Human Resources
Charter 2009-2013
supporting excellence
An empowered organisation is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective organisational success.

Stephen Covey
Introduction

A Thriving Maritime Economy in Harmony with the Ecosystem and supported by the delivery of excellence in our services

This is the first HR charter to be produced by the Marine Institute. It signals a long term focus on the important challenges facing our staff and also signals significant changes to the HR processes, systems and information management. This will see us move to simpler, more timely and comprehensive management of staff within the Institute.

The Human Resources team is committed to supporting a culture of high performance and on placing our focus firmly on providing a service centred around the needs of staff. We will continue to place great importance on how we can connect with service teams and on deepening our understanding of our business as it evolves and develops.

Given the diverse and ambitious programmes which the MI undertakes, our staff includes a blend of specialised scientists in such fields as Fisheries Science, Marine Environment, Oceanography, Molecular Biology, Data Management, Seabed Mapping and other expertise such as Finance, Communications and Business Development. This creates a unique challenge for our Human Resource team in the areas of recruitment and career development which we would like to meet in a positive partnership with the MI management team.

The contribution made by our staff is vital to the organisation’s operational effectiveness. This HR charter is a fundamental support for our business strategy, setting out the framework to support and enable staff to achieve the objectives laid out in our Strategic Corporate Plan.

This Charter focuses on six goals for delivery by the HR team and in each case sets out the proposed actions to be taken by us.
Attracting and Retaining
High Calibre Staff

We in the Marine Institute must attract and retain the very best talent across all fields.

In the Marine Institute, we value our ‘people as our greatest asset’. The human resources team will work with service groups to continually attract the best possible candidates for all areas of the organisation through on-going reviews and assessment of current recruitment practices.

We will continue to adopt a best practice approach in our recruitment methods, and will ensure that all recruitment is dealt with in a fair and efficient manner – supporting the MI as an equal opportunities employer.

We will provide support and advice to all candidates and will ensure all recruiting panel members are adequately trained to conduct a fair and equal recruitment process.

We will retain our ‘Excellence through People’ accreditation and aim to gain further accreditation as we work to position the Institute as an employer of choice.

Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds.

Admiral H.G. Rickover
Objectives for the HR team

We will attract the best possible candidates to meet the needs of the Marine Institute now and into the future

We will deliver a recruitment service based on international best practice

We will position the Marine Institute as an Employer of Choice to support the development and retention of staff

Making it Happen

• We will ensure that we recruit the right people at the right time, in line with the Marine Institute’s objectives.
• We will continually review and agree cost-effective ways to advertise new positions in order to attract the best possible people for the MI.
• All staff involved in the Recruitment & Selection process will be continually trained and kept updated on the recruitment process and any changes to the process.
• We will ensure all R&S policies and procedures are followed to ensure a fair and equal process, promoting the MI as an equal opportunities employer.
• We will continue to provide career advice and information to individuals and discuss their development needs with them.
• We will make use of all tools available to us in order to ensure that we recruit in the most effective and efficient way.
• We will evolve and develop our recruitment processes in line with international best practice through partnerships with other organisations.
• We will continually review and benchmark our R&S process against other organisations to ensure that we are adopting a ‘Best Practice’ approach.
• We will consider the use of e-R&S Systems to assess their impact on the organisations overall effectiveness.
• We will design promotional materials for recruitment and selection purposes.
• We will work with Directors and the CEO striving to be included on the annual ‘Best Companies To Work For In Ireland’ list.
• In partnership with colleagues across the organisation, we will retain our Gold Standard of ‘Excellence Through People Award’.
• We will seek to retain staff using continuous learning and development and providing the best possible environment to work in.
• Where required we will provide outplacement support for staff.
• We will continue to develop tailored programmes to attract the brightest graduates.
Supporting Staff to Achieve their Best

Continuous learning and development to deliver performance excellence

As a dynamic organisation it is vital that the Marine Institute retains flexibility and can adapt to the changing needs of government, public sector and private sector clients.

The human resources team will adopt a holistic approach to organisational learning and development, valuing the individual in their own right and seeking to develop them and their teams within a culture of continuous learning and inquiry.

The team will promote a culture of ongoing improvement, development and equity in access to all training. We will grow human resource partnerships with other organisations to assist us in providing the very best learning and development programmes to Marine Institute staff, and we will use a broad range of tools to provide opportunities for them.

We will work with senior management to evolve a programme for succession and people planning to ensure that the organisation has the right skills available at the right time in order to achieve our goals.

We will continue to invest at least 3% of payroll annually in learning and development for all staff. We will foster an atmosphere where seminars are held and staff are encouraged to attend to promote individual and cross disciplinary learning.
Objectives for the HR team

- We will promote a culture of continuous learning for all staff
- We will benchmark the Marine Institute’s Learning and Development programme against the best world class organisations
- We will form strategic alliances with human resource teams in relevant organisations
- We will provide innovative and employee focused learning and development tools and opportunities
- We will work with senior management to evolve a programme for succession and people planning

Making it Happen

- We will actively promote personal and career development so that all employees have the opportunity to reach their potential, and in so doing they are able to fully contribute to the achievement of our strategic and business objectives.
- We will build up the Marine Institute Management Development programme to empower managers in their ongoing development.
- On behalf of the organisation, we will continue to retain and build on our quality accreditation.
- We will carry out research to benchmark our learning and development programme against the best organisations in both the public and private sectors.
- We will form partnerships and alliances with other bodies in the Irish research community to strengthen our learning and development programme.
- We will regularly survey our colleagues to determine their evolving learning and development needs.
- We will respond to Marine Institute staff needs in developing innovative programmes for learning.
- We will develop our e-learning programmes to make information more accessible to staff.
- We will develop accredited in-house training courses.
- We will identify creative methods to broaden the personal development of staff.
- Together with senior management and the CEO, the human resource team will develop a framework for succession planning to assist the Institute in building effective contingency plans.
- We will hold joint planning sessions annually with all services areas to ensure effective knowledge transfer.
Managing Performance

We will foster joint responsibility by all staff in delivering first-rate performance management

Shared ownership of performance management is vital in a high performing organisation. The human resource team has an important role in encouraging employees to fully participate in managing effective performance through easy to use, efficient systems that ensure a consistent model of managing performance is applied across the Institute.

The Performance Management and Development Programme (PMDS) in the Institute will continue to nurture a shared understanding about what is to be achieved, how it is to be achieved, and an approach to managing people that maximises individual and organisation success.

In partnership with colleagues, the human resources team will use new technologies to make it easier to clearly link individual and team performance to the objectives of the organisation. Through a partnership mechanism, the Institute’s performance Management Programme will continue to evolve, and will be flexible to support the organisation as it changes and evolves in the future. This will all be closely linked with the MI Corporate Plan.

The tragedy in life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.

Benjamin Mays
Human Resource Objectives

We will ensure Marine Institute performance management systems are efficient, relevant and easy to use

We will research reward mechanisms in both the public sector and in similar high performing organisations to identify options for consideration by senior management

We will work together with senior management and colleagues to assist in translating organisational objectives into clear individual goals

Making it Happen

• On behalf of the Institute, we will implement an accessible and user-friendly E-PMDS system.
• We will ensure all staff have access to training to enable full participation in the PMDS programme.
• In partnership we will regularly review the PMDS programme to ensure it evolves with the organisation.

• We will identify public sector bodies and similar organisations that implement reward schemes for exceptional performers.
• We will compile a report on outcomes of this research for the consideration of senior management.

• Through Partnership, the PMDS programme will evolve to train all staff to take ownership and responsibility for their daily performance.
Promoting Positive Working Relationships

A collaborative approach to successful and inclusive two-way communications

The Marine Institute is committed to developing and supporting a communications policy that will demonstrate effective leadership, professionalism, teamwork and effective communications in the delivery of all our services. It will ensure the open and timely exchange of information to inform and empower all people in the organisation.

The Marine Institute believes that our people are our greatest asset. We value their personal contribution and development. We respect and value each other and the relationships we have forged through working together. The human resource approach to communications will reflect that integrity, quality, accountability, cooperation and service to others are the cornerstone of what we do.

There are few, if any, jobs in which ability alone is sufficient. Needed, also, are loyalty, sincerity, enthusiasm and team play.

William B. Given, Jr.
Human Resource Objectives

We will provide the right information at the right time to aid effective decision making

We will foster open, honest and respectful communication across the organisation

We will create opportunities for regular communication and feedback

Making it Happen

• We will participate in annual planning meetings with senior management and service groups to identify business requirements.
• We will work with the CEO and Directors to agree regular updates on events and upcoming plans to all staff.
• We will ensure that centrally accessible HR information is up to date and accurate to ensure consistency.
• We will implement a HR Management Information System to provide on-line access to information for staff.

• We will communicate with all of our customers internally and externally in a confidential, open, honest, respectful and transparent manner.
• We will support the senior management team and Directors in developing communications training, information material and opportunities that will continue to support the MI ethos and values.
• We will participate in an annual programme of meetings with Industrial Relations officials and staff representatives.
• We will use the MI Management Development Programme to support the development of effective communications in teams and individuals.

• HR will operate an open door policy.
• Members of the HR team will regularly be available at all MI facilities for both formal and informal communication with colleagues.
• Monthly HR Clinics will continue to take place in the main facilities.
• We will support the communications related training needs of all employees as identified through Training Needs Assessment, Performance reviews, Working Style Assessments and Employee development plans.
• We will use an external provider to run annual Customer Satisfaction Surveys about the HR Service.
• We will use Excellence Through People guidelines, recommendations and feedback to assist the senior management team in developing and improving communications and feedback opportunities.
• We will use the e-PMDS structure to create easier opportunities for feedback and the transfer of information between managers, staff and the HR team.
Safe and Healthy Working Practices and Environments

Building on a culture of effective health and safety practices providing safe working environments for all

In so far as is reasonably practicable, the Marine Institute provides comprehensive health and safety systems which address the risks associated with our work programmes. As a scientific organisation the Institute recognises the inherent risks associated with its work, and will continue to ensure that the working environments provided do not impair the health, safety or wellbeing of Marine Institute employees, visitors, contractors or members of the public.

