

News & Appointments

Permanent Defence Force to move towards two brigade structure

Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Alan Shatter TD has announced details of a plan to reorganise the defence forces and move from a three brigade to a two brigade structure. There will also be a revised ceiling of 9,500 personnel in the Permanent Defence Force (PDF).

The reorganisation will see many personnel, currently employed in headquarters, administrative and allied support tasks re-deployed to front line posts. The two new brigades will be located in Cork and Dublin. The Minister also mentioned that while PDF numbers in locations throughout the country will not change greatly, there will be movement of functions and personnel between locations. He also assured that while four barracks were closed in March of this year, no further closures will take place.

Minister Shatter added that while the reorganisation impacts on the

administration and support for the Reserve Defence Force (RDF), the organisation of the RDF itself has not been addressed. The recommendations of the Value for Money Review of the Reserve Defence Force, due to be completed by the end of September, will take into consideration the revised PDF structures.

The Minister stressed that he “will ensure that the Defence Organisation remains at the vanguard of modernisation and reform”.

While this reorganisation plan is immediate, the Green Paper on Defence, to be published towards the end of 2012, will address longer term defence policy.

The reorganisation of the Permanent Defence Force, the Minister added “will enhance operational capabilities within a reduced resource envelope”.

Minister for Children to develop Heads and General Scheme of Bill to establish the Child and Family Support Agency

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has been given the go ahead by the Government to commence the drafting of Heads and a General Scheme of a Bill to establish the Child and Family Support Agency.

The Programme for Government set out to “fundamentally reform the delivery of child protection services by removing child welfare and protection from the HSE and creating a dedicated Child Welfare and Protection Agency.”

Additionally, the Government also announced its decision to merge the existing Family Support Agency into the Child and Family Support Agency in the public service reform plan, published in November 2011.

The drafting of the Bill will give the new Agency the responsibilities currently undertaken by both the HSE Children and Family services and the

Family Support Agency.

Last year the Minister Fitzgerald established a task force to assist the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the work of preparing for the establishment of a Child and Family Support Agency. The task force was required to base its work on best practice in child welfare, family support and public administration consistent with the Government’s public sector reform agenda.

The final report of the Task Force is being circulated to Government prior to its publication and the recommendations will inform the development of the Heads and General Scheme to establish the Child and Family Support Agency.

President of Irish Planning Institute elected

Ms Joanna Kelly has been elected as President of the Irish Planning Institute (IPI), the professional body representing the majority of professional planners engaged in physical and environmental planning in Ireland.

Ms Kelly graduated from UCD in 2002 with a Masters Degree in Regional and Urban Planning. After working with a number of local authorities, she became a Bord Pleanála Inspector in 2008.

Amongst her plans for the new role is the preparation of a corporate plan for the Institute which will set out key strategic

objectives for the Institute over the next three to five years. Additionally, she also hopes to get the public more involved in the country’s planning system. She stated: “I want to look at how the IPI can set up initiatives to better educate the public, including students and children, about how the planning system works and to entice all stakeholders to participate in a more meaningful manner.”

Justice and Equality Minister announces approval of 26 senior Garda appointments

The Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter TD has announced the appointment of one Assistant Commissioner, four Chief Superintendents and 13 Superintendents in An Garda Síochána. The appointments were made by the Government following a competitive selection process in accordance with the statutory regulations governing promotions in the force.

This development, the Minister said, “will enable the Garda Commissioner to fill key operational posts immediately”.

He added: “The agreement I have reached with my colleague, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, will in fact enable the appointment

of one Assistant Commissioner, seven Chief Superintendents and 18 Superintendents, as well as the filling of consequential senior vacancies arising from these appointments. I will be seeking the approval of the Government for the balance of the appointments as soon as new Garda promotion panels have been established”. The agreement also means that, from now on, “the strength of the senior ranks can be maintained at these new levels, so that any further vacancies within those levels will be promptly filled. This will contribute significantly towards the maintenance of the operational capacity and effectiveness of the Garda Síochána”.



Public Affairs
Ireland
25 Mountjoy
Square East
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8198500
Fax: 01 8944733
E: info@publicaffairsireland.com
www.publicaffairsireland.com
twitter.com/publicaffairsir



Bills complete passage through Houses of Oireachtas while additional bills published for consideration in September

A number of bills this week completed their passage through the Houses of the Oireachtas prior to summer recess including the Gaeltacht Bill 2012; the European Arrest Warrant (Application to Third Countries and Amendment) and Extradition (Amendment) Bill 2011; the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012; and the Criminal Justice (Search Warrants) Bill 2012.

Among the Bills published this week that will be considered when the Houses of the Oireachtas reassemble in September 18 include: the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2012, which will improve the current landlord-tenant regulations; the Fiscal Responsibility Bill 2012, which will formally ratify the Stability Treaty; the Betting (Amendment) Bill 2012, which will allow for the extension of betting duty to remote bookmakers and will ensure that all



bookmakers activities offered in the State are taxed equally; the Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill 2012 which will allow the putting in place of a Director General and six new Directorates, aligned to specific areas of service such as primary care, mental health, hospitals etc; the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012, which, when enacted, will make it mandatory for persons working with children or vulnerable adults to be vetted by the Gardai; and finally the Electoral

Amendment (Political Funding) Bill 2011, which will halve State funding to political parties unless 30 per cent of their candidates at the next general election are women.

