Ministerial Council as specified by the North South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999, as amended.	To effectively manage and implement funding programmes on behalf of the two Governments aimed at delivering social and economic improvements to the people in Northern Ireland, Ireland and parts of Western Scotland through cross-border, transnational and inter-regional co-operation.	Admin costs are currently split 53/47 between DoF and the Republic of Ireland, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) 2015 NI admin spend £0.9m 2016 NI admin spend £1.0m 2017 NI admin spend £2.6m	Less than £0.1m per annum	57 FTE	The Chief Executive is appointed by the North/South Ministerial Council	Separate North/South Body Accounts

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
NIBRAC	1973, currently provided for by Article 4 of the Building Regulations (NI) Order 1979 (as amended)	To advise the Department on amendments to building regulations or other contracted matters that the Department may bring to it.	Appointments are unpaid, members may claim for out of pocket expenses incurred in connection with the business of the Committee. No expenditure incurred in past 3 years.	Nil	Normally consists of a Chair and 17 members. Secretariat support provided by DoF Properties Division	Committee members are appointed by the Minister for DoF	Departmental Resource Accounts
SAC	Under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (NI) Order 1988	To advise NI Departments on all matters relating to the collection and disclosure of statistical information from businesses under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (NI) Order 1988 and also on issues such as quality assurance, National Statistics, Codes of Practice and such matters as may be referred to it by departments.”	Appointments are unpaid. No expenditure incurred in past 3 years	Nil	Chair and 9 members. Secretariat support provided by NISRA	Committee members are appointed by the Minister for DoF	Departmental Resource Accounts

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
LSOC	Under the Legal Complaints and Regulation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	The Commissioner plays a strategic role in overseeing the complaints handling systems implemented by the Law Society and The Council of the Bar	Less than £50k per annum.	nil	One	Appointed by the Head of DoF, in consultation with the Lord Chief Justice.	Departmental Resource Accounts

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
CIFNI	4 October 2000 by the then DFP Minister, Mark Durkan	To provide a strategically focussed interface between representatives from Government and the construction industry, where both parties consider matters of mutual interest.	The body does not incur any direct public expenditure.	Nil	Chaired by the Director of Central Procurement Directorate within DoF. No set membership. Meetings generally attract 20-25 delegates.	Centres of Procurement Expertise, departments and the industry nominate their own representatives. Delegates normally comprise officials drawn from the Government Construction Clients Group, industry representatives drawn from the colleges of the Construction Industry Group for Northern Ireland and Trade Union Officials nominated by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.	Departmental Resource Accounts

Core / Agency / Body	Established	Functions	Operating Cost	Capital Expenditure	Staff Numbers	Appointments	Expenditure Recorded
NICSPB	1 April 2015, Section 5 of the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014	To assist the scheme manager of the 2015 alpha pension scheme (Civil Service scheme) in securing the effective and efficient governance and administration of the pension scheme and any statutory scheme connected with it.	The Chairperson remunerated, based on the standard daily rate. Other members are unpaid and expected to claim travelling expenses from their own organisation. 2017-18 £5k	Nil	Chair and 8 members. Secretariat support will be provided by Civil Service Pensions.	Chair appointed by the scheme manager. Members appointed by the Chair with the approval of the scheme manager.	Departmental Resource Accounts.