The State Laboratory
An tSaotharlann Stáit

Excellence and Innovation in Chemistry

Strategy Statement 2020-2023

Contents

I am delighted to present this Statement of Strategy for the State Laboratory, which sets out the goals and strategies of the Laboratory for the period 2020 – 2023.

The State Laboratory made excellent progress during the lifetime of its previous strategy statement and developed and expanded the highly specialised analytical service that it provides to its clients. The highlights included a 24% increase in the level of testing performed, with 184 new tests developed over the three year period. The scope of accreditation was also increased to include seven additional test methods and 71 additional analytes. Great progress was also made with updating the ICT infrastructure, to make it much more robust and secure and support business continuity and the health and safety culture has greatly benefited from the recruitment of a qualified health and safety manager in 2019.

The focus for the coming years will be to continue to innovate and develop the laboratory's capability and expertise and to adopt a project management approach to implement changes and improve processes.

The State Laboratory receives very high satisfaction ratings from its clients in its annual Customer Satisfaction surveys. This reflects the high quality, responsive and expert scientific service provided and it is the Laboratory's mission to continue to provide the same high standards of customer service.

The Laboratory has also forged links with many other public sector laboratories over recent years and it has found these contacts to be very beneficial for enhancing knowledge and sharing experiences. This close collaboration will continue into the future, both nationally and internationally.

Since 2015, the Laboratory has recruited a large cohort of new staff and many long-serving members of staff have been promoted into new roles. A major priority for the Laboratory over the coming years will be to implement a People and Culture Strategy that will develop and retain a highly skilled and engaged workforce and promote a positive and interesting work environment for staff that supports their well-being.

Ita Kinahan,
State Chemist

Our Mission

To provide a world-class analytical chemistry and advisory service to the State, supporting government, protecting consumers, preventing fraud and safeguarding public health

Our Vision

To be a centre of excellence for chemical analysis and innovation, serving the State

Our Values

The State Laboratory will foster and promote:

- A quality and responsive customer service
- A culture of innovation and continuous improvement
- A collaborative work environment where people are treated with dignity and respect
- The highest standards of professionalism and scientific excellence
- A public service ethos of independence, integrity and impartiality
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money

High Level Objective

To provide a high quality, innovative and responsive chemical analysis and advisory service to Government Departments and Offices that supports national food and feed safety programmes; revenue collection; fraud prevention; and public health and consumer protection and to provide centralised analytical toxicology services to the State.

CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

The State Laboratory is a Scheduled Office under the aegis of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. It is the Government's principal analytical chemistry laboratory and provides a comprehensive analytical and advisory service to clients across a range of Government Departments and Offices.

The State Laboratory's main clients currently are:

- the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM);
- the Office of the Revenue Commissioners;
- the Coroners Service and the Office of the State Pathologist;
- the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI);
- the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS);
- the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA);
- the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE);
- an Garda Siochána;
- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- the Department of Transport, and
- the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE)

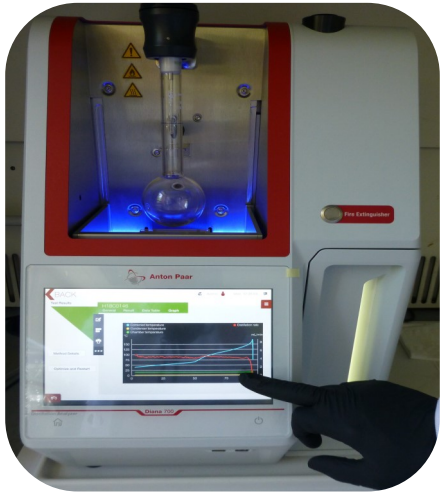
The State Laboratory also provides services to a number of other government departments and state bodies that require chemical testing or scientific advice to implement legislation or protect Ireland's heritage.

