



Final Report on the Execution of EGF/2009/021IE/SR Technics

This Final Report is being submitted in accordance with Regulation 1927/2006, Article 15(1), which requires Member States to submit a final report on the execution of the financial contribution from the EGF no later than six months after the expiry of the 24-month period of use of the contribution.

As required this Final Report is submitted along with a statement justifying the expenditure.

Addresses for Final Report:

The Director General
Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
European Commission B-1049 Brussels Belgium

EMPL-EGF-Closure@ec.europa.eu

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1927/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, Official Journal of the European Union L 406, 30/12/2006, p. 1.

Section 1 - Identification of the EGF Contribution

1. Name of Member State:

IRELAND

2. Full name and address of the authority submitting this report:

Department of Education and Skills
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

3. EGF reference number:

EGF/2009/021IE/SR Technics

Section 2 – Types of Actions Implemented

4. Cost of Actions

Actions Under Part A please use a separate line for each separate action	Cost of actions - Original Budget as described in the application, and approved through the Decision allocation the EGF Contribution			Cost of actions - Actual Outcome		
	Numbers of workers targeted	Cost per worker targeted	Total cost (EGF and national co-financing)	Numbers of workers assisted	Cost per worker assisted	Total cost (EGF and national co-financing)
	(estimated number) a	(estimate in Euro) b	Euro c=a*b	(number) a	(Euro) b	Euro c=a*b
A. Actions (list individual actions planned) (Art. 3.1)						
FAS Occupational guidance	850	100	85,000	727	34.04	24,748.05
FAS Training courses	789	784	618,310	518	1,087.65	563,405.00
FAS Training Allowances	70	3,863	270,400	144	2,955.38	425,574.00
Redundant SRT Mechanical/Avionic apprentices off the job training	70	7,699	538,930	148	5,691.08	842,280.00
Redundant SRT Mechanical/Avionic apprentices on the job training	37	6,886	254,784	77	948.05	73,000.00
VEC Induction Programme	480	250	120,000	44	288.00	12,672.00
VEC Skills Transfer Programme	162	7,000	1,134,000	12	3,936.05	47,232.56
VEC Digital Competence for Work	108	7,000	756,000	9	5,050.84	45,457.56
VEC Skills for Self Employment	90	7,000	630,000	0	0.00	0.00
EI/CEB Entrepreneurship promotion	850	50	42,500	75	339.53	25,464.42
EI/CEB Entrepreneurship Programme	4	3,000	12,000	0	0.00	0.00
CEB priming/employment grants	20	10,000	200,000	45	12,469.02	561,105.83
EI Feasibility Grants	5	15,000	75,000	0	0.00	0.00
EI Campus Enterprise Programme (CORD)	5	30,000	150,000	0	0.00	0.00
3 rd level Preparatory courses	250	150	37,500	146	67.42	9,844.00
3 rd level Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	250	750	187,500	0	0.00	0.00
3 rd level Mature Student support and materials	250	163	40,750	47	583.40	27,420.00
3 rd level Certificate NFQ level 6 f/t courses in Computing, Engineering, Business and Social Studies	20	7,500	150,000	0	0.00	0.00
3 RD LEVEL Degree NFQ level 7 f/t courses in Computing, Engineering, Business and Social Studies	70	7,500	525,000	14	15665.65	219,319.11
3 rd level Degree NFQ level 8 f/t courses in Computing, Engineering, Business and Social Studies	110	7,500	825,000	64	6,288.60	402,470.24
3 rd level Certificate and Degree NFQ levels 6-8 p/t courses in Computing, Engineering, Business and Social Studies	50	2,750	137,500	24	3816.29	91,591.00
3 rd level – income supports	250	16,900	4,225,000	87	11,940.93	1,038,860.68

<i>Total Workers assisted</i>			756	5,833.92	4,410,444.45
Sub-total Actions	4,790	11,015,174	2,181	2,022.21	4,410,444.45
B. Technical Assistance for implementing EGF (Art. 3.3)					
preparatory		40,000			0
management		230,000			76,320.23
information and publicity		80,000			17,433.72
control activities		90,000			
Sub-total Technical Assistance		440,000			93,753.95
TOTAL COST		11,455,174			4,504,198.40

5. Description of the personalised services to individual workers affected that were actually implemented, with an explanation of any divergences with respect to the application (and Decision on the Financial Contribution Adopted by the Commission):

A wide range of services and interventions aimed at supporting redundant workers and apprentices from SR Technics to return to employment were provided.

As indicated in the EGF Application for SR Technics, the main bodies involved in the preparation and delivery of these services and interventions are:

- I. FÁS – The Irish National Training and Employment Authority;
- II. Enterprise Ireland \ County and City Enterprise Boards (CEB);
- III. Vocational Education Committees (VEC);
- IV. Higher Education Authority (HEA) \ Higher Education Institutions (particularly Institutes of Technology); and,
- V. Private Training Companies.

(i) FÁS

FÁS, the State Training and Employment Authority, delivered guidance services and training interventions, administered the EGF Training Grants, and facilitated redundant apprentices to complete their apprenticeship. The full range of FÁS training programmes was made available to workers and apprentices made redundant by SR Technics. In addition, FÁS had developed a number of training interventions in previous EGF funded programmes which were considered and, where appropriate, implemented for former SR Technics workers and apprentices. EGF clients who availed of FÁS related interventions received Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) certification or industry certification on successful completion of their courses and examinations.

Occupational Guidance

Upon receiving notification of the proposed SR Technics redundancies from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, the Employment Services Unit within FÁS made contact with the company's senior management to discuss the available options and to identify the services which could address the potential needs of the employees being made redundant. The first exploratory meeting took place on 18th February 2009 at the SR Technics facility at Dublin Airport.

A Job Centre was set up at the S R Technics facility in Dublin Airport and FÁS conducted registration and individual occupational guidance from 25th March to 17th April 2009. The interviews were scheduled daily on an appointment

basis. A total of 652 workers and apprentices availed of the on-site FÁS registration service.

