



United Kingdom  
Debt Management  
Office

**Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt**

**Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service  
Investment Account**

**Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023**

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under section 45(3) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by Schedule 18 Paragraph 34 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 by the Department of Justice on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General

on

06 July 2023





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# Performance Report

## Overview

The purpose of the overview is to provide sufficient information to understand the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account (NICTSIA), its purpose, the key risks to the achievement of its objectives and how it has performed during the year.

These accounts have been prepared by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt (CRND) under a direction issued by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland in accordance with section 45 of the Administration of Justice Act 1982 (the Act) as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010.

## Purpose and principal activities of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account

The NICTSIA receives funds from the deposit and investment accounts operated by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS), which are available for suitors' funds paid into Court in Northern Ireland. It also contains funds due to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund.

By virtue of rules made under section 82(1) of the Judicature (Northern Ireland) Act 1978, on each day that the Accountant General of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Northern Ireland (the Accountant General) has excess cash in their account, they remit the excess amount to CRND for investment in the NICTSIA; whilst on each day that the balance in their account is insufficient to meet demands, they make a withdrawal from the NICTSIA to make good the shortfall.

Section 39(1) of the Act authorises the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland to make regulations setting out the range of investments in which CRND may invest money transferred to them by the Accountant General. Currently, investment is restricted to securities specified in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 8, 9 and 9A of Part II of Schedule 1 to the Trustee Investments Act 1961 in line with regulations set out by HM Treasury prior to April 2010. The interest or dividends received on investments held by CRND are reinvested in authorised securities in the NICTSIA until required to meet payments.

Section 39(2) of the Act requires the payment into the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund of any surplus interest or dividends received in any accounting year by CRND and section 39(3) provides for any deficiency of interest or dividends to be made good out of the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund. The amount of any surplus or deficiency is obtained by deducting from the interest and dividends received by CRND the sum of:

1. the interest due to be paid or credited on funds in court;
2. the sum required by the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland in respect of administering funds in court;
3. the sum required by CRND in respect of expenses; and
4. any sum the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland requires to be set aside for depreciation in the value of securities.

By agreement with HMT (and later by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland), NICTSIA need not pay over to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund more than £25,000 of its surplus interest in any financial year.

Section 39(5) of the Act provides a guarantee by the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund of the capital paid to CRND by the Accountant General in an instance when the Commissioners are unable to pay a sum due to the Accountant General.

## **Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt**

CRND's main function is the investment and management of major government funds. The investment powers differ from fund to fund.

The Secretary and Comptroller General and Assistant Comptroller, who are appointed by and act on behalf of the Commissioners, make the day-to-day decisions. There is no legislation that determines the specific responsibilities of the Secretary and Comptroller General and the Assistant Comptroller. However, in practice the role of the Secretary and Comptroller General is considered analogous to acting as the Accounting Officer for CRND. Therefore, the Secretary and Comptroller General takes responsibility for preparing and signing the accounts on behalf of the Commissioners.

The arrangements made between CRND and the NICTS in respect of the investment service provided by CRND are set out in a Memorandum of Understanding, which describes how CRND intend to achieve the agreed investment objectives.

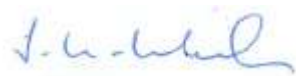
### **Performance summary**

CRND's strategy of investing in the Debt Management Account was maintained throughout 2022-2023. This strategy enabled the NICTSIA to earn a rate of interest very closely correlated with prevailing short-term sterling interest rates, whilst protecting its capital position and access to liquidity at all times.

### **Performance analysis**

During 2022-2023, total income from funds invested was £2,207k (2021-2022: £192k). This increase was primarily due to a rise in average interest rates on the NICTSIA's investments with the Debt Management Account, which correspond to the official Bank Rate. Overall, the NICTSIA generated a surplus of £419k (2021-2022: £46k surplus) after taking into account CRND's management expenses, interest payable on funds in court, any NICTS costs of administering funds in court and the surplus or deficit transferrable with the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund.

As at 31 March 2023, the total value of investments held by the NICTSIA was £107 million (31 March 2022: £102 million). This increase was primarily due to a net advance of funds by the NICTS during the year.



**Jo Whelan**

Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

4 July 2023

# Accountability Report

The accountability report comprises two sections: a **corporate governance report** and an **Assembly accountability and audit report**. The **corporate governance report** includes the following information: the responsibilities of the Secretary and Comptroller General; the composition, responsibilities and actions of the Advisory Board and the Audit and Risk Committee and how they have supported the Secretary and Comptroller General and enabled the objectives of the NICTSIA; the key risks faced by the NICTSIA and how it seeks to manage them. The **Assembly accountability and audit report** includes a formal opinion by the NICTSIA's external auditor to certify that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the NICTSIA's affairs for the year and that they have been prepared in accordance with all relevant rules.

These two sections contribute to the NICTSIA's accountability to the Northern Ireland Assembly and comply with best practice in relation to corporate governance norms and codes. In particular, the **corporate governance report** seeks to do so by describing the key mechanisms the NICTSIA employs to ensure it maintains high standards of conduct and performance. This includes the statement of Secretary and Comptroller General's responsibilities which describes her accountability to the Assembly for the NICTSIA's use of resources and compliance with rules set by the Department of Finance and HM Treasury to ensure best practice in financial management. The governance statement reflects the applicable principles of the Corporate Governance Code for Central Government Departments. The **Assembly accountability and audit report** confirms that expenditure and income of the NICTSIA have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and confirms that information in the Assembly accountability disclosures has been audited and approved by external auditors.

## Corporate governance report

### Directors' report

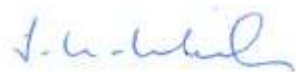
Operationally, the CRND is part of the DMO and its staff are employees of the DMO. The CRND therefore has no staff of its own. The structure of the CRND is described on page 5.

### Directors' conflicts of interest

In 2022-2023, no material conflicts of interest were declared by DMO Advisory Board members.

### Reporting of personal data related incidents

The NICTSIA had no protected personal data related incidents during 2022-2023.



### Jo Whelan

Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

4 July 2023



## **Statement of Secretary and Comptroller General's responsibilities**

Section 45(2) of the 1982 Act requires the Commissioners to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the accounts direction as determined by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the NICTSIA, its income and expenditure, statement of financial position and cash flows for the financial year.

The Commissioners have appointed the Secretary and Comptroller General to discharge their statutory responsibilities, a role that is analogous to acting as an Accounting Officer. Therefore, the Secretary and Comptroller General has responsibility for preparing the annual accounts and for transmitting these to the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland.

In preparing the accounts, the Secretary and Comptroller General is required to observe the applicable accounting standards and be consistent with the relevant requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Department of Finance, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on a going-concern basis; and
- confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced and understandable, and take personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining they are fair, balanced and understandable.

As the role of the Secretary and Comptroller General is analogous to acting as an Accounting Officer, it is considered that the responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, as set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland published by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland, apply to the Secretary and Comptroller General. These include responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Secretary and Comptroller General is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the NICTSIA's assets.

### **Disclosure to auditors**

Section 45(1) of the Act requires the Commissioners to send accounts prepared by them to the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland.

Under section 45(3) of the Act, the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland examines, certifies and reports on the accounts and lays copies of them with this report before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland charges no audit fee for undertaking this statutory audit.

As the Secretary and Comptroller General, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the NICTSIA's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

## **Governance statement**

### **Scope of responsibility**

As Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt (CRND), I am responsible for ensuring the operation of a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of CRND's targets, policies and objectives in managing client investment portfolios whilst safeguarding the public funds for which I am accountable, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me.

CRND is a separate business entity managed within the control framework of the DMO. While I am responsible for CRND's system of internal control, the Accounting Officer of the DMO is responsible for the wider control framework within which CRND is managed. In discharging my own control responsibilities, I take assurance on the continued sound maintenance of the wider control framework from the governance statement for the DMO, although I understand that only reasonable and not absolute assurance can be given that risks have been controlled.

It is also my responsibility to ensure that all CRND fund management activities are conducted with due regard to value for money and operated in line with client instructions. I have put arrangements in place to ensure that there is a proper evaluation of the balance of cost and risk in our operations.

CRND is committed to the highest standards of corporate governance and is guided by the Corporate Governance Code for central government departments (the Code) and the following principles laid down in that Code:

- Parliamentary accountability;
- The role of the Board;
- Board composition;
- Board effectiveness; and
- Risk management.

CRND does not conduct any part of its business with or through arm's length bodies (ALBs) and therefore CRND has not applied principle six which covers departmental governance arrangements with ALBs.

### **Advisory Board**

In June 2021, HMT published a Tailored Review of the DMO. Tailored Reviews aim to assess, amongst other things, an organisation's form and function, its control and governance arrangements, and its relationship with its sponsoring department and other relevant organisations. Overall the review concluded that the DMO is a highly successful and effective organisation.

The review made a series of recommendations regarding the DMO's governance arrangements. In particular, the review recommended that, in terms of its status, the DMO should be regarded as a 'Model 2' Executive Agency as defined in the Cabinet Office guidance. A Model 2 Executive Agency is one which is deemed by the sponsor department to require a greater level of independence from its home department in order to carry out its functions effectively, or one that is considered by its home department to be of sufficient size and importance to require independent assurance. On this basis, the review recommended that the DMO's governance arrangements should be amended accordingly, including the creation of an Advisory Board to replace the current Managing Board and, as a consequence of this, to introduce a Non-Executive Chair (NEC) to the Board membership. The process to recruit a NEC was undertaken in the second half of the year and successfully completed as announced on 4 May 2022. The inaugural Advisory Board was held on 13 June 2022.

The Secretary and Comptroller General was supported during 2022-2023 by the DMO Managing Board and then the Advisory Board (the Board) which, in addition to the Secretary and Comptroller General, is comprised of:

- Dame Sue Owen (from 13 June 2022)

Non-Executive Chair - Dame Sue was a civil servant for 30 years, including 14 years at HM Treasury. Amongst other things, she worked on fiscal policy and debt management policy at HM Treasury. Dame Sue has previously held senior roles at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development and Department for Work and Pensions. Most recently she served as the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, from 2013 to 2019. She has other current roles, including non-executive director at Pantheon International plc and Serco plc.

