



uality

in
Corporate
Planning

1993



NRA Southern Region



NRA

*National Rivers Authority
Southern Region*

20 January 1993

MEMORANDUM

To:

Management Team

The Library

cc Howard Pearce, Corporate Planning, Bristol
Alan Gordon, QA Controller

Corporate Planning Southern Region

Quality Manual

Please find attached a copy of a document prepared by Corporate Planning on the section's work and 'quality assurance'.

Each task is outlined according to the following sub headings:

- Introduction
- Description
- Instructions
- Standards
- Distribution
- Review process.

We hope that you will find it of interest and would welcome any comments.

Paul Batty
Corporate Planning Officer

QUALITY ASSURANCE MANUAL - CORPORATE PLANNING

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Planning section's main responsibilities are to:

1. Produce the Regional Plan
2. Monitor and review its progress
3. Provide an information service to Management and staff in respect of the above.

Through Corporate Planning, the Region sets out its priorities and targets and hence is able to deploy resources efficiently and effectively.

The Regional Plan provides a point of reference about which any changes can be managed in the light of events arising throughout the period of implementation. Hence it gives the Region direction.

The following document outlines the procedures the Corporate Planning section employs to:

Contribute to the national Corporate Plan, communicate the Regional Plan to staff, take stock of past and present progress, make comparisons with other Regions and co-ordinate regional statistics.

The Corporate Planning section is committed to providing managers and staff with a quality service. Any ideas on how the section's service might be improved are always welcome. Good communication is critical to the success of Corporate Planning.

The Corporate Planning section is well equipped to take on a wide range of non-specialist tasks. If you feel that you may require services that are outside the scope of this manual, then please contact us.

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2. CORPORATE/REGIONAL PLAN

2.1 Introduction

The Corporate Plan is produced annually by Head Office and incorporates input from Regional Plans. The Corporate Plan sets out the NRA's aims, objectives, targets and resource requirements. It focuses on the 'budget' year and subsequent 'plan' year and takes a broad look at 2 years beyond. The Plan has to satisfy government, public and internal NRA Management and staff requirements.

To satisfy the needs of the Region, a Regional Plan is produced but not published.

2.2 Description

The Regional Plan sets out the following;

- i Summary map
- ii Overall summary highlighting progress and priorities
- iii Targets for all core functions, support services (and multi functional where appropriate) covering budget and plan years
- iv Supporting detail on exceptional items eg Catchment Management Plan Programme, Pollution from abandoned mines.
- v Schedules concerning
 - Manpower plans
 - Finance plans
 - Output and Performance Measures.

The above is supplemented by a separate brief Regional Plan summary leaflet.

2.3 Instructions

Guidelines from Head Office are issued to the Regional Corporate Planner in the form of a PIGN.

A Corporate Planning Working Group co-ordinated by the Regional Corporate Planner is set up in advance of receipt of the Guidelines. Representatives from all core functions and the support services sit on the Working Group.

The Corporate Planner issues a project plan, task related timetable and translates the Guidelines into a practical action plan.

Requirements are also communicated to Management Team and Committees through summary briefing papers.

2.4 Standards

The Regional Plan will be clear and concise, using tabulated data and bullet points as far as practicable.

The Regional Plan will be readily translatable into Management Action Plans.

The Regional Plan will set out its contents clearly.

All pages will be numbered.

The date of issue will be clearly identified on the front pages.

Regional Plans will be word-processed on A4, spiral bound and covered with a card front to give an appropriate corporate style as advised by Public Relations.

Schedules will be differentiated from the text using coloured paper.

Working copies will be marked 'Draft' on the front page.

All Plan text and data will be backed-up on disk.

The Regional Plan summary leaflet will be produced in-house to a professional standard.

All costs of producing and monitoring of the Regional Plan will be collated by the Corporate Planning section.

2.5 Distribution

Hard copies of the Regional Plan and data on disk will be dispatched to Head Office as requested in the Guidelines.

The final Regional Plan (Regional Management Action Plan) will be made available to all staff through their Managers. Regional Plans are distributed to function Managers, the Corporate Planning Working Group, the library and Area Administrators. Should demand not be satisfied, then the Corporate Planning section should be notified. In addition to the above, the Regional Plan is made available to members of the Regional Advisory Board (RAB).

All staff and Committee members will receive the Regional Plan summary leaflet.

The national Corporate Plan will be distributed in accordance with instructions from Head Office, Bristol. This task will be facilitated by the use of Corporate Planning's Q&A database of organisations.

2.6 Review

The NRA seek to continually improve the value of Corporate and Regional Plans and the process by which they are produced. Comments on the Corporate and Regional Plan are therefore always welcomed by the Corporate Planning section.

3. ROADSHOWS

3.1 Introduction

The Regional Plan will be communicated to all Blue Book staff through a series of presentations at appropriate Area locations as soon after the completion of the Plan as practicable - usually April/May.

