



North South Ministerial Council
An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas

North South Ministerial Council

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Health

Aquaculture and Marine

Transport

Special EU Programmes

Food Safety

Language

Environment

Education

Tourism

Trade and Business Development

Inland Waterways

Agriculture

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INTRODUCTION BY JOINT SECRETARIES

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, following the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive, meetings of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) to deal with practical issues of mutual benefit were resumed.

In July 2007, in Armagh, the first North South Ministerial Council Plenary since 2002 took place. The meeting brought together the Taoiseach, the First Minister and deputy First Minister and almost all of the Ministers in the Executive and the Irish Government for a constructive discussion on matters of common concern.

Our annual report gives a detailed account of the important decisions taken at that meeting and also of the subsequent 13 NSMC meetings at which the relevant Ministers dealt with the business in their areas of cooperation. The focus of all of these Ministerial meetings was on tackling problems where joint action was warranted, dealing with common challenges and monitoring and reviewing the work of the jointly funded North South Bodies.

While there were significant achievements in all of the areas covered by the NSMC a number of highlights have been identified in the summary on page 7 of this report. This list sets out developments which have clearly been of particular benefit including significant joint infrastructural investments, close cooperation in fighting threats such as Foot and Mouth Disease and Bluetongue, the provision of new medical services on a cross border basis and tackling the illegal movement of cross border waste. Cross border mobility remained an issue of high priority for Ministers who launched a new website (www.borderpeople.info) which provides a central information point for people who cross the border to live, work or study.

In addition to supporting the work of Ministers in the NSMC, the Joint Secretariat in Armagh also supported the work of the Review Group, established by Ministers on foot of the St. Andrews Agreement, to review the North South Bodies and the Areas of Cooperation. Our staff worked closely with the four experts/advisers, appointed by the Executive and the Irish Government, as they consulted with the Bodies, and their various stakeholders, to prepare a report for the Review Group.

The NSMC Joint Secretariat also continued to maintain a close dialogue with the many groups and organisations involved in North South cooperation, including the cross border partnerships, community groups, particularly in the border regions, the Trades Unions and the CBI/IBEC Joint Business Council. We particularly appreciated the



opportunity to meet with and hear the views of a wide range of local political, business and community leaders at events in the North West, Enniskillen, Ballymena and Armagh.

The meetings of Ministers in the NSMC have taken place at a number of venues including community and cultural centres, Government Departments and tourist venues. We would like to thank all who have worked with the NSMC Joint Secretariat in the planning and organisation of our meetings.

The 2007 Report of the NSMC Joint Secretariat is appearing in a new format which provides extensive information in English, Irish and Ulster Scots on our activities in what we hope is an accessible and environmentally friendly way. We would be interested in receiving any comments from readers on this new format including ideas for future improvements.

Mary Bunting
Joint Secretary (North)

Tom Hanney
Joint Secretary (South)

CHAPTER ONE

SUMMARY OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

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CHAPTER ONE: Summary of Key Developments

BACKGROUND

1.1 This report covers the work of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) in the period January to December 2007.

1.2 During the period from January to May 2007, decisions on policies and actions relating to the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited were taken using a mechanism provided for in the Exchange of Notes between the UK and Irish Governments of 19 November 2002. A record of these decisions can be found on the NSMC website - www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

1.3 Following restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly in May 2007, there were fourteen meetings of the NSMC – one in Plenary format, two in Institutional format and eleven in sectoral format. At these meetings, Ministers took important decisions relating to the work of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited and the other Areas for Co-operation. This report covers the issues progressed at these meetings.

1.4 In December 2007 the Council approved the appointment of new Boards to the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited and thanked the outgoing Board members for their key role in developing the work of the Bodies.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1.5 The following summarises key developments during the year.

TRANSPORT

- The Council agreed steps, including management structure and noted the appointment of consultants to take forward work on the A5 (North West Gateway to Aughnacloy) and A8 (Belfast to Larne) road projects.
- They also requested officials to assess options for the future development of the cross-border rail link between Dublin and Belfast, including increased service frequency, improvements to rolling stock and elimination of speed restrictions.

The continuing co-operation between the authorities on Road Safety was discussed and welcomed including: advertising and publicity, the sharing of results of relevant road safety research, the mutual recognition of driving disqualifications and penalty points and road safety in border areas.

TOURISM

- Tourism Ireland's challenging targets were welcomed. These included increasing tourism revenue growth by 6.6-7.5% per annum, visitor growth by 4.2-5.1% per annum and promotable growth of 14.0 to 17.2% over the next 3 years. If fully achieved, tourism could generate up to €16/£10.8 billion for the island of Ireland in overseas earnings over the next three years.

INLAND WATERWAYS

- The Council approved arrangements proposed by Waterways Ireland, including joint management arrangements and a targeted marketing programme, to progress the restoration of the Clones to Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal.

AGRICULTURE

- Ministers welcomed the joint work taken to deal with Foot and Mouth and Bluetongue diseases and earlier outbreaks of Avian Influenza in Britain. They agreed that their officials should remain in close contact on key EU CAP issues. Ministers noted the joint development of the all island Animal Health and Welfare strategy paper and progress on crossborder rural development.

LANGUAGE

- The transfer of the functions of Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge to Foras na Gaeilge was approved and the work that had been done to decentralise 30 staff posts of Foras na Gaeilge to Gaith Dobhair was welcomed.
- The Council also welcomed progress made by Tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch Community Programmes and requested the Boord to bring forward proposals to develop links and cultural exchanges with Ulster-Scots communities in Scotland and North America for consideration at the next meeting.

SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES

- The PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes were agreed and their endorsement by the EU Commission was welcomed.

ENVIRONMENT

- Ministers discussed the cross-border movements of waste. They noted and endorsed a 'Road Map' setting out a step by step approach for the removal and disposal of illegally dumped waste including a series of joint enforcement actions designed to prevent future illegal movements.

AQUACULTURE AND MARINE

- Legislation was made to provide the Loughs Agency with the powers to regulate Aquaculture and Wild Shell fisheries in both the Foyle and Carlingford areas. Regulations which should positively impact on conservation and protection of salmon stocks in the area of the River Finn were approved as was the implementation of a Marine Tourism Development Strategy.

EDUCATION

- The Council requested officials to develop proposals on educational underachievement and welcomed the considerable progress made on the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Autism at Middletown and discussed proposals for a joint Autistic Spectrum Disorder Conference in 2008.

