



**An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance**

E109/74/06

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Circular 21/2006: Confined competition for appointment to the position of Director General – Principal (standard scale) level in the Civil Defence

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to announce a confined competition, to be held by the Public Appointments Service, for appointment to the position of Director General at Principal (standard scale) level in the Civil Defence based at Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.

Background

2. The Civil Defence Board was established by Order of the Minister for Defence in May, 2003 as a State Authority, arising from the enactment of the Civil Defence Act 2002. The Board is responsible for the management and development of the Civil Defence Organisation at national level. The Board is made up of fourteen members including the Chairman, the Director General and representatives of the major stakeholders in the wider civil protection community.

3. The Civil Defence is a volunteer-based organisation with approximately 6,000 volunteer members nationwide who are based in their local authority areas. Each unit is administered at local level by the Civil Defence Officer, who is an employee of the local authority. The main activities undertaken by the Civil Defence are casualty/first aid, rescue, fire fighting, radiation detecting and monitoring, radio communications and welfare provision.

4. The Civil Defence Board has recently completed the decentralisation of its Headquarters from the Phoenix Park in Dublin to a new premises in Roscrea, Co Tipperary. The Board's full complement of staff at its Headquarters at present comprises 22 civil servants of the state together with a Communications Officer, a Technical Officer and a small number of support staff. The Civil Defence Headquarters also incorporates the Civil Defence College where centralised courses of instruction are given to volunteer members.

TO ALL DEPARTMENTS [For Department read Department/Office throughout this Circular]

5. The functions of the Board are to:

- promote and support the development of Civil Defence planning at national level;
- promote the role of Civil Defence in supporting the emergency services and in providing services to the community;
- promote public awareness and the dissemination of information to the public in relation to Civil Defence;
- prepare, adopt and monitor the implementation of Strategic Plans relating to the future development of Civil Defence;
- advise the Minister for Defence on policy matters and complying with any general policy directives that the Minister for Defence may give the Board;
- promote the recruitment of new members;
- establish, review and maintain codes of professional conduct for Civil Defence members.

Further information can be found on the Civil Defence website www.civildefence.ie

Job Description

6. The appointee will be responsible to the Civil Defence Board for the efficient and effective management of the business of the Board in compliance with relevant legislation.

7. The appointee will establish and maintain effective relationships with the Board and with the 32 local authority Civil Defence services; and provide strategic direction to the national Civil Defence organisation on behalf of the Board.

8. The main duties of the post include:

- responsibility for the provision of effective executive supports and fully compliant governance structures covering all current relevant legislative, regulatory and financial requirements;
- responsibility for the production of the Strategic Plan and the Annual Reports of the Board and the implementation of the Strategic Plan;
- maintaining and developing the framework for the local authorities to administer all matters aimed at ensuring the recruitment and training of volunteers to fulfill the objectives of the Board;
- overseeing the provision of training designed to provide a first class local authority Civil Defence volunteer body to support the emergency services;
- ensuring value for money for the resources provided to the local authorities for their Civil Defence services.

Personal Requirements

9. The following skills/attributes are considered essential for the position:

- good knowledge of the general legislative framework under which public administration operates in Ireland;
- proven management experience at a senior level or a demonstrated ability to discharge senior management functions including managing staff and resources;

- strong leadership qualities;
- strategic and analytical skills
- good interpersonal, analytical and communications skills.

Desirable

- demonstrated ability in the management of the health and safety risks of volunteer activity;
- some background in the delivery of training, preferably with an emphasis on the emergency skills required by Civil Defence volunteers.
- some experience of working with a volunteer organisation would be useful.

Eligibility

10. Candidates must on 1st July 2006

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

- Assistant Principal (Standard Scale)
- Assistant Principal (Higher Scale)
- Assistant Regional Director or Regional Director on secondment to FÁS from the Civil Service
- a departmental grade listed in Appendix 1

(b) have not less than two years' service in their existing grade or an aggregate of two years' service in eligible grades set out at (a). In this context, credit is given for all job-sharing service on the same basis as full-time service

and

(c) be certified by the Personnel Officer as being suitable for consideration with regard to:

- eligibility
- performance of work in the present grade
- general conduct
- suitability for promotion
- health, especially sick leave.

11. Where an officer was acting or on contract in an eligible grade, and was thereafter appointed in a substantive capacity, eligibility can be based on the aggregate service e.g. six months in an acting capacity or on contract and eighteen months in a substantive capacity, can be aggregated to give two years service. For the purpose of deciding eligibility, officers must be serving on the eligibility date and the one year of continuous service must have taken place immediately prior to the eligibility date of the competition in question.

12. 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 their career break conforms with the terms of Department of Finance Circular 18/98 and they are otherwise eligible.

Conditions of Appointment

13. Successful candidates must be in a position to take up duty without delay.

14. While serving in the Civil Defence, an officer will continue to have access to promotional opportunities and access to interdepartmental competitions in the Civil Service.

15. In the event of the officer's service with the Civil Defence not being satisfactory, the officer will be returned to a vacancy in his/her former grade in his/her former Department.

The Competition

16. Selection, conducted by the Public Appointments Service, will be by competitive interview, and may include a presentation. 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 paragraph 9 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 Public Appointments Service.

17. In determining the order of merit at the competitive interview, the Public Appointments Service 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 relevant staff associations. This means that credit for proficiency in both Irish and English is awarded when candidates are being placed in order of merit following the final stage of the competition.

Codes of Practice

18. The recruitment and selection process for appointment to these positions will be conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice titled Selection of Persons for Appointment on Promotion to Positions in the Civil Service (No.02/04) published by the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

The Code of practice reflects the following core principles:

- *Probity*
- *Appointments Made on Merit*
- *An Appointments Process in line with Best Practice*
- *A fair Appointment Process Applied with Consistency*
- *Appointments Made in an Open, Accountable and Transparent Manner*

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the contents of the codes of practice including, inter alia, the provisions in relation to the relation

to the responsibilities placed on candidates who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

Complaints and Requests for Review

19. Complaints/requests for review will be considered by the Public Appointments Service in accordance with the procedures set out in the Codes of Practice.

The Codes of Practice may be assessed by visiting www.cpsa-online.ie or by contacting the Commission for Public Service Appointments, Chapter House, 26-30 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

Applications

20. Applications must be made on the official application form which is available on the Public Appointments Service website www.publicjobs.ie. Should you have any difficulties applying online please contact **Orla Dooley at (01) 8587645**. Completed forms must be submitted so as to reach the Public Appointments Service **not later than Thursday 24th August 2006**. **This closing date must be strictly observed.**

21. For each candidate entering the competition, the line manager and personnel officer should complete an assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion on a form to be supplied by the Public Appointments Service. This assessment form is designed to reflect the requirements of this position.

22. Candidates should note that (i) eligibility for the competition and (ii) health and the level of sick leave are not verified by the Public Appointments Service until a candidate comes under consideration for appointment. Admission to the competition and interview(s) does not imply acceptance by the Public Appointments Service. In considering a successful candidate's suitability for appointment in terms of health and sick leave, the Public Appointments Service will have regard to Department of the Public Service Circular 34/76 (as amended by Department of Finance Circulars 32/91, 33/99 and 17/03). Candidates with doubts about any aspect of their eligibility should clarify their position with their Personnel Section before applying.

23. Interviews are expected to take place around mid September. The onus is on candidates to make themselves available for interview at short notice.

Circulation

24. Personnel Sections should bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in their Departments and associated offices without delay, including eligible fixed term workers, officers on term time, secondment, maternity leave, career break, contract, and other relevant forms of leave.

25. 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 Public Appointments Service.

26. The Civil Service is an equal opportunities employer.

Mise le meas,

John O'Connell
Assistant Secretary

APPENDIX 1

DEPARTMENTAL GRADES ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Senior Auditor

Courts Service

Any grade at Assistant Principal Level in the Courts Service

Department of Foreign Affairs

First Secretary

Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas

Assistant Principal Committee Clerk

Principal Clerk

Office of the Ombudsman - Office of the Information Commissioner

Investigator