

SCOTTISH AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AGENCY

Annual Report and Accounts 2000-2001



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An Agency of The Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department

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Organisation Chart



DIRECTOR

Dr R K M Hay

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I Evans

PESTICIDES, PLANT VARIETIES & SEEDS

S R Cooper
(Deputy Director)

OSTS	Cereals	Herbage & Vegetables	Pesticide Usage & Wildlife Management	Chemistry
R Don	G P Hall	F N Green	Dr C J Griffiths	Dr K Hunter

POTATO AND PLANT HEALTH

Dr K J O'Donnell

Potato	Plant Health	Diagnostics & Molecular Biology	Virology & Zoology	Seed Potato Classification Scheme
Dr S F Carnegie	Dr J M Chard	Vacant	Dr J Pickup	W J Rennie

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Administration	Farm	Horticulture	Information Technology	Property
Mrs S M Quinn	R Campbell	D McIntyre	P J Winfield	K McLaren

Contents

Organisation Chart	iii
Status, Aim and Functions	1
Director's Report	2
Performance Targets and Results	4
Consulting our Customers	6
Review of Administration and Support Services	7
Annual Accounts 2000-01	10
Representational Duties of SASA Staff 2000-01	28
Contact Points	30

Status, Aim and Functions

(an extract from the Agency's Framework Document 1997)

Status

The Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (SASA) was established on 1 April 1992 as an Executive Agency of the Department which is now the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD).

Aim

The Agency exists to provide government with expert scientific information and technical advice on agricultural crops, horticultural crops and aspects of the environment. It also performs statutory and regulatory work in relation to national, European Union (EU) and other international legislation and agreements on plant health, bee health, variety registration and crop improvement, regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and the protection of crops, food and the environment.

Since SASA's principal customer is SERAD, the Agency operates mainly for Scottish interests, but it also seeks to meet the requirements of other Agriculture Departments as well as various UK and international bodies, local government, academic and research institutes, private companies, organisations and individuals.

The Agency aims to improve the effectiveness of its operations and to enhance its provision of services and products to present customers and other organisations, consistent with Government policy. This will be achieved by ensuring that SASA has the scientific competence needed to respond to changes in legislation, technology, cropping systems and the environment, and that the Agency offers quality and value for money in all aspects of its work.

Functions

The principal functions of the Agency are:

- to serve the needs of SERAD and other customers for scientific and technical expertise by the timely, efficient and effective provision of accurate and appropriate advice and information on the content and implementation of national, EU and other international legislation and agreements in relation to plant health, bee health, variety registration and crop improvement, GMOs, and crop, food and environmental protection.
- to support SERAD's legislative and policy responsibilities and assist in SERAD's enforcement role by the timely, efficient and effective provision of appropriate scientific and technical services including: quarantine, diagnoses, and measures to contain or eradicate pests and diseases in relation to plant health and bee health; plant variety evaluation, description and maintenance in relation to Plant Breeders' Rights and National Lists of Crop Varieties; seed testing, crop inspection and identification in support of the Scottish and UK Seed Certification and Classification Schemes; the regulation of GMOs; and pesticide residue monitoring, other analytical services and pesticide usage assessments in relation to the protection of crops, food and the environment.
- to represent Scottish and, where appropriate, UK interests at national and international meetings which call for a scientific and technical input.
- to maintain and develop the scientific and technical competence needed to respond quickly and effectively to the evolving needs of customers for scientific and technical expertise and services, by maintaining a continuous programme of challenging and well focused research and development.
- to improve the effectiveness of SASA by using the scientific resource to provide scientific and technical services to other customers in relevant areas of work.

Director's Report

I am pleased to lay before the Scottish Parliament this report of the work and achievements of the staff of SASA during 2000-01. The following pages concentrate upon the financial aspects of the Agency, and its performance against key targets set by the First Minister of the Scottish Executive. Details of the scientific and technical achievements of SASA during the period will be found in the second Scientific Review (1997-2000) to be published in autumn 2001. Scientific and technical highlights of the year include: new molecular tools for the detection of plant diseases, and the presence of genetically-modified (GM) plants; preparation of the monoclonal antibody unit for quality assurance assessment; and the application of skills and resources developed for the study of nematode pests of potatoes to those of field beans (a crop which has increased sharply in importance in the wake of BSE, with the need to produce more fodder protein from crops).

During the report year, the Agency discharged in full its service level agreement (SLA) with Scottish Executive customers, and performed additional work for SERAD as the need arose, most notably in terms of GM crop varieties. Towards the end of the report period, the SLA was renegotiated to take account of the disruption of field work caused by the foot and mouth epidemic in southern Scotland, and the redeployment of staff to control potential vertebrate vectors of the disease. I am very pleased to report that the Agency was able to meet its timeliness target in spite of these disruptions.

As outlined in the review of Administration and Support Services, substantial resources were devoted to the planning work which must be completed before the design team for the new Agency headquarters begins work in autumn 2001. Opportunities have been taken to involve all staff in this work, for example, by participation in workshops and committees on laboratory and glasshouse requirements and specifications, and such initiatives will continue up to the occupation of the building in 2005.

The Agency continued to give priority to its role as an Investor in People, with the highest priority being given to the health and safety of staff. The report year saw the completion of a comprehensive competence-based training manual, covering all A/B1 band staff, and the establishment of a working party to extend this initiative to B2 and B3 staff. The popular induction club continued, and an emphasis was placed on training for management, including an intensive 3-day course for all senior managers. The new SASA Partnership Board, superseding the former Whitley arrangements, has functioned effectively.

