



The one-hundred-and-tenth meeting of the  
Joint Nature Conservation Committee to be held at 08.45 on 2 March 2017,  
at Defra, Nobel House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR

This paper was provided to the Joint Committee for decision/discussion  
or information. Please refer to the minutes of the meeting for  
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# **Performance Report Quarter 3 2016/17**

# Performance summary

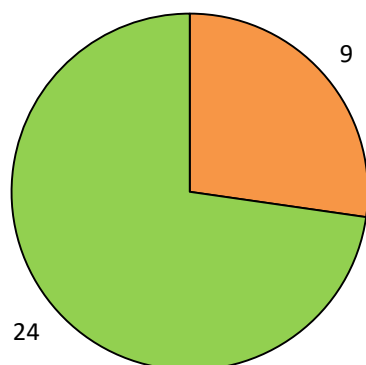
## Performance against success measures

Notable successes during quarter 3 include:

- JNCC successfully ran a stakeholder workshop to consider potential new offshore Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) for Tranche 3. The workshop was very well received with stakeholders providing positive comments on the quality and completeness of the workshop materials. JNCC delivered the first stage of MCZ Tranche 3 advice to Defra on schedule in quarter 3.
- JNCC participated successfully in Operation Grey Seal, a National Contingency Planning Exercise led by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. JNCC brought experience to the environment group from previous exercises/incidents and JNCC's profile was raised.
- JNCC is leading the development of a proof of concept platform for delivering analysis-ready Sentinel satellite data to support environmental applications across the UK, working to the Earth Observation Centre of Excellence which has Defra and devolved administration membership. In addition JNCC is re-using the same technology to deliver a means for Scottish Government to share Lidar data sets within Scotland.
- Publication of the review of terrestrial Special Protection Areas for birds in the UK.
- JNCC's highly praised contribution to the successful outcomes from the 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- A successful 'big room event' in December, bringing sponsor administrations and country nature conservation bodies together to discuss JNCC's priorities for 2017/18.

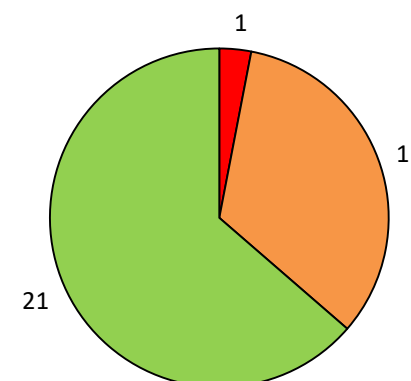
Delays in achieving success measures are largely due to heavy workloads, exacerbated by staff turnover in some teams. Resources are thinly stretched across the organisation and resilience is low. Balancing 'business as usual' against necessary changes to the business is proving very challenging. In some cases, delays in partner contributions have affected success measures.

Performance against success measures in quarter 3



	See dashboards for numbered success measures:				
	Governance & Corporate	People	Standards & Advice	Evidence	Marine Operations
R	-	-	-	-	-
A	2	7	15	19,21,23,24,26,27	-
G	1,3,4,5	6,8,9,10	11,12,13,14,16,17,18	20,22,25	28,29,30,31,32,33

Anticipated performance against success measures by end of 2016/17



	See dashboards for numbered success measures:				
	Governance & Corporate	People	Standards & Advice	Evidence	Marine Operations
R	-	-	-	26	-
A	2	7	12,15	19,21,22,23,24	31,32
G	1,3,4,5	6,8,9,10	11,13,14,16,17,18	20,25,27	28,29,30,33

## Financial performance

The forecast year-end position stands at £59k underspend on grant in aid. The detailed table can be found on the Financial Reporting page.

Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be

# Governance and Corporate

Targets
Increase JNCC's long-term financial security
Plan a swift and effective response to any changes arising from the Government review of JNCC and other Government initiatives
Provide efficient and effective corporate services and systems of internal control to support delivery of JNCC's objectives

Success measures	RAG status for quarter 3	Forward look to end of 2016/17
[1] 20% growth in non-GIA income (see Figure 1)	G	G
[2] Implementation of transition plan to improve long-term financial security (see Figure 2)	A	A
[3] 3-5 year strategic change plan and one-year business plan	G	G
[4] Assurance of effectiveness of system of internal control (see Table 1)	G	G
[5] 4% efficiency saving in 2016/17 governance and corporate services expenditure and plan for further 12% efficiencies by 2020	G	G

## Director's comments

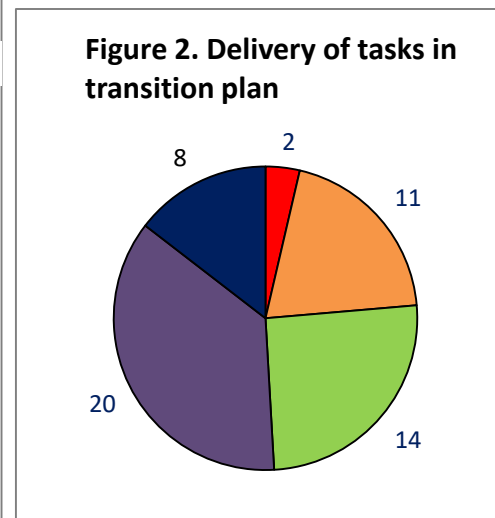
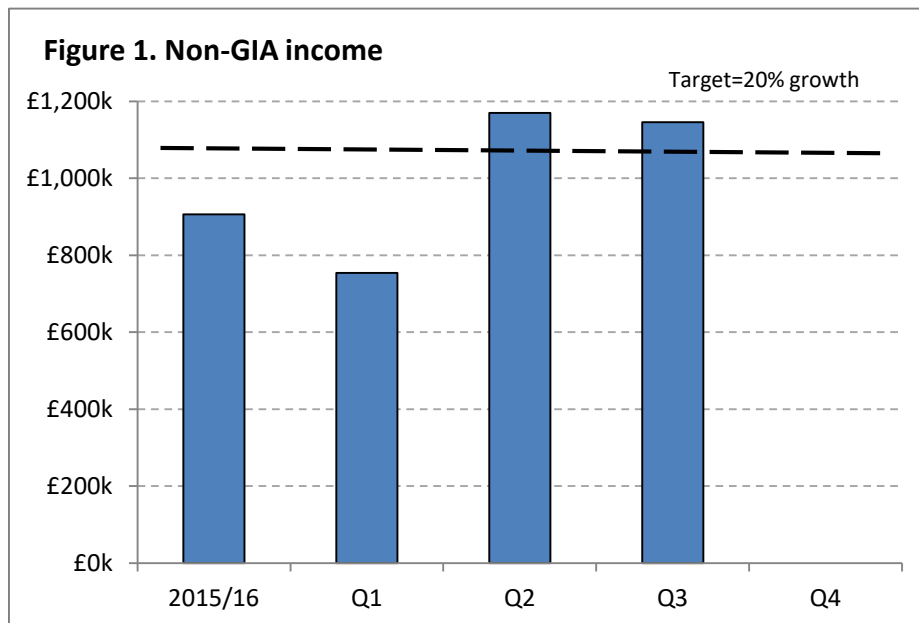
A small amount of additional income has been secured during Q3 although overall there has been a small reduction in the cumulative total as a secondment and the associated income ended early and some income was double counted in Q2.

Two transition tasks [2] are rated as red partly owing to delays in providing high-level direction (external communications strategy and skills framework). Three others have been deferred because the need for a broader review has been identified (time recording) and because of new pressures for HR (Resourcing strategy and associated policy development). Amber tasks have been rated as such because of multiple demands on the staff required (a further 38 transition tasks have been introduced during the year which are not reflected in the information presented). However, it is still possible that they will be achieved.