- Sir Robert Stheeman

DMO Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

- Jim Juffs

Chief Operating Officer

- Jessica Pulay

Co-Head of Policy and Markets

- Tom Josephs (until 13 June 2022)

Non-executive HM Treasury representative

- Ruth Curtice (from 15 September 2022)

Non-executive HM Treasury representative

- Paul Fisher

Non-executive director - During a 26-year career at the Bank of England, Paul Fisher served as a member of the Monetary Policy Committee from 2009 to 2014, the interim Financial Policy Committee from 2011 to 2013 and the PRA Board from 2015 to 2016. He has a number of current roles including Chair of the London Bullion Market Association.

- Paul Richards

Non-executive director - During a 29-year career at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Paul was MD of business in fixed income trading, Debt Capital Markets and Corporate Banking across Europe, the Americas and Asia Pacific. Following his retirement from banking, he spent 18 months as a senior consultant to the FCA. He is currently Chairman of Insignis, a FinTech company he launched in 2015.

Non-executive directors are appointed by the DMO Accounting Officer following a formal process and have fixed terms defined in their contracts of service. All non-executive Board members receive an induction on joining and have access to additional information and training where it is considered necessary for the effective discharge of their duties.

One of the roles of the Board is to advise the Secretary and Comptroller General on any key decisions affecting CRND.

An executive sub-committee of the Board generally meets weekly and supports the Secretary and Comptroller General on operational decisions.

During 2021-2022, in line with good practice, the Board's effectiveness was reviewed through the Tailored Review. The previous Terms of Reference for the Managing Board were supplanted by a new Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board in 2022-2023.

## 2022-2023 Board activities

Board meetings were held throughout 2022-2023 and covered regular agenda items, including risk management, staffing and progress against the operational business plan.

Board, as well as Audit and Risk Committee, attendance is outlined in the table below:

1 April 2022 – 12 June 2022		Managing Board			
	Possible	Actual			
Sir Robert Stheeman	1	1			
Jo Whelan	1	1			
Jim Juffs	1	1			
Jessica Pulay	1	1	<b>Audit and Risk Committee</b>		
Tom Josephs	1	1	Possible	Actual	
Paul Fisher	1	1	1	1	
Paul Richards	1	1	1	1	
Rodney Norman	n/a	n/a	1	1	

13 June 2022 – 28 February 2023		Advisory Board			
	Possible	Actual			
Dame Sue Owen	6	6			
Sir Robert Stheeman	6	6			
Jo Whelan	6	6			
Jim Juffs	6	6			
Jessica Pulay	6	6			
Tom Josephs	1	1	<b>Audit and Risk Committee</b>		
Ruth Curtice	4	4	Possible	Actual	
Paul Fisher	6	6	3	3	
Paul Richards	6	6	3	2	
Rodney Norman	n/a	n/a	3	3	

## **Audit and Risk Committee**

The Secretary and Comptroller General was supported during 2022-2023 by the Audit and Risk Committee on matters relating to risk, internal control and governance. The Audit and Risk Committee covers the activities of the DMO, Debt Management Account, PWLB lending facility and CRND. The members of the Audit and Risk Committee during 2022-2023 were:

Paul Fisher (Chairman)

Paul Richards

Rodney Norman

Audit and Risk Committee member - Rodney Norman was Finance Director of NS&I until 2018. Prior to that he was the Treasury Accountant at HM Treasury. This was preceded by a career in the City where he qualified as a Chartered Accountant with PWC and was Finance Director of the Banking Division of Close Brothers. He is currently a non-executive member of the Audit and Risk Committee of the Army and a senior advisor to the Bank of England. Until recently he was a non-executive director of the Pension Protection Fund and a member of its Audit and Risk Committee.

Audit and Risk Committee meetings are typically attended by the DMO Accounting Officer, the Secretary and Comptroller General, the Co-Head of Policy and Markets, the Chief Operating Officer, the Head of Internal Audit, the Head of Finance, the Head of Risk, the National Audit Office and KPMG.

One of the Audit and Risk Committee's objectives is to give advice to the Secretary and Comptroller General on:

- The overall processes for risk, control and governance and the governance statement;
- Management assurances and appropriate actions to follow from internal and external audit findings, risk analysis and reporting undertaken;
- The financial control framework and supporting compliance culture;
- Accounting policies and material judgements, the accounts and the annual report and management's letter of representation to the external auditors;
- Whistleblowing arrangements for confidentially raising and investigating concerns over possible improprieties in the conduct of the DMO's business;
- Processes to protect against money laundering, fraud and corruption; and
- The planned activity and results of both internal and external audits.

During the period under review the Audit and Risk Committee paid particular attention to the following areas:

- Anti-money laundering process review
- IT and cyber security risks
- Review of past audit reports and management actions taken
- Application development and testing controls

- Fraud risk management
- User access rights and permissions
- Review of payment systems and continuity arrangements
- Relationship management with strategic partners and key suppliers
- Sustainability review of the contracts management framework
- High level risks and issues/principal risks and uncertainties
- Impact of Covid risk
- Development of risk assurance maps
- Whistleblowing reporting process
- Risk management review

The Audit and Risk Committee covers a regular programme of agenda items, together with other current topics, and met four times during the year.

## **Other committees**

The Secretary and Comptroller General has also been informed by the following operational committees throughout the period under review:

### ***Fund Management Review Committee***

The Fund Management Review Committee monitors CRND activity relating to the performance of the government funds under management, including any reporting on compliance activities undertaken in relation to the funds.

