



Department for

Communities

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Release of 2003 files at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland



PRONI

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Using the documents

When using the documents held at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), please ensure that you acknowledge PRONI's custody of the original files and give the full PRONI document reference number.

Please note that in the 2003 file list, any file reference bearing 'A' at the end denotes the open part of a file which has been partially closed.

For example, the file *CENT/1/24/14A* refers to the open part of a file, whereas *CENT/1/24/14* refers to the part of that file withheld under certain exemptions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.



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<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

PRONI on CAIN

PRONI on CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) is a joint project between the Ulster University and PRONI which has resulted in digitised images of key documents from previous PRONI file releases being made freely available to view online for researchers and students. PRONI on CAIN includes over 4,000 public records comprising 17,000 pages of content on the troubles and political developments from 1968-1998. Documents from 2000 and 2001 will be added during December 2024. For further details of the documents available, please visit

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/proni/index.html>



Introduction

The files are being released under the 30/20 Year Rule.

The annual release of selected official files continues against a background of greater public access through the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 balanced against the need to protect personal information. The FOI Act created a new access to information regime and all records were reviewed in accordance with the Act, and the Data Protection legislation.

Annually since 1976, official records held by PRONI which were 30 years old have been reviewed with a view to making them publicly available (“the 30 Year Rule”). In September 2011, the Assembly accepted a Legislative Consent Motion to reduce the time limit for release from 30 years to 20 years (“the 20 Year Rule”). This is underpinned by the FOI Act 2000 and the amendments made to it by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

“The 20 Year Rule” is being phased in over 10 years, with two years’ worth of records being reviewed and released each year. This year, the records of Northern Ireland (NI) Departments with terminal dates of 2003 are being brought forward for release during December 2024.

This process involves the referral of the files to the Responsible Authority for sensitivity review. This entails a page by page examination to ensure that a record contains nothing sensitive as defined by the FOI Act, and Data Protection legislation.

Records Released

There are **743** files being deemed as suitable for release as “fully open”. A further **136** files are open but subject to blanking out and/or partial closure of some content. **18** files remain closed in full.

Some of the significant issues covered by the 2003 release include:

- Programme for Government (PfG), New Targeting Social Need (TSN), Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI), Government Administration (e.g. First Day Briefs, Executive Committee Minutes), Direct Rule
- North/South and East/West Cooperation: British Irish Council, North South Ministerial Council, North South Implementation Bodies
- Europe: Policy, Euro preparations, Women in Europe, Charter on Regional or Minority Languages, Peace II
- Citizen Engagement and Special Initiatives: Civic Forum, European Year of People with Disabilities
- Legacy issues: Community Relations, Sectarianism, Victims, Veterans, Re-integration of ex-prisoners
- Education: Early Years Research, Curriculum Review, Integrated Education
- Emergency and Welfare Services: Police Service for Northern Ireland, Fire Service Review, Health Issues, Child Support Agency
- Economy & Society: Regional Economic Policy, Economic Research, Migrants
- Energy and Utilities: Energy Policy and Strategy, Assembly Committee Energy Inquiry, NI Energy/Utilities Bill, Electricity Legislation
- Transport and Infrastructure: New Start for Public Transport, Airports and Air Services, Regional Transportation Strategy, Travel Survey
- Regeneration and Development: Belfast (Laganside, North and West), North West Development Office, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
- Tourism: Giant's Causeway, Taxi review, Tourism Policy Review
- Agriculture and Environment: Animal Health (TB and Brucellosis), Plant Health, Water Resources

Records may be closed either fully or in part only. Blanking out involves the removal of a limited number of papers from the file that have been deemed as exempt from the right to know under FOI. To facilitate the release of as much information as possible, redaction can be used to blank out sensitive data within individual documents that would otherwise prevent release. All information which is withheld in the manner outlined above, however, must be retained in accordance with the exemptions contained within the FOI Act. In the majority of cases, the reason for extended closure was the application of section 40 – the *personal information*

exemption – of the FOI Act. This means that personal information is exempt from the right to know if it would breach Data Protection legislation.

The catalogue of files for 2003 will be publicly available online on the PRONI website www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni from Monday 30 December 2024 and the files will also be available to view at PRONI from Monday 30 December.



2003 Highlighted Files

Central Secretariat

CENT/1/27/104	1998-2003	<p>Reintegration of ex prisoners "Project 2000". File includes Minute dated 8 December 1998, entitled 'Meeting with Projex 2000' from DPS/Mr Ingram.</p>
<p>The minute noted that a 'businesslike meeting' had taken place on 1 December, where Projex 2000 team members and prisoner representatives 'lobbied the Minister [Mr Ingram] on prisoner reintegration policy.' In response, the Minister had 'emphasised that he was not the lead Minister on this and indeed much of what they raised will probably fall to the new NI Assembly. For that reason he advised them to start lobbying the local parties in the Assembly.'</p> <p>During the meeting, Mr Cleland [of Projex], 'added that it was ironic that someone like David Ervine may end up as a Minister in the New Assembly yet would be unable to employ civil service staff who were politically motivated ex-prisoners.' The Minister later 're-emphasised that a lot of the issues being raised will be devolved to Assembly Ministers. ... He emphasised that every ex-prisoner does not become a good guy so we have to move cautiously.' Mr Mageean (CAJ) [Committee On The Administration Of Justice] 'opined it was ironic that the Government had signed up to the release of several hundred prisoners but yet would not allow them to get a job in somewhere like a passport office.' In response, 'The Minister reminded him that a sizable part of the Northern Ireland community are not signed up to the Agreement we have to move very carefully; there is a much wider issue here.'</p>		

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

DARD/7/3/2	2002-2003	<p>North / South Co-operation.</p> <p>File includes paper entitled, 'DARD NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ISSUES - UPDATE January 2003'.</p>
<p>The 'Agriculture' section gave background details of a proposed 'All-Island Health and Welfare Strategy'. It noted that the: 'need and benefit of cross-border co-operation with regard to Animal Health issues on the Island' had been recognised before the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in 2001. Furthermore it stated: 'As part of the process of moving towards an All-Island system, interim agreement has been reached with GB authorities on movement controls for animals and animal products moving between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Discussions are taking place on the necessary permanent arrangements. This is the first step towards the objective of achieving convergence on import policies and portal controls for the island of Ireland.'</p> <p>The 'Fisheries' section included an update on the 'Foyle, Carlingford Irish Lights Commission - North South Implementation Body'. It stated: 'The Foyle, Carlingford Irish Lights Commission is one of six Implementation Bodies established under Strand 2 of the Good Friday Agreement. The Body consists of two parts, the Loughs Agency and the Lights Agency.' Regarding the Loughs Agency, it noted: 'The main current issue is the progression of the Foyle and Carlingford Bill which gives the Agency its legislative base. ...the Foyle & Carlingford Bill should have reached final draft stage by the end of March for introduction into the NI Assembly in May 2003. However, lack of progress on the Bill in the South has meant that this timetable is now unrealistic. The two Departments are in negotiation to revise the timetable.' The suggested line to take was that: 'DARD and DCNMR continue to work collaboratively on issues which affect the day to day operations of the Loughs Agency.'</p>		

DARD/7/3/7	2002-2003	Renewable Energy - Need for a DARD Policy Review. File includes draft submission dated June 2003, entitled 'Renewable Energy: Need for a DARD Policy Review'.
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The draft submission advises, 'of the need for a DARD policy review on the subject of renewable energy.' Several reasons are given: 'First of all DARD has never defined what its policy objective should be... Second, DARD has been approached on occasion by interest groups, the energy industry, including the Electricity Regulator, and political representatives on renewable energy matters, which suggests a growing need to take a comprehensive look at this area. Finally, as no formal cross-cutting mechanism exists to link any DARD initiatives in the area...this should be considered as well.'

Under the sub-heading 'Difficulties', the draft submission further states: 'There are two key essentials to develop SRC [Short Rotation Coppice] in Northern Ireland. First of all, having an adequate grant support/funding system to encourage the planting and harvesting of the crop. The second aspect is to ensure that production and harvesting of the crop is linked to a sustainable and viable market where it can be utilised as a renewable energy source. Until there is alignment and certainty in relation to each of these aspects it is difficult to envisage meaningful progress.'

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

DCAL/10/2	2003	<p>Executive Team Meetings 2003 Volume 3.</p> <p>File includes 'Minutes of the DCAL Executive Team Meeting held on 21-22 October 2003'.</p>
<p>Issues for discussion included: Interim Guidance on Accessible Information, Gateway Review, Balmoral Show, Sensitive Personal Data, and Business Planning Issues. Regarding the Balmoral Show: 'There was a general discussion about DCAL's participation in the 2004 Balmoral Show. Members noted the "themed" [sic] approached [sic] suggested by DARD and agreed that DCAL should align itself with the 'Countryside and Environment' sub theme for inland waterways and fishing and possibly the 'Future' sub theme for PRONI and OSNI...'</p> <p>The file also includes a paper entitled 'Top of the Office Project Report Executive Summary', prepared by the 'Business Development Team'. It notes that the: 'project was commissioned as a result of concerns expressed by the Minister and the Permanent Secretary towards the end of last year [2002], about deficiencies in some aspects of support provided to them by staff in the Department.' The 'Conclusions and Recommendation' stated:</p> <p>'there was a huge sense of loyalty towards the Permanent Secretary and the Minister. Both were generally regarded as a "breath of fresh air" [sic]... People detected in both a real commitment to make a difference and were frustrated that they were unable to respond accordingly because of the pressures they were facing. Some also felt that there were people in the Department who were happy to take advantage of the Permanent Secretary's generous nature in submitting substandard work.'</p> <p>Furthermore, the paper suggested that DCAL had faced greater pressures than other Departments: 'It is a small Department with a big agenda. From its inception it has struggled with inadequate resources...' Finally, the paper noted that a number of steps had already been taken to address 'deficiencies' and made further recommendations for 'raising standards and easing some of the pressures on staff.'</p>		



Department of Economic Development

DED/3/1208	1998-1998	<p>Political Talks - North / South Arrangements. File includes 'Confidential' Minute with heading 'Areas for North-South Co-operation' from David Ferguson, Central Secretariat, dated 23 March 1998.</p>
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The Minute gives details of a meeting 'with Ray Bassett of the DFA [Department of Foreign Affairs] reviewing areas of potential North-South co-operation.' It states: 'As to implementation bodies, there seemed to be little in the locker on the Irish side, apart from some talk of a single Tourist Board...and a fairly vague idea of Dermot Gallagher's that something might be done in the area of environmental protection... In discussion with Ray Bassett the previous evening (Thursday), Rory Montgomery had apparently undertaken to give some thought to a list of up to a dozen implementation bodies (it sounded a bit like a back of an envelope job to me). However, I note from David Hill's interesting record of his discussion with Rory over lunch on Friday that he at least on the Irish side seems to be backing away not only from specific implementation bodies but also from categorisation. If the idea gains general support from the rest of his colleagues, there may be something rather more to be made of the Unionist idea of a work programme, on which as you know I have asked Alan Smyth to give some thought. If not, I think we are reasonably well placed to get agreement with the Irish on the paper cleared through Mr [Paul] Murphy over the week-end [sic].'



Department of Education

DE/4/1/11A	2003	<p>School Admin Branch - Cross-Departmental Strategy for Supporting Schools in Conflict / Interface Areas - Working Group.</p> <p>File includes 'Note of meeting regarding Strategy for interface schools of 13 June 2003'.</p>
<p>The note states: 'June Ingram had visited Edenbrooke and Malvern St Primary schools with the Minister, Jane Kennedy on the morning of 13 June. The Principals were very appreciative of the visit and the interest shown. They both expressed concern that the BELB had not visited either school since last February. Things were calm in the area at present but with the funeral of Alan McCullough and the unknown outcome of the Ulster Unionist Council meeting next w[ee]k it was felt that tensions might increase.</p> <p>The schools considered that key stage levels of attainment were showing signs of improvement as a result of the funding the schools had received together with self-esteem of the pupils. The acute difficulties in the classroom were no longer apparent as a result of the intervention funding. ...'</p> <p>It was suggested that the outcomes DE would like to see 'in 12 months time were: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The right support mechanisms - Higher levels of achievement by pupils - Confidence in schools - Better behaviours by pupils - Pupils and teachers feel equipped to deal with situation - Better grasp on what funding, support the schools need and how it's used' 		



Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

DETI/1/135	2003	<p>DETI - N/S (North/South) Tourism Company - General.</p> <p>File includes submission to Ian Pearson, dated 28 May 2003, entitled 'Tourism Ireland Limited - Great Britain'.</p>
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The submission noted that David Trimble had queried the role of Tourism Ireland Limited during the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) 'process for approval of additional funding for marketing... While Mr Trimble agreed to the extra funding on this occasion he was still uncomfortable with the position.' The submission outlined that 'TIL is responsible for destination marketing for the island of Ireland in all marketing outside the island...and delivers regional and product marketing on behalf of NITB [Northern Ireland Tourist Board] in GB...' It further stated that papers would be brought forward 'for NSMC approval on additional resources from DETI for TIL operating costs... [and] ... further marketing proposals with regard to proportional match to the recent Rol input. While the former may not draw comment from the UUP, the latter will be of interest to them.' The submission recommended that officials discuss with Pearson 'how to handle the briefing of Mr Trimble and/or his advisors, including timing'.

DETI/4/47	2003	<p>Tourism Strategic Framework - Tourism Strategy Forum Vol. 2.</p> <p>File includes Note entitled, 'Tourism Strategy Forum (Inaugural Meeting)' dated 3 April [2003].</p>
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The Deputy Chair, Bruce Robinson, highlighted the "shared approach" theme coming out of the tourism review and noted 'how all sectors of the local tourism industry showed enthusiasm in accepting a common way forward...' During the meeting: 'The issue of the Image of Northern Ireland as a barrier to tourism development was raised - Paul O'Toole confirmed that although this is changing there are occasions when the negative image is 'topped up' as violent events unfolded. ...to address this Tourism Ireland Limited (TIL) targets influencers in the industry (e.g. travel trade media) and uses them to help portray NI in a more positive way.'



Department of Environment

<p>ENV/34/2/56</p>	<p>1968 - 1972</p>	<p>Schemes For New Roads And Bridges Across The Northern Ireland/Eire Border</p> <p>Small file includes a letter from T A Harrison to Mr Buchanan, dated, 2 June 1975, with subject line 'Louth Co Council's Proposed New Bridge Link, Omeath and Warrenpoint'.</p>
<p>The letter notes that the estimated cost to Northern Ireland of the proposed link road is £200,000. It states: 'Fifteen hundred vehicles per day as a maximum Summer usage is probably a reasonable estimate.</p> <p>The Winter usage could exceed the 250 stated and would probably be around 1,000... At present I cannot see money being available for this work. It is a proposal which is most attractive from a tourist point of view and is worthy of further consideration in the future.'</p> <p>The file also includes a summary note prepared by W J Forster, dated 8 November 1972, on 'Cross-Border Co-operation' between 'Roads Division and Authorities in the Republic'. It is divided into five sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Details of past instances of cross-border co-operation since 1945 (ii) Details of any current instances of cross-border co-operation (iii) Details of instances of co-operative efforts in the EEC entry negotiations (iv) Brief Notes on any areas in which the Department feels that cross-border co-operation would be fruitful whether or not due to EEC entry (v) Brief Notes of meetings with Irish Republic officials and any action likely to be taken as a result of them <p>Regarding Moy Bridge, the note stated, 'After a number of years consultations between the Tyrone County Council and the Monaghan County Council and between the Ministry of Development and the Department of Local Government statutory "schemes" were adopted and approved and all arrangements were finalised in 1971 for the construction of a new bridge... However, before the contract works commenced the Ministry of Development, on the advice of the Cabinet Security Division advised the Tyrone County Council to defer the works. ...The Department of Local Government were not consulted by the Ministry in connection with the decision to advise the deferment of the works and the subsequent cancellation of the contract.'</p>		

ENV/34/12/1	1999-2003	<p>First Day Brief.</p> <p>File includes notes on 'Key Issues For a New Minister', one of which was the 'Use of hand held mobile phones while driving'.</p>
<p>The notes stated: 'It is proposed to introduce legislation to make it an offence to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving... The necessary screening exercises are being carried out to establish what impact the introduction of this new policy might have. Similar legislation was introduced in GB on 1 December 2003.' In regard to the issue of a 'New framework for Taxi Regulation', the notes stated: 'A discussion paper on options for change was issued to key stakeholders in August 2003. A full public consultation...will begin in March/April 2004. The proposals for change...may be contentious and are likely to attract widespread attention'.</p>		

ENV/52/2/1	2000 - 2003	<p>Ministerial Advisors Board Minutes.</p> <p>File includes minutes of DVTA Ministerial Advisory Board Meeting held on Friday 28 November 2003.</p>
<p>Items discussed included a 'Review of Agency Performance'. The Agency was on course to 'meet four and fail four of its eight key ministerial targets.' Five out of ten 'key management tasks had been achieved' and work was on-going. Mr Dillon observed that 'installation of the new MOT2 equipment on time' had been 'a major achievement and he asked if there were any plans to celebrate'. Mr Duncan replied, 'that in view of the current waiting times and problems with the booking services project the Agency had decided to wait until the new year before proceeding. ...'</p> <p>In further discussions on the 'MOT2 Update', Mr Peoples reported: 'that agreement had been reached with Romaha that the issue of the productivity test time was not a DVTA staffing problem and that Romaha had agreed that a 27-minute test time was more realistic than the 18-minute test provided for in the PFI contract. ...'</p> <p>Mr Dillon said he was satisfied that the issues were being addressed. He asked if there were any plans to impose liquidated damages for meeting targets. Mr Peoples confirmed that the option was there and that a lot would depend on the forthcoming principals' meeting. ...'</p>		



Department of Finance and Personnel

DFP/28/1/1/75A	1991-2003	<p>EOU - Equality Impact Assessment - Location of NICS Jobs - Source Documents (Equal Opportunity Unit).</p> <p>File includes copy minute from J G Hunter to NI Permanent Secretaries, dated 22 March 1999, on the subject, 'Dispersal of Civil Service Jobs'.</p>
<p>The minute provides an update on 'revised Government policy on the possible dispersal of Civil Service jobs.' It notes that a previous minute by John Semple on 16 February 1996 had:</p> <p>'confirmed Ministers' approval to the commissioning of a research study... Following receipt of the report of the study by external consultants, and consideration by the Civil Service Management Board, the Secretary of State, in response to Paul Murphy's note of 15 September 1998, has agreed that dispersal policy should be linked to accommodation planning, but should take into account wider policy imperatives, including New TSN and the regional planning strategy and associated commitments in the "Partnership for Equality" White Paper.'</p>		



Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

DHSSPS/2/5/29	2002	<p>Public Safety Unit FANI: Independent Review of Fire Services.</p> <p>File includes document entitled 'Independent Review of the Fire Service: Northern Ireland Position', [2002].</p>
<p>The document notes that: 'Northern Ireland supports the ideal that there should be a common approach to the provision of Fire Services across with the UK... However, it is recognised that it is also vital that local administrations and employing authorities have the flexibility to adopt national guidelines and agreements to meet local circumstances and needs.' The 'agreed establishment of the Northern Ireland Fire Brigade' is listed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> '- 919 whole time fire-fighters; - 980 retained fire-fighters; - 12 volunteer fire-fighters; - 59 control room staff; and; - 208 support staff (plus 53 part-time caretakers). ...' <p>The document further stated: 'Although standards of fire cover are normally the same as in GB, whereas the national standards require five crew on the first appliance attending an incident with not less than four crew on subsequent appliances, in Northern Ireland the current policy is to crew all pumping appliances with five riders. This policy, which was adopted due to the high degree of civil unrest here during the '70s, has significant cost implications. Following recent inspections, the HM Inspector has questioned whether the high ridership levels applied here are still justified and required. He has also highlighted the impact of this policy on the operational effectiveness of the Service, and noted the difficulties that it causes in benchmarking effectively the performance of the NI Fire Service against other UK Brigades.'</p>		

DHSSPS/2/6/51	2002-2003	<p>Medical and Allied Services - Minutes of the Meetings of DPH (Directors of Public Health) CMO DHSSPS.</p> <p>File includes 'Minutes of the meeting Directors of Public Health/CMO Health Monday 4 November 2002.'</p>
<p>Items discussed included 'Cancer Waiting Times Targets'. The minutes noted that: Waiting list targets with regard to breast cancer have been set at 2 weeks... There have been difficulties in collecting data on this and recognition that the data is not very robust. The pro-forma for GPs to measure performance management has been used in only a small percentage of cases. Dr Telford informed the meeting that there have been regular meetings with their breast teams and a high level of commitment to achieving the target. Operational issues were hard to resolve. A MacMillan facilitator had been appointed to assist in the work. Dr McConnell said that it was difficult to make distinction between urgent and non-urgent referrals; referral guidance would be helpful. There is variation between units with some performing better than others. Dr Stewart advised that the system worked well in the Eastern Board. However, the service is vulnerable with small changes, e.g. in staffing, making significant impact. Changes in clinical practice can also give rise to difficulties in meeting targets. It was decided that this issue should be taken forward at the Breast Cancer Meeting in December.'</p>		



Department for Regional Development

DRD/1/3/1A	1995 - 2003	<p>Speed Camera Enforcement.</p> <p>File includes letter from G P Fraser, Roads Service Headquarters, to Chief Supt. Houston, Road Policing Development Branch, dated 16 October 2000.</p>
<p>Writing on the subject of 'Speed Camera Signing and Enforcement', Fraser stated: 'this subject has been under consideration for quite some time. Unfortunately, progress has been less than satisfactory, not least because of a variation of approach within the Police' Fraser was 'keen to make progress'. He proposed that the Regional Traffic Police would identify sites for speed cameras, subject to agreement with the Roads Service, which would erect speed camera signs. He also proposed that the Police would 'regularly undertake enforcement', but noted that: 'regular enforcement will have resource implications for the Police, and so I expect no more than around 6 routes per Roads Service Division - a total of say 50 or 60 route-km per Division.' A 'proliferation' of sites was to be avoided, and sites were 'generally [to] be on main roads in rural areas'.</p>		

DRD/6/27	2002-2003	<p>The Future of St. Angelo Airport.</p> <p>File includes Note for the Record entitled 'Future of St Angelo Airport, Enniskillen'.</p>
<p>The note gives details of a meeting between Robin McMinnis, Director, Air & Sea Ports Division, DRD, and Rodney Connor, Chief Executive of Fermanagh District Council, on 14 February 2003. It states: 'Essentially FDC and their consultants envisage the airport remaining in the Council's ownership, with the actual management of the operation being contracted out to the private sector.' Implementation of the proposal, 'would effectively transfer the operational costs and associated risk to the private sector'. If it was a success, 'the Council might derive a rental income from the airport operators.'</p> <p>McMinnis concluded:</p> <p>'As far as I can see there is no risk to ratepayers and so the proposal should not present any difficulties for the Local Government Auditor. All the Council requires are the enabling powers to implement the proposal and, subject to being satisfied on the detail of the Council's proposal, I consider that they should be given the opportunity to do so.'</p>		



Records of the Laganside Corporation

LAG/2/1/15	2002-2003	Laganside Annual Report Report includes opening remarks by A S Hopkins, Chairman.
<p>Hopkins stated:</p> <p>'It is fair to say that 2002-2003 afforded Laganside the opportunity to refocus on the core values that underpin its work and that during the year there was a strong sense of a move 'back to the heartland' of what Laganside is all about. ...</p> <p>Refurbishment was undertaken at the Lagan Lookout, the walkway and the weir, and this has resulted in a dramatic increase in traffic through the visitor centre. Indeed, the Lagan Lookout was honoured by a visit from Her Majesty the Queen at the start of the year when she performed the official opening of the new Laganside Courthouse.'</p>		



Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

NIASC/8/2	2001	Inquiry into Titanic Quarter Leases. File includes minute of a 'Meeting with Regional Development Minister' [Gregory Campbell] dated 11 September 2001.
<p>Under the sub-heading 'Report on Titanic Quarter Leases', the minute states: 'Copies of extracts of the Committee's report were distributed... and recommendations discussed. The Minister's initial reaction was to welcome the report and he described it as a useful document which will again highlight to the public the greater public accountability which the Department and the Committee are seeking. The Minister is pleased that the report reinforces the very clear message that he gave to Belfast Harbour Commissioners about their duty to protect the public interest. He and his officials will look at the recommendations and decide how they can progress them. The Minister will respond to the Committee's recommendations as soon as possible and will pay particular attention to the need for consistency with other ports in relation to matters such as the Memorandum of Understanding.'</p>		



Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

OFMDFM/3/1/42	2001-2003	<p>Police Service for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>File includes email dated 4 December 2002, on the subject of '50/50 Recruitment and Race'.</p>
<p>The email states, 'Consideration was also given to including women on a 50-50 basis but legal advice at the time was that this was not viable despite their severe under-representation in the police service.</p> <p>The 50-50 split Catholic/non-Catholic has recently survived a legal challenge and I think that Article 15 of the Framework Directive protects the 50-50 provision. Also, it is worth noting that the Framework Directive (number 78) was made AFTER [sic] the Race Directive (number 43). However, it is still possible to challenge our domestic legislation.</p> <p>There may be a point (although unpopular to argue) that the percentage ethnic minority is too small to claim disadvantage/indirect discrimination - ironically, the higher the percentage population of ethnic minorities, the stronger would be the claim for disadvantage/indirect discrimination because the lower the chance of recruitment to the PSNI (ie because the larger share of the non-Catholic pool).</p> <p>Interestingly, a stronger challenge could be brought by a young person for age discrimination, whom statistics show consistently is more likely to be not religious and so in the 'non-Catholic' pool. ...'</p>		

Annual Release of 2003 Official Files

OFMDFM/3/2/33	2003	Public Diplomacy Strategy. File includes minute from Will Haire to Peter May, dated 11 February 2003, entitled 'Public Diplomacy Strategy'.
<p>Haire wrote: 'I attended the meeting of the Public Diplomacy Strategy Board, in the Durbar Conference Room of the FCO.</p> <p>Sitting in the Conference Room from which presumably India was ruled in the late 19th and early 20th century, we had an interesting discussion of what is the current stance of the UK in presenting its public face internationally. I attach the latest version of the papers. What came out of the discussion was a push for the focus not just to be on the respect in which the UK wanted to be held, but also on the fact that perhaps the UK should be, to some degree, liked for its qualities and principles. It is not that the UK knows it all, but that it has actually something to learn from the rest of the world. ...</p> <p>Overall, there were some very interesting people at the event. John Elvidge represented the Scottish Executive, and spoke with very good sense. The British Tourist Authority clearly worked on the basis that the island of Ireland did not exist, although the rest of the meeting did understand the concept of the UK. There was an independent, John Sorrell, who clearly works on this whole area of public diplomacy and might be a useful consultant for us if ever we thought of looking at the Northern Ireland situation in relation to public diplomacy.'</p>		

Annual Release of 2003 Official Files

OFMDFM/3/2/100	2002-2003	<p>EDRMS (Electronic Document Records Management System) Management File.</p> <p>File includes minute from Peter May, Head of Public Service Reform Unit, dated 18 February 2003, to Gerry Slater, PRONI.</p>
<p>The minute entitled 'Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS): Policies, Processes and Procedures' concludes by stating: 'This is an important NICS-wide project with records management at its heart. Unfortunately this issue has not traditionally been given the importance it warrants and it will not be easy to persuade Departments to make the investment required. Nonetheless we agreed that the Programme of work under the EDRMS banner supports and reinforces the approach PRONI was taking in any case. To that extent the programme offers an opportunity to make a step change in records management procedures and to give the issue a profile it has been lacking.'</p>		

OFMDFM/3/2/103	1999-2000	<p>Executive Meeting Minutes. File includes minutes of Executive Meeting dated 8 June 2000.</p>
<p>The 'Introduction' to the minutes states:</p> <p>'The Chairman advised the Committee that the Minister for Regional Development [Peter Robinson] and the Minister for Social Development [Nigel Dodds] had refused a request from the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to meet with them to discuss recent public comments by the DUP concerning their position as Ministers. The Executive Committee endorsed the proposal by the Frist Minister and Deputy First Minister to write again to the two Ministers setting out the following course of action:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the First Minister and Deputy First Minister would assume responsibility for representing the Executive Committee on transport matters at the British-Irish Council in place of the Minister for Regional Development; - the Minister for Social Development and the Minister for Regional Development would not be nominated to attend meetings of the Joint Ministerial Committee; - pending the receipt of satisfactory assurances from the DUP Ministers regarding the confidentiality and integrity of Executive Committee business, the Minister for Social Development and Minister for Regional Development would not receive Executive Committee papers as of right; and 		

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- the First Minister and Deputy First Minister would seek briefing, as appropriate, from officials in the Department for Regional Development and Department for Social Development.

If the DUP carried out their threat to change the holders of the two Ministerial offices on a frequent basis, the Executive Committee would consider other action as appropriate.'

OFMDFM/3/2/113	2002-2002	Executive Meeting Minutes - Final Version.
<p>File includes minutes of Executive Meeting on 19 March 2002. The first item on the agenda was the 'Capital of Culture Bid' by Belfast City, and a paper was presented by the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure. The minutes note that:</p> <p>'The Minister for Employment and Learning and the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment both declared an interest as members of Belfast City Council...</p> <p>The Executive recognised the need for the bid and all associated projects to take account of inclusivity and equality considerations and that during the forthcoming months some consideration should be given to the relationship between the Executive and Belfast City Council. The Executive also indicated that some consideration should be given to ring-fencing the resources required for this bid.'</p> <p>Furthermore, the Executive: 'endorsed the aspirations of the 3 themes including that of 'To Live Without Walls' but recognises that the physical removal of walls would require significant changes in interface areas...'</p> <p>Other business under consideration included the 'Victims Strategy', which was 'endorsed', and the 'Ministerial Code'. Regarding the Code, the minutes noted:</p> <p>'The Minister of Education expressed his concern regarding comments made by the First Minister during his speech at the recent Ulster Unionist Party Annual General Meeting which he believed were in breach of the Ministerial Code. The First Minister responded to the concerns and following comments from other Ministers it was agreed that the Ministerial Code should be the subject of discussion at a future Executive Meeting.'</p>		

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OFMDFM/3/2/130	2003-2003	EYPD (European Year of People with Disabilities) - Calendar of Events. File includes 'Special Olympics World Summer Games 2003 - Background Note'.
<p>The note outlined that the first Special Olympics took place in 1968; it was 'an international programme of year-round sports training and competition for children and adults with a learning disability'. Ireland had participated since 1979, and it would host the 2003 Special World Olympic Games: 'This is the first time this major event will be held outside the United States. Participants will include 7,000 athletes from 160 countries, 3,000 coaches and official delegates and 28,000 families and friends.'</p> <p>The note also gave details of 'A Law Enforcement Torch Run'. This 'kick off event' would comprise of: 'a series of relays run by police officers carrying the 'Flame of Hope' to Opening Ceremonies of major Special Olympic Games.' The Flame would:</p> <p>'be lit in Greece in June 2003, and then travel 2000 miles across sea and land in a protected miner's lamp to Belfast where the Final Leg of the Torch Run will start. On arrival in Belfast it will be met by members of the Police Service for Northern Ireland and the Garda Siochana, who will carry the torch in three legs throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, before being carried into the Stadium where the opening ceremonies will take place.'</p>		

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OFMDFM/3/2/138	2003-2003	<p>Community Relations Consultation Paper - Meetings with Political Parties.</p> <p>File includes brief submission to John Spellar, [Minister of State for Northern Ireland], entitled 'A Shared Future - Letter from Sinn Fein', dated 11 July 2003.</p>
<p>The submission notes that Bairbre de Brun of Sinn Fein had written to the Minister on 26 June. The letter was critical of 'A Shared Future', the consultation document on good relations, and was intended to 'mark your card'. The submission stated:</p> <p>'Sinn Fein is clearly seeking to position or align the issue of community relations within its equality and human rights agenda.</p> <p>This general Sinn Fein position has resulted in a simplistic analysis of community relations, which is flawed in its description of the causes and necessary policy response. ... Sinn Fein ignores the many other factors, not least the violent conflict that resulted in over 3000 deaths. Sinn Fein also portrays poor community relations (for nationalists) as being a purely rational response to the political situation. This ignores the more visceral component of sectarianism, which is all too prevalent in both communities.'</p> <p>The submission recommends that the Minister issue a brief reply and invite Sinn Fein representatives to a meeting.</p> <p>Also included in the file is a note of John Spellar's meeting with Maurice Morrow and Peter Weir of the DUP on 15 August 2003. It stated:</p> <p>'Morrow said he had no problem with sharing the future and suggested that the first step would be an election to decide who spoke for whom...</p> <p>The conversation got round to local councils. Morrow said that Dungannon Council was polarised... On a day to day basis however, people just got on with their lives and his office was full of people who had certainly not voted for him. The DUP were up for the challenge of the election and what came next. The party was capable of delivery - Trimble was not - and HMG [Her Majesty's Government] should have the election and see how they reacted. The DUP wanted to develop a way forward that was acceptable to unionists, the current arrangement had simply transferred the sense of alienation to unionism. ...</p> <p>Weir said that the biggest [step] towards improving community relations would be the creation of a political environment that had the broad support of both unionism and nationalism, and the GFA [Good Friday Agreement] could not create that environment.'</p>		

OFMDFM/3/2/147	2003-2003	<p>Citizenship Ceremonies Racial Equality Unit 2005.</p> <p>File includes email from Ken Fraser, OFMDFM, dated 16 October 2003, with the subject 'Citizenship Ceremonies Consultation Document'.</p>
<p>The email expresses various concerns about Home Office proposals. Under the sub-heading 'Ceremony procedure (national features)', Fraser states:</p> <p>'UK national symbols and national anthem - which are proposed as an integral part of the ceremony - are associated primarily, if not exclusively with the Unionist community, as is much of the language proposed for the ceremony. The proposed use of the Union flag... and national anthem would appear to be at odds with the sustained attempt - by Government and others - to remove emblems from the political arena within NI. It is difficult to reconcile these proposals with, for example, paragraph 31 of the Joint Declaration...</p> <p>The citizenship ceremony is to be a new, and public, institution. It is difficult to see how the ceremony itself (which is intended to be compulsory) and the use of symbols and emblems as proposed in the consultation document will promote mutual respect.'</p>		

OFMDFM/3/3/14	2001-2003	<p>Equal Pay.</p> <p>File includes draft press release dated March 2002, entitled 'Equal Payers Rewarded With New Mark of Excellence'.</p>
<p>It states: 'Denis Haughey, MLA and James Leslie, MLA Ministers in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, today welcomed a new UK-wide initiative, which will mean that women job seekers can identify more easily employers offering them the best equal pay deal.'</p> <p>It further noted that, speaking in London, at the launch of the Castle Award Scheme, Barbara Castle said: "Things have improved a lot since I introduced equal pay legislation back in 1970... However, the current gender pay gap is still intolerable. Therefore, I welcome this move to further tackle the difference. Rewarding organisations which are committed to treating their whole workforce equally, is a good way of ensuring women are aware of which employers are more likely to give them a fairer deal ..."</p>		

OFMDFM/3/4/37	2001-2003	First Day Brief and Departmental Updates. File includes updated overviews of 'Directorate Responsibilities' and 'Current Issues'.
<p>The responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington are noted as:</p> <p>'To develop a relationship with the United States that is mutually beneficial by representing the devolved Government... and positioning Northern Ireland as a confident, capable and outward looking region...</p> <p>To identify policy, programmes and establish relationships between organizations that will provide practical benefits to Northern Ireland and the United States.'</p> <p>'Issues Requiring Attention During the Frist Week' included: Northern Ireland Draft Priorities and Budget 2004-07, Executive Programme Funds (EPFs), Children's Executive Programme Fund, Taskforce for South Down, and Appointment of Chief Executive of Strategic Investment Board. Regarding the 'Northern Ireland Draft Priorities and Budget 2004-07', the briefing notes stated:</p> <p>'The draft Priorities and Budget document was issued for consultation on 6 October 2003... The election meant that 4 public consultation events, across Northern Ireland and a consultation seminar with Concordia (social partners), had to be cancelled. Consultation... is therefore now more limited in scope than would otherwise have been the case. To address this, it is planned that the Minister will brief party leaders before finalisation of the document. A revised Priorities and Budget 2004-07 is scheduled for finalisation and publication on 15 December.'</p>		

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OFMDFM/5/20	2003-2003	<p>NIE [Northern Ireland Executive] Priorities "Under Direct Rule".</p> <p>File includes note, from Andrew McCormick, Second Permanent Secretary, to Permanent Secretaries, dated October 2003.</p>
<p>The note is entitled 'Working Relations with HM Treasury and Other Whitehall Departments During the Suspension of Devolution'. It states that: 'the Secretary of State and his Ministers have sought to follow through on the broad thrust of the various policy directions and initiatives the Executive had agreed upon before the suspension of devolution last year.' The note also outlined 'Consultation and Clearance Arrangements' under Direct Rule. It stated: '(a) where any local spending proposal or policy initiative is considered potentially repercussive in relation to wider UK policy, we need to ensure that there is prior consultation with Treasury and any other relevant Whitehall department. ... (b) where consultation with Whitehall identifies that proposed policies on spending proposals would be actually repercussive, we can only expect to proceed with the agreement of the relevant Whitehall interests (and/or where relevant, the two devolved administrations).'</p>		

OFMDFM/5/24	2002-2002	<p>Teething Troubles.</p> <p>Small file which includes note dated 27 November 2002, entitled 'Teething Troubles: Private Offices'.</p>
<p>The note summarises work completed to aid the transition from devolution to Direct Rule regarding Private Offices. It states:</p> <p>'Overall, it is clear that people want to make the new arrangements work and have done much to achieve that in spite of the difficulties caused by the absence of 'corporate memory' of how Direct Rule used to work.</p> <p>In general, our perception is now that the basic systems are now operating satisfactorily. ... Nonetheless there remain a couple of outstanding issues to be resolved.'</p>		

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OFMDFM/6/3	2001-2001	Executive Meeting Minutes - Final Version. File includes minutes of meeting dated 13 September 2001.
<p>The first item noted was 'Response to Attacks in USA'. The minutes state: 'The Executive held a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the victims of the terrorist atrocities carried out in the United States of America on Tuesday 11 September. It noted that Sir Reg Empey and Séamus Mallon had written on behalf of the Executive to President Bush expressing sympathy.'</p> <p>Also at the meeting, the Secretary presented an 'Update on the Holy Cross Dispute'. After discussion, the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">'(i) noted the latest position;(ii) agreed to the establishment of a local office to liaise between the Executive and local community representatives...(iii) agreed the establishment of an inter-Departmental group of senior officials to take forward work on establishing a formal mechanism for dialogue with local communities to address the full range of social, economic and community issues both now and in the longer term.(iv) agreed to have an early further discussion about community relations issues generally at a subsequent meeting.'		

OFMDFM/8/1A	2000-2002	CAU: Planning arrangements for the Queen's Golden Jubilee 2000. File includes minute from Gary Smyth to Dorothy Angus, dated 15 May 2001, entitled 'HMQ Jubilee 2001 - Progress Report'.
<p>Among various updates, Smyth wrote:</p> <p>'I spoke to Gordon Gibson, DSD about Terry Smyth's letter of 12 January 2001 about licensing laws: the matter was put to their Minister, Maurice Morrow (DUP) who indicated that he would not be asking the NIE [Northern Ireland Executive] to approve any change to current licensing laws in NI to allow for either 24 hour opening (as at the Millennium) nor a blanket approval for extended opening hours as is being considered in GB... Individual licensees can (always) apply for an extension to normal opening on an ad hoc basis within the restrictions of current legislation. There the matter rests. DSD await further pronouncements from the Home Office and Gibson and I have agreed to notify each other of any developments we become aware of and he will copy to me any (existing) relevant papers. Ministers may well come under pressure in due course for a relaxation and/or parity with GB.'</p> <p>The minute concluded, 'That's it so far...making haste slowly?'</p>		

