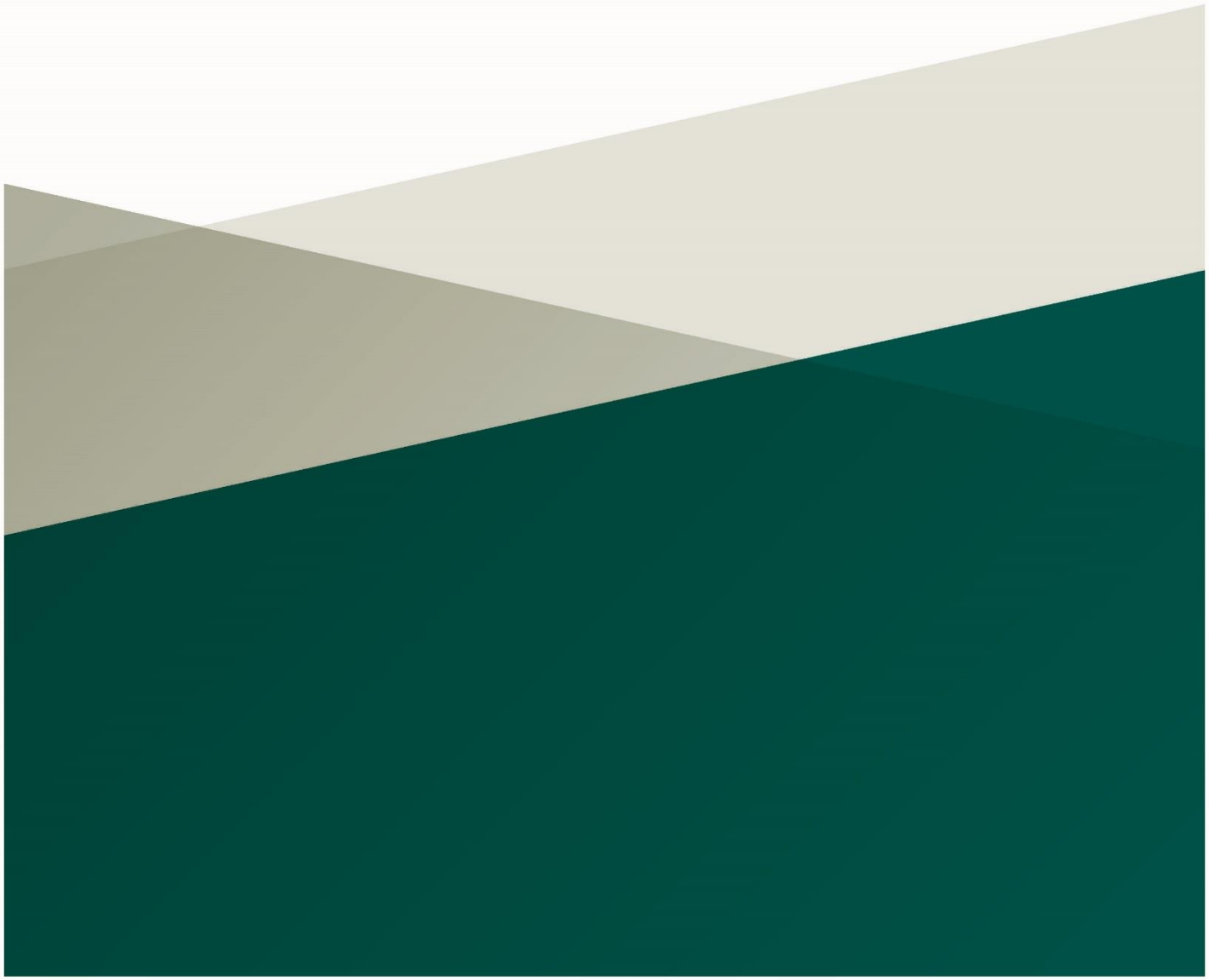
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

WHITE PAPER ON DEFENCE

UPDATE 2019



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Executive Summary

Defence remains of paramount importance to this State and, as a vital element of overall security policy, provides the bedrock of stability and prosperity across political, social, economic and environmental domains.

The White Paper on Defence was approved by Government in July 2015 and provides the strategic and comprehensive defence policy framework for the period up to 2025. It was developed following a lengthy consultation process that involved extensive stakeholder consultation. While ultimately approved by Government, and reflective of the fact that a range of government departments and state agencies have primary responsibilities when it comes to the security of the State and its citizens, development of the White Paper was led by the Minister for Defence, supported by a high-level civil-military Steering Group.

One of the most significant commitments made by Government in the White Paper is to ensure that defence policy remains up to date and to bring certainty and regularity to the process of defence planning and overall preparedness. This is being achieved through the introduction of a new fixed cycle of defence reviews, to be carried out every three years. The first such review is this White Paper Update, with the next iteration under the cycle being a more comprehensive Strategic Defence Review. The White Paper specifies that these reviews are to encompass a fully updated assessment of the security environment and a fresh consideration of implications for overall policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing. Into the future, the fixed cycle reviews will be integrated with the security assessments undertaken by the newly established National Security Analysis Centre.

The hallmarks of Defence policy will continue to be:

- a policy of active military neutrality;
- a highly engaged and participative approach internationally, particularly through the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU);

- a commitment to defence provision appropriate to present and contingent requirements;
- strong recognition of the individual and collective contribution of members of the Defence Forces and the requirement to value these as vital elements of Ireland's statehood.

At the outset, the 2015 White Paper sets out a comprehensive and forward-looking assessment of the dynamic security environment. This provides the context for the Government's defence policy response and the defence contribution to security, including defence of the State from armed aggression and the defence contribution to domestic security through provision of a wide range of day-to-day supports to An Garda Síochána. Furthermore, in an effort to maximise value for money achieved from defence expenditure, for the broader benefit of the State, the White Paper also makes provision for "non-security" policy requirements with the associated provision of a range of services to other departments and agencies. All of these requirements are reflected in the various roles that Government assigned to the Defence Forces in the White Paper.

The updating of the security environment assessment from the 2015 White Paper is the starting point in this Update. The review was completed by a high-level inter-departmental/inter-agency group led by the Department of Defence. This comprised senior Defence Forces' representation as well as various other departments and agencies with security responsibilities, including the Department of Justice and Equality and An Garda Síochána. The review concludes that while the essential aggregate level of threat facing this State has not altered in a way to justify increasing the overall stated level of threat, the position has developed and changed in the period since 2015. Events internationally now impact on our political, social, economic and environmental well-being, in ever more complex ways and patterns. The threats in the cyber domain, and from espionage, have been assessed as increasing since 2015 while the wider political global environment is now more complex and uncertain.

In light of the updated assessment of the increasingly dynamic security environment, the Government do not propose any policy change in their overall approach to Defence including

in relation to the roles of the Defence Forces as set out in the White Paper. In essence, the Update affirms the fundamentals of the White Paper's approach while recognising that there are challenges that will require a continued and unrelenting focus. Some of these are significant, such as in the area of human resources and in certain specialist areas. It is notable that since 2015 overseas operations have increased in tempo while critical supports provided on a daily basis to An Garda Síochána have continued to be met to a very high standard. Nevertheless, there is a recognised difference between meeting commitments within service parameters, for example as laid down in Service Level Agreements, and the desired level of output, and contingency, if operating at close to a full establishment of 9,500 Permanent Defence Force (PDF) personnel. The Defence Forces are below their establishment, significantly so in the case of the Air Corps and Naval Service and it remains a key priority to turn this around.

This Update has reviewed key capability priorities, as set out in the White Paper. Human Resources are a key component of capability and the White Paper sets out a comprehensive agenda for HR development. This Update recognises that the current gap in PDF strength below establishment is a capability deficiency. The current shortfall is especially marked in specialist areas, where small numbers are more vulnerable to gaps. Without giving rise to any compromise on safety, the impact of these shortfalls results in greater pressure on individual members and units; there have also been impacts on the scope of Air and Naval operations and the operational availability of some aircraft and the overall number of ships that have to be managed carefully. Priority will remain on the measures underway to address these challenges, although this Update also gives recognition to the possibility of the need for additionality in certain areas including special forces, cyber, safety management, headquarters (including capability development and joint operations) and other specialist roles.