The Fund Management Review Committee met four times in 2022-2023.

### ***Business Delivery Committee***

The Business Delivery Committee reviews the status of the delivery of DMO's business and work plan as a collective cross-functional body, resolving emerging issues in a timely way, and agreeing priorities to ensure the plan stays on track. The most significant initiatives monitored by the BDC during the year were the upgrade of the website, a new HR system and improving the DMO security profile.

The Business Delivery Committee met regularly (typically weekly) throughout 2022-2023.

### ***Risk Committees***

The Secretary and Comptroller General is informed by two risk committees covering operational risk and material change programmes. More detail on the roles, responsibilities and activities of these committees can be found in the sections below.

## **Risk management and internal control**

The Secretary and Comptroller General is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of CRND's targets, policies and objectives in managing client investment portfolios whilst safeguarding the public funds for which she is accountable, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to her in the Managing Public Money document.

CRND is managed within the wider DMO system of internal control which is based upon what the DMO Accounting Officer, with the support of the Board, considers to be appropriate, taking account of the DMO's activities, the materiality of risks inherent in those activities and the relative costs and benefits of implementing specific controls to mitigate those risks. The DMO's position differs to that of a commercial organisation in that it must always be in a position to transact the underlying business required to meet its remit. As a result, the risks associated with this activity cannot be avoided and the system of internal control can only provide reasonable assurance against failure to achieve aims and objectives.

### **The Risk and Control Framework**

The Board has designed and put in place a formal risk management framework covering all the activities conducted and overseen by the DMO. This framework helps ensure that the DMO Accounting Officer is appropriately informed and advised of any identified risks and also allows the management of risks to be monitored. The risk management framework covers both regular operations and new business initiatives, and evolves as the range and nature of the DMO's activities change. The framework is supported by a clear 'three lines of defence' model:

#### ***First line of defence:***

Day-to-day management of risk is the responsibility of management staff within business areas. The DMO considers effective risk management to be central to its operations and fosters a risk aware culture in which all members of staff, including Board members, are encouraged to understand and own the risks that are inherent in those operations. In particular, the DMO seeks to promote an environment in which staff feel comfortable to identify new risks and changes in previously identified risks, as well as weaknesses so that these may be assessed and appropriate mitigating actions put in place.

Mitigating actions typically include segregation of duties, staff training, clear lines of management delegation and reporting and robust business continuity arrangements.

#### ***Second line of defence:***

Oversight of risk is provided by the Board and risk committees, whose role is to provide regular and systematic scrutiny of risk issues which lie within their remit and to support the DMO Accounting Officer in exercising his overall responsibility for risk management.

The DMO considers that the principal risks it faces arise in three broad areas: credit risk, market risk and operational risk. It has established committees to meet regularly to review the changing risk pattern for each of these areas and to set up appropriate responses. The work of these committees is described in more detail below.

#### *Credit and Market Risk Committee*

The Credit and Market Risk Committee (CMRC) meets on a regular basis, with more frequent meetings held when required, for example during times of market stress. The CMRC monitors and reviews the management of market, credit, and liquidity risk. The CMRC met ten times during 2022-2023.

### *Operational Risk Committee*

The Operational Risk Committee (ORC) meets regularly to monitor operational risks and to review significant risk issues. The ORC is responsible for reviewing risk incidents identified through the DMO's risk incident reporting process, and for considering whether planned mitigating actions are appropriate. The ORC also reviews and tracks the progress of actions identified by Internal Audit. The ORC's scope includes issues relating to information risk, IT security, business continuity, anti-fraud and key supplier risks.

The ORC has advised the DMO Accounting Officer and the Board, during the year, on significant operational risk concerns, significant risk issues and trends as well as actions to mitigate such risks. The ORC has focused this year on business continuity, procurement and contracts management, and the release management process. The ORC met eight times during 2022-2023.

### *Controls Group*

The Controls Group meets periodically to review issues affecting the DMO's system of internal control and to analyse material changes to the control environment. The Controls Group recommends actions to management to implement changes where appropriate. The Controls Group consists of representatives from Finance, Risk, Compliance and Internal Audit.

The Controls Group has advised the DMO Accounting Officer, the Board and senior management on any significant risk concerns stemming from the introduction of new business activities as well as risks relating to other change management activities. The Controls Group has also advised the DMO Accounting Officer on suitable mitigating actions where appropriate.

During the year the Controls Group reviewed key project change proposals. Other topics reviewed included business continuity assurance, electronic trading platforms, payment enhancements and security.

### *Risk Management Unit*

The risk committees are supported by the DMO's Risk Management Unit (RMU) which ensures key risk issues arising from these committees are communicated to the DMO Accounting Officer and senior management on a regular basis, with additional ad-hoc reporting if an emerging issue requires it. The RMU also supports the formal risk reporting processes with defined outputs, including regular detailed risk reports which are reviewed by the Board and senior management.

As well as supporting the risk committee structure, the RMU provides control advice on risks. As part of the second line of defence the RMU is separate from, and independent of, the DMO's trading operations. The RMU conducts risk analysis and provides market, credit and operational risk capability for the DMO.