The human resource team will continue to support the enhancement and growth of a culture of effective health and safety practices. This will include our involvement in the organisations ongoing commitment to compliance with Health and Safety legislation and fulfillment of our general duty of care. The team will support and work in partnership with staff to effectively manage work related risks.

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Human Resource Objectives

We will improve understanding of a safe and healthy working environment and working practices

We will improve monitoring and reporting arrangements for safe welfare and health

We will promote employee health and wellbeing

We will provide access to health and safety training

Making it Happen

• All new staff will receive a Health and Safety induction relevant to their roles and working environment.
• We will advance Health and Safety expertise within the Institute.
• We will encourage and support the embedding of Health and Safety into all service group programmes.
• Health and Safety will remain a key component in the MI management development programme.
• We will cooperate fully with external audits, quality accreditation assessments and inspections to assure high standards of Health and Safety.

• We will ensure that all risk assessors, internal and external, will be competent to carry out the assessment.
• We will work with colleagues to ensure that 100% of workplace incidents and accidents are reported promptly.

• We will work with the Marine Institute Health and Safety committee to ensure that H&S is implemented consistently at all Institute facilities and locations and is actively promoted.
• We will assist managers in encouraging a positive work-life balance for staff.
• We will run annual employee wellbeing events.
• We will work in partnership to implement policies and procedures to mitigate the effects of work-related stress.
• We will invite all staff to participate in a regular employee well-being survey.

• All sea going staff will receive mandatory sea survival training.
• Laboratory Safety training will be provided for all employees working in a laboratory environment.
• Members of the MI H&S Committee will receive access to appropriate training.
Facing Future Challenges

Human Resources working with the organisation as a responsive business partner to support the delivery of our strategic goals

In common with many public sector agencies, there are many challenges facing the Marine Institute including the current economic environment, market and regulatory challenges, and evolving policy issues. The Marine Institute is also committed to delivering on ambitious goals and serving a diverse and expanding client base, while maintaining the highest levels of corporate governance and accountability.

In order to support the organisation in meeting these challenges, the human resource team will work with senior management to develop a service that is flexible and responsive and based on a high performance culture. The HR charter will support the Marine Institute core work programmes and will seek to incorporate the challenges of implementing the Sea Change strategy into the MI. Our goal is not only to enhance the service we provide to our clients and stakeholders, but also to support an environment that is rewarding, energising and challenging.

Human Resource programmes will be designed to encourage all staff to embrace change, team working, a ‘customer service’ culture and a ‘can do’ environment that respects the contribution and unique talents of all members of staff.

The Marine Institute will be updating its 5 year Corporate Plan during 2008. The HR Charter will evolve over time, in parallel with this broader process, to ensure that Human Resources continue to support the delivery of MI strategic goals as an innovative science and research institute.

If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.

Charles R. Swindoll
Human Resource Objectives

To work in partnership with management and colleagues to support and enable the further development of high performing, flexible and responsive teams

Making it Happen

• The HR team will review their key strengths and capabilities to ensure their development is in line with organisational needs.

• We will provide high quality customer service to internal as well as external customers/clients.

• We will actively provide training and coaching to support the transition of staff to new roles / teams where appropriate.

• We will work with the Partnership committee and service areas to foster an ethos of mentoring and coaching for staff on a voluntary basis.

• We will participate in regular joint planning exercises with all service areas.

• We will increase our interaction with service areas through regular formal and informal meetings.

• We will develop and promote the Management Development Programme as a tool to provide support and advice to teams.

• Our advice and support will be based on a coaching style.

• We will be innovative and flexible in the provision of support to evolving multidisciplinary projects and teams.

• We will develop electronic systems to improve efficiencies and access to information e.g. E-PMDS and an Electronic HR Management System.

• We will provide policy advice on a broad range of issues, using specialist advisors where appropriate.

• We will provide key metrics to the CEO, Directors and Senior Managers on a regular and timely basis, in order to aid the decision making process e.g. recruitment and selection; performance management and learning and development.

• We will hold regular HR clinics in all locations to ensure staff have easy access to the HR team.

• We will develop a bespoke Customer service workshop and offer to all staff during 2009.

• Training sessions in customer service related areas will be identified with service groups and made available to staff.

• We will support and encourage staff to identify customers and communicate results in a variety or ways to a wide range of customers.

We will increase our knowledge and understanding of the work of the organisation through working with those on the ground to provide the best support and advice

We will make a direct impact on resolving business problems and focus on making a positive impact on results

We will encourage and foster a customer oriented culture