

Government Decontamination Service

Annual Report and Accounts 2008-09



Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2009



**The UK Government Decontamination Service is an Executive Agency of the
Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs**

**Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 7(2) of the Government
Resources and Accounts Act 2000.**

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 2 July 2009

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ISBN: 9780102958676

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD



I am delighted to present the fourth Annual Report and Accounts for the Government Decontamination Service (GDS), following another extremely successful year which, in the event, proved to be relatively incident free. GDS has again met all of the targets set by Ministers.

During the year, in partnership with the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions, GDS renewed the Framework of Specialist Suppliers. The existing Framework, set up in 2005, was only extendable to October 2008. The new Framework Agreements, to provide the actual decontamination services, will be for a period of four years. As a result of the exercise the number of suppliers on the Framework increased and this will provide greater resilience in depth across the chemical, biological and radiological decontamination capabilities. The testing and evaluation of Framework Suppliers continued throughout the procurement period to ensure the necessary capability was maintained. During the year, our suppliers worked on scenario based case studies involving a chemical and a radiological incident respectively: this evaluation methodology, developed by the GDS team, is world class and is being adopted elsewhere.

GDS was originally conceived as part of the arrangements to deal with decontamination following a terrorist incident but the remit also includes non terrorist incidents involving chemical, biological or radiological materials. Over the last twelve months GDS has dealt with a number of small incidents, each unique in their own way, at the request of the Responsible Authority. One supplier decontaminated a house and garden where chemicals and radiological materials were found following the (unrelated) death of an elderly scientist. Another supplier supported a multiagency sampling and decontamination team by arranging for the disposal of waste following sampling and decontamination at a domestic premise affected by Bacillus Anthracis.

GDS, along with a number of (Defra) organisations became part of the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) on 1 April 2009. This change, which has my unreserved support, will take advantage of the economies of a larger organisation to be achieved, extend the science base available and further enhance the nation's resilience. Despite these changes, GDS will continue as a distinct brand within Fera and the existing team will remain in Stafford. For the future, GDS will be in a stronger position to deliver the remit, agreed by Ministers in July 2008, and form a key element of the UK's strategy to counter the effects, and impact, of international terrorism in the UK. As a consequence of these changes, this will be the final (separate) Annual Report and Accounts for GDS. I will be moving to a new role at The Strategic Advisory Board for Intellectual Property.

The results achieved by GDS are very much the measure of a successful partnership with our colleagues across Government, locally and nationally, and with our Specialist Suppliers. We have achieved so much since GDS was set up in 2005 and I am confident the next four years will see similar significant achievements and progress.

Personally, and on behalf of Defra, I would like to thank GDS staff and our Specialist Suppliers for the excellent work they have done in 2008-2009 (and previous years). Could I also extend thanks and my very best wishes for the future to Adrian Belton, Chief Executive of Fera.

Robert Bettley-Smith FRICS
Chief Executive, Government Decontamination Service

MISSION STATEMENT

The UK Government Decontamination Service increases resilience by providing advice and guidance to those responsible for dealing with decontamination following a CBRN¹ or major HazMat² incident.

VISION

"GDS will be a key element of the Government Machinery that will help the country prepare for a CBRN or significant HazMat incident, and minimise its impact on people, society, the economy and the environment. To ensure the UK has a highly effective decontamination capability."

This will be achieved by fulfilling three principal functions:

1. GDS will provide high quality advice and guidance to authorities responsible for responding to CBRN and significant HazMat incidents.
2. GDS will work hand in hand with Specialist Suppliers and expert advisors to rigorously assess the ability of companies in the private sector to carry out decontamination operations, and to ensure that Responsible Authorities have ready access to services if the need arises.
3. GDS will be the Government's eyes and ears on the national capability for the decontamination of buildings, infrastructure, mobile transport assets and the open environment.

GDS' work will be underpinned by scientific support and research pursued in concert with Government Departments, responsible authorities, specialist suppliers, research organisations and other nations to improve decontamination technologies and capabilities.

These key functions will allow the Government to collate centrally the expertise available in a coherent and comprehensive manner, which will allow responsible authorities to function more efficiently and to gain the benefit of an element of pre-planning rather than to procure the work independently.

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the Government Decontamination Service were revised in July 2008. The following wording and principal objectives have been agreed by Ministers and should not be amended without the appropriate authority:

Role in preparing for a crisis – core functions:

- Establish and maintain a Framework of contractors (Specialist Suppliers) which, in the event of a CBRN or major HazMat incident, and using a call-off contract mechanism, can offer appropriate remediation or decontamination-related services (including sampling and

¹ CBRN – a deliberate act involving Chemical, Biological, Radioactive or Nuclear materials.

² Major HazMat – an accident, regardless of scale, involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear materials where the incident is in excess of local capability and /or knowledge and authorities request GDS services

monitoring and waste management services to facilitate decontamination) for the built and open environment and transport assets, including critical national infrastructure;

- To establish and maintain a programme of work to test, exercise and evaluate GDS and GDS Framework capability against likely requirements based on the appropriate Government policies and materials, using other technical information as appropriate;
- To capture information on known Framework capability and capacity; identify gaps in known capability and capacity, and explore mitigations and possible solutions as appropriate;
- Provision of advice and briefing on Framework capability and capacity³, and written guidance on associated remediation/decontamination issues to Departments, Devolved Administrations, and Responsible Authorities;
- To participate in the work of the Home Office CBRN Strategic Programme in identifying, prioritising, and, as necessary, managing decontamination-related research projects;
- To build up a library of the relevant knowledge (including reference material) and experience available to GDS, drawing on national and international information, which can be used by its officers, and others, to support the development of the Framework and wider remediation work;
- Maintaining a Duty Officer role.

Role in a crisis:

- Act as expert advisors on the capability and capacity of the GDS Framework contractors, their services and, where relevant, the different remediation or decontamination methodologies and technologies available through the Framework;
- To provide expert/scientific advice as necessary to relevant groups, including the Scientific and Technical Advice Cell and Recovery Co-ordination Group, on the consequences of the decontamination techniques used by the Framework contractors, and on their capability/capacity and operating procedures to inform the consequence management strategy;
- Help the lead Responsible Authority (or "Agent") access the most appropriate Framework services in order to ensure the efficient, effective and timely decontamination/remediation work is carried out and to assist them in being an intelligent customer when setting up the appropriate contract or contracts;
- Facilitate the liaison between the Responsible Authority and the contractor(s) throughout the duration of the contract;
- Signposting alternative options where Framework services have reached capacity, or where the decontamination service necessary does not require the level of capability available through the Framework;
- Providing, where required, appropriate briefing and assistance to Central Government (including direct to the relevant Minister through the Lead Government Department) on

³ Where appropriate and subject to appropriate security restrictions.

decontamination-related matters including capability and capacity of Framework contractors and other known remediation or decontamination capability.

During a CBRN or major HazMat incident GDS will deploy on the invitation of the Responsible Authority, or at the direction of COBR⁴. The extent of the deployment will be incident specific, and reflect both the requirements of the Responsible Authority and the efficient use of GDS resources.

⁴ COBR is the Governments Emergency Committee which meets in the Cabinet Office Briefing Room.

MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY

This is the fourth Annual Report of the Government Decontamination Service (GDS) since its formation as an Agency on 1 October 2005. GDS activity supports the planning of the UK's response to terrorist threats and readiness to respond. It is also the last report on GDS as a separate Agency as it moves forward to join the new Defra Agency, the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) as detailed below.

Operational Review

The Year in Brief

The main activity in the year was the evaluation and awarding of a new Framework Agreement for the decontamination and related service required by GDS. This was a joint project between the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions (OGCb.s.) who are the owners of the Agreement and GDS who manage the Agreements. Following an evaluation of the tender documents a competitive dialogue process was undertaken. The Framework Agreements were awarded in October 2008. This has resulted in an increased range of suppliers and capabilities to be available to provide recovery services following a CBRN incident. Following an initial get together the new suppliers are working on case studies to develop their services for a CBRN incident.

The Strategic Advisory Board for GDS accepted the recommendations of the review of GDS which took place in February 2008. The two main areas were in terms of the extent of the remit for GDS to operate and the nature of the organisational home for a small organisation. GDS has produced a revised remit which has been accepted by Ministers and has revised its internal structure to better deliver this remit. In addition, work took place to identify the best organisational home for GDS and this resulted in a recommendation that it should join with the new Agency, Fera. This brings Defra's Plant Health Division (PHD), Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), Plant Varieties and Seeds (PVS) Office and the Central Science Laboratory (CSL) together with GDS. Work has been undertaken to make the changes necessary to make this happen on 1 April 2009.

