

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES (REGULATION)
(NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1977**

FOR THE TWO YEARS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

*Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under Article 12 of the Agricultural Wages
(Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977 by the Department of Agriculture and Rural
Development for Northern Ireland*

16 April 2016

REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD FOR THE TWO YEARS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

Constitution

1. The Agricultural Wages Board for Northern Ireland (the Board) is constituted under the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977. The Board's functions are to fix the minimum rates of wages and certain other related matters, such as holiday remuneration for agricultural workers in Northern Ireland.

Agricultural Workforce

2. The total number of persons working both full and part-time in Northern Ireland farms at 1 June 2015 was 48,100, an increase of 0.4% on the 2014 total of 47,900. An increase was recorded in the category of Total Farmers, while there was a decrease in the Spouses and Other Workers categories. Further details of employment are set out in the appendix.

Activities of the Board

3. The Board held three meetings in 2014 and three meetings in 2015. It made two Orders during this period. Order No. 94 in 2014 increased the minimum rate of wages for agricultural workers by 1.8% across all grades from 6 April 2014. Order No. 95 in 2015 increased the minimum rate of wages for agricultural workers by 2.4% across all grades from 6 April 2015.
4. Copies of the Orders made by the Board are available from the TSO Online Bookshop at www.tsoshop.co.uk.

Appointments

5. Three appointments were made under Article 3 and Schedule 1 of the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977. Mr Rodger McKnight was appointed Chair and Ms Eileen Mullan was appointed Independent Member. The appointments are for a 3 year period, expiring 31 May 2017. Ms Patricia O'Callaghan was appointed Independent Member and the appointment is also for a 3 year period, expiring 31 March 2018.

Minimum Rates of Wages

6. The tables below give details of the minimum hourly rates of gross wages payable to agricultural workers.

Minimum Rates of Wages Payable from 6 April 2014

Order No. 94

	Rate per hour £
Grade 1 – Minimum Rate Applicable for the first 40 weeks cumulative employment	6.47
Grade 2 Standard Worker	6.77
Grade 3 Lead Worker	7.44
Grade 4 Craft Grade	7.99
Grade 5 Supervisory Grade	8.46
Grade 6 Farm Management Grade	9.16

Minimum Rates of Wages Payable from 6 April 2015

Order No. 95

	Rate per hour £
Grade 1 – Minimum Rate Applicable for the first 40 weeks cumulative employment	6.63
Grade 2 Standard Worker	6.91
Grade 3 Lead Worker	7.59
Grade 4 Craft Grade	8.15
Grade 5 Supervisory Grade	8.63
Grade 6 Farm Management Grade	9.34

Holiday Entitlement

7. The minimum holiday entitlement for an agricultural worker is 5.6 weeks or 28 days (proportionally). An agricultural worker in continuous employment with the same employer for more than one year is entitled to a maximum of 29 days, made up of 28 days leave plus one additional day from a list of 14 public holidays.

Enforcement of Minimum Rates

8. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977 and Orders made by the Agricultural Wages Board. Department Inspectors investigate complaints by workers about any matters within remit of the Board's Orders. Complaints should be addressed to The Secretary, Agricultural Wages Board, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3SB.

Complaints

9. One complaint against an employer was received during the period of the report. The issue is currently ongoing.

Costs of Administering the Order

10. The total costs of the Board's operations were:

Year ended 31 December 2014:	£ 37,299.51
Year ended 31 December 2015:	£ 29,028.25

Members of the Board

11. The members of the Board during the period under review were:

Members Appointed by the Head of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Mr Rodger McKnight, appointed as Chair from 01 June 2014*

Ms Eileen Mullan, appointed as Independent Member from 01 June 2014*

Ms Patricia O'Callaghan, appointed as Independent Member from 01 April 2015*

Mrs Sarah Havlin***

Mrs Delia Van der Lenden****

*Members Appointed by the
Ulster Farmers' Union*

Mr C Osborne

Mr C Cleland

Mr T Douglas

Mr R Lyttle

Mr R McCloy

Mr W Mayne

Members Appointed by UNITE the Union

*Mr G Scott***

*Ms J McWilliams**

*Mr S Bradley***

Mr R Corbett

*Mr P Devine***

Mr S McAllister

*Mr P McCrea**

*Mr M Smith ***

*Mr A Smyth***

*Mr H McBride**

*Mr T Davey**

* appointed during the period of this report

** left during the period of this report

*** served maximum length as Chair during the period of this report

**** served maximum length as Independent Member during the period of this report

APPENDIX

Farm Labour (as indicated by the NI Agricultural Census Returns)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Farmers					
Full-time	15.8	15.9	16.2	16.2	16.6
Part-time	13.3	13.1	12.8	12.9	13.4
Total	29.1	29.1	29.0	29.1	30.1
Farmers' Spouses	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1
Other Workers					
Full-time	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5
Part-time	3.4	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.0
Casual/Seasonal	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.4
Total Other Workers	11.4	12.1	12.4	12.5	11.9
Total Farmers, Spouses and Other Workers	46.8	47.5	47.8	47.9	48.1
Decrease on Previous Year	0.2%	-	-	-	-
Increase on Previous Year	-	1.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%