

Disclosure SCOTLAND

Business Plan 2008/09

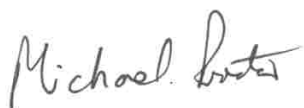


Foreword from Interim Chief Executive

Since its establishment in 2002, Disclosure Scotland has grown and developed rapidly, building over time an excellent reputation for quality, reliability and speed of response. It now faces a time of major transformation and unprecedented opportunity. The separation of Disclosure Scotland from the former Scottish Criminal Record Office and its transfer into Scottish Government in 2007 was the first major step in that change. The further changes driven by the implementation of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 will lead to new developments, different ways of working and a more streamlined service.

This is the first Disclosure Scotland business plan and is the fore-runner to the business plan we will publish as part of our transition to an executive agency in 2009. We are publishing it now as a means of aligning our objectives firmly to those of Scottish Government and ensuring that our staff and stakeholders are kept informed on the developments that lie ahead.

The business plan summarises a huge programme of activity and development that will shape and drive Disclosure Scotland during the next three years.



Michael Proctor

Interim Chief Executive
Disclosure Scotland
Children, Young People & Social Care Directorate
Scottish Government

Disclosure Scotland

Business Plan 2008/09

Disclosure Scotland was established in 2002 to provide disclosures of criminal history information under the provisions of Part V of the Police Act 1997. It was established as a Public Private Partnership with BT plc, who provide and manage the IT systems as well as dealing with the receipt and initial processing of applications and the printing and distribution of certificates.

We provide three types of disclosure, within regulations prescribed by the Act:

Basic disclosure

A basic disclosure can be applied for by anyone for any purpose. The basic disclosure lists 'unspent' convictions, that is to say those convictions that have not been rehabilitated under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The number of basic disclosures applied for has seen strong growth over recent years, driven by growing legal and organisational requirements. For example Royal Mail started using the service in 2007 and all new applicants to the civil service are required to produce a basic disclosure as part of their security vetting. At present, the Criminal Records Bureau, which provides a similar service for England and Wales, does not provide a basic disclosure service. Disclosure Scotland therefore processes applications from Scotland, England and Wales, with Access NI providing a service for Northern Ireland.

Standard disclosure

A standard disclosure includes all convictions, whether spent or unspent. Standard disclosures can only be applied for where the employer can ask 'the exempted question'. That is to say it is available for a range of posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act provisions. To apply for a standard or enhanced disclosure, the application must be countersigned by a body registered with Disclosure Scotland to receive such disclosures. Standard disclosures are available for posts such as an accountant or solicitor.

Enhanced Disclosure

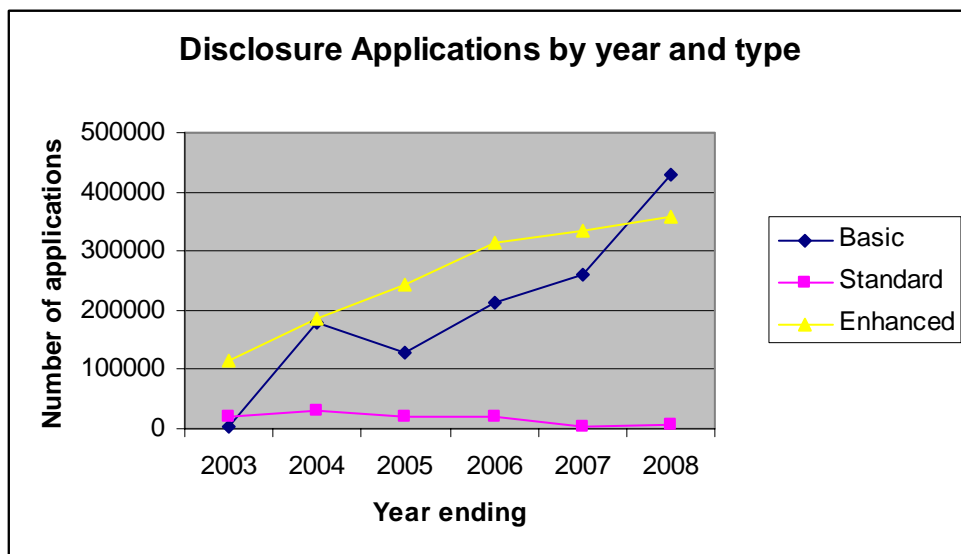
Enhanced disclosures include all convictions and any other information that the police consider might be relevant to the individual's suitability for the post applied for. Enhanced disclosures are available for those types of position where the exempted question can be asked and where the

post fulfils a prescribed purpose under the regulations 9 to 12 of The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The bulk of enhanced disclosures are issued for child or adult care positions, although a small number are available for other purposes such as gaming licences. Where the applicant is applying for a child or adult care position, then checks are also performed on the lists of individuals who are barred from such work in Scotland and elsewhere.

All types of disclosure are subject to a fee of £20, which can be paid by the applicant or the employer. For volunteers working in the voluntary sector with children and adults at risk, this fee is covered by Scottish Ministers.

Trends and Business Development

There has been a steady increase in the numbers of applications for disclosures since Disclosure Scotland was established in 2002. The number of enhanced disclosures grew following the commencement of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 in January 2005 and has been relatively stable since. The number of basic disclosures has continued a rapid growth over recent years and is expected to continue to do so over the next 2 years, with a significant proportion coming from England and Wales. The graph below shows the growth in applications since the inception of Disclosure Scotland.



Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

This new legislation introduced in response to the Bichard Inquiry into the murder of two schoolgirls in Soham, will have major implications for Disclosure Scotland during the period of this business plan and beyond.

The legislation establishes a scheme that aims to prevent people who are unsuitable on the basis of past behaviour from working (paid or unpaid) with children or protected adults and removing from such work those who become unsuitable during their employment.

It will replace enhanced disclosures for individuals working with children and/or protected adults and will have a number of new features:

- Rather than simply disclosing information to employers, the scheme will consider any information and bar individuals who are unsuitable on the basis of past behaviour (For those who successfully join the scheme, employers will still be responsible for deciding whether they are suitable for the post applied for.)
- It will have a memory, so that once an individual has joined the scheme it will be much easier, quicker and in most cases cheaper for employers and scheme members to receive a disclosure
- New information that becomes available about individuals in the scheme will be considered and, if it makes them unsuitable, they will be barred from working with children and/or protected adults
- It will introduce, for the first time in Scotland, a list of people unsuitable to work with protected adults, to sit alongside a list of people unsuitable to work with children.

The new scheme will complement similar arrangements for the rest of the UK established under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, so that an individual who is listed in either jurisdiction will be unable to work in that field of work anywhere in the UK.

Business plan context

It is in a context of significant change that this first Disclosure Scotland Business Plan has been produced. Until March 2007, Disclosure Scotland was part of the Scottish Criminal Record Office. The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act (the PVG Act) made provisions to transfer the staff into Scottish Government, which happened on 1 October 2007, since when Disclosure Scotland has been part of the Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate. From April 2009, it will become an executive agency in preparation for the new functions it will take on under the PVG Act. This plan sets out a range of actions that build the foundations for the considerable change that Disclosure Scotland must manage over the coming years. It is a pre-cursor of the formal business plans that it will produce as an agency and is being published to inform staff and external stakeholders, many of whom will be affected by the changes.

Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals

Our Vision

To help make Scotland's communities safer and stronger

We will do this by ensuring that information about the past criminal behaviour and / or inappropriate non-criminal behaviour of individuals is made available promptly and accurately to support the employment decisions of employers, so communities can have greater confidence in the safety of the services that they use.

Disclosure Scotland contributes primarily to The Scottish Government Strategic Objective *Safer and Stronger*. In addition, there are direct connections amongst Disclosure Scotland's strategic goals, outlined below, and all five of Scottish Government's strategic objectives, particularly as we move towards the implementation of the PVG Act, which will see greater efficiency of systems and a reduction in paperwork.

Our Mission

To inform employers' recruitment decisions through the timely provision of accurate criminal history information; and

To protect vulnerable groups by preventing unsuitable people from working with them.

The first part of our mission describes our current service delivery, with the second part setting out the new protections that the PVG Act will deliver. In achieving our mission, Disclosure Scotland will contribute directly to the following Scottish Government National Outcomes and reporting mechanisms will be established to demonstrate the contribution Disclosure Scotland has made towards them:

Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed

Protecting children from unsuitable people in positions of trust will help both the children and their parents have confidence that their children are safe while using public services.

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

Disclosure Scotland will contribute to improving life chances by reducing the risk to both children and protected adults, through identifying and barring from such work those people who are known to be unsuitable on the basis of past behaviour.

