



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

E100/1/00

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Circular 4/2001: Confined competition for appointment to the post of Director of Human Resources, at Principal (higher scale) level, in the Prison Service, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to say that it is proposed to hold a confined competition to be run by the Civil Service Commission, for appointment to the post of Director of Human Resources in the Prison Service, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The post is at Principal (higher scale) level, and may be competed for by Assistant Principals, Principals and Prison Governors (see paragraph 7 for full details of eligible grades).

Background

2. The Prison Service is in the process of being established as an independent service. The Service employs more than 3,000 people in 17 institutions throughout the country. There are also some 70 staff attached to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Service has an annual budget of about £200 million. The administration headquarters of the Service is currently located in St. Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, but will relocate to Monastery Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22 in July 2001.

3. The management structure is headed by a Director General and includes senior managers responsible for functional areas including Human Resources. The Director General has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the Prison Service, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Service Management Act, 1997. It is the Government's intention to bring forward a Prison Service Bill to establish the Prison Service on a statutory footing. An Interim Prisons Board was appointed in December 1998 to prepare for the establishment of a statutory Prisons Authority. It is also proposed to appoint an Inspector of Prisons, and a Parole Board to review offenders' sentences.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

[For Department, read Department/Office throughout this Circular.]

Nature of work

4. The successful candidate, who will report directly to the Director General, will manage the Human Resource Management (HRM) function in the Prison Service. This will require the formulation and implementation of progressive HRM policies, management of the IR function with emphasis on the achievement of consensus and achievement of organisational change and development so as to deliver an excellent and cost-effective service.

Specifically, the appointee will be responsible for:

- Development with line managers of progressive HRM policies in the new Prison Service, including recruitment, promotions, mobility and succession planning.
- Leading the Staffing and Operations Review aimed at addressing the staffing requirements of the Prison Service.
- Ensuring that all HRM processes and procedures comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice, including health and safety.
- Implementation of effective management development and staff training programmes.
- Implementation of partnership arrangements in the Prison Service.
- Achieving agreement on the development of the Prison Service on a harmonious basis.
- Promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Implementation of fair and accessible systems for dealing with grievances, discipline and poor performance issues.
- Acting as an expert advisor to line managers in HRM matters.
- Development of policies and procedures for devolving HR responsibility to local managers.
- Contributing to, and participating in, with other members of the senior management team, the preparation of the following for the Prison Service;
 - Mission Statement
 - Corporate Strategy Statement
 - Three-year Business Plans
 - Five- to Seven-year Capital/Building Plans.
- Development of links with appropriate organisations such as educational and training institutions.
- Such other duties appropriate to the grade as may be assigned by the Director General from time to time.

Personal requirements

5. The successful candidate will possess the following essential requirements:

- Substantial HRM experience, involving a significant level of personal responsibility.
- Proven ability to create and develop the framework and mechanisms for the achievement of significant organisational change.
- Proven people management skills, keen intelligence and sound judgement.
- Proven ability to lead and motivate staff.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills.

6. A relevant qualification in human resource management is desirable, though not essential.

Eligibility

7. Candidates must,

(a) on the date they apply for the competition, be serving in an established capacity in the Civil Service in one of the following grades:

- Assistant Principal (standard scale),
- Assistant Principal (higher scale),
- Principal (standard scale),
- Principal (higher scale),
- a departmental grade listed in Appendix 1 to this circular,
- Assistant Principal on secondment to the Health and Safety Authority from the Civil Service,
- Assistant Regional Director or Regional Director on secondment to FÁS from the Civil Service,
- Prison Governor, Classes I, II and III,

AND

(b) on **1 May 2001**, those candidates who are serving in an established capacity at Assistant Principal level must have not less than three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades. In this context credit is given for all job-sharing service on the same basis as full-time service.

8. Officers on special leave with pay may apply, if otherwise eligible. Officers on special leave without pay (e.g. to serve with the EU) may be eligible; Personnel Sections should check individual cases with this Department if they are not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91.

9. Officers on career break may apply if the terms of their career break conform with the provisions of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and if they are otherwise eligible.

10. A candidate who resigns, retires or is dismissed from his or her post will cease to be eligible for appointment from this competition.

Conditions of appointment

11. The appointment will be at Principal (higher scale) level. The salary scale for Principal (higher scale) is:

£47,708 - £49,676 - £51,649 - £53,617 - £55,299 - £57,070 (after three years' satisfactory service at the maximum) - £58,840 (after six years' satisfactory service at the maximum).

In addition, an allowance of £3,644 per annum will be payable.

12. If the successful candidate is a Governor in the Prison Service then the appointment, superannuation and retirement arrangements set out in Appendix 2 to this circular will apply to that person.

13. The appointment will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. If the appointment is a promotion then it will be in an acting capacity in the first instance. An officer whose service is not satisfactory, or who opts not to remain in the post, may, at any time up to the end of one year, be returned to his/her former Department or duties. Any extra payment arising from the assignment would then cease.

The competition

14. Selection will be by competitive interview conducted by the Civil Service Commission. The interview board may, having examined the applications of all candidates by reference to the nature of the duties and the personal requirements described in paragraphs 4-6 above, decide that not all of the candidates will be invited to attend before the board for interview. In addition, the board may, at its discretion, require candidates to undergo a preliminary interview and invite only those who reach the requisite standard to attend for competitive interview, which will select the candidate best qualified for appointment. The interview(s) will be conducted by a board to be set up by the Commission. **It is planned to hold interviews in May 2001.** The onus is on candidates to make themselves available for interview at short notice. Requests for postponements will not be considered.

15. In determining the order of merit at the competitive interview, the Civil Service Commission will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English in accordance with Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75 and Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and any other instruction to candidates qualified for the award of such credit on or before the date of the interview, or such other date as may be agreed between the Department of Finance and the Association of Higher Civil and Public Servants.

Applications

16. Candidates should obtain their application forms from their own Personnel Section. The Civil Service Commission will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should return their completed application forms directly to the **Chief Executive Officer, Civil Service Commission, 1 Lower Grand Canal Street, Dublin 2**, to arrive not later than **5.30 p.m. on Friday, 4 May 2001**. This closing date must be strictly observed.

17. The Civil Service Commission will contact Personnel Sections in respect of candidates being called to competitive interview. For each such candidate the Personnel Officer will be required:

(i) to certify that he or she

- has worked well and been satisfactory in his/her present grade,
- has been satisfactory in general conduct,
- fulfils the conditions of eligibility set out in paragraphs 7-10 above,

and

(ii) to send to the Commission an assessment of the candidate's suitability for

- appointment to the post applied for, and
- promotion if appropriate,

on a form to be supplied by the Commission.

18. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition and (ii) health and the level of sick leave are not verified by the Civil Service Commission until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition, therefore does not imply acceptance by the Commission. In particular, candidates should note that the Personnel Officer will not have verified the health and the level of sick leave of those called to competitive interview; accordingly, admission to the competition and/or an invitation to competitive interview does not imply that they meet the health and sick leave criteria. In considering a successful candidate's suitability for appointment from the point of view of health and sick leave the Commission will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76 (as amended by Department of Finance Circular 32/91). If candidates have any doubts about any aspect of their eligibility, they are advised to clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with the application.

Circulation

19. Personnel Sections should bring this Circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated Offices without delay, including eligible officers on maternity leave, career break or other relevant forms of leave (see paragraphs 8 and 9 above).

20. If candidates have any queries about this Circular they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed directly to the Civil Service Commission.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

APPENDIX 1

DEPARTMENTAL GRADES ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Senior Auditor

Deputy Director of Audit

Courts Service

Any grade at Assistant Principal or Principal level attached to the Courts

Department of Foreign Affairs

First Secretary

Counsellor

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Co-ordinator of Work and Training

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas

Principal Clerk

Assistant Principal Committee Clerk

Principal Committee Clerk

Clerk Assistant of the Seanad

Office of the Ombudsman

Investigator

Senior Investigator

APPENDIX 2

**APPOINTMENT, SUPERANNUATION AND RETIREMENT ARRANGEMENTS
RELEVANT TO PRISON GOVERNORS**

1. Prison Governors Classes I, II and III will be eligible to compete for the post of Director of Human Resources in the Irish Prison Service.
2. A Governor who is successful in the competition will be appointed as a Principal (Higher Scale) and will be remunerated on the salary scale for that grade plus the Director post allowance of £3,644 per annum. If a Governor's existing gross pay exceeds starting pay on promotion to Director (Principal Higher Scale plus allowance) he or she may retain existing gross pay on a mark-time basis in accordance with normal pay on promotion rules. By way of exception, a Governor Class I whose allowances plus highest scale point exceed the maximum gross pay of a Director will, on appointment to the Director post, continue to be paid the Governor Class I salary scale and existing allowances.
3. On appointment to the Director post as Principal (Higher Scale), a Governor will transfer his or her service in accordance with the existing provisions i.e. credit of four-thirds of actual service in the Prison Service (e.g. a Governor with 27 years' service would transfer 36 years' service on appointment to a Director post.)
4. In the event of a Director reverting to fill a vacancy in the relevant Governor grade, the following provisions will apply:
 - (i) He or she will be remunerated at the point of the Governor salary scale which he or she had reached prior to being appointed Director, with credit being given by way of additional increments for the period of service as Director (up to the maximum point of the Governor scale).
 - (ii) The existing provisions for transfer of service will apply, i.e. credit of three-quarters of service with provision for "double benefit" being applied to the reduced service combined with any subsequent service in excess of 20 years.
 - (iii) The period of service as Director (on the basis of the transfer provisions at (ii) above) will reckon towards calculation of the minimum service requirement of 30 years in the Prison Service provided that all the service is given in the Prisons/Prisons Authority area. (Subject to the recommendations of the Commission on Public Service Pensions, as decided on by Government, different conditions may apply to future entrants.)
 - (iv) Where reversion occurs within the last three years of service, a Governor's salary will be averaged for the purpose of calculating pensionable salary. Pensionable salary will be based on the salary payable on the last day of pensionable service and any payments resulting from a greater amount of salary paid to that person in the last three years of reckonable service shall be treated as an allowance and averaged accordingly.

A Director reverting to Governor will be bound by the Prison Officer superannuation terms relating to retirement age. Following from that, no reversion will be possible once the Director reaches 60 years of age.