HEALTH

- Planning for major emergencies, pandemic flu handling and high technology were key issues progressed during the year. The Council reviewed co-operation on accident and emergency services including progress on pilot projects on cross-border out of hours GP services. Measures were implemented to provide cancer patients from County Donegal with radiotherapy treatment at Belfast City Hospital. The Council welcomed cooperation between the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast and Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Dublin on Paediatric and Congenital Cardiac Services. The successful implementation on Cancer Research under the auspices of the Ireland - Northern Ireland - National Cancer Institute of the USA Cancer Consortium was discussed and welcomed. Progress was also reviewed in joint working in regard to the promotion of mental health and, in particular an all-island suicide prevention action plan which had been developed and agreed. The Council agreed that the internet played a significant role in relation to suicide and Ministers agreed to work together to influence change in this area.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD

- Ministers welcomed the wide range of promotional activities undertaken by **safefood** and the support it has given to the food laboratory sector. They noted a proposal from the Food Safety Promotion Board on Enteric Reference Services.

TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- InterTradeIreland (ITI) continued during the year to promote trade and business development on the island of Ireland and in the future will target the key areas of competitive advantage - science, technology and innovation, sales and marketing, enterprise capability development, and business networks. ITI will have to balance the growing demand for programmes such as Innova, Fusion, Acumen and Equity Network with emerging opportunities in the new areas of endeavour which it is exploring, such as Design and the Environment.

1.6 St Andrews Agreement Review

The Review of the North South Implementation Bodies and Areas for Co-operation, as provided for in the St Andrews Agreement was progressed during the year. The Council appointed a Review Group to take forward this work and an advisory panel of two members appointed by the Northern Ireland Executive and two by the Irish Government. Details of the review were published on the NSMC website and by the end of the year 29 responses were received for consideration by the Review Group. In addition the advisory panel met separately with each of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited, their sponsor departments and the Bodies' key stakeholders.

1.7 Mobility Issues

Mobility Issues continued to be an important part of the work of NSMC during the year. In October 2007, the Council launched the Cross-Border Mobility Website (www.borderpeople.info) which provides a central access point for information on a range of issues for people who wish to move across the border to live, work and study. The Council also agreed that the NSMC Joint Secretariat should convene two working groups – one to explore options for going forward on the transfer of pension rights on a cross-border basis and the other to examine cross-border banking issues, including transaction charges.

CHAPTER ONE: Summary of Key Developments

1.8 NSMC Joint Secretariat

The NSMC Joint Secretariat which is based in Armagh supports the work of Ministers in the Council (see Annex One). During the year Ministers received a report on progress on acquiring permanent accommodation for the Joint Secretariat and agreed that officials should take forward the necessary administrative procedures for the provision of new leased accommodation for the Joint Secretariat in Armagh.

CHAPTER TWO

NSMC PLENARY MEETING

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

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CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Plenary Meeting



First Minister, Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley, MP MLA and deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, MP MLA along with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern TD at the NSMC Plenary meeting on 17 July.

2.1 The Council met in Plenary Format in Armagh on 17 July. The Northern Ireland Executive delegation was led by the First Minister, The Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley MP MLA and deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness MP MLA who jointly chaired the meeting. The Irish Government delegation was led by the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD.

2.2 At the meeting Ministers acknowledged the significance of the occasion. They welcomed the opportunity to meet to consult, to promote mutually beneficial co-operation and take a number of decisions on a range of issues within the Council's work programme. These included:

Cross Border Co-operation on Roads - the Council noted the Irish Government's intention to make available a contribution of £400m/€580m to help fund major roads programmes providing dual carriageway standard on routes within Northern Ireland serving the North West Gateway and on the eastern seaboard corridor from Belfast to Larne. The Northern Ireland Executive also confirmed its acceptance, in principle, to take forward these two major road projects. It was agreed that the

road project from Belfast to Larne would be taken forward by the Northern Ireland Executive and its agencies and that the route serving the North West Gateway would be taken forward in line with funding and accountability, planning, management and delivery arrangements agreed between the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. Relevant Ministers agreed to the necessary steps to progress this project, including the early commencement of a route corridor study. Further detail on cross-border Roads co-operation can be found in section 4.12 of this report.

Restoration of the Clones-Upper Lough Erne Section of the Ulster Canal - the Council agreed to proceed with the restoration of that section of the Ulster Canal in the light of the Irish Government's offer to cover the full capital costs of the project. It was also agreed that Waterways Ireland would be responsible for the restoration of that section of the Canal and, following restoration, for its management maintenance and development principally for recreational purposes. It was also agreed that Ministers meeting in the Inland Waterways Sector will

agree plans to take forward the restoration work and will report on progress to NSMC Plenary meetings. The restoration of the Ulster Canal is also referred to in section 4.5 of this report.

Work of the North South Ministerial Council - the Council received a report from the Joint Secretaries on the work of the NSMC since 2002, noted that the work of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland had continued and expressed its appreciation to the Boards and staff for their contribution. The Council also noted the mutually beneficial co-operation taken forward between Ministers and Departments in the Areas for Co-operation.

The St Andrews Agreement Review - the Council agreed to take forward the review of the North South Implementation Bodies and Areas for Co-operation, as provided for in the St Andrews Agreement. The terms of reference of the Review Group include an objective examination of the efficiency and value for money of the existing Implementation Bodies as well as the case for additional Bodies and Areas of Co-operation where mutual benefit would be derived. The Review Group is also inputting into the work on the identification of a suitable substitute for the proposed Lights Agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission and will present its findings to the NSMC in 2008. The Review Group is made up of senior officials and an advisory panel comprising two members appointed by the Northern Ireland Executive and two by the Irish Government. The experts/advisers appointed by the Northern Ireland Executive are Peter King and Seán Oliver. Those appointed by the Irish Government are Eoin O'Shea and John Hynes.

Details of the Review were published on the NSMC website, inviting written comments from interested individuals/organisations. By the end of December 2007, 29 responses were received for consideration by the Review Group.

In addition the advisory panel met separately with each of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited, their Sponsor Departments, and the Bodies' key stakeholders during 2007. In total the advisers held 23 meetings in 2007 which focussed on the value for money and effectiveness of the existing Bodies. By the end of 2007 the Review Group had begun consideration of a preliminary report of these meetings as well as other elements of the Review exercise.

Independent North South Consultative Forum - the Council noted that the Irish Government would consult the social partners on the North South Consultative Forum. It also noted the review of arrangements for consulting civic society in Northern Ireland and agreed to consider this matter once that review is complete.

North South Parliamentary Forum - the Council noted the provisions of the St Andrews Agreement relating to the North South Parliamentary Forum. It recognised that any development of a joint parliamentary forum is a matter for the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Oireachtas. It was agreed that officials from the two administrations would make contact with the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas and report back to the NSMC at the earliest opportunity on the prospects for the development of such a forum.

Planning for future NSMC Meetings - the Council considered and approved a schedule of NSMC meetings.



CHAPTER THREE

NSMC INSTITUTIONAL MEETINGS

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

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CHAPTER THREE: NSMC Institutional Meetings



deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, MP MLA, First Minister, Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley, MP MLA and Dermot Ahern TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs launch the Cross-Border Mobility Website www.borderpeople.info at the NSMC Institutional meeting on 30 October.