Finalisation of this Update has coincided with publication of the Third Report of the Public Service Pay Commission (PSPC), which carried out a comprehensive examination of recruitment and retention issues in the Defence Sector. The Government have put in place a High Level Implementation Plan that includes a range of improvements in remuneration, along with the building blocks for further important initiatives. A new joint civil-military

Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established to facilitate full implementation of the Plan. The new Plan, based on the PSPC's recommendations, will result in reprioritisation of some of the existing White Paper human resources related projects. The new PMO, under the direction of the Minister, will ensure that existing projects are assimilated into the new work programme in an effective way. The PMO will also provide staff support to project sponsors and facilitate close coordination with the non-Defence contributors, namely the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

The review of White Paper projects, carried out as part of this Update, has resulted in a number of important decisions being taken that will have a bearing on overall prioritisation and sequencing of projects. This includes those currently underway and those now ear-marked for earliest possible commencement within the framework of the overall ten-year implementation programme (2015 to 2025). In particular, the importance of the projects to conduct a gap-analysis of skill-sets within the PDF and the advancement of the Capability Development Function surfaced as key requirements. The gap analysis project, which is to identify the extent of skill gaps and appropriate measures to address them, is key to commencement of certain other projects, including a number that relate to the Reserve Defence Force (RDF). Its importance has been further emphasised by the focus on workforce planning in the High Level Plan to implement the Report of the PSPC. The sequencing of certain projects with a view to their completion prior to finalisation of the approaching Strategic Defence Review is also addressed. Moreover, the Secretary General and Chief of Staff, who are joint sponsors of the review of high level command and control project, have noted that this project is of major significance.

In terms of funding, this Update has noted that the multi-annual capital programme, launched as *Project Ireland 2040*, has increased the overall level of investment with a total of €541 million for Defence up to 2022. Major investment priorities have been advanced including the upgrade programme of the Army's fleet of 80 Armoured Personnel Carriers, delivery of four new Offshore Patrol Vessels to the Naval Service, while three new PC12 aircraft, with considerably enhanced capabilities, are currently being built for the Air Corps.

In support of this, comprehensive plans are being developed to guide the equipment and infrastructure project priorities across the White Paper based on the available funding envelope.

Planning is also underway for the acquisition of a Multi-Role Vessel to replace the Naval Service flagship LÉ Eithne, and a Mid-Life Extension Programme of the Naval Service's two P50 class vessels has commenced. Following a tender competition, a preferred bidder has recently been identified, and contract negotiations are ongoing, for the replacement of the Air Corps' two CASA Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

Meanwhile, over €30m has been invested on a range of infrastructure projects across all formations since 2016. However, recognising that investment had been constrained, there is continuing scope to enhance investment in military facilities. Currently, some €37m worth of infrastructure development projects are at various stages of implementation. These projects include the upgrade and modernisation of Army, Air Corps and Naval Service facilities. In January 2020, a focussed five year infrastructure programme, utilising the investment provided for in *Project Ireland 2040*, will be launched.

While these equipment and infrastructure projects are all positive developments in their own right, and are reflective of ongoing collaboration between civil and military personnel within the Department of Defence, and with the various military formations, this Update nevertheless points to the continuing potential for additional investment in capital projects. Present funding levels result in major equipment platforms being replaced only sequentially, or over extended periods of acquisition. It remains the case that a range of equipment requirements identified in the White Paper cannot be advanced for some time or will await additional investment becoming available. Thus, for the present, these requirements fall outside what can be prioritised within existing budgets. Meanwhile, demands on capability, which continue to become more sophisticated and dynamic, along with the need to take account of climate change objectives, all point to continuing enhanced investment requirements.

In the international sphere, this Update reinforces Ireland's active approach to international engagement as an absolute necessity in the present and likely future security environment. It also underlines the fact that Ireland's defence policy approach of military neutrality is not isolationist and cannot provide a protective buffer against global events or developments in the security environment which impact on this country. Ireland's very active engagement in the UN, the EU, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) remain central components of our security policy as this participation is the primary means by which we can shape events or policies taken individually or collectively by other States that may impact here.

In terms of the RDF, the White Paper is clear that there is a continued requirement to retain and develop the RDF. This Update recognises that a key challenge is to recruit, train and retain sufficient personnel to meet the Reserve establishment provided for in the White Paper. However, it is also necessary to strike an appropriate balance in terms of the supports needed to achieve PDF and RDF recruitment and the priority in recent years has necessarily been on PDF recruitment.

As regards Civil Defence, this Update recognises the essential supports provided by volunteers and progress made in relation to the Government's commitment to the continued development of Civil Defence around its central strategic objective of supporting the Principal Response Agencies in a variety of emergency and non-emergency situations.

Finally, as regards Brexit, this Update was undertaken, and has been finalised, while Brexit continues to evolve. The precise security implications of Brexit remain hard to predict, albeit that the overall setting in which security resides may be adversely impacted. Nevertheless, this Update notes that both the EU and the UK share the same security and defence interests and both are committed to the establishment of the necessary mechanisms to work closely together following the UK's departure from the EU. Meanwhile, the Defence Organisation remains fully engaged with planning for Brexit to address potential challenges arising and continued implementation of the White Paper reinforces the State's preparedness in the defence domain.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The current White Paper on Defence, which was approved by Government in July 2015, provides the strategic and comprehensive defence policy framework for the period up to 2025.

The previous White Paper on Defence, which was published in 2000, was the first such white paper in the history of this State. In 2013, given the passage of time and significant changes in the security environment which had seen the emergence of new and complex transnational threats, the Government initiated the preparation of a new White Paper through the publication of a first ever Green Paper on Defence. This set out a range of policy questions and sought submissions on Ireland's future defence policy requirements.

In addition to consideration of 122 written submissions received in response to the Green Paper, a process of widespread consultation was undertaken in the development of the current White Paper. Discussions were held with a range of government departments and state agencies on cross-cutting policy issues. The views of international organisations were also obtained, with a particular focus on likely future trends in international peace support operations. The Minister for Defence also hosted a symposium on the White Paper in May 2015 and this, coupled with Dáil statements in June 2015, provided a final opportunity for inputs from stakeholders, prior to the finalisation of the White Paper. The White Paper is published on the Department of Defence website at www.defence.ie .

1.2 Approach to the structure of the White Paper

In acknowledgement that security is the bedrock on which a society's achievements are built, the White Paper, at the outset, sets out a comprehensive and forward-looking assessment of the dynamic security environment. This provides the context for the Government's defence policy response and it situates the defence contribution to security.

While a range of government departments and state agencies are responsible for leading and planning for the response to the threats identified in the security assessment, the White

Paper provides the policy framework for defence of the state from armed aggression, the defence contribution to domestic security, including a wide range of day-to-day supports to An Garda Síochána, and the defence contribution to international peace and security. Furthermore, the defence contribution to cyber security, in support of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, as well as other defence contributions to major emergencies and crises, including the work of the Office of Emergency Planning, are all set out. The White Paper also makes provision for other "non-security" policy requirements, which maximise the utility of available defence assets, and overall value for money achieved from defence expenditure, for the broader benefit of the State. All of these requirements are reflected in the roles that Government specifically assigned to the Defence Forces in the White Paper.

The White Paper commits to maintaining Ireland's support for the United Nations (UN) and to working closely with European partners in the ongoing development of the European Union's (EU) Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It also states that Ireland will continue to participate in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP), which is instrumental in developing the interoperability that is necessary to operate seamlessly alongside partners on overseas peace support and crisis management operations. The White Paper does not change Ireland's traditional policy of military neutrality or the legal requirements governing the deployment of members of the Defence Forces overseas.

The White Paper also sets out key capability decisions. Future capability requirements and associated priorities are considered, particularly having regard to the types of operations that the Defence Forces may be required to undertake in the years ahead. The development of flexible and adaptive military capabilities is a pragmatic approach to dealing with future uncertainty and the roles assigned. The White Paper also addresses a range of capability issues such as "jointness" and, from an equipment perspective, identifies key equipment replacement priorities. Human Resources are recognised as a key component of capability and the White Paper sets out a comprehensive agenda for HR development. The White Paper contains separate chapters dealing with both the Reserve Defence Force (RDF) and Civil Defence and contains specific commitments in relation to each. The White Paper also

introduces a number of new proposals, such as the development of an employment support scheme, and includes a section dealing with Veterans and the support that the Veterans Organisations receive from the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces.

1.3 White Paper Update

One of the key new initiatives contained in the White Paper is a commitment by Government to put in place a new fixed cycle of defence reviews, to be carried out on a three yearly cycle. These reviews, which are common internationally, are intended to ensure that defence policy remains up to date and to bring certainty and regularity to the process of defence planning and overall preparedness. The first of these reviews is this White Paper Update, which in accordance with the White Paper is to be followed by a more comprehensive Strategic Defence Review.

The White Paper provides that these reviews are to consider progress made and any revisions required. Further, these reviews are to encompass a fully updated assessment of the security environment with a fresh consideration of implications for overall policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing. The Government, through the White Paper, also committed to these review processes having new standing in public management terms and that all-party consultation would take place, along with consideration being given to placing these reviews on a statutory footing.