The identification, monitoring and mitigation of operational risk is facilitated by the RMU via quarterly consultations with heads of business units and functional teams. Significant risk issues are assessed for materiality and probability of occurrence. New risks, and risks to which exposure is increasing, are highlighted and actions are taken to ensure effective management of all risks. The DMO has Senior Risk Owners (SROs) who undertake a cross-functional moderation process to promote better prioritisation of operational risks across the organisation. The RMU maintains a central exception log to record all risk incidents raised, in order to identify control weaknesses and assign actions to improve controls.

### ***Third line of defence:***

The DMO's Internal Audit function provides the DMO Accounting Officer with independent and objective assurance on the overall effectiveness of the Agency's system of internal control. It does this through a risk based work programme which is presented to and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee at the start of each year. All audits review the processes in place and where necessary raise findings relating to control



weaknesses and management actions are agreed to mitigate any risks and enhance the control structure. Progress against agreed management actions is monitored on a regular basis to ensure issues highlighted by internal audit, as well as any issues raised by the external auditors, and other identified actions to improve the control environment, are managed and progressed within agreed deadlines. The function is independent of the DMO's trading activities and operations and has a direct reporting line to the Accounting Officer. The work of Internal Audit includes assessing the effectiveness of both control design and control performance. With its independence and overall remit, Internal Audit provides a third line of defence against the risks that might prevent the DMO delivering its objectives.

## **Risk policies and procedures**

The DMO's risk policies reflect the high standards and robust requirements which determine the way risks are managed and controlled. The DMO Accounting Officer, with the support of the Board, ensures that policies are regularly reviewed to reflect any changes in the DMO's operations and/or best practice. In 2022-2023, this included policies relating to health & safety, procurement and contracts management, business continuity, remote access, clear desk, misconduct escalation, anti-bribery and anti-fraud.

Staff are required to confirm that they have read and accepted the DMO's rules on personal dealing and the DMO's policy on the use of information systems and technology, and that they are aware of, and will continue to keep up to date with, the DMO's policies on whistleblowing, anti-fraud, anti-money laundering and information security. The DMO ensures that this exercise is undertaken on an annual basis allowing staff to maintain a good level of awareness of the DMO's policies in these areas. All members of staff have job descriptions which include reference to the specific key risks they are expected to manage.

Managers in each business function are responsible for ensuring that the operations within their area are compliant with plans, policies, procedures and legislation.

During 2022-2023 no concerns were raised by staff under the DMO's whistleblowing policy relating to CRND.

## **Key Developments**

### ***COVID-19***

The government's plan for removing the remaining legal restrictions while protecting people most vulnerable to COVID-19 and maintaining resilience was set out in the "COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19" guidance first published in February 2022 and later revised in May 2022.

The COVID-19 risk assessment was transitioned into the health & safety risk assessment, with suitable controls maintained, where appropriate.

### ***Ukrainian conflict***

Further to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the DMO closely monitored actual and potential effects on activities, markets, counterparties and suppliers.

The DMO continued to work with partners across government to ensure all necessary steps were taken to maintain cyber security defences and also assurances were received from some strategic partners regarding their own arrangements, with details of the assurances put in place to mitigate against any disruption or impact. Internal assessments considered potential accounting or disclosure impacts and any effects through legal and regularity changes.

## Risk Profile

The Secretary and Comptroller General and the DMO Board believe that the principal risks and uncertainties facing CRND are outlined in the table below together with the key actions taken to manage and mitigate them:

### Principal risks and uncertainties

### Mitigation and management

#### IT systems and infrastructure

CRND relies on a number of IT and communications systems to conduct its operations effectively and efficiently.

During the year the DMO has progressed initiatives to further strengthen the resilience and security of its IT network and infrastructure. Strategic roadmap priorities were reviewed and the DMO carried out an internal health-check. The DMO has in place structured business continuity arrangements to ensure it is able to continue market operations in the event of an internal or external incident that threatens business operations.

Arrangements to support critical operations were in place throughout the year with a core team in the office, support teams working from the disaster recovery site and staff working from home. Assessment of business continuity needs is also a specific requirement for new projects and major business initiatives.

#### IT and data security

The DMO could be the subject of an external attack on its IT systems and infrastructure. Through its activities the DMO gathers, disseminates and maintains sensitive information including market sensitive information and personal data about staff and market participants. The DMO seeks to ensure the highest standards of data protection and information management.

The DMO, including CRND, continues to work to maintain the required level of protective security covering physical, personnel and information security and is particularly aware of the growing threat posed by cyber security risk. IT and data security risks continued to be a specific area of focus in 2022-2023 and the DMO's IT team have been enhancing the detective, protective and recovery security controls.

Risks to data and information held by the DMO are owned and managed by designated Information Asset Owners. The DMO has a Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) who is responsible for the information risk policy and the assessment of information risks. The SIRO is a member of the Board and provides advice to Board members on the management of information risks.

The DMO has put in place several layers of defensive controls against external and internal attacks.

## Reliance on third parties

A number of the operational systems and services on which CRND relies are provided or supported by third party suppliers.

