An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence

Óglaigh na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

Strategic Framework

Transformation of the Defence Forces

September 2023

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Department of Defence

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Foreword

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence

Following the publication of the *Report of the Independent Review Group on Dignity and Equality issues* in the Defence Forces in March 2023 (the 'IRG Report'), I set out my priority to develop one Strategic Framework for the transformation of the Defence Forces, fully understood by everyone, that has the appropriate governance and reporting mechanisms, and is properly resourced.

The purpose of the Strategic Framework is to bring together into one overarching document, from the multiplicity of plans developed, the immediate actions to be taken to support the transformation of the Defence Forces into a fit for purpose organisation to defend the State and meet the challenges of today and the future.

My priority within this transformation is cultural change above all else. The end goal of this **cultural change** is to ensure that the Defence Forces is an equal opportunities employer, reflective of contemporary Irish society and that is, providing a safe workplace,

- where self-worth is actively promoted,
- where mutual respect becomes a dominant feature,
- where all members are treated with dignity,
- in organisation that continuously evolves to deliver positive change.

This journey of transformation has commenced, and much work has been done since the end of 2021 in particular to support this transformation. The publication today of this Strategic Framework clearly sets out the actions that I want delivered before the end of 2024 to:

- implement the recommendations of the IRG Report;
- implement the recommendations of the Commission on the Defence Forces (CoDF);
- support the recruitment to and retention of personnel to our Defence Forces;
- enhance the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel; and
- make the legislative changes to underpin the transformation agenda.

The transformation process will be supported by new governance and reporting arrangements which are both clear and straightforward:

- The Secretary General of the Department of Defence and the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces will report to me on the delivery of actions for which they are respectively responsible and accountable on a quarterly basis.
- The External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces, will report to me on Defence Force progress in its cultural transformation on a quarterly basis. The Implementation Oversight Group and the High Level Steering Board tasked to oversee and drive progress on the implementation of the Commission on the Defence Forces will continue.
- A dedicated team in the Department of Defence is in place to monitor and report on all actions within this Framework and I will publish a progress update every six months.

This Strategic Framework, outlines my main priorities as Tánaiste and Minister for Defence.

While all the actions under this Framework are important, my core strategic priorities are:

i. The specific actions to support cultural change within the Defence Forces identified in this Strategic Framework will be implemented through a well-designed and expertly led culture change programme with oversight by the External Oversight Body;

ii. To stabilise the numbers of personnel in the Defence Forces in the short term and thereafter to increase the strength towards the level of ambition arising from the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces;

iii. The implementation of an agreed policy for the application of the Working Time Directive within the Defence Forces with legislative underpinning;

iv. To progress specific projects to enhance the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel including specific capability enhancements across all Services as set out in the CoDF report;

v. To implement a new independent, external complaints service for serving members of the Defence Forces and a new complaints process for civilians and civil servants;

vi. The legislative changes to support the transformation of the Defence Forces to be put in place including the statutory underpinning for

- the new high-level structures within the Defence Forces, and the consequential re-design of the governance and oversight framework for the new command structure,
- the new independent complaints mechanism, and
- the External Oversight Body;

vii. That the Judge led Tribunal of Inquiry to examine the effectiveness of the complaints processes in the Defence Forces into workplace issues relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct is established.

Development work in the area of defence policy and operations will also happen in parallel with the transformation of the Defence Forces and will set the context for the future.

I want, and I am confident, that every effort will be made to make progress internally within the Defence Forces, and will be reported externally.

Clear and irrefutable evidence of change on the ground is the only thing that will rebuild the trust and confidence of serving members.

Micheál Martin, TD

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence

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1. Overview and Core Priorities

Following the publication of the *Report of the Independent Review Group on Dignity and Equality issues* in the Defence Forces in March 2023 (the 'IRG Report'), the Tánaiste set out the priority to develop one Strategic Framework for the transformation of the Defence Forces, fully understood by everyone, that has the appropriate governance and reporting mechanisms, and is properly resourced.

The purpose of the Strategic Framework is to bring together into one overarching document, from the multiplicity of plans developed, the immediate actions to be taken to support the transformation of the Defence Forces into a fit for purpose organisation to defend the State and meet the challenges of today and the future.

This journey of transformation has commenced, and much work has been done since the end of 2021 in particular to support this. A summary of the changes / actions taken since the end of 2021 is set out in Appendix I. Notwithstanding progress on these actions, significant work remains.

The scope of the Strategic Framework includes:

- The implementation of the IRG Report recommendations.
- The implementation of the Commission on the Defence Forces (CoDF) recommendations as approved by Government.
- Actions to support the recruitment and retention of personnel to our Defence Forces.
- Actions to enhance the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel.
- Legislative changes to underpin the transformation agenda.

The Tánaiste and Minister for Defence wants the priorities in this Strategic Framework to be implemented by the end of 2024. There will be an update report published every six months, commencing March 2024. A revised Strategic Framework for 2025 and beyond will be published at the end of 2024.

The priority within this first phase of transformation is **cultural change** above all else. The end goal of this cultural change is to ensure that the Defence Forces is an equal opportunities employer, reflective of contemporary Irish society and that is, providing a safe workplace,

- where self-worth is actively promoted,
- where mutual respect becomes a dominant feature,
- where all members are treated with dignity,
- an organisation that continuously evolves to deliver positive change.

While each action under this Framework is important, the core priorities up to the end of 2024 are:

i. The specific actions to support cultural change within the Defence Forces are made. This will be implemented through a well-designed and expertly led culture change programme, led and driven convincingly from the leadership of the Defence Forces, and including initiatives grounded in the vision of the future Defence Forces. This will be monitored closely by the External Oversight Body.

ii. That the numbers of personnel in the Defence Forces are stabilised, and thereafter increasing the strength towards the level of ambition arising from the CoDF.

iii. The implementation of an agreed policy for the application of the Working Time Directive within the Defence Forces.

iv. To progress specific projects to enhance the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel including specific capability enhancements across all Services as set out in the CoDF.

v. To set up a new independent, external complaints service for serving members of the Defence Forces and a new complaints process for civilians and civil servants.

vi. To introduce the legislative changes to support the transformation of the Defence Forces including the statutory underpinning for:

- the new high-level structures within the Defence Forces, and the consequential re-design of the governance and oversight framework for the new command structure;
- the new independent complaints mechanism; and
- the External Oversight Body.

vii. To set up the Judge led Tribunal of Inquiry to examine the effectiveness of the complaints processes in the Defence Forces into workplace issues relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.

This Strategic Framework firstly specifies a number of key actions to be taken by the end of 2024 relating to the:

- recommendations of the IRG Report (section 2);
- recommendations of the CoDF (section 3);
- recruitment to and retention of personnel to our Defence Forces (section 4);
- enhancing the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel (section 5); and
- legislative changes to underpin the transformation agenda (section 6).

It should be noted that separate to this Framework, but consistent with it, a Detailed Implementation Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces will be published in October 2023.

The normal practice of consulting with the Defence Forces representative associations on matters that come within the scope of representation will be continued.

To support implementation, the Framework sets out the governance and reporting arrangements to oversee this transformation and bring transparency and accountability to the work (Section 7). These arrangements include,

- The Secretary General of the Department of Defence and the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces will report on the delivery of actions to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, through a quarterly **Strategic Framework Review Meeting.**
- The **External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces** which is a critical element in achieving the goal of cultural change of the Defence Forces, and the oversight of the Defence Forces in the delivery of actions on foot of the IRG Report will monitor and report on progress;
- The **Implementation Oversight Group** and the **High Level Steering Board** tasked to oversee and drive progress on the implementation of the Commission on the Defence Forces will continue.

A matrix of all actions, detailing who is responsible for the delivery of each action, and governance and reporting arrangements for each action is set out in Appendix V. By focusing the timescale of the Strategic Framework to the end of 2024, it provides impetus and immediacy to this work, which will be reported on every six months. Progress will be seen internally within the Defence Forces, and will be reported externally.

Clear and irrefutable evidence of change on the ground is the only thing that will re-build the trust and confidence of serving members.

In parallel with the transformative actions that will be delivered by the end of 2024, this Framework sets out the development work in the area of defence policy and operations which will set the context for the future of the Defence Forces (Section 8).

2. Independent Review Group (IRG) Report Recommendations Implementation

Upon the publication of the IRG Report, the Government agreed to progress, as a priority, its 13 recommendations. There are **23** actions identified to be progressed, with the aim to be completed over the next 15 months. These are set out below under six areas:

- Statutory & Non Statutory Investigative Processes;
- External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces;
- Review and Redesign of Defence Forces Complaints and Grievance Processes;
- Supporting Cultural Change with the Defence Forces;
- Data to Inform Progress; and
- Medical.

Statutory & Non Statutory Investigative Processes

The following actions will be progressed by the Tánaiste:

1. In July 2023, the Government agreed to the establishment of a judge-led Tribunal of Inquiry, under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921 to 2011, to examine the effectiveness of the complaints processes in the Defence Forces into workplace issues relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Terms of Reference will be finalised in Autumn 2023.
2. The Department of Defence will engage with relevant Government Departments and State Bodies to bring forward proposals to the Tánaiste on the actions required to examine the investigation of complaints concerning health and safety issues in the Air Corps in relation to the use of hazardous chemicals and complaints concerning the investigation of air accidents.
3. An external group with appropriate expertise will be appointed to investigate and report on the process of medical boarding by Quarter 1 2024. The report will be delivered within 18 months of the appointment.

   Separately the Defence Forces will bring forward proposals in relation to the medical grading system as currently applied.
4. An external body will undertake a study of deaths by suicide in the Defence Forces. Further details will be announced in Quarter 4 2023.

To ensure transparency, it is the intention that each of the reports referenced above will be published, following consideration by Government.

External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces

5. The establishment of the External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces is a critical element in achieving the goal of cultural change of the Defence Forces. It has begun its work in line with the approved Terms of Reference (see Appendix II) noted by Government in July 2023[1]. The role of the External Oversight Body is to oversee the implementation of relevant recommendations of the IRG Report, to increase transparency and accountability in the Defence Forces and to bring about necessary changes to the workplace culture and behaviour in the Defence Forces.

