

REPORT

To: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	Subject: AREA/REGISTRATION SERVICE DEVELOPMENT OF REGISTRATION SERVICES IN SCOTLAND - FER & DIGROS	
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 1 March 2004	Ref: JAF/BN	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the General Purposes Committee of the status of the implementation of the FER (Forward Electronic Register) and DIGROS (Digital Imaging of the Genealogical Records of Scotland's People) Projects in the Area/Registration Service.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 21 August 2002, the Committee was advised of the progress being made by General Register Office for Scotland to replace the current Scottish registration software SRS on a phased basis from the beginning of 2003. This Council indicated to the Registrar General that it would migrate to FER as a replacement for SRS in line with assistance from and in consultation with the Head of IT Services by June 2003.
- 2.2 For technical reasons the implementation of FER was delayed and Registration Offices in North Lanarkshire were rescheduled to have access to FER via a GSX link to New Register House, Edinburgh for the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages from 5 January 2004.
- 2.3 Access from Registration Offices to DIGROS was also scheduled for January 2004.

3. Considerations

- 3.1 Following the migration to FER on 5 January 2004 service availability to Registration Offices throughout Scotland has been interrupted on many occasions. Despite concerted efforts by the GRO and their software suppliers the source of difficulty has not been traced or cured. Therefore, the Registrar General has had to temporarily withdraw birth and death registrations from FER and revert to the SRS system for the registration of births and deaths. As a result, with effect from 1 March 2004 Births and Deaths Registration will be recorded on the SRS system. Marriage Preliminaries will continue to be registered on FER. The GRO will re-release FER for all Registrations when the reliability problem has been resolved and continue to support SRS meantime.
- 3.2 The Registrar General has indicated that access to DIGROS is unlikely until June 2004.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the terms of the report and the delay completing the implementation of the FER and DIGROS systems.

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Members seeking further information on the contents of this report should contact John Fleming, Head of Central Services on Extension 2228.