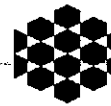


From the Office of the Minister



Department of
**Enterprise, Trade
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Our Ref: DETI SUB 358/2012

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
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BT4 3XX

10 July 2012

Dear Mr McKay

FOLLOW UP TO DETI ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS ON 12 June 2012

As a follow-on to a question posed about the Jobs Fund during DETI Questions on 12 June, you had asked me to give an update on how the figures outlined compare with those set out in the Programme for Government targets and to give an update on how many jobs have been created in North Antrim. As I did not have all of the relevant information to hand at the time I am now writing to you in response to the queries raised.

Under the Programme for Government, the Jobs Fund has a target to promote 6,300 new jobs by March 2015, with 4,000 of those to be created by March 2014.

During 2011/12, the Jobs Fund exceeded its year 1 targets by promoting 2,390 jobs against a target of 2,250 and by actually creating 1,021 jobs against a target of 1,015, which represents a conversion rate of 43% during the first year. To date, there has been a very encouraging uptake across the range of Jobs Fund measures and Invest NI has created a healthy pipeline with over 180 diverse projects at different stages of development. Collectively, these business investment projects have the potential to create a further 1,700 new jobs.

Invest NI is continuing to work with a wide range of businesses and stakeholders across Northern Ireland to promote the scheme and support new job creation projects. Given its performance in the first year, I am content that the Jobs Fund is on track to meet its Programme for Government targets.

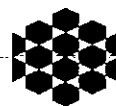
With respect to North Antrim, there are currently 9 Jobs Fund business investment projects at various stages of development which should lead to the creation of 38 new jobs, 8 of which have already been created. To date the Jobs Fund has also provided support to 6 young people (aged 16-24) to set up their own business through the NEET Business Start grant, and to 2 individuals resident in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA) to set up their own business through the NRA Business Start Grant. The Jobs Fund work is ongoing and Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that will lead to further new job creation in North Antrim in the near future.

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be sent to the Speaker's Office and a copy will be placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

From the Office of the Minister



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Our Ref: **DETI SUB 358/2012**

Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

10 July 2012

Dear Mr Ramsey

FOLLOW UP TO DETI ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS ON 12 June 2012

As a follow-on to a question posed about the Jobs Fund during DETI Questions on 12 June 2012, you had asked how the Department assesses performance across all constituencies in Northern Ireland to make sure that there is continuity and consistency of the (jobs) fund. As I did not have all of the relevant information to hand at the time I am now writing to you in response to the queries raised.

The Jobs Fund was launched in April 2011 with the aim of supporting new job creation across Northern Ireland. Since then the Jobs Fund has been promoted through regular press releases, job announcements and more recently through an extensive Northern Ireland wide Boosting Business media campaign.

Invest NI has also engaged with stakeholders throughout Northern Ireland, including Councils, businesses and industry bodies to promote Boosting Business and the Jobs Fund and to encourage uptake across the various scheme measures. Promotional activities have included presentations to trade associations such as the Food Industry Advisory Panel and Momentum and to key stakeholders and businesses throughout Invest NI's Regional Office Network.

Invest NI continually monitors the uptake and performance of all of its assistance on a regional basis, including that provided through the Jobs Fund, to ensure that the benefits of this support are impacting the whole of Northern Ireland. However Invest NI has limited ability to direct investment to specific locations. Final geographical assistance patterns are demand-led by businesses wishing to improve their competitiveness and grow. With regards to the Jobs Fund specifically, I can confirm that the uptake to date by business has been widespread and in its first year the Jobs Fund has delivered new jobs right across Northern Ireland.

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be sent to the Speaker's Office and a copy will be placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment