

# CSQ

Civil Service Quarterly

FÓRSA

WINTER 2018



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# CSQ

Civil Service Quarterly

WINTER 2018

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## Editorial

# Building on our successes in 2019

This edition of CSQ coincides with the first anniversary of the creation of the biggest public service union in Ireland. With more than 80,000 members and growing every day, we have much to be proud of in our first year and still much to do. This edition reviews some of the highlights of the first year.

Union mergers are never easy and they bring their own challenges, not least in the marrying of different cultures and having to get used to how business should be conducted under the instrument of amalgamation. There are times at the Divisional Executive where I am sure that members are frustrated with some issues, but is it any different to our past unions?

Trade unionism is not easy - it's hard work trying to shape agreements, but our efforts continue on key fronts and success has been seen this year with extra higher scales, more leave and a solution to the lower entry rates. As we go to press we are also trying to finalise starting pay on promotion arrangements in the same year that we increased internal EO promotions by 10%.

We also report on a successful start to mobility in September of this year and we begin the negotiations on the next phases in the New Year.

Shared services continue to trouble members though and concerns are growing over the steering group which we were invited to join. Progress is far too slow on the key action for the group, which is a Civil Service-wide survey addressing the big issues at HR shared services, formerly PeoplePoint.

CSQ also bids farewell to Tom Geraghty who has joined the Labour Court and George Maybury who retires this Christmas, two officials who have given great service to the movement.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a very happy and peaceful Christmas holiday time.

*Here's to a successful 2019.*

**Derek Mullen**  
Editor



**PS** CSQ would like to apologise to Helen Linehan, a stalwart activist from Cork General Clerical Branch who serves on the union's DEC, for leaving her off a previously printed list of DEC members.

# GENERAL COUNCIL UPDATE **By Derek Mullen**



The General Council is the main industrial relations forum for Civil Service unions, comprising mainly of senior, elected and full-time officials from Fórsa and other unions as well as senior officials from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER). The Council is established under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme. The Committee meets every month to consider claims from the union or management side and ongoing policy matters that affect the terms and conditions of civil servants.

## NSSO Steering Group

Fórsa has expressed its unhappiness with the current pace of progress at the newly-established steering group, particularly over work on two important surveys - firstly, for HR practitioners and then a Civil Service-wide survey planned for the first quarter of 2019.

Civil Service Division National Secretary Derek Mullen, who sits on the group, told CSQ he had expected more progress at this point "particularly given the need to address the myriad number of issues arising for our members in HR Shared Services".

The Civil Service Divisional Executive is to consider the situation at its December meeting.

## Starting pay on promotion

Fórsa is working to finalise this important circular which will simplify the text of the earlier 1977 circular as well as deal with a number of important issues, such as the abolition of mark time and starting pay on promotion for civil and public servants.

There are a couple of key issues outstanding including the treatment of non-analogous from the wider public service to the civil service as well as the question of retrospection. If these matters cannot be resolved directly they will be referred to arbitration.

## Panels

Discussions continue with DPER over Fórsa's claim that panels be established for the grades of Service Officer, Service Attendant and cleaners. The union is also seeking the setting up of relief panels, in particular to ensure that there is no outsourcing of functions for these grades.

## Competitions

Fórsa is undertaking a review of the competitions process in the Civil Service on foot of a

## DISCIPLINARY CODE

# Union 'anxious' to have code introduced for probationers

**Discussions have continued throughout December on the introduction of a disciplinary code for probationary staff and the bringing in of new guidelines for the management of probation.**

Civil Service Division National Secretary Derek Mullen told CSQ: "The union is particularly anxious to ensure that a disciplinary code for probationary members is introduced as soon as possible, particularly given recent Labour Court recommendations that have made it clear that employers must have such codes. We also continue to argue against these proposed changes which would allow very serious sanction - including dismissal - to be dealt with at grades below that of Secretary General."



Picture: Abhishek Jacob (CC BY-SA 2.0)  
**ARBITRATION** Marriage Leave claim

series of motions passed at Divisional Conference in 2018. Included in this will be a further assessment of short-listing processes, particularly important given that PAS used competency-based application forms as a short-listing tool in the current AP interdepartmental competition.

The Divisional Executive is setting up a sub-committee to examine the issues in detail.

However, DPER and PAS will not change mid-stream in the approach it took to the AP competition.

## Marriage Leave

A claim seeking to increase the combined threshold of annual leave and marriage leave by two days has been rejected by DPER at General Council and will now be referred to arbitration. The claim follows the recent increase in annual leave for the CO, EO and related grades.

## AO leave

A claim seeking parity with HEO annual leave for AOs has also been rejected at Council on the basis that the grade is an open intake grade notwithstanding that many AOs are being assigned to traditional HEO posts. Fórsa will consider referral of the claim to arbitration at this point.



Legal advice helpline: **1850 776644**  
(for non-work related legal matters)

Confidential Counselling helpline: **1850 776655**

Domestic Assistance helpline: **1850 776644**

Bodily injury helpline: **1850 776644**

**FREE TO MEMBERS**

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*There when you need us*

## GERAGHTY GOES TO LABOUR COURT ROLE

# May the Fórsa be with you, Tom!

**Derek Mullen**

*National Secretary*

Tom Geraghty has departed Fórsa shores for a new role as Deputy Chair of the Labour Court. Tom was one of the key architects of Fórsa and he will be missed.

Previously Tom served PSEU as AGS from 1984, DGS from 2004 and became General Secretary when Dan Murphy retired in 2009. During this time Tom worked tirelessly on behalf of PSEU members

Speaking to CSQ, Senior General Secretary Shay Cody said: "Tom was central to trade unionism in the civil and public service and in the wider congress. As secretary of the ICTU Public Services Committee, he was a key negotiator of national agreements during periods of crisis and recovery.

"At all times, Tom displayed good judgment and strategic vi-

**Tom will be missed from our circles but the country and workers generally will benefit from his fairness & measured approach to conflicts in the Labour Court**

sion, both of which will serve him well in his new role in the Labour Court. Tom could quickly identify the issues that would be key to dispute resolution and to form the basis of a satisfactory outcome.

"Tom was a good colleague and comrade within the wider trade union family. He will be missed from our circles but the country and workers generally will benefit from his fairness and measured approach to conflicts in the Labour Court."

At the Civil Service Division we wished Tom Bon Voyage at our Ex-

CSQ Winter 2018



2015 Tom addresses fellow trade unionists



1983 Tom under the watchful eye of former PSEU DGS Tom McKevitt



2005 Tom with former PSEU GS Dan Murphy



ecutive meeting in Sligo – his last – and there is no doubt we will miss his wealth of experience and knowledge in the Civil Service.

Fórsa hosted a night for Tom in October and were delighted to welcome his wife Valerie and sons Ruairí and Fergal and members of his extended family, along with

colleagues from the trade union movement, Civil Service management and many Fórsa colleagues. I think you would all like to join us in wishing Tom the very best for the future and to share in Shay's sentiment that our loss will be to the benefit of workers generally in his new role at the Labour Court.

## Public Service Stability Agreement

# Your at-a-glance guide to pay scales

There are no adjustments in PRD in 2018 and the following rates will apply:

- Up to €28,750 - Exempt
- €28,750 - €60,000 - 10%
- Any amount over €60,000 - 10.5%

The next PRD adjustments arise in 2019 and 2020 with the exemption threshold going to €32,000 on January 1, 2019 and

€34,500 on January 1, 2020 as it becomes a permanent additional superannuation contribution. Although those on the single scheme will pay a lesser percentage of 3.33% up to €60,000.

The following pay scales apply from October 1, 2018 following the application of the 1% increase. There will be a further 1% for

those on salaries below €30,000 on January 1, 2019 and 1.75% for all on January 1, 2019.

Then in 2020 the following will apply:

- January 1, 2020 - annualised salaries up to €32,000 to increase by 0.5%;
- October 1, 2020 - annualised salaries to increase by 2%.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (PPC)											
€31,848	€34,250	€34,935	€37,942	€41,791	€44,719	€47,650	€50,590	€53,521	€56,441	€58,466 <sup>1</sup>	€60,486 <sup>2</sup>

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER HIGHER SCALE (PPC)									
€44,719	€47,650	€50,590	€53,521	€56,441	€58,466	€60,459	€62,454		

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER (PPC)									
€48,028	€49,432	€50,832	€52,233	€53,638	€55,040	€56,441	€58,466 <sup>1</sup>	€60,486 <sup>2</sup>	

HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICER HIGHER SCALE (PPC)									
€50,832	€52,233	€53,638	€55,040	€56,441	€58,466	€59,792	€61,122	€62,454	


EXECUTIVE OFFICER (PPC)													
€29,316	€31,329	€32,460	€34,364	€36,071	€37,720	€39,364	€40,974	€42,600	€44,181	€45,812	€46,891	€48,427 <sup>1</sup>	€49,960 <sup>2</sup>


EXECUTIVE OFFICER HIGHER SCALE (PPC)													
€32,460	€34,364	€36,071	€37,720	€39,364	€40,974	€42,600	€44,181	€45,812	€46,891	€48,427	€49,960 <sup>2</sup>	€50,712	€51,858

CLERICAL OFFICER (PPC)															
€23,338	€24,865	€25,254	€26,010	€27,127	€28,241	€29,355	€30,469	€31,553	€32,638	€33,401	€34,474	€35,540	€37,204	€38,512 <sup>1</sup>	€39,112 <sup>2</sup>


CLERICAL OFFICER HIGHER SCALE (PPC)															
€26,010	€27,127	€28,241	€29,355	€30,469	€31,553	€32,638	€33,401	€34,474	€35,540	€37,204	€38,512	€39,112	€39,922		


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**HEAD SERVICES OFFICER (PPC)**

€600.62	€619.90	€633.02	€652.11	€671.18	€690.27	€713.02 <sup>1</sup>	€738.08 <sup>2</sup>
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**SERVICES OFFICER (PPC)**

€420.50	€445.58	€455.04	€475.05	€492.91	€503.60	€516.12	€531.16	€556.88	€575.26 <sup>1</sup>	€595.73 <sup>2</sup>
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**SERVICES ATTENDANT (PPC)**

€414.82	€431.83	€455.04	€462.41	€477.63	€495.50	€511.09	€528.65	€550.21	€567.82 <sup>1</sup>	€588.37 <sup>2</sup>
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**CLEANER (PPC)**

€401.53	€427.94	€435.33	€452.59	€473.32	€486.15 <sup>1</sup>	€499.00 <sup>2</sup>
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**STATE SOLICITOR & PROSECUTION SOLICITOR (PPC)**

€32,153	€34,576	€35,271	€38,305	€42,188	€45,153	€48,106	€51,077	€54,040	€56,988	€66,495	€68,899	€71,289	€73,687	€76,080	€77,460	€79,876 <sup>1</sup>	€82,300 <sup>2</sup>
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**LAW CLERK (PPC)**

€494.51	€515.71	€547.27	€570.82	€607.86	€626.97	€639.90	€658.83	€677.78	€696.70	€715.71	€735.26	€754.77 <sup>2</sup>
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**HIGHER LEGAL EXECUTIVE (PPC)**

€48,028	€49,432	€50,832	€52,233	€53,638	€55,040	€56,441	€58,466 <sup>1</sup>	€60,486 <sup>2</sup>
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**LEGAL EXECUTIVE (PPC)**

€32,943	€34,920	€36,490	€38,002	€39,371	€40,597	€41,835	€43,071	€44,313	€45,513	€46,644 <sup>1</sup>	€48,119 <sup>2</sup>
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**SENIOR ENGINEERING DRAUGHTSPERSON (PPC)**

€40,244	€41,014	€41,979	€42,956	€43,927	€44,905	€45,822	€47,311 <sup>1</sup>	€48,815 <sup>2</sup>
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**ENGINEERING DRAUGHTSPERSON**

€592.52	€613.61	€635.02	€649.73	€670.83	€692.01	€713.21	€733.50	€753.81	€774.11	€794.49	€820.35	€846.26 <sup>2</sup>
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**CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT MAPPING (PPC)**

€50,154	€52,504	€54,854	€57,197	€59,548	€61,891	€64,239	€66,592	€67,620	€69,632	€71,864 <sup>1</sup>	€74,102 <sup>2</sup>
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**SUPERINTENDENT MAPPING (PPC)**

€44,518	€46,061	€47,346	€48,619	€49,906	€51,196	€52,452	€54,054 <sup>1</sup>	€55,647 <sup>2</sup>
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**EXAMINER IN CHARGE (PPC)**

€38,659	€39,490	€40,310	€41,149	€41,983	€42,825	€44,518	€45,864 <sup>1</sup>	€47,223 <sup>2</sup>
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**EXAMINER OF MAPS (PPC)**

€666.79	€685.12	€702.77	€719.21	€736.98	€749.91	€774.52 <sup>1</sup>	€799.17 <sup>2</sup>
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**MAPPING DRAUGHTSPERSON (PPC)**

€494.90	€501.81	€518.61	€535.46	€552.42	€569.35	€586.25	€602.82	€618.66	€628.39	€644.09	€659.75	€675.52	€697.33 <sup>1</sup>	€719.18 <sup>2</sup>
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**SENIOR ARCHITECT (PPC)**

€65,115	€67,435	€70,705	€73,969	€77,243	€80,913	€83,776 <sup>1</sup>	€86,642 <sup>2</sup>
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**ARCHITECT (PPC)**

€35,478	€38,034	€39,306	€42,145	€44,972	€47,820	€49,705	€51,590	€53,483	€55,363	€57,251	€59,138	€61,025	€62,915	€64,821	€66,899 <sup>1</sup>	€67,924 <sup>2</sup>
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**ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANT GRADE II (PPC)**

€535.23	€573.29	€592.52	€613.61	€635.02	€649.73	€670.83	€692.01	€711.36	€732.56	€753.81	€774.11	€794.49	€820.35 <sup>1</sup>	€846.26 <sup>2</sup>
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**SENIOR LABORATORY ANALYST (PPC)**

€49,823	€52,073	€54,066	€56,107	€58,206	€60,276	€62,403	€64,509	€66,628
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**LABORATORY ANALYST (PPC)**

€32,660	€34,019	€36,176	€37,198	€38,172	€40,475	€41,962	€43,460	€44,990	€46,515	€48,043	€49,584	€51,138	€52,709	€54,231	€55,283 <sup>1</sup>
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**NIGHTWATCHMAN (PPC)**

€420.19	€443.99	€455.74	€473.67	€491.14	€501.42	€516.85	€533.74 <sup>1</sup>	€553.11 <sup>2</sup>
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# Moves aplenty!



## Mobility Request

Request Details			
From Location	HR and Pensions Shared Service	To Location	Zone 26
From PSB	Shared Services Centre	To PSB	COURTS SERVICE
Mobility Status	On Waitlist	Eligibility Status	Ineligible
Expiry Date	12/12/2018		

[Return to Mobility Homepage](#)

### First Moves under the Scheme

In the first two months of operation more than 200 mobility moves were initiated with approximately 50% of these being turned down/cancelled by the applicant at pre-offer stage. We are delighted to announce that over 45 moves took place by end of November 2018 with other moves in progress.

### Annual confirmation of interest

Under the terms and conditions of the scheme, staff will receive an automated email on January 1, 2019, to request confirmation of interest in application(s) choice within 20 working days. It is in staff's interest to review all applications, and given the high level of declines/cancellations to date, to ensure that you delete the ones that you no longer desire, or where unsure, you place these applications temporarily on-hold (this will not affect your waitlist position). This review will aid in ensuring that the staff wishing to move will be offered mobility without unnecessary delays.

### Update

The technical changes to reconfigure the Mobility System/Portal are now complete and the scheme will be fully automated by the start of the New Year. This will streamline the current offer-stage process with automated notifications issuing directly from the portal and staff will have access to confirm/decline their interest of offer.

### Pre-offer stage

Staff will receive automatic notifications of a pre-offer with a three-day window to cancel the application where circumstances have changed and they no longer wish to move to the organisation in question. This organisation will be the only one affected by this pre-offer cancellation. Staff should note that a non-action will determine a confirmation of interest in a move to the organisation.



## Civil Service Mobility





### Offer stage

Following a review of suitability for Mobility under the categories of underperformance (PIP); conduct (disciplinary/formal investigation) and attendance, a staff member will be either offered a position or their application(s) will be considered on 'ineligible/on-hold' hold with a future review date.

Where placed for future review an offer will not be afforded at this time. The waitlist position will not be affected by this process.

Where deemed suitable, following the review, an offer will be afforded by email, and the staff member will have five working days to accept or decline this offer. Where the offer is declined or the staff member does not respond, all applications to organisations for the applicable zone will be cancelled.

Where an offer is accepted a date will be agreed between both Local HRs, in general this will be within a four-week period.

It should be noted that all moves will be

**We are delighted to announce that over 45 moves took place by end of November 2018 with other moves in progress**

full-time and permanent. Staff can apply for shorter working year, work-sharing arrangements etc. upon commencement of employment in the new organisation.

Staff should be reminded that they are fully responsible for their own application(s). Staff should ensure that both personal and work email addresses are recorded on the system and check these daily to avoid missing any Mobility notifications.

*Note: Notifications are only automated where the applicant is on HRMS. A manual process is in place where the applicant is non-HRMS.*

### Mobility update...

Fórsa has been advised that phase 1b - which is mobility within zone 46 Dublin - should be launched, subject to agreement, by the second quarter of 2019. An issue that will arise in these meetings is the question of splitting zone 46 into sub-zones and how we manage internal departmental transfer lists. Phase 2 for HEO, AO and AP follows and it is expected that scoping for this phase will begin in January 2019.

## Review

**Diarmaid Mac a Bhaird** looks back at a busy year for Fórsa's new look Civil Service divisional conferences, numerous campaigning events and an agreement to remove tv



# 2018 a year of firsts for Fórsa...



ALMOST 12 months on from the creation of Fórsa, it has been a particularly busy and eventful year for the Civil Service division. It was always likely that the formation of Ireland's largest public service union would see the biggest changes occur in the Civil Service division, and that has proven to be the case.

The highlights include the Civil Service divisional conference in April, Fórsa's national conference in May, election of Ann McGee as Fórsa president, and reaching an agreement on a new entrants' pay deal to skip two points on their scale.

As we go to press work is ongoing to finalise agreement on a new starting pay on promotion circular which will simplify the original circular, abolish mark time and ensure that public servants moving to the Civil Service will retain pay levels as they move across.

There have also been a number of changes at the top of the Civil Service division. Derek Mullen is the new head of the division following the departure of former head Tom Geraghty.

Pointing out that it was an exciting and eventful time for the union, Derek told CSQ: "There are big issues for the Civil Service division in 2019. My priority will be to ensure that we deal

with the members' issues and the detailed agenda arising at General Council, our main IR forum. Also, I will continue to press for the transition to the State IR structures (WRC and Labour Court). While the Conciliation and Arbitration scheme has served its purpose, there is no reason why civil servants shouldn't have the

**I will continue to press for the transition to the State IR structures... there is no reason why civil servants shouldn't have the same access as all other workers**

same access to these structures as all other workers in the country.

"At departmental level, Brexit staffing in Customs and Agriculture will be a priority too. Organisationally I want to improve communications to members, ensuring updated information on a regular basis. I also want to work with the Divisional Executive to ensure they have as much support as they need to carry out their

work efficiently and within the new Fórsa structures." He underlined that recruitment and organising would be key priorities "particularly among Garda staff where civilianisation will see our potential membership double over the next few years".

### Divisional and national conference

2018 saw a number of agreements brokered that addressed several issues members in the division had placed at the top of their agenda at both the divisional and national conferences.

Over the summer, Fórsa secured an agreement that will see an additional 10% of all Executive Officer (EO) posts filled through internal or interdepartmental competition.

The discussions also included a new EO liability agreement that will see the open and interdepartmental liability for EO competitions fall from 1,000 plus posts, to 400 posts, with the process of equalising the sequences to be done over three years to minimise the impact on internal promotions.

2018 also saw the introduction of additional higher scales at CO level.

Two days additional annual leave for COs and EOs was also agreed and then also applied to

vision, which featured the appointment of a new head of division, the national and two points from new entrants' salary scales.



related service and professional and technical grades. A steering committee was also set up by the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) in the autumn to examine the role of HR Shared Services, formally known as PeoplePoint.

The group will oversee work on an official survey of civil servants to elicit their experience of the system. The survey came about because of union pressure to address serious issues that had arisen with the system. The union also secured its inclusion in the process to help ensure the significant reforms that are needed can be achieved moving forward. However, at the time of writing it is likely we may have to review our participation unless the group steps up its pace. Derek Mullen has pointed out that progress to date is far too slow.

### New entrant pay agreement

In September, newly-agreed measures on public service new entrants' pay concluded the task of addressing the two additional points post-2010 recruits had on their pay scales, which meant it took them two years longer to reach the top of their scale.

The measures mean that from early next year public servants will no longer be at a long-term

disadvantage based on the year in which they were recruited. The measures were agreed two years earlier than originally anticipated, and completed the task that began with merging the pay scales in 2013.

The measures identify two points on each

**Organisationally I want to improve communications to members, ensuring updated information on a regular basis**

pay scale – year four and year eight – which new entrant public servants will now skip, ensuring an equitable outcome for new entrants in different circumstances.

There were also a number of successful campaigning events this year.

Looking ahead, Derek Mullen highlighted a number of items on the agenda for the union in 2019 – in particular, the implications of Brexit

for staffing in Revenue and Agriculture as well as other departments. Added to that there are a number of HR policies that will also be on the table for negotiation, including a proposal for an attendance policy by DPER as well as ongoing discussions on disciplinary codes.

"We also expect to be negotiating welcome amendments to the annual leave circular," he continued, "with a view to removing the onerous three year carry over of leave aspects that can cause members so much difficulty."

"We will also conduct a review of the family-friendly suite of options in the Civil Service particularly to deal with concerns arising with such schemes as Shorter Working Year."

The review of competitive processes in the Civil Service – including the use of psychometric testing for shortlisting – would be another "important piece of work" that would be continued in 2019.

2019 will also see discussions on graduate recruitment, the role of Administrative Officers, HEO recruitment and a new departure arising from the PSSA involving an IT apprenticeship scheme at EO level.

"Yes, it's shaping up to be a busy year ahead," Derek concluded.

## Employment Affairs and Social Protection

**Fórsa claims new IT platform 'not fit for purpose'**

Fórsa members working in the illness benefit section of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection are still struggling to meet the demands of customers, many of whom have suffered serious delays with the payment of their benefit.

The union has been very critical of the new IT platform being used for illness benefit claims which would appear to be not fit for purpose. It is also clear that the move from paying in arrears to real-time payments has also caused a huge difficulty, exacerbated by the issues with

the new computer system. Fórsa members working in illness benefit are suffering the brunt of customer dissatisfaction despite not being responsible for the debacle that has developed.

National Secretary Derek Mullen told CSQ: "Our members are making huge efforts to get people paid using a system which just can't cope with the demands. The Department, as well as apologising to the public and indeed the Public Accounts Committee, should apologise to its own staff for putting them in such a diffi-

cult position. Despite our efforts in the negotiations to date, there is still a lot to be done to ensure that the situation is stabilised. There is an urgent need for further talks to deal with these outstanding concerns including, where necessary, a referral to third party."

He added: "While the Minister has declared this matter resolved, from our perspective it clearly isn't. Our members are still not managing to cope with the new, badly-designed system and to get people paid on time, and with very little support from management."

## Members have been left to pick up the pieces

**Paul MacSweeney**

AGS, Civil Service Division

Over the last four months, Fórsa members have been put under extreme workplace pressure as a result of delays to Illness Benefit payments resulting from the migration of the scheme from the ISTS to BOMi IT systems.

Members - who have been working around the clock to deal with the situation - have engaged with management to suggest ways to relieve the pressure, address the backlogs, and continue to act in a compassionate and professional manner with distraught customers who were faced with having no money to make ends meet because of the non-payment of illness benefits.

Dealing by phone and in per-

son with, in some cases, customers who are threatening suicide, or who want to know how they will be able to feed their children has taken its toll on hard-working frontline staff.

It has been particularly difficult where members can see no end to this fiasco which is not of their own making. In my cases, our members have no answers for customers who are in extreme hardship.

Members in DEASP, and not just in the Illness benefit section, have taken on processing the work of the section in a bid to ensure that customers - some of whom are very vulnerable and depend on the payment, get illness benefit payments they have paid for through PRSI contributions on time when they are unfortunate enough to be out sick. While Fórsa and our mem-

bers have worked with management to address this ongoing problem we have raised concerns in relation to overpayments and training. We sought improved communications and that is now being provided with weekly updates. Our concern is

hoped that lessons can be learned from the major difficulties encountered in the illness benefit section.

It is hoped that in any future initiatives involving change, management will work more closely with members and with

**Our concern is how long can our members continue to engage in a 'fire brigade' action under heightened levels of workplace stress before something gives**

how long can our members continue to engage in a 'fire brigade' action under heightened levels of workplace stress before something gives.

The Department is undergoing some significant restructuring and automation of services. It is

Fórsa to ensure that change, which can be challenging, is done in a way that enhances services to customers while improving the work environment and protection career opportunities of our membership.

**TRUE SON OF THE KINGDOM**  
AGS George Maybury is retiring



# Ádh Mór, George

Assistant General Secretary George Maybury will retire from Fórsa this Christmas having previously served with PSEU. He joined PSEU in 2003 from the AGSI where he had served honourably as general secretary.

George, who looked after the Justice/Garda family over his career with the union, reminded all at his last Justice Council meeting that he had been attending the council for 33 years, firstly on behalf of Garda members and more latterly on behalf of civil service members.

George also looked after all the administrative schemes in PSEU such as the income continuance plan - which is so important to members. Added to that, he was also the voice of PSEU as *gaeilge* - a fluent

speaker of our native tongue.

George is a proud Kerry man and a huge sports fan, particularly the GAA though, although speaking to CSQ, National Secretary Billy Hannigan noted "he didn't win five in a row".

George has been an excellent athlete all his life, a runner par excellence. He continues to run and stay fit and is up there with the top echelon of senior athletes in Ireland.

We will all miss George and would like to take the opportunity to wish him and his family the very best for a long and happy retirement.

*Go raibh maith agat George as ucht do sheirbhís dílis do gluaiseacht na gceardchumann tríd na blianta. Go n-éirí an bóthar leat, go raibh an ghaoth go brách ag do chúl.*

## Garda Staff

# Series of briefings and talks continue

Discussions and briefings are continuing in the Garda Staff area over a number of issues, including the Hybrid Policing Model, further civilianisation, Performance Accountability framework, Garda Mobility Project, Performance Management and Learning Framework (for gardaí), and Computer Aided Dispatch.

Meanwhile at the GISC, Castlebar, there is an issue over staffing requirements for the crime reclassification project - a number of COs are acting up to EO grade. A number of additional COs are to be employed but there has been a delay in the vetting process before they can start.

## Hybrid Policing Model

There are four pilot areas for the Hybrid Policing Model - Dublin South Central, Cork City, Mayo and Galway Divisions, two urban and two rural. The Finance hub is the first hub to get up and running where the existing financial work is being centralised to one location.

Agreements were reached with the Chief Superintendents in Mayo and Galway that outlying Financial EOs (formerly Financial SOs) will not be forced to travel to the central locations.

The ongoing issue in Cork has been resolved and will see two EOs temporarily move in for two months during which time two other EOs in Cork city will be trained to take over this work. The original EOs then move back to their original locations.

Pictures: Garda Press Office



PROJECT STAFFING GISC, Castlebar



TALKS Drew Harris

## Unions meet with Garda chief

A joint meeting of Fórsa and AHCPS with the new Garda Commissioner Drew Harris took place on November 9. The items discussed were:

- Commission on the future of policing;
- Civilianisation;
- Divisional Policing Model;

- Other Pilot schemes, e.g. RDMS, Active Mobility;
- PMDS;
- Funding for training internally and externally;
- Communications and negotiations going forward.

There will be an update report on this meeting.

# Complaints over EO shortlisting procedures

Fórsa has received a large number of queries/complaints over the current EO competition that is due to begin in mid-December. The issue at hand is HR's proposal to use a psychometric test process for shortlisting rather than pre-interviewing all applicants for shortlisting as happened in the last competition.

Immediately after that competition HR indicated that they would not conduct a competition like this again as they didn't have the resources to interview everyone, even though it was our preference. Despite lengthy discussions, the union didn't reach agreement on an agreeable method to shortlist candidates for interviews.

In the meantime, however, there was progress on the civilianisation of posts in An

Garda Siochana. It has been agreed that PAF and PEM's posts will now be filled at EO level.

This opens up a significant number of promotions at EO level, but with no panel in place, the National Committee had to reluctantly agree to psychometric testing for shortlisting, on the basis that there would be a review of shortlisting methodologies of future competitions. HR subsequently agreed to the review. Because of this we reluctantly accepted the test to ensure that a panel was put in place to allow our members access to the new posts we expect to be filled next year.

However, shortlisting for the EO competition, which will be done using a process, termed 'remote proctoring'. In other words, the test will be held at home with the member hav-

ing to use the webcam on their computer to prove that they are alone. So far 463 out of the 515 applicants have applied for a slot to sit the test but the remainder can't do so for technical reasons, such as lack of broadband.

Fórsa asked PAS to allow those members to complete the test at a centre. After considering the request this was declined as PAS indicated they were happy with the uptake.

Fórsa continues to discuss the issue with AGS Denis Keane leading talks. He has also referred the dispute to adjudication and has advised members who do not have access to make complaints under the CPSA guidelines.

Also as CSQ goes to press, significant technical issues arose on December 11 when people were sitting the test online.



Do your Christmas shopping  
where workers count...

Office of the Revenue Commissioners

# Talks on PMOD project and hours



By **Derek Mullen**

Talks are continuing over difficulties with the PMOD Project and planned opening hours. Fórsa raised the lack of consultation at a bilateral meeting with Revenue management on November 12. However, the union is currently responding to management proposals.

At the meeting, union also brought up the related impact on the 1890 Helpline where significant call volumes have been placing members under a great deal of pressure.

Fórsa also held another meeting with management on November 14 to discuss the impact of the Revenue Re-alignment project.

## Helpdesk service hours approved

The following service hours have been approved for the National Employer Helpdesk service hours. These are subject to revision in response to demand and service requirements and/or further discussions with Fórsa.

The Employer Helpline currently offers phone service five days a week from 9.30am to 5pm. In July it had been

agreed that the standard service hours starting time would change from 9.30am to 9am.

It has been decided to postpone the implementation of the change to the standard opening time and that the earlier opening time will be combined with the revised PMOD Introductory period service hours.



Members should note...

It should be noted that the hours are service hours. The number of staff required to work the extended hours will vary depending on the contact volumes and the service requirements and therefore only a certain number of staff will be required to be scheduled on any morning, evening or on overtime.

**... and for the holiday period:**  
**Open 9.00 - 1.00 on Dec 24.**  
**Closed on Dec 25, Dec 26 and Jan 1.**

From	Weekdays	Saturday
<b>Current</b>	<b>9.30-5.00 (M-F)</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Mon Dec 3</b>	<b>8.00-5.00 M-F</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Mon Dec 17</b>	<b>8.00-7.00 (M-T),</b>	<b>9.00-1.00</b>
<b>TBC *</b>	<b>9.00-5.00 (M-F)</b>	<b>Closed</b>

\* The end of the PMOD introductory period and return to standard hours will be regularly reviewed subject to call volumes & helpline requirements.

# Got a FÓRSA themed story or picture?

**Email us:**  
 dmullen@forsa.ie  
 rmckane@forsa.ie

## Justice & Equality

### IPS standalone talks continue

Discussions are still continuing over the Irish Prison Service becoming a standalone organisation. Members in IPS have accepted a proposal relating to internal promotions and some of those competitions are now under way. A draft circular on the HEO competition is expected shortly. Ongoing discussions are to be held on:

- Management of HR function for HQ staff;
- Learning & Development opportunities;
- Higher scales;
- Sequencing arrangements.

## Dept of Agriculture, Food & Marine



### Partnership agreement OKed

Fórsa has signed off on revised partnership arrangements in the Department and it is expected that the new arrangements will be progressed shortly.

The union is also expecting to have a bilateral meeting in the coming weeks to discuss cross-stream reporting proposals in Backweston as well as some competition issues which have been raised by the Branches.



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# It's time... Fórsa calls for a four-day working week

Most of the benefits of increased productivity, achieved through workplace technological change, have gone to a small "global elite," rather than working people, Fórsa deputy general secretary Kevin Callinan has claimed.

He made his comments at an international conference on the future of working time in Dublin on November 22. Kevin Callinan pointed out that reduced working time was again emerging as one of the central issues in international debates about the future of work. He told the conference it was well established that technology has the potential to take a lot of the drudgery and danger out of current workplace tasks, while increasing prosperity and creating many new jobs.

## Fairer share

"Trade unions don't want to impede economic progress in a 21st century Luddite escapade. We know that technology has the potential to take a lot of the drudgery and danger out of current workplace tasks, while increasing prosperity and creating many new jobs. But we are determined to secure a fairer share of the benefits of economic growth and technological advances for all workers in all sectors of the economy, including through reduced working time," he said.

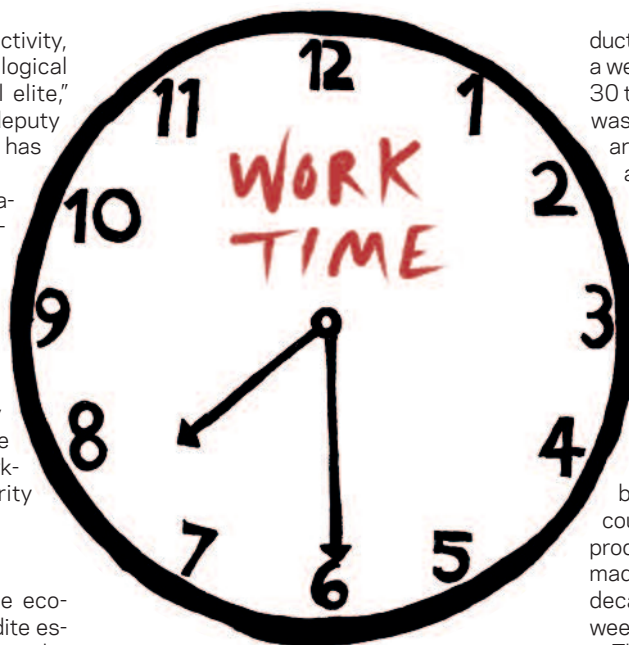


Illustration: Clock\_Rattle (CC BY 2.0)

duction in average working hours from over 60 a week in 1868 – 150 years ago – to just over 30 today is one example. The weekend, which was seen as an unaffordable luxury until around the middle of the 20th century, is another. Several generations on, we have the chance to fight for a fairer share for everyone, including through a four day week," she said.

Mr Callinan added: "It's almost 90 years ago since economist John Maynard Keynes predicted that productivity improvements would eventually lead to a 15-hour working week. His reasoning was straightforward enough. By producing more with less, our needs would be met through less work and there would be more time for leisure. Even Keynes could scarcely have conceived of the gains in productivity that have been achieved since he made his prediction, especially in recent decades. And yet the length of the working week has remained more or less the same."

The conference, organised by Fórsa, brought together trade unionists and working time experts from Ireland, Germany and the UK. It came in response to the large number of motions about working time submitted to Fórsa's national conference last May, when an executive motion committed the union to work with others to reduce working time in all sectors of the economy.

## Productivity

The conference also heard from Conny Schoenhardt of the German manufacturing union IG Metall, which recently negotiated a deal that included the option for 500,000 workers in 280 companies to reduce their working time.

Aidan Harper, director of the UK-based '4-Day Week Campaign', said international studies show no positive correlation between working hours and wealth.

"Countries who work fewer hours tend to have higher levels of productivity, as well as greater amounts of wealth per person. A reduction in working time is entirely feasible with current levels of technology and the benefits for society, gender equality, the economy and the environment can be significant. Time must become political once again," he said.

Conference speakers also highlighted the gender aspects of working time, specifically for women with childcare and other caring responsibilities, as well as the need for workers to have control over their working hours in an era of zero-hours' contracts and other new forms of work organisation.

**...if we raise our productivity, isn't it worth asking whether we could be working four days rather than five while producing the same amount?**

The conference also heard from Kate Bell, head of economic and social affairs at the UK Trade Union Congress (TUC), which has put the demand for a four-day week at the centre of its response to automation and productivity-driving technological change.

"Technology enables us to work cheaper and faster, and that should make us all better off. In Britain, to take just one example, the government estimates that robots and autonomous technology could boost GDP by around £200 billion a year. But if we raise our productivity, isn't it worth asking whether we could be working four days rather than five while producing the same amount?"

"That's how workers have historically benefited from improvements in technology. The re-



TECHNOLOGY'S POTENTIAL DGS Kevin Callinan

## Feature



HIGHLY PRAISED Revenue Choir

# Revenue Revue!

## Dept choir on song for 13 years

In 2018 Revenue Choir is celebrating its 13th year in existence and it certainly would not have lasted this long without teamwork and dedication from our members and supporters. From the early days when the idea of a Choir was only a glimmer of a thought, through to recruiting for singers and right up to the present day, the Revenue Choir has gone from strength to strength.

There are now around 40 members (both serving and retired Revenue staff) covering all ages from 20-something right through to 80-something and comprising four sections of the choir: soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

In recent years we have been invited to various Revenue offices around the country to perform Christmas recitals and to raise much-needed funds for locally-nominated charities. So far, we have had several successful trips and we hope this tradition will continue into the foreseeable future.

The Choir has also had the opportunity to sing in some of the more notable venues around Dublin, including the Mansion House, the National Concert Hall, Farmleigh House, Dublin Castle and Christchurch Cathedral.

We sing at various Revenue functions including the annual Revenue Mass in the Pro Cathedral and the Long Service Awards.

We have performed Christmas concerts in C.R.I.O. and Ashtowngate and have sung to local, national and international audiences and even at times we have been known to participate in "flash mobs". Recently we also performed at the National Services Day in the

**The proceeds from recitals benefit various charities in the 13 years we have been singing we have raised over €57,000 for charity**

National Concert Hall. Each Christmas we perform two recitals and we also end our season with a summer concert around May. The proceeds from these recitals benefit various nominated charities and we are pleased to tell our supporters that in the 13 years we have been singing we have raised in excess of €57,000 for charity.

And don't forget that, come September, the Choir will be open to new members. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings between 6pm and 8pm in Dublin Castle and if you would like to join us, please feel free to come along. For more information call Geraldine on **(01) 6329453**, Bernadette on **(01) 6474140** or Teresa on **(01) 8785169**.

Finally, the Choir would like to thank the Revenue Board for its continuing support and to thank all our supporters, colleagues, friends and family who have given so generously over the years, not only of your donations but also that you take the time out to come and hear our recitals.

*Please know that because of your continued support a difference has been made to so many lives.*

### FESTIVE TIPPLE



## Mulled Wine

Try this recipe over the festive period for mulled wine. It's easy to make and customise with your favorite spices and add-ins - and it's great for entertaining!

**Total Time: 20 mins**

**Prep Time: 5 mins**

**Cook Time: 15 mins**

#### INGREDIENTS:

1 (750 ml) bottle of dry red wine  
1 orange, sliced into rounds  
8 whole cloves  
2 cinnamon sticks  
2 star anise  
2-4 tablespoons sugar, honey, or maple syrup to taste (or your desired sweetener)  
optional add-in: 1/4 cup brandy (or your favorite liqueur)  
optional garnishes: citrus slices (orange, lemon and/or lime), extra cinnamon sticks, extra star anise

#### DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine all ingredients in a saucepan, and heat just barely to a simmer over medium-high heat. (Be careful not to boil the mulled wine — you don't want to boil off the alcohol!) Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and let the wine simmer for at least 15 minutes or up to 3 hours.
2. Strain, and serve warm with your desired garnishes.

- Feel free to use your choice of sweetener here, or leave the mulled wine un-sweetened.
- You can also place the oranges, cloves, cinnamon, and star anise in a cheesecloth. Then simply strain and pull out the bundle when ready to serve.



# Transfers

To place an ad, or apply to one listed, email [transfers@forsa.ie](mailto:transfers@forsa.ie)

## DJ001

**HEO**, in Mountjoy Prison seeking head to head transfer to South Dublin or inner city Dublin (Dun Laoghaire, Blackrock, Bray, Mount Merrion). Salary is slightly higher due to 39 hours p/w requirement.

## DJ002

**HEO**, Department Employment Affairs & Social Protection based in Gandon House, Amiens St, Dublin 1, seeks transfer to any office in Dublin 2 area for commuting reasons. Post in small office provides interesting and varied work. Flexi time and parking available. Office adjacent to Connolly Station & Bus Aras. Canteen available in nearby AMD offices.

## DJ003

**HEO**, Full-time, Dept. of Defence Galway seeks a head to head transfer to department in Athlone for commuting reasons. Excellent working conditions, free parking, flexi time, canteen facilities.

## DJ004

**HEO**, National Shared Services Office, Deerpark Building, Killarney (V93 KH28), wishes to transfer with a HEO in Cork. All areas in Cork initially considered. Flexitime/Parking etc available.

## DJ005

**HEO**, Dept of Health, Baggot St, Dublin 2 seeks transfer to any city centre department for commuting reasons. Work-sharing, Shorter Working Year, flexitime and part-time parking.

## DJ006

**HEO**, Full-time, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in Wexford seeks transfer to any other department in Wexford. Small office with parking in building, flexi-time available and some outdoor duties involved.

## DJ007

**HEO**, Dept of Justice, HO, seeks transfer to Newbridge, Naas or surrounding area for commuting purposes. Friendly office, close to bus, rail and luas line. Varied work, flexi and serviced canteen.

## DJ008

**HEO**, Full-time, Revenue, Sligo seeks transfer to any government department in Roscommon, Carrick-On-Shannon, Longford or Westmeath.

## DJ009

**HEO**, Full-time, Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, Dublin City

Centre. Seeks transfer to Longford/Carrick-on-Shannon/Roscommon/Athlone/Mullingar for family and commuting reasons. Great city centre location with flexitime and free car-parking facilities available.

## DJ010

**HEO**, Full-time, Central Statistics Office, Rathmines, Co Dublin seeks transfer to any Dept/Office in Laois/Offaly/Newbridge/Kildare area for commuting purposes. Family friendly office with car parking and flexi time available.

## DJ011

**HEO**, Community Welfare Services, Abbeycourt House, Georges Quay, Cork City. Parking and Flexi time seeking Head To Head move to any Department in Killarney Co Kerry. Seeking move for personal reasons.

## DJ012

**HEO**, Full-time, NSSO, Killarney seeks transfer to any other Killarney or Tralee-based Government Department. Friendly office, Flexi and Car Parking available.

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Picture: John Martinez Pavlga (CC BY 2.0)

## Update

The Branch Annual General Meeting season is nearly upon us and Civil Service Division National Secretary **Derek Mullen** outlines some guidance to Branches to help comply with the requirements under the new Fórsa structures...

# AGMs what you need to know...

### 1. Branch Rules/Standing Orders etc

All Branches must comply with the provisions of the Rules of Fórsa set out in the Instrument of Amalgamation. In this context existing Branch Rules/Standing Orders/Procedures in place last year continue to have effect (Clause 3.9 Page 42 Transitional Provisions) unless the Branch decides at this AGM to adopt new Rules/Standing Orders/Procedure. A generic set of Branch Meeting Procedures is at Appendix B on Pages 38 - 39 while a new draft Branch Rules template is being brought to the NEC for consideration and agreement before circulation to the Branches. Amended Branch Rules must be submitted to the National Executive Committee for ratification. Branches should use this opportunity, in any case, to update the text of their Rules/Standing Orders/Procedures to reflect the creation of Fórsa.

### 2. Former CPSU Quorum Rule for AGMs

In the case of the former CPSU current Branch Rules & Procedures require a 15% Quorum of eligible members to be present for a valid AGM i.e. for nominations to elected positions within the union, tabling of motions etc. This Quorum still applies unless a quorate AGM removes that quorum rule from the Branch Rules & Procedures for future AGMs. Each former CPSU Branch Secretary will be sent a list of members currently in the Branch with the relevant quorum identifies. Branch Secretaries are asked to cross check the list and liaise with the Membership Section ([adoyle@forsa.ie](mailto:adoyle@forsa.ie)) should they have any queries/corrections as soon as possible.



**Requesting an official**  
Should a branch request an official to be present at their AGM, please contact **Gillian O'Sullivan** at [gosullivan@forsa.ie](mailto:gosullivan@forsa.ie) as soon as possible. We will endeavour to meet all requests from Branches.

**Diary dates**  
Civil Service Divisional Conference  
**8th, 9th & 10th May 2019**

### 3. Specific Clauses relating to former CPSU & PSEU Branches

(i) Former CPSU Branches should note Transitional Provision 11.4 Page 45 which provides that any candidate being nominated for a Civil Service Divisional Executive seats in the former CPSU constituency must be a serving member of the outgoing and incoming Branch Committee.

(ii) Former PSEU Branches should note Transitional Provision 11.6 Page 45 that Rule 23(iii) and part of Rule 19(b) do not apply to the former PSEU constituency election to the Civil Service Divisional Executive.

### 4. Branch Funding

The NEC is currently examining the funding arrangements for Branches and a paper will issue shortly. Branches should note that their AGM in line with Transitional Provision 11.9 Page 46 should decide to continue with their current funding arrangements if they wish to opt out of the standard provision of 10% plus capitation sum (where Branches cover all costs of participation in conferences, seminars, National Committees save Divisional and National Executives and ICTU Conferences) and advise Head Office as soon as possible.

### 5. Motions to the Civil Service Divisional Conference

Branches should note that only motions relating to industrial relations issues in the Civil Service and organisational matters which relate specifically to the Civil Service Division will be valid for the Civil Service Divisional Conference in May 2019. Motions dealing with industrial relations matters that have cross divisional effect and those dealing with organisation of the union nationally and across divisions are appropriate only to the Biennial National Conference in May 2020.

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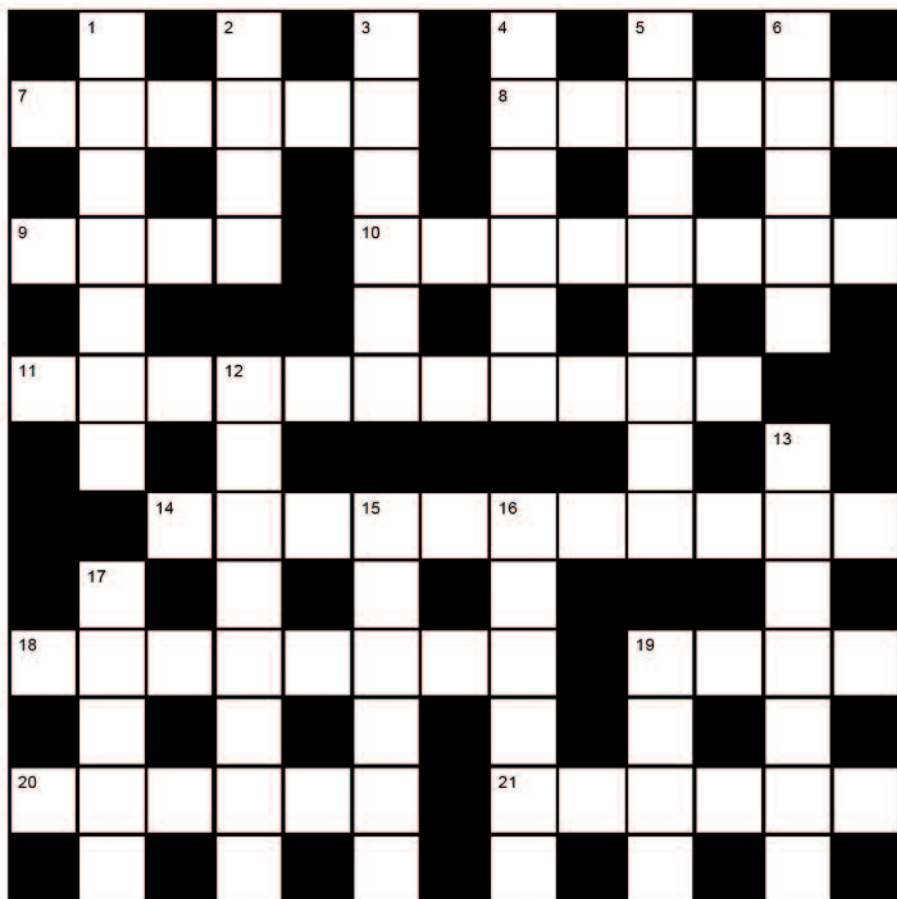
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# 04/18

# Prize Crossword



### Across

- 7. Brandy associated with town in South West France (6)
- 8. Mistakes in printing or writing (6)
- 9. Tennis playing protagonists in Star Trek (4)
- 10. Clonoulty - Tipp Senior Hurling champions (8)
- 11. In the Simpsons, Springfield's rival town (11)
- 14. Former winner and judge on Strictly (6,5)
- 18. Height above sea level (8)
- 19. And 6 down, Iron Man (4)
- 20. Rowan Atkinson character - Blackadder (6)
- 21. Sandpiper with a curved bill (6)

### Down

- 1. Ms. Gale in classic 1939 movie (7)
- 2. Comfortable room in a pub (4)
- 3. Disease associated with sailors, caused by a Vitamin C deficiency (6)
- 4. A martial arts mentor (6)
- 5. Dynasty associated with Monaco (8)
- 6. See 19 across (5)
- 12. Island nation in Gulliver's Travels (8)
- 13. Heavy duty work boot (7)
- 15. Pet - , Beach Boys album (6)
- 16. Make these to compensate, but only in the afternoon (6)
- 17. Glasgow's river (5)
- 19. Zest for a Chinese dynasty (4)

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### Crossword 03/18 winner

**Kieran Cronin**, Revenue Solicitors Division, Dublin 2.

A **€100 One4All** voucher will go to the first correct solution opened.

Crossword entries for **Crossword 04/18** should be addressed to:

**The Editor, Civil Service Quarterly, Adelaide House,  
19/20 Adelaide Road, Dublin D02 WA00  
to arrive not later than Friday, February 8th, 2019**

Name .....

Work Address .....

Union Branch .....

### SOLUTIONS Prize Crossword 03/18

#### Across

- 1. Scrubs; 4. Recap; 8. Franc; 9. Hatters;
- 10. Riposte; 11. Free; 12. Fez; 14. Tyro; 15. Alba;
- 18. Pip; 21. Hyde; 23. Stirrup; 25. Rendell
- 26. Aimed; 27. Syria; 28. Wagner.

#### Down

- 1. Safari; 2. Reapply; 3. Backstop; 4. Ruth;
- 5. Clear; 6. Pisces; 7. Thief; 13. Zabivaka;
- 16. Birdman; 17. Sharks; 19. Psalm; 20. Spider;
- 22. Dinar; 24. Hera.