

**DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTS, 1997 AND 2003**

**GUIDE TO THE FUNCTIONS AND RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT
SECTION 15 REFERENCE BOOK
GUIDE TO THE RULES AND PRACTICES OF THE DEPARTMENT
SECTION 16 REFERENCE BOOK
REVISED EDITION – JULY 2007**

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GUIDE TO THE FUNCTIONS AND RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997 - SECTION 15

1. INTRODUCTION

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act establishes three new statutory rights:

- a legal right for each person to access information held by public bodies;
- a legal right for each person to have official information relating to him/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- a legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting oneself.

The Act asserts the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals.

This manual is prepared in accordance with publication requirements set out in Section 15 of the Act. Its purpose is to facilitate access to official information held by this Department, by outlining the structure and functions of the Department; information on the classes of records we hold and information on how to make a request to the Department under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

Routinely Available Information

The Freedom of Information Act is designed to allow public access to information held by public bodies that is NOT routinely available through other sources.

Access to information under the Act is subject to certain exemptions and involves specific procedures and time limits. This manual provides a guide to the structure of the Department so as to help you access information under the Freedom of Information Acts.

2. DESCRIPTION AND FUNCTIONS

Taoiseach as Head of Government

As stated in the Department's Strategy Statement, the constitutional role of the Taoiseach is as Head of the Government, which exercises the executive power of the State and is collectively responsible for the Departments of State. Accordingly the Taoiseach has a leadership role and a corresponding involvement in all major policy areas, for example Northern Ireland, economic and social issues, the Information Society, and European and wider international policy.

Department of the Taoiseach Overall Strategic Objectives

- supporting the Taoiseach;
- supporting the Government.

There are certain key tasks which the Department has always carried out, such as providing a Secretariat to the Government, liaison with the President and the Houses of the Oireachtas, provision of Government Press and Information Services, and of Private Office, Corporate Support and Protocol Services for the Taoiseach.

The Department has also been involved in the key policy priorities of the Government of the day. As the Taoiseach's role has evolved and developed over time in response to new national priorities and changing circumstances, this has been reflected in the policy development priorities of the Department of the Taoiseach.

3. MISSION STATEMENT

"To provide the Government, Taoiseach and Ministers of State with the support, policy advice and information necessary for the effective conduct of Government and for the dynamic leadership, co-ordination and strategic direction of Government policy – from policy formulation through to decision-making, implementation and monitoring."

4. STATEMENT OF POLICY WITH REGARD TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

“The Department undertakes to use its best endeavors to hold confidential, any information provided by you, subject to the Department's obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Act which comes into force on 21 April, 1998. This will apply in particular to commercial tenders.

Should you wish that any of the information supplied by you should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity, you should, when providing the information, advise us of this and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. The Department will consult with you about this sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

If information is not identified as sensitive, with supporting reasons, then it is liable to be released in response to an FOI request.”

5. HOW TO GET INFORMATION

5.1 Applications under the FOI Act

Under the FOI Act, anyone is entitled to apply for access to information not otherwise publicly available. Within the framework established by the Freedom of Information Act, each person has a right to:

- access to records of the Department;
- correction of personal information relating to oneself held by the Department, where it is inaccurate, incomplete or misleading;
- access to reasons for decisions made by the Department directly affecting oneself.

The following records come within the scope of the Act:

- all records relating to personal information held by the Department irrespective of when created;
- personnel records of serving staff with effect from 21 April, 1995;
- all other records created from 21 April, 1998;

- any other records necessary to the understanding of a current record.

The Department is generally obliged to decide on the request within 4 weeks (i.e. week means a period of 5 consecutive week-days).

Applications for information under the FOI Act should be addressed to:

Ms. Patricia Williams,
Freedom of Information Liaison Officer,
Department of the Taoiseach, Government Buildings, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 2.

Telephone: 353-1-6194154
Lo-Call: 1890-227227 (ext. 4154)
Fax: 353-1-6194257
Email: foi@taoiseach.gov.ie

Applications must be in writing and should indicate that the information is sought under the Freedom of Information Act.

If information is desired in a particular format e.g. photocopy, computer disk, etc. this should also be mentioned in your application.

Please give as much detail as possible to enable the staff in the Department to identify the record. If you have difficulty in identifying the precise records that you require, the FOI Officer will be happy to assist you in preparing your request.

See separate note about fees at section 6.

5.2 Assistance to Persons with a Disability

The FOI Officer is available to provide assistance to persons with a disability to exercise their rights under the FOI Act (e.g. accepting oral requests from requesters who are unable to read, print and/or write due to their disability, enabling the requester to inspect or have records explained to him or her).

