



# FORSA

CSQ

Civil Service Quarterly **AUTUMN 2019**



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# **How to deal with major organisational change**

**Focus on FOBO p4&5**

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AUTUMN 2019

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Fórsa Executive & Clerical Officers Representatives from the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection who attended a recent Trade Union Organising workshop in the Fórsa offices in Dublin

## Editorial

# High time for HR to go back to line departments

Of the many reforms launched during the economic crisis, Shared Services stands out as a reform too far.

In particular, HR Shared Services - which is the rebranded PeoplePoint - should be seriously reviewed at this point, with an aim to returning HR business back into the safe hands of line departments.

Through no fault of all our good members who work there, the system does not work to the best benefit of our members generally.

From the very outset, when it was thought appropriate to populate the service with temporary inexperienced staff, the service has brought us a problem after problem, including a crisis in overpayments which is not going away.

The delivery of HR should be on a best-practice basis, and not delivered through a call centre-type approach to business where the process is transactionalised and the 'human' is taken out of human resources.

The union has worked closely through a steering group whose aim was to survey civil servants on the service and then develop action plans to fix it. However, this survey has been delayed to a point where we really have to consider our continuing cooperation. We are still waiting on a detailed breakdown of a HR practitioners survey from line departments which was carried out earlier.

In September, we experienced a breakdown of services when the core portal, through which members transact business, crashed. As it turned out their 'disaster recovery' back-up wasn't capable of coping with the crash.

Although we are advised that this aspect has been fixed for the future, it is unacceptable that members would have such limited access as seen in

September. This included the unavailability of payslips on-line, an issue that leaves the employer in contravention of the Payment of Wages Act.

All in all the thin end of the wedge and perhaps it is now high time to return HR to line departments.

Meanwhile, in this edition of CSQ, you will also read about our ongoing dispute in DEASP over their Front Office Back Office initiative (FOBO). Charging ahead with change without properly-thought-out solutions - to such things as alternate work, workloads and staffing levels, grading and training issues as well as office locations - is not acceptable. Nor is the pace at which the Department is rolling out the initiative acceptable as we try to finalise an agreement.

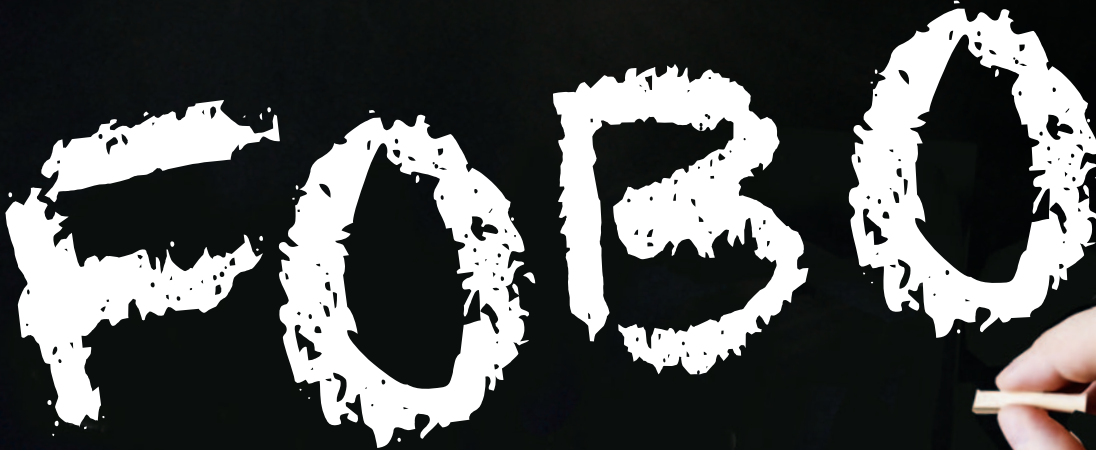
This is a big ticket change and it has to be done right as it has major implications for staff, customer service and the timely delivery of payments. It is often the case that our front-line members know what is best in such matters, time for the Department to sit up and take note.

**Derek Mullen**  
Editor



Focus on...

# Front Office Back Office



Picture: Images Money (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Executive & Clerical Fórsa representatives from across the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP) took part recently in a joint seminar on Trade Union Organisation and related matters. The objective of the seminar was to discuss a range of issues that have a direct impact on the Fórsa membership within DEASP.

One such issue that was consistently highlighted by this broad network of committed trade union representatives was Front Office/Back Office initiative, commonly known as FOBO.

## What is FOBO?

Initially introduced during the summer of 2017 in a number of pilot locations, the Front Office/Back Office model defines four teams each with different roles in claim processing. These are: 1. Front Office; 2. Back Office; 3. Activation Support Team; 4. Control Team.

It was envisaged that this proposed structural change would benefit all stakeholders who interact with the DEASP. However, as was evident from this seminar and indeed its associated workshops, the Fórsa representatives' network took the opportunity to voice strongly-held opinions and concerns over the consistent roll-out and implementation of this initiative.

Those concerns included increased workload, the reduction in staffing levels as well as more limited progression and promotional opportunities within the sector. Reps also spoke of their frustration at the lack of consultation, engagement and discussion on the roll-out of FOBO in the workplace. It was felt that there was "a total disconnect" and reps pointed



FOBO DISCUSSIONS Fórsa DEASP activists at the recent seminar in Dublin

**Reps spoke of their frustration at the lack of consultation, engagement and discussion on the roll-out of FOBO in the workplace... it was felt that there was 'a total disconnect'...**

out that the continued proposed centralisation of tasks would only serve to further frustrate an already faltering system.

Other issues raised at the seminar included the accessing of leave and family-friendly working arrangements, work-related stress as well as the lack of formal training associated with the implementation of FOBO.

Seminar participants also raised concerns

about the potential impact the continued implementation of FOBO might have on clients and the general public who use this essential service.

Fórsa has consistently engaged with DEASP on the issue. To date, there have been more than a dozen meetings with the department where these concerns have been raised and an interim agreement has subsequently been reached.

This has addressed a number of Fórsa concerns, including:

- The technical report has been recognised and a commitment has been given to allocate grade-appropriate work.
- Confirmation given that there is no intention to close DEASP offices or transfer staff.
- The insourcing of back office work previously carried out in private sector branch offices.

# ...does it represent progress – or is it regressive? What do you think?



PRIDE IN OUR SERVICE FÓrsa President Ann McGee

- Additional posts secured through the appointment of training officers and other staff members in each FOBO office.

## Where are we at now?

Fórsa advised DEASP that the union intends to review the interim agreement in October and has called on the department to put the further roll-out of FOBO on hold during this review.

To date eight offices have been restructured under FOBO with a further four offices transitioning. Fórsa will continue to cooperate with FOBO in these 12 offices while the review is taking place but will not be cooperating with the further roll-out of FOBO at this stage.

A number of FOBO issues remain outstanding and will need to be addressed over the review period.

Fórsa and its representatives are committed to continuing to engage with members on this and other matters and will represent and communicate their views as this situation continues to develop.

The opinion of Fórsa members matters and with that in mind the union would encourage all to engage with its network of union activists.

Members may be contacted by a union representative about this issue and we would welcome and encourage your input in this process.