1 The Terms of Reference set out all of the oversight responsibilities and activities of the External Oversight Body. The list of actions contained in this Framework is not an exhaustive list of all activities subject to the oversight of the External Oversight Body

The work of the Body is future-focused and is critical to driving the necessary cultural transformation throughout the Defence Forces.

A particularly important area of focus of the External Oversight Body is to oversee the management of the existing complaints system within the Defence Forces pending the introduction of a new complaints mechanism for members of the Defence Forces.

Review and Redesign of Defence Forces Complaints and Grievance Processes

To begin the process of rebuilding trust in the complaints and grievance processes, the following actions will be progressed:

6. Amend Sections 169 and 192 of the Defence Act 1954, to ensure that An Garda Síochána (AGS) will have sole jurisdiction within the State to investigate alleged sexual offences committed by persons subject to military law. Any subsequent cases will be dealt with by the civil courts. Following a Government Decision, the amendments to sections 169 and 192 of the Defence Act 1954 have been incorporated as part of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2023. The text of the Bill was approved by Government in July 2023. The Bill has now been published and the parliamentary debate on the Bill is due to commence in Autumn 2023.
7. The Defence Forces to ensure grievances related to sexual misconduct should be identified, prioritised, and fast-tracked immediately.
8. The Department of Defence will bring forward legislative change to design an independent, external complaints service for serving members of the Defence Forces to address complaints of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
9. The Defence Forces to conduct a review of the Redress of Wrongs procedures under section 114 Defence Act and submit a report to the Tánaiste for his consideration. Further action will be taken following consideration of this report.
10. A Working Group on the development of a complaints process for civilians and civil servants will be put in place by the Tánaiste by the end of 2023.

Support Cultural Change within the Defence Forces

The priority within this first phase of transformation of the Defence Forces is cultural change above all else. To support this cultural change, the following actions will be undertaken over the next 15 months:

11. Immediately ensure that all policies, information material and local practices are aligned with the Maternity Protection Act 1994. This new body of work will be published shortly.

12. The Defence Forces have already taken steps to ensure that appropriate maternity clothing is made available to personnel as a matter of course and this will continue.

13. The Defence Forces will undertake a well-designed and expertly led culture change programme. External expertise to assist in the specification, design, roll-out, monitoring, and measuring/assessing of the pace and efficacy of implementation will be put in place and the design and implementation of the culture change programme will be subject to oversight by the External Oversight Body.

14. The Defence Forces have engaged an external expert in dignity and respect training to design and deliver strong training interventions to address workplace issues pertaining to dignity and equality, duty of care, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. This will be subject to oversight by the External Oversight Body.

15. The Defence Forces will develop and submit a Retaliation Prevention Policy, including robust deterrent measures, for the approval of the Tánaiste and under the oversight of the External Oversight Body.

16. The Defence Forces will adopt the most up-to-date definitions of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment where relevant to the Workplace Relations Commission Code of Practice.

17. The Defence Forces will examine existing policies and develop new policies, where appropriate, on gender, inclusion and diversity through an inclusive process that is externally and professionally facilitated, taking into account the recommendations arising from the IRG Report. This assessment and new policies to be completed within 12 months. The development of the new policies will be subject to oversight by the External Oversight Body.

18. The Defence Forces will develop a profile of a female soldier in the Defence Forces. This will be subject to the oversight of the External Oversight Body.

19. The Chief of Staff has communicated and reiterated clearly to all members of the Defence Forces that misogynistic beliefs and behaviours are unacceptable, and that complaints that are upheld will be severely punished through penalties that have impact. The Chief of Staff will conduct a review of the current sanctions in place where complaints are upheld and an assessment of the appropriateness or otherwise of such penalties. This will be subject to the oversight of the External Oversight Body. Any necessary amendments to the sanctions system, as recommended, will be implemented.

20. The Chief of Staff to submit proposals for the Tánaiste on the introduction of 360-degree feedback as a method of creating self-awareness and team ethos for all members of the Defence Forces starting with leadership roles.

21. The Chief of Staff will submit proposals to provide final interview board members for promotion competitions with a psychometric assessment tool that they can use to assess the candidate's capabilities but to also support the equity, diversity and inclusion policies as well as the law on discrimination.

Data to Inform Progress

It is critical to understand the impact of changes to better inform progress. Enhancements to Defence Forces data and reporting systems is a key enabler of this objective. The initial actions in this area include:

22. The Defence Forces to carry out an assessment of the existing sources of data available and the steps required to establish a better resourced and standalone data unit. This assessment will be considered by the External Oversight Body.

Medical

23. Extension of the healthcare afforded to officer ranks to enlisted ranks was notified to Government and implemented in September 2023.

3. Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces Actions to be delivered

As set out in Section 1, separate to this Framework, but consistent with it, a Detailed Implementation Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces will be published in October 2023.

Implementation:

The Commission's report highlighted five core areas that must be addressed in the detailed implementation plan on foot of policy decisions in relation to level of ambition and budget. These five core areas are now captured as five Strategic Objectives, which are:

- Strategic HR and Cultural Change to be delivered;
- New Command and Control and Joint Structures to be established;
- Services to be reformed and restructured;
- Reserve Defence Force to be revitalised; and
- Joint Capability Development to be implemented.

The key actions and outcomes to be delivered by the end of 2024 under each of the above areas to support the transformation of the Defence Forces are set out below.

Strategic HR and Cultural Change to be Delivered

24. *Recruitment Strategies:* Revised Direct Entry Policies and Procedures prepared by the Defence Forces and submitted to the Tánaiste.
25. *Gender Perspective Policies & Actions:* Defence Forces to ensure that the Gender Perspective is mandatory in all aspects of decision making across the Defence Forces including HR practices, promotion processes, procurement and infrastructure development.
26. *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategies:* Defence Forces to appoint a Senior Gender Advisor to include responsibilities in the areas of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through an external process. First iteration of gender, diversity and unconscious bias training has been designed and delivered by the Defence Forces in 2023.
27. *Career & Talent Processes and Promotion Systems:* Proposals to transform career and talent process and promotion systems prepared by the Defence Forces and submitted to the Tánaiste for consideration.
28. *Working Time Directive:* Department of Defence to finalise policy position on the implementation of the Working Time Directive within the Defence Forces, with regard to activities which are deemed outside the scope of the Directive by the end of 2023.

29. Defence Forces to introduce a modern time and attendance system for all personnel.

30. *Remote Learning Solutions:* The Defence Forces to put Priority Courses with availability for remote and distance learning in place.

31. *Culture Surveys:* Baseline and subsequently annual climate and attitude surveys to assess morale, command climate and underlying culture to be carried out by the Defence Forces. The content and date to be agreed with the External Oversight Body.

32. *Flexible Work Practices:* Defence Forces to make organisational changes to allow for more flexible service and flexible work practices.

33. *Family Friendly Policies:* Extension and enhancement of existing family-friendly policies to the greatest practicable extent by Quarter 4 2024.

34. *Dining Integration:* Continued implementation of integration of dining facilities within new structures.

35. *Pay & Allowance Measures:* Further Evaluation by the Department of Defence, of CoDF recommendations relating to (i) the replacement of existing sea-going allowances with less complex sea-going duty measures; and (ii) Long-service Increments to pay scales of all ranks of enlisted personnel.

Services to be Reformed and Restructured

36. *Military Intelligence Legislation:* Further Evaluation completed by the Department of Defence regarding the role and functions of Military Intelligence clarified and underpinned by appropriate legislation within the context of a coherent national intelligence architecture.

37. *Service Development:* High level design development work on the restructuring of all three services substantially progressed.

38. *Defence Force Taskings:* Review of current Aid To the Civil Power (ATCP) and Aid To the Civil Authority (ATCA) taskings completed in order to ensure continued relevance and priority, with appropriately defined levels of ambition.

39. *Smart Metrics:* The use of smart metrics to be embedded in the Naval Services Patrol Plan and in relation to fisheries protection.

New Command & Control and Joint Structures to be established

40. *High Level Command & Control:* The Department of Defence to prepare policy proposals for the approval of Government concerning high-level structures within the Defence Forces, including the recommendation concerning military command, and the consequential re-design of the governance and oversight framework of the Minister and Department of Defence vis-à-vis the Defence Forces to give effective assurance and accountability in a new command structure.

41. *Senior Enlisted Advisor Positions:* Further Evaluation completed by the Department by the end of 2023 of the SEAC position currently being trialled.

42. *Defence Forces Vision:* New Defence Forces vision statement developed and published.

Joint Capability Development

43. *Capability Development Structures:* Creation of a permanent civil-military structure through the establishment of the new Capability Development Unit, and commencement of work associated with Phase 1 of the establishment process.

44. *Enhancement of DF Capabilities:* Progress made on each of the specific capability enhancements across all Services set out in the CoDF report including:

    a. Military Radar;

    b. Anti-Drone/Unmanned Aerial System/ Remote Piloted System;

    c. Armoured Fleet Replacement;

    d. Naval Fleet Management & Replacement;

    e. Enhancement of Air Corps Fleet;

    f. Replacement of Existing Medium Lift Helicopter Fleet;

    g. Subsea awareness capability.

45. *Cyber Defence Strategy:* The Defence Forces to submit for consideration of the Tánaiste an updated Defence Forces' Cyber Defence Strategy.

Reserve Force to be Revitalised

46. *Reserve Defence Force Vision:* The Defence Forces to publish a new Reserve Defence Force Vision.

47. *Reserve Defence Force Regeneration Plan:* The Defence Forces to complete a Reserve Defence Force Regeneration Plan.

48. *First Line Reserve:* The Defence Forces to prepare proposals to provide for a Fast Track Process for First Line Reserve.