Other features of the year included a review of the governance of the Agency, in the context of devolution, which led to the setting up of a SASA/SERAD Supervisory (ownership) Board, and the formalising of other governance roles. The Agency renewed its Business Continuity Plan, and devoted significant resources to study of the Turnbull Report, and its implications for risk management in Agencies. Evolution of the management of Information Technology projects and services continued with the setting up of a project board to oversee corporate services; investment was made in electronic presentational equipment to improve the quality of Agency seminars and other presentations; a major review of the Agency website was completed; and work began to establish policies for the capture and storage of electronic (photographic) images. In different ways, each of these initiatives reflects the aspiration of the Agency to be a modern, accessible and highly responsive institution.

During the year, the Agency continued to play its part in the network of relevant scientific institutions in Scotland, the UK and other countries. Staff participated in a range of EU projects, panels and working groups; took part in several international meetings including the World Potato Congress, Amsterdam, and the Third International Crop Science Congress in

Hamburg (whose satellite meeting on Crop Production under Cool Long Days was run by SASA in Edinburgh); and developed their functional relationships with: SCRI, IACR Rothamsted, IGER Aberystwyth, Harper Adams University, CSL York, HGCA, PSD, EPPO, FAO, OECD, ISTA, British Potato Council, the International Potato Centre Peru, and the Departments of Agriculture of the USA, Denmark and Canada (Prince Edward Island). Nearer to home, SASA continued to play major roles in the Committee of Heads of Agricultural and Biological Organisations in Scotland (CHABOS) and the Edinburgh Centre for Rural Research (ECRR).

As in every year, none of this could have been achieved without the skilled and enthusiastic work of a dedicated staff of scientists and their supporters. I continue to be grateful for the pride that they show in their work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert K. M. Hay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'R' and a long, horizontal tail on the 'y'.

DR R K M HAY

Director

Performance Targets and Results

The performance of Agencies against a range of targets is a central feature of the Next Steps vision. These targets should chart achievements not only in relation to traditional "inputs" and "outputs" but also the effectiveness and quality of the work done in meeting the Agency's aim and functions. SASA is involved in a continued dialogue with its main customer, SERAD, on the appropriate portfolio of performance targets to cover these wide range of interests. The following table indicates the performance achieved compared with earlier years, where relevant.

Targets		Outturns and Achievements	Target 2001-02
Quantitative Targets			
Achievement of target income from new work/customers	£50,000	1998-99 Target achieved, £74,500 of income earned	£120,000
	£80,000	1999-00 Target achieved, £101,200 of income earned	
	£120,000	2000-01 Target achieved, £159,000 of income earned	
Completion of specific percentage of all scientific test and analyses within timescales set by customers	92%	1996-97 Target achieved: 97.1%	95%
	93%	1997-98 Target achieved: 96.6%	
	94%	1998-99 Target achieved: 97.4%	
	95%	1999-00 Target achieved: 95.9%	
	95%	2000-01 Target achieved: 96.2%	
Improvement in unit cost of the scientific work of the Agency (cost per direct scientist hour)		1996-97 Target not met : £39.62	✓
		1997-98 Target achieved: £38.71	
		1998-99 Target achieved: £37.74	
		1999-00 Target achieved: £37.33	
		2000-01 Target not met ⁽¹⁾ : £37.49	
Ensuring, as part of the Agency's rolling programme of consultation of customers, that 95% of the customers for the services of the Official Seed Testing Station for Scotland are at least "satisfied"			✓
Milestone targets			
Fulfilment of SLA within budget agreed with SERAD		1996-97 Target achieved	✓
		1997-98 Target achieved	
		1998-99 Target achieved	
		1999-00 Target achieved	
		2000-01 Target achieved	
Continuation of the programme of consultation with all customers on the quality of the work done by the Agency		1996-97 Target achieved	
		1997-98 Target achieved	
		1998-99 Target achieved	
		1999-00 Target achieved	
		2000-01 Target achieved	

⁽¹⁾ Staff costs increased by 6.8%, following the August 2000 Scottish Executive Pay Award, which also introduced an increased level of non-consolidated bonus paid as lump sums. As staff numbers increased by 3.9%, the increased costs raised the direct hour rate.

Targets	Outturns and Achievements	Target 2001-02
Assimilation of the work and personnel associated with the Seed Potato Classification Scheme by the end of 1999	1999-00 Target achieved. Work assimilated, staff moved to SASA HQ October 1999	
Presentation of the "greenfield" options for the buildings and infrastructure of the Agency in a form suitable for decisions by Ministers	1999-00 Target achieved. Options presented to Ministers	
Formal quality assurance accreditation for the Monoclonal Antibody Unit	2000-01 Target not met. The certifying body were unable to arrange an assessment visit before 31 March. Visit to take place on 17 July 2001	
Publication of a review of the scientific work of the Agency 1997-2000 by December 2001		✓

Consulting Our Customers

For 2000-01 we consulted our main customer, the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department, both the headquarters staff in Edinburgh and the area offices throughout the country. The summary of comments is noted below. In addition, comments were offered by respondents, praising the quality of work carried out by SASA staff.

- 100% Find SASA staff very helpful and pleasant;
- 100% Satisfied or very satisfied that SASA's services provide good value for money;
- 100% Find SASA delivers its services always on time or most of the time;
- 100% Are likely or very likely to recommend an approach to SASA to those seeking similar services, (75% have previously recommended SASA's services);
- 93% Satisfied or very satisfied with the services received from SASA; 7% not very satisfied in relation to the label printing service for SPCS;
- 85% Find written reports clear and easy to follow, but 15% feel reports could be clearer;
- 75% Find SASA's advice sound and objective, but 25% find it not always appropriate to their needs;
- 75% Find that SASA's estimated timescales meet their requirements, but 25% would prefer a faster service;
- 40% Find reports generally very comprehensive; with 60% finding information adequate;
- 40% Find SASA's billing arrangements for the SLA clear and unambiguous and contain adequate information, 30% sometimes have difficulty in identifying appropriate work and 30% find the billing details vague and unprecise; and
- 40% Only are very aware of specific activities and services available at SASA, 40% have a general view and 20% only know of specific activities.

Review of Administration and Support Services

As indicated last year, a report on site options for the relocation of SASA had been put forward to Ministers. In line with the Scottish Executive's policy of reviewing the potential for the location of a number of public sector bodies in Scotland outwith Edinburgh, a scientific review was undertaken to investigate the feasibility of locating the work of SASA at a site adjacent to the Scottish Crop Research Institute near Dundee. The results of this review indicated that soil conditions are not compatible with the Agency's work on the certification of seed potatoes. Accordingly, the Agency was given Ministerial consent to take forward its existing plans for relocation to our farm site at Gogarbank, on the outskirts of Edinburgh. Throughout the year, work has continued on the proposals, and discussions continue with Planning Departments. An outline planning application has been submitted to Edinburgh City Council and, as the year ended, progress was well underway to appoint a Project Management Team. Present plans envisage that the move will take place in mid 2005.

Seminars have been held for all staff to keep them fully up to date with progress and many internal discussions are underway about laboratory and glasshouse needs etc.

The relocation project underlines the importance of effective communication throughout the Agency and we have made great use of our internal IT network to distribute material to all staff to keep them aware of issues. We are continuing with open days in various sections to help staff familiarise themselves with the work being done elsewhere within the Agency. Dialogue between management and trade union representatives continues through *ad hoc* meetings and the Partnership Board Structure.

SASA has continued to experience a steady level of staff turnover, resulting in continuous activity in the recruitment and promotion field. SASA operates its recruitment in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' recruitment code, ensuring that all recruitment is carried out on the basis of fair and open competition and selection on merit. The arrangements in place are subject to internal management checks and were also audited by Lorien Consulting on behalf of the Civil Service Commissioners in July 2000.

During 2000-01 SASA held 15 open recruitment competitions and successfully appointed 16 candidates (12 at Band A, 2 at Band B and 2 Farm staff). Of these appointments 6 were female and 10 were male. One specialist post at Band B was advertised twice at open competition without success in appointing a candidate. None of the appointees were from an ethnic minority and none declared a disability. Thirteen other posts were filled, 6 on promotion (5 from Band A to Band B and one from Band B to Band C); 1 on transfer from the Scottish Executive; 3 staff successfully applied for progression posts; and 3 took up new posts under restructuring arrangements. SASA made no exceptions to the Civil Service Commissioners' recruitment code.

Although there was a slight increase in the number of open competitions in 2000-01, SASA continued to notice a downturn in the number of applicants. This may reflect the strong employment market that continues within the Edinburgh area.

At 31 March 2001 the Agency employed 143 staff, but also had 11 vacancies that were in the process of being filled.

The table on the following page provides a breakdown of staff numbers by pay band and gender.

We continue to work within Investors in People guidelines and, along with the Scottish Executive, will have this status reassessed in November 2001. SASA's revised and expanded induction programme for new entrants has proved itself to be an effective mechanism for both

Staff by pay band and gender at 31 March 2001

Pay band	Males		Females		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Senior Civil Service	1	1.4	0	0	1	0.7
Band C	14	19.4	2	2.8	16	11.2
Band B	27	37.5	33	46.5	60	42.0
Band A	21	29.2	36	50.7	57	39.8
Agricultural	9	12.5	0	0	9	6.3
Total	72	100	71	100	143	100

staff and their line managers and is continually refined through feedback from participants. The Induction Club provides an opportunity for new staff to meet each other and gain information on the specific topics presented at each meeting. The Agency is also progressing steadily with a competence based training programme. The handbook for A/B1 staff is now in operation. A group of staff was tasked with working on competencies for B band posts, and their report has just been completed. This should allow us to complete the handbook for B2/B3 staff by autumn 2001. We have channelled greater resources into training over the past year with the appointment of a Training Liaison Officer/Quality Assurance Facilitator and this has resulted in an increase in training activity, with some £38,000 of SASA resources devoted to training delivered throughout the year, in addition to the Scottish Executive provision of training. On average, this represented 8 days training per person for 140 staff.

During 2000-01 the IT section completed three main projects. The first was the replacement, at the end of their functional life, of the label printers used to supply some 2.5 million labels to the Seed Potato Industry. The label printing is done at five SERAD Local Area Offices located at Galashiels, Perth, Dundee, Inverurie and Inverness. The labels are applied to seed potato consignments destined for export and the home market. A related study was completed to identify potential improvements in the operation of the Seed Potato Classification Scheme, which is presently paper-based. Options considered included the development of an integrated information management system to support the scheme and the introduction of new technology to manage the scheme documentation electronically.

Secondly, a study of the data processing requirements for Plant Variety Testing was undertaken. This work which delivers decisions on Distinctness Uniformity and Stability of vegetable cultivars and potatoes and provides support for Cereal Certification is highly reliant upon the effective use of IT. The project board recommended one business option which is under further consideration.

The third study reviewed the collection and production of Time and Cost Management information and proposed a number of Business Systems Options to meet the requirement. Time and Cost Management information is required as part of the Agency's Service Level Agreement with SERAD and also to assist the Agency in bidding for external work. A number of Business Systems Options are under consideration.

Additionally, work was completed on improving the validation and verification of data collected for Pesticide Usage Surveys. Proposals were made and accepted for improving the management of invoicing for the Official Seed Testing Station. Plans have been drawn up to improve the reporting of annual inspections for Cereal Certification to SERAD, and the management of the import and export foreign seed lots.

An assessment of the compliance of the Agency's Information Systems with BS7799 (Information Security Management) was completed. This showed a high level of compliance and identified the additional work required to complete the standard. A plan has been drawn up to achieve this target. The decision was also taken to proceed with linking SASA into the Government Secure Internet (GSI) and this work should be completed by Summer 2001. Integration of the SASA and Scottish Executive networks has been improved making it easier to share applications and information and to exchange e-mail more securely. SASA continues to operate Scottish Executive IT systems for Finance, Purchasing, Personnel and Library.

Annual Accounts 2000-01

Foreword to the Accounts

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with a Direction given by the Scottish Ministers in pursuance of Section 19(4) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. The Direction is reproduced at Appendix 1 to the accounts.

Background Information

The Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (SASA) was established as an Executive Agency within the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD) (formerly Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department) in April 1992, as part of the Government's Next Steps Initiative. It was designated a Simpler Agency in October 1992.

From 1 April 1998 the Agency has been subject to the funding arrangements of a net running costs regime. The Agency is funded by Annual Budget Act of the Scottish Parliament.

Principal Activities

The Agency exists to provide government with expert scientific and technical advice on agricultural crops, horticultural crops and aspects of the environment. It also performs statutory and regulatory work in relation to national, European Union and other international legislation and agreements on plant health, bee health, variety registration and crop improvement, regulation of genetically modified organisms, and the protection of crops, food and the environment.

Review of Financial Performance

The Agency's key financial objectives are to fulfil the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with SERAD within the budget allocated for the year and to recover full economic costs for charged services. In addition to the income received from SERAD, a further £2.76 million was received against sales invoices for externally-charged fees.

The charges for the SLA are set to recover the full economic cost of providing the agreed services including the recovery of certain externally-charged fees. Charges for the latter are set nationally from consolidated UK memorandum trading accounts or by recovering an agreed percentage of the estimated full cost as a matter of current Government policy.

SASA aims to adhere where possible to the CBI Code of Prompt Payment Practice. The average percentage of supplier invoices paid within 30 days of receipt for 2000-01 was 98.7% (1999-00 95.4%).

Future Developments

In December 2000, Scottish Ministers gave approval to co-locate the Agency headquarters with its field activities at Gogarbank Farm. The project is expected to be completed within five years, and is currently at the early design stage, as noted in the Director's Report.

In November 2001, the Scottish Executive accounting package will be replaced. This will provide the Agency with a modern accounting system to support the implementation of Resource Accounting Budgeting in 2001.

Research and Development

SASA undertakes a limited amount of R&D in developing new scientific techniques to support its statutory and regulatory objectives. All research costs are charged to the Income and Expenditure Account when incurred.

Fixed Assets

During the year the Agency acquired scientific equipment, computer hardware, software and capital works amounting to £802,000 of authorised capital expenditure.

Directorate

The senior management team at the end of the financial year was as follows:

- Dr R K M Hay - Director
- Mr S R Cooper - Deputy Director and Head of Pesticides, Plant Varieties and Seeds Division
- Dr K J O'Donnell - Head of Potato and Plant Health Division
- Mrs S M Quinn - Head of Administration
- Mr I Evans - Non-Executive Director

Dr Hay was re-appointed on 1 April 2001 until normal retirement age in accordance with the recruitment code of the Civil Service Commissioners. With the exception of the non-executive director, the other members of the management team are appointed as members of the UK Civil Service. These appointments are all subject to conditions set out in the Civil Service Management Code. Remuneration falls in line with Scottish Executive pay structure and is subject to Pay Awards negotiated with the relevant unions. See note 3 to the Accounts.

Employment Policy

SASA operates in line with Civil Service policies and endorses the commitment on diversity and equality of opportunity for all employees.

Recruitment Policy

In accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Code and the provisions of the Civil Service Order in Council 1995, the Agency has systems in place to ensure that recruitment is carried out on the basis of fair and open competition and selection on merit.

Disabled Employees

SASA is an equal opportunity employer and takes full cognisance of the Public Service Code of Practice on the employment of people with disabilities. Disablement is not regarded as a bar to recruitment, training or advancement, which are based entirely on the ability to do the job.