Guidance services to redundant workers continued in local FÁS offices. Workers had the opportunity to meet with Employment Services Officers to explore options including specific training programmes, possible employment opportunities, and CV preparation and interviewing skills. For example, CV preparation courses were delivered in the FÁS Baldoyle office to 75 eligible SR Technics workers. Occupational guidance services continued to be provided to redundant workers throughout the implementation period, with many receiving multiple occupational guidance sessions.

Training Programmes

FÁS provided training programmes in its centres in North Dublin and in surrounding areas. FÁS also provided additional training interventions through its contracted training division.

The initial training provision focused on ICT / European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), Heavy Goods Vehicle and bus driving, horticulture and Start Your Own Business. Examples of the training programmes provided in the aviation industry field are Certified Airbus Maintenance Programme, Certified Boeing Maintenance Programme and Fuel Handling Safety Programme. Persons undertaking full-time FÁS courses also qualified for a FÁS Training Allowance.

In addition to the contracted training courses, evening / night courses were also accessed by former SR Technics workers in areas such as ECDL, Start Your Own Business, Safepass workplace safety, Gas Installation, Solar Hot Water Systems Installation, Computerised Accounts, Welding, and Security Guarding.

New Programmes developed by FÁS for EGF Clients

In response to the SR Technics redundancies and with experience from other EGF funded programmes in Ireland and to meet the emerging needs of EGF clients, FÁS introduced a number of initiatives in order to provide a more flexible response to clients within the timeframe laid down by the Fund.

EGF Training Grant: This grant facilitates applicants to participate in accredited training courses outside of those services provided by FÁS and other State Agencies. These courses were available from private training colleges or sector specific providers on a short term or more long term duration up to FETAC Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or equivalent. The grant meets the fee component and learning materials specified by the provider for the course.

Mechanic/Avionic Apprentice On and Off the Job Training: The initial redundancies included 60 apprentices in either their second or

third year of apprenticeship and although it had initially been hoped that these would be facilitated to complete their on-the-job training, ultimately this proved not to be the case.

The national Standards Based Apprenticeship System is based on 7 alternating phases of on-the-job (phases 1, 3, 5 and 7) and off-the-job (2, 4 and 6) training. SR Technics apprentices needed to complete Phases 5 and 7 on-the-job with a break in between to complete Phase 6 (generally 14 weeks) off-the-job training. Whereas the off-the-job phases could be pursued through the Institutes of Technology, the challenge was to find a suitable employer from within a highly specialised sector to accommodate the on-the-job phases 5 and 7.

Resulting from comprehensive negotiations between FÁS, the Irish Air Corps under the auspices of the Department of Defence and in consultation with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, FÁS in conjunction with the Air Corps developed an innovative on-the-job training placement to facilitate redundant SR Technics apprentices to complete their apprenticeships. The Air Corps has a highly skilled body of aircraft maintenance personnel and it trains its own personnel to the highest standards, being one of the few employers of aircraft mechanics in the country. This unique co-operative undertaking is understood to be the first time that civilian apprentices were able to complete their on-the-job training at a Defence Forces facility. Off-the-job training was provided to these apprentices in between the on-the-job work placement phases in the Dublin Institute of Technology at Phases 4 and 6 of the apprenticeship cycle.

(ii) Enterprise Ireland / City and County Enterprise Boards

The role of County and City Enterprise Boards (CEB) is to assist the start-up, expansion, or development of small businesses. CEBs offer a range of supports to people seeking to become self-employed or establish an enterprise under the S R Technics EGF programme.

One of the initial options offered to redundant SR Technics workers was to examine the possibility of setting up their own businesses where appropriate. The County and City Enterprise Boards participated in the initial open day information fair held to showcase EGF related supports across the range of service providers in the ALSAA complex at Dublin Airport on 9th December 2009 and again at the second such event held on 20th October 2010. Given its geographic proximity, Fingal County Enterprise Board coordinated the promotion and roll out of such entrepreneurship opportunities on behalf of relevant regional CEBs.

Following the December 2009 open day event, two mail shots were circulated to almost 1,000 former SR Technics workers. Advertisements of the services available were also placed in national and local newspapers.

Support included individual assistance with completing the business application process, provision of mentors to aid and assist with the development of business plans, training in financial management, web design and related training. Grants were provided for self-employment costs and start up costs.

(iii) Vocational Education Committees (VEC)

The VECs offered training programmes at levels 3-5 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The City of Dublin VEC, County Dublin VEC, Meath and Louth VECs, in partnership with Fastrack Information Technology (FIT), formed a working group to address the needs of redundant SR Technics workers.

Initially 12 possible programmes were identified and following the second Open Day Information Fair in ALSAA in October 2010 where 220 eligible workers attended and were offered pre-programme consultations, 4 programmes were then identified. 85 workers were invited to attend for one-to-one guidance, of whom 44 attended. Ultimately two Level 5 programmes were developed in PC Maintenance and Green Technology.

(iv) Higher Education (Third Level)

In order to facilitate any redundant SR Technics workers who wished to explore the possibilities of obtaining a higher education qualification to enhance their employability, the Higher Education Authority (HEA), through its network of third level institutions, facilitated such third level institutions to deliver courses to eligible workers. They also participated in the initial 2009 open day information fair held in the ALSAA complex.

The three main providers of third level courses were Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), Institute of Technology Carlow and All Hallows College. Relevant courses were identified by all three institutions and this led to a number of former SR Technics workers obtaining further qualifications that ultimately led to employment opportunities.

In the case of DIT, three courses were aimed at former SR Technics workers:

- an Engineering System Maintenance programme was specifically designed to meet the increasing demands on maintenance technologists;
- a BEngTech Aviation Technology course aimed at meeting the employment needs of the aviation sector by providing graduates with a degree level qualification; and,
- a Transport Operations and Technology course covered that road, rail, air and sea transport from both operational and technological perspectives.

The Institute of Technology Carlow provided the Certificate in Technical Aircraft Management Programme which retrained skilled workers from SR Technics to allow them seek employment in the Aircraft Leasing sector as Technical Representatives.