3.1 The Council met twice in Institutional format in 2007 - in Dundalk on 30 October and in Belfast on 17 December. Ministers made a number of decisions on institutional and cross - sectoral issues. These included:

OBSTACLES TO CROSS BORDER MOBILITY

- The Council noted progress on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Study of Obstacles to Mobility commissioned by the NSMC, including: progress on the mutual recognition of qualifications, including in the education and health areas; the introduction of single tariffs by some mobile phone operators; and the greater availability of public service information for people who wish to cross the border to live, work and study.
- Ministers also launched the Cross-Border Mobility Website (www.borderpeople.info) which provides a central access point for information on a range of issues for people who wish to move across the border to live, work and study.
- The Council agreed that the NSMC Joint Secretariat should convene two working groups which will report back to a future NSMC meeting – one to

explore options for going forward on the transfer of pension rights on a cross-border basis and the other to examine cross-border banking issues, including transaction charges.

NEW ACCOMMODATION FOR THE NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT

- The Council noted the progress in acquiring permanent accommodation for the NSMC Joint Secretariat in Armagh and agreed that once evaluation of the short-listed tenders is completed, subject to the appropriate internal processes in each administration, officials should enter into contractual negotiations with the preferred bidder to provide leased accommodation and report progress to a future NSMC meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES IN THE NORTH SOUTH IMPLEMENTATION BODIES AND TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

- The Council considered issues such as the regrading of posts and pay issues raised in a paper prepared by the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the Bodies. It agreed that officials from the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance and Personnel will advise their Ministers

of the issues and consider the CEO Pay Paper together with the additional information provided by the Bodies, in the context of relevant national pay policies. Conclusions will be reported to a future NSMC meeting.

BOARDS OF THE NORTH SOUTH IMPLEMENTATION BODIES AND TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

- The Council approved the appointment of members of the Management Boards to the Trade and Business Development Body (InterTradeIreland), the North South Language Body (Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster Scots Agency), the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission, Tourism Ireland Limited and the Advisory Board to the Food Safety Promotion Board, including Chairs and Vice Chairs. It thanked the outgoing Board members and recognised the key role they played in developing the North South Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited. The Council also congratulated the new Board members on their appointment and wished them well in their work. Details of the members of the Boards are contained in Annex Two of this report.

MINISTERIAL ATTENDANCE

- At the October meeting the Northern Ireland Executive was represented by the First Minister, the Rt Hon Dr Ian Paisley MP MLA and the deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness MP MLA, Junior Minister Ian Paisley MLA and Minister for Education, Caitríona Ruane MLA. At the December meeting the Northern Ireland Executive was represented by the deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness MP MLA, Junior Minister Ian Paisley MLA and Junior Minister Gerry Kelly MLA. The Irish Government was represented at both meetings by Dermot Ahern TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs.



CHAPTER FOUR

NSMC SECTORAL MEETINGS

Aquaculture and Marine Matters



Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of NSMC meetings in sectoral format between September and December 2007. The Joint Communiqués from these meetings are available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

Between January 2007 and the restoration of the political institutions in Northern Ireland in May, decisions on policies and actions relating to the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited were taken using a mechanism provided for in the Exchange of Notes between the United Kingdom and Irish Governments of 19 November 2002. These decisions are found at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

Background information on each of the North South Bodies can be found on the Bodies' websites.

Food Safety



Left - Bertie Kerr Former Chairperson of the Food Safety Promotion Board.

Right - John Dardis Current Chairperson and Chief Executive Martin Higgins.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD

BACKGROUND

4.1.1 The Food Safety Promotion Board (FSPB) is principally charged with the promotion of food safety, and supporting scientific co-operation between institutions working in that field. It has an Advisory Board of 12 members, appointed by the NSMC. With effect from 13 December 2007 Mr John Dardis, and Mr Campbell Tweedie were appointed to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. They succeeded Mr Bertie Kerr and Professor Charlie Daly, respectively. The current Board members are listed in Annex Two. The Chief Executive of the FSPB is Mr Martin Higgins.

NSMC MEETING

4.1.2 An NSMC meeting was held in Dublin on 28 November. The Irish Government was represented by Mary Harney TD, Minister for Health and Children. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Michael McGimpsey MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Michelle Gildernew MP MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

4.1.3 At the meeting, in relation to Food Safety, Ministers:

- received and discussed a progress report on the activities of **safefood** from 2002 to 2007. This report was presented by the CEO, Martin Higgins

and the FSPB Chairperson Bertie Kerr. Ministers expressed their appreciation of the work done by Mr Kerr during his term as Chairperson;

- noted the future plans for **safefood** for the period 2008-2010. These include:-
 - i. rolling out five major consumer information campaigns;
 - ii. the delivery of a joined up approach to food safety and healthy eating; and
 - iii. the establishment of a collaborative forum to tackle obesity;
- approved the **safefood** Corporate Plan for the period 2008-2010 and Business Plan for 2008 subject to Finance Departments' agreement and to budgetary considerations by the Executive and the Irish Government;
- noted the Body's Annual Report and Accounts for 2006; and
- noted a proposal paper from **safefood** with regard to the provision of more suitable and readily accessible Enteric Reference Services for the island of Ireland and that following consideration of the proposals in the paper by an external facilitator and technical expert and by the two sponsor Departments, a report will be brought to a future meeting of the NSMC.

Aquaculture and Marine



Left - Former Chairperson of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission Peter Savage.
Right - Chief Executive Derick Anderson and current Chairperson Tarlach O Crosain.

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

BACKGROUND

4.2.1 The NSMC meets on Aquaculture and Marine matters in order to take decisions on policies and action to be implemented by the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC). The FCILC has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC which exercises the functions of the Body in relation to the Foyle and Carlingford areas through the Loughs Agency. With effect from 13 December 2007 Mr Tarlach O Crosain and Ms Jacqui McConville were appointed to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. Until then Mr Peter Savage had been the Chair. The current Board members are listed in Annex Two. The Chief Executive of the Loughs Agency is Mr Derick Anderson.

