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Foreword by Refugee Applications Commissioner

I am happy to introduce the fourteenth Annual Report of the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) for 2014 which provides a further update on the delivery of the strategic goals and objectives contained in our Strategy Statement 2013-2015.

2014 was another busy year for ORAC. As well as undertaking our functions in relation to refugee status determination, ORAC commenced processing subsidiary protection applications in a comprehensive manner under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013. As an indication of confidence in our process, jurisdiction in this important area of international protection was transferred to ORAC by the Minister for Justice and Equality with effect from 14 November 2013. This additional work resulted in a considerable increase in our caseload, with some 1,619 live cases being transferred to ORAC for processing as well as some 2,101 other cases which had to be processed as withdrawn or deemed withdrawn. The total backlog of cases transferred from INIS amounted to 3,720.

There was an increase of 53% in refugee status applications in 2014 when compared to 2013. At the end of 2014 some 1,448 applications had been received compared to 946 applications in 2013. In addition, some 250 new subsidiary protection applications were received in 2014.

We continued to ensure that applications for refugee status were processed as speedily as possible in line with fair procedures and resources available. The number of asylum cases processed increased by some 16% with some 1,060 cases finalised in 2014. In addition, in relation to subsidiary protection, ORAC scheduled some 1,308 interviews and signed off on 826 reports in 2014.

Despite the increase in refugee status cases finalised there were some 743 cases awaiting completion at the end of 2014 as opposed to 248 at the end of 2013. Of these 73 were on hand for more than 6 months. The main reason for the increase can be attributed to a large increase in asylum applications generally in line with international trends as well as the fact that legislative arrangements to support the EU Dublin III process did not come into operation until November 2014.

As in previous years, refugee status cases processed under the Ministerial Prioritisation Directive, some 50, were scheduled for interview within 9 to 12 working days from date of application. However, as part of the measures taken to manage applications from certain countries which reported cases of the Ebola virus, this period was extended to 22 days in the second half of the year. All prioritised cases were completed within a median processing time of 4.4 weeks from date of application.

The remaining cases were processed within a median processing time of 15.3 weeks as compared to 12 weeks in 2013.

The median processing time for subsidiary protection applications from date of interview to date of report signed off was in the region of 51 working days.

ORAC continued to make some determinations in 2014 under Council Regulation (EC) 343/2003 (Dublin II Regulation). This Regulation was replaced on 1 January 2014 by Regulation (EU) 604/2013 (Dublin III Regulation) which establishes the criteria and mechanism for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in
one of the Member States by a third country national or a stateless person. Some 21 Dublin determinations were made in 2014 under the EU Dublin II Regulation as the applications originated in 2013. Considerable work was also undertaken to prepare for the commencement of the European Union (Dublin System) Regulations 2014 which came into effect on 25 November 2014 in order to further support the operation of the EU Dublin III Regulation.

The operation of the EU Dublin Regulation in 2014 continued to depend on the EU EURODAC fingerprinting system. During the year, 1,202 sets of fingerprints of asylum applicants were sent to EURODAC.

ORAC also continued to make use of the Automated Visa Application and Tracking System (AVATS) of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service to identify asylum applicants who made an application for and/or who were issued with an Irish visa.

ORAC continued to attend hearings of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal in 2014 in relation to both asylum and subsidiary protection cases. Some 233 hearings were serviced. We continued to work proactively with the Tribunal to ensure we were in a position to service the maximum number scheduled.

23 new Judicial Reviews were received in 2014, compared with 7 in 2013, which was in part accounted for by the transfer of responsibility for subsidiary protection processing to ORAC. However, in line with trends in previous years, there was a reduction in the number of pending legal challenges in which ORAC was a respondent from 154 ongoing cases in 2013 to 95 ongoing cases in 2014. ORAC continued to keep its internal procedures under review in light of evolving caselaw in order to minimise potential legal challenges.

ORAC staff continued to attend meetings of EU working groups during 2014 with particular reference to the implementation of the EU Dublin III Regulation.

ORAC staff were also heavily involved in the work of the European Asylum Support Office which is tasked with ensuring a common approach to the implementation of the Common European Asylum System including through common training and quality standards.

In relation to the transfer of responsibility for subsidiary protection processing to ORAC in late 2013, a panel of legally qualified persons was established to assist in undertaking interviews and making submissions on applications. Training was provided in conjunction with the UNHCR and the process of interviewing applicants which began on 12 December 2013 was rolled out comprehensively in January/February 2014.

ORAC developed new procedures for the subsidiary protection application process as well as training modules which were delivered in conjunction with the UNHCR and other experts to the new panel members.

In March 2014, ORAC introduced a policy according priority to certain classes of applications for subsidiary protection under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013.

ORAC continued to prioritise quality customer service during 2014. The organisation's commitment to providing a high quality customer service to all our customers is reflected in our fifth Customer Service Action Plan 2013-2015 which builds on the achievements of previous plans and specifies how we intend to implement our Customer Charter commitments over its lifetime. As part of this commitment, a Customer Service Survey was conducted in 2014 to
establish whether ORAC is delivering on the standards expected of its correspondence service according to the ORAC Customer Charter. The results of the survey are contained in this report.

Corporate planning and management continued to be a priority for the organisation in 2014 to ensure efficient and effective use of our resources. A new Corporate Plan for the period 2015-2017 was developed with full staff input. In addition, to ensure the quality of our process, ORAC continued to give priority to staff development and training.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to provide substantial ongoing assistance during the year with particular regard to the provision of training on refugee law and procedures and in the area of subsidiary protection. This included the provision of an international protection expert from Canada, who was based in ORAC, to work with us on the development of quality initiatives including best practice training for refugee status and subsidiary protection. I would like to express my thanks to UNHCR and to their international expert Mike Ross, for their ongoing support during the year.

I am grateful also to other experts from outside ORAC who inputted into our training and development programmes for their support and encouragement and to the Refugee Documentation Centre for the highly professional service provided to this Office.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation to ORAC staff and members of the ORAC Legal Processing Panel for their ongoing work. Their ongoing commitment and professionalism, including through various multi-tasking initiatives, continued to be essential in enabling the mandate of the Office to be achieved.

David Costello
Commissioner
Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner in accordance with the Refugee Act, 1996, the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 and other relevant national and international law is:

(i) to investigate applications from persons seeking a declaration for refugee status and to issue appropriate recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality,

(ii) to investigate applications by refugees to allow family members to enter and reside in the State and report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on such applications

and

(iii) to investigate applications for subsidiary protection and to issue appropriate recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality on such applications

and in so doing, to provide a high quality service to our customers through the implementation of policies and procedures which are fair and open, treating all applicants with courtesy and sensitivity.
Who is an Asylum Seeker?

An asylum seeker is a person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee in accordance with the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees and the related 1967 Protocol, which provides the foundation for the international system of protection of refugees.

Definition of a Refugee

The definition of a refugee in Irish law is “a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it...”.

Subsidiary Protection

Subsidiary protection is granted, when the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for becoming a refugee, but is otherwise in need of international protection.

A person eligible for subsidiary protection means a person:

(a) who is not a national of a Member State,
(b) who does not qualify as a refugee,
(c) in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to his or her country of origin, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm and who is unable or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, and
(d) who is not excluded from being eligible for subsidiary protection.
Part 1

Introduction
Part 1 - Introduction

Legal Framework

Under the Refugee Act, 1996 two independent statutory offices were established in November 2000 to consider applications/appeals for refugee status and to make recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality on whether such status should be granted. These two offices are the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC), which considers applications for a declaration as a refugee at first instance and the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) which considers applications for a declaration at appeal stage.¹


With effect from 14 November 2013, responsibility for the investigation and determination of all existing and future subsidiary protection applications transferred from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service to the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 (SI No. 426 of 2013).

The Office also has regard or had regard, inter alia, to the following Statutory Instruments (S.I.) in the discharge of its business:

- S.I. No 518 of 2006 - European Communities (Eligibility for Protection) Regulations 2006.

Functions of the Refugee Applications Commissioner

Refugee Status
The Refugee Act, 1996 states that the Refugee Applications Commissioner shall be independent in the exercise of his or her functions which are of a statutory and non-statutory nature. The key

¹A detailed description of the asylum process is available on ORAC’s website (www.orac.ie).
statutory responsibilities are:

- to investigate applications from those who seek a declaration for refugee status and to issue appropriate recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality on such applications,

and

- to investigate applications by refugees to allow family members to enter and reside in the State and report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on such applications.

Under the Refugee Act, 1996 it is also the Commissioner's responsibility to:

- issue Temporary Residence Certificates to asylum seekers.
- comply with any Ministerial Directives concerning the prioritisation of certain categories of applicant.
- direct the presentation of the Commissioner’s case to the Refugee Appeals Tribunal where recommendations made by the Commissioner are appealed to the Tribunal.
- furnish to the UNHCR, as well as relevant Government agencies, information as provided for in legislation.
- refer unaccompanied minors to the Health Service Executive in line with section 8(5) of the Refugee Act, 1996.

While ultimately responsible for fulfilling these statutory functions under the 1996 Act, the Commissioner may delegate these functions to any member of his staff.

**Subsidiary Protection**

The Commissioner also has responsibility, with effect from 14 November 2013, for the investigation and determination of subsidiary protection applications under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 (“the 2013 Regulations”). This includes the processing of:

- applications for subsidiary protection made to the Minister for Justice and Equality (Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service), which were not determined at the date of commencement of the 2013 Regulations.

and

- new applications for subsidiary protection made from 14 November 2013.

Under the 2013 Regulations, the Commissioner has responsibility for issuing letters to applicants for subsidiary protection informing them that they have permission to remain in the State until a final decision in relation to their application for subsidiary protection has been made.

Under the 2013 Regulations, the Commissioner shall be independent in the exercise of his functions. He may delegate to a person who has entered into a contract for service with the Minister any of his functions other than the power to make a subsidiary protection recommendation, which remains the responsibility of the Commissioner.
Non-statutory functions
The Commissioner also has non-statutory functions. These include:

- ensuring that all applicants for refugee status and subsidiary protection at first instance are treated and processed in a fair, courteous and efficient manner.
- issuing directives on the practical application of the Refugee Act, 1996 and the 2013 Regulations and on procedures and standards of work.
- ensuring that adequate information on countries of origin of asylum seekers and subsidiary protection applicants as well as international jurisprudence and practice in the area of asylum and subsidiary protection is available to staff.
- participating in international fora on asylum and subsidiary protection related matters.
- management of staff performance and training and development.
- dealing with press queries.
- preparation and management of the budget, the Strategy Statement, Business Plan and Annual Report for the organisation.

Key Values of the Office
The key values that guide the work of the Office are:

- **Independence** - Independence of process and decision-making.
- **Fairness** - Fair procedures which are notified to asylum seekers and subsidiary protection applicants.
- **Firmness** - Firmness in implementing statutory obligations.
- **Serving the key stakeholders** - Commitment to service to applicants and other stakeholders as part of our overall commitment to delivering efficient customer service.
- **Accessibility** - Accessibility of information and services to people with disabilities.
- **Commitment to Staff** - Recognising that staff are the most valuable resource of the Office and fostering an environment in which they can work effectively and develop their potential for the benefit of the Office specifically, and their career generally.
- **Commitment to excellence** - Performing work to a standard that will ensure high quality and timely outputs.
- **Openness** - Communicating with asylum seekers, the Minister for Justice and Equality, UNHCR, Non-Governmental Organisations and the public in a way which will instil confidence in the operation of the Office.
- **Efficiency in use of resources** - Ensuring efficiency in the use of available resources without compromising quality.
- **Partnership** - Adopting a consultative approach to workplace innovation and management of change and fostering a culture of participation, openness and mutual respect.
Funding and Staffing for the Office

Funding for the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner to undertake its mandate is provided by the State through the Department of Justice and Equality. The 1996 Act provides that “members of the staff of the Commissioner shall be Civil Servants within the meaning of the Civil Service Regulation Act, 1956.”