1.4 Overview of Update process

The Update was led by the Minister with responsibility for Defence while the process was managed by a high-level joint civil-military Steering Group. Beneath this, a Working Group comprising civil and military representatives worked in support of the Steering Group.

The process undertaken to carry out this Update looked at three broad strands:

1. Security Environment assessment
2. Review of White Paper implementation
3. Consultation with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence

Each of these strands forms a separate Chapter in this Update report and are covered in more detail in the following Chapter Outline.

1.5 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 - Developments in key aspects of the Security Environment since the White Paper on Defence

The 2015 White Paper on Defence (Chapter 2) contains an assessment of the security environment that considered the broad security threats facing the State. This was done in order to situate appropriately the defence policy response in terms of the lead or supporting roles that defence plays. The updated security environment assessment has been carried out by a high-level inter-departmental/inter-agency group. The group was led, at Assistant Secretary level, by the Department of Defence and comprised representatives of the Department of the Taoiseach, the Department of Justice and Equality, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

The Chapter breaks down the updated security environment assessment into developments in the global and regional security environment, the geopolitical environment and the domestic security environment. In conducting this work, the Department of Defence has had regard to the work of the Cabinet Committee on Security and has noted developments arising from the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, published in 2018. The steps taken to establish a National Security Analysis Centre are very relevant in this context.

Chapter 3 - Review of White Paper Implementation

Since publication of the White Paper, a total of 95 separate projects have been identified for completion over a ten-year period. The White Paper implementation process has involved a concerted project management led approach.

This Update includes a review of overall progress on all 95 White Paper implementation projects broken down by their chapter in the White Paper and categorised based on their life

cycle, from 'initiated' through to 'closed'. This review used a sequenced four-stage process to review the projects, moving from meetings with project sponsors through to a report capturing the outcomes of each stage.

Chapter 4 - Consultation with the Oireachtas

The Minister with responsibility for Defence met with members of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence, on 5th March 2019 in relation to both the White Paper Update and the process of establishing the fixed cycle of defence reviews. This Chapter outlines the main issues raised and there is a full transcript of the meeting in Appendix A.

Chapter 5 - Developments since the White Paper 2015

This Chapter encompasses issues and events that have occurred since the publication of the White Paper on Defence in 2015.

Chapter 6 - Conclusions

This Chapter contains conclusions that have been drawn in relation to the main issues arising from this Update and also from the process itself.

2. Developments in key aspects of the Security Environment since the White Paper on Defence

2.1 Introduction

The White Paper on Defence 2015 contained an assessment of the Security Environment, which provided the context for the policy approach set out. As part of this White Paper Update, the Security Environment assessment has been updated in order to provide an overview of key developments and, in particular, to note changes that have occurred since the White Paper was published.

In 2015, the White Paper identified the increasingly blurred boundaries between internal and external security and highlighted that events in other countries can have significant reverberations in Ireland. As such, a broader view of national security was taken in the assessment of the Security Environment and nothing has changed in the meantime to merit any narrowing of this view. Accordingly, in this review, which is a key element of this White Paper Update, the broad security threats facing the State have been re-considered in the context of changes and developments since 2015, internationally and domestically, that may influence or have a bearing on the defence policy response in the years ahead. As a whole of government approach, this review provides a common perspective for all elements of government involved in the security of the State.

This review of the 2015 assessment is supported by information, including operational intelligence and situational awareness, shared by a range of a government departments and agencies which have key responsibilities in areas of national and international security. A comprehensive cross-sectoral analysis of factual, relevant and reliable information has been a key part of drawing this review together into one overall updated assessment of the current and future security environment. Based on available information, there has been a requirement to identify those areas which require continuing attention and those which for a variety of reasons may be either of greater significance or have reduced in importance.

Security assessment brings with it the risk of over or under estimating the significance of particular factors. In addition, the connectivity over time of different threats or events is not

always straightforward. Human behaviour at inter-state, state, agency and individual level combine to shape the world in which we live. Perceptions, of real as well as possible or assumed threats, combine to create the overall picture. Capturing this very complex picture will always be challenging given that there will always be a degree of subjectivity involved. Moreover, as noted in 2015, the future security environment cannot be predicted with certainty and there will always be unknown future threats. What may seem remote today can quickly emerge as an immediate threat to the security of the State and its security interests and, as such, gaps in our knowledge can often emerge in the form of strategic shocks that have system-wide or transnational impact. It is important therefore that this updated assessment of the security environment is considered with the reality of that uncertainty in mind.

2.2 Developments in the Global and Regional Security Environment

2.2.1 Overarching Nature of Conflict

It is clear that the nature of conflict is continuing to evolve, but also that it has become increasingly complex. This is not to say that the overall magnitude of the threat level faced here in Ireland is necessarily greater than it was in 2015 but it is clear that new challenges, some unforeseen, are emerging globally with increasing evidence of non-conventional approaches being taken, and particularly so at state level. The security environment, therefore, must be assessed in the context of its level of stability and the varying way that threats may manifest themselves. These continue to evolve and an element of the security picture is to identify vulnerabilities within this evolving picture. For example, the increased blurring of the lines between inter-state conflict, terrorism and criminal activity, particularly in the cyber domain, is now commonly characterised as hybrid warfare whereby state and non-state actors may use conventional and high-end asymmetric methods concurrently across the land, sea, air, cyber and space domains.

In 2015, it was noted that conflict zones and fragile states are breeding grounds for terrorism, extremism and cross-border organised crime. Instability caused by fragile states continues to have the potential to provoke broader conflicts while the organised crime landscape in the EU is fundamentally affected by the geopolitical situation in and around Europe. The impact

of conflicts on the periphery of the EU in Libya, Syria and Ukraine on serious and organised crime in the EU has already materialised.

Conflict continues to involve a range of transnational, state, group and individual participants who operate at global, regional and local levels both collectively and individually. In some conflicts, there is concurrent inter-communal violence, terrorism, insurgency and criminality. In recent years, particularly in Syria and Yemen, conflicts have led to huge numbers of civilian casualties and caused catastrophic humanitarian crises. Since 2015, the use, by both state and non-state actors, of explosive weapons in populated areas has become a growing challenge. The use of such weapons in populated areas of Syria and Yemen has clearly been with a view to making certain urban locations uninhabitable. The devastating effect of this on civilians is not only with regard to the immediate impact of a sustained bombardment from explosive weapons, but also the longer term and secondary effects from the destruction of critical infrastructure and vital services. Such levels of destruction impede the economic, social and environmental development of countries affected, long after conflict has ended.

As such, this represents a further dimension to the growing threat of ongoing regional instability in affected areas. This has an impact on international crisis management operations, including Irish participation in UN missions operating in these regions, and the ability of peacekeeping forces to undertake the mandate assigned to them. It also has an adverse impact in the operation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), development agencies and humanitarian workers in these conflict zones.

2.2.2 The Hybrid Sphere

Of particular concern to Ireland is the fact that hybrid activities have now become a significant feature of the European security environment. The fact that the threats faced are increasingly taking non-conventional forms is now a major security challenge. These are frequently state led attacks and can be physical, such as new forms of terrorism, digital, through complex cyber-attacks, or more subtle and aimed at the coercive application of pressure seeking to undermine core values, such as human dignity, freedom and democracy.

While definitions of hybrid threats vary, and need to remain flexible to respond to their evolving nature, the concept captures the mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives, while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare.

The range of hybrid methods and activities is wide, with growing concerns over elections being interfered with, disinformation campaigns, media manipulation, malicious cyber activities and perpetrators of hybrid acts trying to radicalise vulnerable members of society as their proxy actors. Concerns also abound around state led attacks on critical infrastructure, economic and trade-related blackmail, and the undermining of international institutions.

Where such activity occurs, there is usually an emphasis on exploiting the vulnerabilities of the target and on generating ambiguity to hinder decision-making processes. Hybrid strategies are integrated, synchronised, and tailored to achieving a specific effect according to the target. They involve centralised implementation or an effective coordination between different levels of decision making. Hybrid attacks can be deniable and use a combination of covert and overt means. The tactics are intentionally designed to create confusion and blur the distinction between peace and war, making it difficult for the targets to respond in a timely and efficient manner.

The level of hybrid activity is certainly increasing, as is Ireland's response to it. As such, it is important to avoid any potential complacency about how Ireland, as an EU member state, may be the target of activity in this area, and particularly so if it is aimed at de-stabilising the EU.