DR R K M HAY

Director

24 July 2001

Statement of Agency's and Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

Under Section 19(4) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, the Scottish Ministers have directed the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form and on the basis set out in the accounts direction, shown as an Appendix to these financial statements. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Agency's state of affairs at the year end and its income and expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Agency is required to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a "going concern" basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Agency will continue in operation.

The Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Executive has designated the Director of the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency as the Accountable Officer for the Agency. His relevant responsibilities as Accountable Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records, were set out in the *"Memorandum to Accountable Officers from the Principal Accountable Officer"*, dated April 2000.

Statement on the System of Internal Financial Control

This statement is given in respect of the resource account for the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency. As Accountable Officer for the Agency, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated in connection with the resources concerned.

The system can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, financial regulations, administrative procedures including the segregation of duties, management supervision and a system of delegation and accountability. Development and maintenance of the system is undertaken by executive managers within SASA and the Scottish Executive. In particular, the system includes:

- comprehensive budgeting systems with an annual budget review which is reviewed and agreed by the Directorate Group;
- regular reviews by the Directorate Group of the monthly and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- the preparation of regular financial reports which indicate actual expenditure against the forecasts;
- clearly defined capital investment control guidelines;
- as appropriate, formal project management disciplines.

SASA has an *internal audit service*, which operates to standards defined in the Government Internal Audit Manual. The work of the *Internal Auditors* is informed by an analysis of the risk to which the body is exposed, and annual audit plans are based on this analysis. The analysis of risk and the internal audit plans are endorsed by the Agency's Audit Committee and approved by me. At least annually, the *Internal Auditors* provide me with a report on internal audit activity in the Agency.

My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal auditors, the Audit Committee which oversees the work of the audit, the executive managers within the Agency who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

Implementation of the Turnbull Report

In September 1999 the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales published the report of the Turnbull Committee "*Internal Control: Guidance for Directors on the Combined Code*". The effect of the Turnbull Report was to extend the existing requirement to provide a statement in respect of financial controls to cover all controls, including financial, operational, compliance and the management of risk.

As Accountable Officer, I am aware of the recommendations of the Turnbull Committee and am taking reasonable steps to implement the full requirements of the guidance for the year ended 31 March 2002.



DR R K M HAY

Director

24 July 2001

Auditor's Report to the Scottish Parliament and the Auditor General for Scotland

I have audited the financial statements on pages 16 to 26 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets and the accounting policies set out on pages 20 to 21.

Respective responsibilities of the Agency, the Chief Executive and Auditor

As described on page 12, the Agency and Chief Executive are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. The Agency and Chief Executive are also responsible for the preparation of the other contents of the Annual Report. My responsibilities, as independent auditor, are established by statute and guided by the Auditing Practices Board and the auditing profession's ethical guidance.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers, and whether in all material respects the expenditure and receipts shown in the accounts were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. I also report if, in my opinion, the Foreword is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Agency has not kept proper accounting records, or if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent mis-statements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements.

I review whether the statement on page 13 reflects the Agency's compliance with Scottish Executive guidance on statements on the system of internal financial control. I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by the Scottish Executive, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements.

Basis of Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Agency and Chief Executive in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Agency's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material mis-statement, whether caused by error, or by fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and receipts shown in the accounts were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

In forming my opinion I have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency at 31 March 2001 and of the excess of income over expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability Act (Scotland) 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers; and
- in all material respects the expenditure and receipts shown in the accounts were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

P Tait

Chief Auditor, Audit Scotland
26 July 2001

18 George Street
EDINBURGH
EH2 2QU

Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 March 2001

Income	<i>Notes</i>	2001 £000	2000 £000
Income from SLA		5,450	5,303
Income from other activities		2,761	2,877
	2	8,211	8,180
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	3,580	3,351
Depreciation	6	769	695
Other operating charges	4	1,765	1,780
		6,114	5,826
Net income before interest on capital		2,097	2,354
Interest on capital	5	624	606
Excess of income over expenditure transferred to general reserve		1,473	1,748

Statement of Recognised Gains and Losses

for the year ended 31 March 2001

	2001 £000	2000 £000
Net gain on revaluation of assets	28	182

The notes on pages 20 to 26 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

at 31 March 2001

	Notes	2001		2000	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	6		9,873		9,813
Current Assets					
Stocks		8		23	
Debtors	7	663		619	
Cash at bank and in hand		-		6	
			671		648
Trade Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		122		97	
Net Current Assets			549		551
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			10,422		10,364
Financed by:					
Capital and Reserves					
General reserve	8		9,102		9,003
Revaluation reserve	9		1,320		1,361
			10,422		10,364

The notes on pages 20 to 26 form part of these accounts.



DR R K M HAY

Director

24 July 2001

Cash Flow Statement

for the year ended 31 March 2001

	Notes	2001		2000	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities (note i)			2,906		3,054
Capital Expenditure and Financial Investment (note ii)			(800)		(994)
Cash surplus transferred to SERAD	14		(2,112)		(2,054)
(Decrease)/Increase in cash in the year (note iii)			(6)		6

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

Note i: Reconciliation of excess income over expenditure to operating cash flows

	Notes	2001		2000	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Excess of income over expenditure			1,473		1,748
Adjustments for non-cash transactions					
Depreciation charges		769		695	
Interest on capital		624		606	
Auditor's remuneration and expenses	4	14		13	
Services provided by Scottish Executive	4	56		64	
Profit on sale of fixed assets	4	(3)		(6)	
Notional set-aside receipt		(20)		(21)	
			1,440		1,351
Adjustments for movements in working capital					
Decrease/(Increase) in stock		15		(7)	
(Increase) in debtors		(49)		(24)	
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors		27		(14)	
			(7)		(45)
Net cash inflow from operating activities			2,906		3,054

