



An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance

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Circular 26/2002: Confined competition for appointment to the post of Assistant Director IT at Assistant Principal (higher scale) level in the Irish Prison Service, Dublin

A Dhuine Uasail.

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce the holding, by the Civil Service Commission, of a confined competition for appointment to the post of Assistant Director IT in the Prison Service, Dublin. The post is at Assistant Principal (higher scale) level and may be competed for by Assistant Principals, Higher Executive Officers, Administrative Officers, Deputy Governors, Assistant Governors and other eligible grades (see paragraphs 7 to 10 for full eligibility details).

Background

2. The Prison Service is currently part of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. However, legislation is being prepared to establish it as an independent executive agency. Under this legislation, it is envisaged that the Prison Service will have responsibility for day-to-day management of the State's prisons, including responsibility for prison services, finance and staffing. The Prison Service headquarters is located at Monastery Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

3. The Prison Service is headed by a Director General who was appointed in July 1999 as part of the process of transition to agency status. The Director General has responsibility for the operation of the Prison Service pursuant to an Order made under the Public Service Management Act, 1997. Once the Prison Service is established as an executive agency, the Director General will report to a non-executive Prison Board to be established under the legislation. Pending enactment of the legislation, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform has appointed a Prisons Authority Interim Board.

4. The Prison Service has a budget of approximately €273m and comprises more than 3,000 staff in 17 institutions throughout the country as well as some 140 Headquarters staff. All staff in the institutions and almost all staff in headquarters posts will transfer to the new, independent Prison Service once it is established as an executive agency.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS[For department, read department/office throughout this Circular.]

Job description

5. Reporting to the Director of Finance, the appointee's duties will include:

- Development and implementation of the Prison Service's IT Strategy, including ongoing oversight and management of the Prison Service IT investment and development programmes to support the Prison Service's business needs.
- Managing the Prison Service's information and communications technology activities, including aligning IT strategic planning with the Strategy Statement of the Prison Service and Business Plans.
- Development of IT procurement policy and management of relationships with suppliers.
- Management of the Prison Service's IT Unit which will include overall responsibility for:
 - ♦ developing and maintaining the skills set necessary to administer the IT function in the Prison Service
 - ♦ systems development and enhancement
 - ♦ project planning and implementation
 - ♦ project management
 - ♦ budgetary planning and control
 - ♦ managing and developing the Prison Service's technical and communications infrastructure
- Managing and developing the Prison Service's internal and external IT relationships.
- Advising the Director of Finance on internal and external business-related IT opportunities and initiatives.
- Supporting business process re-engineering in the Prison Service.

Personal requirements

6. Candidates for the post should possess the following:

- Experience of leading project teams in successful IT development work.
- Proven experience in planning (including strategic planning), design and successful implementation of computer systems.
- Willingness to take the initiative and to adopt a proactive approach to introduction of IT solutions.
- Sound knowledge and experience of IT networks, systems and security.
- Knowledge of the recommendations on the development of an e-Government / e-public service strategy in response to the Information Society agenda.
- Proven project management and appraisal experience on large projects.
- Excellent interpersonal, communications and presentation skills.
- Experience of working with external consultants.
- Proven leadership and motivational skills.

Relevant extracts from the current PMDS Role Profile Form are at Appendix I.

Eligibility

7. In order to be eligible to compete, prospective candidates must,

(a) be serving in an established capacity in the civil service, or be on secondment to FÁS from the civil service, in one of the following grades:

- Assistant Principal (standard or higher scale)
- Any grade at Assistant Principal level in the Courts Service
- Principal Clerk and Assistant Principal Committee Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
- Senior Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
- First Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs

- Investigator in the Office of the Ombudsman and Information Commissioner
- Deputy Governor in the Prison Service

OR

- (b) (i) be serving in an established capacity in the civil service, or be on secondment to FÁS from the civil service, in one of the following grades:
- Higher Executive Officer (including HEO/Systems Analyst)
 - Administrative Officer
 - Third Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs
 - Auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
 - Senior Clerk in the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
 - Systems Analyst in the IT and Telecommunications Division at Garda Headquarters of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
 - Social Welfare Officer in the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
 - Assistant Governor in the Prison Service
 - Assistant Governor of Works in the Prison Service
 - Industrial Training Instructor I in the Prison Service
 - Inspector of Works in the Prison Service
 - Chief Officer I in the Prison Service

and

(ii) on **1 October 2002**, have not less than three years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of three years' service in eligible grades, except in the case of a Social Welfare Officer or a Higher Executive Officer or an Administrative Officer who has prior service in the Social Welfare Officer grade or the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs & Excise (see paragraph 8 below). In this context, credit is given for all work-sharing service on the same basis as full-time service.

