

Circular 14/2013: Confined competition for appointment to the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché based in the Permanent Representation, Brussels

File Reference: DPE056/59/13

3 September 2013

A Dhuine Uasail,

1. I am directed by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform to seek applications from officers currently serving in the grade of Assistant Principal Officer or equivalent grades (See paragraphs 9 and 10 below) for the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché based in the Permanent Representation, Brussels. The appointment to the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché will terminate at the end of July 2017. At the end of the assignment as Maritime Affairs Attaché the officer will return to his/her parent Department in his/her current grade or may be redeployed in accordance with redeployment arrangements then in place for the Civil Service.
2. A panel will be established and will remain in force for two years from the date of the first appointment from the panel. The successful candidate will be called from the panel in order of merit. The successful candidate for the post will be seconded to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the period of the assignment and will be based in the Permanent Representation. The Maritime Affairs Attaché will report to Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives as required.
3. The successful candidate will be expected to take up duty in Brussels as soon as possible after selection but at the latest within three months.

Job Description

4. The post for which applications are sought is at First Secretary level and is based at the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union in Brussels. The purpose of the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché is to ensure that there is a full-time resource in Brussels to represent Ireland in relation to EU developments in respect of the marine and integrated maritime policy. The Maritime Affairs Attaché will participate in, monitor and report on such developments and liaise with the European Commission, Member States, the European Parliament and relevant agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations while keeping in close contact with relevant Government Departments and Agencies in Ireland, and so will help shape Ireland's contribution to EU developments in this area.

5. The Maritime Affairs Attaché will report to the Marine Coordination Group (see Appendix B) in Dublin and locally to the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the EU

6. The main duties of the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché will include:
 - i. representing Ireland in the Friends of the Presidency Group and other relevant Working Groups dealing with Integrated Maritime Policy/marine issues

 - ii. attendance at various expert meetings convened by the European Commission, the Council Secretariat and other relevant international bodies

 - iii. regular reporting and information exchange with officials of the relevant Departments and agencies in Ireland

 - iv. cross-Departmental liaison within the Permanent Representation with attachés from other Departments as required.

 - v. liaison with the European Commission, the Council Secretariat and other relevant international bodies on relevant issues

 - vi. advising and assisting in the assessment of Commission and other Member States' proposals in the marine area and the development of negotiating positions in relation to them

 - vii. preparation as required of clear and precise briefs, overview papers and associated material, including speech material for relevant Ministers and Departments and for the Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives at the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER 1 and 2) and for meetings of the Council of Ministers or European Council, and oral briefings for Ministers/senior officials

 - viii. the maintenance of on-going relations, including receipt of and follow-up on correspondence, with the principal institutions of the Community; mainly the Council Secretariat and the European Commission and its relevant Directorates

 - ix. relations with the European Parliament and other EU institutions including in particular the preparation of briefing material for Irish members of those institutions and liaison with key members of relevant European Parliament committees and their officials;

 - x. keeping abreast of EU developments generally and of developments internationally and in other international institutions relevant to marine-related work;

- xi. as required, contact and meetings with Irish groups represented in and/or visiting Brussels
 - xii. as required, meetings, correspondence, and requests for information from non-Irish interests - e.g. press, lobbyists and international political/economic consultants.
 - xiii. Attendance at and, where appropriate, speaking at conferences on maritime affairs.
7. The Maritime Affairs Attaché may be required to travel outside Belgium on occasion, such as attendance at meetings of the Council of Ministers in Luxembourg, informal sessions of the Council in other member States and attendance at working groups or other meetings and conferences. The Maritime Affairs Attaché will also be required to return to Ireland from time to time for meetings and consultations and to participate by video conference at the meetings of the Marine Coordination Group.

Person Specification - Maritime Affairs Attaché

8. Candidates for the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché should have the following competencies:
- A record of achievement in his/her career to date
 - Sound judgement, analytical and decision-making skills
 - Excellent communications skills with an ability to influence in a confident manner
 - Experience of building networks and relating to the political process
 - A reasonable knowledge of marine policy issues or the ability to acquire such knowledge quickly
 - Excellent organisational skills with an ability to cope in a pressurised working environment
 - A reasonable working knowledge of the EU institutions.

Eligibility - Maritime Affairs Attaché

9. Applicants expressing interest in the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché must, on 23rd September 2013 be serving in the grade of Assistant Principal Officer in the Civil Service or in one of the Departmental grades listed below:
- Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General - Deputy Director of Audit
 - Courts Service - Any grade at Assistant Principal Officer level in the Courts Service
 - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - First Secretary

- Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas - Assistant Principal Officer Committee Clerk
- Office of the Ombudsman / Information Commissioner - Investigator

10. Expressions of interest may be considered from suitably qualified officers serving at an equivalent level in a professional or technical grade that is considered relevant to the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché.

11. Applicants must be certified by Personnel Officers as being suitable for consideration with regard to:

- eligibility - Personnel Officers should verify that a candidate is serving in one of the eligible grades set out above
- performance of work in the present grade - Personnel Officers should verify that the candidate has received an annual review rating of at least 3 under the integrated PMDS model (agreed in General Council Report 1452)
- general conduct, and
- health, especially sick leave.

12. **Allowances**

Foreign Service Allowance:

Married Officer (Accompanied)	€29,514
Married Officer (Unaccompanied)	€24,638
Single Officer	€22,199

Children's Allowance:

€3,606 in respect of each child under 21 years of age who remains in full time education

Rent Allowance:

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has sanction to pay 100% of officers' rent costs, subject to an agreed ceiling in each case. In setting the rent ceiling, the Human Resources Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade takes account of the officer's grade and family circumstances and of current trends in the local property market.

Foreign Service allowances are reviewed regularly. It is important to note that the allowances may increase or decrease following these reviews as they take account of a number of factors including changes to salary rates and cost of living differences between Dublin and Brussels.

Conditions of Appointment

13. Appointment to the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché will be subject to the usual conditions governing such appointments. The appointment to the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché will terminate at the end of July 2017. The Maritime Affairs Attaché will be based at Ireland's Permanent Representation in Brussels and the successful candidate will be required to be resident in Brussels. The appointment will be subject to normal PMDS procedures in relation to on-going performance monitoring and to probationary reviews. Unless alternative arrangements are made, the Deputy Head of Mission at the Permanent Representation will be the supervisor for this purpose.
14. On appointment, the officer will serve a one-year probationary period in the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché. Prior to the end of this probationary period and in consultation with the Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives as appropriate, a decision will be made confirming that the appointment will run until the end of July 2017.
15. During the probationary period, the appointee will be assessed to determine whether s/he has:
 - i. demonstrated the capacity to undertake the duties of Maritime Affairs Attaché, and
 - ii. performed the duties in a satisfactory manner, and
 - iii. been satisfactory in general conduct.
16. An officer whose service is not satisfactory will be notified of the action to be taken. Where a decision is made not to confirm the appointee in the post of Maritime Affairs Attaché, the Personnel Officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade may be asked by the appointee to request that the Civil Service Disciplinary Code Appeal Board review the decision. [Ref Circular 14/2006 Civil Service Disciplinary Code paragraphs 11 and 50 (ii).]

Selection Process

17. The methods used to select the successful candidate for the post may include:
 - i. Short-listing of candidates on the basis of the information contained in the application form.
 - ii. A Preliminary Interview to reduce the numbers of candidates to a more manageable number to invite to main interview.
 - iii. Other assessment tests/exercises designed to measure the competencies required as deemed necessary by the Public Appointments Service.

- iv. A competitive interview which may include a presentation by the candidate.
18. Where it is decided that short-listing is necessary, the Public Appointments Service (PAS) will be guided by an expert board (which may include a representative of the Marine Coordination Group) which will examine the applications and assess them against predetermined criteria based on the requirements of the position. It is therefore in a candidate's interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of his/her qualifications/experience on the application form.
19. The onus is on applicants to make themselves available on the date(s) specified by the Public Appointments Service and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them at the contact details specified on their application form.

Applications

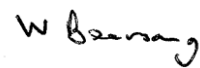
20. **The Closing Date for Applications is of 23rd September 2013**
Applications **will not** be accepted after this date and the onus is on applicants to ensure that they have correctly submitted their applications.
21. **Applications should be made online using the following link:**
<http://www.publicjobs.ie/publicjobs/campaignAdvert/9040.htm>
All sections of the form must be fully completed. Before applying candidates should log-on to www.publicjobs.ie and if you have not already done so you must register as a **'New User'** to create your profile (register a new account). Please do not confuse registering (creating a profile) with submitting an application. Once you have created a profile you must then access the application form, complete and submit it. Once you have submitted your application form it is suggested that you return to your publicjobs account and ensure that it has been successfully submitted via **'My Applications'**. Only fully submitted applications will be accepted into the campaign.
- Applications should be made online through www.publicjobs.ie no later than midnight on **23rd September 2013**.
- If candidates do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their application within one working day of applying, please contact the **Public Appointments Service at (01) 8587724**. Candidates should note that support will be available during office hours until the closing date.
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23. Admission to the competition does not imply acceptance by the Public Appointments Service that a candidate is eligible to compete in the competition.
24. The CPSA code of practice does not apply in this instance as it is not considered a promotional competition. However PAS will conduct the process in line the code of practice.
25. Feedback will be provided on written request.
26. Complaints/requests for review will be considered by the Public Appointments Service. Should a candidate be unhappy with an action or decision in relation to their application for appointment, they may write to the CEO, Public Appointments Service, setting out the basis on which they seek a review. This request must be made within 5 working days of the decision on their application. Where the decision being conveyed relates to an interim stage of the selection process, the request review must be received within 2 working days of the date of receipt of the decision.

Circulation

27. Please bring this circular to the notice of all eligible officers serving in your Department and associated Offices without delay. Special care should be taken to ensure that eligible officers on maternity leave, career break or other relevant forms of leave are notified of the competition.

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William Beausang
Assistant Secretary
Civil Service HR Directorate

Appendix A:

Marine Coordination Group

The Departments that are members of the Group are the Departments of:

- Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- Defence
- Environment, Community and Local Government
- Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
- Public Expenditure and Reform
- Taoiseach
- Transport, Tourism and Sport

Appendix B: Candidates' Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the process.

Candidates must not:

- knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- canvass any person with or without inducements
- interfere with or compromise the process in any way

A third party must not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine/or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- where he/she has not been appointed to a post, he/she will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- where he/she has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, he/she shall forfeit that appointment.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by the Public Appointments Service, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as the Public Appointments Service require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, will have no further claim to consideration.

Quality Customer Service

The Public Appointments Service aims to provide an excellent quality service to all our customers. If, for whatever reason, you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive from us, we urge you to bring this to the attention of the unit or staff member concerned. This is important as it ensures that we are aware of the problem and can take the appropriate steps to resolve it.

Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003

When your application form is received, we create a record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature and should you be successful certain information you provide will be forwarded to the employing organisation. Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. To make a request under the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003, please submit your request in writing to: **THE DATA PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR, PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS SERVICE, "CHAPTER HOUSE", 26-30 ABBEY STREET UPPER, DUBLIN 1**, ensuring that you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record. A fee of €6.35 should accompany your request. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, or personal cheque, made payable to the 'Public Appointments Service'. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from records for general statistical purposes.