Partnership in FAS – A Case Study

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for a BA in Human Resource Management

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July 2004.
I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation will explore the concept of Partnership in FÁS and the experience of staff in relation to the concept.

Worker Participation and its history will be traced, up to and including the National Social Partnership Agreements, and then the development of Partnership itself in FÁS, and the experience of staff in relation to the process will be described.

Conclusions and recommendations will also be included in this dissertation.
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And finally, I hope that this dissertation will be of benefit to other students who may follow in my footsteps.
PREFACE

Partnership is a topical and popular notion in Ireland at the present time. It is a relatively new phenomenon, and is defined by its potential to achieve results and effect change, in the areas of performance, productivity, innovation and worker benefits.

It is hoped that the reader will develop an appreciation for the practicalities of what is required in relation to operating a successful enterprise-level Partnership.

The motivation for this dissertation was to study the employees' experience of the process of Partnership in FÁS.
INTRODUCTION

The dissertation that follows will discuss the concept and process of Partnership.

The work is divided into two main parts; the first part traces the development of Worker Participation throughout Europe from its origins to the present day and looks at available literature on the subject.

In the second part, qualitative research is carried out, to assess the effect of Partnership on the working life of FAS staff.

Following this, conclusions will be drawn on the basis of the work carried out, and recommendations will be made on the basis of those conclusions. The paper will be structured as follows:

Chapter One

This Chapter will contain a review on the beginnings of Worker Participation in Europe from the 1950's up to the present day, and a review of writings on the subject.

Chapter Two

The Chapter will describe the historical development of Social Partnership, in Ireland, based on the National Partnership agreements from 1986 to 2003.

Chapter Three

This Chapter will describe Partnership in FAS.

Chapter Four
This Chapter will describe the survey carried out, its results and the methodology used, and will also evaluate the findings of the survey.

**Chapter Five**

This Chapter will describe the conclusions on the basis of the work carried out in previous chapters.

**Chapter Six**

This Chapter will make recommendations on the basis of conclusions drawn in Chapter Five.
ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

The following is a list of the main organisations involved in Social Partnership:

**Employer and Business Pillar:**
Irish Business & Employers Confederation (IBEC)
Construction Industry Federation
Small Firms Association
Chambers of Commerce of Ireland
Irish Exporters Association
Irish Tourism Industry

**Trade Union Pillar:**
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)

**Farming Pillar:**
Macra na Feirme
Irish Farmers Association (IFA)
Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)
Irish Co-Operative Society (ICOS)

**Community and Voluntary Pillar:**
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
St Vincent de Paul
National Youth Council of Ireland
Congress Centres Network
Protestant Aid
ABBREVIATIONS

FUE  Federated Union of Employers
ICTU Irish Congress of Trade Unions
CII Construction Industry Federation
ESRI Economic and Social Research Institute
IMI Irish Management Institute
IPC Irish Productivity Centre
ESB Electricity Supply Board
ILO International Labour Organisation
CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW
CHAPTER ONE

Development of Worker Participation

This Chapter will describe the beginnings and patterns of worker participation in Europe, the United Kingdom and Ireland. The chapter will include an overview of successful models of Worker Participation in Europe and will trace early attempts at Worker Participation in Ireland. It will also contain a review of literature on the subject, and this will include definitions of Partnership.

Background to Worker Participation

Worker Participation emerged shortly after the First and Second World Wars and was first seen in Europe in The Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan’s official title was "European Recovery Program". Its aims were as follows:

1. To increase production;
2. To increase the expansion of European foreign trade;
3. To facilitate European economic co-operation and integration;
4. To control inflation.

The Plan proposed to elect workers to the boards of companies, thereby strengthening their say in the regulation of work and making the process more democratic.

Worker Participation initially began in the iron and steel industries in Germany in 1952. The labour movement was challenging the existing social order, and wanted a greater stake in decisions taken at plant level. An attempt therefore was being made on the part of workers for increased industrial democracy.

The concept of industrial democracy was further referred to by Salaman, (1998 p 358) who defined two pressures, socio-political and industrial, which were responsible for
the development of employee involvement. Significant social development in Europe in the early 1960’s and 1970’s was characterised by relative economic prosperity, with stable and secure employment and increased knowledge and awareness being further drivers of “the democratic imperative” on the part of workers. (Salaman, 1998 p 358).

All of this led to increased aspirations by employees to have an input into managing their organisation, while, similarly, management recognised that technological, industrial and economic change could be carried out more smoothly, quickly and effectively with the full participation of employees, as opposed to imposing decisions upon them.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s the position of workers was weakened in Europe, through mass unemployment, declining and relocating industries. However, the European Commission made two major sets of proposals relevant to worker representation. The first was concerned with the harmonisation of company law in member countries EC Commission 8/75 – <http://www.europa.eu.int> [date accessed 17/5/04] and the second was a European Company Statute (EC Commission 4/75 – <http://www.europa.eu.int> [date accessed 17/5/04]. These proposals promoted further the concept of worker participation in the European Union, and the notion of Worker Participation had by this stage gained a foothold in the European Union.

The central tenet of the European Social Model, which emerged from the European Union, was that harmonious social relations could only be established and maintained if society was taking the interests of workers into consideration. The Vredeling Directive, in 1980, was an attempt to ensure that transnational undertakings should have the same obligations towards employees, irrespective of which member state their company is operating in, to provide for equal treatment of employees. However, it was met with fierce opposition from employers’ unions and was not passed into legislation.

While unsuccessful, the Vredeling Directive which was initiated by the Commission, (1980) eventually resulted in the adoption of the Directive on the European Works Councils, number 94/45/EC on 22 September 1994. This initiative gave rise to the establishment of a European Works Council for the purposes of informing and consulting employees about an organisation's activities.

(http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc> [date accessed 3/6/04)

Patterns of Worker Participation in Europe

In 1993, a study initiated by the European Foundation in Dublin compared the patterns of direct participation across the European Community member states. This study found that of the then twelve EU member states, Belgium, Germany, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain, eight of them had statutory provisions for the establishment of works councils or joint committees. Five countries, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, had legal provision for employee representation on company boards, while Ireland, Greece and Portugal have provisions for worker participation in state-owned enterprises. (Gold & Hall 1990 p 20). Of all the countries studied, Denmark and Germany were deemed the most successful at implementing and developing worker participation.

Germany’s success at worker participation was found to be based on Works Councils, and the notion of co-determination in the workplace, through supervisory boards. Worker participation has been enshrined in German legislation since the immediate post-war years. An example of this legislation would be the Framework Law passed in 1946 by the Allied Control Council. (Knudsen, 1995 p 50).

Denmark’s success at worker participation can be traced back to the September Agreement of 1899, which recognised employers and employees as legitimate bargaining agents through collective agreements. These agreements underpinned the industrial relations system and were largely worked out through negotiations and central agreements between bodies operating within a legislative framework. This
long tradition of co-operation, therefore, has contributed to the success of the Danish worker participation model. (Knudsen 1995, p 81).

**Worker Participation in the United Kingdom**

In the United Kingdom, employee participation takes place mainly in the area of Health and Safety, and both sides in the industrial relations system rely on their immediate position of strength to make gains. (Knudsen, 1995 p 64). The system is based on the old adversarial model and collective bargaining remains the main dispute settlement mechanism.

**Worker Participation in Ireland.**

During the 1960's the ideas of liberty, equality and openness underpinned the drive for industrial democracy throughout Europe, and by the end of the 1960's these values had created a shift towards participation.

Following on from the pattern of industrial democracy in Europe, the key players in the Irish industrial relations system were placing a greater level of worker participation on their agenda for negotiation.

In 1969, a joint Federated Union of Employers and Confederation of Irish Industry Committee on Industrial Democracy, chaired by Professor Charles Mulvey visited West Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Yugoslavia. The committee concluded that even in Germany, there was no evidence to suggest that co-determination had in fact 'made any direct contribution to the sharing of managerial authority'. (Report on the Advisory Committee into Industrial Democracy paragraph 79 p 31 1985)

The committee found that the most effective way for employees to influence managerial discussion was by an extension and deepening of the collective bargaining process. Professor Mulvey also proposed a one-channel system of participation at plant level based on trade union organisation, with representatives of employees that would meet regularly and continually seek to extend the scope of its discussion.
Professor Mulvey also suggested that an organisation should keep the workforce as fully informed as possible about its affairs.

In 1973, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union published a paper on industrial democracy titled 'Some aspects of works councils'. This was a comprehensive paper, raising issues of employee representatives, powers of a works council and whether or not management, as well as workers representatives, should be involved. <http://www.ictu.ie/html/services/eubarg.html> [date accessed 12/6/04]

A coalition Government comprising the Labour Party and Fine Gael came to power in 1973. The Minister for Labour, Mr. Michael O'Leary set up a Worker Participation unit in the Department of Labour. He also established a working party to look at job restructuring, which comprised representatives of the ICTU, FUE, ESRI, IMI, IPC and other government departments. The group came up with the same two problems, as had its predecessor, the Mulvey Report, around the lack of interest in participation by the trade union movement and management’s fear of loss of power through restructuring.

In June 1976 to the Worker Participation (State Enterprises) Bill was introduced in the Dail. The Report of Congress' Industrial Democracy Committee recorded also in 1976 that the Executive Council approved in principle the Employer-Labour Conference draft national agreement on the establishment of works councils.

Finally, in March 1977 the Worker Participation (State Enterprises) Bill was passed by the Senate. Although this Bill was confined to seven state enterprises it was hoped that its influence would transcend its scope and that the private sector might follow its example.

In the government discussion on worker participation the Minister for Labour, Mr Michael O'Leary made the following statement:

‘To work for such fundamental changes in the social and economic system that would secure for the workers of Ireland adequate and effective participation in the control of the industries and services in why they are employed, could be understood as a
permanent social objective of the labour movement'. (Report of Advisory Committee into Industrial Democracy, 1985).

In 1985, the Report on the Advisory Committee on Worker Participation took this impetus for change a step further. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) instructed its executive to review the concept of Worker Participation with regard to the experience of its operation in other countries and the particular context of industrial, commercial and economic life generally in Ireland. This Report became a discussion document, which confined itself to considering Works Councils as a means of participation.

The committee behind this report identified two major obstacles to participation, the inadequate resources of the trade unions including structural problems, and the low priority and recognition given to personnel management by senior management.

The Report recommended that worker participation should be debated at shop-floor level to decide upon the best form of participative structure. It also recommended that employees be trained in participation. The committee proposed works councils as being the best way of structuring worker participation. This was the first effort at worker participation by the social partners in Ireland.

**Partnership in Ireland**

The idea of enterprise level Partnership which emerged from the Partnership 2000 agreement which will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

**Definition of Partnership.**

The term Partnership is used in a broad sense in Ireland, both at national level and within the field of industrial relations. Currently, it is the preferred approach to workplace industrial relations, of the Government, employer and trade union organisations. (O'Dowd, 1998 pg 6) Partnership itself is a voluntary concept, not
statutory, and it emerged from the Partnership 2000 agreement. In this agreement, Partnership is defined as follows:-

"An active relationship based on recognition of a common interest to secure competitiveness, viability and prosperity of the enterprise. It involves a continuing commitment by employees to improvements in quality and efficiency, and the acceptance by employers of employees as stakeholders with rights and interests to be considered in the context of major decisions affecting their employment. Partnership involves common ownership of the resolution of challenges, involving the direct participation of employees/representatives and an investment in their training, development and working environment".


"Partnership", "participation" and "involvement" can be interpreted as forms of the concept of "Partnership".

Salaman, (1992, p 340) defines "participation" as a generic term which encompasses all processes and institutions of employee influence within the organisation, including joint consultation, collective bargaining and Partnership.

Salaman, (1998, p 342), defines "involvement" as a measure introduced by management intended to optimise the utilisation of labour and secure the employees identification with the aims and needs of the organisation.

Cooke (1990, p 3) defined Partnership as a "co-operative effort between union representatives and plant management which is outside traditional contract negotiations and contract administration".

He further describes Partnership as a system that includes new forms of employee and trade union participation in problem solving and decision-making alongside collective bargaining.
Roche's 1998 study, (cited in Gunnigle 1999, p 460) describes Partnership as a process which challenges traditional collective bargaining, while embracing a wider agenda of issues, including business and product plants, the design of production systems and work organisation. It focuses on problem solving within a consensus decision-making framework.

Gunnigle et al (1995 p 323) identified four different forms of participation as follows:-

- Task Participation, which involves greater employee involvement in the design of job and work systems, which in turn allows for greater employee involvement in decisions affecting their jobs and immediate work environment. An example of task participation would be autonomous work groups, quality circles and consultative meetings and committees.

- Equity Participation, which involves the adoption of various profit sharing and share ownership schemes.

- Representative Participation, which allows for employee input into management decision-making, sometimes with statutory support. A most obvious example of this in Ireland would be the Worker Participation (State Enterprises) Acts 1977 and 1987, which introduced board level participation to various semi state companies.

- Participation through Collective Bargaining, which allows for increased trade union involvement at workplace level through extending and strong representation of workers' rights at workplace level.

Gunnigle et al suggests that a combination of any of these forms can be used in organisations.

O'Dowd (1998 p15) lists a number of benefits of Partnership as follows:-
• Better economic performance, as measured by factors such as cost reductions, quality improvements and advances in customer service;
• Better communications and relations between managers, supervisors and employees;
• Less conflict;
• Better understanding of corporate strategies including problems and a better climate for introducing change;
• A better context for significant medium-term change in the public sector, as envisaged for commercial state bodies by the European Union liberalisation policies, and for non-commercial bodies such as government departments, health boards and local authorities, as envisaged in national policies such as the Strategic Management Initiative.

Partnership in Ireland is a recent phenomenon. Dr. Patrick Gunnigle, in his paper, More Rhetoric than Reality: Enterprise level Industrial Relations Partnerships in Ireland, delivered at the National College of Ireland in March 1998, points to a lack of empirical research to date on Partnership (p12).

Some research has been done in Ireland to date on the subject of enterprise level Partnership. The Irish Management Institute’s pilot study at the Department of Enterprise Workplace 2000 conference surveyed forty two companies who had undertaken Partnership initiatives. The main findings of this survey, carried out by Hannigan (1997 pp. 1 – 2) found that the key areas of employee involvement, involvement in strategic decision making and sharing in the rewards of success, were not present to any degree in the sample.

Hannigan (1997 p 4) also found that management’s commitment to Partnership is higher in theory than in the extent to which it exists in organisations. Worker flexibility and responsiveness were found to be the areas that expand most due to Partnership.

The next study was the Cranfield University of Limerick study in 1995. This study, cited in Gunnigle’s paper, More Rhetoric than Reality: Enterprise Level Industrial
Relations Partnerships in Ireland (1995 p 15) found that overall, there is little evidence of trade union or employee involvement in strategic decision making in the companies surveyed.

Research conducted by IBEC (1999 p 6) found that the most extensive form of Partnership was team working. The survey also discovered that trade union involvement is minimal, due to the changing dynamic of relationships within enterprises. (IBEC 1999 p 7).

Roche and Geary (2002) conducted a joint UCD/ESRI workplace survey. This research, cited in Chapter 12 of Gunnigle’s upcoming book, (August 2004) Industrial Relations in Ireland found that Partnership approaches in the enterprise relates more to operational, rather than strategic issues. When direct involvement did occur it was in relation to strategic and operational change issues.

Knudsen (1995 p 63) found that participation is less intense in key decision-making areas such as tactical and strategic issues. For employees, direct participation is only relevant in relation to decisions at the operational level. Indirect participation contains potential for influence on a much wider range of decisions, although its intensity is lower for decisions of a strategic or tactical nature.

Fox (1974 p 20) proposed various ‘conditions’ necessary for the successful embedding of Partnership within the workplace. One of these conditions was that the relations between the parties are characterised by trust, that is, that one party can feel secure that the other party will not attempt to appropriate all the gains stemming from a common effort.

The level of participation in decision-making underpins the intensity and success of Partnership. Knudsen (1995 p 60) identifies two types of participatory decision making, one which exists when the decision is taken jointly by the employer and employee side by side, and the strongest when the employees themselves are enabled to make decisions.
Furthermore, the range and importance of subjects covered by participatory decision-making is another important point in the success of worker participation. Direct participation may be based on information, consultation and joint regulation, but to a large extent it is practised by transferring low-level management decisions to the employees themselves, be it in individual jobs or through autonomous groups.

The National Centre for Partnership and Performance's report, Achieving High Performance: Partnership Works – The International Evidence Research Series Number 1 focuses attention on what Partnership has to offer for organisations and employees.

The Report (p 5) argues that Partnership is a critical driver of change and high performance. However, various factors such as business and product market strategy, research and development expenditure, relationships with governments and merger activity also influence the level of success achieved.

Currently, there is a broader research debate around high performance and high commitment organisations, as a result of changing work practices, globalisation and foreign competition. The challenge around Partnership is to promote high performance and high commitment as goals relevant to stakeholders.

The report further argues that employee involvement and Partnership is still a niche strategy. Many organisations are still unaware of the benefits of Partnership. Taylor's 2003 study on Partnership (cited in the Achieving High Performance Report – p 10) reviewed research in the United Kingdom and found that employers choose not to utilise the skills of their staff through employee participation to make a positive impact on the organisation. Sixty percent (60%) of manufacturing firms surveyed make no attempt to use employee participation in their organisation.

Guest and Peccei 1994 study, (cited in the National Partnership's document, "Achieving High Performance: Partnership Works – The International Evidence, p 15) further examined the United Kingdom landscape. They examined fifty-four organisations and found three key components in Partnership - the principles, the practices and the employee outcomes - which enabled and supported the development
of work practices, communication, decision-making, financial reward and performance management.

The Work Foundation Survey 2001 (cited in the National Partnership’s document, “Achieving High Performance: Partnership Works – The International Evidence, p 20) provided further results of the effects of Partnership. This survey studied over 300 organisations, again in the United Kingdom. Employees in Partnership organisations stayed with employers longer, had lower levels of absenteeism and higher satisfaction levels. Essentially, Partnership offered the possibility of making the working life more fulfilling. It was also found that organisations that adopted a Partnership approach testified that it has helped them achieve enhanced performance, productivity, quality and profitability.

Positive outcomes from a Partnership approach cited in the report were employee involvement in key decision making, use of employee expertise, better time management, improved decision making, opportunities for innovation, higher quality of work, cost savings and best practice.

So what are the rationales behind Partnership? Is it merely a continuation of worker participation that commenced in Europe after the First and Second World Wars? Or is it, as Poole (1987 p 20) suggests a ‘way in which employees are able to exert some influence on the condition under which they work?’ Or is it as Dale suggests, (1954 p 76) manipulation of workers as opposed to democracy? Partnership is essentially a phenomenon borne by widely differing rationales, which are connected to differing stakeholders and their interests, each of who is seeking to achieve their own distinctive objectives. For example, Vroom and Jago (1988 p 74) found that employers in general are very critical of those forms of participation that place limitations on their right to manage.

O’Dowd (1998 p 83) in Employee Partnership in Ireland – A Guide for Managers, found that there are several keys to success for successful workplace Partnership, as follows:

- Effective management and union leadership support
• A system that is rigorously based on the specific needs of the individual organisation and that recognises the respective roles of management and unions
• Effective communications systems that link all employees to the change process
• Commitment to training in the necessary technical and social skills.
• Reasonable assurances of employment security so that employees will not be constrained by a sense of insecurity from making a significant contribution to organisation improvement, including cost reductions where necessary.
• Gainsharing of some kind to ensure high levels of employee commitment to organisational improvement and to ensure a sense of equity within the organisation as far as the distribution of gains is concerned.

Partnership in the Civil Service – A Formal Review, was issued in January 2002, and in its list of recommendations, (p. 84) stated that

‘the successful implementation of any change programme requires dynamic leadership from significant influencers at all levels in the organisation. It involves those who believe in the proposed change articulating a clear vision for the new organisation and promoting it strongly and consistently’.

This report (p 84) further stated that to ‘make Partnership a success it is not sufficient to explain the concept and then leave it to people to embrace it and carry it forward’. It is an evolving process, requiring ongoing redefinition, reaffirmation and strong leadership at all levels. This report also found that in departments/offices where management and union champions gave active leadership, significant progress in the Partnership areas and issues was made (p 84).

This Chapter has reviewed the beginnings of Worker Participation, in the European Union and the United Kingdom, and has reviewed literature on the process of Partnership in Ireland. The next Chapter will discuss Social Partnership in Ireland.
CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP IN IRELAND
CHAPTER TWO

National Social Partnership Agreements

This Chapter will trace Partnership as a concept and will deal with a variety of arrangements that grew out of the notion of Partnership through the National Agreements. It will discuss the merits and demerits of Partnership from leading contributors on the subject and from some people directly involved in the process.

Since 1987, Ireland has had a sequence of agreements negotiated between the Social Partners (Social Partners are listed on p. 9). The regulation of wages and workplace industrial relations in this way, together with initiatives like changes in taxation and foreign direct investment, combined to produce an economy which has boomed over the past decade.

The first development in the path to economic success was the National Economic and Social Council’s Strategy for Development in 1986. This plan paved the way for the government and social partners to form the first of five Partnership agreements each covering a three-year period. Each agreement reflected the differing social and economic priorities of the specific period.

Programme for National Recovery (PNR)

The first agreement was the Programme for National Recover (PNR), which covered the period 1987 to 1990. In 1987, Ireland was submerged in an economic and social crisis. There was little to no economic growth, unemployment was increasing at a rapid rate and the national debt was getting larger. Living standards were declining and the tax burden was increasing. The PNR was designed primarily to rectify public finances. The priorities or objectives at the time were to reduce unemployment and generate employment, fiscal policy improvements particularly in the area of taxation, and the prevention of deteriorating standards of living.
There was also a commitment given under the agreement to stabilise the debt: gross national product ratio. Another feature of this agreement was a commitment to minimising the public expenditure cuts particularly in health and education.

All the Partners involved in this agreement agreed that they would not contribute to increased inflation and would not seek deflation when problems arose. The Central Review Committee was established to ensure proper implementation of the PNR and also to ensure continuous talks between the government and social partners on relevant social and economic issues.

**Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP)**

The next agreement was the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP), which covered the period 1990 – 1993. The main objective of this programme was to tackle long term unemployment, arising from a strategy to accelerate economic and social progress in the nineties.

In 1991, Charles J Haughey, the Taoiseach declared that one of the aims of PESP was:

“To maintain a low inflation economy with a stable exchange rate which can compete internationally and give us the higher standards of living and improved social services to which we aspire”. (Programme for Economic and Social Progress, 1991 P 5)

The key objectives of the PESP agreement were as follows:

- Sustained economic growth and the generation of greater income;
- A further major assault on the long term unemployed;
- The development of greater social rights within health, education, social welfare and housing services;
- The development of worker participation, women’s rights and consumer rights.
Pay increases were also included in the PESP. The pay clause provided for the following increases:

- 4% increase on basic pay in the first year;
- 3% increase on basic pay in the second year;
- 3.75% increase on basic pay in the third year.

(Programme for Economic and Social Progress, 1991 pp 11 – 12)

The PESP agreement gained a commitment from all parties to encourage industrial harmony, with the Labour Relations commission having full responsibility for the promotion of good industrial relations.

The Irish Congress of Trade Union's policy documents, New Forms of Work Organisation 1993 and Managing Change 1995 both suggested that trade unions needed to take a more proactive role in influencing the planning and implementation of new workforce management strategies, with a particular focus on task participation at enterprise level.

**Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW)**

The third agreement was the Programme for Competitiveness and Work, which spanned the years 1993 to 1996.

There were some negotiations between the Government and unions before agreement was reached on the third programme as the trade unions wanted a temporary pay levy to be lifted. The unions believed that the previous programme, the PESP, had not achieved all its objectives, so were wary of another agreement.

The government did not immediately agree to these conditions and there was some debate in various quarters that there was a risk of returning to de-centralised bargaining. The union and the government eventually reached a compromise and the negotiations began.
The main terms of the new agreement centred around a comprehensive range of pay increases. The PCW set out the increases to be expected by the different sectors. It was deemed to be more successful than the PESP as it was during this period that the growth pattern of the so-called *Celtic Tiger* first began to make its emergence.

In 1997, the European Commission published a Green paper titled “Partnership for a New Organisation of Work”. This provided a European Union level framework for Partnership. It was proposing that Partnership was the preferred system for workplace management.

**Partnership 2000.**

The fourth agreement emerged in 1997 and covered the following three year period up to the year 2000. The focus of the agreements changed somewhat around this period, to include mechanisms for the regulation of industrial relations in Ireland.

Partnership 2000 set out the governing principles for the development of Partnership at sectoral and organisational levels. The objectives of Partnership were described in Chapter Ten of Partnership 2000 as:

“ensuring that, in each department and office through consultation and the participation and co-operation of all concerned, there is, firstly, common ownership by management, unions and staff of the development and implementation of the action programmes, and secondly, a new participative approach to resolving issues and challenges generally”. (Partnership 2000 p 3).

This was the framework for Partnership at enterprise level.

The Partnership 2000 pay increases were the most generous increases distributed in the Irish economy in years. Record economic growth was reported, from under 8% real GDP in 1997 to over 10% real GDP in 2000 <http://www.esri.ie/content.cfm> [date accessed 6/6/04]. Unemployment fell to from over 10% to 5%. <http:www.esri.ie/content.cfm> [date accessed 6/6/04]. Over the three year period of
this agreement, workers received a 9.25% increase. This programme also covered other issues outside of pay structure. Tax bands were widened to allow for a reduction in taxes paid by the highest earners, and to allow for increased allowances for others within the system.

At national level, the National Centre for Partnership was established in 2001 to provide support and drive change in the Irish workplace. The Centre's remit was to enable organisations in the private and public sectors, through Partnership, to respond to change, to build capability and to improve performance. It was felt that the adversarial system of improving performance no longer delivered results, and there was a need to respond to change quicker when changed economic circumstances demanded it. <http://www.ncpp.ie> [date accessed 2/7/04].

Dr. Patrick Gunnigle, in a paper More Rhetoric than Reality: Enterprise Level Industrial Relations Partnerships in Ireland delivered at the National College of Ireland in 1998, identified two broad stimuli for the emergence of enterprise level Partnerships in Ireland.

Firstly Dr. Gunnigle (p3) identified the increasingly competitive environment facing organisations, which has provided an impetus for the re configuration of industrial relations policies to facilitate improved performance and productivity.

Secondly, Dr. Gunnigle (p3) cited the decline in trade union penetration as another impetus, which prompted the trade union movement to seek mechanisms to increase their legitimacy and representativeness at enterprise and national level.

Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF)

This agreement ran from 2000 to 2003. The Social Partners confirmed the Partnership approach at national level through this programme, which contained sections on modernisation across the public services. The Taoiseach, Mr Bertie
Ahern, stated that the agreement would “enable Ireland to meet her key challenges”. (Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, p 5).

The agreement had the following objectives;

- To maintain international competitiveness through policies that encourage enterprise and investment;
- To ensure that those in work had a fair share of the increased national prosperity;
- To substantially increase the resources allocated to social inclusion;
- To enable Ireland to become a learning, knowledge based society, with the capacity to embrace with confidence the opportunities offered by technological change.

The PPF provided for financial involvement by employees through employee ownership, share schemes etc., in state companies as a result of union demands. The change in union power and position was reflected by the former General Secretary of the ICTU, Mr Peter Cassells who said of the PPF in 2000;

“Remaining competitive in the global market should, of course, continue to be our focus, but I also want us (Ireland) to develop the best workplaces in Europe, where workers are treated as stakeholders”. <http://www.ictu.ie/html/news/briefcase.htm> [date accessed 6/6/04].

The Partnership agreements existed during an unprecedented level of growth in the Irish economy. The approach taken through the National Agreements played a major role in Ireland’s success during this time. The economy grew at an increasing rate each year, inflation fell to its lowest level for nearly thirty years, and the national debt fell substantially.

Perhaps the most successful of all the Partnership agreements was Partnership 2000. Recommended pay increases were adhered to and workers were recipients of the new prosperity in the economy. Taxation modifications were also met; for example, people who earned under £100 were removed from the tax net entirely. Under
Partnership 2000, the level of job creation was unprecedented, with 218,000 jobs created.

<http://www.cso.ie/principalstats/pristatlab.htm>[date accessed 7/6/04].

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness contributed to the Partnership culture by providing for the establishment of forms of trade union and employee involvement in the change management process across the private and public sectors.

Sustaining Progress

This is the current agreement that started in 2003 and is due to end in 2005. It has reiterated Government commitments to previous national agreements. It has also declared that the National Centre for Partnership and Performance will "play an increasing role in supporting this process" (Sustaining Progress 2003 p 77), in conjunction with ICTU and IBEC.

Emphasis has also been placed on the promotion of a learning culture in Irish enterprises; best practice case studies in Partnership and performance, a national training strategy to assist those involved in organisation change through Partnership and financial guidelines for differing forms of employee involvement. (Sustaining Progress, 2003 p 77 – 78)

Current debates around Partnership in Ireland.

Partnership in Ireland is currently a popular concept. Managers, trade unionists, politicians, employees, employers, Social Partners all endorse it, and are in favour of it. In April, 2002, David Begg, General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, said this about Partnership:

"There have been very substantial improvements achieved in the areas of taxation, social policy, employment, competitiveness and equality issues. It can be asserted
with some confidence that what has been achieved under these headings would not have been possible outside social Partnership”.


Mr. John Dunne, of IBEC, said this about the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness at the Irish Management Institute’s Conference in Summer 2002:

"PPF incorporates a finely balanced pay agreement which goes just far enough to meet high expectations without damaging competitiveness." He also expressed his optimism at the future of Social Partnership seeing its major value as "facilitating the achievement of a balanced long-term strategic focus".


Nevertheless, Partnership has proved to be a highly controversial issue in the relations between trade unions and employers’ organisations and between national states within the EU.

Mr. Turlough O’Sullivan of IBEC is in full support of the Partnership agreements, stating in 1999 that ‘under the national agreements there were 400,000 more people working, with 95,000 new jobs created in 1998 alone”. However, IBEC criticised the pay increases to employees in March 2002, during the term of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness.

Roche and Geary of UCD put forward an argument against Partnership. Both parties express concern about widespread national Partnership between employers and trade unions. In their paper, “Collaborative Production and the Irish Boom”, they state that collaborative production is significant in many workplaces but that exclusionary forms of decision-making have been more dominant in the management of change”.

(Roche and Geary 2000 pg. 1)

At the July 1999 Institute of Personnel and Development Conference, Mr. John Horgan, HR Director of Analog Services and former Labour Court Chairman stated
that 'Social Partnership was not responsible for the country's economic growth'. He believed that the economic turnaround was due to larger factors such as investment of multi nationals here and the effects of globalisation.


He further believed that it "would be a sorry future if the influence of the unions over national economic and social policy continued any further".

A final criticism of this period of centralised agreements is the failure to extend the Partnership approach below national level interactions. Roche, (cited in Gunnigle's paper 1998 p 2) comments that the Irish model of Social Partnership is somewhat narrow, involving only the top levels of the union and employer bodies and has not significantly impacted on developments in enterprise level industrial relations. The Irish model of Social Partnership is 'truncated' inferring that while Partnership exists at the pinnacle of union and employer interactions, old fashioned adversarialism characterises employer union relations at enterprise level.

This chapter has reviewed the national context for Partnership, the different pay agreements, and debates and opinions on Partnership.
CHAPTER THREE

PARTNERSHIP IN FAS
CHAPTER THREE

Partnership in FAS

This Chapter will trace the development of Partnership in FAS. Task Participation consisting of consultative meetings and committees, is the form of participation used in FÁS, defined by Gunnigle (1995 p 323) in the literature review.

The term Partnership is used in a broad sense in Ireland, both at national level and within the field of industrial relations. Currently, it is the preferred approach to workplace industrial relations, of the Government, employer and trade union organisations. (O’Dowd, 1998 pg 6) Partnership itself is a voluntary concept, not statutory, and it emerged from the Partnership 2000 agreement. In this agreement, Partnership is defined as follows:-

"An active relationship based on recognition of a common interest to secure competitiveness, viability and prosperity of the enterprise. It involves a continuing commitment by employees to improvements in quality and efficiency, and the acceptance by employers of employees as stakeholders with rights and interests to be considered in the context of major decisions affecting their employment. Partnership involves common ownership of the resolution of challenges, involving the direct participation of employees/representatives and an investment in their training, development and working environment".


Background to Partnership in FAS

A key part of the rationale for the development of Partnership at the level of individual organisations was that it had been a very successful process at the level of the economy. Another key part of the rationale was the widespread change that was happening across all parts of the public service, which looked set to continue at an even more intensive pace in the coming years. Partnership was intended to provide a mechanism whereby the social partners at the level of sectors and organisations could
replicate the Partnership approach that had been developed at national level around joint objective setting and non-confrontational problem solving.

In FAS the development of participation predates these two national agreements as participation through the Worker Directors and participation at below board level existed before the Partnership 2000 agreement framework.

**Why Partnership?**

The pace of change has created many difficulties and opportunities for the organisation, and it against this background that FAS needed to find a way to preserve their place in the fast changing, competitive market place. Worker participation also formed part of the drive for improved Human Resource Management, seeking greater efficiency, change management, flexibility and quality in technologically sophisticated work. These developments have created changing patterns of managerial prerogative, and increasingly, emphasis is being placed on forms of joint worker-management initiatives in companies. (Knudsen, 1995 p 4).

**The Partnership Process in FAS**

Partnership in FAS is defined as “a relationship, a process and a way of doing business, involving all staff at all levels” (Partnership – The FAS Workplace of the Future 2000).

There are eight key principles which are specifically targeted as key engines of change, listed as follows:-

1. **Labour Market Policy**

   To play an active and leading role in informing and influencing future labour market policy in Ireland.

2. **Employers and people in employment.**
To promote investment in training by employers and to accelerate the development and delivery of a comprehensive range of programmes and services, for employers and those in employment, based on identified labour market needs.

3. **Unemployed people**

To mobilise labour supply from all available sources and to stem the flow into long-term unemployment through the provision of a range of programmes and services for unemployed people, with a particular focus on marginalised groups, that are driven by labour market demands and individual customer needs.

4. **Alliances and Partnerships**

To form alliances and working Partnerships with other organisations and service providers, to meet organisational goals.

5. **Quality and Standards**

To set and promote world class standards in training and employment services, within a framework of total quality, continuous improvement and accreditation.

6. **Organisation development**

To develop the knowledge, skills and competencies of staff, to improve organisational structures and to develop a culture to support the achievement of objectives.

7. **Information and Communications Technology**

To maximise the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in the provision of services and in internal processes and systems.

To ensure that our customers and key stakeholders are fully aware of the availability of our programmes and services and that the reputation of the organisation is consistent with the achievement of the organisation's objectives

Briefly, the structures through which Partnership in FAS is driven comprise the National Partnership Group, Regional Partnership Groups, Local Partnership Groups and Issue Groups. Appendix One details the mission statement and values of FAS, together with structures for the process of Partnership. (This information was sourced from the FÁS Staff intranet site).

These structures comprise employee, management and union representatives, who work together on a monthly basis on issues relating to working life in FAS. A blend of task participation and participation through collective bargaining forms the basis for the Partnership model in FAS, and the process is issue driven, based on principles, practices and outcomes.

This Chapter has reviewed traced the development of Partnership in FÁS. The structures, processes and arrangements for Partnership in FAS are contained in Appendix One.
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND SURVEY OF PARTNERSHIP IN FAS
CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology and Survey of Partnership in FAS.

This Chapter will describe the research carried out to assess the effect of Partnership in FAS. The research was confined to Employment Services Staff in the Dublin area in FAS.

Primary methods of research in this dissertation involved a questionnaire (see Appendix Two). Secondary research consisted of desk research, comprising journals, papers, reports, the internet and academic books. Secondary research has been referenced, and included in the bibliography.

The main research instrument used was a questionnaire, which was designed to elicit responses from FAS staff on the process of Partnership.

Qualitative research was deemed more appropriate in this case due to the nature of the questions asked, which were designed to elicit responses from staff on Partnership.

The questionnaire was piloted initially on three members of staff in a city centre office. No changes were made to the questionnaire, as no problems were reported with the pilot.

Population sample

The population for the purposes of the research was defined as the Employment Services Staff in FAS in Dublin. Dublin has been divided into two areas for the purposes of FAS resource and management allocation, Fingal and Dublin City area.

Staff at four different locations from these two main areas (listed below) were surveyed:

1. FAS City Centre Dublin city area
2. FAS D’Olier Street   Dublin city area
3. FAS Baldoyle Office  Fingal
4. FAS Coolock Office   Fingal.

There are a total of sixty-two Employment Services staff dispersed amongst these four locations.

The population sample comprises a horizontal and vertical survey of twelve staff dispersed between these four locations, from both genders, across different grades, from clerical to supervisory level.

The survey was distributed and collected through e-mail. The function of the research was to provide information and analysis on the experience of Partnership, from the employee’s perspective.

**Results Analysis.**

Twelve questionnaires were distributed through email, on the 15th of June, 2004. The twelve questionnaires were returned completed by the 23rd of June. All respondents responded promptly to the questionnaire.

**Section One - Profile**

Table One illustrates the number of Male and Female respondents in the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Source: Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement Officers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Placement Officers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Officers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Source: Questionnaire

Table Two illustrates the number of staff from differing grades who completed the questionnaire.
Table Three below illustrates the age brackets for male respondents in the questionnaire, and the relevant number of males in their particular age bracket.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Bracket</th>
<th>Number of Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 – 25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 55</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Males</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Source: Questionnaire

Table Four below illustrates the age brackets for female respondents in the questionnaire, and the number of females in their relevant age bracket.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Bracket</th>
<th>Number of Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 – 25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 35</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 40</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 55</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Females</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Source: Questionnaire

**Section Two - Principles**

This section will present, in table format, the opinions of the respondents on a question-by-question basis.

Q1. Do you have a full understanding of the Partnership process and its implications for you as an employee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No understanding</th>
<th>Some understanding</th>
<th>Strong Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Source: Questionnaire
The majority of staff surveyed had a strong understanding of the Partnership process.

Q2. Is the purpose of Partnership in FAS clear to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of respondents felt that the purpose of Partnership in FAS was very clear to them.

Q3. In your opinion, does Partnership promote workers' interests in FAS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 Source: Questionnaire

This question asked respondents to elaborate on their answers. Half of the sample felt that Partnership did promote workers' interests, conversely the remaining half felt otherwise.

While the purpose of Partnership was to promote workers' interests in FAS, the opinion was expressed that there was insufficient information available on the idea of Partnership in relation to what it could actually be used for.

Also due to the wide span of control in the organisation, and the levels of hierarchy, it was felt that very often issues were lost or ignored within the process. The opinion was also expressed that Partnership delayed decision-making and internal processes within the organisation, and took credibility away from the process.

Partnership provided an opportunity for staff to receive readily-available information about the activities of management in FAS.

Respondents who felt that Partnership did promote workers' interests in FAS, felt that it was a forum for the free discussion and sharing of views amongst staff. It was also perceived as a good mechanism as staff, management and unions were all engaged in the process, in trying to promote the interests of all stakeholders in the organisation.
It was felt that Partnership as a concept was a platform where anything other than industrial relations issues could be resolved between management, staff and unions so more workers should be using it.

Partnership, while a forum for workers to express views, did not allow for important decision making to devolve to workers in the organisation. Respondents who expressed this view also felt that important decisions were still made at management level. This finding links with Irish research from the IMI, the Cranfield University of Limerick study, and Knudsen, which found that effective employee participation is underpinned by the intensity of employee involvement in decision making.

Q4. Do you think Partnership has led to greater worker influence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of employees surveyed felt that the process of Partnership, while still in its early stages, has led to greater worker influence. There appears to be some uncertainty around Partnership and the changes it can effect, as it is still a relatively new phenomenon in FAS.

The respondents who said that Partnership did not lead to greater worker influence felt it was due to the length of time taken in decision-making. However some respondents expressed the view that flexibility has increased, a point highlighted also in IMI's pilot study at the Department of Enterprise Workplace 2000 seminar.

Q5. Do you think Partnership has led to reduced conflict and greater worker satisfaction?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of respondents felt that Partnership has led to a reduction in conflict and greater worker satisfaction for varying reasons.
There was an increase in communication between staff, management and unions, and Partnership was perceived as allowing staff to air issues and concerns which in turn could be fed up the line to management.

Partnership provided a sense of common purpose, which led to better organisational teamwork, an improved climate, and increased teamwork at local level, alluding to the point raised by IBEC’s research that the most extensive form of Partnership was team working.

The respondents who felt that Partnership had not achieved progress in this area said that they felt that despite Partnership, directives still issue and work practices were changed overnight. This is viewed by workers to be a major source of conflict which erodes job satisfaction, and seems to defeat the purpose of Partnership, which is essentially joint co-operation between unions, management and staff. It would also question again, the degree to which staff are involved in decision making in FAS.

Some staff surveyed questioned exactly what Partnership is about, in relation to the organisation and their own working life.

Q6. Do you think that Partnership has led to increased co-operation and a reduction in conflict?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Source: Questionnaire.

The majority of respondents responded positively to this question.

While issues are taken to Partnership meetings and discussed, it was felt by staff that the outcomes of these meetings are slow, due to the processes involved. For example, issues were subsumed through the Partnership process, particularly if it moves from one group to another for discussion.
Another respondent said there is an improvement in relationships between management and staff as a result of the Partnership process. While there is an improvement in relationships between management and staff as a result of the Partnership process, respondents highlighted little or no communication between committees in different offices. Many respondents would like to see systems for ensuring such communications.

A minority felt that there has been a reduction in conflict in the organisation.

Q7. Has Partnership led to a more balanced representation of interests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of respondents felt Partnership had led to a balanced representation of interests.

Partnership generally was viewed as a very positive development in FAS, particularly as staff from all units in FAS are involved, from differing grades. It was generally felt that all sides were represented on Partnership, thereby generating a wider and broader level of interest of various employees at all levels, giving all stakeholders a chance to express their opinions. The monthly meetings while they discussed topics that were relevant to all, did not include topics of a tactical or strategic nature.

However, one respondent noted that cross unit sharing of information through Partnership did not occur. For example, information on issues in relation to what has been a success or failure, which could be an aid to the development of Partnership was not available and this was highlighted in the survey.

Those who felt that Partnership did not lead to a more balanced representation of interests, felt uncertainty about the level to which management takes the views of staff and the ethos of Partnership into account. This links to the findings in Hannigan's study which holds that management commitment to Partnership is higher in theory than the extent to which it is actually practiced in organisations.
It was also noted that while staff have more access to management to have their interests represented, few avail of these opportunities, limited as they are.

Q8. Do you feel that workers in FAS have a greater say in decision making since Partnership?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of staff surveyed said that workers have a greater say in decision-making since Partnership, through the mechanism of expressing their views at meetings. However, the final decision, it was felt, on any issue invariably rests with management. This finding links to the Cranfield University of Limerick and the IMI/Department of Enterprise Workplace 2000 Study, which found an absence of employee involvement in decision-making.

Overall, employees questioned the level to which they have a say in decisions that affect them.

Section Three - Practices

Q9. When was your last Partnership workshop?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 – 12 months ago</th>
<th>12 – 18 months ago</th>
<th>18 – 24 months ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 Source: Questionnaire

This table breaks down the frequency of Partnership workshops. The majority of staff have been at a workshop within the past year, of the twelve staff surveyed, nine staff attended a Partnership workshop six to twelve months ago.

As mentioned previously, the Dublin region is divided into two main areas, the Fingal and Dublin City Region.
Six of these nine staff worked in city centre FAS locations, with the remaining three staff now in outer offices, but they would have transferred to suburban offices from city centre locations within the past six months. Therefore, they would have come within the arrangements for Partnership briefings for the Dublin city area. The remaining staff are in the Fingal catchment area.

Q10. How often do you use the Partnership Intranet site?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Every Fortnight</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14 Source: Questionnaire

This question was posed to all respondents to assess how often they use the Partnership Intranet.

Half of the respondents rarely use the Intranet site, with the remainder using it on a monthly basis.

Q11. How regularly does a Partnership representative communicate to you about the process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Fortnightly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Six Monthly</th>
<th>Yearly</th>
<th>Little or no communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of staff said that Partnership representatives communicate to them on a monthly basis.

Of the twelve respondents, one respondent said that their local Partnership representative was very informative on the subject. Another is involved in local Partnership so communication is good. The remaining two respondents said that they receive the minutes of the meetings by email.

Q12. Do you think that policies and procedures are more transparent since Partnership evolved?
Of the twelve respondents, eight expanded further on their answers.

The majority of respondents felt that policies and procedures were more transparent since Partnership emerged. Minutes of meetings were easily accessible on the intranet, new policies were outlined on the intranet, and one respondent said that they discovered new developments in working life much sooner due to Partnership. Overall, an improvement was noted by respondents in relation to communication, which manifested in more openness and sharing of information, with policies and procedures being communicated to staff at all levels.

Three respondents said that they felt the transparency of policies and procedures was the same since Partnership as before the process.

A minority felt policies and procedures were less transparent since Partnership; in particular the application of the policies particularly in relation to recruitment and promotion.

Q13. Do you feel that communications have improved since the inception of Partnership?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>The Same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17 Source: Questionnaire

Of the six respondents who felt that communications have improved since Partnership, the main reason given was because groups met regularly and kept staff up to date on developments within FAS.

Other reasons given were minutes of the Partnership meetings being available on the intranet and being emailed to staff, thereby developing the communications process.
One respondent felt that while communications had improved, management communicate more, albeit reluctantly.

One respondent felt that there has been less of an improvement since before Partnership, due to, the respondent felt, management being selective in the information they communicate to staff.

Of the respondents who felt that communications had remained the same, one said that communications were a two way process and felt that there was no improvement. Two respondents felt that communications had stayed the same, as information was freely available on most issues through the intranet; and these respondents felt that there was no visible Partnership presence at local level expressed the view.

Section Four – Outcomes.

Q14. Do you feel that Partnership has improved the communication process in FAS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No improvement</td>
<td>Some improvement</td>
<td>Great improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of respondents felt that there has been an improvement in the communication process. Some expressed concern at the extent to which Partnership reaches people at local level.

Most cited minutes of meetings being available on the staff intranet as the main reason for improvement. Also, Partnership was viewed to have opened a communications mechanism, through the fact that staff can discuss issues with management. The Employee Partnership in Ireland Guide, (O’Dowd 1998 p 83) referred to effective communication systems being part of effective Partnership, as all employees were thereby linked to the process.

One respondent said that there was a great improvement in the communication process. This particular respondent has over twenty-one years’ service with FAS.
During this time management style and communications changed, reflecting the differing styles of the time, from an adversarial approach to an open one.

Q15  Are you familiar with the goal and outcome of your National Partnership Group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19 Source: Questionnaire

The sample was divided evenly on this issue, simply half said yes they were familiar, and the remaining half said they weren't familiar with the goal and outcome of the National Partnership Group.

Q16. Do you feel that you have an input into the process of your local Partnership group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20 Source: Questionnaire

The majority of respondents felt they had an input, and expressed the view that it was due to the close ties with the Partnership representatives who communicated with them regularly at local level. This would suggest, therefore, that Partnership is an evolving process, requiring constant effort at all levels, and this finding was also reflected in the Partnership in the Civil Service Report, cited in the literature review.

Of the respondents who said No, the reason given in one instance was the dominant style leadership. Other reasons given were a lack of knowledge generally on the Partnership process.

Q17. If you have a particular issue you think is important and would like mentioned at your local meeting, do you know how to invoke it at workplace level and how to bring it to the group?
The majority of the respondents knew how to invoke Partnership at workplace level and how to bring issues to the group.

Q18. Are you aware of the issues discussed at local Partnership meetings?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21 Source: Questionnaire

This question asked the sample population to expand on their answer if they did not know about the issues discussed at local meetings.

Two respondents said that they did not know the content of the issues discussed at their local meetings. The remaining respondent said that while minutes were circulated; regular verbal feedback was not forthcoming at local level. The topics discussed and their relevance was also questioned. The other respondent said they felt that minutes were circulated; regular verbal feedback was not forthcoming.

The survey highlighted the view that many of the issues discussed were of an operational, rather than strategic nature, a point also referred to in Roche and Geary’s research in 2002, in relation to Partnership, cited in the literature review.

Q19. How often does a Partnership representative contact you about any issues you have that you may like to bring to the group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23 Source: Questionnaire

This table reflects the continuum of frequency of communication for Partnership representatives, and that frequency clearly depends on the Partnership representative at local level. Again Partnership is a process that requires ongoing effort at all levels.
Q20. Overall what is your opinion of Partnership in FAS?

This question was designed to elicit each respondent’s opinion of Partnership. The comments were as follows.

One respondent felt that staff involved in the group know about the process and its implications, but felt that the process itself was slow, and the issues included were management’s as opposed to staff issues.

Another respondent felt that Partnership was “fashionable” and will be replaced by another programme in the next few years.

The next respondent expressed the view that Partnership was a positive experience, which will take time for to develop. It was clearly a two way process, which required commitment from all, requiring constant updating and briefing sessions.

Another respondent said in theory Partnership was a great idea but in practice involved a huge amount of effort in terms of constant updating and briefing sessions.

The majority of the respondents felt that Partnership was a good idea, a way forward and a way of expressing views and opinions into working conditions. Some staff expressed the view that knowledge of it will embed further and expand when current representatives finish their time on their particular group and other members of staff take their places.

Partnership was also viewed as a mechanism for improving our relationships with other service providers, such as Social Welfare and has improved internal processes such as transfer lists. Previously, all positions were advertised on a promotional basis, currently, every second position in the organisation is filled through the transfer list, thereby facilitating staff to move from region to region with relatively short waiting times.
Partnership has also delivered results in other areas such as Health and Safety, with staff working in Public Offices, for example, being offered the option of inoculation against infectious diseases, the request for which was driven by the local issue groups.

Overall respondents said that Partnership was a good idea, with staff welcoming the notion and development of it.

This Chapter has reviewed the methodology used in the research, and reported on the findings of the research.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

This Chapter will detail conclusions drawn on the basis of the work carried out in the survey. There is a lack of empirical research on Partnership. The available work suggests that managements' commitment to partnership is higher in theory than in practice. Partnership approaches in enterprises relate more to operational issues and there is little evidence of trade union or employee involvement in strategic decision-making.

For Partnership to work in an organisation there must be trust, good communication, job security and adequate rewards. The implementation of any change programme through Partnership in an organisation requires dynamic leadership from key influential people who possess a clear vision for the new organisation. It is not sufficient to explain the concept and leave it to people to embrace it and carry it forward.

Partnership is an evolving process requiring on going definition and leadership at all levels of an organisation. It is a phenomenon borne by widely differing rationales which are connected to differing stakeholders, each one seeking to achieve their own distinctive objectives.

Current thinking suggests that the old adversarial system of employee relations no longer delivers results. The increasingly competitive environment has created a need for a different system of workplace management to respond more quickly to change.

Despite its stated benefits Partnership has proved to be a highly controversial issue between trade union and employer organisations and between national states within the EU. It would also appear that the old fashioned adversarial system still characterises employer-union relations at enterprise level.
The Social Partnership model adopted in Ireland for the regulation of pay and other matters gave rise to substantial benefits in areas like taxation, social policy, and competitiveness and equality issues. This model however is not solely responsible for
the economic growth in recent years in Ireland. Other factors such as foreign direct investment and changes in fiscal and taxation policies also helped bring this situation about. The following conclusions have been made on the experience of Partnership in FAS. As Partnership in FAS is still a relatively new phenomenon, it will take further development and time to embed at local level. The following conclusions can be drawn on the survey carried out in FAS.

- As alluded to in the literature review, employee decision making and management commitment are important parts of the process of Partnership, which will in turn embed it at strategic level, yet are not always present at enterprise level.

- Overall, the Partnership process so far has been a positive experience. There is a large amount of goodwill towards Partnership and the majority of staff appear to welcome the opportunity to engage with one another jointly to achieve the goals of FÁS.

- Partnership in FAS is a new structure, involving challenges for all, particularly management and trade union representatives.

- Staff representatives involved in the Industrial Relations process will now have to learn new ways of operating. This will provide challenges to those unfamiliar with the Partnership process.

- There was a high degree of understanding among the staff members surveyed. Some of them, however, expressed concern about the extent to which the Partnership process is meaningful, and involves staff who are not directly involved in the committee meetings.

- More training needs to be given to Partnership in FAS, which will raise the awareness of staff at all levels, thereby contributing to the further development of a culture of Partnership. It is important that the commitment to a Partnership approach to the regulation of work is reaffirmed and all managers need to be proactive in this.
• The profile of Partnership needs to be seen to make a real and visible impact on the working lives of staff not directly involved in the process.

• There are mixed views on whether Partnership promotes workers’ interests in FAS.

• The survey shows that staff are confused about what Partnership can offer to them, especially in relation to their real input into the decision making process. There was also confusion amongst staff as to whether Partnership committees are intended to be decision-making or consultative bodies. The resolution of disputes arising out of the Partnership process would appear to be difficult. There is a tendency for both management and employee representatives to return to the roles they previously played.

• A majority of staff who were surveyed felt that management have the final say in the decision making process; which reinforces current writings on Partnership cited in the literature review. Also, the process is perceived as being slow in producing results.

• Trust in the Partnership process and in management’s agenda is limited amongst those surveyed. This again alludes to the literature review; trust being a condition, referred to by Fox, for embedding Partnership in the workplace.

• The survey highlighted clearly that the communication process is key to the success of Partnership. While the majority of staff surveyed have undergone training through workshops, and person-to-person contact with their local representative, communication of Partnership and its values at local level depends on the Partnership representative. Also, there is little communication between units on Partnership issues.

• The majority of staff surveyed do not use the Partnership intranet, which contains minutes of meetings relating to all groups. The practice is to email
minutes of meetings to staff. The intranet as a tool for assisting the Partnership process would appear to be under utilised.

This Chapter has detailed conclusions on the basis of the work carried out in the survey. Overall Partnership is viewed in a positive light, and there is a high degree of good will towards it.
CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS
CHAPTER SIX

Recommendations

This Chapter will outline the recommendations to move the Partnership process further along in FÁS. The survey highlighted that the frequency of training and development in Partnership and the communication process needs improvement, and that the building of Partnership capability needs particular attention.

- FÁS should continue to re-iterate the benefits of Partnership to all staff, both inside and outside of Partnership committees. The use of a trained facilitator at committee meetings could assist those having difficulty with the process to better understand its value. This should further enhance the ability of FÁS staff to rapidly respond to change, and the achievement of organisational goals and objectives.

- Staff at all levels should be actively encouraged to get involved in Partnership committees and review groups. This will raise their awareness of the process and help reduce the concerns of those who are sceptical of its benefits.

- Regular training of staff in the Partnership process should occur every six months. The use of outside consultants with a proven track record of implementing change in outside organisations could make a major contribution to the development of Partnership in FÁS.

- Issues of concern that are highlighted at Partnership meetings could be included in the agendas of management meetings as well as at informal meetings of Staff. This will provide everyone with an opportunity to hear about problems and a system for expressing opinions on them.

- Particular attention should be given to any projects or special initiatives that have come out of the Partnership process. Also, “fast tracked” decisions which emerge from Partnership should be identified and disseminated; case studies, suggestion
schemes and their outcomes will help build confidence in the process among those who have concerns regarding its efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with decision-making.

- Team building training should be given to staff members (management and trade unions) who are on Partnership committees, to foster better ways of finding solutions to problems. This would further contribute to building Partnership capability and fostering a Partnership culture.

- Partnership committee meetings at each level should include representatives of other committees. This will improve the communication process further and help each group understand the concerns and problems of others within the organisation.

- The further use of surveys and the analyses of their findings should be encouraged. It will help maintain up to date information on the effectiveness of Partnership and help FÁS to make the necessary changes.

- Staff should be encouraged to make greater use of the intranet to assist with communicating information and retention of the most up to date findings on all aspects of Partnership. This will also make the administration and communication of information, changes of rules etc more efficient.

This Chapter has outlined the recommendations for the issues which arose out of the staff survey.
Appendix One

FAS was established in 1987, under the Labour Services Act. FAS is an amalgamation of AnCO, the National Manpower Service and the Youth Employment Agency. These three agencies were amalgamated to create a greater dynamic in delivering manpower policy. The original aim of FAS was to provide a better and more cost effective service to stakeholders. In 1988, the Worker Participation State Enterprises Act provided a framework for a suitable model of Worker Participation.

In December 1999, the Joint Partnership Development Group in FAS was established. It was charged with the task of investigating the introduction of Partnership to the FAS workplace. Partnership in FAS emerged formally in December 2000, with management and unions signing the joint statement of commitment to develop Partnership in FAS. This agreement is the outcome of the work of the group.

The mission of the organisation is to:

"To increase the employability, skills and mobility of job-seekers and employees to meet labour market needs, thereby promoting competitiveness and social inclusion".

www.fas.ie [date accessed 18/6/04]

The core values are:

Professional, Caring, Flexible, Proactive and Trustworthy. Figure One shows the organisation structure.

Organisational Structure Fig.1 (Source: FAS Intranet [date accessed 17/7/04])

Joint Aims for Partnership in FAS

The success of FAS and the well-being and interests of all its staff depend on its continuing ability to provide the highest quality of service and standards to all its clients. This involves the active participation by the board, management, staff and unions in jointly developing effective internal and external responses to the challenges facing FAS. Partnership aims to enable FAS to provide programmes and services that anticipate and satisfy the needs of clients in the changing business environment.

Committed staff and managers who will be more involved jointly in decision-making
processes concerning their own work and the organisation as a whole will achieve Partnership working in FAS. This will be fully supported by the board. Joint involvement will be facilitated by appropriate arrangements and by good quality training, information, communications and other backup as required.

Partnership aims to improve the industrial relations environment. It will involve the board, managers, staff and their representatives in effective two-way communications and information sharing. It will provide a motivating and rewarding work environment, including the development of appropriate reward systems, as agreed by the parties to the Partnership. All of these will be elements in a framework of effective processes that will institutionalise the principles and practices of Partnership in FAS.

**Processes and Structures for Developing Partnership in FAS**

Partnership is the preferred way of working in FAS. It concerns the bringing about of a Partnership culture in FAS. It depends on managers and staff working together jointly on the day-to-day provision of programmes and services and handling the difficulties and opportunities that arise in the daily work. This includes developing and implementing initiatives and responding to internal and external challenges.

The processes and structures set out below are to support the operation of the principles and practices of Partnership. Through joint participation in these processes the unions agree to pursue the joint aims for Partnership. The processes are to ensure that staff affected by decisions is given the opportunity to have their experience, concerns and obligations reflected in the outcome of the process.

The following information on the structures, together with their roles and terms of reference, were taken from the FAS National Partnership intranet site.

**National Partnership Group**

- To give an operational meaning to the definition of Partnership as set out in this Agreement.
• To pursue the joint aims of Partnership which are set out in this Agreement

• To jointly address the issues that are within its remit as set out in this agreement or which may be referred to it by any of the parties.

• To act as the national joint management/union body to steer the promotion of programmes, services and service improvement on the basis of joint decision making and where appropriate, liaise with the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

• To take collective and joint responsibility for the quality of programmes, services and annual priorities in FAS in a manner that maximises the benefits to the organisation, clients and staff.

• To co-ordinate at a national level the development of Partnership and involvement processes and ensure that they meet the standards required by the parties.

• To review progress regularly, take and suggest initiatives for continuous improvement

• To keep up to date on all challenges that may impact on FAS and consider how to respond to such challenges, including liaison with the Department at senior level.

• To act as a continuing point of contact between the Unions, Staff and Management in FAS.

• To identify any obstacles to the Partnership way of working and recommend suitable action plans for their resolution.

The membership of the National Partnership Group is as follows:

**Management Members**

• Director General

• One Assistant Director General - Regions

• One Assistant Director General - other than Regions
• One Regional Director

• Five Management Staff - one each from Employment Services, Community Services, Training Services, Services to Business and Finance and Administration

Union Members

• Chief Shop Steward SIPTU (in the first instance)

• Six SIPTU members - one each from Employment Services, Community Services, Training Services, Services to Business, Finance and Administration and Head Office

• One CPSU

• One PSEU

• (One AHCPS - in the event that AHCPS is not represented in the management members an additional place will be provided.)

Chairpersons

The National Partnership Group will have joint chairpersons, one of whom will be the Director General and the other a nominee of the Unions. In the first instance the Joint Chairpersons will be the Director General and the Chief Shop Steward of SIPTU. Thereafter, the unions will agree between them who is to be the union nominated Joint Chairperson.