5.3 Rights of Review and Appeal

The Act sets out a series of exemptions to protect sensitive information where its disclosure may damage key interests of the State or of third parties. Where a Department invokes these provisions to withhold information, the decision may be appealed. Decisions in relation to deferral of access, charges, forms of access, etc., may also be the subject of appeal. Details of appeals mechanisms are as follows:**5.4 Internal Review**

You may seek an internal review of the initial decision that will be carried out by an official at a higher level if:

- you are dissatisfied with the initial response received e.g. refusal of information, method of access, charges, etc.; or,
- you have not received a reply within 4 weeks of your initial application. This is deemed to be a refusal of your request and allows you to proceed to internal review.

Requests for internal review should be submitted in writing to:

Ms. Patricia Williams, contact details are provided in paragraph 5.1 above.

Such a request for internal review must be submitted within 4 weeks of the initial decision. The Department must complete the review within 3 weeks. The internal review must normally be completed before an appeal may be made to the Information Commissioner.

5.5 Review by the Information Commissioner

Following completion of the internal review, you may seek an independent review of the decision from the Information Commissioner. Also if you have not received a reply to your application for internal review within 3 weeks, this is deemed to be a refusal and you may appeal the matter to the Commissioner.

Appeals in writing may be made directly to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

Office of the Information Commissioner,
18 Lower Leeson Street,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 353-1-6785222 Fax: 353-1- 6610570
Email: foi@ombudsman.irlgov.ie
Website: <http://www.irlgov.ie/oic/>

6. FEES

There are basically 2 types of charges that apply under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. Fees that accompany a request for a record or a review of a decision:

A fee of €15 must accompany a request for records other than records containing only personal information relating to oneself. A reduced fee of €10 applies in relation to such a request if you are covered by a medical card. Neither fee applies if the request is for personal information relating to oneself.

A fee of €75 must accompany most applications for internal review of a decision of a public body. A reduced fee of €25 applies if you are covered by a medical card. There is no fee for internal review applications concerning only personal information relating to oneself or in relation to a decision to impose a fee or deposit.

A fee of €150 must accompany most applications for review by the Information Commissioner. A reduced fee of €50 applies if you are covered by a medical card or in relation to a review concerning certain third party information. There is no fee for review applications concerning only personal information relating to oneself or in relation to decisions to impose fees or deposits.

2 Fees/deposits in relation to the cost of search and retrieval and copying of records released.

Requesters can also be charged for the time spent finding records that are to be given to them, and for any photocopying costs incurred by the public body in providing material to the requester. Such costs are very unlikely to arise in the case of personal information. Requesters cannot be charged for the time spent on deciding whether or not to grant their request.

A deposit may be payable where the total fee is likely to exceed €50.79. In these circumstances, the public body must, if requested, assist the member of the public to amend the request so as to reduce or eliminate the amount of the deposit.

Charges for search and retrieval and copying may be waived in the following circumstances:

- where the cost of collecting and accounting for the fee would exceed the amount of the fee;
- where the information would be of particular assistance to the understanding of an issue of national importance; or,

- in the case of personal information, where such charges would not be reasonable having regard to the means of the requester.

7. STRUCTURAL BREAKDOWN BY DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT:

This section gives a breakdown of the internal structure and organisation of the Department. It describes the functions of each Division and also describes the categories of information held, and the ways in which they can be accessed, either through existing publications or through the procedures set out in the Act.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH ORGANISATION CHART

THE ORGANISATION CHART IS TEMPORARILY UNAVAILABLE DUE TO INTERNAL REORGANISATION OF STAFF AND FUNCTIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT. THE CHART WILL BE INSERTED BY SEPTEMBER 2007

As civil servants use terminology to describe their work and the information they hold which may not be familiar to the general public, an explanatory glossary of the more common elements of this terminology which are repeated in the following sections is set out at the end of this document at Appendix 2, page 27.

7.1 GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE GOVERNMENT, AND PROTOCOL AND GENERAL DIVISION

GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT AND OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE GOVERNMENT

FUNCTIONS

- To provide a Secretariat for the Government (and any appropriate Cabinet Committees) to ensure the efficient and orderly conduct of business, including notification to Ministers' offices of decisions of Government;
- The maintenance of records on the submission of matters to Government and conclusions thereon;
- To assist the Taoiseach in the observance of constitutional and legal requirements of his office in relation to the Government and the President;
- Compilation of weekly PQ listings for the Department, and a database of submissions to and rulings of the Chair in relation to same;
- Provision of secretariat support to the Secretary General.

