

# Civil Service Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

## General Council Report 1497

(Meeting/s of 27 February 2008)

This claim seeks the introduction of condensed hours as a flexible working option and that flexi time bands be amended to accommodate this option.

1. The Staff Side put forward this claim at General Council stating that the aim of work life balance policies is to help workers achieve a balance between their work and family lives. Staff are constantly challenged in terms of longer commuting times and the organisation of caring responsibilities while trying to balance work and family life. The introduction of condensed hours would allow members work the same number of hours each week but on the basis of a much more flexible working day, while maintaining their same weekly income.

2. The claim was referred to the Equality Subcommittee and was included as part of the general review of Work Life Balance arrangements that is currently being undertaken.

3. The Official Side indicated that the delivery of service is crucial. Concerns relating to the introduction of condensed hours include:

- condensed hours could give rise to situations in contravention of the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997,
- condensed hours are in conflict with paragraph 4.4 of Circular 31/2001 (Civil Service Worksharing Scheme),
- condensed hours are not consistent with existing sick leave regulations,
- staff supervision, and
- allowing staff condensed hours would most likely lead to staff shortages on Mondays and Fridays, the most popular days to take time off. Many Departments/Offices are already experiencing difficulty in providing cover on these days.

4. Accordingly, the Official Side rejected the claim and a report recording disagreement was adopted on 27 February 2008.

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Aengus O Riain

Joan Byrne

Official Side Secretary    Staff Side Secretary

Agreed report, recording disagreement.

This report was adopted on 27 February 2008