

Terms of Reference of the Commission on the Defence Forces

In addressing the detailed tasks as provided for in its Terms of Reference, the Commission will have regard to immediate requirements while also seeking to develop a longer term vision for beyond 2030. This is against a backdrop of the high-level Defence goal which is to provide for the military defence of the State, contribute to national and international peace and security and fulfil all other roles assigned by Government. This fits within the broader context of the protection of Ireland's defence and security interests nationally and internationally. The Commission's approach should aim to ensure that the Defence Forces will remain agile, flexible and adaptive in responding to dynamic changes in the security environment, including new and emerging threats (such as from climate change) and technologies.

It is understood that recommendations of the Commission may require legislative changes. In arriving at its findings and recommendations for arrangements for the effective defence of the country, the Commission will have regard to the level of funding provided by Government for Defence.

The following Terms of Reference, and the Commission's overall approach will be guided and informed by both the White Paper on Defence 2015 and the White Paper Update 2019, which set out Ireland's extant Defence Policy, including the current Security Environment Assessment, as set out in the White Paper Update.

- The Commission will take account of Ireland's particular defence requirements, including its strong international commitment in the overseas domain as well as the particular roles of the Defence Forces in the domestic security environment which itself continues to evolve.
- The Commission will consider and recommend the appropriate structure and size of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) and the Reserve Defence Force (RDF). This will encompass consideration of appropriate capabilities, structures and staffing for the Army, and its brigade structure, the Air Corps and the Naval Service along with the appropriate balance and disposition of personnel and structures across a joint force approach in the land, air, maritime, cyber, intelligence and space domains.
- With regard to the RDF, the Commission will consider a wide range of options and will make recommendations to better leverage the capabilities of the RDF in their supports to the PDF and to make service in the RDF a more attractive option.
- The Commission will examine the structures in the Defence Forces as well as the work of the White Paper Command and Control project to date. In that context, the Commission will consider the most appropriate governance and effective high-level command and control structures in the Defence Forces.
- The Commission will examine the evolution of all remuneration systems and structures currently in place in the Defence Forces noting what the Programme for Government states in relation to a future Permanent Pay Review Body. Upon completion of the Commission's work, the Minister for Defence will consult with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the establishment of a permanent pay review body, reflecting the unique nature of military service in the context of the public service. All recommendations by the Commission or the successor body and their implementation must be consistent with national public sector wage policy.

- The Commission will set out a strategic perspective on HR policies, and associated strategies, including grievance processes and consideration of appropriate structural flexibility, to fulfil the requirements of military capabilities for a more agile and adaptive Defence Forces in a manner congruent with modern society, and in light of the prevailing dynamics of the labour market, while consistent with public sector pay and personnel policy.
- The Commission will consider and recommend appropriate turnover and retention approaches, having regard to work undertaken to date, and international best practice, to deliver the capabilities required of a modern military force. In addition, it will recommend approaches to recruitment, including identifying military career options that could create a more diverse, gender-balanced, flexible and responsive force, with a system of career progression to meet the recommended force structures and disposition.

4. Membership of the Commission on the Defence Forces

Chair: Aidan O'Driscoll, former Secretary General, Department of Agriculture 2015-2018 and Department of Justice and Equality 2018-2020. Department of Agriculture Chief Economist from 1995 to 2001 and Assistant Secretary General from 2001 to January 2015 for EU Affairs, Economics and Climate Change.

Peter Brazel, retired civil servant who worked in a number of departments, including at senior level in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, with significant experience of public service policy, including on personnel and remuneration matters.

Admiral Haakon Bruun-Hanssen, retired Norwegian Chief of Defence (2020) and formerly Chief of the Armed Forces Joint Operations and Inspector General of the Norwegian Navy.

Shay Cody, former Chair of ICTU Public Services Committee and retired Senior General Secretary of ForSa 2010-2019.

Maura Conway, Professor of International Security in the School of Law and Government at DCU and coordinator of VOX-Pol, a EU-funded project on violent online political extremism. Member of the Academic Advisory Board of Europol's Counter-terrorism Centre.

Marie Cross, retired Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, former Ambassador to the EU Political-Security Committee (PSC), member of the Board of the IIEA and Chair of its Defence and Security Committee. Was a member of the White Paper (2015) Ministerial Advisory Group.

Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, Danish researcher and security policy expert. She is Director of the Institute for Strategy at the Royal Danish Defence College and Professor (part time) at the Center for Social Security and Risk Management at the University of Stavanger. She is former head of the Department of Preventive Security in the Police Intelligence Service. In June she was appointed to the advisory group to the NATO Secretary General on NATO 2030.

Dan Harvey (Comdt Rtd), military historian, museum curator and retired Lieutenant Colonel in the Defence Forces. As an author he has written extensively about the history of the Defence Forces.

Caitriona Heintl, Executive Director at the Azure Forum for Contemporary Security Strategy, Ireland and Adjunct Research Fellow at the School of Politics and International Relations at UCD.

John Minihan (Capt Rtd), former Senator and retired Captain in the Defence Forces. Chair of 2015 White Paper Ministerial Advisory Group.

Conor O'Boyle (Lieutenant General Retd.), former Irish Defence Forces Chief of Staff and previously Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) and General Officer Commanding Defence Forces Training Centre.

Lieutenant General Esa Pulkkinen, Finnish military officer who is a 3 star General (equivalent to rank of Defence Forces Chief of Staff). Previously, Director General of the EU Military Staff and military strategic adviser to the High Representative.

Geraldine Tallon, former Secretary General, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (2007-2014) and ex Chair of Department of Defence Audit Committee (2014-2019). Chair of the Catholic Institute for Deaf People.

Gerry Waldron (Capt Rtd), currently works as a medical doctor and Director of Slándáil (National Security Summit Ireland). He previously served as an officer in the Defence Forces for 16 years in a variety of roles at home and overseas with the United Nations.

Jane Williams, Managing Partner, SIA Partners Management Consultants and former Eirgrid PLC Board member and interim CEO 2009-2010. She has served on the Board of the National Competitiveness Council, the Irish Universities Quality Board, TLAC and a number of other boards and committees.

The Commission will be supported by an independent Secretariat under the direction of the Chairperson and will have available to it specific legal expertise and access to any additional research or analysis required to be carried out on its behalf.