

Adoption Authority of Ireland  
Business Plan  
2013

## Goals and Objectives set out in the Adoption Authority Corporate Plan 2012-2015

*Goal 1: To undertake and promote objective decision-making in adoption services in accordance with national and international law and evidence-based best practice.*

*Goal 2: To build capacity for excellence in adoption services both internally and externally.*

*Goal 3: To support, monitor, investigate and, where necessary, to secure quality standards in adoption services.*

*Goal 4: To provide a comprehensive information, research and communications framework to support the development of adoption policy, service delivery and continuous quality improvement.*

### Number of employees of the Authority for the period of the Plan

The number of employees of the Authority provided for under the Employment Control Framework (ECF) for the period of this Business Plan is **31** (whole time equivalents), the number of staff required by the Authority to fulfil its statutory obligations.

The AAI is currently operating with **22.85** whole time equivalents.

**Goal 1: To undertake and promote objective decision-making in adoption services in accordance with national and international law and evidence-based best practice.**

Tasks	Actions	Date	Person(s) responsible	KPIs / Outputs
Engaging with foreign National Central Authorities in accordance with the Corporate Plan.	Identify 2-3 candidate states for administrative arrangements (possibly India, USA and Kazakhstan). Ongoing engagement with other National Central Authorities.	Dec 2013	Senior Management Team and Manager ICA Unit	Draft arrangements examined.
Engaging with foreign National Central Authorities in accordance with the Corporate Plan.	Identify 2-3 candidate states for bi-lateral agreements (possibly Russia and Ethiopia). Ongoing engagement with other National Central Authorities.	Dec 2013	Senior Management Team and Manager ICA Unit	Draft agreements examined.
Processing and reviewing of Section 40 applications (Foreign)	Average 6-8 week turnaround in routine declaration applications	Ongoing.	Intercountry Adoption Unit and Social work team, occasional referral to Medical Advisor	6-8 week turnaround maintained
Reviewing the issues arising in relation to the expiration of Declarations of Eligibility & Suitability	Meet with DoCYA and Health Service Executive to agree processes and procedures for renewals	Q1	Senior Management Team and Manager ICA Unit	Process and procedures agreed
Processing and reviewing of Section 40 Extensions.	Average 3-4 week turnaround in routine applications	Ongoing.	Intercountry Adoption Unit and Social work team, occasional referral to Medical Advisor	3-4 week turnaround maintained

Processing and reviewing of Section 40 applications (for non-identified children) (Domestic)	Average 6-8 week turnaround in routine declaration applications.	Ongoing.	Domestic Adoption Unit and Social work team, occasional referral to Medical Advisor	6-8 week turnaround
Processing and reviewing of Section 40 applications (for identified children) (Domestic)	Average 6-8 week turnaround in routine declaration applications.	Ongoing.	Domestic Adoption Unit and Social work team, occasional referral to Medical Advisor	6-8 week turnaround
Processing Article 17 referrals from foreign Central Authorities or Accredited Bodies	Intercountry Adoption Unit checks legal and administrative requirements and compliance, Social Work Team dovetails matching requirements, Medical Advisor advises on child's health needs	Ongoing	Multi disciplinary team, Head of ICAU, Principal Social Worker and Medical Advisor	1-2 weeks turnaround in routine applications
Maintaining the Register of Intercountry Adoptions.	Processing of applications for entry into the RICA	Ongoing	Intercountry Adoption Unit	Routine applications dealt with in 2-3 weeks.  Framework to be agreed for non-routine cases.
Process and review Section 17, 18, 20, 30, 40, 53, 54 in domestic applications.	Ensure Adoption Orders are processed, presented to the Board, and finalised in a timely, efficient, and effective manner.	Ongoing	Domestic Adoption Unit and Social Work Team	Processing of all Domestic Adoption Orders undertaken in a timely, efficient and effective manner.
High Court Procedures	Inform and guide service providers in the process under Sections 18, 30, 53 and 54. Attend before the Court and provide evidence.	Ongoing	Domestic Adoption Unit, Social Work Team and legal advisers	Clear presentation to the Court

High Court Litigation / Legal Advices	Continue work with Legal Advisors to progress current matters	Ongoing	All Units	Matters settled
Maintain Register of Natural Fathers	Timely processing of applications. Identify system for on-line registration.	Ongoing	Domestic Adoption Unit	Registration within 7 days on-line registration Q2
Maintain existing levels of services in Information and Tracing	Initial enquiries from public and agencies responded to within 10 working days. Waiting period of 3-6 months for initial interview with social worker and for initiating a full trace maintained. Priority service to matches on NACPR. Continuance & development of day duty service.	Ongoing.	Information and Tracing Unit and Social Work Team	Existing levels of service maintained.  All NACPR applications and matches up to date.

