

17 January 2006.

Mr Sean O' Riordan
General Secretary
Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants

Dear Sean

I am writing to you following our discussions with Dave Thomas and yourself about our Draft Decentralisation Discussion Paper Proposals on General Service Grades Promotion [January 2006].

You indicated, inter alia, that in a situation where a Department was decentralising over a long time frame, with different sections gradually moving, your executive was concerned that all internal promotions would cease 52 weeks before the first section decentralised and that this would continue until the final section moved perhaps many years later.

This is addressed in paragraph 8 [iv] of our draft proposals. In the event, for instance, that following the intake of CAF volunteers, there are no unfilled decentralisation requirements for specific grades, e.g. no further Principal or Assistant Principal level post decentralising, there will be no decentralisation tag put on internal promotion to those grades. Equally, if only a small section of a department is moving with, say, one unfilled Principal post, then a decentralisation tag would only be attached to one and not to all Principal level promotions.

Where Departments are moving in part, it is intended that the decentralisation tag in paragraph 8[ii] will operate for a period of 52 weeks and it is not intended that it will continue indefinitely.

In general, we envisage that there will be a close relationship between the number of posts requiring to be decentralised and the number required to carry a decentralisation tag. There is no intention on our part that a decentralisation process which took longer than planned would be used to require that a disproportionate number of internal promotions would carry a decentralisation tag.

It is not possible at this stage to deal with every eventuality and it is for this reason that paragraph 8 [iv] of our draft envisages discussions between the Department of Finance, the relevant Department and the Staff Side at the appropriate time, that is, when the 52 week period is being agreed centrally at the General Council Sub Committee on Decentralisation as provided for in paragraph 10 of our draft proposals.

On a final point, where a Department is decentralising in full, we intend that staff opting to remain in Dublin will be in the same position in competing for promotional opportunities in Dublin as all other staff in the same grade in other Departments remaining in Dublin.

I hope that this response clarifies the matters for your Executive Committee.

Yours sincerely

John O' Connell
Assistant Secretary