Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Annual Report and Accounts | **2013**

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a statutory body responsible for protecting the environment in Ireland. We regulate and police activities that might otherwise cause pollution. We ensure there is solid information on environmental trends so that necessary actions are taken. Our priorities are protecting the Irish environment and ensuring that development is sustainable. The EPA is an independent public body established in July 1993 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. Its sponsor in Government is the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

LICENSING

We license the following to ensure that their emissions do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (e.g., landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations);
- large scale industrial activities (e.g., pharmaceutical manufacturing, cement manufacturing, power plants);
- intensive agriculture;
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges;
- dumping at sea.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

- Conducting over 1200 audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities every year.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities in the areas of -air, noise, waste, waste-water and water quality.
- Working with local authorities and the Gardaí to stamp out illegal waste activity by co-ordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders, conducting investigations and overseeing remediation.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment as a result of their actions.

MONITORING, ANALYSING AND REPORTING ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- Monitoring air quality and the quality of rivers, lakes, tidal waters and ground waters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government.

REGULATING IRELAND'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Quantifying Ireland's emissions of greenhouse gases in the context of our Kyoto commitments.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, involving over 100 companies who are major generators of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Co-ordinating research on environmental issues (including air and water quality, climate change, biodiversity, environmental technologies).

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- Assessing the impact of plans and programmes on the Irish environment (such as waste management and development plans).

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING, EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

- Providing guidance to the public and to industry on various environmental topics (including licence applications, waste prevention and environmental regulations).
- Generating greater environmental awareness (through environmental television programmes and primary and secondary schools' resource packs).

PROACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Promoting waste prevention and minimisation projects through the co-ordination of the National Waste Prevention Programme, including input into the implementation of Producer Responsibility Initiatives.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE EPA

The organisation is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and four Directors. The work of the EPA is carried out across four offices:

- Office of Climate, Licensing and Resource Use
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Environmental Assessment
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet several times a year to discuss issues of concern and offer advice to the Board.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

EPA Annual Report 2013

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The layout of this report has been structured and aligned to reflect our Strategic Plan 2013-2015 – *Working with others for a Better Environment.*

Environmental Protection Agency – Key Statistics 2013

LICENSING

176
licences issued

700+
licences reviewed for possible amendment in accordance with new Industrial Emissions provisions in the EPA Act 1992, as amended

10,000
licensee returns assessed electronically via new e-reporting services

392
licences amended to comply with the Industrial Emissions Directive

327
technical amendments completed

ENFORCEMENT

€8m
in additional financial provision put in place by licensees

LEGAL

10 Prosecution cases taken + **3** DPP cases concluded + **1** Injunction proceeding + **1** Commercial Court case

1.8m+ visits
to the EPA website
www.epa.ie

eco-eye

748,000
average number of viewers who watched each episode
(the EPA provides support funding for the series)

1,356 submissions
on the draft **Terms of Reference** for a Research Programme on Environmental Impacts of Unconventional Gas Exploration & Extraction (fracking)

epa Research
Climate - Water - Sustainability
Identifying pressures • Informing policy • Developing solutions

€68m
in grants awarded to support 490 projects throughout EPA's 2007-2013 environmental research programme

epa BeGreen
PREVENTING WASTE & SAVING MONEY
in 2013

€3.3m
invested by EPA in BeGreen resource efficiency programmes

€14m
saved by Irish enterprises through BeGreen programmes in waste, water, energy

50%
of Irish Hotel beds participating in EPA Green Hospitality scheme

Environmental Indicators' Dashboard

A selection of key enviromental indicators for Ireland is presented below, with the enviromental status/trend of each. Visit www.epa.ie/irelandsenvironment/environmentalindicatorsdashboard to explore in more detail and view the relevant up-to-date data.

Climate change Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Kyoto Protocal Limit	
Greenhouse Gas Projections to 2020	
Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector	
Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Levels	

Air Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Air Quality – Nitrogen Dioxide	
Air Quality – Particulate Matter	
Air Quality – Ground Level Ozone	
Air Emissions – Nitrogen Oxides	

Water Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Groundwater Quality	
River Water Quality	
High Quality River Sites	
Lake Water Quality	
Estuarine and Coastal Water Quality	
Urban Wastewater Treatment	

Waste Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Recovery and Disposal of Municipal Waste	
Recovery of Packaging Waste	
Biodegradable Waste Diversion from Landfill	
Predicted Growth in Municipal Waste	

Nature Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Countryside Bird Populations	
Conservation Status of Listed Habitats	
Conservation Status of Listed Species	
Threatened Species	

Environment and Health Indicators	**Status/Trend**
Drinking Water Quality	
Bathing Water Quality	

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DIRECTOR GENERAL'S STATEMENT

2013 was a year of significant achievement for the Environmental Protection Agency in challenging circumstances as the EPA continued to extend its work in protecting the environment. Some key achievements included:

- Tackling pollution risk from septic tanks through the implementation of a new National Inspection Plan for septic tanks and other on-site waste water systems;
- Developing a new EPA web-site with features to make it easier for people to access environmental information and interact with the EPA;
- Using technology to make it easier, faster and more efficient for our licensees to interact and report to us;
- Using the full range of enforcement tools available to us to enforce our licences and permits;
- Working with others to advocate for the integration of environmental issues in policy and decision making at national and local levels;
- Making very good progress on the merger between the EPA and the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland.

The EPA's most recent Strategic Plan (February 2013), *Working with others for a Better Environment*, set out the priority actions that we are taking between 2013 and 2015 in our role as environmental regulator, knowledge provider and advocate for the environment. The Strategic Plan specifies nine Strategic Priorities which reflect the current environmental challenges being faced by the EPA and society as a whole. The following is a brief overview of significant work we undertook in 2013 across these priority areas.

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION:

Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to all of our stakeholders contributes to public participation in environmental decision-making and gives people the information they need to make environmentally-friendly choices. During 2013 we launched a new EPA website and introduced the following initiatives:

- **Air Quality Index for Health:** a web-based index, calculated hourly, showing current air quality across Ireland and providing appropriate health advice.
- **Infographics:** a series of infographics and environmental factsheets developed for State of Environment topics as part of the EPA's on-going programme to communicate key environmental information to as wide an audience as possible.
- **My Local Environment/Timpeall an Tí**: This new map based section of the EPA website provides information about the quality of the environment from a local perspective on topics such as air and water quality, regulated facilities, historic mines, and soil type and landcover.
- **Householder information:** Two new sections were added to the EPA website following feedback from the public: *Householder & Waste* and *Householder information on septic tanks*.
- **See it? Say it! iPhone App:** Launched in February 2013, the App allows people to report environmental pollution using their own phone. An Android App is being developed and both will be compatible with www.fixyourstreet.ie.
- **Bathing water:** *Splash.ie* - the national bathing water information website - was upgraded in 2013. The website is another map based service and provides information about bathing water quality, including existing warnings or notifications.

EVIDENCE BASED DECISION MAKING:

Good decision making relies on evidence-based, high quality environmental data and inventories. Since its establishment in 1993, the EPA has continually provided essential support for the formulation and implementation of environmental policies and decision-making. In 2013 the EPA produced a range of reports to assist decision making at a national and international level in many areas, including greenhouse gases, air emissions, emissions trading, water, persistent organic pollutants and waste. We also provided support during Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2013.

RESEARCH PROGRAMME:

In 2013 the EPA held extensive consultations in relation to the future direction of the EPA's National Environmental Research Programme for the period up to 2020, and the Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government launched the report, *Environmental Protection through Research,* in September. The report outlined the vital role that EPA-funded research has played in providing the evidence to help identify and tackle environmental challenges in the areas of climate change, water and sustainability. It also set out the critical role that research plays in ensuring that EU and national environmental policies are implemented in the most cost-effective manner and in developing novel solutions to protect Ireland's environment.

As well as providing administrative support, the EPA participates in the national steering committee to manage research into Unconventional Gas Exploration & Extraction (fracking). Fracking is an emerging issue for Ireland and, while there is currently no exploratory or commercial drilling underway on the island of Ireland, extensive research is needed to understand its potential impacts on the environment and human health. A public consultation on the Terms of Reference for a proposed research programme was held and the assessment of the more than 1,300 submissions strengthened the Terms of Reference for the research.

WORKING WITH OTHERS:

A protected environment provides a clean and healthy place to live and provides a strong platform for the development of a green economy. This enables major opportunities for growth, competitiveness and employment creation in Ireland. During 2013 the EPA continued to engage with other sectors and organisations to ensure the integration of environmental issues in policy and decision making at national and local levels.

Resource-efficiency investments such as those provided under the EPA's National Waste Prevention Programme can bring positive environmental outcomes as well as savings to existing businesses. The EPA undertakes this work in conjunction with private and public sector bodies including the HSE, Bórd Bia, An Taisce, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Teagasc, SEAI, CSO, government departments, local authorities, and industry representative groups such as IBEC, ISME, IFA and Chambers Ireland. Successful collaborative initiatives in 2013 included engagement with Bord Bia on the development of the Origin Green programme, provision of Bring Centres for Farm Hazardous Waste, a new Smarter Farming initiative, and a new collaboration with the HSE to prevent avoidable food waste in the Healthcare sector.

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE:

As indicated by the initiatives above, the National Waste Prevention Programme, led by the EPA, has delivered substantive results in preventing and minimising waste. Preliminary results show that in excess of €14 million in identified savings were made for enterprises in 2013. A new 6-year Strategy will be published in 2014. The approach taken by the Programme through its *BeGreen* resource efficiency programmes is cited as best practice by the EU Commission and the OECD. Consultation on another 6-year strategy, to improve the management of Ireland's hazardous waste, concluded towards the end of 2013.

HUMAN HEALTH:

Protecting the Irish environment plays an essential role in protecting the health of the population. Initiatives such as the online Air Quality Index for Health provide people with a greater understanding of air quality and its impact on their health. During 2013 we published a range of research reports on health and the environment topics such as Heat Waves and Increased Mortality, and the effects of Indoor Air Quality. A Health Impact Assessment study was also scoped, tendered and substantially completed in 2013.

The EPA's Health Advisory Committee met three times in 2013. It comprises representatives from 11 agencies and government departments. The EPA also participates in the cross-government committee set up by the Department of Health to help implement its new national strategy: *Healthy Ireland - A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025.*

CLEAN WATER:

In February 2013 the EPA issued a National Inspection Plan for domestic waste water treatment systems, including septic tanks, which brought Ireland into compliance with a 2009 Court of Justice ruling on the issue. Inspections are underway since mid-year and are concentrated in areas where waste water discharges present a high risk to human health or the environment. As part of the Plan, the EPA also rolled out a campaign to advise and help people to operate and maintain their systems, so delivering the best outcome for public health and the environment.

Water quality has been steadily improving in recent years due to improvements in regulation, monitoring, management and treatment processes and, overall, water quality in Ireland compares favourably with that in other European countries. Improvements can also be seen in drinking water quality, and bathing water quality continues to be at a relatively high standard. Many challenges though still remain to ensure that our good quality waters are adequately protected and poorer quality waters brought up to a good standard.

Despite recent progress, the EPA has signalled the need for continued infrastructural investment to bring all drinking water and waste water treatment plants up to acceptable standards. The new state utility, Irish Water, will be accountable to the EPA as the environmental regulator. It faces a number of challenges in providing safe and secure drinking water to the public and ensuring waste water discharges do not cause pollution; these include improving the national infrastructure and prioritising the operation and maintenance of treatment plants and collection networks.

Adverse weather throughout the year highlighted the vulnerability of some of our drinking water supplies. Many people had to endure boiling their water as treatment systems were not capable of dealing with variations in raw water quality. Critically, the responsiveness of treatment system operation during heavy rainfall events needs to improve so that drinking water quality standards are met during weather events.

BETTER REGULATION:

In 2013 the EPA looked at the full range of enforcement tools available to us – from education and advice, to warnings, civil sanctions and licence revocation – and continued to expand our better regulation activities and risk based approaches to licensing, enforcement and monitoring. During the year, 10 summary prosecutions and three DPP cases were concluded, and injunction proceedings were initiated in one instance.

In recent years, the EPA has carried out a major programme of business analysis and systems development in its core areas of licensing and enforcement. During 2013, new e-reporting services facilitated the electronic assessment of approximately 10,000 licensee returns and incidents. New e-reporting services are now available for EPA licensees in the areas of Drinking Water, Ozone Depletion Substances and Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases as well as Historic Landfills, Urban Waste Water, and Integrated Pollution Prevention Control. A new on-line service was also developed in June 2013 to assist enforcement efforts under the new Industrial Emissions Directive and Environmental Objectives Regulations. The response rate from licensees was high, facilitating the examination of in excess of 700 licences and the amendment of close to 430 licences by the January 2014 deadline. In all, the EPA issued 176 licences in 2013, 36 of which were reviews, and completed 327 licence and technical amendments.

One of the areas which the EPA regulates is the contained use and deliberate release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The EU has adopted Biotechnology as an integral part of the EU economy for job creation and sustainable development and, with this in mind the EPA organised a two day conference about the regulation and use of GM technology in Ireland, and the challenges and opportunities GM technology presents for Ireland and Europe.

PREVENTING ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE:

Licensees are required to provide adequately for known and potential environmental liabilities arising from the closure of potentially polluting activities, thereby protecting the environment and the public purse. At the end of 2013, over €8 million in additional financial provision had been put in place by licensees, representing a significant increase in the value of cover provided to the State. The EPA also initiated a case in the Commercial Court seeking to recover monies set aside for the closure, remediation and aftercare of four licensed sites.

MERGER:

As part of the Government's Public Sector Reform Plan, a Government decision was made in November 2012 to merge the EPA and the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII). Legislation was passed in 2014 to give effect to the merger and the EPA's newly established Office of Radiological Protection commenced operation on 1st August 2014. The merger brings together the committed and dedicated staff of the EPA and RPII to create a strong scientific organisation which will continue to place the same high value on both environmental and radiological protection.

IN CONCLUSION

The EPA's John Lucey and Martin McGarrigle retired in 2013. Both biologists made significant contributions to protecting and improving river and lake water quality during their professional lives and were held in high regard within the EPA and in the wider environmental community. We wish them well in their retirement.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Dr Ann McGarry who joined the Board of the EPA on 1st August 2014, in her capacity as Director of the new Office of Radiological Protection. Following the recent merger we broadened the EPA mission statement to reflect the enlarged scope of our work, functions and responsibilities and both myself and the other four Directors look forward to working with Ann as we focus on delivering our mission: *To protect and improve the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. To protect our people and the environment from harmful effects of radiation and pollution.*

Finally, I would also like to welcome former RPII staff who transferred to the EPA in 2014 and wish them well in their new roles, whether it be within the Office of Radiological Protection or within other parts of the EPA.

Laura Burke
EPA Director General

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

OUR MISSION:

To protect and improve the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. To protect our people and the environment from harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

OUR VISION:

A clean, healthy and well protected environment supporting a sustainable society and economy.

OUR VALUES:

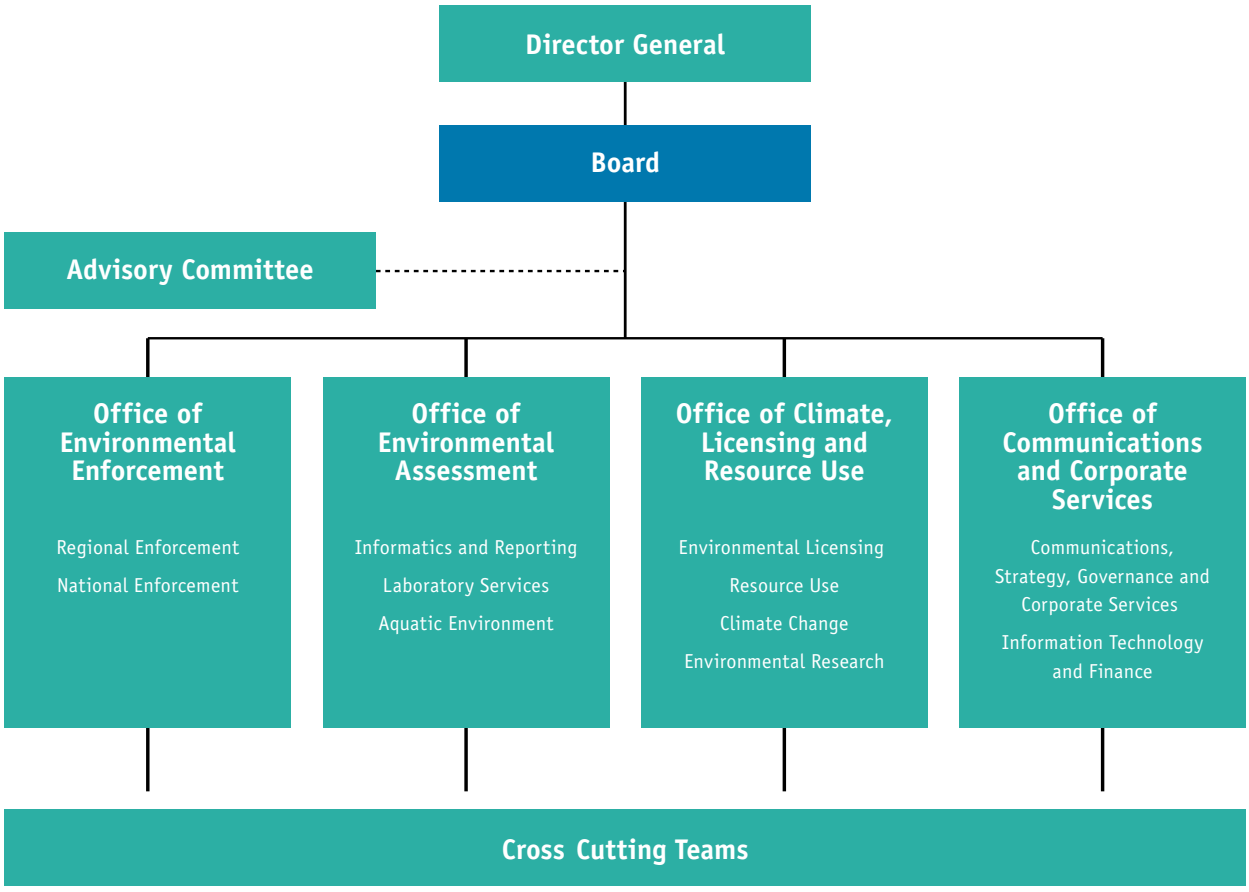
- We are a trusted, independent and authoritative advocate for the environment.
- We make objective decisions based on the best available scientific evidence and information.
- We manage our resources effectively and efficiently to deliver value to the public.
- We regulate in a fair, proportionate and transparent manner and target those who don't comply.
- We make a difference by working with others to build trust, networks and partnerships to deliver effective outcomes.
- We strive continuously for improvement and excellence through learning and development.
- We are innovative, adaptive and open to new and flexible ways of working.
- We design and deliver services from the citizen's point of view.
- We provide our services in a manner that is competent, courteous and responsive.
- We work together to deliver effective outcomes.
- We support, trust and value our colleagues and empower each other to make decisions.
- We are open and honest with each other.
- We constructively challenge and encourage each other to do better.

EPA ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In 2013, the work of the EPA was carried out by its four main Offices:

- The Office of Climate, Licensing, Research and Resource Use
- The Office of Environmental Enforcement
- The Office of Environmental Assessment
- The Office of Communications and Corporate Services

More information on EPA activities, licences, publications and newsletters can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie.



EPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(L to R): Dara Lynott, Deputy Director General (Director Office of Climate, Licensing, Research and Resource Use) Gerard O' Leary, (Director Office of Environmental Enforcement), Matthew Crowe (Director Office of Environmental Assessment). Micheál O Cinnéide, (Director Office of Communications and Corporate Services) Laura Burke, Director General.

EPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of 12 members who meet to discuss issues of concern and offer advice to the Board. The Director General of the EPA, is *ex officio,* a member and Chairperson of the Committee. The term of office of the Committee is three years. The 6th EPA Advisory Committee was appointed by Mr Phil Hogan, TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government on 13 February 2013.

Back Row (L to R): Cllr. John Sheahan (Fine Gael, Kerry County Council); Dr. John Cuddihy (HSE); Prof Colin O'Dowd (NUI Galway); Mr. Pat Farrell (IFA); Mr. Martin Hogan (Cliste Consulting) and Mr. Tom O' Reilly (Committee Secretary)

Front Row (L to R): Dr. Sharon McGuinness (HSA); Mr. David Ball (Consultant); Ms. Laura Burke, (Chairperson); Mr Dara Lynott (EPA Deputy Director General); Ms. Elaine Nevin (CEO Eco Unesco)

Missing from photo: Ms. Deirdre Lyons (IDA); Elizabeth Delahunty (ClearStream); Dr. Aine Ryall (UCC)

CHAPTER 1: REGULATION

Implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.

1.1 LICENSING

1.2 ENFORCEMENT

1.3 GUIDANCE

1.1 LICENSING

The EPA licences activities to ensure that their emissions do not endanger human health or harm the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS DIRECTIVE

The Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU) was transposed into national legislation in April 2013. The EPA Act and Waste Management Act were amended and new licensing regulations were published bringing in three distinct licensing regimes, namely Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC), Industrial Emissions (IE) and Waste. New and amended licence application forms to cater for the changed requirements are on the EPA website. The Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) brought in new activities which will be required to be licensed by July 2015, and work commenced on identifying these installations and notifying them of their new obligations.

A web service was also developed to implement the new Industrial Emissions Directive and Environmental Objectives. Over 700 licences were examined and 392 licences technically amended. In all, the EPA issued 176 licences in 2013, 36 of which were reviews, and completed 327 technical amendments.

The IED transposition also brought changes in relation to the Large Combustion Plant Regulations and a Transitional National Plan was agreed with the EC (2013/731/EU).

BEST AVAILABLE TECHNIQUES (BAT)

Due to the transposition requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive (2012/75/EU), applicable from 7 January 2013, the existing EPA BAT notes apply to IPPC and Waste activities. BAT requirements in relation to Industrial Emission Directive activities are addressed via existing BAT reference documents and Commission Implementing Decisions on BAT Conclusions.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs)

The EPA organised a two day conference about the regulation and use of GM technology in Ireland. Attendees heard about the challenges and opportunities GM technology presents for Ireland, and Europe particularly, as the EU has adopted Biotechnology as an integral part of the EU economy for job creation and sustainable development.

In 2013:

- There were 398 active entries on the register of GMO users in Ireland.
- 30 decisions were granted for the contained use of GMOs and two consents for deliberate release activities.

DUMPING AT SEA PERMITTING

Three Dumping at Sea permits issued in 2013. Information on all current and historical marine dump sites and marine sediment chemistry monitoring have been mapped and is publicly available on the EPA's ENVision map viewer.

ARTICLE 27

In 2013, 45 notifications were received by the EPA through Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, which allows economic operators to decide that their material is a by-product and not a waste. Development of an on-line notification system commenced in 2012 and will be rolled out in 2014.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT AND HABITATS REGULATIONS

The EPA continues to focus on interpretations of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats Directives, and European and national case law, to strengthen compliance with the requirements of these Directives. The EPA also continues to manage and respond to requests for comments under planning legislation, where appropriate.

HISTORIC LANDFILLS

Local authorities are required to make an application to the EPA for a certificate of authorisation for closed landfills that were operated by local authorities between 1977 and 1997. Any certificate of authorisation issued by the EPA will set out the remedial measures, if any, to be implemented at the site and will also set out what monitoring is required into the future. To date 21 applications have been received for a Certificate of Authorisation (CoA), with one CoA issued.

EMISSIONS TRADING PERMITS

The EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is one of the policies introduced across the EU to tackle emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, in an effort to combat the serious threat of climate change. The scheme is based on a 'cap-and-trade' authorisation and covers specific industrial sectors (energy generation, minerals, ferrous metal

processing, paper & board pulp activities) and the aviation sector. There are 98 industrial (fixed installation) and 132 aviation operators subject to this licensing process.

Ireland achieved 100% compliance under the 2012 reporting cycle of the EU ETS for statutory operators. Data submitted by stationary installations showed that emissions of greenhouse gases increased by about 7% in 2012 compared to 2011. Greenhouse gas emissions from Irish companies participating in the ETS had declined to 15.77 Mtonnes in 2011 but figures submitted by the 31 March 2013 deadline indicate a total of 16.89 Mtonnes.

2013 was the first full year of operation for the Union Registry following centralisation of national EU Emissions Trading Scheme operations into a single registry maintained by the European Commission.

INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS, WASTE LICENSING AND INTEGRATED POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPPC) LICENSING

Table 1: Environmental Licensing Programme Licensing Tasks 2013

Licence Type	Total Applications Received 2013	Total PDs issued 2013	Total Objections Received	Total Decisions issued
IED/IPC Licences	21	28	30	52
Waste Licences	3	11	8	5
Waste Water Licences	1		N/A	84
Waste Water Certs of Authorisation	12		N/A	0
GMO Permits (Contained use)	36		N/A	30
GMO Permits (Deliberate release)	1		N/A	2
Historic Landfill Certificates	10		N/A	0
Dumping at Sea Permits	2		N/A	3
Certificates of Registration (Waste)	18		N/A	20
VOC Permits	10		N/A	0
TOTALS	**114**	**39**	**38**	**196**

Table 2: Environmental Licensing Programme Other Regulatory Tasks 2013

Tasks	Total tasks assessed 2013
Article 11 Requests	111
IE/IPC Technical Amendments	26
Initiated Intensive Agriculture Technical Amendments	112
Initiated Solvent Technical Amendments	10
Initiated Environmental Objectives Technical Amendments	159
Initiated Industrial Emissions Amendments	392
Waste Technical Amendments	16
Wastewater Technical Amendments	2
Dumping at Sea Technical Amendments	2
Article 27 requests (by-product)	45
EFSA(GMO)	2
EMA (GMO)	2
TOTAL	**879**

1.2 ENFORCEMENT

The EPA implements and enforces environmental protection legislation in Ireland. We seek to improve overall compliance with environmental legislation and prevent environmental pollution before it has a chance to occur.

CLEAN WATER

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER DISCHARGES

The EPA takes a risk-based, outcome focused, approach to enforce Municipal Wastewater Discharges Authorisations and progress compliance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Plant Directive. The outcomes sought are to protect and restore water quality and prevent environmental pollution from the impacts of wastewater discharges. The *National Urban Waste Water Report for 2012* was published in 2013 and provides details of compliance for municipal wastewater discharges and the challenges to be addressed. Some of the key highlights for 2013 were:

- The first legal actions for non-compliance with waste water discharge licences were initiated in 2013. These related to Bundoran, Clifden, Killybegs and Longford town plants.
- 242 audits were completed focusing on key compliance requirements of the municipal wastewater discharge licences.
- Work relating to Irish Water intensified during the year to progress issues including background information on waste water, data needs and reporting in 2014, legislation, role of the EPA as regulator and a selection of draft procedures and protocols.
- Non compliances with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Plant Directive resulted in the European Commission initiating infringement proceedings against Ireland.

DOMESTIC WASTE WATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SEPTIC TANKS)

Under the *Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012*, the EPA was given responsibility for the preparation of the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems. The aim of the Plan is to protect water and human health by using a two-strand approach of locally delivered education and awareness strategies with a risk-based inspection process. The Plan is delivered by local authorities and the number of inspections for each county is allocated on a risk basis.

Some of the key deliverables in 2013 were:

- An e-inspection and reporting process was devised and implemented for the National Inspection Plan for septic tanks.
- The EPA website now contains substantial information on the inspection process, remediation guidance and FAQs.
- Workshops were held for all local authorities in relation to planning for inspections. 120 inspectors were trained at five regional training centres. 79 inspectors have been appointed to date.

DRINKING WATER

During 2013 the EPA continued to focus on assessing drinking water quality and followed up on compliance issues identified during compliance checking on the safety and security of water supplies.

- The challenges that Ireland faces to provide safe and secure drinking water were outlined in the report *The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland,* published in December.
- At the end of 2013 the number of public water supplies requiring improvement - and on the EPA Remedial Action List (RAL) - was down to 140, from 339 in the past five years. 32 supplies were removed from the RAL during 2013.
- The EPA highlighted the need for continued progress on the remaining RAL supplies. A priority is implementing improvements at supplies where consumers are on boil water notices or restrictions.
- Advice notes on Borehole Construction and Wellhead Protection were published to assist protection of drinking water sources.
- Work continued on the promotion of the WHO Water Safety Plan approach to protecting drinking water quality. A Water Safety Plan Tool was developed and rolled out to the largest water supplies in September as a pilot. Full roll out to Irish Water and all local authorities is scheduled for 2014.

PREVENTING ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITIES RISK ASSESSMENT AND FINANCIAL PROVISION

It is a priority for the EPA to ensure environmental liabilities associated with incidents or closure of potentially polluting activities are managed by licensees; and to promote this by ensuring the necessary investments in remediation and financial provision are made. The Environmental Liability Directive also provides enforcement tools which are applicable in certain circumstances.

- In 2013 the EPA commenced a new strategy in relation to environmental liabilities risk assessment and financial provision. The overall aim is to put in place an increased number of financial instruments covering environmental liabilities at licensed sites. The EPA is also engaging with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government to develop legislative proposals in relation to the discharge of environmental obligations in cases of company liquidations.
- Eight potential cases were screened under the Environmental Liabilities Directive in 2013. A report was submitted to the Commission on Environmental Liability Directive implementation in Ireland in November.

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Significant work was completed to streamline the interaction between the EPA and licensees in relation to the enforcement and management of Financial Provisions, Environmental Liabilities Risk Assessment and Closure Restoration and Aftercare Management. Twelve additional financial provisions were secured in 2013 as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Financial Provisions

In place on 01/01/2013		In place on 31/12/2013	
No.	Value	No.	Value
12	€1,124,250	24	€8,330,528

CONTAMINATED LAND

The principal aim in dealing with contaminated land and groundwater related issues is to secure the protection of human health, water bodies (including groundwater) and the wider environment. A series of Guideline Template Reports were published and these set out the content and standard of work that should be achieved by licensees when reporting to the EPA on contaminated land and groundwater issues. The template reports will ensure that the standard of works undertaken by licensees is adequate, that issues are understood and dealt with appropriately and that both licensees and the EPA achieve the aim of closing issues out in an efficient manner.

PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES AND FLUORINATED GREENHOUSE GASES

- 234 inspections of contractors in the refrigeration, air-conditioning and fire sectors were undertaken in 2013 to assess their management and control of ozone depleting substances (ODS) and fluorinated greenhouse gases (f-gases).
- An online system for service and maintenance companies, obligated by the ODS and f-gas legislation to interact with the EPA for submission of Prior Annual Notifications, was deployed in 2013.

WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND BATTERIES

- In 2013 the EPA carried out a total of 121 announced and unannounced inspections of producers and retailers of electrical and electronic equipment and batteries, including 45 inspections of distance sellers (e.g. websites).

BETTER REGULATION

The EPA is committed to carrying out its regulatory functions in a way that embraces principles of Better Regulation. The goal of Better Regulation is to reduce the administrative burden of regulation on business, while maintaining the effectiveness of regulation and improving its outcomes. 2013 saw significant moves towards improved efficiencies for our licensees with the introduction of the following programmes:

- In January the EPA launched a web-based portal that allows the EPA and licensees to communicate electronically. This portal allows licensees to submit enforcement related documents and report incidents directly to the EPA. At the end of 2013 this new Enforcement Module had tracked actions in relation to over 12,500 issues which included licensee returns, incidents, non-compliances, complaints and compliance investigations.
- Webinars for licensees were held by the EPA for the first time in 2013. These covered topics including air emissions monitoring and management, best practice for water sampling & analysis, emergency response, accident prevention and incident notification, bund & pipeline integrity assessment, storm water management & setting trigger levels and the management of contaminated land and groundwater at EPA licensed sites.
- The recent implementation of a national septic tank regime has led, for the first time, to a paperless enforcement system.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Protecting the environment is a huge responsibility and the EPA works with a number of organisations that carry out specific environmental functions including:

- 34 local authorities who play a key role alongside the EPA in environmental enforcement;
- the National Parks and Wildlife Service;
- An Garda Síochána;
- Inland Fisheries Ireland and
- the Health Service Executive.

The EPA and the local authorities, with the support of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, An Garda Síochána and other Agencies, have developed the *Network for Ireland's Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (*NIECE), to provide an integrated national approach to the enforcement of environmental legislation. The NIECE network is acknowledged internationally as a role model for other countries to follow and the EPA, along with its partners in the network, will continue to work together to enhance the ability of the regulatory bodies with environmental protection responsibilities, and in doing so protect and improve Ireland's environment. The enforcement network now numbers over 1,000 public sector staff registered from about 50 agencies within Ireland.

The EPA and the local authorities have the combined responsibility for regulating over 8,100 permits across Ireland, and enforcing more than 500 environmental protection requirements contained in more than 100 pieces of legislation. Almost 132,000 site inspections on average each year are conducted. Of these, 115,000 per year are planned and the remaining 17,000 are in response to complaints, incidents or investigations. Public complaints are dealt with by implementing systematic complaint response systems, national complaints lines, a smartphone App and online complaint forms. The National Environmental Complaints Line (NECL) continues to complement local authority environmental complaint phonelines. Work significantly progressed to develop and integrate two smartphone Apps with a national web based local authority complaints handling tool and testing is progressing. Currently more than one third of complaints handled by the NECL are received via the App.

A core part of the network is the working groups of experienced practitioners from relevant agencies to tackle particular implementation issues. These working groups exchange best-practice and develop plans for tackling illegal dumping of waste, historic landfills, mining regulations, sewage sludge, end of life vehicles, biodegradable municipal waste, food waste, waste tyres, drinking water (water safety plans), wastewater, water quality issues (nitrates, farm inspections, septic tanks), solvents/deco paints, noise and air quality matters (coal bans), and WEEE and battery regulations.

AIR ENFORCEMENT

The EPA Air Enforcement team provides expert technical advice in relation to air emissions. Air enforcement activities in 2013 included:

- Management of the EPA's Air Emissions Monitoring Programme (AEMP): This programme consists mainly of independent monitoring at licensed installations and facilities, the aim of which is to assess the licensee's compliance with the emission limit values and to take corrective actions, if required. In 2013, 114 sites were monitored with 684 tests of emissions completed. 81% of sites were fully compliant with only 4% of all tests non-compliant.
- Co-ordination of the preparation of the Noise Action Plans as required under the Environmental Noise Directive and submission of the required reports to the European Commission in December.
- Appointment of the National Panel of Approved Assessors under the Solvent and Deco Paint Regulations in September.
- The collection, validation and reporting of data for inclusion on the European Pollution Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) - a public register of pollutant releases and transfers from industrial and other sources.
- Management of the Environmental Enforcement Network Air and Solvents Working Group.
- Revision of Air Emissions Monitoring Guidance Note (AG2) and Webinar on *Update on EPA Emissions Monitoring.*

INSPECTIONS

The core work of scheduled enforcement was guided by the sectoral enforcement plans and provided for audits and inspections of IPPC, Waste and WWD Licensed sites, based on risk profiling of all active sites. This strategy decreased the frequency of visits to one in three years for low risk sites. Table 4 details the number of scheduled audits and inspections undertaken in 2013.

This work was supplemented by reactive enforcement activities including unscheduled inspections and audits, which are not planned or specified in advance, to address issues arising from complaints and incidents, while others related to enforcement actions and legal cases.

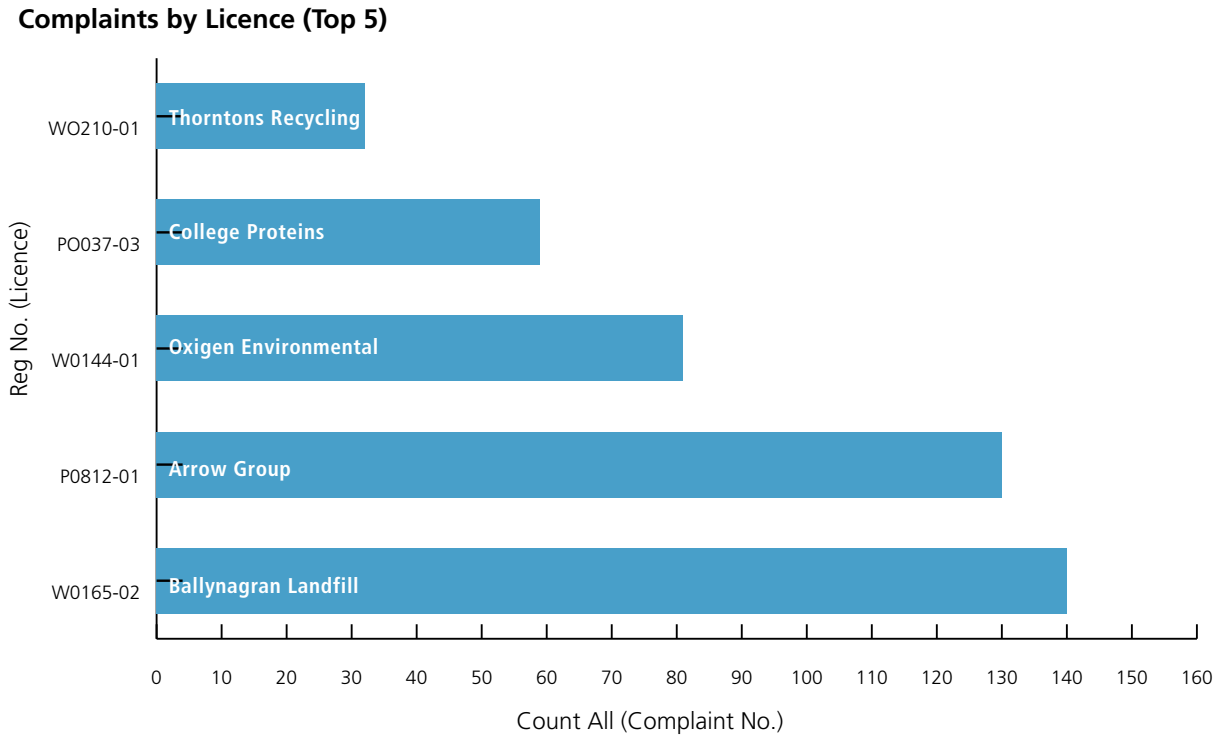
In addition, the sectoral enforcement plans provided for sectoral engagement activities including guidance, workshops and other engagement activities.

Table 4: 2013 Inspections & Audits – IPPC & Waste

Activity	Number in 2013
Industrial & Waste Enforcement Audits & Inspections	1,370
Waste Water Discharge Licence Enforcement Audits	242
Drinking Water Audits	55
Complaints Received Industrial & Waste and Waste Water Discharges	1,174 (Industry & Waste: 1124) (WWD: 50)
Industrial & Waste Licence Non-Compliances Recorded	1,879
Compliance Meetings Held	104
Incidents Notified to the Agency	2,550 (Industry & Waste: 1,763) (WWD: 787)

The top five most complained of licensed facilities are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Most Complained about Licensed Sites



STATUTORY PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

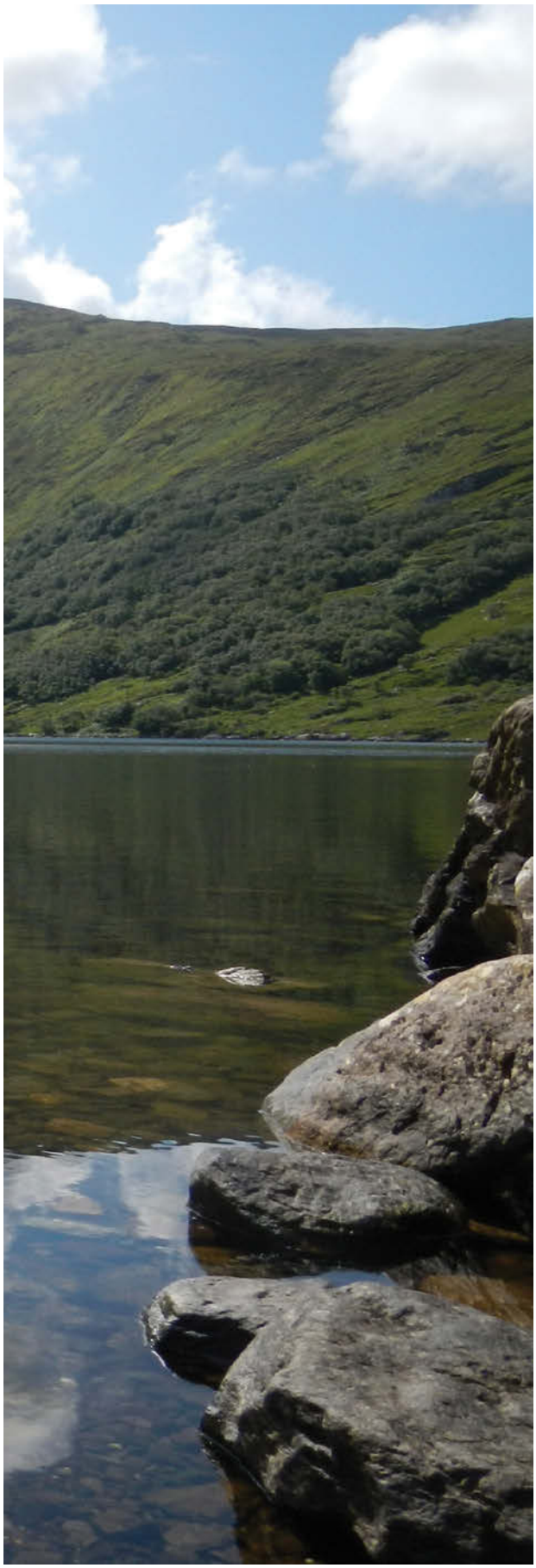
The EPA undertakes audits to assess the performance by a local authority of their statutory functions relating to environmental protection. The scope of these audits includes a review of the local authority's enforcement plan under Recommendation 2001/331/EC, providing for minimum criteria for environmental inspections (RMCEI), environmental complaint handling in accordance with the National Complaints Procedure and a review of open public authority enforcement files, inspections, enforcement and statutory registration of licenses/certificates issued by the local authority. In 2013 the EPA carried out 55 audits of local authority drinking water plants; 254 audits of local authority urban waste water discharge licenses and 6 local authority statutory performance audits.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The legal enforcement activities undertaken by the EPA in 2013 are set out in Table 5.

Table 5: Legal Enforcement Activities in 2013

No. of District Court Prosecutions heard	10
No. of DPP cases heard	2
Fines awarded in District Court	€40,500
Fines awarded in DPP cases	€28,000
Costs awarded in District Court	€88,245
Costs awarded in DPP cases	€14,077
Total Fines and Costs	**€170,822**



1.3 GUIDANCE

The EPA produces advice and guidance to industry and the public covering a wide range of environmental activities to ensure compliance with best practice.

GUIDANCE AND ADVICE ON DOMESTIC WASTE WATER SYSTEMS (SEPTIC TANKS)

Following the publication of an Inspection Plan for domestic waste water systems in February the EPA produced a range of guidance and advice to help owners to maintain their domestic waste water systems and prevent environmental pollution. Information on the website was updated including short animated videos on *What you can do to maintain your waste water treatment system* and *What to expect from an inspection.*

PROPOSED GUIDANCE ON THE AUTHORISATION OF DIRECT DISCHARGES TO GROUNDWATER

The EPA prepared *Guidance on the Authorisation of Direct Discharges to Groundwater.* The proposed guidance was published for consultation in 2013 and addresses direct discharges to groundwater from point sources that may have the potential to cause pollution. It supplements the earlier report published in 2011 by the EPA entitled "Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater" which focused on the technical assessment of indirect discharges to groundwater.

This Guidance has the following primary objectives:

1. It presents an overview of the Groundwater Regulations with respect to direct discharges to groundwater.
2. It provides specific examples of different types of direct discharges.
3. It describes conditions under which direct discharges of domestic-type wastewater effluents may be considered in the absence of suitable or feasible alternatives.

DUMPING AT SEA GUIDANCE

Two STRIVE-funded research reports regarding dumping at sea have been published:

- *Guidance on the Beneficial Use of Dredged Material* (CIT, 2013) and
- *Dumping at Sea Site Selection Guidance* (Aquafact, 2012).

CONTAMINATED LAND

In 2013 the EPA published *Guidance on the Management of Contaminated Land and Groundwater at EPA Licensed Sites*. The risk based approach in this guidance is considered best practice for the assessment and remediation of contaminated land and groundwater at EPA licensed sites. This guidance was communicated to licensees electronically and via a webinar and is available on the website.

ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITIES RISK ASSESSMENT

The *Guidance on Assessing and Costing Environmental Liabilities* presents a systematic approach for assessing and costing environmental liabilities associated with closure, restoration/aftercare and incidents. It replaces those aspects of Guidance on Environmental Liability Risk Assessment, Residuals Management Plans and Financial Provision (EPA, 2006).

DRINKING WATER

A pesticides working group developed the guidance *Pesticides in Drinking Water* to raise the awareness of protecting drinking water sources from pesticide contamination.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

The EPA prepared the following guidance to support the implementation of SEA in Ireland:

- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Practitioner's Manual
- Good practice guidance in Cumulative Effects Assessment in SEA and Appropriate Assessment
- SEA and Alternatives Guidance
- SEA and Climate Change Guidance
- SEA Resource Manual
- SEAGIS Manual

CHAPTER 2: KNOWLEDGE

Provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.

2.1 MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

2.2 RESEARCH

2.3 REPORTING

2.1 MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The EPA provides evidence based assessment and timely information to all our stakeholders, so as to support action to protect and manage the environment.

AIR QUALITY

The EPA is the designated competent authority for the implementation of all Irish and EU ambient air quality legislation. In cooperation with local authorities, it carries out ambient air quality monitoring across the country, and manages the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network. In addition, the EPA is responsible for reporting to all stakeholders – which include the public and the EU. The EPA is also the designated National Reference Laboratory for air quality for Ireland. In 2013 the National Reference Laboratory was formally accredited as a calibration laboratory, which is a requirement under the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive

The results of air quality monitoring in 2012, from the 29 monitoring stations that form the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network, were presented in the *Air Quality Report 2012*. The results were compared to the limit and target values set out by the EU Air Quality Directives.

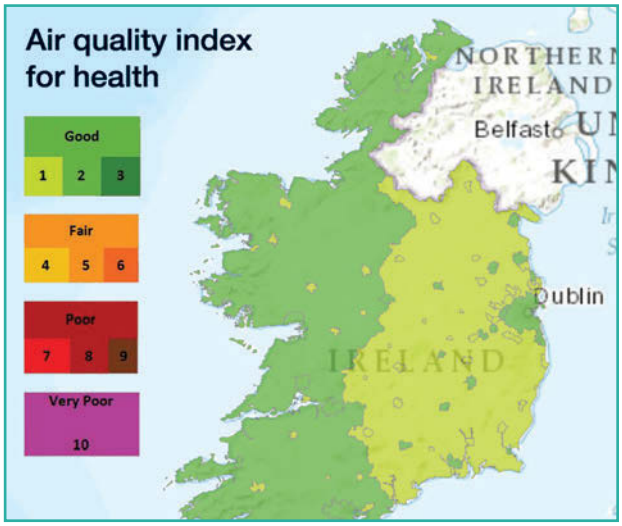
Although we must remain vigilant with regards to particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, Ireland was found to be in compliance with the EU Directives for all pollutants.

Under EU legislation, Ireland is required to reduce exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) by 10% between 2012 and 2020. This challenging reduction will require an integrated approach across a number of sectors including industrial, transport and residential emissions, but will lead to many health and environmental benefits.

During 2013, the EPA continued its investment in upgrading its air quality IT infrastructure and systems to ensure that more up-to-date information can be made available on air quality. This also facilitated the EPA in meeting a new requirement under the CAFÉ Directive to report specified air quality information on an hourly basis to the European Environment Agency.

The **Air Quality Index for Health (Figure 2)** was launched in March 2013. This web-based index, allows the public to view current air quality in their region and assess its impact on their health. It was developed in conjunction with the Health Service Executive, Met Éireann and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. The Air Quality Index for Health can be viewed on the EPA website. To coincide with the launch of the Index, the EPA also launched a twitter channel **@EPAAirQuality**. The public can sign up to this Twitter channel and receive tweets on the status of air quality in their region every day.

Figure 2. Air Quality Index for Health

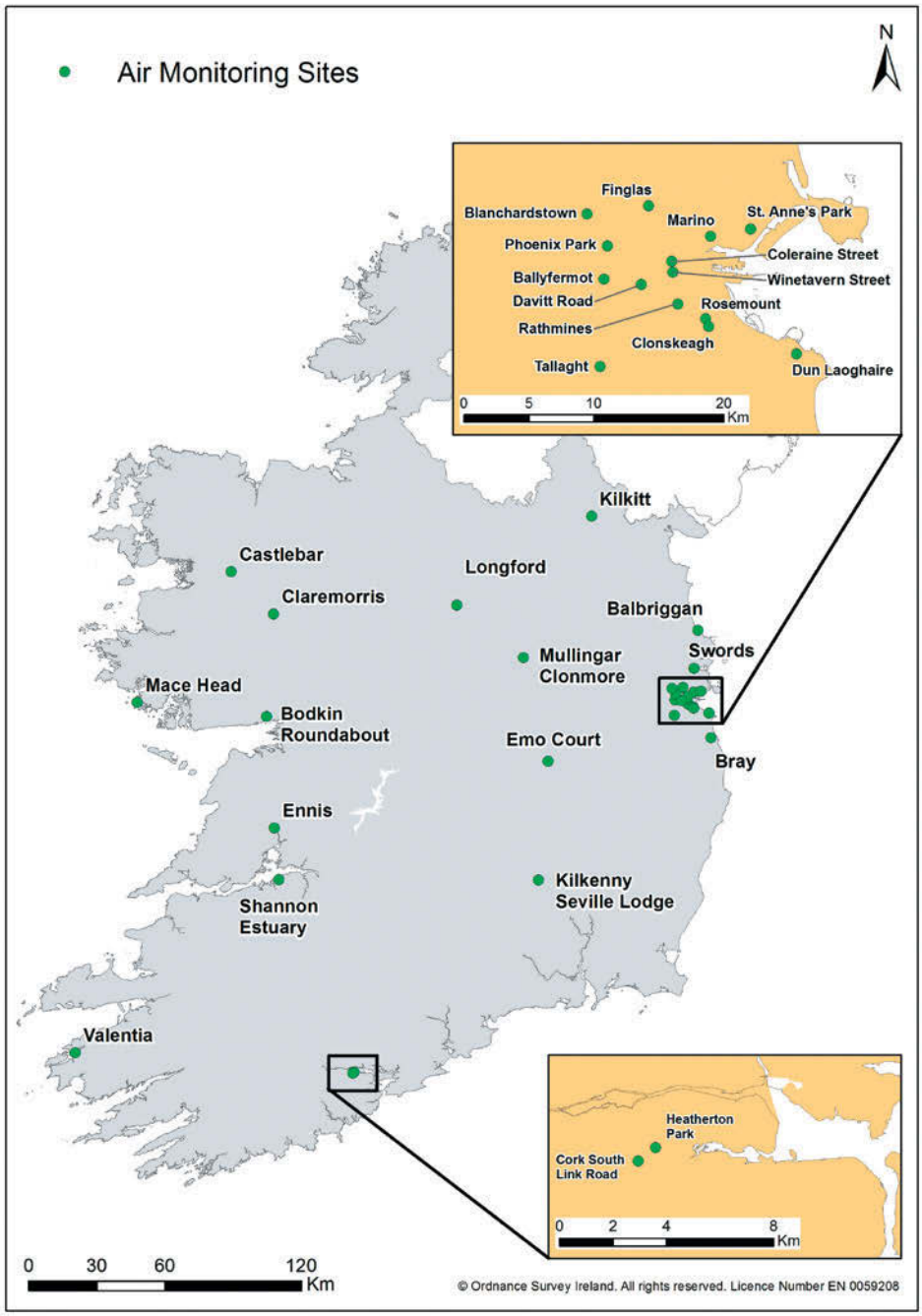


AMBIENT AIR QUALITY MONITORING NETWORK

2013 saw some changes to the **Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network:**

- Old Station Road site in Cork moved to a new site at Kinsale Road in Cork.
- Additional monitoring stations were added at St. Anne's Park, Finglas and Davitt Road in Dublin. (Figure 3)

Figure 3. Air Monitoring Sites



WATER QUALITY

WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (WFD)

The objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) are to protect all high status waters, prevent further deterioration of all waters and to restore degraded surface and ground waters to good status by 2015. The EPA has been assigned a large number of tasks under the *European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations, 2003* (S.I. No. 722 of 2003), which come under the category of "coordination and oversight" of the Irish WFD programme.

Work undertaken in 2013 included the following:

- Twelve rounds of surface water physico-chemical sampling gave rise to analyses involving 9,371 samples from rivers and lakes, and 3,023 from estuaries.
- Three rounds of groundwater samples were taken from 275 wells and springs.
- Water sampling details are provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Total Number of Water Samples Analysed in 2013

WFD lakes	
Surveillance	1,602
Operational	470
Priority substances	155
Total lake samples	2,227
WFD rivers	
Surveillance	2,960
Operational	3,839
Priority substances	345
Total river samples	7,144
WFD Groundwater	1,003
WFD estuarine	3,023
OSPAR	144
Additional Shellfish Samples	108
Totals	**13,649**

- Ecological assessments are used to assign WFD status to surface waters for reporting to Europe and inclusion in River Basin Management Plans. They also support the development of Programmes of Measures to improve or protect the ecological status of waters. In 2013 EPA scientists undertook ecological surveys at:
  - 861 river sites on 369 rivers
  - 85 lakes at over 4000 sample stations
  - 80 transitional and coastal water bodies at 550 sampling stations

Of the 861 river sites, 801 were operational/investigative and 60 were at long term surveillance sites. Macroinvertebrate Q value assessments were carried out at the 861 sites, while seasonal phytobenthos sampling was carried out at surveillance and some operational/investigative sites in 2013. A total of 60 River Hydromorphological Assessment Technique (RHAT) surveys were also carried out in 2013. (Table 7)

Table 7. Biological Monitoring of Rivers

Macroinvertebrate Q Value Assessments (No. Sites)	801	60	861
Phytobenthos Sampling & Assessments (No. samples)	20	210	230
Hydromorphological Assessment Surveys (RHAT)	21	39	60

HYDROMETRIC PROGRAMME

In 2013 the EPA provided updated estimates of 95%tile flow statistics, to facilitate assimilative flow calculations for Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWRP) licences. The EPA, in conjunction with the Office of Public Works, set up the National Hydrometric Working Group (NHWG) to promote the more efficient use of hydrometric resources, to disseminate data and to foster greater cooperation in relation to hydrometric activities. This group consists of organisations involved in the collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of surface water and groundwater hydrometric data. The core purpose of the NHWG will be to improve the overall monitoring, processing, availability and use of good quality hydrometric data. Hydrometric data collected by all organisations involved are of national importance and support water resource planning and management, EU and national reporting requirements, assimilative capacity for discharges, hydro-ecological studies, flood estimation, flood risk management, flood forecasting and warning, infrastructural design, fisheries management, research and education, and navigation and recreational activities. It will also act as a national platform for the exchange of both scientific and technical expertise while advocating the development of best hydrometric practices.

GROUNDWATER

In 2013, the EPA carried out assessments of historic mines, contaminated sites and landfills to determine the potential for them to cause failure of the Water Framework Directives's (WFD) environmental objectives. Assessments were also undertaken at groundwater dependent wetlands, to determine if they are significantly damaged due to groundwater body pollution or over abstraction. There has

been significant input to the development of other pressure datasets relating to agriculture and domestic waste water treatment systems.

Groundwater quality monitoring was undertaken for three sampling rounds at the WFD groundwater network (275 sites) in 2013. The generation and processing of data from the groundwater level and spring flow network were maintained. The groundwater quality and quantitative data is used in the WFD status and trends assessments, and also reported for other regulatory requirements, such as the Nitrates Directive.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) DIRECTIVE

The EPA is one of five statutory environmental authorities designated under national SEA legislation and is required to be issued notifications at various stages for all Plans and Programmes and related reviews, variations and amendments. During 2013 the EPA made 46 submissions on SEA Environmental Reports and Draft Plans and 28 submissions on Proposed Amendments to Draft Plans. In addition 74 SEA screening notifications and 50 SEA scoping notifications were received.

The EPA engaged in consultations on the preparation of key significant national level plans / programmes. These included:

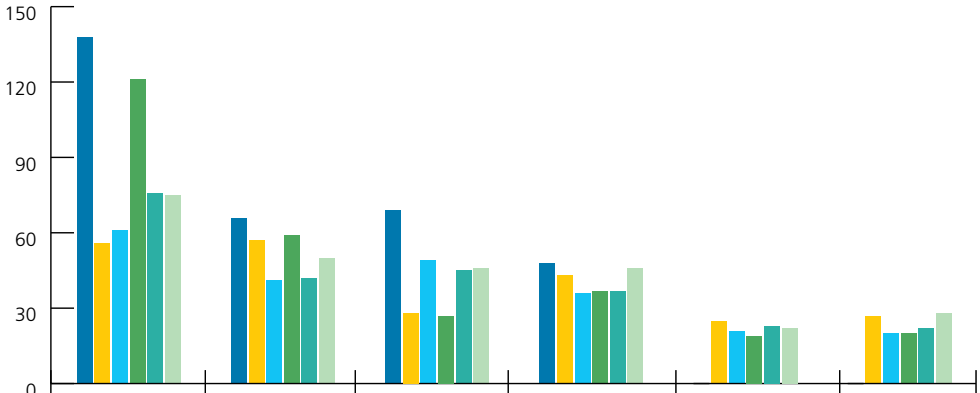
- the National Energy Export Policy and Development,
- National Peatland Strategy / National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan,
- Framework for Investment in Land Transport,
- National Strategic Aquaculture Plan and
- the Wild Atlantic Way.

The EPA also participated on key national and regional steering groups including:

- National SEA Technical Forum
- Shannon Integrated Framework Plan
- National Coordination Committee on Waste Management Plans
- Offshore Renewable Energy Development Programme
- Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management National Technical Coordination group

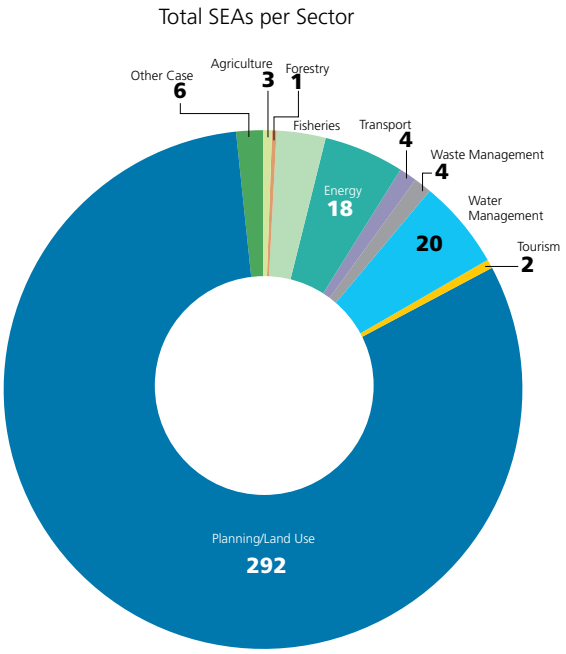
The EPA continued to proactively engage with government departments and local and regional authorities to promote SEA best practice. This included participating and presenting at regional SEA fora and organising a training event *A Strategic Approach to SEA* - in September 2013.

Figure 4. Annual Breakdown of SEA Activity



	Screening Submissions Received	Scoping Submissions Received	Number of Environmental Reports Received	Number of submissions made on Environmental Reports and draft Plans	Number of Amendments to Environmental Reports Received	Number of Submissions made on Amendments to ER's made
2008 Total	138	66	69	48	0	0
2009 Total	56	57	28	43	25	27
2010 Total	61	41	49	36	21	20
2011 Total	121	59	27	37	19	20
2012 Total	76	42	45	37	23	22
2013 Total	75	50	46	46	22	28

Figure 5: SEA by Sector to End 2013



Total Number of SEAs **361**

LABORATORY SERVICES

The EPA laboratory services provide the analytical capability to support the implementation of national monitoring programmes and to support the EPA's core roles on licensing and enforcement.

The laboratories, located in Kilkenny, Monaghan, Castlebar and Dublin, undertake the analysis of the physico-chemical parameters for rivers, lakes, ground waters and transitional waters for the WFD surveillance and other monitoring programmes. Each of the laboratories also provides monitoring and analytical services at licensed facilities and undertake the auditing of waste water discharge licences. The laboratories in Castlebar, Monaghan and Kilkenny also provide services to the local authorities in these regions.

In 2013:

- A total of 23,566 samples were taken and analysed for a range of chemical and, where appropriate, microbiological parameters.
- Work towards the integration of the laboratories continued and saw the adoption of new technologies for document management and quality control within laboratories as well the development of common analytical methods and procedures for the most frequently used tests in the laboratories.
- An application was made to the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB) for a single multi-site accreditation for the EPA laboratories. Following audits of the laboratories in December 2013 by INAB, the EPA laboratories were recommended for one single integrated multi-site accreditation.
- The laboratories in Kilkenny, Castlebar and Monaghan produced Regional Integrated Water Quality reports. These reports cover rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal waters and bathing waters and address both chemistry and biology aspects. A key focus of the reports has been to assess the water quality data in the context of the WFD and to identify specific areas that need to be tackled to help meet WFD objectives.

INTERCALIBRATION PROGRAMME

The total number of laboratories participating in the EPA's intercalibration programme increased, by three, to 141 in 2013. These include local authority, IPPC and contract laboratories, other laboratories supplying data to the EPA and also the EPA's regional laboratories. The sample preparation and distribution elements of the programme continue to be outsourced to an external laboratory.

The register of laboratories, provided for under Section 66 of the EPA Act, 1992, and based on performance of the individual laboratories in the previous year, is available for inspection at http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/water/other/epalistofapprovedlaboratories-2012.html

INTERNAL MARKET SURVEILLANCE – HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE MONITORING

The EPA carries out a wide range of market surveillance activities covering an extensive scope of product categories which includes electrical and electronic equipment (Directive 2011/65/EU), batteries (Directive 2006/66/EC), paints (Directive 2004/42/CE) and packaging and toys (Regulation (EC) No 850/2004). The Regulation on Accreditation and Market Surveillance (Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008) and its associated legislation govern these activities to a large extent.

During 2013 market surveillance activities within the various sectors included:

- 22 product technical file evaluations under Directive 2011/65/EU (RoHS Directive)
- 24 motor factor inspections for compliance with vehicle refinishing products obligations under Directive 2004/42/CE (Paints Directive)

- Completion of a total of 13 RAPEX notifications relating to contraventions of the POPs Regulation (5), REACH Regulation (6) and combined POPs Regulation/REACH Regulation (2).
- 12 samples of bituminous coal for sulphur content under the Solid Fuel Regulations (S.I. No. 326 of 2012).

HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS CONTROL

The EPA enforces the control of certain hazardous substances including persistent organic pollutants (POPs). The EPA maintains the National Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) Inventory, a register of volumes of certain PCB-contaminated materials contained in equipment within the State. During 2013 the volumes of PCB-contaminated materials decreased from 69,032 litres to 24,328 litres. This reduction was largely achieved through the various local authorities who did significant work to identify and inspect potentially PCB-contaminated equipment within their functional areas.

2.2. RESEARCH

Effective management of the environment is increasingly science driven. Through our research programme, the EPA is generating the knowledge and expertise to influence policy, identify pressures and develop solutions to environmental challenges.

RESEARCH INITIATIVES HIGHLIGHTS

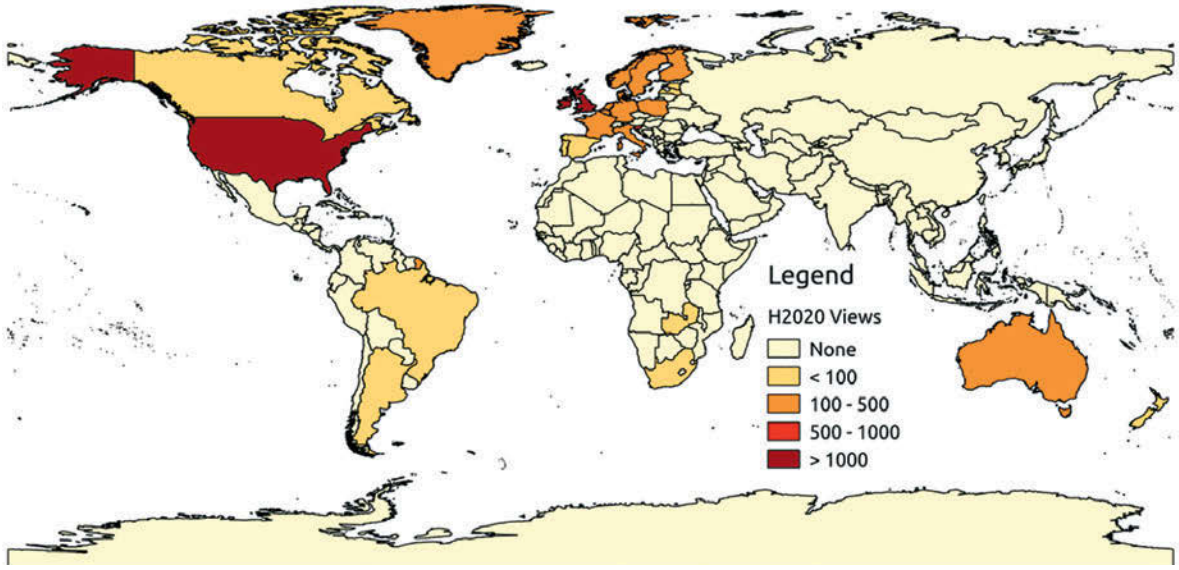
2013 was a busy year for the research programme in terms of new research calls, completion of previously funded projects, enhanced dissemination of research findings and on-going engagement with our national and international peers.