4. Recruitment and Retention of personnel to our Defence Forces

As of the end of August 2023, the strength of the Permanent Defence Forces stood at 7,671, with 6,221 Army, 755 Navy and 695 Air Corps. The current establishment of the Permanent Defence Forces is almost 9,600 with the ambition to move to 11,500 (including civilian staff) by 2028 under Level of Ambition 2 (LOA2).

The immediate focus is on stabilising the numbers of personnel in the Defence Forces and thereafter increasing the strength to meet the level of ambition arising from the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces.

The key actions to be completed/progressed over the next 15 months include:

49. *Recruitment Initiatives:*

    a. Joint Induction Training Centre (JITC): The Defence Forces have established a new JITC in Gormanston. The aim is for the JITC to increase the throughput of recruits annually. Infrastructure projects to support the JITC will also be significantly progressed;

    b. The maximum age for enlistment in the Permanent Defence Force will be increased from 29 years to 35 years;

    c. The 'Be More' recruitment campaign will continue in operation;

    d. A Naval Service specific recruitment campaign launched in June 2023 is continuing, and its impact will be reviewed again in 2024;

    e. A contract has recently been awarded to a marine specialist recruitment body to target individuals with the skills and expertise required by the Naval Service;

    f. Opportunities to undertake further direct entry recruitment and civilian recruitment will be explored;

    g. A specific campaign targeted at re-entry opportunities will be undertaken;

    h. The recruitment process will be further streamlined to include changes to the application process;

    i. The impact of pausing Psychometric Testing for Naval Service General Service Recruits, which has been paused for 6 months from June 2023, will be examined in 2024 and will inform any future decisions on the process;

    j. External recruitment expertise have been engaged to validate existing recruitment processes and to advise on any potential opportunities to improve such recruitment processes.

50. *Retention:*

    a. A range of financial and non-financial retention measures have been introduced by Government to-date including significant changes to pay rates for Private 3 Star/Able seamen in first three years of service; provision of service commitment schemes in the Air Corps and Naval Service; provision of tax measures in the Naval Service, and payment of increases in tech pay to certain personnel;

    b. The provision of a service commitment scheme in the Air Corps will continue in 2024;

    c. In line with the commitment in the CoDF, the replacement of existing sea-going allowances with less complex measures will be finalised by the end of 2023;

    d. Extension of the healthcare afforded to officer ranks to enlisted ranks was rolled out in September 2023;

    e. Increasing mandatory retirement ages for both commissioned officers and enlisted personnel will be progressed with DPENDR with a view to a decision in 2024;

    f. A tender will issue to undertake a Review of Medical Services in the Defence Forces, with the Review itself being progressed during 2024;

    g. Associate membership of ICTU for the Representative Associations underpinned by legislation will be provided by end Quarter 2 2024; and

    h. The introduction of a mechanism to provide for the ongoing review of the application of existing specialist pay rates and allowances to groups and categories of military personnel, in line with the commitment in the CoDF, will be progressed with DPENDR. Any recommendations will be progressed within public pay policy parameters.

51. *Civilianisation Strategy:* The Defence Forces will submit its Civilianisation Strategy to the Tánaiste to support Defence Force personnel carrying out military tasks, with significant progress on the design of a workforce plan identifying civilian recruitment requirements in 2024.

52. *Reserve Defence Forces:* In addition to the actions 46 to 48 regarding the revitalisation of the Reserves, employment protection measures for Reserve Defence Force members who deploy on a voluntary basis in support of the Permanent Defence Force, will be developed by the Department of Defence in 2024.

5. Enhancing the Physical Working Environment and Equipment of our Personnel

The Defence Forces Equipment Development Plan and the Infrastructure Development Plan set out the very significant capital investment over the coming years in the working environment and equipment for our Defence Personnel. Specific projects which are aimed to be progressed or delivered by the end of 2024 from within the existing Defence Vote, which will have a positive impact across all three services are set out below.

Infrastructure

Currently there are a significant number of infrastructure projects underway at different stages of development. The following significant capital projects will commence construction or will be substantially completed over the next 15 months:

53. *Haulbowline*
    - » Upgrade of Block 4 Accommodation construction to commence by the end of 2023
    - » Upgrade of Block 9 Office Accommodation at the Naval Base construction to commence in 2024
54. *McKee Barracks*
    - » Upgrade of Office Accommodation (Block F) under construction with completion in 2024
    - » Relocation of Printing Press, under construction
55. *Collins Barracks*
    - » New Accommodation Block now under construction and Refurbishment of Block 1
    - » Upgrade of Infrastructure & Utilities Offices under construction
56. *Gormanston*
    - » Joint Induction Training Centre New Gym/ Obstacle Course construction to commence in 2024
    - » New integrated Dining Hall construction to commence in 2024
57. *Defence Forces Training Centre*
    - » New Communications and Information Services (CIS) Workshop Facility construction to commence in 2024
    - » Cadet School HQ under construction to be completed in 2023
    - » New Garaging Facility construction to commence in 2024
58. *Medical Facilities*
    - » Casement Military Medical Facility (Relocation of Bricins) construction to commence in 2024
    - » Former Chief of Staff House – new Medical facility under construction
59. *Army Ranger Wing*
    - » New HQ Building construction to commence in 2024
60. *Galway*
    - » Upgrade of Former USAC Block, under construction
61. *Aiken (Dundalk)*
    - » Dining Hall construction to commence in 2024
62. *Finner Camp*
    - » Gym Roof Replacement to commence in 2024
63. *Gym renovation programme*
    - » Request for Tenders for a Design Team for Renmore, Haulbowline and Casement Aerodrome will be published in 2023

Equipment

There are currently a significant number of equipment projects underway, at different stages of development. The following significant equipment projects will commence or will be substantially completed over the next 15 months:

Land Capabilities

64. Mid-life maintenance and upgrade programme of the Army's fleet of Armoured Personnel Carriers
65. Light Tactical Armoured Vehicle fleet planning project to commence
66. General Service Body Armour for the Defence Forces
67. Chemical-Biological-Radiological and Nuclear protection suits
68. Chemical-Biological-Radiological and Nuclear detection equipment
69. Night-vision surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance equipment platforms for the Infantry Corps
70. Specialist equipment for the Army Ranger Wing (including Body Armour and Parachute)
71. Specialist equipment for Explosive Ordnance Device Bomb Disposal Unit
72. Bomb Disposal Robot Upgrade
73. Armoured Utility Vehicles
74. Software Defined Radio project progressed on a phased basis

Air capabilities

75. Two new Airbus C-295 in Maritime Patrol Aircraft by end of 2023
76. Production of one new Airbus C-295 in a Military Transport configuration to be significantly progressed with delivery in 2025
77. Ministerial Air Transport Aircraft Project progressed

Naval capabilities

78. Mid-Life Extension programme for the Naval Service P50 Class has seen the completion of the works on LÉ Roisín and LÉ Niamh.
79. Two Inshore Patrol Vessels and RHIBs fleet delivered and operational
80. Naval Service Primary armament guns refurbishment and modernisation
81. Naval Service gun fire control systems
82. Naval Service X and S band radar systems
83. Naval Service Reserve Motor Launches

6. Legislative changes to underpin the Transformation Agenda

To support the transformation of the Defence Forces, the Department of Defence will progress the following legislative changes by the end of 2024 under the following Bills:

84. Amendments to ensure that An Garda Síochána (AGS) will have sole jurisdiction within the State to investigate alleged sexual offences committed by persons subject to military law, as part of the **Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2023.** The text of this Bill was approved by Government in July 2023, and the Bill has now been published.

    As set out under Action 28, the Department of Defence will finalise the policy position on the implementation of the Working Time Directive within the Defence Forces including, those activities which are deemed outside the scope of the Directive by the end 2023.

85. Amend the Defence Acts through two separate Bills with General Schemes to be brought forward in Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024 to:

    i. Give effect to the policy approach to be approved by Government concerning high-level structures within the Defence Forces, including the recommendation concerning military command, and the consequential re-design of the governance and oversight framework of the Minister and Department of Defence.

    ii. Establish a new independent complaints mechanism on a statutory basis.

    iii. Establish the External Oversight Body on a statutory basis.

    iv. Address the longer-term associate membership of ICTU for the representative associations.

    v. Protect the use of the title 'Oglaigh na hÉireann' in legislation.

    vi. Ensure greater flexibility in relation to increasing the maximum age for enlistment in the Permanent Defence Force.

7. Governance & Reporting Mechanisms

It is important that there is clear **accountability** and transparency for each of the actions under this Strategic Framework supported by clear **governance and reporting arrangements** to oversee the transformation of the Defence Forces.

The timescale for the Strategic Framework is to the end of 2024, with a revised Strategic Framework for 2025 and beyond to be published by the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence by the end of 2024.

A dedicated team in the Department has been put in place to support the monitoring and reporting on delivery of all actions outlined in this Strategic Framework. This dedicated team will provide progress updates to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence on a regular and routine basis, with progress updates published every 6 months.

The governance and reporting arrangements for delivering this Strategic Framework, illustrated in *Figure 1*, are straightforward.

The Secretary General of the Department of Defence and the Chief of Staff will report to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, through a quarterly **Strategic Framework Review Meeting**, on the delivery of actions for which they are respectively responsible and accountable. **All** actions set out in this Strategic Framework will be covered.

The **External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces,** chaired by Prof. Brian MacCraith, is a critical element in achieving the goal of cultural transformation of the Defence Forces, and the oversight of the Defence Forces in the delivery of actions on foot of the IRG Report. The Terms of Reference of the External Oversight Body is set out in Appendix II.

The role of the External Oversight Body is also to increase transparency and accountability in the Defence Forces and to bring about necessary changes to the workplace culture and behaviour. The External Oversight Body will report to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence on, amongst other things, the performance and progress of the Defence Forces in the implementation of the recommendations of the IRG Report on a quarterly basis.

The **Implementation Oversight Group (IOG)** of the Commission on the Defence Forces, chaired by Ms. Julie Sinnamon, continues to oversee and drive progress in relation to the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by the Government. The Terms of Reference of the Group is set out in Appendix III. The Group will report to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence every 6 months.