To mitigate the risk of failure of a key third party supplier the DMO undertakes regular corporate risk assessments of each key supplier to assess a range of factors including its financial strength and operational capacity, including the reliance on sub-contractors. The DMO has dedicated contract owners who meet regularly with key suppliers and monitor performance against the agreed Service Level Agreements, where appropriate

The procurement manager and the vendor management group have been working to embed consistent standards of supplier management across account managers by improving visibility of key contracts and sharing best practice. The DMO has introduced enhanced monitoring for critical suppliers (i.e. strategic partners) that focuses on risk and strategic aspects. Scrutinised areas include inherent risks, scenario analysis, assessment of supply chain risks including fourth parties, monitoring and assessing residual risks, and mitigation planning. External consultancy work assisted with the approach.

The DMO sought assurance that its key suppliers and strategic partners follow National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance on cyber-security.

## Transaction processing

CRND relies on its operational processes to successfully execute a significant number of high value transactions on a daily basis. Reliance on the accurate execution of processes exposes CRND to operational risk arising from process breakdowns and human error.

A key component of CRND's control framework is the segregation of duties to ensure independent checking and reconciliation, and to avoid concentration of key activities or related controls in individuals or small groups of staff. In particular, segregation of duties takes place between front and back office activities.

All teams, including CRND, have documented procedures for their main activities and there are clearly defined authorisation levels for committing the DMO externally.

The RMU conduct regular control and compliance testing of CRND activities, providing the executive sub-committee of the Board with assurance on the effectiveness of operational controls and compliance with relevant Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority rules in the dealing and settlement areas.

The DMO also maintains a strong audit and control environment which includes a well embedded incident reporting procedure which extends to cover CRND. This promotes the early identification and resolution of risk incidents and provides visibility to the DMO Accounting Officer and Board.

The continued focus has been on enhanced compliance monitoring over transaction processing, to provide assurance over controls standards during remote working. During the year, a review of the transaction processing controls produced recommendations for enhancements. The implemented changes have resulted in controls being more robust and processes streamlined.

## People risk

The DMO, including CRND, relies on maintaining a sufficiently skilled workforce at all levels of the organisation in order to operate effectively and efficiently, ensuring delivery of its strategic objectives.

The DMO is exposed to an increased risk of operational failure if it is unable to compete for, and retain, sufficiently skilled staff over time. Competition for skilled staff is generally against employers from the private financial services sector who have historically offered higher remuneration packages that are not subject to public sector remuneration policies.

DMO recruitment activity helps ensure that individuals with the appropriate level of skill and experience are appointed at all levels within the organisation. This helps mitigate the level of human error which could result in process failures.

The DMO follows the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles and selection process to ensure vacancies are filled on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

The DMO has a formal performance appraisal process and all staff are given clear and achievable objectives.

The DMO's Training and Development policy is designed to help ensure that staff have the right skills to meet its objectives.

Staff are encouraged to engage in activities which promote development and the DMO provides regular training opportunities and support for professional studies to enhance the skills base of its employees. The DMO also provides cross-training for different roles to help improve staffing flexibility and reduce turnover pressure.

Salaries are benchmarked annually to equivalent private sector pay levels in order to keep management aware of any significant disparities that are developing. Challenges with recruitment and retention were again identified this year and were reviewed by the Advisory Board. The DMO has a policy to recognise those staff who have performed well in their roles through the payment of one-off non-consolidated performance related awards. Any awards are assessed annually by the DMO Performance Review Team. They are determined by individual performance and criteria associated with the DMO's performance management process, which are also aligned to the policy for public sector pay.

A Staff Council has met regularly throughout the year and enabled an open exchange of ideas and views between management and staff representatives. Staff Council was consulted to discuss the future hybrid working arrangements. This has been an effective conduit for wider communication and consultation with all staff.

On an annual basis all DMO staff are given the opportunity to take part in the Civil Service People survey. Any issues raised via this route, with suggested mitigating action if required, are considered by the Accounting Officer and the Board.

The organisation has placed greater emphasis on undertaking key person risk analysis for succession planning.

The DMO is a disability confident employer.

## **Review of effectiveness**

I have reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal control and confirm that an ongoing process designed to identify, evaluate and prioritise risks to the achievement of CRND's aims and objectives has been in place throughout 2022-2023. This review included an assessment of any material risk and control issues identified and reported during the relevant period.

My review has been informed by the advice of the risk committees, the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the DMO, who have been delegated responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework. Comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other relevant reports have also informed this review.

In my role as Secretary and Comptroller General I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review, of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Board and the Audit and Risk Committee.

In 2022-2023, no ministerial directions were given and no material conflicts of interest have been noted by the Board or Audit and Risk Committee members in the Register of Interests.

In my opinion, CRND's system of internal control was effective throughout the financial year and remains so on the date I sign this statement.



**Jo Whelan**

Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

4 July 2023

## **Assembly accountability and audit report**

### **Regularity of expenditure**

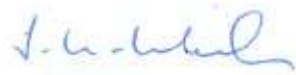
The income and expenditure of the NICTSIA were applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly.

The above statement has been audited.

### **Fees and charges**

The NICTSIA received no fees or charges during the year.

The above statement has been audited.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Whelan', is positioned below the text of the 'Fees and charges' section.

**Jo Whelan**

Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

4 July 2023

## **THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY**

### **Opinion on financial statements**

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010.

The financial statements comprise the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's:

- Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2023;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Client Funds for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted International Accounting Standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and its surplus for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 and Department of Finance directions issued thereunder.