NSMC MEETING

4.2.2 An NSMC meeting was held in the Loughs Agency Headquarters in Prehen on 21 November. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and Junior Minister Ian Paisley MLA. The Irish Government was represented by Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

4.2.3 At the meeting Ministers:

- noted progress made since the last meeting in April 2002 and welcomed the opportunity to come together to discuss co-operation in the aquaculture and marine sector. Ministers welcomed the passing of legislation in both jurisdictions in 2007 which provided the Loughs Agency with the powers to regulate aquaculture and wild shellfisheries in both the Foyle and Carlingford areas. They also welcomed the introduction of a hardship package to provide a measure of relief to those affected by the cessation of the commercial drift or draft net salmon fishing in the Foyle area;
- noted the future plans in the Aquaculture and Marine Sector for the period 2008-2010 including:
 - actions to maintain the sustainability of fisheries in both the Carlingford and Foyle catchments;
 - the introduction of a regulatory and licensing regime for aquaculture in the Foyle and Carlingford Areas;
 - the improvement of the angling licensing system; and
 - bringing forward a Marine Tourism Development Strategy

- approved the Loughs Agency's Corporate Plan for the period 2008-2010; and Business Plan for 2008 subject to budgetary considerations by the Executive and the Irish Government. They noted that the St Andrews Agreement Review is now underway and that the Agency's future plans may require consideration in light of the outcome of this Review;
- approved the implementation of the Loughs Agency's Marine Tourism Development Strategy for the period 2008 to 2013, subject to the availability of funding under the EU programme for Cross Border Territorial Co-operation. This Strategy will work through partnerships with State authorities and private bodies, providing support for projects, developing access infrastructure, project development, skills training, marketing and communications activities;
- approved the Loughs Agency's Financial Assistance Policy to oversee how grant aid will be administered in the support of angling development, conservation and protection of fisheries, marine tourism and aquaculture;
- noted the Loughs Agency's Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2006;
- approved the Loughs Agency's proposed purchase of a monitoring vessel subject to the availability of funding under the EU Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG); and
- approved the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Angling) (Amendment No 2) Regulations 2007 which should positively impact on conservation and protection of salmon stocks in an area of the River Finn and noted the Regulations currently being developed to improve the control of salmon and coarse angling and for the licensing and development of aquaculture.

Special EU Programmes



Left - Margaret Ritchie MLA, Minister for Social Development, Brian Cowen TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Finance and Peter Robinson, MP MLA Minister for Finance and Personnel pictured at the Special EU Programmes meeting.
Right - Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body Pat Colgan.

SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY (SEUPB)

BACKGROUND

4.3.1 The mission of the SEUPB is to develop co-operation, understanding and action between people and organisations in Ireland and Northern Ireland through consultation and the implementation of EU social, economic, reconciliation and cultural programmes. The Chief Executive of the SEUPB is Mr Pat Colgan.

4.3.2 The SEUPB is the Managing Authority for the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE II) and the INTERREG IIIA Programme. It is also the Paying Authority for the INTERREG IIIA Programme. It is also responsible for monitoring and promoting the Common Chapter, the strategic framework for cross-border co-operation across a broad range of sectors agreed between the two Governments. The Body is also responsible for the North South elements of the Community Initiatives URBAN II, LEADER + and EQUAL in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Further details are available at www.seupb.org.

NSMC MEETING

4.3.3 An NSMC meeting was held in Dublin on 7 November. The Irish Government was represented by Mr Brian Cowen TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Finance. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by the RT Hon Peter Robinson MP MLA, Minister for Finance and Personnel and Ms Margaret Ritchie MLA, Minister for Social Development.

4.3.4 At the meeting Ministers:

- received a report from the Chief Executive of the SEUPB on developments since the Council last met in this sector on 9 October 2002, including the successful closure of the PEACE I Programme and the achievement of annual expenditure targets by the PEACE II and INTERREG IIIA Programmes;
- welcomed the adoption by the European Commission of the Peace III and the Northern Ireland/Ireland/Scotland Cross Border Co-operation Programme (INTERREG IVA). Including matching funding from the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive, a total of €589m will be made available through these Programmes for investment to help build a peaceful stable society in Northern Ireland and the creation of a more prosperous cross border region;

- welcomed the focus of the new PEACE Programme on (i) Reconciling Communities and (ii) contributing to a Shared Society. Ministers noted that the PEACE III Programme has a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) allocation of €225 million and will be funded under the EU's Territorial Co-operation Objective. Including match funding from the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive, the PEACE III Programme will be worth almost €333 million;
- welcomed the focus of the new cross border INTERREG IVA Programme on (i) Co-operation for a more prosperous border region (ii) Co-operation for a sustainable border region. Ministers also welcomed the inclusion of Western Scotland in the Northern Ireland/Ireland cross border Programme and looked forward to working with Scottish colleagues in this Programme. Including match funding from the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive, the new Programme will have a total budget of €256 million compared with INTERREG IIIA's budget of €183 million;
- noted that the UK has allocated €139 million of its share of Cross Border European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) to the Northern Ireland/Ireland/Scotland Programme and that Ireland has allocated €53 million; and
- approved the SEUPB Corporate Plan 2008 to 2010 and Business Plan for 2008 subject to budgetary considerations by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Sectoral Meetings

Language



Clockwise from top left - Former Chairperson of the Irish Language Agency/Foras na G  ilge Maighr  ad U   Mh  irt  n, current Chairperson Liam    Maoilmhich  il, Chairperson of the Ulster-Scots Agency/Tha Boord O Ulst  r-Scotch Mark Thompson, Chief Executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency/Tha Boord O Ulst  r-Scotch, George Patton and Chief Executive of the Irish Language Agency/Foras na G  ilge Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh.

THE NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY (AN FORAS TEANGA/THA BOORD O LEID)

BACKGROUND

4.4.1 The Language Body is composed of two separate agencies – The Irish Language Agency/Foras na G  ilge, and the Ulster-Scots Agency/Tha Boord O Ulst  r-Scotch. The Chairperson of Foras na G  ilge, and the Chairperson of Tha Boord O Ulst  r-Scotch, are joint Chairpersons of the Language Body. With effect from 13 December 2007 Mr Liam    Maoilmhich  il was appointed Chair of Foras na G  ilge, succeeding Mrs Maighr  ad U   Mh  irt  n. There are 15 other members on the Board. These are listed in Annex Two. Mr Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh is the Chief Executive. Mr Mark Thompson is the Chair of

the Ulster-Scots Agency. There are 7 other members on the Agency’s Board. These are listed in Annex Two. Mr George Patton is the Chief Executive.