Regional/Head Office Partnership Groups

• To act as the joint Regional/Head Office group to steer the promotion of programme and service improvement through the Partnership way of working.

• To agree an annual work programme and arrange for its ongoing review.
• To agree appropriate Partnership mechanisms to be used to enhance programme and service delivery, organisational effectiveness, job satisfaction and to address staff issues.

• To review programme and service delivery from internal and external customer/client perspectives.

• To take appropriate initiatives in pursuit of the joint aims of Partnership.

• To co-ordinate the development of suitable joint training programmes to support joint decision-making, problem solving and the Partnership way of working.

• To provide advice and guidance to local level Partnership initiatives and joint groups.

• To identify any obstacles to the Partnership way of working and develop suitable action plans for their resolution.

• To set up local Partnership structures, as appropriate, no later than three months after its inaugural meeting.

**Composition of the Regional/Head Office Partnership Groups**

The membership will normally be sixteen in total. It will be necessary to increase the Union members in regions with more than one Training Services Unit. Each unit should have one representative. The maximum number is twenty. The group will be jointly chaired by the Regional Director and a SIPTU representative in the first instance. There will be six Management Members and ten Union Members.

**Management Members**

• Regional Director - Joint Chairperson

• Five Management Staff - one each from Employment Services, Community Services, Training Services, Services to Business, Finance and Administration.
Union Members

- SIPTU - Joint Chairperson (in the first instance)
- One CPSU
- One PSEU
- Seven SIPTU representatives, one each from Community Services, Employment Services, Training Services a Curriculum, and Services to Business (Grades 8, 9, and 10) Finance and Administration. One member to represent Clerical Officers, Administration Assistants and Purchasing. One member to represent General Assistants and Canteen Staff. Where a Clerical Officer comes from FASU any other Clerical Officer members must come from another Unit.
- (One AHCPS - in the event that AlICPS is not represented in the management members an additional place may be provided.)

Local Partnership Groups

- To act as the joint local group to steer the promotion of programme and service improvement through the Partnership way of working.
- To agree an annual work programme and arrange for its on-going review
- To agree appropriate Partnership mechanisms to be used to enhance programme and service delivery, organisational effectiveness and job satisfaction and to address staff issues.
- To review programme and service delivery from internal and external customer/client perspectives.
- To take appropriate initiatives in pursuit of the joint aims of Partnership.
To co-ordinate the development of suitable joint training programmes to support joint decision-making, problem solving and the Partnership way of working.

The Composition of the local Partnership groups will be decided at Regional and Head Office Partnership Group level. In general it is recommended that each Local Partnership Group should be at Operational Unit level in Regions and at Divisional Unit level in Head Office.

Chairpersons

The Local Partnership Group will have rotating chairpersons one of whom will be at management level and the other a nominee of the unions. The chairpersonship will rotate at alternate meetings.

Guidelines for the Establishment of Local Partnership Groups in the Regions

In a regional unit with two or more management staff the staff representation should not exceed twice the number of management members. This may be exceeded only if inclusiveness and geographical representation needs to be accommodated. In a unit with only one management staff the staff representation should not exceed three. This may be exceeded only if inclusiveness and geographical representation needs to be accommodated.

There are eighteen members in total. The Group will be Jointly Chaired by the Director General and the SIPTU Chief Shop Steward in the first instance. There are eight Management Members and eight Union Members.

Composition of Regional Partnership Groups

The composition will be as follows.
The membership will normally be sixteen in total. It will be necessary to increase the Union members in regions with more than one Training Services Unit. Each unit should have one representative. The maximum number is twenty. The group will be jointly chaired by the Regional Director and a SIPTU representative in the first instance. There will be six Management Members and ten Union Members.

Management Members

- Regional Director - Joint Chairperson
- Five Management Staff - one each from Employment Services, Community Services, Training Services, Services to Business, Finance and Administration.

Union Members

- SIPTU - Joint Chairperson (in the first instance)
- One CPSU
- One PSEU
- Seven SIPTU representatives, one each from Community Services, Employment Services, Training Services a Curriculum, and Services to Business (Grades 8, 9, and 10) Finance and Administration. One member to represent Clerical Officers, Administration Assistants and Purchasing. One member to represent General Assistants and Canteen Staff. Where a Clerical Officer comes from FASU any other Clerical Officer members must come from another Unit.
- (One AHCPS - in the event that AHCPS is not represented in the management members an additional place may be provided.)

Composition of Local Partnership Groups

This is to be decided at Regional and Head Office Partnership Group level. In general it is recommended that each Local Partnership Group should be at Operational Unit
level in Regions and at Divisional Unit level in Head Office. There are currently six local Partnership groups in Dublin.

**Chairpersons**

The Local Partnership Group will have rotating chairpersons one of whom will be at management level and the other a nominee of the unions. The chairpersonship will rotate at alternate monthly meetings.

**Guidelines for the Establishment of Local Partnership Groups in the Regions**

In a regional unit with two or more management staff the staff representation should not exceed twice the number of management members. This may be exceeded only if inclusiveness and geographical representation needs to be accommodated. In a unit with only one management staff the staff representation should not exceed three. This may be exceeded only if inclusiveness and geographical representation needs to be accommodated.

**Partnership culture**

The Partnership process will be issue driven. It will support and facilitate the involvement of the staff and management jointly in developing a Partnership culture in FAS. All personnel in FAS will be encouraged to participate personally and directly in enhancing the full range of programmes and services provided by FAS and in improving the quality of working life for all staff.

The structures outlined above are not intended to be the central focus of Partnership. Instead, they are a framework around which Partnership relations and behaviours will be encouraged. While bringing the management and unions together in new points of contact, their overall aim will be to help provide more opportunities for all staff to participate in developments and issues that are important to them and to FAS.
APPENDIX TWO

SURVEY

Section One - Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Information</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender:</strong> Male/Female <em>(Please delete as necessary)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age group:</strong> 20-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Please place an “X” beside the age range)</em></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Grade:</strong> Clerical Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Please place an “X” beside the age range)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length of Service:</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Section Two - Principles

1. Do you have a full understanding of the Partnership process and its implications for you as an employee? *(Please place an “X” beside your answer)*
   - No understanding
   - Some understanding
   - Strong understanding

2. Is the purpose of Partnership in FAS clear to you? *(Please place an “X” beside your answer)*
   - YES
   - NO

3. In your opinion, does Partnership promote workers’ interests in FAS? *(Please place an “X” beside your answer)*
   - YES
   - NO
4. Do you think Partnership has led to greater worker influence?

(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

YES NO

Please explain your answer:-
(Please type your answer here)

5. Do you think Partnership has led to reduced conflict and greater worker satisfaction?

(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

YES NO

Please explain your answer:-
(Please type your answer here)
6. Do you think that Partnership led to increased cooperation and a reduction in conflict?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

YES                      NO

Please explain your answer:-
(Please type your answer here)

7. Has Partnership led to a more balanced representation of interests?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

YES                      NO

Please explain your answer:-
(Please type your answer here)
8. Do you feel that workers in FAS have a greater say in decision making since Partnership?

(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

YES NO

Please explain your answer:-
(Please type your answer here)

---

Section Three - Practices

9. When was your last Partnership workshop?
(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

6-12 months ago 12-18 months ago 18 – 24 months

10. How often do you use the Partnership Intranet site?
(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

Weekly Every fortnight Monthly
Rarely Never

11. How regularly does a Partnership representative communicate to you about the process?
(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

Weekly Every fortnight Monthly
Six Monthly Yearly Little or no communication
If you have any comments you would like to add, please type them here:-

12. Do you think that policies and procedures are more transparent since Partnership evolved?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

More Less The same

Please explain your answer:-
(You can type in space here)

13. Do you feel that communications have improved since the inception of Partnership?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

More Less The same

Please expand on your answer:-
(You can type in the space here)
Section Four - Outcomes

14. Do you feel that Partnership has improved the communication process in FAS?

(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  
No improvement Some improvement Great improvement

Please explain your answer:
(You can type in the space here)

15. Are you familiar with the goal and outcome at the moment of your national Partnership group?

(Please place an “X” beside your answer)

YES NO

16. Do you feel that you have an input into the process of your local Partnership group?

(please place X beside your answer)

YES NO

(If no, please explain your answer, in the space provided)
17. If you have a particular issue you think is important and would like mentioned, do you know how to invoke it at workplace level and how to bring it to the group?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

YES NO

18. Are you aware of the issues discussed at local Partnership meetings?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

YES NO

If no, why do you think this is so (please type answer in the space provided)?

19. How often does a Partnership representative contact you about any issues you may have that you would like to bring to the group?

(Please place an "X" beside your answer)

Regularly Frequently Occasionally Seldom

20. Overall, what is your opinion of Partnership in FAS?

(Please type your answer in the space provided)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://www.ipd.ie/conference1999/

http://www.marshallfoundation.org

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