Fórsa President Ann McGee, who is a CO at DEASP, told CSQ: "Many of us see our role within the DEASP as a critical and necessary support to the state and its citizens and we take pride in ensuring that a quality service is provided to all."

"We interact with many people and take pride in recognising that for many of our ser-

vice users we are the first and – in some cases – last resort for them and that our intervention and support is necessary.

"We endeavour on a daily basis to recognise and respect our role within the DEASP and are committed to maintaining quality standards, but we strongly feel that we ourselves have concerns relating to FOBO that are not being addressed and that such matters must be resolved."

And Higher Executive Officer Michael Crowe, who is also a Fórsa representative, pointed out that members' concerns over FOBO needed to be resolved.

He said: "As an executive grade officer within the DEASP, we stand with our Clerical Officer

**Many of us see our role within the DEASP as a critical and necessary support to the state and its citizens and we take pride in ensuring that a quality service is provided to all**

colleagues and share their concerns relating to FOBO. We are insisting that these concerns that collectively affect us all are voiced and listened to. We support our union, Fórsa, in its endeavours and are resolved to having these concerns addressed.

"We are committed to working with initiatives that positively benefit our service users. However, collectively we have concerns that have to be addressed."

## Where to next?

Fórsa collectively organises and negotiates on behalf of members within the DEASP but the continued engagement of members is critical in doing this.

A spokesperson told CSQ: "We must organise and join together to form one consistent voice to increase influence and secure outcomes. So please engage with your local representatives on this issue. If you are not a member please join us, and when local briefings and engagements are taking place, please attend and encourage others to do the same."

For further details, see the list of contacts below. Additional info is also available from Fórsa Lead Organiser Bernie Aston at [baston@forsa.ie](mailto:baston@forsa.ie).

## Officials refused entry

● As CSQ goes to print (on Thursday, 24th October), Fórsa officials were being refused entry to departmental buildings. Reacting to the news, Head of Division Derek Mullen told CSQ: "One would wonder what are they afraid of?"

## Fórsa Industrial Relations Team:

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**FOBO module full details, go to:**

<https://bit.ly/2MID1HZ>

# 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.



## Agreements 2018/19

### New entrant pay

Fórsa is engaged with DPER on a number of anomalies arising out of the important agreement brokered over new entrant pay, but in particular the question of the start date on the circular.

It is important to acknowledge though that this agreement was never going to encompass all eventualities that have arisen but we are doing what we can in Fórsa to deal with particular anomalies.



### Starting pay on promotion

One of the most important agreements concluded during the year was on starting pay on promotion, with a new circular issued, which simplifies the previous 1977 circular. Importantly, the new circular abolishes mark time for serving civil servants.

Currently payroll are assessing pay for those positively impacted by the agreement and making the necessary recalculations to reflect what is now agreed.

### Mobility

Phase 1B has now commenced for Zone 46 which is Dublin and we have started talks on the next phase for HEO's, AO's and AP's.

**See more on page 8**

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship schemes, for IT across the Civil Service and audit technician posts in Revenue are now up and running and are subject to review with Fórsa.

A key issue on pay was settled for the IT apprenticeships who have now come in above the minimum wage. It is agreed that these schemes will not replace promotional outlets or normal course recruitment.

### Disciplinary code issues

Fórsa has for the first time agreed a disciplinary code for probationary staff as well as new guidelines for probation after promotion.

We have also agreed to arrangements to expedite cases under the code which are referred to the appeals board.



**NEW ERA** Lansdowne House HQ of the Labour Court and Workplace Relations Commission

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

# Move to State IR structures promises more efficient service

General Council is the main industrial relations forum in the Civil Service and operates under the Conciliation & Arbitration scheme.

However, over the course of next year or so, we will move to the State IR system that will give civil servants access to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC)/conciliation; the Labour Court; as well as adjudicators for grievance issues under IR legislation.

Benefits will also include a more efficient service and we will keep the best parts of the

C&A scheme such a General Council.

There have, however, been some delays relating to the need for Government to enact a piece of legislation to allow this important move to proceed.

We understand though from the WRC that they are making the necessary resource arrangements to allow the Civil Service move to take place.

Currently the General Council Staff Panel is considering issues in sub-committee and we will engage further with DPER over the closing months of the year.

## Ongoing issues

### Other important agreements...

Other important agreements this year include single scheme purchase and transfer facilities as well as returning to work after ill health retirement.

### Attendance management

A new attendance management policy in which DPER propose a similar approach to underperformance policy, with warnings linked to the Disciplinary Code, something we have a huge difficulty with. We are awaiting revised proposals following the initial presentation from management.

### Annual leave circular revision

This matter is still outstanding and as CSQ goes to print we are awaiting management proposals on the revision of the circular, including carry-over arrangements. We expect progress before Xmas.

### Overpayments

The gross pay issue for out-of-year overpayments is still unresolved and further discussions are due. However, it is very apparent that arrangements overall appear not to be improving the situation.

### Red Weather Alerts

We are awaiting arbitration on arrangements for Red Weather Alert periods and our submission is lodged. However, at the time of writing the DPER counterstatement is still awaited and as we head into the winter months Fórsa is pressing for a hearing date.

### Automation procurement

Discussions are continuing on an automation procurement process, which we report on at page 17 of this edition of CSQ.

### Service Officers/attendants

There is an ongoing issue over an establishment process for Service Officers/attendants, now overdue. We have made it clear to DPER that this process has to happen, in line with time-honoured procedures.

### NSSO Steering Group

The NSSO Steering Group did not operate as planned and as a result we have seen significant delays in the Civil Service-wide survey which is in planning. We are also awaiting the detailed results of an earlier HR practitioners survey, which should be interesting.

## Competency-based comps motion for General Council

One of our motions from Conference required us to seek the return of some form of senior/suitable promotion in the Civil Service.

However, we will not be able to replicate what existed in the past for a number of reasons. These include opposition from the employer/PAS side and indeed from our own members as well as provisions set out in the Croke Park Agreement that provide for promotion on a competitive basis.

Because of this, the DEC has agreed to lodge a motion at General Council seeking competitions that rely on a competency-based approach, taking account of experience and corporate knowledge.

In effect this deploys the employers' own arguments about specialist knowledge and expertise back at them, as can be seen in the competency models set out above.

It was also recommended that we seek the reservation of 10% of posts for such competitions.

### HEO issue

Meanwhile, the Civil Service DEC has also agreed to widen a proposed HEO bilingual interdepartmental competition to the wider public service. This is deemed necessary given the likely small field of competitors for such posts. Recent competitions for Irish

## NSSO platform crashes

The NSSO core portal went down in September - with no access to payslips, which is required by law - leaving members with all sorts of difficulties conducting HR business. As a result, Fórsa has been looking at what next steps it should take over shared services, particularly with regard to HR.

At General Council the union was told a near rebuild was needed to get the system back on-line. We also discovered - as we had suspected - that the Disaster Relief element was not fit for purpose, leading to limited access during the month. While we given assurances that the problem had been fixed, the issue has further eroded confidence in the system. Fórsa was told that no data was lost or compromised, but why should we have to ask these questions in the first place? We agreed earlier this year to take part in a high-level steering group aimed at resolving the difficulties in HR shared services, and this group has carried out its business

effectively. As CSQ goes to print, we are still waiting for a detailed breakdown of a departmental HR Practitioner survey, which we know didn't return a positive response from respondents.