2.2.3 Cyber Security

In 2015, the White Paper noted that advances in technology will continue to present both opportunities and threats. Societies are increasingly reliant on technology which underpins basic functioning of many aspects of states, including critical national infrastructure. Our increased reliance on technology in all facets of our lives and business processes has created a potential vulnerability that can be exploited by those who have the means and knowledge

to do so. As such, cyber security has become an increasingly mainstream concern in the last number of years due to some very public incidents. These incidents have provided a very visible reminder of the extent to which modern societies and economies depend on network and information systems, including remote management, and of the vulnerability of these to attack from a wide range of threat actors, ranging from states to criminals of various scales. These seek to infiltrate and manipulate these systems towards their own ends and to gather sensitive data. Moreover, the diverse nature of the incidents have shown how threat actors in this space can use and develop attacks in combination with other tools, including military force, disinformation and economic means – described above as hybrid activity. As such, the complex and dynamic nature of security threats, vulnerabilities and consequences in the cyber sphere are becoming increasingly clear - risks arise without regard for geography, and in ways that challenge the abilities of states to detect and respond appropriately.

Cyber security is now central to the global security environment, and has given rise to a diverse set of responses from states and international organisations. Many of these stress the need for greater resilience of critical systems, as well as secure and rapid threat and vulnerability information exchange. Allied to this is the need for coordinated national incident response capacity and enhanced international efforts to institute new norms for state behaviour online, and to address cyber crime.

Aspects that should not be overlooked in this analysis are developments in the area of artificial intelligence and the fact that technological advancements are becoming a significant aid, at state level, to military organisations, in terms of effective command and control, and to law enforcement authorities in the fight against serious and organised crime. This includes the use of advanced digital forensics tools.

2.2.4 Terrorism

Terrorism is one of the most profound challenges of our time, but defining terrorism is not straightforward as there is no single internationally accepted definition. The University of Maryland based authors of the Global Terrorism Database, however, define terrorism as “the

threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation."[1]

No country is immune from the threat of terrorism, and no country can address the challenge alone. As a basic headline indicator of the trend in terms of recorded terrorist incidents worldwide, the situation is that in 2017 there were a total of 10,900 separate incidents, compared to 13,587 in 2016 and 14,965 in 2015. In European terms, the number of such incidents fell to 401 in 2017, from 407 in 2016 and 1,017 in 2015.[2]

Despite this overall downward trend in the number of incidents, member states of the EU have been the target of repeated terror attacks since 2015. In 2018, a total of 129 foiled, failed and completed terrorist attacks were reported by nine EU member states and these resulted in the deaths of 13 victims. The number of attacks represented a decrease compared to 2017 (205 terrorist attacks causing 68 deaths) and, a sharp spike in 2017 excepted, is in line with an overall downward trend that started in 2014. While "ethno-nationalists" and "separatists" continue to account for the largest proportion of attacks, all 13 fatalities in 2018 were as a result of so-called "jihadist terrorist attacks". In its most recent EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (2019), EUROPOL observed that all such attacks in 2018 were committed by individuals acting alone and targeted civilians and symbols of authority. EUROPOL commented that often the motivation of the perpetrator and the links to other radicalised individuals or terrorist groups remained unclear and, furthermore, mental health issues contributed to the complexity of the phenomenon.[3]

According to the UN Secretary General's April 2018 Report on Activities of the UN system in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: "The global fight against terrorism is currently entering a new phase in which the international community has to confront several parallel and interlinked global terror networks." Investigations into the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, carried out in November 2015 and March 2016 respectively, uncovered the involvement of some of the perpetrators in different types of serious and

[1] Global Terrorism Database Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables, University of Maryland, 2018.
[2] Global Terrorism Database, University of Maryland, 2018.
[3] EUROPOL, EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, 2019.

organised crime including drugs and firearms trafficking. The profit-driven nature of organised crime activities is in many cases incompatible with terrorist acts, given the subsequent media and law enforcement attention given to the perpetrators. However, the evidence of a cross-over between terrorism and organised crime is a growing cause of concern given the fast pace of radicalisation, access to logistics and infrastructure associated with organised crime, and the use of organised crime methods as a means to finance future terrorism related activities.

Following the rise of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) after 2014, the international community has faced a continuously transforming global terrorism landscape. Challenges to countering terrorism are compounded by rapid developments in closed communications technologies as terrorist groups quickly adapt and make use of these developments to facilitate their financing, recruitment and propaganda. Experience has also shown that the actions of "lone actors" using rudimentary means can also cause significant deaths and injuries. Perpetrators of such attacks are frequently unconnected to a centralised terrorist network, but have been self-radicalised through internet and social media based propaganda that is targeted at those vulnerable to influence as a result of racism, social exclusion, mental health and economic difficulties.

2.2.5 Proliferation of Weapons

The illegal and unregulated distribution of conventional weapons, including small arms, continues to exacerbate conflicts in many regions of the world, including Africa. Such weapons empower insurgents, extremists, pirates and criminal gangs, which can in turn undermine the governance structures of fragile states. This was identified as an issue in 2015 and remains a key security challenge.

Concern also continues to remain about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology. Thousands of such weapons exist and the risks increase where the possibility arises that state authorities may lose control of parts of their missile and munitions arsenal.

This concern increases where there is potential for terrorist groups to obtain Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons. Controlling access to materials and

technology, from which such weapons could be manufactured, is a key security issue. Recent years have seen a marked increase in the number of incidents where chemical weapons have been used, in particular, since 2012. Their use has seriously threatened to undermine the universal prohibition on the use of chemical weapons.

Furthermore, the use of chemical weapons, in an entirely civilian context, in the UK last year, has served to demonstrate their lethal nature as well as the need to bolster a strong rules based system that serves as a deterrent to any state that may actively facilitate or surreptitiously countenance the use of such a deadly form of military technology. The strong and united response of the international community, including Ireland, was an important and clear signal of the level of shared abhorrence at the use of such chemical weapons in those and any other circumstances.

In recent years, there has been a rapid advancement of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) technology and the use of armed or strike enabled UAVs has become increasingly widespread. The development and use of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems by some states, which are putting increasingly significant resources into this technology, has also grown. The development of these systems brings a new dimension to the area of weapons proliferation and potential usage.

2.2.6 Espionage

There is increasing evidence internationally of the threat that espionage presents to the sovereignty, national security and economic well-being of states. Espionage can involve the presence of agents and proxies operating in or against a target state, including citizens who are unaware of the true purpose of the activity and their role in it. It is also increasingly intertwined with activity in the hybrid and cyber domains. This can encompass attempts to influence policy to the disadvantage of the target state, to obtain confidential industrial secrets and intellectual property, and to source technology (with potential use for military purposes) as well as obtain "dual-use goods"[4] outright. Efforts by states to acquire restricted materials or knowledge are quite sophisticated, often with several layers of deception in

[4] Materials with an innocent application but which could be put to possible military use.

order to camouflage the intended end user and purpose, and to circumvent controls such as sanctions, treaties, and international protocols.

In October 2018, the Dutch Government made public details of an attempted cyber-attack, in April 2018, by the Russian GRU[5] on the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) which is based in The Hague. The Dutch authorities provided specific details of the operation carried out and identification of the four individuals involved as GRU officers was confirmed with supporting information obtained from phones and a laptop seized. The four entered the Netherlands on Russian diplomatic passports. At the time of the attempted attack, the OPCW was investigating the poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury (UK). It was also examining an alleged chemical attack in Syria by Russian-backed Syrian forces. The Russian authorities deny any knowledge or involvement.

2.2.7 Transnational Organised Crime

The UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime provides an internationally shared definition of an organised criminal group as "a group of three or more persons existing over a period of time acting in concert with the aim of committing crimes for financial or material benefit." Increasingly, however, geography is no longer a limiting factor in today's security environment and organised crime networks are operating on a transnational basis exploiting free movement, free trade zones and well-developed transport infrastructure in the EU. It is understood that there are now more than 5,000 such groups operating internationally who are under investigation in the EU. Most of these are active in more than three countries and an increasing number are involved in more than one criminal activity. Such activities include drug smuggling, smuggling of migrants, human trafficking, money laundering and cybercrime as well as counterfeiting activities. As noted in 2015, while organised crime is a global threat, its effects can be felt locally and are a cause of significant suffering throughout the world, including Ireland.

[5] Despite a name change in 2010, the Russian military intelligence service is still commonly known by the Russian acronym GRU (which stands for Main Intelligence Directorate).

2.2.8 Climate Change

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal. The fifth assessment report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2013) concluded that there is at least a 95% probability that the global warming of the last 50 years is a result of human activity. The Paris Agreement of December 2015 committed 195 countries, including Ireland, to the goal of limiting the increase in global temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. However, it is important to note that even if this goal is met, the impact of climate change will continue over the coming decades because of the delayed impacts of past and current emissions.