8. Social Welfare Officers will be required to have not less than eight years' service to be eligible for the competition and may count service, up to a maximum of five years, in the grade of Executive Officer as service in the Social Welfare Officer grade for this purpose. Former Social Welfare Officers and former Higher Officers of Customs & Excise who have been recertified as Higher Executive Officers and/or appointed as Administrative Officers **and** who have less than three years' service in the Higher Executive Officer and/or Administrative Officer grades, will be required to have an aggregate of at least eight years' service in eligible grades to be eligible for the competition. Service in the former grade of Higher Officer of Customs & Excise will count as service in an eligible grade. Former Higher Officers of Customs & Excise may count up to five years' service in the Executive Officer grade or in the former grades of Officer and / or Indoor Officer of Customs & Excise as service in the Higher Officer grade for this purpose.

9. Officers on probation are not eligible to compete except where they would have been eligible had they remained in their previous grade and they have served continuously since satisfactorily completing a period of probation. Periods of special leave without pay should not be considered to break continuity of service for this purpose.

10. 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 cases not covered by Department of Finance Circular 33/91 with this Department. 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.

Conditions of appointment

11. The appointment will be to the grade of Assistant Principal (higher scale) and will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. 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.

12. If the successful candidate is a Deputy Governor, Assistant Governor or equivalent grade, then the appointment, superannuation and retirement arrangements set out in Appendix II to this Circular will apply.

The competition

13. The civil service is an equal opportunity employer. Promotion within the service is made on the basis of qualifications and the ability to carry out the responsibilities of the grade or post.

14. Selection will be by means of a competitive interview conducted by a board to be set up 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 5 and 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 to select the candidate best qualified for appointment.

15. In placing the candidates considered best qualified for appointment in order of merit, the Civil Service Commission will give credit for proficiency in both Irish and English, in accordance with Department of Finance Circular 30/90 and Department of the Public Service Circular 43/75, and any other relevant instruction to candidates qualified for the award of such credit.

Applications

16. Applications forms are available from Personnel Sections or, alternatively, candidates can apply online at www.publicjobs.ie. The Civil Service Commission will supply application forms to Personnel Sections on request. Candidates should return their completed application forms online or directly to **The Chief Executive Officer, Civil Service Commission, Chapter House, 26 - 30 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1**, or by email to profman6@publicjobs.ie to reach there as soon as possible, but not later than **5.30 p.m. on 10 October, 2002. This closing date must be strictly observed. Candidates should use only one means of application i.e. online, hardcopy or email.** Candidates invited to interview must be prepared to make themselves available at short notice. It is expected that interviews will take place in November, 2002.

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:

(a) to certify that the candidate has worked well and been satisfactory in his or her present grade, has been satisfactory in general conduct, and fulfils the conditions of eligibility set out in paragraphs 7 to 10 above,

AND

(b) if appropriate, to send to the Civil Service Commission an assessment of the candidate's suitability for appointment / promotion to Assistant Principal (higher scale) 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 their 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 Circulars 32/91 and 33/99. If candidates have doubts about any aspect of their eligibility, they should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before proceeding with their application.

Circulation and further information

19. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their department and associated offices without delay, including officers on maternity leave, career break and other relevant forms of leave. If candidates have any queries about this Circular, they should contact their Personnel Section. Subsequent enquiries about their candidature should be addressed to the Civil Service Commission.

Mise le meas,

Joe McGovern
Assistant Secretary

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM CURRENT PMDS ROLE PROFILE FORM

Job Title: Assistant Director Information Technology in the Irish Prison Service

Main Purpose of Job

General Description:

As Assistant Director you will oversee the ongoing development of the IT function within the Irish Prison Service (IPS). You will manage an in-house team of 14 staff and additional outsourced service providers in order to deliver a comprehensive IT service to the 17 prison institutions and the HQ directorates to support their business needs. You will develop and enhance the IPS IT Strategy, policies and procedures. You will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the IT spend of €5m per annum represents value for money and achieves IPS objectives.

Key Functions/Responsibilities:

- Operational

- Managing the IPS information and communications technology activities, including aligning IT strategic planning with the overall IPS Strategy Statement and Business Plans
- Overseeing the management of IPS IT Unit
- Development of IT programmes to support the IPS business needs
- Managing and developing the IPS technical and communications infrastructure
- Ongoing oversight and management of the IPS IT investment
- Management of relationships with suppliers
- Overseeing systems development and enhancement
- Responsibility for the planning and implementation of large IT projects
- Active project management of large IT projects
- Budgetary planning and control

- Human Resources

- Developing and maintaining the skills set necessary to run an efficient and effective IT function in the IPS
- Developing training programs and implementing policies and procedures to ensure that IT best practice is followed through out the IPS

- Customer Service

- Managing and developing the IPS internal and external IT relationships

- Strategy Planning

- Development and implementation of the IPS's IT Strategy
- Development of IT procurement policy
- Review and introduction of a plan to support e-Government in the IPS

- Additional responsibility

- Advising the Director of Finance on internal and external business-related IT opportunities and initiatives
- Supporting business process re-engineering in IPS

What are the key long-term objectives?

The development of a five-year IT Strategic Plan to set the overall direction in relation to information systems development to ensure that future developments in relation to IT will be fully aligned to the overall strategic objectives of the IPS and will encompass new evolving technologies. Ensuring that the operational systems are continuously available to the 17 prisons and the HQ directorates and that these systems support the users needs.

Key Deliverables for the Year

- Development of a comprehensive IPS IT strategy.
- Establishment of policies and procedures to support the IT strategy.
- Development of the IPS technical and communications infrastructure.
- The identification and development of Key Performance Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the IPS IT strategy.

Critical Success Factors

- The provision of adequate staff resources to develop, maintain and operate the necessary IT systems.
- Provision of adequate financial resources to fund the IT programme.
- Possible industrial relation issues associated with the introduction of new IT systems and procedures.
- Ability to modify IT systems to reflect the changes arising out of the current review of staffing and work practices throughout the IPS.

Key Performance Indicators

- An agreed IPS IT Strategy within 12 months.
- An agreed IT training and development plan within 18 months.
- Identification of significant IT needs and necessary system enhancements within the IPS and development of a plan to ensure efficient and effective delivery of these needs over a three-year time frame.
- Development of Key Performance Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the IT strategy within 24 months.

Identification of Competencies for the Job

- Achievement, Drive and Commitment
- Team Working
- Networking/Influencing
- Customer Service
- Managing and Developing People
- Leadership
- Analytical Thinking
- Decision Making/Judgement
- Managing Budgets and Resources

Knowledge and Skills

1. Proven experience in planning (including strategic planning), design and successful implementation of IT systems.

2. Sound knowledge and experience of IT networks, systems and security including leading project teams in successful IT development work.
3. Willingness to take the initiative and to adopt a proactive approach to introduction of IT solutions including understanding the issues associated with new developments in an environment of ongoing organisational change.
4. Proven project management and appraisal experience on large projects including good interpersonal, communications and presentation skills and an understanding of budget and resource management in large organisations.

APPENDIX II

APPOINTMENT, SUPERANNUATION AND RETIREMENT ARRANGEMENTS RELEVANT TO PRISON GOVERNORS

1. Deputy Governors and Assistant Governors and equivalent grades will be eligible to compete for the post of Assistant Director, IT in the Irish Prison Service.
2. A Deputy Governor, Assistant Governor or equivalent grade who is successful in the competition will be appointed as an Assistant Principal (Higher Scale) and will be remunerated accordingly.
3. On appointment as Assistant Principal (Higher Scale), a Deputy Governor/Assistant Governor or equivalent grade 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 Deputy Governor with 27 years' service would transfer 36 years' service on appointment to an Assistant Director post.)
4. In the event of a Deputy Governor/Assistant Governor or equivalent grade 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 Deputy Governor/Assistant Governor or equivalent grade salary scale which he or she had reached prior to being appointed Assistant Director, with credit being given by way of additional increments for the period of service as Assistant Director (up to the maximum point of the relevant 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 Assistant 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 Deputy Governor/Assistant Governor or equivalent grade'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.

An Assistant Director reverting to Deputy Governor/Assistant Governor or equivalent grade will be bound by the Prison Officer superannuation terms relating to retirement age. Following from that, no reversion will be possible once the Assistant Director reaches 60 years of age.