Core stakeholders are currently being consulted on the strategic plan [3] and have been engaged with planning through a CNCB workshop and JNCC Big Room event. Further work is needed with sponsors in Q4 to complete business planning for 2017/18. Defra's planning process has been demanding and further discussion is needed on its application to JNCC to reflect the requirement for funding to be agreed collectively with the devolved administrations.

Systems of internal control [4] continue to prove effective. The efficiency savings target is anticipated to be achieved [5].

Sue McQueen



**Table 1. Systems of internal control**

Health and safety	Green
Environmental	Green
Equality and diversity	Green
Fraud and losses	Green
Data and cyber security	Green
Internal audit	Green
Whistleblowing	Green

Green indicates no incidents of non-compliance resulting in, or risking, material loss of harm and/or harm and/or systems working effectively

Finance summary	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Variance (£k)
Salaries	777	867	(90)
Other costs	212	169	43
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>1,036</b>	<b>(47)</b>
Income	(6)	(5)	(1)
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>(48)</b>

Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be
P	Achieved or exceeded but ongoing (applies to transition plan only)
B	Deferred or dropped (applies to transition plan only)

# People

Targets
Maintain, and optimise use of, the strong body of expertise within JNCC
Enhance continuing professional development within JNCC

Success measures	RAG status for quarter 3	Forward look to end of 2016/17
[6] Maximum of 10% staff turnover (see Figure 3)	G	G
[7] Increased staff capacity to strategically important teams	A	A
[8] Increased exchange of staff between JNCC and partners	G	G
[9] Task and Finish Groups and innovation teams established	G	G
[10] Development of a Continuing Professional Development approach	G	G

## Director's comments

Staff turnover [6] in Q3 has fallen but the cumulative total for the past 12 months remains high because of a high number of leavers in Q4 of 2015/16.

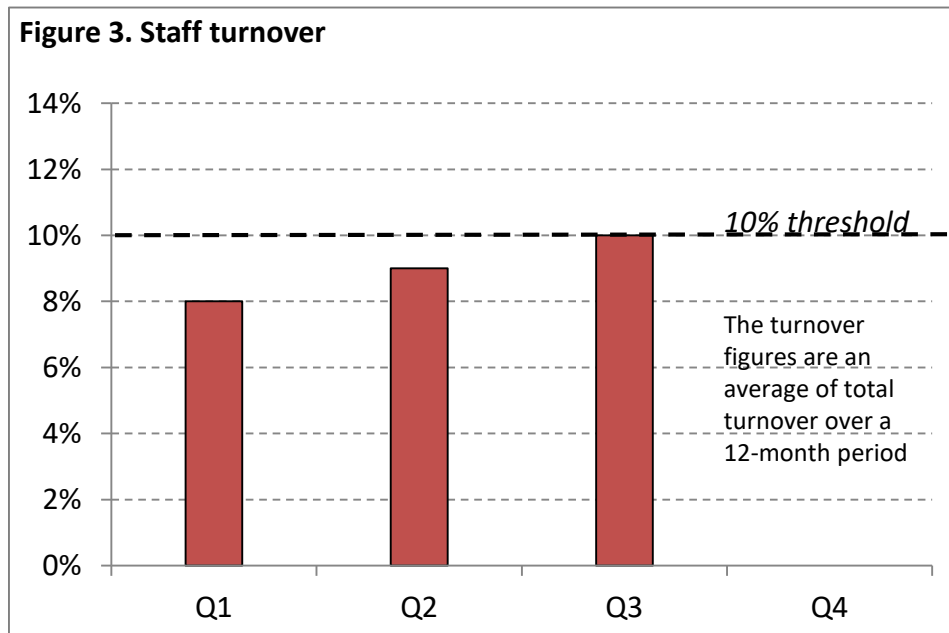
Action to identify skills shortages [7] has been delayed so no further changes will be possible this financial year.

Staff continue to be based with our main stakeholder organisations [8] in all four countries through a mixture of formal and informal arrangements. Action is underway to strengthen this in Scotland and to replace the Welsh liaison officer. In addition, there are a small number of secondments to other organisations. The one inward secondment has now ended.

Task and finish groups [9] continue to operate and be established or disbanded as work is initiated or completed. The CPD task and finish group [10] is expected to report in February.

Sue McQueen

Figure 3. Staff turnover



Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be

# Standards and Advice

Targets
Advise UK government and devolved administrations on international and European legislation and obligations
Provide UK coordination to enable the consistent and appropriate implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Birds Directive and other relevant European policies and programmes
Provide tools and mechanisms for cost-effective joint working with the country nature conservation bodies and other relevant bodies
Make evidence expertise available to initiatives looking to deliver social and economic benefits from the sustainable use of natural capital/resources in the UK and its Overseas Territories

Success measures	RAG status for quarter 3	Forward look to end of 2016/17
[11] Scientific advice to enable UK Government to meet its objectives at: [a] Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) CoP17 (September-October 2016) [b] Convention on Biological Diversity Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice 20 (April 2016) and CoP13 (December 2016)	G	G
[12] Delivery and coordination of R&D in support of offshore, national and international marine assessments	G	A
[13] Provide support and advice through the UK National Contact Point for the EU LIFE programme	G	G
[14] Build capacity in the UK Overseas Territories to sustainably manage their natural resources	G	G
[15] Publication of terrestrial SPA review and an assessment of the sufficiency of the UK marine SPA suite	A	A
[16] Substantial progress on revised guidance for Common Standards Monitoring of designated sites to give more flexibility commensurate with devolution and a risk-based approach to implementation	G	G
[17] Define and implement processes to support the delivery of offshore, regional and European reporting for marine legislation and commitments, an integrated and cost-efficient approach for European terrestrial reporting, and the UK report to the Convention on Migratory Species	G	G
[18] Process access to evidence and undertake research to support the uptake and improve the performance of models and other tools that facilitate integrated approaches to managing biodiversity, natural capital and ecosystem services in marine and terrestrial environments across the UK	G	G

## Director's comments

The outcomes of negotiations at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (11b) were good for the UK and the JNCC contribution to the UK delegation, provided by Vin Fleming and Deborah Procter, was highly praised. The publication of the terrestrial SPA review (15) was also a major landmark after many years of work by JNCC and the CNCBs.

Most other success measures are on track which is an excellent outcome given the uncertainty and increased requirement for advice post EU referendum. This was particularly pronounced for staff undertaking European work and CITES work. Minor delays to the final sign-off stages of the assessment of marine SPA sufficiency [15] is responsible for the amber rating and the work is now scheduled to finish in June 2017.

Severe unforeseeable and sudden staff shortages in the Marine Ecosystems Assessment team during this quarter required a herculean effort by the team to maintain progress. Delays to non priority work and legacy work from 2015/16 were made to keep key success measures [12 and 17] on track as far as possible but delays have occurred to work on the offshore site assessment pilot and longer term assessment planning to 2019.

There are some gaps in evidence quality assurance across the suite of work, all due to the early stage of the work. These gaps will be rectified soon. They are all in the marine reporting and assessment area of work.

*Paul Rose*

Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be

Finance summary	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Variance (£k)
Salaries	1,850	1,829	21
Other costs	443	489	(46)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>2,693</b>	<b>(24)</b>
Income	(413)	(539)	126
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>2,256</b>	<b>2,154</b>	<b>102</b>

# Evidence

Targets
Produce robust evidence of the state and change in the terrestrial and marine environments
Provide standards for monitoring, surveillance and quality control in the terrestrial and marine environments that are shared by voluntary, public and private sectors
Provide a mechanism for cost-effective, open and efficient sharing of key data sources for terrestrial and marine environments
Provide integrated products and analytical services that can be rapidly deployed in support of decision-making across a variety of scales

Success measures	RAG status for quarter 3	Forward look to end of 2016/17
[19] Continued delivery of terrestrial evidence products and new partnership contracts that facilitate joint analysis and provide potential for new protocols	A	G
[20] Strategic offshore biodiversity surveys with partners	G	G
[21] Support countries to develop metrics for assessing habitat and species condition related to biodiversity and natural capital	A	A
[22] Participate in country-led initiatives to develop shared marine monitoring strategies and prioritisation processes, and collaborate with the country nature conservation bodies and Governments to finalise preferred marine biodiversity monitoring options	G	G
[23] A data infrastructure to allow cross-cutting analysis of key datasets for applications across the environment	A	A
[24] A defined set of service levels for data collation, standardisation and access including initial and ongoing costs	A	A
[25] Prepare for the next generation of seabed maps to inform the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, supported by an effective European partnership	G	G
[26] Demonstrate how spatial data on pressures, sensitivity and biodiversity can be integrated to streamline advice and deliver better regulation	A	R
[27] Demonstrate detection of changes in land-parcel condition enabled by Earth Observation to streamline habitat management and condition assessment	A	G

## Director's comments

Performance is now beginning to suffer under the combined impact of in-year pressures (especially staff resilience), the extensive and unprecedented scale of change required of all programmes that is almost always taking place in the context of significant partnership arrangements and working.

Green RAG ratings are usually associated with JNCC having 'sole control', JNCC's nature requires that it writes partnership-dependent success measures but as JNCC and partners all struggle with similar pressures, success measures will be missed. Looking within the Q3 under-performing success measures, Service levels for data collation [24] and spatial data on pressures [26] are affected by staff issues, progress on data infrastructure [23] and Earth observation [27] has been limited by partner input, and terrestrial evidence [19] by both.

*Steve Gibson*

Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be

Finance summary	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Variance (£k)
Salaries	2,419	2,329	90
Other costs	2,157	2,378	(221)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>5,103</b>	<b>5,233</b>	<b>(130)</b>
Income	(232)	(460)	228
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>4,871</b>	<b>4,773</b>	<b>98</b>

# Marine Operations

Targets
Technical support and scientific advice to enable designation of Marine Protected Areas
Technical support and scientific advice on biodiversity to facilitate effective sustainable management/use of MPAs
Scientific advice on biodiversity for the regulators of offshore industries

Success measures	RAG status for quarter 3	Forward look to end of 2016/17
[28] Advice to Defra on a third tranche of offshore Marine Conservation Zones	G	G
[29] Advice to Defra and devolved administrations on offshore Special Protection Areas	G	G
[30] Re-submit recommendations to ministers on possible harbour porpoise SACs after taking account of public consultation responses	G	G
[31] Report on progress towards MPA network targets	G	A
[32] Advice to Defra and devolved administrations on management of fisheries in offshore MPAs under the Common Fisheries Policy	G	A
[33] Advice to competent authorities, within agreed consultation periods, for the regulation of offshore industry activities – respond fully to 95% of requests for advice on oil and gas operations within the consultation period	G	G

## Director's comments

Although pressure and demands on staff time remain high progress in the Marine Operations directorate is good and the collective status/prognosis has improved from Q2.

Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zone advice [28] is on track and the first set of outputs has been submitted to Defra. The final advice package is scheduled for discussion with the MPA Sub Group and inter-sessional Committee sign-off in Q4. The consultation on possible marine SPAs in Scottish offshore waters is underway following a delay in Secretary of State approval. The inevitable knock on delay to the reporting timetable has been discussed and agreed with Marine Scotland and SNH. JNCC plan to consult on an additional offshore site in Secretary of State Waters (mid Irish Sea) in January 2017. Again this is a late start due to delay in ministerial approval, which means the work cannot be completed in 2016/17. A revised plan has been discussed and agreed with Defra [29]. Submission of post-consultation advice on potential SACs for harbour porpoise was discharged on time in a previous quarter [30]. MPA network reports [31] have been provided to Defra and Welsh Government slightly behind schedule, so the original success measure is discharged. However, Northern Ireland have requested analysis by the end of March. This may be difficult to complete in Q4 but the bulk of the work can be done with a final report in early 2017/18. Progress on MPA fisheries management advice for Defra and Marine Scotland [32] is good, although some sites are very challenging from a stakeholder perspective and it remains difficult to juggle competing demands on staff time. There is also over-arching uncertainty on the longer term fisheries management process in the context of EU exit. All requests for advice on oil and gas operations were responded to within the consultation period [33].

New work for Q4 relates to the management of offshore industry activities in harbour porpoise SACs.

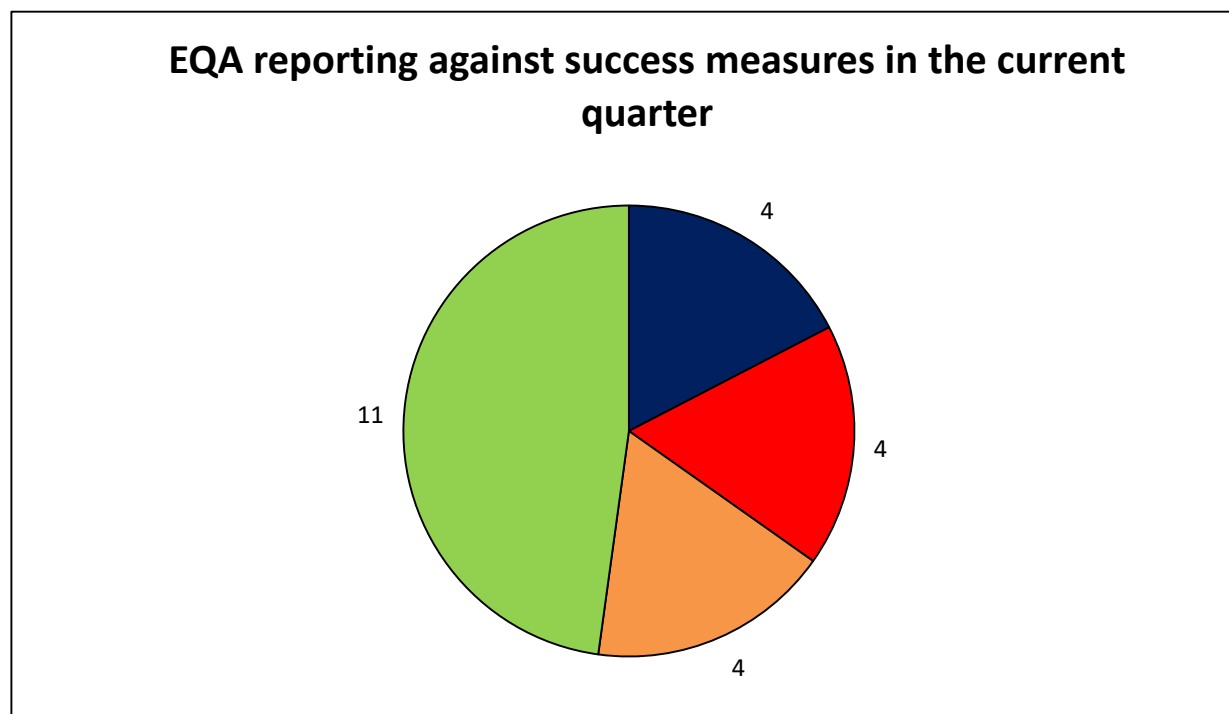
*John Goold*

Finance summary	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Variance (£k)
Salaries	1,403	1,348	55
Other costs	123	158	(35)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,836</b>	<b>1,816</b>	<b>20</b>
Income	(68)	(89)	21
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>1,768</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>41</b>

Key	
R	Critical issues have materialised that could affect delivery
A	Some issues that could affect delivery but they are being managed
G	Good progress – delivery is where it is expected to be



# Evidence Quality Assurance



## Director's comments

Four success measures (17%) do not require EQA. One is an enabling function, one was a major bid submission and two are IT technology specifications/builds.

Eleven success measures (49%) are green. This generally reflects measures that have been ongoing from the previous year. However, for the four MPA projects, although we are confident that the EQA meets our standards a proportion of historical documentation has not been revised; we anticipate having revised them by the end of the financial year.

Four success measures (17%) are amber. Three of these relate to projects where the specification is now clear and EQA documents are in development. One relates to long-term challenges allocating sufficient resources to the Offshore Industries Advice casework service. Steps are being taken to address this gap by the new programme leader.

Four success measures (17%) are red. All of these relate to new and developing work where in most cases the specification to be assured is as yet unclear.

Ten success measures have been assessed and are deemed outside the scope of the EQA policy (i.e. corporate and people success measures). These have not been included in the chart.

In summary, a slight improvement on Q2, around half of those measures needing EQA have them, and the remainder are new and significantly changing work. The latter divides at this stage in the year between projects for which the specification is now clear and those where work remains ongoing. There is some pressure emerging caused by the speed of work, but it is presently not creating additional risk that we are unsighted on. This feels right given the very significant scale of change the organisation is going through to realign and develop work. The focus will now need to be on ensuring that this significant number of new EQAs are of sufficient standard.

*Steve Gibson*

Key	
R	Success measure has not yet been assessed against the EQA policy. EQA documents are not in place and implementation of EQA policy and processes has not been completed
A	Success measure has been assessed and would be subject to EQA policy. EQA documents are being finalised and once agreed EQA policy and processes will be followed and implemented
G	Success measure has been assessed and would be subject to EQA policy. EQA documents are in place and EQA policy and processes are being implemented
B	EQA has been assessed and EQA policy does not apply to this success measure

# Financial reporting

The forecast year-end position stands at £59k underspend on grant in aid. The position will continue to be monitored closely over the remainder of the year.

	Reserved (£k)			UK Coordination (£k)			Marine (£k)			Governance & Corporate Services (£k)			Other funding sources (£k)		
	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Marine Operations</b>															
Salaries	46	38	8	244	207	37	1,030	1,004	26	15	15	0	68	84	(16)
Other costs	0	0	0	55	69	(15)	68	88	(20)	310	285	25	0	25	(25)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1,098</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>(41)</b>
Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(68)	(89)	21
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1,098</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>(20)</b>
<b>Standards and Advice</b>															
Salaries	562	550	12	790	788	2	127	148	(21)	0	0	0	371	344	28
Other costs	175	190	(16)	200	230	(30)	60	58	1	375	301	74	9	84	(75)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>(19)</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>(48)</b>
Income	(26)	(37)	11	(18)	(57)	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	(369)	(445)	76
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>(19)</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Evidence</b>															
Salaries	54	56	(2)	1,508	1,496	12	427	405	22	247	230	17	183	142	41
Other costs	0	0	0	1,459	1,577	(118)	471	512	(41)	753	764	(11)	0	51	(51)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>2,967</b>	<b>3,073</b>	<b>(106)</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>(10)</b>
Income	0	0	0	(86)	(235)	149	(5)	(2)	(3)	0	0	0	(140)	(223)	83
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>2,881</b>	<b>2,838</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>(22)</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>(30)</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Corporate Services</b>															
Salaries	35	38	(3)	75	76	(1)	134	135	(1)	533	546	(13)	0	73	(73)
Other costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	212	246	(34)	0	(77)	77
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>(47)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>4</b>
Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(6)	(5)	(1)	0	0	0
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>(48)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>JNCC total</b>															
Salaries	697	683	14	2,617	2,566	51	1,718	1,691	27	795	790	5	622	643	(20)
Other costs	175	190	(16)	1,713	1,877	(163)	600	659	(59)	1,650	1,596	54	9	83	(74)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>4,330</b>	<b>4,443</b>	<b>(112)</b>	<b>2,318</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>2,445</b>	<b>2,386</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>(94)</b>
Income	(26)	(37)	11	(104)	(292)	188	(5)	(2)	(3)	(6)	(5)	(1)	(577)	(757)	180
Unallocated budget	2	0	2	(21)	0	(21)	0	0	0	(30)	0	(30)	0	0	0
<b>Net cost/Call on GIA</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4,206</b>	<b>4,151</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2,312</b>	<b>2,348</b>	<b>(36)</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>2,381</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>85</b>

## Grant in Aid summary

Total GIA agreed	10,175
Allocated to Cefas	(400)
GIA budget in JNCC	9,775
Net expenditure	9,716
Variance	59

# Significant Risks Register

Risk	Inherent rating			Agreed actions	Residual rating			Q3 update
	Likelihood	Impact	Total		Likelihood	Impact	Total	
Reduced funding affects JNCC's ability to discharge essential functions for sponsors	H	VH	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree indicative multi-year GIA allocations with sponsors</li> <li>Develop and implement a realistic plan for income generation</li> <li>Pursue efficiency savings where feasible and appropriate</li> <li>Promote the value of JNCC's work</li> </ul>	M	H	H	JNCC has an agreed programme of work and financial allocation for 2016/17. Planning for 2017/18 has started and a successful 'big room event' involving sponsors and country conservation bodies was held in December. However, a GIA allocation for 2017/18 has not yet been agreed. Good progress is being made to secure additional income.
Changes to JNCC's role, functions or governance affect JNCC's ability to deliver essential functions to sponsors	H	VH	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive input to JNCC review and other government change initiatives</li> <li>Engagement with key stakeholders to promote value of JNCC's work and influence change initiatives</li> </ul>	M	M	M	The government review of JNCC was published in November. The recommendations are mainly concerned with how JNCC operates; changes to JNCC's role and functions are relatively small-scale. An implementation plan has been prepared for agreement with sponsors. We are continuing to engage with Defra's transformation programme. EU exit may lead to significant changes to JNCC but not in the short to medium term.
Increasing divergence between sponsor administrations (e.g. priorities, policies, institutional arrangements) erodes JNCC's ability to provide cost-effective services at UK level	H	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen relationships with devolved administrations and country bodies</li> <li>Agreement between sponsors as to how a UK body should operate in an increasingly devolved UK</li> </ul>	M	M	M	Good working relationships are being maintained with all sponsor administrations. Improvements (e.g. to sponsor engagement in planning JNCC's work) will be made following the JNCC review. This will require sponsors to take the lead in ensuring a forum for collaboration re-established. In the longer term EU exit may lead to greater divergence between administrations in the UK.
Poor staff engagement and morale undermine JNCC's ability to discharge essential functions for sponsors	H	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve internal communications</li> <li>Undertake annual staff survey and prepare action plan to address priority issues</li> <li>Keep areas with high staff turnover under review</li> </ul>	M	M	M	Staff have welcomed involvement in task and finish groups. The T&F group on internal communications has identified some quick wins which we intend to implement as soon as possible. A staff survey took place during Q3. Results will be available in Q4. Staff turnover has not been clustered around any particular team(s).
Limited flexibility leaves JNCC unable to respond to change sufficiently quickly	H	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal processes to ensure they are fit for purpose</li> <li>Implement a less risk averse culture in targeted areas</li> <li>Ensure staff are not over committed and can dedicate sufficient time to change</li> </ul>	M	H	H	Ideas have been generated on how we can better mobilise resources by a task and finish group and others. These are currently under consideration. The risk appetite has been refined. This will be considered by ARAC and Committee in March. Resources continue to be very stretched. The planning process will be key in agreeing a realistic work programme for 2017/18 with sponsors.
Quality of evidence and science declines putting quality of advice to sponsors at risk	M	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement (and keep under review) evidence quality assurance processes</li> <li>Staff training and development</li> <li>Adapt JNCC's evidence activities to meet evolving customer needs</li> </ul>	L	M	M	Challenges to JNCC's evidence and advice have increased. However, evidence quality assurance processes have been updated, which makes defence of these challenges less time consuming and more successful. A plan for engagement with the science sector and for coordinating delivery of nature conservation research requirements is in development.