



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ1**

**Name of TD making query: Duncan Smith, TD**

**Query Received:** To ask the Taoiseach and Minister for Defence the measures he has taken to protect the health and safety of DF personnel in their duties with regards to the outbreak of COVID-19 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

It is the policy of the Permanent Defence Force to provide a safe working and living environment for Defence Force personnel. There is a requirement to ensure that all DF personnel are cared for in a practical way, in line with HSE guidelines, whilst also ensuring that Defence Force capabilities are maintained.

On 4<sup>th</sup> March last, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform published guidelines for all Civil and Public Service Employees, which provide information and FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) in relation to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) infection. These guidelines and FAQs have been subsequently updated as the situation continues to evolve.

Sectors were advised to amend the FAQs having regard to their own circulars or arrangements as necessary.

As a result, the Military Authorities issued a General Routine Order (GRO), setting out the procedures in place for Defence Forces personnel which reflects the provisions of Defence Forces Regulations and public health guidelines as set down by the HSE.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ2**

**Name of TD making query: Robert Troy, TD**

**Query Received:** 240 Irish Peacekeeping troops currently serving in the Lebanon were due to end their rotation shortly. They have received information that the UN will not allow any new rotations until the end of June. This information has not been issued officially and serving members are anxious to have clarification on the matter. Could the Department of Defence clarify the exact status of rotations for personnel currently serving abroad.

### **Reply:**

Given the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 crisis, and in order to mitigate its transmission, the United Nations Secretary General in recent days advised all troop contributors and mission commanders of his plans to suspend all rotations and leave for military personnel serving in UN missions until 30 June.

The UN direction will impact over 100,000 UN uniformed personnel from over 120 countries serving world-wide.

The moratorium on upcoming rotations and leave is designed to ensure the continued operations of essential peacekeeping missions, to protect vulnerable populations in conflict zones and to maintain international peace and security. It is also designed to ensure the health and wellbeing of personnel deployed on UN operations by limiting movement of personnel into mission areas.

This is a decision which effects all contingents from all countries in all missions. The main impact for the Defence Forces will be on the deployments to MINUSMA in Mali where personnel are due to rotate later this month and for UNIFIL in Lebanon where personnel are due to rotate in two rotations in May, (12th and the 19th).

The Defence Forces contingent in UNDOF in Syria rotated over the weekend so they are unaffected by the recent announcement.

The UN Secretary General has advised that limited exceptions may be considered in extremis and where they are required for the continuation of the delivery on the mission mandate, and on the basis of strict conditions being applied to prevent the spread of the virus. Decisions on any exception will be taken by the UN Headquarters in New York on a proposal from the Force Commander.

The Department of Defence and the Defence Forces have been examining the impact of the UN decision on Defence Forces personnel currently serving with UN missions. We are also examining the impact it may have on future deployments, so as to advise personnel and families accordingly. Personnel deployed overseas will be briefed by their commanders in the mission area (We understand that this has already taken place). There is also ongoing engagement within the mission and with mission commanders to ensure that rotations can take place as close as possible to the original planned dates and in accordance with the direction of the UN Secretary General.

Ireland will continue to meet its commitments to UN and other multilateral peacekeeping operations in support of international peace and security through this challenging period to the greatest extent possible. Our aim is to maintain the integrity and operational capability of our overseas contingents in discharging their mandates. Protecting the health and welfare of our personnel remains a priority consideration throughout.

All currently deployed Defence Forces personnel whose overseas service is extended as a result of this UN decision will continue to receive their overseas peace support allowance for the extended duration of their deployment amounting to between €2,500 and €3,400 per month in addition to their normal pay. These allowances will continue to be paid free of tax.

Personnel whose deployment is delayed due to any imposed UN moratorium on rotations, will serve their full six month tour of duty when deployed and will therefore be at no loss in terms of their expected overseas allowances of some €15,000 to €20,000 tax free for their 6 month deployment.

Personnel and families will be advised and updated by the Defence Forces as further information becomes available and as the implications of these decisions are fully evaluated to ensure that we can provide personnel and families with as much information as possible.

The United Nations has assured of its absolute commitments to the health and safety of personnel in the field. UN missions are enforcing strict health and safety measures and infection protocols to keep personnel safe and well while continuing to carry out the important work of the UN mission.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ3**

**Name of TD making query: Carol Nolan, TD**

**Query Received: 335.** To ask the Minister for Defence to provide an update on the work of the Defence Forces in assisting to establish temporary covid-19 related medical facilities; the location of such facilities and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

I am advised that my Department and the Defence Forces have been engaged with the HSE in relation to their potential requirements for access to military installations, as part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. I understand that a number of installations have been identified for potential use, including St Bricin's Medical facility. The necessary preparatory works to ensure that the facilities are ready for immediate use, if required by the HSE, is now underway.

In addition to engaging with the HSE on the possible use of military buildings/installations, the Defence Forces have provided a number of other temporary facilities to the HSE. In particular Naval Service Ships are providing additional capacity to the HSE for Covid-19 testing facilities. The Defence forces are also supporting the roll out of regional test centres through the provision of Defence Forces tentage and marshalling at some of the regional Covid-19 testing facilities.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ4**

**Name of TD making query: Catherine Connolly TD**

**Query Received:** To ask the Minister for Defence what is the present status of the emergency Aeromedical service operated by the Defence Forces in light of the problems experienced due to staffing shortages and with particular reference to the need to have such services in light of Covid-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Reply:**

The Deputy will be aware that the Air Corps provides a broad range of services in accordance with its primary security role. The Air Corps also undertakes a diverse range of non-security-related tasks on an 'as available' basis including the provision of air ambulance services to the Health Service Executive (HSE).

I am pleased to update the Deputy that the Emergency Aeromedical Support (EAS) Service continues to operate on a daily basis. I am advised that no reduction in service provision is expected.

**END**



## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ5**

**Name of TD making query: Aengus O'Snodaigh**

**Query Received:** To ask the Minister for Defence the current status of the Civil Defence Forces in dealing with the Covid 19 public health emergency; if they are currently ensured to carry out missions during this emergency and what type missions they are authorised to carry out

### **Reply:**

Civil Defence (*Cosaint Shibhialta*) is a statutory volunteer-based organisation with a nationwide footprint, established in 1951. Nationally, Civil Defence is managed by 35 Local Authority Civil Defence Officers and has approximately 3,500 volunteers. Without these volunteers giving freely of their time and expertise, there would be no Civil Defence organisation. The role of Civil Defence is set out in the 2015 Government White Paper on Defence and that is to support the Principal Response Agencies in emergency and non-emergency times.

Civil Defence is actively involved in the response to COVID-19 and in the period 17 March – 8 April 2020, Civil Defence volunteers undertook a total of 378 separate taskings and provided 3,837 volunteer hours. The number of taskings and volunteer hours is increasing day on day.

In terms of insurance, my Department holds a commercial insurance policy which covers all Civil Defence volunteers throughout the country. There are many elements within the insurance policy including Motor fleet insurance, Public Liability Insurance, Employers Liability Insurance, Marine Insurance, Medical Mal-practice Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance.

To ensure the maximum utilisation of Civil Defence during the COVID-19 crisis, my Department also introduced a Loss of Earnings scheme on the 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2020. The scheme applies to Civil Defence volunteers activated during the COVID-19 crisis and who as a result either have to self-isolate for 14 days or contract COVID-19 and are out of work sick for up to 10 weeks.

Civil Defence volunteers have been deployed in a wide variety of tasks related to COVID-19. These include helping set up and operate testing centres, transporting test samples to laboratories, transporting patients to hospitals and medical appointments, delivering medicines and food to vulnerable people and also assisting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. Civil Defence will continue to play its part in dealing with this public health emergency.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ6**

**Name of TD making query: Aengus O'Snodaigh, TD**

**Query Received: 848.** To ask the Minister for Defence how many Defence Force members have applied to re-enlist on the introduction of the recently amended emergency legislation

### **Reply:**

I announced on the 01 April, a scheme to re-enlist former enlisted personnel who have the skills and expertise required to fill identified gaps in the Permanent Defence Force. The scheme will allow for initial re-enlistment for a minimum of six months and up to 3 years. The Chief of Staff will identify where such shortages exist and make recommendations to the Minister as to those that should be re-enlisted.

The legal provisions underpinning the scheme were previously approved by Government as part of the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2020, which was published in January. They were re-prioritised in light of the current situation regarding COVID 19 and included in the Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (COVID-19) Act 2020.

The focus of this scheme is on those with skills and expertise required to fill specialist vacancies that currently exist in the Permanent Defence Force (PDF). This includes technicians, fitters, chefs, communications and IT specialists and naval staff. These returning personnel will assist in delivering Defence Forces supports in the COVID 19 response and beyond.

Since announcing the scheme, a total of 540 Applications, as of 15 April, have been received.

The Military Authorities have advised that work is continuing with a view to the Chief of Staff making recommendations to the Minister.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

Department of Defence Internal Reference Number:

DCQ7

Name of TD making query: Michael Healy-Rae, TD

**Query Received:** In relation to our Defence Forces, can you update me as to their activity during this crisis of Covid-19. I believe more of a presence should be seen and helping supplement the efforts of our Gardaí in checkpoints and enforcing travel restrictions.

### Reply:

The Department of Justice and Equality and An Garda Síochána have primary responsibility for the internal security of the State. Among the roles assigned to the Defence Forces in the White Paper on Defence is the provision of Aid to the Civil Power which, in practice, means to assist An Garda Síochána when requested to do so. The decision to seek support from the Defence Forces is an operational matter for An Garda Síochána.

In coordinating the Defence Forces contribution and support to the whole of Government response to Covid-19, a new Joint Task Force (JTF) has been established. The JTF has the authority to draw together in a joint manner the contribution of all of the elements of the Defence Forces, within means and capabilities, to provide a range of supports in response to Covid-19. Brig General Brian Cleary, who has been appointed to command the JTF, represents the Defence Forces on the Senior Officials Group, chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach to support the Cabinet Committee on Covid-19 Emergency Response.

The Defence Forces have provided, and continue to provide, the HSE with a broad range of supports in response to Covid-19. Some examples of the range of Defence Forces supports to the HSE include:

- Contact tracing – the Defence Forces have assisted the HSE in their contract tracing effort from an early stage.
- Naval Service Ships are providing additional capacity to the HSE for Covid19 testing facilities at Dublin, Cork and Galway.

- Support is also being provided for the roll out of regional test centres through the provision of Defence Forces tentage and marshalling at a number of the regional Covid19 testing facilities.
- The Defence Forces Central Medical Unit have assisted the National Ambulance Service through tele triage services and through Defence Forces ambulance/crew supports.
- Defence Forces transportation assets and personnel have been utilised in the collection and distribution of vital PPE for the HSE.

In addition, the Defence Forces have supported the building of a National body storage facility on the grounds of Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick. It will be available as a support facility for the regional mortuaries. They are also supporting a similar facility built on the grounds of the Royal Hospital Kilmainham in Dublin.

The Defence Forces have also made available a number of their locations around the country if they are needed for the response to the COVID19 pandemic.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ8**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 848.** To ask the Minister for Defence the number of applications to re-join the Defence Forces received since the passing of the Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (Covid-19) Act, the number of eligible applicants, the number of eligible applicants in receipt of a Defence Forces pension and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

I announced on the 01 April last, a scheme to re-enlist former enlisted personnel who have the skills and expertise required to fill identified gaps in the Permanent Defence Force. The scheme will allow for initial re-enlistment for a minimum of six months and up to 3 years.

Since announcing the Scheme, as of 15 April, a total number of 540 applications have been received.

Individuals, wishing to apply are required to meet a range of eligibility criteria such as medical and physical fitness, and will be required to be within the age requirements for the rank for the duration of their enlistment.

