



Oifig an Ard-Rúnaí

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Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Dublin 2.

18 October 2010

Mr Michael Perkins,
Secretary,
Review Group on Assets and Liabilities,
Department of Finance,
Merrion St,
Dublin 2.

Dear Micheal,

I enclose the Department's submission to the Review Group. We will be happy to elaborate on the details and to discuss the issues arising with the Group at the meeting on 21 October.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Moran,
Secretary General.

Submission to the Review Group on State Assets and Liabilities

Asset Disposal

In addition to a network of local and regional offices, the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Food has a portfolio of property dispersed throughout the country which includes farms, research centres, laboratory facilities and fishing harbours.

Following receipt of the letter of 23 July 2010 in relation to the activities of the Review Group on State Assets and Liabilities, the Department conducted a critical review of the various assets and properties and examined the need for their retention on an on-going basis. In addition, the Department requested the Non-Commercial State bodies under its aegis (Teagasc, An Bord Bia, BIM, Marine Institute and the Sea Fisheries protection Agency) to carry out a similar review for the purposes of identifying those assets which can be disposed of without undermining the work of the bodies concerned.

Following this review, the Department is proposing that the attached list of assets be disposed of, subject, of course, to consideration of the arrangements for sale to achieve maximum value for the State. It is not possible for the Department, without recourse to professional expertise, to estimate the current market values of the various assets.

Insofar as the Department's local office structure is concerned, a major programme of rationalisation is well advanced following Government decision in July 2009. The current structure of 57 local offices (District Veterinary Offices, Agri-Environment and Forestry offices) will be reduced to 16. Total savings are estimated at €30m p.a. and there will be a reduction in staff numbers of about 400 on completion of rationalisation programme. The programme will also reduce substantially the need for office accommodation throughout the country.

Commercial State bodies; attached separately are statements in relation to Coillte, Horseracing Ireland, Bord na gCon and the National Stud Co Ltd setting out the background, the activities, purpose and options for asset disposal in each case. The Department is not recommending privatisation of the bodies but sets out options for asset disposal which may be considered.

The Department's officials will be happy to discuss the situation in detail with the Review Group.

Review Group on State Assets and Liabilities

List of Assets proposed for disposal by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food -

1. Laboratory Complex and Research Farm, Abbotstown, Dublin 15.

200 hectares (approx.), no valuation available

Following Government Decision, and in accordance with legislation, the land at Abbotstown is to be transferred to the National Sports Campus Development Authority (NSCDA). It is likely that 70/100 hectares will remain in the possession of the Minister when the needs of the NSCDA have been fully met.

3. National Crop Variety Testing Centre, Backweston Farm and Backweston Laboratory Complex.

A laboratory complex and administration building has been built on about 37 hectares of the farm. The OPW are planning to build offices near the complex for the Forensic Science Laboratory and the Garda Technical Bureau. However there is potential to sell some 10 ha across the road from the complex.

4. Potato Testing Centre, Tops Farm, Raphoe, County Donegal

78 hectares (approx.), no valuation available

The Department operates a potato research farm and laboratory on this land. Part of the land which is not required for the core function could be disposed of.

6. Cold Store, Ballytarsana, Thurles, County Tipperary

No valuation available

The cold storage facility was used for BSE related activities and is now closed. The procurement process for cleaning and decommissioning are nearing completion and the property could then be offered for immediate sale.

7. Forestry Plots-Variou

No valuation available

The amount of land remaining with the Department is 14 hectares of land (8 plots).

8. Fishing Harbours; the Department currently has two Harbour Masters' residences in its possession located at Ros an Mhíl Fishery Harbour Centre and Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre. Both houses are unoccupied, in need of repair and upgrade but nonetheless are of value and could be disposed of.

9. Marine Institute Significant Assets.

Marine Institute Abbotstown: Current Net Book Values €2.65m.

A 1 acre site within the larger campus at Abbotstown is surplus to requirements. The offices are approximately 1000 sq. m. and are vacant. The Marine Institute vacated this site in early 2010. The title is vested in the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

10. Bord Iascaigh Mhara.

No valuation available

BIM occupies a building on Crofton Road, Dunlaoighre. Discussion is on-going with OPW to achieve vacant possession.

11. Teagasc Properties

No valuation available

Teagasc, under their *Change Programme*, proposes to close 40 Advisory Offices and to dispose of research lands in order to fund their capital programme until 2016. Total research lands available to Teagasc in the order of 2,790 acres. Discussions on land disposal are on-going with the Department of Finance in the context of funding for Teagasc.

Commercial State bodies

Attached are statements outlining the background, rationale, current activities and options for asset disposal in respect of

Coillte Teo,
Horse Racing Ireland,
Bord na gCon,
The Irish National Stud Co Ltd.,

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.
October 2010.