Note ii: Analysis of capital expenditure and financial investment

	<i>Notes</i>	2001 £000	2000 £000
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	6	804	1,004
Receipts from sale of tangible fixed assets		(4)	(10)
		<u>800</u>	<u>994</u>

Note iii: Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds

	2001 £000	2000 £000
Cash in hand and in bank at 31 March 2000	6	0
Cash in hand and in bank at 31 March 2001	0	6
(Decrease)/Increase in cash in year	<u>(6)</u>	<u>6</u>

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2001

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the revised Accounts Direction issued by the Scottish Ministers on 29 March 2001.

Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of fixed assets and stocks, where material, at their value to the Agency by reference to their current costs.

Fixed Assets

The Agency generally capitalises assets costing £1,000 or more which have a useful economic life of more than one year. However this threshold is varied for works projects (over £10,000), IT (over £100) and fixtures and fittings (over £100).

Departmental Estate is treated as an asset of the Agency, although legal ownership now rests with the Scottish Ministers. This reflects the Agency's position as the principal beneficial user of this property.

The valuation of land and buildings is on the basis of open market value for existing use. Professional valuations of land and buildings are carried out every 5 years.

Land and buildings are revalued in the years between professional valuations using indices published in the Valuation Office's Property Market Report. Other tangible fixed assets, excluding computers, are revalued annually using appropriate CSO Indices.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land, at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset evenly over its expected useful life, as follows:

Freehold buildings	30-60 years
Fixtures & fittings	over 5 years
Plant & machinery	over 10 years
Vehicles	over 5 to 10 years
Computer hardware/software	over 3 to 5 years
Equipment	over 10 years

Asset lives are reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to represent a reasonable estimate of useful economic life.

Donated tangible fixed assets are capitalised at their valuation on receipt, and this value is credited to the donated asset reserve. Subsequent revaluations are also taken to this reserve. Each year, an amount equal to the depreciation charge on the asset is released from the donated asset reserve to the income and expenditure account.

Stocks

Stock is stated at the lower of net current replacement cost or net realisable value. Provision is made where necessary for obsolescent, slow moving and defective stocks.

Consumables are written off in the year of purchase.

Research and Development

Research and development expenditure is written off as incurred.

Income

The Agency is not primarily a trading organisation. It provides services, primarily to SERAD, under a Service Level Agreement for which a charge is made. Receipts from the Service Level Agreement, together with receipts from fees for seed certification, seed and variety testing, statutory pesticides work and other activities are presented as income net of value added tax. In addition, a notional receipt of £20,000 has been included in respect of agricultural land set aside.

Value Added Tax

Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in the year in which it is incurred, apart from that which is capitalised as part of asset values.

Early Departure Costs

The cost of early departures has been funded under arrangements announced in the Civil Service White Paper "Continuity and Change" published in July 1994, with the minor part of the cost borne by the Agency and the majority borne by the Civil Service Superannuation Vote.

In previous years a notional charge has been included in the accounts to reflect the annual payments made by the Civil Service Superannuation Vote to cover the costs of the scheme. From 1 April 1999, in accordance with the provisions of the Resource Accounting Manual, no such notional charge has been made. However, the equivalent sum of £22,000 will be included in the costs calculated when setting fees and charges under Government regulations.

2. ANALYSIS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

An analysis of income and expenditure by division is given below:

	Income 2000-01 £000	Expenditure 2000-01 £000	Net Divisional Outturn 2000-01 £000	Income 1999-00 £000	Expenditure 1999-00 £000	Net Divisional Outturn 1999-00 £000
Support Services	319	2,761	(2,442)	340	2,647	(2,307)
Pesticides, Plant Varieties and Seeds	3,793	1,890	1,903	3,609	1,765	1,844
Potato and Plant Health	4,099	2,087	2,012	4,231	2,020	2,211
	8,211	6,738	1,473	8,180	6,432	1,748

The net cost of the support services is recovered in charges for services made by the other divisions.

The significant excess of income over expenditure relates in the main to the Seed Potato Classification Scheme. Although a number of services are provided by SERAD Agricultural Staff for which no charge is currently made, the costs are recovered in setting fees to third parties for this scheme.

3. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS

	2000-01 £000	1999-00 £000
Wages and salaries	3,022	2,833
Social security costs	196	180
Other pension costs	362	338
	3,580	3,351

For 2000-01 contributions of £362,245 (1999-00 £337,723) were paid to the PCSPS at rates determined by the Government Actuary and advised by the Treasury. These rates were in the range 12-18.5 per cent of pensionable pay.

