



**An Roinn Iompair  
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**

**Department of Transport,  
Tourism and Sport**

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## **Quality Assurance Report for Expenditure in 2015**

### **Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport**

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Submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in  
Compliance with the Public Spending Code



Irish Government Economic & Evaluation Service

## **Certification**

This annual Quality Assurance Report reflects the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's assessment of compliance with the Public Spending PSC. It is based on the best financial, organisational and performance related information available across the various areas of responsibility.

**Signature of Accounting Officer:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

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**Graham Doyle**

**20 September 2016**

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## 1. Executive Summary

This report fulfils a requirement under the Public Spending Code (PSC) for each Department to put in place an internal, independent, quality assurance procedure involving annual reporting on how organisations are meeting their PSC obligations. This is the third QA report to be published by DTTaS and overall the Department is satisfied that it, and its agencies, are meeting the obligations set out in the PSC.

The main findings of the report are summarised below under the five key steps required to be completed under the Quality Assurance procedure.

### Step 1 - Inventories of all projects/programmes at different stages of the Project Life Cycle

In 2015, there was **309** projects or programmes across the different spending categories. There were **101** projects Being Considered, **157** projects Being Incurred and **51** projects Recently Ended.

The majority of projects/programmes and schemes **Being Considered** in 2015 were roads projects with **11** falling under the €0.5-5 million band, **33** projects under the €5-20 million band and **20** projects with a projected total value of over €20 million. For **Expenditure Being Incurred**, roads (B.3) and public transport (B.6, B.7 and B.8) made up the majority of the projects and programmes, 51 and 45<sup>1</sup> respectively. For expenditure **Recently Ended**, capital projects in public transport (B.6., B.7 and B.8) comprised the largest share at **32**.

### Step 2 - Publish summary information on website of all procurements in excess of €10m

In 2015, there were two procurements in the Department over €10 million which was the Irish Coast Guard Helicopter Search and Rescue Service and the Airports PSO. Separate to this a Local Authority procurement was also funded through the Sports Capital programme. DTTaS agencies had 29 procurements in total over €10 million.

### Step 3 - Checklists to be completed in respect of the different expenditure stages

The PSC contains a set of **7 checklists** that allow the Department and its agencies to self-assess their compliance with the PSC. **Checklist 1** refers to general obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes and is completed only by Departments. **Checklists 2 to 7** refer to expenditure at different stages of the project life cycle and are completed by Departments and agencies under their remit.

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<sup>1</sup> Note the totals referred to here include programmes/schemes that are rolling over from year to year and therefore would not be included in the summary table 2 below. The summary tables only refer to projects where the total expenditure is provided.

With regard to **expenditure Being Considered**, the checklist applying to capital expenditure demonstrated good levels of compliance with the PSC with regard to areas such as appraisal, procurement and state aid rules. For **expenditure Being Incurred**, again good levels of compliance were evident in checklist responses for both current and capital expenditure. Issues with project management were noted in one response with understaffing being mentioned. Overruns in project completion were also identified in some cases with one response indicating that this was due to a number of factors such as Irish Water issues, flooding problems and planning permission delays. Checklists for **expenditure Recently Ended** in 2015 again indicate a good level of compliance. It should be noted that current expenditure programmes are primarily rolling, year-to-year programmes such as the PSO contracts and are subject to on-going performance monitoring, rather than once off reviews.

#### **Step 4 – Carry out In-Depth Checks on a small number of selected projects/programmes**

A number of projects or programmes are selected under the QA process each year to be reviewed more intensively<sup>2</sup>. The primary aim of these checks is to evaluate the standards employed in financial management, planning, and implementation across the lifecycle of projects and programmes. The two selected for review in this year's QA report were the Helicopter Search and Rescue Service and the N6 Galway City Transport Project.

Both in-depth checks concluded that the project/programme under review were broadly in compliance with the prevailing set of guidelines. However, some areas for improvement were identified. This included more rigorous and detailed appraisal of the options being considered, better defined key objectives, and the need for collection and monitoring of performance indicators in order to ensure value for money is being achieved.

#### **Step 5 - Complete a QA Summary report**

The QA summary report for expenditure in 2015 identified a high level of compliance overall by divisions and agencies and included a number of achievements:

- DTTaS provided appraisal training to staff that covered a number of aspects of the PSC and also held information sessions on the QA process;
- The Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects and Programmes was published by DTTaS and is aligned with the PSC; and
- A VfM and FPA were completed on National Roads Maintenance and Green Schools respectively with another VfM on the Driver Testing Service which commenced at the end of 2015.

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<sup>2</sup> The PSC specifies that in-depth checks should analyse on average 5% of the total value of all projects/programmes/schemes in the inventory per annum i.e. 15% in total over the three years.

## 2. Introduction

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport's Economic and Financial Evaluation Unit (EFEU) has completed this Quality Assurance (QA) Report as part of the Department's on-going compliance with the Public Spending Code (PSC).

The Quality Assurance procedure aims to gauge the extent to which Departments and their associated agencies are meeting the obligations set out in the PSC<sup>3</sup>. The PSC seeks to ensure that the State achieves value for money in the use of all public funds.

The Quality Assurance Process contains five steps:

- 1. Drawing up Inventories of all projects/programmes at different stages of the Project Life Cycle** (appraisal, planning/design, implementation, post implementation). The three stages are expenditure Being Considered, expenditure Being Incurred and expenditure that has Recently Ended and the inventory includes all projects/programmes above €0.5m.
- 2. Publish summary information on website of all procurements in excess of €10m**, whether new, in progress or completed.
- 3. Checklists to be completed in respect of the different stages.** These checklists allow the Department and its agencies to self-assess their compliance with the PSC in respect of the checklists which are provided in the PSC document.
- 4. Carry out a more in-depth check on a small number of selected projects/programmes.** A number of projects or programmes (at least 5% of total spending<sup>4</sup>) are selected to be reviewed more intensively. The primary aim of these checks is to evaluate the standards employed in financial management, planning, and implementation across the lifecycle of projects and programmes.
- 5. Complete a short report for the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform** which includes the inventory of all projects, the website reference for the publication of procurements above €10m, the completed checklists, the Department's judgement on the adequacy of processes given the findings from the In-Depth Checks and the Department's proposals to remedy any discovered inadequacies.