3.2 Description

Each roadshow is made up of a presentation lasting 20-30 minutes, followed by an opportunity for discussion.

The presentation is given by the Regional Corporate Planner and a member of Management Team and is supported by viewfoils and slides.

3.3 Instructions

The roadshow programme is co-ordinated by Corporate Planning.

The content of the presentation is determined by Corporate Planning in liaison with Management Team.

The presentation is 'signed off' by Management Team through a rehearsal that is arranged and given by Corporate Planning.

A member of Management Team chairs each roadshow.

3.4 Standards

Viewfoils will be clear, concise, simple and readable.

Slides will be relevant, illustrative and explained.

The content of the presentation will be made relevant to the audience.

The delivery will be made as interesting and entertaining as practicable.

3.5 Distribution

All Blue Book staff should be given the opportunity to attend a roadshow.

3.6 Review

Corporate Planning will seek to continually improve the roadshows. Comments on the roadshows are therefore always welcomed by Corporate Planning.

4. ANNUAL REVIEW

4.1 Introduction

It is important to take stock of progress against past and current plans - this helps to identify strengths and weaknesses and assists with communicating our achievements both internally and externally. A significant media for achieving this is the publication of an NRA Annual Report to which each Region contributes.

4.2 Description

The Annual Report is built up by Head Office from Monthly Management Reports, progress summaries in the Regional Plan, Regional Plan summary leaflets and Quarterly Reviews.

The Regional Member Services Officer produces a paper on key events related to Committee activity in the past year.

Regions are required to complete statistical proforma for return to Head Office.

4.3 Instructions

Report material is co-ordinated by the Corporate Planning section. It is the task of the Corporate Performance Officer, Bristol to put together the Annual Report.

4.4 Standards

Corporate Planning will compile a representative selection of colour slides for possible inclusion in the Annual Report. These slides will specify location, date and activity where known.

The Committee report will be edited by Corporate Planning prior to dispatch.

Corporate Planning will ensure that any key events, issues etc are brought to the attention of the Corporate Performance Officer, Bristol.

Corporate Planning will seek to ensure that Southern Region is fairly represented in the Annual Report. Slides and report material will be dispatched as requested by Head Office.

4.5 Distribution

The Annual Report and Annual Report summary will be distributed in accordance with instructions from Head Office. This task will be facilitated by the use of Corporate Planning's Q&A database of organisations.

The full Annual Report will be made available to all staff through their Function Managers, the library and Area Administrators.

All staff will receive a copy of the Annual Report summary leaflet.

5. QUARTERLY REVIEW

5.1 Introduction

The progress of the implementation of the Regional Plan is monitored by means of a Quarterly Review. The Quarterly Review provides quick look reference for essential management information.

5.2 Description

The Quarterly Review sets out the following:

- i Finance summary (revenue and capital spend vs budget)
- ii Personnel summary (in post FTEs vs Plan FTEs)
- iii MAFF grant claim situation
- iv Progress summary (brief text on progress vs Plan targets)
- v Action plans (detail on progress vs Plan targets)
- vi Progress against selected Output and Performance Measures
- vii Progress against efficiency savings initiatives.

5.3 Instructions

Proforma and a brief guidance memo are issued by the Corporate Planning section to Management Team at quarterly intervals. Corporate Planning collate the completed proforma and use this information to produce a Progress summary.

The Progress summary and completed Output and Performance Measures are 'signed off' by Management Team at Briefing prior to dispatch to the Director of Operations, Bristol. This information is used by the Director of Operations to report to the Executive Group and the Board.

The complete Quarterly Review is compiled by Corporate Planning and submitted to Management Team for discussion and appropriate action.

5.4 Standards

The Quarterly Review will be clear and concise and will use tabulated data wherever possible. It will be word processed on A4 paper. Contents will be set out clearly. Appropriate pages will be colour coded to ease quick look reference.

The content will be scrutinised and anomalies etc highlighted.

All data for submission to the Director of Operations will be submitted to Management Team at Briefing prior to its dispatch.

All data will be backed up on disk and held in the Corporate Planning section.

The complete Quarterly Review will be submitted to the first RMT following dispatch of the required data to Bristol.

The front cover will clearly indicate the period under review, date of origin and source of document.

5.5. Distribution

Output and Performance Measures and Progress summary are sent to the Director of Operations, Bristol and Management Team.

The complete Quarterly Review is distributed to Management Team, the library and Area Administrators.

5.6 Review

Corporate Planning will review the content, format and distribution of the Quarterly Review annually.

6. MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

6.1 Introduction

The Monthly Report details exceptional items and events of interest together with a suite of statistics which give an indication of problems and level of activity. The statistics do not necessarily relate to performance.

6.2 Description

The Monthly Report sets out the following:

- i Headline bullet points, by function
- ii More detailed report, by function
- iii Management statistics.

6.3 Instructions

Proforma and a brief guidance memo are issued by Corporate Planning to a designated Monthly Report contact point. The provision of text for the report is the responsibility of each function Manager unless otherwise specified.

The completed proforma and text returns are collated, checked and edited by Corporate Planning.

A final draft is then checked by the RGM or their deputy Manager. Once agreed with the RGM (or deputy), the Manager signs the report and it is ready for distribution.

6.4 Standards

All reports will be 'signed off' by the RGM (or deputy).

Monthly Reports will be sent to Head Office by the date requested. They will be distributed internally within two working days of this date.

All data will be backed up on disk.

Monthly Reports for circulation to staff and other RGMs will be word processed, double sided and photocopied onto gold paper.

Summary headlines will be presented as bullet points on the front page.

The front page will clearly show the Region and NRA logo.

6.5 Distribution

The Monthly Report will be distributed to Head Office, RAB and internally in accordance with the latest circulation list detailed in the 'Monthly Report' file held in the Corporate Planning section.

Staff named on the circulation list will be responsible for distributing their copy of the Monthly Report to relevant members of staff within their section by the most appropriate means.

6.6 Review

The Corporate Planning section will undertake surveys at appropriate intervals to assess the effectiveness of the Monthly Report contents, format and distribution. Comments on such matters are always welcomed by the Corporate Planning section.

7. INTER-REGIONAL COMPARISONS

7.1 Introduction

The analysis of Plan data from different Regions provides Management with information to assist them in addressing strengths, weaknesses and inconsistencies in interpretation. Furthermore, it provides a useful tool in sharpening up the planning and performance monitoring process.

7.2 Description

Inter-regional comparisons are usually produced as a set of graphs supported by brief explanatory text. Each document is covered by an overall summary.

7.3 Instructions

The most up to date full suite of available data is used. This is obtained from other Regional Plans or, if superseded, directly from the Head Office Corporate Planning section. The appropriate data is entered onto a SuperCalc 5 spreadsheet package and graphed as appropriate using the SuperCalc 5 graphics facility. A Harvard Graphics package may also be used for certain applications.

7.4 Standards

Inter-regional comparisons will normally be produced as A4 booklets.

Contents will be clearly indicated.

The front cover will show the title, source, date and NRA logo.

The exception to the above will be quick-look, ad-hoc analyses. These will be undertaken as deemed most appropriate for the situation by Corporate Planning.

7.5 Distribution

The inter-regional comparisons will be distributed to the appropriate Function Manager(s) and the RGM. If multi-functional activities are being analysed, the documents will be distributed to Management Team.

8. CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLANS/STATISTICS

8.1 Introduction

Catchment Management Plans have a key influence on the overall Regional Plan in as much that they provide a fundamental building block for this process. Each Catchment Plan will present a suite of statistics which will be reflected at regional level in the Regional Plan summary leaflet and at national level in the Annual Report and NRA Facts. The Corporate Planning section contribute to these documents and are custodians of the catchment statistics.

8.2 Description

Catchment statistics will be presented by catchment in each Catchment Management Plan and a Regional Statistical Handbook. The latter will also summarise statistics at a regional level.

Selected regional statistics will be presented in the Regional Plan summary leaflet, Annual Report and NRA Facts, all of which are co-ordinated by Corporate Planning.

8.3 Instructions

In terms of overseeing the Catchment Management Plans, influence on the Region/Corporate Plan and co-ordination of statistical input, the Corporate Planner sits on the Regional Catchment Management Planning Steering Group.

The Regional Statistical Handbook will be produced in accordance with a Corporate Planning Project Plan as will the selection of statistics for the Regional Plan summary leaflet.

Statistics for the Annual Report and NRA Facts are co-ordinated by the Corporate Planning section following guidance from Corporate Planning, Bristol.

8.4 Standards

Statistics will be carefully checked for consistency by Corporate Planning and anomalies will be pointed out to the appropriate Manager.

Statistics will be presented in tabular form, facing maps where appropriate.

Footnotes will be used to explain variations, queries, estimates, information sources etc.

The Regional Handbook will be clear, concise and easy to use. It will be supported by a front cover showing the title, date and NRA logo which will be drawn up in accordance with advice on corporate style from PR.

8.5 Distribution

Distribution of the Regional Handbook will be to Management Team, deputies, RAB, the library, Area Administrators and other staff by request. The Regional Handbook will be promoted internally.

Catchment Management Plans will be distributed by the Catchment Management Plan Coordinator.

The Annual Report and summary will be distributed according to Section 4.5.

NRA Facts will be distributed to Regions by the Corporate Planning section, Bristol. At least one copy will be held in the Corporate Planning section for reference purposes.

8.6 Review

Statistics will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

P Batty/15 January 1993

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