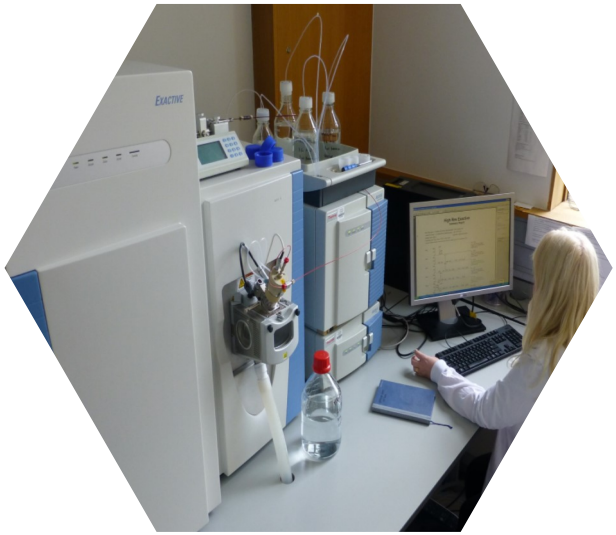
The main areas of activity of the Laboratory are:

- supporting DAFM and FSAI, as Ireland's food and feed safety regulators, to implement official controls and ensure the safety, integrity and authenticity of the food chain, thus protecting consumers and supporting food exports;
- supporting Revenue to ensure compliance with Customs and Excise legislation, in particular the collection of the appropriate tariffs on imports, excise duties on alcohol and motor fuels, and assisting Revenue to combat fraud and illicit trade e.g. counterfeit spirits and fuel laundering
- providing forensic toxicology services to support Coroners' investigations into cases of unexplained deaths and provision of veterinary toxicology services to DAFM and the NPWS
- assisting the HPRA and DAFM to control the use of unlicensed human and veterinary medicines
- supporting the HSE to implement the Tobacco Products Directive
- and supporting DETE by providing technical advice on the processing of Applications for Suspension of Customs Duty

The Laboratory has an important advisory function and its staff act as the Irish experts on EU scientific committees and technical working groups on behalf of its clients. Laboratory staff also represent Ireland at meetings of international and EU organisations such as Codex Alimentarius, the World Customs Organisation (WCO), the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) and Eurachem. In addition, staff are active on many national task forces and scientific committees and organise workshops and seminars on current topics in analytical chemistry.

The State Laboratory has been designated as Ireland's main Official Control Laboratory for chemical testing of animal feedingstuffs and fertilisers and as a National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for parameters such as nutritional additives for use in animal feed, specific classes of veterinary drug residues in food of animal origin and contaminants such as persistent organic pollutants, mycotoxins, plant toxins and heavy metals in feed and/or food. The Laboratory's NRL role involves collaborating with European Union Reference Laboratories (EURL), participating in core working groups to improve analytical methods and testing capabilities, providing scientific and technical assistance to the competent authorities and where necessary, coordinating the activities of official laboratories.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Goal 1

Support Official Food, Feed and Fertiliser Controls

Ireland's Agri-Food sector continues to perform strongly and in 2019, the value of Irish food and drink exports increased by an estimated 6% to a record high of €14.5 billion. Further expansion of primary production and export trade is envisaged under Food Wise 2025. Consumers expect their food to be safe to eat and through a system of official controls and inspections, DAFM, in partnership with the FSAI, plays a leading role in ensuring the highest standards of food and feed safety. Laboratory testing is a front-line service that is critical to the implementation of national sampling and surveillance programmes and the demand for laboratory services continues to grow as new and emerging risks are identified in an increasingly complex food chain.

A new Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625, which came into force in December 2019, impacts about 50% of the work of the State Laboratory. Meeting the requirements of this new regulation and responding to the demands of its expanded NRL responsibilities will provide a major focus for the State Laboratory over the lifetime of this strategy statement.

Animal Feedingstuffs

Animal feed is one of the most important components of the food chain for the production of food of animal origin – meat, milk, fish and eggs. The State Laboratory is Ireland's principal analytical chemistry laboratory for the analysis of feedingstuffs and it plays a key role in ensuring the nutritional quality and safety of animal feedingstuffs, ensuring that no undesirable substances such as dioxins, mycotoxins or heavy metals enter the food chain.

Contaminants in Food

Food of animal origin, including infant formula and dairy products, is also tested for the presence of dioxins and mycotoxins as part of comprehensive multi-annual control plans to monitor the production of food at all stages of the food chain and ensure compliance with national and international standards of food safety.

Work on developing methods for other persistent organic pollutants such as brominated flame retardants (BFRs) was hampered by a lack of staff resources during the lifetime of the previous strategy statement but this continues to be a priority for the FSAI, in addition to developing the capability to test for perfluoroalkylated substances (PFAs) in fish and other food matrices to comply with new legislation being formulated for these harmful and ubiquitous contaminants.

Veterinary Drug Residues

The presence of unauthorised residues of veterinary medicinal products in food of animal origin may pose a risk to public health. The State Laboratory has a high level of expertise in this area and increased its level of testing by 43% over the lifetime of its previous strategy statement. This was achieved by developing new methods of analysis and bringing previously outsourced testing in-house.