**Goal 2: To build capacity for excellence in adoption services both internally and externally.**

Progress the establishment of the Authority as an independent body	Work with key stakeholders to put in place necessary structures	Ongoing	Senior Management and staff Accountants DoCYA	Independence
Production and publication of Business Plan 2013	Prepare and publish 2013 Business Plan.	January 2013	Senior Management Team and staff	Publication of 2013 Business Plan
Adoption of a Code of Governance	Bi-monthly reviews	Q1	Board of the Authority	Implementation of Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies
Publication of Customer Service Charter	Draft Charter	Q3	Senior Management Team	Charter published
Optimise maximum efficiencies within existing resources	Review staffing structure, re-assess workloads and establish priorities.	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	Reorganise staffing structure, workloads and identify priorities.
Identification of new roles and responsibilities	Identify changes in roles and clarify responsibilities and processes in line with the Corporate Plan Implement P.M.D.S. cycle.	Q1	Senior Management Team	P.M.D.S. implemented. On the job training provided.
Information Technology system	Review IT system and identify needs with a view to developing a specification	Q1	Head of Operations	Specification for IT system identified
Establishment of a practitioner's forum (incl. HSEs, Accredited Bodies, Medical Advisors, Local Adoption Committees)	Training days Focus groups on specific practice issues arising from sections of Adoption Act 2010	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	Four meetings held during twelve months

Continued communication with Stakeholders	Facilitate communication between AAI and stakeholders.	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	SMT to meet stakeholders on an annual basis.
Liaison with HSE and practitioners in Accredited Bodies	Provide advice, guidance and training to each area/body.	Ongoing	Admin on processes and SW team on practice issues	Majority of applicants' queries will be handled by the HSE / agencies.
Produce and publish Business Plan 2014	Prepare and publish 2014 Business Plan.	December 2013	Senior Management Team and staff	Publication of 2014 Business Plan

**Goal 3: To support, monitor, investigate and, where necessary, to secure quality standards in adoption services.**

Tasks	Actions	Dates	Persons Responsible	KPIs Outputs
Standards for Accredited Bodies in ICA mediation	Development of the Standards	Q2	Board subcommittee	Standards approved
Regulation of Accredited Bodies	Ongoing monitoring of routine files. Identification of patterns and trends. Monitoring of reports from Accredited Bodies.	Q3	Senior Management Team	Report to Board on accredited bodies.
Applications from bodies seeking accreditation	Review in a timely manner.	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	Routine Applications Dealt with in 6-8 weeks
Domestic Adoption (in Family Adoptions) Standardised Framework	Social Work finalise practice issues. Administration finalise procedures in family adoptions.	Q1	Social Work and DAU Admin	Framework Document published and implemented.
Draft Domestic Adoption (non-family adoptions) Standardised Framework	Social Work finalise practice issues. Administration finalise procedures in family adoptions.	Q3	Social Work and DAU Admin	Draft Framework Document produced.



**Goal 4: To provide a comprehensive information, research and communications framework to support the development of adoption policy, service delivery and continuous quality improvement.**

Tasks	Actions	Date	Person(s) responsible	KPIs / Outputs
Implications of Children's Referendum 2012	Consider implications	Q1	Senior Management Team and Manager, DAU	Submission to DoCYA to inform proposed legislation
Possible amendments to Adoption Act 2010	Consider proposed amendments	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	Submit responses to DoCYA
Information and Tracing Bill	Consider proposals	Ongoing	Senior Management Team and Manager I&T Unit	Submit responses to DoCYA
Implications of the Ombudsman (Amendment) Act 2012	Meet with Ombudsman's Office to discuss implications, practice and procedures	Q1	CEO Head of Operations	Procedures agreed.
Publication of Annual Report 2012	Prepare and publish Annual Report 2012.	Q1	Senior Management Team	Publication of 2012 Annual Report.
Dealing with Media Queries / Parliamentary Questions	To respond in a timely manner subject to available resources	Ongoing	Senior Management Team	Responses issued
Maintenance of comprehensive statistics in respect of all applications	Regular compilation of statistical information	On-going	Head of Operations	Publish core statistics quarterly and comprehensive tables in Annual Report

ICA Information Literature on Adoption Authority website	Regular updating of website, with country specific information	Ongoing	Board decisions - inform ICAU on updates to web	Up to date information on website
Produce and publish Annual Report 2013	Prepare draft	December 2013	Senior Management Team and Manager Corporate Services Unit.	Draft documents prepared