



Annual Report 2022



An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service



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Joint Introduction from the Chairperson of the Board and the Chief Executive

2022 has been a very busy year for the organisation; we processed almost 65,000 applications, conducted over 14,000 interviews and made over 9,000 appointments to a range of complex roles across a diverse range of public service organisations.

We are constantly reviewing and enhancing our approach to assessment and selection. In 2022, we completed a significant job analysis project reviewing the general service competencies from Clerical Officer to Principal Officer. The output was a Capability Framework with four key capabilities; the implementation of the new model will take place in 2023. Significant work was also carried out to introduce efficiencies in recruitment processes, while also maintaining the quality of the candidates we assign, with new tests and assessments developed (including Multi-Media Situational Judgement Tests and structured questionnaires for the assessment of experience for some technical roles).

We have responded to client demands in delivering new campaigns and adopted new approaches to recruitment. In March we launched a competition for Temporary Clerical Officers with Ukrainian Language Skills; the competition was delivered in a very short timeframe and received considerable interest from clients and candidates. In October we also launched the recruitment process for the ICT Apprenticeship programme for the Civil Service in order to attract people at a different level in areas of skills shortages.

2022 also saw the launch of the Medical Consultant Hub, a dedicated website for medical consultant roles recruited by PAS on behalf of the HSE; this microsite will continue to develop during 2023 to ensure that it continues to provide the greatest outcomes for the HSE and the candidates that we hope to attract.

PAS has a target of filling over 95% of roles for clients and this was achieved in 2022. We also aim to complete recruitment campaigns within the timescale set with clients in at least 80% of campaigns, and recruitment delivery targets were met in respect of 73% of campaigns in 2022. The tight labour market and high attrition rates at all stages of the recruitment process has impacted on delivery timeframes, with additional campaigns and the processing of additional candidates required to fill vacancies. There was also a significant increase in the requests by clients for recruitment campaigns in 2022 and this was seen across all areas of PAS recruitment. A business process review of the clearance and assignments process was conducted in 2022 to allow us better respond to these demand and supply issues, and

actions were implemented to address any issue identified. We are committed to delivering excellent recruitment services by enhancing our service delivery model and ensuring positive customer experiences. In engaging with our candidates and clients, we recognised the importance of a mechanism to regularly listen and respond to feedback to ensure that our services, processes and digital solutions meet user needs. We developed an organisation-wide framework for client and candidate feedback in 2022, which will be rolled out in 2023.

In 2022, we were delighted to announce the launch of the Public Service Recruiters Network, in collaboration with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). The purpose of the Public Service Recruiters Network is to facilitate greater collaboration in recruitment and to maintain the high standards that are in place across the public service. There is a strong focus on the sharing of best practice across the public service, identifying common challenges/opportunities and working together to attract the best people to our organisations.

We analysed our progress on delivering on our Strategy with a mid-point strategy review, and the organisation is on track to deliver the strategic objectives despite a very challenging period since the strategy was developed. We also developed our first Innovation Strategy for PAS and this will be a useful guide for us in the coming years, informing how we develop and deliver our services.

A key priority in our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy 2021-2023 is to develop a data driven, evidence-based diversity profile of candidates throughout the recruitment process. In 2022, we engaged with the ESRI on this area. We are organising a conference for early 2023 to highlight and discuss the resulting Equality Monitoring Dashboard project and the power of data to drive change and help to build a more diverse and inclusive public service workforce. We also completed an external ED&I diagnostic review of our practices and policies as an employer and as an external recruiter for the civil and public service. Over 90 recommendations were made, many of which were in some way in progress already, that have provided us with a clear set of actions to progress our ED&I commitments in the short to medium term.

PAS are committed to using the best methodologies and technologies to recruit. Project NOVA is our project to find, buy, and implement a new recruitment system and significant progress was made on this in 2022, with a supplier due to be procured in 2023. The Chapter House Upgrade Project continued throughout 2022 and is due to be completed in early 2023.

None of this could have been achieved without the guidance and support of the members of the Board of PAS and of the Audit Committee in ensuring that we continued to meet the highest governance standards in fulfilling our statutory public service selection and recruitment obligations and providing quality services to our clients and customers throughout this very challenging period. We are very appreciative of their contribution to our success. We would like to thank our staff and selection board members for their significant contribution throughout 2022 and their commitment to delivering a high quality, independent and merit-based recruitment and selection process.

Margaret McCabe, PAS Chief Executive

Tom Moran, Chairperson of the Board

About the Public Appointments Service

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the recruitment and resourcing service provider for client organisations in the civil and public service. It is responsible for the sourcing, assessment and delivery of quality candidates to public service clients. It runs a wide range of 'openly advertised' recruitment competitions and 'interdepartmental' promotion competitions within the Civil Service. The activities are primarily focused on the sourcing of candidates for roles in the Civil Service; the most senior roles in Local Authorities; trainee Garda and certain Garda competitions for promotion for An Garda Síochána; and a range of management, executive and specialist roles across the civil and public service. PAS also has a key role in the identification of suitable members for State Boards.

Recruitment to the civil service and a range of other public bodies operates under the provisions of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Acts, 2004 to 2013. PAS operates under licence from the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and is independent in its operations. In carrying out its recruitment and selection processes, it complies with the Codes of Practice published by the CPSA, which ensure that fair and open processes are in place. Where the Codes do not apply, it adheres to the same core principles in carrying out its functions.

In 2022, PAS processed 64,908 applications, conducted 14,033 interviews and made appointments to a range of complex roles across a diverse range of client organisations.

Strategic Objectives and Key Trends in 2022

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of the Public Appointments Service are shown below.



These objectives were published in the Statement of Strategy (Nua) 2020-2023, which was officially launched on 19th October 2020 by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath.

Strategic Management

A Strategy mid-point review was undertaken by the Strategic Programme Office to ensure appropriate progress of the delivery of the strategy and to ensure that any necessary corrective action is taken to keep delivery of the strategy on target. A robust analysis methodology was used to analyse a dataset, which was developed using a data gathering exercise with the Management Board and their teams.

The NUA23 statement of strategy commits to end states that describe what success will look like by December 2023 when we deliver on our organisational goals. In 2020, the Strategic Programme Office and the Management Board of PAS developed a series of signposts against which we can sense check our direction of travel during the mid-point review. The strategy mid-point review analysed our progress

toward the end states by sense-checking against the signposts to ensure we are on the right route and making sufficient progress to achieve the anticipated end states by December 2023.

The mid-point strategy review clearly identified the commitment to delivering NUA and demonstrated that the ambition that NUA articulates remains very strong in PAS. Significant progress has been made across all three pillars and the organisation is on track to deliver the strategic objectives despite a very challenging period since the strategy was developed.

The Strategic Roadmap is continually maintained and informs the annual Business Planning process, which is now aligned with the financial calendar, and was completed on target and by year end.

Innovation Strategy

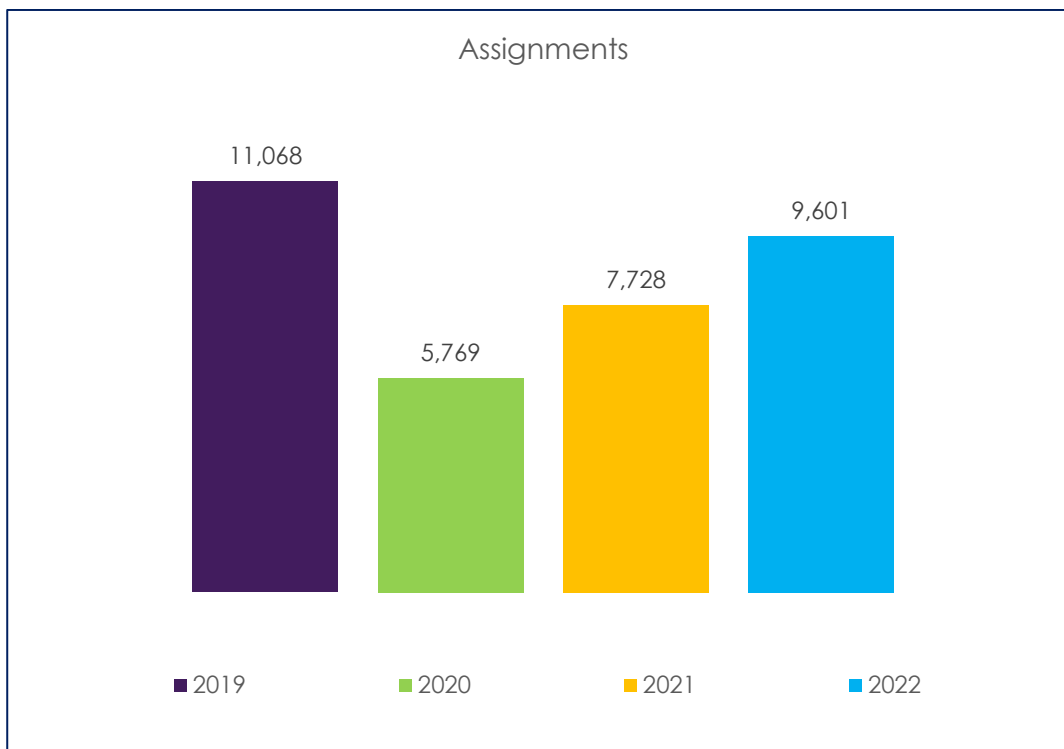
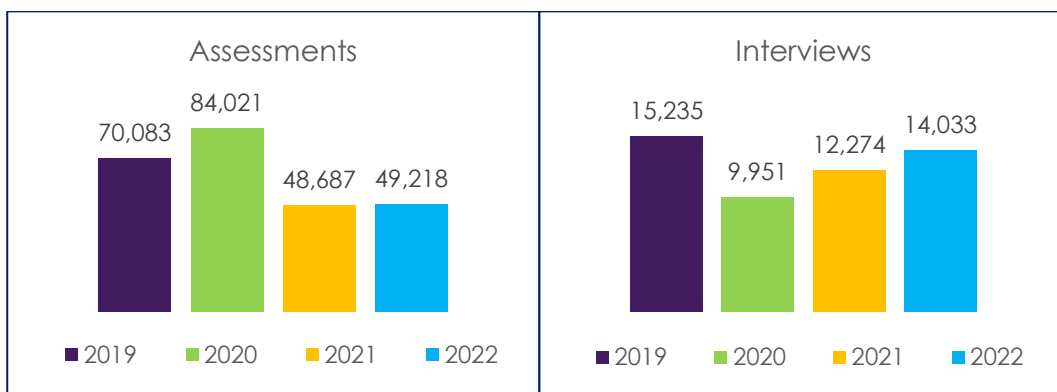
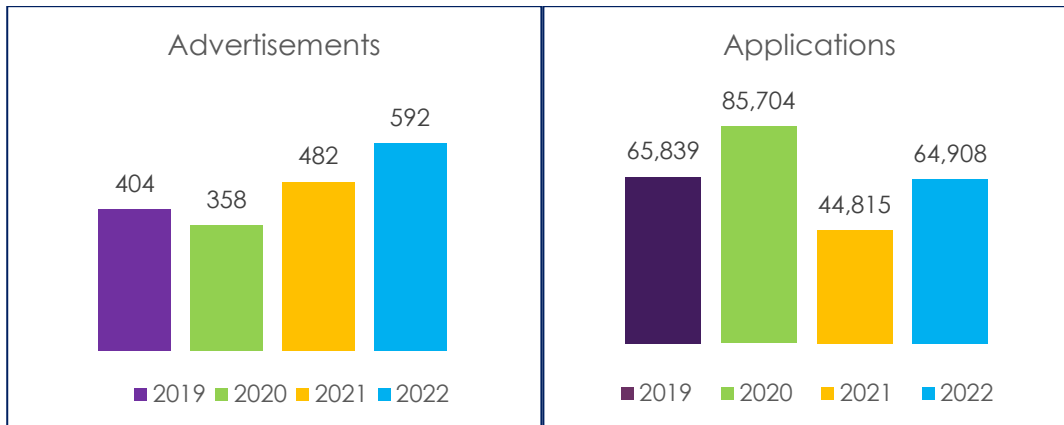
The Strategic Programme Office developed the first Innovation Strategy for PAS. It is aligned to our NUA strategy and to the Innovation Strategy for the Civil Service, which sets out principles and guidelines that public sector bodies are expected to follow when developing their own organisational innovation strategies. The three strategic priorities are:

- **Priority 1 – Citizen-centric Innovation**
 - o Put citizens and users at the centre of innovation, to enhance their experience through seamless service delivery
- **Priority 2 – Culture of Innovation**
 - o Create a culture where all staff are inspired, empowered and enabled to innovate
- **Priority 3 – Scale Up Innovation**
 - o Work across sectors and organisations to optimise efficiency by scaling innovations across the Irish Public Service

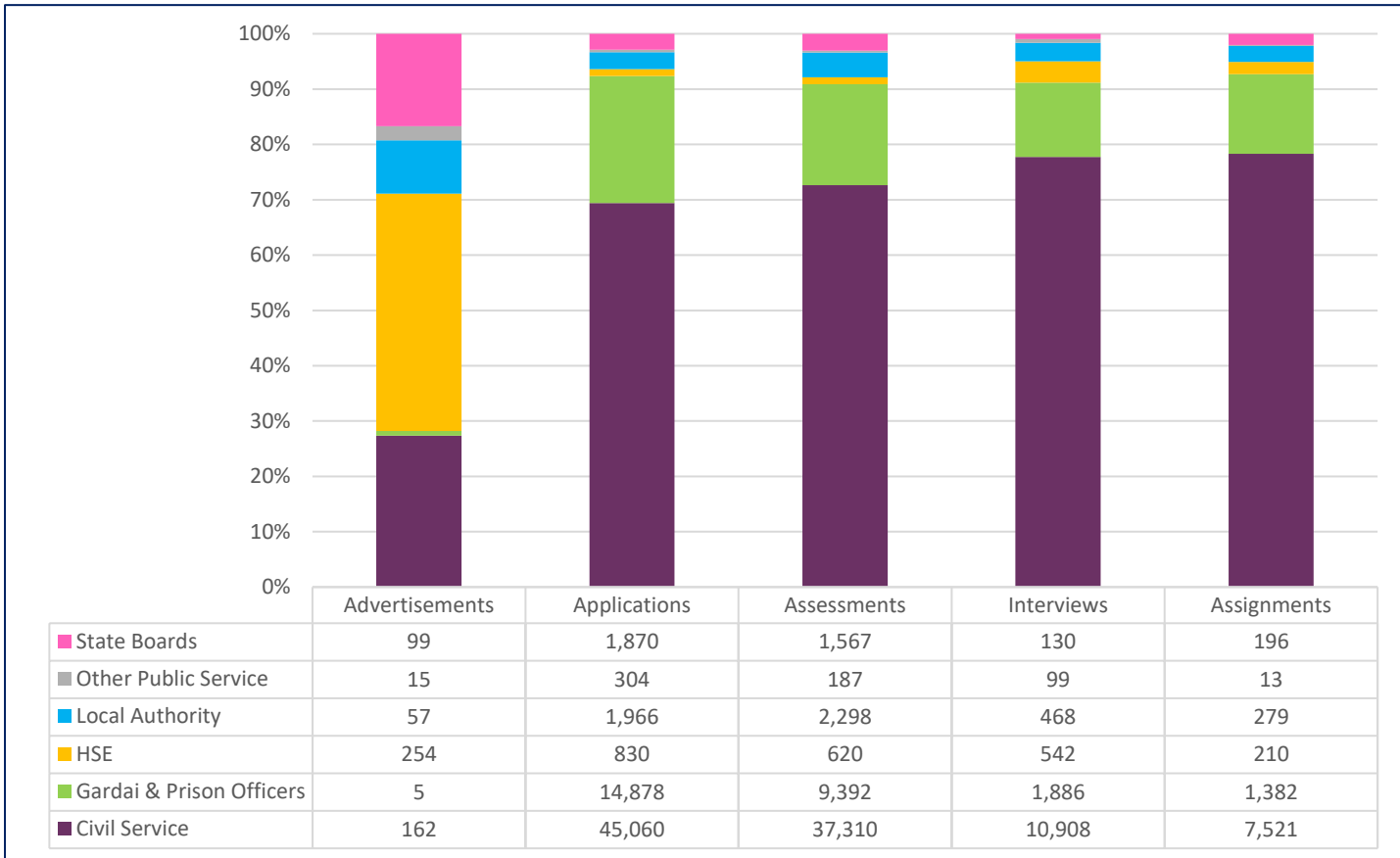
The Strategic Programme Office developed a template which will be used for all internal strategies across the organisation, ensuring alignment with NUA 23 Statement of Strategy.

Key Trends in 2022

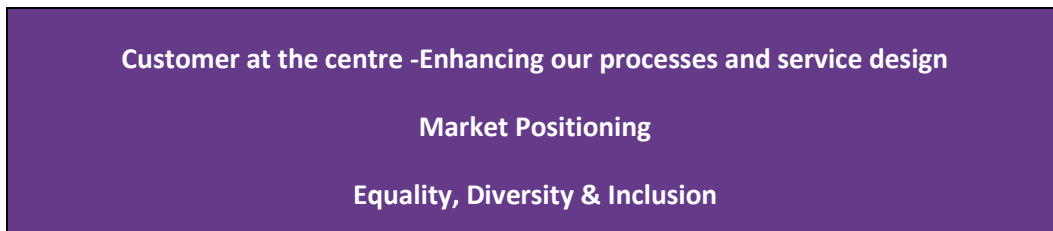
Recruitment Delivery from 2019-2022



2022 Recruitment Operational Activities by Sector



Delivering Recruitment Excellence



Customer at the centre – Enhancing our processes and service design

Developments in Assessments

A job analysis project to review all of the general service competencies from Clerical Officer to Principal Officer was completed in 2022. The output was a Capability Framework with four key capabilities; Building Future Readiness, Evidence-Informed Delivery, Leading and Empowering and Communicating and Collaborating. The implementation of the new model will take place in 2023.

Throughout 2022, the Assessment Services Unit (ASU) was involved in supporting the range of recruitment competitions carried out by PAS, including the promotions to Sergeant and Inspector. Across the year, significant work was carried out to introduce efficiencies in recruitment processes, including merging different assessment stages and making changes to interview processes. The aim is to allow for a faster process while maintaining the quality of the candidates we assign. As part of the re-design of processes, new tests and assessments were developed, including Multi-Media Situational Judgement Tests and a structured questionnaire for the assessment of experience for some technical roles.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has always been a strong focus of the ASU team. In 2022, an audit was undertaken on the area of Reasonable Accommodations as part of the assessment process. The findings were very positive and the highlighted areas for improvement are being implemented. ASU have also been very involved in the assessment aspects of the OWL and WAM programmes.

Sharing best practice in assessment is an important part of the remit of PAS, and in 2022 numerous events took place, including an information exchange with the College of Policing in the UK, presentations to the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) Equality and Diversity Network, an Upskill with ASU session on the area of shortlisting for all PAS staff, a presentation to the Public Service Recruiters Network on designing a recruitment process, and participation in the Ahead seminar on employing people with special needs.

The Board Member Unit (BMU) is now well established, with more formalised recording processes and over 150 Board members trained in the last two years. The training provided to Board Members has been extended and a managed process of shadowing has been introduced. A big focus in 2022 was to increase the proportion of diverse Board Members participating on our Interview Boards. As part of our commitment to being a Trusted Advisor, our Interview Skills e-learning modules have been made available to a range of other public service organisations.

Recruitment Activity 2022

Professional and Technical Recruitment

Professional and Technical (P&T) recruitment advertised 113 competitions in 2022, an increase of 48% when compared with 2021. The restructure of P&T recruitment resulted in significantly improved competition planning within the unit and the establishment of this planning unit has also ensured that priority roles can be advertised in a very short time, including the Educational Psychologist competition which was advertised in November 2022. In 2022, P&T competitions attracted nearly 4,000 applicants with 1,056 assignments made to client organisations.

P&T recruitment have been working closely with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to progress the advertisement of ICT roles on behalf of the Civil Service. Further to previous competition reviews, and considering the overall labour market, PAS conducted these competitions within a significantly reduced timeline to mitigate against delays and to ensure a more positive candidate and client experience. P&T will continue to work with colleagues in Marketing and Communications to progress these competitions in a new and unique way to ensure that the civil service remains a competitive option in this candidate driven labour market.

Working within a hybrid operating model, P&T recruitment successfully balanced several priorities in 2022, including managing the increased programme of work with the need to fill urgent requests at short notice for roles deemed to be of national importance. P&T recruitment continued to experience an increase in demand for the advertising of new competitions during 2022 with the same demand is expected for 2023.

Large Volume Recruitment

In 2022 the year began with a high volume of requests for general service grades and this continued to remain high throughout the year, with a 28% increase in applications on the previous year.

Along with a reduced number of applications across all competitions, we also experienced rapid attrition of candidate pools at all stages of the process. A number of panels were exhausted much faster than

expected and PAS launched a number of competitions much earlier than expected (Clerical Officer, Temporary Clerical Officer, Administrative Officer – Business & Finance, and Assistant Principal) to maintain the pool of available candidates.

The changes made to the Clearance Units in late 2021 delivered significant improvements to productivity. From January there were monthly increases in the volume of assignments made. In May, we made 788 assignments, an increase of over 70% on what was achieved in January. The volume of assignments reduced later in Q3 due to seasonal impacts on operations and the ongoing challenges in the labour market.

All recruitment units in LVC undertook to review and streamline processes in order to get candidates through assessment stages and onto panels as quickly as possible while also maintaining robust assessment standards. While significant changes were implemented to improve service delivery the labour market was extremely difficult and posed a huge challenge to meeting client demands. Radio advertising campaigns for Clerical Officer and Temporary Clerical Officer competitions were launched in Q4 to increase our reach and attract a wider, more diverse candidate pool.

In March we launched a competition for Temporary Clerical Officers with Ukrainian Language Skills. The competition was delivered in a very short timeframe and received considerable interest from clients and candidates. There was ongoing collaboration between PAS and a number of key clients in relation to this initiative and the feedback from clients was very positive. There were 196 candidates assigned to requests and 142 candidates took up the roles offered.

In October we also launched the recruitment process for the ICT Apprenticeship programme for the Civil Service. The programme is being led by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer but there has been wide interest from across the Civil Service and there will be 110 places offered across three streams. The programme is due to commence in March 2023.

Throughout the year LVC launched three Temporary Clerical Officer competitions, and competitions for Principal Officer, Executive Officer, Assistant Principal, Third Secretary, Administrative Officer (General) and Administrative Officer (IGEES), Principal Officer Higher and Clerical Officer (Dublin).

Executive Search

The Public Appointment Service manages the executive search process for clients at a senior and executive level, for competitions in Senior Executive Recruitment, State Boards, Medical Consultants and Professional & Technical Recruitment. Executive Search provides an invaluable service to high profile and sometimes difficult to fill roles across the civil and public sector providing a targeted search process, generally with an

international element to the search, attracting candidates who otherwise are unaware of such opportunities.

In 2022, the searches conducted were predominantly for Chairperson and commercially sensitive appointments to the boards of state agencies, Medical Consultant specialist posts and senior executive appointments.

Senior Executive Recruitment

In 2022, we completed 57 competitions at senior executive level, Top Level Appointments Committee (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary and TLAC specialist roles), and a number of roles which represent key areas of public interest,.

State Boards Recruitment

The process for appointments to the boards of State Agencies completed 77 competitions across 314 vacancies. In total for 2022, 45% of appointments were male and 55% female.

The State Boards team in PAS participated in a number of awareness raising opportunities in 2022. They presented on Opportunities on State Boards in Transport on 3rd March with the Minister for Transport, Eamonn Ryan; Ken Spratt, Secretary General; and Liz O'Donnell, Chairperson, Road Safety Authority. They also presented to the IPA Governance Forum on 12th May, the Institute of Directors on 16th June, the Law Society Annual Conference on 12th October and at Shannon Chamber of Commerce on 28th November.

Justice Sector Recruitment

A new Garda Trainee competition launched on 10th February 2022. Over 10,500 eligible applications were received and those candidates were invited to complete Stage 1 Online Tests which were remotely proctored. 5,180 completed the tests and 4,541 were successful. Candidates were then invited to attend Stage 2 – Report Writing Exercise. Stage 3 – Competitive Interviews commenced 26th July 2022 and have continued monthly. 1,010 candidates were invited to interview during 2022 and 875 attended. 733 names were forwarded to An Garda Síochána for the appointments stage of the process. Planning for a new competition in 2023 has commenced.

Following Stage 1 online testing, interviews were conducted during 2022 for promotion to the ranks of Sergeant and Inspector. The names of candidates who were successful at interview were forwarded to An Garda Síochána for consideration for promotion to the rank of Sergeant and Inspector.

New competitions were launched for Control Room Operators and Incident Creation Representatives, and these will progress through the various selection stages in 2023.

A Recruit Prison Officer competition was launched on 15th July 2022. 2,031 eligible applications were received, and those candidates were invited to Stage 1 testing, which was remotely proctored. The first batch of successful candidates were invited to Stage 2 Role Play Exercise and 127 candidates were successful and invited to Stage 3 Competitive Interview.

Medical Consultant Recruitment

Medical Consultant Recruitment continued at unprecedented levels throughout 2022. PAS advertised 318 Medical Consultant posts in 2022, a 33% increase on 2021, and an increase of 158% when compared with 2020. Throughout 2023, PAS will continue to provide support to the HSE for the recruitment of permanent Medical Consultants into the Irish Public Health Service, with an anticipated increase of a further 100%. 2022 also saw PAS deliver on Public Health Consultant Competitions, comprising of 34 initial posts, with all competitions delivered within deadline; a further 17 which are on hand are expected to be completed in 2023.

2022 also saw the launch of the Medical Consultant Hub, a dedicated website for medical consultant roles recruited by PAS on behalf of the HSE. Twelve area specialities are represented as part of this partnership including surgery, psychiatry, paediatrics, anaesthesiology, emergency medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, general internal medicine, pathology, radiology, public health, orthodontics, and ophthalmology. The HSE is keen to appeal to specialists who have trained and are already working in Ireland, those working overseas, as well as specialists who trained in other jurisdictions. To support candidates' consideration for the roles, the hub details the requirements needed to work in the Irish health system as well as information on housing, taxation, banking, driving, and education. All vacancies are easily searchable utilising speciality, county, or keyword filters. The microsite will continue to develop during 2023 to ensure that it continues to provide the greatest outcomes for the HSE, PAS and the candidates that we hope to attract. PAS also continues to work in collaboration with the HSE by participating in several working groups including the permanent consultant recruitment working group and the Public Health Consultant Working Group.

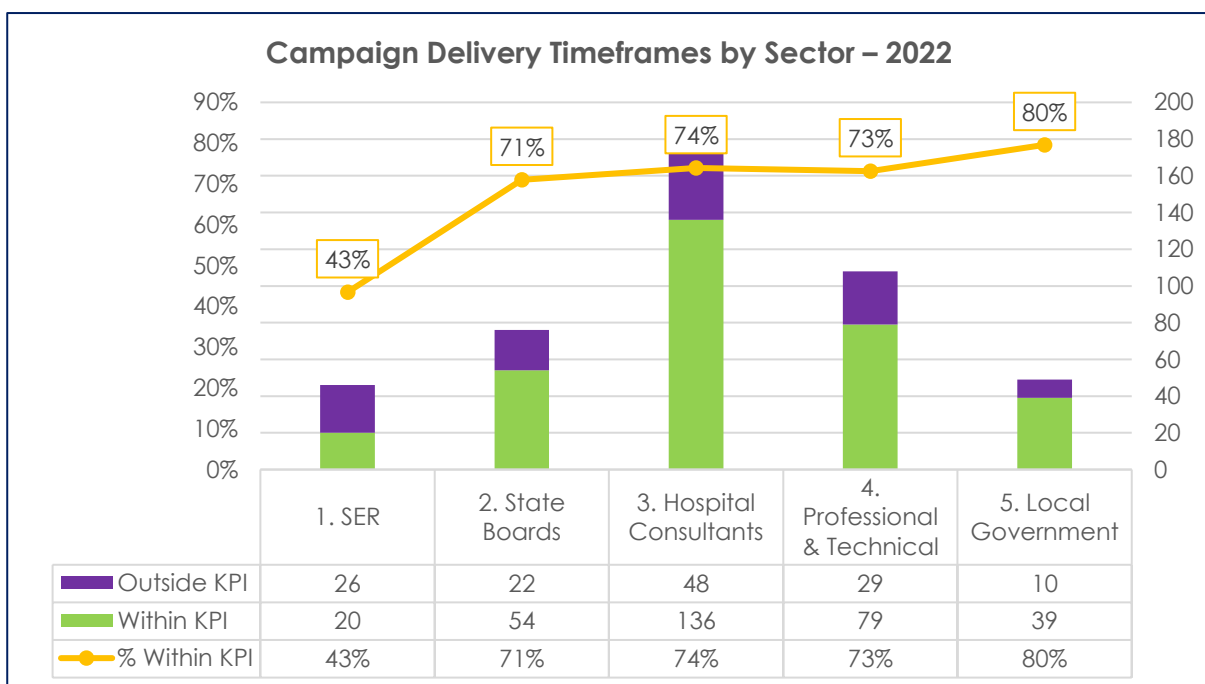
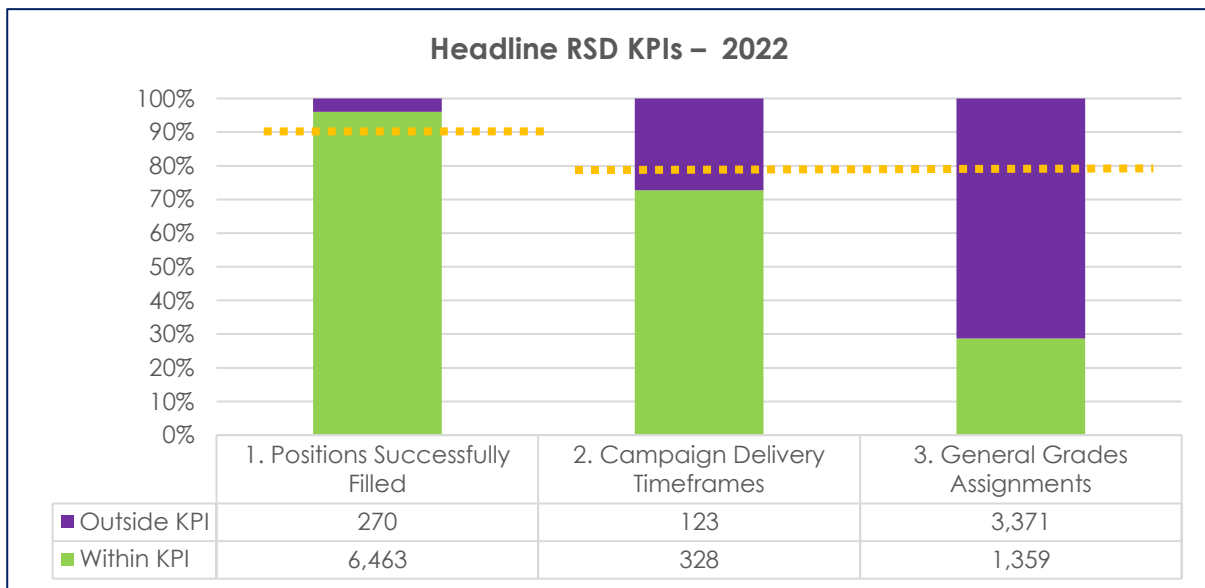
Local Authority Recruitment

