An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence

Óglaigh na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

"Building for the Future – Change from Within"

HIGH LEVEL ACTION PLAN FOR THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE DEFENCE FORCES

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"Building for the Future – Change from Within"

High Level Action Plan for the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces

1.

Background

The Commission on the Defence Forces was established on foot of a commitment in the Programme for Government and the Government decision in December 2020 which also agreed its terms of reference and membership. The Commission published its report on the 9th February 2022.

The Commission undertook a significant body of work on the future of the Defence Forces, encompassing their wide-ranging terms of reference, having regard to immediate requirements while also seeking to develop a longer-term vision for beyond 2030. The report contains 69 main recommendations and together with sub recommendations, comprises 130 recommendations in total[1].

These recommendations were guided and informed by existing government policy, namely, the White Paper on Defence 2015 and the White Paper on Defence Update 2019. The Commission's terms of reference included consideration of appropriate capabilities, structures and staffing for the Army, the Air Corps and the Naval Service.

The report proposes significant changes for the Defence Forces, including to Defence Forces' culture, high-level command and control structures, HR and staffing and for the level of Defence provision in Ireland.

The Commission noted that the relatively high levels of ambition for Ireland's military capabilities, as set out in the White Paper, are not supported by the resources provided for the Defence Forces. This led the Commission to conclude that there is a disconnect between stated policy, resources and capabilities. The Commission identified an urgent need for clarification of the level of ambition for the roles of the Defence Forces.

1 The Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces recommendations and sub recommendations 1-69 have been renumbered 1-130 to comprehensively reflect each individual recommendation as part of this High Level Action Plan. Each of these recommendations 1-130 are cross referenced with the original recommendation numbers from the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces, 1–69, in Annex 1.

In the absence of such clarity, the Commission created a framework focused around three tiers of level of ambition (LOA). These three tiers, which the Commission used to frame the capability requirements for a 21st century Defence Forces, although not exhaustive acted as a guide for the Commission's own deliberations. The three tiers of LOA are:

LOA | 1 **current capability**	**Aiming to uphold sovereign rights and serving on peace support operations to the same extent as at present.**
LOA | 2 **enhanced capability**	**Building on current capability to address specific priority gaps in our ability to deal with an assault on Irish sovereignty and to serve in higher intensity Peace Support Operations.**
LOA | 3 **conventional capability**	**Developing full spectrum defence capabilities to protect Ireland and its people to an extent comparable to similar sized countries in Europe.**

2.

Government Response to the Report

The Government has approved a decision to move to Level of Ambition 2 (LOA2) over a six year period to 2028. This will result in the Defence budget rising to €1.5 billion, in 2022 prices, by 2028, the largest increase in Defence funding in the history of the State. In addition, the move to LOA2 will require an additional 2,000 personnel (civil and military) over and above the current establishment of 9,500. The Commission recognised that any proposal to move to LOA3 could only be considered in the context of a step-up, in the first instance, to LOA2 and following a comprehensive review of Ireland's defence policy.

For specific capabilities recommended under each LOA, the Commission highlighted that appropriate examination by defence planners, of those capabilities specified within the report, would be required to develop detailed specifications, assess value for money and consider whether the same effect can be more effectively delivered by different means. The Commission also recognised that significant infrastructure development would be required to support some of the capability enhancements considered.

Government has also noted that, in light of the Commission's report, there is an urgent need for HR and cultural transformation in the Defence Forces and this will be prioritised. This High Level Action Plan identifies the recruitment, through an open process, for the new senior-level civilian positions of Head of Transformation and Head of Strategic HR for the Defence Forces as early actions required to progress this transformation.

This High Level Action Plan sets out the response of Government in relation to each recommendation: Accept, Accept in Principle, Further Evaluation or Revert. The 130 recommendations are grouped under five core areas (strategic objectives) with associated themes, underpinned by a number of key enablers to drive an ambitious transformation programme required to meet LOA2 by 2028.

A number of early actions for the six month period July 2022 – Dec 2022 are set out in this High Level Action Plan (see section 8 below).

3.

Response to Recommendations

Upon publication of the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces, a process to allow for detailed consideration of the significant recommendations contained in the report commenced. This process involved significant internal discussions, both within the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence and jointly, inter-departmental consultation, consideration of the views of key stakeholders and engagement with Government Ministers. Each of the 130 recommendations, which are set out in Annex 1, has been designated a response of Accept, Accept in Principle, Further Evaluation or Revert, under the following definitions:

Accept	Accept In Principle	Further Evaluation	Revert
Recommendation accepted for implementation.	This recommendation is accepted in principle, but further consideration is required on the optimal approach to meeting the intent of the Commission.	This recommendation is desirable. Further evaluation is required with key stakeholders, of the resource, policy, financial and legislative implications before a decision on implementation can be considered.	It is proposed to revert to Government at a later stage with regard to this recommendation.

NOTE: The recommendations from the Commission include many that are complex in nature, have potential legislative changes and may require significant time to fully implement. For example, it is the Minister's intention to revert to Government on the proposed changes to the Defence Forces' structures and, in particular, the reform of high-level Command and Control of the Defence Forces. This includes the creation of a Chief of Defence (CHOD), supported by a Vice CHOD, with the appropriate military Command and Control authority of the Defence Forces. Legal advice has been sought from the Attorney General. Clarification of the Minister's role and the future role of the Department of Defence may be required following receipt of that advice.