NSMC MEETING

4.4.2 An NSMC meeting was held in Newry on 26 October. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Caitr  ona Ruane MLA, Minister for Education. The Irish Government was represented by Eamon O’ Cu  v TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

4.4.3 At the meeting Ministers:

- received and discussed a report on the activities of the Language Body from 2002 to 2007. The report was presented by the Chief Executives of Foras na G  ilge and Tha Boord O Ulst  r-Scotch and focused

on the joint work undertaken by the two Agencies on a number of projects including joint funding of the posts of “Arts Development Officer for Language Arts” (with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland) and Cultural Officer in Altnaveigh House Cultural Society in Newry. In addition the Agencies piloted a joint lecture series on “Our Shared Heritage” which was made available to a variety of bodies;

- welcomed the successful introduction of the first ever Ulster-Scots summer schools in 2006 and noted that the Youth Development Officer, funded by the Irish Youth Foundation in 2006, enabled the Agency to work with young people in inner city areas. In Education, the Agency commissioned a schools drama with 120 primary schools receiving the production in 2007. In addition, the Agency piloted Ulster-Scots after school clubs in a number of locations;
- discussed the Ulster-Scots Agency’s community programmes and noted in particular the significant progress in music, dance and drama and work with young people. They also noted that Tha Boord will establish a new Development Grant scheme beginning in February 2008;
- recognising the very positive reception given to Ulster-Scots language, heritage and culture at the Smithsonian Festival in Washington in 2007 and the planned activities associated with the 400th anniversary of the Plantation of Ulster, invited the Agency to bring forward a proposal for a programme to develop links and cultural exchanges with Ulster-Scots communities in Scotland and North America;
- welcomed a report on the work of Foras na Gaeilge, especially in the eGovernment area with the development of an online database of terminology – www.focal.ie, the launch (with Microsoft) of an Irish language version of Windows XP and the development of Córas Creidiúnaithe/an Accreditation Scheme for Irish Language translators. A successful three-year local community support scheme which provided funding to 20 groups throughout the island of Ireland was extended to 2010. The success of the scheme has led the Foras to widen the scheme to post-primary level; and
- approved the proposal to transfer the functions of Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge to Foras na Gaeilge, from

1 January 2008. Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge (the Irish Language Books Board) was established in 1952 as a non-statutory state body and its objective is to assist writers and publishers in supplying Irish language material for the general public.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Sectoral Meetings

Inland Waterways



Left - Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, and Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure laying a stone at the foot of Waterways Ireland Headquarters under construction at Enniskillen.
Right - Waterways Ireland Chief Executive John Martin.

WATERWAYS IRELAND

BACKGROUND

4.5.1 Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway systems throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes. It is currently responsible for the following waterways: Barrow Navigation, Erne System, Grand Canal, Lower Bann Navigation, Royal Canal, Shannon-Erne Waterway and Shannon Navigation amounting to approximately 1,000km of navigable waterways. Waterways Ireland is also responsible for the restoration of the section of the Ulster Canal between Clones and Upper Lough Erne and, following restoration, for its management, maintenance and development. The Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland is Mr John Martin.

NSMC MEETING

4.5.2 An NSMC meeting was held in Ballyconnell, County Cavan on 17 October. The Irish Government was represented by Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development.

4.5.3 At the meeting Ministers:

- welcomed and agreed on a framework for Waterways Ireland to take forward the restoration of Clones-Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal which will provide a boost to the economic wellbeing of communities in the area;
- noted a report to the Council from the Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland, Mr. John Martin, on progress which included the following highlights:
 - **Accommodation:** Work has commenced on a new Headquarters building for Waterways Ireland in Enniskillen.
 - **Restoration of the Royal Canal:** Significant progress has been made with the canal to be fully open to navigation from Dublin to the Shannon in 2009.
 - **Sponsorship Programme/Joint Activities:** Events supported included major international sporting events such as the Classic Fishing Festival on Lough Erne, the Water Ski World Cup Championship in Enniskillen and the Triathlon in Athlone (Tri Athlone).
 - **Moorings and Boat Registrations:** 8,500 additional metres of moorings have been provided across the waterways and boat

registration has more than doubled - from 5,544 registered boats at the start of 2000 to 11,468 boats in 2007.

- approved future plans for Waterways Ireland for the period 2008-2010 as set out in its Corporate and Business Plans, subject to budgetary considerations, which focussed on the achievement of the following six goals:
 - Manage and maintain a reliable and high quality waterways network
 - Develop and restore the waterways network
 - Enhance the existing waterways network to widen its appeal to users
 - Promote increased use of our waterways resource principally for recreational purposes
 - Assess, manage and develop the assets of Waterways Ireland
 - Develop an Organisation of Excellence;
- agreed to proposals for a number of property disposals and a compulsory purchase order; and
- noted Waterways Ireland's Annual report and Accounts for 2005.

Trade and Business Development



Left to Right - Former Chairperson of the Trade and Business Development Body Dr Martin Naughton, current Chairperson Dr David Dobbin and Chief Executive Liam Nellis.

INTERTRADEIRELAND

BACKGROUND

4.6.1 The Trade and Business Development Body was established to exchange information and co-ordinate work on trade, business development and related matters, in areas where the two administrations specifically agree it would be in their mutual interest. With effect from 13 December 2007 Dr David Dobbin and Mr John Fitzgerald were appointed to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of InterTradeIreland. They succeeded Dr Martin Naughton and Mr Barry Fitzsimons respectively. The Chief Executive of InterTradeIreland is Mr Liam Nellis. The current Board members are listed in Annex Two.

ACTIVITIES

4.6.2 Details of the Body's activities in 2007 are detailed in the paragraphs below.

4.6.3 InterTradeIreland's 2007 portfolio of initiatives include a series of collaborative business networks, such as sector specific networks operating in biotechnology and life sciences (BioMedIreland), computer software (All

Island Software Network and Mobile Software Business Network), plastics (Polymer and Plastics Network) and other business networks such as the North West Science and Technology Partnership, All Island Learning Networks – Skillnets, Build Up Construction Network, and the Digital Asset Management Network, Mobile Advertising Platform Initiative and All Island Digital Media Forum.

4.6.4 In its Areas of Excellence Networks, InterTradeIreland has addressed areas such as the utilisation of equity finance as a tool for company growth (EquityNetwork), the exploitation of benchmarking resources (All Island Best Practice Network) and an Entrepreneurship Network.

4.6.5 Support was provided to Communities of Interest Networks such as MicroTrade, which supports micro-enterprises in both jurisdictions, the US/Ireland Research Partnership which is developing linkages between the US and research institutes and researchers in Ireland and Northern Ireland, Universities Ireland and the North South Roundtable Group.

4.6.6 Included within its science, technology and innovation programmes in 2007, InterTradeIreland offered the FUSION technology transfer project, the

INNOVA collaborative research and development project and the unique research portal www.expertiseireland.com which provides access to the research expertise of third-level institutes in Ireland and Northern Ireland. InterTradelreland also, in partnership with Invest Northern Ireland and Enterprise Ireland, initiated work on an All Island EU Framework 7 Project, with a Steering Committee established and having defined ICT, Nanotechnology and Biotechnology as its target sectors.

4.6.7 Within its sales and marketing programmes in 2007, InterTradelreland offered the ACUMEN programme which is designed to stimulate cross-border trade through sales and marketing supports for small and medium enterprises, the Network & Getwork buyer-supplier programme in co-operation with the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Dublin Chamber of Commerce, the Go-Source public procurement portal www.go-source.com in partnership with Enterprise Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland, and the Go-Tender training programme which helps SMEs to develop expertise in selling into the public procurement market.