- 14 press releases from the research programme issued in 2013.
- 28 research awards were made on foot of the June 2013 call, following which 68 proposals were received.
- There were 5,963 downloads from Safer Data Research Archive in 2013, a 10% increase from 2012.
- The new Horizon 2020 catalogue of Irish experts was launched. By end of 2013 there were 27,000 hits worldwide (>50,000 April 2014) (see Figure 6). http://erc.epa.ie/h2020catalogue/downloadCatalogue.php

31 research reports were published. Details of a number of the key releases are summarised below.

- In February, five new Climate research studies were published which explore diverse issues ranging from economy wide mitigation options to regional and local adaptation needs. The reports were launched by Mr. Phil Hogan T.D., Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government at the EPA research event, *Informing Actions on Climate Change.*
- In April, research was published that highlighted a dramatic loss of waterbodies in pristine condition due to relatively low intensity activities such as field drainage and one-off housing, as well as pollution. The report outlines strategies to protect pristine waterbodies from degradation.
- In May, a report on Indoor Air Pollution and Health was published which examined the health impacts of air pollution in homes using solid fuels for heating or cooking and in homes that have a resident smoker. The study showed that the concentration of particulate pollution in the homes of smokers who smoke indoors is six times higher than the WHO's recommendation for general outdoor air quality.
- An assessment of seven heatwaves that have occurred in Ireland over the past 30 years and their impact on mortality was published in June. This work quantified the relationship between extreme heat events and mortality rates, and identified relevant adaptation strategies.
- In September a series of reports on climate change impacts were launched. These included a detailed analysis of river-flow data collected by the EPA under the guidance of the late Micheál Mac Cárthaigh, to whom this report was dedicated.

Figure 6. Number of views worldwide of the Horizon 2020 Catalogue



- The Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government launched the report, *Environmental Protection through Research*, in September. The report outlined the vital role that EPA-funded research has played in providing the evidence to help identify and tackle environmental challenges in the areas of climate change, water and sustainability. It also set out the critical role that research plays in ensuring that EU and national environmental policies are implemented in the most cost-effective manner and in developing novel solutions to protect Ireland's environment.

Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D. Minister of the Environment, Community and Local Government and Ms Laura Burke, Director General, EPA launch the EPA report *Environmental Protection through Research*.

2014-2020 RESEARCH STRATEGY

In 2013 seven workshops were held, attended by over 600 people, to help the EPA prepare the 2014-2020 research strategy. The EPA Research Programme targets key environmental challenges through competitive research leading to the generation of knowledge, to promote high-quality research and to inform protection and improvement of our natural environment and human health. A draft research strategy was issued for consultation in November and during a six week public consultation 67 submissions were received.

The final research strategy comprises three pillar areas: Climate, Water and Sustainability. Projects supported through the programme will be targeted to deliver on three key areas:

1. *Identifying Pressures:* Providing assessments of current environmental status and future trends to identify pressures on our environment.
2. *Informing Policy:* Generating evidence, reviewing practices and building models to inform policy development and implementation.
3. *Developing Solutions:* Using novel technologies and methods that address environmental challenges and provide green economy opportunities.

Dissemination of our research will involve the provision of a variety of project reports (including a dedicated e-newsletter) and other material, as well as communication modalities that are designed to address these challenges.

UNCONVENTIONAL GAS EXPLORATION & EXTRACTION (UGEE)

UGEE is an emerging issue in Ireland and involves high-volume hydraulic fracturing (fracking) of low-permeability rock to permit the extraction of natural gas on a commercial scale from unconventional sources such as shale gas deposits, coal seams and tight sandstones.

A public consultation process was undertaken in early 2013 and 1356 submissions were received. In November, the EPA - on behalf of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency - initiated a public procurement process to engage a single operator to undertake a research programme on the environmental and human health impacts of UGEE. A contract was awarded in 2013 to undertake the research which will last approximately two years.

SOILS

Work continued on the completion of the EPA-funded project Irish Soil Information System (ISIS), which aims at developing a 1:250,000 soil type map for Ireland. Related to this, the EPA organised the Combined ISIS and Soils & Land Use Research Planning Workshop in September 2013. In advance of the workshop the EPA prepared a draft Soils & Land Use Research Priorities Discussion Document.

In addition the EPA participated in a National Priority Action Group on Sustainable Food Production. The work of this committee is facilitated by Department of Agriculture, Forestry and the Marine.

BIODIVERSITY

The SIMBIOSYS Project Report was published in October. The overall project quantifies the impacts of key sectoral activities in Ireland on biodiversity and the ecosystem services they provide, including pollination, biological pest control, carbon sequestration and resistance to alien species invasion. One aspect of the project mapped feral populations of Pacific Oyster and focused on how the spread can impact on the ability of estuaries to support aquaculture and fisheries.

The Practitioner's Manual on Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment (IBIA) was published during 2013. This manual promotes linkages between biodiversity related aspects in SEA & Appropriate Assessment and EIA & Appropriate Assessment.

The EPA continues to liaise closely with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other stakeholders on the National Platform for Biodiversity Research, which will run up to 2014. Working papers have been produced and published which cover the knowledge gaps and priority research needs in Freshwater, Marine and Agriculture, Grassland and Soils.

The EPA continues to participate in, and co-hosts with the NPWS, Ireland's Ramsar Wetlands Committee (IRWC). The IRWC was set up by the government in November 2010 to assist Ireland in meeting its requirements as a signatory to the Ramsar Convention. Membership is drawn from a variety of relevant government agencies, scientific and technical institutions, regional and local authorities and non-governmental organisations. The primary objective of IRWC is to promote the wise use, awareness and protection of wetlands in Ireland.

2.3 REPORTING

Independent reporting on environmental quality helps to inform decision making by national and local government.

EMISSIONS TRADING

NATIONAL EMISSIONS INVENTORIES

The national Greenhouse Gas inventory for 2011 was finalised, while the preliminary inventory for 2012 was published. For 2012, total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to be 58.5 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO2eq). Ireland is estimated to comply with its Kyoto limit when the impact of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and forest sinks are taken into account.

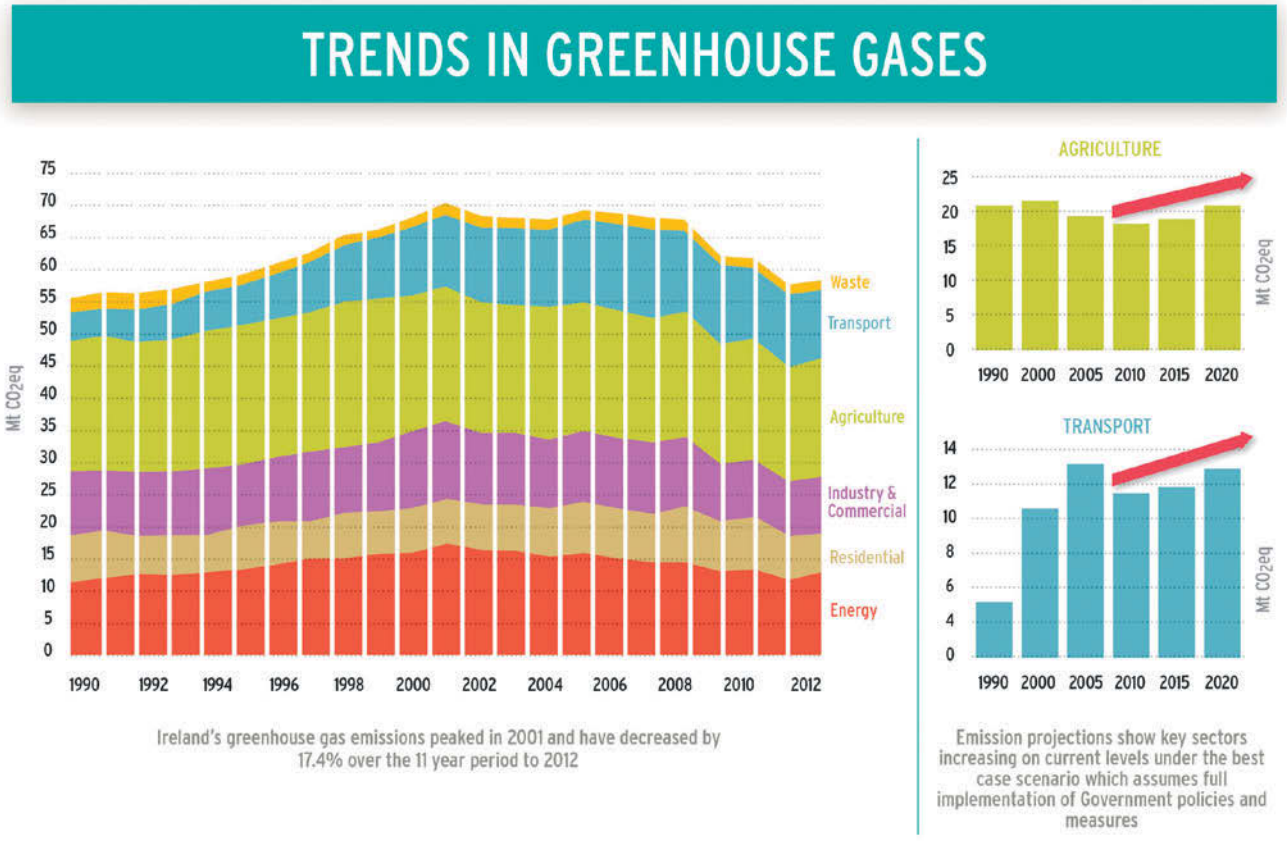
The EPA hosted a seminar in the Royal Irish Academy in October, to present Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions figures for the period 1990–2012.

A UN in-country review of Ireland's 1990–2011 greenhouse gas inventories took place.

EMISSIONS PROJECTIONS

Greenhouse gas emission projections, published in 2013, showed the projected trends up to 2020 and gave a picture of Ireland's ability to meet EU and international targets. Ireland is at significant risk of not meeting our EU 2020 targets even under the best-case scenario in terms of policy implementation. Strong projected growth in emissions from transport and agriculture are the key contributors to this trend. (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Trends in Greenhouse Gases



AIR CLIMATE SCIENCE

The research programme continued to provide material and analysis that supported the on-going development of national emissions inventories and projections, including analysis of emissions of greenhouse gases from key sectors to 2050, with a strong focus on land use and land use change. The programme also enabled scientific engagement by researchers from Ireland with pan-European models that are used to develop strategies to achieve European environmental goals and targets.

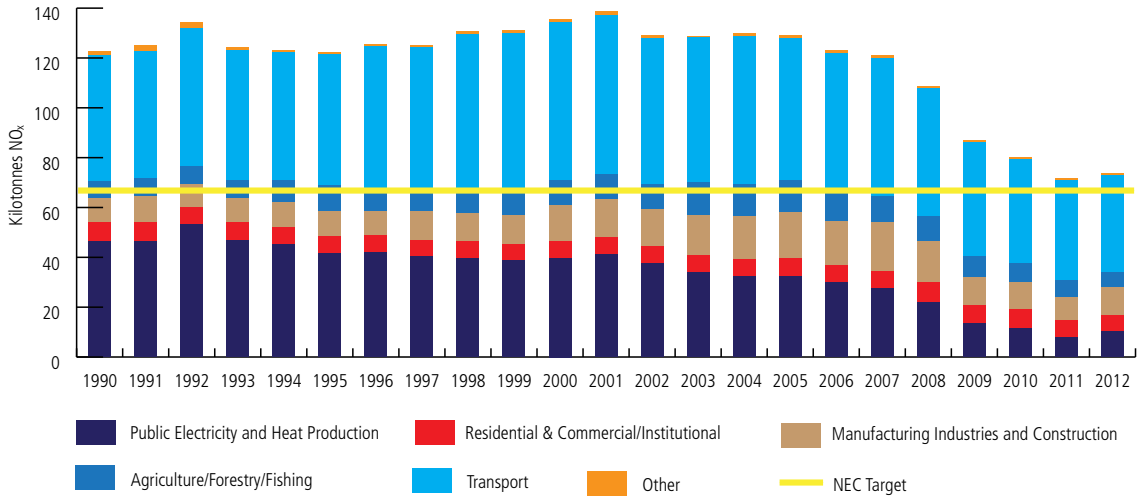
A major scientific conference of future air quality goals was held in Dublin in 2013. The outcomes were provided to a subsequent EU Council of Ministers meeting.

NATIONAL EMISSIONS CEILINGS DIRECTIVE

Under the National Emission Ceilings Directive, Ireland is required to limit emissions of four transboundary air pollutants by 2010 and each year thereafter. These four pollutants are responsible for long-range transboundary air pollution such as acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution.

The data show that emissions of the air pollutant nitrogen oxide (NO_x) in 2011 were above the specified EU emission ceiling (Figure 8). Emissions of air pollutants - sulphur dioxide (SO_2), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and ammonia (NH_3) - were well within the required EU emission limits.

Figure 8. Trends in NO_x Emissions



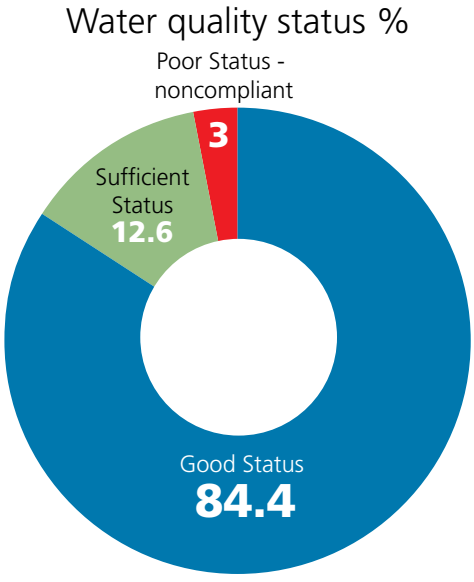
BATHING WATER QUALITY

National and EU legislation on bathing water focuses on the protection of public health, with a proactive approach to the management of bathing water quality and the provision of information to the public. There are 135 designated bathing waters in Ireland.

The 2012 Bathing Water Report showed that overall the quality of Ireland's bathing waters remains high, with 97% (131 of 135) bathing water locations meeting the minimum EU quality standards (Figure 9).

As required, the EPA submitted the bathing water national results and assessments to the EC by end of December 2013.

Figure 9. Bathing Water Quality



The *Splash* website - www.splash.epa.ie -provides the public with bathing water quality information for all of the 135 designated bathing waters in Ireland. The website provides the latest sampling results during the bathing season, together with their compliance with EU standards, their overall water quality status, lifeguard availability, weather and tidal information. It was extensively updated during 2013 to provide additional information including public access to bathing water profiles and incident notifications. The Twitter messaging service on *Splash* also allowed timely dissemination to the public of any pollution incident warnings.

LAND COVER

The EPA produces a generalised landcover dataset called CORINE for the European Environment Agency (EEA). CORINE has been produced for 1990, 2000 and 2006. The EPA is currently in the process of producing CORINE 2012. The production of these data has been brought in-house and is being developed using a semi-automated methodology. This is an innovative approach and will reduce the time and resources required to produce CORINE. The methodology was tested and approved by the EEA in 2013 and production is on schedule with an end date of June 2014.

The Corine dataset is currently the only national landcover dataset; however, it is a pan-European dataset with poor resolution. Use for national, regional and local assessment purposes is frequently inappropriate. In 2013 the EPA continued to participate on a national working group that is investigating the options for the development of a national landcover and habitat mapping programme. The aim of this working group is to bring proposals to government that highlight the need for the development of a national mapping programme. The aim of such a programme would be to produce detailed landcover and habitat maps for Ireland. The EPA was central to developing a technical approach and funding research to address knowledge gaps.

NATIONAL WASTE REPORTING

The National Waste Report showed that, in 2011, Ireland's municipal solid waste generation had decreased by 17% since it peaked in 2007, largely as the result of the recession and a decline in personal consumption. The report showed that Ireland produced less household waste per capita in 2011 than the EU average, and recycled 40% of its municipal waste. Preliminary figures for 2012 indicated that this had reduced to 38%. Ireland is also achieving all its EU waste recovery targets, with the exception of End of Life Vehicle recovery.

EUROPEAN POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTER (E-PRTR)

The European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) is a public register of pollutant releases and transfers from industrial and other sources. In 2013 Ireland produced a national report to put PRTR pollutant releases and waste transfers into context for the public. The report summarises the information and data validated by the EPA and reported to the EU under the E-PRTR Regulations for the year 2012. The availability of such information should help assist public participation in the decision-making process and provides relevant information, in a timely manner, to policy-makers and those involved in the regulation of activities subject to PRTR reporting.

In 2012, Ireland reported 380 facilities above the E-PRTR thresholds for emissions to air, water and waste water and above the specified thresholds for transfers of hazardous and non-hazardous waste. Of the totals reported to E-PRTR by all reporting states, Ireland contributes approximately 1% of the emissions to air and water and 0.5% of hazardous waste and 1% of non-hazardous waste transfers.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPS) REPORTING

Both the Annual and Triannual Reports on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No. 850/2004 (POPs Regulation) within the State, as required under Article 12 of the Regulation, were submitted to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government for transmission to the European Commission.

REACH (REGISTRATION, EVALUATION, AUTHORISATION AND RESTRICTION OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES)

The EPA continues to work with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and relevant government departments to ensure implementation of the REACH Regulation. Work in 2013 included reporting under the Chemicals Act 2008.

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA)

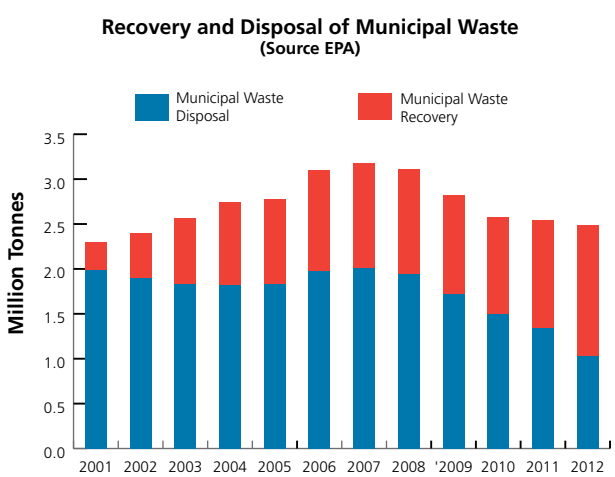
The EPA, in its role as National Focal Point for Ireland, continued to co-ordinate environmental information exchange with the EEA and to maintain and develop the national network and facilitate and co-ordinate contacts, requests and deliveries between national and EU levels. The EPA hosted the National Focal Point meeting in Ireland in March 2013.

STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORTING

The EPA Environmental Indicators web resource *Ireland's Environment* provided the public and decision-makers with regularly updated information on key environmental indicators throughout 2013. Information is made available in a variety of formats including videos, dashboards, downloadable data, graphs, infographics, factsheets and environmental assessments. There were in excess of 147,000 hits to this section of our website during 2013.

Recovery and disposal of municipal waste 2001 - 2012
(Source EPA)

STATUS / TREND



CHAPTER 3:
ADVOCACY

Work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.

3.1 EDUCATION

3.2 AWARENESS RAISING

3.3 BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

3.1 EDUCATION

The EPA continually strives to improve our communications and educational resources to better inform decision makers about the environment and to influence business, the public and the organisations that we work with.

EPA STRATEGIC PLAN

In February 2013 the EPA published its new three-year corporate strategy, the fourth formal strategy since the EPA was established almost 20 years ago. The EPA Strategic Plan 2013-2015 – *Working with others for a Better Environment*, sets out the key priority actions that the EPA will carry out up to 2015 to deliver on its mission of protecting and improving our environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. It specifies nine strategic priorities for the EPA across its core functions of environmental regulation, knowledge and advocacy.

EPA WEBSITE

A review of the EPA website was completed in 2012 to identify how the EPA's use of the web could better serve it and its audiences online. Extensive consultation was carried out with stakeholders to allow the EPA to understand its audiences' online needs and develop clear audience-focused online communications.

The findings of this review were implemented with the development of a new website which was launched in 2013. The website included a new design, new functionality, site-restructuring, a system upgrade and a new search engine to enable people to access our information more easily. Our website is now our main communication tool for disseminating information with over 1.8 million visits in 2013 compared to 650,000 in 2011. We will continue to implement a programme of on-going development and improvement of the website to ensure that timely and accessible information is made available to all our stakeholders.

COMMUNICATING OUR KEY MESSAGES

During 2013, a total of 438 media enquiries were dealt with by the EPA.

Tailored articles were developed for regional media featuring information on a variety of EPA issues. In 2013, seven regional press releases were developed and issued, generating 142 articles overall.

An End of Year Statement by the Director General was published and disseminated. The Statement captured the highlights of the EPA's main activities and achievements during 2012.Three editions of *EPANews*, the corporate electronic newsletter, were distributed to subscribers during the year.

During 2013 the EPA continued to use social media as a way to communicate its messages, adding a fourth Twitter account - @EPAAirQuality. By year end the EPA had over 4,600 followers on Twitter, across four accounts and had issued 2,897 tweets.

At the end of 2013, the EPA had uploaded 216 videos to YouTube and had 125,460 viewers. Topics covered in videos added in 2013 included climate change, the septic tank inspection process and guidance on national waste reporting for local authorities.

How the inspection process will work
https://www.youtube.com/user/EPAIreland/videos

As part of promoting the wider awareness of wetlands, a module on *Biodiversity and Wetlands* was prepared as part of the EPA secondary schools *2020 Vision* resources, now available online. The EPA also sponsored a lesson on air in *Science and Technology in Action*, a multimedia resource for second level schools.

The EPA provided support funding for the eleventh series of the *Eco Eye* TV programme, which was broadcast on RTE 1 early in the year. Viewing figures averaged almost 750,000 per programme. The EPA agreed to support a further series and pre-production was largely completed during 2013.

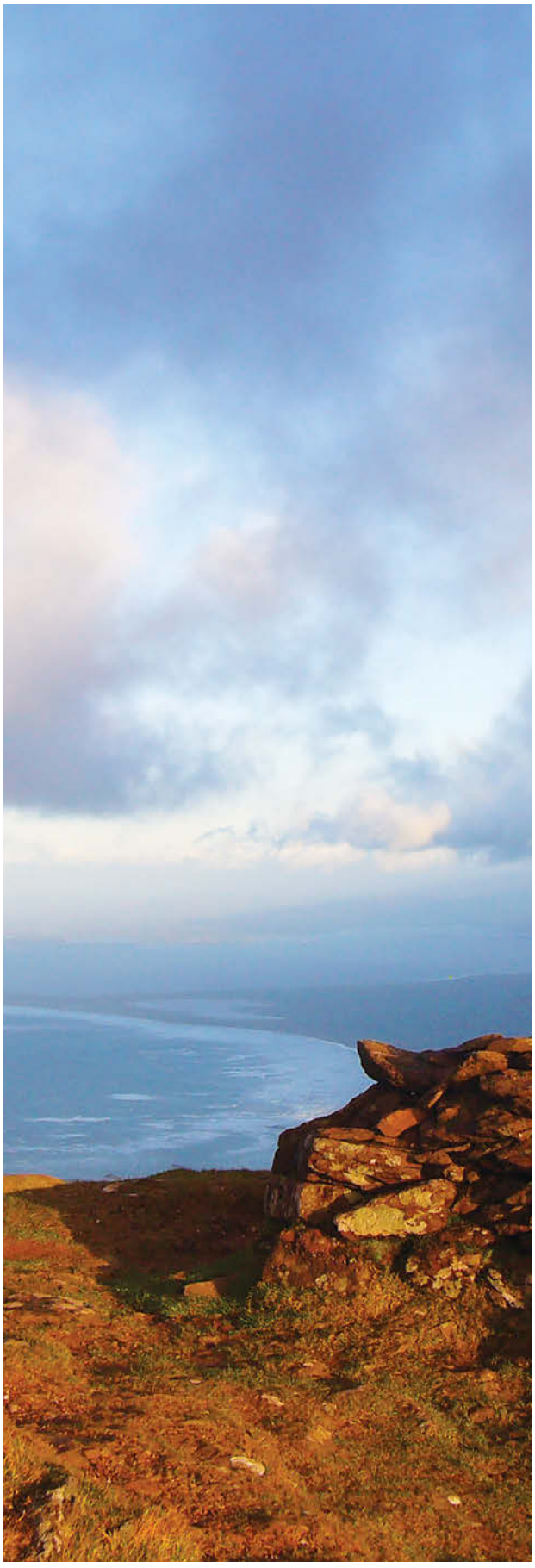
CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS

For the ninth year, the EPA sponsored the annual *Environment Ireland* conference in September. Themes discussed at the event included: The environment & the economy; Waste resource efficiency; Delivering reform of Ireland's water services and Behaviour change and the environment. This conference is the largest environmental policy and management conference held in Ireland each year and is attended by delegates representing all the main sectors with an interest in Ireland's environment.

Some other key conferences and events held during the year included:

- The National Water Event in June entitled '*Protecting and Improving Ireland's Strategic Water Resources'*. This has become a key forum for local authorities, regulators, and water professionals to learn about current changes in Ireland's water policy and practice.
- A two day conference about the regulation and use of Genetically Modified (GM) technology in Ireland. Attendees heard about the challenges and opportunities GM technology presents for Ireland and Europe.
- Two Climate Change public lectures in 2013. In February, Rik Leemans delivered the first lecture, *Giant Steps - the Scientific Perspective.* Rik Leemans is chief scientist of the Earth Systems Sciences Partnership and Professor at Wageningen University. In April, Jos Delbeke, Director General of the European Commission's DG Climate Action spoke about European Union leadership on Global Climate Change Policy. Over 300 people registered for each of these lectures. Recordings are now available on the EPA website at www.epa-pictaural.com and the EPA YouTube channel at youtube.com/user/epaireland.

The EPA took part in a number of exhibitions to communicate what we do to our stakeholders including the BT Young Scientist & Technology exhibition, the Science Gallery and the Native Species weekend in Dublin Zoo. These events provide an important opportunity to interact with our many stakeholders.



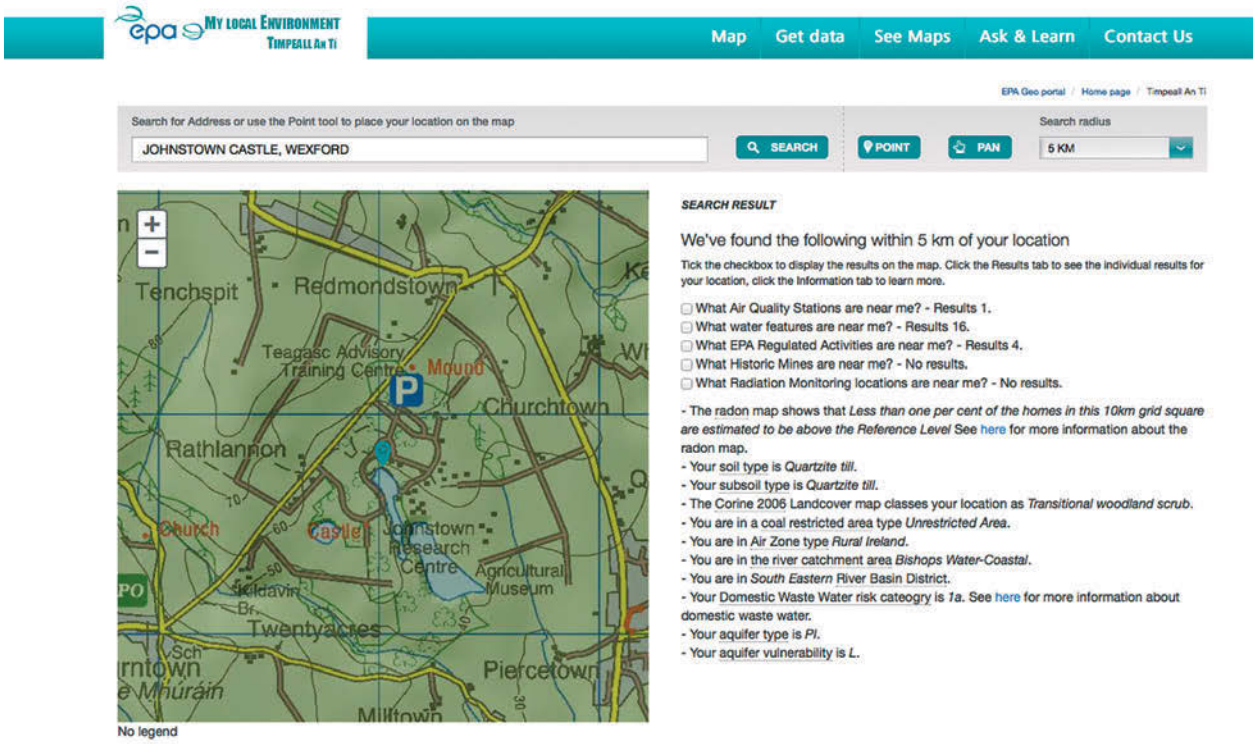
3.2 AWARENESS RAISING

Providing timely and easily accessible information to all our stakeholders contributes to public participation in environmental decision making and gives people the information they need to make environmentally friendly choices.

MY LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

A new GIS application to provide the public with information on their local environment was developed during 2013. This application is called My Local Environment/Timpeall an Tí and allows anyone to input an address and see air quality, water quality and other information about their environs.

The application was made operational at the end of 2013 and was formally launched in early 2014.



IRELAND'S ENVIRONMENT

The Ireland's Environment web resource contains a variety of environmental information which is updated as soon as new data is released. Information is provided in a variety of formats including an indicator dashboard, assessments and videos.

A series of factsheets and infographics were developed by the EPA as part of its on-going programme to communicate key data and information from our State of Environment assessments, to as wide an audience as possible.

The factsheets provide summary information and assessment for a range of topics, from air quality, waste and climate change to more broader cross-cutting issues such as environment & health, sustainable agriculture, and environment & the economy. The infographics were piloted by the EPA in 2013, where graphic visual representations are used to summarise the main information on three topics – air quality, waste and sustainable transport.

It is planned to expand and develop this series of outputs in 2014.

IRELAND'S ENVIRONMENT
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

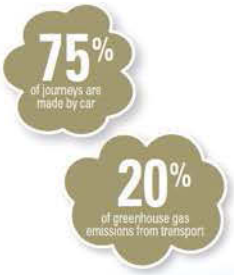
epa Environmental Protection Agency

DID YOU KNOW?

- Approximately three quarters of all journeys made in Ireland are made by private car
- Transport accounts for almost one-fifth of total greenhouse gas emissions
- Limerick City, Dungarvan and Westport currently share funding of €23million into to transform into Smarter Travel Areas
- Ireland's **National Cycle Policy** aims to develop a cycling culture to the extent that by 2020, 10% of all journeys will be by bike

Transport accounts for almost one-fifth of total greenhouse gas emissions and is an emission source that will require major action if Ireland is to meet its 2020 greenhouse emissions obligations.

Between 1990 and 2007, transport emissions grew considerably in Ireland, with emissions in 2007 137% higher than in 1990. However, since 2007 transport emissions have decreased by 20% – due largely to the economic downturn and changes to the vehicle registration and road taxes. Given the strong relationship between growth in transport emissions and the economy, it is reasonable to assume that as the economy recovers, transport emissions will increase again without sustained policy action and further intervention.



TRANSPORT POLICY

Sustainable transport is central to efforts to control greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and environmental damage. The benefits of sustainable transport, however, extend beyond environmental considerations, delivering improvements in congestion, productivity, health and quality of life.

Nationally, the Government approach to sustainable transport is set out in **'Smarter Travel – a Sustainable Transport Future'**, which aims to improve our current transport and travel patterns. Key goals of the strategy include improving economic competitiveness through maximising the efficiency of the transport system; alleviating congestion and infrastructural bottlenecks; minimising the negative impacts of transport on the local and global environments; reducing overall travel demand and commuting distances travelled by private car; and improving security of energy supply by reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels.

Investment in transport, and in particular in large-scale public transport projects, has seen a sharp fall in funding as a result of the economic recession. Government policy is now focused on a wide range of small-scale projects such as improving the existing network, cycling and pedestrianisation projects and the Smarter Travel Areas programme.

SMARTER TRAVEL AREAS

In 2012, Limerick City, Dungarvan and Westport were awarded a combined total funding of €23 million over a five-year period to transform into Smarter Travel Areas, promoting cycling and walking, the use of public transport, and reducing car travel. In broad terms, these Smarter Travel Area projects include provisions for:

- Improved cycling ways, including safe routes to school and to key business and workplace zones
- Secure cycle parking in town centres or at public transport nodes
- Better walking facilities, including pedestrianisation
- Lower speed limits in residential and town centre areas
- School and workplace travel planning
- E-working
- Car clubs

www.epa.ie/
irelandsenvironment/

3.3 BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

The EPA strives to influence positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to be more resource efficient.

NATIONAL WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

The National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP) promotes a resource efficient Ireland by reducing waste, controlling polluting and hazardous substances and enforcing producer responsibilities for a wide range of products. The programme has three main strands:

- Supporting resource efficiency and waste prevention by providing expertise and financial backing for projects/ initiatives;
- Measuring progress through waste reporting and statistics; and
- Implementing statutory obligations on controlled substances and producer responsibility initiatives.

GREENBUSINESS.IE

In 2013, Green Business offered free and confidential advice and assistance to 57 companies on resource efficiency improvements and cost savings, through waste prevention and reductions in water and energy consumption. 60% of these visits were to the food processing sector, many of which are involved in the Bord Bia Origin Green programme. Green Business identified average savings of €40,000 per company visited, in areas including water, waste and energy management. Potential savings identified ranged from €650 to €421,000/annum, with overall savings of €2 million identified for the participating businesses.

The Green Enterprise Programme committed funding of €621,405 to 12 SME's in 2013, to support resource efficiency and cleaner technology development.

Summary statistics for the Green Business programme:

- 6 resource efficiency seminars events hosted
- 10 new case studies prepared
- 21 presentations on Green Business made at national and local sectoral events
- 30 Cross-linking meetings attended to develop partnership with other government funded resource efficiency
- 50 Resource Efficiency Assessments carried out
- 262 delegates attended seminars and increased their knowledge of resource efficiency
- 1000 companies registered with Green Business.

GREEN HOSPITALITY

The Green Hospitality Programme (GHP) has engaged more than 30% of Irish hotels and approximately 50% of Irish Hotel Rooms over its six years, by providing a step-by-step approach to environmental management through awards given at Eco-label, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. The programme has become the standard for environmental management within the hospitality sector in Ireland. In 2013, membership of the Green Hospitality Programme grew to 270.

Estimated environmental benefits for Green Hospitality Programme members annually are:

- 8,500 tonnes of waste prevented
- 42,000,000 kWh of energy saved
- 400,000 m^3 of water saved
- 9,200 tonnes of CO_2 saved
- an estimated €5 million saved.

GREEN HEALTHCARE

The Green Healthcare programme has worked with 33 healthcare facilities, including acute hospitals, children's hospitals and primary community continuing care (PCCC) facilities representing 50% of the acute beds in Ireland to prevent and reduce waste and emissions from healthcare facilities in Ireland.

In 2013 the revamped Green Healthcare website – www.greenhealthcare.ie – was launched. The main aim of the website is to provide guidance and support information to any healthcare facility wising to implement waste prevention and increased segregation measures.

The Green Healthcare programme identified annual potential savings, across the HSE hospital groups, of €7 million in food waste, more than €1 million in healthcare risk waste management and €0.5 million in other waste prevention activities.

LOCAL AUTHORITY PREVENTION NETWORK

The Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) has now engaged with 31 out of the 34 local authorities in Ireland to promote waste prevention and resource efficiency at a local level. This network of local authority personnel, embedded in local communities, businesses and other organisations, gave the practical knowledge on how to apply resource efficiency.

STOP FOOD WASTE

Stop Food Waste programme promotes changes in behaviour that lead to reducing food waste and to composting at home, through a combination of education, training, local champions, peer example and easy-to-use information. One of the main points of contact for the programme is the new website - www.stopfoodwaste.ie.

Up to 409,000 viewers tuned in to the TV documentary *Waste Watchers* which aired on RTÉ in December. The programme featured the residents of Killorglin, Co. Kerry demonstrating how small changes can lead to reducing food waste and saving money. More videos filmed during the Killorglin initiative are available on the Stop Food Waste website.

COMMUNITY REUSE NETWORK AND SMILE RESOURCE EXCHANGE

As we get better at managing waste and resources, reuse, recovery and recycling Networks are becoming more popular and the EPA has been supporting these reuse networks in Ireland for a number of years. SMILE Resource Exchange is a free service for business that encourages the exchanging of resources between its members in order to save them money, reduce waste going to landfill and develop new business opportunities. Potential exchanges are identified through networking events, an online exchange facility (www.smileexchange.ie) and a support team to assist throughout.

SMART FARMING

Smart Farming is an on-farm resource efficiency initiative run by the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) in conjunction with the EPA. A key output from this programme in 2013 is the Smart Farming Guide along with the supporting website and smart phone App. The website is available via www.smartfarming.ie and also through the IFA's ifarm portal.

Copies of the *Smart Farming Guide* were made available through the national seminar and workshop which was held in November with over 130 delegates who participated in the discussions in relation to resource efficiency on farms. Six on-farm resource efficiency assessments (REAs) were carried in October 2013. All 6 farmers presented their experience of the REAs at the seminar in November.

PILOT FARM HAZARDOUS WASTE BRING CENTRES

In November 2013, a project team comprising EPA, the Pesticide Control Division of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc, six local authorities, WEEE Ireland, European Recycling Platform (ERP) and Rilta Environmental Ltd (a hazardous waste contractor) collaborated on a pilot project to collect farm hazardous waste at six centres across the country.

A total of 864 farmers used the bring centres and deposited 94,472 kg of farm hazardous waste and 22,228 kg of waste electronic and electrical equipment and batteries. The six locations were Ballinasloe (141 farmers); Tullow (142); Ballymote (79); Trim (117); Midleton (163); and Thurles (222). Farmers also contributed financially to the pilot project and were issued with a certificate of disposal.

GREEN HOME

By the end of 2013, 98 primary schools and 14 community groups – with approximately 30,000 associated households throughout Ireland - had received the *Green Home* award. In addition, there are over 280 Tidy Towns/Community groups registered on the programme.

GREENING COMMUNITIES

The following are key achievements for the *Greening Communities* programme in 2013:

- Five communities registered for the *"Greening Communities Challenge"*.
- Engagement with 12 demonstration greening communities and one County Council area.
- Over 1000 direct community based interactions (seminars/ workshops and action groups).
- Over 70 meetings with other programme operators (Including identifying synergies with Sustainable Energy Communities Programme; the Tidy Towns Competition; the Pride of Place Programme; and the Green Home Programme).
- Data collection on programmes/initiatives (50+) that are currently in operation in Ireland.

CHAPTER 4: **ENABLING CHANGE AND REFORM**

The EPA is committed to being a high performance organisation and to achieving best practice in its management, governance and use of technology.

4.1 PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES

4.2 PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY

4.3. GOVERNANCE

4.4 MERGER WITH THE RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION INSTITUTE OF IRELAND (RPII)

4.1 PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES

REDUCED RESOURCES

The EPA's continuing goal is to ensure that we have a committed workforce that performs to its maximum ability.

Arising from the Public Service Agreement and the Employment Control Framework, the EPA staff complement was 315 at the end of 2013. 133 staff were located at EPA Headquarters in Wexford, with the remaining staff strategically located in five Regional Inspectorates and three small offices throughout the country.

To deliver on its statutory functions, with reduced staffing and financial resources, the EPA has adapted its ways of working. The organisational structure has been changed significantly on a number of occasions to help adapt to the loss of staff and to reflect emerging priorities and challenges.

The EPA has taken significant steps to adapt through using smarter technology and external service providers where possible, sharing of services and functions with other agencies and internal re-assignments to priority areas through workforce planning.

The EPA has a very positive attitude to work placements, and continued to participate in Job Bridge, the National Internship Scheme in 2013. Many of the interns who participated in the scheme were successful in gaining full-time employment in the private sector as a result of their placement with the EPA. At the end of December 2013 a total of eight Interns were in place.

The EPA received sanction in the latter part of 2012 to implement a new Human Resource Management Information System. The new integrated system will provide greater efficiencies, will enhance the role of line managers in relation to the management of staff, and will provide an improved reporting capability for staff management. A phased implementation of the new system commenced in 2013.

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

During 2013, the EPA developed a revised Integrated Reform Delivery Plan (IRDP) for implementation of the Public Service Reform Plan and the Haddington Road Agreement, and made significant progress in implementing it.

This plan gives effect to the measures set out in the Agreement and outlines the specific actions to be taken by the EPA to achieve efficiencies and savings, the timescale for these, the benefits and verifiable savings arising and the periods in which they will be achieved.

Continuing emphasis was placed on internal Cross Office collaboration for the EPA in delivering its 2013 Annual Work Programme. Significant progress was achieved on the development and roll out of LEMA (Licensing, Enforcement and Monitoring Application) project. This integrated IT project is focused on moving many of the EPA licensing, enforcement and monitoring duties onto an automated electronic platform which will result in substantial efficiencies for both the EPA and its stakeholders.

Under this project new on-line services were rolled out for licensees in the areas of Urban Waste Water and IPPC historic landfills. During 2013, the platform was extended to include Drinking Water, Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and Fluorinated gases (F-gases) resulting in the elimination of over 10,000 pieces of correspondence from licensees in paper format as they are now are collected electronically.

PARTNERSHIP

The EPA has had an internal Partnership Committee (Meitheal) in place since 1999. The work of Meitheal is mainly conducted through Cross Office groups. During 2013 Meitheal continued to play a role in the ongoing development of Health and Safety initiatives, Green Team activities, staff climate, staff consultation in relation to the merger of the EPA and the RPII, and input into the Public Service Agreement 2010–2014 IRDP and Progress Reports.

Externally the EPA continues to work with other agencies operating in a similar environment to identify opportunities and implement actions where collaboration and co-operation can yield efficiencies for stakeholders. To this end the EPA has now in place 14 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreements with various organisations that have an involvement in, or who contribute to matters relating to the environment.

SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

In order to continuously improve the depth of skills and knowledge across the organisation, the EPA has a very significant commitment to staff learning and development. That commitment is reflected in a budget allocation to Learning & Development which represents approximately 2.5% of payroll spend. During 2013 staff participated in a programme of 278 (internal, external and specialist) training courses, workshops, conferences and seminars, amounting to a total of 1,587 training days' giving an average of 5.15 days training per person.

In 2013 significant work took place on the building of team skills and capabilities through a Team Development Initiative.

The EPA has a formal Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) in place which is well embedded with full participation. The PMDS aims are to promote high performance standards by employees, ensure achievement of business goals set out in the Strategic Plan, develop employee skills and promote clear two-way discussion between managers and employees.

STRONG LEADERSHIP

Work continued in 2013 on "The Way Forward for Leadership in the EPA", with a focus on designing support initiatives for managers that:

- consolidate the leadership knowledge and skills already invested in;
- take account of the EPA's leadership and technical culture;
- build and embed a leadership framework of behaviours and standards that are positive, proactive and mindful; and
- supports the EPA strategic goal of continuing to be a High Performance Organisation.

The EPA continued roll-out of an Essential Skills of Management and Leadership programme for first line managers.

EPA ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The EPA is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of its own operations. The EPA's Environmental Management System (EMS) is audited twice a year by an external accredited body to ensure that the requirements of the internationally recognised ISO 14001 Standard are met. The main energy consumption at EPA offices and laboratories is related to space heating, lighting, power, hot water and transport fuel. In 2013 the EPA's total energy consumption amounted to 2,867 MWh.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE AT WORK

The EPA is committed to ensuring the safety, health and welfare of its staff through the provision of appropriate training, audit, risk assessment and safety awareness programmes. The EPA's excellent safety record was maintained, with no serious accidents or injuries occurring at work during 2013.

BOARD OF THE EPA

The EPA Board comprises five full-time Executive Directors. A total of 54 Board meetings were held in 2013, this included 12 general meetings, at which corporate policy, strategy, finance and planning issues were dealt with, and 42 technical meetings, at which licence applications, prosecutions and operational issues were dealt with.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The 6th EPA Advisory Committee was appointed by Mr Phil Hogan, TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government on 13 February 2013. The Committee held four meetings during 2013 and continued to provide useful and timely advice to the EPA on a range of issues.

SUPPORT OF IRISH EU PRESIDENCY 2013

The EPA provided expert personnel to support the Irish Presidency during the 2013 calendar of activities. Whilst a good deal of Presidency support work in terms of document review and analysis was undertaken from EPA offices, there were a key number of international meetings that were serviced by EPA staff at the request of the Government.

4.2 PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY

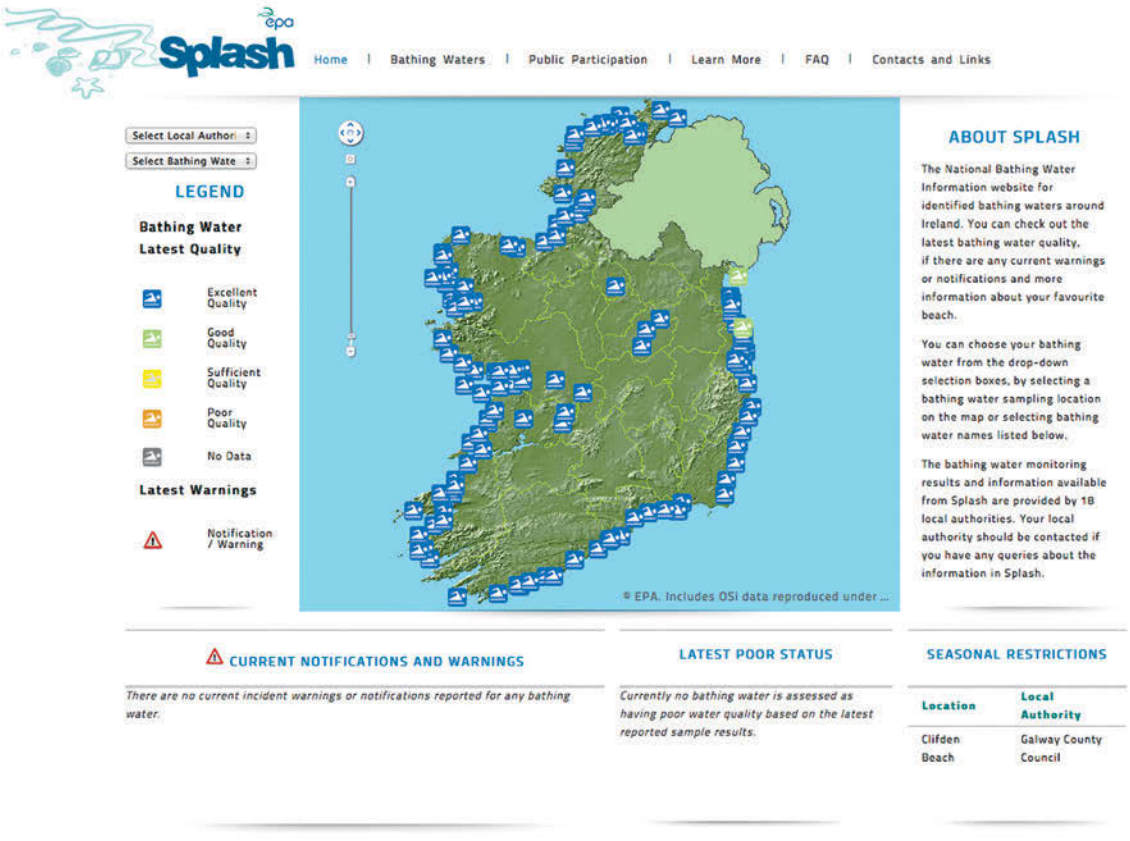
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENABLED CHANGE AND REFORM

Information Technology has always been used in the EPA as an enabler of change and reform by:

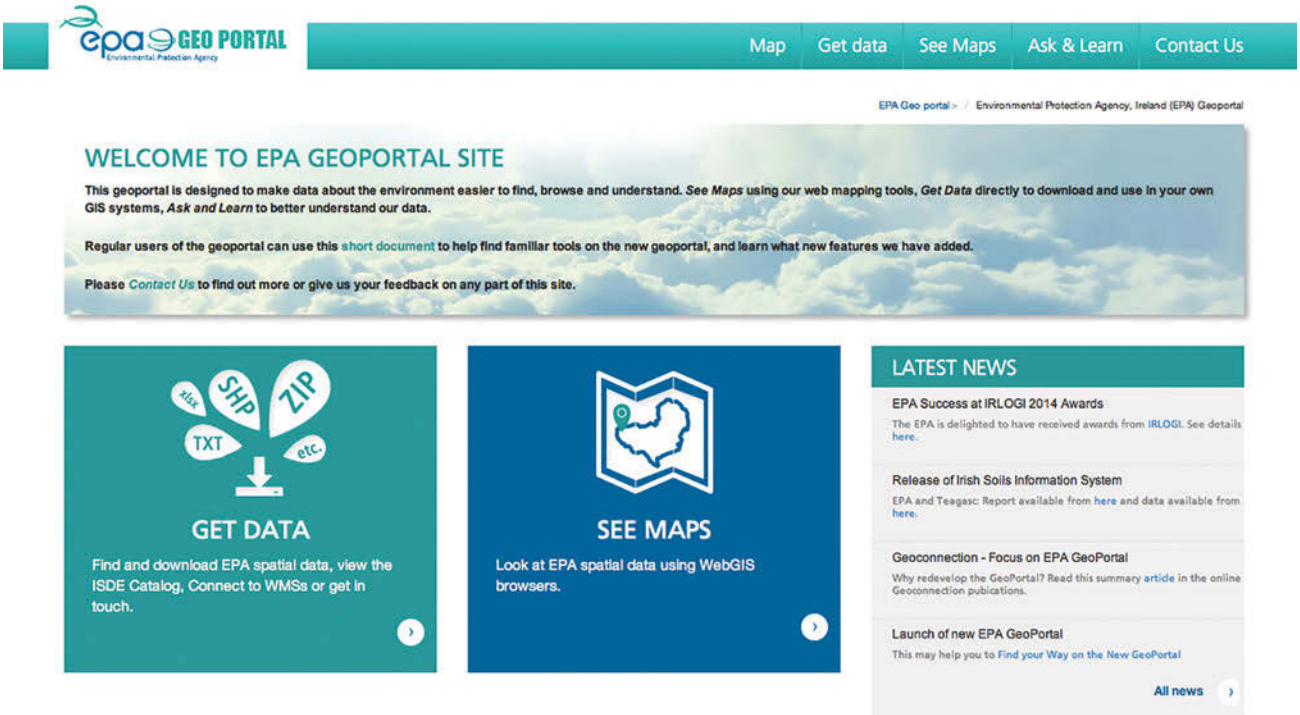
- simplifying, standardising and where possible, automating key processes and regulatory tasks;
- maximising the number of on-line and shared services, thereby providing a better customer service, improving data accessibility and reducing costs for the taxpayer and our service users;
- the adoption and development of leading edge information, communication and spatial assessment technologies to deliver effective outcomes and our strategic priorities;
- providing improved access to data and providing key decision support tools that allow stakeholders to carry out their tasks more efficiently.

During 2013 the EPA continued to make significant improvements in its systems and processes,including:

- The re-development and enhancement of *SPLASH*, the public bathing water website. *SPLASH* was well used throughout the summer months and further development is planned for 2014 to reflect the requirements for full implementation of the Bathing Water Regulations. A new Bathing Water Compliance Risk Incident System (CRIS) was also developed to support delivery of statutory obligations and gain efficiencies in collating and managing information from the local authorities. This was used extensively in the assessment of submissions for short-term pollution (STP) events for the 2013 bathing water assessment.
- The development of a new interactive web mapping tool for the general public called *My Local Environment/ Timpeall An Tí*. This new tool allows the public to identify an area of interest (e.g. their home) and get a report on the environmental information for that area. The system was made operational towards the end of the year and launched in early 2014.



- Improvements to design and usability of the EPAs GeoPortal Maps section on www.epa.ie. The GeoPortal is the primary resource for providing the public with access to spatial data and all associated environmental data. The redevelopment work makes it easier to access mapping tools, download data and learn about EPA data. It also allows interested parties to download EPA geographical datasets for their own use. Between 6,000 and 8,000 visits were recorded to the portal during each quarter in 2013.
- Facilitating the development and sharing of web applications and environmental data between public authorities through the Environmental Data Exchange Network (EDEN) shared service.
- Improvements to the Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems application to facilitate inspection management.
- Development of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) WebGIS & Reporting Tool for public authorities to review relevant data under Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- Preliminary work on the development of a new application to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.
- Use of spatial analysis to establish the primary environmental considerations for licensing discharges and evaluating the environmental risk of discharges for the enforcement of licences. Spatial analysis was also used to improve the delineation of WFD river waterbody catchments to ensure that WFD status is more accurately classified.
- Electronic collection and routing of over 10,000 pieces of correspondence from licensees (replacing paper interactions).
- On-line examination of over 700 licences and the amendment of close to 430 licences by the 7th January 2014 deadline set by the EU Industrial Emissions Directive.
- Introducing the use of Microsoft Master Data Services to facilitate the improvement of data management. Microsoft Master Data Services is a system that allows data used and edited by different users in different systems, to be managed centrally. Significant further work on mobile data capture is planned for 2014.
- Implementation of Shared services for Finance and Human Resources through the CORE HR.



4.3 GOVERNANCE

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The EPA continues to comply with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2009. The EPA commissioned an independent review of its compliance with the Code and of the internal control systems in place in the EPA in 2013. The review found that the EPA has a full-time Corporate Governance Unit with responsibility for overseeing and reporting on the implementation of and compliance with the Code of Practice. It also found that the EPA has a range of policies and procedures covering the key areas of governance and internal control. These policies were reviewed and it was noted that they were fit for purpose and in line with good practice.

The review noted also that regular management meetings and workshops are held in the areas of governance and internal control and there is a high level of awareness of the need for a strong system of control throughout the organisation. An Implementation Plan to further enhance the system of financial controls was significantly progressed by end of 2013.

INTERNAL AUDIT

The EPA's Internal Audit Committee comprises of an external Chairperson and other external expertise in lieu of non-executive Director input, together with a senior representative from the EPA. In light of increasing responsibilities, greater emphasis on corporate governance and the imminent merger with the RPII, membership of the IAC was increased to six in 2013, with the addition of two further external members.

Three internal audits were carried out during the year in the areas of value for money and IT security and implementation plans to address the audit recommendations were commenced.

The Internal Audit Plan for the period 2014 - 2015 was developed during 2013. It reflects the risks identified in the EPA's Corporate Risk Register, the requirements of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and developments and issues in relation to Corporate Governance that have arisen in the Public Sector in general.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Risk Management process in the EPA includes the identification, classification, evaluation, monitoring and control of events and activities. The system in place in the EPA provides a cycle of risk management procedures as well as providing a framework for managing risks as they arise.

A Chief Risk Officer was appointed and a Risk Committee has been in place since 2011 and met twice during 2013. A fundamental review of office-level risks was also completed in 2013 and the Office Risk Register was updated.

The Corporate Risk Register was updated to reflect changes that had occurred in relation to principal risks and mitigations. The Corporate Risk Register sets out key risks under the following nine headings:

- Reputation,
- Operational & Business Controls,
- Personnel,
- Legal and Regulatory,
- Information Management and Technology,
- Fraud/ and Corruption,
- Budgetary/Financial,
- Health & Safety, and
- Inter-Agency.

Both the Office and Corporate Risk Registers are subject to regular monitoring.

Through the Risk Management process, the following key risks facing the EPA were identified:

- The loss of specialist knowledge and skills, through retirements, and the impact of the public sector staff moratorium;
- Reducing income, in particular earned income;
- The closure/liquidation of large licensed facilities with associated environmental liability legacies and costs;
- Implementing the merger within the timeframe set out by the Government and the successful integration of the Radiological Protection Institute (RPII) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

CUSTOMER SERVICE

In the EPA's new Strategic Plan 2013 - 2015 – *Working with Others for a Better Environment* - the EPA commits to continue to monitor and analyse its communication services to ensure that value for money and efficient customer service are provided. As part of the EPA commitment of providing accessible information a new website was launched in 2013 and there is on-going development and refinement of the website to meet customer needs. In February 2013 the EPA launched a new iPhone App, *See it? Say it!* to help people report environmental pollution, which is complemented by the 24-hour National Environmental Complaints Phone line.

The EPA continues to adhere to the standards laid out in the customer charter and no complaints were referred to the QCS officer in 2013.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUERIES

The Environmental Queries unit continues to centralise and manage environmental queries received from the public via telephone, email and the internet. In 2013, approximately 2,700 queries were processed with 88 per cent of these being directly closed out by the officer, providing customers with a high level of service. Topics of particular interest to the public included issues in relation to domestic waste water systems (septic tanks), hydraulic fracturing (fracking), illegal dumping, environmental pollution and noise. In addition, new website pages was developed to provide more accessible information to customers.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The EPA is committed to being an open and accessible organisation and to providing environmental information to the public in an accessible manner. In addition, the Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts and the Access to Information (AIE) Regulations are two further methods of accessing information for those members of the public that have not been able to access the information they require under alternative routes.

During 2013 the EPA received six FOI requests. Of these, five were granted or part-granted and one was withdrawn.

Under the AIE Regulations, the EPA received 35 requests and one was carried over from 2012. Of these, 20 were granted in full or in part, 14 were refused and two remained live at the year-end. Of the requests that were refused, half were technical refusals, i.e. either the EPA did not hold the information, the information was already available on the public file or on our website, or the information requested was not deemed to be environmental information under the Regulations. The remaining refusals were based on the mandatory and discretionary grounds for refusal as outlined in the AIE Regulations.

The EPA processed seven Internal Reviews where the original decision was appealed, resulting in two original decisions being annulled, the means of access being varied in one case and affirmation of the original decision in the remaining appeals. Three appeals, from the same appellant, to the Commissioner for Environmental Information were live at the year-end.

4.4 MERGER WITH RPII

The Government's Public Sector Reform Plan included a commitment published in November 2012 to merge the EPA and the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII). Preparatory work to give effect to the merger commenced in early 2013.

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government decided that the bodies should be merged by creating an additional Office within the EPA structure, bringing the total number of Offices to five, each headed by a Director. In addition, an Advisory Committee for radiation issues will be established to provide expert input to the merged organisation.

The vision for the merger is that it will bring together the committed and dedicated staff of both organisations to create a strong scientific organisation that combines the expert resources and the excellent reputations of the EPA and the RPII and continues to place the same high value on environmental and radiological protection.

In January 2013, the Minister set up a Merger Working Group to manage the process of merging the RPII with the EPA in accordance with Government policy.

The Merger Working Group was comprised of representatives from the DECLG, EPA and the RPII. The Merger Working Group's high-level objective was to plan for and manage the merger to completion. The Working Group was also explicitly tasked with ensuring that there is no diminution, or perception of any diminution, among stakeholders and the general public, in Ireland's commitment to either environmental or radiological protection - arising from the merger.

Terms of Reference were established for the working group to manage the merger process and an action plan was approved by the Minister in July 2013.

The Merger Working Group established a Merger Project Group to implement the actions required to give effect to the merger and good progress was made during the last quarter of 2013.

Regular updates of the merger process were published on the EPA website.

APPENDICES

CONSULTANTS AND ADVISERS ENGAGED IN 2013

PROMPT PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS ACT, 1997

EPA PUBLICATIONS 2013

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2013

- STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCY
- STATEMENT ON INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL
- REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL
- ACCOUNTING POLICIES
- INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
- STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES
- BALANCE SHEET
- CASH FLOW STATEMENT
- NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

CONSULTANTS AND ADVISERS ENGAGED IN 2013

Accenture Ireland	Carr Communications Ltd	LHM Casey McGrath
Achilles Procurement Services	Clean Technology Centre	Mason, Hayes & Curran
Acustica Ltd	Compass Informatics Ltd	Mazars Ireland
Aether Ltd	Cora Systems Ltd	Mott McDonald Pettit Ltd
Antaris Consulting	Deloitte	Penna Plc.
Amec Earth & Environmental UK Ltd	EnviroGuide	River Crossing Business Solutions Ltd
ARIA Wealth & Investment Ltd	Fehily Timoney & Company	RPS Group
Assure Health & Safety Consultants	Geosyntec Consultants	Sinclair Knight Merz (Ireland) Ltd
Barry Doyle & Company	IP Forensics Ireland Limited	Tandem Consulting
Camp Dresser &McKee (Ireland) Ltd.	Institute of Public Administration	Tobin Environmental Services
Capita Business Solutions Ltd.	Kefron Consulting	URS Ireland Ltd

PROMPT PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS ACT, 1997

The Environmental Protection Agency comes under the remit of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997, which came into effect on 2 January 1998, and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2012, which came into effect on 16 March 2012.

It is the policy of the EPA to ensure that all invoices are paid promptly. Specific systems and procedures have been put in place to enable invoices to be tracked and to ensure that payments are made before their due date. Purchase invoices are logged on a daily basis in the Accounts Section, and are followed up systematically to ensure that they are certified and returned for payment without delay. Payments are issued as required to ensure prompt payment.

These controls are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material non-compliance with the Act and Regulations.

There were no late payments with values in excess of €317 during 2013.

Laura Burke

Director General EPA

EPA PUBLICATIONS 2013

The majority of EPA publications are available to download from the EPA website www.epa.ie/downloads. All publications can also be purchased either on-line or from EPA Publications Sales at +353 916 0642.

AIR

The following air reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/air/

- Air Quality in Ireland 2012- Key Indicators of Ambient Air Quality
- Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH)
- Dioxin Levels in the Irish Environment 2012

CORPORATE

The following corporate reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/other/corporate/

- EPA Annual Report and Accounts 2012
- 2012 End of Year Statement
- EPA News
- Greening the EPA: Our Environmental Performance Report 2009-2012
- EPA Strategic Plan 2013-2015
- National Implementation Plan on Persistent Organics Pollutants
- Dumping at Sea- EPA Enforcement and Permitting Booklet

WASTE

The following waste reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/waste/

- National Waste Report 2011
- National Waste Prevention Programme (NWPP) Annual Report 2012
- Municipal Waste Bulletin 2012

WATER

The following water reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/water/

- The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland A Report for the Year 2012
- The Quality of Bathing Water in Ireland 2012
- Integrated Water Quality Report for 2012- South East Ireland
- Integrated Water Quality Report for 2012- Galway and Mayo
- Integrated Water Quality Report for 2012- Monaghan and Louth
- Focus on Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2012
- National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems
- National Inspection Plan- Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2013- An Interim Review
- A Risk-Based Methodology to assist in the Regulation of Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems

GUIDANCE NOTES

The following guidance notes can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/advice/

- Guidance on the Management of Contaminated Land and Groundwater at EPA Licensed Sites
- Guidance on Fire Safety at Non-Hazardous Waste Transfer Stations
- Regulation and Management of Waste Wood
- WEEE, Batteries and Metal Theft prevention leaflet
- The Battery Regulations- How to comply?