The Minister favours implementation of these four recommendations (recommendations 2, 3, 4, and 5 Annex 1), subject to the advice from the Attorney General on any potential Constitutional and legal implications.

4.

Resources and Key Appointments

Additional resources for both the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence are required to progress the implementation of the recommendations. The appointment of a number of key roles in the Defence Forces will be initiated immediately, including:

- a civilian Head of Transformation reporting directly to the Chief of Staff
- a civilian Head of Strategic HR reporting directly to the Chief of Staff
- a Gender Advisor reporting directly to the Chief of Staff
- a Digital Transformation Officer to lead a digital transformation programme working under the Head of Transformation

It is also intended to establish immediately an Office of Reserve Affairs and a Capability Development Branch (civil-military).

The additional resources required by the Department and the Defence Forces will play a critical role as part of an overall transformation programme.

Initial implementation and oversight structures for the transformation programme are set out in section 6.

5.

Five Core Areas and Associated Strategic Objectives:

Five Core Areas and Associated Strategic Objectives				
The Commission's report highlighted five core areas that must be addressed in a detailed implementation plan on foot of policy decisions in relation to level of ambition and budget:				
Transformational change to modernise the Organisational Culture, its Human Resources Strategy and practices	**Reform High-level Command and Control and creation of a Joint Strategic Headquarters**	**Reform and Restructure the Services**	**Revitalise the Reserve Defence Force**	**Joint Capability Development**
Putting human resources – the Defence Forces' people – at the centre of the organisation, through re-engaging in a different way with its core values, renewing its 'contract' with its people with modern work practices, career management systems and transparent promotion systems based on merit.	Requires the appointment of a Chief of Defence (CHOD), with full command and control of the Defence Forces, and commensurate accountability, supported by three Service Chiefs. Create a Joint Strategic Headquarters staffed by all services, including civilian experts, to support the Chief of Defence in delivering Defence Forces 2030+.	To provide a modern Army, Navy and Air Force designed and structured to provide the future integrated force for national defence, overseas missions and ATCP/ATCA.	To create a reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally.	To support all Services in developing the joint future force, thereby providing Government with military force options at readiness for national and international operations.

These five core areas are now captured as five Strategic Objectives, which are:				
Strategic HR & Cultural Change to be delivered	**New C2 and Joint Structures to be established**	**Services to be reformed & restructured**	**Reserve Defence Force to be revitalised**	**Joint Capability Development to be Implemented**

In addition to the five Strategic Objectives, a separate enabling workstream captures the necessary building blocks required for implementation of many of the recommendations within the report. All 130 recommendations have been grouped under a number of themes under the relevant strategic objective and enabling workstream headings as follows:

Categorisation of Themes and Recommendations

Strategic HR & Cultural Change to be delivered

#	Theme	Rec[2]
1	Associate membership of ICTU	63
2	Pay and allowance structures	56-62,
3	Recruitment strategies	46, 55
4	Gender perspective policies and actions	29, 32, 36 37, 39, 40 41, 42
5	Diversity and inclusion strategies	28, 33, 34 35, 43
6	Career progression processes	14-16, 20 21, 22, 23 24, 27, 38
7	Medical services	52, 53, 54
8	Working Time Directive	49, 50
9	Targeted cultural change strategies	30, 31, 47 48, 19

New C2 and Joint Structures to be established

#	Theme	Rec[2]
10	Defence Forces Vision Statement	44
11	High Level Command and Control	2, 3, 4, 5
12	Senior Enlisted Advisor positions	6
13	Transformation and Strategic HR Leadership	13, 17
14	Ombudsman for the Defence Forces	45
15	Veterans	129
16	Cyber Defence	9, 10, 96
17	Joint Units	7, 8, 97 114, 128
18	Military Intelligence	98, 99 110-113

Services to be reformed & restructured

#	Theme	Rec[2]
19	Army force design	125-127
20	Defence Infrastructure	130
21	National Defence Academy and joint educational establishments	51, 107 108, 115
22	Naval Fleet and staffing	88-90 124

Reserve Defence Force to be revitalised

#	Theme	Rec[2]
23	Office of Reserve Affairs	70, 71
24	Reserve A/CHOD & Service A/ Chiefs	67
25	Reserve Force regeneration	64-66, 73-79
26	Reserve Establishment	68, 69