CLASSES OF RECORDS

- Memoranda for Government;
- Government decisions;
- Minutes and papers in relation to Government meetings (these minutes reflect in full the formal decisions recorded at Government but do not contain details of consideration given to any proposal submitted);
- Cabinet Handbook;
- Inner Bar admissions; and

- State Papers e.g. warrants of appointment, letters of accreditation, etc.
- General correspondence.

CONTACT:

- Anthony Cummins, Telephone: (01) 6194089

PROTOCOL AND GENERAL DIVISION

FUNCTIONS

- State Protocol including protocol for the Taoiseach and Ministers of State attached to this Department;
- Relations between the President and Government including ongoing liaison with the Office of Secretary to the President;
- Liaison with Office of the Attorney General, Chief State Solicitor's Office, Office of the Director of Public Prosecution and the Law Reform Commission;
- Assisting implementation of the Government's legislation programme and the Programme of Oireachtas Reform;
- Arranging for Enrolment and printing of texts of the Constitution;
- Liaison with Tribunals of Enquiry;
- Freedom of Information Liaison Office.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Files and papers relating to the foregoing functions;
- Most personal records consist only of names and addresses (used for issue of invitations to official functions);
- A very small number of more detailed personal records are kept in relation to persons selected for appointment to positions in State Law Offices.

CONTACT:

- Protocol: Mary Preece/Miriam Dollard, Telephone: (01) 6194121
- General: Sile de Burca, Telephone: (01) 6194278
- Freedom of Information: Patricia Williams, FOI Liaison Officer, Telephone (01) 6194154

7.2 GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE AND GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE

FUNCTIONS:

- Provides information to the media and public on Government matters;
- The Government Press Secretary advises the Taoiseach on media relations.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

Listings of all:

- Ministers, Ministers of State and CV's;
- TDs by address and constituency;
- Senators;
- Departmental Secretaries General;
- Private Secretaries to Ministers and Ministers of State;
- Council of State members
- European Parliament members;
- Current Government statements/press releases/speeches given by Taoiseach and Chief Whip;

- All reports issued through GIS on behalf of Divisions within the Department, NESC Reports, NESF Reports, CSO statistics.

CONTACT:

- Kate O'Toole, Telephone: (01) 6194130

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES - COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

FUNCTIONS:

- The Communications Unit provides a media reference information service for Government Ministers and their Departments

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Electronic and/or hard copies of records of news summaries and transcripts

CONTACT:

- Kate O'Toole, Telephone: (01) 6194130

7.3 NORTHERN IRELAND AND INTERNATIONAL DIVISION

FUNCTIONS:

- Supports the Taoiseach in carrying out his responsibilities in this priority area and co-ordinates in this regard, with other key Departments, especially the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Justice, Equality and
- Law Reform
- Works on strategic policy formulation, development and communication;
- Supports the Taoiseach's meetings and contacts with relevant key players;
- In conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs, co-ordinates implementation of the Good Friday Agreement

- Supports the Taoiseach's participation in the North-South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council;
- Supports the Taoiseach in his contacts with the United States

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Northern Ireland Peace Process and the implementation of both the Good Friday Agreement and St. Andrews Agreement
- North/South co-operation
- Co-operation and Support Programmes
- Records relating to Independent Commission of Inquiry into Dublin/Monaghan and Dundalk bombings and other related inquiries
- Records relating to the Commission of Investigation (Dublin and Monaghan Bombings 1974);
- Confidence and Security related issues
- International involvement of the Taoiseach (USA);
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding with Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Administration of the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust Act, 1988;
- Administration of financial assistance for Commemoration Projects and Events
- Co-ordination and Divisional Administration.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations, 1998 (Good Friday Agreement)
- Joint Statements and Declarations by the British and Irish Governments on the Northern Ireland Peace Process 1998-2006
- St. Andrews Agreement 2006

- Joint Communiqués from Plenary Meetings of the North/South Ministerial Council and the British Irish InterGovernmental Conference
- Dáil Debates (periodical) which include Taoiseach's replies to questions on Northern Ireland
- Speeches and articles by the Taoiseach
- Published reports of inquiries
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Ireland and of Newfoundland and Labrador.

