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JNCC SUPPORT CO.

REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Paper by Marcus Yeo

1. Since the first company board meeting, the Executive Management Board (EMB) has met twice: on 28 April and 12 May. Full minutes of these meetings are available on request. The main items discussed by EMB and other significant issues relating to the running of the company are summarised below.
2. After periods of illness, the Chairman and Managing Director returned to work on 11 May and 1 June respectively.
3. The JNCC Support Co became fully operational on 1 April 2005. New staffing, finance and governance arrangements are now in place and are running without any major problems. A small number of outstanding tasks (e.g. finalisation of some HR policies and documentation of financial procedures) will be completed by the end of August 2005. EMB has agreed that a light-touch post-implementation review should be carried out.
4. The end of year performance report for 2004/05 will be discussed as a separate agenda item at this meeting of the company board (paper BD05P07). EMB believes that the organisation's overall performance for the year was good, especially taking into account the difficulties caused by FMPR implementation and the absence of a Chairman and Managing Director for lengthy periods.
5. Government has set JNCC's grant in aid for 2005/06 at £6,591k (including an estimated contribution of £230k from EHS), and has indicated that funding for the following two years will be capped at this level. Programme and project budgets have been set in line with these figures. Total budgets exceed grant in aid by £115k: as in previous years, this over-allocation will be managed down during the course of the year. Many project budgets are extremely tight and will require careful management to ensure that JNCC can deliver agreed targets within available funds.
6. To enable effective implementation of JNCC's strategy within likely resource levels, EMB have agreed a structured programme of reviews. All projects will be fully reviewed over a 2-year period, and EMB have identified priorities for evaluation in 2005/06. Reviews of systems/processes cash overheads and team structures will also be instigated.
7. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill has had its first reading in Parliament. The Bill replicates the provisions of the Regulatory Reform Order, and also proposes other changes to JNCC, including the extension of its functions to cover Northern Ireland and the addition of two independent Committee members.
8. Defra and devolved administrations are currently discussing future funding arrangements for JNCC, in particular the establishment of a direct funding route from UK Government for specific services and the incorporation of Northern Ireland in the funding formula.