

TERMS & CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE 2026 COMPETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF DIRECT ENTRY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OFFICERS TO THE IRISH AIR CORPS.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

A person who wishes to apply for this competition should read this document carefully prior to completing the application form. An application should only be submitted if the applicant is satisfied that they fulfil all of the governing conditions detailed in this document.

The acceptance by the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces of an application from a person desiring to be a Defence Forces officer should not be regarded as an admission by the Chief of Staff that such a person satisfies all or any of these conditions or that they are not disqualified by law from becoming an officer of the Permanent Defence Force.

Everything contained in these conditions, notes and annexes is subject to the over-riding authority of the governing statutes, regulations and schemes, including the Defence Act, 1954 (as amended and extended) and statutory provisions made, or to be made, thereunder, and any other relevant provisions, agreements, legislation, public service policy, circulars and/or instructions and any errors which may appear herein are subject to correction at any time.

Appointments are open to all eligible candidates, on an equal basis. Exceptions to the governing conditions cannot be made in individual circumstances.

Candidates, when completing their application form, will be required to confirm that they have not:

- knowingly or recklessly provided false information
- canvassed any person with or without inducements
- impersonated a candidate at any stage of the process
- interfered with or compromised the process in any way

CANVASING WILL DISQUALIFY

Overview

The Irish Air Corps (IAC) provides air navigation services at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnell and within Irish military airspace.

To support its operations, the IAC is recruiting through a direct entry competition, qualified and experienced Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) at the rank of both Lieutenant and Captain – depending on the qualifications of the applicants - to serve as ATC Officers in the Irish Defence Forces. Successful candidates will be offered a position or placed on a merit panel for consideration for future vacancies.

1. Role of the Military ATC Officer

Military ATC officers are responsible for the safe, orderly and expeditious management of air traffic at Casement Aerodrome and across the airspace managed by the Defence Forces. Beyond air traffic control duties, commissioned officers also take on additional responsibilities including, but not limited to, administrative, operational, training and oversight functions, as directed by the General Officer Commanding the Air Corps. The role offers a dynamic career, with varying duties depending on your

appointment, but always within the broader framework of supporting military operations and training and ensuring the highest standards of safety and efficiency.

2. General Qualifications

Candidates for appointment as a Direct Entry ATC Officer in the Irish Air Corps must at the time of application:

- a. Be a citizen of Ireland
or
- b. have a legal entitlement to reside and work in the State for the period of their commission
and
- c. Be of good character and satisfy any security clearance required
and
- d. Meet the required minimum standard of Medical and Physical Fitness- see paragraph 7 for further information.

3. Age requirements

All candidates must be less than 50 years of age on the 31st of December in the year of application.

4. Professional Qualifications - Required

- a. A candidate for a **Direct Entry ATC Officer (Lieutenant)** appointment must hold:

A valid Air Traffic Controller licence issued by a National Military Authority or a valid Air Traffic Controller licence issued in accordance with European Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340, Commission Regulation (EU) 805/2011 or Directive 2006/23/EC, containing:

Aerodrome Control Surveillance (ADC/SUR) or Aerodrome Control Instrument (ADI) rating endorsement, with a minimum of 3 years' experience exercising this endorsement,

AND

An English Language Proficiency Certificate of at least Operational Level 4 or higher, issued in accordance with the requirements set out in point ATCO.B.030 to Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 as applicable.

- b. A candidate for a **Direct Entry ATC Officer (Captain)** appointment must hold:

A valid Air Traffic Controller license issued by a National Military Authority or a valid Air Traffic Controller licence issued in accordance with European Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340, Commission Regulation (EU) 805/2011 or Directive 2006/23/EC, containing:

Aerodrome Control Surveillance (ADC/SUR) or Aerodrome Control Instrument (ADI) rating endorsement, with a minimum of 3 years' experience exercising this endorsement,

AND

An Approach Control Surveillance (APS) rating endorsement with a minimum of 3 years' experience exercising this endorsement.

AND

An English Language Proficiency Certificate of at least Operational Level 4 or higher, issued in accordance with the requirements set out in point ATCO.B.030 to Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340, as applicable.

5. Professional Qualifications - Desired

- a. Accredited On-the-Job Training Instructor (OJTI), from an approved training organisation, certified under Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- b. Accredited Controller Competence Assessor, from an approved training organisation, certified under Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- c. Approach Procedural (APP) rating with a minimum of 3 years' experience exercising this rating.

6. Medical and Physical Standards

- a. Candidates must be in good mental and bodily health and free from any physical defect, abnormality, physiological condition or history of serious illness likely to interfere with the efficient performance of their duties.
- b. Candidates are required to pass an initial Class 3 aero-medical examination, the medical requirements for which are set out in Annex IV (Part ATCO.MED) of Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- c. The following are the minimum requirements in respect of:

Height

The minimum height requirement is 157.48cm (5ft 2ins). Physical standards and weight must be in keeping with height and age.

Vision

Colour vision must be normal trichromats as determined by a Defence Forces Medical Officer. Both eyes must be free from disfiguring or incapacitating abnormality and free from acute or chronic disease. There must be no evidence of squint or latent squint.

The eligibility of applicants who have had previous incisional or laser treatment to correct visual acuity will be determined at the Medical Examination.

Please see ‘**Annex B**’ for further information.

Vision must be not less than 6/18 in each eye, corrected to not less than 6/6 in one eye and 6/9 in the other.

Dental

Candidates must be free from any serious periodontal disease and possess teeth to a specific standard, which is not less than the equivalent of eleven over eleven natural teeth functionally opposed. In certain circumstances, artificial teeth may be acceptable.

Hearing

A good standard of unaided hearing is essential. Candidates will be required to undergo an audiometric test at which:

- (1) The sum of the hearing threshold at 1,2,3, 4 and 6 kHz should not exceed the age and gender related warning levels contained in the "Guidelines on Hearing Checks and Audiometry Regulations 2007", issued by the Health and Safety Authority.
- (2) Candidates under 25 years of age must be able to hear all measured pure tones up to and including 8 kHz at 20dB in each ear. Candidates aged 25 and older must be able to hear all measured pure tones up to and including 8 kHz at 25dB in each ear. Candidates must also be free from acute or chronic ear disorders.

Candidates are advised to avoid all sources of loud noise and music for a period of 48 hours prior to this examination as exposure to such noise may adversely affect the results of the examination.

7. Applications for appointment

- a. Candidates shall apply online at www.military.ie. Candidates wishing to undertake the assessments through Irish must make this request known to the Defence Forces Recruitment Section at recruitment@defenceforces.ie.
- b. All correspondence with candidates will be done by email for the duration of the competition. Candidates should ensure the email address given is accurate and correct. Each application is acknowledged automatically by the system within 24 hours. If an acknowledgement is not received within 48 hours of applying, candidates should immediately contact the Defence Forces Recruitment Section at: 01 8042556 or e-mail recruitment@defenceforces.ie.
- c. Likewise, if a candidate's email address should change, the onus is on the applicant to make contact with the Defence Forces Recruitment Section immediately advising them of the change of email.

8. Assessment and Selection Process

- a. Candidates who meet the initial requirements of the application process as per the terms and conditions will proceed to attend a suitability interview.
- b. Candidates called for interview are required to provide the Interview Board with original documentary evidence of required and desirable Professional Qualifications. The evidence

required above is subject to verification by the Irish Air Corps with the organisation who issued the licence, certificate or document.

c. Candidates shall also provide the following documents:

- (1) A passport sized photograph (signed on the back)
- (2) Valid Passport- (photocopies are not acceptable)
- (3) Original Long Form Birth Certificate- (photocopies are not acceptable)

Candidates will be requested to sign the Declaration Form accompanying the application form at the Interview.

Candidates may be required to undergo a written and verbal examination to prove they have a satisfactory level of English. An applicant who fails to pass this examination will be advised accordingly and the application will be refused.

Competencies

The following competencies will be assessed in the interview together with the overall suitability of the candidate:

Competency	What the candidate will have to display
Planning and Organising	The ability to plan, prioritise and organise people and other resources.
Decision Making and Problem Solving	An ability to carefully analyse problems, in order to generate appropriate solutions. A preparedness to stand by a decision and to accept responsibility for its consequences.
Working with Others	An aptitude for working within a team environment; to be supportive of others.
Communication	Clear, concise and effective communication skills.
Leadership and Supervising	The ability and motivation to take responsibility for others; to co-ordinate and to delegate to others.
Personal Motivation and Discipline	A commitment to the Air Corps as a career. An ability to act on own initiative.
Resilience	Calmness when faced with conflicting demands and when working under pressure.

Medical and Physical Examination

Candidates who are successful at interview stage will be required to pass an initial Class 3 aero-medical examination, the medical requirements for which are set out in Annex IV (Part ATCO.MED) of Regulation (EU) 2015/340.

Candidates, if selected, will be required to attend for the interview and medical/physical examination stages of the selection procedure on dates and times as notified by the recruitment office. Candidates who fail to attend for any stage of the selection procedure will be disqualified from further participation in the competition.

9. Employee vetting by An Garda Síochána.

Candidates who are invited to attend before an Interview Board will be required to complete and sign a Garda Vetting Application Form. This will, pursuant to the Data Protection Acts 2018, authorise An Garda Síochána to furnish to the Military Authorities, a statement that there are no convictions recorded against the candidate, or if applicable, a statement of convictions.

10. Expenses

Candidates will be liable for all expenses incurred in connection with their participation in the competition, such as those incurred in connection with their attendance at the medical and interview boards.

11. Nomination for appointment

The nomination of a successful candidate for appointment as an Officer of the Air Corps in the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) shall be made by the Minister for Defence whose decision shall be final. A commission is subject to the approval of the Government, on the recommendation of the Minister, who will advise the President to make such an appointment.

12. Terms of Appointment

- a. The successful candidate(s) will be appointed to the rank of Lieutenant or Captain (as applicable) on a short service commission of 3 years, with the opportunity for extension to a commission without limitation as to time, subject to the rank retirement ages as per Defence Force Regulations.
- b. On completion of 12 months satisfactory service, an Air Traffic Control Officer inducted under this competition may apply for a commission without limitation as to time. This will be subject to vacancies existing and to continuous satisfactory service and the recommendations of the General Officer Commanding the Irish Air Corps and the Chief of Staff. A commission without limitation as to time is subject to the approval of the Government, on the recommendation of the Minister, to advise the President to make such an appointment.
- c. An officer inducted under this competition will be required to undergo such military training as directed by the Director of Training (DJ7). The initial period of military training will take approximately six (6) weeks and will involve a period of training in the Defence Force Training Centre (DFTC), Curragh Camp. Additional Air Traffic Services training will be required in Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnell to enable officers appointed under this competition to work as a military ATC Officer. This will comprise the Local Aerodrome Control (ADC) Training Course of approx. 6 – 9 months duration, depending on the qualifications of the officer.

- d. Successful candidates will be expected to take up duty as soon as possible, allowing for reasonable notice to current employer, or reasonable expiry of current contractual obligations, but subject to the overriding requirement to fill the vacancies in the Irish Air Corps.
- e. Candidates will be required to undertake compulsory random drug testing throughout their career in the Defence Forces in accordance with Defence Force Regulation A.7.

13. Overseas Service

Under the terms of the Defence Amendment Act 2006, all Defence Force personnel, if selected, are expected to serve overseas, from time to time.

14. Pay and Allowance & PRSI (See notes 2 and 3 below for further information)

The following are the current annual Personal Pension Contribution (PPC) rates of pay payable to Officers in the Air Corps inclusive of Military Service Allowance:

Lieutenant:

Point	Basic Salary	Military Service Allowance	Total Pay PPC Scale (Class A PRSI)
1	€45,699	€6,566	€52,265
2	€46,383	€6,566	€52,949
3	€47,819	€6,566	€54,385
4	€49,283	€6,566	€55,849
5	€50,893	€6,566	€57,459
6	€52,381	€6,566	€58,947
7	€53,904	€6,566	€60,470
8	€54,780	€6,566	€61,346
9	€56,086	€6,566	€62,652
10	€57,419	€6,566	€63,985

Captain:

Point	Basic Salary	Military Service Allowance	Total Pay PPC Scale (Class A PRSI)
1	€58,764	€6,566	€65,330
2	€60,158	€6,566	€66,724
3	€61,549	€6,566	€68,115
4	€62,969	€6,566	€69,535
5	€64,377	€6,566	€70,943

6	€65,771	€6,566	€72,337
7 (Maximum)	€68,823	€6,566	€75,389
8 (1 st LSI)*	€71,743	€6,566	€78,039
9 (2 nd LSI)*	€74,255	€6,566	€80,821

*A long service increment will be payable to Officers who have completed three years' service on the maxima of the scale. A second long service is payable on the completion of 6 years' service on the maxima of the scale.

Additional Allowances:

The following allowances are paid to Air Traffic Control Personnel as applicable by qualifications held and experience:

ATC Assistant	€1,950 p.a.
ATC Aerodrome Controller	€2,925 p.a.
ATC Aerodrome & Approach Radar Controller	€9,749 p.a.
ATC Aerodrome & Approach Radar Controller	€18,367 p.a.*

- *after two years' experience, subject to successfully completing Watch Supervisor training

Figures correct as of 1 June 2026

Notes:

1. The rates of remuneration including the payment of the allowances outlined above are subject to review and adjustment on an ongoing basis in accordance with changes applicable across the Public Service generally, as per Government policy.
2. In general all new entrants to the Public Service on or after 6 April 1995, including a person appointed from this competition, are liable to pay PRSI contributions at the full Class A rate, in addition to employee contributions for personal and survivors *superannuation* benefits. Such persons are subject to PPC rates of remuneration (see pay scales above); and their occupational pension is subject to integration with the Social Insurance system. (Candidates should read paragraph 18 following and Annex A for further information).
3. Different rates of pay and allowance will apply where candidates appointed as Officers under this competition are not members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and/or are not making a personal pension contribution.
4. In line with Department of Finance instructions of 23 December 2010 starting pay will be at the minimum of the scale.

Method of Pay

All Defence Force Officers are paid on a monthly basis by means of electronic funds transfer to a designated financial institution.

5. A service commitment scheme currently operates for Air Traffic Controllers. New members will not have access to the scheme on appointment. Eligibility for the scheme for serving members arises after a defined period of service within the organisation. Previous relevant experience for new entrants may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

15. PROMOTION

An Officer inducted from this competition may, subject to meeting the stipulated eligibility criteria, be eligible for future promotion within the Permanent Defence Force, under agreed arrangements between the Department and the Representative Association of Commissioned Officers and in accordance with the provisions of Defence Force Regulations A.15.

16. UNIFORM

An officer appointed as a result of this competition will be paid an allowance towards the cost of providing themselves with a uniform. Currently, this is:

In the initial year:

Male - €2,171.92

Female - €2,615.46

An allowance is currently paid to a Commissioned Officer towards the purpose of replenishing their kit as follows;

Male - €1,391.03

Female - €1,840.81

Note: The allowance provided for in the initial year and the dress uniform shall be paid on the basis of a submission by the Officer of certified receipts up to but not exceeding the value of the initial allowance to the Finance Branch, Department of Defence, Renmore, Galway. The allowance for the initial and the dress uniforms are exempt from taxation, while the replenishment allowance paid in subsequent years is subject to taxation under the arrangements in place, currently 40% is taxable and 60% not taxable

17. RETIREMENT AGES FOR OFFICERS

At present, the retiring ages for Officers in the Permanent Defence Force are generally as follows:

Rank	Age
Lieutenant	62 years
Captain	62 years
Commandant	62 years
Lieutenant Colonel	62 years
Colonel	62 years

Please note: mandatory retirement ages in the Defence Force may be subject to review.

18. RETIREMENT BENEFITS

This should be read in conjunction with **Paragraph 14 (Pay, Allowances and PRSI)** and **Annex A**.

Members of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) may qualify for retirement benefits (also called *superannuation benefits*), provided they meet certain terms and conditions.

The superannuation arrangements for members of the PDF are *defined benefit* pension schemes. The main benefits are:

- a retirement pension,
- a retirement lump sum (gratuity) or death in service lump sum, and
- spouses'/civil partner's and children's contributory pensions.

There is also provision for immediate retirement benefits if compulsorily retired on medical grounds, and for death in service benefits (dependents pensions and death lump sum).

Pension contributions are generally payable by the scheme members from their Defence Forces salary towards their retirement and 'dependents' benefits.

Permanent Defence Force personnel are members of a fast accrual member group. Fast accrual members' benefits generally build up at higher rates, and they are eligible for payment of retirement benefits earlier than standard accrual members. Fast accrual members may also pay employee contributions at higher rates than standard members.

In general, anyone joining pensionable public service employment on or after 1 January 2013 is a member of the **Single Public Service Pension Scheme**. This scheme applies to all military personnel who **join the Permanent Defence Force from 1 January 2013 onwards as first-time new entrants to the public service**. Those arrangements are provided under the Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 ('the Single Scheme').

***Note:** The specific pension scheme that applies to new entrant PDF personnel depends on the date the person joins the PDF and on whether the person is joining the Public Service for the first time. Different pension terms will generally apply for personnel who join the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) from 1 January 2013 onwards who are not first-time new entrants to the Public Service and/or have previously been in the PDF or public service. See Annex A for details. Any specific queries in this regard should be referred to the Department of Defence.*

Membership of the relevant pension scheme is compulsory.

See Annex A below for a summary of the Single Scheme pension terms for new entrants and for some details regarding potential other pension schemes that may apply.

19. Courses

- a. In order to ensure that they will be competent to carry out the duties of higher rank to which they may be promoted, an Officer will be required to undergo such courses as may be laid down from time to time.
- b. In the case of certain courses which are undertaken at public expense, an Officer may be required to subscribe to an undertaking (or undertakings) that, in the event of their leaving the Permanent Defence Force voluntarily within a specified period from the date of termination of the course, they will refund the outstanding cost of such training to the Minister for Defence. Such costs may include pay and allowances paid to them during the period of attendance at the course.
- c. Payment of the outstanding amount involved, including the cost of any pay and allowances paid to them during the attendance at the course, must be made in full and up-front i.e. before the actual date of their retirement. However, in every case, the granting of permission to a Commissioned Officer to retire or resign from the Permanent Defence Force is a matter for the appropriate authority in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Defence Act.

20. Annual Leave

Subject to the exigencies of the service, an Air Corps Officer in the rank of Lieutenant or Captain, may be granted 31 days leave with full pay and allowances (where issuable) in any one leave year in accordance with the provisions of Defence Force Regulations A.11.

It should be noted that this annual leave provision is currently calculated on a 7-day basis and is subject to adjustment on an ongoing basis in accordance with changes applicable across the Public Service as per Government policy.

21. Sick Leave

Sick Leave may be granted in accordance with the provisions of Defence Force Regulations A.12 (Medical Treatment) and Defence Force Regulations S.3 (Pay and Allowances). Sick Leave entitlements may be subject to review and adjustment as per Government policy.

22. Medical attendance and hospital treatment

Primary health care i.e. medical attendance at and treatment by a doctor or primary care medical team in the Defence Forces including e.g. physiotherapy, routine dental treatment etc., some limited in-house secondary care and the provision of medication prescribed by a Medical Officer are provided without charge, subject to any limitations as required by law.

In accordance with Defence Forces Administrative Instructions, referral for secondary treatment as a private patient to a consultant or for private treatment in hospital may be made by the Defence Forces Medical Officer or the attending doctor subject to financial sanction and any other limitations as required by law. The medical service provided to members of the Defence Forces is by nature an occupational medical service and as such, services such as cosmetic surgery (where such does not arise from occupational injury), etc. are not provided.

23. Maternity / Paternity Leave

Statutory provisions in relation to Maternity/Paternity leave apply in the Permanent Defence Force. Officers claiming maternity/paternity benefit payments from the Department of Social Protection will be required to sign over these payments to the Department, which will then refund the tax, PRSI, and Pension related deduction on these amounts to the Officer.

24. Pay and allowances – Benefit in kind

The tax status and taxation of any benefit, payment or allowance paid to members of the Defence Force as may be determined by the Revenue Commissioners from time to time is a matter, between the individual taxpayer and the Revenue Commissioners and must be disclosed by the individual to the Revenue Commissioners.

The Department will not be liable for the financial impact, positive or negative, of any change in the tax status of any current payment, allowance or benefit paid or made available to members of the Defence Forces, or any determination of their tax status, as may be directed by the Revenue Commissioners from time to time.

ANNEX A RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Introduction

(A) Single Public Service Pension Scheme

In general, anyone joining pensionable public service employment on or after 1 January 2013 is a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme. This Scheme applies to all military personnel who join the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) from 1 January 2013 onwards as first-time new entrants to the Public Service. The Single Scheme also applies if you are a former pensionable public servant who re-joins the Public Service in a pensionable position on or after 1 January 2013, with a break of more than 26 weeks between public service employments. These arrangements are provided under the *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* ('the Single Scheme').

Note: Different pension terms will generally apply for personnel who join the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) from 1 January 2013 onwards who are not first-time new entrants to the PDF or Public Service and/or have previously been in the PDF or public service. Some details are given below but any queries in this regard should be referred to the Department of Defence.

(B) 'Post-April 2004' Defence Force Pension Schemes

In certain cases, the 'post-April 2004' Defence Force pension scheme arrangements may apply. This Scheme generally applies to military personnel who first joined the PDF **between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2012**. The arrangements are governed by the *Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004*.

These 'post-April 2004' pension scheme arrangements may apply to anyone who has worked or is working in the PDF or in other Irish public service pensionable employment, and who is not a *new entrant* as defined under the Single Scheme. For example, if you joined the Public Service before 1 January 2013 and have either, (i) been working continuously there, or (ii) left that public service employment and return after a break of less than 26 weeks, you will be a member of a relevant 'post-April 2004' Defence Force pension scheme.

(C) 'Pre-April 2004' Defence Force Pension Schemes

In certain very limited circumstances, the 'pre-April 2004' Defence Forces pension scheme arrangements may apply.

Where a person joining the PDF is not a *new entrant* as defined:

- under the 2012 Act (see paragraph (a) above); or
 - under the 2004 Act (see paragraph (b) above),
- the pre-April 2004 Defence Force superannuation arrangements may apply.

Single Scheme – summary of main elements for PDF members

- It is a *defined benefit* scheme based on *Career-Average Earnings*.
- Retirement benefits – pension and lump sum – are primarily based on % of *pensionable earnings* throughout your public service career as a Single Scheme member.

PDF Single Scheme members pay a 7.5% employee contribution from salary towards their Single Scheme benefits, as well as an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC) – see **Note 1(i) and Note 2 in paragraph (b) below**.

- Each year of your PDF Single Scheme membership, you build up money amounts on a *fast accrual* basis towards your Single Scheme retirement benefits. The total of these amounts at retirement, with adjustments for increases in inflation (as measured by increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) produced by the Central Statistics Office), determines what your retirement benefits will be.
- Single Scheme retirement benefits are payable immediately on retirement from the PDF if you serve to the *minimum pension age* of 50, and have the required *vesting period of 2 years*¹.
- If you finish employment with the PDF before age 50 and have the required vesting period, payment of your retirement benefits is normally *deferred* to the qualifying age for *Contributory State Pension* (CSP)² from the Department of Social Protection.
- Retirement pension (but not lump sum) is *integrated* with the Social Insurance system – see paragraph (a) below.
- There is no cap on the length of time over which members can build pension benefits under the Single Scheme.
- Transferring retirement benefits to Single Scheme from other employments:
 - The option for a member of the Single Scheme to transfer-in benefits from private sector pension schemes is generally available, subject to certain terms and conditions.
 - If, before joining the Single Scheme, you hold deferred retirement benefits from previous employments under a ‘pre-2013’ Public Service pension scheme, you cannot transfer those benefits to the Single Scheme. Those benefits remain to be administered under your earlier pre-2013 pension scheme.
 - If you hold deferred benefits under the Single Scheme from an earlier Single Scheme employment, you do not need to arrange for their “transfer” because it is the same Single Scheme in place across the Public Service.
- There is provision for immediate retirement benefits if compulsorily retired on medical grounds, and for death in service benefits (dependents pensions and death lump sum).
- Following retirement, increases to Single Scheme pension are linked to inflation.

¹ The *vesting period* for the Single Scheme is 2 years, the minimum length of time you must pay employee contributions into the scheme before becoming eligible for retirement benefits.

² The current qualifying age for all State Pensions is 66.

DF Post 2004 Pension Scheme – summary of main elements

This pension scheme provides for a ‘minimum pension age’ of 50. This means pension and gratuity (lump sum) will not normally be payable immediately on discharge/retirement from the PDF unless the person serves to age 50. Maximum retirement benefits generally accrue over 30 years. Where leaving the PDF before age 50, benefits are not payable immediately but are preserved and payable from age 60. Benefits are based on total pensionable service (subject to a maximum of 30 reckonable years) and pensionable pay at discharge/retirement date. Occupational pension is subject to integration with the Social Insurance system. In the case of commissioned officers, a 6.5% employee superannuation contribution is payable as well as an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC) – see **Note 1(ii)** and **Note 2 in paragraph (b)** below.

DF Pre 2004 Pension Scheme – summary of main elements

For commissioned officers who are new joiners to the public service **on or after 6 April 1995 but before April 2004**, and who are subject to PPC pay scales and full PRSI (Class A), a gratuity is payable on retirement after 5 years’ qualifying service, while pension and gratuity are payable after 12 years service.*

There is no preservation. Benefits, which are payable immediately on retirement, and regardless of age, are based on retiring rank, service and other factors such as pensionable pay. A 6.5% employee superannuation contribution is payable as well as an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC) – see **Note 1(ii)** and **Note 2 in paragraph (b)** below; and occupational pension is subject to *integration* with the Social Insurance system.

*For commissioned officers who join **prior to 6 April 1995**, apart from pension contributions and integration, the same general occupational pension scheme terms apply as for post-April 1995 officers. However, **pre-6 April 1995** officers are on non-PPC pay scales. Therefore, they do not pay ‘main scheme’ pension contribution towards occupational pension and gratuity, but pay a dependants’ benefit contribution only, as well as an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC) – see **Note 1(iii)** and **Note 2 in paragraph (b)** below. They are insured for modified PRSI (Class C) and their occupational pension is not subject to integration.

(a) Integration of retirement pension with the Social Insurance system:

New entrants to the Public Service on or after 6 April 1995, including Commissioned Officers in the PDF, are insurable for full PRSI. For this reason, public service retirement (or spouse's / civil partner's) pensions are subject to **integration** with the State Social Insurance system in accordance with standard Public Service arrangements.

This means that a person’s entitlement to the range of Social Insurance benefits (including the Contributory State Pension) is taken into account when calculating the amount of retirement pension payable. In an integrated pension scheme, the Contributory State Pension (CSP) is regarded as part of the employee’s total pension package. Under standard Public Service arrangements, this integration of retirement pension with the Social Insurance system applies from the time the retirement (or spouse’s / civil partner’s) pension commences payment.

This means the retirement pension is adjusted (reduced) from the start by a Social Insurance State Pension *offset*³, regardless of whether the person has reached Contributory State Pension age. Integration applies to retirement pension and also to employee contributions, but not to retirement lump sum.

A Contributory State Pension becomes payable upon reaching the qualifying age.

(b) Employee pension contributions:

Note 1

- i. The 7.5% **Single Scheme** member contribution is comprised of 4.2% of *net pensionable remuneration* (which means pensionable remuneration less twice the maximum rate of State Pension Contributory payable from time to time to a person who has no adult or child dependants) plus 3.3% of pensionable remuneration.
- ii. The 6.5% contribution for ‘**pre-Single Scheme**’ members who join the public service from 6 April 1995 onwards is 3.5% of *net pensionable remuneration* (towards personal pension) plus 1.5% of pensionable remuneration (towards retirement gratuity) plus 1.5% of pensionable remuneration (towards spouses / civil partner’s and children’s pensions).
- iii. A contribution of 1.5% of pensionable remuneration is payable by **pre-6 April 1995** officers towards spouses / civil partner’s and children’s pensions.

Note 2 – Subject to certain exemption thresholds, all Public Servants who are in pensionable employment – including members of the PDF – are also liable to pay an *Additional Superannuation Contribution* (ASC). The ASC is separate from the standard employee pension contributions mentioned above. No additional superannuation benefits are earned as a result of the ASC. The ASC applies to pensionable earnings above certain thresholds at different bands and % rates depending on the pension scheme applicable to the member. From 1 January 2020, the ASC bands / rates are as follows:

Additional Superannuation Contribution	
All Public Servants who are members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme	<i>Fast Accrual</i> members of pre-2013 Public Service Pension Schemes
First €34,500 of pensionable earnings – exempt	First €28,750 of pensionable earnings - exempt
Next €25,500 @ 3.33%	Next €31,250 @ 10%
Balance @ 3.5%	Balance @ 10.5%

³ The current value of the Contributory State Pension (CSP) reduction is €299.30 per week

(c) Declarations:

Under the *Public Service (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act), candidates are required to declare:

- any prior Public Service employment, or
- any pre-existing entitlements to a Public Service retirement benefit (whether already paid, in payment or deferred), or
- any existing remuneration from any other Public Service employment, or
- any such employment in which they received a payment-in-lieu of pension for that service.

(d) Pension abatement:

The following pension(s) will be immediately **subject to abatement*** in accordance with the relevant Defence Forces pension scheme rules and/or Section 52 of the *Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* (the 2012 Act) :

- i) any Defence Forces occupational pension that is currently in payment to the applicant, or that comes into payment to him/her during the period of re-employment, and
- ii) any other civil or public service occupational pension already in payment to the applicant, or that comes into payment to him/her during the period of re-employment.

**suspension, reduction or otherwise as the case may be.*

The abatement outcome will depend on factors such as a person's ongoing overall earnings from the public service by way of salary plus pension.

(e) Pension accrual:

In addition to abatement (under paragraph (d) above), if a member was previously employed in the public service, the 2012 Act limits the amount of qualifying service which can be accrued in existing (pre-2013) pension schemes to a maximum of 40 years' service across all Public Service employments. This may have implications for any new recruit/appointee who has already acquired pension rights in a previous Public Service employment.

(f) Further information:

Information on pension arrangements for Defence Forces members can be found on the Department of Defence website

at; <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/f65fb1-defence-forces-pension-information/>

including scheme booklets – see those for officers

See also Department of Public Expenditure and Reform website for information on the Single Pension Scheme ; <https://singlepensionscheme.gov.ie/> and,

<https://singlepensionscheme.gov.ie/for-members/scheme-information/scheme-booklet/#> (see booklet for 'Fast Accrual (Uniformed) Members)

Annex B

Laser Eye Surgery

Applicants, for whom any one or more of the following criteria apply, will be deemed unfit to join the Permanent Defence Force:

- (a) Applicants who have had their visual acuity corrected by non-laser surgery or laser surgery involving the raising of a corneal flap
- (b) Applicants who have had corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, within 12 months of the advertised closing date for receipt of applications
- (c) Where there continues to exist, beyond one year of corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, significant visual impairment or side effects related to the surgery, or both
- (d) Where, following corrective laser surgery not involving the raising of a corneal flap, the residual corneal stromal thickness is less than 300 microns.