A Civil Service-wide survey aimed at all members has also been delayed. This survey should identify issues we have been flagging up for some time. The results are expected to lead to action plans to fix the various issues and problems we expect will be highlighted in the data.

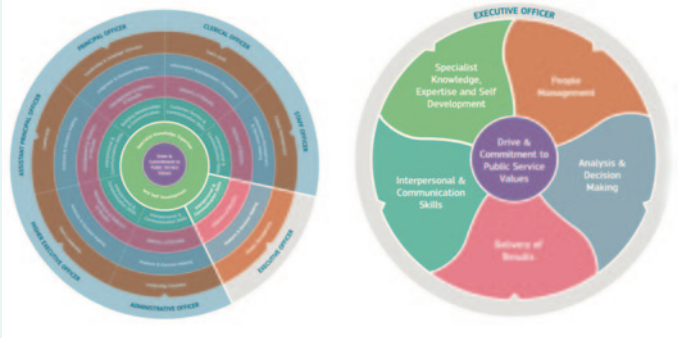
It is obvious to us - and we have made this clear to management - that there should be no surprises in this survey particularly after the September debacle. We expect the response to be very negative.

The Divisional Executive will consider matters at its October meeting and decide whether it is time to reconsider some of the more serious options, on the question of the potential to return these important services to line departments.

## Claims in Progress

- AO pay parity when performing HEO functions
- AO leave parity
- Higher scales after 25 years for CO grade
- Sick leave and personal injury claims
- Incremental credit for periods of acting
- Panels for full-time relief cleaners
- Panels in Dublin, Service Officers and attendants
- Political activity for civil servants

### EXECUTIVE OFFICER Civil Service competency model



speakers have had a very small application base.

This approach was considered a more suitable alternative to the original proposal from DPER/PAS for an open competition.

The extension of this completion to the wider public service will not act as a precedent for other competitions.

This point has been agreed with DPER.

## News

# Building social dialogue would benefit society



**ACTION** FÓRSA GS Kevin Callinan called for IR Act to be changed to ensure collective bargaining rights

Picture: Jimmy Weldon

FÓRSA General Secretary Kevin Callinan has said that a reestablishment of social dialogue, bringing together government, unions and employers, could resolve or improve issues where the government has failed, including childcare, education and housing.

Mr Callinan made the remarks during a speech to SIPTU's national conference in Cork on 9th October. He was addressing delegates on union concerns over growing inequality in Irish society, and the absence of the 'balancing' influence that social partnership provided up to its collapse in 2009.

He told delegates: "In the early years of social partnership the 1990 Industrial Relations Act became law resulting in a huge reduction in strike days. The legislation tilted the balance towards employers but the existence of the institution of social partnership provided a measure of redress to unions and their members.

"The apparatus of social partnership helped to fill the void and to provide stability to the changed conditions, while the collapse of social partnership when the crisis hit removed this balance," he said.

Mr Callinan emphasised that he did not regard the old model of social partnership as entirely successful, and remains critical of its deficits as well as what he called 'missed opportunities' by unions: "Whatever its failings, and there were many, social partnership provided a mechanism to engage in genuine

social dialogue with the aim of crafting policy solutions to national problems," he said.

Mr Callinan said the Labour Employer Economic Forum, which eventually replaced social partnership, "is more about meeting the obligations under the revised EU governance arrangements than genuine collaboration."

Mr Callinan cited remarks made by IBEC CEO Danny McCoy at the Department of

**The apparatus of social partnership helped to fill the void and to provide stability to the changed conditions, while the collapse of social partnership when the crisis hit removed this balance**

Business, Enterprise and Innovation's conference to mark the ILO centenary in September. "He delivered a devastating critique of Irish infrastructural capacity while making the case for genuine social dialogue.

"Albeit couched in a concern for long-term national competitiveness, he highlighted a range of failings including the decline in the standing of our universities, the exorbitant cost of childcare, the excessive commutes for so many and the absence of effective solutions to the housing crisis.

"I put it to you that real social dialogue just might resolve, or at least improve, these issues where government has failed," he said.

Mr Callinan told SIPTU delegates that the emergence of calls for the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act was not surprising as many employers continue to develop employment practices that stretch the limits of what the law permits.

"Some employers have no compunction in using their ample resources to run to the courts to impede unions and workers from invoking the right to strike in what effectively becomes a test of the respective financial position of both parties - one that no union can win.

"When the latter scenario becomes reality it is time for decisive action to restore fairness to the relationship between capital and labour."

Mr Callinan insisted trade unions would not be silent on the issue. "The law must be changed to ensure not just the right to organise but the right to bargain effectively. Otherwise it will have no credibility and little acceptance," he said.

Mr Callinan told the conference that unions needed to be relevant, empathetic and visible both to their members and to wider society, and that the current project by Congress to create local trade union centres was part of the effort to achieve this.

He said: "We must be connected to the concerns of workers and their local communities; we must be on their side; and we must be available to them."

## Keeping you in the loop...

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# Prepared for worst...

The current Government contingency arrangements outline levels of preparedness for Brexit. As CSQ goes to print, these preparations have become yet more vital as the continuing uncertainty over Brexit plays out in the Westminster Parliament and changes day by day.

Clearly in Revenue and Agriculture there are significant numbers of additional staff trained and waiting to go into operation.

Whether the numbers are enough, particularly in the context of a hard Brexit, is unclear at this point. Indeed it is still very unclear as to what precisely we will face, given the level of political chaos in the UK.

As well as Revenue and Agriculture, officials are monitoring the situation across departments, including in DEASP where an agreement has been reached on UK pensions and vice versa. Obviously they acknowledge staff will increase in the event of

a hard Brexit causing a hike in unemployment, as set out in the extract from the Government's Executive Summary (below).

We are also discussing staffing implications in Justice particularly for the BMU and the passport service in Foreign Affairs, which has seen a huge rise in the number of applications this year, particularly from UK residents.

Clearly a no-deal Brexit will have a serious economic impact which we will have to monitor closely from a range of perspectives, including pay, but even a negotiated exit will also be difficult.

Fórsa is also assessing a range of other important issues including the question of UK nationals working in the Civil Service and the position of members living in Northern Ireland. Our primary focus though has been to ensure that staffing levels are appropriate.

## Government Executive Summary

# 'Highly disruptive with profound implications'

This update to the Brexit Contingency Action Plan takes place in the context of the extension of the Brexit Article 50 process until 31 October 2019, which was agreed by the European Council at its meeting on 10 April.

The conclusions of that European Council make clear that there can be no opening of the Withdrawal Agreement, nor can the extension be used to start negotiations on the future relationship. The EU is willing to look again at the Political Declaration on the future relationship should the UK move on its red lines.

Following this decision of the European Council, the default withdrawal date of the United Kingdom from the European Union is 31 October 2019 at 23:00 (Irish time). It is the Government's assessment that there is a significant risk of a no-deal Brexit on 31 October (or thereafter) and, accordingly, work on no-deal Brexit preparations continue to be taken forward as a matter of priority across government departments and agencies.

A no-deal Brexit will mean that on 31 October 2019, the UK's status under EU law will change from that of an EU Member State to that of a 'third country' with no trade or cooperation agreements in place with the EU. The transition period, provided for in the Withdrawal Agreement, will not apply.