Design Team appointed for the Re-configuration of National Forensic Mental Health Service Facilities

A Design Team has been appointed for the re-configuration of National Forensic Mental Health Service Facilities to replace the Central Mental Hospital in Dundrum. They will commence work immediately on the design of the new facilities including a new National Forensic Hospital, a Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit, a Forensic Mental Health Intellectual Disability Unit and an Intensive Care Rehabilitation Unit (ICRU) to be located at Portrane, as well as three regional ICRU's that will be located at HSE South, HSE West and Dublin Mid Leinster regions. It is expected that construction will commence in 2014 and take two years to complete.

The appointment, by the HSE, was welcomed by the Minister for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, Kathleen Lynch TD. She said the redevelopment of the Central Mental Hospital is a "very important element in our plan to modernise our mental health services".

The Minister added: "It has long been accepted that the facilities at Dundrum are not an appropriate place for treating and caring for persons with mental illness, so I am delighted that we are now moving forward with this major capital project which will provide for a pathway through high, medium and low secure mental health care to align with 'A Vision for Change'".

Appointment to the Health and Social Care Professionals Council

Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD invites expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced persons interested in being appointed to the Health and Social Care Professionals Council.

The Minister is currently seeking to appoint one member to the Council to represent the interest of the general public. This may be a member of an advocacy group or user of services.

The Council was established in March 2007. It is an independent regulator established to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence amongst registrants of twelve designated health and social care professions. It was established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (the Act) and consists of a Chairperson and 24 ordinary members.

270 new staff to be recruited to work in Primary Care

The Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD has announced plans to recruit over 270 new staff to work in Primary Care. The new staff will be funded via a special allocation of €20m, set aside as part of the HSE's 2012 National Service Plan to fill posts in Primary Care.

The funding will provide for the employment of 17 Clinical Nurse

Specialists to support the Integrated Care Diabetes Programme and 255 additional Primary Care Team posts, including Public Health Nurses, Registered General Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists.

Committee Meetings next week

July 24

1.30pm

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

Committee Room 2, Leinster House

AGENDA: (i) 1.30 p.m. - The contribution to enterprise and jobs made by the Crafts Sector [Mr. Karen Hennessy, Chief Executive, Mr Brian McGee, Head of Market Development and Ms Louise Allen, Head of Innovation and Development Programmes, Crafts Council of Ireland]; and (ii) 3 p.m. - The role, function and remit of the Competition Authority [Ms Isolde Goggin, Chairperson, Competition Authority]

2.15pm

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht

Committee Room 4, Leinster House

AGENDA: Report of the Pyrite Panel on the cost of restoring the structural integrity of houses damaged by the use of Pyrite in building materials [Mr Brendan Tuohy, Chairman, Pyrite Panel]

July 25

10am

Health and Children

Committee Room 3, Leinster House

AGENDA: Engagement with Ms Nuala Doherty, Chairperson Designate, National Education Welfare Board



The Future of HR in the Public Sector

Public Affairs Ireland Annual HR Conference
Thursday 27th September 2012

THE WESTIN HOTEL, DUBLIN, 9am - 3.30pm

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

The onset of recession and the role of the 'Troika' plunged the Irish public sector into crisis. Pay cuts, a moratorium on appointments and promotions, widespread redeployment of staff, adjustments to premium payments and allowances - all of these have been introduced to a degree that was unthinkable a few years ago. Many organisational changes are taking place in timescales that would have been inconceivable in the past. But are we witnessing lasting changes or temporary adjustments? What does the future hold in store for public sector employees and management? What positive changes of an enduring kind can we expect over the coming years in public sector HR?

The Croke Park implementation body concluded in its recent report that "the Agreement will continue to be measured against its ability to accelerate the pace of change across the public service and its potential for extracting further pay bill and non-pay savings."

This full-day conference – for managers, employees and union representatives – will address the key themes now emerging in public sector HR:

- The Croke Park Agreement Performance to Date and Future Prospects
- Innovations in Public Sector Industrial Relations
- Innovations in Pay, Promotions, Performance

These and other compelling themes will be discussed at this year's annual HR Conference for the Public Sector.

Croke Park, what has it delivered?

Public Service Staff numbers have been reduced by 28,000, or 8.8%, since 2008 from 320,000 to 292,000

Staff numbers have been reduced by over 17,300 during the first two years of the Agreement

Pay and non-pay savings:

The Exchequer pay bill has been reduced by 17.7% between 2009 and 2012, from €17.5bn to €14.4bn (net of the Pension Related Deduction)

Pay Bill Savings of €650m were achieved during the year under review (Q1 2011 to Q1 2012) driven largely by the reduction in staff numbers

Factoring in an estimate for the maximum possible post-February recruitment over 2012 still yields significant sustainable pay bill savings of €521m. An estimated €810m in sustainable pay bill savings has therefore been achieved during the first two years of the Agreement

Over the period 2009 to 2015, the Exchequer pay bill is expected to reduce by €3.8bn, or €3.3bn net of expected increases in public service pensions costs

Administrative efficiency (or "non-pay") savings totalling €370m were reported for the review period. Adding the examples of non-pay savings presented in last year's Report totalling €308m, gives a total of €678m in non-pay savings in the first two years of the Agreement

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