The average number of staff, excluding casuals, employed during the year was as follows:

	2000-01 Number	1999-00 Number
Scientists	107	102
Support staff	41	41
	148	143

The salary and pension entitlements of the most senior managers of the Agency during the year were as follows:

Name and title	Age at 31 March 2001	Salary ⁽¹⁾ £000	Real increase in pension at age 60 ⁽²⁾ £000	Total accrued pension at age 60 at 31 March 2001 ⁽³⁾ £000
Dr RKM Hay Director	54	55-60	0-2.5	5-10
Mr SR Cooper Deputy Director	56	50-55	0-2.5	15-20
Dr KJ O'Donnell Head of Potato and Plant Health	38	35-40	0-2.5	0-5
Mrs SM Quinn Head of Administration	49	25-30	0-2.5	10-15

Pension benefits are provided through the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). This is a statutory scheme which provides benefits on a "final salary" basis at a normal retirement age of 60. Benefits accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to 3 years pension is payable on retirement. Members pay contributions of 1.5 per cent of pensionable earnings. Pension payments increase in line with the Retail Prices Index. On death, pensions are payable to the surviving spouse at a rate of half the member's pension. On death in service the scheme pays a lump sum benefit of twice pensionable

pay and also provides a service enhancement on computing the spouse's pension. The enhancement depends on length of service and cannot exceed 10 years. Medical retirement is possible in the event of serious ill-health. In this case, pensions are brought into payment immediately without actuarial reduction and with service enhanced as for widow(er) pensions.

- (1) Salaries include gross salaries, and if appropriate performance bonuses payable, reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances, recruitment and retention allowances and private office allowances. It does not include the estimated monetary value of benefits in kind.
- (2) The increase in pension earned during the year in bands of £2,500.
- (3) Annual pension entitlement, in bands of £5,000, accrued for services with the Scottish Executive, excluding any AVCs, added years purchased or transfers into PCSPS.

4. OTHER OPERATING CHARGES

	2000-01 £000	1999-00 £000
Personnel	70	48
Premises	640	626
Transport	209	205
Supplies and services	779	830
Non-cash items:		
(Profit) on disposal of fixed assets	(3)	(6)
Auditor's remuneration and expenses	14	13
Services provided by Scottish Executive	56	64
	1,765	1,780

5. INTEREST ON CAPITAL EMPLOYED

Interest of £624,000 (1999-00 £606,000) has been charged in the Income and Expenditure Account on the basis of 6% of the average cost of capital employed by the Agency in accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual. Capital employed is defined as Total Assets less Current Liabilities, but excludes donated assets where the charge is nil.

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS - £000

	Land & buildings	Furniture & fittings	Plant & machinery	Vehicles	Computer hardware/ software	Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Replacement Cost or Valuation								
At 1 April 2000	8,164	339	986	561	2,021	2,566	–	14,637
Reclassification	(60)	–	–	–	(15)	–	75	–
Additions	93	7	19	22	147	212	302	802
Disposals	–	–	(9)	(20)	(30)	(64)	–	(123)
Transfers	–	–	–	–	17	–	(17)	–
Revaluation adjustment	21	2	12	1	–	11	–	47
At 31 March 2001	8,218	348	1,008	564	2,140	2,725	360	15,363
Depreciation								
At 1 April 2000	369	292	571	410	1,466	1,716	–	4,824
Provided in year	207	17	72	40	256	177	–	769
On disposals	–	–	(8)	(20)	(30)	(64)	–	(122)
Revaluation adjustment	7	1	5	–	–	6	–	19
At 31 March 2001	583	310	640	430	1,692	1,835	–	5,490
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2000	7,795	47	415	151	555	850	–	9,813
At 31 March 2001	7,635	38	368	134	448	890	360	9,873

The land and buildings at the East Craigs site together with the farm at Gogarbank were valued independently, as at 31 March 1998, by Bell Ingram Rural, Chartered Surveyors on the basis of Existing Use Value in accordance with the Appraisal and Valuation Manual of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The Independent Valuers have provided an additional valuation, at that same date, on the basis of Open Market Value.

The revaluation adjustment of £47,000 and backlog depreciation of £19,000 were transferred to the revaluation reserve.

Reconciliation of fixed asset additions to capital expenditure cash flow.

	£000
Creditor at 1 April 2000	15
Fixed asset additions	802
Creditor at 31 March 2001	(13)
Payment to acquire fixed assets	804

7. DEBTORS

	2001 £000	2000 £000
Trade debtors	271	225
Other debtors	3	8
Prepayments and accrued income	389	386
	663	619

8. GENERAL RESERVE

	£000
At 1 April 2000	9,003
Cash surplus transferred to SERAD (Note 14)	(2,112)
Non-cash transactions:	
Notional costs	669
Transfer of realised element of revaluation reserve	69
Excess of income over expenditure	1,473
At 31 March 2001	9,102

9. REVALUATION RESERVE

	£000
At 1 April 2000	1,361
Surplus arising on revaluation and indexation during the year	47
Backlog depreciation	(19)
Transfer to general reserve in respect of the realised element of revaluation reserve	(69)
At 31 March 2001	1,320

10. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	2001	2000
	£000	£000
Contracted	110	40
Authorised but not contracted	1,648	697

11. OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2001 the Agency was committed to making payment of £7,000 (£7,000 at 31 March 2000) in respect of land and building operating leases which expire within one year.

The Agency has entered into non-cancellable contracts (which are not operating leases) for building services totalling nil as at 31 March 2001 (£12,000 at 31 March 2000).

12. CONTINGENT LIABILITY

There were no material contingent liabilities at 31 March 2001 (nil at 31 March 2000).

13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

SASA is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department. SERAD is regarded as a related party with which SASA has had various material transactions during the year. In addition SASA has had various material transactions with other central Government bodies. Most of these transactions have been with the Pesticides Safety Directorate and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

During the year, the Director, managerial staff and other related parties have not undertaken any material transactions with SASA.