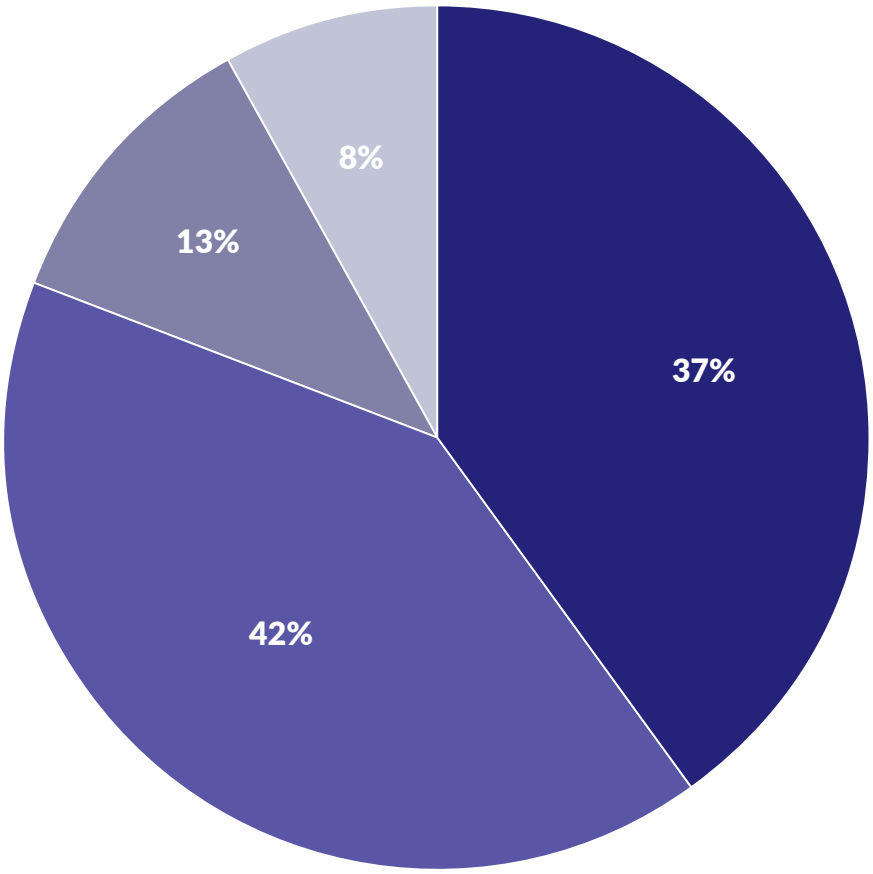
Joint Capability Development to be Implemented

#	Theme	Rec[2]
27	Review of Defence Force taskings	1, 109 120-123
28	Capability Development Structures	85
29	Cyber Defence Strategy	11, 95
30	Green Defence	86
31	National Maritime and Aviation Security	80, 81, 84
32	Horizon Scanning	12
33	DF Training and Education arrangement	18, 25, 26 72
34	EU Capability Development	82
35	Enhancement of DF Capabilities	87, 91, 92 93, 94, 100
36	LOA 3 enhancement of DF Capabilities	101-106

Enablers

#	Theme	Rec[2]
37	Government Defence LOA Defined	119
38	Implementation structures developed	N/A
39	Defence budget allocation agreed	117
40	Key HR enablers developed	N/A
41	Strategic Defence Review progressed	83, 116 118

2 Details of the Commission's recommendations are on p.19



Response to Recommendations

- **Accept**
- **Accept in Principle**
- **Further Evaluation**
- **Revert**

For completeness, all 130 recommendations have been captured across the five strategic objectives and the enabling workstream. Since publication of the report, both the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence have evaluated each of the recommendations and engaged with a wide circle of stakeholders. As a result of this work, 48 recommendations have been accepted, 55 accepted in principle, 17 are subject to further evaluation and 10 are to revert to Government. A list of all recommendations and their status is attached at Annex 1.

6.

Initial Implementation and Oversight Structures

Initial implementation and oversight structures are set out below.

Government have noted that the Minister for Defence will establish a High-Level Steering Board, chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach, to oversee the implementation of the Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces as approved by Government. In addition to supporting and guiding the implementation, the Board will also act as a clearing house for issues that cannot be resolved or where particular blockages are being experienced in the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. The Minister will provide an update to Government and to the Oireachtas on an annual basis on the implementation of the report's recommendations.

An independently chaired Implementation Oversight Group will be established to oversee and drive progress in relation to the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission.

A civil/military Implementation Management Office will support the implementation of the overall transformation programme required to implement recommendations from the report of the Commission on the Defence Forces. Initially the Implementation Management Office will focus on the implementation of the early actions as set out in Section 8.

The development of a detailed implementation plan within six months of the Government decision to move to LOA2 is a key early action set out in Section 8. This detailed implementation plan will set out recommendations to be delivered over the short, medium and long term.

The Implementation Management Office will monitor and report on actions against set timeframes for the early actions and the detailed implementation plan. The office will also monitor and report on the implementation of the White Paper on Defence (2015) and the subsequent White Paper Update (2019).

The existing management structures within the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence, led by the Chief of Staff and the Secretary General, through the Senior Management Committee (SMC) will drive the transformation internally.

Progress reports will be provided internally on a quarterly basis and published externally on an annual basis.

High-Level Steering Board[3]	
Chaired by:	Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach
Membership:	Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces; Secretary General, Department of Defence; Chair of the Implementation Oversight Group; Secretary General, Department of Justice; Secretary General, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications; Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs.

Escalation/Direction

Implementation Oversight Group[3]	
Chaired by:	Independent Chair
Membership:	Defence Forces Deputy Chief of Staff x2; Defence Forces Head of Transformation; Assistant Secretary x2, Department of Defence; Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach; Deputy Secretary, Department of Justice; Assistant Secretary, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; Director, National Cyber Security Centre and Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs.

Escalation/Direction

Implementation Management Office (IMO)[3]	
Resources:	Resourced with civil and military subject matter experts, supported by external expertise. This office will drive day-to-day implementation of the overall programme.

3 Each of these groups may invite subject matter experts and other participants to attend, as required.

7.

Stakeholder Engagement

It is important to acknowledge that a key factor in ensuring that the required progress is achieved will be effective and timely stakeholder engagement. The Department will also engage with the Representative Associations on actions that fall within the scope of Representation, with regard to the implementation of the Recommendations from the Commission's Report. In addition, there will be engagement with other Government Departments, together with, but not limited to, public sector organisations who have a stake in individual projects/actions and staff unions.

8.