4.6.8 InterTradelreland has continued its programme of Business & Economic Research and among its own research projects, and those which it sponsored in 2007, have been the Mapping Study of Research & Technological Development Centres on the island of Ireland (in partnership with DETI, DETE, DEL, SFI, Invest NI and Enterprise Ireland), the Direct Shipping Study to North America, the All Island Business Competitiveness Model and the BT/InterTradelreland Business Monitor.

4.6.9 The 2007 InterTradelreland EquityNetwork Seedcorn Competition was formally launched in April 2007 and Awards were presented in November 2007 in Croke Park in Dublin. Movidia, a Dublin-based company, won the overall prize of €100,000 in the International category. Another Dublin-based company, Openplain, won €50,000 in the Emerging category.

4.6.10 Organised by InterTradelreland in co-operation with Invest NI, Enterprise Ireland, IDA and Forfás, the 'Business Networks Forum - Collaborate for Commercial Success' took place in Farmleigh, Dublin in January 2007. It was attended by more than 160 delegates who were drawn from existing network members, company executives, industry associations and network facilitators, policy-makers, academics and economic development agencies. Outcomes included agreement on the need for a co-ordinated approach to network funding, particularly in a North South context.

4.6.11 InterTradelreland has also completed formal evaluation of three of its flagship projects, Innova, Fusion and Acumen, and economic appraisals recommending their continued implementation.

4.6.12 InterTradelreland's programmes in 2007 have generated trade and business development Value in excess of £50m/€67m against a target of £25M, and they are engaged in the support and exploitation of more than 28 all-island business networks against a target of 25.

Tourism



Left to Right - Former Chairperson of the Tourism Ireland Limited Andrew Coppel, current Chairperson Hugh Friel and Chief Executive Paul O'Toole.

TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

BACKGROUND

4.7.1 Tourism Ireland Limited is responsible for marketing overseas the island of Ireland as a tourist destination. Tourism Ireland has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC. With effect from 18 December 2007 Mr Hugh Friel and Ms Ciara Boyle were appointed to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. They succeeded Mr Andrew Coppel and Ms Ann Riordan respectively. The current board members are listed in Annex Two. The Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland is Mr Paul O'Toole.

NSMC MEETING

4.7.2 An NSMC meeting was held in Dublin on 8 November. The Irish Government was represented by Seamus Brennan TD, Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Nigel Dodds OBE MP MLA, Minister of Enterprise Trade and Investment and Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

4.7.3 At the meeting Ministers:

- received and discussed a progress report on the activities of Tourism Ireland from 2002 to 2007. This report was presented by Ms Ann Riordan, Vice-Chair of Tourism Ireland. Ministers welcomed the report on the strong growth in visitor numbers and revenue which are forecast to have grown by 2.17 million and €1.3/£0.87 billion, respectively, including an increase of 391,000 in visitors to Northern Ireland, during this period;
- noted Tourism Ireland's future plans for the period 2008-2010. These include:-
 - increasing tourism to the island of Ireland; and
 - supporting Northern Ireland to realise its tourism potential.
- approved Tourism Ireland's Corporate Plan 2008-2010 and Business Plan for 2008 subject to Finance Departments' agreement and to budgetary considerations by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government; and
- noted the Body's Annual Report and Accounts 2006.

Education



Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education and Science and Caitríona Ruane MLA, Minister for Education.

4.8.1 An NSMC meeting was held in Dublin on 28 November. The Irish Government was represented by Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education and Science. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Caitríona Ruane MLA, Minister for Education and Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure.

4.8.2 At the meeting Ministers:

- welcomed progress on addressing educational underachievement including successful initiatives for the promotion of literacy and numeracy in schools and requested officials to develop proposals on educational underachievement and bring them forward for consideration at the next NSMC meeting in Education Sectoral format;
- welcomed the ongoing co-operation between the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Education in the area of cross-border school youth and teacher exchanges. Ministers noted that a formal review of co-operation on educational exchanges and supporting mechanisms, including the North South Exchange Consortium, will shortly commence with a view to identifying a range of options for future progress in the light of current and future funding availability;
- noted developments in both jurisdictions in relation to the vetting of those working with children and vulnerable adults. Ministers noted that arising from the Assembly debate in October 2007, the issue of child protection could emerge as a significant matter for consideration by the NSMC and British Irish Council (BIC) and that the Education Departments will consider issues that may arise, as appropriate and consistent with the Departmental responsibilities in this area;
- welcomed a report from the Chief Executive and Chair of the Centre of Excellence for Autism at Middletown and the significant progress made to date on the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Autism at Middletown. The Ministers endorsed the future plans for the Centre which include the provision of training/advisory and information/research services and education, learning and support services which are due to come on stream once building work is completed;
- discussed other joint projects in the field of special educational needs including the "Cross

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Sectoral Meetings

Border School and Parent Community Partnership Programme” which was supported by the EU Peace and Reconciliation Programme and co-funded by both Departments of Education;

- noted progress made to date by the Teacher Qualifications Working Group and noted that the Teaching Councils will work co-operatively on the issues in the future as appropriate. Ministers recognised that significant changes have been made to the previous requirements for proficiency in the Irish language in respect of teaching posts and that a specific professional development programme has been introduced to address the needs of primary teachers undertaking the Scrúdú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (SCG) - Irish proficiency examination; and
- discussed issues relating to Teachers’ Superannuation and agreed that officials from the Department of Education and the Department of Education and Science will participate in a working group to consider the transfer of pensions rights on a cross-border basis and will report back on issues relevant to the Education Sector to the next NSMC meeting in Education Sectoral format.

Agriculture



Left to Right - Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment, Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Michelle Gildernew MP MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development,

4.9.1 An NSMC meeting was held in Donegal on 9 November. The Irish Government was represented by Mary Coughlan TD, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Michelle Gildernew MP MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment.

4.9.2 At the meeting Ministers:

- welcomed the progress made since 2002 on a range of issues including the mutually beneficial collaborative work taken in response to the recent outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease and Bluetongue disease and earlier outbreaks of Avian Influenza in Britain. This co-operation had ensured a common approach was adopted to preventing these diseases from entering the island of Ireland while maintaining trade levels;
- noted an all-island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy paper developed by the North South Animal Health and Welfare Steering Group. They restated that the free movement of animals on the island continues to be the ultimate aim of the animal health and welfare strategy and that the way forward is through co-operation and the development of complementary policies. Ministers noted that the Strategy includes a list of initial activities for delivery of key elements with various milestones and deadlines for the immediate period ahead and requested that officials continue to oversee progress and to submit further measures to implement the Strategy for approval at the next NSMC sectoral meeting;
- agreed that North South co-operation on plant health should focus on the status of pests and diseases threatening the island's plant health and co-operation on EU matters and that the work of the North South Pesticide Steering Group should focus on the production of co-ordinated pesticide usage surveys for grassland and fodder crops, and for arable crops;
- noted that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is developing a plant health strategy for Northern Ireland which will include a section on North South co-operation consistent with the

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Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food plant health strategies;

- agreed that officials from the Departments should remain in close contact on a range of key CAP issues including the EU Commission's recent adoption of a single Common Market Organisation, the reform of the Fruit and Vegetable sector and the forthcoming CAP "Health Check". Ministers noted that future NSMC meetings will consider and review common challenges and opportunities arising from the EU dimension of agriculture;
- noted the work of the North South Steering Committee on Cross Border Rural Development. They agreed that the future work of the Committee should focus on developing the maximum co-operation in the implementation of rural development programmes and policy, including EU programmes and to examine the scope for a common approach to the feasibility of developing cross-border area based strategies and rural development research; and
- welcomed the progress achieved under the funding provided by the EU Peace Programmes, particularly the strong focus on rural areas which had been particularly disadvantaged as a result of the conflict. They requested officials to bring forward a report and recommendations, to the next meeting of the NSMC in the Agriculture Sectoral Format, in respect of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 and co-operation projects.

Environment



Left - Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment.



Right - John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

4.10.1 An NSMC meeting was held in Killadeas, County Fermanagh on 26 October. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment and Margaret Ritchie MLA, Minister for Social Development. The Irish Government was represented by John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

4.10.2 At the meeting Ministers:

- noted and welcomed progress made since the last meeting in 2002 which included:
 - i. joint work on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive to enhance water management on a coordinated cross-border basis;
 - ii. over 175,000 waste fridges and freezers recycled under a Northern Ireland/Ireland contract ; and
 - iii. a successful cross-border waste awareness campaign was undertaken.
- agreed that implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive for the three International cross-border River Basin Districts (IRBDs) falling within the scope of the Directive should proceed on the basis of single management plans for each

IRBD - i.e. the North Western IRBD, the Neagh Bann IRBD and the Shannon IRBD and requested officials to report on progress at the next meeting;

- welcomed the progress made by the North South Market Development Steering Group which worked on a mutually beneficial approach to the development of the waste and recycling market, exploiting opportunities to benefit from economies of scale;
- agreed that the Steering Group should require the market development delivery agencies in Ireland and Northern Ireland to develop proposals for a joint market development action programme, guided by the respective strategies and programmes in both jurisdictions;
- agreed that the Steering Group should be chaired by a representative from the business sector and should include members from the business sector as well as relevant Non Governmental Organisations;
- recognised the continuing joint work on the feasibility of establishing of a Paper Mill, capable of reprocessing waste paper generated on the island, contingent on the mobilisation of private

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sector support and funding and requested a progress report for its next meeting;

- welcomed the significant progress made in tackling the movements of illegal cross-border waste and specifically the recent joint enforcement actions, designed to prevent such illegal activities;
- endorsed a “Road Map” that had been developed in response to a request by the European Commission. The ‘Road Map’ sets out the responsibilities of both jurisdictions within the context of the relevant legislation. It outlines a step by step approach for the removal and disposal of waste which has already been illegally dumped and sets out a series of joint enforcement actions designed to prevent future illegal movements;
- approved the commissioning of a review of two environmental research websites – (aNSwer) a North South website of environmental research, incorporating an environmental database (EDS) - which were developed under the auspices of the NSMC and launched in 2002. It welcomed the intentions of the Environment Protection Agency and Environment and Heritage Service to meet to determine the potential opportunities for the co-ordination of joint environmental research; and
- noted the successful outcome of a cross border waste awareness campaign and requested officials to explore the scope for further work including information exchange, environmental awareness campaigns and funding options.

Health



Left to Right - Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mary Harney TD, Minister for Health and Children and Michael McGimpsey MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety at the Health meeting

4.11.1 An NSMC meeting was held in Dublin on 28 November. The Irish Government was represented by Mary Harney TD, Minister for Health and Children. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Michael McGimpsey MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

4.11.2 At the meeting, in relation to Health, Ministers:

- received and discussed a comprehensive progress report on health co-operation since 2002 which covered a range of issues including planning for major emergencies, pandemic flu planning, technology, cancer research, and health promotion;
- noted that a joint feasibility study was under way and that this would identify the potential for a more strategic approach to co-operation in relation to both health and social well-being;
- received a report on continuing co-operation on accident and emergency services. Ministers also noted and welcomed work commissioned by Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT), a partnership group established by the relevant

Health Boards, to examine issues concerning the implementation of a cross-border out-of-hours GP service;

- welcomed on-going work involving co-operation on paediatric and congenital cardiac services between the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast and Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children in Dublin;
- requested officials to report on the further development of the cross-border out of hours service and the ongoing work on paediatric and congenital cardiac services to the next NSMC Health Sectoral format meeting;
- welcomed co-operation on training and planning for major emergencies and welcomed the close co-operation between the two Departments and the Health Service Executive (HSE) on infectious disease emergency planning and noted plans for a cross border exercise on pandemic flu planning linked to a similar exercise in the EU;
- welcomed the excellent co-operation between the fire and rescue services in dealing with emergencies and road accident responses in the border areas and also agreed that the First

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Sectoral Meetings

Responder Schemes should be managed through the Ambulance Services;

- considered a report on high technology equipment which focused on the provision of improved access to radiotherapy services. In this respect, Ministers welcomed an agreement between Belfast City Hospital, Altnagelvin Hospital and the HSE to provide cancer patients from County Donegal with radiotherapy treatment at Belfast City Hospital. Ministers also agreed that the development of additional Radiotherapy capacity should be taken forward in parallel with work on the joint feasibility study;
- received a presentation from the Chief Medical Officers, Dr Jim Kiely of the Department of Health and Children and Dr Michael McBride of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on the work of the Ireland-Northern Ireland-National Cancer Institute of the USA Cancer Consortium. Activities being undertaken under the auspices of the Consortium include; the development of common protocols, definitions and datasets by cancer registries, the running of a Cancer Prevention Fellowship Programme; the use of telesynergy to aid the diagnosis of rare conditions and for research collaborations; and the operation of an all-island Cancer Clinical Trials Co-operation Group;
- welcomed the broad range of co-operation on health promotion in key areas such as tackling obesity, research, health promoting hospitals, training, smoking, workplace health promotion, men's health, mental health and breastfeeding. Ministers noted in particular the work of the Institute of Public Health particularly in relation to addressing health inequalities; and
- noted and welcomed progress and co-operation on mental health and in particular that an all-island suicide prevention action plan has been developed and agreed. They agreed that the Internet played a significant role in relation to suicide and agreed to work together to influence change in this area.

Transport



Left to Right - Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development, Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment and Noel Dempsey TD, Minister for Transport at the September Transport meeting.

4.12.1 NSMC meetings were held in Killadeas on 28 September and in Trim, County Meath, on 12 December. On each occasion the Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment. The Irish Government was represented on both occasions by Noel Dempsey TD, Minister for Transport.

