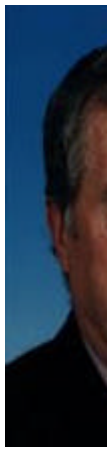
Press Release about the White Paper (February 2000)

White Paper on Defence

February 2000

(*(Note: Captions for photographs are visible if the cursor is allowed to pause on each image, for several seconds)*



Foreword

The publication of this White Paper on Defence marks the implementation of a commitment given in the Government's Action Programme for the Millennium. As the first-ever White Paper on Defence in Ireland, it emphasises the Government's view that the end of the century in which we achieved our Independence was an opportune time to take stock and set a forward progressive course to meet the new challenges and opportunities facing Ireland and the Defence Forces.

The White Paper sets out the Government's medium term strategy for defence covering the period up to 2010 based on the evolving national and international security environment.

In Article 29.1 of the Constitution, the State "affirms its devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly co-operation amongst nations founded on international justice and morality". Ireland has sought the achievement of this ideal in many ways but especially in its willingness to participate in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations throughout the world. Since 1958, the Defence Forces have been the major component of our contribution. While the Defence Forces exist primarily as an expression of the State's sovereignty and of its intention to provide its own security, the availability of flexible, well-equipped and well-trained Forces provides the Government with opportunities to contribute to peace support operations abroad in pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

The Government's White Paper strategy provides a new framework for the on-going management and reorganisation of the Defence Forces, comprising the Permanent Defence Force - the Army, the Air Corps, the Naval Service - and the Reserve Defence Force and will ensure that the Defence Forces can continue to participate in peace support missions abroad in the cause of international peace, as well as meet the requirements of the on-island security environment.

A major objective is to ensure that Ireland has a world-class military organisation. This objective requires an on-going modernisation process. It also requires a rebalancing of

resource allocation within defence to new equipment to enable the Defence Forces to meet the requirements of Government in the changing national and international spheres. It is also important that the Defence Forces continues to offer rewarding and challenging careers. I believe that the decisions set out in the White Paper will provide exciting new possibilities for those concerned.

The development of defence in Ireland is more than simply the better management and organisation of the Defence Forces. The White Paper also aims to improve the way different arms of Government integrate to respond to security requirements.

I am privileged and honoured to have the responsibility of publishing this White Paper. In doing so I pay tribute on behalf of the Government and the people to those in the Defence community - the Defence Forces, the civil service and civilian staff of the Department of Defence and members of Civil Defence.

Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil do ghach uile dhuine as ucht na seirbhíse a thug siad ar son na tíre on am a bunaíodh an Stáit.

Michael Smith TD

Minister for Defence

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Message

As Minister of State at the Department of Defence, I am very pleased to be associated with the publication of the first-ever White Paper on Defence.

The Government's Action Programme for the Millennium, for which I have a special co-ordination role, is ambitious and developmental and has brought this country into the 21st century at a level of prosperity which could only be dreamed of by our predecessors.

The publication of the White Paper sees the achievement of yet another commitment contained in the Action Programme. It sets out a positive strategy for defence, including Civil Defence, and the Defence Forces for the next decade. It also sees a 25% increase in the funding to be allocated by the Government to the Civil Defence organisation for training and equipment and gives a commitment to maintain the increased level of funding for future years.

The White Paper sets out a programme for the on-going development of Civil Defence which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The organisation will continue to be developed as a top-class provider of second line emergency services through the local authority structure. The organisation provides a unique opportunity for people to give voluntary service within their own communities. There are some 6,000 volunteers throughout the country who give so freely and selflessly of their time and commitment.

The Minister of State at the Department of Defence traditionally has responsibility for Civil Defence and I am extremely proud of my involvement. I propose to bring forward a new Civil Defence Bill which will be published in the Autumn of this year. This Bill will update and improve existing legislation in relation to Civil Defence and steer the organisation into this new millennium.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Government to express my appreciation of the work and dedication of our Civil Defence volunteers, Civil Defence Officers, Assistant Civil Defence Officers and staff of the Department.

Seamus Brennan TD

Minister of State

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Summary

1.

The White Paper sets out the policy on Defence for the next decade with a view to ensuring an appropriate level of defence capability having regard to the changing defence and security environment both at home and abroad.

2.

Chapter 1 sets out the overall context within which the White Paper has been prepared. The White Paper provides for the restructuring and reorganisation of defence within the existing broad level of resources to ensure that the State has the Defence Forces that it needs. This builds on the progress already achieved since 1996 under the existing reform programme to develop sustainable and affordable Defence Forces for the long term.

3.

The key goals of the White Paper development programme are:

To provide a light infantry based force with an appropriate level of all-arms capability.

To provide sufficient forces and capabilities to meet needs at home and to make a significant contribution abroad.

To put in place a more cohesive and better equipped force than exists at

present.

To provide significant additional resources for equipment and infrastructure broadly within the existing level of financial allocation.

4.

These goals require the creation of a balanced and flexible military organisation which has sufficient depth in terms of personnel, doctrine, training, organisation and equipment to meet expected future needs. The current organisation provides a strong starting point but a process of continuous change will be needed to ensure that the State has effective and efficient defence capabilities relevant to its needs. This poses a demanding management challenge. However, the Defence Forces have shown in the past that they have the "can-do" approach to meet this challenge.

5.

Chapter 2 describes the defence and security environment. At the international level, significant changes have taken place since the end of the Cold War giving rise to new challenges. These changes are accompanied by developments at the institutional and political levels. The EU response to the new environment includes provision for Petersberg Tasks in the Treaty of Amsterdam. In the home context, the progress under the Good Friday Agreement and subsequent political developments, continue to offer firm hope for a lasting peace.

6.

Chapter 3 describes defence policy. There will be a continuing need to ensure that Ireland has conventionally organised Defence Forces capable of operating alongside military forces from other countries in a peace support role and of responding to the uncertainties and challenges of the changing environment. For the present, prudence dictates an on-going requirement for the Defence Forces to support the Garda Síochána, in particular providing support in response to potential actions of dissident groups. The roles of the Defence Forces laid down by the Government are reviewed and provision is made for ensuring that the defence and security environment assessment is updated on a regular basis.

7.

Chapter 4 sets out major new plans for the development of sustainable and affordable Defence Forces to ensure that they are capable of meeting the challenges of the emerging defence and security environment and to fulfil the roles laid down by the Government. This will involve the provision of a Permanent Defence Force of 10,500 personnel, plus the option of 250 recruits in training and the conversion of about £20m resources from the pay to non-pay areas. In addition to these pay savings, extra resources will also be generated from the sale of properties outside of barracks which are surplus to requirements. Additional to the savings generated from Defence Forces restructuring, an extra £5m will be allocated to defence each year for the next five years to meet urgent Air Corps equipment requirements. These measures will help achieve the required balance between pay and non-pay expenditure. The overall thrust of the restructuring is to ensure that the Defence Forces have the organisation, personnel, training and equipment to fulfil their roles now and in the future. A special joint Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group will develop the necessary proposals for Defence Forces equipment over the medium to long term. The Air Corps and the Naval Service will be developed and new equipment provided. The policy of continuous recruitment will be maintained and a new Personnel Management Development programme will be put in place to ensure that a career in the Defence Forces is attractive.

8.

Chapter 5 describes the development of the Reserve Defence Force. An Fórsa Cosanta Aitiúil (FCA) will become the Army Reserve, and together with An Slua Muirí (the Naval Reserve) will be developed and improved. The Army Reserve will have a new organisation and increased training and better equipment. Personnel of the Reserve may undertake periods of service in units integrated with the Permanent Defence Force for conventional military training. In addition provision is being made to enable members of the Reserve who meet appropriate training standards to serve overseas in peace support missions.

9.

Chapter 6 outlines the current and future approaches to overseas peace support operations and describes Ireland's commitment to the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS).

10.

Chapter 7 deals with the evolution of Civil Defence and the need to build on the "Towards 2000" programme. It indicates the areas upon which Civil Defence will focus in providing services at community level through the volunteer organisation. As part of the Government's plans for decentralisation of elements of the public service, the Civil Defence Branch of the Department of Defence will be relocated to Roscrea.

11.

Chapter 8 sets out proposals for the enhancement of defence management through restructuring and other proposals relating to the Department of Defence.

12.

Chapter 9 contains details of the overall financial framework for the provision of defence services. A key element of this framework is the allocation of savings from the restructuring of the Defence Forces to investment in equipment and infrastructure.

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1. Introduction

1.1 First White Paper on Defence

1.1.1

This is the first time that a White Paper on Defence (*) has been published in Ireland. In recent years, there has been a growing public awareness of the importance of defence issues and of the need for Ireland to take a more considered view of our defence and security environment, particularly in the context of developments in the European Union. In addition, there has been a growing focus on strategic management in the public service. These themes are complementary in the White Paper process, which had as its objectives:

> to provide a medium term policy framework within which Defence policy can evolve to set out a clear strategy for the next ten years;

to provide for the continuation of the reform programme of Defence services, already commenced under the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan, consistent with the national and international security environment and the state of the public finances;

to ensure that the management of Defence services is in accordance with the evolution of the Strategic Management Initiative for the public service; and,

to set out the basis for the future development of Civil Defence policy and the follow-up to the present *"Towards 2000"* strategy.

(- The terminology used in the White Paper is as follows : the term "defence" is used to refer in a broad sense to defence provision in Ireland comprising civil and military elements; "defence organisation" refers to the civil and military organisation; the "Defence Forces" refer to the military organisation.)*

1.1.2

The White Paper sets out the strategy for defence for the next decade and builds on the reorganisation and reform process begun in the 1990s. A restructuring process is mapped out to ensure that the Defence Forces are geared for the evolving defence and security environment. The White Paper also sets out a new approach to enable the management of defence to respond in a dynamic way to future needs.

1.2 Background to the White Paper

1.2.1

The Action Programme for the Millennium contained a commitment to publish a White Paper on Defence which was reaffirmed in the Government's recent mid-term review. It was a response to recommendations made in previous reviews of the Defence Forces and was a natural progression in the Department of Defence's on-going strategic process.

1.2.2

In their 1994 review of the Defence Forces and again in their 1998 studies of the Air Corps and the Naval Service, consultants Price Waterhouse suggested that a White Paper on Defence would be an important element in providing an explicit policy framework to support more detailed decision-making on the Defence Forces.

1.2.3

The preparation of this White Paper is a positive opportunity to support the development of defence. Changes in the defence and security environment since the early 1990s, the on-going reform process in defence, and public service reform under the Strategic Management Initiative, make the publication of a White Paper opportune.

1.3 General Approach

1.3.1

The publication of a White Paper reflects the importance which the Government attach to having a soundly based approach to defence. It sets out the Government's medium term strategies to give effect to their policies on defence. These policies are consistent with broader Government objectives on foreign and security policy at the national and international levels.

1.3.2

Many of the themes addressed in the White Paper are not unique to Defence. Public service reform under the Strategic Management Initiative and the new Public Service Management legislation have addressed similar issues in other parts of the public service. The principal goals of these management reforms in the public service are:

to contribute to national development;

to provide excellent service to the customer; and,

to ensure an effective and efficient use of resources.

1.3.3

From submissions made to the Department, it is clear that some viewed the White Paper process as an opportunity to propose increases in the overall allocation of resources to defence. In the final analysis, the share of public resources allocated to any area of public spending is a matter for Government decision. Defence in Ireland is conducted within a modest level of resources. To increase this overall level would involve a

departure in the approach to defence in this country and would necessarily involve a shift in public resources from other areas to defence. However, nothing has emerged in the course of this process to suggest that there is any need for substantial change in the overall level of resource allocation.

1.3.4

Within a policy which recognises the importance of the political dimensions to security, there is still a hard edge to defence which is ultimately to do with preparation for and actual use of force as a legitimate policy option in response to security challenges. The Defence Forces have been confronted by dangerous operational situations at home and abroad in responding to the needs of the United Nations (UN) in the peace support context. In both environments, a credible capacity to use appropriate force has been a necessary element of the response which is only made possible by an adequate defence capability. In this context, the Government are satisfied that the broad level of resources allocated to defence is appropriate.

1.3.5

In all areas of the public service, there is constant pressure to increase expenditure and a tendency to associate re-development with a greater share of resources. This approach is unrealistic and in defence, as in the rest of the public service, there is a need for a better management of resources and to develop the necessary dynamism and flexibility to ensure the organisation gears itself for changing circumstances.

1.3.6

A major element of the approach to defence in Ireland is the utilisation of a professional Permanent Defence Force - Army, Air Corps and Naval Service - augmented by a volunteer reserve. It has been a feature of Irish defence provision that the Defence Forces, permanent and reserve, have always been based on voluntary service even during the period of the Second World War.

1.3.7

The State’s long-standing policy of military neutrality has never been a limiting factor

in the use of defence as an appropriate tool of international policy in the UN context and in the context of European Union (EU) membership having regard to the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam. The White Paper provides the opportunity to reflect on changing trends in the defence and security environment and to explore the implications of these for defence.

1.3.8

Defence is an expression of sovereignty. Defence provision is to a significant extent about preparing for and dealing with contingency: it has been likened to insurance. The defence organisation must seek to provide capabilities appropriate to the anticipated risks - the risks to the security of the State in its broadest sense. Defence is not the only policy response to these risks - political, diplomatic, economic and other policy roles all play a part. To a significant extent, defence is about preparing and maintaining a capability to respond to contingencies and threats. When not actually engaged in operations, any defence organisation concentrates on training and preparation, and not on the provision of identifiable services to individual citizens. For this reason, the value of a defence force can be less apparent and more open to question than organisations focused on everyday service provision. However, it is important to stress that the Defence Forces continue to provide services to the general public, for example, aid to the civil power, search and rescue, fishery protection and air ambulance. Ultimately, the objective is an appropriate level of defence capability, in the light of the legitimacy of, and the necessity for, a military response to certain situations. This response must have regard to the current and prospective defence and security environment.

1.3.9

In addressing issues of defence policy, it is necessary to refer back to the review of the Defence Forces conducted by the Efficiency Audit Group (EAG) (*) which included a study by consultants Price Waterhouse. That comprehensive review set out the basis for the current reorganisation process and has been accepted by successive Governments. The overall reform process was identified as requiring up to ten years and it is important to take account of the progress made to date.

(- The Efficiency Audit Group was established to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of different branches of Government under an independent Chairman and involving all of the relevant stakeholders and utilising independently appointed consultants.)*

1.4 The White Paper process

1.4.1

In August 1998, interested parties were invited to make submissions on the White Paper. A position paper (Appendix A) was published to provide those interested with an overview of the areas to be covered by the White Paper. The deadline for submissions was originally set at 30 October 1998. In the event, a number of the key stakeholders, including the Permanent Defence Force Other Ranks Representative Association (PDFORRA) and the Representative Association of Commissioned Officers (RACO), were allowed substantial additional time to complete their submissions. Overall some 46 submissions were received of which 27 were from individuals and 19 from various organisations or groups. Thirteen submissions related primarily to Civil Defence matters. A list of the contributing organisations is provided at Appendix B.

1.4.2

A number of those who made submissions were met by civil and military personnel of the Department during June-July 1999. These meetings were a very constructive part of the White Paper process.

1.4.3

Many of the submissions were substantial and clearly involved a considerable commitment of time and energy. Some groups, such as PDFORRA and RACO, published their submissions, so the contents of these are already in the public domain. All submissions were carefully considered and the following are some of the main points that emerged:

The submissions were supportive of the White Paper process and saw it as opportune.

There was general support for the Defence Forces and a widespread appreciation of the important job that they do.

There was recognition of the fast changing defence and security environment and the need to ensure that the Defence organisation is geared to meet these new challenges.

This was generally coupled with a desire to look outwards and to ensure that Ireland can play its full part in developments in Europe and elsewhere, especially in the context of emerging European security developments arising within the EU or under Partnership for Peace.

Linked to this last point there was a belief that the Defence Forces must be willing to embrace a programme of continual and radical change to meet new challenges and that change would be beneficial to the Defence Forces in the long term.

There was a general appreciation that resources, human and financial, are limited and need to be managed carefully.

The need to link the Reserve Defence Force with the overall provision of defence in a more effective way was identified.

There was a recognition that the steady progress on improving and upgrading the equipment base of the Defence Forces needs to be continued.

There were a number of submissions which took an expansionist approach to defence and sought additional resources on a significant scale

while others took an opposite view.

In the Civil Defence area, a number of submissions sought to build on the progress already made under the "***Towards 2000***" programme.

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Defence and Security Environment Assessment

2.1 Introduction and General Assessment

Defence policy must be grounded upon a realistic assessment of the defence and security environment. The principal conclusions of the Government's current review of this environment are:

Ireland faces a generally benign security environment.

The external security environment does not contain any specific threats to the overall security of the State.

Broader security challenges have emerged in the European context which impact on Ireland as a member of the European Union (EU). These include humanitarian and other crises for which international responses are required.

The on-island security environment is being transformed through progress under the Good Friday Agreement. While some threats to peace remain, the Agreement provides the basis for a lasting peace.

2.2 Developments in the External Security Environment

2.2.1

Ireland enjoys a very benign external security environment. Since the end of the Cold War and the general relaxation of East-West tensions, there has been a positive transformation in Ireland's external security environment in common with that of our neighbours in Western Europe. Ireland faces virtually no risk of external military attack on its territory from another State and there is at present virtually no risk of externally instigated conflict in our immediate region. Any change in this position is likely to be preceded by a significant warning time of some years.

2.2.2

The Cold War era was marked by high risk and, paradoxically, high stability. The risks of a ruinous land battle between East and West, fought largely on the territory of the EU and, what many saw as its inevitable consequence, global nuclear war, have receded dramatically. The new security environment in greater Europe, however, is marked by a lower degree of risk of large scale military conflict, but also by new challenges and uncertainties. Ethnic, economic and religious strains rooted in history, and the pursuit of self-determination, have now become a focus of security tensions in Europe and around the world. To an extent not seen in Europe since the Second World War, civilians have been caught up in these conflicts, leading to humanitarian crises and refugee flows which have affected every country in the EU. Moreover, these conflicts have resulted in substantial zones of instability on or close to the borders of the EU. The risk of spillover and escalation, as well as humanitarian concerns, have resulted, in some instances, in the intervention of the wider international community.

2.2.3

The EU has been developing its approach to European security and defence through the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties. The EU, expressly in its Treaties, and by virtue of its potential as a pole of attraction, a zone of stability, and an instrument for promoting stability outside its frontiers, has a capacity to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world.

2.2.4

The EU Treaties do not provide a mutual defence guarantee. It is clear, however, that the security interests of member states are increasingly interdependent. There is a security impact in terms of political solidarity between member states, reinforced by agreement on the progressive framing of a common defence policy which might lead to a common defence. The operational focus of the EU is on tasks of peacekeeping and crisis management in Europe (the Petersberg Tasks) as set out in the Treaty of Amsterdam. Moreover, the EU's enlargement process constitutes an encouragement to the applicant countries to persevere on the road to building democratic, stable and secure societies. EU enlargement is one element in the continuing creation of a European security architecture which must build upon the benefits arising from the end of the Cold War in terms of co-operative security in Europe. The EU's Common Strategy on Russia, adopted at Cologne in June 1999, reflects the wish to enhance outreach to Russia.

2.2.5

Elsewhere in the world, new risks to international peace and security have emerged through confrontation in the Middle East and Asia. In Africa also, problems associated with weak political institutions and other political and economic difficulties all call for a response from Europe, among others. The expectation that responses should be forthcoming either from the United Nations or indeed Europe poses political, economic and logistical challenges.

2.2.6

The UN has had to respond to an increased number of conflicts in the 1990s and has, where appropriate, encouraged regional organisations to use their own potential for preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peace-making and post-conflict peace building. In recent times, organisations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) have been tasked with peacekeeping under a UN mandate. Ireland's participation in the Stablisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) and the International Security Presence in Kosovo (KFOR) is indicative of a trend in the conduct of peace support operations. Traditionally peace support missions, for example the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), have been directly organised by the United Nations.