The 1996 Act also provides that “The Commissioner may delegate to any members of the staff of the Commissioner any of his or her functions under this Act save those conferred by section 7”.

All staff of ORAC other than Services staff are designated authorised officers on appointment.

Reporting Requirements

The reporting requirements for the Commissioner - as set out in the 1996 Act - are as follows:

- to submit a report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on his/her activities not later than 3 months after the end of each year. The Minister will lay a copy of the Annual Report before each House of the Oireachtas.
- to provide to the Minister, on an ongoing basis, all necessary information to enable him/her to discharge his/her ministerial accountability and responsibility in relation to the Office.
- to keep all proper and usual accounts of all monies received or expended and all such special accounts (if any) as the Minister may direct.
- to submit these accounts to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit on a date specified by the Minister. A copy or extracts from these accounts, together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, will be furnished to the Minister who will bring both before each House of the Oireachtas.

Certain reporting requirements also apply in respect of the 2013 Regulations.

(The Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) receives an annual allocation of funds for which the Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality is the Accounting Officer and the accounts of ORAC are included in the annual Departmental accounts.)
Part 2

Key Developments in 2014
Part 2 - Key Developments in 2014

Processing of Applications for Refugee Status

- 1,448 applications for refugee status were received by ORAC in 2014. The average monthly number of applications in the course of the year was 121. December with 172 applications had the highest monthly total, while February, with 83 had the lowest. The number of new applications in 2014 represented a rise of 53% on the 946 applications received in 2013 and is the highest since 2010.

- The leading five countries for 2014 were Pakistan (20.2%), Nigeria (9.8%), Albania (6.8%), Bangladesh (6.8%) and Zimbabwe (5.9%).

- As in previous years, the trend was that ORAC received a small number of applications from a large number of individual countries. In 2014 there were 44 countries from which we received 10 or less applications and 9 countries from which we received 50 or more applications.

- Of those cases awaiting finalisation at the end of 2014, no more than 73 were on hand for more than six months.

- The total number of refugee status applications processed to completion in 2014 amounted to 1,060 cases. In addition, we completed some 826 subsidiary protection reports.

- Asylum cases received and processed under the Ministerial Prioritisation Directive increased from 28 in 2013 to 50 in 2014 and were scheduled for interview within 9 to 12 working days from date of application. However, as part of measures taken to manage applications from certain countries which reported cases of the Ebola virus, this period was extended to 22 days in the second half of the year. Nevertheless all prioritized cases were completed within a median processing time of 4.4 weeks from date of application.

- The remaining asylum applications were processed within a median processing time of 15.3 weeks as compared to 12 weeks in 2013. This was due to the increase in applications generally during 2014.

- The number of cases which were deemed withdrawn during 2014 increased by more than 40%. This normally occurs when applicants fail to co-operate with the asylum process as required under the provisions of the Refugee Act, 1996. 189 applications fell into this category in 2014 compared to 135 in 2013.

- Applications from unaccompanied minors, amounting to 30, represented 2% of the total number of applications received in 2014. This percentage is consistent with the percentage of such applications received in 2013. Recommendations were issued within an average processing time of 16.1 weeks except for those delayed for medical or other compelling reasons.

- In the course of 2014, a total of 22 persons in places of detention indicated a wish to apply for asylum, which constituted 1.5% of all applications received in 2014 and represents a
decrease on the rate of 2.5% for the same category in 2013. Such applications continued to be prioritised in line with statutory provisions.

- During the year, ORAC, with the assistance of UNHCR, reviewed and updated the report templates for both the subsidiary protection and refugee status determination processes, as well as developing guidance notes to accompany the roll out of the templates. The new template and guidance notes ensure that the reports which we prepare are legally robust and of a high quality.

- An ORAC Planning Team commenced preliminary planning for an International Protection Bill, the preparation of which was announced by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The Bill, which is expected to be commenced during 2015, will contain provisions for a single procedure for protection and other grounds on which applicants may wish to obtain residency in the State.

- ORAC continued to work closely with the Dublin Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the development and delivery of training modules with particular reference to the provision of training on refugee and subsidiary protection law and procedures. This training is in line with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Training Curriculum, UNHCR guidelines and international best practice.

- As in previous years, a Quality Assurance Review Group continued its work of monitoring sample ORAC outputs and providing feedback on relevant issues. Part of its remit relates to examining overturned decisions at the Refugee Appeals Tribunal as well as court judgments which results in the ongoing review and fine tuning of ORAC policies and procedures.

- ORAC also contributed to the development of a European wide Quality Matrix by the European Asylum Support Office.

- Operational training on the following matters was provided in 2014:
  - Refugee Status Determination
  - Subsidiary Protection
  - EU Dublin III Regulation
  - Module on the asylum process and Human Rights & Cultural Competence delivered by ORAC trainers as part of the Training Programme for INIS Civilian Personnel.

- A training module for ORAC officials dealing with Separated Children in the asylum and protection processes was organised by UNHCR in November 2014. This was attended by a number of key ORAC frontline staff. The module was organised as part a conference on the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children in Ireland and Europe, organised by the European Migration Network and the UNHCR.

- Protecting the integrity of the asylum process continued to be a priority for the organisation and in this regard ORAC continued to liaise with the Garda National Investigation Bureau (GNIB) and the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service during the year.
• We continued to be vigilant in monitoring our process for applicants who might have been subjected to human trafficking. Such cases were reported to the Anti Human Trafficking Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality as well as GNIB for further investigation.

• Participation continued in 2014 in discussions in Working Groups of the European Union dealing with various protection related matters including the implementation of the EU Dublin III Regulation.

• ORAC issued some 21 determinations under the EU Dublin II Regulation in 2014 in respect of applications which originated in 2013. In addition, the Dublin III Regulation came into effect on 1 January 2014. As with Dublin II, the EU Dublin III Regulation provides a mechanism to determine the Member State responsible for the examining of an application for international protection. The European Union (Dublin System) Regulations 2014, which were finalised in order to support the operation of the Dublin III Regulation in Ireland, came into effect in November 2014.

• ORAC continued to identify cases to be progressed under the terms of the Dublin Regulation by way of the EURODAC fingerprinting system and by taking into account visa or other residence histories that did not come within the scope of EURODAC. This results in the identification of applicants who, having obtained a visa or residence permission in another Member State, came to Ireland and applied for asylum while claiming to have no identity or travel documents.

• During 2014, 1,202 sets of fingerprints were sent to EURODAC. The fingerprints of 85 applicants resulted in 103 hits with EURODAC which indicated that these applicants had made an application for asylum in one or more Member States.

• Planning commenced in ORAC for the introduction of a new EURODAC II Regulation which is due to come into operation in July 2015.

• In the course of 2014, 3,467 sets of fingerprints were destroyed, in line with statutory requirements.

• The Automatic Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) continued to enhance ORAC’s capability for the exchange of information with the EURODAC system and to identify those with more than one asylum application. In addition, the Automated Visa Application and Tracking System (AVATS) of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service supported the detection of applications for asylum where the applicant had obtained an Irish visa but had not presented a passport or other relevant documentation when they came to ORAC.

• The ORAC Investigations and Liaison Unit continued to act as a liaison point for ORAC with other State agencies such as the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, the Garda Technical Bureau and the Garda National Immigration Bureau as well as the asylum authorities of other EU States.

• In 2014, 167 family reunification applications were received, a small increase on the 2013 figure of 161. These were investigated in line with ORAC responsibilities for the investigation of applications from persons with refugee status for family reunification and for providing reports on these investigations to the Minister for Justice and Equality.
• The number of appeal hearings scheduled by the Refugee Appeals Tribunal in 2014 was lower than the previous year. Nevertheless, ORAC Presenting Officers serviced 233 such hearings. This total includes subsidiary protection appeal hearings which were scheduled in the latter part of the year.

• ORAC received 30 enquiries under section 16(6) of the Refugee Act, 1996, from the Refugee Appeals Tribunal. This is similar to the number received in 2013. All enquiries were dealt with within set time frames.

Subsidiary Protection

• During 2014, substantial work was undertaken by ORAC to process subsidiary protection applications. Responsibility for processing all existing and future subsidiary protection applications transferred from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service to ORAC under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 with effect from 14 November 2013. The Regulations provide for a system for the investigation and determination of applications for subsidiary protection in the State. A panel of legally qualified persons was established to assist the Commissioner in undertaking interviews and making submissions on applications. The process of interviewing applicants began in December 2013 but was rolled out on a more comprehensive basis in January/February 2014.

• Following on from work undertaken in 2013 in relation to our new subsidiary protection responsibilities, ORAC continued to develop the necessary policies, guidelines and procedures as well as the development and delivery of training programmes for staff and Panel members in association with the UNHCR. Further training was provided in January 2014 and July 2014 as the panel of legally qualified persons was expanded.

• Originally, subsidiary protection applications were prioritised by ORAC for interview mainly on the basis of oldest applications first. However, from March 2014, a more comprehensive scheduling strategy was adopted following detailed consultation with the UNHCR. In this regard, the following classes of cases were prioritised for interview scheduling, also mainly on the basis of oldest cases first;

  ▪ Unaccompanied minors in the care of the HSE.
  ▪ Applicants who applied as unaccompanied minors, but who have now aged out.
  ▪ Applicants over 70 years of age, who are not part of a family group.
  ▪ Applications which include a Medico-Legal report indicating likely well-foundedness.
  ▪ Applications relating to the following countries on the basis of country of origin information, protection determination rates in EU member states and UNHCR position papers indicating the likely well-foundedness of applications from such countries – Afghanistan, Chad, Eritrea, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria.

• There were 3,720 cases in the subsidiary protection backlog transferred to ORAC from INIS in November 2013, of which 1,619 confirmed that they wished to continue with their
applications. Over 1,300 interviews were scheduled up to 31 December 2014 and 826 reports were completed. Of this processed caseload, there were 251 grants and 575 refusals – amounting to a grant rate of some 30%.

- In addition to the backlog of cases transferred from INIS, by 31 December 2014, 250 new applications for subsidiary protection were also received by ORAC for processing since the introduction of the 2013 Regulations on 14 November 2013.

- Another substantial part of work undertaken in 2014 on our subsidiary protection caseload was in respect of withdrawn and deemed withdrawn cases. During the year 1,436 applications were withdrawn or deemed withdrawn from the subsidiary protection process. These included cases where the applicant has advised that s/he did not wish to proceed with their application or had not co-operated with ORAC resulting from a non-response to a number of letters enquiring about their wish to proceed with their cases.

- Overall in 2014, ORAC processed some 2,311 subsidiary protection applications to completion of a backlog of some 3,720.

- From 8 October 2014 it was open to applicants to apply simultaneously for both refugee status and subsidiary protection. Applicants were informed that their subsidiary protection application would be examined after the Minister for Justice and Equality issued a decision in respect of the asylum claim. This arrangement also applied to persons with applications for refugee status on hand.

Other Developments

- In relation to judicial review proceedings, the number of new judicial review cases received amounted to 23 cases in 2014. At the same time, the overall number of legal challenges on hand in ORAC decreased from 154 cases in 2013 to 95 cases in 2014. The low number of new judicial reviews taken against ORAC in 2014 was influenced by the continued support provided by training to caseworkers and Legal Panel Members, the ongoing improvement in ORAC’s quality assurance procedures, as well as relevant jurisprudence on recourse to the Refugee Appeals Tribunal rather than utilising the route of judicial review.

- The expenditure under the legal costs subhead in 2014 amounted to €296,937.