CONTACT:

- Cathal Hunter, Telephone: (01) 6194110

7.4 EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

FUNCTIONS:

- Supports the Taoiseach in his role as a member of the European Council and in respect of his other European and international responsibilities;
- Co-ordinates and contributes to the development of Government policy and overall strategy in relation to Ireland's role in EU issues (in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and other key Departments);
- Identifies and responds to current and prospective items on the European agenda which affect Ireland's core interests;
- Monitors and where necessary co-ordinates the implementation of Government policy in relation to these issues.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Divisional Administration
- European Council Meetings
- E.U. External Relations
- E.U. Sectoral Policies (e.g. Enlargement, IGC, Employment)
- E.U. Conventions and Treaties
- International Relations, including with the UN .

CONTACT:

Aileen Shanahan, Telephone (01)6194211

7.5 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION

FUNCTIONS:

- Advising the Taoiseach on economic and social policy, including social partnership
- Co-ordinating the development and implementation of policy on key national issues, such as infrastructure, unemployment, poverty and social inclusion
- Liaising with the National Statistics Board, the Central Statistics Office, the National Economic and Social Development Office and the National Competitiveness Council
- Providing a secretariat to the Cabinet Committee on Housing, Infrastructure and PPPs and leading the Cross-Departmental Team on Housing, Infrastructure and PPPs
- Providing a Secretariat to; the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, the Cabinet Committee on Health, the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion and the Senior Officials Group on Health
- Lead role in negotiating, monitoring and overall implementation of the non-pay-related policy objectives set out in the National Programmes agreed with Social Partners
- Providing a Secretariat to the Plenary Meetings of Social Partnership *and to the Steering group on Towards 2016*
- Formulating and co-ordinating policy in relation to the Financial Services Industry
- Providing a secretariat to ; the IFSC Clearing House Group and Working Groups, the Pan European Pensions Task Force and Asset Management Task Force.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Social Partnership Process negotiating, monitoring and implementation of non pay related issues;
- Economic and Budgetary issues, including labour market and infrastructure concerns;
- Social Policy and Inclusion issues, including local development, drugs, homelessness, integration, labour market issues, childcare, travellers and the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion

- Health matters, including health reform and long term care.
- Matters relating to the International Financial Services Industry
- Matters relating to National Economic and Social Development Office (NESDO) and its constituent bodies.
- Consultations with Taskforce on Active Citizenship

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Towards 2016 –Social Partnership Agreement 2006 – 2016
- Cross Departmental Team on Housing, Infrastructure and PPPs annual progress reports
- Lisbon Agenda – Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs
- Building on Success – A strategy for the International Financial Services Industry in Ireland
- Sustaining Progress – Social Partnership Agreement – 2003 to 2005;
- Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF)
- National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 - 2016
- Reports of the National Economic and Social Development Office and its constituent bodies.¹
- Framework for Action on Infrastructure and PPPs;
- Statement of Government Policy: E-Business and International Financial Services;
- Strategy for the Development of the International Financial Services Industry

¹ Available from Government Publications Sales Office, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 Telephone (01) 6613111 or NESDO, 16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

- Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship, March 2007 ²

CONTACT:

Economic Policy: Aedan Hall, Telephone (01) 6194335

Social Policy: Elaine Kelly, Telephone (01) 6194353

Social Partnership: Mary Clare O’Sullivan Telephone (01) 6194012

Taskforce on Active Citizenship: Catherine Eddery, Telephone (01)6194551

7.6 SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP (INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS & WORKPLACE CHANGE) AND PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNISATION DIVISION

FUNCTIONS:

Social Partnership: (Industrial Relations & Workplace Change)

- Leading role in negotiation, monitoring and overall implementation of the pay and workplace related provisions set out in the Social Partnership Agreements;
- Advising the Taoiseach on pay, industrial relations and workplace related issues;
- Servicing the National Implementation Body (NIB);
- Supporting the work of the National Centre for Partnership and Performance (NCP).

² Available from the Secretariat to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship.

PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNISATION

DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING THE PROGRAMME OF PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNISATION THROUGH:

- Co-ordinating, formulating and contributing to the development and direction of policies in relation to the ongoing modernisation programme for the Civil and wider Public Service;
- Supporting the Implementation Group of Secretaries General and various associated Subgroups and Networks charged with developing specific aspects of the ongoing modernisation Programme;
- Working with Departments, Offices and the wider Public Service in implementing the modernisation agenda as set out in Social Partnership Agreements and in Government Strategies.
- To promote improved quality of regulation through implementation of the Government's White Paper, *Regulating Better*.
- To introduce an appropriate model of Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) as a tool for evidence-based policy-making.
- Support better regulation initiatives at EU and international level.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Social partnership process: workplace related issues;
- Labour Market and Industrial Relations;
- Records relating to the NCPP;
- Support of co-ordinating structures/Working Groups in relation to the modernisation programme for the Civil and wider Public Service;
- Support for implementation of the modernisation programme in Departments/Offices;
- General administration papers.