The IPCC predicts more frequent hot and less frequent cold temperature extremes over most land areas. According to the IPCC, the impacts of climate change will include a higher risk of flooding and changes to crop yields. Global mean sea level is expected to continue to rise during the 21st century due to increased ocean warming and increased loss of mass from glaciers and ice sheets which will contribute to upward trends in extreme coastal high water levels in the future.

Climate change is likely to result in increasingly violent weather patterns, drought and natural disasters. This could aggravate existing water and food shortages and increase the likelihood of regional instability, with resultant humanitarian and economic crises. Population growth and migration flows will also be influenced by the effects of climate change. Globally, climate change will see increased competition for scarce resources and may have devastating consequences for many states on Europe's periphery. In Europe, according to the European Environment Agency (EEA), climate change can be seen as a threat multiplier that may exacerbate existing trends, tensions and instability both within Europe and across European borders. The Agency also notes that recent research suggests that an unprecedented drought in the southern Mediterranean has been one of many drivers shaping local conflicts that triggered the Syrian civil war, which ultimately led to the substantial increase in refugee flows to Europe. The impacts of climate change on the Arctic region illustrate the multiple

interactions between human security and geopolitical risks, even though they are not currently associated with direct geopolitical conflicts.[6]

2.2.9 Migration

While migration has long been a global issue, it has struggled to find a place on the UN agenda until recently. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a landmark in acknowledging the "positive contribution of migrants" and setting an express target for safe, orderly and regular migration. Following Ireland's successful stewardship of the process leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, Ireland co-facilitated the negotiations leading to agreement on the outcome for the UN Summit held in September 2016 to address large movements of refugees and migrants. At this Summit, governments adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

This Declaration contained a series of commitments to address issues specific to large numbers of people on the move, including a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and created parallel processes for two Global Compacts; one on Refugees and one on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The 2015 White Paper noted that Irish people have a long history of migrating and have contributed positively to the growth and development of many countries. Ireland also continues to benefit from the positive contribution made by people who have come from abroad and settled in this State. Free movement of people between member states under the EU treaties has also contributed positively to economic development.

Inward migration to the EU arises for various reasons including as a response to political conflict, environmental or economic pressures. Changes observed since 2015 include the fact that fewer people are now migrating as a result of conflict and, as such, the context has changed somewhat. Compared to 2015, there has been a substantial decrease in numbers of migrants detected entering the EU but large scale migration, both regular and irregular, will continue to raise significant challenges for host countries and for the EU more generally.

[6] EEA Report No 1/2017 – Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016.

These challenges include how to ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of migrants across the Union, how this may impact on existing policies and structures including the Common European Asylum System and Schengen, concerns about economic impacts, and the rise of far-right and anti-immigration movements in parts of the EU that seek to generate and exploit disproportionate anxieties about the potential impact of inward migration on domestic security.

As noted in 2015, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the smuggling of migrants is a highly profitable business in which criminals enjoy low risk of detection and punishment.[7] As a result, the crime is becoming increasingly attractive to criminals and organised crime syndicates in particular. Furthermore, the distinction between the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking is often very subtle and sometimes they overlap. The migration crisis has resulted in an increase in the number of potential victims of human trafficking. In recent years, the traditional human trafficking flow from Eastern Europe to Western Europe has been replaced by multiple and diverse flows all over the EU. A growing number of vulnerable adults and unaccompanied minors in the EU are likely to be targeted by traffickers who, facilitated by weak governance, work closely with transnational organised criminal groups.

2.2.10 Globalisation

As noted in 2015, as a small open economy, Ireland benefits from globalisation and is more closely linked and inter-dependent on others than ever before. At the same time, it was stated that Ireland is exposed to all of the dangers, uncertainties and challenges in the wider defence and security environment that accompany globalisation. Since then, the challenges and uncertainties have increased and become more complex. To an extent not observed in 2015, the UN led framework of multilateral cooperation and collective security, globally and in Europe, is now at risk. This has implications across the spectrum but particularly for climate, trade and prosperity, and for security. There are indications that developing trade disputes could have damaging repercussions for global trade and investment flows overseen by the World Trade Organisation; doing further harm to other states' faith in global cooperation and

[7] http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/migrant-smuggling-a-deadly-business.html

multilateralism. Such a polarisation, were it to become widespread, would serve to raise concerns about global and regional security.

Nevertheless, a more positive consequence of the shift on the part of some away from multilateral cooperation and collective security has been a re-doubling of effort on the part of Ireland and others to preserve and, where necessary, reform approaches to international cooperation. Strong continuing commitments on the part of the EU and the bulk of the international community to the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Iran nuclear deal are examples of this.

Ireland is highly dependent on external trade links and is reliant on the unimpeded movement of goods for our economic well-being. Any potential disruption or change to this pattern of movement of goods or services is a concern for Irish businesses seeking to access new and existing markets. In 2015, it was noted that as an island nation, Ireland is highly reliant on sea transport routes, particularly via the United Kingdom, for the import and export of goods and for essential supplies. The high reliance on these transport links presents a potential vulnerability that has been amplified by the UK's decision to leave the EU.

2.2.11 EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy

In 2015, the White Paper noted that a new European Foreign and Security Policy Strategy may give rise to different focal points, requirements and responses, and that Ireland will contribute to the development of these strategies and policies in order to ensure that our values and interests are fully considered.

Subsequently, the EU's Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy was adopted in June 2016. Its five priority themes are (i) security and defence, (ii) building resilience of states and societies, (iii) an integrated approach to conflicts and crises, (iv) support for cooperative regional orders and (v) supporting global governance. The Strategy has a positive focus on the Middle East Peace Process, disarmament, gender, the UN and importance of multilateralism more generally.

Since its adoption, implementation has focused on security and defence, resilience and the integrated approach. A priority in the time ahead will be the EU's work in support of global governance, multilateralism and the UN. Strengthening the EU's peace-keeping and crisis-management capacity in support of the UN will be an integral part of implementing the Global Strategy and will be done through the further development of the CSDP, as defined in the EU Treaties, including through greater cooperation and coordination between military and civilian CSDP Missions and Operations.

2.2.12 Economic Developments

The 2015 White Paper observed that the balance of economic power is expected to shift over the next half century with those countries with emerging growing economies accounting for an ever-increasing share of economic output. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) forecasts that a consequence of the rising importance of emerging markets in the world economy, notably China and India, but also Indonesia, is that the centre of gravity of world economic activity will continue to move from North America and Europe toward Asia.[8] Running alongside this economic shift is the rise of Asian, and in particular Chinese, influence in other regions. With a population of 1.3 billion, China is the world's second largest economy and is increasingly playing an important and influential role in development and in the global economy. China has been the largest single contributor to world growth since the global financial crisis of 2008.[9]

Growth in defence spending has continued in some Asian states, which have expanded their military capabilities. As noted in 2015, the associated re-balancing of global military forces can increase the risks associated with existing inter-state rivalries, including those relating to contested territories. While the Paper noted that, in the period 2006 to 2012, defence spending across EU member states had declined in real terms, the latest Eurostat figures indicate that this trend stabilised in 2015, 2016 and 2017.[10] In noting this trend, security is dependent on a variety of elements of which appropriate levels of defence are relevant. In considering threats, the defence component sits within a broader international framework

[8] OECD Economic Policy Paper, 12 July 2018, The Long View: Scenarios for the World Economy to 2060
[9] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/china/overview#2
[10] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government_expenditure_on_defence

which should seek to reinforce security overall and avoid any suggestion of an approach which goes beyond protection of the international order and relevant interests.

2.2.13 Emergencies and Natural Disasters

As was noted in 2015, not all emergencies constitute a national security concern and are well provided for within emergency planning fora. However, emergencies can occur that have the potential to cause serious and protracted disruption to the functioning of a state and adversely affect its citizens. These could include severe weather events, pandemics or other natural disasters.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, was adopted by 187 states, including Ireland, at the conclusion of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015. The Sendai Framework is the global blueprint for disaster risk reduction up to 2030.

2.2.14 Energy Security

EU countries' dependency on energy imports increased from 40% of gross energy consumption in the 1980s to reach 55.1% by 2017.[11] Projections indicate that the EU will import 77% of its energy by 2030. Europe will therefore become increasingly dependent on the rest of the world for its energy supplies – with much of its oil being sourced from Europe's surrounding arc of instability from North and West Africa to the Middle East and Eurasia. As noted in 2015, uninterrupted energy supplies are a key factor in both EU and Irish security, and require stable, well-functioning suppliers. Ensuring the stability of these states may require long-term international assistance. Changing global energy dynamics, and threats to the EU's energy security, have given greater impetus to the development of the EU's energy diplomacy and to efforts to strengthen European energy security. The publication of the EU Energy Security Strategy in May 2014 is an important development in this regard.

[11] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Energy_production_and_imports#More_than_half_of_EU-28_energy_needs_are_covered_by_imports

2.2.15 Resource Scarcity

Insecurity in the global food chain will continue to impact on all states, and not just on those that directly experience climate change. Feeding the Earth's population in a context of rapid urbanisation and changing consumption preferences will require an increase of up to 70% in global food production by 2050, at a time of declining resource availability and severe climate stress and volatility. Even now, when global food production is sufficient to feed the world's population, nearly one billion people suffer from hunger and under-nutrition due to several factors including: inadequate incomes, vulnerable livelihoods, an estimated 30-50% in food losses throughout the global food chain and geo-political challenges leading to poorly distributed intensification of food production. Furthermore, 1.6 billion people live in countries and regions with absolute water scarcity and this number is expected to rise to 2.8 billion people by 2025. A particular cause for concern is that terrorists, international criminal organisations, and militants may be in a position to use the scarcity of resources to promote their own interests, and, by doing so, undermine affected governments.

2.3 Developments in the Geopolitical Environment

In 2015, the White Paper noted that following a period of apparent stability, new and serious conflicts had erupted adjacent to the EU which challenged perceptions about the stability of the broader European region. The suddenness at which these crises arose highlighted the unpredictability of the security environment and reignited concerns not seen since the end of the cold war. The instigation of actions that threaten and impact on security at global and European level remain an on-going cause for concern. A more variable global setting in which multilateral approaches are not always consistently pursued may contrive to generate additional uncertainty and enhance a context that is more permissive to aggressive behaviours in the security environment.

While conflict and tensions in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and elsewhere continue to challenge international peace and security, it remains the case that the probability of a conventional military attack on Ireland is low. However, as in 2015, conflicts affecting member states of the EU present serious concerns for Ireland and the future outlook remains unpredictable. Uncertainty over the future shape of the external environment, with the continued evolution of non-conventional hybrid threats, remains a concern.

The dynamic for the EU has changed. While continuing to present for the world a firm commitment to democratic values based on multilateralism and treaty-bound commitments, the political landscape has at times seemed to cast doubt on the resilience and benefits of this approach for all. The rise of more extremist political forces along with some continuing economic pressures has challenged the EU to maintain its full force in being a pole of attraction for enhancement and promotion of peace and stability.

Tensions continue in this neighbourhood within and between some states that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Certain states have sought greater integration with the West and others continue to remain oriented towards Russia. Russia encourages these ties through various measures, including political, economic and security means. The ongoing conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol by Russia have illustrated the potential for the escalation of military confrontation in the region. As an indication of associated concerns, in 2016 NATO member states agreed at the Warsaw summit to enhance its forward presence in Eastern Europe with four multi-national battalion-size battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

Tensions between Russia and Georgia regarding the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh continue to threaten to undermine peace and stability in the region. In the Western Balkans, the efforts of the international community have contributed to the ongoing stability. However, problems and clear challenges remain, which need to be addressed, building on the security achieved so far.

In terms of Brexit, both the EU and the UK share the same security and defence interests and both are committed to the establishment of the necessary mechanisms to work closely together following the UK's signalled departure from the EU. Both the UK and the EU are committed to the UK remaining firmly part of Europe and in a reciprocal way continuing to be an important part of the EU's security.

The situation in the Middle East is expected to remain volatile for the foreseeable future and it is reasonable to conclude that current conflicts have little chance of reaching a quick

resolution. The protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict will continue to fuel resentment across the broader region, and other internal and regional conflicts and diplomatic disputes will also continue to impact on security in the region and beyond.

In spite of the territorial defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the security situation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya and the strength of extremist groups in each country are also likely to play a major part in the evolution of the transnational terrorist threat over the next ten years. The number of foreign fighters from all parts of the world currently operating in that region makes it likely that new terrorist groups and networks will be formed. These groups continue to have a destabilising effect on the region and this trend is likely to continue. There are also concerns that the EU nationals who have already engaged in conflict in Syria and Iraq may contribute to the evolution of the transnational terrorist threat to EU nations. The security situation in Afghanistan is also a concern. The Taliban remain the main threat, but attacks in recent years have demonstrated the continued and increasing threat to Afghanistan posed by ISIS. The chances of concrete peace negotiations, and a substantial improvement in the security situation, remain slim in the short term. Renewed threats to the nuclear agreement with Iran may also lessen regional stability.

The instability arising from the recent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East is likely to continue for some time due to the failure to satisfy the 'Arab Spring generation' and the tightening or closing down on political space for civil society and advocates of democratic change. This will also fuel migration, as recently seen in the Mediterranean, and the increasing risk of marginalisation of ethnic or religious minorities. It may also contribute to a potential growth in support for radical groups. A range of governance failures will also exacerbate security issues in the coming years leading to increased risks associated with ungoverned spaces. Indeed, this trend is already visible in the region.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) will continue to suffer the impact of profound and chronic instability, driven by state failure, poor governance and corruption in three main regions; the Horn of Africa, across the Sahel and the Great Lakes region. In areas where the State is weak, organised crime and terrorism networks are often interconnected. Further growth in extremism is likely to be apparent over the next decade. Countries such as Mali, Sudan,

Nigeria, Somalia and the Central Africa Republic already have significant issues with extremist groups. Organised crime in human and drug trafficking, and wildlife poaching is likely to continue to be a feature.

With high levels of youth unemployment at a time when 70% of the population is under 35 in most SSA countries, political unrest and instability is a considerable risk in the coming decades. Competition for resources is also likely to fuel regional conflict in the Great Lakes and across the continent.

Weak governance structures and an increasing threat from non-state actors will continue to threaten the stability in some areas of the Central and South Asian region. The development by North Korea of nuclear weapons, increased military spending, along with territorial disputes, are a cause of concern.

The Arctic has also become the focus of renewed geopolitical, economic, academic and environmental interest due to the melting of the polar icecap, combined with progress in offshore capabilities.

2.4 Developments in the Domestic Security Environment

2.4.1 Domestic Terrorism

The Good Friday and subsequent agreements continue to underpin a stable peace process that commands overwhelming cross community support, although there are challenges in securing agreement between the parties in Northern Ireland in order to form a new Executive. However, there remains a real and persistent threat from paramilitary groups who are prepared to use violence in order to oppose democracy and peace. The level of threat from these groups is reviewed on an ongoing and active basis. While the threat of an attack in the State is generally considered to be low, these groups carry out planning and preparatory activities for attacks in Northern Ireland, where the threat is classified as severe. The State has a strong commitment to counter any such activities aimed at undermining peace and prosperity on this island.

The authorities here and in Northern Ireland, working jointly and individually against these paramilitary groups, have disrupted their activities and secured convictions in the courts. An increased factionalisation among these groups is apparent in recent years. While this can weaken their coherence, it can potentially lead to greater volatility in the small groupings. Moreover, inextricable links have developed between the paramilitary groups and organised crime. They are heavily involved with criminal gangs in the drugs trade; they engage in extortion and smuggling; they are also known to provide expertise and firearms to criminal gangs.

In the context of Brexit, the commitments made by the Irish and British Governments and the EU, including in the area of rights, will be fundamental to ensuring an outcome that sustains the achievements of the peace process and provides no advantage to the violent objectives and actions of paramilitary groups on the island of Ireland.

2.4.2 International Terrorism

As outlined in 2015, the threat to Ireland as a target of international terrorism remains under constant review, taking into account developing security threats including identified common risks that arise for western democracies generally. The experience in other European countries has shown that the threat level can escalate rapidly and the source and intensity of that threat can differ. A threat can also emerge suddenly as a result of factors that lie outside the control of Government. Events such as these are a continuing concern.

In 2015, concern was identified about self-radicalised individuals acting alone – often referred to as "lone actors". Since the White Paper was published in 2015, terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, Nice, Munich, Berlin, London, Stockholm, Manchester and Barcelona have, amongst others, provided stark examples of the lethal threat experienced and faced by European states. The frequently unsophisticated nature of such attacks highlight the challenges that face security authorities in seeking to prevent atrocities of this nature. Moreover, it is apparent that these types of attacks can inspire subsequent plots by other "lone actors" or very small groups of radicalised individuals who, because they may be "home-grown" and have not travelled to, or returned from, conflict zones, may not be directly connected to any terrorist network and be unknown to the intelligence services.

In this context, there is continuing concern about the process of radicalisation and the range of influences, including the internet, which can enable this process. Overall, while the potential source of the threat to this State from international terrorism has evolved, the threat level has remained unchanged since 2015 and Ireland also continues to have a responsibility to seek to prevent transnational terrorist groups from using the State as a refuge or as a base from which to direct their activities against targets in other countries.

As noted in 2015, Ireland has always engaged actively, through the EU, UN and other international bodies, in crisis management and in tackling the root causes of instability. This proactive approach mitigates security risks in the international environment, which is in Ireland's interest. UN and UN-mandated missions, including military missions, are among the instruments used by the international community in the collective security response. Active engagement by Ireland in this collective response can lead, on occasion, to an increase in the threat to Ireland directly or by association, without, necessarily always, significantly altering the general security environment that Ireland faces.

Ireland along with other democracies puts a premium on societal freedoms and seeks to ensure that in its responses to threats that actions taken do not of themselves work counter to the cherished rights of its citizens. Threats to a fully functioning democratic society are therefore considered in this wider context and the aims of those behind such threats factored into the relevant analysis and ultimately responses.

2.4.3 Cyber Domain

In 2015, the White Paper noted that Ireland, like most of Europe, has highly developed infrastructure that is in many cases dependent on information and communication technologies (ICT). Critical national infrastructure such as energy, water, social welfare, telecommunications, banking and healthcare are dependent on ICT not just to operate effectively, but to operate at all. Cyber security risks exist for government and public utilities as well as for commercial entities and individuals.

The State has adapted to this, like many others, by both building capacity and systems to respond to incidents as and when they occur, and by taking measures to improve the

resilience of critical national infrastructure and services. The former is embodied in the growth and development of the National Cyber Security Centre, the latter in the Network and Information Regulations 2018, which compels Critical National Infrastructure Operators to take a series of measures to protect their systems.

The centrality of network and information technology issues to the global security environment notwithstanding, the unique concentration of major technology companies in Ireland underscores the importance of coordinated systems of resilience to protect the economic and social well-being of the State and its citizens.

2.4.4 Organised Crime

The cross-over between organised crime and subversive paramilitaries was noted in 2015, particularly in the context of the use of improvised explosive devices by criminals within the State. As noted above, the links between both have continued to increase in recent years and have contributed to the factionalisation that has occurred within republican paramilitary groups.

There continues to be a growing connectedness between domestic organised crime groups and networks across Europe and further afield that are involved in a wide range of transnational criminal activities including drug smuggling, money laundering, fraud and human trafficking. Through these connections, there has been a noted increase in the volume of firearms coming into the possession of organised crime groups in this State. Ireland continues to play its role in international action to combat the activities of transnational organised crime, including through operational co-operation by the Naval Service, An Garda Síochána and Revenue in drugs interdiction in the maritime domain both bilaterally with partner states and through MAOC-N.[12]

[12] Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre - Narcotics (MAOC-N) is a Lisbon based agency established to combat transatlantic drug trafficking, by air and sea, to Europe and the West African seaboard. Ireland and six other EU member states participate in MAOC-N.

2.4.5 Espionage

A developing factor in the domestic security environment is the threat to national security and economic well-being from espionage in the form of the clandestine activities by hostile states, including by their intelligence officers. Such activity is known to be multi-faceted and may involve cultivating sources with a view to intelligence gathering and gaining protected, sensitive information relating to this State, as well as to international institutions and external organisations to which Ireland is affiliated. Furthermore, the potential repercussions of espionage activities on the confidence of foreign direct investment in Ireland has potential to affect our economic development. This State will continue to take preventative measures to safeguard our sovereignty, national security and economic well-being from espionage activities that are hostile to our interests.

2.4.6 Energy Security

The commencement of production from the Corrib gas field at end 2015, which is now operating at full capacity, reduced Ireland's overall energy import dependency in 2016 from 90% to 70%, a significant improvement in security of supply. Currently almost 60% of Ireland's natural gas needs are met by indigenous production. However, the Kinsale fields (Kinsale Head, Ballycotton and Seven Heads) are expected to cease production by 2021, and by 2025/26 Corrib gas supplies will have declined to less than 40% of initial peak production levels. The anticipated reduction in Corrib and Inch gas supplies will mean that connections to international networks will remain key in terms of energy security. Post-Brexit, Ireland and the EU will become increasingly reliant on non-EU sources of energy (UK, Norway, Russia, Middle-East). Over the course of the next decade, it is likely that further electricity interconnection to the UK and to France will be built. Ireland's energy security is therefore heavily reliant on a relatively small number of vital installations, both onshore and sub-sea. As Ireland continues to decarbonise its electricity system, offshore wind installations will be developed, initially in the shallower waters in the Irish Sea by mid-2020s with floating wind technologies deployed off the west coast later in the decade.

2.4.7 Maritime Domain and the Illegal exploitation of natural resources and security of offshore infrastructure

As noted in 2015, being an island, many of the risks and threats listed in the EU Maritime Security Strategy are relevant to Ireland's maritime domain. This includes threats to Ireland's economic resources arising from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing or other illegal exploitation of Ireland's maritime resources and has the potential to deplete fish stocks and destroy marine habitats.

The development of off-shore renewable energy technology will lead to an increased focus on maritime based energy systems in the coming years, and the future development of infrastructure will need to be monitored. Whilst the current threat to existing infrastructure is assessed as low, the security challenges that could be posed in the event of a change in the threat assessment will also need to be continuously reviewed.

A continuing feature of the wider domestic security environment is the possible security implications arising from foreign military air or maritime activity in the vicinity of Ireland. Such activity, while not necessarily constituting a direct threat to this State, can raise tensions and may have an undermining effect on security overall.

2.4.8 Natural Disasters

In 2015, the White Paper noted that Ireland's geographic position does not pre-dispose us to the same level of risk of natural disasters as many other countries. However, the effects of climate change are continuing to lead to changes in weather patterns and an increased probability that severe weather events such as flooding could become more common-place in Ireland.

The possibility of a pandemic, caused by influenza and other diseases, remains an ongoing concern with the potential to cause serious disruption to society. Animal infectious diseases such as Foot and Mouth disease also have the potential to cause significant economic loss.

2.5 Policy Implications

The threats set out in this updated assessment of the security environment, as contained in Chapter 2 of the White Paper on Defence 2015, will continue to require a broad policy response with policy lead roles resting in a variety of government departments and agencies. Defence policy is one aspect of this broader policy response and the implications of the changes outlined in this review will be considered in the context of overall defence policy requirements, and with regard to the other elements of work carried out as part of the White Paper Update.

3. Review of White Paper Implementation

3.1 Overview of approach to White Paper implementation

The 2015 White Paper on Defence sets the defence policy agenda over a ten year planning horizon and covers all aspects of defence within overall security policy. In this regard, it encompasses all work carried out by the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces, Civil Defence and other organisations with responsibilities in this area. It comprehends the Government's policy on defence of the State from armed aggression, the defence contribution to domestic security, the defence contribution to international peace and security and a broad range of other "non-security" roles which the Government require the Defence Forces and Civil Defence to undertake. It considers the defence capabilities required so that the Defence Forces can successfully deliver on the roles assigned by Government. Finally, the White Paper also considers implementation and the actions required to ensure that defence planning and provision processes are further developed through a new fixed cycle of defence reviews process and a specific defence funding study.

During scoping of the White Paper implementation programme, a total of 88 actions or projects were specifically identified along with seven sub-projects in the capability development area. As the projects are implemented, projects may be sub-divided augmenting the numbers so currently the number to be implemented stands at 95 and this number will be subject to further change as the process evolves. Implementation of these specific actions is being carried out on a phased basis over a ten-year period out to 2025. Implementation on a phased basis is necessary in order to reflect Programme for a Partnership Government and Strategy Statement commitments, the related nature of some projects and resourcing implications. This process is being kept under review and will be subject to change as issues arise and other business dictates. Appendix B contains a table that provides summary statistics reflecting the current position in relation to White Paper implementation.

A decision was made by the Secretary General and Chief of Staff in 2015 that in order to ensure that these projects were implemented over the ten year horizon, a Project Management approach would be adopted in this regard with joint civil-military teams being

established for each project as it was initiated. In effect, a Change Management process was initiated to enable and support the effective implementation to the White Paper. A Joint Civil Military White Paper Implementation Facilitation Team (Joint Team) was set up to provide support and monitor the progress of these White Paper projects.

The Joint Team is a civil-military team which operates in an oversight capacity and supports the facilitation of learning and knowledge sharing across the Defence Organisation[13] through the civil-military project teams. The Joint Team reports monthly on the progress of implementation to the Organisation's Strategic Management Committee (SMC) as part of the governance framework put in place to oversee implementation and to embed a Project Management approach to implementation. The Joint Team also worked closely with the SMC and the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) in relation to the creation and roll out of tailored Project Management documentation and training to the Defence Organisation. To date over 150 people in the Organisation have undergone Project Management training delivered by the IPA in conjunction with the Joint Team. This training programme continues to be rolled out with relevant updates provided to project team members at regular intervals.

