

Department of

**Agriculture and
Rural Development**

www.dardni.gov.uk

From: Gerry Lavery

2 November 2005

**To: Colm Shannon
Deputy Director of Communications
EIS**

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EIS REVIEW OF NICS ADVERTISING

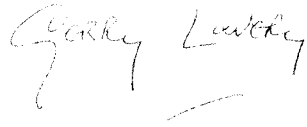
In response to the Review of NICS Advertising, DARD's position is as follows: DARD's expenditure on advertising is generally much lower than the expenditure of other departments, and mainly focuses on public notice advertising and some specialist campaigns in the farming and weekly newspapers. DARD advertising needs are met by the weekly and specialist farming newspapers, with occasional use of daily newspapers. We will be happy to follow any guidance devised by EIS in relation to rationalisation of public notice advertising, recruitment advertising etc. However, in light of our specialist target audience, it is vital that any guidelines developed will allow us to continue our current approach of utilising the appropriate range of farming and rural papers to reach that audience.

DARD's current position with regard to internal advertising administration is that our Press Office is the central purchasing unit for most of our advertising expenditure, with Divisions holding planning and budgetary control of advertising. DARD Press Office purchases advertising space through DRD Advertising Unit, thus achieving greater bulk buying discounts and better value for money. This central purchasing role has proved beneficial in achieving efficiencies for DARD in relation to advertising purchase.

Management of advertising expenditure has been devolved to Divisions in DARD for the past three years, and has proved much more effective and efficient in terms of planning, evaluation and achieving value for money than when a partial budget was held centrally. Divisions allocate advertising funding from general administrative funds or project funds as required, rather than holding ring-fenced advertising budgets. This approach has served the Department well over the past few years, and we would propose to continue with it.

Our internal review of advertising has allowed us the opportunity to enhance our procedures, so that we will be better placed to provide you with regular information on planned expenditure. We are also setting this review in the context of a broader reassessment of external communications issues.

Finally, I am aware that, on top of this review, EIS has now been tasked with assessing the possible establishment of a central advertising unit for all NICS departments. We will be happy to discuss as required.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerry Lavery". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

GERRY LAVERY
Senior Finance Director