

Agency Rationalisation

The Irish Experience

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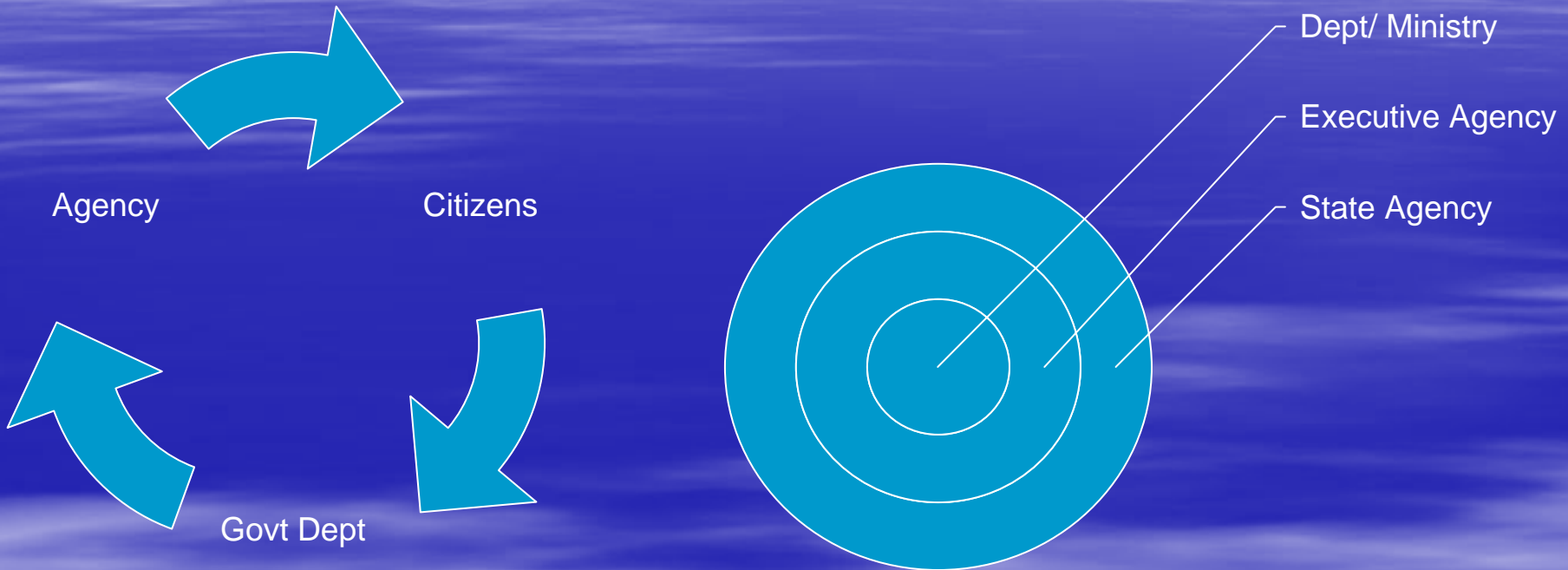
An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

Background

- Historical context
 - Growth of agencies as state developed
- Changing Circumstances
 - Radical increase after 2000
- New Solutions to Old Problems
 - Service delivery
 - Issue recognition/ Isolation/ Solution
- New Problems



Service models



Agency vs Department/Ministry

Dept

- Direct accountability
- Ministerial control
- Wider staff pool
- Competing priorities
- Parl. overhead

Agency

- Single focus
- Specialised
- Professionalism
- Agency 'capture'
- Ghetto



Reasons for change

Policy

- Increase accountability
- Ministerial and Parliamentary oversight

■ Economic

- Reduce cost of bureaucracy
- Force sharing of services



Guiding Principles

- Govt Depts primary locus for POLICY
- Agencies deliver specialist services
- Overlapping/ Competing agencies
- Opportunities for sharing back-offices
- Staff interests
- Ongoing relevance: sunset clause?



Early experiences 2008/9

- Positive

- Low-hanging fruit (*Combat Poverty Agency*)
- Business mergers in train (*Local Government Services*)

- Negative

- Resistance
 - Staff/ Management/ Stakeholders
- Technical
 - Legal/ HR/ IR/ Dispersed Locations



Initial progress 2009

- *Agencies closed or abolished:*
 - National Crime Council
 - Educational Disadvantage Committee
 - National Adult Learning Council
 - Centre for Early Childhood Development & Education
 - Office of Tobacco Control
 - Culture Ireland to remain part of the Department of Arts, Sports & Tourism
- *Funding ceased:*
 - National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism



Next Round

Merger or amalgamation of agencies

- Censorship of Publications Board and its Appeals Board with the Office for Film Classification
- Rent Tribunal into Private Residential Tenancies Board
- Postgraduate Medical and Dental Board into, as appropriate, the Dental Council, the Medical Council and the HSE
- Establishment of National Transport Authority to incorporate the
 - Dublin Transport Office (completed),
 - the Commission for Taxi Regulation and
 - the Public Transport Licensing functions of the Department of Transport.
- The Crisis Pregnancy Agency subsumed into the HSE
- The National Cancer Screening Service, National Cancer Registry Board, Crisis Pregnancy Agency & Drug Treatment Centre into the HSE
- Inland Fisheries Ireland resulted from the merger of the seven regional fisheries boards and the Central Fisheries Board.
- Merge Local Government Management Services Board Local Government Computer Services Board into Local Government Services Board
- Air Accident Investigation Unit, Railway Accident Investigation Unit & Marine Casualty Investigation Unit amalgamated



Lessons learned



- Bold Announcements... Delayed delivery
- Need for consensus
 - Social
 - Interest Group
 - Organisational
- Need for infrastructure
 - Technical / legal
 - IR/ HR
- Need for Persistence



Changing Context 2011

- National priorities: Mindset
- “Croke Park Agreement”
 - Enabling measure
 - Redeployment
 - Basic pay/pensions protected
- New Government Programme: 5 years
- Comprehensive Review of Expenditure
- New focus: staff numbers reduction

