

The real story is that half the ‘quangos’ survived, and none were devolved

Oct 15 2010

All new governments like culling ‘quangos’ that have outlived their usefulness. [Chris Gilson](#) find that Francis Maude’s reforms fit this recurring pattern pretty well, with three tenths of bodies likely to survive intact or in somewhat reconstituted form



Analysing the government’s list of changes to quasi-government agencies (the so-called ‘quangos’, which are in fact quasi-governmental agencies, and not at all non-governmental) shows that the outcome is more stability than [Francis Maude’s public pronouncements](#) might suggest. The overall outcomes are:

Outcome for organization	Per cent
Body retained	47
Body abolished	24
Still under review	13
Body transferred or reconstituted	10
Body merged with another (or devolved)	5
Body turned into a charity or other form	2
Total	100%

Depending on the outcomes of ongoing reviews, it seems likely that three out of five quasi-government agencies will survive the attempted cull largely unchanged (some in a reconstituted form), while most of the outright abolitions are concentrated on fairly small advisory committees or bodies that have outlived their usefulness. There is a strong emphasis upon reintegrating larger abolished bodies into central departments, often with a ‘transparency’ or ‘accountability’ justification. In fact this often reflects the IT potential from contemporary ‘digital-era’ developments for departments to handle directly matters that they previously found difficult to supervise, [discussed elsewhere on this blog](#). There were only isolated examples of any ‘big society’ transition of government bodies into becoming charities. And just one body (out of 367) was devolved to local government – suggesting that the rot has already set in on ministerial intentions on this front.

There were only isolated examples of any ‘big society’ transition of government bodies into becoming charities. And just one body (out of 367) was classed by *the Guardian* as devolved to local government – suggesting that the rot has already set in on ministerial intentions on this front. (Nine Regional Development Agencies (see [previous blogs](#)) are classed in our table as ‘abolished’ although some functions will pass to new sub-regional quasi-government agencies. Three local Development Corporations (for Thurrock, West Northamptonshire and London Thames Gateway) were also classed as abolished, but a few functions will pass to local government here too, especially for the Gateway).

Looking across Whitehall our larger table below shows that four departments (FCO, DfID, GEO and Treasury) stood aloof and offered up little for the Maude cull exercise. By contrast five others were enthusiastic (MoJ, Defra, BIS, DH and DCMS), each offering around 40 or more bodies for review, and accounting for the bulk of abolitions – along with Eric Pickles at DCLG, who culled almost two thirds of bodies reviewed. Defra and DH emerged as the transfer/reconstituting kings. The remaining departments fell in between these poles, offering some sacrificial victims but generally small bodies.

The quango cull of 2010

Department	Retain	Abolish	Under review	Transfer/reconstitute	Merge (or devolve)	Turn into a charity/other	Total
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)	33	11	3		5		52
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)	19	14	6	10			49
Business, Innovation and Science (BIS)	15	9	12		6	2	44
Department of Health (DH)	10	10		20			40
Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS)	20	8	1		4	3	36
Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)	6	15	1		1	1	24
Department for Education (DfE)	3	6	8				17
Ministry of Defence (MOD)	15	1	1				17
Home Office (HO)	10		4		1	1	16
Cabinet Office	7	1	4	3			15
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	8		2	3	2		15
Department for Transport (DfT)	9	6					15
Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	9	3					12
Foreign Office (FCO)	2	2	4				8
Department for International Development (DfID)	2						2
GEO	1	1					2
HM Treasury	1						1
Total, all departments	170	87	46	36	19	7	365
Per cent	46.6	23.8	12.6	9.9	5.2	1.9	100

Our full analysis of the changes is also available in a [downloadable form](#). It is derived from *the Guardian's online listing*.

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