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH REPORTS

CLIMATE CHANGE

The following climate change research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/ climate/

- The Potential for Grass Biomethane as a Biofuel (CCRP 11)
- Co-Ordination, Communication and Adaptation for Climate Change In Ireland: An Integrated Approach (CCRP 30)
- Winners and Losers: Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity in Ireland (CCRP 19)
- Climate Change Impacts on Phenology: Implications for Terrestrial Ecosystems (CCRP 22)
- Ireland's National Phenology Network (IE- NPN) (CCRP 23)
- HydroDetect (CCRP 27)
- Coastal Climate Adaptation in Ireland (CCRP 28)
- Climate Change Research Programme- Thematic Areas and Projects Funded
- Governance and Climate Change- Making the transition to an adapted Ireland (CCRP 20)

- The Status of Ireland's Climate (CCRP 26)
- Robust Adaptation to Climate Change in the Water Sector in Ireland (CCRP 16)
- Addressing Climate Change Challenges in Ireland (CCRP 25)

WATER

The following water research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/water/

- Assessment and Monitoring of Ocean Noise in Irish Waters (STRIVE 120)
- Norovirus in Waste Water and Shellfish (STRIVE 109)
- Monitoring of Priority Substances in Waste Water Effluents (STRIVE 117)
- Regional-Scale Assessment of Submarine Groundwater Discharge Using Remote Sensing (STRIVE 112)
- Water Saving Technologies to Reduce Water Consumption and Waste Water Production (STRIVE 108)
- Ecosystem Indicators for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (STRIVE 105)
- Ireland's Environmental Researchers and Framework Programme FP7
- Evaluating the Influence of Groundwater Pressures on Groundwater-Dependent Wetlands (STRIVE 100)
- Management Strategies for the Protection of High Status Water Bodies (STRIVE 99)

BIODIVERSITY

The following biodiversity research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/biodiversity/

- SIMBIOSYS: Sectoral Impacts on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (STRIVE 115)
- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment - Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes - A Practitioners Manual

LANDUSE, SOILS AND TRANSPORT

The following landuse, soils and transport research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/land/

- Identification, Mapping, Assessment and Quantification of the effects of disturbance on The Peat Soil Carbon Stock in Ireland (STRIVE 98)

WASTE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The following resource management research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/waste/

- Re- Evaluate Re-use of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (Evaluation and Mainstreaming) (STRIVE 110)
- Resource Efficient Ireland: Biodegradable Plastic from Farm Waste Plastic (STRIVE 107)
- FLOW Technology- A Green Technology with a Bright Future (STRIVE 101)

SOCIO-ECONOMICS

The following socio-economic research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/econ/

- Towards a Green Net National Product for Ireland (STRIVE 103)

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

The following environmental technology research reports can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.ie/downloads/pubs/research/tech/

- New Approaches to Renewable Energy (STRIVE 111)
- From Doughnuts to Energy: Miniature Enzyme Driven Biofuel Cells (STRIVE 114)
- Developing Coated Filtration Membranes for Water Purification (STRIVE 116)
- The use of novel enzymes for the cleaner, greener production of cellulosic bioethanol (STRIVE 113)
- Safer Acid Catalysts (STRIVE 119)

ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

- Extreme Temperatures and Mortality in Ireland (STRIVE 102)
- Indoor Air Pollution and Health (STRIVE 104)

SMALL SCALE STUDIES

- Classification of Freshwater Sponges in Ireland

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2013

- Statement of Responsibilities of the Agency
- Statement on Internal Financial Control
- Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General
- Accounting Policies
- Income and Expenditure Account
- Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses
- Balance Sheet
- Cash Flow Statement
- Notes to the Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGENCY

Section 50(1) of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, requires the EPA to prepare financial statements in such form as may be approved by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in consultation with the Minister for Finance.

In preparing those financial statements, the EPA is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the EPA will continue in operation;
- disclose and explain any material departures from applicable accounting standards.

The EPA is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the EPA and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 50 of the EPA Act. The EPA is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Laura Burke

Director General

Micheál O Cinnéide

Director

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL 2013

1. On behalf of the Directors of the EPA, I acknowledge our collective responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial controls is maintained and operated, for preparing the accounts of the EPA and for complying with all statutory obligations applicable to the EPA.

2. The Directors of the EPA acknowledge also that the system of internal financial controls can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised, properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected and rectified in a timely period. While the effectiveness of an internal control system can change over time, the EPA reviews and updates such systems as required.

3. KEY PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

i) The Directors of the EPA have taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment within the EPA by:

- Publishing the EPA Strategic Plan 2013-2015 *Working with Others for a Better Environment*. This Strategy sets out the EPA's Vision, Goals and nine Strategic Priorities. Implementation of the Strategy is monitored and reported to the Board of the EPA on a periodic basis. Agreeing a detailed work programme each year and monitoring and evaluating progress against that work programme on a monthly basis.
- Holding regular Board meetings, including monthly management meetings where the Agenda includes strategic issues such as Corporate Governance, Financial Management, Corporate Strategy and staffing matters.
- Adopting a set of financial procedures to control the significant financial elements of the EPA's business and publishing these in the staff Finance Manual.
- Maintaining a comprehensive schedule of insurances to protect the EPA's interests.
- Establishing an Internal Audit Committee, as part of the on-going systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures within the EPA, to oversee the Internal Audit function and advise the Board in relation to the operation and development of that function.
- Establishing and operating a Risk Management Policy and Framework, appointing a Risk Committee and a Chief Risk Officer.
- Adopting a Policy for monitoring and assessing compliance with corporate legislation.
- Clearly defining management responsibilities, delegating appropriate functions, and reviewing and approving all EPA policies and procedures.
- Adopting a Code of Business Conduct for Directors and Staff in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
- Ensuring compliance with the Ethics in Public Office Acts requirements and Sections 37 & 38 of the EPA Act 1992, relating to the Declaration and Disclosure of Interests.

ii) The EPA's Risk Management Policy and Structures are in compliance with the revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. A Chief Risk Officer was appointed and a Risk Committee established in the EPA in 2011.

The Risk Committee met on two occasions in 2013. A review of Office level risks was completed in 2013 and the All-Office Risk Register was updated. The Corporate Risk Register was updated to reflect changes that had occurred in relation to principal risks and mitigations and sets out the key risks for the EPA.

Both the All-Office and Corporate Risk Registers are subject to regular monitoring and are reviewed by the Risk Committee. The Internal Audit Committee and the EPA Board review the Corporate Risk Register on an annual basis. Each Director provides quarterly assurance statements to the Board acknowledging responsibility for the on-going update, monitoring and review of the Risk Register for their Office and for ensuring the implementation of the Risk Management Policy.

iii) The system of internal financial controls is based on a framework of regular management information, a system of delegation and accountability, a set of financial and administrative procedures including segregation of duties. In particular it includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget, which is reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

- The assignment of budgets and budgetary authority and responsibility for specific functions to selected managers. A Finance Manual is in place and sets out policies and procedures in relation to budgetary and financial issues.
- Restricting authority for final approval of all payments of EPA monies, payment of salaries, pensions, creditors, and expenses etc. (whether by cheque or electronic fund transfer) to Directors and three named Programme Managers.
- Segregation of payment transaction processing duties into two steps: (a) confirmation that goods/services were received and salaries, pensions and expenses were due, by staff responsible for these transactions and (b) calculation of the total monies due by the Finance Unit, prior to seeking authorisation for payment.
- Arrangements for all purchasing to be conducted and controlled through the EPA's financial management system and procedures.
- Regular and on-going review of payments by senior management.
- Regular reviews by the Board of periodic and annual financial information and reports (including key financial management information and purchasing commitments), which indicate financial performance against budgets.
- The application of project management disciplines in respect of building programmes and other major projects.
- A system of control on the overall approval of capital contracts.
- Development of an Asset Management Process and Procedures.
- Adoption in 2011 of a Corporate Procurement Plan covering the period 2011-2013.

iv) The financial implications of business risks have been considered through the formal business risk assessment process and in the preparation of the EPA Internal Audit Plans. These are further assessed and evaluated through the phased implementation of the EPA's Internal Audit Plan. A comprehensive set of Financial Procedures have been put in place to control the significant financial elements of the EPA's business including authorisation limits for purchasing/expenditure.

v) The EPA's Internal Audit Committee comprise an external Chairperson and other external expertise in lieu of non-executive Director input, together with a senior representative from the EPA. In light of increasing responsibilities, greater emphasis on corporate governance and, the imminent merger with the RPII, membership of the IAC was increased to six in 2013, with the addition of two further external members.

The EPA Internal Audit Plan 2013 – 2014 was progressively implemented during the year with an audit completed in the area of IM&T Security and two Value for Money (VFM) Review reports presented to the Internal Audit Committee and the Board in 2013. The VFM reviews were carried out in accordance with Department of Finance Guidelines and were in the areas of the National Waste Prevention Programme and the Water Framework Directive.

Implementation Plans to address audit recommendations are approved by the Audit Committee and the Board of the EPA. Progress on the implementation of the actions in each of the Internal Audit Implementation Plans is regularly reviewed and reported to the Audit Committee and the EPA Board.

The Internal Audit Plan for the period 2014 - 2015 was developed during 2013 and approved in November 2013 and reflects the risks identified in the EPA's Corporate Risk Register, the requirements of the Comptroller and Auditor General, and developments and issues in relation to Corporate Governance that have arisen in the Public Sector in general. This Internal Audit Plan was approved by the Internal Audit Committee and by the EPA Board.

4. ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONTROLS

I confirm that, in addition to the internal audits carried out and referred to in paragraph 3 (v) above, the EPA arranged for a formal independent review, in March 2013, of its compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and of the internal control systems in place in the EPA. This review was carried out using external expertise and was based on a detailed examination of governance, financial management and control documentation.

The review found that it was evident that the EPA invests in Corporate Governance and Internal Control processes. It was noted that the EPA has a full-time Corporate Governance Unit with responsibility for overseeing and reporting on the implementation of and compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The review also stated that the EPA has a multitude of policies and procedures

covering the key areas of governance and internal control. The policies were reviewed and it was noted that they were adequate and generally in line with good practice.

The report noted also that regular management meetings and workshops are held in the areas of governance and internal control, and there is a high level of awareness of the need for a strong system of control throughout the organisation.

The overall conclusions of the review were that:

- there is a strong system of Corporate Governance in operation within the EPA and the EPA is substantially compliant with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies,
- Corporate Governance is at a well-developed stage in the EPA when benchmarked against other state agencies.
- the control environment in the EPA is generally adequate with a small number of areas for improvement noted.

An Implementation Plan to address the recommendations of the above review to further enhance the system of internal financial controls was approved by the Board and significantly progressed by the end of 2013.

I confirm also that the Directors of the Agency conducted a review of the system of internal controls in the EPA in 2013.

Signed on behalf of the Board.

Laura Burke

Director General

29 September 2014

REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL FOR PRESENTATION TO THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

I have audited the financial statements of the Environmental Protection Agency for the year ended 31 December 2013 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992. The financial statements, which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein, comprise the accounting policies, the income and expenditure account, the statement of total recognised gains and losses, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement and the related notes. The financial statements have been prepared in the form prescribed under Section 50 of the Act, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE AGENCY

The Agency is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, for ensuring that they give a true and fair view of the state of the Agency's affairs and of its income and expenditure, and for ensuring the regularity of transactions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and report on them in accordance with applicable law.

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation.

My audit is carried out in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and in compliance with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

SCOPE OF AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of:

- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Agency's circumstances, and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed
- the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made in the preparation of the financial statements, and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I also seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit.

In addition, I read the Agency's annual report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies, I consider the implications for my report.

OPINION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In my opinion, the financial statements, which have been properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in Ireland, give a true and fair view of the state of the Agency's affairs at 31 December 2013 and of its income and expenditure for 2013.

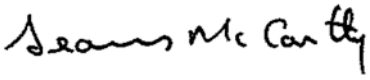
In my opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the Agency. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

MATTERS ON WHICH I REPORT BY EXCEPTION

I report by exception if:

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- my audit noted any material instance where money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where the transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them, or
- the information given in the Agency's annual report is not consistent with the related financial statements, or
- the statement on internal financial control does not reflect the Agency's compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, or
- I find there are other material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I have nothing to report in regard to those matters upon which reporting is by exception.



Seamus McCarthy
Comptroller and Auditor General
30 September 2014

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1 BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in the form approved by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government with the consent of the Minister for Finance in accordance with Section 50 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992.

The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis, except as stated at 2 below, and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice. Financial reporting standards recommended by the recognised accountancy bodies are adopted as they become applicable.

2 OIREACHTAS GRANTS

The figures shown are the actual grants received in the accounting period.

3 LICENCE FEES

Applicants for all licences are required to pay the full licence application fee at the time of making the application. The amounts received are apportioned to the Income and Expenditure Account on completion of the following stages of the licensing process:

INTEGRATED POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL AND WASTE MANAGEMENT LICENCES:

- Application 30%
- Proposed Determination 50%
- Licence Issue 20%

WASTE WATER DISCHARGE LICENCES:

- Application 10%
- Acknowledgement of complete application 40%
- Licence Decision Issue 50%

4 FUNDING OF EMISSIONS TRADING UNIT

The Emissions Trading Unit (ETU) was established within the Environmental Protection Agency in 2003. The auction / sale of a quantity of the total allowances (not greater than 0.5%) was provided for in the Government direction to the Environmental Protection Agency in connection with the EU emissions trading scheme. Auction / sale proceeds are used to defray the costs of administering the emissions trading scheme and the balance is paid over to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and is not treated as income of the Agency. In 2012 the costs of the ETU were recovered from the proceeds of the sale which took place in 2009, 2010 and 2011. The remaining 2009 - 2011 funding was returned to the Department in 2013. With effect from 1 January 2013 the sale of allowances is a matter for the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, with auctions being conducted at EU Level and the sale proceeds being paid directly to the Department. From 2013 onwards, ETU operating costs will be reimbursed to EPA by the Department from the proceeds of the ongoing sales of allowances.

5 RESEARCH GRANT PAYMENTS

The EPA enters into commitments in respect of research projects awarded for funding. Expenditure on these research projects is charged in the financial statements on the basis of the initial payments which are made on signing of the grant award, interim payments which may be made subject to satisfactory performance and further payments which are issued on receipt and verification of claims in respect of work completed. Costs incurred by the EPA in the implementation of the research programmes are charged to the financial statements as they are incurred.

6 FIXED ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis at the rates stated below which are estimated to reduce the assets to their realisable values at the end of their expected working lives :

- Buildings 2%
- Furniture and Fittings 10%
- Laboratory and Field Equipment 15%
- Equipment 20%
- IT and Computer Equipment 25%
- Motor Vehicles 20%

7 CAPITALISATION OF INTERNALLY DEVELOPED SOFTWARE

The external costs of software developed for internal use are capitalised where it can be separately identified as feasible software for use by the Agency and where it is expected to convey business benefits for a number of future years. The internal staff costs of software development for internal use are not capitalised.

8 CAPITAL FUNDING

The fixed assets of the EPA and advances to fund work in progress and asset purchases are met from a combination of capital grants, approved borrowing and allocations from current revenue. Funding sourced from grants (including that used to repay borrowings) is transferred to a capital account which is amortised in line with the depreciation of the related assets.

9 STOCKS

All stocks, including consumables are written off in the year of purchase.

10 DEBTORS

Provision for doubtful debts is made, where warranted, in the accounts. Bad debts, as they arise, are written off against that provision.

11 SUPERANNUATION

The Environmental Protection Agency operates defined benefit pension schemes, which are funded annually on a pay as you go basis from monies available to it, including monies provided by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and from pension contributions deducted from staff salaries.

Pension Scheme liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method.

Pension costs reflect pension benefits earned by employees in the period and are shown net of staff pension contributions which are retained by the Agency. An amount corresponding to the pension charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable, and offset by grants received in the year to discharge pension payments.

Actuarial gains or losses arising from changes in Actuarial assumptions and from experience surpluses and deficits are recognised in the Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses for the year in which they occur and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

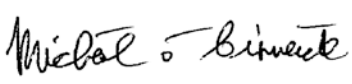
Pension liabilities represent the present value of future pension payments earned by staff to date. Deferred pension funding represents the corresponding asset to be recovered in future periods from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

		2013	2012
Income	**Note**	**€'000**	**€'000**
State Grants	**1**	41,496	41,453
Emissions Trading Costs Recovered	**2**	947	1,387
Other Services		35	36
Income from Regional Laboratories		1,104	1,140
Licencing Activities	**3**	1,547	835
Enforcement Activities	**4**	7,486	6,932
Sundry Receipts	**5**	53	27
Net deferred funding for pensions	**22(c)**	6,836	5,556
		59,504	**57,366**
Expenditure			
Salaries and PRSI	**6**	19,020	19,403
Pension Costs	**22(a)**	8,464	7,818
Travelling Expenses	**7**	1,284	1,354
Laboratory and Field Costs	**8**	1,432	1,906
Accommodation Costs	**9**	1,465	1,768
Other Administration Costs	**10**	6,463	6,136
Consultants	**11**	53	206
Contractors, Grants and External Service Providers	**12**	8,160	7,628
Environmental Research	**13**	8,794	9,630
Depreciation	**18**	3,310	2,993
		58,445	**58,842**
Transfer (from)/ to Capital Account	**14**	(408)	(311)
		58,037	**58,531**
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)		**1,467**	**(1,165)**
(Deficit)/Surplus on Disposals of Assets		(42)	64
Surplus/(Deficit) before Interest		**1,425**	**(1,101)**
Interest Received	**15**	52	85
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	**16**	(39)	(47)
Surplus/(Deficit)for Year		**1,438**	**(1,063)**
Surplus at 1 January		300	1,363
Surplus at 31 December		**1,738**	**300**

The results for the year relate to continuing operations. The statement of accounting policies and cash flow statement, together with notes 1 to 26 form part of these financial statements.

Laura Burke
Director General
Date signed: 29/09/2014



Micheál Ó Cinnéide
Director

STATEMENT OF TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES FOR YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		**1,438**	**(1,063)**
Experience gains on pension scheme liabilities		6,487	(102)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of pension scheme liabilities		0	(12,881)
Actuarial Gain /(Loss) on Pension Liabilities	**22(b)**	**6,487**	**(12,983)**
Adjustment to Deferred Pension Funding		(6,487)	12,983
Total Recognised Gains and Losses for the Year		**1,438**	**(1,063)**

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The statement of accounting policies and cash flow statement, together with notes 1 to 26 form part of these Financial Statements.

Laura Burke
Director General

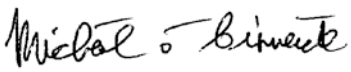
Micheál Ó Cinnéide
Director

Date signed: 29/09/2014

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Fixed Assets	**18**	**35,973**	**36,574**
Current Assets			
Debtors and Prepayments	**19**	741	1,324
Cash on Hand and at Bank	**20**	10,712	10,590
		11,453	**11,914**
Less Current Liabilities			
Creditors (Amounts falling due within one year)	**21(a)**	(9,796)	(11,601)
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)		**1,657**	**313**
Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)	**21(b)**	(934)	(1,221)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities before Pensions		**36,696**	**35,666**
Pension Liabilities	**22(b)**	123,197	122,848
Deferred Pension Funding	**22(c)**	(123,197)	(122,848)
		0	**0**
Total Net Assets		**36,696**	**35,666**
Represented by :			
Capital Account	**14**	**34,958**	**35,366**
Income and Expenditure Account		**1,738**	**300**
		36,696	**35,666**

The statement of accounting policies and cash flow statement, together with notes 1 to 26 form part of these financial statements.



Laura Burke
Director General

Micheál Ó Cinnéide
Director

Date signed: 29/09/2014

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Reconciliation of Surplus to Net Cash			
Inflow from Operating Activities			
Surplus / (Deficit) for year		1,438	(1,063)
Interest Received	**15**	(52)	(85)
Interest Paid	**16**	39	47
Surplus / Deficit on Disposal of Assets		42	(64)
Transfer from Capital Account	**14**	(408)	(311)
Depreciation charge for year	**18**	3,310	2,993
Decrease / (Increase) in Debtors and Prepayments		480	(183)
(Decrease) in Creditors (other than Loan Creditors)		(1,796)	(3,205)
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		**3,053**	**(1,871)**
Cash Flow Statement			
Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		**3,053**	**(1,871)**
Returns on investments and servicing of finance			
Bank Interest Received	**15**	52	85
Bank Interest Paid	**16**	(39)	(47)
Investing activities			
Proceeds on disposal of fixed assets		26	76
Payments to acquire fixed assets		(2,674)	(2,407)
Net Cash Inflow Before Financing		**418**	**(4,164)**
Financing			
Fixed Asset Loan Repayments		(296)	(287)
Increase in Cash		**122**	**(4,451)**
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in cash balances			
Increase in cash in year		122	(4,451)
Funds at 1 January		10,590	15,041
Funds at 31 December		**10,712**	**10,590**

The statement of accounting policies together with notes 1 to 26 form part of these financial statements.

Laura Burke
Director General

Micheál Ó Cinnéide
Director

Date signed: 29/09/2014

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

		2013	2012
1 State Grants		**€'000**	**€'000**
Grants from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government			
Grants from the Department's Vote	Current	13,758	16,050
	Capital	3,708	1,100
	Other Programmes	4,811	302
		22,277	**17,452**
Grants from the Environment Fund	Non-Pay	5,096	2,500
	Research	8,800	9,600
	Other Programmes	5,323	11,901
		19,219	**24,001**
Total State Grants		**41,496**	**41,453**

The Research Funding is a specific allocation to meet the cost of Environmental Research. €8.794M was expended on these research activities in 2013 (2012- €9.63M).

2 Emissions Trading Unit (ETU) Activities	**€'000**	**€'000**
(a) Cost of Emissions Trading Unit		
Emissions Trading Operator Registration Fees, etc.	33	38
Costs to be recovered from Auction Funds, etc.	914	1,349
Total Funding of ETU Costs	**947**	**1,387**

(b) Summary of Emissions Trading Unit Funds:	**€'000**	**€'000**
ETU Operator Fees Received	28	33
Sale of Allowances	0	0
Bank Interest Received	11	85
Aviation Fees Received	5	5
Total Funds Generated	44	123
Funds Carried Forward	2,987	4,251
Funds Returned to the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government	(2,987)	0
Funds Received from the Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government	1,228	0
Total Current Year ETU Costs	(947)	(1,387)
ETU Funds Carried Forward	**325**	**2,987**

In previous years, the EPA sold emissions trading allowances in the market. With effect from 1 January 2013, the sale of such allowances is a matter for the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, with auctions being conducted at EU Level and the sale proceeds being paid directly to the Department. From 2013 onwards, ETU operating costs are being reimbursed to EPA by the Department from the proceeds of the ongoing sales of allowances.

3 Licensing Activities - IPPC, Waste and WWD	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Licence Fees prepaid at 1 January	5,283	5,827
Fees Received	590	291
Licence Fees prepaid at 31 December (see Note 21 (a))	(4,326)	(5,283)
Amount credited to Income and Expenditure Account	**1,547**	**835**

Licensing: Integrated Pollution Control (IPPC) and Waste

Under Section 83 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 the EPA is responsible for the licensing of large/complex industrial and other processes with significant polluting potential.
Under Section 40 of the Waste Management Act, 1996 the EPA is responsible for the licensing of all significant waste recovery & disposal activities operated by local authorities and private enterprise.

Licensing: Waste Water Discharges (WWD)

The Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 provide for the licensing of local authority waste water discharges.
Discharges from areas that serve over 500 population equivalent require a licence from the EPA.
Areas that serve less than 500 population equivalent are required to be certified by the EPA.
The EPA's licensing income arises from fees charged in respect of processing such licensing applications.

4 Enforcement Activities - IPPC, Waste and WWD	€'000	€'000
Enforcement Charges Invoiced	7,317	6,864
Enforcement Income from Prosecutions	169	68
Total Income from Enforcement Activities	**7,486**	**6,932**

Under Section 96 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 the EPA is responsible for the regulation of large/complex industrial and other processes with significant polluting potential.
Under Section 15 of the Waste Management Act, 1996 the EPA is responsible for the regulation of all significant waste recovery and disposal activities operated by local authorities and private enterprise.

Under the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007 the EPA is responsible for the regulation of waste water discharges.
The EPA's enforcement income arises from fees charged in respect of this monitoring work.

5 Sundry Receipts	€'000	€'000
Sales of publications	1	3
Sundry	52	24
	53	**27**

6 Salaries and PRSI of Staff

	€'000	€'000
Salaries	17,509	17,867
Employers' PRSI	1,511	1,536
Total Salary Costs	**19,020**	**19,403**

The numbers of employees on 31 December were :

	Headquarters	137	138
Regional Inspectorates :	Castlebar	28	28
	Cork	43	40
	Dublin	73	76
	Kilkenny	19	19
	Monaghan	12	12
	Regional Offices	4	5
		316	**318**

Director General's Remuneration Package and Director's Fees

The Director General received a salary of €158,813 in 2013 (2012- €164,464) and is also entitled to a pension in line with the standard entitlements of the Environmental Protection Agency (Director General and Director) Staff Superannuation Scheme, 1996. This scheme has been approved by the Minister and is in line with standard entitlements of similar defined benefit schemes in the Public Sector.

The Directors of the Environmental Protection Agency are full time executive Directors. They are paid an inclusive salary and consequently no Directors fees are paid. There is no performance related payment scheme in place for the posts of Director General or Director of the Environmental Protection Agency and thus no performance related payments have been paid.

Pension Related Deductions

In 2013 €1.197M (2012- €1.215M) of pension related deductions were deducted and paid over to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

7 Travelling Expenses	**2013 €'000**	**2012 €'000**
Travel and Subsistence	1,119	1,201
Motor Vehicle Expenses	178	172
Travel Refunds	(13)	(19)
	1,284	**1,354**

Board Members Expenses

The Directors of the Environmental Protection Agency are full time executive Directors based at Headquarters in Wexford. The majority of Board meetings are held in Wexford in which case no expenses arise. Where, for business reasons, Board meetings are held in another location, Travel and Subsistence expenses are reimbursed at the rates applicable for the Civil Service.

Expenses paid to Directors in relation to attendance at Board meetings in 2013 amounted to €2,574 broken down €1,564 mileage, €910 subsistence and €100 other costs. The 2012 total was €1,392 (€912 mileage, €389 subsistence and €91 other expenses).

Staff Development & Training Costs

A sum of €102,418 (2012- €118,996) in respect of travelling expenses is included under staff development and training costs at Note 10.

8 Laboratory and Field Costs	**€'000**	**€'000**
Laboratory and Field Expenses	1,145	1,621
Equipment Repairs and Maintenance	276	272
Protective Clothing	11	13
	1,432	**1,906**

9 Accommodation Costs	**€'000**	**€'000**
Rent and Rates	260	257
Power, Light and Heat, Cleaning	569	596
Repairs, Maintenance, Security	636	915
	1,465	**1,768**

10 Other Administration Costs	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Telephone and Postage	289	304
Printing of Publications and Stationery Supplies	235	287
Insurance	150	156
Computer and Data Processing Charges	3,666	3,476
Audit Fees	15	16
Corporate Governance and Internal Audit Costs	49	61
Legal Fees	983	652
Staff Appointment and other related costs	49	38
Bank Interest and Charges	6	4
Books, Periodicals, and Library	43	51
Staff Development and Training Costs	486	527
Advertising	136	218
Communications	276	271
Sundries	80	75
	6,463	**6,136**

11 Consultancy Costs	€'000	€'000
Consultants	53	206
	53	**206**

The work programme activities which made use of these consultancies were:	€'000	€'000
Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment (WFD) Programme	0	6
Environmental Assessment	0	3
Environmental Enforcement	38	146
National Waste Prevention Programme	0	7
Communications and Corporate Services	14	44
Climate, Licensing and Resource Use	1	0
	53	**206**

12 Contractors, Grants and External Service Providers	€'000	€'000
Contractors	4,007	3,814
Grants	2,973	1,226
External Service Providers	1,180	2,588
	8,160	**7,628**

The main work areas which incurred costs under this heading were:	€	€
Communications and Corporate Services	322	294
Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment (WFD) Programme	1,691	1,853
Environmental Enforcement	2,626	1,794
National Waste Prevention Programme	2,996	3,208
Environmental Assessment	334	384
Emissions Trading Unit	46	70
Climate, Licensing and Resource Use	145	25
	8,160	**7,628**

In 2013, the EPA in conjunction with Galway County Council took charge of the site management of East Galway Landfill which was previously operated by the Greenstar Group. Grant payments of €838K made to Galway County Council to fund this activity are included in the Environmental Enforcement figures above.

13 Environmental Research	**2013 €'000**	**2012 €'000**
EPA Research Programme	8,901	9,630
Co - Funding Research Income	(107)	0
Research Programme Payments	**8,794**	**9,630**

The current EPA environmental research programme was launched in 2007. It is being funded through the NDP 2007 - 2013 and the Government Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI).The research programme aims to fund research that will address key environmental management issues, which will ultimately protect and improve the natural environment.

In 2013 the EPA Research Programme expenditure of €8.794M includes Grant Payments of €8.24M and implementation and activity costs of €731,722.

At 31 December 2013 commitments entered into but not yet charged to the financial statements in respect of Research projects amounted to €16.063M (2012- €19.491M) with the following breakdown:

	€'000	**€'000**
Outstanding Grant Commitments at 1 January	19,491	22,277
Grants Approved during the year	5,583	7,169
Grants Decommitted during the year	(830)	(1,141)
Grant Payments made in the year	(8,181)	(8,814)
Outstanding Commitments at 31 December	**16,063**	**19,491**

These figures exclude EPA implementation costs in respect of Research programmes.

14 Capital Account		**€'000**	**€'000**
At 1 January 2013			35,366
Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account :			
Income Allocated for Capital purposes	- Fixed Asset Additions	2,547	
	- To Fund Future Additions	127	
	- Repayment of Loans	296	
		2,970	
Less			
Disposals		2,246	
Less prior depreciation on disposals		(2,178)	
		68	
Depreciation charge for year		3,310	
Net Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account			(408)
At 31 December 2013			**34,958**

At 31 December 2013 the Capital Account balance includes €243,688 (2012- €346,773) in respect of prepayments for fixed assets (see Note 19 - Debtors and Prepayments).

15 Interest Received	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Total Bank Deposit Interest Received	63	170
Less Deposit Interest Earned on ETU Funds incl. in ETU Total Funds Generated at Note 2(b) above	(11)	(85)
Bank Deposit Interest Earned on EPA Funds	**52**	**85**

16 Interest Payable and Similar Charges	€'000	€'000
Bank Loans repayable by Instalments - Mortgage on Headquarters building	**39**	**47**

17 Taxation

The EPA is specifically exempted under the provisions of Section 32, and Schedule 2, of Finance Act, 1994.

Accordingly no taxation charges have been included in the accounts.

18 Fixed Assets	Total	Buildings	Furniture & Fittings	IT & IS Equipment	Lab & Field Equipment	Motor Vehicles
Cost	**€'000**	**€'000**	**€'000**	**€'000**	**€'000**	**€'000**
At 1 January 2013	58,344	37,984	3,109	7,486	8,670	1,095
Transfers	230	226	4	0	0	0
Additions	2,547	330	120	1,787	133	177
Disposals	(2,246)	0	(223)	(881)	(982)	(160)
At 31 December 2013	**58,875**	**38,540**	**3,010**	**8,392**	**7,821**	**1,112**
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2013	21,770	6,861	2,444	4,450	7,094	921
Charge for Year	3,310	772	200	1,582	626	130
On Disposals	(2,178)	0	(213)	(879)	(925)	(161)
At 31 December 2013	**22,902**	**7,633**	**2,431**	**5,153**	**6,795**	**890**
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2013	**35,973**	**30,907**	**579**	**3,239**	**1,026**	**222**
At 31 December 2012	**36,574**	**31,123**	**665**	**3,036**	**1,576**	**174**

Headquarters for the Environmental Protection Agency were built on the grounds of Johnstown Castle Estate, County Wexford, on a site whose title is vested in Teagasc. In 2013 the EPA finalised a long - term lease of this site from Teagasc.

The headquarters building was constructed by the Office of Public Works (OPW) who financed the construction by means of a commercial loan. The EPA funds the annual repayments made by the OPW. The interest element of the repayments met by the EPA is accounted for in the year it arises. Both the asset and the associated funding arrangements have been recorded in the books of the EPA to reflect the substance of the underlying transactions.

Under an arrangement with Cork County Council the EPA shared a building at Inniscarra, Co Cork for a number of years and by agreement the EPA took possession of the entire building in 2008. The legal transfer of the premises from Cork County Council to the EPA has been completed.

The EPA regional inspectorate building at Seville Lodge, Kilkenny was constructed by the Office of Public Works on a site acquired for EPA. The legal transfer of the site to the EPA is being processed by the OPW through the State Solicitors Office.

In 2013 the EPA capitalised €1.285M (2012- €1.465M) in respect of the external cost of software development for internal use. This is in line with our new Accounting Policy for *Capitalisation of Internally Developed Software.*

19 Debtors and Prepayments	**2013 €'000**	**2012 €'000**
Debtors	497	977
Prepayments for Fixed Assets	244	347
	741	**1,324**

Prepayments for Fixed Assets:

At 31 December 2013 prepayments totalling €243,686 (2012- €346,773) had been made as set out hereunder. These prepayments have been included in the amounts transferred from the Income and Expenditure Account to the Capital Account.

Advances to the Office of Public Works (OPW)

At the end of 2012 the OPW held advance payments of €21,130 in respect of minor capital works and furniture. In 2013 €4,170 of this was paid to to a number of small suppliers for furniture and transferred to Fixed Assets.

At 31 December 2013 an advance payment of €40,000 was made to the OPW for furniture.

Advance payments for other Fixed Assets

In 2013 €86,727 was paid by the EPA to the Local Government Management Agency as a contribution toward licence & implementation costs of the Core HR Payroll & Superannuation System. This is in addition to €100,000 paid in 2012. These payments will be transferred to Fixed Assets when the system is installed.

All debtors fall due within one year.

20 Cash on Hand and at Bank	**€'000**	**€'000**
Cash and Bank Balances	**10,712**	**10,590**

Prepaid Licensing income (see Note 3) accounts for €4.326M (2012- €5.283M) of the Bank balances at the Balance Sheet date.

21 Creditors and Accruals	**€'000**	**€'000**
(a) Amounts falling due within one year :		
Licence Fees (see Note 3)	4,326	5,283
Proceeds of ETU Auction (see Note 2 (b))	325	2,987
Trade and Other Expenses	4,819	2,996
Instalments due on purchase of Fixed Assets	326	335
	9,796	**11,601**
Included in Trade and Other Expense above are the following amounts due to revenue		
Professional Service Witholding Tax	404	328
PAYE/PRSI/USC	530	536
VAT	122	181
Relevant Contract Tax	0	29
	1,056	**1,074**
(b) Amounts falling due after more than one year :		
Instalments due on purchase of Fixed Assets	**934**	**1,221**

22 Pension Costs

(a) Analysis of total pension costs charged to Expenditure	2013 €'000	2012 €'000
Current Service Cost	4,636	3,443
Interest on Pension Scheme Liabilities	4,729	5,313
Employee Contributions Received	(901)	(938)
	8,464	**7,818**

(b) Movement in Net Pension Liability during the financial year	€'000	€'000
Net Pension Liability at 1 January	122,848	104,309
Current Service Cost	4,636	3,443
Interest Costs	4,729	5,313
Actuarial (Gain)/ Loss	(6,487)	12,983
Pensions paid in the year	(2,529)	(3,200)
Net Pension Liability at 31 December	**123,197**	**122,848**

(c) Deferred Funding for Pensions

The EPA recognises these amounts as an asset corresponding to the unfunded deferred liability for pensions on the basis of the set of assumptions described below and a number of past events. These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the superannuation schemes, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The EPA has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

The Net Deferred Funding for Pensions recognised in the Income and Expenditure Accounts was as follows:

	€'000	€'000
Funding Recoverable in respect of current year pension costs	9,365	8,756
State Grants applied to pay pensioners	(2,529)	(3,200)
	6,836	**5,556**

The deferred funding asset for pensions at 31 December 2013 amounted to €123.197M (2012 €122.848M).

(d) History of defined benefit obligations	2013 € M	2012 € M	2011 € M	2010 € M	2009 € M
Defined benefit obligations	123	123	104	95	91
Experience Gains / (Losses) on Scheme Liabilities:					
Amount (€ '000)	6.5	-0.1	-1	10	6
Percentage of Scheme Liabilities	5.3%	-0.1%	-1.4%	11.0%	6.9%

The cumulative actuarial loss recognised in the Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses amounts to €12.159M.

(e) General Description of the Schemes

The schemes are defined benefit final salary pension arrangements with benefits and contributions defined by reference to current "model" public sector scheme regulations. The schemes provide staff members with a pension (1/80 per year of service), a gratuity of lump sum (3/80 per year of service) and spouse's and children's pensions. Normal Retirement Age is a member's sixty fifth birthday, and pre 2004 members have an entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction from age 60. The schemes provide Board members with a pension (1/48 per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (1/32 per year of service) and spouse's and children's pensions. Board members are entitled to retire when their contract ends. Pensions in payment (and deferment) increase on a discretionary basis in line with salary inflation.

The valuation used for FRS 17 (Revised) disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation at 26 March 2014 by a qualified independent actuary taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31 December 2013.

The principal actuarial assumptions were as follows:	2013	2012
Rate of increase in salaries	3.00%	3.00%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	2.50%	2.50%
Discount rate	3.75%	3.75%
Inflation rate	2.00%	2.00%

The mortality basis adopted explicitly allows for improvements in life expectancy over time, so that life expectancy at retirement will depend on the year in which a member attains retirement age (age 65). The table below shows the life expectancy for members attaining age 65 in 2013 and 2033 .

Year of attaining age 65	2013	2033
Life expectancy - male	87.5	90.0
Life expectancy - female	88.9	91.0

23 Kerdiffstown Emergency Response

In 2011, the Environmental Protection Agency took the lead in co - ordinating the emergency response to an underground landfill fire at Kerdiffstown, Naas and took charge of the subsequent management of the site.
The total cost of this work in 2013 was €1,301,885 (2012- €2,181,884) and this cost is reflected under the following cost headings in these financial statements:

	2013	2012
	€'000	**€'000**
Note 8 Laboratory and Field Costs - Site Operations, Waste Disposal, etc.	392	912
Note 9 Accommodation Costs - Mainly Security costs of the site.	400	598
Note 10 Other Administration Costs - Mainly Communications, Health and Safety and Insurance costs.	58	134
Note 12 Contractors and External Service Provider Costs - Mainly personnel for site operational work, etc.	436	502
Note 18 Capital Expenditure - Mainly portable landfill gas management equipment and site offices.	3	17
Note 7 Travelling Expenses - Travel and Subsistence costs of EPA staff.	13	19
Total Costs Incurred	**1,302**	**2,182**

The ongoing management of the Kerdiffstown site by the Environmental Protection Agency is continuing in 2014. The EPA is involved in legal proceedings on this matter and is seeking to recover the costs of remediation.

24 Board Members' Interests

The EPA has adopted procedures to govern its decision making in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 and the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and regulations made thereunder. These procedures have been adhered to by the EPA during the year.

25 Post Balance Sheet Event - Merger

The Radiological Protection (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 was enacted in August 2014.
It provides for the dissolution of the Radiological Protection Institue of Ireland and the transfer of its functions, assets, liabilities and staff to the Environmental Protection Agency.
The Agency's 2014 accounts will reflect the effects of the transfer.

26 Approval of Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board of Directors on the 29th of September 2014.

An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Is í an Gníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (EPA) comhlachta reachtúil a chosnaíonn an comhshaol do mhuintir na tíre go léir. Rialaímid agus déanaimid maoirsiú ar ghníomhaíochtaí a d'fhéadfadh truailliú a chruthú murach sin. Cinntímid go bhfuil eolas cruinn ann ar threochtaí comhshaoil ionas go nglactar aon chéim is gá. Is iad na príomh-nithe a bhfuilimid gníomhach leo ná comhshaol na hÉireann a chosaint agus cinntiú go bhfuil forbairt inbhuanaithe. Is comhlacht poiblí neamhspleách í an Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (EPA) a bunaíodh i mí Iúil 1993 faoin Acht fán nGníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil 1992. Ó thaobh an Rialtais, is í an Roinn Comhshaoil, Pobal agus Rialtais Áitiúil.

ÁR bhFREAGRACHTAÍ

CEADÚNÚ

- Bíonn ceadúnais á n-eisiúint againn i gcomhair na nithe seo a leanas chun a chinntiú nach mbíonn astuithe uathu ag cur sláinte an phobail ná an comhshaol i mbaol:
- áiseanna dramhaíola (m.sh., líonadh talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistrithe dramhaíola);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíocha ar scála mór (m.sh., déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta);
- diantalmhaíocht;
- úsáid faoi shrian agus scaoileadh smachtaithe Orgánach Géinathraithe (GMO);
- mór-áiseanna stórais peitreail;
- scardadh dramhuisce;
- dumpáil mara.

FEIDHMIÚ COMHSHAOIL NÁISIÚNTA

Stiúradh os cionn 2,000 iniúchadh agus cigireacht de áiseanna a fuair ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht gach bliain.

- Maoirsiú freagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil údarás áitiúla thar sé earnáil aer, fuaim, dramhaíl, dramhuisce agus caighdeán uisce.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus leis na Gardaí chun stop a chur le gníomhaíocht mhídhleathach dramhaíola trí comhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmithe náisiúnta, díriú isteach ar chiontóirí, stiúradh fiosrúcháin agus maoirsiú leigheas na bhfadhbanna.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí comhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaol mar thoradh ar a ngníomhaíochtaí.

MONATÓIREACHT, ANAILÍS AGUS TUAIRISCIÚ AR AN GCOMHSHAOL

- Monatóireacht ar chaighdeán aeir agus caighdeáin aibhneacha, locha, uiscí taoide agus uiscí talaimh; leibhéil agus sruth aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách chun cabhrú le rialtais náisiúnta agus áitiúla cinntí a dhéanamh.

RIALÚ ASTUITHE GÁIS CEAPTHA TEASA NA HÉIREANN

- Cainníochtú astuithe gáis ceaptha teasa na hÉireann i gcomhthéacs ár dtiomantas Kyoto.
- Cur i bhfeidhm na Treorach um Thrádáil Astuithe, a bhfuil baint aige le hos cionn 100 cuideachta atá ina mór-ghineadóirí dé-ocsaíd charbóin in Éirinn.

TAIGHDE AGUS FORBAIRT COMHSHAOIL

- Taighde ar shaincheisteanna comhshaoil a chomhordú (cosúil le caighdéan aeir agus uisce, athrú aeráide, bithéagsúlacht, teicneolaíochtaí comhshaoil).

MEASÚNÚ STRAITÉISEACH COMHSHAOIL

- Ag déanamh measúnú ar thionchar phleananna agus chláracha ar chomhshaol na hÉireann (cosúil le pleananna bainistíochta dramhaíola agus forbartha).

PLEANÁIL, OIDEACHAS AGUS TREOIR CHOMHSHAOIL

- Treoir a thabhairt don phobal agus do thionscal ar cheisteanna comhshaoil éagsúla (m.sh., iarratais ar cheadúnais, seachaint dramhaíola agus rialacháin chomhshaoil).
- Eolas níos fearr ar an gcomhshaol a scaipeadh (trí cláracha teilifíse comhshaoil agus pacáistí acmhainne do bhunscoileanna agus do mheánscoileanna).

BAINISTÍOCHT DRAMHAÍOLA FHORGHNÍOMHACH

- Cur chun cinn seachaint agus laghdú dramhaíola trí chomhordú An Chláir Náisiúnta um Chosc Dramhaíola, lena n-áirítear cur i bhfeidhm na dTionscnamh Freagrachta Táirgeoirí.
- Cur i bhfeidhm Rialachán ar nós na treoracha maidir le Trealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach Caite agus le Srianadh Substaintí Guaiseacha agus substaintí a dhéanann ídiú ar an gcrios ózóin.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta um Dramhaíl Ghuaiseach a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a sheachaint agus a bhainistiú.

STRUCHTÚR NA GNÍOMHAIREACHTA

Bunaíodh an Ghníomhaireacht i 1993 chun comhshaol na hÉireann a chosaint. Tá an eagraíocht á bhainistiú ag Bord lánaimseartha, ar a bhfuil Príomhstiúrthóir agus ceithre Stiúrthóir. Tá obair na Gníomhaireachta ar siúl trí ceithre Oifig:

- An Oifig Aeráide, Ceadúnaithe agus Úsáide Acmhainní
- An Oifig um Fhorfheidhmiúchán Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Measúnacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáide

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag ball air agus tagann siad le chéile cúpla uair in aghaidh na bliana le plé a dhéanamh ar cheisteanna ar ábhar imní iad agus le comhairle a thabhairt don Bhord.

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