

Department of Finance – Decentralisation Discussion Paper
Proposals on General Service Grades Promotion- November 2005
Draft

INTRODUCTION

1. During the Implementation Phase of the Decentralisation Programme, civil service promotion arrangements must meet the following objectives: these arrangements must ensure that

- decentralising Departments, offices and business units have built up a sufficient number of trained staff able to work in the new locations with minimum disruption to service levels;
- staff opting to remain in Dublin are re-deployed as quickly and efficiently as possible;
- the morale and productivity of staff is secured by maintaining appropriate promotion opportunities in Dublin; and
- the procedures allow departmental management to discharge its core functions.

2. Every effort will be made by Departments to expedite the transfer of staff to decentralising functions in the first instance. Where staff who do not wish to relocate cannot be accommodated in their current department, it will be a matter for that department to ensure that such staff are given the option to transfer to a Dublin based post in another department not later than 52 weeks in advance of the scheduled relocation. It is understood that in such cases while formal transfer will take place on an officer exercising the option to transfer, actual transfer may be deferred on an agreed basis between the Departments concerned.

Assistant Secretary posts

3. Promotions to top management posts in the civil service come within the remit of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC). Across the civil service, a proportion of posts at these levels are due to move to decentralised locations while others will remain in Dublin. With regard to these posts, the conditions which should be applied will be a matter for TLAC in the light of the circumstances of each post.

Director posts

4 In the case of Director level posts, decisions on whether an undertaking to decentralise will be required will be made by Departmental managements.

OTHER POSTS

Future promotion arrangements

5. In the light of the principles listed above, [the Department of Finance proposes the following arrangements] [it is agreed that]

Inter-Departmental promotions

6. The ratios of non-recruitment posts to be filled by inter-departmental competition will be as already agreed; that is, 40% of promotion posts, rising to 50% with effect from 1 January 2007 in accordance with the terms of Sustaining Progress.

7. With effect from 1 June 2005, all **appointments from inter-departmental panels** will be made on the basis of the appointee making a commitment in writing to move to a post in a decentralising unit or existing provincial office. The details of how this will work in practice are set out in paragraph 7 below.

8. Where a promotion is due to be made from an inter-departmental panel

(i) in a Department which is short of the required number of persons to fill the necessary number of decentralising posts in that grade, or which is short of the required number of persons to fill the vacancies in that grade in existing provincial offices arising from staff moving under the CAF, that vacancy will be filled

(a) in the first instance by an applicant under the CAF in the same grade for the relevant location, in which case the resultant vacancy in that applicant's Department will be filled from the inter-departmental panel in accordance with the above section; or

(b) if there is no such applicant, by promotion from the panel on the basis of a commitment to relocate to the relevant location;

(ii) in any other Department, by the transfer from another Department of an officer in the same grade who has to move to another Department in order to remain in Dublin; the resultant vacancy in that officer's Department will be filled from the inter-departmental panel in accordance with the above section.

Internal promotions: General

9. With effect from 1 June 2005, **internal promotions** will continue to be made according to the local promotion arrangements in place within each Department, except that,

(i) in a Department which is decentralising in its entirety, from 52 weeks before decentralisation is due to take place, **all promotions** in the Department concerned will be made on the basis of a written commitment by promotees to relocate with that Department;

(ii) in a Department which is decentralising in part, from 52 weeks before a decentralisation move is due to take place, **one half of all promotions** in the Department concerned will be made on the basis of a written commitment by promotees to relocate with that Department;

[iii] where it does not prove possible to make a suitable internal promotion subject to the conditions at [i] and [ii] above, an appointment will be made from the relevant inter-departmental panel subject to the condition that the candidate agree to relocate. This will create a future debt to internal promotions; and

[iv] where Departments are due to decentralise in phases it is envisaged that the above arrangements at [i] to [iii] will apply. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to consider specific arrangements in the light of the pace of decentralisation and the local needs of individual Departments. Any such arrangements will be discussed between the Department of Finance, the relevant Department and the Staff Side. These discussions will examine whether the timing or proportions set out in the above arrangements require any adjustment in the light of the scale of business units relocating and the scheduling of the particular phases.

10. In each case, these arrangements will apply until all of the Department's decentralisation requirements in the relevant grade are met, at which point internal promotions will only require written commitments to relocate where the post concerned is itself due to decentralise. The date for triggering the above 52 week periods will be agreed centrally at the General Council Sub-Committee on Decentralisation on foot of information from OPW on the progress of the building programme for each location.

Internal promotions: Staff Officer and Executive Officer

11. [i] Promotions to Staff Officer and Executive Officer posts which are required to support the Decentralisation programme will be opened to **all** staff service-wide who are eligible for promotion to these posts. Selection will be by means of by special interdepartmental competitions which will be organised on a regional basis;
- [ii] further discussions will take place with Staff Side in the event that shortfalls at EO and SO grades arise in decentralising locations that would require additional measures to be agreed;

Monitoring and Review

12. All of the above arrangements will be subject to a regular ongoing review – from the commencement of these arrangements - to ensure that sufficient progress is being made towards the early implementation of the Decentralisation programme. This agreement will be formally reviewed before **1 March 2007** with a view to determining arrangements for the next phase of decentralisation. A review of these arrangements can be undertaken before this date to deal with issues which may arise for particular grades in particular locations.

Professional and technical grades

13. These arrangements relate only to general service and related grades, a parallel agreement in respect of professional and technical grades is currently being negotiated.