The Chief of Staff will identify where specific shortages exist within the Permanent Defence Force and will make recommendations to the Minister as to those that may be re-enlisted. The Military Authorities have advised that work is continuing to establish the eligible applicants who will be recommended to the Minister by the Chief of Staff for re-enlistment. In addition to assessing the criteria outlined above, this also requires an analysis of the applicant's skills and qualifications which is ongoing.

As a result, it is not possible, at this stage, to provide information on the number of eligible candidates who will be recommended for an appointment and who are in receipt of Defence Forces Pension.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ9**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 848.** To ask the Minister for Defence to outline the Terms and Conditions of re-entry to the Defence Forces, if his Department sought a waiver of the pension abatement provision and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

I announced on the 01 April last, a scheme to re-enlist former enlisted personnel who have the skills and expertise required to fill identified gaps in the Permanent Defence Force. The scheme will allow for initial re-enlistment for a minimum of six months and up to 3 years. The Chief of Staff will identify where such shortages exist and make recommendations to the Minister as to those that should be re-enlisted.

The legal provisions underpinning the scheme were previously approved by Government as part of the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2020, which was published in January. They were re-prioritised in light of the current situation regarding COVID 19 and included in the Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (COVID-19) Act 2020.

The focus of this scheme is on those with skills and expertise required to fill specialist vacancies that currently exist in the Permanent Defence Force (PDF). This includes technicians, fitters, chefs, communications and IT specialists and naval staff. These returning personnel will assist in delivering Defence Forces supports in the COVID 19 response and beyond.

Individuals, wishing to apply are required to meet a range of eligibility criteria such as medical and physical fitness, and will be required to be within the age requirements for the rank for the duration of their enlistment. Full details of the Scheme are available on the careers page of [military.ie](http://military.ie).

Section 52(4) of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012, provides that the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform may, at his or her discretion waive the application of the abatement of a public service pension payable to a public servant or a class of public servants. The waiver of pension abatement which has been sanctioned by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to

other areas of the public service for the Covid-19 response is time-bound and linked to temporary contracts.

While the re-enlistment of former PDF members will assist in the Defence Forces support to the principal response agencies in the Covid-19 response, the scheme is designed for medium to long-term requirements and is not comparable to other sectors. It will remain in place after the COVID 19 response is complete.

It should also be noted that anyone who is re-enlisted in the Defence Forces will benefit from doing so at the rank and salary point attained on retirement.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ10**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 850.** To ask the Minister for Defence to provide an update on the decision by the United Nations to suspend troop rotations for its peacekeeping missions, the impact of this for Defence Forces personnel, to outline the conditions and procedures involved in seeking exemptions to the decision and if his Department will seek such an exemption for Irish troops.

### **Reply:**

Given the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 crisis, and in order to mitigate its transmission, the United Nations Secretary General in recent days advised all troop contributors and mission commanders of his plans to suspend all rotations and leave for military personnel serving in UN missions until 30 June.

The UN direction will impact over 100,000 UN uniformed personnel from over 120 countries serving world-wide.

The moratorium on upcoming rotations and leave is designed to ensure the continued operations of essential peacekeeping missions, to protect vulnerable populations in conflict zones and to maintain international peace and security. It is also designed to ensure the health and wellbeing of personnel deployed on UN operations by limiting movement of personnel into mission areas.

This is a decision which effects all contingents from all countries in all missions. The main impact for the Defence Forces will be on the deployments to MINUSMA in Mali where personnel are due to rotate later this month and for UNIFIL in Lebanon where personnel are due to rotate in two rotations in May, (12th and the 19th).

The Defence Forces contingent in UNDOF in Syria rotated over the weekend so they are unaffected by the recent announcement.

The UN Secretary General has advised that limited exceptions may be considered in extremis and where they are required for the continuation of the delivery on the mission mandate, and on the basis of strict conditions being applied to prevent the spread of the virus. Decisions on any exception will be taken by the UN Headquarters in New York on a proposal from the Force Commander.

The Department of Defence and the Defence Forces have been examining the impact of the UN decision on Defence Forces personnel currently serving with UN missions. We are also examining the impact it may have on future deployments, so as to advise personnel and families accordingly. Personnel deployed overseas have been briefed by their commanders in the mission area. There is also ongoing engagement within the mission and with mission commanders to ensure that rotations can take place as close as possible to the original planned dates and in accordance with the direction of the UN Secretary General.

Ireland will continue to meet its commitments to UN and other multilateral peacekeeping operations in support of international peace and security through this challenging period to the greatest extent possible. Our aim is to maintain the integrity and operational capability of our overseas contingents in discharging their mandates. Protecting the health and welfare of our personnel remains a priority consideration throughout.

All currently deployed Defence Forces personnel whose overseas service is extended as a result of this UN decision will continue to receive their overseas peace support allowance for the extended duration of their deployment amounting to between €2,500 and €3,400 per month in addition to their normal pay. These allowances will continue to be paid free of tax.

Personnel whose deployment is delayed due to any imposed UN moratorium on rotations, will serve their full six month tour of duty when deployed and will therefore be at no loss in terms of their expected overseas allowances of some €15,000 to €20,000 tax free for their 6 month deployment.

Personnel and families will be advised and updated by the Defence Forces as further information becomes available and as the implications of these decisions are fully evaluated to ensure that we can provide personnel and families with as much information as possible.

The United Nations has assured of its absolute commitments to the health and safety of personnel in the field. UN missions are enforcing strict health and safety measures and infection protocols to keep personnel safe and well while continuing to carry out the important work of the UN mission.

**END**



## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ11

Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD

**Query Received: 851.** To ask the Minister for Defence to detail what additional equipment and PPE has been procured to assist the Defence Forces in their response to Covid-19 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### Reply:

My priority as Minister with Responsibility for Defence is to ensure that the operational capability of the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service, is maintained to the greatest extent possible to enable the Defence Forces to carry out their roles as assigned by Government, including overseas deployments, and any tasks that related to the Government's response to the Covid-19 crisis.

The Defence Forces maintains strategic stocks of equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to meet specified operational tasks. In addition to these existing stocks, the additional items, specific to the response to Covid-19 have been procured.

The following table sets out the Equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) procured to assist the Defence Forces in their response to Covid-19.

Unit/Formation	Description	Value	Details
Air Corps	PPE and Sanitiser Gels	€20,840.63	Note 1
Air Corps	PC12 Aircraft	€5,219,952.08	Note 2
Communications	Audio Visual (AV)Equipment	€15,000.00	Note 3
Medical	PPE, Medical Supplies, Creams and Medical Equipment	€52,975.38	Note 1
Barrack Services	Refrigeration Units, decontamination sprayers	€277,468.00	Note 4
<b>Total</b>		<b>€5,586,236.09</b>	

**Notes:** Table reflects items received up to and including 9 April 2020. Additional orders have been placed but are not yet received.

- 1 PPE and Sanitiser Gel includes but is not limited to:
  - Disposable face masks
  - Full face visors
  - Safety spectacles
  - Hand sanitiser gel
  - Sanitiser sprays
  - Disinfectant Wipes
  - Gloves
- 2 One PC12 NG aircraft was procured from Pilatus Aircraft Ltd to provide the Air Corps with a further agile resource to service urgent requests from agencies of the State.
- 3 Procurement, installation and maintenance of addition audio visual equipment for the Joint Task Force in McKee Barracks.
- 4 Procurement of 4 refrigeration units for storage of strategic ration reserves and 25 decontamination units.

Further orders will be placed as required to ensure that the Defence Forces have the equipment and PPE required to enable them to continue to perform the important tasks assigned to them during this time.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ12**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 852.**To ask the Minister for Defence what is the role of the Joint Taskforce that has been established to coordinate the Defence Forces response to Covid-19 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

In coordinating the Defence Forces contribution and support to the whole of Government response to Covid-19, a new Joint Task Force (JTF) has been established. The JTF has the authority to draw together in a joint manner the contribution of all of the elements of the Defence Forces, within its means and capabilities, to provide a range of supports in response to Covid-19.

The establishment of the new JTF was provided for in a Defence Forces Regulation and the provision of this joint command Covid19 taskforce is temporary in nature and will terminate with the end of the current crisis when the Task Force is stood down.

**END**

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ13**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 853.** To ask the Minister for Defence what taskings have been undertaken by the Defence Forces in assisting with the national response to Covid-19 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

A joint command structure has been established to coordinate the overall Defence Forces response to the Covid 19 crisis. The purpose of this Joint Task Force (JTF) is to coordinate the Defence Forces contribution to the whole-of-Government COVID response. It has the authority to draw together in a joint manner the contribution of all of the elements of the Defence Forces. The provision for a joint command Covid19 taskforce is temporary in nature and will terminate with the end of the current crisis when the Task Force is stood down.

The Defence Forces have provided, and continues to provide, the HSE with a broad range of supports in response to Covid-19. Examples from the range of Defence Forces supports to the HSE include:

- Contact tracing – the Defence Forces has assisted the HSE in this effort from an early stage.
- Naval Service Ships are providing additional capacity to the HSE for Covid19 testing facilities at Dublin, Cork and Galway.
- Supporting the roll out of regional test centres through the provision of Defence Forces tentage and marshalling at some of the regional Covid19 testing facilities.
- The Defence Forces Central Medical Unit have assisted the NAS through tele triage services and through DF ambulance/crew supports.
- Defence Forces transportation assets and personnel have been utilised in the collection and distribution of vital PPE for the HSE.

In addition, the Defence Forces have supported the building of a National body storage facility on the grounds of Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick. It will be available as a support for the regional mortuaries. They are also supporting a similar facility built on the grounds of the Royal Hospital Kilmainham in Dublin.

The Defence Forces have also made available a number of their locations around the country if they are needed for the response to the COVID19 pandemic.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ14**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 854.** To ask the Minister for Defence what allowances that are being to members of the Defence Forces who are rostered to assist in the response to Covid-19 and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

The circumstances facing the State with the COVID 19 virus pandemic is placing unprecedented demands on the principal response agencies and the health service in particular.

The Defence Forces are currently providing supports to the HSE as part of the State's response to the COVID 19 virus. It is expected that the Defence Forces will be called upon to provide a broad range of services to support the principal response agencies in the coming period.

Enlisted personnel will be paid an Aid to the Civil Authority (ATCA) allowance while Commissioned Officers and Cadets will be paid a Maintenance of Essential Services Allowance (MESA). These allowances will be paid in addition to basic pay, military service allowance, and technical pay (where applicable).

As part of their operational configuration, the Defence Forces are implementing 72 hour duty rosters as part of the COVID 19 response to provide personnel to assist the civil authorities. Where a person is on duty (either in barracks on standby, or deployed in the field) for an entire 72 hour COVID 19 response

roster, and tasked exclusively to respond to tasks in this regard in support of the Principal Response Agencies, the ATCA allowance or MESA will be aggregated for the duty period.

By way of example (for post 2013 enlisted personnel), each 72 hour duty allowance will be calculated as follows: €99.52 per 24 hours Monday to Friday, €149.40 per 24 hours on a Saturday, where no working day is provided as a rest day, and €199.20 for 24 hours on a Sunday and Defence Forces holidays. This will only apply to personnel on duty for the entirety of each 72 hour COVID 19 response roster.

Duties performed outside of this roster will continue to be paid relevant duty allowances at current rates, which can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/65e6ec-routinely-published-information/#defence-forces-pay-scales>

Technical pay will be paid to those individuals who are rostered and deployed for duties in the COVID 19 response and who have the specific skills/qualifications which attract technical pay.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

**Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ15**

**Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD**

**Query Received: 855.** To ask the Minister for Defence to furnish details of payment, allowances and other benefits received by officer cadets who are involved in contact tracing and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **Reply:**

The Defence Forces are currently providing supports to the civil authorities as part of the State's response to the COVID 19 virus.

Currently, Defence Force Cadets have been assigned to carry out contract tracing for the HSE. Cadets are continuing to receive their pay which starts at €19,255 per annum. Those cadets contributing to the COVID response will also receive a daily Maintenance of Essential Service Allowance (MESA) for the duties performed in assisting the civil authorities. Throughout their training to become Officers, Cadets also receive their accommodation and rations free of charge.

The Maintenance of Essential Services Allowance is paid to members of the Defence Forces who are deployed on occasion to support the Civil Authorities, across a wide range of scenarios. The allowance is €48.26 for weekdays; €72.50 on Saturday (where no working day as a rest day); €96.65 on Sundays and Defence Forces holidays.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ16

Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD

**Query Received: 856.** To ask the Minister for Defence to furnish details of the taskings undertaken by Civil Defence units on a county by county basis in response to the Covid-19 emergency and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### Reply:

In the context of COVID-19, Civil Defence was first tasked by the Principal Response Agencies on 17 March 2020. In the period 17 March 2020 – 8 April 2020, Civil Defence nationally undertook 378 separate taskings, mainly in support of the HSE and the Local Authorities. As Minister for Defence and on behalf of the Government, I want to thank all Civil Defence volunteers for their ongoing service to the state, and to those who have been available to be deployed to date, as part of the response to Covid-19.

Local Authority Civil Defence Unit	Number of Taskings	Local Authority Civil Defence Unit	Number of Taskings
Carlow	8	Limerick	5
Cavan	41	Longford	16
Clare	10	Louth	26
Cork City	7	Mayo	15
Cork North	3	Meath	15
Cork South	3	Monaghan	7
Cork West	4	Offaly	22
Donegal	19	Roscommon	8
Dublin	51	Sligo	2
Galway	7	Tipperary	16
Kerry	14	Waterford	1
Kildare	8	Westmeath	14
Kilkenny	9	Wexford	8

Laois	22	Wicklow	12
Leitrim	5	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>378</u></b>

Civil Defence volunteers have been deployed in a wide variety of tasks related to COVID-19. These include helping set up and operate testing centres, transporting test samples to laboratories, transporting patients to hospitals and medical appointments, delivering medicines and food to vulnerable people and also assisting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. Civil Defence will continue to play its part in dealing with this public health emergency.

Civil Defence will continue to play its part in supporting communities during this public health emergency.

**END**



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## COVID19 RELATED QUERY

Department of Defence Internal Reference Number: DCQ17

Name of TD making query: Martin Heydon, TD

**Query Received: 857.** To ask the Minister for Defence to outline the income supports available to Civil Defence volunteers and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### Reply:

Civil Defence (*Cosaint Shibhialta*) is a statutory volunteer-based organisation with a nationwide footprint, established in 1951. Nationally, Civil Defence is managed by 35 Local Authority Civil Defence Officers and approximately 3,500 volunteers. Without these volunteers giving freely of their time and expertise, there would be no Civil Defence organisation.

In central Government terms, policy responsibility for the Civil Defence falls under the aegis of my Department.

One of the range of supports my Department provides to Local Authority Civil Defence units is the provision of insurance to all Civil Defence volunteers covering a range of areas including Motor fleet insurance, Public liability Insurance, Employers Liability Insurance, Marine Insurance, Medical Malpractice Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance.

In the context of COVID-19 and the challenges it presented and to ensure appropriate income protection for Civil Defence volunteers involved in response, my Department introduced a Loss of Earnings scheme on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, 2020. The scheme applies to Civil Defence volunteers activated during the COVID-19 crisis, who as a result, either have to self-isolate for 14 days, or contract COVID-19 and are out of work sick for up to 10 weeks.

Applications under the scheme must be submitted through the volunteer's Civil Defence Officer or Assistant Civil Defence Officer. The scheme applies to Civil Defence volunteers who are employed within the private sector and where that employer seeks a recoupment or for Civil Defence volunteers who are self-employed. It does **not** apply to volunteers employed within the public sector.

**END**