This report fulfils the fifth requirement of the QA Process for the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport for expenditure in 2015.

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<sup>3</sup> Public Spending PSC, DPER, <http://publicspendingPSC.per.gov.ie/>

<sup>4</sup> The PSC specifies that in-depth checks should analyse on average 5% of the total value of all projects/programmes/schemes in the inventory per annum i.e. 15% in total over the three years. The 2014 QA Report analysed 3.5% of inventory and DTTaS will ensure that it reaches this average over the three year cycle.

## 3. Inventory and Expenditure Analysis

### 3.1 Inventory of Projects and Programmes

This section details the inventory drawn up by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in accordance with the guidance on the Quality Assurance process. The inventory lists all of the Department's projects and programmes which amount to more than €0.5m<sup>5</sup>. This inventory is broken down between current and capital expenditure and into three stages:

- Expenditure Being Considered;
- Expenditure Being Incurred; and
- Expenditure that has Recently Ended

Tables 1, 2 and 3 list summaries of the Department's compiled inventory. Full tables including details of each programme/project are listed in **Appendix 1**. For the purposes of clarity and completeness the headings in the inventory were updated to cater for the total projected expenditure on projects/programmes/schemes. Agencies and relevant Departmental bodies were also requested to compile an inventory of their projects and programmes, according to this updated template.

#### Expenditure Being Considered

**Table 1** provides a summary of the inventory of expenditures above €0.5m Being Considered by DTTaS and its related agencies and bodies. As the table identifies, there are a total of **101** projects/programmes Being Considered across the various spending and value categories.

#### Expenditure Being Incurred

**Table 2** provides a summary of the inventory of expenditures above €0.5m Being Incurred by DTTaS and its related bodies. In total there are **157** projects or programmes which are currently incurring expenditure of over €0.5m.

#### Expenditure Recently Ended

**Table 3** provides a summary of the inventory of expenditures above €0.5m Recently Ended by DTTaS and its related bodies. There are **51** projects or programmes that have Recently Ended.

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<sup>5</sup>The tables in the following pages refer to the estimated total figures (i.e. from start to finish – covering expenditure in all phases (Appraisal, Planning and Design, Implementation and Completion (otherwise known as “Recently Ended) for individual projects/programmes/schemes. The inventory relies on estimates of total expenditure for a number of programmes and projects, particularly those under consideration.

**Table 1: Expenditure on Projects/Schemes  
"Being Considered" in 2015**

Subhead	Subhead Description	Current Expenditure			Capital Expenditure			TBA*
		.5 - 5M	5M- 20M	>20M	.5 - 5M	5M- 20M	>20M	
A.3	Regional Airports	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.3	Road Improvement and Maintenance	0	0	0	11	33	20	15
B.4	Road Safety Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.4	Medical Bureau of Road Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.5	Vehicle and Driver Licensing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.6	Smarter Travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.7	Public Service Provision Payments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.8	Public Transport Investment Division	0	0	0	8	4	5	1
C.3	Maritime Administration and the Coast Guard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. 3	Grants for Sporting Bodies and the Provision of Sports and Recreational Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D.4	Grants for the Provision and Renovation of Swimming Pools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D.5/D6	Sport Ireland	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
E.3, E5 and E6	Fáilte Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E.4	Tourism Ireland Limited	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
X.05	Information Services Division	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total number of projects Being Considered in 2015 (See note below)</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>

Note: Amounts above refer to the *estimated total projected expenditure* for the project/programme/scheme. (Start to finish – from appraisal to completion). Given that these projects/programmes/schemes were only under consideration the total amounts may change as they move into the “Being Incurred” Phase.

\* The TBA column refers to the 17 capital projects that were Being Considered in 2015 but the projected total expenditure has yet to be estimated. This brings the total number of projects/programmes and schemes that were under consideration in 2015 to 101.



A number of observations can be made in terms of the composition of expenditure over €500,000 **“Being Considered” in 2015**. Being Considered refers to expenditure referring to the Appraisal and Planning and Design Phases of Projects/Programmes/Schemes. The key points in this regard are listed below:

- All of the projects under consideration were designated under capital expenditure;
- The vast majority of projects/programmes and schemes Being Considered in 2015 were **Roads projects (B.3) with a total of 79 being considered**. The figure of 79 is composed of **11** road projects in the **€0.5-5 million band**, **33** projects in the **€5-20 million band** and **20** projects with a projected total value of **over €20 million**. In addition, there were **15** capital road projects/schemes where the total expenditure had **yet to be estimated**;
- At total of **18** projects/schemes were listed as being under consideration for **Public Transport Investment (B.8)**. The total figure is composed of **8** projects/schemes in the **€0.5-5 million band**, **4** in the **€5-20 million band** and **5** with a projected total value of **over €20 million** and **1** where the total expenditure had **yet to be estimated**;
- A total of **4** projects/schemes were being considered by **Sport Ireland (D.5/D.6)** which includes one where the total expenditure has yet to be estimated.

**For more detail, please see Appendix 1.**

**Table 2: Expenditure on Projects/Programmes and Schemes  
"Being Incurred" in 2015**

Subhead	Subhead Description	Current Expenditure				Capital Expenditure			
		.5 - 5M	5M - 20M	>20M	On-Going*	.5 - 5M	5M-20M	>20M	On-Going*
A.3	Regional Airports	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
B.3	Road Improvement and Maintenance	0	0	0	3	7	10	14	17
B.4	Road Safety Authority	0	0	0	11	1	0	0	2
B.4	Medical Bureau of Road Safety	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
B.5	Vehicle and Driver Licensing	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
B.6	Smarter Travel	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	0
B.7	Public Service Provision Payments	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
B.8	Public Transport Investment Division	0	0	0	0	6	7	12	9
C.3	Maritime Administration and the Coast Guard	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
D. 3	Grants for Sporting Bodies and the Provision of Sports and Recreational Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D.4	Grants for the Provision and Renovation of Swimming Pools	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
D.5/D6	Sport Ireland	0	1	0	7	2	0	1	1
E.3, E5 and E6	Fáilte Ireland	6	9	0	0	2	2	1	0
E.4	Tourism Ireland Limited	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
X.05	Information Services Division	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Total number of projects Being Considered in 2015 (See note below)</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>
<p>Note: Amounts above refers to projects/programmes/schemes where the estimated total projected expenditure for the project as a whole falls within the bands as referred to above.</p> <p>* There was a total of <u>36 current</u> expenditure programmes/schemes that are <u>rolling over</u> from year to year and a total of <u>34 capital</u> schemes that are <u>rolling over</u> from year to year. See <u>Appendix 1</u> for detailed inventories.</p> <p>Note: these programmes/schemes cannot be categorised under the expenditure thresholds as the total expenditure on the schemes cannot be estimated into the future given that they are rolling from year to year.</p>									

A number of observations can be made in terms of the composition of expenditure over €500,000 **“Being Incurred” in 2015**. “Being Incurred” refers to expenditure during the Implementation Phase of Projects/Programmes/Schemes. The key points in this regard are listed below:<sup>6</sup>

- Roads and Public Transport made up the majority of projects/programmes/schemes;
- With regard to **Roads (B.3)**, there were **3** current programmes which are rolling from year to year and **48** capital projects incurring expenditure greater than €500,000 in 2015. The figure of **48** is composed of **7** road projects in the **€0.5-5 million band**, **10** projects in the **€5-20 million band** and **14** projects with a projected total value of **over €20 million**. In addition, there were **17** capital road projects/schemes which are rolling from year to year/on-going and as such a total figure cannot be supplied.
- On the **Public Transport side (B.6 B.7 and B.8)**, there were **7** programmes incurring Current Expenditure (this includes PSO payments), and **38** capital projects of various sizes incurring expenditure in 2015;

**For more detail, please see Appendix 1.**

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<sup>6</sup> Note the totals referred to below include programmes/schemes that are rolling over from year to year and therefore would not be included in the summary table as the summary table refers to projects where the total expenditure is provided.

**Table 3: Expenditure on Projects/Programmes/Schemes  
"Recently Ended" in 2015**

Subhead	Subhead Description	Current Expenditure				Capital Expenditure			
		.5 - 5M	5M- 20M	>20M	On-Going*	.5 - 5M	5M- 20M	>20M	On-Going*
A.3	Regional Airports	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
B.3	Road Improvement and Maintenance	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	4
B.4	Road Safety Authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.4	Medical Bureau of Road Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.5	Vehicle and Driver Licensing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.6	Smarter Travel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.7	Public Service Provision Payments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.8	Public Transport Investment Division	0	0	0	0	23	1	8	0
C.3	Maritime Administration and the Coast Guard	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
D. 3	Grants for Sporting Bodies and the Provision of Sports and Recreational Facilities	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
D.4	Grants for the Provision and Renovation of Swimming Pools	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
D.5/D6	Sport Ireland	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
E.3, E5 and E6	Fáilte Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E.4	Tourism Ireland Limited	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
X.05	Information Services Division	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total number of projects Being Considered in 2015 (See note below)</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Note: Amounts above refer to the actual total expenditure (i.e. not the budgeted expenditure) for the project/programme as a whole. For details on the budgeted expenditure vs actual expenditure- see appendix 1.</b></p>									
<p><b>*Note in relation to "On-going" Category: In the case of Airports On-going refers to where the programme is on-going but a new agreement was put in place. In the case of roads the on-going refers to capital programmes where individual projects were completed in 2015 where such information was provided.</b></p>									

The key points in terms of expenditure in 2015 for projects/programmes and schemes totalling over €500,000 "Recently Ended" in 2015 is listed below:

- There were **50** capital projects of various sizes that Recently Ended in 2015;
- Capital projects in roads and public transport made up the majority of projects and programmes that have "Recently Ended";
- With regard to **Roads (B.3)**, there were **11** capital projects greater than €500,000 which ended in 2015;
- On the **Public Transport side (B.6, B7 and B8)**, there were **0** current programmes, **32** capital projects of various sizes incurring expenditure in 2015;

## 4. Procurement Details

As part of the Quality Assurance process, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport has published summary information on our website of all procurements in excess of €10m. Listed below is the link to this publication page and an illustration of its location.

### Link to Procurement Publications:

<http://www.dttas.ie/corporate/english/procurement-over-%E2%82%AC10-million>



[Home](#) » [Corporate Information](#) » [Financial Information](#) » Procurement over €10 million

- ▶ Agencies
- ▶ Legislation
- ▶ Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)
- ▶ Customer Service
- ▶ Annual Report
- ▶ Publications
- ▶ Economic Evaluation Unit
- ▶ Freedom of Information
- ▶ Grants and Funding
- ▼ Financial Information
  - ▶ Prompt Payment Returns - Department
  - ▶ Departmental Purchase Orders greater than €20,000
  - ▶ Suppliers and Purchase Orders
  - ▶ eDay 19 September 2014
  - ▶ Expenditure on External Services
  - ▶ Photography Costs

### Procurement over €10 million

Procurements in the Department of over €10 million will be published here, pursuant to the requirements of the Public Spending Code.

There were two procurements in the Department over €10 million for 2015 (Irish Coast Guard and Airports PSO)

Also pursuant to the requirements of the Code procurement details from the Department's agencies are listed below.

#### File Attachment:

- [airports-ps0-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [failte-ireland-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [irish-coast-guard-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [irish-rail-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [nta-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [road-safety-authority-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [sport-ireland-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [sports-capital-mayo-county-council-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [tii-procurement-information.pdf](#)
- [tourism-ireland-limited-procurement-information.pdf](#)

Source: [www.dttas.ie](http://www.dttas.ie)

## 5. Self-Assessment and Checklists

### 5.1 Self-Assessment Checklists

The third step in the Quality Assurance process involves completing a set of checklists covering all expenditure. The high level checks in Step 3 of the QA process are based on self-assessment by the Department and its agencies/bodies, in respect of guidelines set out in the PSC. There are seven checklists in total:

**Checklist 1:** General Obligations Not Specific to Individual Projects/Programmes

**Checklist 2:** Capital Expenditure Being Considered

**Checklist 3:** Current Expenditure Being Considered

**Checklist 4:** Capital Expenditure Being Incurred

**Checklist 5:** Current Expenditure Being Incurred

**Checklist 6:** Capital Expenditure Completed

**Checklist 7:** Current Expenditure Completed

Checklists 1-7 were completed by DTTaS for its own expenditure. The Department also requested that agencies/relevant bodies each complete checklists 2-7 in relation to their expenditure. As previously agreed, the National Transport Authority has completed the checklists on behalf of Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and Irish Rail (GDA expenditure).

**Table 4** below assesses DTTaS overall compliance with the PSC (checklist 1). Tables 5 to 10 provide an overview of general compliance against the different stages of expenditure and are a combination of the responses received from DTTaS divisions and agencies for checklists 2 to 7. Analysis of the tables is then provided in section 5.2 with mention of any issues arising. The full completed individual checklists for Departmental agencies are listed separately in **Appendix 2**.

Each question in the checklist is judged by a 3 point scale:

1 = Scope for Significant Improvements

2 = Compliant but Some Improvement Necessary

3 = Broadly Compliant

**Table 4 - DTTaS Checklist 1: General Obligations**

Question	Rating (0-3)	Comment/Action Required
Does the Department ensure, on an on-going basis that appropriate people within the Department and in its agencies are aware of the requirements of the Public Spending Code?	3	All relevant staff are aware. The Department's Common Appraisal Framework for land transport projects is aligned to the PSC and guidance notes are produced on a regular basis.
Has there been participation by relevant staff in external training on the Public Spending Code? (i.e. DPER)	2	Some related training through IGEES network but no central training provided by DPER.
Has internal training on the Public Spending Code been provided to relevant staff?	3	Yes. Two one-day appraisal training sessions were held in 2016 that covered a number of aspects of the PSC. Also held information sessions for staff and agencies on the QA process.
Has the Public Spending Code been adapted for the type of project/programme that your Department is responsible for? i.e. have adapted sectoral guidelines been developed?	3	Yes, sectoral appraisal guidelines developed and published in 2016 (see above).
Has the Department in its role as Sanctioning Authority satisfied itself that agencies that it funds comply with the Public Spending Code?	3	Yes, through the QA Process, VfM and FPA reviews, sectoral guidelines, business case evaluations and forthcoming PSC of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
Have recommendations from previous Quality Assurance exercises (incl. old Spot-Checks) been disseminated, where appropriate, within the Department and to your agencies?	3	Yes, all spot checks carried out have been discussed with relevant division/agency.
Have recommendations from previous Quality Assurance exercises been acted upon?	2	Broadly yes. We have rolled out training to staff on QA and appraisal, updated our sectoral guidance, and monitor implementation of recommendations through QA process.
Has an annual Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report been submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform?	3	Yes
Was the required sample subjected to a more in-depth Review i.e. as per Step 4 of the QA process	3	Yes, see section 6 of this report.
Has the Accounting Officer signed off on the information to be published to the website?	3	Yes



<b>Table 5 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 2: Capital Expenditure Being Considered</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating (1-3)</b>	<b>Comment/Action Required</b>
Was a Preliminary Appraisal undertaken for all projects > €5m	3	Yes
Was an appropriate appraisal method used in respect of each capital project or capital programme/grant scheme?	3	Yes. Appraisal carried out in accordance with the methodology applicable at the time. TII currently updating their own Project Appraisal Guidelines to reflect changed requirements.
Was a CBA/CEA completed for all projects exceeding €20m?	3	Yes
Was the appraisal process commenced at an early stage to facilitate decision making? (i.e. prior to the decision)	3	Yes
Was an Approval in Principle granted by the Sanctioning Authority for all projects before they entered the Planning and Design Phase (e.g. procurement)?	3	Yes
If a CBA/CEA was required was it submitted to DPER (CEEU) for their views?	3	Yes. One was submitted on the roads side in 2015. Noted that a further 2 will be submitted in 2016.
Were the NDFA Consulted for projects costing more than €20m?	3	Regular review on roads side of potential PPP possibilities with NDFA part of consultation. NDFA also consulted on the DART Underground.
Were all projects that went forward for tender in line with the Approval in Principle and if not was the detailed appraisal revisited and a fresh Approval in Principle granted?	3	PT projects not progressed as far as tender stage.
Was approval granted to proceed to tender?	3	For NTA funded projects with a project execution plan.
Were Procurement Rules complied with?	3	Yes
Were State Aid rules checked for all supports?	3	Yes
Were the tenders received in line with the Approval in Principle in terms of cost and what is expected to be delivered?	3	Yes
Were Performance Indicators specified for each project/programme which will allow for the evaluation of its efficiency and effectiveness?	3	Targets/outcomes have been used, particularly in relation to PPP schemes. In the case of the Infrastructure Manager Multi-Annual Contract (IMMAC), global performance indicators have been applied to the contract.
Have steps been put in place to gather Performance Indicator data?	3	Yes where projects have progressed. In the case of rail, there is an established process to attribute delay minutes and service cancellations by cause.

<b>Table 6 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 3: Current Expenditure Being Considered*</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating (0-3)</b>	<b>Comment/Action Required</b>
Were objectives clearly set?	3	Yes
Are objectives measurable in quantitative terms?	3	KPIs clearly outlined for all current expenditure.
Was an appropriate appraisal method used?	3	Yes
Was a business case incorporating financial and economic appraisal prepared for new current expenditure?	3	Yes
Has an assessment of likely demand for the new scheme/scheme extension been estimated based on empirical evidence?	3	Yes. Business case is prepared to assess the demand model.
Was the required approval granted?	3	Yes
Has a sunset clause been set?	3	Programmes reviewed annually.
Has a date been set for the pilot and its evaluation?	n/a	
Have the methodology and data collection requirements for the pilot been agreed at the outset of the scheme?	n/a	
If outsourcing was involved were Procurement Rules complied with?	3	Yes
Were Performance Indicators specified for each new current expenditure proposal or expansion of existing current expenditure which will allow for the evaluation of its efficiency and effectiveness?	3	KPIs outlined for each programme.
Have steps been put in place to gather Performance Indicator data?	3	Part of the contract management piece.

\*Refers only to RSA as no other agency or division had expenditure under this category heading.

**Table 7 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 4: Capital Expenditure Being Incurred**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating (0-3)</b>	<b>Comment/Action Required</b>
Was a contract signed and was it in line with the approval in principle?	3	Yes. For local and regional roads each Local Authority puts in place a contract as appropriate.
Did management boards/steering committees meet regularly as agreed?	3	Yes. For example, TII holds regular steering group meetings on all projects over €20m.
Were Programme Co-ordinators appointed to co-ordinate implementation?	3	Yes, where required.
Were Project Managers, responsible for delivery, appointed and were the Project Managers at a suitable senior level for the scale of the project?	2	Yes broadly. Project management understaffing issue noted by TII.
Were monitoring reports prepared regularly, showing implementation against plan, budget, timescales and quality?	3	Yes with focus on large projects. Failte Ireland require grantees to submit monthly progress reports.
Did the project keep within its financial budget and its time schedule?	2	Yes broadly. Some roads and sports projects were late completing and a few sustainable transport projects overran due to a number of factors such as Irish Water issues, and flooding problems.
Did budgets have to be adjusted?	3	In some cases yes, however all adjustments were authorised.
Were decisions on changes to budgets / time schedules made promptly?	3	Yes, though noted in one instance that some delays in local authorities reporting back to Sanctioning Authority.
Did circumstances ever warrant questioning the viability of the project and the business case incl. CBA/CEA? (exceeding budget, lack of progress, changes in the environment, new evidence)	3	On occasion.
If circumstances did warrant questioning the viability of a project was the project subjected to adequate examination?	3	Yes where applicable. One agency noted that projects that haven't commenced in the timeline expected are reviewed.
If costs increased was approval received from the Sanctioning Authority?	3	Yes
Were any projects terminated because of deviations from the plan, the budget or because circumstances in the environment changed the need for the investment?	3	Largely no. One roads project was terminated due to the tender being significantly above the estimate.
For significant projects were quarterly reports on progress submitted to the MAC and to the Minister?	3	In the case of TII, the reports go to the board rather than the Minister. For Irish Rail, progress reports submitted to advisory group, Irish Rail Board and Sanctioning Authority. Yes otherwise.

**Table 8 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 5: Current Expenditure Being Incurred**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating (0-3)</b>	<b>Comment/Action Required</b>
Are there clear objectives for all areas of current expenditure?	3	Largely yes overall though it was noted by TII that the score for directly managed maintenance expenditure would be 3 but less so for LA managed expenditure.
Are outputs well defined?	3	Outputs generally well defined through business planning process.
Are outputs quantified on a regular basis?	3	Yes, particularly for PSO contracts.
Is there a method for monitoring efficiency on an on-going basis?	2	Yes to some degree, though not fully specified in certain cases. Measured mostly through KPIs.
Are outcomes well defined?	3	Yes. Outcomes are usually defined within the business plan process or project management framework.
Are outcomes quantified on a regular basis?	3	Yes, though there is room for improvement.
Are unit costings compiled for performance monitoring?	2	Broadly yes. In the case of Irish Rail, service and infrastructure cost comparisons are compiled.
Is there a method for monitoring effectiveness on an on-going basis?	3	Yes, for example monthly reports are compiled in a number of cases.
Is there an annual process in place to plan for new VFMs, FPAs and evaluations?	3	Yes, the Department is very active in this regard through its Economic & Financial Evaluation Unit.
How many formal VFMs/FPAs or other evaluations been completed in the year under review?	3	A VfM on Current Expenditure on National Road Maintenance and FPA on Green Schools was completed in 2015.
Have all VFMs/FPAs been published in a timely manner?	3	Yes
Is there a process to follow up on the recommendations of previous VFMs/FPAs and other evaluations?	3	Yes, under the QA process a status update on implementation of recommendations is provided.
How have the recommendations of VFMs, FPAs and other evaluations informed resource allocation decisions?	3	Recommendations of previous VFMs/FPAs currently being implemented or considered. For example, 2011 VfM on Regional Airports recommended ending funding for Sligo and Galway airports and PSO services to Knock, Derry, Sligo and Galway and this has been implemented.

**Table 9 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 6: Capital Expenditure Completed**

Question	Rating (0-3)	Comment/Action Required
How many post project reviews were completed in the year under review?	3	Post-project reviews are carried out as required. For NTA PT PPRs, currently 5 are being completed that ended in 2015.
Was a post project review completed for all projects/programmes exceeding €20m?	3	Yes. Reviews for roads projects not normally carried out in the year of completion-they are carried out once traffic patterns settle.
If sufficient time has not elapsed to allow a proper assessment of benefits, has a post project review been scheduled for a future date?	3	Yes
Were lessons learned from post-project reviews disseminated within the Sponsoring Agency and to the Sanctioning Authority?	3	Yes. For example, TII have a lessons learned data base compiled from complete PPR's and is used for new projects.
Were changes made to the Sponsoring Agencies practices in light of lessons learned from post-project reviews?	3	Yes. For example, past inspection reports have led to changed procedures to improve financial control and avoid non-compliance.
Were project reviews carried out by staffing resources independent of project implementation?	2	Generally yes.

<b>Table 10 – DTTaS and Agency Checklist 7: Current Expenditure Completed**</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Rating (0-3)</b>	<b>Comment/Action Required</b>
Were reviews carried out of current expenditure programmes that matured during the year or were discontinued?	3	Review undertaken of PSO air services scheme for 2011-2014 and submitted to EU.
Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were effective?	3	
Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were efficient?	3	
Have the conclusions reached been taken into account in related areas of expenditure?	n/a	A new PSO Contract, similar in nature, commenced in February 2015.
Were any programmes discontinued following a review of a current expenditure programme?	n/a	No
Was the review commenced and completed within a period of 6 months?	3	

\*\*Refers only to Airports as no other agency or division had expenditure under this category heading.

## 5.2 Analysis of Checklists and Issues Arising

The completed checklists show the extent to which the Department and its agencies rated their compliance with the PSC. Overall, the checklists show a reasonably high level of compliance with the PSC.

As mentioned, checklists 2 to 7 take an overview of expenditure covering both the Department and its agencies. Individual agency and DTTaS division checklists have informed the completion of these checklists. **Checklist 1** was completed by EFEU on behalf of the Department and demonstrates that DTTaS has been proactive in implementing the QA process by ensuring that the Economic and Financial Evaluation Unit oversees the process in line with PSC recommendations. QA process guidelines have been prepared and circulated across Departmental divisions and to relevant agencies. Two information sessions were also held by EFEU at the start of the 2016 QA process to inform DTTaS divisions and agencies of their requirements. A review of the 2016 QA process is also scheduled to take place with stakeholders following this year's report submission.

For **Expenditure Being Considered**, the checklist applying to capital expenditure demonstrated high levels of compliance with the PSC in general with regard to areas such as appraisal, procurement and State Aid rules. There was only one current expenditure programme under consideration in this time period.

For **Expenditure Being Incurred**, again high levels of compliance are evident in checklist responses for both current and capital expenditure. Issues with project management were noted in one response with understaffing being mentioned as a concern. Overruns in project completion were also identified in some cases with one response indicating that this was due to a number of factors such as Irish Water issues, flooding problems and planning permission delays.

Checklists for **Expenditure Recently Ended** in 2015 again indicate a high level of compliance. It should be noted that a large proportion of current and capital expenditure on programmes and schemes are rolling, year-to-year. Programmes such as the PSO contracts are subject to on-going performance monitoring and also such programmes fall under the requirements for periodic evaluation as set out in the PSC.

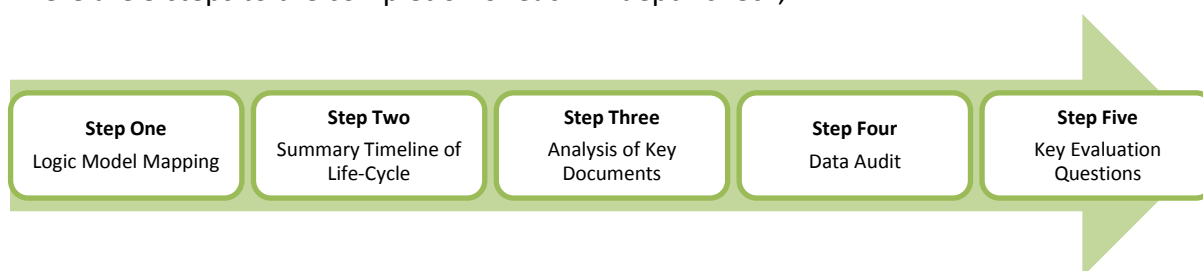
## 6. In-Depth Checks

The following section describes the in-depth checks which were carried out in the Department as part of this Quality Assurance Process. Through this process DTTaS developed a standard methodology and template through which in-depth checks are to be carried out in this year and into the future (see section 6.1 below). DTTaS carried out two in-depth checks as part of this year's process. The full in-depth checks are published in Appendix 3 of this report and summaries of the checks are below in section 6.2.

### 6.1 In-Depth Check Methodology

As part of the completion of this year's Quality Assurance Report, EFEU has drafted and implemented a standard methodology for carrying out in-depth checks. The methodology is based on the principals and guidance within the PSC and best practice evaluation tools. This methodology has been applied uniformly across this year's in-depth checks and will be utilised in a similar fashion in future years.

There are 5 steps to the completion of each in-depth check;



#### *Step 1: Logic Model Mapping*

Each programme or project is mapped to a Logic Model. A Programme Logic Model (PLM) defines the objectives, inputs, activities, outputs and impacts of a process into a coherent framework and facilitates best practice evaluation. PLMs are standard practice in evaluation in Ireland and are utilised here as a means of distilling information. The publication of these PLMs in the QA report will encourage further evaluation and assist the selection and completion of Value for Money and Policy Reviews (VfMs), Focused Policy Assessments (FPAs) and other analysis.

#### *Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme Life-Cycle*

The timeline of the project is outlined along the project lifecycle which are set out in the PSC – Expenditure Being Considered, Expenditure Being Incurred and Expenditure Recently Ended. The types of major events considered include the dates associated with decisions to proceed with certain analysis, project options, policies that are published during the period that supported the programme/project, finalisation of relevant reports, etc.



### *Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents*

Having outlined the project stages through the lifecycle, the in-depth check examines in detail all material that has been compiled in order to plan, assess or implement the programme. In practice this involves reviewing and analysing key documentation such as any business cases, cost-benefit analyses, evaluations or post-project reviews. The assessment of these documents will assist in the completion of the key evaluation questions.

### *Step 4: Data Audit*

In step 4 the in-depth check defines the data requirements for future evaluation and the current level of data availability. This assists in the identification of any data gaps and steps to alleviate any issues are considered. The findings from this section are also be used by EFEU to inform on-going work on the Department's Data and Statistics Strategy.

### *Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions*

As a final step the in-depth check assesses the programme on the basis of three key evaluation questions and the stated answers are informed by the findings from the previous steps. The completion of these questions will form the evaluation of the project/programme. The three key questions are:

1. Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the PSC? (Appraisal, Implementation and Post-Implementation Stages)
2. Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?
3. What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management is enhanced?

Having outlined the methodology behind the in-depth checks, this report presents a summary of each of the two checks carried out this year. The two projects/programmes selected for review are the Helicopter Search and Rescue Service and the N6 Galway City Transport project.

**Table 11: Summary of Projects Subject to In-Depth Review**

Project/Programme	Value
<b>Maritime</b>	
Helicopter Search and Rescue Service	€630,400,000
<b>Roads</b>	
N6 Galway City Transport Project	€519,000,000
<b>Total Value of In-Depth Checks</b>	<b>€1,149,400,000</b>
<b>Total Value of Inventory of Expenditure for 2015 <sup>7</sup></b>	<b>€17,950,226,731</b>
<b>% of Inventory Value Analysed</b>	<b>6.4%<sup>8</sup></b>

## 6.2 In-Depth Check Summaries

### *Helicopter Search and Rescue Service*

The in-depth check of the Helicopter Search and Rescue Service revealed that overall the process and document preparation was generally in line with best practice. In particular, the process had a clear objective and appraised a number of options. There was appropriate reporting between the programme management team and the Department and Minister of Transport at appropriate intervals to keep all interested parties fully informed. Standard procurement procedures were followed and a subsequent compliance audit on the delivery of contract requirements has been undertaken.

While EFEU is satisfied that the re-tendering of the SAR Helicopter contract was managed satisfactorily, a number of areas did emerge which have led to some recommendations for enhancing future best practice. These relate to the appraisal of the various options for delivering the Service and the need for collection of data and monitoring of performance indicators in order to ensure it is delivering value for money.

The PSC guidelines require projects and programmes to have an evaluation plan which detail how it will be measured after completion. This is a new requirement but should be incorporated into all projects and programmes into the future. It is recommended that a VfM policy review be carried out of the existing Service in sufficient time so that its findings can be taken on board prior to any future contract being put in place. This review when undertaken should be cognisant of the issues raised by this in-depth check.

<sup>7</sup> Estimate. Some Projects are a Value Range and some are themselves an estimate. In addition, the value referred to above does not include projects/programmes and schemes that were considered in 2015 but where an estimate was not provided. It also does not include the figures for programmes/schemes that are rolling over/ongoing from year to year.

<sup>8</sup> The PSC specifies that in-depth checks should analyse on average 5% of the total value of all projects/programmes/schemes in the inventory per annum i.e. 15% in total over the three years. The 2014 QA Report analysed 3.5% of inventory and DTTaS will ensure that it reaches this average over the three year cycle.

## *N6 Galway City Transport Project*

The overall process and documentation prepared for the N6 Galway City Transport project is generally consistent with the prevailing guidelines set out at the time in the PSC and DTTaS's Common Appraisal Framework (2009). However, there are elements of the process which require amending or updating to ensure that the process more closely adheres to the current guidelines. It should also be noted that the project is still at an early stage of its development with several steps to be taken before it is implemented.

While the overall process has been broadly in line with the prevailing guidelines there have been some areas which require attention; notably the Cost-Benefit Analysis report carried out in August 2015. This report does not use all of the most up to date parameters as set out in the current guidelines for carrying out such analysis. Similarly, the objectives presented in relation to this project are too broad and generic; more detailed, quantifiable objectives are needed in order to better appraise the different options and evaluate the project once implemented. Furthermore, there needs to be clarity over the current estimated cost of the project as the Cost-Benefit Analysis and the Route Selection Report advise significantly different costs figures.

While the options explored do make mention of improvements to the traffic management, it could be of benefit to explore in more detail traffic management measures which could be applied to the existing N6 route to alleviate congestion and improve journey times.

There has been substantial research and analysis of the transport network in Galway City and its environs to establish the existing conditions and issues within it. This research was carried out by Arup Consultants who were appointed by Galway City Council and Galway County Council to provide multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy services. Their research found that congestion at key junctions, journey time delays and lack of journey time reliability were significant issues within the network and in particular to the existing N6/R338 route north of Galway City.

Having set out the need for an intervention in the transport network the project set out a broad list of objectives under 5 main headings: Economy, Safety, Environment, Accessibility & Social Inclusion and Integration. These headings are taken from DTTaS's 2009 version of the Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects and Programmes as the key criteria for undertaking appraisals. More specific objectives and performance targets have been outlined in some of the key documents but the appraisals have used these five main objective headings as criteria in their assessment of the different options.

A number of the options were set out and evaluated by way of preliminary appraisal. The options which were determined to be feasible were then brought forward to be assessed in a more detailed manner. These options were six potential route corridors north of Galway

City and included completely new routes, upgrades to existing routes and a combination of both. Following the detailed appraisal, which entailed Multi Criteria Analysis and a Cost Benefit Analysis, a preferred route was selected which comprised of portions of two of the six route corridors. The project is now progressing to the next two stages of its development process simultaneously; these are Design and Environmental Impact Assessment & Statutory Process.

The project has involved a substantial amount of data analysis to: (i) investigate the need for intervention in the existing transport network; (ii) establish a model to analyse future traffic demand and capacity; (iii) assess the feasibility of different options; and (iv) appraise the feasible options in a more detailed manner. The data is well presented and the sources used available. The main issue relating to data will be in the implementation and monitoring stage of the scheme when new data analysis will be required to assess what impact the new route has had on areas such as journey times, journey time reliability, modal shift, volume to capacity ratios at junctions and the number of collisions due to congestion.

## **7. Addressing Other Quality Assurance Issues**

### **7.1 Financial Spot Checks**

In addition to the in-depth checks carried out as part of this Quality Assurance Process, the Department has carried out/will carry out a number of financial Spot Checks in relation to 2015 Expenditure. This work is carried out to support the grant drawdown procedures as set out in our PIFCO (Procedures for Internal Financial Controls).

The purpose of the Spot Checks is to provide a mechanism to assist with the auditing of financial systems and processes for projects, programmes and schemes. This process differs from the in-depth check analysis which is more focused on the assessment of how PSC requirements are being met during the different phases of the project/programme life cycle (Appraisal, Planning and Design, Implementation and Post Project Review and Evaluation). Both the Spot Checks and In-Depth Checks whilst serving different purposes assist with the oversight of programmes/projects and schemes.

Spot Checks are carried out for four areas of expenditure; Public Transport Investment, Regional and Local Roads, Sports Capital, and Smarter Travel projects. The following is a summary of checks that have been carried out and or have yet to be carried out in respect of 2015 expenditure.

#### **Regional and Local Roads**

Road Division has carried out two Spot Checks in respect of 2015 expenditure. The spot checks concerned expenditure in counties Offaly and Carlow. These checks were desk checks as opposed to on-site checks.

#### **Sustainable Transport Division**

For smarter travel projects the aim is to select a number of transactions that relate to 2015 expenditure for Spots Checks. These have yet to be carried out. The value of transaction will represent 5% of the 2015 Capital Payments and covers a range of projects which come under the Division's remit: NCN stimulus, Mobility Programme National Bike Week, National Cycling Network, Sustainable Travel and Transport, Smarter Travel Areas. The checks will be carried out by way of desktop analysis and on-site examinations of larger schemes.

## **Sports Capital**

The Department is in the process of finalising its list of inspections for sports capital grants for expenditure in 2015. The inspections will cater for 5% of the sports capital expenditure and 5% of the swimming pools expenditure. An in-house report is prepared at the end of each year outlining the Spot Check process. The report lists the clubs and or facilities that were spot checked during the year and summarises any issues that arose in the course of the Spot-Check.

## **Public Transport Investment Division**

Financial spot checks will be carried out over the course of 2016 in respect of expenditure in 2015 for Public Transport Investment. The aim of the spot check process is to verify the accuracy and completeness of financial information reported from implementing agencies and the extent to which the relevant systems and procedures meet the Department's requirements for capital grant drawdown as set out in PIFCO.

### **7.2 Implementation of VFM and FPA Recommendations**

Two evaluations were completed in 2015. One was a Focused Policy Assessment and the other was a Value for Money review:

1. **Focused Policy Assessment** – Green Schools Travel Programme  
(Published, February 2015)
2. **Value for Money and Policy Review** – Current Expenditure on National Road Maintenance  
(Published, December 2015)

The full reports are available on the [DTTaS's website](#).

Both reports set out a number of key issues and recommendations for follow up. **Appendix 4(1)** and **4(2)** list the key issues/recommendations and the progress made to date.

#### **1. Focused Policy Assessment – Green –Schools Travel Programme**

Green-School Travel (GST) is an activity based mobility management programme which, following a two-year pilot in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), has been in operation nationally since 2008. It is rolled out in schools that have completed the first three themes of the Green-Schools Programme (Litter and Waste, Energy and Water). In 2015 schools were taking two years to complete the travel programme.

This FPA did not set specific deadlines for acting on recommendations. In addition, the recommendations were not numbered in the report. A selection of recommendations and responses received are listed below. For the full list of key issues and recommendations please refer to **Appendix 4(1)**.

<b>FPA Recommendation:</b>
<b>There is a need for the primary overall objective of the programme to be well defined.</b>
<b>NTA and Sustainable Transport Division Update:</b>
<b>The principal objective of the green schools travel programme is now set out in the 2015 - 2018 SLA agreement.</b>
<b>FPA Recommendation:</b>
<b>A new Service Level Agreement (SLA) should be negotiated to ensure transparency (including clear definitions of roles and responsibilities).</b>
<b>NTA and Sustainable Transport Division Update:</b>
<b>Agreement between the Department and NTA for each funding 3 year cycle with specific details of roles and responsibilities.</b>
<b>FPA Recommendation:</b>
<b>Revise the targets so that they are consistent with the objectives.</b>
<b>NTA and Sustainable Transport Division Update:</b>
<b>Targets have been revised from 15% to 7.5% either walking and/or cycling to ensure that they are consistent with objectives.</b>

## 2. Value for Money and Policy Review - Current Expenditure on National Road Maintenance

In the case of the VFM on National Road Maintenance, a number of recommendations were made with deadlines of December 2015. These recommendations were numbers 1, 6 and 8. For the full list of key issues and recommendations please refer to **Appendix 4(2)**.

<b>VFM Recommendation 1</b>
The NRA should, as part of an overall data collection plan, proceed to fully implement an adequate method of data collection on ordinary maintenance works through the GeoAPP system by end-2015 to ensure that the appropriate data is available for the management and evaluation of the ordinary maintenance sub-programme. Data on costs and outputs produced by the system should be broadly comparable across delivery mechanisms.
<b>TII update</b>
This refers to the overall data collection plan for national road maintenance. The TII (formerly the National Roads Authority) has advised that to deliver this action requires extensive engagement with local authorities. Staffing constraints in local authorities and in TII have militated against an early completion of this Recommendation. Moreover, it will not be feasible to ensure compatibility of data across different delivery modes given pre-existing requirements in PPP and MMarC contracts. They have committed to update the DTTaS on this action later in 2016.
<b>VFM Recommendation 6</b>
The NRA will proceed to implement a system to track, monitor and evaluate the level of performance and maintenance carried out in regard to ITS maintenance. This system will be operational by the end of 2015.
<b>TII Update</b>
The system of monitoring ITS maintenance contract activities and performance is in place.
<b>VFM Recommendation 8</b>
By end-2015 DTTaS and the NRA should consider the implementation, in consultation with relevant national and international stakeholders, of a national road user survey that is completed to assist in the evaluation and management of this and other NRA programmes.
<b>TII Update</b>



**TII has taken initial steps in this regard through discussions with our marketing department and peer jurisdictions in Europe.**

**TII has also advised that early steps have been taken in developing a national road user survey. It is anticipated that such a survey will be implemented in 2017, and annually thereafter, in line with common practice in a number of other peer European jurisdictions.**

### **General Comment**

It should be noted that issues were raised by TII in relation to the timeline of some of the recommendations, particularly those involving multiple stakeholders, and as a result DTTaS is considering revisiting these timelines. A practical problem is that in general TII works through local authorities and the resources devoted to roads within that sector is very constrained. This limits the amount of additional information which TII can obtain from the local authority sector.

## 8. Summary and Next Steps

In summary, through the completion of this Quality Assurance report, the Department is satisfied that in general it and its agencies are meeting the obligations set out in the PSC. As part of an on-going effort and commitment to continually improve and ensure that requirements are met in full, EFEU has identified the following areas of work:

- The Department will maintain its other evaluation activities, such as Value for Money Reviews and Focused Policy Assessments, to ensure that the activities of DTTaS and its agencies remain compliant with the PSC;
- Any issues raised through the self-assessment checklists will be internalised by divisions and agencies and acted upon in the short term as necessary;
- The findings and recommendations of the two in-depth checks will be recognised and applied by divisions and agencies in the current and future delivery of relevant projects and programmes;
- The Department will maintain an up-to-date version of the Common Appraisal Framework such that all project and programme appraisal continue to be in line with best practice and the PSC;
- Future Quality Assurance Reports will continue to assess progress towards implementing the recommendations of previous VfM and FPA reviews. As such the QA Report for 2016 expenditure will review the implementation of the FPA on the Green Schools Travel Programme, VfM on National Road Maintenance and the forthcoming VfM on the Driver Testing Service;
- EFEU will avail of any external training provided by DPER and will in turn continue to facilitate internal training on the Quality Assurance Process through information sessions and guidance notes to ensure that all divisions, units and agencies are aware of the various requirements and tasks. Further appraisal training will also be rolled out to staff;
- Finally, the Department will evaluate its Quality Assurance process to ensure that it is continually improved and fit for purpose. On this basis, a review of the 2015 QA process will be undertaken in 2016 with the relevant agencies and DTTaS divisions.