Early Actions

Since the publication of the Commission's report, both the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence have examined the report to identify and recommend to the Minister the prioritising of early actions. The early actions as set out below under each of the five strategic objectives and enabling workstream will progress a number of key recommendations from the Commission on the Defence Forces report, whilst also providing the necessary building blocks to develop a detailed implementation plan within six months of the Government decision to move to LOA2.

Early Actions to be completed within 6 months of Government Decision	
Theme	**0-6 Months**
Implementation structures developed (38)	Implementation and governance structures developed and initiated.
	Development of detailed implementation plan.
Defence Review Cycle (41)	Commencement of Strategic Defence Review progressed.
Key HR enablers developed (40)	Key positions advertised and additional staffing and resources for implementation agreed and sanctioned.
	Procurement of external change management support.

Early Actions to be completed within 6 months of Government Decision	
Theme	**0-6 Months**
Associate membership of ICTU (1)	Temporary associate membership decided.
	Legislative and policy objectives commenced.
Pay and allowance structures (2)	Progress implementation of the following recommendations: » Removing the requirement for a 3 Star Private/Able Seaman to 'mark time' for the first three years at that rank; » Ensuring that all personnel of Private 3 Star/Able Seaman rank are paid the full rate of MSA applicable to the rank; » Providing immediate access to the Sea-going Service Commitment Scheme to direct entry personnel in the Navy;
	Commence further evaluation of: » Replacing the existing sea-going allowances with less complex sea-going duty measures; » Introducing Long Service Increments to the pay scales of all ranks of enlisted personnel; » On the basis that all personnel should, in the first instance, be paid the full rate of MSA applicable to their rank, MSA should be abolished and the full applicable rate integrated into core pay.
	Commence examination of options in relation to a mechanism for review of existing specialist pay rates and allowances.
Recruitment strategies (3)	Commencement of measures to enhance the visibility of the wider benefits of membership of the Defence Forces in recruitment campaigns.
	Recruitment and induction strategies developed encompassing advertising, expanded recruitment and induction capacity.
Gender perspective policies and actions (4)	Explore options for female participation at General Staff level.
	Fitness standards reviewed and updated.
	Extension of the DF Women's Network to include female members of the Reserve.
Diversity and inclusion strategies (5)	Post of full-time senior rank position of Gender Advisor progressed.
	Gender, Diversity and Unconscious Bias training designed.
Medical services (7)	Access to private healthcare for enlisted personnel progressed.

Early Actions to be completed within 6 months of Government Decision	
Theme	**0-6 Months**
Working Time Directive (8)	Heads of Bill to be finalised with a view to submitting to the Attorney General's office.
Defence Forces Vision Statement (10)	Defence Forces Vision Statement developed by Chief of Staff for approval by Minister.
High Level Command and Control (11)	Active engagement with the Attorney General on the legal implications of recommendations.
Senior Enlisted Advisor positions (12)	Senior enlisted advisor to Chief of Staff position progressed.
Transformation and Strategic HR Leadership (13)	Head of Transformation advertised externally and progressed.
	Head of Strategic HR advertised externally and progressed.
Ombudsman for the Defence Forces (14)	Implementation of administrative solutions complete.
Military Intelligence (18)	Preliminary work relating to Military Intelligence role commenced.
Army force design (19)	Army force design planning commenced.
Naval Fleet and staffing (22)	Engage with Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority regarding smart metrics for patrol days.
Office of Reserve Affairs (23)	Office of Reserve Affairs established.
Reserve Force Regeneration (25)	RDF regeneration planning commenced.
Review of Defence Forces taskings (27)	Review of specific ATCP taskings commenced.
Capability Development Structures (28)	Capability Development planning process and permanent structure established.
EU Capability Development (34)	Opportunities progressed by the EU's Permanent Structured Co-operation (PESCO) to develop Ireland's Defence Capabilities.
Enhancement of Defence Forces Capabilities (35)	Commence planning for military radar capabilities, including primary radar.

Annex 1

List of recommendations and position for each recommendation

Accept	Accept In Principle	Further Evaluation	Revert
Recommendation accepted for implementation.	This recommendation is accepted in principle, but further consideration is required on the optimal approach to meeting the intent of the Commission.	This recommendation is desirable. Further evaluation is required with key stakeholders, of the resource, policy, financial and legislative implications before a decision on implementation can be considered.	It is proposed to revert to Government at a later stage with regard to this recommendation.

Number Format

Column 1 – Recommendation numbers in total 1 -130

Column 2 – For ease of reference – original Commission on Defence Forces Report key recommendations numbers 1-69

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
1	4	The respective roles of the Garda Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and the Defence Forces' ARW should be clarified to ensure that there is a clear understanding of how they would interact in an operational situation and common procedures and operational guidelines should be developed.	**Accept in Principle**
	16	**That the high-level Command and Control structures of the Defence Forces be aligned to international best practice, including:**	
2		The creation of a CHOD, supported by a Vice CHOD, with the appropriate military command and control authority of the Defence Forces at the strategic level, including the ability to assign OPCOM, OPCON, TACOM and TACON.	**Revert**[4]

4 See p. 7 for complete note. The Minister favours implementation of these recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
3	16	The creation of a Defence Forces' Headquarters that will report to the CHOD, who will be assisted by the A/CHOD and the Head of Transformation.	Revert[4]
4		The creation of three Service Chiefs, and Deputy Service Chiefs, for the land, air and maritime forces, and a Joint Force Commander, who should also be the Vice-CHOD, supported by a Deputy Commander. This high-level leadership team may be formalised as a Command Board or similar title and should support the CHOD in managing issues connected to the development of the Joint Force.	Revert[4]
5		The Army, Air Corps and Naval Service should become services, have service headquarters, and have parity of esteem.	Revert[4]
6		That the SEAC position, currently being trialled, is made permanent for the purposes of bringing the expertise and experience of the senior NCO appointee to the top table, including being a member of the Defence Staff. Additionally, each Service Chief should be supported by a service Sergeant Major/Warrant Officer who would sit on their respective service staff.	Further Evaluation
7		That the supporting joint functions are staffed by all three services, from all ranks.	Accept in Principle
8		That the ARW should be renamed IRL SOF and include permanent Air and Maritime Task Groups in Casement Aerodrome and Haulbowline Naval Base. Implementation of the current White Paper Project Report should also be expedited.	Accept in Principle
	21	**The enhancement of Defence Forces structures across the cyber domain, to include:**	
9		The creation of a Joint Cyber Defence Command that should manage, Defence Forces IT Services, CIS Services and Cyber Defence.	Accept in Principle
10		Incorporating practical lessons identified from comparator countries and EU Member States' maturing cyber commands.	Accept
11		Updating and publishing a cyber defence strategy in line with best international practice and standards.	Accept
12		Increased civil-military engagement across Government on the development of appropriate structures and processes for countering hybrid warfare, learning from current international experience.	Further Evaluation

4 See p. 7 for complete note. The Minister favours implementation of these recommendations 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	27	**Implementation of a comprehensive approach to Strategic HR within the Defence Forces with, in particular, the following enablers put in place:**	
13		The establishment of a Strategic HR Change Leadership Team, to be led by the externally recruited Head of Transformation;	**Accept in Principle**
14		The introduction of a talent management system and new career streams;	**Accept in Principle**
15		The conduct of a comprehensive exercise that maps current patterns of career progression and develops a career progression route map for all roles, starting with entry level and those roles that are experiencing higher attrition rates; and	**Accept**
16		All personnel should have a personal Continuous Professional Development plan and at least annual meetings with their commander to review their performance and competencies.	**Accept**
17	28	The development of an organisational leadership and development capability within the Defence Forces of the future to lead the transformation agenda.	**Accept in Principle**
18	29	The creation of a permanent training establishment and provision of greater flexibility for managers, within the overall establishment number, to allocate staff across formations and ranks.	**Accept in Principle**
19	30	Development and resourcing of remote and distance learning solutions to provide greater use of ICT-based training and education both in the home and from regional garrison locations or hot desks.	**Accept**
20	31	The creation of a new enlisted rank of Lance Corporal in the Army and the Air Corps.	**Further Evaluation**
21	32	The creation of a structure to provide a recognised career path for Naval divers that permits rank progression for enlisted personnel within the Naval Service Diving Section.	**Accept in Principle**
22	33	Provision of a specialist Military Police career stream for all ranks, with adequate career progression opportunities.	**Accept in Principle**
23	34	Re-development of promotion systems to ensure they are open, competitive and entirely merit-based, while the necessity for all officers and NCOs to undertake long career courses needs to be examined.	**Accept in Principle**
24	35	There should be objective, competitive selection processes designed for career course selection that recognise high performing individuals and avoids creating a 'box ticking' culture.	**Accept in Principle**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
25	36	There should be equal emphasis and access to career training and professional military education for officers, NCOs and reservists.	Accept in Principle
26	37	Service specific courses need to be introduced at a junior and senior level, with joint courses and training where required at a senior level.	Accept in Principle
27	38	A practice should be developed of actively managing the retention of valuable members of the Defence Forces who have decided that promotion is not for them, or whose career stream has a restricted rank structure.	Accept in Principle
	39	**A fundamental cultural change process, using the most up-to-date approaches, should be undertaken; and the Defence Forces should ensure early implementation of the following high profile immediate impact changes:**	
28		Creation of a full-time senior rank position of Gender Advisor (OF-5) with a dedicated staffing resource and full time co-ordinators for staff networks such as the Women's Network and the Defend with Pride group;	Accept in Principle
29		Creation of a mechanism to ensure there is female participation and input at all meetings at General Staff level (or the equivalent under the proposed new structures);	Accept in Principle
30		Full integration of all dining facilities, on land and at sea; and	Accept in Principle
31		Regular climate and continuous attitude surveys to assess morale, command climate and underlying culture on an ongoing basis.	Accept
	40	**Development of expanded recruitment channels with objectives set for the recruitment and participation of under-represented groups, through:**	
32		Setting an overall female participation rate of 35% to be achieved through a combination of entry-level inductions (Cadet and General Service) and civilianisation, as well as direct entry into more senior, and specialist, positions across the organisation;	Accept in Principle
33		Consultation with the communities of under-represented groups to discuss the attractions and barriers to service in the Defence Forces;	Accept
34		Adoption of measures to enable easier access to Irish citizenship for those who serve in the Defence Forces; and	Further Evaluation
35		Development of a profile of current serving personnel as an essential starting point to underpinning longer-term approaches to strategic HR and ensuring the Defence Forces is more reflective of the diversity of Irish society.	Accept

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	41	**Consideration of the gender perspective should become mandatory in all aspects of decision making across the Defence Forces and particularly in relation to HR practices, promotion processes, procurement and development of infrastructure, including:**	
36		Immediate removal of gendered rules, regulations and standards that are unfavourable to women, and others who do not fit a perceived 'norm', including a review and modernisation of grooming standards for both men and women in line with trends in other armed forces and Irish society;	**Accept**
37		A guaranteed minimum female participation rate of 35% on all command and other relevant career courses by 2025;	**Accept in Principle**
38		Identification and removal of practices around access to promotion opportunities and courses which, in effect, indirectly discriminate against women or other groups such as, for example, primary carers;	**Accept**
39		Fitness standards should be reviewed and updated to ensure they are relative to accepted standards for females and modern military roles;	**Accept**
40		Women in the Defence Forces should be supplied with and have ready access, without delay or special request, to clothing and equipment that are designed for females and, as such, are fit for purpose;	**Accept**
41		Immediate extension of the Defence Forces' Women's Network to include female members of the Reserve; and	**Accept**
42		Establishment of a female mentoring programme to allow women in the Defence Forces to benefit from the experience of identified role models and mentors.	**Accept**
43	42	Gender, diversity and unconscious bias training should become mandatory across all ranks of the Defence Forces.	**Accept**
44	43	The development of a statement of the Defence Forces' vision of its role and value to the people of Ireland.	**Accept**
45	44	Implementation of an administrative solution without delay to enable the ODF to investigate complaints received more than 12 months after the date of the alleged action, or the date the complainant became aware of the alleged action.	**Accept**
46	45	Increased use of direct entry recruitment to fill specialist posts with appropriately adjusted training and physical fitness requirements.	**Accept**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	46	**Urgent reform of existing working arrangements including:**	
47		Any necessary legislative and organisational changes to allow for flexible service and flexible work practices;	**Accept in Principle**
48		Extension and enhancement of existing family friendly policies to the greatest practicable extent, including for overseas postings, and recognition of the challenges faced by single parents and parents of children with disabilities, amongst others; and	**Accept**
49		Introduction of a non-financial 'labour hours budget' for all managers.	**Accept**
50	47	The expeditious removal of the blanket exclusion of the Defence Forces from the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 subject to the application of the derogations permitted by the Working Time Directive.	**Accept**
51	48	Establishment of an Officer Training Centre comprising the existing Cadet School and a new Officer Candidate School which would conduct Potential Officers Courses, Late Entry Officers Courses and Reserve Officers Courses every two years.	**Accept in Principle**
	49	**Urgent reform of medical services within the Defence Forces to include:**	
52		Implementation of measures to extend provision of private healthcare to all enlisted personnel in the Defence Forces;	**Further Evaluation**
53		Completion of all outstanding reviews into medical services within a 12-18 month period and the implementation processes started immediately; and	**Accept**
54		Extension of HIQA's remit to include the Defence Forces' medical services.	**Further Evaluation**
55	50	Greater transparency of the wider benefits of membership of the Defence Forces should become a central feature of future recruitment campaigns, which should be supported by external expertise.	**Accept**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	51	**That the equity of existing pay and allowance structures be enhanced by:**	
56		Removing the requirement for a 3 Star Private/Able Seaman to 'mark time' for the first three years at that rank;	**Accept**
57		Ensuring that all personnel of Private 3 Star/Able Seaman rank are paid the full rate of MSA applicable to the rank;	**Accept**
58		Providing immediate access to the Sea-going Service Commitment Scheme to direct entry personnel in the Navy;	**Accept in Principle**
59		Replacing the existing sea-going allowances with less complex sea-going duty measures; and	**Further Evaluation**
60		Introducing Long Service Increments to the pay scales of all ranks of enlisted personnel.	**Further Evaluation**
61	52	On the basis that all personnel should, in the first instance, be paid the full rate of MSA applicable to their rank, MSA should be abolished and the full applicable rate integrated into core pay.	**Further Evaluation**
62	53	The introduction of a mechanism to provide for ongoing review of the application of existing specialist pay rates and allowances to groups and categories of military personnel, and to make recommendations, within public pay policy parameters, where adjustments are required.	**Accept in Principle**
63	54	PDF Representative Associations should be facilitated if they wish to pursue associate membership of ICTU.	**Accept**
64	55	A new high level vision be articulated for the RDF that clarifies its core purpose as being to support the PDF in all its roles.	**Accept**
65	56	Decisions to deploy RDF personnel should be taken by the unit commanders, and should not be limited by the overarching policy as at present.	**Accept in Principle**
66	57	A detailed regeneration plan for the RDF, with clear and specific timelines, be developed and published by the end of 2022 setting out how a reformed RDF will be operationalised and funded.	**Accept in Principle**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
67	58	The CHOD be supported by a Reserve Assistant Chief of Defence and that each Service Chief should be supported by a Reserve Assistant Chief of Service.	Accept in Principle
68	59	The establishment of the RDF should include, at a minimum, an Air Force Reserve of 200 and a Navy Reserve of 400.	Accept in Principle
69	60	The Army Reserve establishment should stand at 3,900 with a ratio of 50:50 between Combat / Combat Support and Combat Service Support	Accept in Principle
	61	**A joint Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA), with senior staff from RDF and with support from the PDF, be established which should report regularly to the CHOD and senior commanders on all reserve matters. Command authority should remain with the integrated PDF/RDF unit commanders in conformity with the SFC but:**	
70		The deployment of RDF personnel should be audited annually and documented by the ORA, with appropriate and effective follow-up, including in commanders' annual appraisals, to ensure best practice and accountability; and	Accept
71		The ORA should provide an annual progress report to the Minister for Defence on the implementation of the RDF regeneration plan.	Accept
72	62	The role of reservists be highlighted and embedded in the curriculum of education courses for senior NCOs and officers.	Accept
73	63	The Defence Forces should urgently develop revamped and efficient recruitment processes for the FLR, the Army Reserve, the Air Force Reserve and the Naval Reserve. For the Army, Air and Naval Reserves, a maximum recruitment time of eight weeks, from application to initiation, should be set and a fast track system should be developed for those who wish to join the FLR on discharge from the PDF.	Accept in Principle

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	64	**The Defence Forces should develop a clear and focused recruitment plan, with clearly identified milestones and annual reviews, targeted at meeting the full establishment of the RDF within eight years to include recruitment of specialists, Combat Support and Combat Service Support personnel. A part of its recruitment plan, the Defence Forces should:**	
74		Ensure that the RDF fully reflects the diversity of contemporary Irish society;	**Accept**
75		Clarify the specific skillsets where targeted Reserve recruitment would be most likely to yield positive benefits and build the outcome into a sustained recruitment effort;	**Accept**
76		Provide for increased utilisation of direct entry commissions and direct entry at NCO level to the RDF, including an expanded use of direct entry mechanisms to all services and Corps;	**Accept**
77		Create lateral entry mechanisms for those with prior foreign military experience who wish to join the RDF; and	**Accept in Principle**
78		Focus the recruitment plan around attracting highly skilled people to staff an expanded range of clearly defined non-combat and specialist functions, as well as general recruitment to conventional combat units	**Accept**
79	65	Employment protection legislation should be considered and discussed with employer representative bodies and Trade Unions to protect reservists and ensure their availability when needed.	**Further Evaluation**
80	6	Ireland should deepen its engagement with the implementation of the EU's Maritime Security Strategy.	**Accept in Principle**
81	7	A whole-of-government National Maritime Security Strategy and a National Aviation Security Strategy should be developed. As part of this, or in advance, the powers required by the Naval Service for effective enforcement, in support of national security, in the maritime domain should be addressed.	**Further Evaluation**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
82	9	Opportunities offered by the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation to develop Ireland's defence capabilities should be more fully explored and exploited than at present.	**Accept**
83	10	Future Government decisions on Ireland's capacity and appetite to take on higher intensity peace support operations must be coherent with the resourcing and scale of the Defence Forces and ensure consistency between international security and defence policy objectives, level of ambition and defence budget.	**Accept in Principle**
84	11	A whole of government air and maritime services 'needs analyses' should be undertaken in the short term in an attempt to highlight trends and predict needs into the future over a 10-20 year period.	**Further Evaluation**
85	12	The immediate establishment of a codified top-down Capability Development Planning process through the creation of a permanent civil-military structure in order to embed capability development within the Department and the Defence Forces.	**Accept**
86	13	That analysis of green defence solutions and horizon scanning to identify emerging technologies, is embedded in the capability development planning process.	**Accept**
	14	**Within the context of a decision being taken by Government that the capability requirements of the Defence Forces need to step up from LOA 1 to LOA 2, whether as a discrete step or as an interim position en route to LOA 3, the following is recommended:**	
87		Replacement of the existing APCs with a larger and enhanced fleet equipped with sufficient firepower for future overseas missions, and with 'level 4' armour across armour platforms where required;	**Accept in Principle**
88		An accelerated programme of Naval vessel replacement to ensure a balanced fleet of nine modern ships by early in the next decade;	**Accept in Principle**
89		That all modern vessels be double crewed to ensure each vessel spends an absolute minimum of 220 days at sea per year, with this being phased in over the course of the vessel replacement programme;	**Accept in Principle**

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
90	14	That smart metrics for patrol days should be developed and agreed between the Naval Service and the SFPA focused on quality and effectiveness of enforcement activities rather than quantity;	Accept in Principle
91		Development of a primary radar capability to ensure a complete Recognised Air Picture can be maintained;	Accept in Principle
92		Development of anti-drone or counter UAS capabilities and the further development of RPAS capabilities;	Accept in Principle
93		Enhancement of the Air Corps' fleet with the addition of a fixed wing aircraft with strategic reach capability, and two additional medium lift rotary wing aircraft for enhanced Defence Forces support and priority ATCA taskings;	Accept in Principle
94		The ultimate replacement of the existing medium lift helicopter fleet with a fleet of eight super-medium helicopters;	Accept in Principle
95		Deepening Defence Forces involvement in relevant national and international forums to enhance capability development in the cyber domain;	Accept
96		A further 100 additional specialist personnel as part a Joint Cyber Defence Command managing Cyber Defence, Defence IT Services, and CIS Services;	Accept in Principle
97		Establishment of SOF Air and Maritime Task Groups, including associated logistics, to be based at Casement Aerodrome and Haulbowline as part of the planned increase in the ARW/SOF establishment and enhancement of SOF capabilities;	Accept in Principle
98		Strengthening Military Intelligence capabilities and the establishment of a Joint Military Intelligence Service in the context of a revised mandate underpinned by new legislation (as proposed in Chapter 7);	Accept in Principle
99		The establishment of an Intelligence School, with shared programmes, which would facilitate enhanced cooperation and joint training opportunities between Military Intelligence and their Garda counterparts; and	Accept in Principle
100		The development of relevant military capabilities to counter hybrid activity where military capability is required and to contribute to national resilience.	Further Evaluation

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
	15	**Within the context of a decision being taken by Government that the capability requirements of the Defence Forces need to step up to LOA 3, the following is recommended:**	
101		By 2040 the Infantry element of the Army would have a substantial mechanised component offering state of the art force protection, communications, ISTAR and firepower. All Infantry units would have full organic lift capability, ideally mechanised. Combat Support elements would be modernised, with both Artillery regiments and Cavalry squadrons being fully interoperable to NATO standards, and the land force would have the appropriate level of combat service support elements;	Revert[5]
102		By 2040 the Naval Service would comprise a balanced fleet of at least 12 ships, supported by appropriate technology, as part of a joint Defence Forces structure;	Revert[5]
103		As part of a national Air Defence Plan, the Air Corps would develop an air combat and intercept capability through the acquisition of a squadron of jet combat aircraft, allied to the development of associated operational, infrastructure and support arrangements;	Revert[5]
104		The overseas deployment of combat aircraft, pilots and support personnel to provide organic intra-theatre mobility based on tactical transport helicopters. Deployed forces would also have an organic helicopter combat SAR capability armed and equipped to operate in hostile environments;	Revert[5]
105		A further 200 additional specialist personnel working under a matured Joint Cyber Defence Command; and	Revert[5]
106		ARW/SOF would have an organic self-sustainment capability, which would include dedicated combat helicopter assets to insert, operate and extract from mission areas.	Revert[5]
	18	**That jointness be inculcated throughout the Defence Forces by:**	
107		Prioritising training institutions, with an emphasis on routine joint exercises to prove future force operational capabilities for national defence and overseas operations.	**Accept**
108		The introduction of joint operational and leadership training courses at junior and senior level for both officers and NCOs.	**Accept**

5 Recommendation numbers 101 – 106 refer to LOA3. The Commission recognised that any proposal to move to LOA3 could only be considered in the context of a step-up, in the first instance, to LOA2 and following a comprehensive review of Ireland's defence policy. Therefore, these LOA3 recommendations have been assigned a 'Revert' status.

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
109	19	That the Defence Forces seek to further integrate with whole-of-government processes, with a focus on contributing to national security and national resilience through ATCP and ATCA operations.	Accept in Principle
	20	**The modernisation of Military Intelligence, to include:**	
110		The role and functions of Military Intelligence be urgently clarified and underpinned by appropriate legislation within the context of a coherent national intelligence architecture.	Further Evaluation
111		The development of an overarching legal and governance framework to ensure optimum coordination and collaboration between the Defence Forces and An Garda Síochána on intelligence matters.	Accept in Principle
112		A fully joint approach to Intelligence within the Defence Forces under the Joint Force Commander.	Accept
113		Appropriate arrangements in relation to oversight in relation to intelligence should be set out in the legislation.	Accept in Principle
114	22	The creation of a Joint Military Police Service, independent of the operational chain of command, with enhanced electronic and analytical supports, and with oversight, inspection and complaints mechanisms also established.	Accept in Principle
115	24	The development of a National Defence Academy and an Apprentice School to support a future tech-enabled force.	Further Evaluation
116	66	That the Government and Oireachtas urgently address the need to define a clear level of ambition for the major roles of the Defence Forces: defence of the State, its people and its resources, overseas missions, ATCP and ATCA.	Accept in Principle
117	67	That the chosen level of ambition be clearly and credibly linked to the budget provided annually and over the period to 2030.	Accept in Principle
118	68	That the forthcoming cycle of Defence Reviews be based on a coherent and consistent approach to defence policy, level of ambition, required capability and budget.	Accept
119	69	That consideration be given to a step up to LOA 2, as described in this report, in the short term pending the more detailed policy debate and decision required for higher levels of ambition.	Accept

Rec #	CoDF Report Rec #	Recommendation	Position
120	1	Specific taskings of the Defence Forces, including those arising from ATCP and ATCA, should be subject to regular review for continued relevance and priority, with appropriately defined levels of ambition.	Accept
121	2	That an immediate focus be given to standing down a number of current Defence Forces' ATCP taskings which no longer seem justified in the current security situation.	Accept in Principle
122	3	The reassessment of priorities, structures and the distribution of resources across the full spectrum of ATCP activities and, in particular, in areas such Chemical Biological Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN) response, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), and provision of Engineer Specialist Search Teams (ESST).	Accept
123	5	Clear inter-agency policies and planning for the deployment of the Defence Forces to support routine armed policing duties in times of emergency should be developed and that the necessary contingency planning and training for such deployments should be undertaken.	Further Evaluation
124	8	The future Naval legal branch should include additional legal officers with appropriate maritime law and fisheries law specialisations.	Further Evaluation
	17	**That the Army be urgently restructured by completing the following:**	
125		The Chief of Defence to initiate an immediate force design process assisted by external experts with access to international military expertise, and to include a detailed force design process.	Accept
126		The creation of a more agile and flexible force structure that can meet current and future operational taskings.	Accept
127		That the future disposition and structures of the Army be regionally balanced.	Accept in Principle
128	23	Modernisation of the Naval Service Diving Section with the establishment of a Defence Forces' School of Diving, and a diving safety office reporting directly to the Chief of the Navy.	Accept
129	25	The establishment of an Office of Veterans' Affairs to coordinate veteran supports and provide advice and assistance to veterans and their families.	Accept in Principle
130	26	That a focused and detailed review of the Defence estate be carried out by appropriately qualified professionals prior to decisions on the optimum future disposition of the Defence Forces.	Accept in Principle

Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence