



Department of
**Finance and
Personnel**

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Sickness Absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service

2010/2011

Government

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Executive Summary

- ▶ This annual report provides a detailed analysis of sickness absence for staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service over the 2010/2011 financial year. It contains analyses of trends over the last five years and an evaluation of the progress that has been made towards absence targets.
- ▶ This is the first report to include information on industrial staff, and staff in the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service which are now part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.
- ▶ In 2010/2011 the headline absence figure was 10.4 days (average days lost per staff year), down from 11.0 days in the previous year. The NICS absence target of 10.5 days was therefore met.
- ▶ The headline absence level represents 4.7% of available working days lost and equates to approximately £25.5 million of lost production.
- ▶ The proportion of staff with no recorded spells of absence increased from 50.1% in 2009/2010 to 51.5%.
- ▶ Analysis by Department revealed that the level of absence ranged from 5.4 days in OFMDFM to 13.4 days in DSD. A large part of this Departmental variation was attributable to differences between Departments in terms of their grade, gender and age profiles.
- ▶ As in previous years, the level of absence was highest at the Administrative Officer (AO) grade level (13.2 days).
- ▶ The absence level of females reduced from 14.2 days in 2009/2010 to 12.9 days in 2010/2011 but was still markedly higher than that of males (8.1 days). It remained higher (11.7 days) even when *Pregnancy Related Disorders* were taken into account.
- ▶ The level of absence was highest for staff aged 55+ (11.2 days). At 9.9 days, staff aged 16-24 had the lowest level of absence.
- ▶ The main reason for absence was *Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses*. The proportion of working days lost due to illnesses of this type was 30.4%, a similar proportion to the previous year (30.5%).
- ▶ The level of absence in the NICS was due, in large part, to a relatively small group of staff (10.3%) being absent from work on a long-term basis for an average of 61.7 working days. This group of staff accounted for 71.0% of the total days lost.
- ▶ Staff within their first year of employment lost significantly fewer days to sickness absence (5.4 days) than staff who had been employed for one year or more (10.5 days).

Key Facts

	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011
Proportion of Staff with No Recorded Spells of Absence	41.0%	40.7%	43.1%	49.8%	50.1%	51.5%
Working Days Lost per Staff Year	13.4	13.7	12.9	11.0	11.0	10.4
Percentage of Available Working Days Lost	6.0%	6.2%	5.8%	4.9%	4.9%	4.7%
Total Number of Working Days Lost	328,141	322,640	284,833	246,806	245,590	256,663 ²
Estimated Lost Production¹ (£ Million)	25.4	25.6	24.5	21.0	22.9	25.5 ²
Average Number of Spells per Staff Year	1.2	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8
Proportion of Working Days Lost by Certification³						
Certified	83.3%	83.7%	83.1%	79.4%	66.7%	68.5%
Self-Certified	16.7%	16.3%	16.9%	17.1%	24.4%	23.8%
Long-term Absence						
Proportion of Working Days Lost due to Long-term Absence	68.4%	69.3%	69.4%	70.6%	70.0%	71.0%
Frequency Rate ⁴	13.0%	13.7%	12.5%	10.9%	10.9%	10.8%
Average Duration (Working Days)	62.0	60.5	62.0	61.7	62.8	61.7
Short-term Absence						
Average Number of Spells per Staff Year	1.04	1.00	0.95	0.76	0.75	0.69

¹ Any information provided in this report that relates to lost production, is calculated where possible on the basis of each individual's actual salary.

² The increase in total working days lost and the estimated value of lost production in 2010/2011 is due, in large part, to the inclusion of industrial staff and staff in the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

³ Since moving to HRConnect in 2008/2009, the proportion of working days lost by certification shown here may not sum to 100%. This is due to absence spells which were uncertified or for which the certification type was missing.

⁴ Frequency Rate is the average number of long-term spells per employee, expressed as a percentage. (No of spells of long-term absence in the period/No of employees) x 100

Chapter 1
Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence

1. Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence

1.1 Introduction

In 2010/2011 an average of 10.4 days were lost by staff in the NICS as a result of sickness absence and this is lower than in the previous year (11.0 days). This overall level of absence represents 4.7% of available working days and constitutes approximately £25.5 million in terms of lost production.

The following pages look at the variation in the levels of absence over time across Departments, grade levels, genders, age groups and by length of service.

This is the first annual sickness absence report to include statistics on the Department of Justice¹ and the Public Prosecution Service. It is also the first report to include information on industrial staff. The inclusion of these groups of staff means that the overall NICS statistics for 2010/2011 are not directly comparable with those presented for previous years. That said, the analyses presented in Appendix 9 show that these changes have had little effect on the overall level of absence.

¹ Information on the Northern Ireland Prison Service was not available in sufficient time to meet the publication deadline for this report and these staff therefore do not feature in any of the statistics presented.

1.2 Departmental Variation

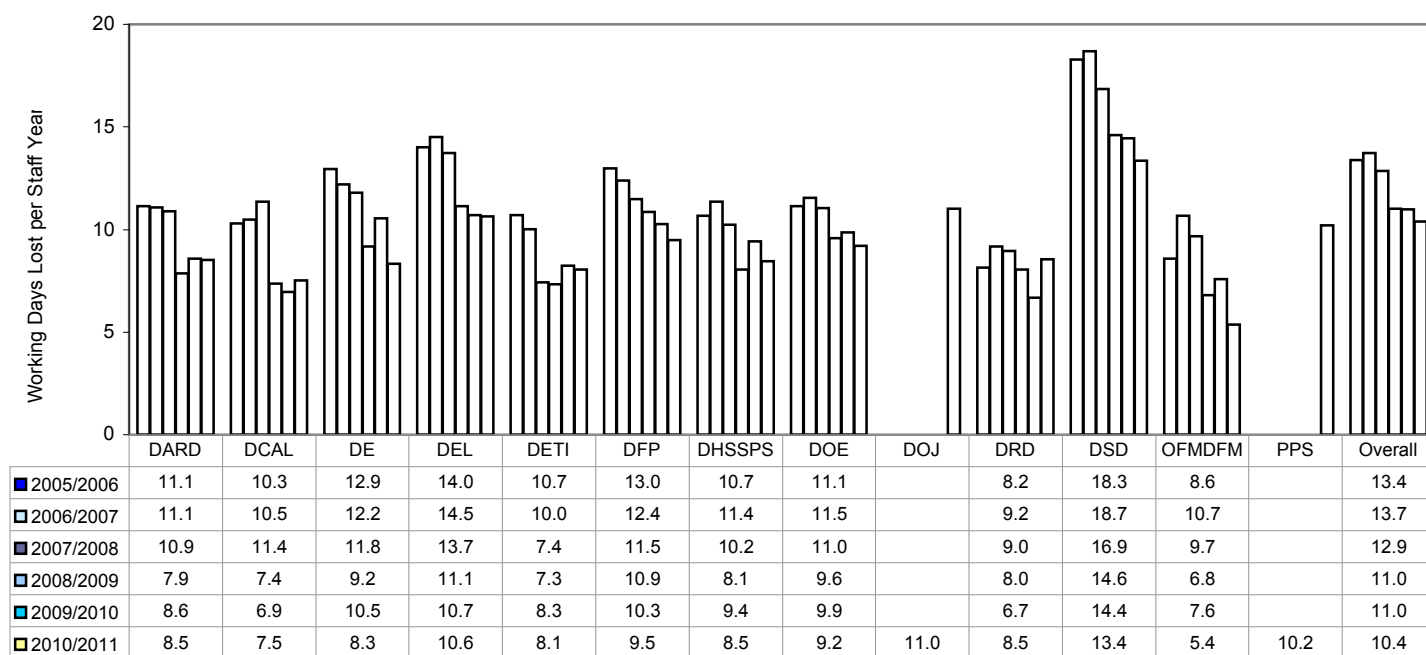
Of the eleven Departments with trend information available, nine achieved a reduction in the average number of days lost. In percentage terms, the greatest reductions were in OFMDFM (29.1%) and DE (21.1%). The two Departments (DCAL and DRD) that had the lowest levels of absence in 2009/2010 are the only ones that showed an increase in 2010/2011.

The level of absence ranged from 13.4 days in DSD to 5.4 days in OFMDFM. The absence rate in OFMDFM was equivalent to a loss of 2.4% of available working days, whereas the rate in DSD amounted to 6.1% of available working days (Table 3, Appendix 3).

When making Departmental comparisons, it is important to consider that absence levels differ by grade level, gender and age. Consequently, the staffing profile of a Department can have a major bearing on its absence rate. The extent to which a Department's staffing profile can influence its overall absence rate, most notably in the case of DSD and DEL, is illustrated by the analysis presented in Appendix 5.

Figure 1¹

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Department 2005/2006 - 2010/2011



¹ Staff in AOCC, HSENI, NIAUR and OAGNI are included in the Overall figure.

1.3 Grade Level

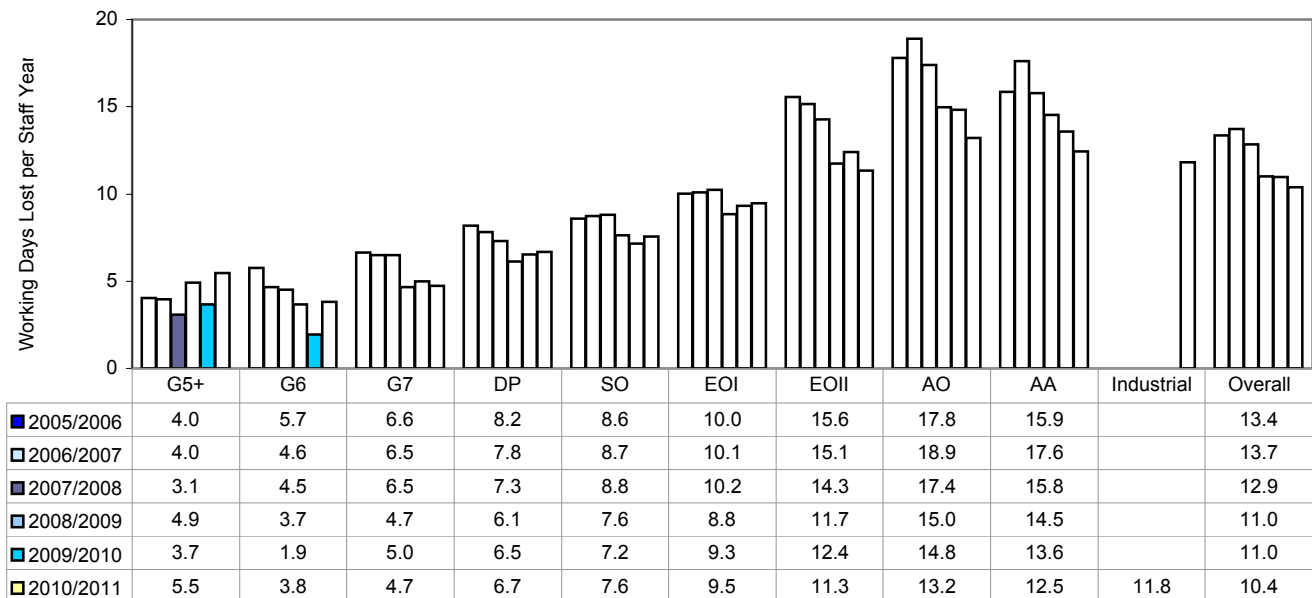
As with previous years, the level of absence was highest for staff at, or analogous to, the Administrative Officer (AO) grade (13.2 days lost). The level has, however, reduced in each of the last four years. Female officers at this grade level had a particularly high level of absence, 15.1 days lost on average. Analysis by Department revealed that the level of absence among female AOs ranged from 5.4 days in OFMDFM to 17.8 days in DSD (Table 11, Appendix 3).

From AO level upwards, the average number of days lost decreased at each successive grade level to a low of 3.8 days at Grade 6. The level of absence for Industrial staff (11.8 days) was lower than for staff at both AA and AO levels (12.5 and 13.2 days respectively).

Compared with the previous financial year, four of the nine grade levels showed a decrease in the average number of days lost during 2009/2010. The largest decrease (10.8%) occurred at AO level.

Figure 2¹

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Analogous Grade Level 2005/2006 - 2010/2011



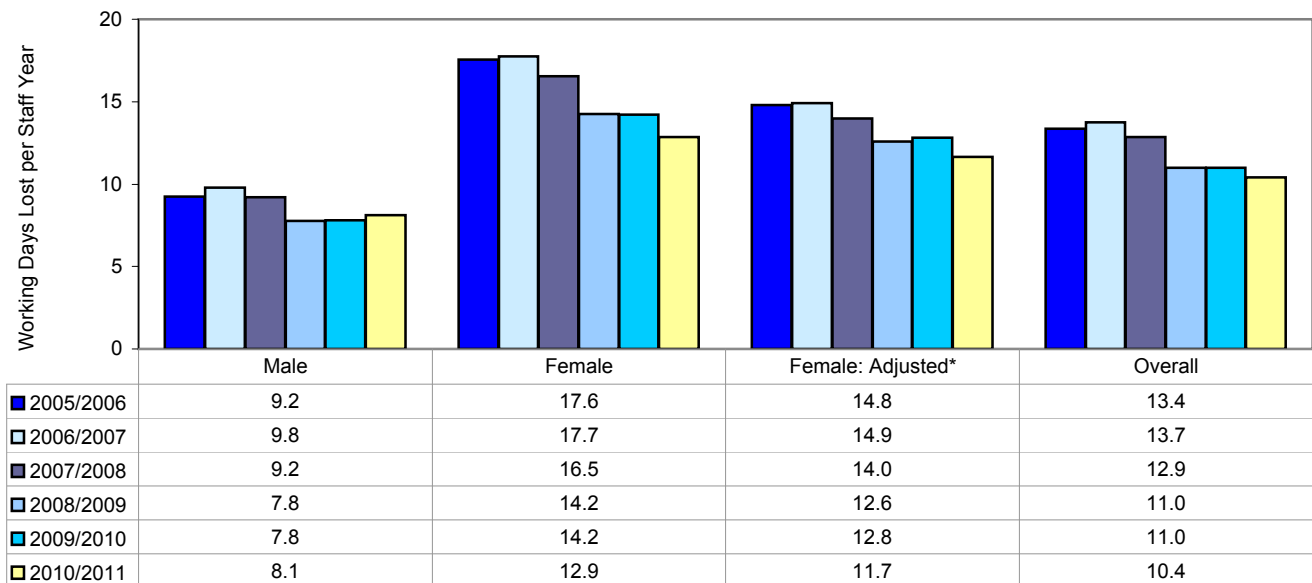
¹ For the purpose of this analysis all former Northern Ireland Office staff at the Band C grade level have been classified as analogous to the EOII grade level.

1.4 Gender

The level of absence for females reduced from 14.2 days to 12.9 days in 2010/2011. In contrast, the level of absence for males increased slightly to 8.1 days. Despite this, the level of absence for females was still markedly higher than the level for males, even when absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders* were removed from the calculations (11.7 days lost).

Figure 3

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Gender 2005/2006 - 2010/2011



* Excludes absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders*. Prior to 2008/2009, excludes *Pregnancy Related/Postnatal* absences.

1.5 Age Group

The absence level decreased for all age groups apart from those aged 35-44 where it remained the same. The largest decrease (13.3%) was recorded for those aged 16-24. The absence level of staff ranged from 9.9 days for those aged 16-24, to 11.2 days for those aged 55+.

Certified absence levels generally increased with age group from 6.0 days for staff in the youngest age category to 8.2 days for staff aged 55+ (Table 6, Appendix 3).

Figure 4

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Age Group 2005/2006 - 2010/2011

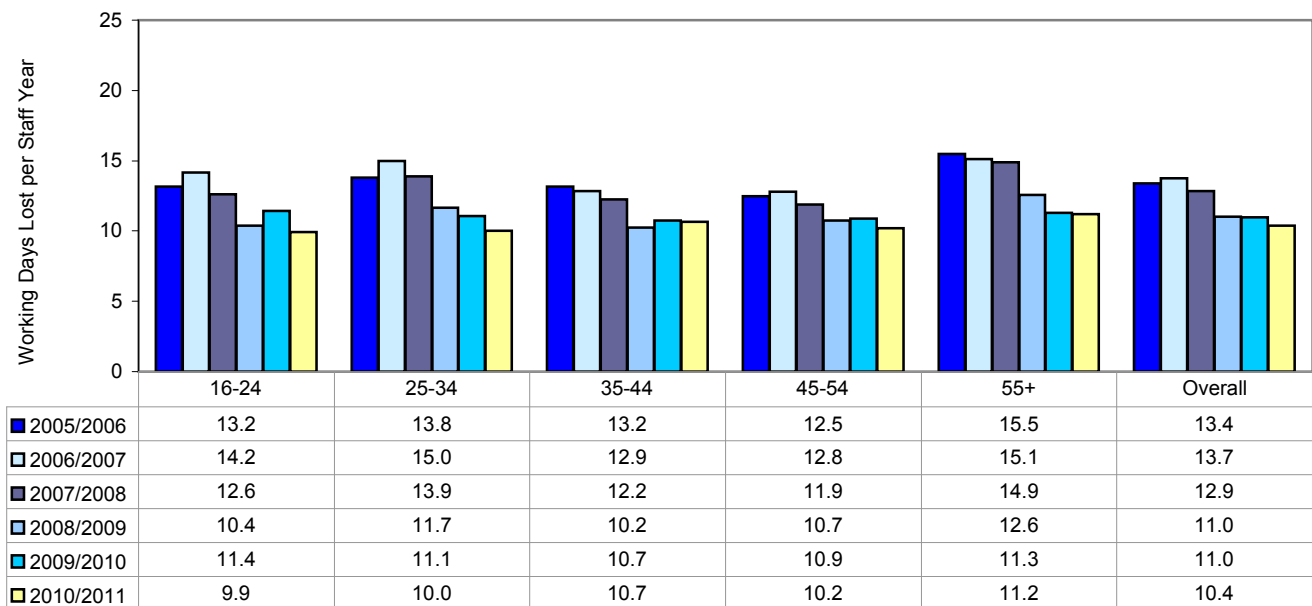


Table 1

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Length of Service

Length of Service	Working Days Lost per Staff Year
Less than 6 months	5.1
6 months to less than 1 year	5.5
Less than 1 year	5.4
1 to less than 2 years	7.4
2 to less than 3 years	10.7
3 to less than 4 years	10.4
4 to less than 5 years	10.7
5 years or more	10.6
1 year or more	10.5
Overall	10.4

1.6 Length of Service

There was a marked difference in the number of days lost per staff year by length of service. Staff within their first year of employment lost significantly fewer days to sickness absence (5.4 days) than staff who had been employed for one year or more (10.5 days).

Chapter 2
Spells of Sickness Absence

2. Spells of Sickness Absence

2.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the number and average duration of recorded spells of sickness absence. Supporting information can be found in Appendix 6.

2.2 Number of Absence Spells

The proportion of staff with no sickness absence in 2010/2011 was 51.5%, compared to 50.1% in 2009/2010. A further 31.7% of staff had only one recorded absence and 12.1% were absent on two separate occasions during the year. The remaining 4.7% of staff were absent from work through illness on three or more occasions.

Staff in the NICS had an average of just under one spell of sickness absence (0.8), down slightly from 0.9 in the previous financial year.

Figure 5

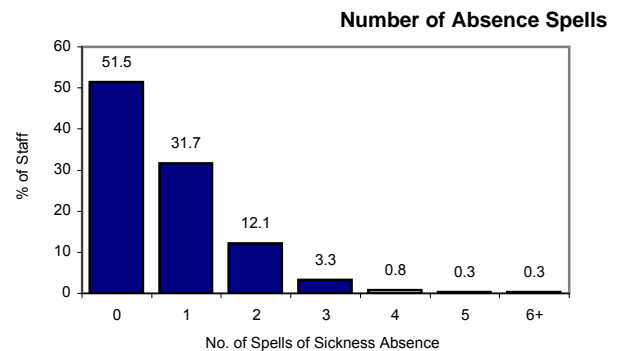
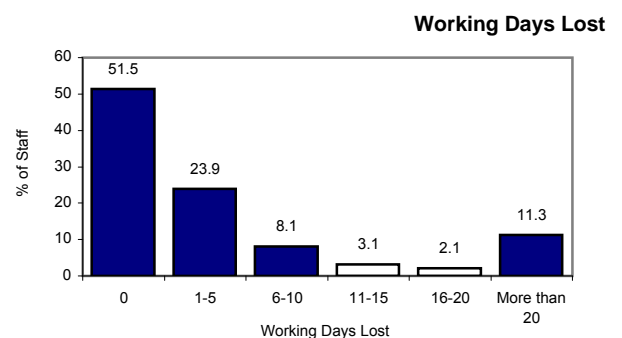


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows that, while 51.5% of staff had no spells of sickness absence, 23.9% were absent between one and five days in 2010/2011. Some 11.3% of staff were absent for more than 20 days in total during 2010/2011.



2.3 Duration of Absence Spells

As shown in Figure 7, the majority of absence spells were short-term in nature, with 70.0% of absence spells lasting for five working days or less. These absences accounted for 15.3% of the total working days lost. Long-term spells of absence (i.e. those lasting for more than 20 consecutive working days) accounted for 14.8% of all spells of absence. These absence spells accounted for 71.0% of the total working days lost.

Figure 7

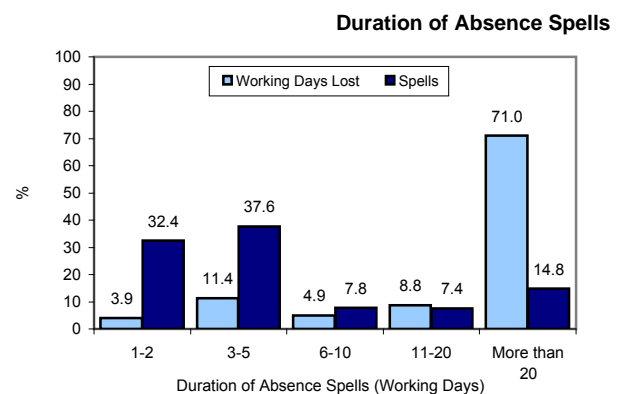
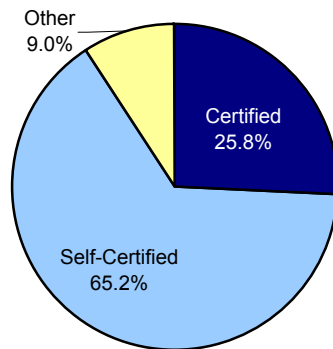


Figure 8

Proportion of Absence Spells by Certification



2.4 Absence Certification

Self-certified absences made up just under two thirds (65.2%) of all spells of sickness absence. This was up slightly from the 2009/2010 figure of 64.0%. Absence spells that were covered by a medical certificate accounted for just over a quarter (25.8%) of spells. This was similar to the 2009/2010 figure.

Absences which were uncertified, or where the certification was missing, accounted for 9.0% of spells.

Figure 9

Proportion of Working Days Lost by Certification

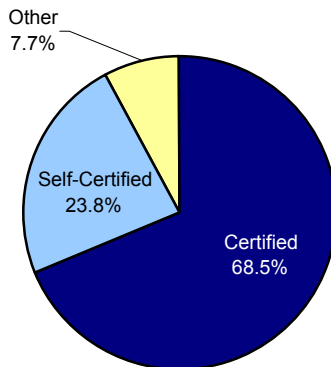


Figure 9 shows that over two thirds (68.5%) of the working days lost were certified by a medical certificate, giving rise to 7.1 days lost per staff year (3.2% of available working days). Shorter term absences covered by self-certification accounted for 23.8% of the working days that were lost, resulting in 2.5 days lost per staff year (1.1% of available working days).

Absences which were uncertified, or where the certification was missing, accounted for 7.7% of the working days lost.

On average, self-certified absences lasted 4.7 working days (down slightly from 4.8 days in 2009/2010), whereas certified absences lasted 34.2 working days (up from 33.6 days).

Chapter 3
Reason For Sickness Absence

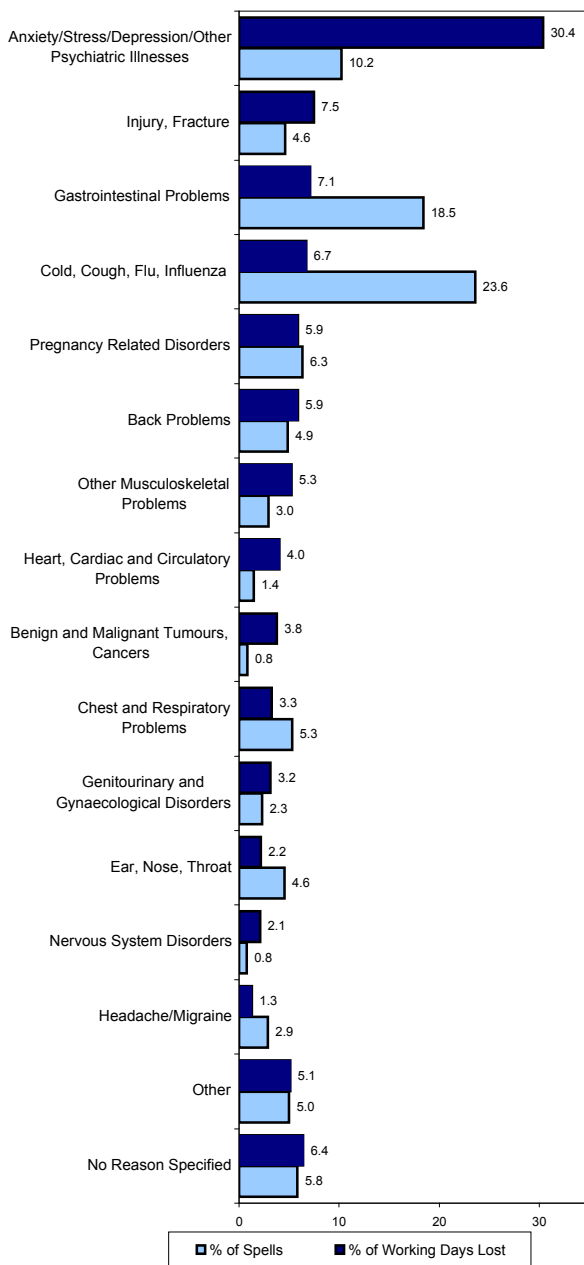
3. Reason for Sickness Absence

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the reason for sickness absence. More analyses are presented in Appendix 7.

Figure 10^{1,2}

Reason for Absence



3.2 Overall

The highest proportion of working days lost in 2010/2011 was accounted for by *Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses* (30.4%). Absences in this category tended to be long-term, lasting an average of 38.2 days.

Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza accounted for the largest proportion of absence spells (23.6%). These spells were generally short-term in nature, lasting an average of 3.7 working days. *Gastrointestinal Problems* accounted for the second largest proportion of spells (18.5%).

Table 2²

Reason for Absence	Average Duration (Working Days)
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	59.3
Substance Abuse	41.4
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	38.2
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	35.7
Nervous System Disorders	35.5
Blood Disorders	22.9
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	22.7
Injury, Fracture	20.9
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	19.3
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	17.4
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	16.8
Back Problems	15.5
Skin Disorders	14.1
Eye Problems	12.6
Pregnancy Related Disorders	12.0
Infectious Diseases	9.3
Asthma	8.0
Chest and Respiratory Problems	7.9
Ear, Nose, Throat	6.2
Headache/Migraine	5.7
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	5.5
Gastrointestinal Problems	5.0
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	3.7
Dental and Oral Problems	3.1
No Reason Specified	14.2

¹ The category 'Other' contains any absence with a reason that is not shown elsewhere in the analysis.

² The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

The following tables show the percentage of the total working days lost attributable to each reason for absence, disaggregated by grade level, gender and age group. Shading has been used in each table to highlight the illness category which accounted for the largest proportion of the working days lost.

3.3 Grade Level

Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses accounted for the largest proportion of the working days lost across all grade levels apart from Industrial staff where the main reason was *Injury, Fracture*.

Table 3¹

Reason for Absence by Grade Level

Reason for Absence	% of Working Days Lost							
	G7+	DP	SO	EOI	EOII	AO	AA	Industrial
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	35.3	28.4	25.3	28.0	30.0	34.1	32.6	14.2
Asthma	-	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	-
Back Problems	5.2	3.8	5.4	7.9	5.4	5.7	6.3	7.9
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	8.1	3.8	4.3	6.9	4.4	2.4	2.9	-
Blood Disorders	1.2	1.5	0.6	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.5	-
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Chest and Respiratory Problems	2.4	3.6	3.2	4.7	2.9	3.1	2.4	5.1
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	5.7	7.4	6.9	5.7	6.9	7.2	7.1	3.5
Dental and Oral Problems	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.1
Ear, Nose, Throat	1.1	2.2	2.2	1.5	1.9	3.0	1.6	1.0
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	-	1.3	0.8	-	1.1	0.5	0.3	1.1
Eye Problems	0.6	1.1	0.2	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.3	1.0
Gastrointestinal Problems	7.4	4.5	9.2	5.6	8.4	7.1	6.4	5.4
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.2	3.5	4.3	4.1	3.3	2.8	3.3	1.6
Headache/Migraine	0.3	1.0	1.6	3.2	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.1
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	8.5	9.3	7.1	3.6	4.4	1.8	3.4	5.5
Infectious Diseases	-	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	-
Injury, Fracture	5.9	7.6	6.2	6.8	6.6	7.0	6.5	21.0
Nervous System Disorders	1.3	3.0	3.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.2
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	0.5	0.8	2.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.1	-
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	3.8	3.6	5.1	4.2	3.9	4.7	7.6	15.9
Pregnancy Related Disorders	2.6	4.7	6.5	4.8	6.5	7.1	5.9	n/a
Skin Disorders	-	0.9	0.5	1.1	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.4
Substance Abuse	n/a	n/a	-	-	0.7	0.7	0.7	n/a
No Reason Specified	7.9	7.5	5.1	6.1	5.3	5.9	7.4	13.3
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Cells with small numbers of occurrences have been suppressed (-)

n/a: No cases recorded

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

3.4 Gender

Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses accounted for the largest proportion of the total working days lost among both males and females (28.5% and 31.6% respectively).

Table 4¹

Reason for Absence by Gender

Reason for Absence	% of Working Days Lost	
	Male	Female
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	28.5	31.6
Asthma	0.2	0.2
Back Problems	7.2	5.0
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	2.9	4.4
Blood Disorders	0.9	0.7
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	0.1	0.1
Chest and Respiratory Problems	4.0	2.8
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	8.3	5.7
Dental and Oral Problems	0.3	0.2
Ear, Nose, Throat	2.1	2.3
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	0.5	0.7
Eye Problems	1.0	0.7
Gastrointestinal Problems	8.0	6.5
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.0	4.7
Headache/Migraine	1.0	1.4
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	6.6	2.2
Infectious Diseases	0.5	0.3
Injury, Fracture	10.3	5.6
Nervous System Disorders	1.5	2.5
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	0.9	0.8
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	5.9	4.8
Pregnancy Related Disorders	n/a	9.9
Skin Disorders	0.8	0.6
Substance Abuse	0.8	0.3
No Reason Specified	6.9	6.1
Overall	100.0	100.0

n/a: No cases recorded

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

3.5 Age Group

Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses accounted for the largest proportion of working days lost in all age groups during 2010/2011. The second largest proportion for 25-34 year olds was accounted for by *Pregnancy Related Disorders* (15.5%).

Table 5¹

Reason for Absence by Age Group

Reason for Absence	% of Working Days Lost				
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	35.7	30.3	34.6	27.8	27.3
Asthma	-	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3
Back Problems	5.7	5.4	4.7	6.7	7.2
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	n/a	0.7	3.7	6.3	4.4
Blood Disorders	-	0.2	0.6	1.6	0.5
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Chest and Respiratory Problems	2.6	2.4	2.4	4.2	4.4
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	10.0	9.1	6.0	5.9	4.9
Dental and Oral Problems	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1
Ear, Nose, Throat	5.4	2.9	2.1	1.7	1.6
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.4	0.6
Eye Problems	0.9	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.6
Gastrointestinal Problems	9.8	7.9	7.4	6.6	5.7
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.7	1.9	3.1	4.7	2.2
Headache/Migraine	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.1	2.2
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	n/a	1.4	2.1	5.4	9.7
Infectious Diseases	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.9
Injury, Fracture	8.1	6.0	7.8	8.2	7.6
Nervous System Disorders	0.2	1.1	2.1	3.5	1.3
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	-	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.7
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	3.2	3.8	4.4	5.4	9.4
Pregnancy Related Disorders	8.3	15.5	7.3	0.1	n/a
Skin Disorders	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.9
Substance Abuse	n/a	0.1	0.9	0.7	0.2
No Reason Specified	5.2	5.8	6.5	6.5	7.2
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Cells with small numbers of occurrences have been suppressed (-)

n/a: No cases recorded

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

Chapter 4

Long-term Sickness Absence

4. Long-term Sickness Absence

4.1 Introduction

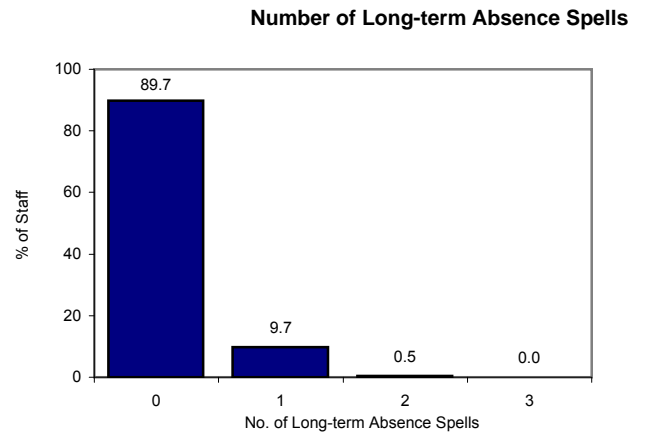
This chapter considers long-term absence, which is defined as any spell of absence lasting more than 20 consecutive working days in the 2010/2011 financial year. Supporting information can be found in Appendix 8.

4.2 Prevalence of Long-term Absence

A total of 2,812 staff (10.3%) in the NICS had one or more spell of long-term absence. This was the same proportion as in the previous year.

The 2,954 long-term absence spells recorded in 2010/2011 equate to a long-term Frequency Rate¹ of 10.8%. Long-term absences accounted for 71.0% of the total working days lost throughout the year and is equivalent to losing the work of over 800 full-time staff for the entire year.

Figure 11

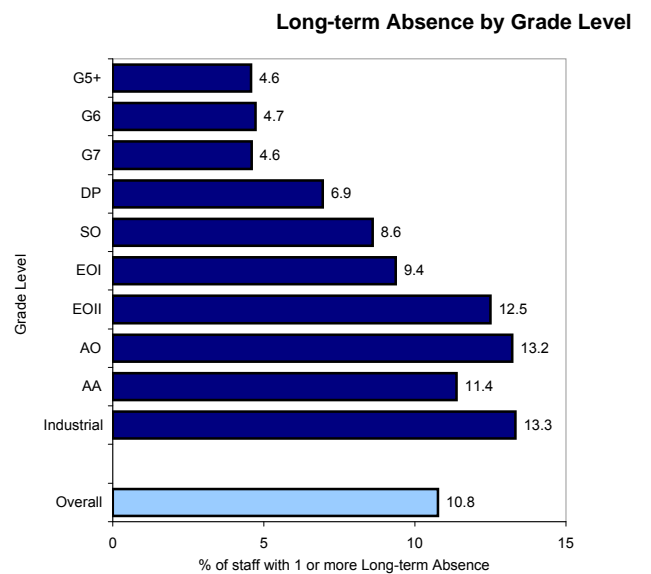


Number of Long-term Absences	Number of Staff	Percentage of Staff
0	24,612	89.7
1	2,672	9.7
2	138	0.5
3	2	0.0
Overall	27,424	100.0

4.3 Grade Level

In 2010/2011, the incidence of long-term absence was highest for Industrial staff where 13.3% of staff had one or more spell of long-term absence. Staff analogous to the AO grade level had a similar incidence level (13.2%).

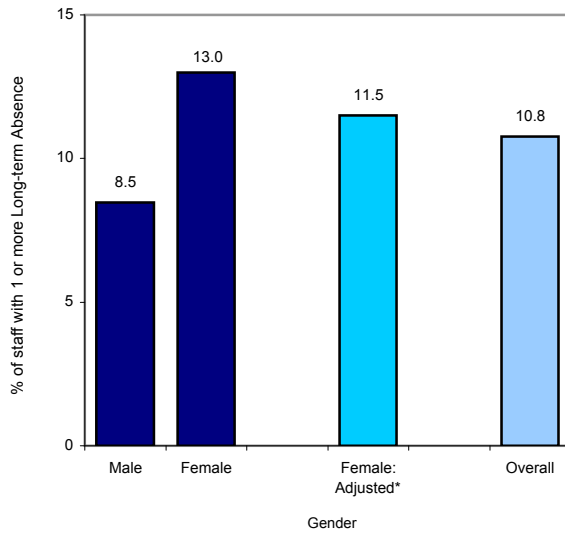
Figure 12



¹ Frequency Rate is the average number of long-term absences per employee, expressed as a percentage. (No of spells of long-term absence in the period/No of employees) x 100

Figure 13

Long-term Absence by Gender



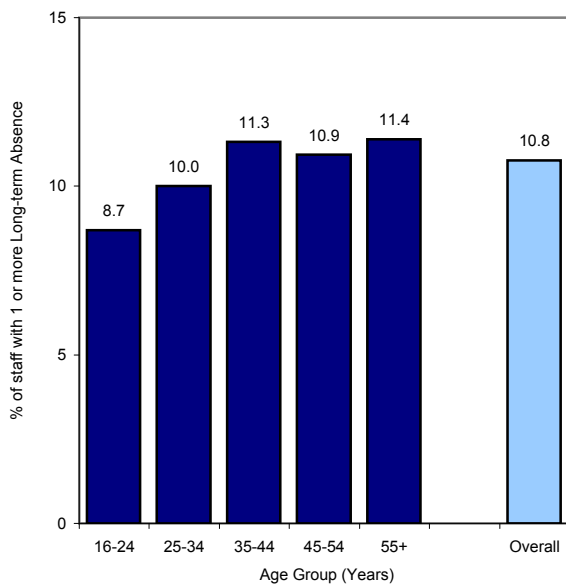
* Excludes absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders*

4.4 Gender

The proportion of female staff with one or more spell of long-term absence (13.0%) was significantly higher than the proportion of male staff (8.5%). When long-term absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders* were excluded, the proportion of females who had one or more spell of long-term absence (11.5%) still remained substantially higher than that of males.

Figure 14

Long-term Absence by Age Group



4.5 Age Group

The incidence of long-term absence was lowest in the 16-24 age group, with 8.7% of staff having one or more spell of long-term absence during 2010/2011. Staff aged 55+ were most likely to be absent on a long-term basis, with 11.4% having one or more spell of long-term absence.

4.6 Reason for Long-term Absence

Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses accounted for approximately two in every five (38.0%) long-term working days lost. *Injury, Fracture* (8.1%) and absences with *No Reason Specified* (6.4%) were the second and third largest contributors to long-term working days lost.

Table 6¹

Reason for Long-term Absence
(% of Long-term Working Days Lost)

Reason for Absence	% of Long-term Working Days Lost
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	38.0
Injury, Fracture	8.1
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	6.1
Back Problems	6.0
Pregnancy Related Disorders	5.3
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	5.0
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	5.0
Gastrointestinal Problems	4.5
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	3.4
Nervous System Disorders	2.7
Chest and Respiratory Problems	1.8
Headache/Migraine	1.0
Ear, Nose, Throat	1.0
Other	5.6
No Reason Specified	6.4
Overall	100.0

¹The category 'Other' contains any absence with a reason that is not shown elsewhere in the analysis. The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

**Chapter 5
Targets**

5. Targets

5.1 Introduction

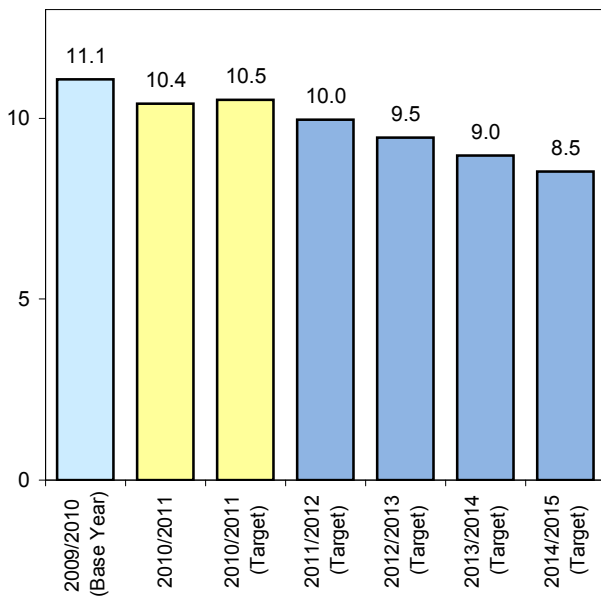
In 2010, Ministerial targets were agreed for an overall reduction in sickness absence within the NICS to 8.5 days lost per staff year by the end of the 2014/2015 financial year. This target appears in the Northern Ireland Executive's Draft Programme for Government 2011-2015 and reflects a 23% reduction from the 2009/2010 base year¹ figure of 11.1 days. It was agreed that Departmental targets, while differing in absolute terms, should be equally challenging.

This chapter charts how individual Departments, and the NICS overall, have progressed towards their targets.

¹ Targets were set based on the number and composition of staff in each of the NI Departments during 2009/2010 as, at the time of setting, this was the most recent information available. The base year figures for 2009/2010 were reworked to include industrial staff and to take account of the creation of the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

Figure 15¹

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year



5.2 Absence Targets - NICS Overall

The NICS achieved its overall absence target for 2010/2011, losing 10.4 working days per staff year against a target of 10.5 days. It did, however, just fail to meet its strategic target for the frequency of long-term² absences, achieving a Frequency Rate³ of 10.8% against a target of 10.7%.

The NICS also failed to meet its strategic target for the duration⁴ of long-term absences with an average duration of 61.7 days against a target of 59.5 days. There has been little change over the last five years in the duration of long-term absences.

Table 7

Frequency and Duration of Absence

		2009/2010 (Base Year) ¹	2010/2011	2010/2011 (Target)	2011/2012 (Target)	2012/2013 (Target)	2013/2014 (Target)	2014/2015 (Target)
Overall	Average days lost per staff year	11.1	10.4	10.5	10.0	9.5	9.0	8.5
Long-term ²	Frequency Rate ³ (%)	11.1	10.8	10.7	10.4	10.1	9.8	9.5
	Average Duration ⁴ (working days)	62.6	61.7	59.5	56.5	53.7	51.0	48.5

Note: **Green** text denotes target met
Red text denotes target not met

¹ Targets were set based on the number and composition of staff in each of the NI Departments during 2009/2010 as, at the time of setting, this was the most recent information available. The base year figures for 2009/2010 were reworked to include industrial staff and to take account of the creation of the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

² For the purpose of target-setting, absences are split into long-term and short-term, with long-term being defined as greater than 20 consecutive working days.

³ Frequency Rate is the average number of long-term spells per employee, expressed as a percentage.

⁴ Throughout this report, the duration of absence relates only to days lost in the corresponding financial year.

5.3 Days Lost per Staff Year by Department

Table 8 shows that the NICS achieved its overall target of 10.5 days lost per staff year. Five Departments, however, failed to meet their individual targets.

Table 8

Days Lost per Staff Year

	2009/2010 (Base Year) ¹	2010/2011		Target			
		Actual	Target	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
DARD	9.3	8.5	8.9	8.5	8.2	7.8	7.5
DCAL	6.5	7.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
DE	10.5	8.3	9.9	9.4	8.8	8.3	7.8
DEL	10.7	10.6	10.1	9.5	8.9	8.4	7.9
DETI	8.3	8.1	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.5
DFP	10.3	9.5	9.7	9.1	8.6	8.1	7.6
DHSSPS	9.4	8.5	9.0	8.6	8.2	7.8	7.5
DOE	10.1	9.2	9.5	9.0	8.5	8.0	7.5
DOJ	11.3 ²	11.0	10.6	10.0	9.4	8.9	8.4
DRD	8.2	8.5	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.5
DSD	14.4	13.4	13.6	12.8	12.1	11.4	10.7
OFMDFM	8.4	5.4	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.5
PPS	9.0 ²	10.2	8.7	8.4	8.1	7.8	7.5
Overall	11.1	10.4	10.5	10.0	9.5	9.0	8.5

Note: **Green** text denotes target met
Red text denotes target not met

¹ Targets were set based on the number and composition of staff in each of the NI Departments during 2009/2010 as, at the time of setting, this was the most recent information available. The base year figures for 2009/2010 were reworked to include industrial staff and to take account of the creation of the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

² The 2009/2010 absence information, for staff in areas that became part of the Department when it was established as an NICS Department on the 12th April 2010, was used to calculate the Base Year figure.

5.4 Long-term¹ Frequency²

The NICS just failed to meet its overall target for long-term Frequency Rate (10.8% compared with a target of 10.7%). At Departmental level, five of the 13 Departments met their individual target.

Table 9

Long-term Frequency

	2009/2010 (Base Year) ³	2010/2011		Target			
		Actual	Target	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
DARD	9.3	9.2	9.0	8.8	8.5	8.2	8.0
DCAL	7.0	8.7	6.8	6.6	6.4	6.2	6.0
DE	10.7	8.7	10.4	10.0	9.7	9.4	9.2
DEL	10.3	11.2	10.0	9.7	9.4	9.1	8.9
DETI	8.8	8.4	8.6	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.6
DFFP	10.0	9.9	9.7	9.4	9.1	8.8	8.6
DHSSPS	9.4	7.9	9.1	8.9	8.6	8.3	8.1
DOE	9.3	9.5	9.0	8.7	8.5	8.2	8.0
DOJ	12.5 ⁴	12.2	12.1	11.8	11.4	11.1	10.8
DRD	8.4	8.6	8.2	7.9	7.7	7.4	7.2
DSD	14.3	13.5	13.9	13.5	13.1	12.7	12.3
OFMDFM	7.7	5.5	7.4	7.2	7.0	6.8	6.6
PPS	8.9 ⁴	10.2	8.6	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.6
Overall	11.1	10.8	10.7	10.4	10.1	9.8	9.5

Note: **Green** text denotes target met
Red text denotes target not met

¹ For the purpose of target-setting, absences are split into long-term and short-term, with long-term being defined as greater than 20 consecutive working days.

² Frequency Rate is the average number of Long-term spells per employee, expressed as a percentage.

³ Targets were set based on the number and composition of staff in each of the NI Departments during 2009/2010 as, at the time of setting, this was the most recent information available. The base year figures for 2009/2010 were reworked to include industrial staff and to take account of the creation of the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

⁴ The 2009/2010 absence information, for staff in areas that became part of the Department when it was established as an NICS Department on the 12th April 2010, was used to calculate the Base Year figure.

5.5 Long-term¹ Duration²

Six Departments achieved their individual target for the duration of long-term absence, although the overall NICS target of 59.5 days (actual 61.7 days) was missed.

Table 10

Long-term Duration

	2009/2010 (Base Year) ³	2010/2011		Target			
		Actual	Target	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
DARD	68.5	64.5	65.1	61.8	58.7	55.8	53.0
DCAL	47.5	52.7	45.1	42.8	40.7	38.7	36.7
DE	64.7	54.0	61.5	58.4	55.5	52.7	50.1
DEL	62.7	59.5	59.6	56.6	53.8	51.1	48.5
DETI	57.2	59.0	54.3	51.6	49.0	46.6	44.2
DFP	61.9	58.9	58.8	55.8	53.0	50.4	47.9
DHSSPS	62.9	65.2	59.8	56.8	54.0	51.3	48.7
DOE	73.0	64.6	69.4	65.9	62.6	59.5	56.5
DOJ	53.7 ⁴	57.3	51.0	48.5	46.1	43.8	41.6
DRD	63.9	67.8	60.7	57.7	54.8	52.1	49.5
DSD	61.6	62.0	58.5	55.6	52.8	50.1	47.6
OFMDFM	72.5	61.1	68.9	65.5	62.2	59.1	56.1
PPS	59.4 ⁴	55.9	56.5	53.7	51.0	48.4	46.0
Overall	62.6	61.7	59.5	56.5	53.7	51.0	48.5

Note: **Green** text denotes target met
Red text denotes target not met

¹ For the purpose of target-setting, absences are split into long-term and short-term, with long-term being defined as greater than 20 consecutive working days.

² Throughout this report, the duration of absence relates only to days lost in the corresponding financial year.

³ Targets were set based on the number and composition of staff in each of the NI Departments during 2009/2010 as, at the time of setting, this was the most recent information available. The base year figures for 2009/2010 were reworked to include industrial staff and to take account of the creation of the Department of Justice and the Public Prosecution Service.

⁴ The 2009/2010 absence information, for staff in areas that became part of the Department when it was established as an NICS Department on the 12th April 2010, was used to calculate the Base Year figure.

**Appendix 1
Data Quality**

Data Quality

Relevance

This report covers sickness absences during the 2010/2011 financial year that were recorded on HRConnect (the HR system used by the NICS) for industrial and non-industrial staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The report also includes sickness absence information for the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (taken from their CYBORG-HRMS system) and the Youth Justice Agency (taken from their Simply Personnel system) which are component parts of the Department of Justice. This report does not include sickness absence information for the Northern Ireland Prison Service as sufficient information on this group of staff was not available in time to meet the publication deadline.

Absence information is presented by Department, Grade Level, Gender, Age Group, Length of Service and Reason for Absence. Some comparisons with figures for the last five years are also included along with progress against relevant sickness absence targets.

Accuracy

Sickness absence records for all staff held on HRConnect were extracted eleven weeks after the end of the financial year reporting period; this allowed for the updating of absence records and personnel moves. Absence records for staff in NICTS and YJA were extracted on a monthly basis a week after the end of each month of the 2010/2011 financial year.

Users should note that some figures may not add to the totals due to rounding.

Timeliness and Punctuality

The report relates to the 2010/2011 financial year and was published on 2nd December 2011. It had been planned to publish in October 2011 but this was delayed for a number of reasons: the late receipt (June 2011) of suitable data extracts from the HRConnect system; the implementation of a more rigorous and extensive validation process due to a new data extraction process and the need to integrate absences that were recorded on the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service and Youth Justice Agency HR systems; and work associated with the inclusion of sickness absence information for the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Accessibility and Clarity

No issues relating to accessibility or clarity were received during a stakeholder consultation process in November 2009. The report contains contact details for further information and is available to download through the NISRA website.

Coherence and Comparability

Prior to 2010/2011 industrial staff were not included in the analyses, nor were staff in the Department of Justice or the Public Prosecution Service. Historic figures are therefore not directly comparable with the analyses for 2010/2011.

Also, analyses prior to 2008/2009 were based on data extracted from HRMS (the previous HR system used by the NICS). Sickness absence information was entered onto this system by Departmental HR staff based on manually completed weekly sick returns. Under the new system it is the responsibility of line managers to record sickness absence information on HRConnect.

This change in recording practices coincided with a substantial increase in the proportion of staff with no absences and should be taken into consideration when analysing historical trends.

The recording of the reason for absence changed in 2008/2009 from using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) codes to the Sickness Absence Recording Tool (SART) codes. These were developed by the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) for the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Trend data relating to the reason for absence is therefore not available prior to 2008/2009.

Trade-offs between Output Quality and Components

No trade-offs applied.

Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions

A user consultation undertaken in November 2009 received positive feedback to the annual publication. A request for the report to include analyses by disability was not able to be met at this time.

Appendix 1**Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden**

There is no respondent burden since the data are held on an administrative system and extracted using an automated process.

Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

Suppression is applied where the number of cases in a cell is less than three. Suppression is also applied, where necessary, to the next lowest valued cell in order that identification by subtraction is not possible.

Data are held on a network that is only accessible to the few statisticians who need access. Printouts containing individual records or small cell sizes are locked away and shredded as soon as possible.

Appendix 2 Calculations

Calculations

Absence levels are presented in a number of ways throughout the report and are defined as follows:

$$\text{\% of Available Working Days Lost} = \frac{\text{Number of Working Days Lost}}{\text{Number of Available Working Days}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Working Days Lost per Staff Year} = \frac{\text{Number of Working Days Lost}}{\text{Number of Staff Years}}$$

$$\text{Spells per Staff Year} = \frac{\text{Number of Absence Spells}}{\text{Number of Staff Years}}$$

The "Working days lost per staff year" approach was recommended by the Cabinet Office in the review *"Managing Attendance in the Public Sector (1999)"*. This approach replaced 'working days lost per person' which does not always permit valid comparisons to be made between or within organisations that differ in their proportions of part-time staff and/or their levels of staff turnover. In particular, it can misrepresent the absence rate in organisations that have a high proportion of part-time staff and/or high levels of staff turnover. For the majority of people, a staff year is approximately 224 working days, but clearly this depends on date of entry and/or date of leaving, and annual leave entitlement which varies by grade, length of service, and work pattern. For each individual a 'staff year' was therefore calculated taking all of these factors into account. The following simple example highlights the rationale for the methodology used by the Cabinet Office.

Example

There are 2 members of staff **A** and **B**.

A. Worked Full-time all year (hence 1 staff year), and

B. Worked Full-time for ½ year (hence ½ staff year)

If **A** was absent for 20 working days and **B** was absent for 10 working days, then the number of working days lost per staff year are calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total Number of working days lost} &= 30 \\ \text{Total Number of Staff Years} &= 1 + 0.5 = 1.5 \\ \text{Working Days Lost per Staff Year} &= \frac{30}{1.5} = 20 \end{aligned}$$

According to the other approach, the number of days lost per person would be:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total Number of working days lost} &= 30 \\ \text{Total Number of People} &= 2 \\ \text{Working Days Lost per Person} &= \frac{30}{2} = 15 \end{aligned}$$

which overlooks the fact that one of the staff was only employed for six months.

Appendix 3
Tables Relating to Chapter 1

Tables Relating to Chapter 1

Table 1: Distribution of Working Days Lost

Cumulative Number of Working Days Lost	% of Staff
0	51.5
1-5	23.9
6-10	8.1
11-15	3.1
16-20	2.1
More than 20	11.3

Table 2: Absence Levels by Occupational Grouping

Occupational Groupings with more than 200 staff

Occupational Grouping	Days Lost per Staff Year
Industrial	11.8
General Service	11.6
Typists	11.4
Support Grade Staff	9.6
Driving Examiners	9.0
Other	8.2
Drawing Officers	8.0
Scientific Officers	7.9
Statisticians	6.6
Planning	6.2
Agricultural Inspectors	6.0
Computing	5.8
Casual	5.8
Civil Eng (inc assistants)	4.6

Appendix 3

Table 3: Certification by Department

Department	No. of Days Lost per Staff Year			% of Available Working Days Lost		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
DARD	1.4	6.6	8.5	0.7	3.0	3.9
DCAL	1.6	5.6	7.5	0.7	2.5	3.4
DE	1.8	5.9	8.3	0.8	2.7	3.8
DEL	3.2	6.8	10.6	1.4	3.1	4.8
DETI	1.5	6.2	8.1	0.7	2.8	3.7
DFP	2.4	6.7	9.5	1.1	3.1	4.3
DHSSPS	1.7	6.0	8.5	0.8	2.7	3.8
DOE	2.0	6.4	9.2	0.9	2.9	4.2
DOJ	1.7	9.1	11.0	0.8	4.1	5.0
DRD	2.0	5.6	8.5	0.9	2.6	3.9
DSD	3.7	8.3	13.4	1.7	3.8	6.1
OFMDFM	1.0	4.3	5.4	0.5	1.9	2.4
PPS	1.6	8.2	10.2	0.7	3.7	4.6
Overall	2.5	7.1	10.4	1.1	3.2	4.7

Table 4: Certification by Grade Level

Grade Level	No. of Days Lost per Staff Year			% of Available Working Days Lost		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
G5+	0.3	5.1	5.5	0.1	2.3	2.4
G6	0.3	3.5	3.8	0.1	1.5	1.7
G7	0.8	3.8	4.7	0.4	1.7	2.1
DP	1.3	5.1	6.7	0.6	2.3	3.0
SO	1.4	5.6	7.6	0.7	2.5	3.4
EOI	2.3	6.6	9.5	1.0	3.0	4.3
EOII	2.8	7.7	11.3	1.3	3.5	5.2
AO	3.4	8.8	13.2	1.5	4.0	6.0
AA	3.5	7.9	12.5	1.6	3.5	5.6
Industrials	2.4	8.1	11.8	1.1	3.7	5.4
Overall	2.5	7.1	10.4	1.1	3.2	4.7

Table 5: Certification by Gender

Gender	No. of Days Lost per Staff Year			% of Available Working Days Lost		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
Male	2.0	5.4	8.1	0.9	2.4	3.7
Female	3.0	9.0	12.9	1.3	4.1	5.8
Overall	2.5	7.1	10.4	1.1	3.2	4.7

Table 6: Certification by Age Group

Age Group	No. of Days Lost per Staff Year			% of Available Working Days Lost		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
16-24	3.2	6.0	9.9	1.4	2.6	4.4
25-34	2.9	6.4	10.0	1.3	2.9	4.5
35-44	2.5	7.2	10.7	1.2	3.3	4.8
45-54	2.1	7.3	10.2	1.0	3.3	4.6
55+	2.2	8.2	11.2	1.0	3.7	5.1
Overall	2.5	7.1	10.4	1.1	3.2	4.7

Appendix 3

Table 7: % of Available Working Days Lost by Department

Department	% of Available Working Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
DARD	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.5	3.9	3.9
DCAL	4.6	4.8	5.2	3.3	3.1	3.4
DE	5.8	5.5	5.4	4.1	4.7	3.8
DEL	6.2	6.6	6.2	5.0	4.8	4.8
DETI	4.8	4.5	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.7
DFP	5.8	5.6	5.2	4.9	4.6	4.3
DHSSPS	4.8	5.1	4.7	3.6	4.2	3.8
DOE	5.0	5.2	5.0	4.3	4.4	4.2
DOJ	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.0
DRD	3.7	4.2	4.1	3.6	3.0	3.9
DSD	8.1	8.4	7.6	6.5	6.5	6.1
OFMDFM	3.8	4.8	4.4	3.1	3.4	2.4
PPS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.6
Overall	6.0	6.2	5.8	4.9	4.9	4.7

Table 8: % of Available Working Days Lost by Grade Level

Grade Level	% of Available Working Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
G5+	1.8	1.8	1.4	2.2	1.6	2.4
G6	2.6	2.1	2.1	1.6	0.9	1.7
G7	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.1	2.2	2.1
DP	3.7	3.6	3.4	2.8	3.0	3.0
SO	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.4	3.2	3.4
EOI	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.0	4.2	4.3
EOII	6.9	6.9	6.5	5.3	5.6	5.2
AO	7.9	8.5	7.9	6.7	6.7	6.0
AA	7.0	7.9	7.1	6.5	6.1	5.6
Industrial	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.4
Overall	6.0	6.2	5.8	4.9	4.9	4.7

Table 9: % of Available Working Days Lost by Gender

Gender	% of Available Working Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Male	4.1	4.4	4.2	3.5	3.5	3.7
Female	7.8	8.0	7.5	6.4	6.4	5.8
Overall	6.0	6.2	5.8	4.9	4.9	4.7

Table 10: % of Available Working Days Lost by Age Group

Age Group	% of Available Working Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
16-24	5.8	6.3	5.7	4.6	5.1	4.4
25-34	6.1	6.7	6.2	5.2	5.0	4.5
35-44	5.9	5.8	5.6	4.6	4.8	4.8
45-54	5.6	5.8	5.4	4.8	4.9	4.6
55+	7.0	6.9	6.8	5.7	5.1	5.1
Overall	6.0	6.2	5.8	4.9	4.9	4.7

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

Appendix 3

Table 11: Working Days Lost by Department for Female Staff at AO Grade Level

Department	No. of Days Lost per Staff Year
DSD	17.8
DFP	16.1
DEL	15.1
DARD	13.0
DOJ	12.6
DOE	12.4
DHSSPS	11.4
DE	11.1
DRD	10.7
DCAL	9.9
PPS	9.6
DETI	8.6
OFMDFM	5.4
Overall	15.1

Appendix 4
Seasonal Effects on the Onset of Absence

Seasonal Effects on the Onset of Absence

The following tables examine seasonal effects on the onset of sickness absence during the financial year 2010/2011.