2.2.7

Since the end of the Cold War, the threat of nuclear weapons has changed but not disappeared. Proliferation of nuclear weapons, the degradation of massive arsenals from the Cold War era, as well as the risks posed by biological and chemical weapons, and instances of their use in recent years, emphasise the continuing threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

2.2.8

In the wider security sphere, international crime, the proliferation of small arms, drug trafficking, environmental problems, ethnic conflicts and refugee flows pose fundamental challenges in that they do not recognise international boundaries. Although an island situated on the western periphery of Europe, Ireland has had some experience of the effects of these challenges. Serious and disruptive as these challenges are, especially for some EU countries, they are generally not threatening to the overall security of states in the same way as conventional defence threats.

2.3 On-island internal security environment

2.3.1

The threats to the security of the State which have required an operational response from the Defence Forces over the last thirty years have all been in the internal security domain. The internal security of the State is primarily the responsibility of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Garda Síochána. The Garda Síochána are predominantly unarmed and trained for policing activities in a normal peaceful society although they have developed some armed and specialist elements. The Defence Forces provide military personnel in an operational role in an aid to the civil power (ATCP) capacity.

2.3.2

The Good Friday Agreement continues to be a source of hope for the political settlement of conflict in Northern Ireland. The political and security situations in Northern Ireland have been transformed by the Good Friday Agreement.

2.3.3

The security situation in Northern Ireland and on the Border has been transformed with the continuing cease-fires on the part of the main republican and loyalist paramilitary groups and the beginning of normalisation of security arrangements as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement. These ceasefires have been firmly in place for a substantial period of time.

2.3.4

Paramilitary organisations hold significant quantities of illegally held offensive weapons and explosives, and are subject to varying degrees of political influence. All of the parties to the Agreement are committed to using any influence they may have to achieve the decommissioning of all paramilitary arms by May 2000. The appointment of representatives to enter into discussions with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, following the establishment of the institutions of the Agreement, has been recognised as a significant and positive development in this regard.

2.3.5

The British Government, for its part, is committed under the Agreement to making progress in reducing the numbers and the role of their armed forces in Northern Ireland to levels compatible with a normal peaceful society. It published its Security Strategy document in December 1999 which outlines normalisation measures put in place to date and the further steps to be taken. A review of security arrangements is currently being undertaken by the British Government, in consultation with the Irish Government, the political parties and interested groups. The British Government is also committed to continuing consultation on the regulation and control of legally held firearms in Northern Ireland. The Independent Commission on Policing established under the Agreement has brought forward substantial recommendations for the organisation, management and resourcing of policing in a normal, peaceful society including transitional arrangements. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland endorsed the essential thrust of these recommendations in a statement to the British Parliament on 19 January 2000.

2.3.6

The Good Friday Agreement provides that the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference will facilitate continuing co-operation in security matters between the two Governments. Cross-border and other aspects of this co-operation are, of course, relevant to consideration of the Defence Forces' continuing role. A certain level of threat from dissident paramilitary groupings is likely to remain for some time.

2.3.7

The security environment issues which have to be considered in the context of Northern Ireland stem from the actions or potential actions of illegal armed organisations, republican or loyalist. The greater threat to the security of the State stems from the activities, and potential activities, of dissident republican paramilitary groups. While it is recognised that the current ceasefires have been sustained over a protracted period, organisations of this kind may pose security dangers for which a level of defence response continues to be required. However, the overall dangers to security are of a considerably lower order than was the case prior to the ceasefires and it is considered likely that the longer that this period of sustained peace continues, the less danger there is of a return to widespread violence.

2.3.8

While dissident republican groups present a threat to security in a broad sense, they do not, given their small level of political support, represent a potential insurgency threat to the State. The threats from these groups stem principally from the threat of bank or other cash robberies and from the illegal importation of arms through or into the State. In pursuing their activities, such groups have shown a willingness to kill members of the public, the Garda Síochána or the Defence Forces.

2.3.9

The threat from loyalist armed groups is entirely different. Like the republican groups, there is the potential for the formation of factions based on these groups' perception of the political process. Unlike the republican groups, there is no evidence that the loyalist groups can rely on support (for example, safe houses, storage of weapons) within the State. This is not to discount the threat to security from such groups. Of their nature they are unpredictable but at present there would appear to be a limited threat of a sustainable assault on the State from these groups. The loyalist paramilitaries can call on a considerable reserve of weaponry. However, while the availability of these weapons can be a significant contributor to violent activity in Northern Ireland, it is of less significance in relation to this State. As a further point, while the scale of legal weapons ownership in Northern Ireland (some 140,000 weapons are legally held in private hands) is high by standards in Britain or this State, this may be considered unlikely to be a significant threat to this State.

2.3.10

There is no particular threat to the State from other externally based subversive groups. While some continental countries fear the actual or potential activities of international terrorist groups, there is no evidence to suggest that any of these groups has reason or desire to undertake attacks against this State.

2.3.11

While there is no threat to the security of the State per se from the existence of externally based organised crime, such crime does impact on the State and its citizens. The State will play its part in assisting other States in combating such crime. The single most important area of externally based crime arises from drug trafficking. These matters are essentially policing issues.

Chap

3. Defence Policy and Programmes - Roles of the Defence Forces

3.1 Introduction

The Government are committed to the provision of Defence Forces organised, maintained and equipped on conventional military lines to ensure a defence capacity suited to current and contingent needs. This chapter provides an overview of defence policy responses to the environmental analysis already described.

3.2 Defence Responses to the Changing Defence and Security

Environment

International context

3.2.1

Ireland is a small country with a limited capacity to influence its external environment. We have a practical as well as a principled interest in the maintenance of international peace and security in Europe and further afield. Our defence policy will seek to reflect this strategic interest.

3.2.2

The analysis of the external security environment already outlined indicates that national security has evolved beyond the narrow role of territorial defence towards issues of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and crisis management. A broad concept of security has emerged in all of the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions including the EU. In order to keep up with new security challenges, defence concepts have evolved focusing on rapidly deployable forces which can engage in a range of different operations - including humanitarian tasks, peacekeeping and crisis management.

3.2.3

European security is in a process of transition in which all of the organisations involved, including the European Union, are adapting themselves to the new realities and are engaging in detailed co-operation. These developments reflect certain precepts publicly assented to by all European and North American states, including Ireland: the indivisibility of security; the importance of collective security based on the principles of international law; the emergence of a comprehensive concept of security which reflects the new risks and challenges; the importance of co-operative mechanisms between states, and also between security institutions in order to promote international peace and stability. It is in Ireland's and Europe's interest to continue to develop the architecture and structures which will contribute to improving security in the European and international domain.

3.2.4

Ireland's commitment to collective security is pursued through the United Nations which has the primary role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security. The UN possesses no standing military forces of its own and relies on the provision of such resources by willing members. Since 1958, Ireland has provided military personnel and units to UN missions and has indicated continued willingness to participate in peace support and humanitarian operations throughout the world. Ireland has offered, through the UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS), to provide up to 850 military personnel to meet UN and other peace support and humanitarian commitments. Defence policy must allow for the provision and maintenance of military forces for such purposes.

3.2.5

Ireland is an active and committed member of the EU and our financial, political, economic and social well-being is inextricably linked to our participation in the Union. Ireland has a fundamental strategic interest in the peace, security and stability of the EU and adjoining regions - an interest which is increasing in the context of the Euro currency, preparation for enlargement to the East, and in view of the growing expectation that the EU should take a more active role in addressing regional conflict such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

3.2.6

Increasingly, proactive and preventive approaches which entail a range of co-ordinated techniques - for example, political, diplomatic, humanitarian, policing and military - in the form of regional peacekeeping and crisis management, are seen as necessary to ensure stability and to defend against threats to security in the European sphere. The reality is that no one state or institution can deal by itself with the multi-faceted challenges to security of the post Cold War world. An increasing number of countries, including all of the former adversaries of the Cold War, including Russia, and neutral states, are involved in a web of mutually reinforcing security co-operation in the Euro-Atlantic area. This security interdependence, which involves the UN, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the EU, NATO and the Western European Union (WEU), has played a role in reducing the risk of war between states within Europe, as well as facilitating co-operation for the management of regional conflicts such as in the Balkans. Partnership for Peace (PfP) also contributes to this

process.

3.2.7

In a broader context, this emerging scenario must be set in the context of Ireland's membership of the UN and does not take from Ireland's belief in the primacy of the UN as the principal institution in the development of international relations and the promotion of peace and security. The Treaty of Amsterdam takes account both of the specific character of the security and defence policies of member states and the broader European and global security context. The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) under the Treaty of Amsterdam encompasses a new role for the EU in the areas of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking, known as Petersberg Tasks. In Ireland's case, participation in Petersberg Tasks will not affect our long-standing policy of military neutrality. Proposals for the development of European military forces which would be available to the EU to undertake Petersberg operations are indicative of the recognition of both the indivisibility of European security and the need for a collective response by Europeans to these challenges. The EU member states have set an agreed, voluntary target, known as a Headline Goal, to improve capabilities for Petersberg Tasks which they aim to meet by the year 2003. Ireland will maintain the sovereign decision over whether, when and how to commit Irish personnel to a Petersberg Task or to any overseas peacekeeping or crisis management operation. The EU have identified the capabilities to ensure effective performance in peace support and crisis management. These include: deployability, sustainability, interoperability, flexibility, mobility, survivability and command and control. The qualitative importance of these capabilities is borne out by Ireland's experience of peacekeeping and crisis management over many years.

3.2.8

The recent crisis in Kosovo and proposals in support of the view within the EU that the European states should do more in this area have acted as catalysts in the defence and security debate within the EU.

3.2.9

The decisions at the 1999 Cologne and Helsinki EU summits recognise the need for a collective response to security challenges and the associated need for the EU to work towards a capability for autonomous action. This does not involve the creation of a European Army. The current challenges facing the EU relate essentially to peacekeeping and crisis management, and not the hard defence commitments which for certain member states remain the preserve of NATO. PfP is of importance in facilitating planning and co-operation for Petersberg Tasks. Ireland joined PfP on 1 December 1999. From Ireland's perspective, participation in any EU level response would only arise where a UN mandate is in place. The participation by the Defence Forces in this emerging environment is an important element of Ireland's capacity to influence events in a way which is sensitive to this country's needs and consonant with its military neutrality.

On-island context

3.2.10

With regard to on-island security, internal security arrangements in the State contribute to the development and maintenance of public confidence, both here and in Northern Ireland and thus support the new political structures emanating from the peace process.

3.2.11

The response to threats from paramilitaries is a matter for the Garda Síochána in the first instance. However, there will continue to be a requirement, for the foreseeable

future, for the Defence Forces to be available to support the Garda Síochána in an aid to the civil power (ATCP) capacity and to respond to paramilitary activity on either a localised or nation-wide basis. This Defence Forces contribution relates primarily to the supply of personnel for cash escort security and to the availability of personnel from time to time for other ATCP back-up, for example, check-point or cordon operations. It is also important that the Defence Forces continue to be able to provide an appropriate Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) capability.

3.2.12

The political and security situations in Northern Ireland have been transformed by the ceasefires and there is the firm hope of a lasting peace. However, account still needs to be taken of the activities of paramilitary groups on both sides of the Border. Therefore, security issues in the Border area will continue to be of importance, at least in the short term. There will be a continuing need for availability of Garda Síochána and Defence Forces personnel to undertake security tasks in that area. The overall level of commitments will, however, be kept under review and as the security situation continues to improve, these commitments will be scaled back appropriately. The Defence Forces also provide military security at Portlaoise Prison. The nature and extent of this requirement will be kept under review.

3.2.13

For the foreseeable future, any actual or potential activities of international terrorist individuals or groups can be dealt with as a policing matter. However, the maintenance in the State of an effective EOD capacity is essential in this context.

3.2.14

With regard to responses to externally based organised crime, and the illegal importation of drugs in particular, the co-operation between the Garda Síochána and other police forces and international police agencies, together with the work of Customs agencies, is the most important contribution to such problems. Interventions to intercept trafficking operations usually take place on foot of specific intelligence from domestic or international police sources. Requests for aerial surveillance and/or maritime surveillance/interception by the Defence Forces arise from time to time and do not impact significantly on the ability of the Defence Forces to perform other tasks such as fishery protection.

3.2.15

While there is no general threat to the security of the State from domestically-based organised crime, the Defence Forces role in aid to the civil power contributes to security by the provision of, for example, cash escorts. There is some common ground between the threat to general security from armed criminals and paramilitary groups, including the willingness to use arms and to kill in pursuit of illegal activity. However, it is important not to overstate the total level of criminal activity in this area; appropriate security precautions by holders and transporters of cash are the best primary response.

3.2.16

Interception of arms, which is largely an intelligence based activity, may result from time to time in a requirement for a Defence Forces response in the ATCP role.

3.3 Current Roles of the Defence Forces

3.3.1

In 1993, the following roles of the Defence Forces were approved by the Government:

> to defend the State against armed aggression; this being a contingency, preparations for its implementation will depend on an on-going Government assessment of threats;
>
> to aid the civil power (meaning in practice to assist, when requested, the Garda Síochána, who have primary responsibility for law and order, including the protection of the internal security of the State);
>
> to participate in United Nations missions in the cause of international peace;
>
> to provide a fishery protection service in accordance with the State's obligations as a member of the European Community;
>
> to carry out such other duties as may be assigned to them from time to time, eg search and rescue, air ambulance service, Ministerial air transport service, assistance on the occasion of natural or other disasters, assistance in connection with the maintenance of essential services, dealing with oil pollution at sea.

These roles have provided the policy underpinning to organisational, operational, training and resourcing decisions.

3.3.2

The Government consider that the defence and security environment outlined does not require any substantial changes to these roles and that the roles correctly encompass the full range of requirements that the State has for its Defence Forces. In particular, the statement of roles identifies the contingent nature of defence while at the same time indicating the range of other missions and tasks carried out by the Defence Forces on a day-to-day basis.

3.3.3

It is important that the statement of roles is kept up to date and therefore the White Paper provided the opportunity to refine the statement having regard to the passage of time. Firstly, the revised statement reflects the need for the Government's assessment to cover the broader security and defence context, including threats, which impact on overall defence planning and configuration. Secondly, the revised statement recognises the role of the Defence Forces in participating in overseas missions and takes account of the wider context in which UN authorised missions may arise. The Government have decided that the revised roles of the Defence Forces are:

to defend the State against armed aggression; this being a contingency, preparations for its implementation will depend on an on-going Government assessment of the security and defence environment;

to aid the civil power (meaning in practice to assist, when requested, the Garda Síochána, who have primary responsibility for law and order, including the protection of the internal security of the State);

to participate in multinational peace support, crisis management and humanitarian relief operations in support of the United Nations and under UN mandate, including regional security missions authorised by the UN;

to provide a fishery protection service in accordance with the State's obligations as a member of the EU;

to carry out such other duties as may be assigned to them from time to time, eg search and rescue, air ambulance service, Ministerial air transport service, assistance on the occasion of natural or other disasters, assistance in connection with the maintenance of essential services, assistance in combating oil pollution at sea.

3.4 Government Assessment of the Defence and Security Environment

3.4.1

The defence and security environment is assessed in an operational context on a continuing basis. A more formalised type of assessment was undertaken as part of the White Paper process and the Government consider that there is a need to ensure that this kind of assessment takes place as part of the normal business of defence and the interaction with other interested Departments and agencies.

3.4.2

There is a need for a more formalised arrangement to ensure that the Government is kept up to date on the implications for defence and the Defence Forces of developments in the defence and security environment. As a matter of policy, the Government have decided to establish a standing inter-departmental committee under the aegis of the Department of Defence, chaired at Assistant Secretary level, and comprising nominees from the Department, civil and military, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Garda Síochána and the Department of the Taoiseach. This group will meet at least once a year to provide whatever inputs are necessary to ensure that the Minister for Defence has the best possible information available to him on current and emerging developments in the defence and security environment so that these can be considered in the context of the management of defence and to enable the Minister to keep the Government fully advised of the implications for defence and the Defence Forces.

4. Defence Forces Organisation and Development: 2000-2010

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the defence organisation is to ensure that the State has available to it affordable and sustainable conventional military Defence Forces to fulfil the roles laid down by Government. The organisation must continually evolve and develop in order to keep pace with the changing environment and to ensure that it has the flexibility to meet Government's on-going requirements. The White Paper sets out the Government's strategy for Defence Force development in the period up to 2010.

4.2 Defence Policy Requirements

4.2.1

Having regard to the defence and security environment, the Government's policy for defence will be aimed at ensuring that the following requirements are met:

> To maintain a military force structure that provides a basis for responding to any major change in Ireland's strategic circumstances in the medium to long term, as well as demonstrating an appropriate commitment to national defence.
>
> To maintain a military force structure capable of responding to requests to provide aid to the civil power and in that context, contributing to the prevention of security challenges from abroad including terrorism and arms smuggling.
>
> To fulfil Ireland's international and regional responsibilities arising from membership of the UN by providing a range of military capabilities that can effectively be employed to participate in a broad range of multinational peace support and humanitarian relief operations.
>
> To demonstrate Ireland's commitment to European security by having a suitable range of military capabilities that can be used to make appropriate contributions to regional security missions authorised by the UN.

4.2.2

The Government's White Paper provides a policy framework to ensure that the State has affordable and sustainable conventional Defence Forces appropriate to its needs, having regard both to current and contingent requirements. The Defence Forces must have the capacity and flexibility to meet Government requirements in the evolving defence and security environment, particularly having regard to the new challenges to security in the European context. Although much has been achieved in the past three years in the context of the reform process initiated under the auspices of the EAG review, there is a need to ensure the on-going development of this process.

4.2.3

Most importantly the issues as set out below must be addressed.

> The achievement of an appropriate balance within defence expenditure between the pay and non-pay areas is critical to ensuring a sustainable defence capability. The pay:non-pay expenditure ratio has improved from around 78:22 in 1996 to 76:24 in 1999 (excluding hearing loss compensation which is not relevant to defence capability) but it is still out

of line with the minimum target ratio of 70:30 recommended by the EAG and accepted in principle by Government. Equipment deficiencies remain which cannot be addressed as quickly or as comprehensively as is desirable while the pay:non-pay imbalance remains.

The currently approved manpower level of 11,500 was an initial step in bridging the gap between the level recommended by the EAG and that proposed by the military authorities in 1995. The underlying recommendations made by Price Waterhouse that existing domestic and international commitments should be capable of being met by fewer personnel still apply. The fact that the EAG's recommendations preceded the first Northern Ireland ceasefires underlines the scope for further manpower efficiencies. Price Waterhouse considered three options for the manpower level of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) which varied according to the number of brigades suggested. These options were for a one brigade force with a total manpower of 8,310; a two brigade force of 10,033 - which was their favoured option; and a third option for a three brigade force with 10,656 personnel.

The present organisational structure provides for three all-arms brigades involving infantry, combat service and combat service support elements. This structure differs considerably from the light infantry based army recommended by Price Waterhouse and accepted in principle in Government decisions on the reform process.

With the exception of newer border barracks and posts, the deployment of the Defence Forces, and specifically the Army, has been determined predominantly by historical factors with units being spread over too many locations. This deployment results in an overhead in terms of barracks maintenance, security and administration.

4.3 Defence Forces Organisational Structure

4.3.1

A process of reorganisation and reform has been underway in the defence area during the 1990s. The Efficiency Audit Group completed a series of examinations of the defence area in 1994-95 based on a report by consultants Price Waterhouse. The consultants had been asked to review the Defence Forces and to make recommendations. Independent military advice was supplied by Canadian military officers on the Price Waterhouse team and by the EAG's own military adviser from New Zealand.

4.3.2

The conclusions which emerged from the EAG's review were that the Defence Forces manpower and organisation were in need of radical change in order to ensure that the Defence Forces were in a position to fulfil their roles. There was an excessive number of under-strength units. There were many serious personnel problems including a high age profile and a large number of personnel who were not medically fit for the full range of military duties. There was a shortage of funds for equipment and collective training arising from an imbalance in the allocation of resources between pay and non-pay expenditure. Only 17% of Defence Forces time was employed on operational activity compared to high manpower usage in barracks security, other support activities and administration.

4.3.3

The many positive features of the organisation were also recognised, including the "can-do" approach, the high standards of individual training and the extent to which general

military doctrine had been preserved despite the other deficiencies of the organisation. Since the review progress has been made in many areas. There is now a greater concentration on operational and training activity and progress continues to be made. The new streamlined organisation deriving from the creation of two posts at Deputy Chief of Staff level has assisted this process. The introduction of a process of continuous recruitment has also created a positive new dynamic. New overseas missions in Europe such as SFOR and KFOR have been successfully taken on, as well as the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET).

4.3.4

Based on Government approval of the general thrust of the EAG report, the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan (1996-98) provided a three year first phase plan to address the issues identified by the EAG as part of a longer term reform. The plan provided for the replacement of the previous multi-layered structure of four commands with a more streamlined Army organisation based on three light infantry brigades. The plan achieved a reduction in the overall manpower level while facilitating the introduction of a policy of regular recruitment. The reduction in manpower was mainly achieved by means of a voluntary early retirement scheme which was availed of by over 1,500 personnel in the period 1996-98 at a cost of over £65m in retirement benefits. From 1999 onwards, payroll savings of some £15m a year began to accrue and 50% of these savings have been made available for investment in additional new equipment. These funds are being channelled into the acquisition of 40 new armoured personnel carriers for the Army for which a contract was placed in December 1999, with delivery to be completed by mid-2002.

4.3.5

There were two key elements to the decisions on the reorganisation, firstly that the State should have available to it Defence Forces organised on conventional military lines, and secondly, that full achievement of the recommended reforms would take up to ten years. Regarding the overall level of defence provision, Price Waterhouse stated:

"It is not possible within a reasonable cost envelope (ie a cost envelope bounded by expenditure parameters in or around current levels of Government spending on Defence activity) to provide a contingent capability on any on-going basis against the worst case scenario at the extreme upper end of the threat spectrum. Indeed, no country could afford to resource an on-going capability against a doomsday scenario..... An all-arms conventional force is needed in order to provide a credible response against armed aggression, as dictated by Government, based on our independent assessment of threats".

4.3.6

Price Waterhouse stated that a conventional force would also provide a sufficiently flexible structure to carry out all of the roles assigned by Government whereas any other form of armed force would not be able to discharge all of the roles. An important consideration in this regard is that a conventional military capability cannot be quickly acquired. It must be built up over years and maintained at a level consistent with threats and roles. Once lost, it cannot be easily regained. The Government are, therefore, committed to the maintenance of a versatile force, which is organised, equipped and trained along conventional lines, which can adapt readily to the requirements of different situations in the prevailing defence and security environment, and which can participate in a broad spectrum of military and non-military operations. A force other than a conventionally trained and appropriately equipped military force would not have the operational or technical expertise, deployability, readiness and capacity to discharge modern peace support type operations.

Defence Policy - Force Requirements and Overall Manpower

4.3.7

The Government accept the continuing validity of these judgments. The Defence Forces will continue to be developed to ensure the retention of a conventional military organisation to meet current and contingent requirements.

4.3.8

To ensure that the State has affordable and sustainable Defence Forces geared to future requirements and which will be more effective and efficient, the Government have concluded that it is essential to review the strength of the Permanent Defence Force. In the context of enhancing the equipment and improving the infrastructure of the Defence Forces, the Government have decided that an overall manpower level of 10,500 for the PDF is to be achieved by the end of 2001 and that the resulting savings of £20m per year will be fully reinvested in the Defence Forces.

4.3.9

The Defence Forces require a strength of 10,500 soldiers, ready to fulfil current tasks at home and abroad. This strength represents the requirement to meet current roles and tasking and the current threat assessment. In order to maintain this force effectively for operations, and to provide for wastage (circa 1,000 per annum at present), the Chief of Staff will have the authority to have in training at any one time throughout the year, an additional 250 soldiers.

additional 250 soldiers.

4.3.10

It is expected that the present rate of personnel turnover will result in the achievement of the new manpower level within the timeframe mentioned while at the same time allowing for continuous recruitment. The Government consider that a programme of regular recruitment is essential and will therefore be continued. The strength of the PDF in 1999 has been well below 11,500 and currently stands at around 10,900. The revised ranks structure will have regard to the need to ensure reasonable career prospects for Defence Forces personnel as well as the need to maintain appropriate management structures.

4.3.11

While the Army, in the short term, will be required to make the largest adjustment to reach the overall ceiling of 10,500 personnel, some rebalancing of numbers between the Army, the Air Corps and the Naval Service should be possible in the light of future developments in the different services. For example, new less-maintenance intensive aircraft in the Air Corps, more contracting out of some services, lower crewing levels for some Naval Service vessels and the acquisition of newer ships over time, should yield further scope for efficiencies.

4.3.12

For the medium and longer term, it is clear that flexible, more mobile and better equipped Defence Forces will be required. Moreover, within the present resource envelope and numbers, the targeted 70:30 pay to non-pay expenditure ratio cannot be achieved. Accordingly, the Government's decision that the pay savings arising from the revised strength level of the PDF will be available in full for reinvestment in much needed equipment and infrastructure is critical.

Army Organisational Structure

4.3.13

A key difference between the structure recommended by Price Waterhouse and the current organisation was the adoption in the Implementation Plan of the 11,500 manpower level organised in three "all-arms" brigades (ie brigades with cavalry, artillery, engineer, transport and other elements in addition to infantry) rather than one or two such brigades. None of the Price Waterhouse options envisaged three full brigades.

4.3.14

Price Waterhouse had also sought to address the question of rationalisation of unit sizes particularly for infantry. While it has been possible to make some progress, the average strength of the Army's nine infantry battalions is only marginally higher at around 390 personnel compared to the average strength of the eleven pre-Plan infantry battalions of 345 personnel.

4.3.15

There is a danger of focusing excessively on the comparative strengths in the abstract rather than on military capabilities. The Implementation Plan made partial progress in achieving the goal recommended by Price Waterhouse of having "a light-infantry based army element with minimal requirements for heavy indirect fire support". In terms of capability, Price Waterhouse recognised that the Army should be built around the provision of adequate infantry. An undue emphasis on support elements in the Army, in some cases for historical reasons, results in additional overheads in terms of equipment, infrastructure and training for each of these non-infantry components and necessarily reduces operational capability where it is most urgently required.

4.3.16

Mobility and general deployability must be enhanced. This can only be achieved over time by the development of more flexible Defence Forces with better equipment, more collective training and an improved age profile.

4.3.17

The production of a plan to achieve the reduction of 1,000 personnel in the establishment of the PDF will be the responsibility of the Chief of Staff and any organisational adjustments necessary can be carried out by him, subject to an implementation plan to be approved by the Minister.

4.3.18

The new PDF organisation will be supported by the strategy for revitalisation of the Reserve Defence Force, as detailed later in the White Paper. The three brigade structure remains the basic organisation necessary to meet Defence Forces (PDF and FCA) tasks and responsibilities for the duration of the White Paper. This strategy includes provision for integration of elements of the new Army Reserve with the PDF brigades. This supporting role of the Reserve is based on the essentially contingent nature of conventional military requirements in the national defence context.

4.3.19

The White Paper sets out the strategy for Defence Forces strength and organisation for

The White Paper sets out the strategy for Defence Forces strength and organisation for the next ten years. This is recognised as being very important from the point of view of morale in the Defence Forces and in terms of providing the necessary stability and certainty for planning purposes and that there be no further review of strength in the ten year lifetime of the White Paper. The key goals of this restructuring and development programme which are not contingent on barracks closures are:

To provide a light infantry based force with an appropriate level of all-arms capability.

To provide sufficient forces and capabilities to meet needs at home and to make a significant contribution abroad.

To put in place a more cohesive and better equipped force than exists at present.

To provide significant additional resources for equipment and infrastructure broadly within the existing level of financial allocation.

4.4 Overseas Peace Support Operations

4.4.1

Overseas peace support and other operations, largely on UN authorised missions, dealt with more fully later in the White Paper, are the Defence Forces' single biggest operational tasking. By any international standard, Ireland is proportionately a very large contributor. This contribution is costly and will become more expensive as the UN's capacity to fund such operations diminishes, although a resolution of the financial crisis affecting the UN would greatly enhance its ability to finance such operations. Overseas operations have been an important dimension of meeting Ireland's international obligations, have significant training and morale-boosting benefits for the Defence Forces and enhance this country's standing on the international stage.

4.4.2

Under the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) Ireland offers to provide up to 850 personnel to serve on overseas operations. The spirit of UNSAS is that no commitment is too small or none too large. There is scope for Ireland to review its actual commitment at any given time. The proposals in the White Paper are directed at improving capabilities. There is a particular focus on improving the proportion of the Defence Forces deployable both in the domestic and international peace support context.

4.5 Defence Forces Personnel

Policy Context

4.5.1

The Government's defence policy is aimed at ensuring the availability of military personnel with the appropriate skills and equipment to undertake whatever tasks the State requires. The recruitment, induction, training and management of personnel are key to achieving this policy. Ireland has been fortunate in being able to call on dedicated men and women who have served the State loyally and with great dedication.

4.5.2

The 1994-95 EAG review identified a number of critical manpower problems:

- The age profile was too high at all rank levels.
- Maximum retirement ages were too high.
- Too many personnel were rated Medical Category C (unavailable for the full range of military duties).
- There was overmanning at officer level.
- Stop/Go recruitment was a detrimental factor.

4.5.3

The Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan (1996-98) represented the first phase response to these problems. Despite regular recruitment, the age profile continues to be too high. The solution can only be achieved over time as older personnel leave to be replaced by younger personnel and the overall proportion of personnel in the younger age ranges increases. The current age profile problem is both a product of the stop/go recruitment approach of the past and the fact that too many personnel remained in service beyond the appropriate age/rank profile.

4.5.4

A policy of regular recruitment is now in place and in time the induction of younger soldiers will make its mark on the overall age profile. The general state of the economy is also an important factor. The military organisation relies on a balanced recruitment and exit policy. In recent times, the Defence Forces have experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining personnel, arising principally from the extremely healthy state of the economy, which is in marked contrast to the position which obtained up to the early 1990s when there were long waiting lists for recruitment. The Defence Forces can continue to offer a range of unique and very attractive opportunities for people and should, with appropriate and targeted recruitment strategies, be able to obtain the required personnel.

4.5.5

The Government have decided that an updated Defence Forces Personnel Management Plan will be prepared as a matter of priority. This will build on what has been achieved already and, drawing on this experience, the Plan will set down policies and goals to ensure that personnel policies and practices keep pace with current best practice to the benefit of the new organisation. The representative associations will be fully consulted in a spirit of partnership in accordance with the system of representation. An Integrated Personnel Management Plan will include the following elements:

- A policy of regular recruitment to be continued, employing best practice in advertising approaches.
- Introduction of short service commissions and graduate entry as part of an overall plan to address the shortage of junior officers.
- Introduction of a system of officer promotion which will result in at least some personnel achieving the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in their thirties.
- Examination of arrangements to ensure appropriate turnover consistent

Examination of arrangements to ensure appropriate turnover consistent with retention of adequate manpower overall and the achievement of an improved age profile.

Proposals to address outstanding convergence issues.

Review of terms of engagement of enlisted personnel including new regulations to facilitate the transfer of personnel between locations and corps.

Ensuring that superannuation arrangements, which are at present under review, support the Personnel Management Plan.

Continued efforts to address the issue of the excessive number of personnel who are medically unfit.

Regular schemes to commission enlisted personnel as officers in the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service.

Reviewing arrangements to ensure, especially in the case of enlisted personnel, that members of the PDF have qualifications which will enhance their job prospects on leaving the Defence Forces.

Review of progress on equality issues in the Defence Forces.

Review of current fixed period promotion arrangements and consideration of the case for their abolition.

Study of reserve commitments of PDF personnel.

Review of the existing complaints procedure to ensure speedier consideration of cases and to supplement and strengthen the procedure with the introduction of an external element.

4.5.6

In relation to promotion, the Chief of Staff will control promotion of officers subject to Ministerial approval, Defence Forces Regulations and agreements with the staff associations and all NCO promotions within the 10,500 strength. The Chief of Staff will also control automatic recruitment to maintain the 10,500 strength and for this purpose the advertising finance for recruitment will be delegated to him.

4.5.7

The role of the representative associations in this context is fully acknowledged. Many of these issues are the subject of existing agreements negotiated with the associations under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme. In addition, there are other personnel management issues where the associations have indicated a desire to advance the interests of their members. Both sets of proposals for change will be addressed under the terms of the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme.

4.5.8

In recent years public service pay has generally been determined in national agreements to which the Defence Forces representative associations had no direct input. To address this, in the context of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, a series of parallel discussions took place which enabled issues of particular concern to the associations to be considered.

Civilianisation

4.5.9

A number of organisations have sought to introduce a degree of civilianisation in order to release personnel for operational duties for which they are specifically trained. In the context of their recommendations for the Defence Forces, Price Waterhouse estimated that at least 700 posts are filled by military personnel which should either be civilianised or contracted out to the private sector. The consultants also recommended that posts which are civilianised within the military structure should report within that structure.

4.5.10

The argument for civilianisation/contracting out is that it is generally more cost effective. Additionally, it can release military personnel from essentially administrative and other tasks which can more appropriately be undertaken by civilians. It enhances continuity in appointments which is often lacking due to the frequent transfer of military personnel, eg on courses or overseas duties. Nevertheless, operational considerations do require that core military technical capabilities are retained within the Defence Forces.

4.5.11

The Garda Síochána have made considerable progress in civilianising many functions and it is likely that similar approaches can be adopted in the defence sector. Progress has been made in relation to front-of-house catering contracts which facilitated the redeployment of up to 100 military personnel to other duties. The Government have, therefore, decided that an examination should be put in train to identify posts within the military organisation which would be suitable for civilianisation. This review will begin in the year 2000.

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

4.5.12

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, contains extensive provisions for the safeguarding of the well-being of persons at work. Since the Act came into operation the Defence Forces have been actively engaged in a comprehensive programme to give effect to the relevant provisions. Safety Statements, Safety Representatives and a comprehensive training programme are in place at unit level throughout the Permanent Defence Force. The recommendations arising from the Health and Safety Authority's 1993 report on health and safety matters in the Defence Forces have been implemented.

4.5.13

The health and safety of personnel are of paramount importance and all health and safety programmes in the Defence Forces will be kept under constant review. The scope of representation available to the Representative Associations provides for the raising of Health and Safety matters within the conciliation forum for the Force.

4.6 Training and Development

4.6.1

Weapon systems, doctrine and tactics are constantly evolving to meet modern requirements. The primary focus of the Defence Forces, when not engaged on operations, is training and preparation. The appropriate training for all Defence Forces formations and units is based on conventional military doctrine to prepare them to fulfil the roles laid down by Government.

4.6.2

Operational readiness will be maintained through realistic individual and collective training. The Defence Forces must train and maintain appropriate levels of readiness with all personnel equipped and prepared accordingly. As a reflection of the defence and security environment, increased emphasis will be placed on joint and combined exercises stressing interoperability, procedures and doctrine. The training of personnel in the technical and tactical skills of the military profession plays a vital role in Defence Forces activities. All personnel will be provided with the opportunity for personal development and associated professional experience in order to realise their full potential during their service in the Defence Forces.

4.6.3

The Defence Forces Training Centre (DFTC), located at the Curragh, has the critical role in providing the facilities to prepare the Defence Forces for the conduct of military activities and maintaining required training standards within all formations and units. Greater use will be made of modern technology, simulators and simulations in the training function.

4.6.4

The Defence Forces must continue to modernise planning, doctrine, equipment and training resources. Modernisation will include enhancing the performance of personnel and weapons systems to protect the lives of our soldiers in the field.

4.7 Barracks Infrastructure

Existing Infrastructure

4.7.1

The Permanent Defence Force is deployed in 29 barracks, including Clancy Barracks which will be closed later this year. There are also some 48 State-owned posts and a further 210 premises which are rented on either a full-time or part-time basis for use by the Reserve Defence Force.

4.7.2

The proliferation of barracks and their present geographical spread are widely acknowledged as being unsuitable for modern requirements. The current barracks infrastructure was largely inherited on Independence and reflects the priorities of a by-gone age. The need to base troops in reasonable proximity to the border with Northern Ireland also influenced deployment.

Multiplicity of Locations

4.7.3

The considerable burden resulting from the multiplicity of military locations may not be fully apparent to those outside the organisation. It involves the diversion of several hundred personnel to securing and maintaining these barracks. Such personnel are therefore unavailable for other tasks. It also results in some units being dispersed over a number of locations and this seriously undermines their capacity to engage in collective training. The programme to utilise new security systems and technologies to ease the security burden on personnel will be intensified.

4.7.4

Price Waterhouse considered that only half of the thirty-four barracks then open were required. The Implementation Plan made provision for a special study of military accommodation. The Plan recognised that, while barracks needed to be closed, the issue was very sensitive and had the potential to impede the whole reform process. In the past two years, through the actual or planned closure of six barracks, significant progress has been made.

4.7.5

While there is a multiplicity of barracks, the number of special training areas available

to the Defence Forces (for example, artillery ranges, battle training areas) is limited. Due to increasing usage from a higher level of training demands and the greater environmental pressures on these facilities, it will be important in the years ahead to ensure that existing facilities are retained and developed.

Rationalisation of Properties

4.7.6

In 1994, Price Waterhouse concluded that there were no military arguments to justify widespread geographic dispersal of troops other than in the Border area. With progress under the Good Friday Agreement it is expected over time that the military presence in the Border area will be reduced. Given the need to find additional resources for equipment and training facilities, it is important that all defence assets are closely scrutinised to ensure that they are being utilised in the most efficient way possible.

4.7.7

While wider socio-economic and associated issues have to be considered, the primary drivers of Defence Forces deployment should be military considerations. A military barracks should contain a viable minimum level of personnel which would provide economies of scale in the provision of support services and allow proper collective training. With the modernisation of society and the benefits of growth generally, the economic role of a military barracks in a town is, in any event, of a lower order than in the past. Indeed, the retention of a valuable and central location in a town for military use alone may in many cases be an obstacle to local development.

4.7.8

The recent closures of barracks have freed up important sites in the towns concerned. Plans for important new community, health, industrial and housing initiatives are in progress. With the increasing demand for social housing and related programmes and the Government's new decentralisation initiative, it is quite likely that freeing up military locations for alternative uses would assist these Government programmes. Consistent with the overall approach of not adding to the multiplicity of Defence Forces locations and as part of the defence contribution to the decentralisation process, the Government have decided that elements of the Defence Forces, such as components of Defence Forces Headquarters, should be relocated outside of Dublin, within the overall Defence Forces restructuring and development plan.

4.7.9

There are a number of other properties within the defence portfolio which are located outside of the permanently occupied military barracks and posts. The Government have decided that a rigorous examination of the necessity for each such property will commence this year and only those required for essential defence purposes will be retained. The others will be disposed of by sale or otherwise and the Government have approved that the proceeds, along with the revenue from the existing programme of barrack disposals, will be invested in Defence Forces infrastructure and equipment.

Property Management

4.7.10

In December 1998, the Comptroller and Auditor General completed a study of property used by the Defence Forces. The report's recommendations are being implemented in full over time. Property management systems generally will be streamlined having regard to the need to monitor maintenance and overall stewardship of the portfolio (including disposals) and to improve management information systems. A policy of phasing out the vast majority of married quarters is being implemented. Such quarters

phasing out the vast majority of married quarters is being implemented. Such quarters located outside barracks are being sold-off. Those inside barracks will be converted to other uses. For the small number of married quarters being retained, a review of rents is underway with a view to providing a system which more accurately reflects the market value of military property.

4.8 Environmental Management

4.8.1

The Department of Defence has a very significant property portfolio, which includes substantial tracts of land at the Curragh, Co Kildare; the Glen of Imaal; Co Wicklow; and Kilworth, Co Cork. Other Defence Forces installations around the country also have an impact within their local environment. In line with Government policy, the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces are committed to the protection of Ireland's natural environment and heritage resources. The focus on environmental issues is concentrated on the conservation of defence lands, pollution prevention, energy conservation, recycling and waste disposal, and environmental enhancement generally. The preservation, protection and restoration of natural resources while fulfilling training and operational requirements are important challenges.

Curragh of Kildare

4.8.2

The Curragh of Kildare, now designated as a Recorded Monument under the National Monuments Act, 1994, is a unique area encompassing archaeological, historical, agricultural and environmental elements. The Curragh covers some 4,870 acres and has since very early times been a mustering, training and encampment area for military forces and contains today the largest military base in the State. In more recent times the Curragh has had close associations with the race-horse industry. Other factors in relation to management of the Curragh include sheep grazing rights based on commonage and an increasing identification of the Curragh as a source of interest from tourism and heritage perspectives.

4.8.3

In 1998, the Government approved the appointment of an Inter-Departmental Task Force, comprising experts from relevant Departments and State agencies to report and make recommendations on the future management and development of the Curragh of Kildare, having regard to the immense archaeological, cultural, environmental and historical significance of the area. The Task Force was established in the context of the declaration of the Curragh as a Natural Heritage Area and the establishment of the Defence Forces Training Centre at the Curragh Camp. The work of the Task Force included consultations with interested parties.

4.8.4

Following the completion of the Task Force's report, and in order to ensure that broader environmental issues are addressed in an effective way, the Government have decided that, with the exception of the Curragh Military Camp, the management of the Curragh lands will be transferred to a new statutory authority to be established under the aegis of the Department of Defence. It is considered that the management of this important national asset should be carried out by a dedicated agency with the necessary expertise. The requirements of the Defence Forces in relation to the use of lands in the environs of the Curragh Camp for training purposes will be fully protected under the new arrangements.

Other Environmental Issues

4.8.5

More generally, to build on the lessons learned from the Curragh review, a special civil-military environmental and conservation project group will be established to consider and bring forward proposals for the improved management of environmental issues across the full range of the Department's property portfolio. In all cases, consistent with military requirements, environmental management must work in concert with local interests and draw on relevant expertise.

4.9 Equipment

4.9.1

It is Government policy to ensure that the Defence Forces are adequately equipped to undertake the roles assigned to them. Establishing realistic equipment requirements and priorities for procurement forms a major element of strategic planning activities within the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces. The objective is to acquire, maintain and manage equipment, weapons and ammunition for the Defence Forces at the appropriate level of operational readiness in a cost effective manner. For many years, the imbalance between the pay and non-pay allocation of resources has led to a deficiency in the required levels of modern equipment. The Government's plans for the development of the Defence Forces are designed to ensure that resources are freed up in the manpower and other areas and allocated to the acquisition of necessary equipment. Any re-equipment programme should be regular, sustained, consistent and reasonable having regard to the tasks required.

4.9.2

Since the completion of the EAG review, a substantial investment has been made in the modernisation of equipment - the financial allocation for Defensive Equipment was £19.7m in 1999. The most important current programme is the acquisition of new Mowag Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) for the Army. They will replace vehicles which first saw service in the 1970s. Most of the funding for this procurement programme comes from the pay savings achieved as a consequence of the 1996-98 Defence Forces reorganisation. This is a major commitment already made by the Government at a cost of £40m for 40 APCs due for delivery by mid-2002.

4.9.3

Recent experience gained overseas in the Balkans and East Timor has indicated that current Defence Forces basic equipment compares favourably with other countries. Between 1997 and 1999, equipment items purchased have included tactical Very High Frequency (VHF) communications equipment; weapons simulation systems; night vision units; new turrets and sights for AML armoured vehicles. Details of recent significant equipment purchases are set out in Appendix E. Further substantial expenditure will arise for some of these items in 2000 and beyond.

4.9.4

There is a need to develop a more meaningful co-ordinated combat development plan which would take a medium to long term view of equipment purchase, replacement/upgrading and maintenance in a systematic manner across all units and services. A considerable amount of foundation work has already been undertaken in the area of procurement planning. A draft Long-term Defensive Equipment Plan for the decade 1999-2009 has been drawn up by the military authorities for consideration.

4.9.5

The Government have decided that this process will now be taken a stage further with the establishment of a High Level Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group, chaired at Assistant Secretary level, tasked with the development of a new five year plan to address equipment needs over this timeframe covering the Army, the Air Corps, the Naval Service and the Reserve Defence Force. This Group will identify requirements and agree a procurement programme to provide the Defence Forces with the type and quantities of equipment necessary to carry out their assigned roles. The strategic focus of the investment programme for the period 2000-2010 is the acquisition of a broad range of equipment in order to achieve a balanced increase in operational capacity throughout the Defence Forces. It will be necessary to prioritise and reconcile the equipment requirements for the Army, the Air Corps, the Naval Service and the Reserve Defence Force within the total resources available. Basic to the plan is a multi-annual budgetary strategy which is vital to achieving value for money.

4.9.6

Equipment procurement will take account of the requirements arising from operations across the full spectrum of the roles of the Defence Forces. Procurement planning will focus on the most critical deficiencies in those capabilities where there is more likely to be a need in the short term, for example, modern multidimensional peace support operations and urgent Air Corps requirements.

4.9.7

The procurement programme will be greatly facilitated by the multi-annual budgeting arrangements being developed under the Strategic Management Initiative. The procurement life cycle is often protracted with major equipment items having long lead times requiring payments spread over a number of years. A highly developed planning process is necessary to match funding to proposals and to ensure optimum use of the available funding. Additionally, it is important to ensure that this planning process is capable of adjustment to changes in the environment and taskings such as new overseas missions.

4.10 Air Corps

4.10.1

The Air Corps is the air component of the Defence Forces. Through a fleet of fixed and rotary winged aircraft based primarily at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel, the Air Corps provides a variety of military and non-military air services. Air Corps military

Corps provides a variety of military and non-military air services. Air Corps military roles and functions are those of an Army Air Corps rather than a conventional military air service.

Air Corps Roles

4.10.2

The Air Corps has traditionally discharged a mix of functions based on the need to supply a range of different services such as search and rescue (SAR), fishery protection and Ministerial Air Transport. The generally favourable security climate resulted in the need for a very limited military air capability. To exceed this capability would require a level of investment in personnel, equipment and infrastructure which could not be justified.

4.10.3

A pragmatic approach has provided capabilities in the following areas:

General utility helicopter capacity with capabilities in relation to search and rescue over land and sea, limited transport and security surveillance in aid to the civil power.

Ministerial and other such transport requirements.

Fishery protection and limited general maritime patrol.

Air ambulance transport tasks.

Air space control limited to low level and favourable visibility conditions.

Limited clear weather ground attack/support capability.

4.10.4

The Government have decided that the present broad profile of Air Corps roles will be maintained. The future development of the Air Corps will therefore be determined within the following policy parameters which set out the general air-based military and non-military capabilities which the State will seek to provide:

Maintenance/generation of a 24 hour general helicopter capability for a variety of military and non-military tasks, including Garda support.

The provision of SAR capabilities on the basis of agreed arrangements with the Department of Marine and Natural Resources.

The provision of a Ministerial Air Transport service.

The provision of fishery protection patrol services to standards agreed with the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources.

The provision of an air ambulance service on the basis of agreed arrangements with the Department of Health and Children, and other transport services of a military or non-military kind.

Provision of an appropriate capability to meet training requirements.

4.10.5

Aspirations to broaden the range of available air based capabilities are understandable but have to be balanced against real world constraints. The fact is that, given the enormous costs involved, few small countries possess the ability to provide a comprehensive air based defence capability. The choice must then lie between maintaining an essentially token force to address all dimensions of national defence or seeking to perform a selected range of tasks to a professional standard. The latter option has been the one chosen in Ireland. The Air Corps is deserving of credit for its professional performance in this role.

4.10.6

The challenge for the future is to ensure that, within the likely level of available resources, the State has available to it an Air Corps which is capable of meeting on-going requirements and providing the basis for expansion should this be required. There is also the need to ensure that the Air Corps is kept on a sufficiently high professional footing by adequate investment in personnel, training and equipment.

4.10.7

More resources for the Air Corps would necessarily mean less resources for other defence purposes. This is not to say that the Air Corps is deprived of essential equipment. The acquisition of relatively sophisticated aircraft, such as the CASA maritime patrol aircraft and the Gulfstream IV transport aircraft, are examples of investment in the Air Corps.

4.10.8

There are many reasons to concentrate resourcing in the one State supplier of military and State-required air services. Thus it made sense for the Air Corps to undertake search and rescue, Ministerial transport, and fishery protection, even if these are essentially civil functions. There is, however, a need to ensure that these services are delivered on a value for money basis.

4.10.9

The Government recognise that there are urgent equipment modernisation requirements in the Air Corps and they have approved the allocation of an additional £5m per annum in each of the next five years for this purpose. This investment is on top of the savings arising from Defence Forces restructuring. The precise overall funding for Air Corps equipment will be decided within the context of the work of the High Level Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group and having regard to the policy approach on individual equipment issues as set out below.

Fixed Wing Aircraft

4.10.10

The Government recognise that the age and limited capabilities of the Air Corps fixed wing military aircraft - Marchetti and Cessna - highlight the need for this issue to be dealt with in a comprehensive way by the High Level Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group. The cost of acquiring, maintaining and operating even a small number of such aircraft will be an important consideration. As always, such costs have to be viewed in terms of their opportunity cost elsewhere in denying resources to other defence equipment.

4.10.11

The State has never had an all weather twenty-four hour capability to secure or seek to secure an element of its air space. The Government's policy parameters set out above indicate that the Air Corps will be heavily involved in providing services to agencies outside the Defence Forces. The extent and nature of those services will of necessity be a determinant of the type of aircraft to be provided for the Air Corps. In the meantime, it will be necessary to ensure that essential flying training is provided for Air Corps personnel in order to meet current operational requirements. The Government consider that this matter should be addressed by a recently established civil-military board put in place to examine urgently a number of issues in relation to Air Corps equipment decisions including those relating to flying training and SAR cover. The on-going work of this board will feed into the High Level Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group being established to develop a medium term plan for Defence Forces equipment generally.

Rotary Winged Aircraft Requirements and Search and Rescue

4.10.12

The State does not at present have a requirement to move large numbers of troops by air within the State. The need for such a capability is minimised by the small size of the country, the geographically dispersed deployment of the Defence Forces and the greatly improved roads infrastructure. In addition, on-island security responses are a matter for the Civil Power through the Garda Síochána in the first instance.

4.10.13

The Department of the Marine and Natural Resources has primary responsibility for search and rescue and it must decide how it obtains SAR services. SAR is undertaken at the operational level by the Irish Coastguard which calls on its own medium range helicopters or Air Corps shorter range helicopters to respond to emergencies. At present, 24 hour helicopter SAR cover is provided on a contract basis by Bond Helicopters to the Irish Coastguard on the western seaboard from Shannon and on the east from Dublin Airport. The Air Corps provide dedicated aircraft operating from Finner Camp, Co Donegal and Waterford Airport to provide cover for the North West and South East coasts respectively. The Waterford based aircraft, an Alouette, provides daylight cover only.

4.10.14

The question as to whether the Dauphin aircraft should undergo a major refit due in 2001 and beyond or be replaced by aircraft with enhanced capabilities is being considered by the civil-military project board. The best way of meeting the requirements of the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources is also being examined in this context. The execution of SAR tasks has wider benefits for the Air Corps and the State, particularly in relation to operational readiness and training. The provision of appropriate aircraft for the Air Corps may provide further advantages in terms of the adoption of a single aircraft type which can have benefits beyond the SAR capability.

Overseas Role

4.10.15

The Government have decided that the State will not seek to commit Air Corps equipment resources to an overseas operation. In a situation where there are many demands on resources it would not be reasonable to participate beyond the domestic context.

Ministerial Air Transport

4.10.16

The Government have identified a need to review the Ministerial Air Transport service with a view to examining the case for its enhancement. The work of the High Level Civil-Military Planning and Procurement Group will include the examination of measures to address this requirement. The extent to which other transport needs might be met from this capability will also be considered.

Air Corps Personnel Issues

4.10.17

At present the Air Corps has difficulty retaining sufficient experienced flying officers because of the buoyant state of the commercial airline industry. As in other countries, the State cannot compete with the pay and conditions of service which airlines can offer flying officers. Moreover, Air Corps officers whose training involves a considerable investment by the State can, like other military officers, retire with a pension at a relatively young age. In this situation, the State seeks to manage the rate at which officers retire through a variety of measures, including when appropriate, incentive-backed retention arrangements. The State can, however, seek to ensure that the Air Corps offers an attractive career. As with many other areas of public service, there is a sense of fulfilment in doing a worthwhile job whether in terms of serving one's country, saving lives, having highly motivated colleagues, or the many other intangible but attractive features of Air Corps life. Building a service in which people are proud to serve is an important objective of this White Paper.

Development of Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel

4.10.18

Casement Aerodrome is the principal base of the Air Corps. With the withdrawal of aircraft from Gormanston and the relocation of Air Corps headquarters to Baldonnel, the Air Corps has the basis for better management of its resources. However, Gormanston will continue to play a role as a training location for specific Air Corps purposes.

4.10.19

The Aerodrome at Baldonnel has been identified as offering other developmental opportunities. From a defence standpoint these must be consistent with the primary purpose of the base: military aviation requirements; all other objectives are secondary. However, without prejudice to the primary objective, the question of how this defence asset can be used to the optimum extent has to be examined with due regard to the scope for new investment in Air Corps aircraft and support facilities at Baldonnel. Civil Aviation policy is a matter for the Minister for Public Enterprise. The Minister for Public Enterprise has recently conducted an examination of the policy considerations arising from any development of Baldonnel for civil aviation purposes. The Minister for Public Enterprise is satisfied that the opening up of Baldonnel would not conflict with civil aviation policy provided that there would be no financial support for any such developments from the Exchequer and that the State should ensure a commercial return for the use of its assets. The Minister for Defence will proceed with consideration of the possible options in this regard.

Price Waterhouse Review of the Air Corps

4.10.20

Following the 1994-95 EAG review which concentrated on the Army, the largest element of the Defence Forces, Price Waterhouse were appointed to complete follow-up reviews of the Air Corps and the Naval Service. Aside from the policy issues dealt with above, the reviews recommended a range of developmental measures. Plans to give effect to these measures are already in formulation. The main features of the Air Corps plan to implement the effectiveness and efficiency recommendations made by Price Waterhouse are:

> A new organisational structure based on a division between operational and support elements with a total manpower of around 930.
>
> Service level agreements with principal clients such as the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources.
>
> Measures to address personnel training and retention.

The consultants also recommended relocation of Air Corps Headquarters to Baldonnel and this was implemented in January 2000.

4.11 Naval Service

Introduction

4.11.1

The Naval Service provides the maritime element of the State's Defence Forces with a flotilla of eight vessels which operate from the State's single naval base at Haulbowline, Co Cork. The Naval Service has a general responsibility to meet contingent and actual maritime defence requirements. Fishery protection activities account for over 90% of Naval Service operations.

Maritime Defence Requirements

4.11.2

The Naval Service is the State's principal sea-going agency and is tasked with a variety of defence and other roles. From the 1970s, its major role has been the provision of a fishery protection service to implement the EU Common Fisheries Policy. Substantial

fishery protection service to implement the EU Common Fisheries Policy. Substantial funding was provided by the EU towards the acquisition of five of the eight vessels and more recently for vessel upgrading and for some operational costs.

4.11.3

The naval component of defence has necessarily had a lower priority than land-based defence. Having regard to the defence and security environment assessment, the Government consider that there is no case for a significant shift in defence provision towards an enhanced naval contribution.

4.11.4

The Naval Service flotilla is larger now than at any time in the history of the State mainly due to its fishery protection role and the availability of this flotilla provides broader maritime capabilities. Naval Service vessels carry with them unique characteristics as an expression of State sovereignty and political will at sea and in furthering policy objectives in the international maritime domain.

4.11.5

The Government have decided that the Naval Service will be developed around the provision of a modern 8 ship flotilla. There will be a process of continuous investment and vessel replacement to ensure that the flotilla is capable of meeting military and other requirements. Ireland does not face a maritime-based threat for which the provision of a full naval capability is necessary or for which the huge costs of warships could be justified. The military requirements of the Naval Service are largely of a contingent nature and the general approach will be to ensure an appropriate level of retained capability. The requirement is for a flexible force with the capacity to deploy vessels at sea quickly and to sustain as many days on patrol as possible. While a major alteration in the level and type of vessel provided is not contemplated, there is the potential to maximise capabilities, within the available broad financial envelope. This can be achieved by a range of effectiveness and efficiency measures designed to achieve more patrol days and to utilise existing manpower and other resources in a better way. The costs associated with the operation of 8 vessels together with the modernisation and replacement costs as these fall due represent a significant allocation of resources into the medium and long term.

4.11.6

The Naval Service's latest vessel the LE Róisín was commissioned in December 1999 at a cost of some £22m and is a state of the art offshore patrol vessel. The Government have decided to purchase a second fishery protection vessel of the same type, as a replacement for the LE Deirdre which is approaching the end of its economic service life.

4.11.7

On a day-to-day basis, the primary activity of the Naval Service is providing fishery protection services based on outputs agreed with the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources which has policy responsibility for fisheries protection. The most important indicators of performance in this area are the number of days spent at sea and the number of boardings of fishing vessels. There is scope to enhance performance in this regard, including utilisation of patrol days.

4.11.8

The Naval Service's ability to undertake tasks at sea is its unique contribution as a State agency. There are important effectiveness and efficiency benefits obtained through the single agency approach. To move away from a single agency policy would have significant ramifications for defence provision, particularly in relation to public expenditure and could lead to duplication of resources between those provided in the defence context and those provided for other maritime needs. The Government have decided that the emphasis will be on utilisation and development of the Naval Service to contribute to the maximum to all of the State's requirements in the maritime domain.

4.11.9

The Government have also decided that action be taken to increase both days-at-sea and the number of boardings. This will be achieved through a variety of measures:

A number of vessels of the flotilla will be manned and equipped primarily for fishery protection duties.

New vessels will be brought on stream to replace older ones as these fall due for replacement.

A range of effectiveness and efficiency measures arising from the Price Waterhouse review of the Naval Service will be implemented.

Review of the Naval Service

4.11.10

As in the case of the Air Corps, the Naval Service was subject to a special review undertaken under the auspices of the EAG. The detailed report provided for a new organisational structure and made recommendations on all aspects of Naval Service operations. The principal elements of a plan to implement the effectiveness and efficiency recommendations made by Price Waterhouse are:

A new organisational structure based on operations and support divisions with an overall manpower level of around 1,144.

A planned approach to sea/shore rotation of personnel based on a two-year period of commitment to sea-going duties followed by a two year period away from such duties.

Service level agreements with principal clients such as the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources.

Regular recruitment and other measures such as schemes for the commissioning of enlisted personnel to address personnel shortfalls.

Enhancement of the Naval College and development of proposals for a joint initiative with Cork Institute of Technology, in order to meet changing needs and keep pace with the increased demand for maritime education and training responses.

Continuation of a programme of investment at the Naval Base to improve the buildings and other infrastructure.

Enhancement of information technology infrastructure to maximise information gathering and utilisation in line, inter alia, with EU requirements.

The recommendation for the relocation of Naval Service headquarters to Haulbowline was implemented in December 1999.

4.12 The Army Nursing Service

4.12.1

The Army Nursing Service (ANS), with a current strength of 43 nurses, has been a valuable and essential component in the provision of a high quality, professional medical service to Defence Forces personnel for many years. Although a component of the Defence Forces, the ANS was not examined during the Review of the Defence Forces and consequently the service has remained largely unchanged throughout the recent programme of PDF reorganisation.

4.12.2

The Government consider that the ANS should now be reviewed with regard to its future development, roles, work practices and strength, so that the services it provides to the Army Medical Corps can be developed in a co-ordinated manner.

4.13 Other Defence Forces elements

4.13.1

In addition to the provision of direct military services, some elements of the Defence Forces are engaged in other activities which have become part of military tradition. The Government recognise that these elements are important in less tangible ways to the organisation itself and in providing a positive relationship with the public. The Government acknowledge the contribution of these elements, such as the Army School of Music and the Equitation School, which are important to the esprit de corps of the organisation and which have a continued and valued role.

Army School of Music

4.13.2

Military music is a characteristic of a range of ceremonial events which are a traditional feature of military organisations. The Army bands are recognised as an important contribution to morale and also as a means of contact between the Defence Forces and the community as well as adding a ceremonial element to a range of State occasions and local events.

Army Equitation School

4.13.3

The Army Equitation School has a unique role. Established in 1926 with a mission to promote the Irish horse abroad through participation in international competitions, the School has since then not alone been an excellent showcase for Irish non-thoroughbred horses but its riders have represented Ireland with distinction throughout the world. Through its attendance at national events, the School has provided popular contact between the Defence Forces and the public as well as promoting excellence in equitation and encouragement to horse breeding.

5. Reserve Defence Force

5.1 Introduction

All military organisations must address the issue of quickly augmenting their standing force in the event of a major crisis. In Ireland, a Reserve Defence Force (RDF) has been maintained in one form or another since the foundation of the State. There is a need to

build a newly focused RDF based on the strengths of the existing arrangements but which provides for future needs through a radical new approach.

5.2 Existing Reserve Defence Force

Current Organisation and Strengths

5.2.1

The RDF has two separate elements, a First Line Reserve, comprising former members of the PDF who have volunteered or are obliged to serve on the first line, and a second line volunteer reserve organised into An Fórsa Cosanta Aitiúil (FCA) and An Slua Muirí (the Naval Reserve).

5.2.2

The FCA, with a total strength of about 14,000, broadly mirrored the territorial organisation of the PDF prior to the recent reorganisation of Army Commands into three Brigades. An Slua Muirí is organised into two Groups: Eastern (Dublin and Waterford) and Southern (Cork and Limerick) and has a total strength of about 330.

Utilisation of the RDF

5.2.3

Reservists may be called out on full-time service in specified circumstances. In practice, the peacetime role of the FCA and Slua Muirí is confined to training for their designated emergency roles, although personnel are occasionally employed on security duties in military installations. In the 1970s, FCA personnel were employed on security duties in their own areas, principally guard duties, stand-to parties, fire pickets and patrols, thereby releasing PDF personnel for security duties in border areas and elsewhere. FCA members have not been employed in a full-time capacity with the PDF since 1989. No training of the first line reserve has taken place since 1988.

5.3 Policy Context

Special Studies of the Reserve

5.3.1

The overall strategy for the development of the RDF is based on the report of a special Steering Group established by the Minister for Defence in January 1998. The Steering Group directed the work of a military board which carried out a comprehensive review of the RDF. The Group produced its report in September 1999, and the recommendations contained in the report have been accepted as the general basis on which the development of the RDF can proceed. The review process involved extensive consultation with the Reserve Defence Force Representative Association (RDFRA), members of the RDF and other stakeholders. Consultations also took place as part of the White Paper process and the outputs of all of these processes have now been subsumed into this document. The Steering Group Report will be published to facilitate wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders. An Implementation Plan will be brought forward to bring about the necessary detailed changes.

Defence Policy

5.3.2

The RDF contributes to Ireland's defence capability by providing a capacity to augment the PDF, the State's regular forces, in the event of a major crisis. The RDF also serves as a source of recruitment for the PDF and provides a character-forming opportunity for young Irish men and women to serve the State. In addition, the RDF represents an important part of Irish life, and its presence and activities throughout the country are recognised and appreciated.

Defence Provision

5.3.3

Ireland provides for its core defence requirements through the PDF. The availability of supplementary forces, in the form of reserves, offers a cost-effective means of achieving an overall strength target through a judicious combination of standing and reserve forces. This allows standing forces to be maintained at a reduced level, while ensuring the retention of an effective overall defence capability. Through service with the RDF, former PDF personnel can make their professional military expertise available to the State in an emergency. Reservists can also bring valuable expertise from their civilian occupations.

5.3.4

Reserve forces should, ideally, be organised and equipped on a similar basis to regular forces in order to develop the interoperability necessary to train and to conduct operations jointly. In addition, the assignment of meaningful and realistic operational roles is a key factor in maintaining motivation amongst reservists.

5.4. The need for change in the Reserve Defence Force

5.4.1

The overwhelming conclusion reached by the study of the RDF is that a real and sustained change process is required. The review recognised the desire for positive change among members of the Reserve who deserve considerable appreciation for their commitment.

5.4.2

The main issues identified are:

- In common with many voluntary organisations, the FCA and Slua Muirí are experiencing increasing difficulty in recruiting new members (annual recruitment has fallen to about half of the 1994 level) and retaining trained personnel.
- The quality of training varies across the country.
- There are about 14,000 members in the RDF and just over 50% of members attend annual training camp each year.
- The RDF has little or no presence in some major urban areas.
- Many reservists serve only for a short period. This can lead to an over-emphasis on repetitive, basic, induction-type training for all members.
- The recruitment process is not always targeted at individuals likely to give long and useful service or provide valuable, scarce skills.
- The PDF cadre personnel who support the RDF have not been rotated sufficiently.
- There is some ambiguity regarding the role of the RDF - this can have an adverse effect on morale.
- The role of the Slua Muirí (as currently configured) in a contingency is difficult to envisage.
- Training methodologies are rigid and excessively focused on long periods of continuous training, while access to specialist and collective training is limited.
- Some units of the Reserve are not structured in accordance with standard military doctrine.
- There are shortages of certain resources, especially specialist military equipment.
- There are problems in accessing RDF equipment, especially in rural areas.

These weaknesses have contributed to a growing level of dissatisfaction among members of the RDF.

5.5 The New Reserve Defence Force

5.5.1

As a volunteer and part-time organisation, the RDF's most important contribution is to support the PDF in its contingency defence roles in an emergency situation. In peacetime, the main function of the RDF should be to train and prepare for these contingency roles

contingency roles.

The plan for the RDF will create a new RDF with the following hallmarks:

A clearer contingency defence role.

An improved and more consistent organisational structure.

An enhanced relationship with the PDF and the affiliation of RDF units and the integration of RDF sub-units with appropriate PDF units.

More and better quality training.

Improved equipment.

Opportunities to serve on overseas peace support operations.

An increase in resourcing.

Retention of the traditional strengths and features of the organisation, especially the spirit of voluntary service.

Overall, a better value for money reserve defence capability.

5.5.2

The blueprint for a new RDF will involve:

An Army Reserve, or in Irish, Cúltaca an Airm, with a total strength in the region of 12,000, which will replace An Fórsa Cosanta Aitiúil (FCA) and which will be made up of two elements:

One element will provide personnel who will integrate with PDF units to bring them up to full operational strength in a contingency situation. These integrated RDF personnel - who will be described as "The Integrated Reserve" - will be provided with enhanced military training and career development opportunities, and will receive the appropriate equipment. PDF unit commanders will be responsible for the training of the RDF personnel integrated in their units.

The other element will provide an overall Army reserve for the PDF. It will be organised into three brigades - the "Reserve Brigades" - and trained on standard military lines.

A naval reserve - An Slua Muirí.

A first line reserve comprising former PDF officers, non-commissioned officers and privates with active and non-active components.

5.5.3

A feature of the existing FCA organisation is that it has a country-wide geographical spread. This feature will in general be retained. The full organisational and strength

details of the new entities will be determined in the implementation process. This process will involve a careful examination of strength numbers and the extent of the spread having regard to effectiveness, efficiency, local factors and demographics. The study of the Reserve provides indicative proposals in respect of unit amalgamation which will form the basis of the more detailed restructuring of the RDF. The greater concentration of units will give the potential to provide much better training and other facilities in the reduced number of locations. The military authorities will consider and recommend detailed proposals for the restructuring of reserve units within each brigade area. This may provide the opportunity to increase the RDF presence in some of the larger urban areas.

5.6 Naval Service Reserve

5.6.1

Organised in five companies, the Naval Reserve, An Slua Muirí, is trained in basic naval disciplines, which provide a naval presence in Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Waterford. It forms the basis for a Naval Service contingency capacity in those locations, is a source of recruitment for the Naval Service and performs naval ceremonial duties.

5.6.2

The primary purpose of the naval reserve should be to augment the State's maritime defence capability in the event of a national emergency. Due to the particular demands of Naval Service requirements, it is impractical to establish an integrated naval reserve on the same basis as that proposed for the Army. However, An Slua Muirí will be developed to improve the capacity of members to provide a genuine naval reserve capability based on:

A revised overall Slua Muirí strength of up to 400 personnel.

As a rationalisation measure, the two Dublin-based Slua Muirí companies will be amalgamated.

The Naval Service, in conjunction with the Director of Reserve Forces, will bring forward specific proposals to develop an integration role for the reorganised Slua Muirí. When this new role has been defined it would then be appropriate for the organisation to be renamed the *Naval Service Reserve (Cúltaca an tSeirbhís Chabhlaigh).*

5.7 Air Corps

5.7.1

5.7.1

There are no reserve units within the Air Corps. The primary task for a volunteer Air Corps RDF unit would be air base security with no specific requirement for specialisation particular to the Air Corps. Such air base security could equally well be discharged by an Army RDF unit, if required. The view taken, both in the Price Waterhouse Review and in the Steering Group's study, is that the existing First Line Reserve system meets the Air Corps' reserve aviation requirement.

5.8 RDF Personnel and Training Issues

5.8.1

It is proposed to develop the RDF study proposal to create four new Lieutenant-Colonel appointments in the RDF. Holders of these appointments, one in each of the reserve brigades and one in the Defence Forces Training Centre, would be promoted on a temporary basis, and would subsequently revert to the rank of Commandant. This will enable senior RDF officers to serve and influence reserve activities at the highest level in brigade headquarters and the DFTC. This initiative will contribute to career development and create promotion opportunities.

5.8.2

In order to give recognition for RDF service, honourable discharges will be marked by the issue of testimonials similar to those issued in the case of the PDF.

Training Arrangements

5.8.3

Attendance by members of the FCA and the Slua Muirí at training is on a voluntary basis. Since 1983, the Defence Vote has provided for a total of 63,000 paid training days each year for such members. Within this overall total a limited number of personnel is permitted to attend for certain courses of instruction of two weeks' duration. Members of the RDF also undertake local training by means of weekly unpaid training parades (each of about 2 hours' duration), field days (a continuous period of training of between 5 and 15 hours' duration) and overnight camps (a continuous period of between 20 and 36 hours' duration).

5.8.4

A new training regime will be introduced to enable the RDF to achieve an enhanced operational capacity involving the following elements:

Training will be modular and structured to take cognizance of the voluntary nature of the reservist and modern methods of education, in areas such as distance learning and proficiency testing.

Training will consist of an appropriate combination of nightly parades, field days, weekend training, annual training periods of two weeks' duration and courses.

An essential objective of the proposed training profile is to ensure that most personnel will, in each 12 months' period, undertake a total of 14 days' paid training. In the year 2000, the overall training days provision is being increased by 50%. Subject to financial prioritisation within the military budget as a whole, it is planned that this allocation will be increased as the reorganisation process continues.

An individual training log book, recording levels of technical and tactical *proficiency, will be introduced for each reservist.

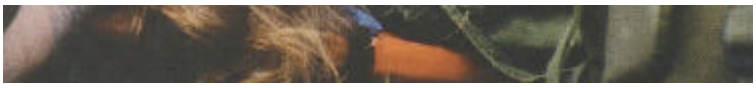
On completion of recruit training, which should culminate in a period of full-time training, reservists may apply to serve with the integrated element or remain within the non-integrated element of the RDF.

Increased training responsibility will be devolved to trained RDF instructors and the facilities in the DFTC will be utilised for RDF training and educational needs.

A new annual recruitment and training programme will be introduced. The recruitment process will commence during the summer months, culminating in enlistment in the autumn. Recruit training will be conducted by RDF units during training nights, weekend training and field days, ideally culminating in a 14 day recruit training camp.

5.8.5

Careful consideration has been given to the training regime that should apply to new recruits in terms of balancing the needs of the organisation with those of individual recruits. The proposed training cycle is a considerable advance on the current position. The new training strategy will be kept under review in the light of experience.



5.9 Overseas Service

5.9.1

An important change recommended by the study of the Reserve is that RDF personnel should be considered for participation in overseas peace support missions subject to appropriate qualifications, availability and advance training. Service by reservists on overseas peace support operations by other countries is quite common. This initiative will be important to ensure the retention of a highly motivated and trained Reserve which is in the best interest of the State and the Defence Forces as a whole. This significant change will be preceded by appropriate consultation with the representative associations.

5.9.2

Overseas service will significantly enhance the status of RDF personnel and give a training or personal goal for many personnel. It will improve morale of individual reservists and the esprit de corps of the RDF. It will also further develop the relationship between the PDF and the RDF in an operational and training context. It may well be the case that the overall numbers involved will be small but it is nonetheless important that these reservists take their place along with their PDF counterparts overseas.

5.10 Equipment and Infrastructure

5.10.1

The Government consider that the equipment of the RDF should be improved. It is desirable, over time, to achieve standardisation and interoperability between the PDF and the RDF in respect of both dress and individually issued personal equipment. This is regarded as being important for operational capability and training as well as having a positive effect on RDF morale and self-image. However, bringing the RDF fully up to PDF equipment standard would have very significant resource implications - particularly if all of the potential improvements were to be attempted over a short time frame.

5.10.2

The actual scale of issue of additional clothing and equipment for reservists assigned to the integrated element will be determined in the implementation process. The standard PDF issue Steyr 5.56 mm rifle will become the primary individual weapon for appropriate personnel of the RDF. In relation to major equipment, it is intended that the RDF should have improved access to personal and support weapons.

5.10.3

There are requirements for appropriate training locations for Reserve units and for an effective and efficient training infrastructure. These requirements will be examined in conjunction with measures to rationalise the number and use of existing RDF premises on foot of the reorganisation of the RDF. The introduction of a new organisational structure and the associated rationalisation of units open up the possibility of freeing up properties which may at present be under-utilised. The proposed review of Defence Forces properties, along with decisions on the future organisational arrangements for the Reserve, will identify properties, surplus to requirements, to be sold - with the proceeds being available for reinvestment in the Defence Forces.

5.11 The First Line Reserve

Factual Context

5.11.1

The First Line Reserve is intended to provide a pool of trained personnel who are available at short notice to supplement under-strength PDF units in time of emergency. Its strength at any time is determined by the reserve commitments entered into either voluntarily or by contract by former members of the PDF. Members of the First Line Reserve are posted to their former PDF units in the rank held by them when members of the PDF.

Utilisation of the First Line Reserve

5.11.2

Members of the First Line Reserve were called out in aid of the civil power in 1969. By the end of August 1969 a total of 1,575 all ranks of the First Line Reserve was serving in aid of the civil power. Within months of the call-out, however, there was a considerable reduction in the number serving owing to the grant of exemptions and release from service in order to avoid hardship arising from the call-out.

5.11.3

On 31 December 1979, the strength of the First Line Reserve was 426 all ranks and this strength increased until 1984 when it peaked at 1,187 all ranks. Thereafter, the strength decreased gradually until it reached a level of 487 at 30 June 1999, comprising 203 officers, 52 NCOs and 232 privates.

5.11.4

Proposals for the First Line Reserve recognise that since First Line Reserve service derives from PDF service and the second line reserve is based entirely on volunteer service, there is no simple way to fully accommodate the characteristics of the First Line and Second Line Reserve in a single organisational form. The proposals for the First Line are:

> The elimination of reserve commitments for PDF personnel is an issue for consideration in the context of PDF conditions of service and will be the subject of a separate study.
>
> Former PDF personnel who have a reserve commitment or who volunteer for reserve duty will be attached to a single designated PDF unit. Such personnel can either be used as instructors for training RDF personnel or simply be listed for call-up in the event of a national emergency.
>
> The maximum period of such attachment will be seven years. However, on completion of the seven years' engagement, former PDF personnel would be permitted to enlist (as volunteer reservists) as full members of a reserve unit, subject to the prevailing enlistment criteria. Subject to the pattern and number of personnel coming on to the First Line Reserve, an overall cap on membership may need to be introduced.

5.12 PDF Support of the RDF

5.12.1

The interface between the PDF and the RDF is critical to the success of the reserve element of the State's defence capabilities. This involves the Directorate of Reserve Forces and the PDF cadre. The Directorate will have the key role in overseeing and implementing the new organisational, training and administrative arrangements. In this regard, the control of FCA training mandays will be the responsibility of the Chief of Staff. The PDF cadre is being reduced considerably in size, ultimately to 298 personnel in the Army component and 22 in the Naval Service. The new RDF will have a revitalised cadre of personnel who will be selected on the basis of aptitude and ability to undertake the new tasks. PDF cadre personnel will be rotated so that they remain fresh in their assignments. At the same time it will be necessary to ensure there is sufficient continuity in the system.

5.12.2

The integrated reserve element of the Army Reserve will be supported by PDF personnel from within the units to which integrated personnel are assigned. This role will be undertaken by appropriate PDF personnel - called "in addition" personnel - in addition to carrying out their normal duties. The number of "in addition" personnel required will depend on the number of integrated personnel assigned to any particular unit.

5.13 Implementation

Conclusion and Implementation Plan

5.13.1

The RDF must present itself as a modern, relevant and progressive organisation if it is to attract and retain recruits and must also be able to obtain the support of employers and communities throughout the country if it is to prosper. The resources and expertise of the Defence Forces Public Relations Section will be utilised in this regard.

5.13.2

The implementation process will consist of the development of a Reserve Defence Force Review Implementation Plan based on the Steering Group's report. The implementation of the structural and reorganisation changes will take place over a period of six years. In concert with the development of an implementation plan, there will be a requirement for the military authorities to consider and recommend detailed proposals for the restructuring of reserve units within each of the brigade areas.

Consultation

5.13.3

Consultation and communication will be important if the changes proposed are to be carried through smoothly and effectively. Where appropriate, consultation with the Defence Forces representative associations will take place within the normal system of representation. In addition, measures will be taken to ensure that RDF units are made aware and kept informed of implementation plans and developments. It is clear that the RDF of the future will make greater personal demands on members. Experience shows that the commitment and dedication of members as endorsed in submissions including that of RDFRA will be equal to these new challenges.

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6. Overseas Peace Support Operations

6.1 Introduction and Background

6.1.1

Since the first peacekeepers from the Defence Forces were deployed under the flag of the United Nations (UN) in 1958, Irish soldiers have played a successful role in seeking to bring peace to many parts of the world and have deservedly won the respect of people both at home and abroad. Eighty members of the Defence Forces have died while serving overseas in the service of international peace; thirty-six of these personnel were killed as a direct result of hostile action. In addition, one soldier, who was serving with UNIFIL, has been missing in action since 1981. Their sacrifice continues to be borne by their families and loved ones for whom that loss is irreparable.

