

PRISON OFFICERS'  
ASSOCIATION

# PRISON OFFICER

July 2014

# ANNUAL MASS 2014



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## ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

I am now inviting submissions to be included in the September Newsletter.

Any Member who wished to submit articles and photographs, please send submissions by Friday 29th August 2014 to [admin@poa.ie](mailto:admin@poa.ie)

**ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR THE  
SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER MUST  
BE SENT BY EMAIL TO  
[admin@poa.ie](mailto:admin@poa.ie)**

The 'Prison Officer' is published four times a year.

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Artwerk Ltd, 18 Alderwood Rise,  
Springfield, Dublin 24.  
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The 'Prison Officer' is published by The Prison Officers' Association, 18 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

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The views expressed in this magazine unless expressly stated, do not represent the views of the POA or the Editorial Board.

**Printed by:** Turner's Printing Company Limited, Longford.

Colleagues,

The theme of this year's Annual Delegate Conference was **"Protecting Prison Officers"** with good reason.

One year on from the Haddington Road negotiations there is a danger that the protection of members pay and allowances secured by those negotiations is beginning to fade from the memory of some. It bears reminding that the premium pay rates and Annualised Hours 1.8 rate were protected during those negotiations which have had the consequence of protecting members from further financial hardship in extremely challenging times. It is also worth mentioning that during those same negotiations the Public Services Committee of ICTU took the precaution of advising the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform that the staff side reserved the right to lodge a pay claim prior to the expiry of the agreement if it was felt by us that the economy could sustain such a claim.

The reality is that the only way that such a claim could be sustained is if exchequer borrowing drops below 3% of GDP. However if at least some of the reported economic trends are true then there may be a reasonable expectation that that at some stage in mid-2015 a claim for the commencement of the unwinding of the impositions placed upon us as Prison Officers and Public Servants could be lodged and sustained.

I refer you to the Pay and related matters section for a detailed update on progress on this matter.

A more basic example of the protection of Prison Officers was outlined by our President Stephen Delaney where he commented in his address to Annual Delegate Conference

**"This Complaints Procedure is not fair and balanced, particularly towards Prison Officers. A Complaints Procedure must be fair for all stakeholders including Prison Officers. We have rights and it cannot be right that in a particular instance following an investigation, where no case was found to answer by the Gardai, Prison Management or an Investigator, a further appeal for an investigation was initiated on foot of direction from the Inspector of Prisons. In this case we had to get our legal advisors involved and get this procedure stopped."**



Following this issue being highlighted at conference and the constant work being done on this matter the employer has agreed to a review on the process to take place bearing in mind our concerns on the process and particularly the ability of inmates to use the process to undermine our work at the coal face of the Justice System. Until this review is completed we have to remain vigilant and contact your local branch representative for advice on

how to proceed.

I refer you to Developments on Prisoner Complaints section in this magazine.

### **Annual Mass**

The Annual Mass which took place on the 24th April 2014 was again a great success mainly due to the numerous contributors including Fr. Ciaran Enright, The Pipe Band, Colour Party/Guard of Honour and the Midlands Prison Choir. Please refer to section on Annual Mass in this magazine. Sadly one member passed away since last year's Annual Mass which was Billy Collins Cork Prison. May he rest in peace.

### **Merit Award Policy**

It was agreed by the Merit Award Committee to review the Merit Award Policy after 12 months. Accordingly the Committee is now seeking observations on the operation of the policy in 2013 to date and suggestions on how the policy can be approved or the scope widened. If you wish to make a suggestion or have any observations please email the Committee **(by Friday 25th July 2014)** at: [meritaward@irishprisons.ie](mailto:meritaward@irishprisons.ie)

A perspective on the present merit policy could be taken from Brendan Doorhey's historical account on the page 64 of a Warder Doyle in Waterford Prison in 1922 who faced down an armed gunman and locked him between two gates while throwing the keys out through a broken window in order to ensure the gunman's capture. His award? The officer had "favourable record" entered on his conduct sheet by order of the General Prisons' Board on the 30th March 1922! No medals there.

## Short Notice Leave

The Short Notice Leave Scheme commenced on the 18th June 2014 for all staff. This initiative culminated from a pilot project in Limerick which was a great success. It is important to remember that this development arose from ongoing difficulties with Force Majeure leave and varying interpretations of what merited an FM being awarded and the POA raising the point that other sections of the Civil and Public Service were allowed to avail of short notice leave. While we recognise that we are different in many ways to other Public Servants due to our work we successfully argued that we should have access to something similar. However to retain this facility we would urge members to be prudent in their use as it is something that we wish to retain for us all and not just the favoured few who *always* had short notice leave!

## Website

I would like to thank ALL Members who access our website, traffic has certainly increased and this is a vital vehicle for the dissemination of information. To date 969

Members have signed up for email access and I would like this to increase. I encourage more Members to sign up by emailing [admin@poa.ie](mailto:admin@poa.ie) to access important information that you may not be aware of. It's disappointing that some Members complain about the lack of information while this service is readily available.

Finally members, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for reading this magazine. It is vital that information both Industrial Relations and Local News is disseminated to members to ensure an accurate account of how the Prison Officers' Association carries out its business and to remain strong and united in these challenging times. As we all know there are some hard times ahead of us as an organisation in these most challenging times of all for Trade Unions so I ask that members attend meetings, check notice boards, sign up for emails and check the POA Website. I would also like to thank Shirley, Bernadette, Teresa and Tom for all their assistance during the year. Their work is invaluable for the running of your organisation.

Paul Purcell Editor



## Developments on Pay and Related Matters December 2013 – June 2014

### **LRC Proposals Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2016 (The Haddington Road Agreement)**

On Thursday 5th December 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that there was a meeting of the Prison Service Sectoral group held on Monday 25th November 2013, at the IPS Dublin. This was the first meeting of the Prison Service Sectoral group held since the Haddington Road Agreement came into effect. The agenda for the Prison Service Sectoral group meeting and other documentation issued at the Sectoral Group meeting was issued in the executive file.

The National Executive Council was also informed that engagement with the Irish Prison Service and the Sectoral Chair had continued on a bilateral basis and that there were six meetings/engagements on the on-going Transformation Process/HRA that took place since the National Executive Council meeting held on Tuesday 19th November 2013. The dates, venues and issues dealt with at the six meetings/engagements were outlined in the Headquarters Report for the NEC meeting and the National Executive Council was briefed regarding the aforementioned meetings and the forthcoming schedule of meetings.

On Thursday 27th February 2014 the National Executive Council was informed that there were two meetings of the Prison Service Sectoral group held since the last National Executive Council meeting which was held on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th December 2013. These meetings were held on Monday 13th January and Monday 23rd February 2014 at the IPS Dublin. The agenda for the Prison Service Sectoral group meeting and other documentation issued at the Sectoral meetings were issued in the executive file.

The National Executive Council was informed that engagement with the Irish Prison Service and with the Sectoral Chair had continued on a bilateral basis and that there were twenty-three meetings/engagements on the on-going Transformation Process/HRA that took place since the National Executive Council meeting held on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th December 2013. The dates, venues and issues dealt with at the twenty-three meetings/engagements were outlined in the Headquarters Report for the NEC meeting and the National Executive Council was briefed regarding the aforementioned meetings and the forthcoming schedule of meetings.

On Wednesday 2nd April 2014 the National Executive Council was informed that there were no meetings of the Prison Service Sectoral group held since the last National Executive Council meeting which was held on Thursday 27th February 2014 and that the next Prison Service Sectoral group meeting was scheduled for Monday 7th April 2014 at the IPS Dublin. They were also informed that engagement with the Irish Prison Service and with the Sectoral Chair had continued on a bilateral basis and that there were twelve meetings/engagements on the on-going Transformation Process/HRA that took place since the National Executive Council meeting that took place on Thursday 27th February 2014. The dates, venues and issues dealt with at the twelve meetings/engagements were outlined in the Headquarters Report for the NEC meeting and the National Executive Council was briefed regarding the aforementioned meetings and the forthcoming schedule of meetings.

The National Executive Council meeting held on Wednesday 2nd April 2014 was the last National Executive Council meeting held prior to this year's Headquarters Report for Annual Conference going to print. At this point in time there had been one hundred and four meetings/engagements on the ongoing Transformation Process/HRA. The National Executive Council received further briefings on meetings/engagements on the on-going Transformation Process/HRA at the National Executive Council meeting on the Thursday 24th April 2014.

The first meeting of the National Executive Council held following Annual Delegate Conference May 2014, was held on Wednesday 11th June 2014. At this meeting the National Executive Council was informed that the AGM of the ICTU Public Services Committee was held on Wednesday 28th May 2014 at the Teachers' Club Parnell Square at 11.00hrs. The Agenda for the AGM, the Annual Report of the Secretary and the Accounts of the PSC were issued in the executive file.

The National Executive Council was informed that Unions represented at the ICTU Public Services Committee AGM were given a report on developments since the 2013 AGM. The Chairperson informed the Public Services Committee that the Committee had taken the precaution, in the course of the 2013 negotiations, of writing to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to reserve the right to lodge a

pay claim if conditions were judged to be capable of sustaining such a claim. As there were hopeful signs that such a possibility could arise in 2015, it was agreed that the officers of the Committee would meet with the affiliates to ascertain priorities over the coming months.

The National Executive Council was also informed on Wednesday 11th June 2014 that there was one meeting of the Prison Service Sectoral group held since the last National Executive Council meeting which was held on Thursday 24th April 2014. This meeting was held on Monday 19th May 2014 at the IPS Dublin. The agenda for the Prison Service Sectoral group meeting and other documentation circulated at the Sectoral meeting were issued in the executive file. The National Executive Council was informed that engagement with the Irish Prison Service and with the Sectoral Chair had continued on a bilateral basis and there were sixteen meetings/engagements on the on-going Transformation Process/HRA that had taken place since Thursday 24th April 2014. The National Executive Council was briefed regarding the aforementioned meetings and informed of the forthcoming schedule of meetings.

## Reports on other HRA related matters.

### REDUCED NEW RATES OF PAY FOR NEW ENTRANTS

On Thursday 5th December 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that the IPS sent correspondence to the Union that morning confirming that there is no 10% reduced pay scale in place for the Prison Officer grade, therefore when Officers receive their increments and move from the RPO grade it will be to the standard Prison Officer PPC scale. This correspondence was issued in the executive file.

On Thursday 27th February 2014, the National Executive Council was reminded that the IPS position on how this matter would be resolved for the RPO Grade was issued in the December 2013 executive file. The National Executive Council was also informed that DPER issued a Circular on the 30th January 2014 outlining how the Implementation of Clause 2.31 of the Haddington Road Agreement - revised pay scales and allowances for persons recruited to certain direct entry grades would be applied. This matter would have implications for members directly recruited to the PASO role should they remain on that career path.

### RENT ALLOWANCE FOR FUTURE NEW ENTRANTS

On Thursday 5th December 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that contact had been

maintained with SIPTU in particular regarding this matter as there will be further fire fighters in the Dublin Fire Brigade within a short timeframe who will not be in receipt of the rent allowance. The National Executive Council was informed that they would be kept updated on this issue.

On Thursday 27th February 2014, the National Executive Council was informed that contact has been maintained with SIPTU regarding the Official Sides decision to unilaterally remove the Rent Allowance for new entrants and this matter has been raised by the Union representatives to the oversight committee for the HRA. There was a meeting of the ICTU Public Services Committee held on Tuesday 21st January 2014 to consider the fact that the Official Side have abolished unilaterally for new entrants certain payments that are universal for the grades which therefore effectively imposes additional pay cuts on these new entrants. The Official Side refused to deal with this matter in the discussions on the unification of the 2010 and 2011 pay scales. The National Executive Council was updated on all matters relating to the Rent Allowance for new entrants and a copy of the correspondence forwarded from the Secretary of the ICTU Public Services Committee to DPER on this matter was issued in the executive file.

On Wednesday 2nd April 2014, the National Executive Council was informed that there has been a Labour Court Recommendation issued regarding the payment of the Rent Allowance to three full-time firefighters who work for Waterford City Council. The Labour Court Recommendation was issued 24th February 2014 and there was a copy of the LCR issued in the executive file. The National Executive Council was informed that this Labour Court Recommendation may have ramifications in respect of future entrants to the Irish Prison Service; they would be kept updated on this matter.

### ANNUAL LEAVE/DEFERRED INCREMENTS

On Thursday 5th December 2013, the National Executive Council was informed the HRA includes a number of sections under the general heading of 'Increments and Related Balancing Measures'. These provide for incremental freezes or suspensions for staff on various pay levels, including those who are on salaries (basic pay plus pensionable allowances) of between €5,000 and €65,000 per annum, which includes the majority of Prison Service staff.

Under Sections 2.24 and 2.25 there are special arrangements for staff who are on or near the maximum of their scales, since freezing or suspending increments will not affect them as much. For staff in the Prison Service the arrangements have been amended to include an

option of working an equivalent number of rest days rather than suffering a deduction of salary or annual leave. These arrangements are set out on a Draft form the IPS intends to use regarding the implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement. There was a copy of this Draft form issued in the executive file.

On Thursday 27th February 2014, the National Executive Council was informed that the Union forwarded correspondence to the IPS on Wednesday 22nd January 2014 and on Monday 10th February 2014 seeking clarification on numerous issues relating to Annual Leave/Deferred Increments provision of the HRA. The aforementioned POA correspondence and the response from the IPS was issued in the executive file.

## Summary Document on the Public Service Stability Agreement 2013 – 2016 (The Haddington Road Agreement including the full content of Appendix 1 the Irish Prison Service Sectoral Agreement)

There are nine Appendices to this Agreement outlining the different Collective Agreements in the different Sectors across the Public Service. Appendix 1 of the Haddington Road Agreement sets out the Irish Prison Service Collective Agreement as follows:

The Irish Prison Service must secure savings of €12.42 million attributable to measures agreed as an extension to the *Public Service Agreement 2010 2014*. These measures must ensure the maintenance of the Prison Service on a safe and secure basis within the constraints outlined in Chapter 4.1 of that Agreement.

To build on the progress already made, both in the Proposal for Organisational Change (PFOC) and the *Public Service Agreement*, and to achieve greater efficiencies and modernisation it will be necessary to examine the organisational, structural and operational arrangements of the IPS, and implement such changes as are necessary so that prisons can operate in the most effective (including cost effective) and efficient manner.

The changes to be implemented may include:

- Changes to the proportion of staff to be assigned to each of the current bands of Additional Hours so that ten per cent of prison staff who use additional hours be assigned to the zero hours band (Band 0); ten per cent be assigned to the 112 hours band (Band 1); ten per cent be assigned to the 240 hours band (Band 2);

and seventy per cent be assigned to the 360 hours band (Band 3). The reduction in hours usage will be removed from the AH budget.

- The rationalisation and consolidation of grades such that the grade of Chief Trades Officer 1 (Regional Manager) is terminated and the duties attached are subsumed within the existing management structure of the Building Services Division.
- The rationalisation and consolidation of grades such that the grade of Industrial Supervisor is terminated and the duties attached are subsumed within the revised supervisory structure of the prison work training regime.
- The introduction of a centralised detailing model such that the rostering and detailing of staff in all parts of the IPS is done remotely, and the requirement for specialist detailing staff in each prison and ancillary service of the IPS is reduced as far as possible.
- The alignment of Annual Leave of all grades in the Prison Service with the provisions of the relevant Circulars.
- A reduction in the expenditure on agency and locum healthcare staff, consequent on the staffing of this area in accordance with the agreed report on the task review.
- A reduction in the expenditure on trades contract staff and other maintenance contract services, consequent on the staffing of this area in accordance with the agreed report on the task review.
- The introduction of an automatic key and radio disbursement facility.
- The removal of all acting up allowances, with all vacancies arising to be filled through use of existing resources, including relief panels in line with the IPS internal competition procedure. Details of these arrangements are to be agreed between the parties.
- The pursuance of efficiencies across the Justice sector, including specifically video linking for court appearances, the introduction of electronic warrants, the closure of prison main gates after certain times, resolution of issues regarding Production Orders and Special Criminal Court warrants, and issues around the escorting of prisoners.
- The progression of Prison Administration and Support Officer (PASO) grade staff to other grades within the Prison Service as part of their career path options, details of which to be arranged between the parties.

- Develop/explore potential for one committal prison for Dublin.
  - Review operation of St. Patrick's Institution to sex offender/protection.
  - Review senior management attendance at weekends.
  - Review of the grade structures of the Irish Prison Service with a view to achieving a reduction in supervisory grades.
  - Extending PASO grades, for example, Medical Filing/Booked visits/Central Detail/Healthcare target of 50 over period of Agreement.
  - Pursuance of reform measures – eliminate grace periods/full implementation of campus structures to include unitary staffing.
- Twilight Payments 6.00pm – 8.00pm – Remains unchanged
  - Night Duty Allowance – Remains unchanged
  - Saturday Allowance – Remains unchanged
  - Sunday Allowance – Remains unchanged
  - Bank Holiday Allowance – Remains unchanged
  - Good Friday Allowance – Abolished as this is not a Public Holiday
  - The 10% pay cut introduced on RPOs will be rectified and reintegrated into their pay scales during their career – discussions to take place on implementation of ending this two-tier structure.

The savings generated by the implementation of these measures will be aggregated and included towards the achievement of the savings target set for the IPS. In the event that the necessary level of savings outlined above cannot be clearly identified by the end of this process it may be necessary to introduce changes to ensure the required level of savings is delivered. In the event that such proposals are tabled by either side any issues arising will be considered by the Parties for early resolution. Where agreement cannot be reached at this level the dispute resolution mechanism set out in the main civil service document will apply.

Nothing in this Agreement will be taken to imply anything beyond the terms of the Agreement.

This is the exact same Collective Agreement between the Prison Officers Association and the Irish Prison Service as was contained at Appendix 2 of the LRC Proposals for a Public Service Agreement 2013 – 2016 (Extension of the Croke Park Agreement) issued on 25th February 2013, which was accepted by the membership in the National Ballot counted by the Returning Officer on Tuesday 16th April 2013. Furthermore the improvements contained within the Haddington Road Agreement in respect of the Reinstatement of Pay to members earning pensionable pay over €5,000 will apply to POA members.

## Summary of the effects of the Haddington Road Agreement specific to members of the POA are as follows:

- Extra working hours – Non applicable due to our Additional Hours Contracts

## Summary of the effects of the pay and productivity measures matters applicable to all Public Servants contained within the Haddington Road Agreement, are as follows:

### HIGHER PAY (ADDITIONAL HOURS PAYMENTS NOT INCLUDED)

- For those with salaries of €5,000 and greater including allowances in the nature of pay, their total remuneration is reduced by 5.5% subject to not falling below €5,000 (To be Reinstated)
- Earnings including allowances in the nature of pay between €0,000 and €150,000 will be reduced by 8% (To be Reinstated)

### RESTORATION OF PAY

- Persons on salaries above €5,000 inclusive of allowance in the nature of pay to the max of Principal Officer higher scale or equivalent across the Public Service, subject to the reduction in pay will be restored to the pay rate that they would have had, but for the pay reduction, within a maximum of 18 months of the end of this three year Agreement. This restoration will be in two equal phases, the first after 9 months and the second 9 months later

### INCREMENTS

- Public servants who earn less than €5,000 a year will receive their next increment when it falls due and then wait 15 months rather than 12 before any following increment is paid. (3 month increment freeze)

- Public servants who earn between €5,000 and €5,000 will receive their next increment when it falls due, then wait 15 months rather than 12 before any following increment is paid, and then 15 months rather than 12 before any further increment is paid. (Two 3 month increment freezes)
- Where an employee's salary (inclusive of allowances in the nature of pay) surpasses €5,000 during the Agreement, a second incremental freeze of three months will apply, in accordance with the arrangements for those on salaries between €5,000 and €5,000, inclusive of allowances in the nature of pay outlined above.
- Public servants who earn between €5,000 and €5,000 a year, and who are now at the top of their scale, will forfeit six days leave, or the pay equivalent over the lifetime of the agreement (ie, before the end of 2016).

## PENSION LEVY

Legislation will be introduced to exempt more earnings from the Pension levy. This will be done by halving the 'pension levy' rate of 5% on earnings between €15,000 and €20,000.

## REDEPLOYMENT

The limit remains at 45 kilometers. The proposals would introduce some changes to procedures for the

redeployment of staff in the civil service and non-commercial semi-state bodies, and for cross-sectoral redeployments. Appeals procedures would remain in place but individuals who refuse an assignment to "a comparable role in the public service" would be subject to normal disciplinary procedures.

## ALLOWANCES

There is no significant change to the existing situation regarding allowances. The proposals commit unions and management to continue to cooperate with the Government's allowances review. It says the parties should take account of a recent Labour Court Recommendation on the issue with a view to reaching agreement on compensation in situations where pensionable allowances are eliminated in future.

## OUTSOURCING, AGENCY WORKERS AND CONSULTANCY COSTS

The proposals reaffirm the principles and procedures on outsourcing set out in the original Croke Park agreement. The proposals would establish a national procurement office to ensure compliance with the terms of the agreement. Should it be required, there will be a joint review of the outsourcing element of the original Croke Park agreement. The proposal notes union concerns about the use and cost of external consultants and says "it is expected that savings in consultancy contracts will be a key element of this programme."

## Paul Kennedy – Limerick Prison

I wish to thank my colleagues of the Prison Officers Association for the support and unending assistance they have given me over the last five years, In particular General Secretary John Clinton Deputy General Secretary Jim Mitchell and Mick Moloney Branch Chairman Limerick Prison .Their efforts on my behalf ensured that my name has been cleared and my reputation restored. I also wish to thank my colleagues at Limerick Prison who supported me during this period.

Yours sincerely  
Paul Kennedy



## Annual Mass 2014

The Annual Mass for deceased members and retired members of the Prison Service took place on Thursday 24th April 2014 at 8.15pm in St. Joseph's Church, Berkeley Road, Phibsboro. Once again it was a great success due to the professionalism of the Pipe Band, Guard of Honour and the Colour Party. I must also thank the management of Mountjoy Prison who laid on refreshments prior to the parade to the Church.

I must thank in particular the Mountjoy and Cloverhill combined Guard of Honour/Colour Party and the Pipe Band for their professionalism and expertise in making the Annual Mass the focus of so many serving and retired members who attend the Annual Mass year on year to pay tribute to the deceased members, retired members and their families. I would like to thank Mal O'Sullivan Mountjoy, Paul Brennan Arbour Hill, Kevin O'Neill, Pat Cosgrove (Pipe Band) and Paul Kellett Portlaoise/Cloverhill in organising the combined personnel from their Prisons to attend the Annual Mass.

The focus of the Annual Mass is to honour those serving, retired and family members who have sadly passed away in the last year. This year I was delighted that the

Midlands Prison Choir accepted my offer to attend the Annual Mass. They were excellent with their range of songs and hymns. I would like to thank Kevin Doyle for organising the choir and photographs of the Midlands Prison Choir are featured in this magazine.

Since last year's Annual Mass there has been one serving member who sadly passed away. This member was Billy Collins from Cork Prison. May he rest in peace.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who participated on the night including all of the aforementioned, retired members, serving members and in particular Prison Chaplain Fr.Ciaran Enright (Arbour Hill) who again contributed to a memorable Mass.

The weather on the night was sunny and warm. It was great to see some a large crowd in particular the many retired members and local residents who came out to see the Colour Party, Pipe Band and the Guard of Honour. As the names of our departed members, retired members and relatives were read out by Mr. Stephen Delaney President Prison Officers' Association a candle was placed in front of the altar in memory of those who passed away since last year's Annual Mass. The sight of these candles is a reminder of those who have passed away since last year's Mass but are not forgotten.

# ANNUAL MASS





## Address by Stephen Delaney, President, Prison Officers' Association, Annual Delegate Conference 8th May 2014.

### Welcome

- Mayor Marcella McGarry
- Our invited guests from sister associations
- Our Service Providers
- Our invited guests from the National media
- Céad Míle Fáilte to you all

### Speech 2014

Minister Alan Shatter had agreed to attend and address our Conference. Events emerged yesterday which has led to his resignation. We currently await the announcement of the new Minister and following his/her appointment we will be requesting a meeting so that we can highlight the very challenging issues confronting our members and the Prison Service. We very specifically want to meet the Minister to raise our serious concerns about the Prisoner Complaints Procedures operating in the Prison Service. This procedure is weighted to favour the complainant and we are very unhappy about this. More about this later.

Delegates, the past year has been very challenging for the Union. Since our last Conference much time and effort has been devoted to the negotiations; which eventually led to the acceptance and implementation of the Haddington Road

Agreement. The reasons we accepted such an agreement was that arising from cost savings of 12.4 million for the Prison Service we could and did protect our pay from further cuts while also restoring the 10 per cent reduction in pay for new entrants. Constant engagement has taken place with the Irish Prison Service on all aspects of this agreement and while its been very demanding; I want to acknowledge the contribution of our members for their patience and understanding in implementing difficult measures.

Your contribution and leadership as local representatives has been essential. Indeed it is indicative of our overall performance that through all the changes which have been implemented, we have had little recourse for third parties.

### What Next

This country, by all accounts, is well on the road to recovery. The DPER have confirmed that over 1 billion savings will be achieved from the payroll during the lifetime of this agreement. The ESRI is forecasting growth of between 3 and 4 percent over the next two years. Over 40 per cent of private sector firms have negotiated pay increases. Various Ministers have suggested possible tax cuts in the very near future.

We as Prison Officers have paid our dues and we have made a very significant contribution to the national recovery. We have taken huge pay cuts and this has placed a very heavy burden on us as individuals and more especially on our families.

Let's hope our new Minister will recognise the input from Prison Officers and their families and we are not forgotten.

It is only right and to be expected that the Government now honour previous commitments made to restore the pay for hard pressed workers, which include Prison Officers. We read about this most welcome and continuing recovery on a daily basis and I want to assure our members here today that the Prison Officers' Association will pursue all avenues necessary and open to us to restore our pay entitlements, which have been denied to us in recent years. The economic crisis is over we are told; so let's now have our pay cuts restored.

### Last twelve Months

For so long delegates, we Prison Officers have had no recognition either inside or outside prison walls for the job we do on behalf of the state. This is something we have long campaigned for and we are now pleased to have the introduction and rollout of the Merit Award Scheme, as it provides for the recognition of Staff on completion of long service or indeed when they perform acts or deeds, which would be described above and beyond the call of duty.

We as a Union have engaged constructively with the Irish Prison Service and made progress on many issues and policies directly affecting our members. However, there are regrettably some serious issues, which have to be addressed.

Last year the then Minister announced the introduction of a Complaints Procedure for Prisoners. We supported this initiative in principle.

However, over the past twelve months there have been numerous complaints issued against staff with 94 per cent of the complaints having no case to answer. This

Complaints Procedure is not fair and balanced, particularly towards Prison Officers. A Complaints Procedure must be fair for all stakeholders including Prison Officers.

We have rights and it cannot be right that in a particular instance following an investigation, where no case was found to answer by either the Gardai, Prison Management or an Investigator, a further appeal for an investigation was initiated on foot of direction from the Inspector of Prisons. In this case we had to get our legal advisors involved and get this procedure stopped.

In another case video evidence was viewed by a senior manager which exonerated an Officer completely, yet that same senior manager because of these procedures, had to request that a full investigation be carried out into the alleged incident. Where is the fairness for the Officer concerned, the logic or the rational for the consequential cost to the taxpayer?

That Officer is here in this hall today and I want to congratulate you on your professionalism during this difficult time and I want to assure you of our continued support regarding this issue. In this case, this Officer has not yet been given the full file and is not in a position to pursue the vexatious nature of the allegation.

How can an Officer ascertain if a complaint was vexatious if they are not issued with the complete findings? When a complaint is found to be vexatious in nature Management should support the Officer and the complainant should be subject to disciplinary rules of the Prison. In such instances the complainant should be pursued through the judicial system. An Officers job or career prospects could be in jeopardy. All we want is fairness and support from Management in doing our job properly.

## Prison Life Today

All of you will be aware that the Report on the tragic death of Gary Douche while in

prison was published last week. The report stated, "The Commission recognises also that the Prison system is frequently overwhelmed and under - resourced".

Delegates, what has changed since 2006. Thankfully overcrowding has been tackled in the main penal institutions like Mountjoy. However we still have significant overcrowding in both women's prisons, Dochas and Limerick – while Castlerea and Cork currently operate beyond bed capacity.

In 2007 a year after Gary Douche died there were 3,200 prisoners in custody. Today that figure has increased to 4,065, an increase of over 20 per cent. Coupled with this, there are currently 688 on temporary release and 545 on trial or remand. This makes the total number in the penal system 4,888.

This is a massive increase in prisoner numbers compared to a total daily average of 3,321 in custody in 2007. With contracting resources there simply isn't the capacity to cater for such increasing numbers in custody. Where does this level of increase in occupancy take us – it just can't continue without planning at management level and a review of facilities and resources.

The Incentivised Regime Programme is an example of a good programme poorly administered. This scheme as currently operated in certain institutions, is merely a paper exercise for over worked class officers and is doomed for failure, unless a coherent approach is taken by local management in these locations.

Violent and disruptive prisoners have to be managed better within the prison estate. Assaults on staff continue, only last week in Mountjoy there were three separate incidents of assault, two Officers had boiling water thrown over them, another was struck viciously about the head and the other had a blood spillage smeared over his face. Only last Monday an Officer was bitten by a prisoner which required the Officer to have hospital treatment. Where else in the State is this type of behaviour a feature of a worker's daily life.

It was regrettable but necessary that

the assistance of the Health and Safety Authority was required arising from management's failure to deal with violent inmates within the Wheatfield Complex.

The fact is Delegates, that Risk Assessments and the implementation of Diminishing Task Lines are a key feature of prison life for both management and staff in most prisons today. The Safety Management System has been devised and rolled out.

Local managers must be instructed that there is a requirement to only carry out tasks where there is sufficient manpower to do the job in a safe environment. All stakeholders, including those in custody, should be aware you can only cut your coat according to your cloth.

Delegates, there is also an enormous task ahead with regard to creating a workplace where staff are treated with dignity and respect and are valued as employees. This work continues but it must be made clear that local managers must support and ensure the success of the Dignity at Work Initiative as Dignity at Work is not an optional extra, but a basic entitlement for all staff who do such a difficult job on behalf of State.

Even for Portlaoise Prison, the highest security prison in Europe, there is a proposal to withdraw the Environmental Allowance for staff within. It is not because the subversive prisoners have gone away, it is because the prison numbers have increased to include the most dangerous criminal underworld within the state.

Delegates, in particular for those in Portlaoise, I can assure you that we have and will continue to provide all the necessary resources to oppose such derisory and unnecessary actions of the state.

Delegates, all of the above issues have led to an environment where the Officer is hamstrung in doing his duties in an effective and rehabilitative way. He is no longer the most important person in the operation of the prison. The system is balanced in favour of the inmate. We have to pull it back and give the Officer the capacity and the ability to create an

environment where good behaviour is rewarded and bad behaviour is properly addressed, thereby creating a positive working atmosphere for staff.

## Where next

In terms of funding and recruitment it is essential that the Prison Service is supported sufficiently. The Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest should be discarded for the long term prospects of the Prison Service. Politicians see no votes in prisons but they should realise that without investment in our Prison Service; we will all pay a much higher societal price in the short and long term. You can only generate so much by way of efficiencies before you destroy the very fabric of the service we are supposedly developing.

## Conclusion

Delegates the theme of our Conference this year is as it was last year "Protecting Prison Officers".

Bearing in mind the circumstances I hope that you share our view that we have managed to protect Prison Officers pay and conditions. Next year will be as equally challenging for the Union; for all of us. I have no doubt we will again experience a massive shortage of funding, despite the recovery which is more than evident. The public service and the public servant will continue to pay a high price for the failings and recklessness of others.

Delegates, we will not become complacent and together we will tackle the major issues which are on the horizon such as:-

- Regaining lost ground in terms of our pay.
- The pursuance of career development and promotional opportunities for staff; in particular we will ensure provision of career opportunities for all PASO Grades.
- We will pursue the retention of the Rent Allowance and Pension arrangements for new recruits.

Finally delegates to quote Gandhi "strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will". With your assistance and support delegates we can and we will succeed.

We have a lot to do, let's get to work.

Thank You

## Short Notice Leave

You can avail of such leave on up to 3 occasions during the leave year, provided that you have the leave to take.

The Short Notice Leave scheme (SNL) is to cater for situations where you are unable to attend work for reasons which were not foreseeable. This scheme is not intended to replace the existing mechanisms for availing of leave or scheduling attendance and is only for **unforeseen situations**.

- Short Notice Leave cannot be taken on consecutive days
- Short Notice Leave cannot be taken immediately prior to or directly after a Self-Certified Sick Leave absence
- Short Notice Leave cannot be taken directly after Certified Sick Leave
- *Saturdays or other restrictions to be agreed at local level*

**In order to avail of an SNL day you must contact the Detail Office between 8.00am and 8.45am, or 1pm if on Night Duty.**

- The Scheme will be overseen by the HR Governor and the local branch of the Prison Officers' Association.
- The Operation of the Scheme in each location will be monitored by the Governor and will be reviewed nationally in November 2014.

## REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE & MOTIONS TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014 IN THE RADISSON HOTEL, SLIGO

ON THURSDAY 8th & FRIDAY 9th MAY 2014

### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO CONFERENCE 2014

Under Rule 117 of the Prison Officers Association Constitution, the National Executive Council for the purpose of setting the order of business for the Annual Conference shall appoint a Standing Orders Committee annually. The Standing Orders Committee shall consist of the President Stephen Delaney, Information Officer Paul Purcell and two other National Executive Council Members, Chairperson, Alan Holbrook and Derek Hynes who shall work together with the General Secretary John Clinton and the Deputy General Secretary Jim Mitchell.

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1

VENUE: Radisson Hotel, Sligo  
DATES: Thursday 8th May and Friday 9th May 2014

#### THURSDAY 8th May 2014

9.45 am Registration  
10.00 am Opening Addresses/Guest Speakers  
11.15 am Tea/Coffee  
11.30 am Conference Business  
1.00 pm Lunch  
2.00 pm Conference Business  
3.15 pm Tea/Coffee  
3.30 pm Conference Business  
5.00 pm Conference Adjourns

#### FRIDAY 9th May 2014

10.00 am Conference Business  
11.15 am Tea/Coffee  
11.30 am Conference Business  
1.00 pm Lunch  
2.00 pm Conference Business  
3.15 pm Tea/Coffee  
3.30 pm Conference Business  
5.00 pm Conference Concludes

Fraternal Greetings from invited guests will be given at various times during conference.

**Note: The above times are exact times. Delegates are asked to be present at all times as outlined above.**

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2

In accordance with Rule 117 (c) of the Prison Officers' Association Constitution 2009 version, the following Provisions shall apply for Annual Delegate Conference 8th and 9th May 2014.

1. All powers for the conduct of the Annual Delegate Conference are invested in the Chairman / or persons acting in that capacity.
2. The Proposer of a Motion or an Amendment may speak for 3 minutes but not more than three minutes.
3. A Delegate speaking on a Motion or an Amendment must not exceed 3 minutes.
4. The Proposer of a Motion or an Amendment may speak a second time for 3 minutes before a vote is taken but no other Delegate may speak for a second time on the Motion or Amendment.
5. The Chairman may at any time, if he considers the matter sufficiently discussed, call on the Proposer for a reply and when this has been given, a vote must be taken.
6. A Delegate may, with the consent of the Chairman move "that the question be put" after which, when the Proposer has spoken, a vote must be taken.
7. A Delegate who refuses to abide by a decision of the Chairman or who is found to be in contravention of

Standing Orders shall be suspended for the duration of the Conference.

8. All motions for withdrawal or Special Notice Motions should be notified in writing to the Standing Orders Committee, who will advise the Conference on any other matter.

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 3

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that following the opening addresses to Annual Delegate Conference on Thursday 8th May 2014 that Sections 2 to 5 of the Headquarters Report the headings from Pay & Allowances to National Monitoring and Review/PFOC be dealt with and that Motions Nos. 1 to 12 be dealt with.

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 4

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that Sections 6 to 18 of the Headquarters Report the headings from Prisoners Complaints Procedures to Merit Awards be dealt with at 2.00 pm, Thursday 8th May 2014 and that Motions 13 to 18 be dealt with. The General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and the two Assistant General Secretaries will give their Annual reports to Annual Delegate Conference as provide for in the Independent Consultants Report 2009 during this session of conference.

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 5

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that Sections 19 to 29 of the Headquarters Report, the headings from Health Screening Programme to Union Training and Education be dealt with at 3.30 pm, Thursday 8th May 2014 and that Motion No. 19 be dealt with.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 6**

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that Sections 30 to 33 of the Headquarters Report the Finance Sections, be dealt with at 10.00 am, Friday 9th May 2014.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 7**

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that Sections 34 and 35 of the Headquarters Report the Headings of Civil Service Charities and Third World Funds and Report of the National Executive Council be dealt with at 11.30 am, Friday 9th May 2014 and that Motions Nos. 20 to 25 be dealt with.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 8**

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that Sections 36 to 38 of the Headquarters Report the Headings from Public Services Committee to General Council be dealt with at 2.00 pm on Friday 9th May 2014 and on that on Conclusion of these sections adoption of the Headquarters Report to Annual Delegate Conference 2014 will be sought

## **PRISON OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION MOTIONS TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014**

### **PAY AND ALLOWANCES**

**Motion 1:** That each member's yearly allocation of annualised hours be equally spread over the 26 pay periods.

**Explanation:** The equal distribution of payment of annualised hours provide staff with a more predictable and reliable income. This will prevent salaries from straying into higher tax and levy brackets during pay periods of high additional hours working and also prevent staff from enduring financial difficulties during pay periods of low additional hours working, such as holidays. This system would also create efficiencies in the payment systems

for both local detail offices and the central pay section in Killarney as only A/H unauthorised absences would have to be submitted and wages changed accordingly."

**MIDLANDS / CASTLEREA — Decision: Defeated**

**Motion 2:** That the POA actively seek through ICTU to put pressure on the Government to re engage in a National wage agreement as the Government reneged on the previous National wage agreement (towards 2016)

**CLOVERHILL — Decision: Carried**

**Motion 3:** That the POA in conjunction with the ICTU public service committee seek to have the pension levy removed from Public Sector Workers.

**Explanation:** This levy was brought in in 2009 as an emergency measure and only applies to public / civil servants. As we have now exited the bailout program, this levy should now be removed.

**CLOVERHILL — Decision: Carried**

**Motion 4:** That the POA seek an immediate reduction in the USC as the country has now exited the bailout Program.

**CLOVERHILL — Decision: Carried**

**Motion 5:** The end of year premium payment be paid at either the end of November or the end of January.

**Explanation:** To avoid the payment being lost in taxation

**CASTLEREA — Decision: Withdrawn**

**Motion 6:** I wish to propose the following motion for Conference. That Nurse Officers have their Nurse Officer Allowance incorporated into their basic pay in line with recent charges with regard to Work Training Officers.

**Explanation:** In line with the Irish Prison Service Healthcare Standards Nurse Officers as part of their role deliver health education and health promotion to prisoners as part of defined objectives within this framework. As such they are closely aligned especially to the former

gym officers with regard to the work training of lifestyle advice they deliver.

**SHELTON ABBEY — Decision: Carried**

## **CONSTITUTION**

**Motion 7: The Training Unit propose the POA Constitution Rule 14 be altered from: RULE 14**

Each Branch Committee shall select two delegates to represent it at the Annual Conference or at any Special Delegate Conference. Where a Branch has more than 30 Members, the Branch Committee shall select 1 additional delegate for each additional 30 Members subject to a maximum of 9 delegates. All delegates shall be Members of the Branch Committee and shall be selected in the following order; firstly the chairperson; secondly the Secretary; and thereafter any other Branch Committee Member.

To:

Each Branch Committee shall select three delegates to represent it at the Annual Conference or at any Special Delegate Conference. Where a Branch has more than 30 Members, the Branch Committee shall select 1 additional delegate for each additional 30 Members subject to a maximum of 9 delegates. All delegates shall be Members of the Branch Committee and shall be selected in the following order; firstly the chairperson; secondly the Secretary; and thereafter any other Branch Committee Member.

**Explanation:** Since the Training Unit is now operating under Transformation numbers, the members can currently be represented by the Chairperson and the Secretary at Conference or a Special Delegate Conference. Operating traditionally from an open mandate from the Branch members, there could be a difference of opinion on any motion causing the Chairperson's vote to be used as the deciding factor. This is viewed as undemocratic and in the interests of democracy a third person voting would allow a purely democratic decision be achieved.

**TRAINING UNIT — Decision: Carried**

## Motion 8: Amend Rule 112 of the POA Constitution 2009 Version

### Current Rule

#### RULE 112

The National Executive Council shall cause the books of the Association and the names of Members to be available for inspection by any Member or person having an interest in the funds of the Association at all reasonable hours at the registered Office or at any place where the books are kept.

#### To be amended to read:

#### RULE 112

The National Executive Council shall cause the books of the Association to be available for inspection by any Member or person having an interest in the funds of the Association at all reasonable hours at the registered Office or at any place where the books are kept.

**Explanation:** The amended Rule removes the wording "and the names of Members" as under Data Protection Legislation, being a member of a Trade Union is sensitive data and as such, other members are not entitled to know if someone is a member of a union. It is necessary to amend Rule 112 in this manner to comply with the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003 in relation to the protection of privacy of individuals with regard to personal data.

**NEC — Decision: Carried**

## PENSIONS

**Motion 9:** POA seek to have the annualised hours reckonable for pension purposes.

**Explanation:** As annualised hours are liable to pension levy deductions they should be eligible for pension.

**CASTLEREA — Decision: Carried**

## NATIONAL MONITORING & REVIEW / PFOC

**Motion 10:** In light of the current transfer policy being changed I propose that all transfers and appointments be allocated a 240hrs band. This is a change to the current policy where an officer who

transfers goes on 112hrs and an appointed W.T.O. goes on his/her relevant band i.e. 360 goes on 360.

**Explanation:** It is stopping our members who have been waiting for a number of years being able to transfer as you now have to transfer with a pay cut. The new procedure would be a more equal representation of all our members.

**WHEATFIELD — Decision: Withdrawn**

**Motion 11:** In light of the new transfer policy i.e. members transferring mid quarter are reduced bands and cannot fulfil the rest of the Add hrs in that particular quarter that the Association strive to implement that members transfer only at the start of quarters and not mid quarter.

**Explanation:** Members who currently transfer mid quarter are not entitled to fulfil their remaining prison in that quarter (write offs).

**WHEATFIELD — Decision: Withdrawn**

**Motion 12:** An equalisation of contribution of hours across the Dublin Institutions to be given to PSEC on a daily basis when a shortfall occurs.

**Explanation:** There is an over reliance of a contribution of staff from Cloverhill which is unsustainable.

**CLOVERHILL — Decision: Defeated**

## PRISONER COMPLAINTS

**Motion 13:** That a comprehensive training course is put in place to ensure that all Branch Members are familiar with the new Category A complaints procedures and protocols.

**Explanation:** This is a new area for all branch members and it must be ensured that they are trained in correct procedures in the case they are representing a member locally.

**CLOVERHILL — Decision: Carried**

**Motion 14:** The POA seek to have legal representation for staff at Category A Complaint interviews,

**Explanation:** Due to the serious

consequences of a damning report (i.e. potential dismissal etc.) that staff have access to a solicitor when the interview takes place.

**CASTLEREA — Decision: Withdrawn**

## Motion 15: Prisoner Complaints

That the POA impress upon the Minister for Justice to use any and all means at his disposal to address the current situation where large number of complaints against Officers are found, by independent investigators, to be unfounded yet in no instance to date has a prisoner been charged with making a vexatious complaint.

This situation has serious repercussions for Prison Officers everywhere where prisoners can make allegations without fear of sanction and use this gap in the system to have Officers removed from areas of responsibility as well as placing their careers and livelihoods at risk. This in turn has created a crisis in confidence in the rules and regulations as they currently apply which in turn creates a difficulty in the application of law and order in our places of work.

**Explanation:** It cannot be taken as an acceptable position by the POA that no level of prisoner complaints are deemed to be vexatious. While it is accepted in some cases it may be very difficult to find that a complaint was vexatious in nature there are clearly other examples where it is easy to verify that a complaint was vexatious. A clear example of this is where a prisoner makes a complaint that they were sexually assaulted by staff, this can be medically verified. Yet where this has happened in the past and it was clear that prison staff did not act in any inappropriate way, sufficient action was not taken against the complainant.

**NEC — Decision: Carried**

## HEALTH & SAFETY

**Motion 16:** That the POA campaign for the legal and proper implementation of the smoking policy i.e. it is prohibited to smoke

in any prison in Ireland except in designated area. At present IPS have completely ignored the legislation and in doing are jeopardising the health of staff and population alike.

**WHEATFIELD** — **Decision: Withdrawn**

## UNIFORM

**Motion 17:** That the POA again revisit the uniform issue. The present issue is substandard and needed to be changed.

**WHEATFIELD** — **Decision: Withdrawn**

## DIARY

**Motion 18:** The paper edition of the Prison Officer Magazine is changed to paperless and becomes an e magazine.

**Explanation:** The majority of POA members have email access. The cost of printing magazines and diaries is approximately €8,000 annually. The transfer from paper to paperless will assist in the reduction of costs incurred on the membership subscriptions.

**LIMERICK** — **Decision: Defer to NEC**

## COMPETITIONS

**Motion 19:** That the POA seek outside impartial professions body/bodies to run all promotion related competition in the Irish Prison Service. The recent debacle of the WTO competition showed that Irish Prison Service are inept at facilitating these competitions.

**WHEATFIELD** — **Decision: Carried**

## POLICY

**Motion 20:** That a definitive career path is put in place for PASO grade staff that wish to carry on in this grade and for those that wish to become Prison Officers that they are giving first options on the next competition ahead of a public run competition.

**Explanation:** Prior to taking up employment with IPS the PASO's were giving paperwork suggesting that "may be considered for the position of Prison

Officers at future competitions". This motion will give clarity and a definitive career path for the PASO.

**CLOVERHILL / LIMERICK** — **Decision: Carried**

**Motion 21:** That all hospital escorts be manned by three staff.

**CORK** — **Decision: Defer to NEC**

**Motion 22:** I propose that any officer required to do any form of drug testing, with regard to prisoners, receive formal training.

**Explanation:** The integrity of the drug test could be challenged by the prisoner due to lack of training for the officer.

**WHEATFIELD** — **Decision: Carried**

**Motion 23:** PASOs who originally were recruited from the RPO panel, once recruitment recommences are contacted immediately and given the option of filling the position ahead of other applicants.

**LIMERICK** — **Decision: Withdrawn**

**Motion 24:** Interested PASOs would be able to access HCCP, RPO course.

**LIMERICK** — **Decision: Carried**

### **Motion 25: Renaming of St. Patrick's Institution**

That the POA actively pursue a name change for St. Patrick's Institution so that the buildings in the grounds of what was known as St. Patrick's Institution from 1956 up until the present Government's announcement to close St. Patrick's Institution in July 2013 are renamed collectively as a unit with an appropriate name due to the historical context of the buildings.

**Explanation:** The buildings on the St. Patrick's site, Mountjoy Complex date back to 1858 becoming the Mountjoy Female Convict Prison as it was then named. The prison was originally built to replace Cork Female Prison and housed female prisoners on the site until 27th December 1999 when the female prisoners that were housed there were transferred to the Dochas

Centre following 141 years of service. Of particular historical interest is the fact that during the years from 1916 to 1923 many female prisoners whom where members of Cumann na mBan were imprisoned on this site and as we all know Irish women played a very important part in Ireland's fight for freedom.

The stained glass window in the Chapel is dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and was donated by Mrs. Ellen Humphreys, 36 Aylesbury Road, Ballsbridge in her memory. Mrs. Humphreys was born in Ballylonford, Co. Kerry about 1876 and was a sister of the O'Rahilly, one of the founders of The Volunteers in 1913. He was killed by a British Sniper near Moore Street on the 28th April 1916, during the 1916 Rising. Mrs. Humphreys was arrested after the Rising and was imprisoned in Mountjoy from the 9th to the 16th May 1916. She was interned in Mounjoy from the 3rd November 1922 until August 1923. Her daughter Sheila, sons, Richard and Emmet and her sister in lawn, Madame O'Rahilly were all interned at Mountjoy with her. The window was produced by the famous Harry Clarke studios, 6/7 North Frederick Street, Dublin and cost £460. Mrs. Humphreys died on 8th June 1939 and did not live to see the window blessed on the afternoon of Sunday 15th October 1939. It replaced a window damaged by rifle fire during the Civil War. It was repaired in 1960 at a cost of £255.

With the centenary of the 1916 rising approaching, the POA believe it would be fitting that the buildings be renamed with some connection to the woman of Cumann na mBan. Some suggestions with regard to the renaming of the buildings: Ard Craobh Unit (the first branch of Cumann na mBan was named the Ard Craobh and held its meetings in Brunswick Street before and after the Easter Rising).

St. Leonard Unit (St. Leonard of Noblac was the Patron Saint of Political Prisoners, Prisoners of War).

Countess Markievicz Unit (Countess Markievicz was the President of Cumann na mBan, April 1916)

**NEC** — **Decision: Carried**



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# The Irish Prison Service Pipe Band



### Your Band

The 'Irish Prison Service Pipe Band', your Band, was born in 1992. It was brainchild of our Band Chairman, Pat Cosgrove, a serving Prison Officer. Through all the changes our job has seen over the last 23 years, the Pipe Band's commitment to displaying your pride and professionalism for the benefit of those who see us is constant. Ever since our first steps on St Patrick's Day in Enfield, County Meath, we have enjoyed the honour of representing the Irish Prison Officer both at home and abroad.

Over the years we have played in many Irish cities and large towns, and at many official engagements. We have regular gigs which we attend every year, and play selected individual events as they arise. In 2010 we finally achieved our dream of playing in all four provinces. At the invitation of our colleagues in the Northern Ireland Prison Service Pipe Band, we played in Ulster. This was an honour and a joy not conceivable up until then, thanks again to them for such a wonderful memory.

We have made numerous foreign trips, joining St Patrick's Day Parades abroad. We have gone to Manchester twice, New York twice, Boston, Dillingen twice, Munich, London, and this year we won 'Best Marching Band' in Birmingham. Our trip to Boston in 2008 even took in a Jewish Wedding. In London in 2012, after the St Patrick's Day Parade, we raised the roof of 'New Scotland Yard's' local pub, playing sets with 'The Emerald Society Pipe Band' and

their guests 'The Flanders Memorial Pipe Band'. The London Emerald Society's Pipe Band members are Officers of the London Metropolitan Police, many of whom enjoy Irish ancestry.

Always, the image of the Officer and The Service is foremost, earning us the respect and gratitude of those that have seen us and met us. We often bring our partners, children and friends with us on our trips, both national and international. With Kevin O'Neill and John Dooley providing the entertainment in the evenings, we often continue to share 'the craic' and the odd pint until late.

We often play at official, IPS functions and events, such as the 2013 rededication of our Training Centre, 'Stack House'. Every year we take part in the Easter Sunday Parade in Naas, County Kildare, and the Annual Mass for Deceased Members, marching from Mountjoy Prison to St Joseph's Church, Berkeley Road. We regularly combine our public appearances with Irish Prison Service Guards of Honour, more often from Mountjoy and Cloverhill, but also with Wheatfield and Portlaoise. At a more local level, we play at Service Medal Ceremonies, Service members' retirements as requested, and occasionally at weddings. Sadly, our pipers have also been asked to play at the funerals of prematurely deceased colleagues, may they rest in peace.

Your Bandsmen and Bandswomen are drawn from all facets of the Service. Membership is open to everyone working in

or connected with the Irish Prison Service, anywhere in Ireland. We are based in Wheatfield Place of Detention, where we hold practice in the Waiting Room every Thursday night from 8 to 10. Our instruments are the Bagpipes, Snare Drum, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum and Bugle. We also have a Drum Major (out front with the big Mace). Tuition is provided, instruments and uniform though provided are the property of the Band. Anyone wishing to 'check us out' is welcome to attend, without obligation.

Your Band is funded by voluntary staff contributions and an annual grant from the Irish Prison Service. As with all small organisations, finance has become an issue. Increased pressure on IPS budgets, the strain on Officers' personal finances and increased costs are all concerns, but we also require more members. We need your help.

### How can you help Your Band?

**Associate Membership.** Help support your band by contributing one euro per cheque. If enough staff contribute, the financial burden of running this valuable asset will be greatly eased.

**Membership.** Become a Bandsman. Joining the Band gives you an opportunity to learn an instrument, and share in the joy of playing that instrument with the Irish Prison Service Pipe Band with pride, pomp and ceremony.

**Other Supports.** You may perform some function, within or outside the Service, which may help or be of benefit to Your Band. If so, and you see an opportunity, please consider contributing your support in that way. Remember, we are volunteers, you may have influence or expertise which Your Band could benefit from.

JD O'Connor

Secretary Irish Prison Service Pipe Band





## Birmingham City UK Saint Patrick's Day Parade 2014



The Irish Prison Service Pipe Band march from the start point at Camp Hill onto Digbeth Street where an estimated turnout of up to 90,000 people lined the streets, the Birmingham Parade is the third biggest Saint Patrick's Day parade in the World.



At the end of the Parade it is a tradition for all Pipe Bands in the Parade to mass together and form into one Band to perform a set of tunes.



Right: Governor Colm Bartley and wife on the V.I.P bus leading the parade with Miss Anne Tighe, parade organiser.



Pipe Major Mick Deegan, Pipe Sergeant Patrick Cosgrove and Governor Colm Bartley accept the overall best marching Band award presented by the Lord Mayor Mike Reedy and his wife the Mayoress of Birmingham



The Band reaches the half-way point.



Governor Colm Bartley presents the Lord Mayor with a presentation from the Irish Prison Service Pipe Band



On the 15th May 2014 Cloverhill Prison honoured the Long service of their staff in both the presentation of 21 & 30 year medals as well as the awarding of 4 Merit Awards to staff for their contribution to the service.

In total there was 16 members of staff awarded their 21 year service medal and 4 staff were awarded the 30 year medal. The combination of both the Long Service and the Merit Awards resulted in an extremely successful night with nothing but compliments from all involved in the evening.

Families in attendance were invited to take a guided tour of the prison and several of our escort vehicles were on display for them to view.

Recognition must be afforded to local Governors and many Officers for their

huge contribution of time and experience in making the evening special for all staff and their families. The hidden skill sets of some staff was impressive. The WTO staff of the kitchen must be extra commended for the very high standard of food served up on the evening under the guidance of Richard Fleming and to the staff who served the meal with such professionalism.

POA President Stephen Delaney and Information Officer Paul Purcell were in attendance and remarked how well the entire evening had been put together and the recognition that staff deserved.

Director General Michael Donnellan was in attendance along with personnel from IPS and he commented to me on the professionalism and success of the evening.

All staff involved in the evening should be proud of their contribution to a very successful night because if it was not for the goodwill of many staff which generally can go unnoticed it would not be possible to host such an event. The logistics of such an event is quite startling when you are personally involved.

Recognition for the Merit Award Committee must also be mentioned for their continued recognition to staff for their contributions above the call of duty.

All in all a memorable evening was had by all and we look forward to many more similar evenings of recognition for staff in the future.

Ray Murtagh,  
Branch Secretary



## Cork Athletics

Have had plenty of success on the local scene with numerous team prizes at the Business Houses events. Merck Millipore 6k proved to be a very successful outing with two team prizes and 3 individual wins also. Don Keohane winning the over 45s , Timmy Kelleher 3rd in the over 40s and Nora O Flynn surprise winner in her section. Two weeks later for the Mount Oval 6 mile there was a repeat performance with the prison team taking the overall honours, with 3 in the top twenty lead home by Finbar O Dwyer 5th position. A second team of Brian Cotter, Adrian Crowley and Seamus Cahill were in the prizes also. Full results of all these events are on the Cork Bhaa website. The next main event will be the IPS 5k on July 9th with a full report of this event in the next issue of the magazine.

## Cork City Marathon

The prison service was well represented at this years Cork City Marathon, an event that has something for everyone, full marathon, half marathon and team relay. In the full marathon there were some very good individual performances . Finbar O Dwyer had an exceptional run finishing just outside the top ten in 2hours 47 mins

just four weeks after the Rotterdam marathon. Finbar also won the inter services championship. Robert Stafford ran a fine race to finish in 3-13 and Donal Murphy taking on the marathon distance for the first time achieved his goal finishing well inside the 3-20 mark. The tall figure of John Touhy was a welcome sight to the streets of Cork and after completing the marathon took a stroll up Patricks Hill for good measure. Vinnie Faulkner and Dermot Gill were well up for the challenge both finishing comfortably. The half marathon proved to be a very popular and took the same route as the latter half of the marathon and a very important day for club members, Willie Gould, Jason Hennessy , Simon Drislane and David Levy who were taking on the half marathon distance for the very first time, well done to these guys and we look forward to their progression as the year goes on. The marathon relay with over 600 teams gives everyone an opportunity to take part. The prison service team of Kevin O Connor, Brendan McGrath, Brian Cotter, Don Keohane and Seamus Cahill completed the distance in 2 hours 57mins, enough for a 3rd place finish in the inter services . The ladies team put together a fairly elite squad with a time of 3.45 to finish just outside the top 100 teams overall, well done to Norma, Sarah and Jenna.

## Merit Award Presentation Night

On the 20th March 2014 the first Long Service Medals were presented at a function held in the Officers Mess in Cork Prison. Governor Jim Collins welcomed the recipenents and their families to this presentations of Long Service Medals and invited families to visit the Prison at their leisure. Director General Michael Donnellan addressed all present and spoke warmly about the Officers Mess which was transformed as you can see in the photos. Mr. Donnellan also praised the recipenents and their families for this important milestone in an Officers career. President POA Stephen Delaney congratulated all recipenents and outlined the importance of the Merit Award Scheme which has been very successful since it was relaunched in 2013.

All present were treated to a fine meal laid on by IS Tom Weste, WTO's Jim O'Connell, John Aher, Willy Gould, Pat Holland, Karen Whelan and Deirdre O'Donovan. Great assistance on the night was given by Dan Collins, Fergus Lordan, Gerry Ring and Nikki O'Donovan



## UNION NEWS

Following Transformation the work of the local branch continues. We are currently involved in discussions with management on issues including DTL's, Incentivised Regimes, AV Gates and Staffing Levels. We are awaiting the official Transformation Reports for the Medical and Trades areas and also for PSEC which hopefully will bring positive results. We still have a number of vacancies on the branch committee and will be holding a few meetings over the next few weeks so any members wishing to bring up their attendances should take note.

## Merit Awards

Earlier this year the Midlands hosted its first Merit Award Ceremony. It was held at lunchtime in the Mess. Guests on the day included POA President, Stephen Delaney, POA Information Officer Paul Purcell and the Director General of the Irish Prison Service, Michael Donnellan, as well as the families of the Officers who received the awards. Several members of ARPO well special guests on the day. I would like to congratulate all of our members who received awards on the day. It is nice to see that the unseen work that is carried out by prison officers on a daily basis in difficult and often dangerous circumstances is being recognised. I would also like to thank the staff in the Mess for the wonderful spread that was provided. The compliments from those in attendance spoke volumes.



## CONDOLENCES

Our deepest sympathies are expressed on behalf of all the members at The Midlands Prison to all those who have lost loved ones recently. Our thoughts are with them in this most difficult time. May they rest in peace.

## CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those members who have recently got married and to those who have recently had additions to the families.

## MIDLANDS CELTIC FC

Midlands Celtic's season finished in massive disappointment once again as we only managed to finish 3rd in the league after a promising start which saw us in contention all the way to the last 4 games where unfortunately we lost out in both league and also in the cup semi-final.

A few players stood out from the rest in their performances throughout the season but none more so than the aging Cathal 'Sos' Fitzpatrick, who deservedly picked up 'Player Of The Year' for plenty of outstanding performances from his centre half position.

A massive thank you to IPSSLA, Midlands Staff Mess and IPS for their contributions towards our new goalposts which we now have for our new pitch in St Fintans.

Our new season begins again on the 17th August and new players are always welcome.

*Shane Mitchell, Club Secretary*



*Cathal 'SOS' Fitzpatrick receives player of the year award from Willie Gaffney (Manager).*



## MIDLANDS RUSTY RAMBLERS

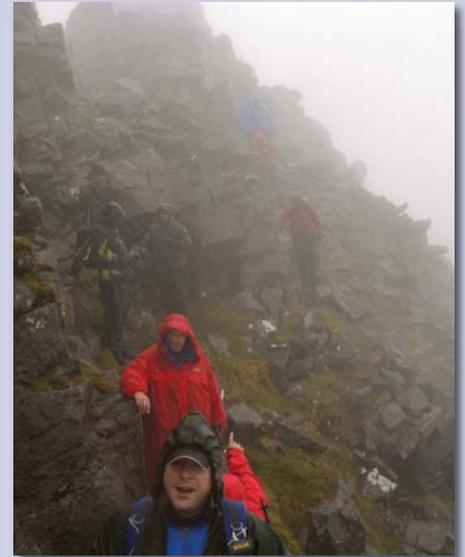
Since our last article we have had huge successes in both our walks and expansion of the club. The club has organised regular walks every month and an annual weekend away walk. Recently we have had walks including Blackstairs, Luqnaquilla via Glenmalure, Galtee's/Lyracappul and finally our annual weekend away walk Carrauntoohil via Coumloughra Horse Shoe. We held our first AGM of the club in the Holiday Inn Killarney where a wide range of topics were discussed debated and decided.

Briefly, our walk on Blackstairs was held in March and this walk was steep to start with but eight brave souls rose to the challenge. They braved the wind and the rain that day and 5 hours later returned to their cars wet but looking forward to the traditional refreshments in a local pub after!

Luqnaquilla via Glenmalure was warm to start with and we had eight participants



*Left to Right: Cathal Fitzpatrick- Player of the year, James Donohoe- Clubman of Year, Shane Mitchell- Top Scorer*



walk. We walked 17km taking in the summit at 925m. Things were rather windy at the top but the rest of the day made up for it.

May was our biggest walk this year with 16 walkers taking part in our Annual weekend away and AGM (details of which we will outline later). As for the walk itself we headed to Carrauntoohil and we took one of the longest route on the range known as Coumloughra Horse shoe. The walk lasted for 9 hours and it was probably one of our most difficult and technical walks this club has ever done. We started with dry overcast weather but as we rose in height we soon found ourselves among the mist and low level clouds.

As we made our way up we met three walkers who also joined us asking if they could tag along to the top. The weather

however then turned wet and this added to the difficulty in navigating up to Carrauntoohil in very poor visibility. We negotiated our way across the infamous Benkeeragh Ridge with sheer drops both sides and although the pace was slow due to conditions and number of walkers we made a successful summit to Carrauntoohil on time!! There we stopped only for a quick photo where we met other walkers who were taking the Devils Ladder Route up and down.

Before we started to make our way back down we learned that there was a walker missing from a different group and that Mountain Rescue were in the process of searching for him. This news reminded us of the dangers of the mountain and the importance of how we plan our route and stay together as a group. Luckily we learned that night that the person had been found and rescued off the mountain.

We made our way down from the summit and after some difficult navigation we returned to our start point where we parted company with our three guests for that day! Indeed we were humbled by their comment posted on our facebook page the next day

*Keith Devane posted to Rusty Ramblers  
25 May near Ardrahan*

Thank you to the group that guided me through the clouds in Kerry yesterday. A very warm and technically confident group who could trek anywhere. Thanks again. With that successful walk behind us we returned to the hotel where some went for long baths and others enjoyed the Sauna/Jacuzzi in the hotel before enjoying an evening meal in the Hotel Restaurant. Not like the first night we only had a few social beverages as the group in general were wrecked after the long and difficult walk so most retired early! Compliments must also be paid to Gemma who even after 9 hours of walking appeared out that night wearing very high heels proclaiming to be a "slave to fashion!"

Sunday morning however it was clear not all were as nimble as they had hoped as most showed obvious signs of aches and pains after the long walk the day



before and indeed many went for a walk up town to stretch out the legs before the journey home! And so our 2nd Annual Weekend Away concluded with all participants safe even if a little sore!

Finally we would like to thank the Governor of Midlands for facilitating and helping to organising supplies for the walk on the day. The refreshments along with the sambo's and fruit supplied by the Hotel on the morning of the walk was a great help for all on the day as we did not need to go organise these for walkers on the morning of the walk! Thanks again.

Our AGM was held on the Friday of the weekend. This was our first AGM as a fully affiliated member of the IPSSLA. We discussed a wide range of topics including confirming our constitution as a club, our achievement over the past two years, plans for the future of the club, funding for the club and a briefing on our three year plan for an expedition to Elbrus, Russia. It was decided that members would take responsibility for walks over the next twelve months. Each month will be organised by one/two members of the club.

In August of this year the club has planned a Wild Camping Event for its members. This is to be held in the Galtees and we plan to trek up to Lough Muskerry where we will set up camp and have lunch. Lightening our load we continue on an afternoon walk returning to camp and grubbing up before settling down for the night. Next morning we will pack up and

head back down to arrive at our cars around lunch time. This is our first wild camping event and is limited to club members due to equipment restraints. We do however plan to make this an annual event and we hope to open this up to walking clubs within other prisons in the coming years. This is also designed as a springboard to launch our three year plan to mount an expedition to climb Mount Elbrus in Russia in 2017! Plans for which we will publish as things progress in the coming months.

We would like to thank all those who have made funds available to the club in support of this event and as a result we have raised enough funds this year to purchase cooking equipment, tents and safety equipment needed to run this event. We were generously supported by IPSSLA, our Mess Committee, the Governor of the Midlands Prison and most generously from IPS Official Contribution Scheme. Without this funding organising such an event would have been impossible.

Moving on from Carrauntoohil we held our June walk in the Galtees. It was decided to walk up to Lyracappul and on the day we were joined by three newcomers to the club. After negotiating the dirt road up to the car park we headed off hoping our cars would make it back down the track at the end. Unfortunately some cars were better suited than others and consideration was given to the driver when some of us got out of cars to help improve



the clearance underneath!! The walk was difficult to start with, with a steep incline at first and soon followed with a few whitty comments from the new comers like "thanks for not taking us out on a difficult walk!!!". But soon the ground eased up and we rambled our way up to summit. We had fantastic weather all day and great temperatures of 20+!! Views were amazing from the top and it certainly helped make up for the lack of view from Carrauntoohil the month previous. Some used the opportunity to express their inner most feelings for the club, we think, and for that we thank Hovie for his love heart pose at the summit! Plenty of water was needed for hydration on the day with the high temperatures where as others decided to dip their weary feet in the river when they got back to their cars. However all seemed to enjoy the day despite the difficult drive up to the car park!

Going forward we are expecting August to be a big success and a great start to the direction the club is taking. We invite other clubs within the prison service to contact us over the coming year and we plan to organise more events for all involved. We would also encourage all to become members of the IPSSLA in the year ahead so that we can all share in the support and funding that this association can provide for us.

Finally we invite all to join us on a walk soon and enjoy the mountains around us that our country has to offer!

On behalf of the club,  
Alan and Paul



**MIDLANDS PRISON OFFICER'S CHOIR**

To date and since the last issue, the Midlands Prison Officer's Choir has been very busy.

On the 19th of February the Choir was invited to open the Novena in the Portlaoise Parish with guest speaker Father Brian Darcy.

On the night the choir were truly magnificent. The Parish were delighted to hear and indeed see the Choir sing at the opening and many comments came flowing in from local people as to when the Choir would perform again for the parish.

On the 14th of June the Choir were back in the Portlaoise Church to sing at our late colleague Paddy McEvoy's Anniversary Mass at the invitation of his family.

The family were very grateful to the Choir and indeed deeply thankful for the Choirs input on the night.

On the 24th of April the Choir was invited by the P.O.A. to sing in St. Joseph's Church Dublin for the Deceased Member's Mass.

This was a great honour for the Choir whom on the night sung with true heart and feeling. Many from the congregation came up to the Choir afterwards and congratulated the Choir on their wonderful singing.

Up and coming events for the Choir are on the 15th of August the Choir has been invited to sing on R.T.E. 1 Radio,

performing at an evening Mass which will be live from the Midland's Prison. We are, to our amazement, also after getting an invitation to open the Ploughing Championships 2014 and on this date will be performing for President Michael D Higgins.

The Choir at present are also organising a trip for St. Patrick's week in New York 2015. We are invited to sing at a Mass on Sunday the 15th of March 2015 in a parish in Manhattan, we are also invited to sing at the vigil Mass on the eve of St. Patrick's Day in the same Parish. The Choir will also march in the New York parade alongside fellow colleagues from Cloverhill, Portlaoise and Cork.

Just to finish by saying that we are grateful for the support of our fellow colleagues who have their own name on the Midland's Prison Officer's Choir and indeed when reading this they know what names I am referring to.

We sincerely thank you all for your support and indeed the support of management with relation to our engagements in the role of Midland's Prison Officer's Choir.

THANK YOU ALL.

K.D.

## MERIT AWARDS

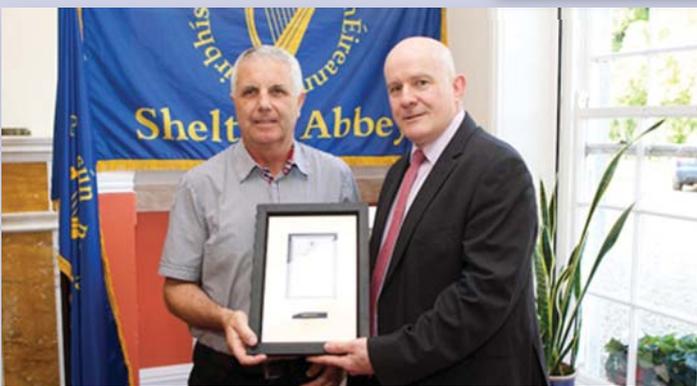
The merit award ceremony took place in Shelton Abbey on Thursday the 19th of June 2014. A large crowd was in attendance and an excellent evening was had by all. A big thank you to all involved in organising this event and to the kitchen staff for the excellent food provided on the night.

## RETIREMENT

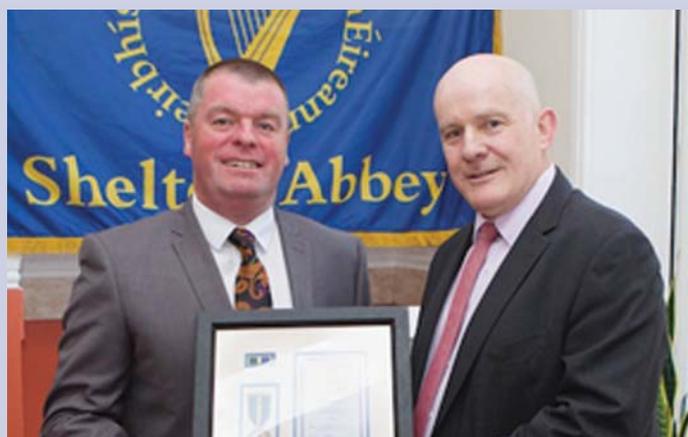
Recently the retirement took place of Officer Mark Curran after 33 years in the prison service. Mark celebrated this occasion with friends and workmates on a night out in Arklow town. All the staff in Shelton would like to wish Mark a very long and happy retirement. Sure we will see you in the near future.

## SHELTON FARM

The farm in Shelton is growing at an alarming rate. Over the last while the farm have been very busy with heifers and goats for the bothar project and also last year acquired some pigs. I am happy to say that just last week the Shelton sows gave birth to numerous little piglets and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Tom and Declan on their new arrivals. Many sleepless nights ahead!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!







# www.poa.ie



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Prison Officers' Association (POA) website. At the top left is the POA logo and the text "PRISON OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION". To the right are links for "register", "site map", and "links". A yellow banner in the top right corner says "members benefits". Below the header is a navigation menu with links: "home", "about us", "your rights", "latest news", "conference", "members", and "contact". The main content area features a "Slow Down Day" heading and a "Latest News from POA - Click to view" section with a news article thumbnail. Below this are three columns: "Members Section" (with a "read more" link), "About the P.O.A." (with a "read more" link), and "Contact Us" (with a "read more" link). At the bottom, there are logos for "CONGRESS Irish Congress of Trade Unions", "Life Assurance For POA members", "EUROFEDDP", and "Dental Services". A footer at the very bottom contains navigation links and a "W3C XHTML 1.0" logo.

**Any member wishing to sign up to receive Information Bulletins, Press Releases and Newsletters, please apply to:**

## admin@poa.ie

**To access the members section of the website you must apply for an username and password to**

**admin@poa.ie**

Sadly I think you would find it very hard today to find a house in Ireland that hasn't been touched somehow by suicide whether involving a family member or a friend. Its shadowy grip has been tightening over the country for many years and for a long time no one dared to speak about it. But thankfully now a change is coming about. A couple of years ago Jim Breen came up with the idea to have a Cycle Against Suicide after appearing on the Secret Millionaire TV program. He has a very simple message and he along with thousands of other people across the country want to share it. It simply is "It's ok not to feel ok, and it's absolutely ok to ask for help".

On seeing that IPSSLA had a notice on the IRIS system we were expecting an announcement about the Prison Service being involved in the Cycle Against Suicide this year. We discussed it and were all in favour of going but no one really sat down to organise our participation. I guess we were expecting a PR announcement from either IPS or IPSSLA. After a few weeks when we didn't see anything appear and we were all back on duty together we decided that if we were going to do it we had better organise it ourselves. We caught the Governor, Anne-Marie Allen off guard one morning and told her we were looking for a van so that we could get to the cycle and home each evening. We would organise drivers but we would graciously accept any other donations that she or anyone else wanted to give. To her eternal credit she came back to us very shortly with a van and some supplies for us to take away. Of course we pushed it a bit further and asked for a different van that evening. By 9am the following morning we had a reply from Anne-Marie to say that all was organised and if we needed anything just to give her a shout. The van along with water and food organised by John and Breda in the shop was a godsend and snapped up by more than just our slovenly lot, (we had a couple from Castlereagh to make inroads into the biscuits too!)

Van loaded on Sunday evening and everything ready, all we had to do was to get there. The first morning Matt Farrell was our voluntary designated driver and he succeeded in delivering us as close as humanly possible to RTE for the start. There were cars



parking in the boots of other cars so out we got and cycled up to the start and then we were off.

Each day consisted of two legs with a lunch break in between. The first day was one of the highlights with thousands of students lining the streets of Naas to welcome us into the town. This carried on each day in which we took part. Members of the public stopped whatever they were doing in every single village to wave, encourage, and to applaud what we were doing as a group. We rolled on through town after town spreading our message and raising awareness. After Naas we continued on to finish in Carlow where we would start the following day. Portlaoise Staff only covered 5 days of the cycle, going on our due off days of that week. The days we took part were:

- Day 1: RTE(Dublin) - Naas - Carlow.
- Day 2: Carlow – Kilkenny - Waterford.
- Day 5: Killarney - Tralee – Newcastlewest.
- Day 6: Newcastlewest – Limerick – Ennis.
- Day 7: Ennis – Galway – Tuam.

Special mention has to go to Stephen Burke from Loughan House who did the entire 14 days of the cycle. It took a lot of commitment and had all of us jealous. (especially of his orange socks)

Each day we cycled around 100 km but it wasn't a race. We all made our way along the route together, one large mass of orange jerseys starting and finishing together. It wasn't about speed, it was about creating awareness. Moving along at a handy pace made it easy to get to know people in the crowd and to share stories and experiences with them. Of course at the start of each day when we all got out of a prison service van some heads turned but slowly and very surely word got around that we were officers and not on TR for the day. In fact because of the van a lot of people spoke to us about the job and our experiences. One girl spoke about how her brother had a problem but didn't get the help he needed.



# CYCLE AGAINST SUICIDE

Instead he went off to America and without the support of his family the psychiatric problems got worse till he ended up in a prison over there. She wanted to thank prison staff for taking part and supporting the cycle, and for the tough job that we do every day. This sentiment was echoed by everyone we spoke to over the five days.

Colm Hayes the 2FM DJ told a story of how one day a lady wrote into his show. She told him that last year she had made up her mind to take her own life and was just walking off to do it. Fortunately at that time the cycle against suicide was passing through her town and she stopped on the street to see the hundreds of cyclists passing by. She then thought what a complete waste of life it would be to take her own life. Spurred on by seeing hundreds of others taking their time and effort to cycle around the country she decided that she would go and seek help. It can be said that the Cycle Against Suicide saved her life. How many more did it and will it save in the future.

Each day guest speakers would speak at school assemblies in the host school. As the cycle went on more and more cyclists were crowding in each day to hear the inspiring stories of real people overcoming adversity and coping with their lives. They didn't serve to put your problems into perspective, they instead showed you that by seeking the help of your friends and family you could cope too. You ran the full gambit of emotions each afternoon from laughter to having a lump in your throat and back to laughing again. You also got to sit on something other than a saddle for an hour which was great but got a little lift from the proceedings also. On Friday morning we heard from Fionbarr Walsh. He came to speak of his son Donal and his message and the #livelife campaign. Fionbarr joined us cycling from Killarney to Tralee and just as we were arriving in Tralee he stopped at a junction and looked back to me and said, "tell Jason Meaney I was asking for him". I said to him "is there no one you don't know at this stage, and is there anyone in the country that that F\*\*\*er doesn't know!"

I mentioned Matt Farrell earlier who drove the van on the first day. Brian Hayden drove on the second day. Seán Moroney drove on day 5 and Robbie Brothwood drove on days 6 & 7. Without them we



could not have taken part. They were up at the crack of dawn with the van ready to drive us down and then follow the route before driving us back home. We really appreciate their help and assistance over the few days. Also thanks are in no small part due to Governors Anne Marie Allen and Ethel Gavin and also John Staunton and Breda Beere in the tuckshop.

We met many people who knew jailers and were asking for them. We also had plenty of jailers there over the 5 days that we were involved. They included Barra Dineen, Jason Twomey, Christy Bannon, PJ Quinlan, Fran Rogers, Matt Farrell, Brian Hayden, Seán Moroney. (Portlaoise) Ian Carroll, Denis Owens (Midlands) Tom Gregan, Declan Jordan, Frank O'Brien. (Shelton Abbey) Peter Doyle, Mick O Connor, Olive O'Connor, Mick O Connor. (Limerick) Tony Shalley, Paraic Conlon, Stephen Norton, Seán Nolan, Suzanne Nolan, PJ Mullarkey . (Castlerea) Stephen Burke (Loughan House)

If you would like to take part next year or help out in any way please don't hesitate to contact ourselves in Portlaoise or any of the guys named who can get you involved. In my honest opinion it was one of the most inspiring and worthwhile causes I have even had the privilege of taking part in. I certainly got a lot more from it than I had to give and all the lads in Portlaoise are getting ready for next year's Cycle Against Suicide already. Together we can break the cycle of suicide in Ireland.

Christy Bannon



# IPS - EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

The Employee Assistance Programme For Prison Officers (EAPPO) caters for serving and retired Prison Officers, their spouses and immediate families. Employee Assistance Officers are supported in most prisons by locally appointed Staff Support Officers who each provide a confidential solution focused support service to help staff deal with difficulties which may arise for them which can be to do with personal, domestic, work related, financial or other social problems.

This service provides information on a range of issues while also having access on a referral basis to specialist agencies.

## ACCESS BY STAFF TO THE PROGRAMME

The programme is available on a countrywide basis to all staff, serving, retired and to the spouses of deceased staff and immediate families. Access to the EAP is merely a phone call away. The office in Bow Street is open Monday to Friday and appointments in Bow Street and other locations may be arranged by prior notice at mutually agreeable times. A list of locally appointed S.S.O.'s is available on your local notice board.

## METHODS OF REFERRAL

Referrals to an EAO/SSO takes place through:-

Self-referral

Management referral e.g. Governor, Staff and Corporate Services, etc.

Referral by concerned other (spouse, colleague, parent)

Staff Support Officer referral to an EAO.

Prison Officers Association Staff Representative

Of course, only the individual concerned can decide ultimately whether or not to avail of the Service.

**If you require the service please contact:**

**Phone: 043-3335316**

**Fax: 01-8727684**

**Address: EAPPO**

**1st Floor, 31-35**

**Bow Street**

**Dublin 7**

**Email: eapsupport@irishprisons.ie**

## STAFF SUPPORT OFFICERS

Staff Support Officers are assigned to most prisons and undertake their role during normal roster attendance, in addition to their normal range of duties. S.S.O.'s are available to employees seeking assistance. Each will have or is undertaking training appropriate to the provision of social support in the workplace. They have been selected on the basis of their helping and empathic skills. S.S.O.'s are also experienced members of the Irish Prison Service with an increased awareness of the range of problems affecting staff.

## STAFF SUPPORT OFFICERS, July 2014

(Prison's without an SSO are covered by the EAO's)

**Chief EAO Bernie McHugh, EAO Derek Murphy &  
EAO John Guiney**

### MOUNTJOY PRISON

Dan O'Leary  
Rosemary Llyod

### ST. PATRICK'S INSTITUTION

Eamon Fitzpatrick  
Paula Nolan  
Barbara Clarke

### DOCHAS

Brid Morris  
Robert Cosgrove

### TRAINING UNIT

Joe Fleming  
Pat Murphy  
James Flanagan

### O.S.G. UNIT

Yvonne Donohoe – Arbour Hill  
Mark Bermingham – St. Patricks  
Patrick Daly – Limerick  
Colm Davis - Cloverhill

### P.S.E.C.

Colm McAuley - Cloverhill  
John O'Mahony - Cork

### WHEATFIELD PRISON

Pat Murphy  
John Tuohy

### CLOVERHILL PRISON

David Clare  
Elaine Redmond  
Mark Rasmussen

### PORTLAOISE PRISON

Christopher Bannon  
Martin Dunne  
Claire Hurley

### MIDLANDS PRISON

Gabriel Campbell  
Margaret LaBossiere

### CORK PRISON

Michael Walsh  
Stephen O'Halloran  
William Gould

### LIMERICK PRISON

Dairmuid Kelly  
Sean Carey  
Senan O'Dwyer

### CASTLEREA PRISON

Theresa Beirne  
Tony Madden

### LOUGHAN HOUSE

Shane Kitson  
Niamh Cahill

### BELADD HOUSE

Ray O'Keefe

### ARBOUR HILL

Under care of EAO's

### SHELTON ABBEY

Under care of EAO's

## Review of Irish Prison Service Merit Award Policy 2013

As you are aware a new Merit Award policy was introduced in 2013.

### Content of Policy

The Merit Award policy falls into 2 distinct separate categories Long Service Awards and Merit Awards.

Long Service by their title are designed to recognise milestones in service and mark the contribution the Officer has made to the Irish Prison Service and society. They include

- Twenty One Year medal
- Thirty Year Service Bar
- The Forty Year Service Medal
- Citation of Service on Retirement

Merit Awards recognise acts of bravery, outstanding heroism or merit which have been performed by staff of the IPS. They include

- The Stack Medal
- The Distinguished Service Medal

The Policy also includes a Governors Commendation which may be issued where the committee considers that a particular deed of a staff member merits official recognition.

### Operation of the Scheme

The IPS Merit Policy came into effect on 1 June 2013. The Policy was published on IRIS and was included in the IPS and POA Newsletters. In addition, details of the Policy were issued by email to all Governors and Chief Officers.

The first Stack Medal was presented by the then Minister for Justice and Equality Alan Shatter TD on Friday 3rd May 2013. The Medal was posthumously awarded to the late Chief Officer Brian Stack, after whom the medal is named, and was presented to Mrs Sheila Stack at a ceremony in the Irish Prison Service College. The event served as the de facto launch of the Merit Award Policy.

Under the Policy all IPS institutions are

required to hold a Merit Award Ceremony at which all medals and awards are to be presented.

Since the introduction of the Policy approximately 500 long service awards have been made including approximately 450 Twenty-one Year Medals and 70 Thirty Year Bars.

In addition one 40 year medal was presented to Governor John Malone by the Director General.

A summary of the Award Ceremonies which were held is as follows:

Arbour hill (Pre policy) Date 16 November 2012

Castlerea – 6 Sep 2013

Mountjoy (Including Dochas) 10 October 2013

St Patricks – 24 October 2013

Loughan house – 7 Nov 2013

Training Unit 14 Nov 2013

Portlaoise – 15 Nov 2013

Limerick – 30 Jan 2014.

Cork – 20 Mar 2014.

Midlands – 11 Apr 2014.

Cloverhill Prison--15 May 2014

Wheatfield -12 June 2014

Shelton Abbey – 19 June 2014

Arbour Hill-19 June 2014

As was agreed under the Policy the Director General attended each Merit Award Ceremony and presented the staff with their awards. The Director General has reported that each ceremony was organised to a very high standard and has complimented each prison and their organising Committees for their dedication and planning.

Feedback received from all prisons reported that the events were a great success.

### Applications for Merit Awards

Since the Merit Award Policy came into effect the Merit Award Committee has met on 4 occasions to consider applications received. Committee meetings were held on:

6th September 2013 in IPS HQ Longford

3rd December 2013 in Wheatfield Prison

11th April 2014 in Midlands Prison

23rd May 2014 in IPS HQ Longford

18 Merit Award Applications were considered in 2013. Of this 15 were approved, 2 were refused and 1 application was deferred for further consideration. Of the 15 applications approved this resulted in the awarding of 15 Distinguished Service Medals and 35 Commendations.

14 Merit Award applications have been received in 2014. Of this 4 have been completed and resulted in the awarding of 4 Distinguished Service Medals. The remaining applications are currently being considered and further awards are expected in due course.

### Review of the Policy

It was agreed by the Merit Award Committee to review the Policy after 12 months. Accordingly the Committee is now seeking observations on the operation of the policy in 2013 and suggestions on how the policy can be approved or the scope widened.

**If you wish to make a suggestion or have any observations please email the Committee (by Friday 25th July 2014) at:**

meritaward@irishprisons.ie

or write to

Ciaran McCauley  
Secretary - Merit Award Committee  
Irish Prison Service  
Ballinalee Road  
Longford Town  
Co Longford.

## Wheatfield Prison 25th Anniversary

On the 12th June 2014 the Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald opened the Memorial Garden for deceased members of Wheatfield Prison. Campus Governor Colm Barclay welcomed the Minister and invited guests to Wheatfield Prison for the opening of the Memorial Garden, presentations of Merit Awards and presentations to staff who were the original staff in 1989 when Wheatfield first opened. The ceremony for the opening of the Memorial Garden was very well organised and it's a credit to those staff involved to the final product that is the Memorial Garden. It is a fitting tribute to those staff that sadly passed away while stationed in Wheatfield Prison. The Pipe Band, the newly formed Wheatfield Choir and the Guard of Honour contributed to a memorable occasion. After the opening of the Memorial Garden staff and guests were invited to refreshments in the gym hall where the Merit Awards and other presentations took place. Please see attached photos of the day.



# WHEATFIELD 25TH ANNIVERSARY





The Irish Prison Service Sports and Leisure Association (IPSSLA) is planning to arrange a group booking for flights and accommodation, as well as kit, for members interested in participating in the World Police and Fire Games in Fairfax, Virginia in June 2015.

All the information pertaining to the Games regarding the sports, venues, dates, etc is available on the website -

[www.fairfax2015.com](http://www.fairfax2015.com) .

A number of members have already registered their interest in participating in the games so if you wish to go to the games but have not yet registered your interest with IPSSLA please email us your name, prison, and sport at

[fairfax2015@irishprisons.ie](mailto:fairfax2015@irishprisons.ie).

When we have confirmation of the numbers travelling we will revert with quotations for flights and accommodation.

We would advise those interested in travelling to start saving now via a budget account in the Credit Union. Once we have collated all of the information we will be in contact with you via email.

If you need any further information feel free to contact us via [fairfax2015@irishprisons.ie](mailto:fairfax2015@irishprisons.ie).

To ensure the best prices for flights and accommodation we need to book early, as a result we have a closing date of 31/07/2014 for you to register your interest with us.





# Frontline Emergency and Security Services Eire Forum

## FESSEF

The Frontline Emergency and Security Services Eire Forum (FESSEF) was recently formed out of the Security and Emergency Services Ireland Forum. SESIF was originally founded to promote communication, co-operation and friendship, mainly through sport, among the personnel of the National Security and Emergency services.

Following the foundation of FESSEF, Emergency and Security Services were invited or are in the process of being invited to participate with the organisation. Many have expressed a strong interest in the organisation and have representation on our newly formed committee. Those services that have agreed to participate are:- Irish Prison Service, Defence Forces, An Garda Siochana, National Fire Service, National Ambulance Service, Irish Coast Guard, Veterans Associations, RNLI, Customs and Civil Defence.

FESSEF are now organising an event to heighten the public's awareness of the role played by the security and emergency services in protecting the safety and security of the citizens of the state and indeed in the protection of the state itself. This event is also seen as an opportunity for the services to show their appreciation for the ongoing support they receive from members of the public.

It is intended to realise the above objectives by showcasing, through an open day, the specialist skills, expertise, drills, tactical equipment etc. used by service personnel in the performance of their duties. The general public will be invited, along with the family members of service personnel to witness this showcase display and enjoy the exhibition as it unfolds during the open day.

Our committee members are actively working on the format of this showcase day with emphasis on the following:

- Identification of suitable venue- Royal Hospital Kilmainham (RHK)
- Parading of Colour Parties, Guards of Honour and Marching Bands from Collins Barracks to RHK.
- Presentation of marching groups at Reviewing Stand in RHK
- Demonstration of Skills and the use of tactical equipment including rescue, equestrian, and specialist transport etc.

This occasion will be a 'Family Day', with some very colourful and fascinating displays and is scheduled to take place on Saturday 6th September.

Final details of this event will be announced over the coming months but if you would like more information about FESSEF please contact the following;

**Mark Breen (IPSC / Portlaoise)**  
**Paul Kellett (Portlaoise)**

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# Developments on Sick Leave and related matters

May 2013 – May 2014

The Prison Officers Association continued to represent the membership on the many issues related to the area of sick leave over the past year. As has been the case in recent years a number of members attended at Head Office for assistance in replying to fourteen-day dismissal letters and other sick leave related matters. In most of these cases, comprehensive reports were forwarded to the Irish Prison Service, making representations on behalf of individual members. Alternative approaches were recommended in a small number of cases in particular members were advised of the assistance and advice available by way of the Prison Service Welfare Service.

The Union also continued to engage with the Irish Prison Service in an effort to have a number of Policy documents drafted and implemented regarding the various elements of attendance management including improving the injury on duty processes and seeking a return to work accommodation Policy. However the main sick leave related issue dealt with since last year's Annual Delegate Conference was the new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme which was introduced with effect from 31st March 2014.

### **The following reports were given to the NEC on sick leave over the past year:**

On Friday 7th June 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that the issue of the application of Labour Court Recommendation No 20335 was discussed at the ICTU Public Services Committee AGM. Specifically, the definition of critical illness and the application of the transitional arrangements were the subjects of discussion. The Labour Court Recommendation was re-issued in the executive file. The National Executive Council received a full briefing on the issues that were raised at the ICTU Public Services Committee AGM and on any progress made on the injuries on duty process specific to the Irish Prison Service.

On Tuesday 3rd September 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that a document was circularised on 30th July 2013 to all managers in the Civil and Public Service including Governors in the IPS in

relation to changes in the certified sick leave scheme. The National Executive Council received a full briefing on the document of 30th July 2013 and other sick leave related matters.

On Tuesday 19th November 2013, the National Executive Council was informed that there was a meeting held in the LRC, Haddington Road on Tuesday 29th October 2013, that discussed proposals for a Critical Illness Protocol, as required by the 19th July 2012 Labour Court ruling on sick leave in the Public Service. They were informed that there would be a follow up meeting on this issue on Wednesday 20th November 2013, at IMPACT Headquarters to discuss a Draft protocol which was forwarded on to the ICTU Public Services Committee by the LRC.

The National Executive Council was also informed that the IPS issued a notification on Wednesday 30th October 2013, which was attached to staff members' pay checks. This notification was brought to the attention of head office by a number of branches and it caused certain confusion with regard to the changes due to come into effect from 1st January 2014 in particular with regard to self-certified sick leave. The Union issued correspondence for display on Thursday 31st October 2013, to all branches clarifying that the changes to arrangements for self-certified sick leave commenced on 1st January 2012 and were not from November 2012 as outlined in this recent management notification.

On Thursday 5th December 2013 the National Executive Council was informed that the Union received correspondence on Wednesday 27th November 2013, from the Chairperson of the ICTU Public Service Committee stating that DPER confirmed that the Minister has determined that the new sick leave scheme will be rolled out for the general public service from the 1st January 2014. DPER will be circulating a communication to HR Departments with the current draft on critical illnesses with the caveat that there are some outstanding matters being referred to the Labour Court. The matters being referred back to the Labour Court relate to issues concerning mental health, disability and pregnancy related illness. As it was not possible to reach agreement on these matters they have been referred

back to the Labour Court for a binding and final determination. The Union received notification on Wednesday 4th December 2013 that the Labour Court hearing on these three issues would be Monday 16th December 2013.

On Tuesday 27th February 2014 the National Executive Council was informed that the Labour Court convened for a hearing on Wednesday 4th December 2013 on the three issues that were referred back the Labour Court in respect of the Critical Incident Protocol for Public Servants under the new sick leave arrangements. The three issues related to matters concerning mental health, disability and pregnancy related illness.

Following these hearing representatives from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform confirmed that the new sick leave scheme for Public Servants would not be introduced from 1st January 2014. While they were unable to give a definitive date for the commencement of the new Sick Leave Scheme arising from Labour Court Recommendation No. 20335 they stated that it was unlikely that the new sick leave scheme for Public Servants could be implemented before middle to late March. The documentation issued at the recent NEC training course on the new sick leave regulations was issued in the executive file and the National Executive Council was informed that DPER had now confirmed that the start date for the new sick leave arrangements is to be Monday 31st March 2014.

On Wednesday 2nd April 2014 the National Executive Council was updated on the operation of the new sick leave scheme for the Public Service which was introduced with effect from Monday 31st March 2014. They were also briefed was on the operation of the Critical Illness Protocol and the application of management discretion in the transition phase of the protocol. A copy of IPS statistics on sick leave that was forwarded to the Union recently by the IPS was issued in the executive file.

## Summary of the new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme

The new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme was introduced with effect from March 31, 2014.

This scheme is being introduced as a result of a binding Labour Court Recommendation in 2012. The POA has spent the time since working with the other unions to ensure as much protection as possible for members, and – in that context – we have agreed a Critical Illness Protocol which will seek the continuation of extended sick pay terms. The POA have also met with the IPS regarding the issue of members injured while performing duty. The IPS have confirmed that staff

members injured while performing duty will hold the six months full pay six months half pay limits regarding the IOD process.

## Main Provisions of New Sick Leave Scheme

### Paid Sick Leave

The new scheme provides for:

A maximum of 92 days sick leave on full pay in a year

➤ Followed by a maximum of 91 days sick leave on half pay

This is

➤ Subject to a maximum of 183 days paid sick leave in a rolling four year period, and

➤ The dual one year look back will also continue

### Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR)

If you have exhausted 183 days paid sick leave in a rolling four-year period and are absent on sick leave again, you may be granted Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration for a further 548 days.

Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration used to be called “Pension Rate of Pay” and will be calculated in the same way.

Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration will only be available when there is a realistic prospect of a return to work following illness.

### Critical Illness Provisions

Additional support for members who are critically ill has also been agreed. The criteria for assessing whether someone is eligible for extended sick leave as a result of critical illness or serious physical injury are set out in the Critical Illness Protocol (CIP) which is available on the POA website.

The criteria under which members can access the extended pay under the Critical Illness Protocol (CIP), requires the medical condition to meet at least one of the following characteristics:

- Acute life threatening physical illness
- Chronic progressive illness, with well established potential to reduce life expectancy;
- Major physical trauma ordinarily requiring corrective acute operative surgical treatment;
- Inpatient hospital care of two consecutive weeks or greater.

It will be necessary for members to produce the treating doctor’s appropriate medical reports/certificates in time to their HR Departments in any application for payment under the CIP.

It is important to note that the decision to award the

extended pay arrangements is a matter for HR departments and – importantly – discretion has been built to allow a Personnel Officer to make decisions in cases where the criteria is not fully met.

We have also agreed an appeal process for members. This can involve a medical appeal or an appeal under the grievance procedure where issues arise with the interpretations or use of discretion by the Personnel Officer.

The CIP was also referred to the Labour Court by the Public Service Unions in December 2013. The Court was asked to give a binding recommendation on how the CIP was to be applied in three instances:

- Pregnancy related illness, including assisted pregnancy related illness;
- Disability related illness; and
- Mental illness

Following this the CIP was changed to take account of the binding recommendations of the Labour Court as follows:

- (i) Pregnancy-related illness that requires a stay of two or more consecutive days of in-patient hospital/clinical care may qualify for extended sick pay under the CIP.
- (ii) When using the provision in the CIP for management to apply discretion in granting extended sick pay – where a member does not meet the strict medical criteria – management should consider a number of factors including if it has not been possible to make an accommodation to facilitate the return to work of a person with a disability-related illness or condition.
- (iii) In respect of mental illness, the Court was of the view that the CIP addressed supports for mental illness and did not need to be amended.

If someone becomes critically ill or has a serious physical injury and is eligible for support under the CIP they may have access to:

- A maximum of 183 days on full pay in a year
- Followed by a maximum of 182 days on half pay

This is:

- Subject to a maximum of 365 days paid sick leave in a rolling four year period and
- There will be a one year look back also used

If members have exhausted 365 days extended sick leave under the CIP, they may be considered for a maximum of 12 months Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration in the first instance.

Management may then consider paying TRR for a

further period of time not exceeding 730 days. This is subject to 6 monthly reviews and may only be granted where the occupational health physician has confirmed there is a reasonable prospect of a return to work.

## Transitional Arrangements

If you have started a period of sick leave before March 31, 2014 that continues after that date, you will stay on the current sick leave arrangements, i.e., a maximum of six months on full pay and a maximum of six months of half pay. After you return to work your next sick leave absence will be dealt with under the terms of the new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme.

## Treatment of previous periods of sick leave under the new scheme

As has always been the case, sick leave records will continue to be reviewed over a rolling four year period. This means that if you have been paid more than 183 days sick leave in a rolling four year period on the commencement date, you may not get paid the next time you are off sick or may only be paid Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration.

In negotiations the Unions pressed for the “Dual Look Back” which will be used as part of the new scheme.

The process will be the same as that currently in place and it involves reviewing the member’s sick leave over that four-year period, access may be granted to paid sick leave.

Then there is a simultaneous review of the last year to determine the rate at which sick leave may be paid. If the initial 92-day limit at full pay has not been exhausted, full pay may be awarded until the limit of 92 days is reached.

Thereafter, the amount paid will be calculated based on half pay or TRR as appropriate.

The formula is the same for critical illness but the appropriate figures for the look back are 365 days over a four year period and 183 days over the last year.

**While the above summary attempts to cover all aspects of the new scheme, there will still be a need for individual clarification, which we will deal with at Head Office. The new Public Service Sick leave Scheme was explained in detail at the POA Training Course held from 5th to 7th February 2014.**

**LABOUR COURT RECOMMENDATION NO 20335, ISSUED ON 19th JULY 2012 AND LABOUR COURT RECOMMENDATION NO 20667, ISSUED ON 20th DECEMBER 2013 – BOTH RELATING TO THE NEW PUBLIC SERVICE SICK LEAVE SCHEME ARE POSTED IN THE MEMBERS SECTION OF THE POA WEBSITE.**



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## Developments on Prisoner Complaints and Related Matters May 2013 – May 2014

The prisoner complaints process and specifically the implementation of the Category A complaints, has been the subject of a significant volume of work in the past 12 months. In January 2013 Statutory Instrument 11 of 2013 was enacted which was to be the guiding legislation in relation to Category A complaints. The application of the guiding legislation was to refer to the prison service procedure dated 3rd February 2011 by the then Director General Brian Purcell and the subsequent procedure by the present Director General dated 31st October 2012.

Correspondence exchanged in the last 12 months outlines the lack of clarity in what was required of members who were the subject of these complaints and what process was to be followed i.e. the 2011 document, the 2012 document or the SI 2013. In the absence of a clear policy any amount of interpretations can be taken from the preceding documents.

The primary issues that concerned the Union were:

- Dealing with frivolous and vexatious complaints.
- The availability of all information to prison officers at the earliest stage, particularly having regard to the AG's advice regarding disclosure including access to CCTV.
- Notice to be given to staff when investigators are arriving to interview them.
- The interaction between the Code of Discipline, Garda investigations and the prisoner complaints processes.
- Whether the other processes should continue where there is a Garda investigation.
- The entitlement of prison officers to make submissions before the investigators report, and their entitlement to receive a draft report first, prior to the Governor making a decision
- Where the governor makes a decision, provision should be made that he sets this out in writing together with facts and reasons.

In June correspondence was received indicating the intention of developing other categories of complaint to address issues such as service level issues, healthcare etc. No draft protocols were forwarded.

In July the Union wrote to the Minister in response to the pattern of vexatious/frivolous complaints that was developing and requested a meeting on same.

In August a response was received from the Ministers office redirecting our correspondence to the Director General.

In October, following consultation with our legal representatives, correspondence was forwarded to IPS querying when, if ever, were prison officers allowed to physically touch prisoners. This correspondence was in response to instances that the union became aware of where code of discipline proceedings had been instigated following incidents where officers had used minimum force in a reasonable manner in response to acts of physical aggression by prisoners.

In November the Union corresponded with the IPS to ascertain the statistical position in relation to how many complaints had been dealt with, how many were upheld, how many were appealed, who made the appeals. A response was received that provided the requested statistical information and also outlined the process involved in processing an appeal.

In December the union eventually received draft protocols for the various complaints. These protocols were forwarded to our legal representatives for examination. We gave a preliminary response to particular issues contained within the Category A protocol.

In January IPS responded to our preliminary observations and we arranged a meeting with our legal representatives. The membership was circulated in relation to 'historical' complaints.

In March we received new draft protocols with a position to disregard the previous drafts. A consultation took place with our legal representatives with their advice to follow.

The above chronology does not adequately convey the interaction on a case by case basis with members that have been and are currently the subject of prisoner complaints. It is however through the medium of this interaction that the flaws and strengths of the process can be identified. It has been apparent that there are significant flaws within the process primarily;

- No provision for vexatious complaints within the existing mechanism
- No provision for appeal by the officer being complained of
- No clarity as to the extent of contact allowed between officer and prisoner
- No entitlement for an officer to see the report and make comment prior to the Governors decision
- No entitlement to see the report if complaint is not upheld thereby limiting the grounds for the officer to make an accusation under the prison Rules

There have been some successes where for example the union successfully defended the rights of an officer who was potentially the subject of excessive investigation i.e. internal, Gardaí and Category 'A' investigators to be followed by a further investigation by Category A investigators. It is also fair to say that in the vast majority of cases the investigators have been professional with a fair balance being taken on all information being forwarded to them. The Union do have to include a section in the training course for branch officials in order to formalise the present representative function which is of an ad-hoc nature based on the protocol drawn up last year. This of course will be arranged when Complaints Procedures have been finalised and are easily understood. This is not to demean the manner in which our union representatives have interacted with the process to date which has been of an exemplary nature.



# 2014 CLOSE CHAMPIONSHIPS

**SPONSORED BY CAPITAL ADVISORY SERVICES**

The 2014 Close Championships were held in the Heritage Golf Club on the 29th of May. Over 70 golfers competed in glorious conditions on the championship course.

Vincent Sweeney from Wheatfield Prison playing off a 6 handicap won the title with a wonderful score of 66, 4 shots better than the 2012 champion Jody Cunningham (5) from The Midlands Prison. Alan Craven (3) from Castlerea won the gross prize with 74. Francis Daly won the ladies section and Wheatfield Prison taking the Team event

Once again we would like to thank our Sponsors, Capital Advisory Services.

Finally we would like to bring to your attention that next year will be the 30th anniversary of the Close Championships. It has been suggested that we return to a more traditional golf course located in the Midlands area for this special occasion and perhaps a two day competition such as singles on day one followed by a team event on day two. Details will be announced over the next few weeks and it is wished that all golfers will make a special effort to support the event.



*Team Winners, Wheatfield, J Touhy, C Maher, V Sweeney, G Ryan, M McGrath*

	NAME	HCP	LOC	Score
1	V Sweeney	6	Wheatfield	66
2	J Cunningham	5	Midlands	70
Gross	A Craven	3	Castlerea	74
4	P Keogh	5	Castlerea	72
5	J Dunne	12	Portlaoise	72
6	A Gorman	14	Limerick	72
7	J Reid	5	PSEC	73
8	D Keane	6	Cork	73
9	P Sheedy	15	Mountjoy	73
10	J Farrell	12	Wheatfield	75
11	G Mc Carthy	8	Cork	75
12	C Maher	15	Wheatfield	75
13	S O'g Brennan	9	Mountjoy	76
14	N Morrin	13	Castlerea	77
15	B Farrell	17	Midlands	77
16	G Garland	17	Mountjoy	77
17	S Carter	2	Portlaoise	78
18	T Murphy	9	Mountjoy	78
19	T O'Neill	16	Midlands	78
20	P Barry	14	Limerick	78
Ladies	F Daly	31	Wheatfield	72
Team	Wheatfield			



*2014 Close Champion Vincent Sweeney with Sponsors Aaron Mcann and Ken Fitzgerald from Capital Advisory Services*

# Prison Officers Association

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**Midlands Delegates**

**Arbour Hill Delegates**





**Training Unit  
Delegates**

**Mountjoy Delegates**



**Cloverhill Delegates**

**PSEC Delegates**





**Loughan House  
Delegates**



*Bert Van Caelenberg Secretary General EUROFEDOP addressing  
Annual Delegate Conference*

**Cork Delegates**



**Dochas Delegates**

**Limerick Delegates**





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**Portlaoise Delegates**

**BPOA, SPOA & NIPOA  
Representatives at  
Annual Delegate  
Conference**



## Claims at the Justice Departmental Council

May 2013 – June 2014

The Administrative Council on behalf of the Union have utilised in full the mechanisms available through the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme, in particular the Justice Departmental Council. There were six meetings of the Justice Departmental Council Staff Panel and six meetings of the Justice Departmental Council held since last year's Annual Delegate Conference. These Justice Departmental Council meetings were held as follows:

- Thursday 6th June 2013, Thursday 25th July 2013, Thursday 3rd October 2013, Thursday 5th December 2013 - Held in 51 St Stephens Green
- Thursday 6th February 2014, Thursday 3rd April 2014 and 5th June 2014 - Held in 51 St Stephens Green

The National Executive Council was briefed regarding the outcome of each of the aforementioned Justice Departmental Council meetings. The Agendas from these meetings and a copy of the briefing documents issued throughout the year at the Justice Departmental Council were issued in the executive files.

### Items/Claims Raised on the Agenda by the Official Side

1. Information Items : Transforming Public Services, Performance Management and Development System, Partnership, the Immigration Control Pilot Project at Dublin Airport, Merger of the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority and Work Placements Schemes (JobBridge)
2. The proposed clarification of the status of Assistant Industrial Supervisors in the Prison Service, and agreement regarding remuneration of the grade.  
**The Official Side proposed to formally recognize the AIS position as a separate grade and requested the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to amalgamate the AIS allowance into the basic remuneration for the post. On Thursday 30th May 2013, the Union received a final Circular from the Irish Prison Service for the Internal Competition for Promotion to Work Training Officer in the Irish Prison Service.**

### Items/Claims Raised on the Agenda by the Staff Side

#### CPSU/IMPACT

3. Update on the number of PASO Grade II posts and consequent assignments to the Irish Prison Service.
4. Update on the development and implementation of Financial Shared Services.
5. Query on the Competition of Establishment for FGE Grades.
6. Status of promotion panels in the Department of Justice and Equality.
7. Query regarding vacancies in the Department of Justice and Equality.
8. Query regarding ECF numbers in the Department of Justice and Equality.
9. Insolvency of Ireland – update on staffing numbers and general operating procedures.

#### POA Claims

10. Clarification on the proposed new Code of Discipline for Prison Service Personnel.  
**The Union received a new Draft Code of Discipline on 30th August 2013 since then there have been engagements and exchanges of views with the IPS. This matter is currently on-going.**
11. Claim for the introduction of an agreed procedure/policy document indicating the precise procedures to be adopted in order to have an injury on duty recorded for all grades represented by the Prison Officers' Association. (First submitted in October 2007)  
**This matter is currently on-going.**
12. Claim for the Irish Prison Service to accept applications from Clerk II grades for PASO Grade II assignments in the Irish Prison Service.  
**The IPS was receptive to the Claim however DPER would not sanction the Claim due to the Moratorium on promotions and recruitment in the Civil Service.**

13. Claim that the time accumulated arising from late attendance be deducted from annual leave upon request from the Officer concerned.

**Claim not accepted by the Official Side – Agreed Report recording disagreement recorded**

14. Clarification on the status of the claim from the Official Side for the withdrawal of the environmental allowance for all staff stationed at Portlaoise Prison.

**Third party: The Union forwarded our Counter Statement of Claim on this matter to the Official Side Secretary on Monday 16th December 2013.**

15. Claim for the incorporation of the Industrial Supervisor Allowance into the salary for all Industrial Supervisor Personnel.

**The Union is currently waiting for a bilateral engagement with the Official Side on this Claim however the Official Side does not appear receptive to this Claim.**

16. Claim for the application of incremental progression on promotion following a period of acting in a higher capacity in the substantive new grade.

**This matter is currently on-going.**

Representative to the Partnership Committee. Eight staff members were nominated. A further Office Notice was circulated on 20 May 2013 including a statement of “what I can bring to partnership”. The four candidates with the most votes on 24 May 2013 were duly elected. The membership of the Partnership Committee is now concluded as follows:

Management Representatives	Union Representatives	Staff Representatives
Paula Connolly	Cathal Kelly - PSEU	Roisin Elmonem
Michael Kirrane	Maurice Kenny - CPSU	Samuel Gallagher
Deirdre Ni Neill	Paul McDonnell - AHCPs	Antoinette Gavin
Michael Walsh (Chair)	Peter Ryan - IMPACT/FGE	Fiona O'Sullivan

The four runners-up will form a reserve panel to fill any vacancies for Staff Representatives that may arise over time.

#### (d) Work Placements Schemes

JobBridge (National Internship Scheme) is a scheme that provides work experience placements for interns for a 6 or 9 month period. The aim is to assist in breaking the cycle where jobseekers are unable to get a job without experience, either as new entrants to the labour market after education or training or as unemployed workers wishing to learn new skills.

The Department is actively engaging in the scheme and has already advertised some 50 separate internship opportunities across a range of vocational areas including the legislative area, statistics, procurement, customer relations, finance and general administration. There are currently a total of 22 individuals on placements across the Department. In all cases a mentor is appointed to the intern who provides support and guidance and ensures that the intern benefits from specific learning outcomes, associated with that internship opportunity.

One of the opportunities advertised, 30 placements as Processing Clerks in the Citizenship Division in Tipperary, gave rise to an objection from the CPSU. Agreement was reached to permit a number of temporary uplifts from clerical officer to staff officer. This allows these officers to take on a supervisory role in relation to the interns. The number of uplifts is linked to the number of interns and they will last for the duration of the internship. There is currently one temporary uplift. There are currently 6 interns in place in Citizenship. There are no placements currently being advertised by JobBridge for the Department.

## Departmental Council

6 June 2013

Department of Justice and Equality

51 St. Stephen's Green

### Briefing Document

#### Item 1 – Information items

##### (a) Transforming Public Services

The Official Side Spokesperson will update the Council and answer any questions on the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014.

##### (b) Performance Management and Development System

HR Division will shortly engage with management and staff in relation to the completion of the interim review stage of PMDS for 2013.

##### (c) Partnership

An Office Notice was circulated on 1 May 2013 seeking self-nominations to stand for election as Staff

## **(e) Immigration Control Pilot Project at Dublin Airport**

A business case was submitted to the Dept. of Public Expenditure and Reform for consideration of the roll-out of the Project as a full scale solution for Dublin Airport. Discussions are ongoing.

## **(f) Temporary Clerical Officers**

The Department sought sanction for the appointment of 42 temporary Clerical Officer replacements for:

- (i) Priority vacancies arising from the Shorter Working Year Scheme.
- (ii) Licensing project in the PSRA in Navan.
- (iii) Citizenship project in Tipperary.

The Department received sanction for 38 posts. While this will mean that while we will not be able to make full provisions in all 3 areas, the shortfall is relatively small.

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## **Departmental Council, 10 a.m., 3rd April 2014 Department of Justice and Equality 51 St. Stephen's Green**

### **AGENDA**

#### **All Unions**

1. Information Items
  - (a) Transforming Public Services
  - (b) Performance Management and Development System
  - (c) Partnership
  - (d) Immigration Control Pilot Project at Dublin Airport
  - (e) Merger of the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority.
  - (f) Work Placements Scheme (JobBridge)

#### **POA**

1. Claim for the incorporation of the Industrial Manager's Allowance into salary.

2. Claim for the application of incremental progression on promotion following a period of acting in a higher capacity in the substantive new grade

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## **Departmental Council 3 April 2014 Department of Justice and Equality 51 St. Stephen's Green**

### **Item 1 – Information items**

#### **(a) Transforming Public Services**

The Official Side will update the Council and answer any questions.

#### **(b) Performance Management and Development System**

The completion date for the Annual Review Stage for the 2013 cycle has now passed.

An Office Notice issued during the first week of February informing all staff that the Department would not be migrating to the new ePMDS system for the 2014 cycle. Staff were also requested to create their Goal Settings for 2014 and to meet with their Managers to discuss the performance expected over the coming year. This stage was to be completed by 28 February 2014. HR Division is continuing to engage with management and staff in relation to the completion of any outstanding Goal Setting Forms for 2014.

#### **(c) Partnership**

The Partnership Committee held its third meeting in January. One aspect of the Committee's work programme is to review a range of policy documents commonly used in the Department. A revised Dress Code Policy has been approved by MAC and will be made available shortly. A sub committee has been established to review the ICT Acceptable Usage Policy in consultation with IT Division. The Partnership Committee will meet again on 14 April, 2014.

#### **(d) Immigration Control Pilot Project at Dublin Airport**

Following on from Office Notice 86/2013 - Expression of interest Dublin Airport staff from that competition were

assigned to the Border Management Unit (BMU) INIS with effect from 17th February, 2014. The initial Weeks of their assignment will be taken up with training: a combination of classroom and on the job training. Currently the officers concerned are doing front-desk training at Pier A/D in Terminal 1, Dublin Airport.

The entire qualifying numbers have been drawn from the panel established after the above-mentioned competition: 5 EO and 13 CO. The EOI notice indicated a 6 month probation period after which persons retained would be required to give a commitment to remain in the post for 2 years (subject to any promotion opportunities). While we have no reason to suggest that this will be the case, it is possible that we may have fewer officers available at the end of the probationary period.

There were eleven staff on the pilot programme (3 EO and 8 CO); of that number 2 EO and 2 CO staff will remain to work under the new shift arrangements (having applied under the latest Expression of interest). Therefore, there is little carry-over of staff at the Immigration Control Officer (CO) level, the majority of whom will have no experience of operating in the airport environment. All but two staff (at CO level) that were on the pilot, but are not participating in the shift arrangement, remains to be redeployed – this will take place within the next couple of weeks.

In terms of moving to the new shift arrangement, two shifts will operate to cover the period 07:00 to midnight; Monday to Friday. For the moment staff will remain in Terminal 1 of the airport. It is expected that the shift arrangement will begin no later than the last week of April or earlier if we are satisfied with progress of staff in their training.

#### **(e) Merger of the Equality Authority and the Irish Human Rights Commission**

IHREC Bill has been published. It provides that all staff will become civil servants of the State. Chief Commissioner Position will be advertised again within a few weeks by PAS as indicated previously.

#### **(f) Work Placements Schemes (JobBridge).**

JobBridge (National Internship Scheme) is a scheme that provides work experience placements for interns for a 6 or 9 month period. The aim is to assist in breaking the cycle where jobseekers are unable to get a job without experience, either as new entrants to the labour market after education or training or as unemployed workers wishing to learn new skills. The Department is actively

engaging in the scheme and has already advertised 62 separate internship opportunities across a range of vocational areas including the legislative area, statistics, procurement, customer relations, finance and general administration. There are currently a total of 5 individuals on placements across the Department. In all cases a mentor is appointed to the intern who provides support and guidance and ensures that the intern benefits from specific learning outcomes, associated with that internship opportunity.

#### **Items/Claims Raised on the Agenda by the Official Side**

1. Information Items : Transforming Public Services, Performance Management and Development System, Partnership, the Immigration Control Pilot Project at Dublin Airport, Merger of the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority and Work Placements Schemes (JobBridge)

#### **Items/Claims Raised on the Agenda by the Staff Side 5th June 2014**

##### **CPSU/IMPACT**

2. Claim which seeks to have the Flexi-Time System that is available to members in the Civil Service made available to members throughout the Probation Service (New Claim).
3. Query on the financial implications for FGE/IMPACT Grades arising from the introduction of the Department of Justice Mobility Policy (69/2014).

##### **POA Claims**

4. Claim for the incorporation of the Industrial Manager's Allowance into salary.
5. Claim for the application of incremental progression on promotion following a period of acting in a higher capacity in the substantive new grade
6. Claim for the commencement of recruitment at RPO level into the Irish Prison Service (New Claim).

# Report from NEC December 2013-June 2014

Pay and Allowances in the normal course of events is the major item on the Agenda of the Headquarters Report at meetings of the National Executive Council. Therefore as the major item pay and allowances is primarily dealt with before any of the many other items placed on the agenda for meetings of the National Executive Council. As matters regarding Pay and Allowances are comprehensively outlined in a stand alone section in this magazine they will not form part of the Report on meetings of the National Executive Council outlined in this Section. There is a summary outlined below of the many other issues dealt with at meetings of the National Executive Council held from December 2013 – June 2014.

## **Meeting held Thursday 5th December and Friday 6th December 2013**

### **Justice Departmental Council**

The NEC was informed that there was a meeting of the Justice Departmental Council held on the morning of Thursday 5th December 2013, the Agenda for this meeting and a copy of the briefing document issued at the Departmental Council was issued in the executive file. The NEC was briefed regarding the outcome of the Justice Departmental Council meeting.

### **Sick Leave**

The NEC was informed that the POA received correspondence on Wednesday 27th November 2013, from the Chairperson of the ICTU Public Service Committee stating that DPER confirmed that the Minister has determined that the new sick leave scheme will be rolled

out for the general public service from the 1st January 2014. DPER will be circulating a communication to HR Departments with the current draft on critical illnesses with the caveat that there are some outstanding matters being referred to the Labour Court.

The matters being referred back to the Labour Court relate to issues concerning mental health, disability and pregnancy related illness. As it was not possible to reach agreement on these matters they have been referred back to the Labour Court for a binding and final determination. The POA received notification on Wednesday 4th December 2013 that the Labour Court hearing on these three issues is scheduled for Monday 16th December 2013. The NEC was briefed regarding the up to date position regarding the new sick leave scheme.

### **Equality Cases**

The NEC was informed that it was reported to Annual Delegate Conference 2012 that the Union was assisting three members with Gender Equality cases. The dispute related to three female members being allegedly discriminated against by the Irish Prison Service, on the grounds of gender, in terms of section 6(2) and contrary to Section 8 of the Employment Equality Acts, 1988 and 2008, in relation to promotion, training and conditions of employment.

In the three members cases the Equality Officer found that the respondent's selection process for allowance carrying posts did not comply with Equality legislation. There was a copy of the decision from the Equality Tribunal issued in the executive file.

### **Category A Complaints**

Following on from a meeting held with the Unions legal advisors on Thursday 12th September 2013 and further information supplied by the POA to our legal advisors in respect of a number of matters relating to Category A Complaints the POA has now been furnished with a summary of our legal advisors views on the matters the Union raised regarding Category A Complaints. The NEC was briefed regarding this matter at the meeting and they directed that more extensive legal advice be sought.

### **Proposed Union Training Course**

The NEC was informed that there would be an advanced training course held in the New Year to run from Wednesday 5th February 2013 to Friday 7th February 2013 for executive council members and substitute executive council members. The course will take place at the Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, County Westmeath. This matter was discussed at the meeting.

### **St Patrick's Institution**

The NEC was informed that there were three meetings held on Monday 2nd December, Tuesday 3rd December and Thursday 5th December 2013 regarding the future role of St Patrick's Institution and related matters. The NEC was updated at the meeting.

### **Secondment to the Probation and Welfare Service**

The NEC was informed that the IPS is proposing to assign a member of staff that is a grade represented by the POA from the IPS to a co-located Inter-Agency (IPS/Probation Service) Unit. The proposed new

assignment will be on a secondment basis, and will be restricted to staff at Prison Officer and Assistant Chief Officer level. It is intended, subject to agreement, to invite expressions of interest from staff at these grades.

The National Executive Council was also informed that all applicants will be required to go through an assessment process to determine suitability for the position. Any staff assigned to the Unit as a result of this process will remain attached to the Irish Prison Service. The IPS sought the Unions views on this proposal, as it is their preference to seek expressions of interest for this post.

### **Health and Safety**

The NEC was informed that there were a number of meetings held recently with the Irish Prison Service regarding the structure of how issues of concern which affect the health and safety of staff should be raised and progressed. Correspondence was issued in the executive file arising from a recent meeting in the IPS Training College with the Health and Safety Representatives, where the procedure was outlined with regard to how a Health and Safety Representative should raise an issue locally and then based on no local resolution, forward it to POA Headquarters where it can be addressed at the national health and safety forum.

### **Pensions**

At the last NEC meeting held on Tuesday 19th November 2013 matters were raised under Any Other Business by the Midlands Branch regarding pensions for staff that joined the Prison Service post 1995. Following a general discussion on this matter it was agreed that a detailed explanation on pension arrangements would be arranged for a future NEC meeting. Mr Mark Solon of Cornmarket was available to the Union to attend at the December

NEC meeting so he gave a detailed briefing on Pensions to the NEC.

### **Finance**

The NEC was informed that there were a number of financial matters to be discussed at the meeting including:

- Annual Conference 2014
- Retirement Function, 5th December 2013
- Updated O2 offer

### **AOB**

The Dochas Centre raised the issue of staffing numbers which are being allowed to go below agreed levels on a constant basis. The NEC directed that the local Branch be assisted with this difficulty.

### **Meeting held Thursday 27th February 2014**

#### **Justice Departmental Council**

The National Executive Council was informed that there was a meeting of the Justice Departmental Council held on Thursday 6th February 2014. The Agenda for this meeting and a copy of the briefing document issued at the Departmental Council was issued in the executive file. The National Executive Council was briefed regarding the outcome of the Justice Departmental Council meeting.

### **Sick Leave**

The National Executive Council was informed that on Wednesday 4th December 2013 the Labour Court convened for a hearing on the three issues that were referred back to the Labour Court in respect of the Critical Incident Protocol for Public Servants under the new sick leave arrangements. The three issues relate to matters concerning mental health, disability and pregnancy related illness. Following the Labour Court

hearing representatives from DPER confirmed that the new sick leave scheme for Public Servants would not be introduced from 1st January 2014.

The NEC were also informed that the documentation issued at the recent NEC training course on the new sick leave regulations was issued in the executive file and they were informed that DPER had now confirmed that the start date for the new sick leave arrangements is to be Monday 31st March 2014.

### **Dignity at Work**

The NEC was informed that the Dignity at Work initiative is continuing with the various sub groups now reporting back with specific documentation to the Central Steering Committee. It is envisaged at the Central Steering Committee that a pilot project will shortly commence. There were a number of matters discussed by the NEC at the meeting and it was confirmed that all Branches will be updated with regard to future developments when more information is available.

### **Category A Complaints**

The NEC was informed that following on from a meeting with the Unions legal advisors and an individual member in late December in respect of matters relating to Historical Category A Complaints that some progress had been made on this matter. The NEC was briefed on this matter at the meeting.

### **Annual Mass**

The NEC was informed that this year's Annual Remembrance Mass for deceased members, deceased former members and deceased relatives of members of the Irish Prison Service will be held on Thursday 24th April 2014, St Joseph's Church, Berkley Road, Phibsboro, Dublin 7 at 8.15pm.

## Health and Safety

The National Executive Council was informed that there was a National Health and Safety meeting held between the POA and the IPS where a number of items were discussed which affect the Health & Safety of all staff. The NEC was briefed on the following items General risk assessments, Fire and emergency plans, Health screening for staff: hepatitis, Irish Prison Service smoking policy, Safety checks on PSEC vehicles, Shelters for staff in inclement weather and Health & Safety representatives, their respective training and information gathering.

## Health Screening Programme

The NEC was informed that the Health Screening Programme for IPS Staff was launched on the 26th September 2014 in the IPS Training College Brian Stack House. CPL the company who will be undertaking the Health Screening of staff gave a briefing to the NEC and the documentation relating to this matter was issued in the executive file.

## Finance

There were a number of financial matters discussed at the meeting and a full briefing was given on the following

- POA Investments
- Legal cases
- Service providers

## AOB

The Midlands Branch raised the issue of the Management Structures at Open Centres.

The Mountjoy Branch raised matters relating to issues on the C Division.

The Portlaoise Branch raised matters relating to the Annual Mass for deceased members.

The Wheatfield Branch raised

issues relating to the Trades Transformation Report

## Meeting held Wednesday 2nd April 2014

### Sick Leave

The NEC was updated on the operation of the new sick leave scheme for the Public Service which was introduced with effect from Monday 31st March 2014. They were also issued with a copy of IPS statistics on sick leave that were forwarded to the POA recently by the IPS.

### Policies

The NEC was informed that the IPS would be implementing two Policies for all employees in the areas of Social Media and Computer Use. The aforementioned Policies were issued in the executive file.

### Promotion Competitions

The NEC was informed that the Civil Service General Council issued an Agreed Report on Wednesday 18th December 2013 regarding eligibility criteria for Promotion of Staff in the Civil Service. This agreed report has implications for the Irish Prison Service as the previous criteria for promotion, that is holding a specific grade under or in line with the grade being advertised can no longer be used regarding eligibility criteria for Promotion. There was a Copy of Agreed Report 1526 issued in the executive file.

There was also a copy of a recent draft Circular forwarded to the Union for our observations relating to the position of Chief Officer 11. This will be the first internal Prison Service competition to be run since Agreed Report 1526 came into operation, as a result these matters were discussed by the NEC and they outlined that they had difficulties with the draft Circular relating to the

position of Chief Officer 11. The NEC directed that the National Officers raise the concerns outlined at the meeting with the IPS.

### Relationships between Analogous Grades

The NEC was informed that the Irish Prison Service had forwarded a number of Proposals to the Union in the context of National Monitoring and Review regarding lateral movement between analogous grades, AH Bands and A/L for WTOs and Annual Leave grade seniority pools. These matters were discussed by the NEC who directed that the National Officers have further exploratory discussions with the IPS regarding these matters and report back when further information is at hand. No decision would be taken regarding any of the above matters until the National Executive Council had all the required information.

### Uniform

The NEC was informed that the winter hat is now being distributed to all Prisons and should be available for Staff to have issued. They were also updated on issues relating to Rank markings.

### Finance

There were a number of financial matters discussed at the meeting and a full briefing was given on the following:

- Accounts for 2013
- POA Investment Policy

## AOB

The Portlaoise Branch raised a number of matters relating to the recent PSSG Report.

The Wheatfield Branch raised a number of matters relating to the nursing area.

## Meeting held 11th June 2014

### Justice Departmental Council

The NEC was informed that there was a meeting of the Justice Departmental Council held on Thursday 5th June 2014. The Agenda for this meeting and a copy of the briefing document circulated at the Justice Departmental Council meeting was issued in the executive file. The NEC was briefed regarding the outcome of the Justice Departmental Council meeting.

The NEC was also informed that the Union received notification on Friday 6th June 2014 that the Arbitration Hearing in relation to the IPS Environmental Allowance due to be held on 27th June 2014 has been postponed. The Secretary to the Arbitration board will proceed to re-arrange the hearing once a new Board has been established following the expiry of the current Board at the end of this month. There was a site visit held to Portlaoise Prison on Tuesday 27th May 2014 to assist with the presentation of the Unions Claim to maintain the Portlaoise Prison Environmental Allowance.

### Chief Officer Competition

The NEC was informed that the Circular relating to the promotion competition for the position of Chief Officer 11 was issued in the last executive file. Following the short listing process a number of queries were received at POA Headquarters regarding the competition. The Union sought clarification on these matters and all Branch Secretaries were issued with the answers received from the IPS on Wednesday 4th June 2014. This correspondence was issued in the executive file.

### Policy Documents

The NEC was informed that the Union submitted a number of Claims in October 2009 to the C&A Scheme in particular:

- Claim for the introduction of clear, precise and fair procedures to be used in dealing with the issue of sick leave/absenteeism in the Irish Prison Service.
- Claim for the introduction of an agreed procedure/policy document outlining the precise procedures to be adopted in order to have an injury on duty recorded for all grades represented by the Prison Officers' Association.

Following the submitting of these claims the Union engaged the services of Ms J Kitt and Ms S Corbett, Human Resource Management Consultants to assist us in compiling an attendance management policy based on best practice. The Union submitted our Policy to the IPS in January 2010 and engagement commenced with the IPS on issues relating to our Claims. As work on these matters was complete three Policy Documents were issued in the executive file to be discussed in detail at the NEC meeting.

### Bullying and Harassment

The NEC was informed that there is a review currently ongoing by DPER re Bullying and Harassment in the Civil Service. There is a major emphasis now been placed on the use of Mediation to resolve Bullying and Harassment matters, the IPS have issued a Draft document on this issue which was issued in the executive file.

### POA Income Continuance Policy

The NEC was informed that the new Public Service Sick Pay Arrangements have changed with effect from 31st March 2014. The POA Income Continuance Policy (ICP) is due to be reviewed in late 2014. An interim measure has been agreed between the POA, Cornmarket and Friends First which allows for the dovetailing of

the new sick pay arrangements until the review takes place. Correspondence on this matter was issued in the executive file and a full briefing was given at the NEC meeting.

### Employee Assistance Programme

The NEC was informed that there was a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Employee Assistance Programme held on Tuesday 10th June 2014. The agenda for this meeting and the Annual Report for the Employee Assistance Programme were issued in the executive file.

### Merit Award Scheme

The NEC was informed that the Merit Award Scheme is now in existence for over twelve months and is due for review. There was a full briefing given on the events of the past twelve months and there was correspondence on the Merit Award Scheme issued in the executive file.

### Short Notice Leave

The NEC was informed that Agreement had been reached with the IPS for the introduction of a Short Notice Leave Scheme. The scheme will be introduced on a pilot basis for six months with correspondence contained in the file.

### Magazine

The NEC was informed that the closing date for submissions for the summer edition of the Prison Officer magazine is **Friday 27th June 2014**. Articles should be submitted by email to [admin@poa.ie](mailto:admin@poa.ie)

### Finance

There were a number of financial matters discussed by the NEC at the meeting.

## Dublin Prison Staff win the Dublin Staff Relay 2014

What an exciting event which took place yesterday evening in the Phoenix Park as the Dublin prison staff running under the Wheatfield banner won the prestigious award of the Dublin Staff relay of 5 x 5 kilometres in a winning time of 1 hour 30 minutes.

The winning team took off from the gun with Tommy Buggle in a time of 18:03 handing the baton over to Shane McCarthy in a super time of 18:09 third man up was Anthony O'Brien coming in at 18:34 and on to Philip Sheridan in a time of 18:52 which left the team lying in third place, where up came Fergal Swaine with what can only be described as an outstanding performance to claw back a deficit of 1 minute 27 second to a superb time of 16:46 and crossing the line as the 2014 Winners of the Dublin staff relay. A great achievement to a team that had been put together at late notice due to injuries.

This event attracted a record number of 950 corporate teams with a total of 4750 runners

Congratulations and well done to all. We wish a speedy recovery back to race fitness to Andrew Friel and John Brennan.



The winning team been presented with their prize by former Republic of Ireland footballer Jason McAteer.

Thank you to Governor Pat Kavanagh and others in Wheatfield for your generosity and support.



Willie Gould and Seamus Cahill getting to know the Belle of Ballincollig at the 5k event ,



Nora O Flynn, Kevin O Connor, Adrian Crowley and Mary O Connell at the Pzifers 6 mile event.



Jason Hennessy, Anthony O'Brien, Donal Murphy and Finbarr O Dwyer at the John Buckley Sports 5k.



Tim Kelleher, Adrian Crowley and Eddie Byrne at the Merk Millipore 6k.



Vinnie Faulkner, John Touhy and Declan Gill prior to the Cork City marathon .



Willie Gould happy man after completing the Cork City Half Marathon

## Cork City Marathon



Right: Norma, Sarah, Genna, who took part in the Cork City Marathon Relay.

# 2014 INTER PRISONS ROAD RACE John Sheehan Memorial

**On:** Friday 22nd August at 8pm.

**Venue:** Portlaoise

**Distance:** 5k Road Race

**Entry Fee:** 10 euros

**ENTRIES WILL BE AT BRIAN STACK HOUSE**



This will be a team event with teams of 4 for men and teams of 3 for ladies.



Refreshments will be provided afterwards in the dining area.



The John Sheehan Trophy will be presented to the winner of this race.

## IPS/BHAA 5k Trail Race

The annual Irish Prison Service/Business House's Athletic Association Trail Race was held on Tuesday 24th June at 8pm in the Phoenix Park.

The BHAA is a voluntary organisation set up to facilitate about 20 races each year set up by various companies and Government services which allow the members compete against each other in individual and teams.

This was the 5th year of the event and once again was a great success.

The race takes place on a 2.5k trail around the GAA pitches and runs under the trees parallel with Chesterfield Avenue and this year there were over 230 runners. Big thanks to OPW who give us permission to use the park and to the Defence Forces who allow use to use the Army clubhouse in the park for race HQ.

The winner this year was Eoin Callaghan Secondary Teachers in a time of 15mins. 47secs. In second was Patrick Roche Army just 5secs later and Eoin's brother Neil was 3rd.

In the Ladies section we had Yvonne McAuley TCD in a time of 19.05 followed by Alma Hanevy Pharmacist 19.49 and in 3rd Tara Kennedy 20.12.

A large group from the Army and Navy travelled up from Cork to take part and took several prizes for their effort.

Well done to the group of staff from Wheatfield and Cloverhill who were back again for the second year, it was great to see them and thank them for their support.



We also had group from the Conrad Hotel in Dublin who were participating as part of their fundraiser week for Heart Child Ireland. The Conrad Hotel Group throughout the world were doing the same for local charities and we were delighted that they chose our race as their Dublin event.

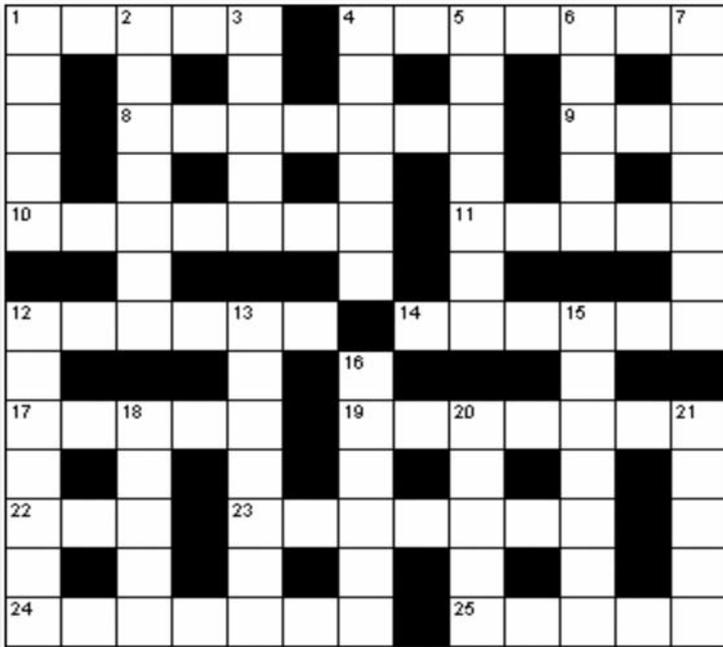
Staff member Noreen Carey Wheatfield representing the Governor presented the prizes and not only that but she helped with registration and then served out copious amounts of tea, scones, sandwiches and biscuits to all the tired runners.

Thank you very much Noreen and all the staff who helped on the night some even brought family members to assist. This event could not take place without this help and is a credit to all involved.

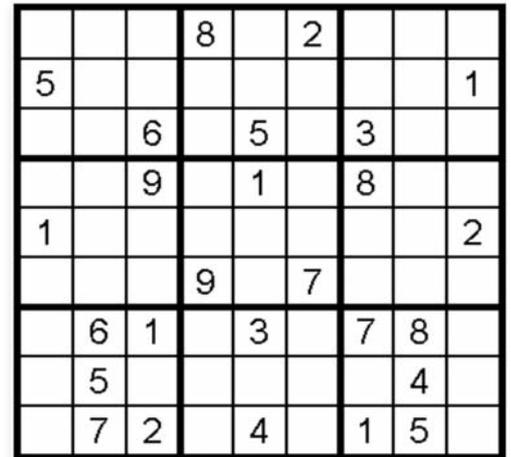
A special thanks to the Governors of Arbour Hill, Mountjoy and Wheatfield for the supplies of food and water, each year they come up with the goods.



# BRAIN EXERCISES



## S U D O K U



PLEASE SEND COMPLETED SUDOKU ENTRIES TO  
**The Editor**  
**Prison Officer Magazine,**  
**18, Merrion Square, Dublin 2.**  
 5 prizes of €25 will be awarded to the winning entries.

PLEASE SEND COMPLETED  
 CROSSWORD ENTRIES TO  
**The Editor,**  
**Prison Officer Magazine,**  
**18, Merrion Square,**  
**Dublin 2.**  
 5 prizes of €25 will be  
 awarded to winning  
 entries.

### ACROSS

1. Gem (5)
4. Shade of yellow tinged with orange (7)
8. Symetrically arranged (7)
9. Pouch (3)
10. Two-wheeled vehicle (7)
11. Publish (5)

12. Patisserie (6)
14. Syntactic category (6)
17. Wanderer (5)
19. Stone pillar (7)
22. Mesh (3)
23. Floorshow (7)
24. Stayed clear from (7)
25. Groups of cattle (5)

### DOWN

1. Jests (5)
2. Male witch or demon (7)
3. Source of illumination (5)
4. Remuneration (6)
5. Surreptitious (7)
6. Hazards (5)

7. Type of power (7)
12. Very rich vein of precious ore (7)
13. Made smaller (7)
15. Vagrant (7)
16. Prohibit (6)
18. Slogan (5)
20. Planet (5)
21. Praise (5)

### Winners Crossword:

Dave Philpott	Cork	€25
Martin Casey	Cork	€25
Dennis Collins	Limerick	€25
John Rogers	Wheatfield	€25
Brian Martin	Cork	€25

### Winners Sudoku:

Dave Philpott	Cork	€25
Martin Casey	Cork	€25
Eamonn Stapleton	Limerick	€25
John Rogers	Wheatfield	€25
Brian Martin	Cork	€25

**PRIZES KINDLY SPONSORED BY AXA INSURANCE**

# IT HAPPENED AT THE MAIN GATE

**During the Irish War of Independence (1919 – 1921) hundreds of I.R.A. supporters were imprisoned in every prison in Ireland. Some managed to escape and others were rescued by armed men.**

An interesting report of a failed attempt to rescue one such supporter was sent to the General Prisons' Board, Dublin Castle, by the Governor of Waterford Prison (Captain Hubert Cyril Burke 1884 – 1965) on the 17th February 1922.

"I beg to report that about 4.00 p.m. yesterday evening a man named T. MacDonagh came to the Prison to visit John O'Brien of Ballyporeen, and was admitted to the room inside the gate for the purpose of being searched. Warder Doyle the Officer on duty at the extern gate when proceeding to search the visitor commenced by asking him courteously to hand up anything he had in his possession till he would return from the visit. The visitor suddenly put his hand in his pocket, drew a revolver and shouted at Warder Doyle "put your hands up, I have this for you". Warder Doyle immediately grappled with him. The visitor suddenly wrenched himself free and covered Warder Doyle with his revolver. Doyle backed to the window put his hands through the window glass and threw the keys into the prison ground cutting his hand in process. The visitor then left the room and was between the gates which were locked. I was in the office when I heard the warder's whistle sounding the alarm, and was on the scene immediately. I at once ordered all prisoners to be locked up and keys put into the safe and the keys of the safe thoroughly secured. I also immediately communicated with the Police at Headquarters and out-city stations. Both Police and Military arrived about 4.50 p.m.

Warder O'Hare who was on duty at the inner gate gave me the key and managed to bring me the keys of the outer gate from where Warder Doyle threw them. In the meantime the visitor who was locked between the two gates was endeavouring to break the lock of the outer gate and was using

all sorts of threats to Warder Doyle to let him out. On finding himself so safely entrapped he surrendered himself to me by throwing his two revolvers through the gate when I ordered him to do so. When I asked him what he meant by his action he replied "I am a soldier of the I.R.A. entitled to have these weapons in my possession." I then brought him into the visitors' room and handed him over to the custody of the County Inspector R.I.C. whose custody he still remains in pending further enquiry.

It is entirely due to the cool and courageous action of Warder Doyle who has always shown himself to be a worthy, zealous officer and whose devotion to duty at the risk of his life on this occasion prevented the visitor from carrying out his intentions. Warder O'Hare also behaved with great coolness and at great danger to himself retrieved the keys of the outer gate from the ground.

I am enclosing reports from the Warders concerned. The man is still in the custody of the R.I.C. at the Prison."

(Sd) H.C. Burke.

Both Officers had "favourable records" entered on their conduct sheets by order of the General Prisons' Board on the 30th March 1922.