### **Opinion on regularity**

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

### **Basis for opinions**

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom (2022). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2019*. I am independent of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Commissioners and the Secretary and Comptroller General with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Department of Finance's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

## **Other Information**

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report but does not include the financial statements nor my auditor's report. The Commissioners and the Secretary and Comptroller General are responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Opinion on other matters**

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Department of Finance directions made under the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.



## **Matters on which I report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with Department of Finance's guidance.

## **Responsibilities of the Commissioners and the Secretary and Comptroller General for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Secretary and Comptroller General's Responsibilities, the Commissioners and the Secretary and Comptroller General are responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view and are prepared in accordance with Department of Finance directions made under the Administration of Justice Act 1982 as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010; and
- assessing the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Commissioners and Secretary and Comptroller General anticipates that the services provided by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account will not continue to be provided in the future.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

My responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

### **Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud**

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud is detailed below.

### **Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud**

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's accounting policies;
- inquired of management, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's policies and procedures on:
  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's controls relating to the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's compliance with the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
  - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
  - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition and posting of unusual journals. In common

with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override of controls.

I obtained an understanding of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 and Managing Public Money.

### **Audit response to identified risk**

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Committee and legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, I tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my report.

### **Other auditor's responsibilities**

I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

**Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dorinnia Carville". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

**Dorinnia Carville**  
**Comptroller and Auditor General**

Northern Ireland Audit Office

106 University Street

BELFAST

BT7 1EU

5 July 2023

# Accounts of the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account

## Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £000	2022 £000
Interest income		2,207	192
<b>Total income</b>		<b>2,207</b>	<b>192</b>
CRND management expenses		(52)	(52)
NICTS costs of administering funds in court		(85)	-
Interest payable on funds in court		(1,626)	(124)
(Surplus) / deficit transferrable with the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund	2	(25)	30
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>419</b>	<b>46</b>

The notes on pages 31 to 34 form part of these accounts.

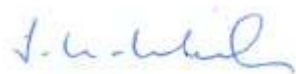
## Statement of financial position

As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £000	2022 £000
<b>Assets</b>			
Demand deposits with the Debt Management Account		106,830	102,118
Deficit receivable from the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund	2	-	30
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>106,830</b>	<b>102,148</b>
<b>Liabilities and client funds</b>			
<b>Liabilities</b>			
NICTS costs of administering funds in court		85	-
Surplus payable to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund	2	25	-
		<b>110</b>	-
<b>Client funds</b>			
NICTS funds		106,191	102,085
Reserves*		529	63
<b>Total liabilities and client funds</b>		<b>106,720</b>	<b>102,148</b>

\* These reserves are payable to the NICTS and arise due to annual surpluses as calculated in the statement of comprehensive income, combined with any reserve carried forward from the previous year.

The notes on pages 31 to 34 form part of these accounts.



**Jo Whelan**

Secretary and Comptroller General to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

4 July 2023

## Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Operating activities</b>		
Interest received on deposits with the Debt Management Account	1,906	146
Increase in demand deposits with the Debt Management Account	(4,411)	(7,180)
CRND management expenses	(52)	(52)
NICTS costs of administering funds in court	-	-
Deficit received from the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund	30	21
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<b>(2,527)</b>	<b>(7,065)</b>
<b>Financing activities</b>		
Funds received from NICTS	47,337	46,798
Funds paid to NICTS	(44,810)	(39,733)
<b>Net cash from financing activities</b>	<b>2,527</b>	<b>7,065</b>
<b>Increase in cash</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash at the beginning of the year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash at the end of the year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

The notes on pages 31 to 34 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of changes in client funds

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	NICTS funds £000	Reserves £000	Total NICTS funds £000
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>94,896</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>94,913</b>
Surplus for the year	-	46	46
Interest payable on funds in court	124	-	124
Funds received from NICTS	46,798	-	46,798
Funds paid to NICTS	(39,733)	-	(39,733)
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>102,085</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>102,148</b>
Surplus for the year	-	419	419
Interest payable on funds in court	1,626	-	1,626
Transfer from client money employed account	(47)	47	-
Funds received from NICTS	47,337	-	47,337
Funds paid to NICTS	(44,810)	-	(44,810)
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>106,191</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>106,720</b>

The notes on pages 31 to 34 form part of these accounts.



## Notes to the accounts

For the year ended 31 March 2023

### 1 Accounting policies

#### (i) *Basis of preparation*

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with a direction made by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland under section 45(2) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982 in accordance with applicable International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and relevant requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual; and under the historical cost convention and on a going concern basis. In particular, the following standards have been applied:

- IFRS 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures
- IFRS 9 Financial Instruments
- IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement
- IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements (revised 2007)
- IAS 7 Statement of Cash Flows
- IAS 8 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
- IAS 10 Events After the Reporting Period
- IAS 24 Related Party Disclosures
- IAS 32 Financial Instruments: Presentation
- IAS 36 Impairment of Assets
- IAS 37 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Certain IFRS have been issued or revised, but are not yet effective. Those issues or revisions expected to be relevant in subsequent reporting periods are:

- IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements:
  - This has been revised as part of the IASB's 'Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-Current (Amendments to IAS 1)'. Application is required for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. The NICTSIA expects to apply these revisions to IAS 1 in 2024-2025. The application of these revisions, which the IASB has delayed by two years, and which affect only the presentation of liabilities in the statement of financial position and relate to a clarification of the classification of current and non-current liabilities, are not expected to materially alter the presentation of the financial statements of the NICTSIA.
  - This has been revised as part of the IASB's 'Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2)'. Application is required for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. The NICTSIA expects to apply these revisions to IAS 1 in 2023-2024. The application of these revisions, which help preparers to decide which accounting policies

to disclose in their financial statements, are not expected to materially alter the presentation of the financial statements of the NICTSIA.

- This has been revised as part of the IASB's 'Non-current Liabilities with Covenants (Amendments to IAS 1)'. Application is required for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. The NICTSIA expects to apply these revisions to IAS 1 in 2024-2025. The application of these revisions, which clarify how conditions with which an entity must comply within twelve months after the reporting period affect the classification of a liability, are not expected to materially alter the presentation of the financial statements of the NICTSIA.
- IAS 8 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors, which has been revised as part of the IASB's 'Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS 8)'. Application is required for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. The NICTSIA expects to apply these revisions to IAS 8 in 2023-2024. The application of these revisions, which help entities to distinguish between accounting policies and accounting estimates, are not expected to materially alter the presentation of the financial statements of the NICTSIA.

A separate income statement, as required by the accounts direction, has not been presented as the content would be identical to the statement of comprehensive income. A statement of comprehensive income is required by IAS 1.

**(ii) Assets**

Deposits with the Debt Management Account are financial assets held by the NICTSIA in order to collect contractual cash flows of principal and interest on specified dates. Therefore, these deposits are treated as financial assets measured at amortised cost.

**(iii) Income recognition**

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest rate method. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts or payments through the expected life of the financial instrument or, where appropriate, a shorter period, to the net carrying amount of the instrument.

## 2 Surplus / (deficit) transferrable with the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund

Surplus interest, calculated according to section 39(2) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982, is payable to the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund. A deficit is receivable from the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund. Payments of any surplus or deficit are made the following year:

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Interest received	1,906	146
Interest payable on funds in court	(1,626)	(124)
NICTS costs of administering funds in court	(85)	-
CRND management expenses	(52)	(52)
	<b>143</b>	<b>(30)</b>
Surplus retained	(118)	-
<b>Surplus / (deficit) transferrable with the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>(30)</b>

## 3 Risk

### (i) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a counterparty, or security issuer, will fail to discharge a contractual obligation resulting in financial loss to the NICTSIA.

The investments of the NICTSIA comprised deposits with the Debt Management Account. These deposits were considered to have no exposure to credit risk because they are obligations of HM Government.

There were no renegotiated assets or assets considered impaired at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022: no renegotiated or impaired assets).

### (ii) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk for the NICTSIA was considered to comprise interest rate risk.

The interest returns on deposits were closely linked to the official Bank Rate.

CRND monitored interest rate movements to help inform the NICTS of potential issues and events. The NICTSIA was not subject to active management and thus no formal market risk parameters were in place.

### (iii) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the NICTSIA will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with client withdrawal requests.

Assets held by the NICTSIA were highly liquid to enable all client obligations to be met as they fell due.

#### **4 Related party transactions**

CRND is a separate entity within the DMO. CRND client mandates are kept distinct from other DMO business.

During the year, the NICTSIA had a significant number of material transactions with the Debt Management Account, which is operated by the DMO. CRND's client mandates required the bulk of the funds to be invested in gilts or deposited with the Debt Management Account. The amount held by the Debt Management Account is shown in the statement of financial position, and the interest received and movement in amounts deposited are shown in the statement of cash flows.

During the year, the NICTSIA had a significant number of material transactions with the NICTS due to monies advanced and withdrawn in respect of investments. During the year, the NICTS advanced £2.5 million (net of withdrawals) to the NICTSIA (2021-2022: £7.1 million net advance).

#### **5 Events after the reporting date**

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10, events after the reporting period are considered up to the date on which the Secretary and Comptroller General authorises the accounts for issue. This is interpreted as the date of the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly (page 26).

## **Accounts Direction**

### **Accounts Direction given by the Department of Finance in accordance with Section 45 (2) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982, as amended by schedule 18 paragraph 34 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010**

1. This direction applies to the **Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Investment Account**.
2. The Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt shall prepare accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2023 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Account at the reporting date and of its income and cash flows for the year then ended.
3. The Accounts shall be prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, and shall be consistent with relevant requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury which is in force for 2022-23.
4. The Accounts shall present an Income Statement, a Statement of Comprehensive Income, a Statement of Financial Position, a Statement of Cash Flows, and a Statement of Changes in Client Funds. The Statement of Financial Position shall present assets and liabilities in order of liquidity.
5. The notes to the Accounts shall include disclosure of assets and liabilities, and of income and expenditure, relating to other central government funds including the National Loans Fund.
6. The report shall include:
  - a. a brief history of the Account and its statutory background;
  - b. an outline of the scope of the Account, its relationship to the Department of Finance and other central funds, and its management arrangements;
  - c. a management commentary, including information on financial performance and financial position, which reflects the relationship between the Account and other central funds; and
  - d. a Governance Statement.

**Stuart Stevenson**

Treasury Officer of Accounts