

Staff remaining in Dublin Document negotiated with unions – January 2007

Introduction

1. There is a need to address the position of individuals who wish to remain in Dublin but who will have to transfer to other departments^[1] as there will no longer be posts available in Dublin in their existing department.
2. The document which provided the framework for the operation of the CAF and subsequent transfers stated that:

“Staff serving in areas which are being decentralised and who wish to remain in Dublin will also have to be reassigned, if possible, to other posts in their existing Departments and Offices or else to other Departments and Offices. Detailed arrangements for managing this will be discussed between the management and staff sides at a later stage when a clearer picture has been established of the numbers involved. The aim will be to ensure that, so far as possible, only one move between Departments takes place

Where some but not all of the relevant staff in a grade are to be transferred to other posts in the Dublin area the selection of those to transfer will initially be done on the basis of volunteers. If there are insufficient volunteers, the “last in first out” principle will apply. A system will be put in place to allow staff to indicate preferences on where they would wish to transfer to although it must be recognised that it will not always be possible to meet these wishes.”

Overall approach

3. Departments will be asked to identify the numbers of staff in each grade who are likely to have to move to another department in order to remain in Dublin. The number of staff who will actually be affected in this way will change as implementation of the decentralisation programme proceeds. However, for current planning purposes, departments may assume that it would equate to the difference between:-

- (i) the number of posts to be decentralised in each grade; and
- (ii) the number of staff in the same grade in the department who have applied for decentralisation either with their existing department or with another department.

If the number at (ii) equals or exceeds that at (i), a department will assume for the present that none of its staff are likely to have to move to another department in order to remain in Dublin. Otherwise, the following arrangements will apply.

^[1] Throughout this note, references to departments covers departments/offices.

4. In the case of departments which are decentralising in full, each member of staff in Dublin who has not applied to decentralise with their existing or another department will be invited to indicate where they would like to go.
5. In the case of departments which are decentralising in part, each member of staff in Dublin who has not applied to decentralise with their existing or another department will be asked whether they would be interested in volunteering to move out of the department and, if so, will be invited to indicate where they would like to go.^{2[2]}
6. Each department will provide the individuals concerned with a list of all departments remaining in Dublin. This will outline the existing Dublin office locations for each organisation but it will be made clear to staff that they will only be able to apply for a department and not a specific location. If a person is interested in a specific location, s/he may apply to move to that location after moving to the new department and the matter will be dealt with in accordance with that Department's normal internal procedures.
7. Staff will be allowed to indicate an interest in transferring to as many departments as they wish and will not have to rank these in any order of priority. It will be made clear to staff that it will not be possible to guarantee that any of their preferences can be met in all cases.
8. Details of the individual staff members concerned and their expressions of interest in relation to Dublin departments will be provided to the PAS by departments. The PAS will then compile a series of panels for each department. Individuals will be placed on the panels in order of seniority.
9. The timing of the release of Dublin based vacancies to staff in the various departments who have expressed an interest in those departments will be managed in accordance with the following principles:
 - all staff who need to be placed in alternative departments in Dublin will be placed on the Dublin arrangements;
 - the arrangements will seek to balance the need to facilitate the effective achievement of the decentralisation programme with the business needs of departments and the aspirations of staff to be placed in appropriate posts in Dublin;
 - the arrangements will be activated for departments at each grade level over the transition phase at times when that organisation is ready to release staff at the appropriate grade level to another Dublin post. The operation of the arrangements will be informed by staffing returns from departments indicating their planning timelines for intake of staff and release of staff in order to meet their decentralisation timeframes;

^{2[2]} It may prove necessary in due course to make up any shortfall in the number of expressions of interest received at a particular grade level by identifying the most junior people in the grade (excluding those who have applied to move to decentralised locations).

- the arrangements will take full account of the seniority of staff in the organisations participating in the arrangements at any particular time;
- in the absence of volunteers for a particular post, the last-in/ first-out principle will apply in relation to the departments participating in the arrangements at that time.

The arrangements will therefore, as appropriate, allow for prioritisation at certain times during the transition phase of staff in organisations who have an immediate need to be placed in Dublin posts due to the timing of the relocation of their current department or office.

10. As part of these arrangements an assignment will not be made to a decentralising post until alternative arrangements have been identified for an existing post holder who does not wish to decentralise with it.

11. An officer who accepts an offer of transfer to a department in respect of which s/he expressed an interest will have her/his name removed from the panels for any other departments for which s/he expressed an interest. In the event that the officer declines the offer, her/his name will be removed from the panel for that department but will remain on the panels for any other departments for which s/he expressed an interest.

Posts arising in the context of lateral transfers

12. As inter-departmental lateral transfers proceed, situations may arise where an applicant who is interested in relocating with one of the decentralising departments is from a department which is not decentralising. Similarly, a department which is only partly decentralising may be prepared to release someone who is interested in relocating with another decentralising department and to accept in return someone from that department who wishes to remain in Dublin and who wishes to move to the department concerned on a voluntary basis.

13. In such cases, the departments concerned may proceed with the transfer on the basis of the volunteer being offered a post by the relocating department and the resulting Dublin vacancy being filled on a voluntary basis by someone from the relocating department.

14. If there is no volunteer for the Dublin post from the relocating department, the last-in/first-out principle will apply

15. If there is no one remaining on the panel for the department with the Dublin post, the most junior person in the grade (excluding those who have applied to move to decentralised locations) in the relocating department will be transferred to the Dublin post.

Review of Arrangements

16. The Department of Finance is committed to ensuring that alternative arrangements will be available for each person who opts to remain in Dublin. These arrangements will

be monitored on an ongoing basis through the General Council sub-committee on decentralisation. A review of these arrangements will take place in January, 2008.

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