6.1.2

Earlier in the White Paper, the defence and security environment was outlined. It is in Ireland's interest to ensure that the conduct of international relations is undertaken in accordance with international law and democratic principles. This is supported and reinforced in a very direct way by Ireland's willingness to provide peacekeepers to the troubled spots of the world.

6.1.3

Overseas service is popular among military personnel and has offered the Defence

Forces a range of important training and operational opportunities not available at home. It also provides a powerful motivation to enhance operational and training standards. Individual officers have held important appointments in a number of UN missions giving Ireland a significant influence in the conduct of a number of critical peace support missions down the years. In all cases, officers and other ranks have brought their expertise, professionalism and dedication to bear - to their own credit and to the honour of the country.

6.2 International Peacekeeping

6.2.1

Diplomacy, rather than the use of arms, must be the primary focus in conflict resolution. The deployment of military personnel in a peace support role is widely seen as a last resort. However, frequently in areas of conflict, life can be protected and peace restored only by the use or potential use of force.

6.2.2

The United Nations Charter commits all member states to:

> Maintain international peace and security.
>
> Develop friendly relations amongst nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.
>
> Achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

6.2.3

The UN enjoys almost universal membership and is the primary organisation of the international community in the area of peace and security. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of peacekeeping missions has increased substantially. Ireland will continue its policy of supporting the primacy of the UN while also seeking to ensure that the UN adapts to the new global environment.

Trends in the International Peace Support Environment

6.2.4

The following trends have emerged in the new international peace support environment:

An increase in the number of conflict situations for which a peace support operation is an element of the solution – in some cases it may be considered the most important element.

Increasingly, the UN mandates peace support operations by regional organisations on its behalf.

A greater demand for international peace support operations in internal conflict situations has brought new levels of complexity often involving difficult and historically charged situations created by ethnic tensions and disputes.

While the immediate post-colonial disputes, which were frequently the source of peacekeeping missions in the 1960s and 1970s, have largely disappeared, many former colonies remain beset by complex internal or external relationships.

The necessity to undertake peace support operations on the continent of Europe is a new feature necessitated by the demise of regimes in countries, for example, the former Yugoslavia, which in the past "contained" internal strife and conflict.

The news media have played a role in the demand for international action on humanitarian grounds, even though the appropriateness of a particular response may be uncertain.

It is a truism that sustainable peace can only be obtained through the willingness of the parties to the dispute to maintain this peace and work together in resolving matters of actual and potential conflict. Third party contributors can assist this process in a variety of ways - through coercion, assistance, mediation, and arbitration, but these processes are clearly supplemental to the parties themselves resolving or overcoming differences.

The range of international responses continues to develop, covering all aspects of potential assistance, including diplomatic, military, policing, political, economic and other confidence building initiatives. A growing development is the use of an international war crimes component as a judicial element to peace support.

6.3 Current Defence Forces deployments on peace support operations

6.3.1

Ireland contributes directly and indirectly to international peace in a variety of ways. The deployment of our Defence Forces in peace support operations represents a major direct contribution by Ireland. Participating on overseas peace support operations is the largest single military activity currently undertaken by the Defence Forces. Since 1958, some 47,000 tours of duty have been completed with distinction by members of the Defence Forces on 51 different missions. The location and number of personnel currently involved are set out in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

Defence Forces Peace Support Commitments - January 2000

MISSION	NO. DEPLOYED
UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon)	611
KFOR (International Security Presence in Kosovo)	103
SFOR (Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina)	46
INTERFET (International Force in East Timor)	40
OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe)	19
ECMM (European Community Monitor Mission)	13
UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation)	10
MINURSO (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara)	7
UNFICYP (United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus)	5
UNIKOM (United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission)	5
UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo)	5
UNAMET (United Nations Mission in East Timor)	3
UNNY (United Nations Headquarters New York)	1
UNSCOM (United Nations Special Commission)	1
TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONNEL	**869**

6.3.2

Ireland's level of participation in overseas missions is acknowledged to be significant. Arguably, Ireland's contribution over the past 40 years could be considered as being disproportionate to our size. Ireland is consistently among the leading contributors of personnel to UN peacekeeping operations. With up to 7% of the PDF serving abroad at any one time this is a very significant manpower commitment. The current level of commitment is equivalent to over 9% of Army strength. Although personnel are drawn from right across the Defence Forces, the vast majority come from the Army. Notwithstanding Ireland's continuing support for the UN, the scale of our commitment

Notwithstanding Ireland's continuing support for the UN, the scale of our commitment must be kept under review and the Government have decided that there should be a rigorous review of the sustainability of the current level of commitment in the light of decisions on restructuring set out in the White Paper.

6.3.3

Defence policy direction on overseas peace support operations will be determined in the light of the following factors:

Security requirements at home.

The on-going development of UN peace support operations.

The evolution of security structures and developments within the emerging security architecture in Europe and the necessity to have Defence resources available and capable of meeting the needs of Government.

The need for overseas peace support operations to be balanced and proportionate with respect to the defence budget, resources and other commitments.

6.3.4

The Defence Forces will, subject to domestic security requirements, continue to contribute to peace support activities overseas. The policy approach in considering individual requests to participate in a peacekeeping mission will be informed by the following factors:

An assessment of whether a peacekeeping operation is the most appropriate response.

Consideration of how the mission relates to the priorities of Irish foreign policy.

The degree of risk involved.

The extent to which the required skills or characteristics relate to Irish capabilities.

The existence of realistic objectives and a clear mandate which has the potential to contribute to a political solution.

Whether the operation is adequately resourced.

The level of existing commitments to peacekeeping operations and security requirements at home.

6.3.5

At present Ireland subscribes to the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) under which the State offers to provide up to 850 personnel on overseas service at any given time. This is an expression of policy intent and not a binding commitment. There is no obligation to participate in any particular mission and the approval of Dáil Éireann is required for the dispatch of a contingent of the PDF to specific operations. Ireland has also communicated its UNSAS returns to the WEU in the context of measuring and assessing capabilities for EU-led Petersberg Tasks.

6.3.6

The aim will be to maintain the overall UNSAS commitment of 850 personnel for the present. A pragmatic approach is required having regard to the broad range of operational demands, the availability of personnel and the appropriateness of Ireland participating in missions. It will always be the case that domestic national security needs will come first in relation to the deployment of troops and overseas commitments must be kept at a level which is consistent with the domestic situation.

6.3.7

An important continuing element of the Defence Forces contribution overseas is in a humanitarian context. Humanitarian tasks go hand-in-hand with military tasks in many crisis situations. The multi-functional nature of UN peacekeeping in recent years calls for a considerable degree of co-operation in the humanitarian aspects of peacekeeping. In Lebanon, for example, the Defence Forces have been able to give assistance, such as support for a local orphanage and the provision of medical clinics, which has greatly improved the quality of life of the local community. Other humanitarian assistance has included the evacuation of and shelter for people during hostilities and assistance with saving harvests etc. In addition, Defence Forces personnel on secondment to non-governmental organisations have made important contributions to dealing with humanitarian crises, for example, in the aftermath of the hurricane in Honduras in 1999.

Unit Deployments

6.3.8

At present units deployed on overseas peace support operations are formed and maintained on an ad hoc basis. The units comprise personnel selected from volunteers. The current organisation requires an approach in which personnel are drawn in small numbers from units throughout the country. In general, only personnel who are fully committed serve overseas thus ensuring a very positive ethos. This approach is attractive to Defence Forces personnel because it allows them to have direct control over the timing of any periods spent away from home and family.

timing of any periods spent away from home and family.

6.3.9

The Defence (Amendment) (No.2) Act, 1960 provides that PDF personnel enlisted after that legislation was enacted are liable to serve outside the State on a peacekeeping mission. With the passage of time virtually all personnel are now liable for such service. The Defence (Amendment) Act, 1993 provides for service overseas in a peace enforcement capacity, such as UNISOM II in Somalia in 1993-94.

6.3.10

There is a developing understanding that if the Defence Forces are to continue to contribute in the overseas domain, there will not be the same scope for forming units for overseas service on the basis of the individual choice of volunteers.

6.3.11

For the future, the organisation itself must give greater shape and direction to the timing and type of volunteer service. A planning process will now be initiated to examine how personnel might be drawn together in a more integrated way for service abroad. Detailing of personnel for overseas service occurs in only a small number of cases at present but if the Defence Forces are to ensure that the necessary professional standards are maintained in overseas activities, it will be desirable to a far greater extent to draw individual platoons, companies and in time battalions, to serve in an overseas role. This could be done by specifying times during which personnel are likely to be required for overseas service.

6.3.12

Another way of augmenting the process is by utilising fully-formed units. This has taken place already, albeit in unique circumstances, in the deployment of members of the Army Ranger Wing to East Timor. Generally, this is the approach adopted by most other countries and the experience in East Timor will be assessed to identify what lessons can be learned. For operational reasons, there are many advantages to the deployment of fully-formed units. The personnel of such units will have worked and trained together already and when deployed are, in effect, a ready-formed team.

6.4 Other Developments in Overseas Peace Support Activities

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

6.4.1

Ireland’s longest major peace support contribution, spanning more than twenty years, is in Lebanon. While prospects for long-term peace are improving, the UN is likely to have a continuing role in Lebanon. In view of our lengthy involvement in UNIFIL, Ireland would wish to see progress on the fulfilment of the mandate before withdrawing from Lebanon. There have been real benefits to the people of south Lebanon deriving from the UNIFIL presence. However, it is important to recognise that a military presence of this kind should not become a permanent fixture in any country.

6.4.2

The UNIFIL deployment is a very significant draw on the Defence Forces total capacity and the scale of that operation limits the potential to deploy to other overseas missions. As the Middle East peace process develops, it will be important to establish Ireland's options in relation to continued participation and the scope for scaling down on our own commitment there. It may be desirable to obtain a variety of overseas deployments and to avoid a single large long-term deployment as at present.

European Security Developments

6.4.3

Within Europe, the political, institutional and other elements of security provision are in a state of evolution. An overview of these trends was presented earlier in the White Paper. It is in Ireland's and Europe's interest to continue to develop the architecture and structures aimed at improving security and the responses to challenges to security.

6.4.4

Participation in peace support activities by Ireland in the European domain will take place in the context of the Petersberg Tasks and when authorised by the UN.

Partnership for Peace (PfP)

6.4.5

Ireland joined Partnership for Peace (PfP) on 1 December 1999. Partnership for Peace provides a framework for co-operation between countries on a range of security, defence, humanitarian and other initiatives. The overall objectives of PfP are consistent with Ireland's approach to international peace and European security. It involves voluntary and non-binding co-operation through a bilateral agreement with NATO limited to those areas of interest to the country concerned. In agreeing a PfP programme, a state decides the areas it wishes to be involved in and the contribution it wishes to make. Ireland's Presentation Document envisages our participation, including peacekeeping and humanitarian tasks, in line with our traditional approach.

6.4.6

Participation in PfP does not involve membership of NATO and will not bring Ireland into any form of alliance involving mutual defence commitments. It does not constitute or imply any undertaking or intention to become a member of NATO at any time in the future. Participation in PfP does not affect Ireland's long-standing policy of military

future. Participation in PfP does not affect Ireland's long standing policy of military neutrality nor is PfP in conflict with our traditional support for UN peacekeeping operations. Indeed, it will enhance our capacity to contribute to such operations.

6.4.7

PfP has been joined by most OSCE countries, including Russia and the former Soviet Republics, as well as neutral countries such as Sweden, Finland and Switzerland. Currently, 43 states participate in PfP. PfP has been complemented by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which includes all members of PfP. The EAPC grew out of consultations involving members of PfP who felt the need for a new multi-national consultation framework at political level. The EAPC has become an important forum for greater involvement in PfP planning and decision making.

Partnership for Peace and the Defence Forces

6.4.8

Considerable benefits will accrue to the Defence Forces from participation in PfP, allowing them to enhance their capability for multi-national peacekeeping operations in the future through the medium of interoperability development, training and exercises.

6.4.9

PfP will be of value to Ireland in co-operation and planning for Petersberg Tasks. Ireland's participation in NATO-led UN mandated forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo are examples of the type of situations in which Ireland can benefit from participation in PfP because much of the preparation and training for these new style missions is undertaken by countries under the auspices of PfP.

6.4.10

The Defence Forces, in turn, have much to offer to other participating States in terms of the cumulative experience and insight which they have gained over many years in a wide variety of peacekeeping missions. This will give Ireland an influence in how peacekeeping operations will be conducted in the future.

Reserve Defence Force

6.4.11

A key element of the new strategy for the reorganisation and development of the Reserve Defence Force is the proposal to permit reservists to serve overseas, subject to the individuals concerned meeting appropriate training standards. This is common in other countries, including those like Ireland with a fully professional regular defence force. It will generally encourage interoperability between regular and reserve forces and will go towards ensuring that the Defence Forces have the necessary capacity to meet the State's desired commitment to overseas peace support operations.

Equipment

6.4.12

Overseas peace support operations vary considerably in character depending on the nature of the mission. There is a requirement to give peace support operations a degree of flexibility that can only be met by modern equipment and new technologies. The safety of personnel is of paramount importance at all times. Certain conflict situations require heavier firepower and strength in the field and the mandates given to the many missions reflect this reality. Increasingly, contributing countries are expected to provide their own heavy equipment, including armoured vehicles.

6.4.13

As part of the on-going equipment procurement policy, the Defence Forces will be equipped to meet their overseas role. Recent equipment and *materiel* programmes will ensure that the Defence Forces have the capacity to undertake overseas activities in the new operational environment. These include the APC programme, the acquisition of specialist logistical vehicles and the continued upgrade of the transport fleet.

Financial Context

6.4.14

Apart from normal pay there is a real cost in the provision of personnel for overseas service. In 1999, the additional cost to the Exchequer in respect of overseas allowances and other expenses is estimated at about £14m, of which £6.5m is recoverable from the UN.

6.4.15

UNIFIL and UNFICYP are the only missions for which there is currently an entitlement to reimbursement of troop costs from the UN. However reimbursement has tended to be delayed and at end-1999 there were arrears outstanding from the UN of approximately £9.5m. All other missions have to be funded by the Exchequer from within the Defence Vote. There is a discernible trend that many future missions will be financed by the participating countries. This will increase the overall net cost of overseas operations in a situation where the proportion of missions with a reimbursement facility declines. The general strategy for the management of the Defence Vote within existing resources will set the context for all defence programmes, including overseas operations.

United Nations Peacekeeping Training Assistance Teams (UNTAT)

6.4.16

In 1994 the United Nations General Assembly requested the UN Secretary General to provide assistance to member states requiring guidance in the development and

implementation of their national peacekeeping training programmes. The UNTAT function is intended to provide immediate and short term assistance for a member state's participation in a specific peacekeeping mission. Ireland will accept a UN invitation to participate in this initiative which will enhance Ireland's peacekeeping profile and will contribute to the development of the peacekeeping capacity of new and developing troop contributing countries in Africa and elsewhere. For example, the UN Training School, based in the DFTC, is involved in an instructor exchange programme between relevant international peacekeeping schools.

Inter-departmental Committee on Peacekeeping

6.4.17

It was decided in 1996 to establish an Inter-departmental Committee on Peacekeeping. The Committee is chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs and otherwise comprises representatives from the Departments of Defence, Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Defence Forces and the Garda Síochána. The Committee operates in accordance with thinking under the Strategic Management Initiative to ensure that there are structures in place to address cross-departmental issues. The function of the Committee is to provide a forum to exchange views on policy issues relating to Ireland's participation in international peacekeeping with a view to increasing the effectiveness and coherence of policy in this area and to ensure that policy and its implementation can keep pace in a coordinated way with developments in international peacekeeping.

Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel

6.4.18

Ireland will accede to the Convention which came into force on 15 January 1999. The purpose of the Convention is to secure the better protection of personnel engaged in UN efforts in the fields of preventive diplomacy and other peace support operations. The relevant Bill has been published by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and will be progressed as quickly as possible.

Other Types of Overseas Participation

6.4.19

In addition to the peace support activities described, members of the Defence Forces are involved in other elements of overseas peace support activity:

Disarmament and Arms Control: Policies in this area play a central role in international security. An example of participation is the deployment of Defence Forces technical ordnance officers to UNSCOM.

Confidence and security building measures: When requested, Defence Forces observers attend exercises, conduct verification inspections and supervise elections under the auspices of the OSCE in the area of confidence and security building.

Overseas training: The UN School at the Defence Forces Training Centre, Curragh Camp, in addition to providing the necessary preparation for Irish contingents undertaking peace support activities abroad, shares the experience of Irish peacekeepers with other countries.

Staff and Liaison Officers, Conferences and Courses: Defence Forces personnel are appointed to appropriate postings abroad such as that of the Military Adviser to the Irish Permanent Representation in the UN and the liaison officer for SFOR and KFOR based at Mons, Belgium. Personnel also attend relevant conferences and courses associated with overseas peace support operations and management.

7. Civil Defence

7.1 Introduction

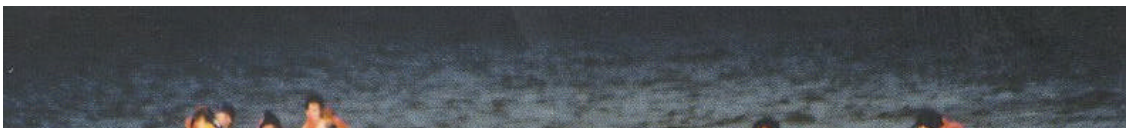
Civil Defence forms an important part of overall community support capability. The White Paper sets out the strategy for the continued development of Civil Defence for the next ten years.

7.2 Background to Civil Defence in Ireland

Origins

7.2.1

Civil Defence was set up in 1950 to be part of the national defence structure as the necessary civil response to potential hazards which might arise in a war situation. Civil Defence was designed to undertake non-combatant activities and measures to afford defence against or mitigate the effects on persons and property of an attack on the State or of hazards otherwise arising during a time of war or emergency such as from radioactive fallout or biological or chemical warfare.



7.2.2

Civil Defence operates under legislation that includes the Air Raid Precautions Acts of 1939 and 1946 and the Local Government Acts of 1941 to 1976, and various Statutory Instruments. Under this legislation, Civil Defence is empowered to train and conduct exercises in preparation for its role in wartime.

Management and Organisation

7.2.3

The Minister for Defence usually delegates responsibility for Civil Defence to the Minister of State at the Department who is also Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach and Government Chief Whip. Civil Defence services are delivered at local level by the relevant Local Authority. These services are administered by a designated officer, the Civil Defence Officer (an employee of the Local Authority), who normally reports to the County or City Manager.

7.2.4

The Civil Defence Branch of the Department of Defence facilitates, through the Local Authorities, civil defence responses for emergency relief and support to ensure the operation of vital services and to provide other community supports as directed by Government. The Branch is responsible for policy development and the general direction of the volunteer organisation through the Local Authorities. It is also responsible for the administration, training, financing and equipping of the Civil Defence organisation and includes the Civil Defence School - its national training centre. Expenditure incurred by Local Authorities on Civil Defence is grant-aided to the extent of 70% by the Department of Defence. The Department also fully funds capital equipment such as transport vehicles and ambulances which are loaned to Local Authorities.

7.2.5

The Civil Defence organisation has approximately 6,000 volunteer members who are trained in various skills, such as first aid, rescue, fire fighting, emergency feeding, evacuee care, land and water search and radiation monitoring. Civil Defence is an organisation in which Irish citizens can give voluntary service within the framework of local and central government structures.

7.3 Towards 2000 Programme

7.3.1

With the end of the Cold War, the principal focus of Civil Defence in the 1990s changed to one of community support and emergency response. This was highlighted with the launch in 1992 of the development programme "Towards 2000" which was designed to put in place the structures and develop the skills that would enable the organisation to face the future challenges. The aim of the programme was to develop Civil Defence as a top class second line emergency service assisting the local community.