14. RECONCILIATION WITH DRAFT SERAD CASH ACCOUNT

	2001	2000
	£000	£000
Net operating income	(2,252)	(2,379)
Capital expenditure	815	1,025
Capital charges receipt	(675)	(700)
Cash Surplus Transferred to SERAD	(2,112)	(2,054)

Direction by the Scottish Ministers in Accordance with Section 19(4) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

1. The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2001 and subsequent financial years shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Resource Accounting Manual which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.
2. The statement of accounts shall give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
3. In accordance with the requirements of the Manual:
 - 3.1 When preparing its income and expenditure account the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency shall have regard to the profit and loss account format 2 prescribed in Schedule 4 to the Companies Act 1985 to the extent that such requirements are appropriate to the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency.
4. This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the Statement of Accounts. This direction supersedes the one dated 25 April 2000.

Signed by the authority of the Scottish Ministers

P S COLLINGS

29 March 2001

Representational Duties of SASA Staff During 2000-01

Directorate Group

Dr R K M Hay

- Editor of Annals of Botany
- Convenor of Committee of Heads of Agricultural and Biological Organisations in Scotland (CHABOS)
- Executive Committee of Edinburgh Centre for Rural Research

Dr K J O'Donnell

- British Society for Plant Pathology: Membership Secretary
- UPOV Working Group on Biochemical & Molecular Techniques
- ACRE Sub Group on Best Practice in Crop Design

S R Cooper

- Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland Management Advisory Committee
- Plant Varieties and Seeds Committee
- National List and Seeds Committee

Mrs S M Quinn

- Scottish Management Advisory Committee (CHABOS)

Library

Mrs L J Clark

- Scottish Agricultural Librarians Group
- Agency Information Group
- Scottish Working Party on Official Publications

Cereals Section

G P Hall

- National List - Interdepartmental Combinable Crops VCU Group
- EU Cereals Comparative Trials Group (Spring barley)
- OECD Working Group on Genetically Modified Seeds Issues
- OECD Varietal Certification Schemes Committee
- UKASTA (Scottish Council) Seeds Committee

Official Seed Testing Station

R Don

- ISTA Germination Committee
Moisture Committee
Tetrazolium Testing Committee

Mrs V Cockerell

- ISTA Plant Disease Committee
- BCPC Seed Treatment Working Group

Mrs C Cadger

- ISTA/EU Working Group on Germination

Herbage and Vegetable Crops Section

F N Green

- UPOV Technical Working Party for Vegetables
- International Association for Cultivated Plant Taxonomy
- ISTA Nomenclature Committee
- National List - Chairman of Vegetables DUS Centre
- UK Plant Genetic Resources Group
- Hortax

Dr J Davey

- Scottish Executive Assessor to Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)
- Partner in GENRES Project: Future of European Carrot

T Christie

- UPOV Biochemical & Molecular Techniques Working Group: *Ad hoc* subgroup on molecular techniques for Oilseed Rape

K M Pearson

- National List Inter Departmental Herbage VCU Group

Pesticide Usage and Wildlife Management Section

Dr C J Griffiths

- Advisory Committee on Pesticides
- Inter Departmental Secretariat
- Working Party on Pesticide Usage Surveys
- Inter Departmental Fertilisers Evaluation Committee

J P Snowden

- Working Party on Pesticide Usage Surveys

Dr F G L Hartley

- MAFF Rabies Wildlife Control Working Group
- National Goose Forum
- Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime - Scottish Working Group

Chemistry Section

Dr K Hunter

- ACP - Environmental Panel
- British Agrochemical Association - Environmental Research Committee

D A Lindsay

- ACP Pesticide Residues Committee
- PRC Analytical Sub-group

Potato Section

Dr S F Carnegie

- National List Potato VCU Group: Chairman
- VTSC Growers Association Committee
- Seed Potato Consultative Panel
- UK Seed Potato Committee
- EU Potato Comparative Trials Group
- UN ECE Group of Seed Potato Experts
- EAPR Disease Resistance Testing Working Group
- EAPR Potato Cultivar Assessment Working Group

Mrs A M Cameron

- National List Potato VCU Group: Member

P Haddon

- National List Potato VCU Group: Minute Secretary

Seed Potato Classification Scheme Section

W J Rennie

- British Crop Protection Council Board of Management
- Chairman, Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel
- Chairman, Crop Protection in Northern Britain, Standing Committee
- British Potato Council Seed Potato Forum

C Laing

- Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel

Miss C J Landels

- Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel

Plant Health Section

Dr J M Chard

- British Society for Plant Pathology: Board Member
- UK Plant Health Co-ordination Group

Dr C J Jeffries

- Co-ordinator of EU Virus Experts Group
- EPPO Potato Phytosanitary Measures Panel

Dr J Wood

- Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification
- ACGM Technical Sub-Committee

Virology and Zoology Section

Dr J Pickup

- BCPC Science and Technology Committee, Pests and Diseases Working Group
- Scottish Aphid-borne Virus Working Party
- AAB Specialist Group Committee for Nematology
- Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel

Diagnostics and Molecular Biology Section

V Mulholland

- UPOV Biochemical & Molecular Techniques Working Group: *Ad hoc* subgroup on molecular techniques for Oilseed Rape
- ISTA GMO Taskforce

SASA Contact Points – from 1 July 2001

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