Other former S R Technics workers participated, for example, in an engineering degree programme in Mechatronics at the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown.

Three learning assessment seminars of two days duration were held at All Hallows College (affiliated to Dublin City University) and run in conjunction with various other third level colleges. Some 146 redundant workers participated in the seminars and subsequently in the case of All Hallows College, a new programme Adult Learning BA for Personal and Professional Development (ALBA) was initiated, which was offered at Level 6, 7 and 8 of the NFQ for the eligible S R Technics redundant workers. The programme is accredited by Dublin City University and is aimed to assist mature students seeking a third level qualification.

(v) Private Training Suppliers

Private providers of training services were engaged by FÁS Contracted Training to provide training to former SR Technics workers. In addition, EGF training grants were provided to enable former SR Technics workers to access training on an individualised basis with private providers of training services. The courses for which such grants were provided were for qualifications up to FETAC Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or equivalent. The EGF Training Grant met the fee component and learning materials specified by the provider for the course.

A total of 234 EGF training grants were provided.

6. Dates on which the actions (personalised services to workers affected) commenced, and ended:

EGF co-financing for services to workers affected began on 25th March 2009 and continued until the 8th October 2011. Services to affected workers that continued beyond 8th October 2011 were financed by national funds. For example, an additional year of higher education provision for eligible S R Technics workers studying at All Hallows College was supported through Government funding to enable these particular EGF beneficiaries to progress more substantially in their education.

7. Details of any preparatory, management, information and publicity, and control activities required for implementing the EGF assistance that the Member State financed with EGF assistance:

Preparatory

In the case of SR Technics the preparatory work was substantially undertaken by the Managing Authority, Department of Education and Skills supplemented by work undertaken by State Agencies and these costs were absorbed by the relevant organisations.

Management

In the case of SR Technics there was no dedicated co-ordination unit set up and management activities were undertaken directly by the Managing Authority. In June 2011, following a public procurement process, the Department of Education and Skills contracted WRC Social and Economic Consultants to act as the Administrative and Technical Support Unit (ATSU). The main task of the ATSU was to assist the Managing Authority in the compilation of relevant data and financial information and to draft the Closure Report on the SR Technics Programme. Costs incurred in relation to this contract covering the period June 2011 to 8 October 2011 are included in this category.

Information and Publicity

Details on the publicity associated with the SR Technics EGF programme are outlined in Section 7 below.

Section 3 – Workers Benefiting from the Actions Implemented

8. Information on Workers who Benefited from the EGF Contribution (Please note the figures provided in Column B in the table below correspond to those contained in the application for EGF assistance.)

Categories of workers affected by the redundancies included in this Application.		Categories of workers targeted for assistance under this Application	Categories of workers who actually benefited from the assistance under this Application
Job Titles	Column A Number	Column B Number	Column C Number
Analyst	2	2	0
Carpenter	2	1	1
Clerical	116	86	59
Controller	15	11	7
Customer Service	2	2	2
Engineer – Avionic / Mechanical	179	134	150
Engineer -Electrical	26	19	15
Engineer - Radio	2	2	0
Engineer – Wood and Plastic	9	7	6
Finance	2	2	1
HR and Training	13	10	6
Manager – Materials / Data	7	5	3
Manager – Planning	194	145	49
Manager – QA	7	5	2
Manager – Supply	15	11	1
Manager – Technical	20	15	15
Mechanics, Apprentices and Assistants	392	294	243
Painter	13	10	7
Sheet Metal Worker	100	75	33
Stores	15	11	9
Technicians – Instrumentation	4	3	4
Not Available	0	0	143
Total	1,135	850	756

Gender	Men	1,065	797	712
	Women	70	53	44
Nationality	EU Citizen	1,135	850	756
	Non-EU citizen	0	0	0
Age	15 – 24 (<25)	43	32	43
	25 – 54	725	543	450
	55 – 64 (>=55)	353	265	248
	65 + (>=55)	14	10	15
Workers with a longstanding health problem or disability		Not available	Not available	Not available
Membership of a recognised minority (ethnic, religious, etc) (according to national rules)		Not Available		Total % Women
Education Attainment	Primary or lower secondary education (ISCED 1 and 2)			Total % Women
				332 2.1
	Upper secondary education (ISCED 3) (Level 4/5)			Total % Women
				244 9.0
	Post-secondary non tertiary education (ISCED 4) (Level 6)			Total % Women
			82 8.5	
	Tertiary education (ISCED 5 and 6) (Level 7, 8, 9, 10)			Total % Women
				69 11.6
	Attainment level not available			Total % Women
				29 0.0
Status on the Labour Market on completion of the assistance	Employed			Total % Women
				334 6.6
	Of which Self-employed			Total % Women
				44 0.0
	Unemployed			Total % Women
				260 4.6
	Inactive			Total % Women
				162 6.2
	Of which inactive in education or training			Total % Women
				74 5.4

Section 4 – Main outcomes

9. Outcomes in respect of the regional or local economic situation in the territory or territories concerned:

In total, the SR Technics EGF programme supported 2,181 interventions for 756 individual EGF eligible workers across the full range of guidance, education, training and enterprise supports.

To assess the main employment outcomes of the EGF supported interventions for former SR Technics workers, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) provided flow data on workers made redundant during the four month reference period (3rd April to 2nd August 2009) at two points in time, September 2009 (following the redundancy event) and March 2012. These data show that, in September 2009, 626 former SR Technics workers were in receipt of an unemployment related welfare payment. By March 2012, approximately six months following the cessation of EGF funded interventions, the number in receipt of an unemployment related welfare payment had fallen to 331. In overall terms, the data indicate that during a period of rising unemployment there was a 47.1% decline in the number of former SR Technics workers in receipt of an unemployment related payment.

The figures provided by the DSP do not enable a direct quantification of the employment outcomes to be identified. They do, however, suggest that the majority of SR Technics workers obtained employment subsequent to being made redundant and that, in many cases, employment was found relatively quickly. Evidence for the latter is provided by the following: just 626 of the 1,135 workers made redundant by SR Technics were in receipt of an unemployment related payment in September 2009.

To further assess the employment impact of the EGF supported interventions, a survey of 983 former SR Technics workers and apprentices was undertaken by the Administrative and Technical Support Unit to the EGF Managing Authority. The survey methodology included a postal questionnaire and a free phone response option. The survey was undertaken in late January / early February 2012. The main results of this survey concerning labour market status are presented in tabular form below.

Labour Market Status of all SR Technics Workers and Apprentices (January / February, 2012)	%
Employed	42.5
Self-employed	4.5
In Education or Training	7.6
Unemployed	32.7
Inactive	12.7
All	100.0

Using the survey data, the employment rate among former SR Technics workers is estimated to be 47.0%. Of these, one in ten (10.7%) are self-employed. A further 7.6% are estimated to be participating in an education or training programme. Just under one third are estimated to be unemployed (32.7%) or inactive (12.6%).

The results of the survey indicate that 75.0% were recipients of an EGF supported intervention. This corresponds to 788 workers and apprentices – a figure very close to the actual beneficiaries as identified in Section 3 above. The following table presents the labour market outcomes found among beneficiaries of EGF supported interventions.

Labour Market Status of Beneficiaries of EGF Supported Interventions (January / February 2012)	%
Employed	39.0
Self-employed	5.1
In Education or Training	9.8
Unemployed	34.4
Inactive / Other	11.7
All	100.0

The employment rate among beneficiaries of EGF supported interventions is 44.1%. Just over one in 10 of beneficiaries (11.5%) in employment are estimated to be self-employed. In terms of absolute numbers (i.e., 40) this closely corresponds to the number of former SR Technics workers provided with enterprise supports by the County and City Enterprise Boards (i.e., 44). A further one in 10 (9.8%) of beneficiaries of EGF supported intervention were participating in education or training interventions at the time of the survey. Included in this figure are persons concluding third level programmes currently being funded by the Exchequer. Just over one third (34.4%) of beneficiaries are estimated to be unemployed with a further 11.7% being inactive.

10. Principal lessons learned with regard to interventions to assist workers affected by mass redundancies:

This was the third EGF funded programme in Ireland and the various Government Departments, State Agencies and other organisations involved in its delivery continued to develop and implement existing and new services to redundant workers that were effective.

The two open day information fairs held in December 2009 and October 2010 provided opportunities for former SR Technics workers to interact with all service providers and to make informed decisions about the services they wished to avail of. Further innovative use of ICT in communicating with

redundant workers should be considered as a means of maintaining contact between service providers and redundant workers. Examples include text messaging and social media (see examples in Section 7 below)

Clear communications between state agencies, service providers and affected workers during the application, approval and delivery stages is central to ensuring an effective programme of personalised supports is designed and implemented. However, unlike in the Waterford Crystal and Dell programmes no dedicated Co-ordination Unit for the SR Technics programme was provided. It is clear now that the presence of such units can provide the basis for a far more co-ordinated approach across service providers and also ensure an adequate flow of information in relation to programme progress.

Identifying relevant interventions that can be accessed soon after redundancy is critical. The earliest possible intervention with redundant workers is important in attempting to ensure a rapid return to employment and preventing long-term unemployment.

Providing ongoing guidance and support is important. On an ongoing basis, however, more attention is needed in tracking whether or not the interventions accessed by workers are resulting in positive transitions to employment. This is particularly the case for workers not obtaining employment in a reasonable period following participation in an intervention. Follow-up of such workers should be done in a systematic and supportive manner.

On a technical issue, it would be helpful if the period of eligibility for EGF technical assistance extended beyond the deadline for eligibility for interventions. This would allow for greater support of the necessary management and oversight inputs required in closing an EGF programme and submission of a final report (e.g. involvement of external auditors).

Section 5 – Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

11. Steps taken to ensure that the principles of equality of treatment and non-discrimination were respected in the implementation of, and access to, assistance from the EGF:

All EGF clients were contacted and offered assistance on the same basis and were eligible for the same level of supports.

Service providers selected candidates for courses according to their normal selection criteria and in accordance with their policies on Equal Opportunities as informed by National Legislation and good practice.

Courses were provided by FÁS at various times of the day, where feasible,

including in the evening/night, in an effort to ensure the widest availability and accessibility to clients, including women. In this context, also, child care supports were provided to eligible clients who needed to avail of them in order to complete their EGF co-financed intervention.

Furthermore a number of courses were delivered on a distance learning basis in order to facilitate clients who could not attend on site.

Section 6 – Complementarity

12. Complementarity with assistance provided by other Community instruments, in particular the European Social Fund:

The upskilling, retraining and enterprise supports that were made available to EGF clients complemented the broad range of ESF and ERDF supported activities normally available to unemployed people. Assistance from the EGF facilitated a focused delivery of supports to redundant SR Technics workers and apprentices at a time when increasing unemployment had resulted in an increased demand for unemployment services. It also allowed for the development of a number of new, tailored measures specifically targeted at redundant workers and apprentices eligible for EGF co-financing.

These measures included:

- the provision of an EGF training grant to facilitate applicants to participate in accredited training courses (up to FETAC Level 6) outside of those services provided by FÁS and other State agencies
- The targeting and facilitation of specific and flexible higher education courses for the benefit of redundant S R Technics workers.
- the opportunity to consider alternative solutions to specific problems created by the redundancies and the focus on organisations working together e.g. the unique opportunity for aviation apprentices to finish their on-the-job training by working in the Irish Air Corps.
- prioritised assistance from County and City Enterprise Boards for the EGF eligible redundant workers, particularly for new enterprises servicing the locally traded services sector outside the normally ERDF funded supports.

13. Description of the mechanisms by which the managing authority for the EGF assistance has ensured that the assistance complements actions of the Member State at national, regional and local level, including those co-financed by the EU Structural

Funds:

1. Measures were delivered with the support of local, regional and national service providers on a coordinated basis to ensure complementarity with extra-EGF programmes.
2. The relevant Government Departments and State Agencies worked together during the preparation of the EGF application and throughout the implementation period. On an ongoing bi-lateral basis these agencies liaised as appropriate with the EGF Managing Authority. This allowed the relevant Departments and agencies to coordinate their activities over the range of education, training and enterprise supports and to ensure that EGF-supported activities complemented other measures being undertaken both on a regional and sectoral basis, including measures supported by the ESF, ERDF etc.
3. Many of the State Agencies involved in the delivery of services to the redundant workers had extensive experience of working with multiple funding streams and were very aware of the need to ensure complementarity and to establish controls and procedures to ensure, especially in the case of EU funding, that there was a clear complementarity between services being provided.

14. Description of the mechanisms by which the managing authority for the EGF assistance has ensured that the specific actions receiving a contribution under the EGF did not also receive assistance from other Community financial instruments:

The financial management and control system for EGF co-financed projects in Ireland is based on the principle of shared responsibilities by way of delegation and administrative agreements within a 'cascade' system. Each level of the cascade takes responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the financial management and control system are adhered to at their own levels and that EGF and national rules are complied with.

The EGF claims validation process, as operated by the Managing Authority, provides for confirmation that there has been no double funding.

The EGF Certifying Authority and the primary independent body that performed the second level controls on EGF expenditure are also key bodies in the certification of ESF expenditure, which is considered the main other Community financial instrument that could co-finance EGF type expenditure. This oversight of both EGF and ESF across both these funds decreases the risk of double funding of expenditure from other Community financial instruments and increases the overall assurances of the eligibility of EGF expenditure.

Agencies delivering services to eligible beneficiaries under the EGF have previous experience of delivering services funded through the EU and have procedures in place to ensure the risk of double funding is minimised.

Section 7 – Information and Publicity

- 15. Description of the specific activities that the Member State carried out in order to provide information on and publicise the funded actions, including the mechanisms used to highlight the role of the Community and ensure that the contribution from the EGF is visible. Please provide examples of publicity materials where possible.**

National Level

The role of the Community in all EGF-related activities has been emphasised at national, regional and local levels. The Community's contribution has been highlighted by Departments and State Agencies at all appropriate occasions, including during parliamentary questions and debates as well as at information events.

FÁS played a key role in interacting at an early stage with eligible SR Technics workers, including meeting them on-site at Dublin Airport before redundancies took place. Subsequent open day information fairs were held at the ALSAA complex at Dublin Airport in December 2009 and October 2010 and the role of the EGF was highlighted at these events.

As each individual service provider began to engage with the eligible redundant workers, communications such as text messages, e-mails, brochures, flyers, advertisements and application/course material recognised and highlighted the role of the EGF.

At service provider level this included:

- briefings on EGF implementation plan to internal stakeholders (e.g. service providers and intermediate bodies);
- training and awareness programmes for front line staff; and,
- EGF activity updates to the Managing Authority

When offering or highlighting relevant measures from service providers, the EGF logo was prominently displayed in publicity materials including on letterheads, posters, brochures, advertisements and application forms.

Examples of specific information and publicity initiatives include:

- Redundant SR Technics workers were invited by FÁS to an Open Day Information Fair on the 9th December 2009 in the ALSAA complex at Dublin Airport. This day consisted of all participating organisations, (including FÁS, the Higher Education Authority, Enterprise Ireland, CEBs and various Institutes of Technology) providing information through their on-site representatives. For example, Dublin City University and All Hallows College provided information on proposed Learning Assessment Seminars.
- Following approval of the SR Technics EGF Programme by the European Commission, a second Open Day Information Fair was held at the ALSAA complex in October 2010 where all organisations (as outlined above plus the further education sector) involved in the provision of services to redundant SR Technics workers provided opportunities for workers to obtain information on the range of services available to them.
- A series of Learning Assessment Seminars were carried out in All Hallows College in January 2010. These seminars facilitated the former SR Technics workers in considering the value of further education etc. Some 146 workers attended these seminars. Each seminar took two days with lunch provided for the participants. Each seminar accommodated approximately 20 participants.
- Four Vocational Education Committees (County Dublin VEC, City of Dublin VEC, County Meath VEC and County Louth VEC) and FIT (Fastrack to IT) worked in partnership to identify relevant vocational/educational programmes to up-skill ex-employees of SR Technics. To support their information and publicity activities they adopted the following methods of communicating with the former SR Technics workers:
 - Direct Mailing Information Day Flyer and RSVP Postcard
 - Facebook - Through the SR Technics Workers Facebook page and one set up by the VEC/FIT Partnership.
 - Text Messaging and emailing - Via Two SR Technics Workers who liaised with the VEC/FIT partnership.
 - Letters informing of courses on offer through a database gathered on foot of the open day information fair, October 20th 2010.

Section 8 – Management and financial control of the assistance

16. Please detail any changes in the management and control systems as compared to the description provided in the application, specifically any changes in:

16.1. The organisation of the managing and paying authorities and intermediate bodies, of the management and control systems in

place in these authorities and bodies

As detailed in the application form, the management and control structures established and operated for the purposes of the EGF in Ireland endeavour to use the experience and benefits of structures employed in the longer established ESF programme, with modifications as appropriate.

At the time the SR Technics application was submitted in October 2009, the Employment and Training Strategy Unit (ETSU) of the then Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment was the authority responsible for the management and financial control of the EGF. In May 2010, as a result of a Government decision, those functions were transferred to the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Accordingly, responsibility for the management and financial control of the EGF transferred with ETSU to DES. At the same time the training functions of FÁS, came under the authority of the DES.

Also, with formal effect from 1 January 2012, responsibility for FÁS employment services and employment programmes functions of FÁS have been transferred to the Department of Social Protection.

ETSU (subsequently renamed the EGF Managing Authority in 2011) acts as the national Managing Authority (MA) for the delivery of personalised services and technical assistance measures under the auspices of the EGF and for ensuring the proper financial control of funds expended under the EGF.

A number of Intermediate Bodies (IBs) were delegated by the MA to validate EGF claims for reimbursement from Public Beneficiary Bodies (PBBs) and to ensure that those organisations and bodies with responsibility for the oversight of service delivery have adequate monitoring and control procedures in place.

The ESF Certifying Authority in the ESF Policy/Operation Section in DES was designated as the EGF Certifying Authority (CA).

The NDP/Structural Funds Unit in DES was assigned primary responsibility for carrying out the second stage (Ex-Post) checks. This body is functionally independent from the management and payment of monies under EGF programmes.

In June 2011, following a public procurement process, the DES signed a Framework Contract with WRC Social and Economic Consultants, for the provision of services as the Administrative and Technical Support Unit (ATSU) for EGF programmes in Ireland. The first specific contract under this framework was for the closure of the SR Technics EGF Programme, including assistance in producing this Final Report.

16.2. The functions vested in them

The main role of the MA is to verify that the programme of personalised services and supports, co-financed through the EGF, has been properly delivered and to ensure that the services rendered are fully supported by verifiably accurate documentation. The MA examines and pays EGF claims submitted by IBs on behalf of PBBs, certifying that:

- it has reasonable assurance that management and control procedures are in place at the IB and;
- steps, including sample checking of information held by the IB and the PBB, have been taken to give a reasonable assurance that the amount of expenditure returned is correct.

IBs are responsible for the claiming of EGF funding from the MA and in most cases for its disbursement to the PBBs (in some cases payments were made directly by the MA to the relevant PBB following IB claims validation). IBs are also responsible for verifying that the purpose, scope and scale of the funding is appropriate within the terms of the EGF programme. In addition, IBs ensure that monitoring and adequate recording and internal control procedures in relation to all EGF-related expenditure and claims are established by PBBs and duly documented.

The CA is responsible for the certification of expenditure statements related to EGF co-financed measures. In doing so, the CA satisfies itself on compliance with all requirements relating to the accuracy, legality, eligibility and regularity of the expenditure.

The NDP/Structural Funds Unit gains reasonable assurance that the declaration of final expenditure by the PBB is accurate and supported by a clear audit trail and makes a formal declaration to the MA of the total amount of eligible expenditure.

16.3. The allocation of functions between or within their departments, including between the managing and paying authority where they are the same body

The Secretary General, in her capacity as Accounting Officer for the DES with responsibility for EGF, has delegated specific responsibility for certifying claims to appropriate officers at various levels of the “cascade” arrangement through statutory Assignment of Responsibilities of Functions Orders under the Public Service Management Act 1997. This includes delegated orders to officers responsible for the EGF CA, EGF MA, the functionally independent second stage control body and various IBs. This ensures that decisions of these officers cannot be overruled or unduly influenced by more senior officers in the management chain and thus underpins their authority and the

segregation of duties and control within the Department during the implementation of EGF programmes.

In addition, and as outlined under paragraph 16.1, a number of IBs have been formally delegated to carry out various EGF roles and responsibilities by the MA under Administrative Agreements.

16.4. The procedures by which claims for reimbursement of expenditure are received, verified, and validated, and by which payments to beneficiaries are authorised, executed and accounted for

The process of reimbursing and verifying EGF-supported expenditure is carried out in two stages.

- the first stage involves checks carried out during the period of eligible expenditure on receipt of interim claims (Ex Ante);
- the second stage involves checks carried out following the end of the period of eligible expenditure at the time of the declaration by the PBB of total EGF expenditure during the programme (Ex Post)

Ex Ante:

PBBs report expenditure to the IBs. PBBs may make claims for the drawdown of spent or committed monies on a regular basis as agreed with IBs and the MA.

IBs certify that management and control procedures are in place in PBBs and that steps, including the checking of sample information, have been taken to give reasonable assurance that the amount of expenditure returned is correct, before verifying and reporting the expenditure to the MA.

The MA verifies that management and control procedures are in place in IBs and that steps, including the checking of sample information, have been taken to give reasonable assurance that the amount of expenditure returned is correct. The MA may also, as and when appropriate, carry out visits to selected PBB sites to satisfy itself as to the adequacy of their management and financial controls.

Providing reasonable assurance has been given on the accuracy of the interim claim by the IB, the MA sign and authorise payment of interim claims to the appropriate body.

Ex Post:

The Ex-post verification of the final expenditure checks takes place after the eligible implementation period.

The second level Ex-Post checks are primarily performed by the

NDP/Structural Funds Unit (Department of Education and Skills). This Unit is not involved in the EGF management or any Ex-Ante payment controls checks and is, therefore, clearly separated from same. The Unit ensures that the declaration of final expenditure by the PBB in respect of all paid interim claims is accurate and supported by a clear audit trail. The Unit makes a formal declaration to the MA of the total amount of eligible expenditure. In the case of the SR Technics EGF Programme expenditure included for EGF co-financing, a total of 18.66% of expenditure has been subject to 2nd level controls to source documentation by NDP/SF Unit.

The MA, if it considers it appropriate, may also carry out a site visit to a PBB to look more closely at its declared final expenditure as part of the third level Ex-post controls.

Additionally, and separate to the work carried out by the NDP/SF Unit, for each final claim/expenditure report, consideration is given by the MA regarding the level of audit by independent internal bodies or external auditors that should be carried out prior to certification of the final consolidated expenditure report to the CA.

In the case of the SR Technics programme, additional second level Ex-post controls were performed within the higher education area by an external audit company and by a body within the Department of Social Protection that is functionally independent of the EGF management and any Ex-ante payment control checks carried out within that Department on Back to Education Allowance expenditure.

Once it has received reasonable assurance that the final declared amount of expenditure is accurate, the MA reports to the CA that effective steps have been taken to give a reasonable assurance that the amount of final expenditure returned by the PBB and declared by the relevant IB and verified by the NDP/SF Unit is correct. The MA then declares that final total expenditure to the CA for certification.

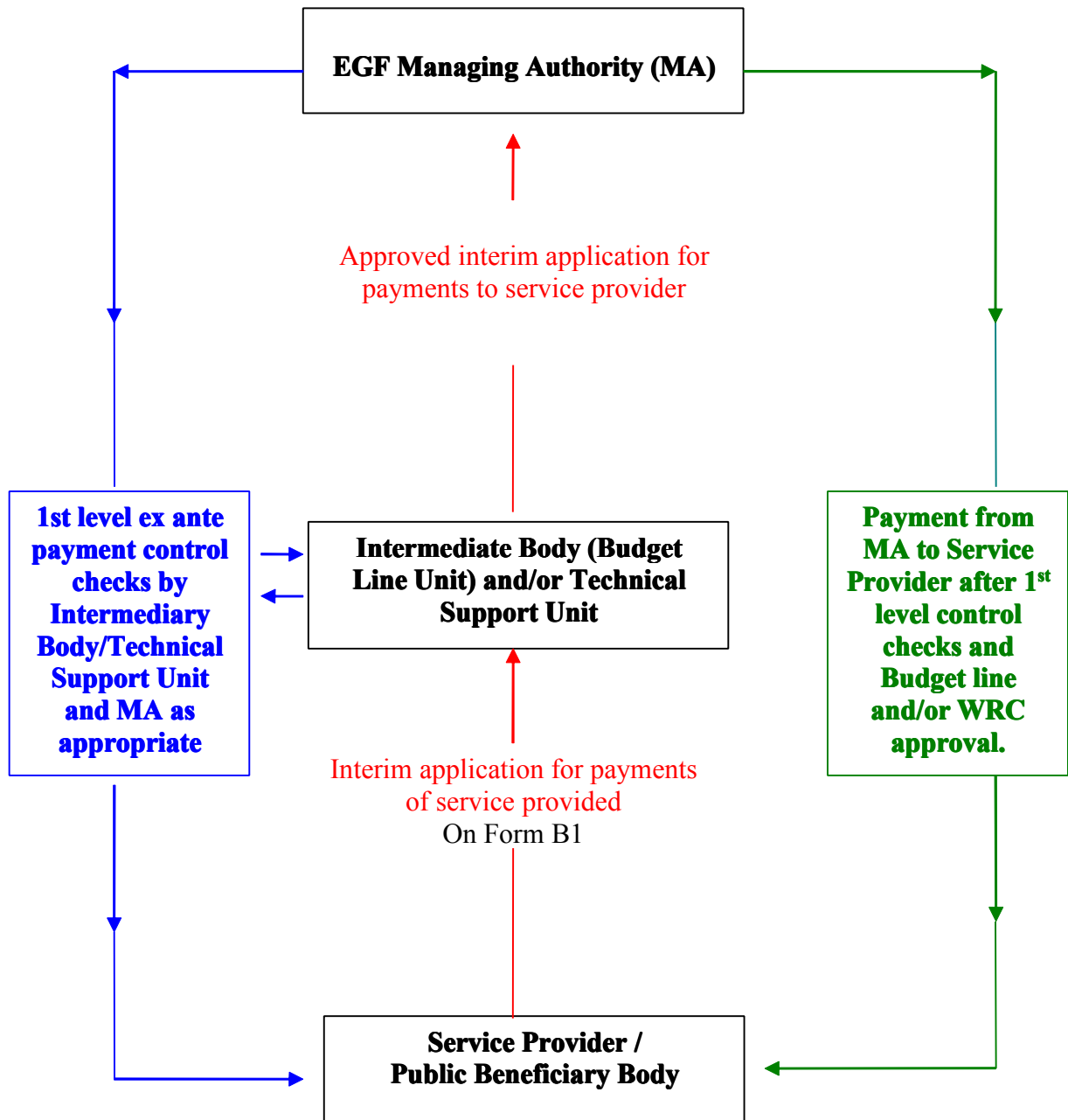
Before the CA certifies the statement justifying the expenditure in the final report, in line with Article 15 of EU Regulation 1927/2006; it carries out its third level Ex-post controls to gain reasonable assurance;

- that the expenditure is accurate, results from reliable accounting systems and is based on verifiable supporting documents and complies with applicable European Community and National rules,
- that expenditure has been incurred in respect of operations selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the EGF programme,
- that it has received adequate information from the MA on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure

- included in the statements of expenditure.
- By taking account of the results of all control checks carried out on the expenditure.

The operation of the reporting cascade at both Ex Ante and Ex Post levels is detailed in the following organisation charts:

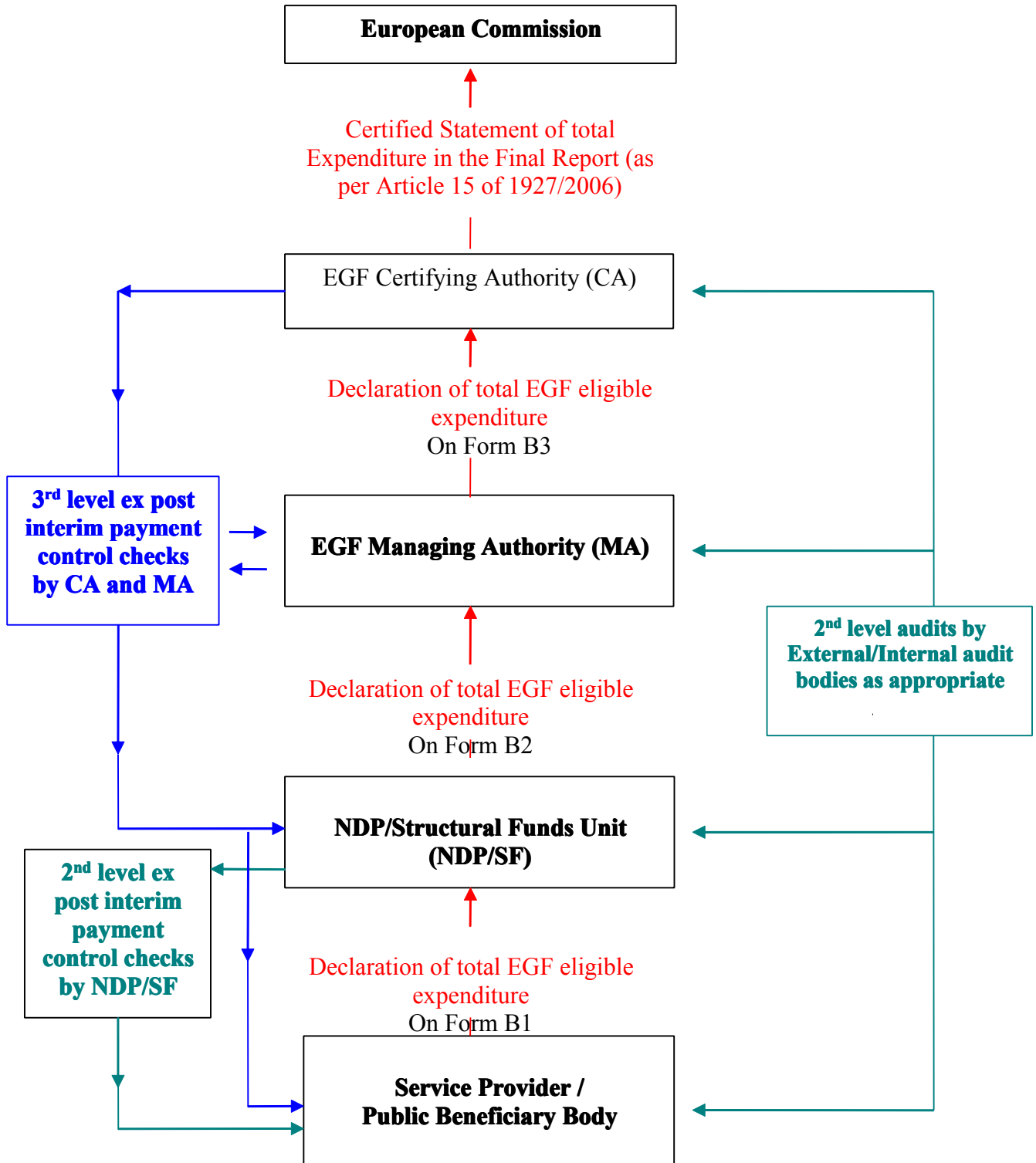
EGF Financial Management and Control Systems Controls before EGF Payments by Managing Authority Ex Ante Checks (1st Level)



1. Interim application for payment to Service Providers
2. 1st level ex ante interim payment control checks
3. Payment by Managing Authority to Service Providers

EGF Financial Management and Control Systems Controls before Certification of EGF Expenditure to Commission

Ex Post Checks (2nd and 3rd Levels)



1. Declaration of total EGF expenditure for submission to European Commission
2. 2nd level ex post interim payment audit checks
3. 3rd level ex post interim payment control checks

The EGF financial and control structure have been subject to systems audits by the European Commission (in respect of the Waterford Crystal programme) and the DES Internal Audit Unit and.

- (a) The systems audit carried out by the European Commission took place between 19 September 2011 and 23 September 2011. The final report issued on 18 December 2011. The objective of the audit mission was to examine actions financed by the EGF and the functioning of the management and control systems for actions supported by the EGF. The actions falling within the scope of the systems audit were the management and control systems for EGF Waterford Crystal programme. However, as common controls and bodies exist in the other EGF programmes, it is considered appropriate that assurance over common areas of the SR Technics controls systems can be drawn from same. The audit report concludes that, notwithstanding an inadequate design of control for ensuring that the number of redundancies is correct, the management and control system is being implemented in compliance with Article 18 of Regulation 1927/2006 with regular and structured communication on the execution of the EGF assistance on regional and local level, and adequate control strategy including controls at the beneficiary level.
- (b) The systems audit carried out by the DES Internal Audit Unit took place between 6 September and 3 November 2011. The objective of the audit mission was to examine the effectiveness of the management and control systems and to assess the current level of assurance which can be attributed to the systems in place and to make any recommendations considered appropriate. The scope of the systems audit was confined to the management and control systems operating within the CA/MA and was not confined to any specific EGF programme. It examined and evaluated the effectiveness of the management and control systems in place and particularly in relation to appropriate internal controls, compliance with EU Regulations 1927/2006 and 546/2009, procurement rules and data protection guidelines.

The methodology set out in 'Guidance document on management verifications to be carried out by Member States on operations co-financed by the Structural Fund and the Cohesion Fund for the 2007-2013 programming period' (COCOF 08/0019/01-EN) issued by the Commission which outlines the key requirements of management and control systems for European Social Funds (ESF), was used to assess the control systems put in place by the MA and CA for the EGF programme.

A report was duly issued by the Internal Audit Unit on 12 March 2012. This audit concluded that the residual risk to regularity was low¹, that the systems work but some improvements are needed² and that, in the opinion of the Internal Audit Unit, the internal control systems and procedures within the EGF Certifying and Managing Authorities are adequate.

16.5. The provisions and timetable for the verification of management and control systems

Within the Internal Audit Unit's systems audit report, a number of important procedural matters were highlighted for addressing by both the EGF Certifying and Managing Authorities with the Internal Audit Unit making a number of recommendations in this regard. A timetable for implementing the relevant recommended actions was established and is being followed by the EGF Certifying and Managing Authorities.

16.6. The arrangements for preventing, detecting and correcting irregularities as defined in Article 70 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 and recovering as well as reimbursing amounts unduly paid together with interest on late payments in accordance with the same Article

The arrangement for preventing and detecting irregularities has been set out under paragraphs 16.1 to 16.4. Any overstatements of expenditure detected during the controls carried out are automatically excluded and, therefore, no amounts in the final report and statement of expenditure are considered pending recovery or reimbursement amounts.

17. Details of any irregularities detected, including:

None

17.1. Nature of the irregularity

Not applicable

17.2. EGF amount concerned

Not applicable

17.3. Date of notification to OLAF

¹ Second of four possible options available (1) Very low, **(2) Low**, (3) Medium and (4) High.

² Second of four possible options available (1) Works well. Only minor improvements are needed, **(2) Works, but some improvements needed**, (3) Works partially. Substantial improvements are needed and (4) Essentially does not work.

Not applicable.

17.3. Outcome, including details of any recoveries made.

Not applicable.