We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger

Through our wider role of providing information to a wide range of employers, Disclosure Scotland will help to ensure that employers employing people in positions of trust can exclude those whose history suggests they may not be trustworthy.

Our public services are high quality, continually improving and responsive to local people's needs

Disclosure Scotland provides a service to a large proportion of the public sector as well as a wide range of private sector organisations. Performance overall is already impressive in terms of speed, cost and accuracy. The improvements to the whole organisation that will be brought about by the introduction of the PVG Act will provide further opportunities to enhance existing services and develop new ones.

We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production

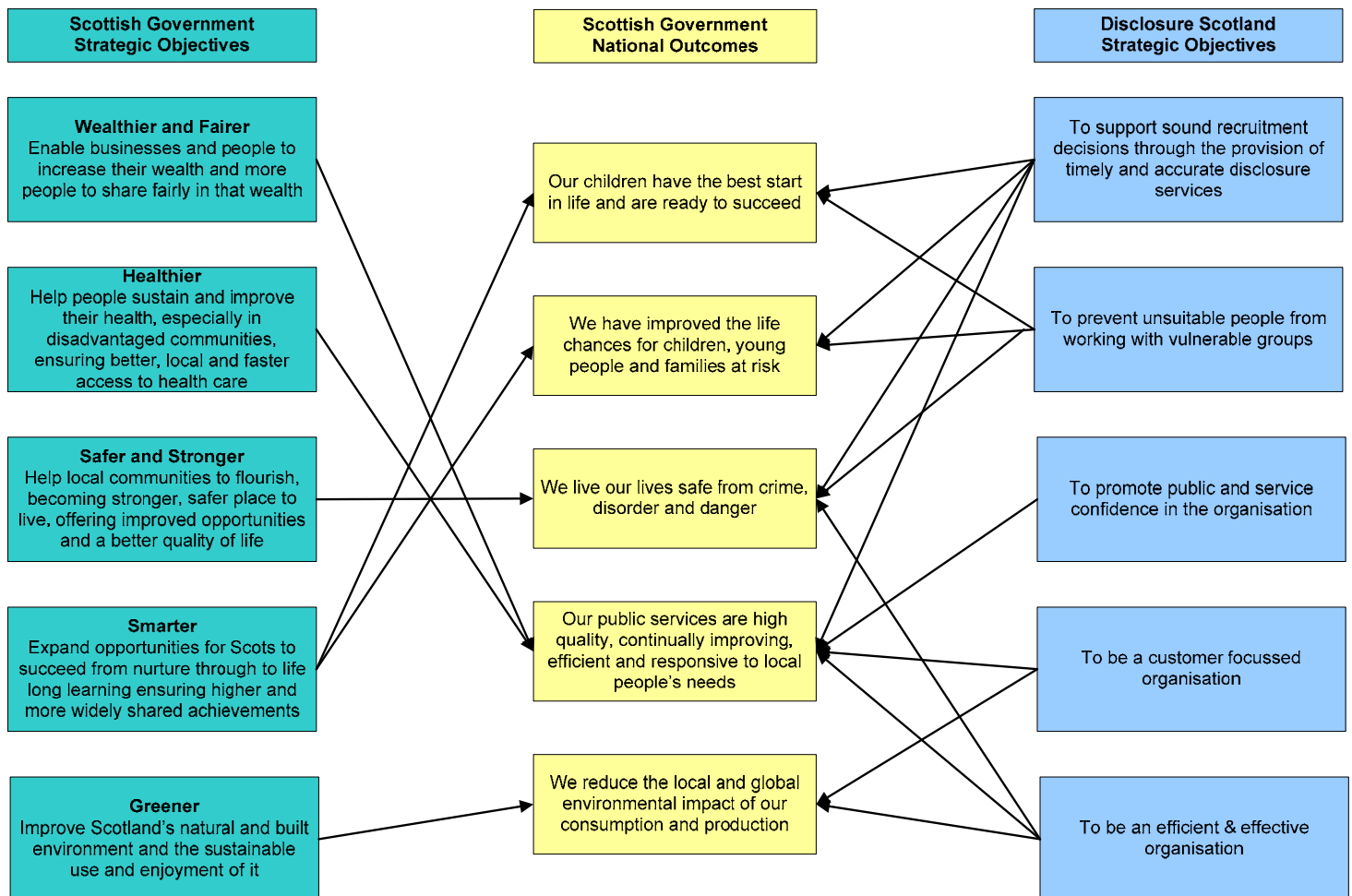
Changes introduced as part of implementation of the PVG Act will enable us to reduce considerably the volume of paper that we use through the introduction of streamlined online application and account management processes and so facilitate a reduction in the need for paper disclosures.

Strategic Goals

Disclosure Scotland has five strategic goals that underpin the way that the organisation will operate. These are:

- To support sound recruitment decisions through the provision of timely and accurate disclosure services
- To prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups
- To be a customer focused organisation
- To promote public and service user confidence in the organisation
- To be an efficient and effective organisation.

The business plan objectives and actions all contribute to the achievement of these long term goals. The diagram below demonstrates the connections between Scottish Government strategic objectives, national outcomes and Disclosure Scotland strategic objectives.



Connections between Scottish Government Strategic Objectives, National Outcomes and Disclosure Scotland Strategic Goals

Organisation and Governance

Disclosure Scotland is part of the Children, Young People and Social Care Directorate of Scottish Government and reports to the Minister for Children and Early Years.

The Disclosure Scotland service is delivered as a Public Private Partnership with BT plc. The partnership is based upon BT providing, developing and maintaining the IT systems as well as undertaking the administrative processing of applications and Scottish Government employees dealing with searching for information from police systems, registration of registered bodies and compliance with the legislation.

The Disclosure Scotland service is managed by a Joint Management Board, with senior management membership from both Scottish Government and BT.

The Joint Management Board is the strategic decision making body for Disclosure Scotland. It works within the overall strategic and policy direction of Scottish Government and the vision, mission and goals of Disclosure Scotland. It is responsible for:

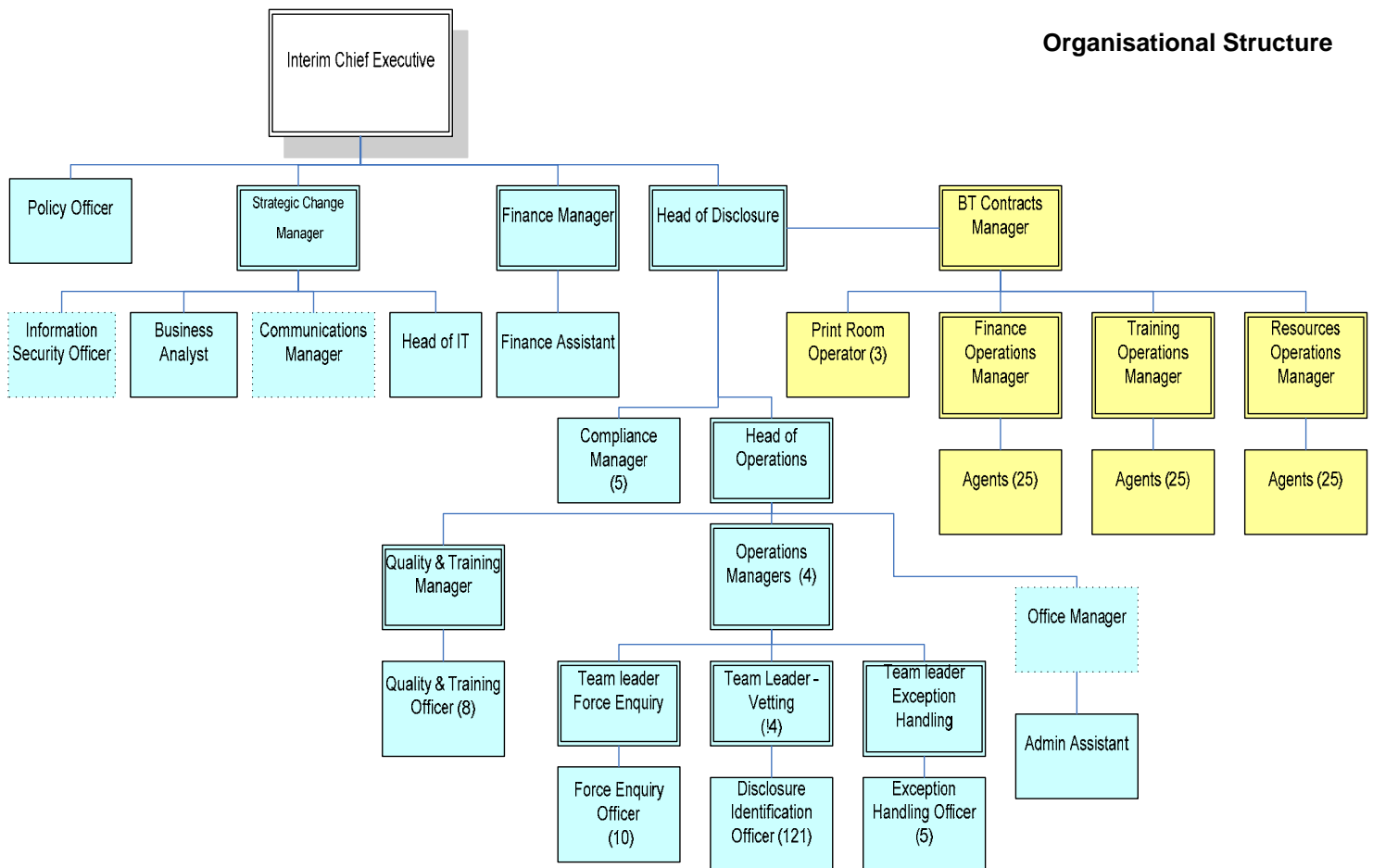
- Setting the strategic direction and culture of Disclosure Scotland
- Agreeing the Business Plan and overseeing its implementation
- Taking strategic investment decisions for the organisation
- Strategic management of the contractual relationship between Scottish Government and BT
- Reporting to Scottish Ministers and the Director for Children, Young People and Social Care on service delivery and the achievement of strategic objectives
- Setting the communications strategy for the organisation and overseeing its implementation
- Ensuring that the organisation meets its business targets and that customer expectations are understood and met
- Dealing with matters escalated from the Operations Board and the Change Board.

A Joint Operations Board monitors and manages the day to day business of the organisation and a Change Board has been recently formed to manage the process of change required to deliver the new disclosure and PVG services.

Organisational Structure

The management diagram below summarises the current Disclosure Scotland organisational structure. That is likely to evolve considerably over the course of the next 18 months as new roles are developed to deliver the additional functions of the PVG Act as well as the structure evolving to accommodate the Central Barring Unit.

Disclosure Scotland Organisational Structure



Our Partners, Clients and Contribution to Government Policies and Priorities

Disclosure Scotland has a wide range of **partners** from whom information is sourced and presented as disclosures. This network is changing and developing rapidly in response to Government policy and particularly to the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry and client expectations about the scope and range of information sources included.

We have a long term relationship with **clients** registered as Registered Bodies for the purpose of receiving standard and enhanced disclosures. These Registered Bodies represent a range of sectors, although predominantly the child and adult care sectors. In addition we are increasingly developing more strategic relationships with organisations such as Royal Mail who process high volumes of basic disclosures.

Our work contributes to the achievement of a range of Scottish and UK Government **priorities and policies**. The most high profile connection is in relation to child and adult protection, but we also contribute to such diverse areas as the checking of “air - side” staff in airports, the issuing of disclosures as part of taxi and gaming licensing and as a component part of the baseline security check for all UK civil servants.

Our Partners

Disclosure Scotland has agreements in place with all the providers of information for the disclosure process under Part V of the Police Act. Currently, the main contributors are the eight Scottish Police Forces and, to a lesser extent other UK forces. Disclosure Scotland attends a regular meeting with the Scottish Police Forces on a bi-monthly basis. The Serious and Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, and subsequent Scottish regulations, further legislated for a several other organisations to be consulted by the Scottish Ministers for the provision of any relevant information on the subject of persons applying for Enhanced Disclosure Certificates. These organisations include the British Transport Police, The Ministry of Defence Police, the police forces of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, An Garda Síochána (Republic of Ireland Police Service) and also Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Interaction with these organisations has resulted in agreements being put in place with the British Transport Police, the Ministry of Defence Police and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. Further work is being done with the remaining organisations to secure access to their relevant information. For various reasons, including IT, resourcing and legal issues, the remaining organisations are at differing levels of preparedness to allow them to interact with Disclosure Scotland, but it is anticipated that during 2008 many more organisations will have procedures in place to allow agreements to be concluded.

During 2008, Disclosure Scotland also secured access to the lists of persons disqualified from working with children or adults at risk held in Northern Ireland. This means that a more comprehensive check is now performed for persons working with children or adults at risk in this country.

Our Clients

Disclosure Scotland currently has over 3,300 Registered Bodies with approximately 8,900 signatories. Disclosure Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Ministers must ensure that a Registered Person or Nominee is and remains a suitable person to have access to disclosure information as per section 120A(1) of the Police Act 1997, and The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Registration) (Scotland) Regulation 2006 regulation 4(3) respectively. To do that we communicate regularly with registered bodies from receipt of their initial registration application and throughout the time they are registered with us. This communication is via telephone, email, letters, presentations, seminars and compliance auditing. We also participate in working groups in various sectors, who are discussing issues which impact Disclosure Scotland.

By far our largest client is the Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS). CRBS was established to act as an umbrella body for the voluntary sector in Scotland. In effect that means that CRBS countersigns applications on behalf of voluntary sector organisations that don't have the infrastructure to allow them to register direct with Disclosure Scotland. In practice, the vast

majority of free disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector are processed by CRBS as well as many checks for paid employees in the voluntary sector. In 2007/08, CRBS processed over 60,000 applications. From April 2008/09, Disclosure Scotland is responsible for managing the grant funding of CRBS as well as administering the £1M budget for free disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector. That allows significant opportunity to streamline the process and discussions are well underway to enable that, which will in turn reduce the time taken to process a disclosure and free up more resource for the work CRBS does to develop the recruitment capacity and capability of the voluntary sector.

In addition we are increasingly developing strategic partnerships with a number of our large basic disclosure clients. Our most recent success in this respect has been with Royal Mail, where we have agreed a data exchange mechanism that replaces the application form and allows the Royal Mail to extract information required for the process direct from their HR system. And deliver it electronically to Disclosure Scotland. This in turn will help inform new processes that will streamline the process for others.

A Customer Survey is completed every 2 years by an independent research company on behalf of Disclosure Scotland. The results of the survey are published on the Disclosure Scotland website. The latest survey shows a very high level of satisfaction, but does identify areas for further improvement which are being addressed through the actions set out in the business plan. The Disclosure Scotland website also describes any relevant service and legislative updates, although major changes which impact the disclosure process are also mailed to the registered bodies. We will be working over the next year to make major improvements to the site as a means of communicating more effectively with our clients.

Government Policies and Priorities

Disclosure Scotland contributes primarily to Scottish Government's "Safer and Stronger" strategic objective, which is reflected in our vision statement. We also contribute to a number of other Scottish Government strategic objectives and to the achievement of several national outcomes. Within Scottish Government we contribute to the delivery of health, education and justice policies. We also work closely with UK Government policies, particularly the implementation of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, where we work with the Home Office, Department of Children, Schools & Families and Department of Health to ensure effective integration between the two schemes.

The Borders and Immigration Agency (now known as the UK Border Agency [UKBA]) was prescribed in regulations during 2008 and this now means that Disclosure Scotland can use UKBA information to help confirm the identity of applicants. The Head of Disclosure Scotland also meets with the Management Group of the UKBA and attends their stakeholders meetings. This dialogue will result in further service improvements over the coming year.

As part of progressing recommendation 30 of the Bichard Inquiry (“Proposals should be brought forward as soon as possible to improve the checking of people from overseas who want to work with children and vulnerable adults”), Disclosure Scotland has recently been asked to participate in both a Steering Group and Working Group led by the Home Office, to look at securing conviction information for persons with overseas addresses. Meetings of these groups have resulted in favourable progress and it is hoped that a Pilot Programme may be developed with at least one overseas country during 2008/09. If this Pilot is successful, plans will be developed to enhance the scope of access to include other countries.

Priority and Challenges over the next Three Years

Managing demand

Since Disclosure Scotland’s inception in 2002, demand has increased year on year and this trend has been forecasted to continue into 2009. This growing demand, alongside the introduction of the PVG Act and the work of retrospective checking of scheme members represents a major challenge for the organisation over the coming years. This is particularly so as the demand is difficult to predict and control. However, steps are in place to allow for effective planning and management of demand, including the continual development of the forecast model and the ongoing PVG volumetric work. Part of this forecasting work also involves working with those organisations who submit large numbers of applications to determine known volumes and fluctuations. These steps will ensure Disclosure Scotland can plan for expected peaks in demand while maintaining the high standards and turnaround times that our clients have come to expect. Improvements in processes, systems and staff utilisation also mean that we are better equipped to deal with any unexpected peaks in the demand for disclosures.

Managing change

Disclosure Scotland has already seen significant change during 2007, laying the foundations for implementation of the PVG Act. We have managed a growth of nearly 30% in the number of disclosure applications, mainly basic disclosures, with significant numbers of applications from outside Scotland. We have also managed the transfer of management from the former Scottish Criminal Record Office and staff employment from Strathclyde Joint Police Board to Scottish Government.

Over the next three years, we will be:

- Completing the transfer to Scottish Government, introducing new HR and health and safety management procedures, transferring to the Scottish Government IT network (SCOTS) and bringing accounting practices in line with Scottish Government standards
- Formally establishing Disclosure Scotland as an executive agency
- Completely re-designing and rebuilding our IT systems to make sure that both Police Act and PVG disclosures are dealt with efficiently and effectively
- Introducing on line application processes and account management facilities

- Developing and implementing the new internal procedures and operational guidance required to operate the new PVG scheme
- Recruiting and developing additional staff to operate the new Central Barring Unit
- Ensuring continuity of service through the introduction of new disaster recovery and business continuity arrangements
- Managing the transition to new ways of working for both our staff and our clients and partners.

In other words we will be completely re-designing what we do, how we do it and the way we provide our services. This is a unique opportunity to build on and improve what works well and replace and re-develop what doesn't. This will be a challenging period, developing the new while we maintain the standards our customers have come to expect.

Developing our staff

Disclosure Scotland has only achieved its current standards of service and quality through the hard work and commitment of all of its people. We have a solid foundation of well qualified and experienced staff at all levels of the organisation, who will contribute to and help shape the new processes and new ways of working that we need to deliver our new services.

Developing and supporting our staff to meet the challenges of growing demand and new service development alongside the alignment of working practices and procedures with Scottish Government practice will be a major focus of our activity over the next three years. In particular we will be:

- Implementing appraisal procedures and the development of personal learning plans
- Developing a new organisational structure that offers opportunity for development and promotion within Disclosure Scotland as well as elsewhere in Scottish Government
- Seeking to involve all of our people in managing the transition to new ways of working
- Developing leadership and management styles that support an open and progressive organisational culture.

Three Year Business Objectives and 2008/09 Action Plan

These business objectives reflect the challenging environment that Disclosure Scotland faces and the opportunities that exist to improve our services. In total there are 12 objectives supporting the achievement of our five strategic goals. These objectives will define our business activities over the three year period and will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to reflect achievements and new challenges and opportunities. The table below indicates the alignment of our 2008/09 objectives to the five strategic goals, and identifies the actions to deliver each of the 12 objectives:

1. To support sound recruitment decisions through the provision of timely and accurate disclosure services

- 1.1 Ensure that current service levels are maintained and where possible improved upon.

2008/09 Actions	
1.1.1	Continue to develop access to information from other prescribed sources
1.1.2	Review service delivery standards and targets and look for areas of improvement
1.1.3	Work with other government agencies to improve information exchange and authentication processes
1.1.4	Develop customer interfaces to be more effective

1.2 Work with new and current service users to manage demand and maintain appropriate staffing levels

2008/09 Actions	
1.2.1	Agree demand profiles with new service users
1.2.2	Continue to develop forecasting and staffing projections

2. To prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups

2.1 Actively participate at all levels in the implementation of the PVG Act

2008/09 Actions	
2.1.1	Work with partners to support technical system development required
2.1.2	Develop recruitment and resourcing plan for current and future requirements

2.2 Plan and effectively manage the transition from the current organisation to the organisation required to deliver the PVG scheme

2008/09 Actions	
2.2.1	Develop a transition plan to manage the change from current to new service and organisational structure
2.2.2	Review and amend the de-registration process in preparation for PVG scheme
2.2.3	Plan recruitment and training required for staff to deliver new service

3. To be a customer focused organisation

3.1 Establish effective two way communications with service users and key stakeholder groups

2008/09 Actions	
3.1.1	Map and develop connections to other policies/partnerships
3.1.2	Build stakeholder communities and involve in service design

3.2 Develop a culture of customer service

2008/09 Actions	
3.2.1	Develop and deliver Customer Service Training

4. To promote public and service user confidence in the organisation

4.1 To develop and implement a quality and performance strategy, that ensures the delivery of a high quality service every time

2008/09 Actions	
4.1.1	Develop comprehensive quality strategy
4.1.2	Review performance monitoring, measuring and reporting mechanisms
4.1.3	Review complaints procedure

4.2 To put in place full disaster recovery and business continuity plans to ensure business continuity

2008/09 Action	
4.2.1	Implement disaster recovery site
4.2.2	Develop comprehensive business continuity plans
4.2.3	Conduct one Business Continuity and two Disaster Recovery audits

5. To be an efficient and effective organisation

5.1 Develop excellent employment practice in line with Investors in People and Scottish Government procedures

2008/09 Actions	
5.1.1	Develop and strengthen absence management systems
5.1.2	Implement a health and safety policy
5.1.3	Introduce performance management systems for all Scottish Government staff
5.1.4	Develop and implement a corporate learning and development plan
5.1.5	Develop an inclusive environmental strategy
5.1.6	Implement e-HR (a self service HR system) for Scottish Government staff
5.1.7	Develop and implement an organisational structure with clear lines of accountability
5.1.8	Develop an induction plan for all staff

5.2 Develop sound financial management and accounting systems

2008/09 Actions	
5.2.1	Prepare table of accounts ready for 2009
5.2.2	Implement EASEBuy for all procurement
5.2.3	Implement finance action plan

5.3 Establish and implement clear and effective operating policies and procedures for all areas of the business

2008/09 Actions	
5.3.1	Implement electronic document management system
5.3.2	Establish process to manage and disseminate legislative change and operational practice
5.3.3	Implement SCOTS for SG staff
5.3.4	Develop joint operating procedures and protocols for all business areas

5.4 Develop clear and effective internal communications, so that every members of staff is able to contribute to the development of the organisation and its services

2008/09 Actions	
5.4.1	Review current communications
5.4.2	Develop electronic and team meeting communications to ensure communication of change processes
5.4.3	Develop supporting infrastructure for the partnership (common intranet, phone system)
5.4.4	Establish clear set of principles/values that underpin organisational culture

Financial Planning in 2008/09

Disclosure Scotland set the budget below for financial year 2008/09. The budget includes change costs of which some are associated with the move to Scottish Government Agency status as well as relating to the introduction of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. Certain other costs relating to the move to Agency status and Development are funded centrally and not included here.

The annual total Disclosure volumes are forecast as 861,040 of which volunteers will account for approximately 5%.

In addition to income from fees, additional funding totalling £1.9M is provided from Scottish Government to sponsor CRBS and fund free disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector and income from the Criminal Records Bureau in England funds access to Scottish police non conviction information.

Disclosure Scotland Projected Income and Expenditure		
	Budget 2008/09	Outturn 2007/08
	£'000	£'000
Income and funding	19,307	15,252
Production Costs		
Direct	16,893	14,465
Indirect	2,128	940
Sub-total	19,021	15,405
Change Costs	944	410
Sub-total	944	410
Total Costs	19,964	15,815
Surplus/(Deficit)	(658)	(563)*
Volume of Disclosures	861,040	
Volunteers	5%	

2007/08 outturn figure excludes £1M funding for volunteer checks yet to be transferred to Disclosure Scotland

Performance and Reporting

Disclosure Scotland's performance directly impacts on the lives of many individuals across Scotland and elsewhere in the UK. If there are delays in issuing disclosures then recruitment decisions can be delayed. If we make errors in our work then people's livelihoods can be affected inappropriately. Over the last few years, despite growing demand, Disclosure Scotland has consistently managed a very high standard of performance that far exceeds our stated performance times of issuing disclosures within 14 days of receipt where there is no requirement for external input. However, we cannot be complacent - maintaining that standard alongside the development programme we've outlined for the next three years will be a major challenge. It is therefore important that we continue to report openly and constructively to our stakeholders and clients on how we are doing.

Standard performance measures and reporting processes

As part of Disclosure Scotland's performance and reporting processes, it is imperative that we develop and report on standard performance measures. Currently, we publish a monthly performance report on our website. This presentation contains performance information including volumes, application processing times, performance against Service Level Agreements, calls received in the call centre and disputes for the previous month. Ongoing work this year will include the expansion of publicly available performance information as well as the consideration of new measures to report on once the new agency has been established. The development of a new website will ensure that this information is more readily accessible

Reporting on development activities

Another important part of Disclosure Scotland's reporting processes is reporting on the achievement or otherwise of our objectives. To do this, work will take place on developing systems to measure achievement of these objectives against expectations and we will look to report on these measurements publicly in the next year.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on Disclosure Scotland and its goals, objectives and performance is available at www.disclosurescotland.co.uk. The website will be re-developed during the course of the year with new features, information and resources provided on it.