Table 1: Onset of Absence by Month

Month	% of Spells Starting in Month		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
April	6.8	8.2	7.2
May	7.0	7.4	7.1
June	7.5	8.8	7.8
July	4.7	6.1	5.1
August	6.5	7.4	6.7
September	8.5	8.0	8.3
October	9.1	9.5	9.2
November	11.1	10.6	11.0
December	11.4	8.4	10.7
January	10.9	10.7	10.8
February	8.2	8.1	8.0
March	8.4	7.0	8.0

Table 2: Onset of Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses by Month

Month	% of Spells Starting in Month
April	9.3
May	7.7
June	10.6
July	7.1
August	7.6
September	8.4
October	9.1
November	9.4
December	5.6
January	9.6
February	8.0
March	7.6

Table 3: Onset of Absence by Weekday

Weekday	% of Spells Starting on Weekday		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
Sunday	0.1	0.4	0.2
Monday ¹	33.3	33.6	33.2
Tuesday	23.2	20.7	22.6
Wednesday	18.8	18.7	18.8
Thursday	15.4	16.0	15.7
Friday	9.0	10.1	9.3
Saturday	0.2	0.4	0.2

¹ It should be noted that absences that actually started on a Saturday or Sunday, and then continued into the working week, may have been recorded as if they had started on a Monday.

Appendix 5
Illustrative Standardised Departmental Absence Levels

Illustrative Standardised Departmental Absence Levels

The following figures show the extent to which a Department's staffing profile can influence its overall absence level. In Figures 1 and 2 below, the staffing profile of each Department has been standardised by grade level, gender and age group to that of DFP.

Figure 1: Working Days Lost Per Staff Year

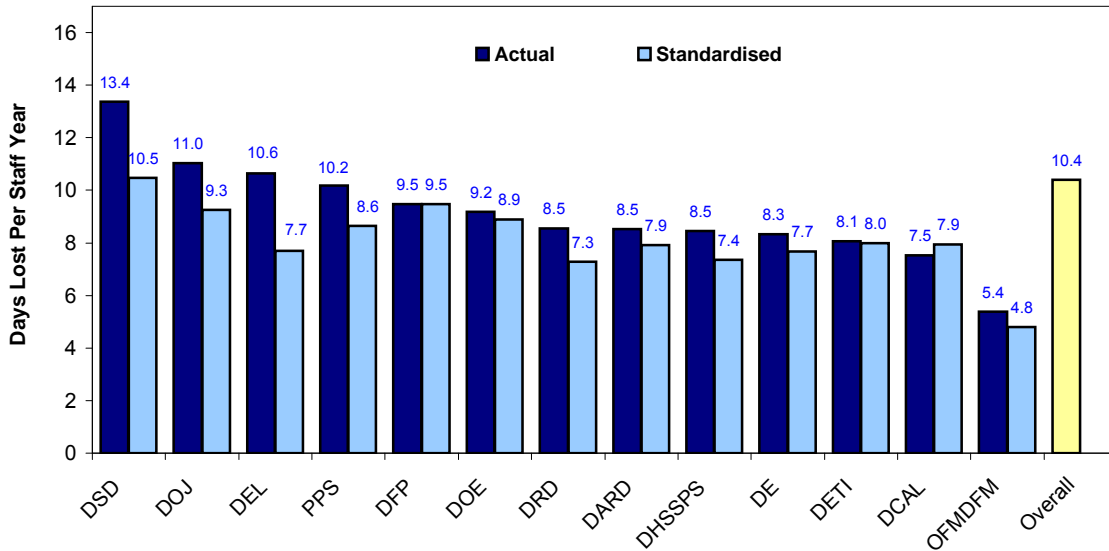
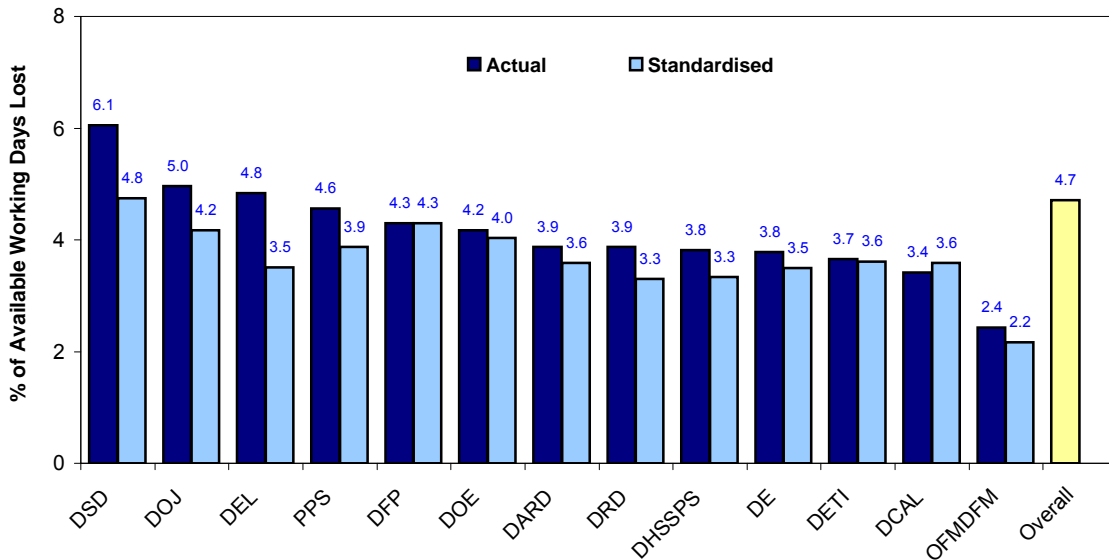


Figure 2: % of Available Working Days Lost



Appendix 6
Tables Relating to Chapter 2

Tables Relating to Chapter 2

Table 1: Average Duration and Number of Spells by Certification and Grade Level

Grade Level	Self-Certified Absences		Certified Absences		Overall	
	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)
G5+	0.1	2.2	0.1	45.9	0.3	20.5
G6	0.1	2.3	0.1	36.9	0.2	16.9
G7	0.2	3.5	0.1	34.4	0.4	13.1
DP	0.3	4.0	0.2	32.1	0.5	12.9
SO	0.4	3.8	0.2	34.5	0.6	12.9
EOI	0.4	5.8	0.2	36.0	0.6	14.9
EOII	0.6	4.8	0.2	35.5	0.9	12.8
AO	0.7	4.6	0.3	32.7	1.1	12.0
AA	0.7	4.9	0.2	33.2	1.0	11.9
Industrial	0.3	7.2	0.2	39.6	0.6	19.3
Overall	0.5	4.7	0.2	34.2	0.8	12.9

Table 2: Average Duration and Number of Spells by Certification and Gender

Gender	Self-Certified Absences		Certified Absences		Overall	
	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)
Male	0.5	4.4	0.2	35.7	0.7	12.1
Female	0.6	4.9	0.3	33.3	1.0	13.5
Overall	0.5	4.7	0.2	34.2	0.8	12.9

Table 3: Average Duration and Number of Spells by Certification and Age Group

Age Group	Self-Certified Absences		Certified Absences		Overall	
	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)	No. of Spells per Staff Year	Average Duration (Working Days)
16-24	1.0	3.3	0.2	28.2	1.3	7.5
25-34	0.8	3.9	0.2	28.3	1.1	9.3
35-44	0.5	5.0	0.2	33.9	0.8	13.4
45-54	0.4	5.4	0.2	38.2	0.6	15.9
55+	0.3	6.5	0.2	39.2	0.6	18.8
Overall	0.5	4.7	0.2	34.2	0.8	12.9

Appendix 6

Table 4: Number of Absence Spells - % of Staff

Number of Absence Spells	% of Staff					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
0	41.0	40.7	43.1	49.8	50.1	51.5
1	31.7	32.7	32.8	31.9	31.6	31.7
2	17.0	17.3	15.7	12.9	12.6	12.1
3	6.3	6.0	5.4	3.7	4.0	3.3
4	2.3	1.9	1.6	1.0	1.0	0.8
5	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.3
6+	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3

Table 5: Duration of Absence Spells - % of Spells

Duration of Absence Spells (Working Days)	% of Spells					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
1-2	39.2	37.1	37.2	34.5	33.0	32.4
3-5	33.8	34.7	35.7	36.5	37.5	37.6
6-10	7.7	7.4	7.1	7.7	8.5	7.8
11-20	6.9	7.1	6.9	7.1	6.9	7.4
More than 20	12.5	13.5	13.1	14.2	14.1	14.8

Table 6: Average Duration of Short-term Absence Spells - Working Days

Department	Days					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
DARD	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.6	4.5
DCAL	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.1
DE	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.3	4.4
DEL	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5
DETI	3.8	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.2	4.1
DFP	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.4	4.2
DHSSPS	3.6	3.7	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.3
DOE	4.1	4.1	3.8	3.9	4.4	4.5
DOJ	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.1
DRD	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.5	4.6
DSD	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4
OFMDFM	3.4	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0
PPS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.2
Overall	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.4

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

Appendix 7
Tables Relating to Chapter 3

Tables Relating to Chapter 3

Table 1: Certification by Reason¹

Reason	% of Available Working Days Lost		
	Self-Certified	Certified	Overall
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	0.1	1.2	1.4
Asthma	0.0	0.0	0.0
Back Problems	0.1	0.2	0.3
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	0.0	0.2	0.2
Blood Disorders	0.0	0.0	0.0
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	0.0	0.0	0.0
Chest and Respiratory Problems	0.1	0.1	0.2
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	0.2	0.1	0.3
Dental and Oral Problems	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ear, Nose, Throat	0.0	0.0	0.1
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	0.0	0.0	0.0
Eye Problems	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gastrointestinal Problems	0.2	0.1	0.3
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	0.0	0.1	0.1
Headache/Migraine	0.0	0.0	0.1
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	0.0	0.2	0.2
Infectious Diseases	0.0	0.0	0.0
Injury, Fracture	0.1	0.3	0.4
Nervous System Disorders	0.0	0.1	0.1
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	0.0	0.2	0.2
Pregnancy Related Disorders	0.1	0.2	0.3
Skin Disorders	0.0	0.0	0.0
Substance Abuse	0.0	0.0	0.0
No Reason Specified	0.1	0.1	0.3
Overall	1.1	3.2	4.7

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

Appendix 7

Table 2: % of Absence Spells by Reason¹

Reason	% of Spells		
	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	8.0	9.3	10.2
Asthma	0.4	0.3	0.3
Back Problems	3.6	3.9	4.9
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	0.5	0.6	0.8
Blood Disorders	0.4	0.5	0.4
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	0.2	0.2	0.2
Chest and Respiratory Problems	5.1	4.4	5.3
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	24.2	27.4	23.6
Dental and Oral Problems	0.8	0.8	0.9
Ear, Nose, Throat	3.4	4.7	4.6
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	0.4	0.5	0.4
Eye Problems	0.7	0.8	0.9
Gastrointestinal Problems	16.4	17.9	18.5
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.5	2.0	2.3
Headache/Migraine	2.6	3.2	2.9
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	1.1	1.1	1.4
Infectious Diseases	2.9	0.6	0.5
Injury, Fracture	4.6	4.1	4.6
Nervous System Disorders	0.6	0.7	0.8
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	n/a	n/a	0.6
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	1.7	2.5	3.0
Pregnancy Related Disorders	6.1	7.1	6.3
Skin Disorders	0.5	0.6	0.6
Substance Abuse	0.1	0.1	0.2
No Reason Specified	14.4	6.7	5.8
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

Appendix 7

Table 3: % of Working Days Lost by Reason¹

Reason	% of Working Days Lost		
	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	26.7	30.5	30.4
Asthma	0.4	0.3	0.2
Back Problems	4.1	4.7	5.9
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	2.6	3.7	3.8
Blood Disorders	1.0	1.2	0.8
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	0.1	0.1	0.1
Chest and Respiratory Problems	2.8	3.2	3.3
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	7.1	9.3	6.7
Dental and Oral Problems	0.2	0.2	0.2
Ear, Nose, Throat	1.7	2.4	2.2
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	0.8	0.5	0.6
Eye Problems	0.6	0.9	0.8
Gastrointestinal Problems	6.1	7.5	7.1
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.6	2.8	3.2
Headache/Migraine	0.9	1.1	1.3
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	3.0	3.0	4.0
Infectious Diseases	1.5	0.4	0.4
Injury, Fracture	6.4	6.0	7.5
Nervous System Disorders	1.1	1.7	2.1
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	n/a	n/a	0.8
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	2.8	4.4	5.3
Pregnancy Related Disorders	7.9	6.8	5.9
Skin Disorders	0.5	0.7	0.6
Substance Abuse	0.3	0.3	0.5
No Reason Specified	20.0	8.3	6.4
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

Appendix 8
Tables Relating to Chapter 4

Tables Relating to Chapter 4

Table 1: Long-term Absence by Grade Level

Grade Level	Long-term Absence		
	No. of Spells per 100 Staff Years	Average Duration (Working Days)	% of the Total Working Days Lost attributable to Long-term Absence
G5+	4.9	85.6	77.5
G6	4.9	65.7	84.2
G7	5.0	66.3	69.3
DP	7.5	63.6	71.4
SO	9.2	59.4	72.1
EOI	10.0	69.6	73.7
EOII	13.8	59.0	71.6
AO	15.1	60.0	68.4
AA	14.4	61.1	70.4
Industrial	14.0	66.9	79.0
Overall	12.0	61.7	71.0

Table 2: Long-term Absence by Gender

Gender	Long-term Absence		
	No. of Spells per 100 Staff Years	Average Duration (Working Days)	% of the Total Working Days Lost attributable to Long-term Absence
Male	8.9	63.2	69.6
Female	15.2	60.7	71.9
Overall	12.0	61.7	71.0

Table 3: Long-term Absence by Age Group

Age Group	Long-term Absence		
	No. of Spells per 100 Staff Years	Average Duration (Working Days)	% of the Total Working Days Lost attributable to Long-term Absence
16-24	10.8	49.5	53.8
25-34	11.3	53.4	60.5
35-44	12.7	60.6	72.0
45-54	11.7	66.1	76.0
55+	12.7	70.3	79.4
Overall	12.0	61.7	71.0

Appendix 8

Table 4: Long-term Absence by Grade Level

Grade	% of Long-term Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
G5+	61.9	66.2	51.7	78.2	77.1	77.5
G6	72.9	55.8	70.3	74.3	61.9	84.2
G7	66.2	60.5	66.6	63.3	72.3	69.3
DP	67.7	65.9	64.7	66.7	71.4	71.4
SO	65.6	67.1	65.1	68.0	68.0	72.1
EOI	65.3	63.8	67.2	70.4	71.3	73.7
EOII	72.9	71.1	72.0	69.3	70.4	71.6
AO	68.9	71.6	71.2	71.9	69.8	68.4
AA	66.1	69.0	67.9	73.1	68.5	70.4
Industrial	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	79.0
Overall	68.4	69.3	69.4	70.6	70.0	71.0

Table 5: Long-term Absence by Gender

Gender	% of Long-term Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Male	62.7	65.1	65.7	66.4	65.4	69.6
Female	71.4	71.7	71.6	72.9	72.6	71.9
Overall	68.4	69.3	69.4	70.6	70.0	71.0

Table 6: Long-term Absence by Age Group

Age Group	% of Long-term Days Lost					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
16 - 24	55.4	58.8	60.7	55.2	56.0	53.8
25 - 34	64.7	67.1	66.0	65.9	61.5	60.5
35 - 44	69.9	70.0	69.8	69.4	70.2	72.0
45 - 54	73.4	72.8	71.6	75.6	76.3	76.0
55+	76.0	75.4	78.0	81.4	78.5	79.4
Overall	68.4	69.3	69.4	70.6	70.0	71.0

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

Appendix 8

Table 7: Long-term Absence by Reason¹

Reason	% of Long-term Working Days Lost		
	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses	34.2	39.5	38.0
Asthma	0.3	0.4	-
Back Problems	4.1	4.6	6.0
Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers	3.5	5.1	5.0
Blood Disorders	1.2	1.4	0.9
Burns, Poisoning, Frostbite, Hypothermia	-	-	-
Chest and Respiratory Problems	1.3	2.3	1.8
Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza	0.9	1.5	0.7
Dental and Oral Problems	-	-	n/a
Ear, Nose, Throat	0.8	1.2	1.0
Endocrine/Glandular Problems	1.0	0.5	0.7
Eye Problems	0.5	1.0	0.8
Gastrointestinal Problems	3.6	5.0	4.5
Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders	1.6	3.0	3.4
Headache/Migraine	0.7	0.7	1.0
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	3.8	3.8	5.0
Infectious Diseases	0.9	0.2	0.2
Injury, Fracture	6.8	6.6	8.1
Nervous System Disorders	1.4	2.2	2.7
Other Known Causes - Not Elsewhere Classified	n/a	n/a	0.9
Other Musculoskeletal Problems	3.1	5.1	6.1
Pregnancy Related Disorders	8.2	6.3	5.3
Skin Disorders	0.4	0.6	0.6
Substance Abuse	0.3	0.3	0.7
No Reason Specified	21.3	8.7	6.4
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: **Green** text denotes a reduction from the previous financial year
Red text denotes an increase from the previous financial year

Cells with small numbers of occurrences have been suppressed (-)

n/a: No cases recorded

¹ The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

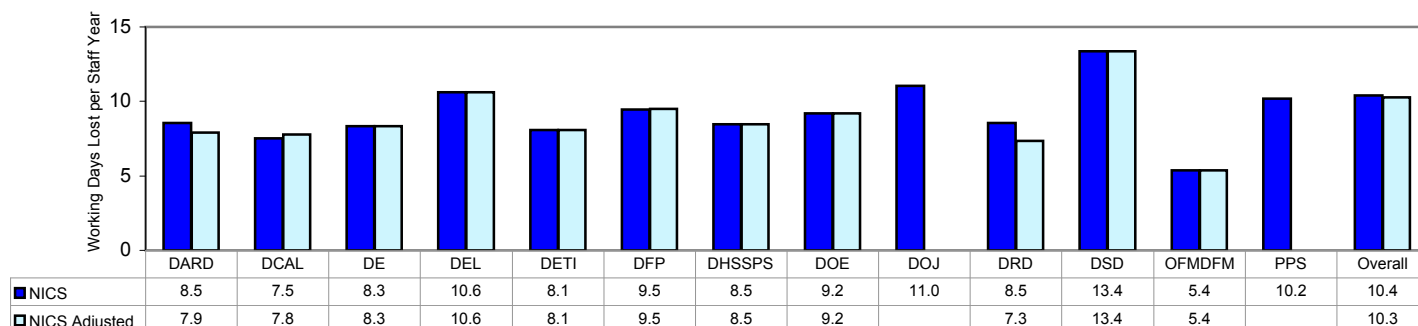
Appendix 9
Impact of including DOJ, PPS and Industrial staff in the
NICS Sickness Absence figures

Impact of including DOJ, PPS and Industrial Staff in the NICS Sickness Absence figures

Key Facts

	NICS	NICS Adjusted ¹
Proportion of Staff with No Recorded Spells of Absence	51.5%	51.4%
Working Days Lost per Staff Year	10.4	10.3
Percentage of Available Working Days Lost	4.7%	4.7%
Total Number of Working Days Lost	256,663	218,962
Estimated Lost Production² (£ Million)	25.5	21.9
Average Number of Spells per Staff Year	0.8	0.8
Proportion of Working Days Lost by Certification³		
Certified	68.5%	67.0%
Self-Certified	23.8%	25.0%
Long-term Absence		
Proportion of Working Days Lost due to Long-term Absence	71.0%	70.6%
Frequency Rate ⁴	10.8%	10.5%
Average Duration (Working Days)	61.7	61.9
Short-term Absence		
Average Number of Spells per Staff Year	0.69	0.69

Average Number of Working Days Lost per Staff Year by Department



¹ Adjusted figures exclude Department of Justice, Public Prosecution Service and Industrial staff.

² Any information provided in this report that relates to lost production, is calculated where possible on the basis of each individual's actual salary.

³ Since moving to HRConnect in 2008/2009, the proportion of working days lost by certification shown here may not sum to 100%. This is due to absence spells which were uncertified or for which the certification type was missing.

⁴ Frequency Rate is the average number of long-term spells per employee, expressed as a percentage. (No of spells of long-term absence in the period/No of employees) x 100

Appendix 10
List of Abbreviations

List of Abbreviations

List of Abbreviations

AA	Administrative Assistant
AO	Administrative Officer
AOCC	Assembly Ombudsman Commissioner for Complaints
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DOE	Department of the Environment
DOJ	Department of Justice
DP	Deputy Principal
DRD	Department for Regional Development
DSD	Department for Social Development
EOI	Executive Officer I
EOII	Executive Officer II
G5+	Grade 5 and above
G6	Grade 6
G7	Grade 7
G7+	Grade 7 and above
HR	Human Resources
HSENI	Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland
NI	Northern Ireland
NIAUR	Northern Ireland Authority for Utilities Regulation
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NICTS	Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OAGNI	Office of the Attorney General Northern Ireland
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PPS	Public Prosecution Service
SO	Staff Officer
YJA	Youth Justice Agency