The **High Level Steering Board,** chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach, continues to steer the implementation of the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government. In addition to continuing to supporting and guiding implementation, the Board will continue to act as a clearing house for issues that cannot be resolved or where particular blockages are being experienced in the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. The Terms of Reference of the Group is set out in Appendix IV.

The Chair of the IOG, Ms. Julie Sinnamon, is a member of the External Oversight Body, Implementation Oversight Group and the High Level Steering Board to ensure coherence between the work of each group.

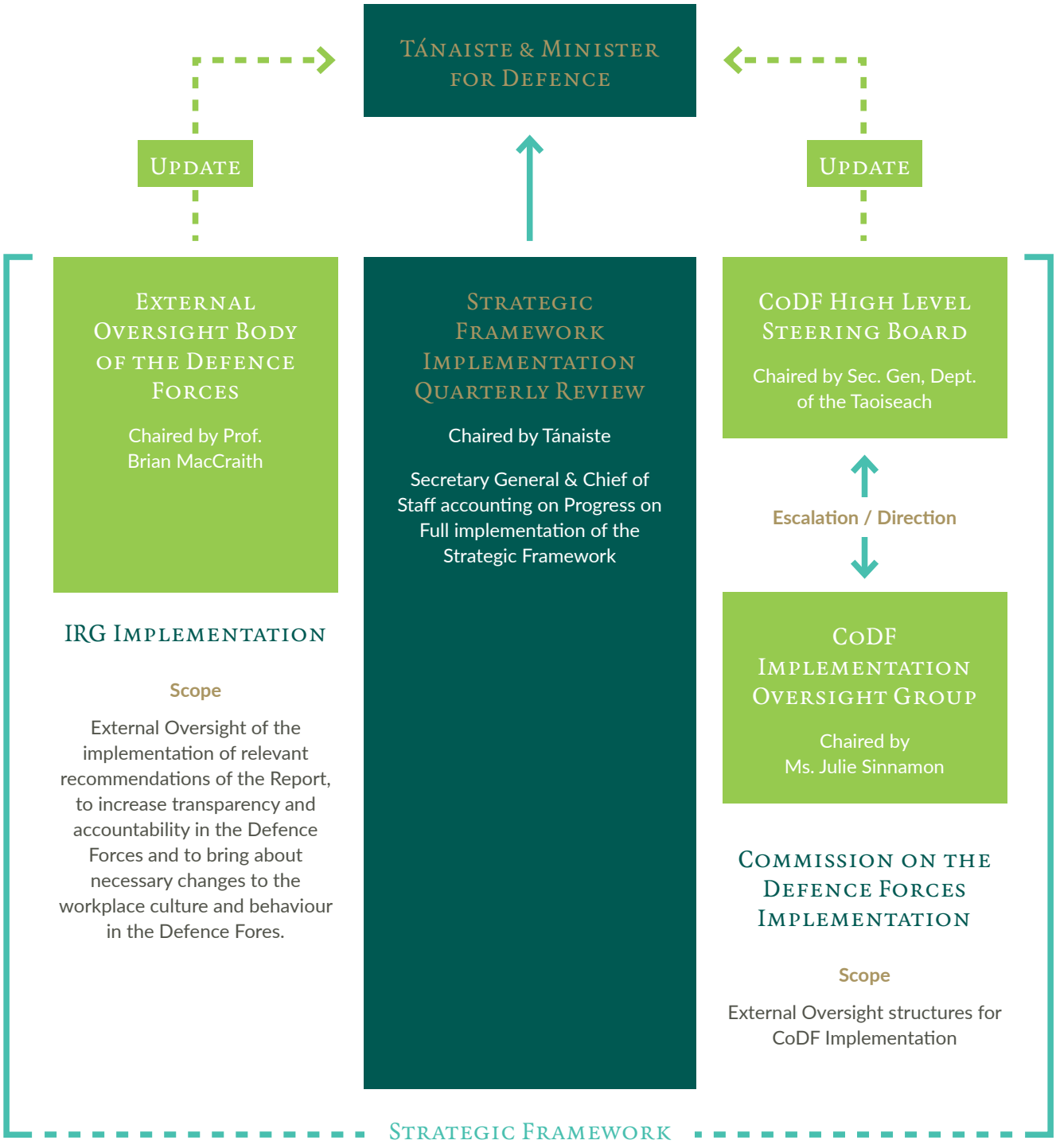


Figure 1: Governance and Reporting Arrangements of Strategic Framework

8. Actions in Policy Development and Operations

There have been many policy and operational decisions since late 2021 that have impacted the context in which our Defence Forces have operated. These developments are set out below.

This section concludes with an overview of the development work in the area of defence policy and operations which will set the context for the future of the Defence Forces, and will occur in parallel with the transformative actions to be delivered by the end of 2024 as set out in this paper.

Policy and Operational Developments since late 2021

Since late 2021 there have been a number of significant decisions and **policy and operational** developments impacting on the Defence Forces including:

- Over the last eighteen months, we have significantly enhanced our engagement with the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). Following Dáil approval in **July 2022,** Ireland is now a full participant on four PESCO projects (and is awaiting acceptance on a fifth). In addition, Ireland is now observing on 20 projects. The period of observation is used to assess the added-value of progressing to full participation status. These projects include cyber, disaster relief capability, mine counter measures, maritime surveillance, logistics, and the protection of critical infrastructure. Participation in these PESCO projects will enhance the Defence Forces' military capabilities for participation in UN-mandated peace support operations, enhance interoperability and, working with our EU partners, ensure that our troops are equipped with the latest and best equipment and training.
- Ireland has been engaging in the European Defence Agency since it was established in 2004. The EDA is an Agency of the European Union, which is designed to support Member States to develop a range of capabilities and capability standards to support CSDP, in particular the deployment of military capabilities in support of Crisis Management Tasks, as outlined in the Treaty on European Union. To-date Ireland has joined 14 EDA capability development projects.
- Most recently, in July 2023, Government and Dáil approval was received for Ireland to join three Joint Procurement projects and a Cyber project. Ireland's participation in these projects provides enhanced capability development opportunities for the Defence Forces.
- With respect to **Overseas** missions, as of September 2023, Ireland is contributing 540 personnel to seven different missions throughout the world. The main overseas missions in which Defence Forces personnel are currently deployed are the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) with 335 personnel. Ireland also contributes observers and staff to various United Nations and OSCE missions and personnel to staff appointments at UN, EU, NATO/PfP and OSCE headquarters. When assessing the sustainability of our overseas commitments, all missions and operations are reviewed. There are always a number of considerations that inform a decision of this nature and importance and such decisions are not taken lightly.

The following key decisions were taken since the start of 2023:

2023

Jan 2023

The Government approved Defence Forces participation in EU Battlegroup 2024/25.

Feb 2023

The Government approved the participation of Defence Forces' personnel in the newly established European Union Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine).

Mar 2023

Ministerial Decision to effectively withdraw the Defence Forces contribution to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights following an assessment of Defence Forces' current commitments.

Jun 2023

Following Government and Dáil approval, the LÉ William Butler Yeats commenced participation in the Operation Irini mission in the Mediterranean.

July 2023

Ministerial Decision to terminate the participation of the Defence Forces in the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) with effect from the completion of the current deployment in September 2023 given the challenging security environment and increasing difficulties preventing this EU mission delivering on its mandate.

July 2023

The Government approved the enhancement of the Defence Forces' participation in EUMAM Ukraine by extending the number of training modules the DF could deliver to include basic military training, Do-King Mine Flail training, leadership training and drill instructor training.

From a broader policy perspective:

- In **March 2023,** the Department of Defence commenced a Strategic Defence Review, as part of the defence review cycle, which includes a wide-ranging assessment of the security environment and the threats facing Ireland.
- In **May 2023,** the Government approved the preparation of plans for high level changes to command and control structures in the Defence Forces in line with CoDF recommendations.
- In **June 2023,** the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence convened the **Consultative Forum on International Security Policy** to build public understanding and generate discussions on our foreign, security and defence policies.

Future Policy and Operational Developments

Building on the decisions and policy developments set out above, and in parallel to the implementation of actions under this Strategic Framework, much development work in the area of defence and security policy will continue to take place and will provide the future context for our Defence Forces. This includes policy development work flowing from the:

- Strategic Defence Review;
- Consultative Forum on International Security Policy; and
- White Paper on Defence Implementation.

This is discussed below.

Strategic Defence Review

The Department has commenced its policy work on a Strategic Defence Review, and will engage a number of stakeholders including the Defence Forces, which provides an opportunity to review all aspects of defence policy. The essential ingredients of the defence review process is to ensure an updated security assessment and a fresh consideration of the implications of this assessment for overall policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing.

As well as encompassing the Government agreed recommendations from the Commission on the Defence Forces, the future role of the Defence Forces both nationally and internationally will also be considered within the Strategic Defence Review.

The first stage of this review is the security environment analysis which is currently being conducted by an interdepartmental working group convened by the Department and should be completed by Quarter 3 2023.

The next stage of the process is to consider the implications of this assessment for policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing.

Consultative Forum on International Security Policy

As set out in the Tánaiste's closing remarks to the Consultative Forum on International Security Policy at the end of June 2023, this forum was convened so that:

> "we could embark on a national conversation on Ireland's international security policy.
>
> Not the only conversation, not a definitive conversation with formal decisions and outcomes; but a starting point, a first cut, an initial airing of the wide range of important and complex issues that together make up our security policy"

The Forum focused on a wide range of issues, including Ireland's efforts to protect the rules-based international order through peacekeeping and crisis management, disarmament and non-proliferation, international humanitarian law, and conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as allowing for a discussion on Ireland's policy of military neutrality.

The independent Chair of the Forum, Professor Louise Richardson DBE, is responsible for the production of a report on the Consultative Forum to be delivered to the Tánaiste following its conclusion. The Tánaiste will consider the report produced by the Chairperson.

This report will be an important contribution to this national conversation that will continue in the months and years ahead.

