Realising the Benefits of Relocation

Stephen Hill

Central Science Laboratory
Sand Hutton
York

© CSL 2005
What my talk will cover

• What is CSL – what do we do?
• The re-location process – what it meant for us
• Initial experiences – mistakes/lessons
• Site selection – where we ended up and why
• Success factors – what we did right
• Looking back on the experience
  – Benefits from co-location
  – Benefits from re-location
Central Science Laboratory

• CSL is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Our Vision
• To be an innovative and influential centre-of-excellence in the sciences underpinning sustainable land use, safe food and a healthy environment and a world-class contractor of choice for a broad user community.

Resources: 700+ scientific, technical & admin staff
Scientific facilities
Long-term datasets

© CSL 2005
Central Science Laboratory – Mission

• play a front-line, responsive role in UK’s agricultural, food safety and environmental science.
• deliver high quality research, consultancy and science services to Defra, the Food Standards Agency, other Government Departments, the European Union, industry and levy organisations.
• excel in the sciences underpinning sustainable crop production and commodity protection; environmental management and conservation; food safety and quality.
• sustain a world class, state-of-the-art facility run on efficient and competitive business lines; investing in its people to sustain a skilled professional and adaptable workforce.
• enhance the UK’s competitiveness through technology transfer and exploitation of intellectual property.
• exploit our expertise and facilities to enhance research training with academic partners.

© CSL 2005
From there to here

- 1982  Rayner Efficiency Review
- 1982/3 MAFF became Departmental sponsor
- 1988  HM Treasury approval
- 1988  Private sector architects appointed
- 1991  Private building contractors appointed
- 1992  CSL launched as Executive Agency
- 1993  Corner stone laid
- 1996  Site occupation
- 1997  Official opening
- 1999  Re-location completed
Slough Laboratory

© CSL 2005
Worplesdon Laboratory, Guildford
Norwich Food Science Laboratory

© CSL 2005
Initial experiences

• Where could we all go?
  – Pre-existing MAFF sites
    • looked at these – plans developed
  – Other (former MoD site) were offered
  – But finally consultants hired to find a green field site
Beware the local opposition
Site selection criteria

- Within 2 hours travelling from London
- Proximity to large conurbation (local infrastructure, housing, employment)
- Probable planning permission
- Un-encroached Greenfield site
- Proximity to strong Universities
- Ready access to international travel
Critical success factors (1)

- Detailed planning
  - Logistics of relocation and co-location
    - Internal
    - Review (peer review of internal planning) by consultants
    - Appointment of relocation company

- Communication
  - Regular, co-ordinated information to staff
  - Information pack to all staff
  - Information centres on each major site (video)
  - Family visits to York (local inspection)
    - Site tour, information fair
Informing staff

‘being invaded by a bunch of cowboys with cartloads of toxic and radioactive chemical hazards and caged animals’
York - ‘CSL on the Move’ information pack to all staff

Area guide

• How to get there and around
• House hunting
• Education
• Health services
• Shopping
• Towns and villages
• Leisure
• Local media
• Useful services
• The move - checklist
• Local maps

A local information guide of the York – Ryedale area for CSL staff

© CSL 2005
Critical success factors (2)

• Support for Staff
  – Relocation package
  – Mobile and non-mobile staff
  – HR support to staff and families
  – Leavers support

• Established spearhead office
  – York University Science Park
    • Support teams built up in York during construction
    • Finance, accommodation, HR, procurement
    • Appoint staff early to York, early move
      for key staff - flexibility
Getting the staff on-side

• Organise team building events at the new site
Critical success factors (3)

- Physical move
  - Schedule to minimise disruption to delivery
  - Critical path analysis
  - Science teams transferred as units
  - Prior IT installation and testing
  - Prior chemical contaminants/laboratory testing

- External Communication
  - Working closely with planning authorities and Council
  - Local Parish Council
  - Local village community
  - Local university, science community
Co-location benefits - rationalisation

• Support services
  – Procurement
  – Financial systems
  – Facilities management

• Processes
  – Quality systems
  – Project management
  – Business continuity/disaster recovery
Co-location benefits - organisation

- Science base
  - Bigger critical mass – flexibility/responsiveness
  - Consolidation of functions (MTU)
  - Maximising benefit from investment
  - Clearer identity

- Management
  - Corporate culture
  - Improved communications
  - Closer control
Co-location dis-benefits

- Higher visibility/profile – greater vulnerability
Re-location benefits

• Staffing
  – Better local staff resource pool (less competition)
  – Lower housing costs so staff live closer (flexibility)
  – New ‘blood’

• New facilities
  – Re-plan
  – Modernise (nursery)

• Efficiency gains
  – Closer to our customer

• Better local and long distance communication
Relocation benefits

• Quality of life
  – Rural environment
  – Cheaper beer

• Organisation
  – Refresh the culture
  – Introduce new behaviours

• Improved staff coherence (survivors)
Relocation issues

• Distance from Whitehall
• Less convenient international travel
• Trailing partners
What has happened since?

• Many co-location benefits have been achieved
  – Cohesive staff unit (tribal cultures lost)
  – Good new staff brought in (lower age profile)
  – Investors in People

• Cost of site is hard to bear
  – Change in Government accounting rules

• Handles are beginning to fall off the doors
Conclusion

• Co-location has been very beneficial
  – Leaner efficient organisation
  – Internationally known facilities
  – Stronger science

• Re-location has less tangible benefits
  – Better for staff
  – Cost savings compared to old sites?
  – Opportunity to refresh