- In line with ongoing practice, ORAC continues to review all incoming legal challenges, and where it is clear that a particular case should be settled (e.g. where an administrative

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2 826 reports in respect of 875 applicants, including dependent minors.
3 While the vast majority of legal challenges to ORAC are in the form of judicial reviews, a small number of others are also received namely injunctions and various types of summonses. Appeals to the Supreme Court are also included in these figures. From time to time ORAC is requested to provide information to the Courts in the context of Habeas Corpus applications.
4 This reduction reflects a number of ongoing initiatives, including by the High Court, to review and manage cases, in particular older cases, on the Asylum and Immigration List awaiting hearing dates.
5 Payments made by ORAC under this subhead are made on foot of Bills of Costs submitted to ORAC (following clearance by the Office of the Chief State Solicitor’s Costs Accounting Section) by applicants’ legal representatives in respect of, for example, judicial reviews settled or lost by ORAC. There are often considerable delays – sometimes several years – in the submission of Bills of Costs. Hence there is a variable time lag between the finalisation of cases before the courts and the submission of the Bills of Costs over which ORAC has no control.
error has been made in a determination), seeks to reach a settlement as quickly as possible in order to reduce any potential costs to the State. Settlements by, and judgments against, ORAC are, in turn, reviewed under our quality control processes to prevent similar issues arising in the future. At the same time, where we believe our recommendation is correct and in line with national and EU legal obligations, it remains ORAC’s policy to strenuously defend such legal challenges.

- During 2014, ORAC continued to make full use of the resources of the Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC), in particular its e-library facility, to ensure that ORAC staff and Legal Panel members had access to up-to-date and reliable country of origin information (COI). The RDC is an independent research centre under the aegis of the Legal Aid Board.

- ORAC continued to maintain an up-to-date Caseworkers’ Shared Knowledge Database, for use by staff and Legal Panel members. The purpose of the database is to collate source material from the RDC in a user-friendly format to meet the Office’s particular needs.

- As one of the main users of the RDC services, ORAC and the RDC met bilaterally on several occasions during the year. ORAC also attended meetings of the RDC Steering Group during 2014. In this way, ORAC and the RDC maintained an effective working relationship, ensuring the flow of reliable and comprehensive COI to meet ORAC’s ongoing needs.

- ORAC continued to utilise language analysis services in 2014 on a small number of applicants. Language analysis testing is a specialised service provided to ORAC under contract, by external service providers, following a formal tendering process carried out in line with the EU’s Public Procurement requirements. Language analysis can be helpful in assessing claims in certain circumstances (e.g. in the absence of supporting identity documentation), in relation to applications for refugee status and subsidiary protection. The applicant attends ORAC and converses by telephone with a language analyst. The conversation is recorded and analysed by the service provider and the recording and a report furnished to ORAC, and in turn, ORAC invites the applicant and legal representative to provide a response to the report. If the language analysis report indicates that the applicant is not from the geographical area or speech community to which they claim to belong, this becomes a credibility issue for exploration at substantive interview. Equally, the report may support the applicant’s claim to be from a particular geographic area or speech community. Regardless of the contents of the report, every applicant is given a full opportunity of presenting his/her claim at a substantive interview. The language analysis report, on those occasions where it is requested by ORAC, is used to assist with the overall evaluation of the application and is considered in conjunction with all other elements of the claim.

- ORAC continued to participate in the work of relevant international fora dealing with asylum and refugee matters such as Working Groups of the European Union, the
Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration matters (IGC) based in Geneva and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

- The Commissioner commenced his second term as Ireland’s representative on the EASO Management Board in 2014 and he attended 3 board meetings during the year. The aim of the EASO is to help to improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System, to strengthen practical co-operation among Member States on asylum and to provide and/or co-ordinate the provision of operational support to Member States subject to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems.

Staff Support/Training and Internal Support Services

- Over the past year further significant changes took place to the ORAC Staff Support and Training function, within the context of the introduction of PeoplePoint in 2013 and the associated realignment of the Personnel Function within the Department of Justice and Equality. The unit continued to provide a focused service to staff and senior management, to maximise staff development in support of achieving ORAC's goals and objectives, in cooperation with the Department's Human Resources Division.

- The ORAC Training and Development Strategy (2012-2014) continued in place. This Strategy provides the framework for the provision and development of the skills and competencies required to assist staff in achieving organisational goals and to provide training for their personal development. Progress on the implementation of this Strategy is monitored and reported on regularly in the Quarterly Updates on the ORAC Business Plan.

- All members of staff continued to participate in the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) during 2014. PMDS is regarded as a key management tool within the organisation. PMDS is designed to be a fair and effective way of measuring and developing performance through regular open and constructive discussions between managers and staff across the civil service. The benefits of PMDS for staff members, managers and the organisation in general include providing clarity on roles and priorities, improving performance and contributing to a systematic and target based approach to personal development.

- In 2014, ORAC continued to prioritise the needs of its staff in the areas of job specific development and training in a cost effective manner. In total, 155 training units were provided to staff.

- Operational training on the following matters was provided in 2014:
  - Refugee Status Determination
  - Subsidiary Protection
  - EU Dublin III Regulation
  - Module on the asylum process and Human Rights & Cultural Competence delivered by ORAC trainers as part of the Training Programme for INIS Civilian Personnel.

7 PeoplePoint is the shared service centre for HR and Pension related administration and queries for the whole Civil Service.
A training module for ORAC officials dealing with Separated Children in the asylum and protection processes organised by UNHCR in November 2014. The training module was organised as part of the EMN/UNHCR Ireland half-day conference on Protection of Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children in Ireland and Europe.

The annual ORAC Judicial Review Seminar was held in October 2014. The seminar was addressed on the topic of “Practical Issues in Judicial Reviews”, by a Counsel from the State’s Asylum Panel. This presentation included a review of the key judgments in 2013-14. A presentation was also made by a senior lecturer from the Sutherland School of Law at UCD on the Court of Justice of the European Union. The attendees included management and members of staff from across the Judicial Review units of INIS, the Refugee Appeals Tribunal and ORAC. The “learning” seminar was also attended by staff from the Attorney General’s Office and the Chief State Solicitor’s Office.

ORAC staff continued to have access to the services of the Employee Assistance Officer of the Department of Justice and Equality during 2014.

The staffing resources of the Office continued to be kept under ongoing review at both unit and organisational level. During the year, under various multi-tasking arrangements, staff provided support to multiple units within ORAC, in response to changing business needs.

The ORAC Legal Panel, as part of a strategy of using external providers, to cope with increasing workloads, continued to play a substantial role in the work of the organisation.

Staff continued to be seconded to the INIS Reporting and Analysis Unit (RAU). The purpose of the Unit is to support INIS (including ORAC) generally in relation to the provision of statistical information for management, operational and strategic planning purposes.

ORAC continued to provide placements under the National Internship Programme (JobBridge). This programme provides useful experience to the participants as well as benefits to ORAC.

Customer Service

In November 2014, the Customer Service Centre conducted a questionnaire based survey, the aim of which was to establish whether ORAC is delivering on the standards set out in the ORAC Customer Charter and ORAC Customer Service Action Plan.

The main findings of the survey can be found under High Level Goal 4 or on the ORAC website (www.orac.ie).

The positive results of this survey would suggest that our customers are satisfied that ORAC is delivering on the standards expected in dealing with customer transactions according to the ORAC Customer Charter. Note has been taken of suggestions relating to potential improvements, particularly to the ORAC website, which will be examined during 2015.
• The Customer Service Action Plan 2013-2015 was reviewed internally twice in 2014. An external review also took place during the year, in the context of the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform met with all 36 members of the Quality Customer Service Network to review their Customer Charters and Customer Service Action Plans. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform met with ORAC in May 2014. The Report on the review of Customer Charters is available on their website at http://www.per.gov.ie/quality-customer-service/. As with our other corporate documents, our Customer Service documents can be accessed on the ORAC website (www.orac.ie).

Haddington Road Agreement

• In the context of Business Plan and Haddington Road frameworks, ORAC undertook ongoing reviews of its procedures and operational processes to ensure a targeted use of resources and internal work structures with a view to achieving maximum efficiencies. As part of external contracting of some operations, a panel of legal graduates was also utilised to assist in processing a backlog of subsidiary protection applications transferred to ORAC from INIS in November 2013.

Partnership

• Interactions with staff and union representatives continued in 2014 under the aegis of the ORAC Partnership Committee. The Business Transformation Process, the Corporate Plan 2015-2017 and Energy Awareness were among the issues discussed during the year. The Committee met 6 times in 2014.

Corporate Developments

• Regular senior management and unit meetings were held during the year to progress work priorities and ensure that ORAC’s business plan commitments were being met. ORAC’s Strategy Statement 2013-2015 sets a clear direction for the Office’s activities in the period between its publication and the planned new statutory arrangements under INIS coming into operation in the context of the planned International Protection Bill.

• Business Plans for all units contain objectives and outputs arising from the commencement of the International Protection Bill, once it is enacted.

• Work was undertaken to develop a new ORAC Corporate Plan for 2015. This involved consultation with staff. The Plan was published in late 2014.

• ORAC continued to give a high priority to health and safety matters in 2014. A Health and Safety Policy Statement enables the Office to meet its responsibilities to staff and customers under health and safety legislation. ORAC is represented on the INIS Health and Safety Committee, which discusses health and safety issues for INIS and its associated agencies, to ensure all requirements in this area are met.

• ORAC’s Energy Action Plan continued to be implemented. ORAC’s Statement of Energy Usage in 2014 is at Appendix 8.
Communications and Business Transformation matters

- A major feature of the ORAC business transformation process in 2014 was the development and operation of a new framework for the processing of subsidiary protection applications introduced in November 2013.

- Substantial administrative work was also undertaken by Subsidiary Protection Unit to support the new process including the scheduling of interviews and the issue of recommendations as well as rolling out training programmes and policies and procedures.

- During the year, building on work already undertaken for the earlier Immigration, Protection and Residence legislation, ORAC commenced preliminary planning for the introduction of a single procedure as part of a planned International Protection Bill which was announced by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The Minister indicated that it is hoped that the Bill will be enacted by the end of 2015 resulting in the subsuming of ORAC functions into the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS). INIS will then be responsible for determining applications for refugee status and subsidiary protection at first instance as part of a wider single procedure which will also consider leave to remain type matters.

- The Customer Service Centre also dealt with a greatly increased volume of correspondence in relation to subsidiary protection applicants.

- Substantial engagement was also undertaken with key stakeholders such as legal representatives, relevant non-governmental organisation and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of the Office.

- Three editions of the ORAC Staff Bulletin issued in 2014. The purpose of the bulletin is to keep staff up-to-date on business developments during the year. Regular unit meetings continued to be held.

- As well as the engagement with stakeholders mentioned above, a meeting of our Customer Service Liaison Panel took place in July 2014.
Part 3

Progress on Strategy Statement 2013 - 2015

High Level Goals
Part 3

Progress on Strategy Statement 2013-2015 High Level Goals

High Level Goal 1

To investigate applications for refugee status and for family reunification within minimum timeframes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Statement 2013-2015 Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To ensure the maximum number of recommendations for a declaration of refugee status issue within minimum timeframes, in line with fair procedures and having due regard to legislative requirements on prioritisation as set out by the Minister for Justice and Equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To achieve the full and efficient application of the EU Dublin II Regulation, and in due course, the EU Dublin III Regulation, having due regard to the criteria for determining the Contracting State responsible for processing asylum applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To achieve optimum productivity in processing applications for family reunification within minimum timeframes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To prepare and plan for the introduction of a single procedure and address fully and effectively any amendments to the Refugee Act, 1996 as they arise.</td>
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Progress on goals and objectives in 2014

Processing of asylum applications

- 2014 saw an increase of some 53% over 2013 in the number of applications for asylum. 1,448 applications were received during 2014. December, with 172 applications, had the highest monthly total.

- The number of cases awaiting completion at the end of the year had increased substantially over that at end of 2013. This was due to the large increase in applications received during the year which placed a considerable additional burden on processing resources. Nevertheless only 73 of these cases were on hands for more than 6 months.

- The top five countries for 2014 were Pakistan (20.2%), Nigeria (9.8%), Albania (6.8%), Bangladesh (6.8%) and Zimbabwe (5.9%).