7.3.2

The methodology employed was to institute enabling mechanisms for programme development in a number of disciplines. There was a recognition that the development would be largely organic and would vary from one part of the country to the next but that over time the overall level of capability would be raised. Local authorities were asked to identify their Civil Defence needs within a number of areas as set out below.

Develop a response to flooding problems.

Develop a response to environmental problems.

Develop a response to major emergencies.

Revise and update evacuee reception arrangements.

Develop plans for radiological emergencies.

Develop a response to river, lake and coastal area search and recovery.

Develop assistance response in blizzard conditions.

Broaden the scope of rescue capability.

Stewarding.

Develop forest fire fighting capability.

7.3.3

The Department of Defence introduced an organisational, training, equipment and logistical support programme to facilitate meeting "Towards 2000" objectives.

Personnel and Training

7.3.4

Civil Defence members are volunteers who are very dedicated and highly committed to the idea of community service and work in a structured and disciplined way under the direction of Local Authority Civil Defence Officers.

Annual Exercises

7.3.5

A programme of national exercises which is conducted each year provides opportunities for large scale exercising of the members, helps to broaden and deepen skills and provides a forum to inject external influence and expertise into the organisation and provides objective assessment of performance.

Equipment and Logistical Support

7.3.6

Equipment purchase and logistical support development have been progressing in accordance with the "Towards 2000" programme. A primary focus in recent years has been upgrading the ambulance and transport fleet and completing the radio communications network. These are now of a very high standard.

7.4 Changing Environment

Changing Planning Environment

7.4.1

The review that ultimately culminated in the launch of the "Towards 2000" programme was aimed at giving the volunteer organisation a current operational role in society, to make it productive and to have a resource available, if required, in wartime. It took account of the fact that planning structures that would emerge for any future national emergency would be different from those originally envisaged for Civil Defence. Any new formation would be based on the framework which was being employed to organise the emergency responses of Local Authorities, the Garda Síochána and Health Boards

the emergency responses of Local Authorities, the Garda Síochána and Health Boards.

7.4.2

Since 1992, the organisation has been learning to operate in close support of the front-line emergency services and so integrate in a meaningful way into the day-to-day emergency planning structures. This has allowed the Civil Defence organisation to focus on serving the needs of local communities. This trend will be continued and developed.

Other Trends

7.4.3

The "Towards 2000" development programme has changed the Civil Defence volunteer organisation in that it is now oriented towards community service on an on-going basis. There are increasing demands on the organisation to assist at community events, to respond in times of difficulty in the local area and to contribute to national activity. It is fair to say that the Civil Defence of the 1970s and 1980s would not be recognisable to the younger members of today's organisation. Certain Local Authorities have developed some of the programmes, under the Department's guidance, to quite a sophisticated extent.

7.4.4

Generally feedback from stakeholders is positive and this was confirmed in the consultative process undertaken in the context of the White Paper which also demonstrated the commitment of those involved in Civil Defence. Of the 46 submissions received on the White Paper on Defence, 13 related directly to Civil Defence matters. Generally the submissions were very supportive of the progress made under the "Towards 2000" programme and sought to give recognition to the valuable work undertaken by members over many years.

7.4.5

The Civil Defence volunteer force is maintained at a very modest cost, has a substantial history of working at community events, in searches, and during emergencies and has maintained its voluntary ethos even while working side by side with full and part-time professional services.

7.4.6

However, in common with other voluntary organisations, Civil Defence has experienced a decline in recruitment and membership. It is clear that the opportunity to serve in Civil Defence should be presented in a more attractive way to assist in recruiting members. Following recruitement, it will be necessary to train and sustain personnel in a way that provides a stimulating learning environment. This will involve the use of more sophisticated training packages, the provision of a variety of delivery systems and the development of a pro-active approach to health and safety issues.

7.5 Future Development of Civil Defence

7.5.1

The Government have decided that the Civil Defence mission should continue to be:

To facilitate through the Local Authorities Civil Defence responses for emergency relief and support to ensure the operation of vital services and the maintenance of public life and to provide other community supports as directed by the Government.

7.5.2

In the period 2000 to 2010, Civil Defence will continue to focus its efforts on enhancing its capacity to respond to emergencies as a high-quality second line service in addition to facilitating community support activities. As already announced by the Minister of State, Civil Defence legislation will be updated to reflect the current and future roles of the organisation. This work will be completed as soon as possible.

7.5.3

The voluntary nature of the organisation will be preserved. There is a particular culture and ethos associated with voluntary activity which is widely recognised as being important in building community. This must be nurtured at all levels by continuing to build co-operative relationships with other service organisations but maintaining the distinctiveness of Civil Defence. The volunteer nature of the Civil Defence organisation gives each citizen the opportunity to serve his or her community and it is the public face of the delivery of local *authority services at many events. The progress of the Better Local Government initiative of the Department of the Environment and Local Government highlights the importance of such factors.

7.5.4

The training provided to Civil Defence members will continue to be revised and updated in line with best practice throughout the emergency community. Co-ordinated training will be provided to support all needs. Efforts will continue to be made to increase the flexibility in delivery of Civil Defence training and advantage will be taken of the existence of the new opportunities provided by the electronic media, particularly the internet. Liaison with third level institutions on collaborative programmes will continue.

Equipment and Infrastructure

7.5.5

In the period under consideration the necessity for upgrading or replacing systems and equipment will arise. The importance of ensuring good quality equipment has already been highlighted both in the context of ensuring that Civil Defence has the capabilities to do the job required and as an important motivational element in recruiting and retaining members.

7.5.6

The Civil Defence Branch of the Department of Defence maintains liaison with other Government Departments and national bodies with roles in emergencies to ensure effective integration of Civil Defence into response planning. From time to time the question of transferring the Civil Defence policy and general direction functions of the Department of Defence to the Department of the Environment and Local Government has been mooted. Indeed this issue was raised in some submissions received during the White Paper consultative process. The rationale behind this approach is that given the Department of the Environment and Local Government’s lead role in local government policy and development, it would be more appropriate that Civil Defence, which at operational level is the responsibility of the local authorities, should fall within that Department’s ambit. On balance, the Government, having considered the various issues involved, have decided that no change in the present arrangements should be made for the time being.

7.5.7

The Government have further decided that, in line with their policy on decentralisation

of public services, the Civil Defence Branch of the Department of Defence will be decentralised to Roscrea as soon as practical arrangements can be put in place.

7.5.8

In addition to the staff cost of the Civil Defence Branch of the Department, expenditure under the Defence Vote on Civil Defence activities in 1999 was £2.5m. This represents a very modest outlay when account is taken of the significant contribution which up to 6,000 volunteers make to their local communities.

7.5.9

The year 2000 marks the 50th Anniversary of the foundation of Civil Defence and a number of special events are planned to mark the occasion. As an additional recognition of the selfless contribution by so many to local communities, the Government approved an extra allocation of £500,000 in the year 2000 for Civil Defence purposes. The provision for 2000 involves an increase of almost 25% on the 1999 expenditure and the Government have also decided to maintain the extra allocation in future years. This demonstrates the Government's appreciation of the efforts of those involved in Civil Defence.

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8. Defence Management

8.1 Introduction

The mission of the Department of Defence is to provide value for money military services which meet the needs of Government and the people and to provide a Civil

Defence capability. The structure, organisation, management and resourcing of the Department must be directed at ensuring that this mission is attained. As changes in the Defence Forces were dealt with earlier in the White Paper, this chapter examines the civil branches of the Department of Defence and their role in the management of defence and the process of strategic change.

8.2 Current Defence Management Arrangements

8.2.1

The role, structure and organisation of the Department of Defence stem directly from the statutory responsibilities of the Minister for Defence and from the corpus of legislation covering defence and the civil service as a whole.

8.2.2

The Department of Defence was established by the Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924, which assigns to the Department "the administration and business of the raising, training, organisation, maintenance, equipment, management, discipline, regulation and control according to law of the military defence forces". The Department is responsible for the administration of military pensions and associated matters under the various pensions acts.

8.2.3

Under the Defence Acts, 1954-98, the Department has civil and military elements. The civil element is headed by the Secretary General and the military element by the Chief of Staff. Both elements are critical to the management of defence. Under the Ministers and Secretaries Act, the Minister is head of the Department and the Secretary General is the "principal officer" of the Department. As such, the Secretary General is the Minister's principal policy adviser. The Secretary General is also the statutory Accounting Officer for all defence expenditure.

8.2.4

In any consideration of top management structures in a defence environment, the principle of ensuring civil control of the military necessarily arises, ie control by the Minister on behalf of the Government. In practice, this consideration is not a pressing issue in Ireland given the robustness of our democratic institutions and the long-standing tradition of acceptance of political authority by the Defence Forces. Accordingly, the legal framework governing defence addresses this requirement in a pragmatic and balanced manner.

8.2.5

The Constitution vests supreme command of the Defence Forces in the President and also provides that the exercise of such command shall be regulated by law. The governing legislation is contained in the Defence Acts, 1954-98, which provide that military command of, and all executive and administrative powers in relation to, the Defence Forces, including the power to delegate command and authority, shall be exercisable by the Government and through and by the Minister for Defence. Military command is delegated by the Minister directly to the General Officers Commanding each of the three territorial brigades, the Defence Forces Training Centre and the Air Corps and to the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service. Each of these officers is responsible to the Minister for the exercise of the command delegated to him. In practice, matters in relation to command are normally channelled through the Chief of Staff and this position will be maintained. In effect this means that day to day operational control of the Defence Forces rests with the Chief of Staff for which he is directly responsible to the Minister.

8.2.6

The present top management structure of the Defence Forces is of relatively recent origin. It is based on legislation enacted in 1998 arising from the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan (1996-98). Previously, the military element of the Department of Defence comprised three military branches, the heads of which had a direct reporting relationship with the Minister. This arrangement was replaced by a unified Defence Forces Headquarters headed by the Chief of Staff. Certain statutory duties in connection with the business of the Defence Forces are assigned to the Chief of Staff, the performance of which he is directly responsible to the Minister for Defence. The Chief of Staff is the principal military adviser to the Minister. His assigned duties emphasise his responsibility for the effectiveness, efficiency and military organisation and economy of the Defence Forces. The focus of the Chief of Staff is also directed towards the overall planning of the development of the Defence Forces and to decisions on major strategic issues affecting the organisation. Subject to the approval of the Minister, the Chief of Staff, in turn, delegates duties to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) and Deputy Chief of Staff (Support).

8.2.7

Arising from the Public Service Management Act, 1997, a new legal framework governing senior management responsibilities in the civil branches of the Department is now in place including a detailed specification of individual responsibilities at senior level. These responsibilities will be reviewed periodically to ensure that their relevance is maintained.

8.2.8

The primary role of the Department is the support of the Minister in his policy development and control functions. It discharges the audit and financial control tasks in connection with the Secretary General's role as accounting officer and also provides administrative support services to the Defence Forces. The Department has a range of responsibilities in relation to the Minister's non-military responsibilities including Civil Defence, the Irish Red Cross Society and Coiste an Asgard. The Department has two divisions each headed by an Assistant Secretary and the Finance Branch headed by the

divisions each headed by an Assistant Secretary and the Finance Branch headed by the Financial Controller, each of whom reports directly to the Secretary General.

8.3 Strategic Management Developments

8.3.1

For a number of years a process of change has been underway in the Department resulting in a gradual evolution in the relationship between the military and civil elements. The principal features of this change process are:

Civil service numbers have reduced from over 600 during the 1980s to a present strength of around 440.

There has been a major investment in computerisation involving the Department and the Defence Forces. A modern communications and information technology infrastructure is now in place.

There has been a shift away from detailed involvement by the civil branches in day-to-day administrative matters.

There has been a significant delegation of procurement authority to the Defence Forces.

There has been a growing focus on the policy and evaluation roles and on securing value for money in tandem with the reform process in the public sector generally.

There has been a more structured approach to co-ordinating the work of the civil and military branches with particular emphasis on using a strategic planning approach.

The Department has increased investment in human resources with an emphasis on training and development of personnel.

8.3.2

The Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) has provided an added impetus to the change process in defence. The Department's Strategy Statements have been drawn up as part of the SMI process and set out the strategic objectives and programmes in place to give effect to its mission. These programmes are to a significant extent geared towards creating a new policy-led organisation with a more streamlined approach to administration.

8.3.3

Major progress has also been made in recent years in a joint management process which involves civil and military elements of the Department. The Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan (1996-98) was developed through these joint approaches as was the new APC programme and the Department's Civil-Military Strategic Information Technology Plan. However, while the civil and military elements have successfully overseen the implementation of the first phase of the current reform process and other initiatives, it is important to recognise that the design of the major organisational reforms relied on external inputs. The challenge for the future is to ensure that the management structures in the Department and the Defence Forces will have the capacity to manage all aspects of the reform agenda.

Restructuring of the Department of Defence

8.3.4

The key issues facing the civil side of the Department fall into the following two broad areas:

> The development of a policy-led Department which is capable of advising the Minister on all defence matters, executing the specific tasks allocated to the civil service branches, and generally managing its business on a value for money basis.
>
> Managing at the policy level the on-going reform and development of the Defence Forces to ensure that there are sustainable and affordable Defence Forces in place to fulfil the roles laid down by Government.

8.3.5

Hearing loss compensation which is dealt with more fully in Appendix C is also a major issue which will continue to face the Department for some time. It has necessarily absorbed a very significant amount of management resources. The Department has managed the huge administrative burden of dealing with some 15,000 claims largely from within its existing staff complement.

8.3.6

In addition to the hearing loss compensation issue, the Department has taken on new tasks, such as:

> Overseeing and evaluating the process of Defence Forces reform and reorganisation

reorganisation.

Major developments in international security policy issues.

Developments arising from the Strategic Management Initiative.

The introduction of a system of representation in the Defence Forces.

8.3.7

The pursuit of strategic change will involve:

A review of the structure of the civil service branches of the Department to give a greater emphasis to the Department's policy development and evaluation roles.

Implementation of the new human resources development strategy.

Further development of the Defence Forces Strategic Management Committee.

8.3.8

The priorities for departmental management will be to:

Free-up personnel resources to concentrate on policy and evaluation work.

Eliminate unnecessary procedures, reduce regulation and make maximum use of information technology. In accordance with Government policy on regulatory reform, the Department will advance the comprehensive review of regulations already commenced, to eliminate or simplify regulations.

Free-up military personnel from tasks which could be more appropriately undertaken by civilian personnel.

Give a greater focus to personnel development and performance management.

Further develop joint civil-military structures to improve interaction.

Develop and enhance inter-departmental links for addressing cross-departmental and inter-agency issues.

8.3.9

The achievement of these objectives will require a review of Departmental structures to ensure that they keep pace with the changing environment and take account of developments under the SMI. This will involve the creation of a new Corporate Services Division and a review of staffing levels. The new division will bring together all of the Department’s management support activities. The objective will be to achieve a more integrated approach to the organisation and development of the Department and to achieve a more holistic approach to policy development, performance management, procurement and value for money.

8.3.10

The restructured Department, which will be based on a three division organisation with a revision of the existing branches to meet these requirements, will lead to a 10% reduction in the current staff complement. The reduction will be undertaken in consultation with the Department's Civil Service Partnership Committee.

Human Resources Development

8.3.11

The management and development of staff are critical to ensuring that an organisation fulfils its mission. The Department has given special attention to this issue in recent years and the principal elements of a new human resources strategy emerged from a detailed consultative process. Many of these are now in place. Selection for promotion among civil service staff is now through a competitive merit-based system. There has been a major investment in training and development to ensure that staff are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. The consolidation of these important reforms, combined with the introduction of the new systems of performance management will be priorities for the Corporate Services Division.

8.3.12

In addition to its civil service staff, the Department has some 1,100 civilian personnel employed in military barracks throughout the country, mainly providing general operative, trades and other services. In a partnership approach with staff interests, efforts will be made to ensure that appropriate opportunities to maximise value for money, including contracting out of services, are utilised.

Civil-Military Management - Council of Defence

8.3.13

The Defence Act, 1954 makes provision for the Council of Defence, which may be convened by the Minister for Defence, and otherwise comprises the Minister of State, the Secretary General of the Department, who also acts as secretary to the Council, the Chief of Staff and the two Deputy Chiefs of Staff.

8.3.14

The Council's origins lie in a requirement in the early years of the State to enshrine the civil-military management process in a formalised way. With developments over time, including the introduction of the Defence Forces Strategic Management Committee (SMC), there has not been a requirement for a formal convening of the Council since 1987. However, it has been decided to retain the Council of Defence pending the enactment of legislation which is not currently contemplated.

Civil-Military Management - Defence Forces Strategic Management Committee

8.3.15

The SMC provides an important forum for the discussion of major policy issues. The SMC is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department and the membership comprises the Chief of Staff, the two Deputy Chiefs of Staff and the two Assistant Secretaries of the Department. The General Officer Commanding the Air Corps and the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service attend in respect of items affecting their services.

8.3.16

The role of the SMC will be enhanced through a greater emphasis on strategic planning and on policy formulation and review. It is envisaged that the SMC will meet on a monthly basis. To enhance the many formal and informal processes already in place to provide the Minister with advice from civil and military sources, the Minister will chair quarterly meetings of the SMC. There is scope to develop sub-SMC level civil-military structures. A more proactive role for the SMC will help to maintain a shared understanding of the policy objectives facing the Defence organisation with a view to ensuring that the Minister has the best possible advice available to him. One of the issues which the SMC will consider is the use of Service Level Agreements. These have been identified as being important in the context of the delivery of services by the Air Corps and Naval Service, and the SMC will consider the extension of this approach where it is considered appropriate.

Cross-Departmental Links

8.3.17

The Department of Defence cooperates closely with a number of Departments in the provision of services, principally Environment and Local Government, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Marine and Natural Resources, and Taoiseach. However, the arrangements in place are sometimes ad hoc in nature and in the SMI context, there is scope for developing these cross-departmental links further. The Department intends to pursue this matter vigorously including the possibility of arranging temporary secondments which would be to the benefit of the Departments involved.

Internal Audit

8.3.18

The Department's Internal Audit Section acts as an independent unit with the responsibility of providing assurance to management, both civil and military, on the adequacy of control procedures. The Section may audit any area of activity involving the expenditure of public funds by the Department or by the Defence Forces. It has full and free access to all civil and military premises, stores and records. The annual audit programme is approved and reviewed by the Department's Audit Committee, which comprises the Secretary General, the two Assistant Secretaries, the Financial Controller, the Professional Accountant and the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support). The Head of the Internal Audit Section has direct access to the Secretary General. As a matter of priority extra staffing resources will be assigned to the Internal Audit Section. This will be made possible by the release of staff from other areas of the Department.

9. Finance and Budgeting

9.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the funding of Defence programmes, multi-annual budgeting, the delegation of financial authority to the Defence Forces and related issues.

9.2 Defence Expenditure

9.2.1

9.2.1

Although not on the scale of most of our European Union partners, expenditure on defence in Ireland represents a significant commitment of public financial resources. It is a substantial element of Government expenditure. This expenditure must be subject to constant review on the basis of the required level of defence services and value for money and also take account of other competing demands for resources.

9.2.2

Public funding for defence is provided through two funds voted by the Dáil - the Defence Vote and the Army Pensions Vote. The Defence Vote provides mainly for the pay, equipment, etc., of the Defence Forces and the Administrative Budget for the civil branches of the Department of Defence. The Army Pensions Vote provides for pensions, gratuities and allowances in respect of retired military personnel, and the dependants of deceased personnel.

9.2.3

Expenditure on defence in 1999 amounted to about £550m, including some £80m under the Army Pensions Vote. This year's Estimates for Public Services provide for gross expenditure on defence of £609m, comprising £522m under the Defence Vote and £87m under the Army Pensions Vote.

9.2.4

The principal elements of proposed expenditure in the year 2000 under the Defence Vote are shown in Table 9.1. The largest single element of expenditure is the pay of the Defence Forces which, when combined with the pay cost of civilians employed at military barracks, amounts to £324m. The capital building programme for 2000 and 2001 will benefit substantially from the revenue from the sale of barracks. The need to provide in the Defence Vote for compensation payments to serving and retired members of the Defence Forces in respect of loss of hearing claims continues to be a major cost to the Exchequer. In 1999 total expenditure on compensation was £44.5m of which about £40m was in respect of loss of hearing claims. The provision for compensation in 2000 is £57m. This expenditure has the effect of distorting the overall level of spending in the defence area.

Table 9.1 Defence Vote - Principal Components

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	£m	%
PDF Pay and Allowances	294	56
Pay and Allowances of Civilian Employees and Reserve Defence Force	30	6
Defensive Equipment	21	4
Air Corps: Equipment, fuel, maintenance, etc.	17	3
Naval Service: Equipment, fuel, maintenance, etc.	16	3
Barracks expenses, repairs and maintenance of lands	13	2
Buildings - Capital	25	5
Military Transport: New vehicles, fuel, repairs and maintenance	9	2
Compensation	57	11
Other non-pay military expenditure	24	5
Administrative Budget	12	2
Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross Society and Coiste an Asgard	4	1
TOTAL	**522**	**100**

9.3 The Need to Rebalance Defence Spending

9.3.1

The Price Waterhouse review of the Defence Forces highlighted the serious imbalance in defence spending in terms of the pay:non-pay ratio. In 1995, pay accounted for approximately 80% of military expenditure leaving only 20% for all non-pay spending. Price Waterhouse recommended that in the case of a light infantry based military structure the balance between pay and non-pay should be at least 70:30 (more heavily equipped armed forces seek to maintain a 50:50 ratio between pay and non-pay).

9.3.2

Even when the additional funding for compensation claims is excluded, progress is being made in regard to the pay:non-pay ratio. Two factors have greatly assisted this process - savings arising from strength reductions under the 1996-1998 Implementation Plan and the re-investment of proceeds from the sale of barracks. Excluding loss of hearing compensation, some 26% of military spending in 1999 was in the non-pay area while the planned figure for 2000 is almost 28%.

9.3.3

Having regard to the need for increased investment in equipment for the Defence Forces, the Government have decided that the pay savings arising from the restructuring of the PDF detailed in the White Paper should be retained in full in the Defence Vote. These savings are estimated at £20m a year when fully implemented. Similarly, proceeds arising from the sale of further military properties will be fully re-invested in equipment and infrastructural facilities for the Defence Forces, in addition to the extra £5m per year for the next five years to be provided to meet urgent Air Corps equipment requirements. These measures will enable the Defence Forces to proceed with much needed equipment improvement programmes. They will also bring about a better balance between pay and non-pay expenditure in line with the target recommended by

Price Waterhouse.

9.3.4

Appendix D sets out details of infrastructural projects valued at £1m or over, completed or in progress, since 1995, in addition to projects under consideration for the period 2000-2004. Appendix E gives details of significant equipment purchases in recent years. While major progress has been made in both areas, much remains to be done. The thrust of the Government decisions in the White Paper is based on their recognition of the necessity to enhance the equipment and infrastructure available to the Defence Forces.

9.4 Multi-Annual Budgets

In the context of developments under the SMI, the Government decided to introduce a system of multi-annual budgets, the final phase of which will take effect this year. Under this system, Departments will be aware of the expenditure allocations which the Government intends, subject to certain conditions, to make available over a three year period. This will facilitate better planning and management of programmes in the defence area where there are generally long lead times in both equipment and building projects.

9.5 Delegation of Budgets to the Defence Forces

9.5.1

Over recent years there has been a progressive increase in the amount of defence expenditure which is under the budgetary control of the Chief of Staff and it is intended that this delegation will continue. In that regard, the Financial Controller will advise and brief the Chief of Staff as he requires on current financial matters. The financial authority delegated to all elements of the Defence Forces (Army, Air Corps and Naval

Service) includes allowances, clothing, catering, transport, communications and IT, certain equipment, barrack maintenance and expenses. In 2000 the total amount delegated will be over £90m.

9.5.2

The arrangements in relation to delegation of budgets have worked well. However, in line with the SMI, the process of devolving spending authority to the lowest possible management levels within the Defence Forces needs to be developed further. This must be done in the context of developing the necessary financial and administrative expertise in the Defence Forces and putting in place an effective financial management system which will facilitate proper accountability and control. As in other areas of the public service, this more devolved approach will require a major change in the organisational culture of the Defence Forces and will need to be supported by an appropriate staff development programme. Progress on these issues will be made in the context of the project now underway as part of the SMI process to introduce enhanced financial management systems across all Departments.

9.6 Expenditure Reviews

9.6.1

One of the key financial and managerial reforms set out in the SMI was to establish a system of expenditure reviews in all areas of public spending. The main purpose of these reviews is to ensure the most efficient use of resources by Departments within the financial envelopes agreed by Government.

9.6.2

The White Paper and the completion of the special studies of the Air Corps and the Naval Service constitute very substantial policy and expenditure reviews in the defence area. Two other areas of expenditure, namely, the provision of medical services for the Defence Forces and the superannuation code for the Permanent Defence Force, are also under review. Both will be completed this year. This review process will be continued in other areas.

Acronyms used in the White Paper

ANS	Army Nursing Service
APC	Armoured Personnel Carrier
ATCP	Aid to the Civil Power
CFR	Commissioning from the Ranks
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
DF	Defence Forces

DFTC	Defence Forces Training Centre
EAG	Efficiency Audit Group
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EU	European Union
FCA	An Fórsa Cosanta Aitiúil (the Army Reserve)
HQ	Headquarters
INTERFET.....	International Force in East Timor
IT	Information Technology
LE	Long Éireannach (Irish Naval Vessel)
KFOR	International Security Presence in Kosovo
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDF	Permanent Defence Force
PDFORRA	Permanent Defence Force Other Ranks Representative Association
PfP	Partnership for Peace
RACO	Representative Association of Commissioned Officers
RDF	Reserve Defence Force
RDFRA	Reserve Defence Force Representative Association
SAR	Search and Rescue
SFOR	Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina
SMC	Strategic Management Committee
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNSAS	United Nations Standby Arrangements System
UNFICYP	United Nations Forces in Cyprus
UNTAT	United Nations Peacekeeping Training Assistance Teams
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
WEU	Western European Union

Position Paper -

White Paper on Defence - August 1998

Purpose of the White Paper on Defence

A White Paper provides a statement of policy and the strategies to give effect to that policy. Publications in relation to Defence and the Defence Forces have not in the past included a Government White Paper. Independent reviews have recommended such a formal statement. The Minister for Defence has always made it clear that he was committed to the publication of a White Paper and saw the associated process as offering an opportunity to consult with all of the Defence stakeholders as well as providing a vehicle for the on-going reform of Defence begun under the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan.

Objectives

The objectives of the White Paper are:

to provide a medium term policy framework within which Defence policy can evolve to set out a clear strategy for the next ten years;

to provide for the continuation of the reform programme of Defence services, already commenced under the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan, consistent with the national and international security environment and the state of the public finances;

to ensure that the management of Defence services is in accordance with the evolution of the Strategic Management Initiative centrally; and,

to set out the basis for the future development of Civil Defence policy and the follow-up to the present *"Towards 2000"* Strategy.

Context

The context for the White Paper involves: the Defence and Security Environment; Defence Reform and Reorganisation; and Civil Defence.

Defence and Security Environment

Countries in Europe and elsewhere have found it necessary to reappraise their Defence and Defence Forces in the light of international and domestic dimensions to defence and security. The European environment has seen many positive changes in recent years, as the risks of large scale international conflict associated with the Cold War have receded. However, some new uncertainties and risks for the international environment have emerged. These cover a broad spectrum including political instability and regional conflicts: the situation in the former Yugoslavia is a clear example. In the new circumstances, there is a developing emphasis on the importance of peacekeeping and crisis management, against a background in which the United Nations is increasingly reliant on support from regional organisations. The implications of the Treaty of Amsterdam are of relevance in this connection, in particular through the inclusion of provisions in that Treaty on the Petersberg Tasks, covering humanitarian, rescue, peacekeeping and crisis management activities. Ireland will have the opportunity of taking part in Petersberg tasks, on a case by case basis. The Treaty of Amsterdam,

including its provisions on security and defence, has been explained in the Government's White Paper on the Treaty of Amsterdam. Ireland's approach to European security informs policy on defence matters.

In relation to internal security, the Defence Forces provide aid to the civil power by supporting the Garda Síochána. The hopes for a lasting peace in Northern Ireland could potentially transform domestic security considerations. In relation to policy in both international and national domains, the approach in the Defence White Paper will be to focus on the sound management of Defence in the medium term and seek a flexible stance which will facilitate future decisions in the security sphere.

Defence Reform and Reorganisation

The Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan (1996-98) was formulated as a first phase plan in a ten year reform process. Many of the required changes involved a longer time-frame than the initial three year plan. The White Paper will consider the progress already made, identify further changes and develop strategies to achieve them.

Significant change is underway. The Defence (Amendment) Act, 1998 provides for the creation of a new top management structure in the Defence Forces, involving a Chief of Staff and two posts at Deputy Chief of Staff level to replace the existing posts of Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General. The plan involves the creation of a new Defence Forces structure based around three Army brigades, a Defence Forces Headquarters, Training Centre and Logistics Base, the Air Corps and the Naval Service.

The reduced manpower level of around 11,500 provided for under the Defence Forces Review Implementation Plan will be reached this year. New manpower policies have been introduced aimed at achieving a younger age profile and better career progression for military personnel. A policy of regular recruitment of new soldiers has been put in place and new training programmes are being introduced. Investment in physical and equipment infrastructure is progressing. Recently, the procurement process for new Armoured Personnel Carriers, the first such re-equipment programme since the 1970s, was launched. Before year-end, the programme to replace the Army's radios at a total cost of £11m will be completed. Investment in the Naval Service and Air Corps has also proceeded. A new ship is being constructed for the Naval Service and some £3m is being invested at the Naval Base, Haulbowline. For the Air Corps, work on a major new hangar will shortly commence at Casement Aerodrome. Alongside the closure of the barracks announced, there is a programme of investment in other military facilities. Some £43m will be spent on building and engineering works over the period 1997-2000.

In addition to the changes already underway, studies or planning work has commenced in a number of areas which were identified for special attention. These include plans for the implementation of efficiency measures in the Air Corps and the Naval Service arising from the Government's decision on the Price Waterhouse study and a special study of the Reserve Defence Forces.

Civil Defence

Civil Defence, which has some 6,000 volunteers in active training countrywide, has undergone major changes in recent years. Civil Defence has moved away from its traditional war-time role to one of providing a variety of community support and emergency services. Each Local Authority organisation will have developed its priority programmes by the year 2000. The completion of the current *"Towards 2000"* strategy programme will mark the end of an eight year development process to meet the needs of the new millennium. The White Paper on Defence will provide the opportunity to develop this strategy further into the 21st century.

Consultation

As this will be the first White Paper on Defence, the Minister wishes to ensure that any one who wishes to have an input to the process can do so. A general invitation has been

given to make submissions to the Department on all aspects of the White Paper.

List of Organisations which made submissions on the

White Paper on Defence in response to the advertised request.

Aviation Ireland
Chief Fire Officers' Association
Civil Defence Officers' Association
County and City Managers' Association
Defence Studies Group
Department of Finance
Fassaroe Sporting Club, Sandyford
General Council of County Councils
GOAL
Green Party
Institution of Engineers of Ireland
Irish Medical Organisation
Maritime Institute of Ireland
Nautical Institute
Permanent Defence Force Other Ranks Representative Association (PDFORRA)
Representative Association of Commissioned Officers (RACO)
Reserve Defence Force Representative Association (RDFRA)
Tralee Urban District Council
Workers' Party

Overview of Hearing Loss Litigation Issue

1. Background

By the end of 1999, the Department of Defence had received almost 15,000 claims for loss of hearing from current and former members of the Defence Forces. Over 200 claims have been cleared by way of court awards, with a similar number having been withdrawn or dismissed by the courts. Nearly 4,000 claims have been dealt with by out of court settlements, leaving in excess of 10,000 claims outstanding. £70m has been paid in awards and settlements and a further £25m has been paid on plaintiffs' legal costs.

When administrative costs are added, the total cost to the end of 1999 exceeds £100m.

Claims began arriving in significant numbers in 1992 and the volume of new claims reached its peak during 1997 when an average of over 120 claims per week was received. During the course of 1999, the rate of new claims arriving had reduced to a level of just under 100 per month. The basis of most of the claims is that the individual was, in the course of his duty, exposed to noise at range practices from either small arms or artillery. In each case it is usually alleged that no hearing protection, or inadequate hearing protection, was provided and that as a consequence the individual has suffered a hearing loss. It has effectively proved impossible to counter these claims as there is inadequate contemporaneous evidence to rebut the claims to the satisfaction of the courts.

2. The State's Strategy for Defending Litigation

In August 1997, the Department of Defence requested the Department of Health and Children to develop an Irish method of calculating hearing disability. The intention was that such an Irish system of measuring hearing disability would find greater favour in the courts than various foreign systems which the State had adduced and which had not been accepted. The Irish system, known as the Green Book, was published by the Department of Health and Children in April 1998 and under the provisions of the Civil Liability (Assessment of Hearing Injury) Act, 1998, the courts are required to have regard to the formula for assessing hearing disability contained therein in hearing loss cases.

The first Green Book test case, *Greene - v - Minister for Defence,* was heard in May 1998. It was held that the Green Book was a fair and reasonable system for assessing hearing disability. £3,000 was awarded to the plaintiff who was assessed as having a two percent hearing disability. This was interpreted as an award of £1,500 for each percentage point. However, in a second test case, *Hanley - v - Minister for Defence,* heard in June 1998, while it was accepted that the Green Book was fair and reasonable insofar as it went, it only provided a current picture of the individual's disability. Reservations were expressed in the judgement about the additional effect of the ageing process on an individual's hearing and a methodology was adopted to provide a means of projecting how an individual's hearing would worsen with age. This methodology applied a scale of compensation based on the £1,500 per percent for a sixty year old implied in the *Greene* judgement, but doubled it for a thirty year old. Compensation for levels of disability over ten percent would be doubled again. A further calculation of the additional disability at age sixty would attract extra compensation, reduced actuarially to a net present value.

Having commissioned further research into the methodology employed in the *Hanley* judgement, the Department of Defence, decided to appeal the judgement. This was heard by the Supreme Court in July 1999. The main point in the State's appeal was that the level of damages awardable under the tariff in *Hanley* was too great and not commensurate with the level of injuries sustained. The Supreme Court requested the State to propose an alternative tariff and this was supplied to the Court. The State proposed a lower scale of damages but continued to provide an increasing rate for younger plaintiffs.

The Supreme Court in its judgment, delivered on 7 December, 1999, ruled that the scale proposed by the State should normally be the basis for calculating compensation in loss of hearing claims. However, the Court also ruled that the methodology set out in the *Hanley* judgement for calculating the future effect of damage should be used and added to the State's scale.

In the light of the Supreme Court judgment, the Department intends to establish an out of court compensation scheme which will be designed to remove the majority of the Army hearing loss claims from the courts. It is the intention of the Department that the establishment of the hearing loss compensation scheme will provide a system of

establishment of the hearing loss compensation scheme will provide a system of resolving the Army hearing loss issue in a way which will provide a level of compensation which will be fair to individuals whose hearing has been damaged and which will also be reasonable to the taxpayer.

3. Cost

After the *Hanley* judgment in the High Court, the Department estimated that the cost of disposing of the outstanding claims would be £550m, excluding legal costs or additional claims for special damages. The cost of settling outstanding claims using the Supreme Court tariff will have the effect of reducing this figure to less than £200m.

DF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS CARRIED OUT (£1M and Over) 1995 TO 1999

Barracks	Project	Contract Status	Cost £M
McKee	Dining Complex	Completed 1996	1.79
McKee	Offices & Training Rooms Refurbishment	Completed 1997	5.11
Collins, Cork	Transport Service Facility	Completed 1997	1.10
Naval Base	Dining Complex	Completed 1999	2.99
Curragh Camp	Armoury	Completed 1999	0.99
Cathal Brugha	Dining Complex	Completed 1999	1.01
Casement	New Hangar	In progress	4.83
Curragh Camp	Ammunition Depot Upgrade	In progress	4.64
Naval Base	Replace Oil Tanks	In progress	2.07
Collins, Cork	Dining Complex	In progress	1.71
TOTAL			**£26.23m**

DF INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSED PROJECTS (OVER £1M) 2000 - 2004

Starting in Year 2000			**Estimate**
			£M
Casement	HQ for Heli. Support Operations		1.00
Cathal Brugha	Signals / Engineering Workshops & Offices		2.00
Collins, Cork	NCO Mess		1.25
Collins, Cork	Gym / Sports Hall		1.54
Collins, Cork	Armoury		2.50
DFTC	N C 0 Mess - Curragh East		1.50
DFTC	HQ Accomodation Upgrade		1.50
DFTC	Armaments Storage Facility		2.90

DFTC	Artillery, Cavalry & Engineering Training		4.70
DFTC	Upgrade Sewage/Water Systems Ph. 1		1.00
DFTC	Ordnance - Transport Workshop /Training Facilities		2.00
DFTC	Accomodation - Connoly Bks		2.20
DFTC	New Transport, Signals & Medical College		1.30
DFTC	Clothing / Barrack Services Storage Facility		3.10
DFTC	Transport Technical Stores		1.65
DFTC	New Swimming Pool/ Gym Upgrade		3.60
DFTC	Accommodation - Clarke Bks		1.42
DFTC	Ordnance Workshops		1.13
McKee	Accommodation		1.80
Starting in Year 2001			
DFTC	Vehicle Workshops		4.00
DFTC	NCO Mess - Curragh West		3.00
Starting in Year 2002			
Casement	Engineer Workshop		1.50
DFTC	Upgrade Sewage/Water Systems Ph. 2		2.50
DFTC	Refurbish Transport Workshops and Offices		1.00
Naval Base	Technical Stores		2.00
Starting in Year 2003			
Casement	Runway Upgrade Ph. 1		3.00
DFTC	Upgrade Electrical Systems		1.00
Kilbride Camp	New Accommodation Block		1.50
Starting in Year 2004			
Naval Base	Additional Berthage		5.00
Naval Base	Office Accommodation Upgrade		3.00
TOTAL			**£65.59m**

Defence Forces Equipment Programme: Major Items over £1m.

Item	Amount	Programme Period
	£M	

Tactical VHF Radios	10.50	1995-1998
Battle Simulation Infantry Equipment	1.08	1996-1998
Night Vision Equipment	2.04	1997-1999
105mm Artillery Weapons	2.79	1997-1998
Armoured Vehicles - Turret Upgrade	3.93	1997-2000
76mm Naval Guns	1.10	1998-2000
Armoured Personnel Carriers	39.59	1999-2002
Refit LE Aoife	1.00	1996
Refit LE Aisling	1.30	1997
Refit LE Eithne	2.06	1998
New Ship (LE Róisín)	22.50	1998-1999
Refit LE Orla	1.57	1999
4 Ton Trucks	3.36	1996-1999
¾ Ton Trucks	5.63	1997-1999
Special Lift/Transport Vehicles	4.48	1998-1999
TOTAL	**£102.93m**	

Notes

In addition to the above, two CASA CN235 aircraft were delivered to the Air Corps in late 1994 at a cost of £42m.

The Air Corps Dauphin helicopters underwent major overhaul in the period 1993 to 1995 at a cost of £5m. approximately.