4.12.2 At these meetings Ministers:

- welcomed the progress made since 2002 on a range of issues and the opportunity to meet to discuss opportunities for cross-border co-operation in relation to Strategic Transport Planning and Road Safety;
- noted that the Irish Government's contribution of £400m/€580m towards the funding of the A5 (North-West Gateway to Aughnacloy) and A8 (Belfast to Larne) A8 projects. They :
 - i. agreed that to simplify the payment process, this contribution would be assigned to the A5 project, taking into account that progress on the A8 project will be the responsibility of

the Northern Ireland Executive and its agencies;

- ii. welcomed the formation of a management structure comprising a Cross Border Steering Group, Technical Group and dedicated Roads Service Project Team to manage the A5 project; and
 - iii. welcomed the early appointment of consultants to enable a route corridor study of the A5 project to commence.
- noted and welcomed continuing progress on proposals to reopen the Annaghroe and Knocknaginny bridges on the Tyrone/Monaghan border including the appointment of consultants by Monaghan County Council;
 - noted continuing progress to date on the Irish Government's proposal for the construction of a bridge at Narrow Water linking Co. Louth with Co. Down and undertook to keep the matter under review and draw on the results of the technical work funded by the Irish Government, when available;

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- noted the discussions and received a presentation from representatives of Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways and noted options for the future development of the cross border rail link between Dublin and Belfast especially in relation to:
 - i. increased service frequency;
 - ii. improvements to rolling stock; and
 - iii. elimination of speed restrictions

and requested their officials to prepare a report for consideration at the next NSMC Transport Sectoral meeting;

- noted the on-going co-operation between Departments and the two railway operating companies, in relation to rail safety and interoperability and requested officials to continue to work closely together to ensure compliance with relevant EU Directives on these issues;
- noted that a jointly supported study on Cross Border Community based rural transport has been considered by both Departments and recognising the potential benefits and the regulatory, resource and organisational constraints on the provision of such services at this time agreed that a pilot cross-border exercise should now be considered; and
- discussed cross-border co-operation on road safety including consultation on road safety strategies. Ministers noted that a study on cooperation between the UK and Ireland in relation to the mutual recognition of penalty points is currently underway. Ministers also received a presentation from the Road Safety Authority on the new Road Safety Strategy for Ireland for the period 2007-2012 and noted that the mid-term review of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy 2002-2012 was underway with an announcement on the way forward expected in 2008. The Council further welcomed the continuing co-operation between the authorities on a range of issues. They agreed:
 - i. that efforts to promote road safety through joint advertising and publicity campaigns should continue and that available evidence on the effectiveness of the existing approach should be reviewed;
 - ii. that work should continue through the Steering to Safety project on finding practical ways of improving road safety

including application of penalty points in Border areas;

- iii. that where possible the results of relevant road safety research should be shared; and
- iv. that the opportunities for improving and harmonizing arrangements for collecting, collating and reporting road safety information should continue to be exploited.
- v. the mutual recognition of driving disqualifications should be taken forward.

ANNEX ONE

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL JOINT SECRETARIAT

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

ANNEX ONE: North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat

The North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) is supported by a standing Joint Secretariat staffed by members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Irish Civil Service. The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is the parent Department of the Northern Ireland Civil Servants and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is the parent Department of the Irish Civil Servants.

Mary Bunting is the Northern Joint Secretary and Tom Hanney is the Southern Joint Secretary. The Deputy Joint Secretaries are Pat Donaghy (Northern) and Niall Holohan (Southern).

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Joint Secretariat include:

- arranging the schedule of Council meetings in different formats;
- securing prior political/Ministerial agreement to agendas for meetings of the Council;
- preparing or commissioning papers for meetings of the Council, including in relation to its work programme;
- drafting joint communiqués and records of decisions of the Council;
- communicating decisions of the Council and monitoring their implementation;
- drafting an annual report on the proceedings of the Council;
- acting as a channel of communication with Implementation Bodies and facilitating their development;
- liaising, where appropriate through the designated Department or Office in either jurisdiction with the Secretariat of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, with the Secretariat of the British-Irish Council and with the North/South joint parliamentary forum and independent consultative forum when established;
- carrying out such other tasks as the Council may direct.

FUNDING

Staff costs are met by OFMDFM and DFA. All other costs associated with the Joint Secretariat and the NSMC are shared between the two administrations. The cost of running the Joint Secretariat in 2007 amounted to £1,626,707/€2,384,763.

ANNEX TWO

NORTH SOUTH BODIES' BOARD MEMBERS

Aquaculture and Marine Matters

ANNEX TWO: North South Bodies' Board Members

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD ADVISORY BOARD

John Dardis
(Chairperson)
Campbell Tweedie
(Vice Chairperson)
Ken Baird
Lynn Ní Bhaoigheallain
Joe Byrne
Brian Cunningham
Aoife Healy
Susan Heraghty
Neven Maguire
Seamus Sheridan
Con Traas
Jane Wells

NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY - FORAS NA GAEILGE

Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl
(Chairperson of Foras na Gaeilge/
Joint Chairperson of An Foras Teanga)
Eoghan Mac Cormaic
(Vice Chair)
Áine Andrews
Lucilita Breathnach
Seanna Breathnach
Adelaide Nic Cárthaigh
Máire Gallagher
Máiréad Nic Giolla Mhichíl
Liam Kennedy
Norman Henry
Éamonn Kinch
Marcas Mac Ruairi
Dónal Ó Bearra
Pádraic Ó Biadha
Diarmuid Ó Murchú
Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín

THA BOORD O ULSTÈR SCOTCH

Mark Thompson
(Chairperson of Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch/
Joint Chairperson of North South Language Body)
Ian Adamson
Dr Aileen Douglas
Angela Graham
William Humphrey
William Leathem
Jacqui Reed
William Roulston

THE FOYLE, CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

Tarlach O Crosain
(Chairperson)
Jacqui McConville
(Vice Chairperson)
Enda Bonner
Brendan Byrne
John Byrne
Denis Haughey
Alan McCulla
Joe Miller
John Mulcahy
Winston Patterson
Thomas Sloan
Jim Wilson

THE TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BODY

David Dobbin
(Chairperson)

John Fitzgerald
(Vice Chairperson)

Brendan Butler

Ray Doherty

Rosaleen Doherty

Sean Gallagher

Jack Gilmour

Hugh Logue

Padraig MacLochlainn

Patricia McKeown

Dr Gerard O'Hare

Tom Scott

TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

Hugh Friel
(Chairperson)

Ciara Boyle
(Vice-Chairperson)

Brian Ambrose

David Lyle

Robert Manson

Mandy Martin

Bill McGinnis

Tom McGrath

Maira McNamara

John Power

Shaun Quinn

Ann Riordan