PAS experienced another significant increase in demand across all senior level Local Authority competitions in 2022. The unit advertised 51 competitions in 2022, which was a 38% increase in competitions advertised in comparison to 2021. 283 assignments were also made in 2022, a 21% increase on the previous year. This increase in demand was driven by key Local Government strategic projects such as the Housing for All social

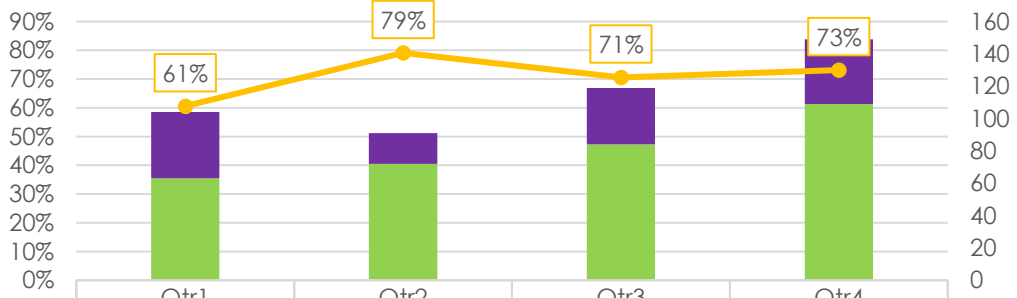
housing initiative and the Active Travel scheme. The demand for positions to be filled in these strategic project areas is expected to continue throughout 2023. Throughout 2022, PAS has liaised with the Department of Housing and Local Government through 2022 to review essential qualifications for competitions run by PAS to ensure that, where possible, they are aligned, with other positions in the wider Public Sector and this will continue into 2023.

PAS continued to engage with the Local Government sector throughout 2022, meeting regularly with representation from the CCMA and LGMA to assess current and future demand in the sector.

Recruitment Delivery Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

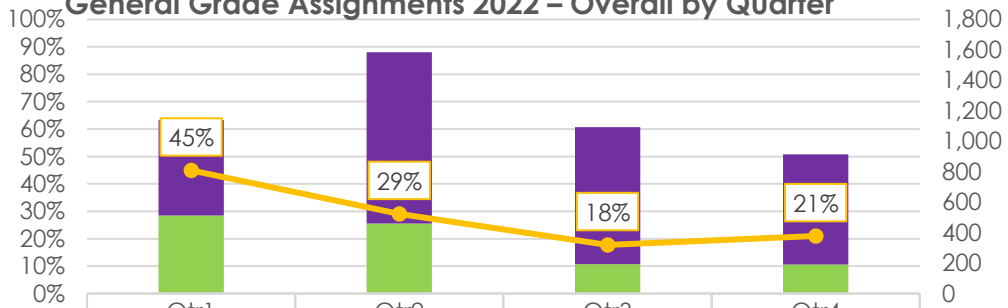


Campaign Delivery Timeframes 2022 – Overall by Quarter



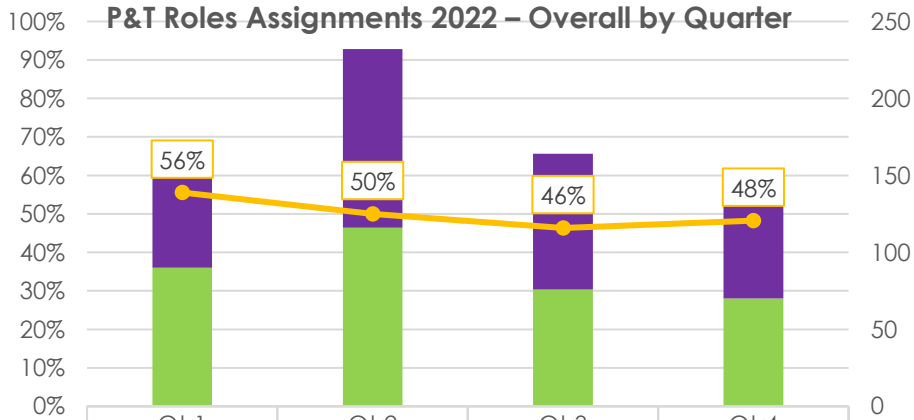
	2022			
	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Outside KPI	41	19	35	40
Within KPI	63	72	84	109
% Within KPI	61%	79%	71%	73%

General Grade Assignments 2022 – Overall by Quarter



	2022			
	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Outside KPI	627	1,123	899	722
Within KPI	512	461	194	192
Within KPI %	45%	29%	18%	21%

P&T Roles Assignments 2022 – Overall by Quarter



	2022			
	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Outside KPI	72	116	88	75
Within KPI	90	116	76	70
% Within KPI	56%	50%	46%	48%

PAS has a target of filling over 95% of roles for clients and this was achieved in 2022.

PAS also aims to complete recruitment campaigns within the timescale set with clients in at least 80% of campaigns. Recruitment delivery targets were met in respect of 73% of campaigns in 2022. The 80% target was achieved in respect of Local Authority recruitment and three areas saw timescale target met in over 70% of campaigns (with P&T at 73%; Medical Consultants at 74%; and State Boards at 71%). The areas of greatest concern were SER at 55%, and the General Grade Assignments at 29% (which also has a target of 80%). The tight labour market and high attrition rates at all stages of the recruitment process has impacted on delivery timeframes, with additional campaigns and the processing of additional candidates required to fill vacancies. There was also a significant increase in the requests by clients for recruitment campaigns in 2022 and this was seen across all areas of PAS recruitment. A business process review of the clearance and assignments process in both areas was conducted in 2022 and actions were implemented immediately. Additional resources were also allocated to both areas and PAS worked to streamline the processes as much as possible with a view to achieving the agreed timescales for delivery in 2023. PAS is also engaging with clients in relation to additional resources to support their recruitment campaigns in 2023.

Client Relations

The role of the Client Relations Management (CRM) team is to act as the primary point of contact between client organisations and the Public Appointments Service. For each client, there is a dedicated member of the CRM team who builds up a knowledge of the client organisation. The CRM team are responsible for: logging vacancies and new competition requests, pipeline management, responding to queries, client reporting and co-ordination of workforce planning. Our standard response time to answer queries is three working days. In 2022, we responded to almost 22,000 client queries and 82% were answered on the same day.

Client Manager Framework

A need was identified for a more strategic engagement with clients to support recruitment excellence. The client manager framework is a key feature of our liaison and is pivotal to building a strong relationship and knowledge base with our clients. Each client has a designated client manager from the PAS Management Team. As part of the wider supports, an internal network for client managers has been established to discuss key challenges, share feedback and ensure a consistency of approach.

Client Workforce Planning

We recognise that many of our clients are operating in complex and challenging environments with shifting priorities. Forecasting demand across our clients is a significant issue that impacts our ability to plan and respond to requirements and changing needs, particularly in the context of a competitive labour market. Our Client Relations Management (CRM) team, engage with each client to obtain projections of their resourcing requirements on a quarterly basis. Taking a collaborative approach to workforce planning is critical, to inform our recruitment strategies, schedule new competitions and to prioritise candidates for assessment so that they are available for assignment in a timely manner. Over 2022, we have increased the engagement rate of clients who participate in the quarterly workforce planning. In 2023 we will be introducing further initiatives to improve the accuracy of the projections.

Customer Engagement

We are committed to delivering excellent recruitment services by enhancing our service delivery model and ensuring positive customer experiences. In engaging with our candidates and clients, it is important to have a mechanism to regularly listen and respond to feedback to ensure that our services, processes and digital solutions meet user needs.

To develop our knowledge and understanding of best practice in Customer Experience (CX), we collaborated with market research experts, Ipsos MRBI, in 2022. The purpose of this project was to inform a more strategic approach to seeking customer feedback and how to embed this user input to inform continuous improvements. Ipsos delivered a series of workshops that were specifically tailored to the PAS context and customer journeys. On foot of this learning, we are finalising our strategy and organisation-wide framework for client and candidate feedback, which will be rolled out in 2023.

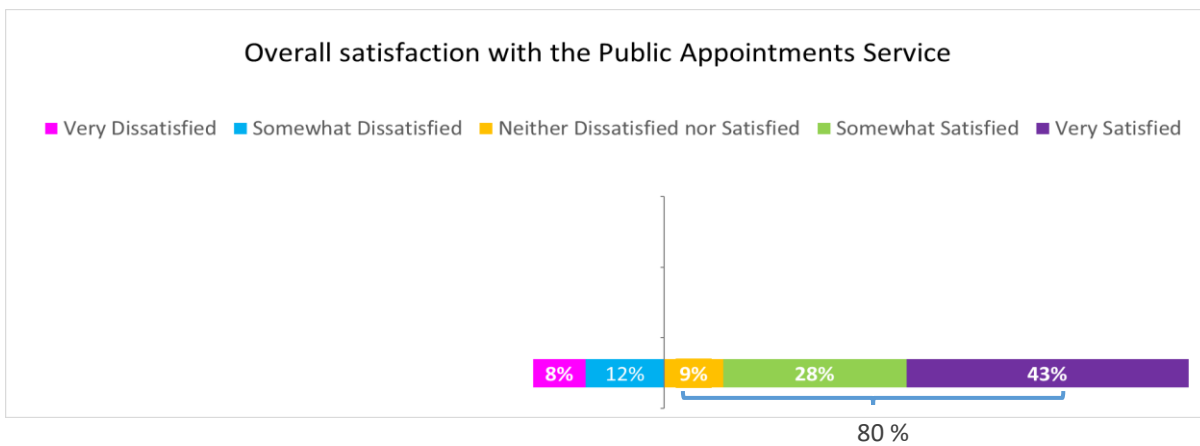
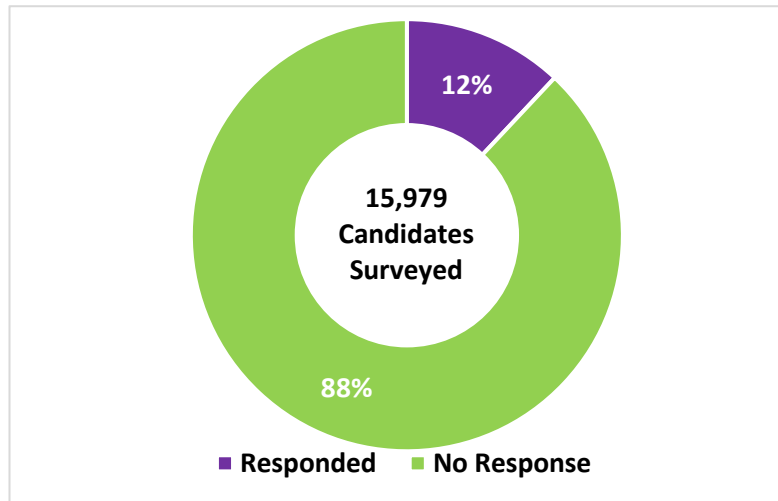
User Feedback (Client & Candidate)

User feedback is a key mechanism that influences innovations and improvements in our service delivery so that we can develop our service to meet customer needs. Over 2022, we continued to build on our customer surveys and engaged with a range of stakeholders including candidates, clients, staff, Board Members, and staff across the wider Civil Service (as part of the competency review project). Over 2023, we will be building on this framework of user feedback, in line with our new customer engagement plan – this will include more regular surveys.

A snapshot of some of the findings in relation to customer satisfaction are presented below:

Candidate Feedback Survey

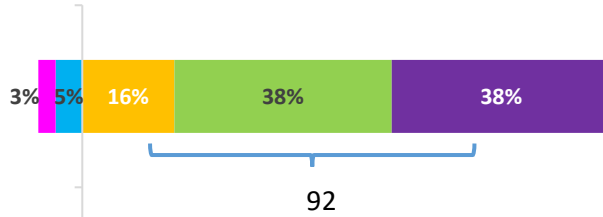
The key findings presented below are taken from our 2022 Candidate Survey that was issued in November 2022. The rate of candidate satisfaction with their overall experience with PAS indicates a 6% increase, in comparison with 2021.



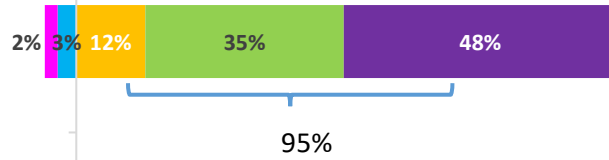
Candidate Experience of Recruitment Service Delivery

Very Negative Somewhat Negative Neutral Somewhat Positive Very Positive

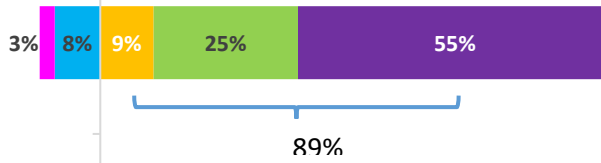
1. How would you rate the user friendliness of the



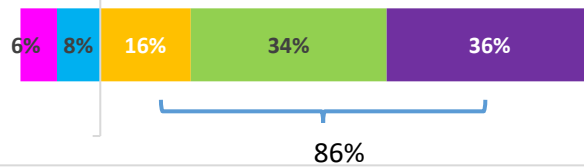
2. How would you rate your experience of completing online testing?



3. How would you rate your overall experience of completing an interview?



4. How would you rate your experience of the clearance & assignment process?



Client Feedback Survey: Professional & Technical Competitions

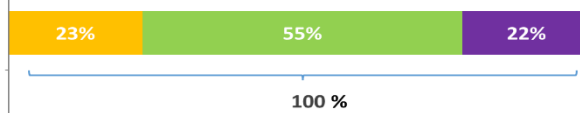
The purpose of this survey is to measure client satisfaction with individual Professional & Technical recruitment competitions that are undertaken and managed by the Public Appointments Service.

Planning of a Professional & Technical Competition:

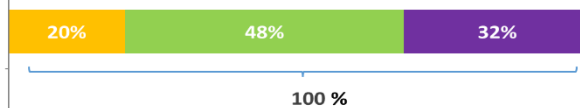
Planning of a P&T Competition

Very Poor Poor Satisfactory Good Excellent

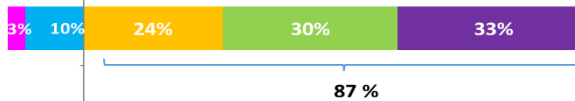
How user-friendly was the initial process of requesting PAS to run a P&T competition



How would you rate the planning and preparation undertaken by PAS to advertise the competition

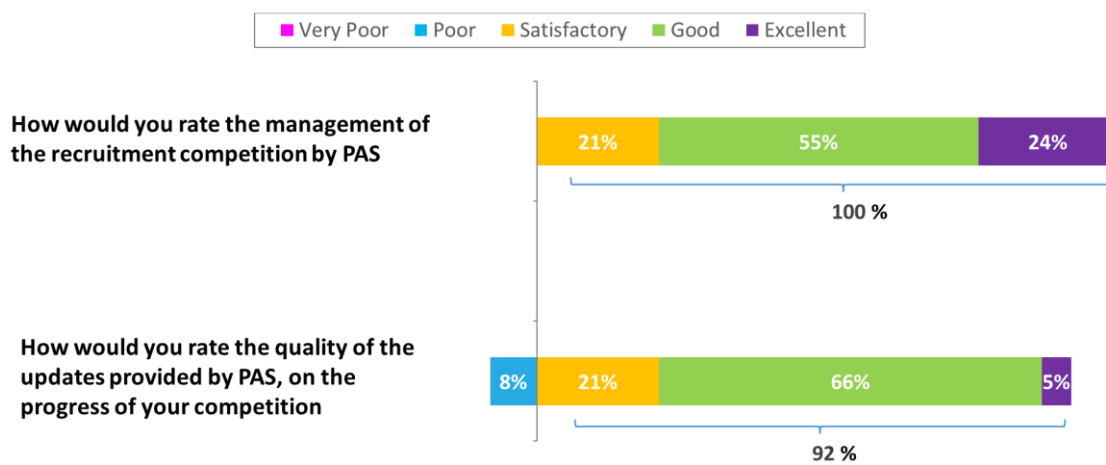


How would you rate the timelines to advertise this post once all documentation had been submitted to PAS

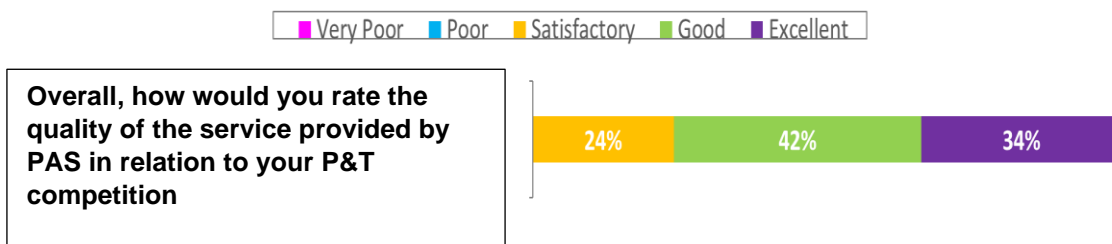


Management of a Professional & Technical Competition:

How would you rate the management of the recruitment competition by PAS?



Overall Quality of the Professional & Technical Competition:



Market Positioning

Driving Awareness of Public Sector Career Opportunities

Recruitment Marketing and Advertising

In 2022 there were 215 recruitment marketing and advertising campaigns delivered to drive awareness of available opportunities with the candidate market. These campaigns resulted in 1,480 recruitment marketing ad placements across a variety of online and traditional media such as print and radio. PAS is also working to the Irish Language Act requirements for public bodies from October 2022 where at least 20% of any advertising placed in any year is required to be in the Irish language, with at least 5% of advertising spend in any year required to be delivered in the Irish language media.

PAS further built capacity in the area of data and insights in 2022 for recruitment marketing and advertising activity. The development of this work is used to inform KPIs on marketing activity for recruitment campaigns, such as conversion, spend, platform performance, format performance.

In relation to publicjobs.ie, users of the website grew by 200k across the year from 3 million in 2021 to 3.2 million in 2022. There was also a growth of +15% in new registrants to publicjobs.ie through the period.

Social Media

The organisations social media presence continues to grow with significant growth in followers in all instances. Two new social platforms were also added to the publicjobs.ie social portfolio during the period, bringing the total number of social platforms for the organisation to six across a variety of audience groups.

Events and Sponsorships

- Career Balance Webinar – The Women’s Network
- DCU Careers Talk in collaboration with Department of Foreign Affairs
- International Women’s Day: Break the Bias Event - Panel
- DCU National Diversity and Inclusion Sponsorship
- Four Institute of Guidance Counsellors webinars
- Career talk at DCU
- Intreo Recruitment Event
- The Pitch – The Publicjobs.ie Schools Advertising Challenge Awards Showcase
- National Pride Day Parade
- Grad Ireland Careers Fair
- Dublin City University
- University of Limerick
- University College Cork
- Law Society Conference

- Colaiste na hInse, Bettystown Careers event
- The National Traveller Education Achievement Awards Sponsorship

Public Jobs Schools Resource Initiative

The Public Jobs Schools Resource Initiative continues to enhance and grow awareness of public sector career opportunities with post-primary students. Over 25% of schools have now signed up since during the first year of the initiative.

As part of the overall initiative, The Pitch Schools Advertising Challenge launched in January 2022 for the first time. The Pitch is a competition for post-primary students to express their creative, digital and communication skills, while learning about future career opportunities in the public sector. As part of the competition, students were challenged to create a 30-second video advertisement pitching the public sector as an attractive career pathway for their fellow students. This challenge was developed as a way to encourage peer-to-peer learning as part of a whole school approach to guidance, but The Pitch is also a fantastic team-building activity for all students to enjoy. Student entrants to the challenge had the opportunity to win the below prizes that showcased the diversity of careers available in the public sector:

The prizes included:

- An opportunity to test student's newfound media skills by interviewing the Taoiseach Micheál Martin.
- The opportunity to discover all-action lifesaving skills with a trip to an Irish Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Centre or Helicopter base.
- Experience behind the scenes action and take part in a policing simulation at An Garda Síochána.

The Pitch – Schools Advertising Challenge closed for entries on 1st April 2022 with some excellent entries from schools across Ireland. A panel of judges was created to shortlist the entries which included Shirley Comerford – CEO at the Public Appointments Service, Nadia Karim - Senior Art Director at Core, Janine Robinson - eLearning and Communications Outreach Officer for DCU Access Art Director and Colin Flaherty, Public Service Innovation Projects Lead with OPS in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

A virtual winners showcase and awards event was held where the shortlisted entries where winners were selected, and prizes distributed. The experiential prizes for the winners then took place May, in collaboration with the Department of Taoiseach, Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

The first year of the initiative was supported with a high touch marketing and communications campaign across a range of channels including, partnerships with key influences for the student, teacher and parents

audience base , email campaigns to database of interested teachers and guidance counsellors and other relevant bodies, and the use of social channel career polls and quizzes.

Marking the success of year one, The Pitch was nominated for the Best in Practice Sales and Marketing award at the Employment and Recruitment Federation Awards and won gold at the Digital Media Awards 2022 for Best Native Campaign for The Pitch.

In September 2022, the second year of the Public Jobs Schools Resource Initiative launched to the market. Following a review of year one, feedback from guidance counsellors and students was implemented to deliver a suite of standalone lesson plans on publicjobs.ie, as well as brand new career profiles, videos, and career pathways to explore.

The number of lesson plans increased from eight in year one to 16 for year two. The number of career path video interviews have also been tripled bringing in a diversity of employee experiences and relatable content to students across the country.

The second year of The Pitch was also launched in late 2022.

Brand Strategy

In 2022, the organisation delivered a comprehensive brand strategy to tackle market confusion and bring clarity to the proposition of a career in the public sector to candidates. The brand strategy has refined the brand architecture for the organisation utilising the core positioning pillars of:

- Thriving Workforce and Workplaces
- Thriving Services and Society
- Thriving Candidate and Client Experiences

The brand strategy was signed off in September 2022 with the Public Appointments Service Board and the Management Board. In December 2022 a creative services procurement opportunity launched to the relevant OGP Framework members. The procurement of creative services will allow this project to progress to the creative development phase to design and deliver a refreshed brand identity for the organisation which will bring the agreed brand strategy to life. The creative services evaluation is scheduled to take place in March 2023. The implementation of the brand strategy will be delivered throughout 2023.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our corporate strategy, Nua (2020-2023), clearly identifies our core purpose as ‘recruiting a diversity of people for the public service with the talent, character & commitment to deliver for Ireland’. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) work in 2022 continued to deliver this mission under the framework of our ED&I Strategy that identifies three strategic priorities for the period 2021 – 2023:

- Greater knowledge and understanding of the Irish public sector workforce and recruitment pipelines.
- Ensure recruitment and selection processes encourage and enable access to candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- Model best practice in ED&I at PAS and support our clients in building public sector workplaces that embrace inclusion and reflect society.

The cross-organisational ED&I Project Board, established in 2021 to drive the implementation of the ED&I strategy, ensure alignment with NUA23’s aims and objectives and to help embed and mainstream ED&I across the organisation, continue to guide, support and challenge this work. The board met quarterly, and several external partners and stakeholders presented to the board on relevant topics such as accessibility and universal design by colleagues from the National Disability Authority, Deloitte on the ED&I diagnostic review and the ESRI on the equality data review.

Better Data, Knowledge and Insight

Equality Monitoring Dashboard

A key priority in our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2021-2023 is to develop a data driven, evidence-based diversity profile of candidates throughout the recruitment process. Workforce equality data provides powerful insights into the composition of a workforce and enables organisations to identify and address inequality of access, discrimination and underrepresentation.

To help us achieve this priority we are developing the first iteration of an equality monitoring dashboard, in collaboration with our project partners the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). The aim of this equality data review was to support the regular reporting of our equality monitoring data and to provide relevant insights into our own systems and processes. We hope this work will help encourage and support the development of sectoral related equality data strategies across the civil and public sector partners and clients while helping to provide the evidence base further progressive inclusion initiatives.

As part of the project, the ESRI assessed the robustness of our equality data by conducting a 'health check'. ESRI then analysed application and assignment data relating to more than 4,000 competitions across the civil and public service (between 2019 and 2021), conducting a deep dive into data on ethnicity, gender, and disability in those competitions, for that period.

In addition to the key findings, the ESRI have provided advice and guidance on how to present and operationalise the equality monitoring data to better understand the composition of the civil and public sector workforce.

A conference You Count - Building an Inclusive and Diverse Public Sector is scheduled for March which will highlight and discuss this Equality Monitoring Dashboard project and the power of data to drive change and help to build a more diverse and inclusive public service workforce.

Improving Processes, Policies & Procedures

ED&I Diagnostic Review

In early 2022 PAS commissioned Deloitte to conduct a diagnostic review of our practices and policies as an employer and as an external recruiter for the civil and public service. The review included a comprehensive assessment of all external operational recruitment, assessment and assignment processes, as well as our internal policies from an ED&I perspective.

This review identified the specific factors and actions that can help create a more diverse organisation with more inclusive operational processes and made useful and practical recommendations to improve our policies and processes, both as an employer and as an external recruiter for the civil and public sector. The OPS ED&I Maternity Models was used to benchmark mark PAS across five key areas including, culture, leadership, data , learning and development and recruitment and selection as employers and recruiters.

Over 90 recommendations were made, many of which were in some way in progress already, that have provided us with a clear set of actions to progress our ED&I commitments in the short to medium term.

There is a growing evidence base that underrepresented groups can benefit from additional pathways that lead to permanent career paths, for example, internships, traineeships, apprenticeships, and work placements. 2022 was a productive year for developing more inclusive routes into the Civil Service. Two such examples, are contained in the section below:

Traveller and Roma Internship

The aim of the Traveller and Roma Internship is to provide members of the Traveller and Roma communities with paid work experience in the Civil Service. The internships are for twelve months, at either Clerical or Executive Officer level at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Houses of the Oireachtas, Department of Justice or PAS. The interns benefit from practical on-the-job experience, as well as the opportunity to develop professionally and personally through approved training courses. There are twelve positions available, and these were filled from the panel of successful applicants. The twelve-month placement will begin in early 2023.

Willing Able Mentoring (WAM)

Willing Able Mentoring (WAM) is a six-month paid programme for graduates with disabilities, involving a wide range of employers, including the civil and public service. The programme allows graduates the opportunity to gain work experience, develop their careers, learn new skills, and receive support during their paid placement.

In 2022, for the first time in its 18 years of operating, the programme provided participants in the civil service with a more inclusive route to a permanent role at the end of their placement. Of the twenty-three work placement participants, a total of twenty applied for a permanent role and nineteen candidates will commence in their permanent positions in February 2023. A new inclusive assessment process was developed that included two in-work performance assessments, a situational judgment test and a competency-based interview. It is hoped that the learning from this process will inform the development of other pilots that provide a route to a permanent role for other underrepresented groups.

Civil Service Eligibility Criteria Review

The current immigration eligibility criteria for civil service employment opportunities are a barrier for many in Ireland with a migrant background who wish to pursue a career in the civil and public sector. In early 2022 PAS met with the Minister, and a review of this criteria was initiated. Through PAS's membership of Open Doors, we partnered with Fragomen and drew on their expertise as immigration service provider in over 170 countries, to examine this issue and see how citizenship eligibility criteria might be broadened.

A cursory review of the current labour market and some of the recruitment challenges the civil service faces presently and the impact these challenges will have on public service delivery for a rapidly changing country, mean that different recruitment approaches and different pools of talent need to be attracted to the civil service to meet demand.

Our research looked at widening citizenship criteria to include those on a range of immigration permissions, giving the Irish civil service access the large pool of currently untapped talent and reducing or removing this structural barrier for those with a migrant background.

An interdepartmental stakeholders group including the departments of Justice; Enterprise, Trade & Employment; Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth and PAS has been established to examine this issue to assess the implementation of recommendations contained within the review.

Trusted partner, modelling best practice in ED&I

In our role as trusted partners we have been proactively supporting our clients, partners, networks and national committees including steering committees of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, the Migrant Integration Strategy committee, and the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy (2019-2021).

We have also provided advice to other government departments or public sector organisations on ED&I strategy and policy related development and implementation including the Central Statistics Office, Department of Foreign Affairs, Marine Institute, Department of Health, the Oireachtas Services, Health Service Executive, An Garda Siochana, and Department of Justice.

The ED&I team presented or were on a panel at over 40 events in 2022 discussing the work PAS are doing to deliver the ED&I commitments outlined in our strategies. This included speaking on a panel focused on ensuring all of Irelands communities were represented in our overseas missions at the Department of Foreign Affairs' Head of Mission Conference and on creating a more inclusive public service at Ibec's Diversity Forum. At Pride@Work and at National Disability Authority's (NDA) national annual we discussed inclusive recruitment and the importance of diverse workplaces to drive innovation; and at an Irish Policing Authority and the Fulbright Commission event and the Education Training Board Ireland's national conference, we presented on the importance of have public services that represent the communities they serve in Ireland. At the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) and at a conference on inclusive employment and the Ministry of the Interiors, the Netherlands we shared, with our European colleagues, the work that PAS are doing to create an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Developing our People, Organisation and Culture



Organisation Design and Development

Our corporate strategy, NUA 23, sets out a framework for developing our people, organisation, and culture to support the Public Appointments Service to realise our ambition of becoming a centre of excellence in recruitment and trusted by those we serve. In 2021, the People & Culture function partnered with business units across the organisation to build capability and deliver high performance in line with the strategic objectives set out in NUA 23 and our People & Culture business plan. Some highlights of this process are outlined below.

Resourcing

On the December 31st, 2021, the staff headcount in PAS was 283 (272 fte).

Learning and Development

In 2022, the PAS Learning and Development Partner collaborated with a number of other units in PAS to roll-out PAS specific training. This included, the IT team, who delivered sessions to support staff a range of areas, including cyber security. The DPO also delivered data protection training on various aspects of data protection.

There was a continued focus on management development in 2022. Given the ever changing, ambiguous environment we are operating in, a programme was developed for the leaders in PAS - Think Adapt Perform. This was delivered over five webinars during the year. The programme used the latest research in neuroscience, positive psychology, and sport psychology in order to provide participants with practical tangible tools and techniques to enhance adaptability and manage transitions more effectively. Twelve managers were also selected to participate in a Leadership Organisational Agility programme, which was run over five weeks, to further develop personal and people agility within mindset and skillset. Managers also completed the 'Managing a Blended Workforce' OneLearning programme which supports the development of management skills in the hybrid working environment.

Specialist training was provided throughout 2022 in areas such as procurement, finance, sustainability and ESG, marketing, quality management, health and safety, equality and diversity, digital transformation, Irish language, cyber security, data protection, business analysis, and data analytics.

Health and Wellbeing

In 2022, PAS launched the annual Employee Wellbeing Calendar. Each month, the themes were brought to life through a diverse range of events and activities. PAS also launched the Fitvision Wellness for Performance: Transition to Hybrid programme, which consisted of five modules delivered over the first half of 2022. The programme covered areas such as, Wellness for Performance, Building Resilience and Adopting a Growth Mindset, Creating Facilitative Environments, Effective Energy Management, and Leading Self, Others and the Future. In June, all staff completed an Ergonomic survey to assess their ergonomic wellbeing at their home working station.

Future of Work

The PAS Future of Work group met on a monthly basis throughout 2022 to manage the transition to a hybrid working model and Town Hall meetings were used to provide staff with the latest updates regarding the Return to Chapter House and the transition to hybrid working. TEAM TIME sessions were delivered to all staff in Chapter House to equip staff and managers with the skills for working effectively in a hybrid team.

PAS' Hybrid Working Policy was launched on 21st November. It provides a framework that supports both staff and the organisation to maximise the potential of hybrid working for all. The policy was designed in collaboration with representatives from across the organisation, the Future of Work Group and the Partnership Committee and has been agreed with the PAS Management Board, the PAS Board and the Civil Service unions.

Digital Transformation

The return to Chapter House and the roll-out of hybrid working is supported by digital technologies with the building refurbishment project, the new hybrid operating model and the future of work design all harnessing the power of digital innovations to improve ways of working and our service delivery.

A new VOIP phone system was delivered in 2022. This system underpins the hybrid working model, allowing staff to make and receive calls, regardless of whether they are in the office or working from home. As it fully integrates with Microsoft 365, the VOIP phone system provides PAS with a fully unified

communication platform, and ensures we continue to derive benefits from our investment in the Microsoft 365 platform. We have seen clear evidence in the last 12 months of growth in adoption rates of some of the technologies we have introduced:

- 92% of the people in PAS use more than one mode to communicate digitally
- 92% of staff regularly use Microsoft Teams instant messaging
- 95% of staff regularly use emails to communicate
- 99% of all Teams meetings used recommended strategies while planning the session
- 78% of instant meetings are less than 30 minutes long
- 41% of staff use Microsoft 365 products on more than one platform (phone, desktop pc, laptop)
- 510.2K activities on Microsoft Teams over last 6 months (up 21% on previous 6 months)

The Zoom videoconferencing platform continues to be successfully utilised for conducting remote interviews as part of the recruitment process. During 2022, we conducted 6222 meetings with over 53797 participants. The average customer satisfaction rate across the year was in excess of 95%.

A new PAS Digital Strategy was drafted by the digital management team in late 2022. It was approved by the Management Board in February 2023.

Cyber Security

There was a renewed focus on cyber security in 2022, with the appointment of a dedicated Cyber Security Officer for PAS in May, and the implementation of a new cyber security platform that provides us with enhanced visibility of potential threats on the PAS network. This new technology uses AI to identify potentially anomalous network traffic and autonomously block suspicious activity.

In line with our continuous efforts to maximise the security of our public facing digital landscape, an in-depth security reviews was also undertaken to further strengthen the PAS cyber security and resilience measures.

There were no significant cyber security breaches or incidents in PAS during 2022.

Infrastructure & Network Operations

Three significant infrastructure projects were completed successfully in 2022 - migration of our STAR/publicjobs.ie data to a new Storage Area network in Johns Road, firewall upgrades in Johns Road and the commissioning of a new Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) in our server room in Chapterhouse, giving us improved uptime in the event of a power failure affecting the server room.

Uptime for publicjobs.ie was 99.90% & uptime for the Candidate portal was 99.78% for 2022. This includes all scheduled STAR releases, and a ten-hour scheduled outage for the SAN migration.

Development of our software systems

The PAS core recruitment system underwent a range of software development cycles in 2022 with a focus on security, accessibility, and continuous improvement of the candidate experience. These enhancements included further refinements of the candidate application form and enhancements to the job search functionality to allow candidates to find roles more quickly in some dedicated disciplines.

The team also continued to build on momentum from previous years developing webpages and microsites to support a range of recruitment competitions and other PAS projects and initiatives including a new dedicated section of publicjobs.ie aimed at providing dynamic and relevant information alongside a dedicated recruitment portal for hospital consultant roles.

An entirely new website was also launched in early 2022 for stateboards.ie that provides a more accessible and compatible interface and is underpinned by a content management system allowing for greater flexibility in the creating of content for our users.

PAS also piloted the use of the Microsoft power platform in 2022 to investigate the where greater efficiencies could be achieved through automation on some internal PAS processes with the aim of continuing to analyse this low-code development approach and how best to implement it throughout 2023.

Project NOVA

PAS are committed to using the best methodologies and technologies to recruit. Project NOVA is the name of the project to find, buy, and implement a new recruitment system.

The Project Team worked closely with the Office of Government Procurement and the Chief State Solicitor's Office to develop the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and a contract as part of a two-stage procurement process to identify and procure a replacement recruitment system for STAR. The PQQ and contract, including the Service-Level-Agreement (SLA) was published to the market in Quarter 2. PAS

successfully concluded the PQQ stage and invited the successful suppliers to stage 2 of the procurement process.

Work began on the development of the ITT which will be published as part of stage 2 of the procurement process.

Transforming our Workspaces

The Chapter Upgrade Project continued throughout 2022 and although both Covid-19 and global supply resulted in some delays at times during the year, substantial completion was reached on the remaining two floors in 2022 and aside from minor snagging to be completed in January 2023, construction has been completed. It is envisioned that staff will return to the Second Floor in Chapter House in February 2023, this will mark the first time since the pandemic began that both staff floors are available.

To further enhance the PAS ambition of moving to a hybrid recruitment model, Audio-Visual technologies were procured in 2022 in line with planned timelines and installations began in late 2022. Global supply chain issues resulted in significant delays to the commencement of the project and although substitute technologies were investigated, no other solutions would offer the full functionality as set out by PAS during the requirements gathering phase of the project. It is envisioned that the final remaining installation and then commissioning of both interview suites and staff meeting rooms will be completed in early 2023.

Trusted Partner

Building our Recruitment and Advisory Service

Professional Certificate in Resourcing and Recruitment



PAS, in conjunction with the IPA, launched year two of the Professional Certificate in Resourcing and Recruitment in 2022. This programme is a Level 8 special purpose award accredited by NUI, and we had a high level of interest from external organisations with applications from the CSO, AGS, Revenue, South Dublin County Council, and the HSE. Internal applicants from PAS are also participating in this programme. The term started on 4th November with a blended approach to give participants the opportunity to network with other civil service colleagues.

Public Service Recruiters Network

In 2022, we were delighted to announce the launch of the Public Service Recruiters Network, in collaboration with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA). The purpose of the Public Service Recruiters Network is to facilitate greater collaboration in recruitment and to maintain the high standards that are in place across the public service. There is a strong focus on the sharing of best practice across the public service, identifying common challenges/opportunities and working together to attract the best people to our organisations.

The Network was launched in April 2022, and there has been an enthusiastic response to its establishment with over 47 organisations signed up to-date. The network meets on a quarterly basis and is hosted by PAS, with key contributions from the CPSA.

The Network offers a platform for the sharing of expertise and best practice across the public service in relation to recruitment and selection. It includes a focus on key thematic areas stemming from the legislative and policy framework, for example, the Code of Practice, attracting and retaining a diverse

workforce, preparing for the workplace of the future, talent attraction, market trends in recruitment etc.

The sessions delivered in 2022 took place online and focused on the following areas:

- Best Practice in Reviews
- Best Practice in Assessment
- Best Practice in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Best Practice in Talent Attraction

To gain a greater understanding of each subject area, the sessions include a combination of focused inputs (from the Public Appointments Service, Network members and external experts), as well as practical examples/case studies and Q&A. There is also an opportunity for networking, sharing experiences and building relationships.

Corporate Governance

The Role of the Board of the Public Appointments Service and the Role of the CEO

The Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 established the Public Appointments Service. It provides for a Chief Executive and the appointment of a Board. The structures put in place in the legislation provide for the Chief Executive to be the Accounting Officer of the Public Appointments Service and the designated Head of the Scheduled Office in accordance with the Public Service Management Act 1997. The Public Appointments Service is therefore a Civil Service body, and this impacts on the role and nature of the Board, which is advisory in nature, due to the robust legal responsibilities placed on the Chief Executive.

Accounting Officer Role

The Public Appointments Service is one of a small number of State Bodies that has a Statutory Accounting Officer (the Chief Executive) within the meaning of Section 22 of the Exchequer and Audit Departments Act, 1866, with responsibility for Voted funds. Therefore, the preparation of the Appropriation Accounts and associated public financial procedures are the responsibility of the Accounting Officer.

The Accounting Officer is personally answerable to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the legislature for the regularity and propriety of transactions in the accounts for which s/he is responsible, as well as for economy, efficiency and effectiveness and the stewardship of assets.

Role of Chief Executive as the Head of a Scheduled Office

The Chief Executive is designated the Head of the Scheduled Office under the Public Service Management Act 1997. As such the Chief Executive, rather than the Board, has the responsibilities set out in that legislation.

Functions of the Board

Reflecting the accountability relationship of the CEO to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform as set out above, the statutory functions of the Board are more advisory in nature than the traditional functions of State Boards and, essentially, relate to giving advice or guidance to the Chief Executive. The specific functions are set out in section 36 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointment) Act, 2004.

The current Board of the Public Appointments Service

Chairman

Mr Tom Moran, former Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Board Members

Ms Shirley Comerford, Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service (*to July*)

Ms Margaret McCabe, Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service (*from July*)

Mr Mary Hurley, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Housing, Planning and Local Government (*to March 2022*)

Mr Fiona Quinn, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Housing, Planning and Local Government (*from June 2022*)

Dr Eddie Molloy, HR Consultant

Ms Anne-Marie Taylor, Management Consultant

Ms Mary Connaughton, Executive Director, CIPD

Ms Yvonne Cooke, Acting Executive Director of Human Resources and People Development, AGS (*from June 2022*)

Ms Anne O'Connor, Chief Operations Officer, HSE (*to June 2022*)

Mr Colin Menton, Assistant Secretary, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (*from October 2022*)

Ms Anne Marie Hoey, National Director HR, HSE (*from November 2022*)

Board Meetings

Six board meetings were held in 2022 (on 23rd February, 22nd April, 22nd June, 14th September, 8th November and 1st December).

Board Member	Number of meetings Board Member was eligible to attend	Number of meetings Board Member attended
Mr. Tom Moran (Chairperson)	6	6
Ms. Shirley Comerford (CEO)	3	3
Ms. Margaret McCabe (CEO)	3	3
Ms. Anne-Marie Taylor	6	6
Dr. Eddie Molloy	6	5
Mr. Colin Menton	1	1

Ms. Mary Connaughton	6	6
Ms. Yvonne Cooke	3	3
Ms. Anne O'Connor	3	0
Ms. Anne Marie Hoey	1	1
Ms. Mary Hurley	1	0
Ms. Fiona Quinn	3	3

Management Board

The purpose of the Management Board is to ensure delivery of the organisation's strategy and to ensure that effective management structures, including corporate governance structures, are in place and are working effectively. The Management Board is responsible for assuring the Board of the Public Appointments Service on the effective use of all resources and, within the allocated resources, ensuring that the organisation has the capability to deliver on its legislative remit.

The management team leads and manages the implementation of the systems, processes and behaviours necessary to promote good corporate governance across the organisation and which ensure that all staff work together as a high performing team. The Corporate Governance Framework for the Public Appointments Service is available on publicjobs.ie. Each individual member of the management team has a responsibility to show leadership, to contribute to the management of the organization as a whole and to actively support colleagues in meeting their objectives. Leadership and management set the tone for effective governance from the top while modelling good governance behaviours and demonstrating a commitment to achieving objectives through accountable processes.

Members of the Management Board	
Name and Role	Responsibilities
Margaret McCabe, Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service (<i>replaced Shirley Comerford in 2022</i>)	Responsibility for implementation of Board policy, strategy, management, and operation of the Public Appointments Service resides with the Corporate Executive, affected through the Chief Executive.
Catherine Dobbins, Head of Corporate Affairs	Responsible for corporate services, including HR, Finance, and Compliance and Quality Assurance (which incorporates Reviews under the CPSA Codes and all corporate governance functions).
Niall Leavy, Head of Market Engagement	Responsible for supporting the Management Board on a number of key strategic research and development projects, that assist the organisation to identify, and prepare for adopting, market-leading approaches to recruitment and assessment, and help ensure

<p>Aoife Lyons, Head of Assessment Services</p>	<p>continuous delivery of excellent service to clients across the public sector.</p> <p>Putting effective, efficient, and best practice assessment measures in place to select the best possible candidates for our clients.</p>
<p>Chief Operations Officer (<i>Vacant – held by Margaret McCabe to July 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Providing high-level support to the CEO, with responsibility for the overall operation of the Public Appointments Service in the delivery of effective and efficient services and achievement of our strategic objectives.</p>
<p>Sinead Coleman, Head of Talent Acquisition for the Public Service (<i>replaced John Keegan in 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Responsible for driving best practices in recruitment and selection to identify high quality candidates for diverse roles across the Public Service. Ensuring consistently high standards of service delivery to enable a responsive recruitment model which takes into account the evolving requirements of clients and candidates in a competitive environment.</p>
<p>Sandra Cairns, Head of Talent Acquisition for the Civil Service</p>	<p>Responsible for driving best practices in recruitment and selection to identify high quality candidates for diverse roles across the Civil Service. Ensuring consistently high standards of service delivery to enable a responsive recruitment model which takes into account the evolving requirements of clients and candidates in a competitive environment.</p>
<p>Michelle Noone, Head of Senior and Executive Recruitment</p>	<p>Using executive search methodologies to identify high quality candidates for Senior Executive & Board level appointments. Responsible for the provision of an open, efficient, and effective gateway and process to identify top quality people for consideration by Ministers for appointment to State Boards.</p>
<p>Rosemarie O’Mahony, Head of Digital Transformation, Strategy and Innovation</p>	<p>Overseeing strategy execution so that the Public Appointments Service delivers on our mission and vision and is positioned to respond to challenges and effectively harness opportunities to enhance our services. Overseeing the delivery of the organisation’s Digital Transformation Programme to future-proof our IT solutions and services, improve organisational performance, and position the Public Appointments Service as a leader in digital recruitment.</p>
<p>Head of People and Culture (<i>Vacant – held by Roisin Walsh to December 2022</i>)</p>	<p>Lead the development, implementation, and evaluation of people strategies that support the Public Appointments Service to achieve our vision, mission, and strategic goals.</p>

Organisation Structure

The Recruitment and Selection Services Unit (RSSU) carries out the core business functions. RSSU consists of recruitment teams and clearance and assignment teams, each headed up by a Recruitment Manager. Each team has a core responsibility, but the structure is flexible enough to focus resources where demand is greatest at any given time. A specialist team has responsibility for the State Boards process.

RSSU is assisted by the Office's key support units: Assessment Services, Executive Search, Marketing and Communications, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Information Technology, Finance, Client and Candidate Relations, Business Support and Facilities Management, Legal and Selection Board Member Unit, People and Culture, Compliance and Quality Assurance, Data Analytics, and Project Services.

The Audit Committee

The membership of the Audit Committee during 2022 was as follows

Ms Clare McGrath (Chairperson) (2nd Term commenced on 25th September 2021 to September 2022)

Mr Kevin Smyth (Chairperson) (1st Term commenced on 15th September 2022)

Mr Tom Young (2nd term commenced on 15th September 2019 to December 2022)

Ms Geraldine Kelly (2nd term commenced on 22nd September 2019 to December 2022)

Ms Anne Marie Taylor, PAS Board Member (2nd Term commenced on 29th May 2022)

Mr Noel O'Connell (1st term commenced on 15th September 2022)

Ms Louise Jevens (1st Term commenced on 1st October 2022)

The Audit Committee carries out functions in relation to the following areas:

- Internal Control
- Governance and Risk Management
- Internal Audit
- External Audit
- Financial Management
- Reporting Functions

The Committee met on four occasions during 2021, on 31st March, 23rd June, 29th September and 1st December.

The Committee continued to focus on developing its role in providing an enhanced level of support to the Accounting Officer in all aspects of the internal audit function. Five Audits, from the Strategic Audit Plan, were scheduled to be carried out in 2022.

The following five audit reports were carried out by the internal audit partners during 2022 and were presented to the Audit Committee:

- Review of Internal Controls
- Report on Remote Operations
- Review of Management of Outsourced Providers of Candidate Services
- Review of Quality Controls in Recruitment and Clearance
- Review of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

The Committee received a report on Internal Controls at their meeting in March. The report outlined the controls in place and incorporated a section which responded to guidance in the C&AG report regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the control environment. The report was prepared for the PAS Management Board and was brought to the attention of the Audit Committee and the PAS Board in order to provide assurance in relation to the internal controls in place. All Principal Officers were required to sign off on internal controls in their area and to identify areas for enhancement. The results of these questionnaires and all other aspects of internal controls were incorporated into the report. The report was also provided to C&AG and was used by the Accounting Officer for assurance to allow her to sign off on Statement of Internal Controls.

Risk Management

A Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Policy has been developed which is appropriate to the office. An internal Risk Management Group oversees the implementation and monitoring of this process. The Group report to the Internal Audit Committee at each meeting and updates on current risks facing the organisation are given to the Audit Committee and the Board at each meeting. A key risk is discussed in detail at each meeting of the Audit Committee and the Board. The Corporate Risk Register was reviewed throughout 2022. It is discussed by the Management Board on a regular basis. The major risks facing the organisation at present are in the areas of meeting organisational objectives/client

demands; talent attraction; cyber security, and that the Schrems II Judgement will have a negative impact on a range of business activities. Considerable time and resources have been invested into mitigating these key risks.

Meeting organisational objectives and client expectations

PAS has a number of mitigations in place in this area, including the allocation of all available resources in a structured manner through the Resourcing Sub-Group of the Management Board, with additional resources being allocated to senior executive, professional & technical, and general service recruitment in order to improve the delivery timescales in these areas. The importance of effective workforce planning is being communicated to clients, and there is ongoing communication and engagement with clients through the CRM structures and client surveys. PAS now has greater visibility around delivery (through the Super 8) and uses this reporting framework and data to allocate resources and support delivery. Processes are being redesigned on an ongoing basis to deliver in the face of changes to both demand and supply, with a continuing focus on business process improvements, automation and standardisation. The Management Board Members with responsibility for Recruitment and Selection continue to monitor implementation of a Service Delivery Action Plan, and there is significant engagement at Board and Management Board level around service delivery.

Attracting the Talent and Skills Required by Clients

PAS has a number of mitigations in place to address this risk, including the move to focused digital marketing and the increased use of social media channels. We have also invested in the Public Jobs Schools Resource Initiative in order to raise awareness of public service careers among school-leavers. There has been significant outreach by ED&I to target under-represented groups and raise awareness of careers in the public service and publicjobs.ie. We have shortened campaign timescales for a number of campaigns and will review the impact of this on attraction. A new approach to graduate recruitment has also been adopted for some campaigns, and new assessment methods developed to select the skills required. The importance of a Hybrid Work offering has been flagged to clients.

Schrems II Judgement

The risk associated with data transfers to the UK was monitored in line with UK political developments, and this risk was not increased during 2022.

Legal developments in both the United States and on foot of findings by European data protection supervisory bodies and the European Court of Justice regarding the right to privacy were identified as potentially having a significant impact on our ability to continue to send personal information to suppliers

based or working from the United States. In particular, significant judgements were made in several European countries banning the use of google analytics, due to the manner in which data is transferred and processed by that company. Similarly, due to transparency issues regarding telemetry data which may be created and processed by Microsoft Office 365 has led to that software being banned for use in German schools, a judgment which, if extended, may have a serious impact on PAS's ability to carry out business as usual.

There are several relevant legal cases still ongoing, which the DPO is monitoring. A potential new data sharing agreement between the European Union and the United States was tabled at a European level during 2022, and is currently under discussion with the US, however this data sharing agreement was challenged by privacy activists who have identified key aspects of how personal data can be processed in the US. By the end of 2022, it was unclear as to whether or not the new data sharing agreement would provide a temporary or permanent solution to the issue of data transfers to the US.

At the moment, PAS has taken all steps possible to mitigate potential risk, however it is understood that for certain suppliers (such as Microsoft) PAS has very little ability to compel changes to how personal data is handled by those organisations, and a business decision may have to be made to accept the risk in order to allow PAS to carry out its core functions.

Cyber Security

Cyber Security training has been rolled out to all staff and completion rates are being monitored by the Management Board. A number of short Cyber Security awareness sessions were also held for staff.

The Civil Service Cyber Security Baseline Standards were introduced in early 2022. A key objective for PAS in 2023 will be to measure our compliance with these standards. The PAS Cyber Security Officer has begun the process of carrying out a self-assessment against the CSBS Cyber Resilience Self-Assessment Framework. It is anticipated this assessment will conclude in late March 2023.

Protected Disclosure Act 2014 - 2022

Section 22 of the Protected Disclosure Act 2014 requires the publication of a report each year relating to the number of protected disclosures made in the preceding year and also for the publication of information with regard to any actions taken in response to protected disclosures made. No protected disclosures were received by PAS in 2022.

PAS has also signed up to the Transparency International Ireland (TII) Integrity and Work Programme and it was rolled out to staff. The programme includes access for staff to a "speak up" helpline and advice

centre. It also includes TII working with PAS to implement an action plan to promote transparency in the workplace and support with the review of our Protected Disclosures Policy and procedures. Our new Policy was agreed in December 2022 and it is available on our website. Training and awareness raising is also being provided as part of the membership.

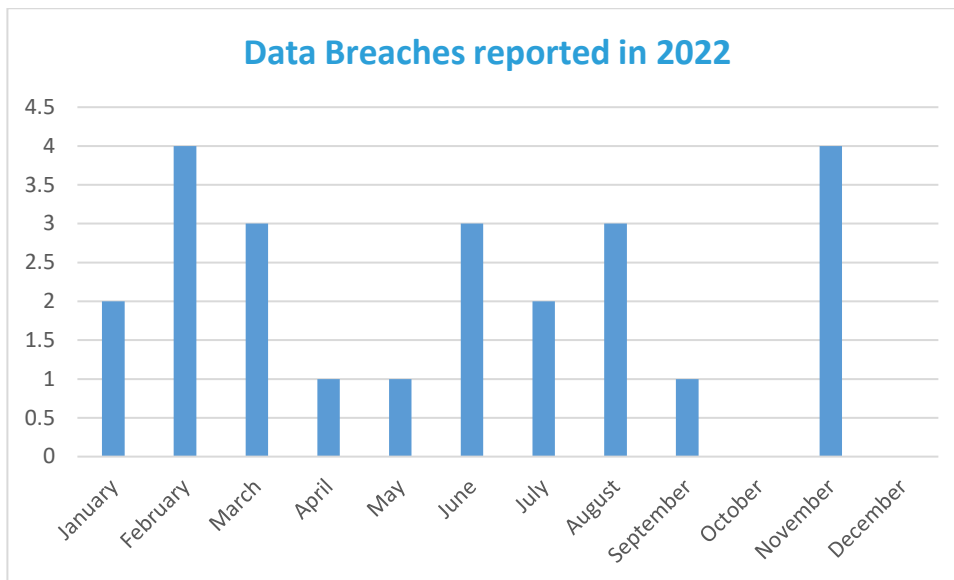
Data Protection

Data is essential to all administrative business. In collecting personal data from our candidates, selection board members, suppliers and staff members, the organisation has a responsibility to use it both effectively and ethically. In striking the necessary balance between an individual's right to privacy and legitimate business requirements, it is critical that all staff work to the highest attainable standards. The Code of Practice for the Protection of Personal Data was updated in 2022 to reflect the evolving use of technologies such as remote video interviews, one-way video interviews and remote proctored tests.

The Data Protection Commission commenced an audit of PAS's Record of Processing Activity in February 2022. The feedback from the Commission was extremely positive, noting the significant level of detail in PAS's account of how complex processing activities are carried out by this organisation. Some minor administrative notes were raised which were addressed by the data protection team. The ROPA will be reviewed again in Q2 2023, and on an annual basis going forward to ensure it remains reflective of how business is conducted.

The Digital Records and Document Management Solutions project continued during 2022. This project began in 2021 in order to address the risk that records are stored on the PAS file storage system outside of their retention period, and in order to ensure PAS is in a position to move to a new file storage system as part of the Office 365 project. By the end of 2022, seven active and a small number of legacy directories had yet to complete the project. It is anticipated that this aspect of the project will be completed by Q2 2023. Based on the work completed in 2022, PAS is now in a good position to begin to scope out a replacement file management system. PAS considers the risk associated with the data potentially stored in the outstanding directories to be minimal.

In relation to the files returned to PAS during the pandemic, due to other pressing business needs PAS was unable to tidy up those papers in 2022. However, a significant piece of work was carried out by our Building Support Unit to identify all the papers in each box currently stored in a temporary storage location, allowing for the records inside these boxes to be searchable for business purposes. This has reduced the risk associated with having these boxes outside of our records management system considerably. It is intended to include these documents in the rollout of a planned tidy-up of all papers in our file storage room, a project which commenced in February 2023.



Of the 24 breaches PAS was responsible for in 2022, 19 were due to unauthorised disclosure of information, with 12 of those relating to the use of email; either PAS staff attaching incorrect documents, sending information to the wrong email address, or using *copy* instead of *blind copy* when issuing correspondence to multiple parties. Three breaches related to the use of excel spreadsheets in order to issue information to candidates through our recruitment application - one due to an error in the spreadsheet, and two due to uploading the incorrect spreadsheet. One was due to a test provider copying a client department in an email containing candidate results (against instruction). One breach related to a person being added to a Sharefile folder in error, and one was due to Board Member details being sent to candidates using our recruitment system in error. All of these breaches were listed as Low Risk and the Data Protection Commission has not initiated any follow up investigations relating to these issues.

One potentially serious unauthorised disclosure of information occurred due to a Board Member printing a copy of candidate application forms without consent and subsequently losing them in a public space. All data subjects were informed of this breach and as of yet, no complaint has been raised with the Data Protection Commission in relation to this matter. Board Members have been reminded at every training session of the importance of not printing documents at home. The confidentiality statement and other Board Member Documentation have been updated to underline the importance of following PAS's instruction regarding the protection of personal data to the letter.

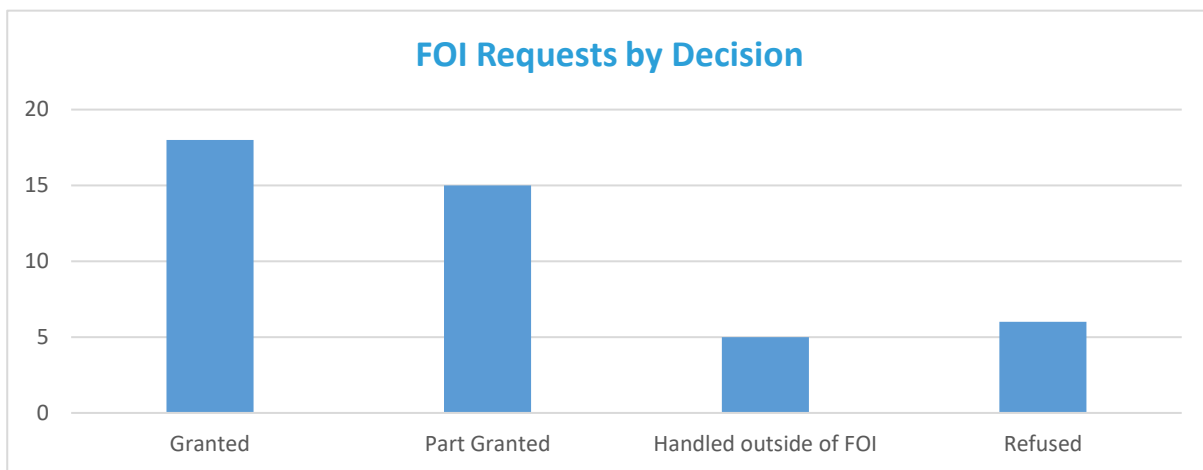
Of the remaining five breaches, one related to an internal staff meeting being recorded on Zoom without prior informed consent being sought. One related to a glitch on the recruitment system where when multiple application forms were opened, the information on one would save over another. The PAS IT development team have taken action to ensure this cannot occur again in the future. Two breaches relate to PAS Representatives accidentally deleting Interview notes before uploading them to Sharefile, resulting

in a loss of data. The final breach related to a PAS Representative incorrectly understanding their instructions and neglecting to record a transcript of a presentation exercise.

The Data Protection 101 training session on data breaches was offered to staff in Q2 and again in Q3 of 2022, to remind staff of the importance of avoiding similar issues going forward. The DPO attends all Board Member and PAS Representative training sessions in order to re-affirm the importance of following procedure and to reinforce the importance of confidentiality as part of our processes.

Freedom of Information

The Public Appointments Service had three designated FOI Decision Makers and one Internal Reviewer (with an alternative for each role should the Decision Maker/Internal Reviewer be absent or involved in the subject matter in any way) in 2022. A breakdown of FOI requests for 2022 is set out below.



Compliance with the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) Code of Practice

The Compliance Unit are responsible for carrying out reviews under Section 7 and 8 of the CPSA Codes and apply similar standards for reviews of processes where the Codes do not apply. The review entails reviewing all relevant information, ensuring that critical information is made available, and understanding the process involved. Consultations are held with Interview Board Members and PAS representatives where the review involves a shortlisting or interview process.

The Reviewer may make recommendations on foot of their review findings. The recommendations are made to a Quality Administrator whose function is to embed a quality management structure and process in PAS, and recommendations are now made through this structure.

A total of 325 requests for review/appeals were processed during 2022, as follows:

Section 7	Section 8	Outside of Codes
313	11	1

Of the 325 processed, a total of 33 were successful for candidates and the original decision of PAS was overturned.

The Compliance and Quality Assurance Team made 6 recommendations on foot of formal reviews carried out in 2022. The nature of recommendations made during 2022 covers a number of areas throughout the process and apply to both PAS staff and Board Members. They include:

- that procedures be reviewed to include guidance in relation to steps to be taken prior to contacting a present employer and that some assurance measure is included in the process to ensure that a candidate meets all other requirements prior to contacting the present employer.
- That unit's quality assures their documentation to ensure that Information on the different stages of the appointment process is made available to candidates in advance in a universally designed format, in accordance with the Code of Practice. It was noted that the web-based applications no longer provide the information regarding shortlisting which previously was outlined at the start of the previous version and that consideration might be given to including this information in the web-based forms.
- that Board Members are advised not to comment on a candidate's ability during any aspect of the presentation or interview process while the candidate is present at the assessment.
- that a procedure is set up to categorise / flag emails received in the ED&I mailbox as read / unread to follow up etc. to ensure emails are not missed as the CPSA Code of Practice states - "The Commission requires a commitment to open, timely and effective communication with candidates. All enquiries are to be responded to adequately and in an efficient and timely manner"
- that going forward that Recruitment Units review the information provided in relation to the eligibility requirements in order to identify if these requirements could be further clarified. This was raised in relation to the AO Business/Finance competition.

No recommendations were made by the CPSA in relation to investigations carried out by that body during 2022.

As part of the Recruiters Network and in keeping with our position as a Trusted Advisor, PAS began offering a Review Clinic to other Civil and Public Service bodies during 2022 in order to share best practice for conducting investigations and responding to complex reviews and complaints. Following on from this, PAS began delivering formal training in conducting a Section 7 and Section 8 review process to other

departments in December 2022. The feedback from this has been extremely positive, with further sessions to be held in 2023.

Quality Improvement Programme

In 2022, PAS continued the process of embedding a quality management system in PAS, with a dedicated Quality Administrator team in place. Learning from reviews conducted under the CPSA Codes of Practice also feeds into the quality process in addition to comprehensive quality reviews into all issues occurring in the organisation (and significant “near-misses”).

Significant progress was made towards achieving PAS’s goal of standardising all recruitment documentation. Because of this, the Quality Administration Team were able to begin focussing on updating the PAS Recruitment Guide to reflect the recruitment processes undertaken across the various business areas of PAS. This project commenced in Q4 2022 and is intended to be completed by Q2 2023.

Compliance with the Official Languages Acts 2003 & 2021

The current Irish Language Scheme covers the period 2017 to 2020 and will be observed until a Language Standard is put in place under the provisions of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. The current Scheme was based on the guidelines of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and its content informed by the experience of delivering on commitments made in the previous Scheme; the submissions made by the public; ongoing feedback from customers; a review of the level of demand for services in the Irish language and suggestions put forward by staff. The Public Appointments Service continues to deliver on its commitments and to build on the progress achieved over the period of the last scheme. The Management Board keeps the effective operation of the Scheme under review. Responsibility for the day-to-day monitoring of the Scheme rests with senior management of the organisation. As the role of the Public Appointments Service evolves over time, every effort is made to take advantage of any new opportunities to enhance the service provided through Irish to members of the public.

To ensure compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act, 2021, and to prepare for the introduction of further provisions under this Act, PAS took the following steps in 2022:

- Nominated a representative to the Irish Language Services Committee (Sinéad Coleman), which will publish a National Plan for the provision of Irish Language Services in the civil and public service by 2024;
- Established an internal, cross-organisational Irish Language Group, which meets periodically to discuss compliance with the Act and to plan for the implementation of future provisions and associated measures;

- Continued to develop its working relationship with Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga/the Office of the Language Commissioner and Roinn na Gaeltachta;
- Approved a new staff member to expand Foireann na Gaeilge/the Irish-language team.

PAS will continue to take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance with language legislation, policy and best-practice.

Compliance with Circular 25/2016

This Circular outlines the Protocol for the Provision of Information to Members of the Oireachtas by State Bodies under the aegis of Government Departments/Offices.

The Public Appointments is required to provide and maintain a dedicated email address for Oireachtas members, and notify/publicise this to Oireachtas members. This email address is oireachtasqueries@publicjobs.ie.

We intend to put in place formal feedback processes to obtain feedback from Oireachtas members by way of survey in 2024.

We aim to acknowledge queries in the day they are received but always within three working days. The acknowledgement includes contact details for the staff member dealing with the query. While the response time for a substantive reply is 15 working days, we aim to reply within 10 working days.

A person at senior management level has been designated with responsibility for ensuring the timely provision of information to members of the Oireachtas.

In the spirit of Open Government Partnership, we will publish the response to queries from members of the Oireachtas on our website where this is appropriate.

Sustainability

In 2022, the Public Appointments Service undertook a range of initiatives to improve the energy performance, including:

- Continued to raise staff awareness in relation to energy savings .
- Installed upgrades to the building management systems which allow closer monitoring of heating/cooling of Chapter House both in the office and remotely.
- Completed the Upgrading of Air Conditioning system to more energy efficient units.
- Upgrading of lighting to LED fittings with presence sensors.
- Developed a Climate Action Roadmap which was approved by Management Board.
- Working closely with Optimising Energy at Work consultant to further enhance energy saving measures in Chapter House
- Made changes to external lighting and temperatures within Chapter House in line with Government Policy on Public Buildings
- Set up an Environment and Social Governance team which will help create the Public Appointments Service Sustainability Policy.
- Implemented new Manage Print Services contract which should help reduce paper consumption with the Public Appointments Service

Green Public Procurement

Green Public Procurement (GPP) is a process where public authorities seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact. Circular 20/19 Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement, highlights the Government's priority in promoting Green Public Procurement. The Circular instructs organisations to consider the inclusion of green criteria in their procurement processes.

PAS uses Office of Government Procurement Frameworks where possible. Where there is no suitable framework, PAS conducts its own procurement, and all budget holders are required to comply with the PAS Procurement Procedures. These Procedures highlight the importance of Green Public Procurement.

Overview of Energy Usage in 2021

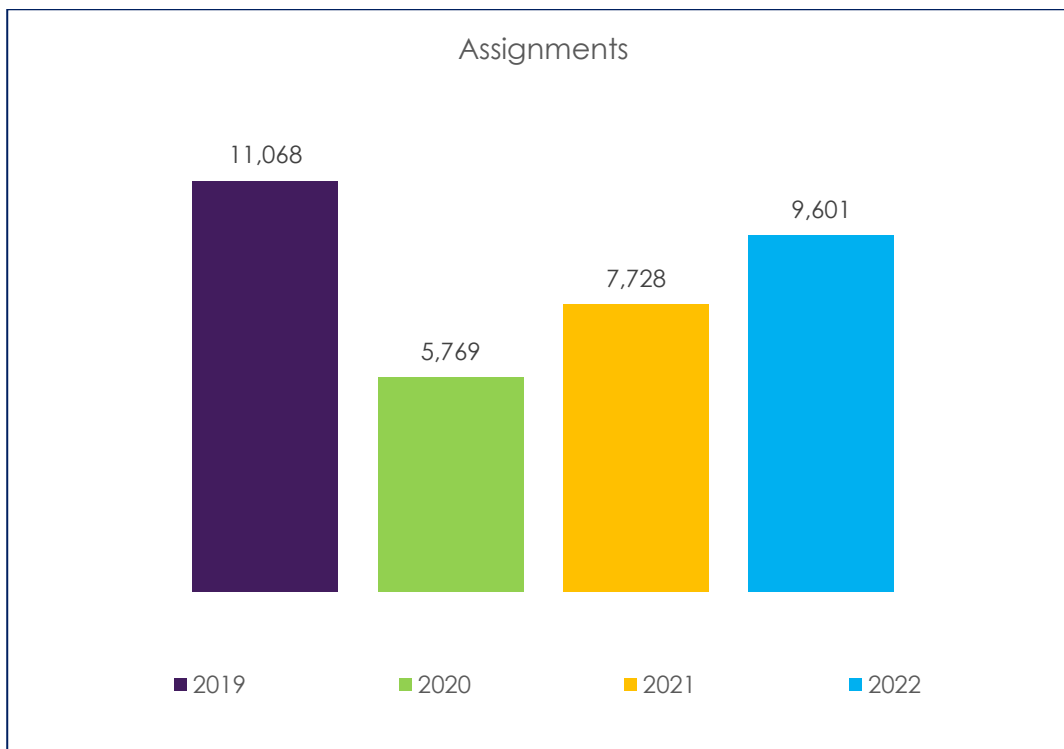
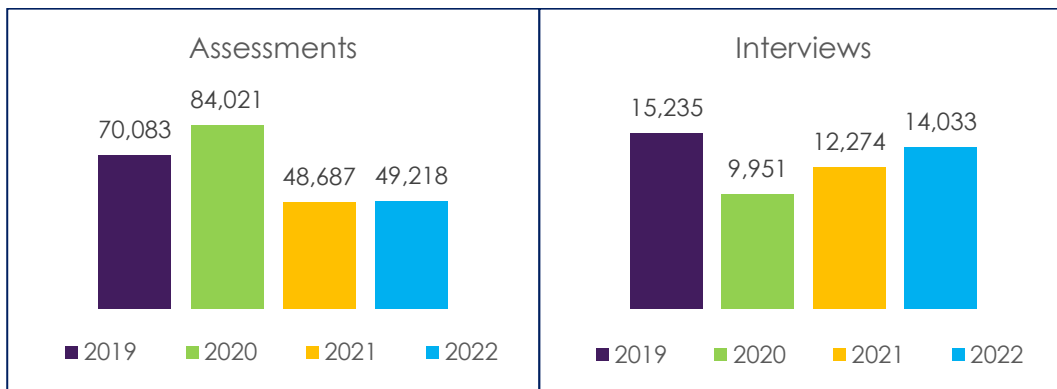
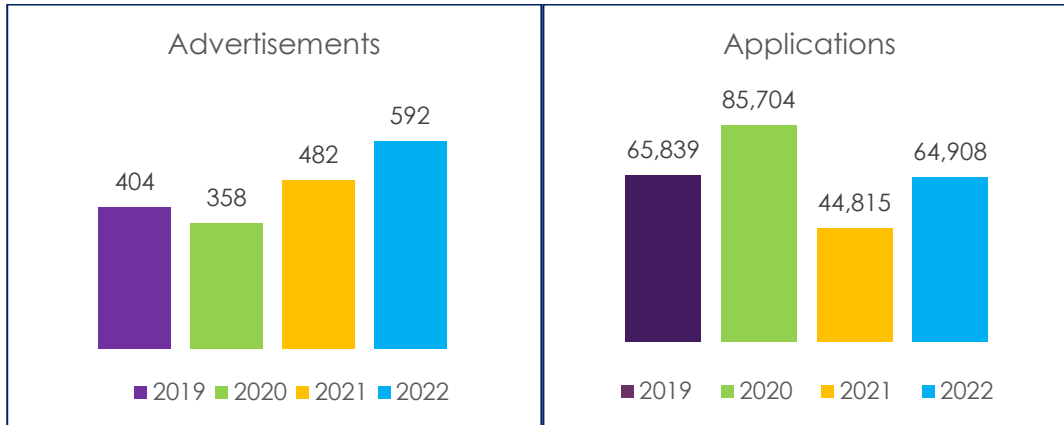
The main energy usage relates to heating/lighting and providing water in the office in Chapter House. The energy usage breakdown for Chapter House in 2022 was as follows;

Electricity Usage: 506 MWh

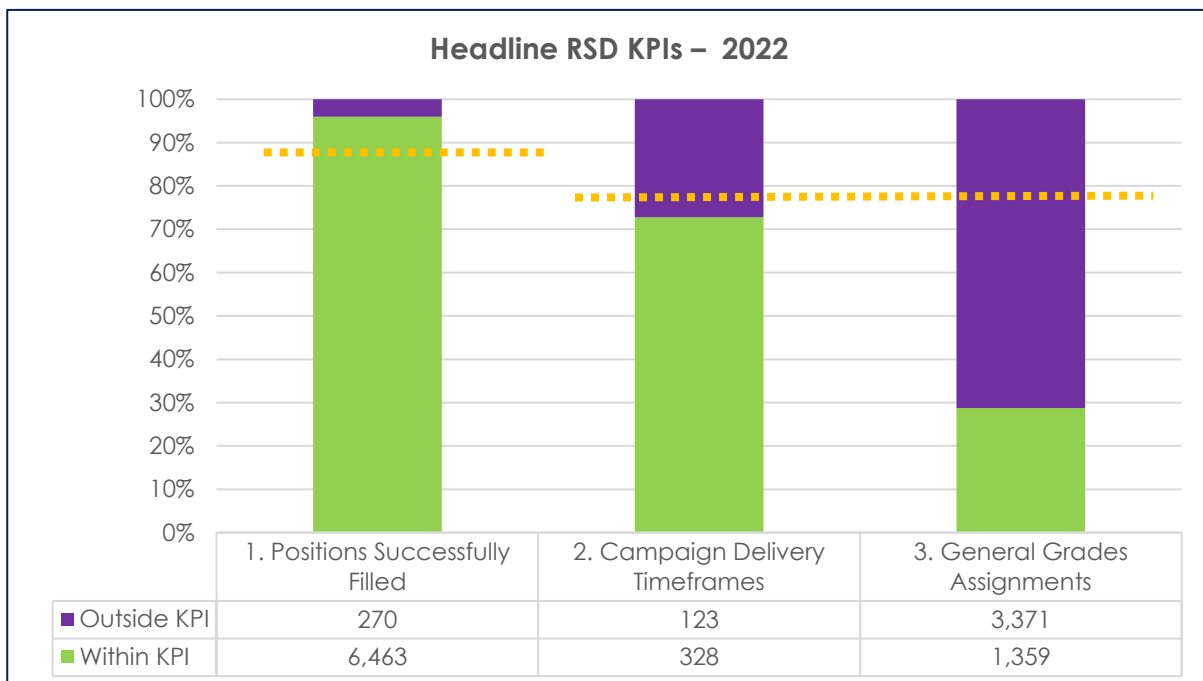
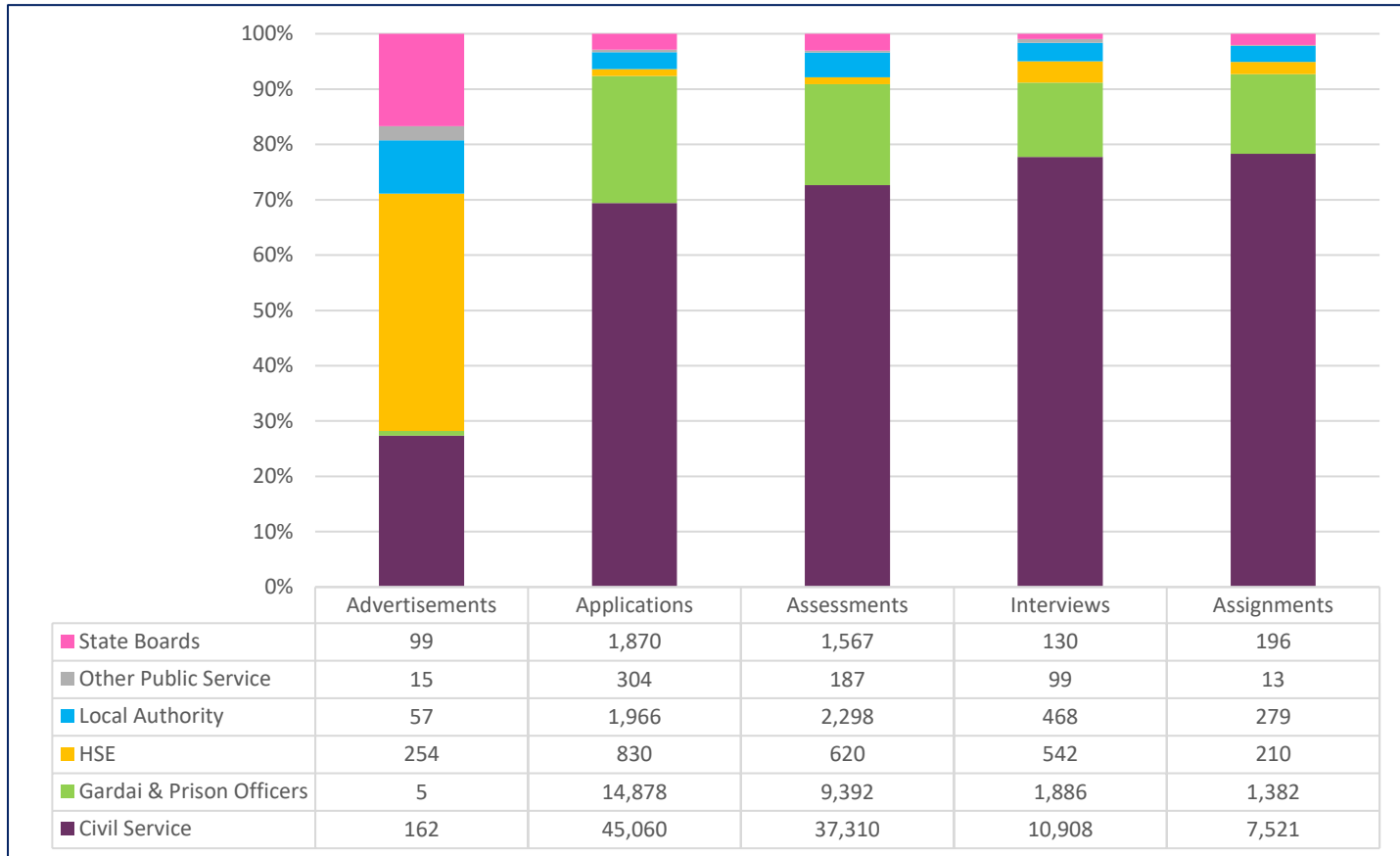
Fossil Fuel Usage: 334 MWh

Total Usage 840 MWh.

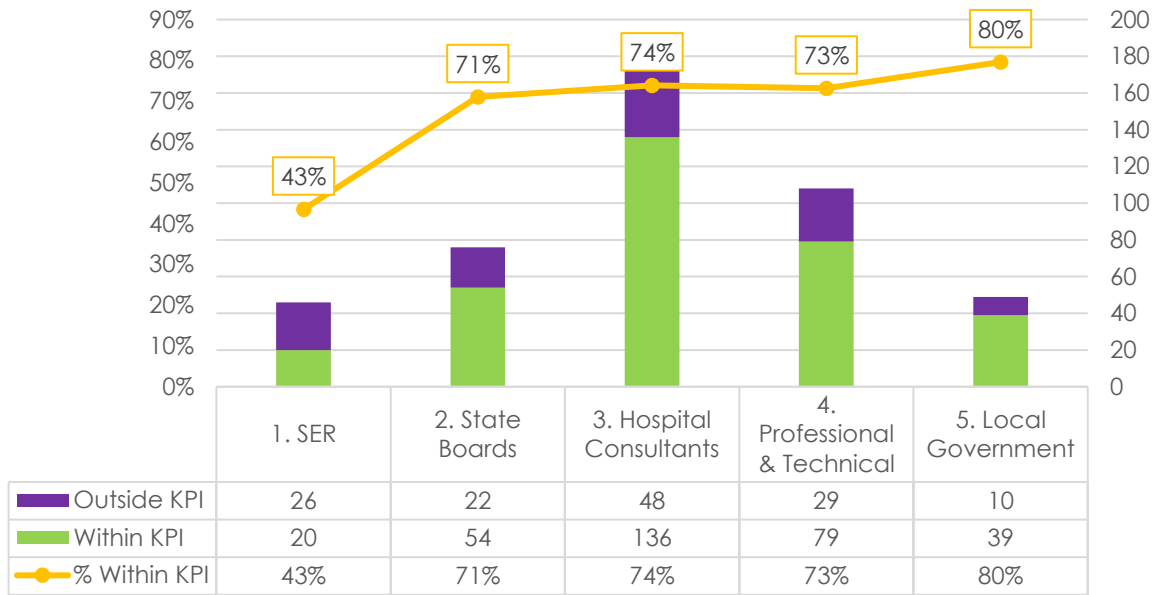
Appendix I – Summary of Recruitment Activity



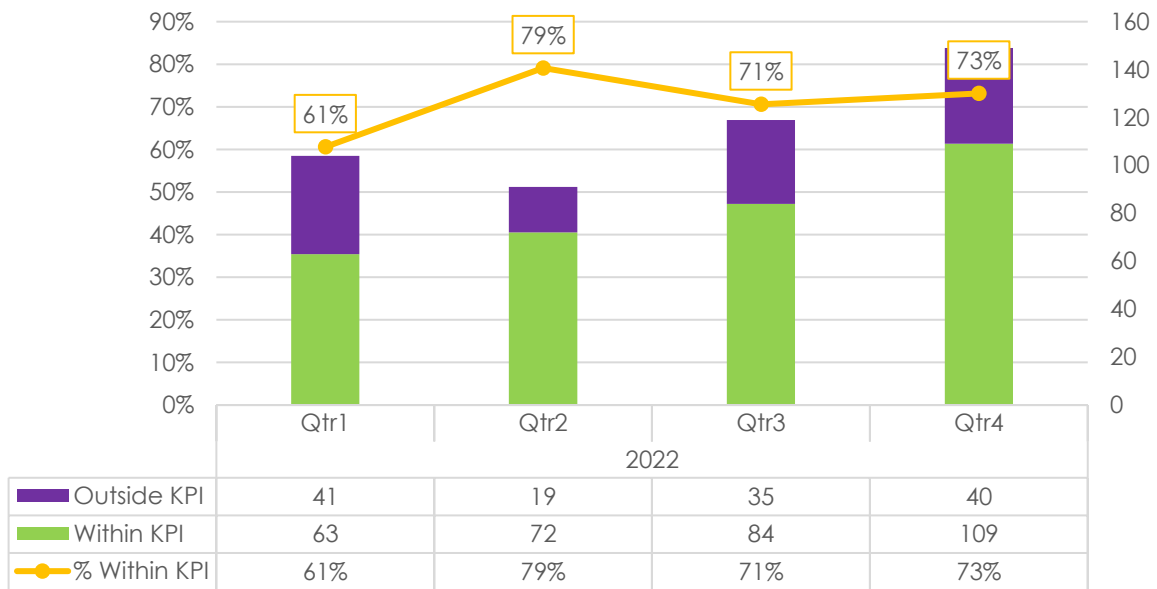
2022 Recruitment Operational Activities by Sector



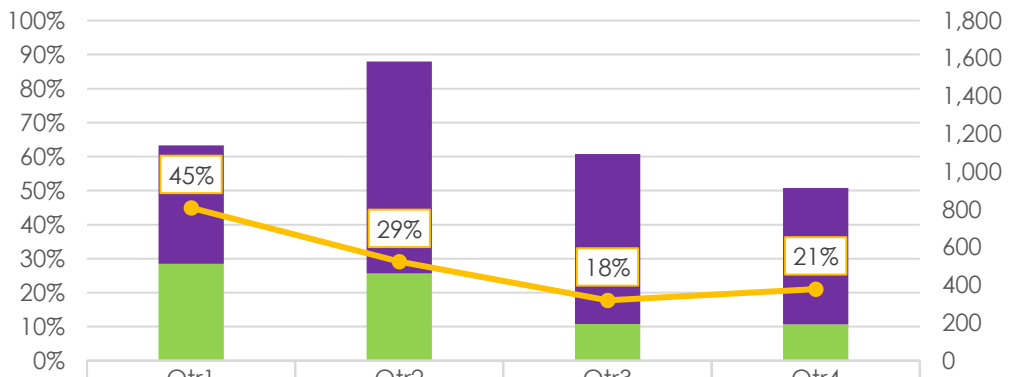
Campaign Delivery Timeframes by Sector – 2022



Campaign Delivery Timeframes 2022 – Overall by Quarter

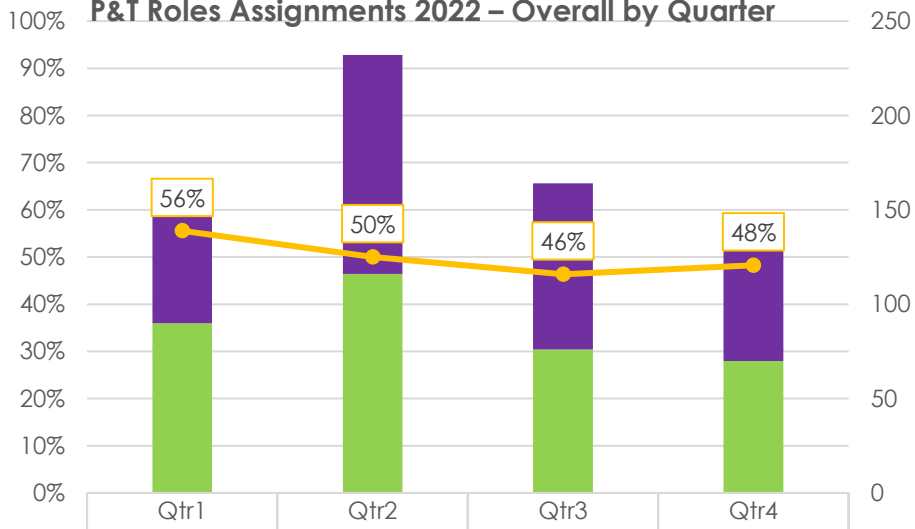


General Grade Assignments 2022 – Overall by Quarter



	2022			
	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Outside KPI	627	1,123	899	722
Within KPI	512	461	194	192
Within KPI %	45%	29%	18%	21%

P&T Roles Assignments 2022 – Overall by Quarter



	2022			
	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Outside KPI	72	116	88	75
Within KPI	90	116	76	70
% Within KPI	56%	50%	46%	48%

Appendix II – Statement on Internal Financial Control

Responsibility for system of internal financial control

As Accounting Officer, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Public Appointments Service.

This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to me and my other obligations as Head of the Office. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

Shared services

I have fulfilled my responsibilities in relation to the requirements of the service management agreement between the Public Appointments Service and the National Shared Services Office for the provision of shared services (e.g. human resources and payroll).

I rely on a letter of assurance from the Accounting Officer of the Vote for the National Shared Services Office that the appropriate controls are exercised in the provision of shared services to the Public Appointments Service.

Financial control environment

I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place.

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- There is an Audit Committee to advise me in discharging my responsibilities for the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

Administrative controls and management reporting

I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place, including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability, and in particular, that

- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management
- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- a risk management system operates within the Public Appointments Service
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines.

Internal audit and Audit Committee

I confirm that the Public Appointments Service has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter which I have approved. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which the Public Appointments Service is exposed and its annual internal audit plans, approved by me, are based on this analysis. These plans aim to cover the key controls on a rolling basis over a reasonable period. The internal audit function is reviewed periodically by me and by the Audit Committee. I have put procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

Procurement

I confirm that the Public Appointments Service ensures that there is an appropriate focus on good practice in purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines.

The Public Appointments Service has provided details of five non-competitive contracts in the annual return in respect of circular 40/2002 to the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform.

Non-compliance with procurement rules

The Public Appointments Service complied with the guidelines except for one contract totalling €46,403 (exclusive of VAT), for the provision of security services at Chapter House.

The supplier was initially engaged on the recommendation of the OPW, for the duration of building works, primarily to ensure access to Chapter House when required. Following the pandemic, on the

advice of An Garda Síochána, it was decided to continue the service due to the significant rise of anti-social behaviour in the area.

The contract will be replaced following a competitive procurement process in 2023.

Risk and control framework

The Office has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks. A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Office and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Board on a quarterly basis. The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and assigns responsibility of controls to specific staff.

Ongoing monitoring and review

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to the Management Board, where relevant, in a timely way. I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

Review of effectiveness

I confirm that the Office has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures (discussed further in the next section). The Office's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors and the senior management within the Public Appointments Service responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

Internal financial control issues

No weaknesses in internal financial control were identified in relation to 2022 that require disclosure in the appropriation account.

Covid-19 control issues

Senior management completed a review of the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and hybrid working on the Office's systems of internal control for 2022. No significant gaps, weaknesses or areas of non-

compliance were noted. A small number of procedures and internal controls were adapted to ensure they continue to function effectively in a hybrid working environment.

Margaret McCabe

Accounting Officer

Public Appointments Service

29 March 2023