Operations (including exercises and incidents)

There have been a number of small (non-terrorist) incidents during the year which called on the full range of chemical, biological and radiological services within the Framework. GDS worked closely with various Local Authorities to deal with the aftermath of an anthrax related death involving African drums (similar to previously reported incidents) and a store of chemical and radiological materials in a dangerous condition. These incidents were successfully concluded and lessons identified have been incorporated in the operational documentation. GDS participated in a number of exercises including the Defra sponsored Exercise Green Star. This concentrated on the Defra related response to a radiological incident and GDS, using some of the Specialist Suppliers, was a key player.

Key Messages and Successes

GDS has taken the Framework of Specialist Suppliers to the next stage of maturity with new contractors and an increased spread of services. GDS has provided advice to Central Government and other authorities as required, on the decontamination of the open environment, buildings and other infrastructure. It has also facilitated access to Framework services where necessary, routinely receiving positive feedback.

In a recent independent survey (February 2009) we achieved an 85% level of satisfaction within our supplier community.

Science

Scientists within the Agency have continued to work closely with Centres of Scientific Excellence throughout the UK science base, including a number of universities and government laboratories (e.g. Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and the Health Protection Agency (HPA)).

The team has played a vital role in the scientific evaluation of the Specialist Framework Suppliers during the current procurement exercise by defining the statement of requirements for decontamination services and assessing the capability of bidders. Additional independent assessment of bids was carried out by a working group formed from GDS' Science Advisory Board (see below for membership). The information and assessments gathered during visits to suppliers and in the evaluation process are being used to inform future work to improve capability.

The Agency has continued to maintain contact with the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism's Science and Innovation Unit, and through them, with the Ministry of Defence, to avoid duplication of Research and Development projects. GDS has participated in the Home Office CBRN Science and Technology Programme by managing a number of decontamination research and development projects on its behalf. GDS scientists have also acted on behalf of the Home Office as reviewers for bids received in response to its call for research proposals. GDS has actively supported the Home Office in developing its policy on the Tolerability of Residual Biological Hazards.

The GDS Science Advisory Board consisting of representatives from the Government Office for Science, Home Office, Defra, Health Protection Agency, Central Science Laboratory (CSL – now the Food and Environment Research Agency), Environment Agency, Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and Department for Transport provides advice on the science and technology available to address CBRN-related decontamination requirements and to support GDS in its evaluation of capabilities. GDS science is working closely with its liaison teams to further develop its evaluation process for decontamination capabilities of Framework Suppliers using scenarios based upon realistic threats. The outputs from these exercises will be used to define further capability and to inform future procurement and research activity.

GDS science has been actively developing links with international partners, especially those in the USA and Canada to maximise benefits from research and development projects, exercises and field-trials and to share operational experience for mutual benefit.

Status and Governance

Up until 31 March 2009 GDS was an Executive Agency of Defra and was accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. Details of the governance arrangements are set out in the Statement on Internal Control (page 26). The Chief Executive chairs the GDS Management Board with representatives attending from the Defra policy sponsor and the Home Office alongside non-executives. Annex 1 sets out the structure of the governance arrangements for the Agency that was in place for the year. Details of Board members and Non-Executive Directors are contained in the Remuneration Report

Staff Policies

GDS follows Defra staff and diversity policies on diversity, equal opportunities etc that are applicable for pay and conditions, staff appraisals, flexible working and travel and subsistence.

Risk

The Agency attitude to risk continues to develop with the Management Board considering their risk appetite and managing the Risk Register throughout the year. Risk has been considered by Internal Audit in their various audit studies and they are content with the progress of embedding risk management into the culture of the Agency.

Protected Data Related Incidents

GDS has fully implemented guidance received from the Cabinet Office to manage information risk. All GDS staff are aware that laptops, removable discs, CDs and USB memory sticks, that contain personal information or restricted information, need to be encrypted if they are taken, sent or used outside of a secure government building. All staff have completed the National School of Government e-learning security package with the appropriate pass mark.

No incidents of loss, theft, unauthorised disclosure or insecure disposal of personal information, restricted information or secret information have occurred during the year.

Development

To support the new remit a revised skills matrix has been developed to identify the essential skills and technical knowledge required by GDS staff. This matrix enables GDS staff to easily identify training and development needs required for their role in planning for emergency response and recovery, during emergency response and recovery, and to fulfil their own development objectives. The matrix recommends development routes and training providers that have been successfully used in the past by other GDS staff.

Stakeholders

Communication and consultation with stakeholders has been through the use of the website, newsletters and face to face liaison.

Stakeholders were routinely consulted on the new GDS remit and when developing the specification for the new Specialist Suppliers Framework. As part of this procurement work GDS also consulted key potential end users from the insurance industry and local government.

Environmental Performance and Sustainable Operations

GDS is an important part of the UK's drive towards sustainable development as part of the work being done to prevent major disruption to everyday life in the UK, and to minimise the impact and duration if it does occur. GDS contributes to the departmental strategic objectives of an 'economy and society resilient to environmental risk and adapted to the impacts of climate change'. GDS is committed to continuing integration through a Sustainable Development Action Plan.

During 2008-09 GDS monitored performance against targets within the Sustainable Development Action Plan and identified ways of improving and raising staff awareness of the sustainable operation agenda and ways that they can contribute to its success. GDS is contributing towards meeting the Government targets for improving performance on Environmental Management systems, emissions on business travel, water consumption, waste and recycling, energy efficiency and sustainable procurement.

Sickness Absence

The average number of days sickness absence, in the year, for GDS was 10 days compared to 5.3 days in the previous year.

Changes in External Environment

GDS continues, as part of its remit, to monitor and review the external environment with regard to changing CBRN issues and develop a response to this for the UK. We have been working closely with other Government Departments to build relationships and ways of responding to incidents. We have attended demonstrations by various overseas administrations to learn from their experiences and to participate in both open and closed seminars.

Looking forward to 2009-10 – Challenges and Opportunities

The GDS team within Fera will face many challenges to ensure that GDS services are delivered as Ministers expect. The benefits of the larger organisation should allow GDS staff to concentrate on their outward facing responsibilities and less on the running of a separate Agency. GDS will have access to, and be able to more easily draw on, a wider range of scientific analytical skills, research capability and resources to support contingency response. GDS principal objectives will become part of the objectives of the new parent organisation.

This will further develop GDS as the UK's foremost public service advisory centre on issues relating to the decontamination of buildings and infrastructure following a CBRN or significant HazMat incident.

GDS ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS (KPT) 2008-09

Summary

Set out below is a summary of achievements in each of the five key areas of activity:

1: GDS will provide an evaluated Framework of Specialist Suppliers to meet the requirements arising from the UK national risk assessment process, utilising exercises to assess the capacity and capability of Specialist Framework Suppliers – Met

Key Deliverable:

In partnership with the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions continue the procurement project to replace the existing Specialist Supplier Framework by the end of October 2008.

GDS provides its services through a Framework of Specialist Suppliers. The Framework is owned by the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions (OGCb.s), and managed by GDS.

The competitive dialogue process was completed by early Autumn 2008, and included scientific, operational and technical evaluation of the bids by a cross-government group of relevant experts. By the end of October 2008, Framework Agreements were in place for those organisations which had met the procurement specification, and feedback had been offered to those organisations which had not.

Outcome:

- **New Framework of Specialist Suppliers successfully established on time, to specification and budget** – the new Framework includes an increase in the number and capability of suppliers.

Key Deliverable:

Organise and deliver a briefing event for the new Framework by the end of November 2008.

GDS delivered a Supplier Briefing Event on the 13 November, bringing together the new Framework Suppliers. The aim of the day was to establish at the start of the Framework Agreement period a joint level of understanding around the potential threats GDS is designed to deal with, and the wider government context within which it works. It also offered the opportunity for GDS to begin exploring the practical capability of the Framework against potential service demand.

Outcome:

- **A better awareness of GDS requirements amongst the Framework Suppliers** – this is reflected in the feedback from the event which has been used to inform our approach to working with the suppliers over the coming months.

Key Deliverable:

Conduct visits to new Specialist Suppliers in order to build partnerships and further develop understanding of capacity and capability by the end of March 2009.

By March 2009, GDS Senior Management Team had visited all new suppliers on the Framework, setting out the strategic vision for the year ahead. The first round of contract management meetings have also taken place – establishing a more transparent management of the Framework, and setting in place arrangements for the routine collection of management information in support of wider capability assessment.

Outcome:

- **Formally established partnership and enhanced GDS knowledge of Framework capability** - this will be used to better inform work with the suppliers throughout the Framework Agreement period.

Key Deliverable:

Update capability matrix and gap analysis to reflect work with the Framework across the reporting year. During 2008 we will carry out at least two evaluated activities across the Framework.

GDS completed four radiological and four chemical scenario-based case studies (Exercises Hydration and Streetwise) during the reporting year. More recently, GDS commissioned Exercise Streetwise 2 to base-line capability amongst new radiological contractors on the Framework – evaluation of which will be completed during 2009/10.