- The trend has been that ORAC receives a small number of applications from a large number of individual countries. In 2014 there were 44 countries from which we received 10 or less applications and 9 countries from which we received 50 or more applications.
The number of cases received and processed under the Ministerial Prioritisation Directive increased by 79%. 50 such applications were made in 2014. Most of these cases were scheduled for interview within 9 to 12 working days from date of application and were completed within a median processing time of 4.4 weeks from date of application. The scheduling period increased to 22 days in the latter half of the year due to processing safeguards in place connected with the Ebola virus.

The remaining cases were processed within a median processing time of 15.3 weeks. This was an increase of c. 3 weeks on the 2013 median processing times. This increase can be attributed to the higher number of applications received as well as the need to process domestically over 100 other cases which, ordinarily, would have been processed under the EU Dublin III Regulations.

Although we continued to schedule the maximum number of interviews in line with available resources, the very large increase in applications during the year pushed the time from date of application to interview from 4 weeks at the beginning of the year to over 18 weeks at the end of 2014.

ORAC, as required by the Refugee Act, 1996, continued to prioritise all applications received from persons in detention by scheduling their initial interview within 3 working days of their application or as close as practically possible.

22 applications – 1.5% of all applications – were received from persons in places of detention in 2014. Ongoing liaison between this Office, the Irish Prison Service and the Garda National Immigration Bureau ensured all applications were dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.

A total of 30 applications were received from unaccompanied minors (separated children) seeking asylum. This accounted for 2% of the total number of applications received in 2014 and these applications were processed within a median processing time of 16.1 weeks. A longer timeframe exists for the return of the completed questionnaire in these cases as agreed with legal representatives.

ORAC availed of interpretation and translation services in more than 50 languages during 2014. The procedures in place with the translation and interpretation service providers assisted in the expeditious processing of asylum applications and were reviewed on an ongoing basis with service providers. Following tendering processes run by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, a new translation service provider was selected in February 2014 and a new interpretation service provider was selected at the end of 2014.

ORAC continued to provide support for protection processing staff including co-ordination with UNHCR experts, in areas such as quality procedures and training in line with UNHCR and EASO best practice modules.

The following training courses were delivered to ORAC staff in 2014:

- Refugee Status Determination
- Subsidiary Protection
- EU Dublin III Regulation
- Module on the asylum process and Human Rights & Cultural Competence delivered by ORAC trainers as part of the Training Programme for INIS Civilian Personnel.

- A training module for ORAC officials dealing with separated children in the asylum and subsidiary protection process was provided in November 2014. The training module was organised in conjunction with a half-day conference on Protection of Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children in Ireland and Europe organised by the European Migration Network and the UNHCR. An ORAC staff member delivered a presentation at this conference.

- During the year, ORAC reviewed and updated the report template for the Subsidiary protection process. ORAC also developed guidance notes to accompany the template. The new template and guidance notes ensure that the reports prepared are robust and of a high quality.

- ORAC’s Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit continued to provide effective support to Case Processing, Subsidiary Protection and the Presenting staff through the provision/development of Refugee Status Determination and Subsidiary Protection Determination support resources having regard to developments in legislation, jurisprudence and international best practice. The Unit also acted as a central knowledge resource to lead the development and ongoing review of ORAC policy and procedures.

- During 2014, the Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit continued to keep the organisation's key procedures and guidance up-to-date. This enabled all ORAC staff including the new Case Processing panel to have ready access to any procedural documentation in relation to their area of operation.

- Interpreter Training was delivered by the ORAC training team in consultation with UNHCR to interpreters acting in the protection process.

- A key emphasis was placed on quality research to enable focused interviews to take place. This research combined with access to current and up to date country of origin information further enabled the drafting of robust recommendations in line with this Office's focus on quality outputs.

- Caseworkers conducted interviews on networked computers. This allowed them immediate access to the internet and various document libraries which reduced adjournments of interviews as live COI issues were fully addressed.

- Applicants for asylum continued to be advised of the need to avail of early legal advice in the protection process. Legal advice is provided by, inter alia, the Refugee Legal Service and Irish Refugee Council Independent Law Centre or applicants may avail of the services of private practitioners if they so wish. This Office co-operates on an ongoing basis with all legal representatives throughout the refugee status and subsidiary protection process.

- In co-operation with the Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC), country of origin information (COI) support continued to be made available to relevant ORAC staff and to Subsidiary Protection Panel members.
Staff of the Staff Support, COI/Research and Legal Analysis Unit continued to work closely with colleagues across the organisation and with the RDC to ensure that relevant and timely COI was available to assist them in processing applicants’ claims for refugee status, subsidiary protection and family reunification.

As a client of the RDC, ORAC was represented on the RDC Steering Group, which brings together the RDC’s client organisations and the UNHCR on a regular basis. Ongoing interactions such as these ensure that ORAC maintains the necessary level of access to reliable and comprehensive COI. ORAC continued to support the RDC’s preparations for Ireland’s accession to a new COI Portal, being developed under the aegis of the European Asylum Support Office. It is now expected that the various technical preparations will be completed during 2015.

ORAC staff participated in discussions with relevant international bodies dealing with refugee and international protection matters such as Working Groups of the European Union, the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration matters (IGC) based in Geneva and the European Asylum Support Office.

Language analysis was also used on a limited basis in 2014 to assist in establishing applicants’ claims as to their stated ethnic or geographic background. Language analysis testing involves the examination of an applicant’s speech in order to assess, as specifically as possible, whether an applicant could be placed in the geographical area or speech community from which they claimed to come. The language analysis report assists ORAC, as part of the overall assessment of all the elements of the applicant’s claim for refugee status or subsidiary protection. Following the establishment of a Framework Agreement in accordance with the relevant requirements of the EU procurement process, a third Request for Supplementary Tender, otherwise known as a “mini-competition”, was held during 2014 for the award of a contract for the provision of these services.

ORAC continued its interaction with the UNHCR throughout the year, availing of its expertise in many areas including in training and on quality issues. In particular, we availed of the services of a UNHCR international protection expert from Canada throughout the year.

The European Asylum Support Office hosted a number of meetings during 2014 which focused on quality aspects of the asylum process. ORAC contributed to these meetings and was also represented.

**EU Dublin III Regulation**

The EU Dublin III Regulation came into effect in January 2014. This Regulation determines the Member State responsible for processing applications for international protection in a Contracting State to the Regulation. The operation of the Dublin III Regulation is supported by the EURODAC fingerprinting process, the Automated Visa Application and Tracking System (AVATS) and the INIS e-Visa system.

The European Union (Dublin System) Regulations 2014, which were finalized in order to support the operation of Dublin III, came into effect in November 2014.
- ORAC processed some 21 determinations made under the EU Dublin II Regulation in 2014 in respect of applications originating in 2013.

- 1,202 sets of fingerprints were sent to EURODAC in 2014 with 103 hits involving 85 applicants confirmed. The fingerprints of all applicants aged 14 years and over are taken and transmitted to EURODAC as part of the application process.

- Fingerprints of asylum seekers have been taken since November 2000 in accordance with section 9A of the Refugee Act, 1996. The destruction of ten-year-old prints commenced in November 2010 in line with the 1996 Act. In 2014, the fingerprints of 3,467 applicants were destroyed on reaching the expiry of the ten year period or who had been granted citizenship.

**Family Reunification**

- In 2014, 167 family reunification applications were referred to ORAC by the Minister for Justice and Equality for investigation under the Refugee Act, 1996, an increase of 3% on the figure for 2013. Under the Refugee Act, 1996, ORAC has responsibility for the investigation of applications for family reunification and for the transmission of a report to the Minister for Justice and Equality based on each of these investigations. The decision on these applications is a matter for the Minister.

**Management of the introduction of change including the Single Procedure**

- ORAC undertook preliminary planning for and implementation of a planned International Protection Bill which was announced by the Minister for Justice and Equality. The Bill is intended to include a single procedure for the consideration of protection applications and other reasons an applicant wishes to remain in the State.

- The International Protection Bill is expected to result in the subsuming of ORAC functions into the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS). INIS will then be responsible for determining applications for protection at first instance as part of a wider single procedure.
High Level Goal 2

To maintain the highest standard of investigation and decision-making.

**Strategy Statement 2013-2015 Objectives**

- To investigate and assess applications to a consistently high standard.
- To continue to have transparent and impartial procedures.

**High quality investigation and processing of applications**

- During 2014, a key priority for ORAC continued to be the implementation of national protection legislation with fairness and transparency. In this regard, the ORAC Quality Assurance process continued to be prioritised which enabled the organisation to perform its work to the highest professional standards in line with statutory requirements. This process entails regular review and update of existing procedures and guidance at an operational and strategic level. Importantly, it also provides for a channel of constructive feedback to caseworkers and other relevant staff. ORAC worked closely with UNHCR over the course of 2014, with a view to ensuring the quality of the new Subsidiary Protection process, and the existing Refugee Status determination process.

- The specialist researchers in the Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC) continued to provide high quality and relevant country of origin information (COI) support in a timely manner which assisted ORAC’s analysis of applications for refugee status, subsidiary protection and family reunification.

- In the area of family reunification, the introduction of new questionnaires in 2013 continued to have a beneficial effect on processing times in 2014. The Family Reunification Unit continued to make use of the specialist assistance of the RDC in researching aspects of foreign legal requirements in relation to marriages etc. to assist investigations.

- Correspondence tracking continued in 2014 to ensure that correspondence from all stakeholders was responded to within the timelines set out in the Customer Service Action Plan 2013-2015.

- Work specific training was delivered to staff in areas such as refugee status determination and subsidiary protection.

- An international protection expert from UNHCR was engaged to assist in the introduction of the new subsidiary protection arrangements in ORAC. The expert also assisted in the quality assurance of various aspects of ORAC’s work processes in relation to both asylum and subsidiary protection. This included:
  - the provision of training modules to ORAC Legal Panel members to undertake subsidiary protection interviews and write legally robust reports,
• the provision of training to relevant ORAC staff for the operation of the new subsidiary protection arrangements,
• assisting in the preparation of subsidiary protection report templates and guidance notes for use by the ORAC Legal Panel members and support staff,
• the provision of training to ORAC caseworkers for interviewing asylum applicants and enhancing templates and guidance material for refugee status determination.

• The Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit continued to work with the European Asylum Support Office in the development of the common European Asylum Curriculum (EAC) and best practice initiatives in the area of refugee status determination. The EASO Training Curriculum and UNHCR best practice form the basis for the ORAC protection training modules.

• In 2014, a number of briefing sessions on the refugee status determination process for a new interpretation service provider were conducted in conjunction with UNHCR.

• ORAC continued to liaise regularly in relation to its mandate with other relevant bodies such as the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), TUSLA – the Child and Family Agency, the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Refugee Legal Service (RLS), the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB), the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), the Department of Health, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Prison Service, as well as other key stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations.

• Ongoing liaison took place with the Irish Refugee Council Independent Law Centre on an early legal advice project as well as with other legal practitioners including the Refugee Legal Service on the work of the Office and the representation of protection applicants.

• As in previous years, the Quality Assurance Review Group continued its work of monitoring sample ORAC outputs and providing feedback on relevant issues. Part of its work also related to examining overturned decisions at the Refugee Appeals Tribunal as well as legal judgments. On the basis of this quality assurance work, feedback was provided to ORAC staff and the revision of internal procedures was addressed as required.

• During 2014, the exclusion clause was considered in a number of cases. Under the Refugee Act, 1996, applicants are not recommended for refugee status if there are strong grounds to suspect that they have been guilty of serious crimes such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and/or serious non-political crimes prior to their arrival in this State. These are regarded as potential “exclusion clause cases”.