- Implementation of the various aspects of the White Paper, *Regulating Better* and the structures to support implementation.
- The introduction of and use of RIA.
- Better Regulation initiatives at EU and international level.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Social Partnership Agreements.
- Delivering Better Government.
- Evaluation of the Strategic Management Initiative.
- Towards Better Regulation – Public Consultation Document.
- Regulating Better – Government White Paper.
- Customer Charters – Guidelines for Preparation.
- LINK – the Newsletter of Better Government (circulated to all civil servants).
- Business Regulation Survey.
- Bodies in Ireland with Regulatory Powers as of February 2007.
- Consultation Paper on Regulatory Appeals.
- Reaching Out – Guidelines on consultation for Public Sector Bodies.
- RIA Guidelines (How to conduct a Regulatory Impact Analysis).
- Report on the Introduction of Regulatory Impact Analysis.
- *Regulating Better*. A Government White Paper setting out six principles of Better Regulation.

- Reports on submissions received arising from public consultation on *Towards Better Regulation – Consultation Document*.

Many reports and publications related to modernisation are available from www.bettergov.ie, the website of Better Government.

Many Better Regulation documents are available from: www.betterregulation.ie

CONTACT:

Social Partnership (Industrial Relations): Alan Plummer, Telephone (01)6194247

Public Service Modernisation: Tony Kavanagh Telephone (01) 6194483

7.7 INFORMATION SOCIETY POLICY UNIT

FUNCTIONS:

- Advising the Taoiseach and the Minister of State on all aspects of Knowledge Society policy;
- Co-ordinating development and implementation of policy on Ireland as a leading Knowledge Society;
- Monitoring and reporting progress in implementing the Government's action plan for the Knowledge Society, and other specific initiatives;
- Monitoring and reporting progress in implementing the *i2010* Action Plan;
- Managing the ASC Fund Initiative;
- Representing Ireland on the *i2010* Advisory Group;
- Providing a Secretariat to the Cabinet Committee on the Information Society;
- Providing a Secretariat to the eStrategies Group of Secretaries General;

- Working with other departments and public service agencies to pursue cross-departmental issues on the Knowledge Society agenda.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Support of the Information Society Implementation Group;
- Support of the eStrategies Group of Secretaries General;
- Support of the Assistant Secretaries Implementation Group;
- Issues on the *EU* Action Plan;
- ASC Fund applications;
- Administration of the Unit.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- *Implementing the Information Society in Ireland – An Action Plan;*
- *New Connections;*
- *First Progress Report on New Connections;*
- *Second Progress Report on New Connections.*

All available on the Department's web-site www.taoiseach.gov.ie/

CONTACT:

- Albert Jordan, Telephone: (01) 6194177

7.8 TAOISEACH'S PRIVATE OFFICE

FUNCTIONS:

- Provide the Taoiseach with the necessary support in respect of his Parliamentary role and obligations;
- Support the Taoiseach in his role as Head of Government;
- Provide the Taoiseach with the necessary support in respect of his Departmental and public commitments;
- Manage the commitments of the Taoiseach in respect of domestic and foreign engagements to ensure that his time is productively utilised;
- Provide for the efficient and effective processing of all internal and external communications (written, telephone and electronic); and
- Manage the Private Office and provide a support service for the Taoiseach's special advisors.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Replies to Parliamentary Questions;
- Speeches by the Taoiseach;
- Correspondence from Heads of State or Government;
- Correspondence from Ministers, members of the Oireachtas, MEPs, other public representatives, social partners, members of the public and businesses, charitable organisations etc;
- Correspondence issued by the office.

CONTACT:

- David Feeney, Telephone: (01) 6194154

7.9 GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP'S OFFICE

FUNCTIONS:

- Provision of support service to the Government Chief Whip.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Bills on Dáil and Seanad Order Paper;
- Bills passed;
- Legislation Programme;
- Weekly whips and schedules;
- General Correspondence

CONTACT:

- Alice Kearney, Telephone: (01) 6194079

7.10 MINISTER OF STATE FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

FUNCTIONS:

- Provision of support service to the Minister of State;
- Manage the commitments of the Minister in respect of domestic and foreign engagements to ensure that his time is productively utilised;
- Provide for the efficient and effective processing of all internal and external communications (written, telephone and electronic).

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Speeches by the Minister
- Invitations to the Minister and other diary and related matters
- Correspondence from Minister's European counterparts;

- Correspondence from Ministers, members of the Oireachtas, MEP's, other public representatives, members of the public and businesses, charitable organisations etc;
- Correspondence issued by the office.

CONTACT:

- Cathy Bruton, Telephone (01) 6194309

7.11 CORPORATE AFFAIRS DIVISION:

PERSONNEL – MANAGEMENT SERVICES UNIT – ARCHIVES AND REGISTRY – LIBRARY – FINANCE UNIT – IT UNIT

PERSONNEL - MANAGEMENT SERVICES UNIT

FUNCTIONS:

- Responsibility for policies and strategic advice in relation to staff organisation, management;
- Administration in relation to personnel issues;
- Development and provision of support services in the Department (see below for Archives and Registry, IT Unit and Library);
- Support for the implementation of the change management processes within the Department.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Departmental Administration:
- Personnel files of staff;
- Recruitment and Promotion;
- General staffing issues;

- Staffing in Bodies under the aegis of the Department
- Estimates;
- Pay, Overtime and Pension issues;
- Information Society Commission;
- Change of Government;
- Accommodation, Office Equipment and Services;
- Management Advisory Committee;
- Legislation;
- Security issues;
- Provision of information to staff.
- Human Resource Policy documents e.g. Human Resource Strategy, Gender Equality Policy.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Personnel policies and schemes which relate to the Civil Service are published centrally by the Department of Finance (Department of Finance, Rules and Practices, Freedom of Information Act - Section 16 Reference Book).
- The Department's Customer Charter which details the levels of service provided to Department customers.

CONTACT:

- Personnel: Jackie Coogan, Telephone (01) 6194038
- Management Services: Nason Fallon, Customer Service Officer, Telephone (01) 6194552

ARCHIVES AND REGISTRY

FUNCTIONS:

- Provision of a Central repository for departmental files, active and dormant, personnel files of serving staff and personnel files for staff who have retired, transferred or resigned;
- Allocation of file numbers;
- Responsibility for indexing and filing of the Taoiseach's correspondence referred from the Private Office;
- Indexing and filing miscellaneous documents.
- (Files requiring easy and ready access or those of a sensitive nature are often held within the Divisions).

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Departmental files;
- Personnel files;
- Personnel files of persons who have retired, transferred or resigned.

CONTACT:

- Sonia Casey, Telephone (01) 6194015

LIBRARY

FUNCTIONS:

- To provide a library and information service to the staff in the Department.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Miscellaneous collection of official publications, books and other published material, hardcopy and electronic;

- Library Administration;
- Internet.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Library Guides

CONTACT:

- Fiona White, Telephone (01) 6194153

CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING UNIT

CHANGE MANAGEMENT UNIT

FUNCTIONS;

- To support the implementation of a programme of change management processes in the Department.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Strategies/Reports e.g. Strategy Statements, Annual Reports
- Performance Management – Development/Implementation of PMDS in the Department
- Partnership - Departmental Committee
- Modernisation Action Plan and Progress Reports for Civil Service Performance Verification Group (CSPVG)
- Official Languages Act – Development of Scheme and Implementation in the Department
- Departmental Applications to the Change Management Fund
- Risk Register

- Employee Opinion Surveys
- Oversight of the Department's Website
- Departmental Change Management Newsletter

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Strategy Statement/Annual Report
- PMDS Short Guide and Handbook
- Reports of Partnership Committee meetings and meetings of Sub-Groups
- Modernisation Action Plan and Progress Reports for CSPVG
- Official Languages Scheme
- Departmental Change Management Newsletter

CONTACT:

- Grainne Hynes, Telephone (01) 6194076

TRAINING UNIT.

FUNCTIONS:

- Provision of staff training and development
- Information Officer for Department's website

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Records relating to Staff Training
- Training Costs

- Applications by staff under the Department's Refund of Fees Scheme
- Training Courses available internally and externally
- Supervision of Department's Website

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- eGuide to the Department of the Taoiseach
- Training Costs
- Training courses

CONTACT:

- Elaine Duffy, Training Officer, Telephone (01) 619xxxx

FINANCE UNIT

FUNCTIONS:

- Management of the Department's financial resources and provision of all financial services to the Taoiseach, Minister of State, Accounting Officer, Management and Staff, Government Departments and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General;
- Processing payments relating to the administration of the Department and Bodies under the aegis of the Department;
- Providing information on expenditure to Divisions and Management for replies to PQ's etc.;
- Compiling data for Estimates, the Appropriation Account, the Public Accounts Committee and the Accounting Officer;
- Ongoing review and improvement of existing processes;
- Implementation of the new management Information Framework (MIF).

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Financial Records
- Records of expenditure by Subhead;
- Records of payments and receipts;
- Suspense accounts;
- Annual Appropriation Account;
- Audit on the Vote;
- Annual Estimates;
- Supplementary Estimates;
- Monthly Profile of Expenditure;
- Divisional Budgets;
- Regulations and Controls;
- Department of Finance Regulations;
- Legislation e.g. Withholding Tax, Prompt Payment;
- EU regulations;
- General Regulations and Procedures;
- Management Information Framework Project Records;
- Parliamentary Questions.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- Travel and Subsistence rates (Department of Finance circular);
- Official entertainment limits (Department of Finance guidelines);
- Appropriation Account for the Department for previous years (published by the Comptroller and Auditor General);
- Estimate for the Department for current year (published in the Estimates Volume by the Department of Finance);
- Guidelines on the engagement of Management Consultants (published by the Department of Finance);
- Information on Withholding Tax (regulated by the Revenue Commissioners);
- Information on Tax Clearance procedures (issued by the Department of Finance);
- Other regulations and guidelines on expenditure within the Department.

CONTACT:

- Amanda Reilly, Telephone: (01)6194086

IT UNIT

FUNCTIONS:

- Overall responsibility for the Department's information technology functions;
- Provide a service geared to meet the Department's needs and those of its customers, in relation to the provision and management of information and I.T. Systems.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- I.T. Projects;

- I.T. Training;
- Statements of Planned and Actual I.T. Expenditure;
- I.T. Procurement for the Department and Bodies under the aegis of the Department;

CONTACT:

- Louise Jevens, Telephone (01) 6194377

7.12 INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT (IAU)

FUNCTIONS:

- To provide assurance to the Accounting Officer on the internal control systems and the extent to which these systems contribute to the achievement of policy and business objectives in the most economic, efficient and effective way;
- Acts as a resource to the Department's management through its analysis and appraisal of departmental control systems.

CLASSES OF RECORDS:

- Annual Report;
- Annual Work Plan;
- Business Plan;
- Internal Audit Charter;
- Individual Audit Reports and background information;
- Value for Money (VFM) Reports and background information.

CONTACT:

- Anne Kirwan, Telephone (01) 6194465

8. APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY: TERMINOLOGY MENTIONED IN SECTION 7

TERM	EXPLANATION
Accounting Officer	A senior Official (normally the Secretary General) in each Department or Office specially and personally charged with signing the Appropriation Account and accountable for the propriety of the Department's expenditure.
AP	Assistant Principal
Appropriation Account	An end of year account of a Department's spending of the monies voted by the Dáil, which compares the Estimate with actual payments made and receipts brought to account and explains any substantial differences.
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CO	Clerical Officer
CPP	Committee on Procedures and Privileges
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CV	Curriculum Vitae
Dept	Department
Divisional Budgets	Delegation of responsibility to line managers for the direct management of financial budgets in respect of specific categories of costs.
EO	Executive Officer
Estimates and	

Supplementary Estimates	The Estimates are published in the Book of Estimates, which contains a separate Estimate of the cost of each Departmental function for which Dáil Eireann will be asked to appropriate money. A Supplementary Estimate is the means by which the Government may ask the Dáil during the year for money additional to that already provided.
EU	European Union
EU Directives/ Guidelines/Regulations	Much of the work of the public service is now set out in European Union directions, guidelines and regulations on particular aspects of policy enacted at Union level. Material held on these contains information on the direction, guideline or regulation in question and how it is interpreted and operated in this State..
FOI	Freedom of Information
GIS	Government Information Services
GPSO	Government Publications Sales Office
HEO	Higher Executive Officer
HOSG	Heads of State or Government
IFSC	International Financial Services Centre
IGC	Inter-Governmental Conference
Imprest Account	An advance payment to meet estimated expenditure on official travel. The actual expenditure incurred is subsequently charged to the relevant subhead on foot of a vouched claim submitted by the officer on return.
IT	Information Technology
Legislation	Information kept on this relates to law making, the procedure by which a proposal becomes law through the introduction of an Act of the Oireachtas. This mechanism is often used to introduce proposals as Acts have a binding legal effect and oblige those which come under their

scope to abide by their terms. Information kept on legislation files is likely to reflect the various stages of production of legislation.

MEP	Member of European Parliament
NCPP	National Centre for Partnership and Performance
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESDO	National Economic and Social Development Office
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NI	Northern Ireland
Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General	This office controls, on behalf of the State, all disbursements and audits all accounts of monies administered by or under the authority of the Oireachtas.
PCW	Programme for Competitiveness and Work
PESP	Programme for Economic and Social Progress
PNR	Programme for National Recovery
PO	Principal Officer
PPF	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness
PQ	Parliamentary Question
Prompt Payment	The Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, effective from January 1998, stipulates that payment by a purchaser for goods and services, must be made within 45 days of receipt of an invoice, or date of supply, whichever is the later.
Public Accounts	

Committee	This committee considers all reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General on behalf of Dáil Éireann.
Schedule	The weekly schedule, which gives details of the business to be taken in the Dáil, is agreed by the Whips each week at their meeting and circulated to every Deputy and Senator.
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
SO	Staff Officer
Subhead	The individual categories of expenditure within a Vote which are separately identified in the Estimates and under which the expenditure is accounted for in the Appropriation Account.
Subsistence	Meal and accommodation payments to cover travel expenses.
Suspense Account	An account opened to record payments or receipts which cannot for the time being be charged or credited to the Vote Account.
Whip	Weekly confidential Party document itemising potential voting times and sitting hours.
Withholding Tax	A tax deducted by Government Departments and Public Bodies on behalf of the Revenue Commissioners in respect of specific categories of professional services.

GUIDE TO THE RULES AND PRACTICES OF THE DEPARTMENT

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1997- SECTION 16

1. HUMAN RESOURCES SCHEMES AND POLICIES

Introduction

The Human Resources schemes and policies operated by the Department are, largely, those agreed centrally by the Department of Finance and which operate across the Civil Service as a whole. Details of these schemes can be found in the Department of Finance's, Rules and Practices, Freedom of Information Act - Section 16 Reference Book.

In a limited number of cases, Departments have flexibility in the way they operate policies and schemes. Details of the personnel schemes and policies operated at present by the Department of the Taoiseach are set out below:

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Department has an integrated Human Resource Strategy and Staff Development Plan, which is aligned with the Department's Strategy Statement, Divisional business plans and core competencies. The strategy is a key mechanism for ensuring that the staff of the Department have the capability and commitment to maximise organisational performance. Under the Department of the Taoiseach Refund of Fees initiative, staff are invited to apply for tuition reimbursement for studies undertaken that pertain to the overall development of the individual and Civil Service.

GENDER EQUALITY

The Department is committed to gender equality as an integral part of its human resource management strategy. A detailed Gender Equality policy has been in place since 2001. This policy contains targets which are monitored on a regular basis.

PROMOTION

The Department fulfills its obligations to interdepartmental promotion panels. The Department has an agreed Internal Promotions Framework in place, which is subject to ongoing review.

THE DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL

This is a forum for staff and management discussions on the operation of the Department. Meetings are attended by the Secretary General, the Personnel Officer and the staff representatives: FUGE, CPSU, PSEU (including the AO Branch) and, in an observer capacity, the AHCS.

Under the terms of Partnership 2000, the Department set up a Partnership Committee, in conjunction with staff and their representatives, to draw up and oversee the implementation of a Modernisation Action Plan.

2. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

The Department operates its financial procedures in line with the guidelines and instructions set down by the Department of Finance, but within these there are particular administrative procedures that the Department has discretion to exercise as it sees fit.

3. COMMEMORATION INITIATIVES FUND

The Commemoration Initiatives Fund is a fund established to make resources available to groups and organisations for the study and commemoration of historic events of national importance. By providing financial support to financial organisations, the aim of the Fund is to assist and encourage the development of local programmes of commemoration. Given the limited budget available, such funding is, in general and by necessity, of a token nature.

In assessing projects for funding such issues as:

- impact

- significance and relevance

- geographic spread

- balance between popular and academic

- educational content and

- viability

are taken into account.

4. THE IRISH SAILORS AND SOLDIERS LAND TRUST FUND (FUNDING HAS CEASED BUT RECORDS REMAIN AVAILABLE).

The Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust (ISSLT) was established under an Act of the British Parliament in 1922, to provide houses for Irish ex-servicemen who fought with the British Armed Forces in the First World War. The number of beneficiaries both in this jurisdiction and in Northern Ireland declined significantly by the 1980s and the Trust was left with surplus funds, following the sale of properties no longer required and the investment of the proceeds.