The UK will be immediately outside the Single Market and the Customs Union and will no longer be part of the framework of EU law.

While preparations at all

levels will help, a no-deal Brexit will be highly disruptive and will have profound political, economic and legal implications, first and foremost for the UK, including most significantly Northern Ireland, as well as having significant impacts on Ireland and the rest of the EU.

In a no-deal scenario, it will be impossible for the UK to maintain the current seamless arrangements with the EU across the full range of sectors, from justice and security cooperation, to transport connectivity, to trade flows and supply chains. The significant short-term risks in the event of a no-deal Brexit are set out clearly in this Action Plan and discussed below.

## Economic impacts

A no-deal Brexit will be an unprecedented event, bringing with it disruption and severe negative economic impacts. Prudent economic planning is a key part of our ongoing preparations, as is the provision of supports, including economic supports, to help businesses and other affected sectors to prepare.

There are likely to be significant job losses in the most exposed sectors in a no-deal scenario, with an estimated increase in unemployment of 50,000-55,000 after the UK leaves the EU.

While every effort is being made to prepare and put in place mitigation measures, there is little doubt that, at least in the initial period, tariffs and checks and controls on UK imports will be disruptive to trade across the Irish Sea. Furthermore, in the immediate aftermath of a no-deal scenario, it is anticipated

that the UK 'landbridge' may be subject to severe delays and there would also be significant disruption to the all-island economy.

## Contingency Planning

The Government prepared extensively for a no-deal Brexit in advance of the 29 March and 12 April deadlines. Key measures included:

- **Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Consequential Provisions) Act 2019** - the 'Brexit Omnibus Act', signed into law by the President on 17 March, focuses on protecting Irish citizens, assisting businesses and jobs, and securing ongoing access to essential services and products. The various parts of this legislation are ready to be commenced as needed in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

- **Infrastructure, staffing and ICT systems at our ports and airports** - sufficient infrastructure was put in place to manage the necessary checks and controls on East-West trade with the UK outside the EU.

- Work at Dublin Port involved nine projects across eight sites to deliver 13 new inspection bays, documentary and identity check facilities, office facilities and parking for up to 128 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

- 400 additional Revenue staff recruited and trained for customs facilitation and checks; nearly 190 Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) staff trained and in place to conduct import controls; 59 additional Health Service Executive (HSE) staff trained and in place.

- **Common Travel Area (CTA)** - a high level MOU that reaffirms the commitment of both Irish and British Governments to the CTA was signed on 8 May 2019. Under the CTA, which will be maintained in any scenario, Irish and British citizens can travel freely, move to live, work and study, and access services including healthcare and social benefits.

- **EU contingency measures** - there was agreement at EU level on a range of temporary contingency measures in key areas, including maintaining basic air connectivity and road haulage access between the EU and the UK in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

- **Extradition arrangements** - workable alternative extradition arrangements under the 1957 Council of Europe Convention on Extradition were put in place for the event of a no-deal Brexit, which would see the UK immediately fall outside the European Arrest Warrant process.

- **Business supports** - a wide range of support programmes for enterprise and the agri-food sector have been developed and put in place, including the €300 million Brexit Loan Scheme and €300 million Future Growth Loan Scheme, Enterprise Ireland's Brexit Scorecard, Bord Bia's Brexit Barometer and InterTradelreland's Brexit Vouchers.

- **Communications and stakeholder engagement** - this has included over 100 Brexit information seminars and events since



Continued bottom page 10

# Phase 1B goes live

Phase 1B of the Civil Service Mobility scheme went live for applications on 14th June 2019 and offers on 2nd September 2019. This phase allows for Mobility within Zone 46 (Dublin) for the grades of Clerical Officer and Executive Officer.

The following arrangements have now expired for the participating grades with effect from 2nd September:

- Head-to-Head transfers;
- Interdepartmental transfers (Expression of Interest);
- Secondments.

**Note:** An exception to this rule is for positions that attract an allowance.

## PHASE 1B - What You Need To Know...

● There will be a Day 1 period for Phase 1B – this means that all applications received from 14th June 2019 until 4th July 2019 will be treated as made on 14th June 2019. Accordingly, applicants may see their waitlist

positions regularly change during the Day 1 period, as new applications are made.

- Applications received after the Day 1 period will be queued on a daily basis.
- A restriction of five organisations choices will be in place from 14th June 2019 when making applications to Zone 46, applying to Zone 46 only.
- Legacy dates do not apply to Phase 1B.

● Zone 46 will remain as a single zone, with organisations facilitating an internal transfer list for further moves within the Zone.

● In general, staff members moving to or within Zone 46 will be assigned to an office in the core location area.

● The core location area includes all offices within a 4km straight-line radius from the GPO, O'Connell Street.

● An exception to this general rule is where the organisational headquarters are located outside of the core location area, e.g. NSSO, Clonskeagh and President's Establishment, Phoenix Park.

● Following a move, a staff member may apply to their Local HR for an organisational internal transfer to an office location outside the core location area (where applicable). In general, a minimum of one year's service in the core location area will apply before the staff member can avail of an internal transfer.

● Offers of moves under Phase 1B commence on 2nd September 2019.

**Note 1:** Applications made to Zone 46 during Phase 1A will retain their current applications and date of application.

**Note 2:** The existing restriction on the number of Zone choices still applies, and applicants may have live applications to a maximum of three mobility zones.



Picture: Daniel M (CC BY-NC-SA)

Continued from page 9

## 'Highly disruptive with profound implications'

September 2018; a nationwide media information campaign and 750,000 leaflets distributed nationwide through 5,000 public outlets; 18 meetings of the Brexit Stakeholders Forum chaired by the Tánaiste; and five meetings of the All-Island Civic Dialogue.

● **Financial and budgetary preparations** - undertaken over three budgets to build the resilience of the economy, including the establishment of the Rainy Day Fund and investment in long-term economic development through Project Ireland 2040.

● The period between now and the 31 October deadline for a possible no-deal Brexit will be used to strengthen and refresh these preparations. Key areas for continued work include: providing further additional infrastructure at ports and airports to enhance our capacity to manage the necessary checks and controls on goods coming from the UK as smoothly as possible.

● Commitments to the people of Northern Ireland, including access to Erasmus+ and the

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

● Preparing for Budget 2020 and making provision for targeted funding for the sectors most affected in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

● A new phase of the Government's Brexit communications campaign, which will include a call to action to businesses operating in exposed sectors to take the necessary steps to prepare for a no-deal Brexit.

● Ongoing engagement with Member States and with the European Commission on key outstanding issues, including on potential supports for Ireland and affected sectors.

## Northern Ireland

A no-deal Brexit poses risks for the Good Friday Agreement and raises profound political challenges and lasting societal impacts for Northern Ireland. The prospect of operating outside the EU with no deal would be extremely serious for businesses, large and small, and for the overall economy of Northern Ireland. It would also have potentially severe implications for North/South cooperation.

The consequences of a no-deal Brexit for the political process in Northern Ireland could be very damaging. A no-deal Brexit risks significantly undermining wider community relations and political stability in Northern Ireland with po-

tential related security concerns

There should be no illusion – a no-deal Brexit would result in far-reaching change on the island of Ireland. This would particularly impact on North-South trade, which could no longer be as frictionless as it is today.