White Paper on Defence Implementation

The White Paper [WP] on Defence sets out the defence policy framework to 2025. Following publication of the White Paper in 2015, a total of 95 separate projects were identified for completion over a ten-year period.

Project and Programme Management Governance frameworks were put in place to monitor the ongoing status of individual projects and to review the scope of projects within the programme. A Joint Civil Military White Paper Implementation Facilitation Team (Joint Team) was established which operated in an oversight capacity, providing support and monitoring the progress of these White Paper projects. The Joint Team reported on the progress of implementation to the Strategic Management Committee[3] as part of the governance framework.

Implementation of all actions and projects was carried out by civil-military teams on a phased prioritised basis to reflect both the Programme for Government and the Strategy Statement commitments.

Progress to-date encompasses different areas of business including, but not limited to, policy, capital acquisitions, HR, Civil Defence and infrastructure development.

In total, of the 95 White Paper projects, 52 are now formally completed and closed with 43 remaining of which 14 are currently active. Of the 14 active, four are in the closing process. The current priority is the finalisation of ongoing WP projects and the evaluation of alignment of outstanding WP projects with the detailed implementation plan for the Commission on the Defence Forces.

A status report on White Paper projects implementation will be published in Quarter 4 2023.

3 The Strategic Management Committee (SMC) is a joint civil-military committee providing a forum for the discussion of all strategic, policy and operational issues

9. Conclusion

The Strategic Framework brings together into one overarching document the actions identified across numerous detailed plans which are needed to support the transformation of the Defence Forces into a fit-for-purpose organisation to meet the challenges of today and the future.

It provides clear accountability and transparency for each of the actions under this Strategic Framework, supported by clear governance and reporting arrangements to oversee the transformation of the Defence Forces.

By focusing the timescale of the Strategic Framework to the end of 2024, it provides impetus and immediacy to this work, which will be reported on every six months. A revised Strategic Framework for the 2025 period and beyond will be published by the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence by the end of 2024.

The priority within this first phase of transformation is **cultural change** above all else.

Progress will be seen internally within the Defence Forces, and will be reported externally.

Clear and irrefutable evidence of change on the ground is the only thing that will rebuild the trust and confidence of serving members.

Appendices

Appendix I

Summary of Actions taken since the end of 2021 in support of the Transformation of the Defence Forces

Since the end of 2021, a number of important actions and initiatives have been taken:

2021

Oct 2021

The Minister put in place a Confidential Contact Person, within Raiseaconcern, to provide a safe place to support the reporting of alleged wrongdoing for both serving and former members of the Defence Forces. This service is confidential and completely external to, and independent of, the Defence Forces.

Oct 2021

The INSPIRE confidential helpline, which is available on a 24/7 basis for all serving members of the Defence Forces, has also been made available to anyone who has contacted the Confidential Contact Person.

Nov 2021

The Organisational Culture Standing Committee (OCSC), was established by the Defence Forces to drive and coordinate the process of cultural change within the Defence Forces. The OCSC has continued its work since its establishment, with over 6,000 personnel having received the briefs, providing organisation wide messages in relation to appropriate behaviours.

2022

Jan 2022

The joint (Department of Defence and Defence Forces) Defence Women's Network was formally launched.

Jan 2022

The Government established the Judge-led Independent Review Group to examine issues relating to sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment and discrimination in the Defence Forces.

The focus since the publication of the CoDF Report in February 2022 has been on putting in place strong foundations and structures to support the journey of transformative change in the Defence Forces under the CoDF and maintain the ambition, energy and urgency necessary to deliver it.

This is reflected in the key achievements in the period February 2022 to March 2023, described below:

2022 *(continued)*

Feb 2022

The **CoDF Report** was completed and received by the Minister for Defence.

Apr 2022

The bullying and harassment prevention campaign, "*It Stops Now*", was launched and rolled out by senior leadership across the Defence Forces.

May 2022

Ministerial consent for Temporary Associate Membership of ICTU, for the purpose of participation in discussions on national pay agreements, was provided for the Representative Associations. The Department continues to work on a legislative solution to ensure a longer-term facilitation of this by Government.

July 2022

Government published its response to the CoDF report, approving a move to 'Level of Ambition 2', which includes funding increases to €1.5bn (in 2022 prices) by 2028[1], the largest investment in Defence in the history of the State.

July 2022

The **High Level Action Plan**, arising from the Report of the CoDF was agreed by Government. This included 38 early actions to be completed within six months of the Government decision.

1 to be agreed via the annual estimates process

2022 *(continued)*

Aug 2022

A baseline survey was conducted across the Defence Forces which sought feedback on four main parts of the DF system - unacceptable interpersonal behaviour, the grievance management system, ethical behaviour, and personnel evaluation processes.

Sept 2022

The funding for Defence was significantly increased as part of Budget 2023 highlighting the commitment of Government to providing a strong financial platform for the Defence Sector to support this Level of Ambition and the required transformation of the Defence Forces. In total, the Government agreed to increase the overall allocation for Defence for 2023 by €93 million or 8% over 2022.

This equates to a budget in 2023 of €1.21 billion. To support significant capital investment in equipment programmes and the upgrade and modernisation of Defence Forces built infrastructure, Budget 2023 included an increase of €35 million in capital funding. The total capital allocation in 2023 is €176 million, a 25% increase on the 2022 provision, the single biggest annual capital investment ever provided to Defence.

Oct 2022

A bespoke Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships training syllabus was developed and was piloted in all formations.

Oct 2022

Implementation of the CoDF recommendations that all personnel of Private 3 Star/Able Seaman rank are paid the full rate of Military Service Allowance (MSA) applicable to the rank, and, the removal of the requirement for that cohort to 'mark time' for the first three years at that rank.

This resulted in increased starting pay rates, with increases backdated to the date of the Government decision on the CoDF in July 2022.

Nov 2022

The Independent Chair of the Implementation Oversight Group for the CoDF report, Ms. Julie Sinnamon, was appointed by the Minister.

2023

March 2022

The High Level Steering Board, for the CoDF, met for the first time and the oversight structures for the transformation programme became fully operational.

A comprehensive **Update on the High Level Action Plan** and an update on all 38 early actions was published on March 23rd, 2023.

Separately in March 2023, the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence published

- The **Mohan Report completed by Hugh Mohan SC** into the issues arising out of an event held in McKee Barracks in June 2020; and the
- **Independent report by Ruth FitzGerald SC** into allegations of sexual abuse, and actions taken by the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces following receipt of correspondence from a former Irish Defence Forces Member relating to alleged sexual offences.

On March 28 2023, the Government published the **Independent Review Group [IRG] report on dignity and equality issues in the Defence Forces** and agreed to progress, as a priority, the report's recommendations including:

- Establishing a statutory inquiry to investigate whether there have been serious systemic failures in dealing with individual complaints, including sexual misconduct;
- Setting up an External Oversight Body to increase transparency and accountability; and to drive necessary culture change throughout the Defence Forces;
- Reforming the existing mechanisms for making a complaint to restore faith and trust in the complaints process.

After the publication of the IRG Report the following actions have been completed:

- All allegations of sexual assault by serving members occurring in the State are referred to An Garda Síochána for investigation.
- The Garda Commissioner has established a helpline for victims of sexual assault to report cases, both historic and current, and has established a targeted operation to examine cases of alleged sexual assault in the Defence Forces.
- While An Garda Síochána do not have jurisdiction to prosecute offences that arise outside of the State where members of the Defence Forces are involved, the Military Police continue to engage with An Garda Síochána on matters under investigation and where required, request the attendance of a member of An Garda Síochána to assist them with the investigation being conducted outside of the State.
- The Minister announced that the Raiseaconcern service would continue in its role as Confidential Contact Person.
- With the assistance of an external legal firm, extensive work has been completed to ensure that the Defence Forces regulations are compatible with the provisions of the relevant maternity legislation. An associated but very relevant and important element of this body of work, is the area of maternity and protected leave policies which has now concluded.

2023 *(continued)*

April 2023

Appointments agreed by Government to the External Oversight Body to the Defence Forces as recommended in the IRG report.

April 2023

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence published the **Recommendations contained in the report of Frances Meenan SC into allegations concerning the conduct of training in the Defence Forces Cadet School**.

June 2023

New Defence Forces Head of Transformation appointed, following an external process, supporting the Chief of Staff directly and a member of the Defence Forces senior leadership and management team.

June 2023

Commencement of Gender, Diversity and Unconscious Bias training for all members of the Defence Forces

July 2023

The Government agreed to progress the establishment of a judge-led Tribunal of Inquiry to investigate whether there have been serious systemic failures in dealing with individual complaints in relation to interpersonal issues, including but not limited to sexual misconduct.

The Government also approved the text of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2023, amending Defence Act 1954 in line with the IRG Report. The amendments when enacted will ensure that An Garda Síochána will have sole jurisdiction within the State to investigate alleged sexual offences committed by persons subject to military law. Any subsequent cases will be dealt with by the civil courts.

The terms of reference of the External Oversight Body were published. This represented a further important step in the ongoing implementation of the recommendations of the IRG Report. The work of the Body is future-focused and is critical to driving the necessary culture change throughout the Defence Forces.

Sept 2023

The new civilian Defence Forces Head of Strategic HR was appointed, following an external process, reporting to the Chief of Staff directly.

Sept 2023

Tánaiste announced the decision to allow all enlisted members of the Defence Forces to benefit from the same access to private secondary health care as applies to commissioned officers.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE DEFENCE FORCES

STARTING PAY

including Military Service Allowance

GRADUATE CADET on commissioning	**€47,245**
SCHOOL LEAVER CADET on commissioning	**€41,962**
RECRUIT on completion of basic training (approx. 24 weeks)	**€38,016**

With effect from 1 October 2023
Salaries progress on an incremental scale to a maximum point for each rank

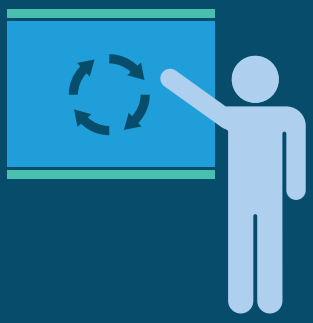
Access to a wide range of **medical and dental services,** including private consultant referrals and maternity care

EDUCATION & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fully funded opportunities to gain professional and academic qualifications, from Leaving Certificate to Third Level, while receiving full pay and allowances.

TECHNICIAN TRAINING (APPRENTICESHIPS)

Available for enlisted personnel.



TRAINING IS PROVIDED

to qualify for career advancements and promotion opportunities

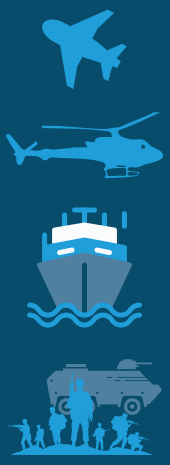
RECRUITMENT PATHWAYS

APPRENTICE
Air Corps

CADETSHIP
Army, Naval Service, Air Corps

RECRUIT

DIRECT ENTRY
Skilled, qualified professionals in technical fields.



TRAIN TOGETHER, WORK TOGETHER

All members are treated with fairness and respect and have equal opportunities and resources

Opportunities for frequent career advancement
to higher ranks & to qualify for additional allowances

FITNESS TRAINING & SPORTS FACILITIES

State of the art fitness and training facilities

20+ Sports Teams & Clubs

PENSION

All serving members of the Permanent Defence Force are members of a Public Service Pension Scheme

OVERSEAS SERVICE

Tax free Overseas Duty Allowance which can start at

€15,000

for a six month deployment

Opportunities for Family Friendly Deployments of three Months

ANNUAL LEAVE

+ Public holidays
+ DF holidays
+ Paid sick leave
+ Study leave
+ Parental leave
+ Special leave on return from overseas missions

Fully paid statutory leave such as Adoptive, Maternity & Paternity Leave

Various measures have been taken by Government under the CoDF Implementation and the Building Momentum Pay Agreement 2020-2023 that have made a very real impact on the pay for those joining the Defence Forces. As of October 2023, pay rates start at:

- €38,016 in Year 1 for a recruit on completion of basic training (approx. 24 weeks);
- €41,962 for a school leaver cadet on commissioning;
- €47,245 for a Graduate Cadet on commissioning (all figures include Military Service Allowance which is pensionable).

This is illustrated in the infographic on the previous page which sets out the Benefits of Joining the Defence Forces. This infographic was developed as part of the overall strategy on how best to communicate the wide range of benefits available to both members of the Defence Forces and potential candidates of a career in the Defence Forces.

In addition, very significant Defence Infrastructure and Equipment Enhancements continued since late 2021 including:

Defence Equipment

- 30 armoured utility vehicles delivered in 2022.
- 220 non-armoured vehicles delivered.
- 10 refurbished Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) delivered as part of the upgraded programme of the overall fleet.
- Mid-life refit of LÉ Róisín completed and LÉ Niamh, commenced.
- MOWAG Gunnery Simulator in the Curragh officially opened in September 2023.
- Delivery of two Inshore Patrol Vessels (IPVs) to the Naval Service.
- Arrival of the first of two Airbus C295 Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

Defence Infrastructure

- Upgraded Spencer Jetty and refurbished Block 8 Accommodation at Haulbowline Naval Base;
- Block H Accommodation McKee;
- Two gymnasiums in Kilkenny and Limerick Barracks;
- Projects underway include a new Cadet School HQ and new accommodation buildings in Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa and Collins Barracks.

In tandem with the transformation in the Defence Forces, an Organisational Capability Review (OCR) of the Department of Defence was undertaken in 2021 / 2022, in order to build capability for the future. The OCR process is an independent examination of the capability of Departments and Offices to achieve their objectives. The review of the Department of Defence was carried out by a Capability Review team from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, with an External Oversight Review Panel under four broad headings; Leadership; Policy-making; Delivery and Business Support. The OCR was validated by an External Review Panel and overseen by a Steering Group of sponsoring Secretaries General from the Civil Service Management Board. The full OCR report and the associated implementation plan are published and available **here**. Implementation of the recommendations set out in the review throughout 2024 will better position the Department to address the challenges facing the sector.

Appendix II

External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces (Non Statutory)

Terms of Reference – July 2023

Background

The Report of the Independent Review Group (the "IRG"), published on 28 March 2023 (the "Report") and established to examine issues relating to allegations of discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and any form of sexual misconduct in the Defence Forces, recommended the establishment of an external oversight body in recommendation 4.3.1 of its report.

The Government has agreed to prepare legislation to establish the external oversight body on a statutory basis.

Until such time as the statutory body is in place, the Government has decided to establish the External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces (Non-Statutory) (the "Body") to oversee the implementation of relevant recommendations of the Report, to increase transparency and accountability in the Defence Forces and to bring about necessary changes to the workplace culture and behaviour in the Defence Forces.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Body are:

1. To oversee the implementation and operationalisation of necessary cultural change by the Defence Forces on foot of the matters identified in the Report.

2. To oversee, where relevant, the performance of the Defence Forces in the quality, timeliness and impact of their implementation of the following recommendations of the Report:

4.2.1: Immediate reform to the process of making a complaint of unacceptable behaviour under Administrative Instruction A7, Chapter 1;

4.2.2: Revised grievance model to replace redress of wrongs system under Section 114 of the Defence Act 1954, as amended;

4.4.1: Revisions to policy, practice and procedures to address incidents of unacceptable behaviours;

4.5.1: Recommendations for addressing incidents of reprisal or retaliation;

4.6.1: Recommendations for training supports to address workplace issues pertaining to dignity and equality, duty of care, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct;

4.7.1: Practice-based recommendations for supporting a culture based on dignity and respect;

4.8.1: Recommendations for addressing cultural issues related to gender;

4.10.1: Recommendations on the provision of adequate maternity clothing for female personnel;

4.11.1: Recommendations on the development of family-friendly policies and initiatives;

4.12.1: Recommendations on the protection of confidentiality within the Personnel Support Service; and

4.13.1: Recommendations on complaints process for civilians and civil servants.

3. To oversee the performance of the Defence Forces in the operation and reform of the following areas:

   a. modern human resources practice with specific emphasis on

      i. supporting a culture based on dignity and respect,

      ii. supporting greater diversity and inclusion,

      iii. removing gendered rules, standards and practices;

   b. initial training and development processes for recruits;

   c. recruitment outcomes which reflect the diversity of contemporary Irish society;

   d. ongoing training and development systems;

   e. performance management systems;

   f. promotion and career progression systems;

   g. addressing workplace issues (including bullying & harassment);

   h. complaints and grievance systems;

   i. reprisals and retaliation prevention systems

   j. sanctions under g, h and i;

   k. inclusive language; and

   l. data and monitoring systems under each of the areas above.

4. To oversee the implementation by the Defence Forces of certain recommendations, as set out in Appendix 1, contained in the High Level Action Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces dated 13 July 2022 as approved by Government.

5. To examine outcomes (including diversity outcomes) reported through the Defence Forces Data & Monitoring Systems.

6. To oversee the management of the existing complaints system within the Defence Forces pending the introduction of a new complaints mechanism for members of the Defence Forces;

7. To identify and monitor clear measures of performance of the Defence Forces under Terms of Reference (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6), including the establishment of relevant baseline data.

8. To assist in developing greater transparency, and accountability in the Defence Forces in relation to the matters raised in (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7).

9. To report to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence on a quarterly basis on:

   a. the performance and progress of the Defence Forces on the matters in Terms of Reference (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7);

   b. the activities of the Body in the period concerned; and

   c. any obstacles encountered by the Body in performing its role under these Terms of Reference in the period concerned.

10. To provide a comprehensive report to the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence by 31 December 2024 on:

    a. the performance and progress of the Defence Forces on the matters in Terms of Reference (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7);

    b. the activities of the Body;

    c. any obstacles encountered by the Body in performing its role under these Terms of Reference; and

    d. any recommendations that the Body deems appropriate in relation to the work of any future external oversight body for the Defence Forces.

11. To advise the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence if the Body considers that it requires further persons with specific skills or experience to be members of the Body to undertake its role.

12. To advise the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence if the Body considers that other specific matters necessary to discharge its oversight role should be addressed in the Terms of Reference. The Tánaiste and Minister for Defence may consider such advice and amend the Terms of Reference if appropriate.

13. To advise the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence on legislative proposals to establish an external oversight body on a statutory basis.

Other

a. The Body may request documents, data and other information from the Defence Forces as it considers necessary to carry out its role.

b. The Body may request documents, data and other information from the Department of Defence as it considers necessary to carry out its role.

c. The Body will be provided with a dedicated secretariat, dedicated resources and access to external support appropriate and proportionate to carry out its role. The Body will put in place its own operational arrangements. The Body will advise the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence of its assessment of these requirements for his consideration and subject to existing approval/sanction processes.

d. The Body will develop a high-level programme and schedule of priorities to cover the period from its establishment up to 31 December 2024.

e. The Independent Chair of the Implementation Oversight Group (the "IOG") established to oversee and drive progress in relation to the recommendations from the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government, is a member of the Body.

f. The Independent Chair of the IOG will inform the IOG on matters referred to at (1) to (7) in the Terms of Reference, as appropriate.

g. For information only, the Independent Chair of the IOG will update the Body on the progress of the implementation of other elements of the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government.

h. The Body may invite the Chief of Staff, the General Staff and other relevant personnel of the Defence Forces (including civilian employees and/or civil servants working within the Defence Forces) to attend meetings of the Body to account for matters relevant to the Terms of Reference.

i. Administrative arrangements shall be put in place between the secretariat of the Body and the Defence Forces regarding the provision of information before meetings of the Body.

j. The Body may consult with officials from the Department of Defence and with any other party, including representative groups, that it considers necessary and appropriate to perform its functions under the Terms of Reference. This may include inviting relevant individuals to attend meetings of the Body.

k. The Body may access any source of expertise that it considers necessary and appropriate to perform its functions under the Terms of Reference. This may include inviting persons with such expertise to attend meetings of the Body.

l. The Body may consider matters referred to in the Terms of Reference as it considers appropriate and are not limited to those relevant recommendations of the Report or the report of the Commission on the Defence Forces.

m. Recognising that there are a number of matters relating to the implementation of the Report recommendations that will be led by the Department of Defence and that are critical enablers to the role of the Body, such matters also fall within the scope of the Body.

n. The work of the Body is future-focused. The Body does not have a role in any recommendations of the Report not explicitly set out in this Terms of Reference. The Body is not charged with engaging in the fact-finding process recommended by the IRG in recommendation 4.1 of the Report which relates to *"mechanisms to address issues of a historical nature for former and serving members of the Defence Forces"*, which will be the subject of different processes.

o. The Body shall have due regard to any criminal prosecution, currently ongoing or pending, that may be affected by its work.

p. The Body shall note that the criminal investigation of any complaint of rape, sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault within the meaning of the Criminal Law (Rape) Amendment Act 1990, or indeed the criminal investigation of any complaint of the commission of any other criminal act, as such, falls outside the Terms of Reference and is properly a matter for An Garda Síochána and/or the Director of Military Prosecutions.

Appendix 1

Clause (4) states that part of the Terms of the Reference of the Body are…

To oversee the implementation by the Defence Forces of certain recommendations, as set out in Appendix 1, contained in the High Level Action Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces dated 13 July 2022 as approved by Government.

This is set out in the Table 1 below cross-referenced with the recommendation number outlined in the High Level Action Plan (HLAP) for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces dated 13 July 2022 as approved by Government.

Table 2.3
Implementation of HLAP Recommendations within Terms of Reference of the Body under Clause (4)

HLAP Number	Recommendation
Implementation of a comprehensive approach to Strategic HR within the Defence Forces with, in particular, the following enablers put in place:	
13	The establishment of a Strategic HR Change Leadership Team, to be led by the externally recruited Head of Transformation;
14	The introduction of a talent management system and new career streams;
15	The conduct of a comprehensive exercise that maps current patterns of career progression and develops a career progression route map for all roles, starting with entry level and those roles that are experiencing higher attrition rates; and
16	All personnel should have a personal Continuous Professional Development plan and at least annual meetings with their commander to review their performance and competencies.
17	The development of an organisational leadership and development capability within the Defence Forces of the future to lead the transformation agenda.
18	The creation of a permanent training establishment and provision of greater flexibility for managers, within the overall establishment number, to allocate staff across formations and ranks.
19	Development and resourcing of remote and distance learning solutions to provide greater use of ICT-based training and education both in the home and from regional garrison locations or hot desks.
23	Re-development of promotion systems to ensure they are open, competitive and entirely merit-based, while the necessity for all officers and NCOs to undertake long career courses needs to be examined.
24	There should be objective, competitive selection processes designed for career course selection that recognise high-performing individuals and avoids creating a 'box ticking' culture.
25	There should be equal emphasis and access to career training and professional military education for officers, NCOs and reservists.
26	Service specific courses need to be introduced at a junior and senior level, with joint courses and training where required at a senior level.
27	A practice should be developed of actively managing the retention of valuable members of the Defence Forces who have decided that promotion is not for them, or whose career stream has a restricted rank structure.

HLAP Number	Recommendation
A fundamental cultural change process, using the most up-to-date approaches, should be undertaken; and the Defence Forces should ensure early implementation of the following high profile immediate impact changes:	
28	Creation of a full-time senior rank position of Gender Advisor (OF-5) with a dedicated staffing resource and full time co-ordinators for staff networks such as the Women's Network and the Defend with Pride group;
29	Creation of a mechanism to ensure there is female participation and input at all meetings at General Staff level (or the equivalent under the proposed new structures);
30	Full integration of all dining facilities, on land and at sea; and
31	Regular climate and continuous attitude surveys to assess morale, command climate and underlying culture on an ongoing basis.
Development of expanded recruitment channels with objectives set for the recruitment and participation of under-represented groups, through:	
32	Setting an overall female participation rate of 35% to be achieved through a combination of entry-level inductions (Cadet and General Service) and civilianisation, as well as direct entry into more senior, and specialist, positions across the organisation;
33	Consultation with the communities of under-represented groups to discuss the attractions and barriers to service in the Defence Forces;
35	Development of a profile of current serving personnel as an essential starting point to underpinning longer-term approaches to strategic HR and ensuring the Defence Forces is more reflective of the diversity of Irish society.
Consideration of the gender perspective should become mandatory in all aspects of decision making across the Defence Forces and particularly in relation to HR practices, promotion processes, procurement and development of infrastructure, including:	
36	Immediate removal of gendered rules, regulations and standards that are unfavourable to women, and others who do not fit a perceived 'norm', including a review and modernisation of grooming standards for both men and women in line with trends in other armed forces and Irish society;
37	A guaranteed minimum female participation rate of 35% on all command and other relevant career courses by 2025;
38	Identification and removal of practices around access to promotion opportunities and courses which, in effect, indirectly discriminate against women or other groups such as, for example, primary carers;
39	Fitness standards should be reviewed and updated to ensure they are relative to accepted standards for females and modern military roles;
40	Women in the Defence Forces should be supplied with and have ready access, without delay or special request, to clothing and equipment that are designed for females and, as such, are fit for purpose;
41	Immediate extension of the Defence Forces' Women's Network to include female members of the Reserve; and
42	Establishment of a female mentoring programme to allow women in the Defence Forces to benefit from the experience of identified role models and mentors.

HLAP Number	Recommendation
43	Gender, diversity and unconscious bias training should become mandatory across all ranks of the Defence Forces.
45	Implementation of an administrative solution without delay to enable the ODF to investigate complaints received more than 12 months after the date of the alleged action, or the date the complainant became aware of the alleged action.
46	Increased use of direct entry recruitment to fill specialist posts with appropriately adjusted training and physical fitness requirements.
Urgent reform of existing working arrangements including:	
47	Any necessary legislative and organisational changes to allow for flexible service and flexible work practices;
48	Extension and enhancement of existing family friendly policies to the greatest practicable extent, including for overseas postings, and recognition of the challenges faced by single parents and parents of children with disabilities, amongst others; and
49	Introduction of a non-financial 'labour hours budget' for all managers.
51	Establishment of an Officer Training Centre comprising the existing Cadet School and a new Officer Candidate School which would conduct Potential Officers Courses, Late Entry Officers Courses and Reserve Officers Courses every two years.
The Defence Forces should develop a clear and focused recruitment plan, with clearly identified milestones and annual reviews, targeted at meeting the full establishment of the RDF within eight years to include recruitment of specialists, Combat Support and Combat Service Support personnel. A part of its recruitment plan, the Defence Forces should:	
74	Ensure that the RDF fully reflects the diversity of contemporary Irish society;

Clause (g) under section 'Other' notes that

For information only, the Independent Chair of the IOG will update the Body on the progress of the implementation of other elements of the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government.

It is noted that progress in, and outcomes from, the implementation of other recommendations of the *Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government* (beyond those set out in Table 1) are of interest to the Body.

Appendix III

Implementation Oversight Group – CoDF - Terms of Reference

Membership

- Independent Chair, Ms Julie Sinnamon
- Defence Forces' Deputy Chief of Staff x2
- Defence Forces' Head of Transformation
- Assistant Secretary x2, Department of Defence
- Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach
- Deputy Secretary, Department of Justice
- Assistant Secretary, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery, and Reform
- Director, National Cyber Security Centre
- Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs
- Secretary

The Implementation Oversight Group may invite subject matter experts and other participants to attend, as required.

Terms of Reference

1. Oversee and provide input into the development of a detailed Implementation Plan on the Commission's recommendations with the support of the Implementation Management Office.
2. Individual members of the Group to provide input on recommendations applying to their respective organisations and agencies, in partnership with the Implementation Management Office.
3. Establish sub-groups, where necessary, to focus on discreet, high-impact actions.
4. Review progress reports generated by the Implementation Management Office.
5. Regularly report into the High Level Steering Board.

Appendix IV

High Level Steering Board– CoDF - Terms of Reference

THE COMMISSION ON THE DEFENCE FORCES

High-Level Steering Board Terms of Reference

Background

The High-Level Action Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces, agreed by Government in July 2022, set out that implementation and oversight structures would comprise a High-Level Steering Board chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach, an independently-chaired Implementation Oversight Group, and an Implementation Management Office.

Aim of Steering Board

The key aim of the Steering Board is to oversee the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government.

Role of Steering Board

- Steer the Implementation Oversight Group and provide guidance where necessary;
- Act as a clearing house for issues or blockages in the implementation of the Commission's recommendations; and
- Provide support and guidance for effective delivery of the Implementation Plan.

Membership

The board will be chaired by the Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach and will consist of:

- Chair of the Implementation Oversight Group
- Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces
- Secretary General, Department of Defence
- Secretary General, Department of Justice
- Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform
- Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs
- Secretary General, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

Reporting

The Group will periodically feed back to the Minister for Defence, who will provide an update to Government and to the Oireachtas on an annual basis on the implementation of the report's recommendations.

Frequency of Meetings

The board is expected to meet quarterly, with scope for additional meetings as the need arises.

Appendix V

Matrix of actions, owners, and oversight

Each of this actions set out in the Strategic Framework will be completed as expeditiously as possible, no later than the end of 2024. As set out in section 5 of the document, actions 53 to 83 set out specific projects which are aimed to be progressed or delivered by the end of 2024 from within the existing Defence Vote.

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
Independent Review Group [IRG] Report Recommendations Implementation					
Statutory & Non Statutory Investigative Processes					
1	Establish a Tribunal of Enquiry - terms of reference drafted and appointment of a Judge	Department			✓
2	Engage with other Departments on actions required to examine the investigation of complaints concerning health and safety issues in the Air Corps	Department			✓
3	Appoint an external expert/external group on the process of medical boarding	Department			✓
4	Engage an external body to undertake a study of deaths by suicide in the Defence Forces	Department			✓
External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces					
5	External Oversight Body to begin its work	Department			✓
Review and Redesign of Defence Forces Complaints and Grievance Processes					
6	Amend Defence Acts regarding jurisdiction of alleged sexual offences	Department			✓
7	Ensure grievances related to sexual misconduct are identified, prioritised and fast-tracked	Defence Forces			✓
8	Design an independent, external complaints service for serving members	Department	✓		✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
9	Report on a review of Redress of Wrongs procedures	Defence Forces	✓		✓
10	Working Group on the development of a complaints process for civilians and civil servants within the Defence Forces to be operational	Department	✓		✓
Support Cultural Change within the Defence Forces					
11	Ensure all policies, information material and local practices are aligned with the Maternity Protection Act 1994	Defence Forces	✓		✓
12	Ensure appropriate maternity clothing is made available	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
13	Undertake a well-designed and expertly implemented culture change programme	Defence Forces	✓		✓
14	Engage an external expert in dignity and respect training to design and deliver a strong training intervention	Defence Forces	✓		✓
15	Develop and submit a Retaliation Prevention Policy	Defence Forces	✓		✓
16	Adopt the most up-to-date definitions of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment	Defence Forces	✓		✓
17	Commence examination of existing policies and develop new policies, where appropriate, on gender and inclusion and diversity (to be completed in 12 months)	Defence Forces	✓		✓
18	Develop a profile of a female soldier in the Defence Forces	Defence Forces	✓		✓
19	Conduct a review of the current sanctions in place where upheld and assessment of the appropriateness or otherwise of such penalties	Defence Forces	✓		✓
20	Proposals for the introduction of 360-degree feedback to the Defence Forces	Defence Forces	✓		✓
21	Proposals for a psychometric assessment tool to assess promotion interview candidates' capabilities to support equity, diversity and inclusion	Defence Forces	✓		✓
Data to Inform Progress					
22	An assessment of the existing sources of data available and the steps required to establish a better-resourced and standalone data unit	Defence Forces	✓		✓
Medical					
23	Extension of the healthcare afforded to officer ranks to enlisted ranks	Department	✓	✓	✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces Actions to be delivered					
Strategic HR and Culture Change to be Delivered					
24	Revised Direct Entry policies and procedures	Defence Forces		✓	✓
25	Make the Gender Perspective mandatory in all aspects of decision making across the Defence Forces	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
26	Appoint a Senior Gender Advisor to the Defence Forces. First iteration of gender, diversity and unconscious-bias training designed and delivered.	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
27	Proposals on how to transform career and talent process and promotion systems	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
28	Working Time Directive: Finalise policy position on the specific exemptions/derogations to apply in the Defence Forces	Department		✓	✓
29	Defence Forces to introduce a modern time and attendance system for all personnel	Defence Forces		✓	✓
30	The Defence Forces to put Priority Courses with availability for remote and distance learning in place	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
31	Conduct baseline and subsequently annual climate and attitude surveys to assess morale, command climate, and underlying culture.	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
32	Make organisational changes to allow for flexible service and flexible work packages	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
33	Extension and enhancement of existing family friendly policies	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
34	Continued implementation of integration of dining facilities within new structures	Defence Forces	✓	✓	✓
35	Further evaluation of Pay & Allowance Measures under CoDF recommendations	Department		✓	✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
Services to be Reformed and Restructured					
36	Evaluation of recommendation regarding the role and functions of Military Intelligence. clarified and underpinned by appropriate legislation	Department		✓	✓
37	Design work on the restructuring of all three services substantially progressed	Defence Forces		✓	✓
38	Review of DF Tasking's (ATCP and ATCA)	Department		✓	✓
39	Use of smart metrics to be embedded in the Naval Services Patrol Plan	Department		✓	✓
New Command & Control and Joint Structures to be established					
40	Prepare policy proposals concerning high-level structures within the Defence Forces, including the recommendation concerning military command, oversight and governance.	Department		✓	✓
41	Further Evaluation of the SEAC position currently being trialled	Department		✓	✓
42	New Defence Forces vision statement developed and published	Defence Forces		✓	✓
Joint Capability Development					
43	Update structure through the establishment of the new Capability Development Unit with Phase 1 work plan commenced	Department		✓	✓
44	Progress made on each of the specific capability enhancements across all Services as set out in the CoDF report	Department		✓	✓
45	Updated Cyber Defence Strategy published	Defence Forces		✓	✓
Reserve Force to be Revitalised					
46	Publish a new Reserve Defence Force Vision	Defence Forces		✓	✓
47	Complete a Reserve Defence Force Regeneration Plan	Defence Forces		✓	✓
48	Prepare proposals to provide for a Fast Track Process for First Line Reserve	Defence Forces		✓	✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
Recruitment and Retention of personnel to our Defence Forces					
49	***Recruitment initiatives***				
49a	New Joint Induction Training Centre (JITC) to be operational	Defence Forces		✓	✓
49b	Maximum age for enlistment to be increased to 35 years of age	Department			✓
49c	'Be More' recruitment campaign to continue to be in operation	Defence Forces			✓
49d	The Naval Service specific recruitment campaign reviewed	Defence Forces			✓
49e	Maintain marine specialist recruitment body	Defence Forces			✓
49f	Explore opportunities to undertake further direct entry recruitment and civilian recruitment	Defence Forces		✓	✓
49g	Undertake a specific campaign targeted at re-entry opportunities	Defence Forces			✓
49h	Streamline recruitment process further	Defence Forces			✓
49i	Review impact of pausing psychometric testing for Naval Service General Service Recruits	Defence Forces			✓
49j	External recruitment expertise to be engaged to validate existing recruitment process in the Naval Services and advise on potential improvement opportunities	Defence Forces			✓
50	***Retention initiatives***				
50a	A range of financial and non-financial retention measures introduced	Department		✓	✓
50b	Continued provision of a service commitment schemes in the Air Corps	Department			✓
50c	Replacement of existing sea-going allowances with less complex sea-going duty measures	Department		✓	✓
50d	Extension of the healthcare afforded to officer ranks to enlisted ranks	Department	✓	✓	✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
50e	Decision on proposals for increasing mandatory retirement ages for both commissioned officers and enlisted personnel	Department			✓
50f	A tender to undertake a Review of Medical Services in the Defence Forces	Department		✓	✓
50g	Associate membership of ICTU for the Representative Associations underpinned by legislation	Department		✓	✓
50h	Introduction of a mechanism to provide for the ongoing review of the application of existing specialist pay rates and allowances to groups and categories of military personnel	Department		✓	✓
51	Submission of a Civilianisation Strategy	Defence Forces			✓
52	Defence Force Reserves Actions	Department		✓	✓
Enhancing the Physical Working Environment and Equipment of our Personnel					
Infrastructure					
53	Haulbowline: Upgrade of Block 4 Accommodation (construction commence in Quarter 4 2023) and Block 9 Office (construction commence in 2024)	Department			✓
54	McKee Barracks: Upgrade of Block F Office Accommodation and relocation of printing press	Department			✓
55	Collins Barracks: New Accommodation Block, Refurbishment of Block 1. Instruction & Utilities Office Upgrade	Department			✓
56	Gormanston: JITC Centre, New Gym/Obstacle Course. New integrated Dining Hall - procurement commenced	Department			✓
57	Defence Forces Training Centre: New Communication and Information Services Workshop Facility (commence in 2024). Cadet School HQ (to be completed in 2023). New Garaging Facility (commence in 2024).	Department			✓
58	Medical Facilities: Casement Military Medical Facility (commence in 2024). New Medical Facility	Department			✓
59	Army Ranger Wing: New HQ - procurement commenced	Department			✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
60	Galway: Upgrade of Former USAC Block (under construction)	Department			✓
61	Aiken: Dining Hall commenced - procurement commenced	Department			✓
62	Finner Camp: Gym roof replacement - procurement commenced	Department			✓
63	Gym renovation programme: request for tenders published	Department			✓
Equipment					
Land Capabilities					
64	Mid-life maintenance and upgrade programme of the Army's fleet of Armoured Personnel Carriers	Department			✓
65	Light Tactical Armoured Vehicle fleet project to commence	Department			✓
66	General Service Body Armour for the Defence Forces	Department			✓
67	Chemical-Biological-Radiological and Nuclear protection suits	Department			✓
68	Chemical-Biological-Radiological and Nuclear detection suits	Department			✓
69	Night-vision surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance equipment platforms for the Infantry Corps	Department			✓
70	Specialist equipment for the Army Ranger Wing (including Body Armour and Parachute)	Department			✓
71	Specialist equipment for Explosive Ordnance Device Bomb Disposal Unit	Department			✓
72	Bomb Disposal Robot Upgrade	Department			✓
73	Armoured Utility Vehicles	Department			✓
74	Software Defined Radio rolled out of project on a phased basis	Department			✓

Action		Owner	Governance & Reporting Mechanism		
			External Oversight Body of the Defence Forces	CoDF Governance Groups	Strategic Framework Review Group
Air Capabilities					
75	2 new Airbus C-295 in Maritime Patrol Aircraft	Department			✓
76	Delivery of 1 new Airbus C-295 in a Military Transport configuration	Department		✓	✓
77	Ministerial Air Transport Aircraft Project significantly progressed	Department			✓
Naval Capabilities					
78	Mid-Life Extension programme for the Naval Service P50 Class has seen the completion of the works on LÉ Roisín and LÉ Niamh	Department			✓
79	Two Inshore Patrol Vessels and RHIBs fleet delivered	Department			✓
80	Naval Service Primary armament guns refurbishment and modernisation	Department			✓
81	Naval Service gun fire control systems	Department			✓
82	Naval Service X and S band radar systems.	Department			✓
83	Naval Service Reserve Motor Launches	Department			✓
Legislative changes to underpin the Transformation Agenda					
84	Amendments to ensure that An Garda Síochána (AGS) will have sole jurisdiction within the State to investigate alleged sexual offences committed by persons subject to military law, as part of the Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2023	Department			✓
85	Amend the Defence Acts	Department			✓

Notes

Notes

Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence