

Minutes of Sixteenth Meeting of the EPA – RPII Merger Working Group (MWG)

Location: DECLG, Custom House

Date: 11 July 2014 (10.00 – 12.00)

In attendance:

- Mr. Paul McDonald, Principal Officer, DECLG (PMD) (Chair)
- Ms. Emer Connolly, Principal Officer, DECLG (EC)
- Ms. Laura Burke, Director General, EPA (LB)
- Dr. Ann McGarry, Chief Executive, RPII (AMG)
- Mr. Micheál Ó Cinnéide, EPA (MOC)
- Ms. Majella Byrne, EPA (MB)
- Ms. Beatrix Aigner, DECLG (Secretariat)

Apologies: Mr. Dave Walsh, DECLG

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the 15th Meeting were approved and the MPG was asked to publish them on the websites of both organisations.

2. Feedback and Update from Merger Project Group Chair and Project Manager

The Chair invited MOC to update members on the progress of the MPG on the High Level Implementation Plan and the Risks to the Merger.

i. High Level Implementation Plan

MOC reported that great progress had been achieved, with 23 actions now completed and the remaining 23 actions on track.

ICT - work in the ICT area especially has been very successful, with the biggest investment in the merger process going to this area. One new action has been added to reflect a number of ICT issues that can only be completed on the day of the merger.

Board/Governance – Action 6: It was agreed that in the Reporting Comments, “CEO RPII” should be added after “EPA Board”.

HR – The MPG submitted a draft of the note to staff on Grading Structures for consideration by the MWG.

With regard to Action 3, it was agreed that in the Reporting Comments, “CEO RPII” should be added after “EPA Board”.

Finance – MOC asked the MWG to note the Merger Implementation Cost Statement to the end of May as 67% of the budget has now been spent or committed which is an indication of the high level of activity. He advised that the allocated budget would not be fully spent and surplus funding would be returned to DECLG and EPA respectively.

The MWG expressed their appreciation for all the work done by the MPG on the implementation of the Merger Action Plan.

ii. Risks to the Merger

MOC advised that some of the Risks have now been closed. The wording for HR Risk 9 has been changed as requested by the MWG at their last meeting.

iii. Post-Merger Proposals

MB presented a paper on Post-Merger Proposals for the MPG including a Post-Merger Action Plan and a Review Template. It is envisaged that a smaller group made up of the Chair, the Project Manager and the post-merger Thematic Leads would continue to meet until the end of December 2014. The group will be called the 'Integration Liaison Group' (ILG) and its primary role will be to progress any post-merger actions and feed into the review of the merger. The first meeting of this group will take place on Wednesday, 24 September 2014 at EPA HQ, Wexford.

The MWG welcomed the proposals and suggested including staff in the review as well. This was agreed.

3. Updates

i. Legislation

PMD informed the MWG that the Radiological Protection (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 has passed through the Dail and is scheduled for Report Stage in the Seanad on Tuesday 15 July. Once the parliamentary process has been completed, the Bill will be signed into law by the President after a five day cooling-off period.

ii. HR

The MWG agreed that, as the proposals in relation to the Phase 1 HR Policies were approved by the EPA Board/RPII CEO, a note to staff should be issued by the MPG.

Further to discussion, the MWG agreed to ask the HR Thematic Sub-group to rework the Note to Staff on Grading Structures, shorten it and make it more concise, focussing on:

- The future grading structure;
- The current agreed alignment; and
- Implications for staff.

It was further agreed that RPII would develop a proposal re the Scientific Officer role for discussion at the next MWG meeting and that Jim Hurley would provide information/ data to assist this as required.

iii. Finance

The MWG noted the Merger Cost update to end of June and the Forecast Outturn.

4. Directions to MPG

It was agreed to ask the MPG to:

- Issue the note to staff on Phase 1 HR Policies; and
- Review the High Level Implementation Plan with regard to:

- Board /Governance Action 6 – in the Reporting Comments, add “and CEO RPII” after “EPA Board”.
- HR Action 3 - in the Reporting Comments, add “and CEO RPII” after “EPA Board”.

And, separately, note to HR Sub-group:

With regard to the Information Note to Staff on Grading Structures Post-merger, it was agreed to ask the HR Thematic Sub-group to rework the paper, shorten it and make it more concise, focussing on:

- The future grading structure;
- The current agreed alignment; and
- Implications for staff.

5. AOB

No issues were raised under AOB.

6. Future meetings of the MWG

Wednesday, 23 July 2014, pm (to be confirmed)