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU will mean that official control testing can no longer be outsourced to UK laboratories and this may require additional veterinary drug residue testing to be brought in-house. As an NRL, the Laboratory has the required expertise to take on this work, but

Strategic Goal 1 (cont.)

additional resources would need to be provided to support the extra workload. In addition, new methods of analysis will need to be developed and existing methods improved to meet new EURL requirements.

Food Authenticity and Integrity

Food authenticity has come to prominence in Europe in recent years following a number of food scandals and the new Official Controls Regulation has a stronger emphasis on food authenticity and integrity than the previous regulation. The State Laboratory signed an overarching Service Contract Agreement with the FSAI in March 2019, in line with its strategy to 'explore the feasibility of providing analytical services to the FSAI where there are gaps in existing services'. Over the lifetime of this strategy statement, the Laboratory will expand the range of services it provides to the FSAI in response to new legislation or new food control and authenticity areas such as organic foods, flavorings and food additives.

Fertilisers

The State Laboratory is Ireland's approved laboratory for checking that fertilisers and liming materials placed on the market comply with regulations. A new EU regulation on fertiliser products will come into force in 2022, which covers all types of fertilisers and sets new harmonised limits for a range of contaminants. New methods of analysis will be required to test for cadmium and other heavy metals in both mineral and organic fertilisers such as soil improvers and growing media. New analytical methods must also be developed to test for environmentally friendly fertiliser additives such as urease and nitrification inhibitors, which have the potential to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from fertilisers.

Strategic Goal 1- Support Official Food, Feed and Fertiliser Controls (cont.)

Strategic Goal 1 Actions 2020-2023
♦ Support National Food and Feed safety inspection programmes
♦ Discharge National Reference Laboratory responsibilities including providing scientific and technical assistance to the competent authorities and overseeing the work of Official Laboratories
♦ Respond to changes in testing requirements resulting from changes to food and feed safety legislation, in particular: ◊ enhance and develop the range of testing offered under the national residue control plan and develop new test methods for veterinary drug residues to respond to upcoming changes to legislative limits and bring outsourced analyses in-house ◊ develop new analytical methods for the detection of persistent organic pollutants in food and plant toxins in feed ◊ comply with the additional requirements of new legislation for Official Laboratories and National Reference Laboratory functions
♦ Maintain accreditation to ISO 17025 for all food and feed testing, and expand the use of flexible scope accreditation
♦ Support DAFM Fertiliser and Limestone inspection programmes and respond to changes in testing requirements resulting from changes to legislation, in particular: ◊ develop new methods of analysis to test for cadmium and other contaminants in fertiliser products ◊ develop new analytical methods to test for environmentally friendly fertiliser additives
♦ Provide input as appropriate to the formulation of new and revised EU and national legislation and participate in relevant CEN technical committees and working groups for the development of European harmonised standards and methods of analysis

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Goal 2

Support Revenue Collection and Fraud Prevention

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners plays a vital role in Ireland's economy by collecting taxes and duties due to the State. The State Laboratory supports Revenue in ensuring that the correct customs duties are collected on traded goods by providing a comprehensive tariff classification advisory service and that the correct excise taxes are paid by testing samples of alcoholic beverages and fuel oils for a wide range of parameters.

One of Revenue's key strategic priorities is to confront non-compliance. The State Laboratory supports Revenue investigations into shadow economy activities, including fraud, illicit trade and smuggling, by providing expert testimony, scientific evidence and analytical results to support court prosecutions.

As a large proportion of Ireland's international trade is currently with the UK, the UK's exit from the European Union will result in a huge increase in customs declarations that will require increased customs controls to support legitimate trade. This will lead to a significant increase in the number of requests to the State Laboratory for tariff classification advice on foodstuffs, chemicals and industrial type products from Revenue in the future and an increased level of testing in the customs area from January 2021.

The State Laboratory played a pivotal role in the successful introduction of the new fiscal fuel marker for marked diesel in Ireland and the UK in 2015. This has made fuel laundering much more difficult and expensive for criminals. As a result of this work, the Laboratory has developed a high level of expertise in the analysis of fuel markers.

A key goal for the Laboratory in the coming years will be to develop new methods of analysis to identify fraudulent fuel products, such as 'designer fuels' and, if required, to support the introduction of a new Euromarker and other initiatives to combat fuel fraud across Europe. 'Designer fuels' are non-standard fuels which may not contain a marker but have been stretched with lubricants or otherwise altered illegally.

Revenue also works in partnership with DAFM and the FSAI on the Geographical Indication (GI) Scheme for Irish spirits. GI status confers protection on national products in International trade agreements and means that only whiskey produced in Ireland in accordance with strict technical specifications can be labelled and sold as Irish Whiskey. The State Laboratory has agreed to provide an analytical testing service to DAFM, as the controlling authority, to support GI authentication of Irish Whiskey and this will require new methods of analysis to be developed over the coming years to support their control programme. Irish whiskey exports grew by 11% in 2019 to €727 million and it is vital that the authenticity of this product can be verified.

Strategic Goal 2

Actions 2020-2023

- Provide Revenue's Tariff Classification Unit with expert scientific advice, supported by chemical analysis, on the correct classification of goods under the Customs and Excise Tariff of Ireland and respond to the increased demand for tariff classification advice from 2021 onwards
- Support DETE by providing technical advice on the processing of Applications for Suspension of Customs Duty
- Support the introduction and deployment of hand held detection devices for use by Customs Officers at ports and airports
- Provide scientific experts to represent Ireland at meetings of EU Customs Code Technical Committees and Working Groups and on the Scientific Sub-Committee of the World Customs Organisation
- Participate in the work of the Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN)
- Advise Revenue on the application of appropriate excise duties on hydrocarbon oil products, alcoholic beverages and non-potable alcohol-containing products and strengthen supports for prosecuting fraud
- Develop new multi-marker methods to streamline the testing of fuel oils and other methods of analysis required to detect fuel laundering and tackle the problem of 'designer fuels'. If required, support the introduction of a new European fuel marker
- Provide analytical support to Revenue, FSAI and DAFM in relation to the authenticity of Irish GI Spirit Drinks, and develop and accredit new methods of analysis as required
- Support FSAI and DAFM food fraud and food authenticity investigations

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Goal 3

Provide Centralised Analytical Toxicology Services to the State

Forensic Toxicology

The State Laboratory tests post-mortem samples for a wide range of prescription medicines and illegal drugs for the Coroners Service and the Office of the State Pathologist. The Laboratory also carries out confirmatory analysis on ante-mortem samples for the Gardaí in criminal cases and it has agreed to provide a back-up testing service to the Military Police if required.

Samples are routinely screened for approximately 170 drugs and confirmatory analysis is performed to determine the levels present for any drugs detected. A major challenge for the Laboratory is keeping the scope of testing relevant and staff must keep abreast of emerging drug use trends. The Laboratory is represented on the National Advisory Committee on Drugs and Alcohol Early Warning and Emerging Trends sub-committee and this network provides valuable information on new psychoactive substances and other drugs available to drug users in Ireland.

Staff are members of the United Kingdom and Ireland Association of Forensic Toxicologists, the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists and the Society of Forensic Toxicologists in the US. They also liaise with the European Monitoring Committee for Drugs and Drug Addiction to ensure all European drug alerts are included in the Laboratory's toxicology screen. A particular challenge is the lack of availability of reference standards, but the Laboratory uses a high resolution mass spectrometry database to screen post-mortem samples when notified of newly identified drugs that are not included in its routine scope of testing.

The wide range of drugs tested for routinely in the State Laboratory provides valuable information on drug and alcohol related deaths in Ireland.

The Laboratory is a member of the National Drug-Related Deaths Index Steering Committee, which was established by the Health Research Board to provide high quality data on drug-related mortality.

Coroners are generally very satisfied with the quality and range of the testing service provided by the State Laboratory, but meeting the required turnaround times can sometimes be a challenge due to the demand-led nature of the service and the complexity of the testing involved. Reducing turnaround times will continue to be a focus for the Laboratory during the lifetime of this strategy statement

Veterinary Toxicology

The State Laboratory provides a toxicant testing service to DAFM to support investigations into large scale poisoning incidents on farms and to the National Parks and Wildlife Service in relation to the illegal poisoning of wildlife, especially re-introduced birds of prey. This involves the analysis of a wide range of toxicants and veterinary drug residues in biological samples. This work supports the RAPTOR protocol (Recording and Addressing Persecution and Threats to Our Raptors) to protect wildlife and it also supports the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use in Ireland (CRRU).

