

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

Location: DECLG, Custom House

Date: 4 April 2014 (10.30 – 12.30)

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) (via video conference)
- Ms. Majella Byrne, EPA (MB) (via video conference)
- Mr. Jim Hurley, EPA (JH) (via video conference)
- Mr. Pat Jones, EPA (PJ) (via video conference)
- Ms. Beatrix Aigner, DECLG (Secretariat)

Apologies: Dave Walsh, DECLG

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the 12th meeting of the MWG were approved and the MPG was asked to publish them on the websites of both organisations.

2. Feedback and Update from Merger Project Group Project Manager via VC Link

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 good work was being done across all thematic areas and solid progress was being made on most issues. One action (HR Action 1) has been put on “alert” but significant work is being undertaken by the HR Subgroup to progress this action.

With regard to Board & Governance Action 9, the MPG recommended that the deadline for this action be rescheduled to October 2014. This was agreed by the MWG.

HR - The MPG provided an update on the CORE HR Project.

A paper on HR Action 1 (HR policies and procedures) was also submitted to the MWG which provided details on the proposed consultation process, next steps and timelines in relation to the associated action. The MWG noted the paper and that consultation with staff/ unions on HR Policies will commence before Easter.

With regard to HR Action 4 (grading structures), it was agreed that the MPG would submit “Next Steps” by email as soon as possible for consideration of the MWG and also prepare a paper on the action for the next MWG meeting.

MOC reported that HR Action 5 (corporate resources) was nearly completed, with the structure agreed in principle. It is anticipated that structures will be finalised and communicated to staff in the near future. The MWG noted the progress achieved with regard to this action and expressed their appreciation for the excellent work done.

MOC asked the MWG to note the Merger Implementation Cost Statement to the end of March as 45% of the budget has now been spent or committed which is an indication of the high level of activity.

The MWG asked the MPG to review the High Level Implementation Plan with regard to deadline dates, and consider splitting actions where appropriate to provide up-to-date information on progress and priorities.

ii. Risks to the Merger

Further to discussion, the MWG agreed to ask the MPG to amend the likelihood of Risk 6 to “Low”.

The MWG agreed that issues highlighted on the Risk Log should also be reflected in the High Level Implementation Plan to ensure consistency.

3. Updates

i. Legislation

PMD gave an update on the current status on the two strands of the legislation - merger and CPPNM.

DECLG will be working hard to have the draft Bill associated with the merger submitted to Government for approval at the first Cabinet meeting after Easter.

The Bill will then proceed through the Parliamentary process, with the aim still of having the necessary legislative changes implemented by the merger date of end June. The MWG noted that any slippage on finalisation of the legislation will have an impact on the completion of the merger and agreed that any implications of this should be discussed at the next MWG meeting.

ii. Communications

The MWG noted that over 2,500 letters were recently issued by the RPII to RPII licensees and stakeholders notifying them of the pending merger. In addition, over 150 letters were co-issued by the EPA and the RPII to joint licensees and key stakeholders.

The MWG agreed that the MPG should circulate summary minutes of MPG meetings and the High Level Implementation Plan (version presented to 4th April meeting) to staff.

iii. HR

The MWG noted the paper on HR Action 1 (HR policies and procedures), which was discussed under Agenda item 2, and the update on the CORE HR Project prepared by the MPG.

iv. Finance

The MWG noted the Merger Cost update to end of March.

4. Directions to MPG

It was agreed to ask the MPG to:

- Publish the minutes of the 12th MWG meeting on the websites of both organisations.
- Review the High Level Implementation Plan with regard to deadline dates, and consider splitting actions where appropriate to provide up-to-date information on progress and priorities.
- Risks & Issues Log:
 - Risk 6 – move Likelihood to “Low”.
- Submit “Next Steps” on HR Action 4 (grading structures) as soon as possible for consideration of the MWG and prepare a paper on the action for the next MWG meeting on 2 May.
- Circulate summary minutes of MPG meetings and the High Level Implementation Plan (version presented to 4th April meeting) to staff.

The MWG noted the paper on HR Action 1 (policies and procedures) and the update on the CORE HR Project prepared by the MPG.

The MWG also expressed their appreciation for the excellent work done by the MPG to date and noted in particular the progress achieved with regard to HR Action 5 (corporate resources).

5. AOB

No issues were raised under AOB.

6. Future meetings of the MWG

Friday, 2 May 2014, DECLG, 10.00 – 12.00