The impact of tariffs, and of the customs and SPS requirements and associated checks necessary to preserve Ireland's full participation in the Single Market and Customs Union, would be significant for the operation of the all-island economy and would involve additional costs for and disruption to businesses throughout the island, particularly those in Northern Ireland.

We continue to work closely with the Commission with a view to minimising these negative consequences of no deal, but any arrangement will clearly be sub-optimal

The commitment of the Irish and British Governments to the maintenance of the Common Travel Area provides important assurances for the way people from both North and South live, move and access public services on the island of Ireland (as well as across both Ireland and Great Britain).



## NEW OPERATIONAL MODEL

# Garda chiefs told no change to status quo before process of engagement

Fórsa had sought engagement with Commissioner Drew Harris as far back as 12th August over media reports of a new operational model proposed for An Garda Síochána.

We were called to a meeting with the Chief Administrative Officer on 21st August to be briefed on the contents of the Commissioner's press conference which was to take place the following day.

Fórsa informed management in the strongest possible terms that before any changes affecting our members could be implemented, the appropriate consultation and engagement had to first take place. For their part, management confirmed they were fully committed to engagement.

An instruction was issued to all members on 22nd August advising them that because no consultation or engagement had taken place with Fórsa over the new operational model, the status quo remained in place with regard to existing working arrangements/duties/work locations etc. Members were told this would continue until the appropriate consultation and engagement had taken place. Management were informed of the development and cautioned that any attempt to circumvent the instruction to members would result in us being in dispute.

### Proposed new regions

At the 22nd August press conference, the following operational model was put forward:

- **North Western Region:** Running from Mayo to Louth and from Donegal to Galway. This would replace both the current Northern Region (Donegal, Sligo/Leitrim, Cavan/Monaghan and Louth) and all but Clare of the current Western Region (Mayo, Galway and Roscommon/Longford).

- **Eastern Region:** This would incorporate both the current Eastern Region (Meath, Westmeath, Laois/Offaly, Kildare and Wicklow) and all but Tipperary of the current South Eastern Region (Kilkenny/Carlow, Waterford and Wexford).

- **Southern Region:** This would replace the current Southern Region (Cork West, Cork North, Cork City, Kerry and Limerick) and also subsume Clare and Tipperary.

- **Dublin Metropolitan Region** will remain unchanged.

### Proposed new divisions

Divisions will be reduced from 28 to 19. The six Dublin divisions and Cork city division would



**CHANGES** Commissioner Drew Harris (centre) sets out new operational model at 22nd August press event

Picture: RollingNews.ie

remain unchanged, as would Kerry, Galway and Limerick. But all other divisions would merge with neighbouring ones. This includes:

- Cork North and Cork West;
- Clare and Tipperary;
- Mayo and Roscommon/Longford;
- Donegal and Sligo/Leitrim;
- Cavan/Monaghan and Louth;
- Meath and Westmeath;
- Laois/ Offaly and Kildare;
- Wicklow and Wexford;
- Kilkenny/Carlow and Waterford.

Fórsa wrote to Commissioner Harris to seek an early meeting so that he could outline to us how the new operating model would be structured and operated. We could then engage with him over how such changes within enlarged and restructured divisions would impact on our members.

Commissioner Harris delegated responsibility to the Chief Administrative Officer who met with a Fórsa delegation on 10th September.

At this meeting we were advised that no further details were available about the implementation of the new model as there was significant work to be carried out to progress the matter.

We were told a decision about the location of new divisional headquarters would be made by

mid-September but were assured that the decision would not affect existing staffing arrangements or work locations. Management again reaffirmed their commitment that staff would not be displaced in the process.

We were advised that the next step would be the appointment of 17 Assistant Principal Officers to the 19 Divisions (two divisions having AP's already in place) all of whom would play a role in divisional discussions on developing proposals to implement the new model.

Fórsa flagged up the totally unacceptable way the proposed changes had been communicated to the union and its members. The union asked for written confirmation outlining the planning process in developing the new operational model as well as calling on management to set out clear timelines for consultation and engagement on the plan.

The union again emphasised that the status quo would remain in place until meaningful consultation and engagement had taken place. Management also expressed their full commitment to such engagement with Fórsa.

This same message was also conveyed to the Garda Staff Council (11th September), and the Strategic Transformation Office (4th September).

At the Garda Staff Council meeting, Fórsa also made clear its view that the 17 new AP's should be appointed internally from within AGS.

We suggested that a background knowledge of AGS would be vital, given the role this post-holder would have in shaping how the new operational model would be implemented.

Management agreed to take this proposal on-board and get back to us with their decision.

**Fórsa flagged up the totally unacceptable way the proposed changes had been communicated to the union and its members**

# Why frontline BMU staff deserve their Sunday premium payments

The Border Management Unit in Dublin Airport is our frontline in immigration control. Civilian Officers represented by Fórsa took over from the Garda back in 2013. They operate a very important role on a 24/7 basis, a shift pattern that attracts an allowance of 25% of pay.

However, they are not paid a Sunday premium as is the entitlement under the Organisation of Working time Act. The Act requires that a single time extra payment is paid for Sunday work, as is the case in other parts of the Civil Service, notably Garda and Revenue.

There is a view on the management side that there is no requirement to pay this premium as it wasn't part of the initial agreement in Dublin Airport. What they fail to recognise though is that the civilianisation was started during the economic crisis and the Sunday premium was not settled at that point. However, the union has sought payment going back more than three years.

While we have been following the adjudication route on this claim, it has now become a more serious matter given recent settlements in the WRC referred by individual staff members.

We have made it clear to the Department that we cannot accept further delays in the payment of a rights-based premium in circumstances where they are making individual settlements.

In this regard we have now decided to ballot members at the airport on a course of industrial action to further the claim. We have also reminded management that in their initial deliberations on this matter, when they were settling shift pay arrangements that they had submitted to DPER on the payment of the premium. Short memories on this one.

Also in a recent circular they tried to argue that the premium was covered by the shift allowance. This can only happen if there is a collective agreement, which there isn't.



**PASSPORT CONTROL** Welcoming guests of the nation at Dublin Airport



We have made it clear that we do not accept the terms set down in the Circular and that its publication can only be without prejudice to our claim.

On other matters the union is also pursuing issues over the value of a leave day given the length of a shift. Our view is one equals one shift. Added to this, the payment/TOIL arrangements for public holidays are unsatisfactory.

Furthermore, the branch is also pursuing, with Head Office advice, a range of health and safety concerns.

**We have made it clear to the Dept that we cannot accept further delays in the payment of a rights-based premium in circumstances where individual settlements are made**

## Concerns identified over FSI/GNTB merger

While Fórsa members of Forensic Science Ireland welcome the expanded remit that a merger of FSI and the Garda National Technical Bureau (GNTB) would bring about, concerns remain about a number of issues.

The FSI branch has organised a series of consultation meetings with the entire FSI branch to ensure that all matters are considered and addressed in meetings with management.

Areas of concern identified by members include:

- The future of the link between their qualification

(QQI Level 8) and their profession and what impact a qualification waiver might have.

- Future internal promotion competitions.
- The future plans for the analyst grades in a larger organisation.

Fórsa members in FSI have endeavoured to seek answers to as many of their queries as possible to ensure that the merger will not result in any unwanted or unforeseen industrial relations matters. Representatives have led a series of interactions with management as we seek to find a way forward.

## Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine

# Major changes to RVL network planned

In early September the Cabinet agreed to give the go-ahead to a major infrastructural development of its regional laboratories network.

Arising out of recommendations contained in the 2016 O'Reilly Report, the plan is to invest up to €33 million in the network. It envisages the building of four new laboratories and the setting up of five regional carcass transfer centres over a 10-year period.

Details of the plan were passed on to Fórsa by Donal Sammin, Assistant General Secretary and Head of Laboratories, along with the Cabinet announcement.

The major issue for Fórsa members is the announcement that the current Cork and Limerick Regional Veterinary Laboratories (RVL) is to close. The union is to meet members in these centres over the coming weeks.

However, a commitment that no staff would be transferred against their will was given by Donal Sammin at the initial meeting with the union. He also said that there would be no job losses resulting from the project.

The 10-year plan proposes the building and establishment of new buildings and RVLs next to the current locations and is not expected to adversely affect the more than 300 staff



**PROPOSALS** Regional veterinary laboratory in Kilkenny. Donal Sammin (right)



based there. In the North-West and North-East regions, with the setting up of carcass transfer centres in Donegal and Cavan, it is proposed that carcasses will be collected in a location in Donegal before being transferred to Sligo. Carcasses collected in Cavan will be transferred to Athlone.

In the South-East, the Department intends to design and build a new facility close to the Hebron Road facility or in Kilkenny. In Sligo, a new RVL will be designed and built to replace the existing laboratory in its current location.

And what is termed a "super-sized" facility will be designed and built in Athlone to cater

for the Midlands and West, replacing the current facility at Coosan, Athlone.

At the end of the 10-year project management have advised that another super-sized facility will be built in north Cork somewhere near the proposed M20 Cork to Limerick motorway.

While only minor changes are proposed for the Backweston facility in Celbridge, Co Kildare, the Department is committed to holding bi-lateral meetings with Fórsa and the unions, with issues being raised at Departmental Council in the coming months as well as over the period of the project.

## Department of Education & Skills

# Agreement on NCSE Departmental Council



Cliodhna McNamara

Agreement has been reached between Fórsa and NCSE on setting up a Departmental Council under the Conciliation and Arbitration scheme.

The NCSE is proposing that the Council be chaired by David Denny, a retired Principal Officer who worked for many years in the pay and industrial relations area of DPER and more recently as secretary to the Public

Service Pay Commission. Fórsa has signaled its approval of the move, given Mr Denny's wide experience in industrial relations as well as his detailed knowledge of both the civil service and education sectors.

The original proposal was to have the Departmental Council meet quarterly in April, June, September and December. However, it is proposed that

the inaugural meeting take place at 11am on Thursday, 21st November in the Trim Castle Hotel. Following this it will revert to the agreed schedule with the next meeting in April 2020.

Assistant General Secretary Cliodhna McNamara welcomed the development which she said would be very important for the conduct of industrial relations in the NCSE.

## Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade

# Grade restructuring deal

Following union consultations, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has agreed a restructuring of the Development Specialist grades within the Department.

The agreement itself has been the subject of two Fórsa ballots. The restructuring arrangement will allow for the deployment of additional Development Specialists over the coming years as Ireland moves closer to achieving its target of 0.7% of GDP being used for

development initiatives around the world.

The restructuring agreement will allow Irish Aid, the key part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for development work, to be prepared for Ireland to extend and grow its international reputation in this area.

Fórsa has called for the Department to run a Development Specialist Counsellor competition before the end of 2019.



News

# Irish employers shy away from social dialogue

Head of Division Derek Mullen pictured with ETUC Deputy General Secretary Esther Lynch (centre) and other trade unionists who took part in discussions in Brussels recently which formed part of the Social Dialogue process.

Derek told CSQ: "We were meeting European employers seeking agreement on the issue of digitalisation in the workplace. This important dialogue follows EPSU work on digitalisation and work-life balance. (see CSQ report on page 17)

"Regrettably the Irish employers are not engaging in these vital discussions and have been absent from the Social Dialogue process generally - and that includes the Civil Service employers."



Revenue

# Staffing and training issues at 1890 helpline

Issues over staffing and some revision training continue in a number of areas across the 1890 helpline.

Fórsa is arranging to meet management again to find out when additional staffing can be provided for the helpline and to check if all areas have been identified where more training is necessary, particularly in relation to death cases, Capital Gains Tax, and residency.

What is needed is the basic revision-type training that will help Clerical Officers identify what is work appropriate to their grade and what work should be passed back to the executive grade. As the business

national helpline continues its rollout we are in particular identifying problems relating to the transfer of work. What is clear is that there is a shortage of COs in the business area.

Also, given that calls are being answered nationally, callers' queries are often about work items from multiple general claims districts. This means that neither the operator nor the line manager can transfer the item across to the person dealing with the taxpayer. In effect, this means that another item of post has to be generated.

This matter will be discussed at the next business IR forum.

# Enforcement & trade

Fórsa has flagged up "considerable" ongoing issues over enforcement and trade facilitation that need to be addressed and has been engaging regularly with management on these and other matters.

While we have had some success on some issues, we continue to reserve our right to proceed to lodge claims over:

- Rates of premium payments over Sunday and bank holidays;
  - Pension entitlements and payment for Sundays and bank holidays.
- There are also health and safety problems, in

particular on overcrowding, at both Dublin Port and Dublin Airport. In the Port a number of staff have not taken seriously the need to wear safety equipment while out in the terminals. Added to this, changes to rosters are still causing problems.

Meanwhile, because of continuing preparations in advance of Brexit, all discussions are to be conducted with both Customs Division and CSD. This is seen as a necessary step to ensure that IR implications are factored into the actions of the division.

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## News

New coalition formed to push benefits of 4-day working week...

# Everyone's a winner!

Irish companies that pilot or introduce a four-day working week will be able to seek support from 4DWI (Four Day Week Ireland), a new coalition of businesses, unions, environmentalists, academics and NGOs set up to campaign for shorter working time across the economy.

The initiative, which is the Irish leg of an international campaign to establish a four-day week without reductions in pay or productivity, was launched in Dublin on Thursday, 26th September. The new coalition claims reduced working time is better for business, better for workers, better for women, and better for the environment.

It is to launch a trademark for businesses that introduce a four-day week, while meeting other standards of workplace protections. 4DWI also said it would seek an early dialogue with Government and opposition parties "to explore how Ireland's largest single employer can encourage a reduction in working hours across the economy" by example, and to find ways for the State to "encourage and support private companies that pilot or introduce reduced working time."

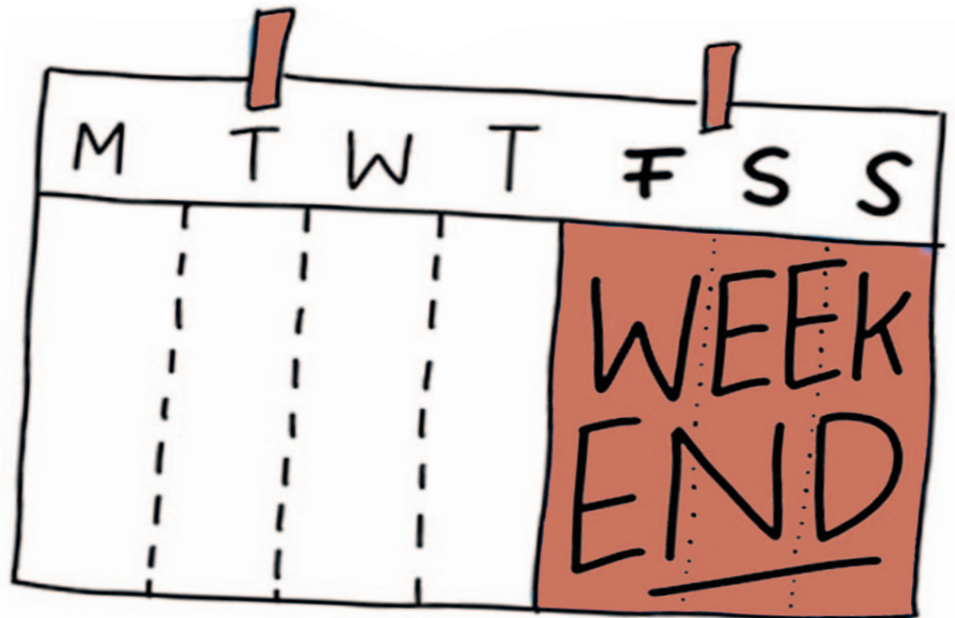
4DWI said it wanted "a gradual, steady, managed transition to a shorter working week for all workers in the private and public sectors." It pledged to promote the concept of a four-day week with Irish businesses and offer support to those who trial the approach by drawing on the experience of companies such as Galway-based recruitment firm ICE and New Zealand's Perpetual Guardian, which are already reaping the benefits of introducing a four-day week for their staff.

Its website - [www.fourdayweek.ie](http://www.fourdayweek.ie) - states: "We want to change the false narrative that working long hours is good for productivity and a badge of honour, challenge the worst excesses of the 'work-first, always-on' culture, and champion the importance of family time, leisure time, caring work and community work.

"Our medium term objective is to move towards the four-day week being the standard work arrangement across the economy, with no loss of pay."

The coalition says there are three routes to achieving the four-day week:

1. Good business leadership, combined with market and labour market factors, which will increase the attraction of the four-day week to more and more companies;
2. Cutting working time, without loss of pay or productivity, through negotiations between management and unions in organisations where collective bargaining takes place;
3. Government as a large employer leading by example, supporting private companies that introduce reduced working time, and legislating where appropriate.



The launch was addressed by Andrew Barnes, founder of New Zealand trustee services company Perpetual Guardian, which won international acclaim when it introduced a four-day week for its 250 staff last year.

He said: "The evidence is in. A productivity-focused workplace can achieve the outcome of working less hours. I encourage business to look at the initiative for themselves. It is clear to me this is the future of work."

**The new coalition claims reduced working time is better for business, better for workers, better for women, better for the environment**

Margaret Cox, CEO of the Galway-based recruitment company ICE, which has also successfully introduced a four-day week, said staff had welcomed the change, which had also been good for her business. "One of our teams has a slogan for their four working days:

focused, energised and happy," she said.

And Fórsa is the first Irish trade union to back the four-day week. General Secretary Kevin Callinan pointed out that working time had emerged as a central issue in international debates about the future of work.

He said: "In a world where new technologies like artificial intelligence are also threatening at least some of our livelihoods, and where modern work practices are making more and more jobs more and more precarious, people are asking why all the benefits seem to be earmarked for a small global elite.

"Trade unions don't want to impede technological developments. We know that they have the potential to take a lot of the drudgery and danger out of current workplace tasks while increasing prosperity, including by creating many new jobs.

"We want to secure a fairer share of the benefits of economic growth and technological advances for all workers in all sectors of the economy. This would also have the benefit of sharing paid work as technology reduces its availability."



**PRODUCTIVITY BOOST** New Economics Foundation researcher Aidan Harper with Fórsa General Secretary Kevin Callinan



**TRAIL BLAZER** ICE Chief Executive Margaret Cox explains 4DW benefits



Fórsa has been involved in an important European project on the impact of digitalisation on work-life balance.

In the context of the EU Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations, employers (EUPAE) and trade unions (TUNED/EPUSU) have jointly agreed a set of guidelines with a view to improving work-life balance by true identifying risks and opportunities stemming from digitalisation.

The guidelines state that digitalisation should maximise opportunities and minimise risks to ensure that private and professional life can be balanced.

A regulatory framework is considered indispensable along with affordable, quality childcare and eldercare infrastructures.

Social partners are in a unique position to observe and identify the different issues and possible solutions as they emerge.

Measures to manage the negative impact of the digitalisation processes on the work-life balance of employees should therefore be jointly addressed by public employers and workers' trade union representatives through collective bargaining or other forms of social dialogue in line with the relevant legal framework.

### Guideline 1: General recommendations

Collective bargaining, on-going consultation and communication between employers, workers and their representatives is a key factor.

While there is no legal framework at EU level that addresses the topic of these guidelines, there are a number of EU directives that lay down relevant legal provisions, such as on work-life balance, both in terms of leave and flexibility; gender equality, including equal pay; the health and safety of workers; and working time.

The guidelines recommend that the following actions need to be taken into consideration:

- Defining and clarifying terminology for your organisation, sector or country, to make sure that they are clear for, and shared by, everyone.
- Defining the objectives for the organisation, employees and users, explaining the opportunities and risks.

Illustration: Doris Kopmann (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)



# Keeping your balance in a digital age...

- Identifying gaps and solutions, preparing for collective bargaining or other forms of social dialogue (e.g. work-life spillover, burn-out prevention), anticipating and reducing negative impact on certain staff grades, gender, and specific groups within the workforce.

- Safeguarding existing work-life balance measures and collective agreements or other forms of social dialogue in case of restructuring.

### Guideline 2: Gender equality

Digitalisation should be framed as an opportunity to enhance work-life balance of both women and men whose needs will differ throughout their life depending on several factors, such as their care responsibilities, economic situation, career or educational changes. Therefore, both digitali-

sation and work-life balance measures have to be gender-sensitive and equality proofed.

### Guideline 3: Health and Safety

The frequency and rapidity of change, blurring of private and working life and virtualisation of human relations in the workplace as well as confusion over what is important and urgent to deal with are potential triggers of high stress levels, burn-out or FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), a form of social anxiety leading to an obsessional relationship with professional communication tools.

- Making health and safety data constantly available for the purpose of updating relevant policies, as well as respecting privacy obligations.

- Making sure that digitalisation and work-life balance are

regular items in meetings of health and safety staff committees.

### Guideline 4: Data and Privacy Protection

- Collecting and monitoring only relevant data about employee output to facilitate performance management – with the full knowledge and consent of the employees and their representatives.

- Differentiating between useful data that does not invade the privacy of employees, and unhelpful or sensitive data, or data that can invade the privacy of employees at work.

- Investing in trusting employees rather than in surveillance software which can often be not only ineffective but also costly and incidentally illegal.

### Guideline 5: Training

Lifelong learning is essential, and even more so when it comes to digitalisation-related aspects, considering that skills can quickly become obsolete. There is also a risk that algorithms and artificial intelligence lead to a deskilling of employees or make their job less rewarding and interesting.

### Guideline 6: Work organisation

- Managing the work overload that is created by digitalisation and the increased speed of work by distributing work fairly among team members as well as building in contingencies and extra resources as they are needed.

- Foster new ways of working between employers and employees based on work objectives, cooperation and teamwork.

- While employees desire more autonomy, measures should be taken to avoid overtime work and – where necessary – make sure it is compensated as well as guaranteeing rest and recovery.

### Guideline 7: Performance management

Transparency in communicating performance standards is essential in building trust and confidence in employees as well as line-managers, when venturing into alternative work arrangements (such as working from home).

# Conversations

**Matt Staunton** is Deputy General Secretary of Fórsa

## Working to the maximum for the best possible deals

### **Congratulations on your appointment as Deputy General Secretary, what does it mean to you both personally and professionally?**

Well, professionally I am really focussed on this opportunity to make the amalgamated union work better for everyone. I am delighted that practically all civil servants are in the one union and will do my utmost to ensure it works for them to get better deals. Personally I am especially delighted as a former civil servant and activist in Revenue to be back in the one union with all my former colleagues.

### **What do you see as the major priorities in your new role?**

Making sure that the structures of the new union are worked to the maximum to give members the best possible deals. I see divisional executives (Civil Service being one of the biggest) focussing more on delivering industrial relations outcomes for members and the national executive getting on with managing the central affairs of the union.

### **What's your thoughts on the amalgamation, particularly for members in the CSD?**

I believe it makes sense that Fórsa is the best possible vehicle to achieve better outcomes for members both in good times and bad. I am passionate as a trade unionist in demanding that when unions come together to share resources it must

result in better and more effective representation. Working together to get to the place that positive outcomes can be achieved that could never have been done had we all stayed separate is my aim.

### **What does the future look like for Fórsa - threats and opportunities?**

I see good times ahead where we will maximise the share of what's going for our members. I also see a situation where if bad times return we can use our might to protect our members' terms and conditions.

### **How will history record the amalgamation?**

Something that makes perfect sense and that we should have done years ago.

### **Any other thoughts you might like to mention?**

As a former civil servant myself I really look forward to Fórsa delivering better outcomes for civil servants by making it clear that we are the single massive force to be reckoned with in the public service. We should make a real go of making this amalgamation work so we can clearly point to other unions in other sectors to do the same which would benefit us all.

*Matt Staunton was in conversation with Derek Mullen*





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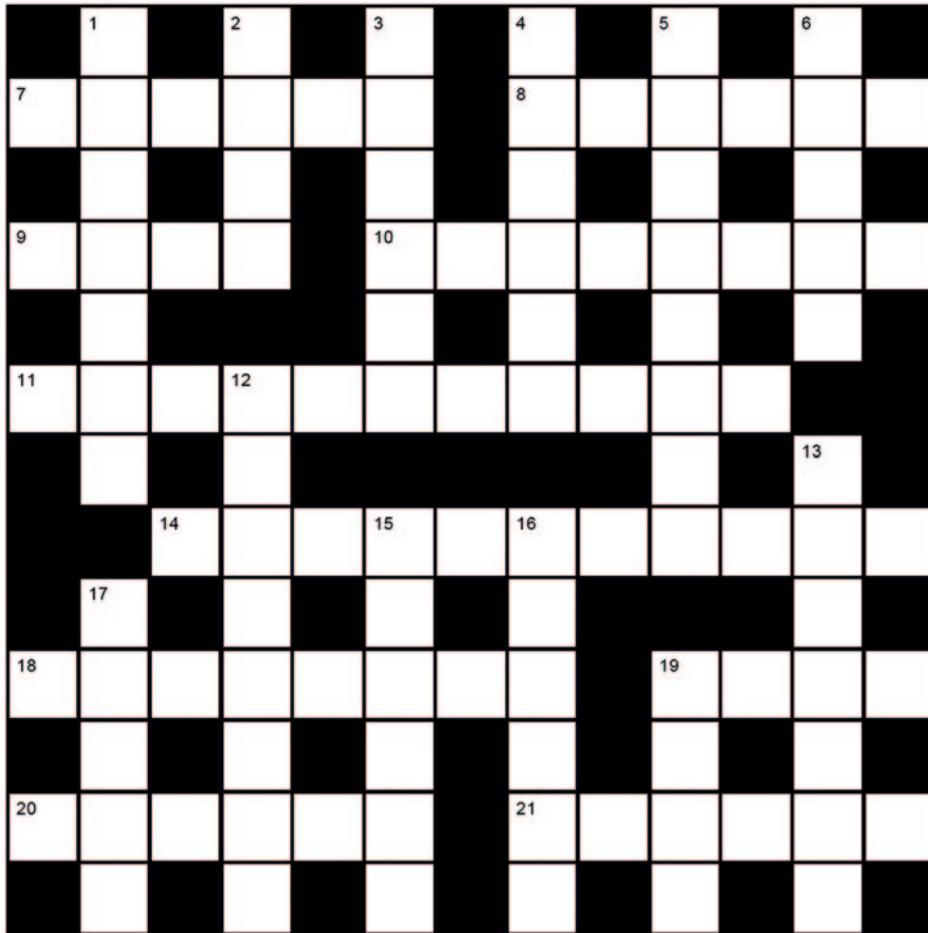
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# 03/19

# Prize Crossword



### Across

7. Powerful media types are so glum (6)
8. ABCDEFGHIJKLM, I see, could go like a bomb (6)
9. Number 1 or 3 on the rugby pitch (4)
10. Market town in County Derry, overlooked by Binevenagh (8)
11. Hal, I bring Mo to the sports car (11)
14. Toy dog (6, 5)
18. To pay out money, as from a fund (8)
19. Mats get turned over for the Dutch Centre Half (4)
20. North American mammals, related to the stink badger (6)
21. Co-author of 'The Communist Manifesto' (6)

### Down

1. African conflict - (1899-1902) (4,3)
2. Sheffield based band fronted by Jarvis Cocker (4)
3. He cares for the horses of guests at an inn (6)
4. Moderate heat or affection (6)
5. A memento for OMD? (8)
6. Member of world's third largest religious group (5)
12. State capital of Queensland (8)
13. Denizen of Haifa or Beersheeba (7)
15. Continuously annoy or pester (6)
16. "Just what I ..." The Cars (6)
17. Nictitations at Spurs (5)
19. A herb for the wise man (4)

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**19/20 Adelaide Road, Dublin D02 WA00**  
**to arrive not later than Friday, 12th December.**

**Name** .....

**Work Address** .....

**Union Branch** .....

### SOLUTIONS Prize Crossword 02/19

#### Across

7. Sierra; 8. Uranus; 9. Chin; 10. Theobold;  
 11. Cummerbunds; 14. Angioplasty; 18. Pamplona;  
 19. Ffos; 20. Apollo; 21. Macken.

#### Down

1. Lithium; 2. Bran; 3. Walter; 4. Bureau;  
 5. Cambodia; 6. Guilt; 12. Monopoly; 13. Strokes;  
 15. I Robot; 16. Plasma; 17. Zappa; 19. Face.