Strategic Goal 3 Actions 2020-2023
♦ Provide a comprehensive forensic toxicology service to the Coroners Service and the Office of the State Pathologist and improve capacity to respond to periodic and ongoing increases in sample numbers
♦ Keep abreast of emerging illicit drug use trends and expand the scope of testing accordingly
♦ Reduce turnaround times to meet client requirements
♦ Optimise the drug screening and quantification strategies to improve the overall efficiency of the service provided
♦ Streamline reporting of results of analysis, including provision of contextual information
♦ Respond to increased demands for retention of post-mortem samples for genetic testing for familial heart screening
♦ Provide a comprehensive veterinary toxicology service to public sector clients and develop new quantitative methods for known toxicants

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Goal 4

Support Public Health Protection Initiatives

Pharmaceutical Products

The Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) protects public and animal health through the regulation of human and veterinary medicines. With the support of Revenue's Customs Service and An Garda Síochána, the HPRA Enforcement Section monitors and investigates instances of illegal supply of medicinal products coming into Ireland via the postal system. The Investigations Division of DAFM also works to protect consumers and the food chain by monitoring the supply and use of veterinary products on farms.

The State Laboratory supports the work of both the HPRA and DAFM by testing samples of seized pharmaceutical, herbal and veterinary products for the presence of pharmaceutically active compounds and excipients. If required, staff of the Laboratory will provide expert testimony in subsequent court prosecutions.

The State Laboratory is accredited to analyse pharmaceutical and herbal products for a wide range of different drugs, both legal and illegal. Future challenges include responding to analysis requests for new active ingredients and testing for excipients to prove that seized medicinal products are counterfeit. A higher level of quantitative analysis may also be required.

Food Supplements / Botanical Weight Loss Supplements

The FSAI protects consumers by ensuring the safety, integrity and authenticity of the food chain. The State Laboratory supports the FSAI by testing food supplements and botanicals for the presence of unauthorised substances, stimulants or substances likely to cause adverse health effects such as anabolic steroids, DNP, yohimbe, synephrine, sibutramine etc.

Many of the analytes tested for are psychoactive or pharmaceutically active substances that should not be sold as dietary supplements, whilst others are illegal and can have dangerous side effects.

Hemp and Cannabidiol (CBD) Products

Hemp crops can only be grown in Ireland under licence from the HPRA and there is a requirement to inspect 30% of the area sown to ensure that the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content of the crop does not exceed 0.2%. The State Laboratory tests hemp samples for DAFM BPS Division and it is expected that there will be an increased testing requirement in the coming years as the area sown with hemp continues to increase.

The State Laboratory has also agreed to support Revenue with testing of CBD products seized by Customs Officers at Dublin Airport to confirm whether any THC present in these products complies with legislative limits to be introduced in the near future.

Tobacco Products

The State Laboratory has been designated by the Department of Health as the testing laboratory for Ireland, for the purposes of carrying out testing on tobacco products as set out in EU legislation. This involves the installation of a specialised laboratory with a controlled temperature and humidity environment for the correct operation of a smoking machine to test cigarettes for tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide.

The Laboratory will also support the HSE, as the market surveillance authority for nicotine-inhaling products, to introduce a licensing system for the retail sale of e-cigarettes and refill containers, by developing suitable methods of

Strategic Goal 4 (cont.)

analysis to test these products. The laboratory will participate in a collaborative study organized by the Joint Action on Tobacco Control (JATC) to standardize a new European method for determining nicotine, glycerol and propylene glycol in e-liquids.

Staff are members of the WHO Tobacco Laboratory Network (TobLabNet), which is a global network of laboratories working to strengthen national and regional capacity for the testing of tobacco products for regulatory compliance.

The Network's goal is to develop harmonised standards for the contents and emissions testing of tobacco products. Staff also participate in relevant CEN and ISO committees developing standardised analytical methods for the testing of e-liquids and emissions of vaping products.

Strategic Goal 4

Actions 2020-2023

- Provide a comprehensive pharmaceutical testing service to public sector clients in support of court prosecutions
- Develop new qualitative and quantitative test methods as required to meet client requirements
- Maintain and expand the scope of accreditation to ISO 17025
- Expand the range of analytical services provided to the FSAI in the area of dietary supplements and botanical weight loss products and support food safety investigations
- Test THC levels in hemp samples for DAFM and support Revenue and other public sector clients who have a requirement to test CBD products for THC content
- Commission a tobacco testing laboratory and set up methods of analysis to test for tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarettes as part of a routine inspection programme
- Develop suitable methods of analysis to test e-cigarettes and e-liquids for nicotine and other constituents / additives for the HSE
- Participate in TobLabNet and JATC networks and relevant ISO and CEN technical committees and working groups for the development of harmonised standards and methods of analysis

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Goal 5

Provide Specialised Chemical Analysis and Advisory Services

Identification of Unknowns

The requirement to test labelled and unlabelled samples for unknown active ingredients / chemical constituents is a feature of the work for a number of its clients and the Laboratory intends to further develop and strengthen its expertise in this area through the use of high resolution mass spectrometry for untargeted testing in the coming years.

Environment Protection

The State Laboratory has supported the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to monitor the presence of dioxins and dioxin-like compounds in the environment for many years, by testing milk samples from cows during the grazing season. Cows' milk is considered a particularly suitable matrix for this purpose, since dioxins present in grass will concentrate in the fat content of the milk. In 2019, the Laboratory tested fish samples for dioxins in support of a new biota monitoring programme in inland surface waters and there may be a need to test for other persistent organic pollutants, such as PFAs in ground water, during the lifetime of this strategy statement.

The State Laboratory supports the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications in protecting the environment by performing sulphur analysis on fuel oil samples. New legislation due to take effect in 2020 will require an increased level of testing and will support the Programme for Government, which seeks to clamp down on the sale of high-sulphur content fuel imported from the UK.

The Laboratory also supports the Department of Transport by testing marine oils for sulphur content and this testing will need to be accredited from 2020 onwards to comply with new legislation in this area.

Heritage Protection

The State Laboratory will continue to provide scientific assistance to the Office of Public Works, the National Museum, the National Gallery and other bodies responsible for the conservation of Ireland's heritage.

Dual Use Goods / Chemical Weapons

The State Laboratory provides scientific advice to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Department of Foreign Affairs in relation to the assessment of dual use goods such as chemicals and chemical precursors used in Ireland that are also covered under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Textiles

The State Laboratory provides scientific representation for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on the EU Expert Group on Textile Names and Labelling and on the Administrative Cooperation Group for market surveillance for the Textile Regulation (TEXTIL-ADCO).

Strategic Goal 5

Actions 2020-2023

- Increase expertise in the use of liquid chromatography high resolution mass spectrometry (LC-HRMS) to improve the capability for the identification of unknown compounds
- Support EPA monitoring programmes for persistent organic pollutants in the environment
- Achieve accreditation for the sulphur in oil method of analysis and test an increased number of oil samples for environmental purposes
- Provide analytical support to local authorities responsible for disposal of illegal waste associated with fuel laundering
- Provide a chemical analysis and advisory service to agencies responsible for protecting Ireland's heritage
- Continue to provide expert advice and representation for public sector clients on expert groups and technical committees

People and Culture

- Develop and implement a People and Culture Strategy to
  - Attract, retain and develop talented scientific and support staff
  - Strengthen leadership and management capability
  - Promote a positive and inclusive work environment in line with our core values
  - Support the well-being of staff

Technology, Processes and Infrastructure

- Implement an ICT Strategy to maintain robust and secure ICT systems and maximise the use of IT solutions to improve efficiencies
- Develop and implement an Innovation Strategy to drive a culture of innovation that supports the introduction of new scientific technologies and delivers world-class services to clients
- Implement a Project Management approach to optimise internal processes and to streamline and enhance services
- Work with the OPW to maintain and upgrade the existing laboratory infrastructure and reduce energy consumption

Governance

- Apply the highest standards of corporate governance, risk management and safety to the operation of the Laboratory
- Operate a Quality System that meets the requirements of ISO 17025 and maintain and expand the Laboratory's scope of accreditation to meet client requirements
- Use centralised procurement and ICT frameworks to improve efficiencies and achieve value for money
- Provide a safe work environment for staff, mitigating the hazards associated with working with potentially dangerous chemicals
- Collaborate with other public sector laboratories in the areas of health and safety, energy efficiency, procurement, recruitment, accreditation and promoting scientific excellence and best practice in analytical chemistry

Strategic Outcomes 2020-2023

- High quality, innovative and responsive analytical chemistry service provided to the public sector
- Expert scientific advice provided to support decision making, regulation and the formulation of legislation and expert evidence provided for court purposes
- Improved national capability in chemical analysis for official control, regulation and compliance purposes
- Optimal use of State resources by provision of centralised chemical testing services and collaboration with other public sector laboratories