In addition to routine capability work and the procurement project, GDS and its Framework have also been operationally active on two occasions over the reporting year (more detail of which is set out under Key Performance Target 3 below). These incidents offer further opportunity to evaluate several of the Specialist Suppliers and our own operational role.

The capability matrix and gap analysis have been updated throughout the reporting year to reflect our work with the Framework.

Outcome:

- **A more robust knowledge of supplier capability against risks** - the output from these studies has informed work with both the new Framework, and our strategic stakeholders across Whitehall.

Key Deliverable:

Update capability matrix and gap analysis to reflect initial understanding of capability and capacity of new Framework. By end of March 2009 establish initial programme of work for new Framework.

The new Framework was established by October 2008, and both the gap analysis and capability matrix updated as a result. An initial programme of work was established to base-line capability across new Framework Suppliers, with activity well underway as the reporting year drew to a close.

Outcome:

- **A greater understanding of new Framework Supplier capability against risks** – this work has quickly established a base-line for new capability and has informed capability assurance work with the Framework for the next reporting year.

Key Deliverable:

By March 2009 develop a mechanism for capturing and maintaining available information on decontamination/remediation capability which exists outside of the GDS Framework.

Work has been completed on scoping and developing a mechanism to capture information on relevant capability which exists outside of the GDS Framework. The mechanism will be in place and fully functional during 2009/10.

Outcome:

- **A more comprehensive understanding of decontamination and remediation-related capability available to the UK Government** – this information will be used to inform further procurement by GDS, and to influence recovery-based policies across wider Government.

Key deliverable:

Review exercise manual and update as necessary by March 2009

The GDS exercise manual is kept under regular review to ensure that work on capability assessment continues to be both relevant and maintained to a high standard.

Outcome:

- **An updated exercise manual** – the updated manual takes account of the operational and exercise lessons from throughout the year.

2. GDS will contribute to Central Government knowledge on national capability and capacity for the decontamination of buildings, infrastructure, mobile transport assets and the open environment. - Met

Key Deliverable:

Provide updates to Central Government on known GDS Framework capability against likely service requirement based upon the appropriate government policies and materials on at least an annual basis.

GDS has now firmly embedded the procedure for updating Central Government on decontamination and remediation-related matters which it agreed last year. Reports on capability, capacity and potential risks have been shared internally with both the Management Board and the Strategic Advisory Board on a routine basis, while more specific information on the gap analysis and known capability has been provided directly to the Home Office and Cabinet Office throughout the year.

Key Deliverable:

Manage projects allocated to GDS within the Home Office CBRN Science and Technology programme.

GDS Science team manages a group of eight-scientific research & development projects relating to aspects of CBRN decontamination science. GDS is also represented on the steering boards of three other projects managed by other government departments, and on working groups to develop guidance on the tolerability of residual hazards and dispersion modelling.

Key Deliverable:

GDS will continue to work closely with UK and overseas partners for advice on CBRN hazards and their decontamination as appropriate.

The ability of GDS to work closely with partners across the UK and overseas continues to be a key aspect of its benefit to UK resilience.

Within the UK, GDS maintains close links with policy makers and practitioners across Whitehall, including Home Office, Cabinet Office and Defra. We also work more closely with relevant scientific experts including those from Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and Health Protection Agency (HPA), as well as UK-based industry and academia. Throughout the year, GDS has attended and hosted a number of knowledge-sharing events both within the UK and overseas, working particularly closely with the United States Environmental Protection Agency and their National Decontamination Team.

3: Provide operational and tactical advice and guidance to Central Government and other stakeholders, including Local Authorities - Met

Key Deliverable:

Provide advice and guidance for stakeholders on decontamination related matters, to inform planning or following a CBRN and major HazMat incident.

GDS continues to work closely with colleagues in the Government Offices and emergency services to provide advice and guidance on preparedness. In recognition of the increasing awareness of GDS and its role in recovery, the past year has seen the introduction of regular input to the UK Fire & Rescue Service Gold Commanders course and our continued representation and input at both the National CBRN Chairs Working Group, and Regional Resilience Forums CBRN sub-groups. GDS was also requested to be a member of the National Planning Team for Exercise Green Star, the Defra-led recovery exercise.

Continuing its development of more structured communications, GDS has produced generic information on its role and operational triggers (including contact details) for Local Authority Emergency Planning Officers. These "generic inserts" have been distributed to regional partners, and are available on the GDS website.

GDS has also offered guidance in a number of HazMat incidents over the course of the year, including:

Chemical/radioactive substances - Warwickshire

In Summer 2008, Local Environmental Health Officers contacted GDS for support after discovering a number of potentially dangerous chemicals on the property of a recently deceased individual known to have been a retired scientist, previously employed within the nuclear industry. One of GDS Framework Suppliers was engaged to undertake a complete survey of the property - subsequently locating more chemicals, and a number of radioactive items. Working closely with the Local Authority and the Environment Agency, the GDS Framework Supplier made the property safe, and removed the hazardous materials for final disposal. The property was then returned to the deceased's family.

Anthrax - London

In Autumn 2008, the Health Protection Agency contacted GDS in connection with a suspected Anthrax contamination. As the health inquiry continued, a GDS Framework Supplier was engaged to support the HPA and the Local Authority, providing the effective disposal of personal protective equipment and contaminated water.

Outcome:

- **Successful engagement of GDS Specialist Suppliers** – contractual arrangements worked well, and a number of lessons were usefully identified from these operations which went on to inform further refinements to the contractual process, and to capability assurance and assessment work with the Framework.

Key Deliverable:

Review and, where necessary, revise the Agency's operational procedures and associated documentation on at least an annual basis. To carry out at least one test of the procedures in the reporting year.

GDS operational procedures have been reviewed in line with the revised Agency remit, and learning from operational experience and exercises. New, more robust, procedures are now in place. A desktop test of the new procedures was carried out by GDS staff and the duty officer system was tested.

Outcome:

- **Revised and updated operational procedures** – the new procedures include a streamlined on-call provision with a more formalised approach to Senior Management support, and greater transparency and support for early decision-making in an incident.

Key Deliverable:

By the end of March 2009 to review and update the Agency's current stakeholder strategy in line with the revised remit.

GDS approach to stakeholder engagement has been reviewed and updated in line with the revised Agency remit. Part of this review has seen greater commitment to more effective communications with Government Offices and Central Government – as evidenced by input to strategic briefings and support for the CBRN sub-groups.

Key Deliverable:

Agree minimum service levels with each Devolved Administration, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and for any Crown Dependent Territory where this is mutually agreed as necessary, within agreed timescales.

Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) have been established with the States of Guernsey and Jersey. The Isle of Man has confirmed that it is content for the current MoU to remain in place. Work with the Welsh Assembly Government, Northern Ireland Government and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has established that agreement of minimum service levels with GDS is a longer term aspiration, and not currently necessary. The MoU with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency was reviewed and extended.

4: GDS will develop its staff with both the capacity and capability to support the requirement arising from its revised remit – Met

Key Deliverable:

Taking into account diversity and equality, GDS will invest in learning and development to increase staff capability and support career development plans.

GDS continues to invest in the learning and development of its staff through in-house coaching and more formalised routes including distance learning and other courses.

In line with the new remit, we have reviewed the Agency training strategy to ensure appropriate guidance and support is in place, and introduced a GDS-specific core skills matrix which includes the Professional Skills for Government (PSG) standards. To ensure that formal training and courses continue to meet the needs of our staff, we have also developed a robust evaluation and feedback process.

GDS continues to review and develop its knowledge capture process to ensure that the corporate memory is maintained and further enhanced.

Outcome:

- **A revised, and more robust training strategy** – this strategy now better underpins the business needs, and supports staff in their continuing development.

Key Deliverable:

GDS will work towards IIP re-accreditation by the end of March 2009.

GDS has continued to work towards its IIP re-accreditation throughout the year, and has been successfully re-accredited as part of the Defra assessment.

Key Deliverable:

We will take forward key areas identified within the 2008 staff survey. The Agency will evaluate progress with a survey in the first quarter of 2009.

GDS recognises that the staff within the Agency are its greatest asset, and, in the form of a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) has taken forward key areas for development identified through the 2008 staff survey. Progress was evaluated through the 2009 survey.

5. Provide robust Corporate Governance in line with the Treasury Audit Committee Handbook, the National Audit Office and Internal Audit recommendations - Met

Key Deliverable:

GDS will identify priorities within its Sustainable Development Action Plan and deliver improvements against baseline, by end March 2009

GDS has identified the key priorities within its Sustainable Development Action Plan, and has delivered the necessary improvements throughout the year – highlighting further action as appropriate.

Key Deliverable:

GDS will develop an action plan and financial strategy to address audit and business performance.

GDS has developed an action plan and financial strategy to address audit and business performance.

Key Deliverable:

GDS will produce audited annual accounts to meet the requirement to lay before Parliament, before the Summer recess.

GDS successfully met all its objectives for 2008/09, and produced audited annual accounts with no substantial audit comments. The accounts were laid before Parliament before the summer recess.

Allocation of costs to Key Performance Targets

KPT	Description	Costs allocated on time and direct project costs £'000	Percentage
1	Evaluation of Specialist Suppliers Framework	619	29.2
2	Contribute to Central Government knowledge	534	25.2
3	Provision of Tactical Advice and Guidance	184	8.7
4	Develop staff to support the remit	144	6.8
5	Robust Corporate Governance	638	30.1
		2,119	100.0

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Performance

GDS is funded through the Defra Estimate as programme costs. Expenditure and budget performance is reported to Defra on a monthly basis. Total expenditure for the year to 31 March 2009 is £2,119,000 (2007-08 - £1,979,000) with the bulk being for salaries at £1,140,000 (2007-08 - £1,212,000). There was a considerable saving against the original projected budget mainly on the expenditure against the Specialist Suppliers.

Financial Review Statement

As stated above, the main expenditure was on staff costs of £1,140,000 and this will continue to be one of the most significant areas of expenditure. Due to operating uncertainties there was some delay in recruiting staff as vacancies occurred. By the end of the year staffing levels were almost to the budgeted level although costs in the year were reduced. The cost of maintaining and developing the supplier capabilities was £173,000 compared to £171,000 for the previous year. All the Specialist Suppliers have regular liaison visits but the procurement exercise to revise the Framework Contractors curtailed case study and exercise activity in the early part of the year. A large case study was carried out towards the end of the year with some of the new suppliers and results from this are now being evaluated. Other costs include travel and subsistence expenses of £193,000 compared to £176,000 in the prior year. In line with sustainable matters travel was looked at critically and more use of video and audio conferencing was made. Defra continued to support our activities by providing central HR, accounting and other services for which a charge of £113,000 was made. We made good use of internal audit provided through Defra and a charge of £18,000 was made for this. In the year there was a small capital purchase amounting to £2,000 for a tannoy system. There is no significant capital expenditure planned for the future.

Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' defined benefit schemes (classic, premium or classic plus) or a 'whole career' scheme (**nuvos**). A full explanation is included in the Remuneration Report.

Supplier Payment

GDS expects to pay all suppliers within 30 days of receipt of invoice in accordance with government guidelines. Pay performance for this year was 99% (previously 92%). As the volume of invoices for GDS is low a delay in processing a very small number of invoices can affect this performance. The Defra Shared Service Organisation administers payments to suppliers on behalf of the Agency. Towards the end of the year a payment performance target of 10 days was introduced and GDS was meeting this 100% by March 2009.

Auditors

The Agency's auditor, appointed by statute, is the Comptroller and Auditor General. A notional audit fee of £37,000 has been agreed for 2008-09 (£30,000 for 2007-08). There have been no payments for non-audit work. The audit fee includes £5,000 for preparatory work for the transition to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Accounting Officer's Audit Disclosure Statement

The Principal Accounting Officer for GDS' parent department, Defra, has confirmed that Mr Robert Bettley-Smith is responsible for signing these accounts through being the Agency Accounting Officer for 2008-09.

So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which GDS auditors are not aware.

The Accounting Officer has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that GDS auditors are aware of that information.

REMUNERATION REPORT

Remuneration Policy

Civil service appointments are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code. The Code requires appointments to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.civilservicecommissioners.gov.uk.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of senior management (i.e. Board members) of the Agency.

Remuneration (audited)

	2008-09		2007-08	
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)
Mr R Bettley-Smith Chief Executive Officer	75-80	0	80-85	0
Mr N Wilson Deputy Chief Executive Officer	55-60	0	55-60	0
Dr D Hewlett Head of Science Until 31 October 2008	25-30 (45-50 full year equivalent)	0	45-50	0
Mr S Thomas Head of Corporate Strategy	45-50	0	45-50	0
Miss F Pembroke Director of Capability Development From 01 April 2008	50-55	0	N/A	N/A

Non-Executive	2008-09		2007-08	
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)
Mr B Dennis Chair Audit and Risk Committee and Management Board non- executive director until 31 December 2008	0-5	0	5-10	0
Mr A Doig CBE Chair and non executive director of Management Board	0-5	0	0-5	0
Mrs M May FCMA Non-executive director, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee from 1 January 2009	0-5	0	5-10	0

Salary

Salary includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

Miss F Pembroke replaced Mr. S Varley on 1 April 2008 as one of the executive directors. Further, with her appointment as Director of Capability Development in October 2008, Dr. D Hewlett stepped down from the Board.

Mr B Dennis completed his term of appointment as a non-executive director on 31 December 2008 (originally appointed on 1 January 2006). Due to the impending changes to the Agency no replacement was appointed.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the Agency and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. No benefits in kind were paid in either year.

Pension Benefits (audited)

Officials	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/09 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £'000	CETV at 31/3/09 £'000	CETV at 31/3/08* £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000
Mr R Bettley-Smith Chief Executive Officer	27.5-30.0 plus lump sum of 85.0-87.5	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	592	542	50
Mr N Wilson Deputy Chief Executive Officer	10.0-12.5 plus lump sum of 17.5-20.0	0-2.5 plus lump sum of (0-2.5)	244	221	23
Dr D Hewlett Head of Science Until 31 October 2008	10.0-12.5 plus lump sum of 17.5-20.0	0-2.5 plus lump sum of (0-2.5)	136	122	14
Mr S Thomas Head of Corporate Strategy	15.0-17.5 plus lump sum of 45.0-47.5	(0-2.5) plus lump sum of (0-2.5)	219	203	16
Miss F Pembroke Director of Capability Development From 01 April 2008	5.0-7.5 plus lump sum of 17.5-20.0	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	66	54	12

*The figure may be different from the closing figure in last year's accounts. This is due to the CETV factors being updated to comply with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008

Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 30 July 2007, civil servants may be in one of four defined benefit schemes; either a 'final salary' scheme (**classic**, **premium** or **classic plus**); or a 'whole career' scheme (**nuvos**). These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus** and **nuvos** are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index (RPI). Members who joined from October 2002 could opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a good quality 'money

purchase' stakeholder pension with a significant employer contribution (**partnership** pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for **classic** and 3.5% for **premium, classic plus** and **nuvos**. Benefits in **classic** accrue at the rate of 1/80th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For **premium**, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike **classic**, there is no automatic lump sum. **Classic plus** is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per **classic** and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in **premium**. In **nuvos** a member builds up a pension based on their pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member's earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and, immediately after the scheme year end, the accrued pension is uprated in line with RPI. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The **partnership** pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee from a panel of three providers. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted, is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic, premium** and **classic plus** and 65 for members of **nuvos**.

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of

any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Summary and Explanation of the Remuneration Policy and Methods used by GDS to assess Performance.

The Government Decontamination Service is a small Agency. In order to concentrate its resources on delivery of its main functions and to ensure efficiency, a conscious decision has been taken to keep the number of support staff to the lowest practicable level. The Agency has therefore elected to adopt Defra terms and conditions, standards, systems, practices and procedures wherever possible. The remuneration of the Agency's Chief Executive is determined by Defra's Remuneration Committee, membership of which is detailed in Defra's Annual Report.

The Agency uses the same pay scales and allowances as those used within Defra to base the remuneration of its staff below Chief Executive level.

GDS believes that those of its staff who consistently produce good quality results should be both recognised and rewarded. Again, we have elected to adopt the same approach for the payment of in-year and annual bonuses as are used by our parent Department. Defra's Senior Civil Servant (SCS) Pay Strategy sets out the circumstances which govern the basis for line managers making pay recommendations, based on Cabinet Office guidance. The SCS Pay Committee chaired by the Permanent Secretary takes the final decisions on relative assessments of staff performance; the Defra Human Resources team carries out the calculations to make individual payments based on a matrix.

Individual performance for the majority in the SCS is assessed relative to all others in their peer group; consolidated pay awards and unconsolidated bonuses are calculated entirely on the basis of their achievements. Each consolidated award is different depending on their position on the pay range and their level of performance.

Performance management is a vital ingredient in the successful delivery of the Agency's priorities. The Agency has also decided to use the Defra procedures to assess performance for staff below SCS level. Shortly after their recruitment (and on an annual basis thereafter), staff and their line manager agree personal objectives underpinning the corporate objectives stated in the Agency's Business Plan.

Performance is regularly reviewed by each staff member together with their line manager throughout the year and honest feedback is provided to enable staff to know how well they are performing and to identify skills gaps and development requirements that need to be met. These skills gaps are then provided for on a prioritised basis.