• ORAC availed of interpretation and translation services in more than 50 languages during 2014. The procedures in place with the translation and interpretation service providers was aimed at ensuring that a quality service was available to applicants and assisted in the expeditious processing of asylum applications. These procedures were reviewed on an ongoing basis and were informed by regular contact with each of the service providers. Following tendering processes run by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, a new translation service provider was selected in February 2014 and a new interpretation service provider was selected at the end of 2014.
ORAC received 30 enquiries from the Refugee Appeals Tribunal under section 16(6) of the Refugee Act, 1996 during 2014. On occasion these enquiries entailed making further contact with applicants in order to provide the information sought.

We continued to update our database of relevant judgments of the Irish and UK courts in relation to asylum matters. We also recorded relevant judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and the European Court of Human Rights in relation to protection issues. The legal interns, placed with ORAC under the JobBridge Programme, assisted with this project, in addition to their other assignments.

ORAC was named as respondent in 23 new judicial reviews during 2014, compared with 7 cases during 2013. The increase is primarily attributable to challenges taken against the 2013 Subsidiary Protection Regulations. ORAC is also the subject occasionally of other types of challenges, such as plenary summonses. As part of the consideration of judicial review cases in the High Court and related appeals to the Supreme Court, referrals of points of European law to the CJEU are becoming a more frequent feature of the legal process in asylum and immigration cases.

The number of judicial reviews on hand in ORAC at the end of 2014 fell to 95 as compared with 154 in 2013.

An important judgment was delivered by the High Court on 12th December 2014 in relation to the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 which found, inter alia, that the transfer of the Minister’s function regarding the processing of subsidiary protection applications to the Commissioner by means of these Regulations was valid.

Where an application for judicial review identifies an error or omission in ORAC’s existing procedures, in the interests of fairness and efficiency, ORAC will usually seek to settle the challenge as soon as possible in order to minimise costs to the taxpayer. However, where ORAC considers that the grounds in a judicial review do not disclose any error or omission on its part, it will contest the application in order to protect the integrity of the asylum process.

The total expenditure by ORAC under the legal costs subhead in 2014 was €296,937.

During 2014, ORAC continued to participate in the National Internship Programme (JobBridge).

ORAC also participated in asylum-related working groups of the European Union, Inter Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration matters (IGC) in Geneva and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

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8 European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 426 of 2013)
10 Settlements usually arise because ORAC seeks to resolve a judicial review at an early stage in order to avoid higher costs arising because of long drawn out proceedings. This can often enable the case to proceed to the Refugee Appeals Tribunal without unnecessary delay. It may also arise that because ORAC is not successful in a particular JR case, we seek to settle, on the basis of a risk assessment, other similar cases in order to avoid long drawn out proceedings even though it is by no means certain that ORAC would be unsuccessful should the case proceed to hearing. Finally, we endeavour to encourage a process of pre-JRs whereby legal advisors would bring potential issues with our determinations to our attentions in advance of legal proceedings being issued. This would avoid the cost of proceedings, settlements etc.
• The Commissioner also continued to represent Ireland at meetings of the Management Board of the EASO. 3 meetings of the Management Board took place in 2014.

Open and Fair Procedure

• ORAC continued to provide comprehensive written information to applicants in a range of languages so that they were informed about their rights, entitlements and obligations under asylum and subsidiary protection processes and the EU Dublin Regulation.

• From 8 October 2014 it was open to applicants to apply simultaneously for both refugee status and subsidiary protection. Applicants were informed that their subsidiary protection application would be examined after the Minister for Justice and Equality issued a decision in respect of the asylum claim. This arrangement also applied to persons with applications for refugee status on hand.

• ORAC continued to encourage applicants to seek legal advice before completing the relevant asylum questionnaire or subsidiary protection application and provided them with information to assist them in this regard. ORAC also stressed the importance to applicants of making available all possible documentation in support of their claim before their substantive interviews took place.

• ORAC also worked with legal representatives of applicants during the investigation process, including in relation to ‘Statements of Claim’ submitted. These statements, which set out the applicant’s claim succinctly, are normally forwarded to ORAC for consideration in advance of the asylum or subsidiary protection interview.

• ORAC continued to recognise the special needs of vulnerable applicants such as unaccompanied minors and to deal with these applicants in a professional and sensitive manner. Specific procedures and guidelines for caseworkers are in place which take into consideration any specific factors and circumstances in individual cases. In developing these guidelines, account was taken of international best practice.

• Where an applicant raised a gender related issue at their initial application or subsequently, ORAC continued to do its utmost to ensure that the caseworker and interpreter (if required) will be of the same gender as the applicant.

• Throughout 2014, ORAC continued to provide an open and fair protection process through the utilisation of a high quality interpretation and translation service to applicants when required.

• To ensure this was upheld, ORAC continued to independently verify the accuracy of a percentage of translated documents on an ongoing basis.

• A briefing session in relation to the provision of interpretation in the context of the asylum procedure was delivered to interpreters in 2014, in conjunction with UNHCR.

• Meetings were also held with the interpretation service provider at various stages during the year to discuss issues of a mutual interest and to ensure that the highest standards were maintained.
During 2014, ORAC liaised closely with the RDC as part of the rolling out of its new subsidiary protection responsibilities. The Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC) provides both electronic and hard copy resources for research purposes. Its e-library facility, which can be directly accessed by ORAC, enables ORAC to efficiently use internationally recognised COI databases, such as the UNHCR Protection Information Section’s Refworld database (www.refworld.org) and the European Country of Origin Information Network (www.ecoi.net) database, as well as a range of other COI resources. During 2014, ORAC continued to liaise closely with the RDC to ensure that reliable and up-to-date COI was available to assist it in examining applications for refugee status, subsidiary protection and family reunification.
High Level Goal 3

To ensure applications for asylum and family reunification are dealt with in an open, fair and impartial manner and that the integrity of the process is preserved.

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<tr>
<th>Strategy Statement 2013-2015 Objectives&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To identify as quickly as possible, in an effective and fair manner, those applicants who come within the definition of a refugee contained in section 2 of the Refugee Act, 1996.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To detect and minimise abuse of the asylum process.</td>
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<td>• To represent the Commissioner at appeal hearings at the Refugee Appeals Tribunal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To develop our own policies and procedures to preserve the integrity of the asylum process.</td>
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Section 2 of the Refugee Act, 1996

- The main statutory role of ORAC during the year continued to be to identify applicants who came within the definition of a refugee as contained in section 2 of the Refugee Act, 1996, in a timely and fair manner. This priority also applied to applicants for subsidiary protection under the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013.

- In relation to refugee status, applications examined under the Ministerial Prioritisation Directive were normally completed within a median processing time of 4.4 weeks from the date of application.

- The remaining cases were processed within a median processing time of 15.3 weeks.

- In accordance with the Refugee Act, 1996, ORAC continued to prioritise the processing of applications from persons in detention. The preliminary interview in these cases took place within three working days of their date of application.

- General Country of Origin information continued to be utilised by ORAC through the RDC e-Library, which provides a single point of access to the EU’s and UNHCR’s COI databases. In addition, ORAC maintains a Caseworkers’ Shared Knowledge Database, on which it stores e.g. the RDC’s replies to individual requests by ORAC staff when examining applicants’ claims, organised for ease of retrieval.

Detect and Minimise Abuse

- For the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the asylum process, a variety of initiatives were undertaken including, specific caseworker training, the exchange of information in

<sup>11</sup> These priorities and obligations also apply to the subsidiary protection process.
line with legislation with other public bodies and EU States and the use of information technology systems such as EURODAC, AFIS and AVATS.

- The Dublin and Investigations Unit continued to oversee work aimed at the detection and prevention of the misuse of the asylum system and, in particular, dealt with an extensive range of investigation queries from other areas of the organisation. It also liaised with bodies such as the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, the Garda National Immigration Bureau, the Garda Technical Bureau, the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality as well as with other Government Departments and EU States, particularly the United Kingdom.

- Applicants are required by law to co-operate with the asylum process. In situations where applicants failed to co-operate (e.g. not attending for interview on the appointed date without showing reasonable cause; not advising the Commissioner of a change of address or not providing information relevant to their application), their cases were deemed withdrawn under the Refugee Act, 1996. 205 applications were deemed withdrawn in 2014, 16 of which were the result of the transfer of the applications under the Dublin II system.

- ORAC continued to liaise with the Garda Technical Bureau (GTB) about identity documents when concerns and doubts arose as to the authenticity of these documents, including at the request of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal.

- In all our processes, we continued to be vigilant in looking out for applicants who may have been subjected to human trafficking and when the situation required it, liaised with the Anti Human Trafficking unit of the Department of Justice and Equality as well as the Garda National Immigration Bureau.

- ORAC continued to apply the EU Dublin III Regulation and the EURODAC fingerprint system in 2014 to determine if it was appropriate for Member States other than Ireland to process asylum applications. (See also Part 2: Key developments in 2014)

- AVATS is available to the Reception and Dublin Units of ORAC and assists ORAC staff to identify applicants who made a visa application to enable them travel to the State, but who subsequently withheld this information in their asylum application.

Represent the Commissioner at appeal hearings at the Refugee Appeals Tribunal

- Presenting Officers continued to represent the Commissioner at appeal hearings before the Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) during the year. In 2014, 233 RAT hearings were serviced. There were fewer RAT hearings scheduled in 2014 as the Tribunal gradually built up its resources.

- All Presenting Officers were fully trained in refugee status determination, subsidiary protection and EU Dublin procedures as well as provided with caseworker specific training and training in the presenting function before being assigned cases before the Tribunal. Other courses provided to Presenting Officers including a presentation on the new Dublin III Regulations as well as training related to Subsidiary Protection appeals.
• ORAC received 30 enquiries from the Refugee Appeals Tribunal under section 16(6) of the Refugee Act, 1996 during 2014, all of which were completed within the required timeframe.

Policies and procedures to preserve the integrity of the asylum system

• In 2014, ORAC continued to update its key procedural and policy instructions in relation to refugee status determination and subsidiary protection functions and this enabled all ORAC staff including Legal Panel members to have easy access to any procedural documentation in relation to their area of operation.

• In particular, major work was undertaken in building up our capacity to process subsidiary protection applications in line with our newly acquired mandate. This included the development and delivery of subsidiary protection training in conjunction with the UNHCR and other experts.

• We also reviewed and updated the report templates for both the subsidiary protection and refugee status determination processes as well as relevant guidance notes.

• To ensure our work was carried out to the highest standards and in line with legal requirements we utilised the available quality assurance systems on a regular and ongoing basis. (See also Part 2: Key Developments in 2014 and update on High Level Goal 1).

• The Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit continued to work with the European Asylum Support Office in the development of a common EASO Training Curriculum and best practice initiatives in the area of refugee status determination including quality assurance.
High Level Goal 4

To maintain excellent customer service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Statement 2013-2015 Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To deliver high quality customer service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To provide clear information to customers regarding the asylum process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To provide a comprehensive and effective complaints procedure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High quality customer service

- A key priority for ORAC during 2014 continued to be a focus on the provision of an efficient, effective and professional service to our customers.

- The Customer Service Centre monitored response times to correspondence on a monthly basis to ensure we are meeting our commitments as outlined in our Customer Charter and Customer Service Action Plan. This was particularly challenging due to the substantial increase in correspondence during the year following the transfer to ORAC of responsibility for subsidiary protection.

- ORAC continued to ensure that staff were kept up-to-date with any new developments in relation to the work of the organisation and a number of staff bulletins issued in 2014 in this regard.

- In line with Customer Service Action Plan commitments a meeting of the Customer Service Liaison Panel took place in July 2014. These meetings with the Liaison Panel provide a useful opportunity for exchanges of information between panel members, comprising relevant NGOs dealing with asylum seekers, refugees, subsidiary protection applicants and key ORAC staff. Aside from this meeting, ORAC maintained ongoing contact with non governmental organisations dealing with asylum seekers on a range of issues.

- ORAC continued to meet with other agencies to exchange views on the efficient and effective operation of the protection process, including the Health Service Executive, Refugee Legal Service and the Garda National Immigration Bureau.

- As previously mentioned elsewhere in this report, ORAC’s Customer Charter and Customer Service Action Plan were the subject of an external review in May 2014. The review took place in the context of the Public Service Reform Plan 2014-2016 and was carried out by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform which met with all 36 members of the Quality Customer Service Network. The Report on the review of Customer Charters can be found on the DPER website at [http://www.per.gov.ie/quality-customer-service/](http://www.per.gov.ie/quality-customer-service/). As with our other corporate documents, our Customer Service documents can be accessed on the ORAC website ([www.orac.ie](http://www.orac.ie)).
• ORAC reviews its customer service process each year. As part of this review, the Customer Service Centre conducted a questionnaire based survey of those who had corresponded with the unit during the first 3 weeks in November 2014. The main focus of this year’s survey was to establish whether ORAC delivered on the standards expected of it in dealing with customer transactions according to the ORAC Customer Charter.

• Those surveyed were asked to comment across three areas, correspondence, telephone service and the ORAC website as follows:

Correspondence
- How do you generally correspond with the Office? (E-mail/Fax/Letter)
- Do you generally receive an acknowledgement within 5 working days?
- Do you generally receive a full reply or interim reply within 20 working days?
- Does correspondence you receive from this office contain a contact name and telephone number?
- Respondents were then asked to rate their customer service experience in respect of
  - Satisfaction level in respect of information provided in the response,
  - Satisfaction level in respect of the quality of the service provided, where 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

Telephone Service
- Was your call answered promptly?
- Were you put through to the right section immediately?
- Did the person give their name and the name of their unit?
- Respondents were then asked to rate their customer service experience in relation to our telephone service in respect of
  - Their satisfaction level in respect of information provided in the response,
  - Their satisfaction level in respect of the quality of the service provided, where 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

ORAC Website
- How easy do you find the website to use where 1 is very difficult to use, 5 very user friendly?
- How quickly can you find the information you want, where 1 is very difficult to find, 5 very easy to find?
- What is your overall impression of this website where 1 is very dissatisfied to use, 5 very satisfied?
- How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the website on this visit where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?
- Respondents were also asked what other information they would like to see on the website and for suggestions as to how we could improve the site
  - Satisfaction level in respect of information provided in the response
  - Satisfaction level in respect of the quality of the service provided, where 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

• The following are the main findings of the survey:

  Correspondence
  - 71% of respondents correspond by post, 19% by fax and 10% by email. In this regard, it should be noted that respondents had the option to select one, two or all options for reply to the question.
91% of respondents state that they generally receive an acknowledgement within 5 working days.
88% of respondents state that they generally receive a full reply or interim reply within 20 working days.
93% of respondents state that correspondence received from ORAC contains a contact name and telephone number.
88% of respondents are very satisfied/satisfied with the information provided in response to their correspondence.

Telephone Service

84% of respondents indicated that their telephone call was answered promptly.
87% of respondents stated that they were put through to the correct section immediately.
76% of respondents said that the person answering their call gave their name and the name of their unit.
88% of respondents are very satisfied/satisfied with the information provided in response to their telephone call.

ORAC Website

62% of respondents stated that the website was very user friendly/user friendly.
72% of respondents indicated that they could find the information they sought very easily/easily.
The overall impression of the ORAC website as rated by respondents was 70% satisfied/very satisfied.

The positive results of this survey would suggest that our customers are satisfied that ORAC is delivering on the standards expected in dealing with customer transactions according to the ORAC Customer Charter. Note has been taken of suggestions relating to potential improvements, particularly to the ORAC website which will be examined during 2015.

The Corporate and Customer Service Centre dealt with 16,268 correspondence transactions during the year. For more information, see Table A at Appendix 6.

Clear information to customers

The Customer Service Centre continued to provide a telephone answering service from Monday to Friday each week from 09.15 to 17.30.

The nature of the comprehensive information material provided to applicants on the asylum process is outlined elsewhere in this report.

Customer Complaints Procedure

ORAC’s customer complaints procedure is outlined in its Customer Charter and Customer Service Action Plan and continues to be kept under review to ensure that it operates in an effective manner.
High Level Goal 5

To efficiently and effectively manage our organisation and its resources in line with best practice, taking into account allocated resources and having regard to the development of our staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Statement 2013-2015 Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure our strategic business planning and individual performance planning frameworks support optimum performance by the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manage human resources to meet the business needs of the organisation and the development needs of staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make optimum use of ICT solutions to support the business needs of the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manage financial resources in the context of Public Sector Reform in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To effectively manage the services and facilities of the Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To build a strong commitment to new ways of working through Partnership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To provide quality corporate support to the ORAC to discharge its statutory and non-statutory functions and also to effectively monitor the Office’s communications, both internal and external.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business Planning

• Business planning continued to be a key element of our management process which allowed the organisation to assess progress on work on a regular basis during 2014 and to identify and review priorities in terms of available resources. Reviews of the business plans for all work areas were completed in each quarter, and adjustments made, as required.

• ORAC’s Business Plan for 2014 contained a strong emphasis on the efficient and effective processing of applications as well as customer service and quality assurance.

• An assessment of risks were also undertaken on an ongoing basis as part of the risk management and business planning process, with necessary mitigations and corrective action taken as required.

Performance/Service Delivery Agreement.

• ORAC agreed a Performance/Service Delivery Agreement with the Department of Justice and Equality/INIS in 2014, the aim of which is to agree standards of performance and outputs and the mutual obligations of both parties to enable commitments to be delivered within our respective statutory functions.
**Human Resources/Training**

- Over the past year further changes have taken place to the ORAC Staff Support and Training function, within the context of the introduction of PeoplePoint\(^{12}\) in 2013 and the associated realignment of the Personnel Function within the Department of Justice and Equality. The Unit continues to provide a focused service to staff and senior management, to maximise staff development in support of achieving ORAC's goals and objectives, in cooperation with the Department's Human Resources Division.

- The ORAC Training and Development Strategy (2012-2014) continued to provide the framework for the provision and development of the skills and competencies required to assist staff in achieving organisational goals and to provide for personal development. Progress on the implementation of this Strategy was monitored and reported on regularly in the Quarterly Updates on the ORAC Business Plan.

- All members of staff continued to participate in the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) during 2014. PMDS is a service-wide system, designed to be a fair and effective way of measuring and developing performance, through regular open, honest and constructive discussions between managers and staff. The benefits of PMDS for staff members, managers, and the organisation include providing clarity on roles and priorities, improving performance on a target based approach and contributing to a systematic approach to personal development.

- In 2014, ORAC continued to prioritise the needs of staff in the areas of job specific development and training in a cost effective manner. In total 155 “training units” were provided to staff. An Annual Training Plan for the year was drawn up following the completion of staff's learning and development plans in Quarter 1 of the PMDS cycle, and to meet organisational training priorities. This was updated on a quarterly basis, and reviewed by ORAC's Training Committee.

- The Employee Assistance Officer of the Department of Justice and Equality continued to be available to meet staff needs.

- The following were among the training courses delivered to ORAC staff in 2014:
  - Refugee Status Determination
  - Subsidiary Protection
  - EU Dublin III Regulation
  - Module on the asylum process and Human Rights & Cultural Competence delivered by ORAC trainers as part of the Training Programme for INIS Civilian Personnel.
  - Separated Children

- Personal skills training courses in the following areas were also delivered: Customer Service Refresher Training, MS Excel Intermediate, First Aid Training and Refresher course, Fire Warden Training and Refresher course.

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\(^{12}\) PeoplePoint is the shared service centre for HR and Pension related administration and queries for the whole Civil Service.
The Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit continued to work with the European Asylum Support Office in the development of the common European Asylum Curriculum (EAC) and best practice initiatives in the area of Refugee Status Determination. The EASO Training Curriculum forms the basis for the ORAC Protection training modules.

Work also continued on the development of a comprehensive training programme in preparation for the introduction of the single procedure in the context of the planned International Protection Bill.

The staffing resources of the Office continued to be kept under review at both unit and organisation level. During 2014 emphasis was placed on staff multi-tasking in various functional units to make up for staff shortages in the context of growing asylum numbers.

For ease of reference, the up-to-date organisational framework is set out in Appendix 1, which is entitled “ORAC Management Staffing Structure”.

To reflect ORAC’s new responsibilities in relation to subsidiary protection, ORAC continued to draw on the successful applicants to the Legal Panel.

Staff continued to be seconded to the INIS Reporting and Analysis Unit (RAU). The purpose of the INIS RAU is to support INIS (including ORAC) generally in relation to the provision of statistical information for management, operational and strategic planning purposes.

In 2014, ORAC again took part in the National JobBridge Scheme through the Department of Justice and Equality. This programme allows unemployed graduates gain valuable work experience while at the same time assisting the Department and its agencies.

Information Technology and Statistics

As in previous years, both the IT Division of the Department of Justice and Equality and the AISIP Business Support Team in INIS continued to support the organisation’s information systems in 2014.

The IT Division of the Department of Justice and Equality continued to support the DubliNET system in 2014. This is a communications system used by all Member States of the Dublin III Regulation which provides secure electronic communications for the processing of cases under that Regulation.

Preliminary work commenced to put a new IT support framework in place for the commencement to the EURODAC II Fingerprinting Regulation which is due to come into operation in July 2015.

Full use continued to be made of the RDC COI System (e-library) by ORAC. The RDC COI System (e-library) is an important resource for ORAC in ensuring access to reliable and up-to-date COI. The e-library is available to bodies dealing with the asylum and immigration process. The system provides facilities for the maintenance of, and access to, electronic information including COI reports, Country Information Packs, anonymised
COI query responses, library catalogue and legal materials. It also draws on key international databases, in particular the UNHCR’s Refworld database and the European Country of Origin Information Database (ecoi.net), to which the RDC is a contributor.

- ORAC is also cooperating with the RDC in the preparations for Ireland’s accession to the new EU COI Portal, being developed under the aegis of the European Asylum Support Office. The various technical preparations are now scheduled for completion during 2015.

Financial Resources

- Appropriate internal and external financial controls were applied by the organisation in 2014 to ensure that ORAC was in compliance with relevant Financial Policy Procedures and Public Procurement Guidelines and that expenditure came within budget.

- ORAC’s expenditure outturn for 2014 is included at Appendix 7.

Internal Support Services

- During 2014, the copying/registry function of the Administration and Arrangements Unit continued to provide a key support service to the Office. 17,391 file movements and other transactions were completed during the year, including file copying and helpdesk assistance. This represented an increase of 18% on the 14,752 file movements and other transactions which took place in 2013 and is mainly due to the fact that the Unit is now also dealing with the movement of subsidiary protection files. Work practices for creating, copying, constructing and moving case files continued to be reviewed and streamlined in conjunction with other units in ORAC, in order to achieve maximum efficiencies in the use of staff and resources.

Partnership

- Interactions with staff and union representatives continued in 2014 under the aegis of the ORAC Partnership Committee. The Business Transformation Process, the Corporate Plan 2015-2017 and Energy Awareness were among the issues discussed during the year. The Committee met 6 times in 2014.

- A total of €500 was raised by ORAC’s Local Community Fundraising Committee during 2014 in support of the local conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul through a number of coffee mornings.

Corporate Developments including Freedom of Information

- This report provides ORAC’s second update on the implementation of the High Level Goals in our Strategy Statement 2013-2015.

- ORAC continued to give a high priority to health and safety matters in 2014. A Health and Safety Policy Statement continues to enable the Office to meet its responsibilities to
staff and customers under health and safety legislation. It involves a number of ongoing initiatives which include:

- The appointment and training of staff as Fire Wardens and training of staff in First Aid and use of Cardiac Defibrillators.
- Staff awareness of health and safety matters.
- Ongoing review of office security and safety procedures for optimum safety of ORAC’s staff and customers.
- Representation of ORAC on the INIS Health and Safety committee.
- Fire Drills completed in accordance with safety regulations.
- Fire fighting equipment checked and maintained on contract.

- Comprehensive planning was undertaken during the year in respect of the planned extension of the scope of Freedom of Information legislation to ORAC in 2015.

- Work took place on the finalisation of a new ORAC Corporate Plan for the period 2015-2017 which included staff consultation.

**Energy Awareness**

- ORAC continued to implement its organisational Energy Plan during 2014, the aim of which is to maximise efforts to assist in reducing energy consumption, while at the same time continuing to have adequate heating and lighting and an acceptable working environment.

- A more detailed outline of our energy usage and energy saving initiatives can be found in Appendix 8.
Part 4

Appendices
Appendix 1

ORAC Management Staffing Structure
## Appendix 1

### ORAC Management Staffing Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commissioner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Officer</strong>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate and Customer Service Centre***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting and Analysis Unit (ORAC aspects)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial Review Unit***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Support, COI/Research and Legal Analysis Unit ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum Case Processing Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration, Arrangements and Presenting Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Reunification Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin and Investigation/Liaison Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Procedure Planning Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidiary Protection Unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1 Principal Officer vacancy.
** 1 Assistant Principal Officer vacancy
*** These Units report directly to the Commissioner.
Appendix 2

Overview of Units of ORAC
Appendix 2 - Overview of Units of ORAC

1. Administration, Arrangements and Presenting Unit

Administration and Arrangements
The functions of the Unit are:
- to arrange the scheduling of interviews for asylum applicants.
- to arrange for interpretation and translation services.
- to manage the interview waiting area.
- to issue recommendation notifications to asylum applicants and relevant parties following the investigation of asylum applications.
- to process deemed withdrawn cases.
- to provide administrative support to the Case Processing Unit.
- to process correspondence in relation to the Case Processing Unit.
- to manage file movement and file copying in ORAC.

Presenting Unit
The role of the Presenting Unit is to represent the Refugee Applications Commissioner at appeal hearings before the Refugee Appeals Tribunal in respect of refugee status and subsidiary protection cases, to respond at appeal hearings to the issues raised in the appellant’s appeal and to assist the Member of the Tribunal in reaching a fair and just decision. The Unit provides statutory responses under sections 16(6) and 16(7) of the Refugee Act, 1996 and the relevant provisions of the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013.

2. Asylum Case Processing Unit

The primary objective of the Asylum Case Processing Unit is the fair, timely and efficient investigation of applications for a declaration of refugee status and the making of legally robust recommendations on such applications. The investigation includes the individual interviewing of applicants, the objective research of the claims made and the making of recommendations as to whether an applicant should be ‘granted’ or ‘refused’ refugee status. The head of unit is also responsible for leading the ORAC quality assurance process in relation to asylum recommendations.

3. Corporate and Customer Service Centre

The role of the Corporate Office is to oversee the provision of quality administrative and secretarial support to the Refugee Applications Commissioner and his senior Management Team to enable him to discharge his statutory and non-statutory functions. The office co-ordinates material in response to requests from, inter-alia, other parts of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), Government Departments/agencies and the media; prepares all corporate documents and is responsible for their circulation. The Customer Service Centre is responsible for the development and monitoring of customer service structures, the management of customer service enquiries and liaising with other organisations (governmental and non-governmental).

4. Dublin and Investigation/Liaison Unit

This Unit deals with the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation and is responsible for determining whether asylum applications should be transferred for examination to other Member States. It also deals with requests from other Contracting States to transfer applications for asylum to this State. The investigation side of the Unit provides investigative assistance to other Units in ORAC, to INIS and to GNIB and acts as a central liaison point with other State agencies.
5. **Family Reunification Unit**

Family Reunification Unit investigates applications made by refugees for permission for certain members of their family to be allowed to enter and reside in the State and provides reports on these investigations to the Minister for Justice and Equality.

6. **Judicial Review Unit**

The Judicial Review Unit prepares the ORAC response to legal challenges against recommendations of the Office (first instance asylum and subsidiary protection recommendations), as well as challenges under the EU Dublin III Regulation. This includes appeals to the Supreme Court and referrals to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

7. **Procedures, Training and Organisation Development Unit**

The role of this Unit is to act as a central knowledge resource for the organisation and to lead the development and ongoing review of ORAC policy and procedures in relation to the management and investigation of asylum and subsidiary protection applications. The Unit also co-ordinates and provides the appropriate training for staff in relation to both refugee status and subsidiary protection determination processes.

8. **Reception Unit**

The Reception Unit deals with the acceptance and processing of asylum applications when first received in ORAC including the initial interview of applicants, the taking of fingerprints and the transmission thereof to the EURODAC fingerprint database, the photographing of applicants and the issue to applicants of Temporary Residence Certificates. The Unit also processes the initial stage of subsidiary protection applications.

9. **Reporting and Analysis Unit**

The Reporting and Analysis Unit (RAU) is responsible for providing statistical and management information and for the compilation and circulation of periodic statistical reports. The ORAC RAU is part of the INIS RAU.

10. **Single Procedure Planning Unit**

The Single Procedure Planning Unit is responsible for the development of internal policies and procedures as well as the training programmes required to facilitate the implementation of the planned International Protection Bill, which will result (when enacted and commenced) in the introduction of a single procedure for the consideration of refugee, subsidiary protection and leave to remain type matters.

11. **Staff Support, COI/ Research and Legal Analysis Unit**

The role of the unit is to:

- Provide and co-ordinate residual staff support functions and certain personal skills training.
- Provide Country of Origin Information (COI) and other research material to support ORAC’s various areas of responsibility.
- Manage the language analysis function.
- Provide legal analysis/research support in relation to judicial reviews, ORAC’s policies.
and procedures, and other legal work which is undertaken for the Commissioner, and

- Manage contract staff (under the JobBridge scheme and/or other programmes) who carry out legal analysis and research work.

12. **Subsidiary Protection Unit**

   The role of the Subsidiary Protection Unit is to ensure the fair, timely and efficient investigation (including interview) of applications for subsidiary protection and the making of legally robust recommendations as to whether an applicant should be ‘granted’ or ‘refused’ such protection. It also oversees the management of other responsibilities in relation to subsidiary protection including scheduling of interviews, ensuring representation at Refugee Appeals Tribunal appeal hearings, issue of recommendations, production of management statistics and the management of work processes generally.
Appendix 3
Applications/Processing Statistics
Table 1. Number of applications per year from 1992 to 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Change on previous year (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>133.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>362</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>424</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1,179</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>946</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>53.1</td>
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</table>

Total 89,647

Table 2. Applications received by month and year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>109</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>131</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>129</td>
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<td>172</td>
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</table>

Year on year change (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Change (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>32.5</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>42.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>149.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 89,647
Table 3. Applications per year from 1992 to 2014 by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male to Female ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993*</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994*</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996*</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2,643</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>3,883</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2,869</td>
<td>1,757</td>
<td>4,626</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4,958</td>
<td>2,766</td>
<td>7,724</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6,602</td>
<td>4,336</td>
<td>10,938</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5,447</td>
<td>4,878</td>
<td>10,325</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5,773</td>
<td>5,861</td>
<td>11,634</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3,944</td>
<td>3,956</td>
<td>7,900</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2,521</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>4,766</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2,778</td>
<td>1,545</td>
<td>4,323</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>4,314</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2,478</td>
<td>1,507</td>
<td>3,985</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2,469</td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td>3,866</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>2,689</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52,908</td>
<td>36,728</td>
<td>89,647</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The totals in respect of these years include cases where 'Gender' was not recorded.
### Table 4. Applications per year by age grouping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Child [0 - 17]</th>
<th>Adult [18+]</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Adult to Child ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1,041</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>3,092</td>
<td>3,883</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>3,563</td>
<td>4,626</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>6,354</td>
<td>7,724</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>8,482</td>
<td>10,938</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2,653</td>
<td>7,672</td>
<td>10,325</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>8,956</td>
<td>11,634</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,895</td>
<td>6,005</td>
<td>7,890</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,071</td>
<td>3,695</td>
<td>4,766</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>3,397</td>
<td>4,323</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>3,350</td>
<td>4,314</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,025</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>3,985</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>3,866</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>2,689</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,654</strong></td>
<td><strong>68,987</strong></td>
<td><strong>89,647</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The totals in respect of these years include cases where ‘Age’ was not recorded.*
Table 5. Age stated by applicants 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
<th>Male to Female ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 34</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 +</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Table 6. Places of application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of application</th>
<th>2013 Applications</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2014 Applications</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORAC</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>1,195</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airports</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>946</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7. Top six stated countries of origin 2014 and comparison with 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>2013 Applications</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2014 Applications</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Year on year change (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>220.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>106.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>219.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>946</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Top six stated countries of origin 2014 by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male to Female ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. Applications from unaccompanied minors, 2000 to 2014 by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male to Female ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,262</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>2,235</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10. Interviews scheduled and attended 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled*</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Attended | 75.9 | 86.3 | 78.7 | 74.0 | 83.9 | 86.4 | 79.8 | 84.3 | 73.6 | 75.2 | 83.8 | 83.3 | 80.4 |

*Each month ORAC over-schedules allowing cancellations to be substituted with another active interview, thus preventing the loss of an interview slot. The above figures relate to the amount of interviews that ORAC had the capacity to service.
Table 11. Cases finalised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Granted</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused s.13(4)(b)</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused s.13(5)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn s.13(2)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed Withdrawn s.13(2)</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed Withdrawn s.22(8)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin Regulation</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cases finalised</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,060</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sections refer to those of the Refugee Act, 1996. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The Commissioner has made a recommendation that the applicant be granted refugee status.

The Commissioner has made a recommendation that the applicant should not be granted refugee status. An appeal to the Refugee Appeals Tribunal must be taken within 15 days.

The Commissioner has made a recommendation that the applicant should not be granted refugee status and has included in his report a finding under section 13(6). An appeal to the Refugee Appeals Tribunal must be taken within 10 days.

The Commissioner has made a recommendation that the applicant should not be granted refugee status where an application has been withdrawn or deemed to be withdrawn.

Cases finalised under section 22(8) relate to applicants transferred under the Dublin Regulation in respect of which determinations were made by ORAC.

Where it is established that the applicant’s claim for refugee status should be determined in another Contracting State under the Dublin Regulation.
Table 12. Comparison of applications received and cases finalised 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications Received</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>1,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases Finalised</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1,060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Recommendations issued 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Granted</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused s.13(4)(b)</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused s.13(5)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn s.13(2)</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total recommendations made</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,023</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Excludes cases processed under the Dublin II Regulation.
Sections refer to those of the Refugee Act, 1996.
Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Table 14. Applications outstanding as at 31-Jan-2014 to 31-Dec-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Cases pending</th>
<th>Change on previous month (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Comparison of yearly applications received and those outstanding at year end

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applications received</th>
<th>Cases pending</th>
<th>Change in cases pending (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>3,883</td>
<td>3,886</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>4,626</td>
<td>5,993</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7,724</td>
<td>7,985</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>10,938</td>
<td>10,127</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10,325</td>
<td>8,483</td>
<td>-16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>11,634</td>
<td>5,094</td>
<td>-40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>7,900</td>
<td>4,554</td>
<td>-10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4,766</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>-48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4,323</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td>-50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4,314</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>-21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3,985</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3,866</td>
<td>1,196</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2,689</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>-60.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>-54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>-11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1448</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>199.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4

Dublin Regulation Statistics
Statistics for the Dublin II & III Regulations for the period of 01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014

No. of Information requests made to Dublin III Regulation Member States

795

- No. of Positive replies received to Information Requests: 379 (Of which 19 from 2013)
- No. of enquiries where No Record found: 361 (Of which 38 from 2013)
- No Response: 8
- Awaiting Reply: 104

No. of Formal Requests made to Dublin III Regulation Member States

17

- 5 (take back)
- 12 (take charge)

No. of Formal Requests awaiting Decision

1

No. of Formal Requests Accepted

28
(Of which 15 from 2013)

No. of Formal Requests Deemed Accepted

1
(1 from 2013 Requests)

No. of Formal Requests Rejected

3
(2 from 2013 Requests)

No. of Formal Requests Withdrawn

4
(Of which 2 were from 2013 Requests)

No. of Decisions issued

21
(Of which 18 were from 2013 Requests)

Files returned to the Substantive process

162

No. of files to DJE* for removal from the State

21
(Of which 18 were from 2013 Requests)

No. of Transfers

17

* Department of Justice and Equality
Table 1. Information Requests made to Dublin III Regulation Member States in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Replies also include a number of Information Requests made in the previous year.

Table 2. Replies received in 2014 to Information Requests to other Dublin III Regulation States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Replies</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>748</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Replies also include a number of Information Requests made in the previous year.

A total of 104 Information Requests were pending a reply at end of 2014.
Table 3. Formal request to Dublin III Regulation Member States - 2014*

*Note: The EU (Dublin System) Regulations 2014 came into effect on 25 November 2014.

Table 4. Replies received in 2014 to formal requests made to other Dublin III Regulation Member States.

Note: Replies also include a number of requests made in the previous year.
Table 5. Formal requests from other Dublin III Regulation Member States to Ireland in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total of 202 includes 156 'take back' and 46 'take charge' requests.

Table 6. Replies to formal requests from other Dublin III Regulation Member States in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Replies</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Replies also include a number of requests received in the previous year.

A small number of requests were pending a reply at the end of 2014.
Table 7. Transfers under Dublin II and Dublin III Regulation in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5
Subsidiary Protection Statistics
Appendix 5
Subsidiary Protection Statistics

Subsidiary Protection Statistics – 01 January 2014 to 31 December 2014

Cases transferred from INIS to ORAC following the commencement of the European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013, (S.I. No. 426 of 2013), on 14 November 2013

- **3,720** applicants had their Subsidiary Protection cases transferred from INIS to ORAC with effect from 14 November 2013.
- **1,619** of these applicants confirmed that they wish to pursue their applications under the new Subsidiary Protection processing arrangements.
- **656** of these applicants have voluntarily withdrawn their applications.
- **1,445** of these applicants have not responded to written communications in relation to the new SP processing arrangements and these cases are in the process of being deemed withdrawn for non-cooperation with the process.

New Applications Received

- **250** applications for Subsidiary Protection were made directly to ORAC during 2014.

Live Caseload

- The Live Caseload on hands for processing refers to the **1,619** applications from the backlog confirmed as proceeding with their applications under the new processing arrangements and the **250** applications made directly to ORAC during the period.

Subsidiary Protection Cases transferred to ORAC in November 2013
Cases Processed to Completion in 2014

1. Cases transferred from INIS to ORAC on 14 November 2013

3,720: Total number of applications transferred from INIS to ORAC with effect from 14 November 2013.

- 1,619 Live applications confirmed as proceeding.
- 868 Live applications processed to completion during 2014.
- 751 Live applications pending for decision at 31 December 2014.
- 656 Applicants confirmed as voluntarily withdrawing their applications.
- 613 Voluntary withdrawals processed to completion during 2014.
- 43 Voluntary withdrawals pending for decision at 31 December 2014.
- 1,445 applicants who have not responded to notification of the new SP processing arrangements.
- 806 applications processed as deemed withdrawn for non-cooperation during 2014.
- 639 applications pending for decision at 31 December 2014.

2. New applications received in 2014

- 250 applications for Subsidiary Protection were made directly to ORAC during 2014.
- 7 applications were processed substantively to completion during 2014.
- 17 voluntarily withdrawn applications were processed to completion during 2014.
- 226 applications were pending for decision at 31 December 2014.

3. Total live cases pending at 31 December 2014

- 977* Live cases were pending for decision at 31 December 2014.
- This is comprised of 751 live cases from the backlog of cases transferred from INIS and 226 new applications received which are pending for decision at the end of the period.

* Some of the 977 pending Live cases have had interviews completed in respect of their applications with reports in the process of being completed. In addition, by the end of 2014, some of the 977 applicants have been scheduled for interview in early 2015.
Subsidiary Protection Processing details - 2014

Interviews scheduled

- ORAC scheduled a total of 1,308 interviews in respect of 1,235 applicants during 2014.

Interviews completed

- 1,026 interviews were completed during 2014.
- 78.44% of interviews scheduled were completed.

Interviews scheduled not completed

- 209 applicants who had been scheduled for interview during 2014 had not completed their interview by 31 December 2014.

Interviews to be scheduled

- 617 applicants from the live caseload (backlog and new applications received) have not been scheduled for interview at 31 December 2014.

Interviews scheduled - position at 31 December 2014

- Interview completed 1,026
- Interview scheduled 209
- Awaiting scheduling 617
Top 5 Countries of Origin – Live Caseload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo, The Democratic Republic of the</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td><strong>941</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Live Cases - Backlog Cases Transferred from INIS to ORAC in November 2013
1. Nigeria (196 applications)
2. Pakistan (144 applications)
3. Congo, The Democratic Republic of the (129 applications)
4. Zimbabwe (106 applications)
5. Afghanistan (103 applications)
6. Other Countries of Origin (941 applications)

Live Cases - New Applications Received in 2014
1. Nigeria (66 applications)
2. Pakistan (22 applications)
3. Zimbabwe (16 applications)
4. Algeria (15 applications)
5. Afghanistan (13 applications)
6. Other Countries of Origin (118 applications)
Appendix 6

Information on Requests Handled by the Corporate and Customer Service Centre and Copying/Registry Unit in 2014
Appendix 6

Information on Requests Handled by the Corporate and Customer Service Centre and Copying/Registry Unit in 2014

Table A – Corporate & Customer Service Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. Processed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters and Faxes</td>
<td>8,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Enquiries</td>
<td>2,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail Enquiries</td>
<td>5,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Enquiries</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,328</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The total number in relation to files copied refers to the number of actual files photocopied, but does not reflect the fact that in the majority of cases multiple copies of each file are produced.

Table B – Copying/Registry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. Processed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enquiries</td>
<td>2,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Files copied</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File movement transactions</td>
<td>9,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transactions</td>
<td>5,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,391</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7

Financial Data
Profile of Pay Expenditure for the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner:

The pay figure for the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner is amalgamated with the Reception and Integration Agency, the Refugee Appeals Tribunal, as well as Headquarters areas of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service of the Department of Justice and Equality under Subhead A.3 of Justice Vote 24. The outturn for pay for Subhead A.3 of the Department of Justice and Equality was €26.86m*, of which €4.37m* was used by ORAC.

Profile of Non-Pay Expenditure for the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Legal Costs</td>
<td>€296,937</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Translation &amp; Interpretation</td>
<td>€275,942</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Miscellaneous</td>
<td>€267,858</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Staff Training &amp; Development</td>
<td>€117,494</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Postage</td>
<td>€76,809</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. General Premises Expenses</td>
<td>€72,348</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Heat Light &amp; Fuel</td>
<td>€42,749</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Stationery</td>
<td>€39,725</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Telecommunications</td>
<td>€34,630</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Total (Home and Foreign)**</td>
<td>€9,920</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopying &amp; Related Total**</td>
<td>€7,788</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Equipment**</td>
<td>€5,670</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Agent Costs**</td>
<td>€3,013</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Maintenance/Consumables**</td>
<td>€2,040</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications**</td>
<td>€1,421</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Costs**</td>
<td>€1,209</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library &amp; Legal Research**</td>
<td>€683</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Expenses**</td>
<td>€138</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising**</td>
<td>€0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land &amp; Buildings**</td>
<td>€0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Total</td>
<td>€1,256,374</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

As confirmed by Financial Management Unit, Department of Justice & Equality, 6 Jan 2015.

Please note that this figure is subject to change until the 2014 Appropriation Account has been published for the Justice Vote.

ORAC's 2014 Non-Pay Expenditure - €1,256,374

**The totals in respect of these item codes are too small to individually represent on the chart.
Appendix 8

Overview of Energy Usage 2014
Appendix 8

Overview of Energy Usage 2014

In 2014 ORAC consumed 580643 MWh of Energy, consisting of

258470 MWh of Electricity
322173 MWh of Gas

This compares to 653015 MWh of Energy used in 2013:

252437 MWh of Electricity
400578 MWh of Gas

This represents a decrease of approximately 11% on total energy usage compared to 2013.

Actions undertaken in 2014 to save energy were:

Quarterly meetings with Energy Consultant to monitor usage and discuss areas of saving.

Energy Awareness staff session organised in conjunction with Aramark.

Energy Saving Posters erected throughout the building.

Regular Emails to staff re: monthly reports and energy saving ideas.

"Turn-Off" Reminders issued before holiday periods.

Heating temperatures monitored on a daily basis and radiators lowered where possible.

Heating system turned off during summer months.

Radiator thermostats audited and maintained throughout the year.

Actions planned in 2015 to save energy

Ongoing implementation of Energy Action Plan.

Out of hours audit to be conducted.

Participation in OPW "Optimising Power @ Work" Campaign.

Further review of Winter/Summer heating timetable.

Continued quarterly meetings with Aramark representative to monitor reports.

Continued communication with staff in relation to Energy Saving.
Glossary of Terms
Glossary of Terms

Country of Origin Information (COI) Country of origin information consists of many types of information such as legislation, news reports, maps, official documents, e.g., passports and work permits. It is used as an aid in determining the substance of applications for declarations of refugee status.

Declaration of Refugee Status As referred to in section 17 of the Refugee Act, 1996, where the Minister gives to the applicant concerned, following a recommendation by the Refugee Applications Commissioner, or following a decision of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal to set aside the recommendation of the Commissioner, a statement in writing that he/she is a refugee.

Dublin II and Dublin III Regulations. The Dublin II Regulation came into operation on 1 September, 2003 and replaced the Dublin Convention. This Regulation provides a mechanism for determining which Contracting State is responsible for examining an application for refugee status. The Dublin II Regulation was replaced by the Dublin III Regulation with effect from 1 January 2014.

EASO (European Asylum Support Office) established under EU Regulation No. 439/2010. The Office became fully operational on 19 June 2011 and is located in Valetta, Malta. The purpose of the Office is to facilitate, co-ordinate and strengthen practical co-operation among Member States on asylum and help to improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System. It also aims to provide effective operational support to Member States subject to particular pressure on their asylum and reception systems.

EURODAC A system for the electronic exchange of fingerprints between Contracting States.

European Union (Subsidiary Protection) Regulations 2013 The principal legislation which provides jurisdiction to ORAC in respect of subsidiary protection matters and which entered into force on 14 November 2013.

Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC) This is an informal, non-decision making forum (based in Geneva) for intergovernmental information exchange and policy debate on issues of relevance to the management of international migratory flows. The IGC brings together seventeen participating states, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organisation for Migration and the European Commission.


Refugee Documentation Centre The Refugee Documentation Centre is an independent library and research service within the Legal Aid Board which provides COI services to the agencies involved in the asylum process.

Refugee Legal Service The Refugee Legal Service is a service offered by the Legal Aid Board and provides legal services to applicants seeking declarations of refugee status.
**Subsidiary Protection** Subsidiary protection is a form of complementary protection arising from EU law which may be granted when an applicant does not fulfil the requirements for becoming a refugee, but is otherwise determined to be in need of international protection.

**UN Refugee Convention** The United Nations Convention relating to the status of refugees signed in 1951 is an international instrument to define the legal status of refugees. The Convention was adopted by a Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the UN on 28 July, 1951, and entered into force on 21 April, 1954. The principles contained in the 1951 Convention form the basis of Irish refugee legislation.

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established as of 1 January 1951. The 1951 Convention specifically notes that the UNHCR is charged with the task of supervising international conventions providing for the protection of refugees and ensuring the effective co-ordination of measures taken to deal with this matter in co-operation with the various Contracting States.