Below SCS level, Defra operates a High Performance Bonus Scheme, the key elements of which are annual bonuses (payable to the top 10% of staff for outstanding performance during the year) and in-year bonuses (payable to permanent and casual staff) in recognition of outstanding work or achievement of goals within a more limited period. Awards may be paid to individuals or teams and may not normally exceed £750 per individual, whether or not as part of a team.

Summary and Explanation of Policy on Duration of Contracts, Notice Periods and Termination Payments.

The contract for the Chief Executive conforms to standard Senior Civil Service contracts as determined by the Cabinet Office. The Chief Executive has to give three months notice on resignation; on dismissal for inefficiency the Department would have to give 5 weeks for less than 4 years service, for 4 years and over, 1 week plus one week for every year of continuous service

up to a maximum of 13 weeks, or if terminated compulsorily 6 months notice. The Civil Service Compensation Scheme would apply in the case of redundancy/early departure/severance.

The majority of staff below SCS level working for the Agency are on permanent contracts that include standard Civil Service terms. Under their terms and conditions, if their employment is terminated before the end of four weeks service, they will be given a period of notice appropriate to the circumstances. This will not exceed five weeks and will not be less than two weeks. Permanent staff with at least four weeks continuous service but less than four years service will receive five weeks notice.

Staff with four or more years continuous service will receive a minimum notice period not less than one week for each year of continuous employment plus one week up to a maximum of 13 weeks.

Other than in misconduct cases if the minimum period of notice cannot be given staff will receive pay instead of the outstanding period.

Robert Bettley-Smith FRICS
Government Decontamination Service
29 May 2009

STATEMENT OF AGENCY'S AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 the Treasury has directed the Government Decontamination Service to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Agency's state of affairs at the year end and of its income and expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements in the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), and in particular to:

- Observe the accounts direction issued by the Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis.
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis.
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the FReM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume the Agency will continue in operation.

The Accounting Officer for Defra has designated the Chief Executive of the Government Decontamination Service as the Accounting Officer for the Agency. His relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including his responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances and for keeping of proper records and for safeguarding the Agency's assets, are set out in the Accounting Officers Memorandum, issued by the Treasury and published in "Managing Public Money".

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Scope of Responsibility

As Accounting Officer for the Agency, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control. This supports the achievement of GDS' aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and Agency assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me and set out in HM Treasury's Managing Public Money.

GDS delivers its aims and objectives as agreed with the Secretary of State, and the Agency's cross departmental Ministerial Board, and within delegations from Defra. These delegations are described in the Accounting Officer letter, Framework Document and other documents as applicable. This statement contributes to the assurances in Defra's Statement on Internal Control. Following the creation of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) the line management of the Agency moved to Defra's Director of Water Floods, Environmental Risk & Regulation Directorate (previously Domestic Climate Change Directorate) who is the Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board.

The Purpose of the Statement on Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level, rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the Agency's aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The development of the system of internal control is an ongoing process, designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of our aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been developed in accordance with HM Treasury guidance and with the oversight of the Strategic Advisory Board.

The Risk & Control Framework

GDS has adopted the following governance and control mechanisms:

Governance

Ministerial Board

This Board is chaired by the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and has as its members representatives from the main sponsor departments. These are in addition to Defra, the Home Office, Communities and Local Government and the Devolved Administrations of Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Ministerial Board will only meet when the Chair, acting on the advice from the Corporate Owner, GDS Chief Executive, or other Board Members, deems it necessary.

Strategic Advisory Board

The Ministerial Board has reporting to it a Strategic Advisory Board chaired by the Defra Director Water Group as the Corporate Owner, and with representatives from the other Government Departments as represented on the Ministerial Board, specifically the Home Office and the Communities and Local Government. The Board also includes two non-executive members. The Board met on a quarterly basis and received updates as required in the interim. The Home Office CBRN Strategy Board acts as a customer board for GDS and provides strategic direction and

policy advice from across Government Departments and the Devolved Administrations. The Strategic Advisory Board met three times during the year.

GDS Review

As reported in the last Statement on Internal Control a review in July 2007 sponsored by the Chief Scientists of Defra and the Home Office made recommendations to improve and strengthen the science support for GDS remitted services. Leading from the recommendations an additional review covering the roles and responsibilities and organisational governance of GDS was instigated by Defra in November 2007. This recommended that the remit was revised, as it lacked clarity and was too broad (given the resources available). The Board also decided that once the remit had been agreed, the issue of departmental location could be addressed with a view to determining 'best fit'.

The Strategic Advisory Board considered expressions of interest from a number of bodies and looked at recommendations for change in June 2008. Further work concluded that the preferred and most appropriate location given the fit with the agreed criteria would be for GDS to join with other areas of Defra that will make up the new Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera). The new Agency vested on 1 April 2009 and consisted of the Central Science Laboratory, Defra Plant Health Division, the Plant Variety Rights and Seeds Division and GDS. Following this GDS as a separate Agency ceased to exist on 1 April 2009 but the GDS remit and brand will continue as a part of Fera. As a consequence of these changes I will be leaving GDS to move to a new role at The Strategic Advisory Board for Intellectual Property.

Management Board

I, as CEO, chair the Management Board which reviews the strategic risks to the delivery of our aims and objectives and the progress against the Service's business plan. The Management Board is responsible for ensuring effective performance, risk management and control. The Board comprised the CEO, Deputy CEO, the Head of Corporate Strategy, the Director of Capability Development plus three non-executive members. During the year Bryan Dennis, who also chaired the Audit and Risk Committee came to the end of a three year appointment (in December 2008) and was not replaced due to the changes expected in terms of joining Fera. The remaining two non-executives were Alan Doig, recently the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Stafford Fire and Rescue Service (appointed in April 2006), and Margaret May, FCMA (appointed in July 2006). Margaret became the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. In addition there are representatives from our policy sponsor in Defra and our major stakeholder, the Home Office.

The Board met six times during the year to consider the strategic approach to the work of the Agency through the Business Plan and to discuss the resources and activities in the year.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), comprised of the three non-executive members of the Management Board, is constituted in accordance with latest Treasury guidance. In addition invited attendance is extended to representatives from Defra, GDS Senior Management, internal and external audit. The Chair also reported to the Strategic Advisory Board on a regular basis. The ARC met three times during the year. Its activities included:

- Endorsing the accounts and Statement on Internal Control for the Annual Report
- Approving the risk management strategy
- Overseeing the development of risk management in the Agency

- Receiving regular reports from management including highlighting any emerging risks and reporting on the strategic risk register activity
- Reviewing progress to develop budgetary control and financial reporting procedures
- Considering the audit arrangements (internal and external). It receives reports from Internal Audit (a bought in service from Defra), and the audit reports from the NAO and discusses any identified weaknesses
- Continuing to develop a strategic oversight and challenge process
- Reviewing the performance, membership and activities of the ARC in accordance with Treasury guidance – and subsequently implementing improvements

Science Advisory Board

GDS Science Advisory Board's role is to provide independent scientific advice and peer review of GDS' science based activities and comprises scientists from our sponsor departments. The Group is chaired by the Government Office for Science and has representatives from the Health Protection Agency, Defence Science and Technology Laboratories, Home Office, Defra, Environment Agency, Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure, Communities and Local Government, Central Science Laboratory and the Department for Transport. A small sub-group of scientists drawn from group members has helped GDS evaluate the technical and scientific capabilities of bidders to GDS' recent procurement exercise for specialist decontamination contractors.

Following completion of the procurement exercise the Board will provide essential peer-review of GDS' technical development programme including overview of research activities and the benchmarking of existing capabilities.

Financial Control

Authority for the financial control of the Agency has been delegated to me by the Accounting Officer for Defra. I have delegated day to day control to the Deputy Chief Executive and Finance Director, a qualified accountant. Further delegation is agreed by me and published in delegation tables. Budgets and forecasts are well understood with close consultation with the heads of the business areas. The Management Board formally reviewed budgets against spend together with revised forecasts presented from time to time and adjusted priorities in line with delivery targets. We are reliant on the accounting systems and transaction services of the Defra Shared Services Organisation that incorporates Accounting, HR and other services. During the year, two external attempts were made to defraud the Government Procurement Cards of individual staff. These attempts were intercepted by the card provider and no loss was sustained by GDS or the Department.

Strategy and Planning

GDS strategy is based on the requirements of the Framework Document published in July 2005 and the agreed three year Corporate Plan. An Annual Business Plan is also agreed by Ministers and monitored by the Board. This Plan includes the Vision, Mission and Objectives for the Agency. The Business Plan focuses on the main areas of the business: the Specialist Suppliers, building and using technical knowledge, the operational needs, our people, our customers or stakeholders and effective financial planning together with management and control. The key performance targets are included and linked to objectives (see pages 10-16) as reported in this Annual Report and Accounts.

The current year's Business Plan was amended to take account of the revised remit and way of working. The targets were agreed with the Strategic Advisory Board and Ministers. The targets contained within that document are underpinned by a risk assessment and mitigation action for

those risks. The risks are considered by the Management Board and reported to the Strategic Advisory Board and the Corporate Owner.

GDS has now been included in the Fera Business Plan for 2009-10 and includes the need to deliver against the remit which was agreed in January 2009.

Capacity to Handle Risk

Risk Management

The Management Board has oversight of the risk management process that has been put in place. A risk summary aligned to GDS objectives is presented with commentary at each meeting. Risk strategy, risk appetite and mitigation are areas that are discussed or are being progressed by the Board.

A Business Continuity Plan has been produced for the on-going operation of the Agency and this has been adapted for the changing accommodation and business priorities. This document is reviewed and updated to take into account the changing requirements and operating environment for GDS.

In response to the Cabinet Office Data Handling Procedure in Government Report (June 2008) and changes to Managing Public Money (Annex 4.15) a number of measures have been introduced, in conjunction with Defra guidance, to ensure that risks relating to information assets are managed and controlled. All staff have undertaken the Cabinet Office on-line training – Protecting Information Level 1 to a satisfactory standard. The Information Asset Owner provides quarterly reports to the Defra Senior Information Risk Owner, which are reviewed as to the effectiveness of controls and identifies if such incidents have taken place. There have been no incidents to report from GDS in this year.

An Internal Audit conclusion and opinion on operational planning confirmed that the process employed by GDS for identifying key threats falling within their remit, mapping supplier capabilities to the required responses, and testing suppliers' ongoing capabilities are adequate⁵.

Change Management

The Corporate Plan sets the strategic staircase for a three year period. The Business Plan sets yearly key performance targets so that progress can be measured. Details are listed on pages 10 to 16 of this Annual Report and Accounts.

During the year we have undertaken exercises with Local Authorities and our Specialist Suppliers. Lessons learned from these events and actual incidents were used to inform the review and update of our procedures and capability requirements from suppliers. This also informed the requirements for the procurement exercise recently completed to replace the 2005-08 framework of Specialist Suppliers. A great deal of work was carried out to change the direction of GDS to line up with the requirements of the revised remit. An extensive process mapping exercise was carried out which developed the job roles and responsibilities required to deliver the new remit. Job descriptions were agreed with all staff as a result.

Joining with Fera has created another major change, the consequences of which (integration with the new Agency structure) is on-going. A great deal of consultation and discussion with staff and

⁵ The internal controls framework functions effectively in normal circumstances and/or sufficiently effectively not to put the achievements of the objectives of area under risk.

their representatives has taken place. New reporting lines and revised systems are being developed and explained to all staff. Where possible these are aligned to the work from the process mapping to reduce the change impact.

Performance Management

GDS performance against its key performance indicators has been monitored by the Management Board throughout the year. The out-turn was assessed, on behalf of Defra, by Internal Audit and reported to the Defra Board.

Individual performance management agreements and objectives were linked to the agreed Business Plan. The targets set in that Plan and for individuals are to be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-limited. We initiated a continuous improvement plan to look at leadership and communications ahead of a successful re-accreditation for Investors in People. We have recently surveyed our staff to look at progress and the areas for further improvement.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the managers within the Agency and comments from the external auditors made in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the results from my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Management Board and the Audit and Risk Committee.

Internal Audit have completed a programme of audit including Key Controls Testing (KCT) and I am pleased to note that few weaknesses have been identified and indeed a '**Strong**' opinion was received for the KCT work. The Head of Defra Agency Internal Audit has given his opinion in his Annual Report to me. This covers the systems for risk management, governance and the internal control framework that GDS has put in place. They are considered to be adequate and effective for the achievement of the organisation's objective. Based on the continued improvement identified in this report and the resolution of the issues relating to the Agency's legal framework, a **full assurance** is given.

Significant Internal Control Issues

Internal control issues for the Agency not only encompass our work to meet our business objectives but also issues that may be raised in the Defra statement as it may affect our business operation. The governance arrangements have worked well with significant input from the non-executive directors who played a full part. There are still areas to address as stated below.

- The testing and assurance of the capability and capacity of Specialist Framework Suppliers under field conditions needs to be explored and safe methods developed if appropriate following the evaluation of scenario based case studies.
- The transition to the new Agency, Fera, and the loss of key staff to other areas of Fera and Defra in that transition gives a short-term reduction in GDS capability and impacts on the level of resilience. Contingency plans are being put in place and other steps such as recruiting to fill the skills gap are being taken.

- Our science needs have been strengthened, not only through direct recruitment but will be enhanced on joining with Fera. To ensure that an effective decontamination operation is readily available, the gaps in other technical areas are being addressed.

Notwithstanding the good audit opinion that GDS has received it is part of the remit to point out issues that may need to be addressed. The points above are a result of the nature of the business and are noted in the context of developing knowledge rather than any failures within the business.

Robert Bettley-Smith FRICS
Government Decontamination Service
29 May 2009

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Government Decontamination Service for the year ended 31 March 2009 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. These comprise the Operating Cost Statement and Statement of Recognised Gains and Losses, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Agency, the Chief Executive and auditor

The Agency and Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, are responsible for preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration Report, and the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and HM Treasury directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. I report to you whether, in my opinion, the information, which comprises the management commentary, included in the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In addition, I report to you if the Agency has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by HM Treasury regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal Control reflects the Agency's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether this statement covers all risks and controls, or to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Agency's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises the Chief Executive's Foreword, Mission Statement Vision and Objectives and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in

the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Agency and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the Agency's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinions

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by HM Treasury, of the state of the Agency's affairs as at 31 March 2009, and of the operating cost, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended;
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; and
- information, which comprises the management commentary, included within the Annual Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

Opinion on Regularity

- In my opinion, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Amyas Morse

**Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
151 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SS
16 June 2009**

GOVERNMENT DECONTAMINATION SERVICE 2008-2009 ACCOUNTS

Operating Cost Statement for the year ended 31 March 2009

	Note	2008-09		2007-08	
		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Programme Cost Expenditure					
Staff Costs	2	1,140		1,212	
Other Programme Costs	3	824		644	
Depreciation	4	5		4	
GDS Programme Costs for the year			1,969		1,860
Departmental Charges and Other Costs					
Defra service recharges		113		89	
Notional audit fees - NAO		37		30	
Total Other Costs			150		119
Operating Costs for the year	7		2,119		1,979

All Activities arise from continuing operations

The Agency had no other recognised gains or losses in 2008-09

The notes on pages 37-46 form part of these financial statements

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2009

	Note	31 March 2009		31 March 2008	
		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	4	43		46	
Total Fixed Assets			43		46
Current Assets					
Debtors and prepayments	5	16		26	
Cash at bank	8	50		334	
Total Current Assets			66		360
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
Creditors	6	(310)		(338)	
Total Creditors			(310)		(338)
Net Current (Liabilities) / Assets			(244)		22
Total assets less current liabilities			(201)		68
Taxpayers Equity					
General Fund	7		(201)		68

The notes on pages 37-46 form part of these financial statements

Robert Bettley-Smith FRICS
Government Decontamination Service
29 May 2009

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended 31 March 2009

		2008-09 £'000s	2007 – 08 £'000s
Net cash outflow from operating activities	Note 8a	(2,095)	(1,078)
Capital expenditure and financial investment	4	(2)	(14)
Cash outflow before financing		(2,097)	(1,092)
Financing			
Defra operational funding	7	1,813	326
Funding from OGD's	7	-	755
Decrease in cash in the year	8b	(284)	(11)

The notes on pages 37-46 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2008-09 Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. Where FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Agency for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The Agency's accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

a) Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of fixed assets to their value to the business by reference to their current costs. Financial information is included in the accounts on an accruals basis. Exceptionally staff bonuses are expensed in the year they are paid as there is no certainty of cost and agreement when they are potentially earned.

b) Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised if the purchase cost equals or exceeds £2,000 and where there is an expected useful economic life of more than one year. All tangible fixed assets are stated at the lower of replacement cost and recoverable amount. On initial recognition they are measured at cost including any costs such as installation directly attributable to bringing them into working condition.

c) Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated at rates calculated to write them down to estimated residual value on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives. Depreciation is charged in the month of disposal but not in the month of purchase. Asset lives are normally in the following range:

Office equipment	10 years
------------------	----------

d) Value Added Tax (VAT)

Most of the activities of the Agency are outside the scope of VAT and, in general, output tax does not apply and most input tax on purchases is not recoverable. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets.

e) Defra Service Recharges

Central overheads from core Defra are now charged on a hard charging basis and included in the accounts. The charges cover central services such as Human Resources, Accounting Services and Procurement and Contracts. Previously there was a notional charge included in the accounts amounting to £89,000.

f) Administration, Programme Expenditure and Income

The Agency is a service provider and has been set up to deal with one of Defra's Top 10 Threats. Accordingly the Agency is deemed to be a Front Line Service and all expenditure is

therefore classified as programme rather than administration. Programme costs reflect administration costs of frontline services and all the other non-administration costs, including certain staff costs where they relate directly to service delivery. The classification of expenditure and income as administration or programme follows the definition of administration costs set by HM Treasury.

g) Foreign Exchange

Transactions which are denominated in a foreign currency are translated into sterling at the exchange rate ruling at the date of each transaction. Balances held in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. These translation differences are dealt with in the Operating Cost Statement. In line with HM Treasury guidance, gains are treated as Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts (CFERs) and losses as programme expenditure.

h) Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 30 July 2007, civil servants may be in one of four defined benefit schemes; either a 'final salary' scheme (**classic, premium or classic plus**); or a 'whole career' scheme (**nuvos**). The provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) cover past and present employees; which is mainly non-contributory and unfunded except in respect of dependent's benefits.

Although the scheme is a defined benefit scheme, liability for payment of future benefits is a charge to the PCSPS. Agencies covered by the PCSPS meet the cost of the pension cover provided for the staff they employ by payment of charges calculated on an accruing basis. There is a separate statement for the PCSPS as a whole. In respect of defined contribution schemes, the Agency recognises the contributions payable for the year.

Further information is provided in the Remuneration Report (page 19) and Note 2.

i) Going Concern

The balance sheet at 31 March 2009 shows Taxpayers' Equity of (£201,000). In common with Government Departments, the future financing of the Government Decontamination Service is accordingly to be met by future grants of supply to Defra and the application of future income, both to be approved annually by Parliament. Such approval for amounts required for 2009-10 has already been given and there is no reason to believe that future approvals will not be forthcoming. GDS has ceased to trade as a separate entity and joined the Food and Environment Research Agency. In accordance with the FReM these accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

j) International Financial Reporting Standards

It was announced in the March 2008 budget speech that the proposed transition to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for all UK government entities would be deferred until financial year 2009-10. However, Defra carried out a restatement exercise to assess the likely impacts of IFRS on the Department's Resource Accounts and Winter Supplementary Estimates. GDS as one of its Executive Agencies took part in this exercise.

2. Staff Costs and Numbers

2a. Staff costs

Staff costs consist of:

	Permanently Employed staff	Others	Year ended 31 March 2009 Total	Year ended 31 March 2008 Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Salaries and wages	851	35	886	938
Social security costs	70	3	73	80
Other pension costs	175	6	181	194
Total costs	1,096	44	1,140	1,212

2b. Staff numbers

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed, including Senior Management, during the year was 25 (prior year 26). This was made up as follows:

Staff employed	2008-09	2007-08
Permanently Employed	24	24
Others	1	2
Total Staff	25	26

2c. Pensions

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but Defra (GDS) is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The scheme Actuary valued the scheme at 31 March 2007. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk)

For 2008-09 employers' contributions of £171,936 were payable to the PCSPS (2007-08 £179,447) at one of four rates in the range 17.1% – 25.5% (2007-08: 17.1%- 25.5%) of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. From 2009-10, the salary bands will be revised and rates will be changing with effect from April 2009. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2008-09 to be paid when the member retires, and not the benefits paid during the period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. GDS has one member of staff with such pension arrangements.

2d. Loans

Loans are made to staff to cover season ticket advances, imprests and to relocate. As at 31 March 2009 there was a Nil balance (2007-08 £4,333).

3. Other Programme Costs

These are made up as follows:

	Year ended 31 March 2009	Year ended 31 March 2008
	£'000s	£'000s
Travel and Subsistence	193	176
Specialist Supplier Payments	173	171
Facilities Charges	151	85
Professional Fees	92	43
Rent	32	32
Training	32	24
Conference costs	21	7
Internal Audit Fees	18	20
Agency staff costs	-	1
IT Costs	5	1
Other costs	107	84
Total Other Programme Costs	824	644

4. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Office Equipment £'000s
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2008	52
Additions	2
At 31 March 2009	54
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2008	6
Charges in year	5
At 31 March 2009	11
Net Book Value 31 March 2009	43
Net Book Value 31 March 2008	46

5. Debtors and Prepayments

Amounts falling due within one year:	As at 31 March 2009	As at 31 March 2008
	£'000s	£'000s
Debtors	16	18
Prepayments	-	8
Total Debtors and Prepayments	16	26
Balances with other Central Government bodies	1	-
Debtors external to Government	15	26

6. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year	As at 31 March 2009	As at 31 March 2008
	£'000s	£'000s
Trade creditors	62	137
Accruals Owing to Defra and its Agencies	80	98
Accruals owing to Other Government Depts	40	37
Other Accruals	128	66
Total Creditors	310	338
Balances with other Central Government bodies	120	170
Balances with public corporations	11	-
Creditors external to Government	179	168

7. General Fund

GDS is funded by its sponsor Defra.

	2008-09	2007-08
	£'000s	£'000s
Balance at 1 April	68	847
Defra Operational Funding	1,813	326
Funding from Other Government Departments	-	755
Operating Costs for the period	(2,119)	(1,979)
Non-cash items:		
Audit Fee	37	30
Defra Service Charges	-	89
Balance at 31 March	(201)	68

8. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

8a. Reconciliation of operating costs to net cash outflow from operating activities

	Year ending 31 March 2009	Year ending 31 March 2008
	£'000s	£'000s
Operating costs for the period	(2,119)	(1,979)
Depreciation	5	4
Defra service charges	-	89
Other notional charges added back	37	30
Decrease in debtors and prepayments	10	736
(Decrease) / Increase in creditors	(28)	42
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(2,095)	(1,078)

8b. Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in cash at bank

	As at 31 March 2009 £'000s	As at 31 March 2008 £'000s
Decrease in cash in the period	(284)	(11)
Cash at bank at 1 April	334	345
Cash at bank at 31 March	50	334

8c. The following balances at 31 March are held at:

Office of HM Paymaster General	48	334
Commercial bank accounts	2	-
Balance at 31 March	50	334

9. Capital Commitments

GDS has no capital commitments as at 31 March 2009 (31 March 2008 Nil).

10. Cost of Capital

Interest on Capital is notional and is calculated at 3.5% in accordance with the Treasury guidance on Fees and Charges. It is based on the average net assets employed throughout the year, excluding the cash balance with Paymaster where the charge is nil. The resulting calculation for 2008-09 is negligible and thus is not provided in the financial statements.

11. Contingent Liabilities

GDS is not aware of any contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2009.

12. Related Party Transactions and Senior Management Interests

As GDS is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and is sponsored by them, the Department is regarded as a related party. During the year, GDS has had significant material transactions with the Department.

In addition, GDS has had various material transactions with other Central Government bodies. We have had material transactions with the National School of Government, the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Ministry of Defence.

None of the Senior Management has had any financial interest in GDS during the financial year or since.

13. Financial Instruments

Financial Assets and Liabilities

The Agency classifies its non derivative financial assets as loans and receivables. Financial assets and liabilities are recognised at fair value (the transaction price plus any directly attributable transaction costs).

Derivative Financial Instruments and Hedging

The Agency does not use derivative financial instruments such as interest rate swaps or any other hedging facilities.

Market Risk

GDS does not face the degree of exposure to financial risk that commercial businesses do. In addition financial assets and liabilities generated by day-to-day operational activities are not held in order to change the risks facing the Agency in undertaking its activities. GDS relies upon Defra for its cash requirements, having no power itself to borrow or invest surplus funds and the Agency's main financial assets and liabilities have either a nil or a fixed rate of interest related to the cost of capital (currently 3.5%). The short-term liquidity and interest rate risks are therefore slight and there is little foreign currency risk as all income and expenditure, and material assets and liabilities, are denominated in sterling. Invoices received in foreign currency (mainly US Dollars) are converted to sterling for accounting purposes and paid in the foreign currency when due. This may give rise to a gain or loss on exchange. There were no significant differences at the year end.

Credit Risk

There is no exposure to credit risk (principally debtors and cash); given that the Agency's net resource requirement is financed through resources provided by other Government Departments.

Financial Assets by category

Financial Assets per Balance Sheet	Loans and Receivables £'000	2008-09 Total £'000	Loans and Receivables £'000	2007-08 Total £'000
Cash	50	50	334	334
Other debtors	3	3	14	14
Total	53	53	348	348

The above figures exclude statutory debtors which relate to VAT due from HM Revenue and Customs. None of the Financial Assets have been subject to impairment.

An analysis of the ageing of the non-impaired trade debtors is shown below:-

	Not Due £'000	0-30 days £'000	30-60 days and over £'000	Total £'000
As at 31 March 2009	-	3	-	3
As at 31 March 2008	-	14	-	14

Financial Liabilities by category

Financial Liabilities per Balance Sheet	Financial Liabilities £'000	2008-09 Total £'000	Financial Liabilities £'000	2007-08 Total £'000
Trade creditors	62	62	137	137
Other creditors	248	248	201	201
Total	310	310	338	338

The above figures exclude statutory creditors which relate to Tax and Social Security due to HM Revenue and Customs.

The following table illustrates the contractual maturity profiles of the Agency's financial liabilities as at 31 March 2009 and 31 March 2008.

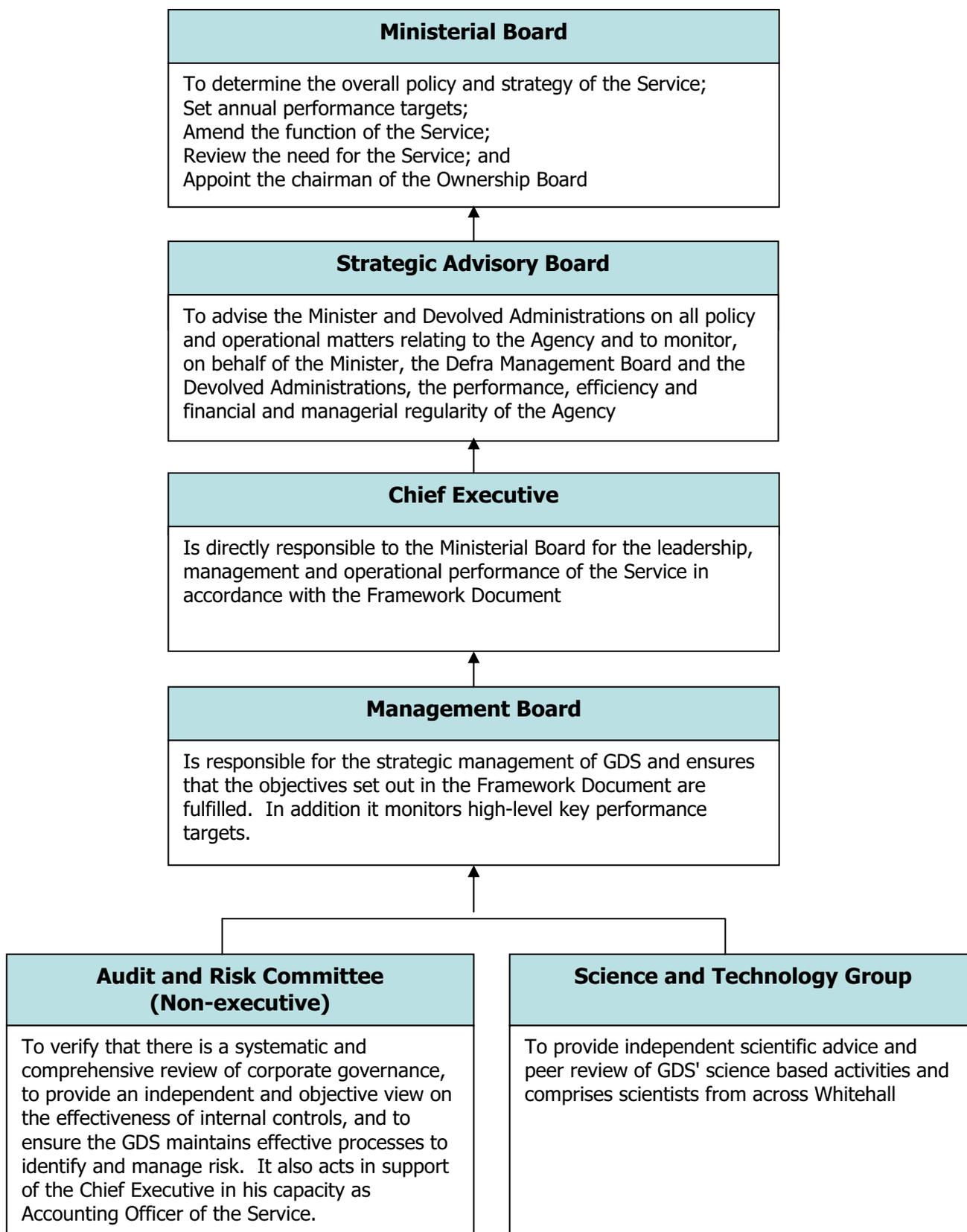
	Within 1 Year £'000	1-2 Years £'000	2-5 Years £'000	More than 5 Years £'000	Total £'000
As at 31 March 2009					
Trade payables and accruals	310	-	-	-	310
	310	-	-	-	310
As at 31 March 2008					
Trade payables and accruals	338	-	-	-	338
	338	-	-	-	338

14. Post Balance Sheet Events

As stated in this annual report GDS has now merged with Defra's Plant Health Division (PHD), Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), Plant Varieties and Seeds (PVS) Office and the Central Science Laboratory (CSL) from 1 April 2009 to form the new Agency, Fera.

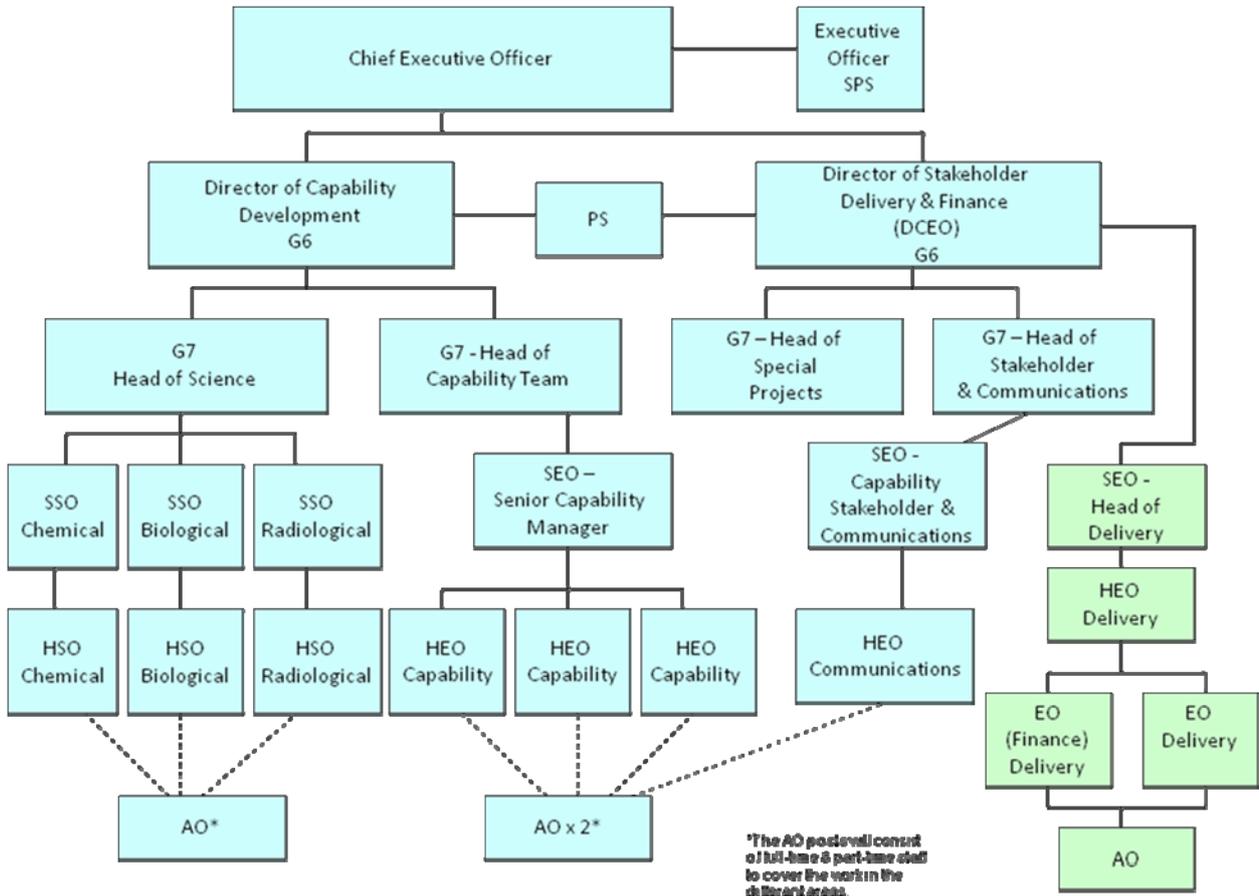
GDS' financial statements are laid before the Houses of Parliament by the Secretary of State for Defra. FRS 21 requires GDS to disclose the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue. The authorised date for issue is 2 July 2009.

Annex 1 Outline Structure of Boards and Committees Relating to GDS



Annex 2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

GDS Team



Key to abbreviations

SPS	Senior Personal Secretary
PS	Personal Secretary
HEO	Higher Executive Officer
HSO	Higher Scientific Officer
EO	Executive Officer
AO	Administrative Officer
SSO	Senior Scientific Officer



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