Arising from the Defence experience with the introduction of Project Management in a civil-military environment, the Organisation was asked to lead on Action 10 of *Our Public Services 2020*[14] to Embed Programme and Project Management in the Public Service. A public service inter-agency Action Team, led by the Defence Organisation, has been active since mid-2018 and enables effective inter-departmental and agency collaboration and learning in the Programme and Project Management space.

A total of 42 White Paper projects have been initiated since the beginning of the implementation programme and of these 15 projects have been fully completed and closed, with several others due to close shortly.

[13] The term Defence Organisation refers to the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces.
[14] *Our Public Service 2020* is a framework that establishes the overall strategy for development and innovation in the Public Service to 2020 and beyond.

3.2 Overview of approach to the review of White Paper projects

The purpose of this element of the Update was to consider the progress on all 95 White Paper projects.

To facilitate a programme-led approach, the projects review process was carried out through a categorisation of all projects, as either: Active; Paused; Tranche 2[15]; Merged; Not Initiated; or Closed. Depending on the status of the project, different considerations arising were factored into the review process.

It was agreed that this element of the Update would proceed through the following sequenced four stages.

1. Joint meetings of Project Sponsors (relevant members of the Department's Management Board and General Staff)
2. Joint meetings of Project Sponsors with Project Leads
3. Specific Project appraisal exercises as agreed by the Project Sponsors
4. Report prepared capturing outcomes of these assessments

Stage 1 – Joint meetings of Project Sponsors

The purpose of these meetings was for the civil and military sponsors of all 95 projects to jointly arrange for and mandate certain specific work to follow. It was essentially to ensure clarity and common communications to respective civil and military project team personnel. Sponsors met according to the project categories and took a preliminary view of new influences relevant to each project and, if necessary, held these for discussion with the Project Leads in the next element of the sequence. Such influences involved specific wider environmental factors unique to a particular project, new policy developments arising since the project commenced, specific resource considerations arising for the project, particular new linkages or connections that have emerged across projects and any other points considered relevant by the sponsors.

[15] Tranche 2 refers to the second wave of projects that were approved for commencement, from 2018, by the Minister with responsibility for Defence.

Stage 2 - Joint meetings of Project Sponsors with Project Leads

Stage 2 involved meetings between the Sponsors and Leads which, in the case of the 18 projects selected for further discussion following Stage 1, considered each relevant project according to its present status and addressed the issues and any relevant influencing factors determined as being relevant at the Stage 1 meetings.

Stage 3 - Specific Project appraisal exercises as agreed by the Project Sponsors

Prior to commencement of the projects review, it was agreed that arising from the previous phase of consideration, Project Leads or Teams may be asked to undertake a particular exercise or report back on specific aspects of their own project. Alternatively, at this stage, P&O Branch and SPB may have been asked to consider particular issues in conjunction with individual project teams in some cases in conjunction with the WP Joint Team. In the circumstances, at Stage 2, the project sponsors considered whether there were any issues that warranted such further consideration at Stage 3, but agreed in each of the 18 cases that there was no requirement for a Stage 3 review.

Stage 4 - Report prepared capturing outcomes of these assessments

The final stage of the review process provided for preparation of a Report, in consultation with the sponsors, capturing the outcomes of the work done under various headings. It was agreed that, in form, this Report was to follow the White Paper chapter structure and the project categorisation governing this overall project review phase. This Report is intended to provide a context, and aggregated view of projects, with which other elements of the White Paper Update (e.g. the outputs of the updated assessment of the security environment) can be considered and conclusions developed. This Report will provide the basis for its next phase of overall work which, inter alia, will consider the case for change in the overall context provided by the updated security environment assessment and the views of the Oireachtas Committee.

Appendix C contains a full list of all 95 White Paper projects while Appendix D contains a full report, on a chapter by chapter basis, of the outcome of this review of implementation in respect of each project. The following pages provide a summary of the outcome of this element of the White Paper Update.

3.3 Review of Chapter 3 Projects: National Security - Defence Policy Response

Chapter 3 of the White Paper considers the defence policy requirements having regard to the assessment of the Security Environment set out in its second chapter. That assessment highlighted the importance of collective security responses and, as the domestic and international security spheres have a broad range of policy actors, there is a significant cross cutting policy dimension to this chapter of the White Paper.

The assessment of the Security Environment highlighted the importance of such collective security responses to meet the complexities of new and emerging threats to international peace and security. As such, the chapter contains specific commitments, that became White Paper projects, to engage proactively with the UN, the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO PfP and other states with a view to developing and deepening relationships to this end. This includes a proposal to evaluate a new concept involving the potential development of a new Institute for Peace Support and Leadership Training in the Defence Forces Training Centre (project number 8).

The chapter also commits that the Defence Organisation will continue to provide inputs to domestic security, including providing supports to An Garda Síochána and supports to other government departments and agencies in areas such as fisheries protection and cyber security. In relation to the latter, one of the commitments made in this chapter was the development of a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which has since been completed, with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (project number 12). This SLA commits to providing support, as resources allow, to the National Cyber Security Centre.

In total, there were 12 projects from this chapter that were reviewed as part of this element of the Update, including three that are now closed. More detail is contained in the report at Appendix D but, in summary, there are no significant changes to the approach to implementation arising from the review of commitments contained in this chapter. Notably, however, developments arising from the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, published in 2018, and subsequent steps taken to establish a National Security Analysis Centre, are very relevant to the requirement for ongoing monitoring of the security environment and associated arrangements (project number 1). External engagement will

continue in relation to the evolving approach to the assessment of security and associated arrangements.

3.4 Review of Chapter 4 Projects: Other Policy Requirements

While security roles underpin the *raison d'être* of the Defence Forces, the Government also require the Defence Forces to undertake a broad range of non-security related roles. This facilitates the elimination of duplication of service provision by the State and promotes enduring savings to the exchequer. This chapter provides that the Defence Forces will continue to provide support to other departments and agencies, across a broad range of non-security related roles. Where such supports are provided on an ongoing basis, or where as a contingency it is envisaged that there will be a specific role for the Defence Forces in certain types of emergency, the Department of Defence will continue to seek to agree SLAs with relevant departments and agencies to ensure that there is clarity on all sides about the roles of all parties and call-out protocols.

All projects arising from commitments made in this chapter were reviewed as part of this element of the Update, including one that is now closed (number 22). This relates to a proposal contained in the White Paper for the direct involvement of the Defence Forces in a new employment support scheme to be developed between the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces and the then Department of Social Protection. The review noted that the outcome of a recent (separate) review of the scheme, which has been very successfully implemented, was that it should be continued on the basis of one iteration annually.

More detail is contained in the report at Appendix D but, amongst the other key projects reviewed as part of this element of the Update, was the project aimed at developing a policy on intellectual property rights and endorsement (number 19), which has recently been finalised and closed and which, it was noted, will enable commencement of two related projects which are concerned with collaboration between the Defence Forces and Irish based enterprise (number 17 (merged with 21)) and the Defence Enterprise Initiative (number 18), which are both currently paused.

3.5 Review of Chapter 6 Projects: Capability Requirements

As the future security environment is uncertain, and the type of operations that the Defence Forces may be required to undertake can change significantly as new threats emerge, capabilities must therefore be developed and maintained to meet the challenges of a dynamic security environment. This chapter of the White Paper addresses capability issues whilst recognising that there is a requirement to adopt a flexible and responsive approach. It sets out key principles in capability development, including jointness, and the major equipment projects to be implemented for the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service, as well as priorities in the event of additional funding becoming available. The chapter also considers infrastructure and the provision of medical services.

All projects arising from commitments made in this chapter were reviewed as part of this element of the Update and details are contained in Appendix D. In terms of the review of progress with the ongoing high level Command and Control project (number 26), the Secretary General and Chief of Staff emphasised the major significance of this project given its potential implications for other projects and also wider policy developments, including those arising from implementation of the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland.

This element of the Update also identified the Capability Development Plan project (number 31) as being a key initiative and, while it was noted that work is underway on this project, and that more time is required for it to be completed, the sponsors determined that it needs to be prioritised as the outcome provides the framework for a number of other key projects that need to be progressed. In this regard, good progress has been made on the development of an Equipment Plan and a separate Infrastructure Development Plan (number 33). In relation to the latter, it was noted that progress made has included an assessment of future needs of all military installations against forecasted operational activities.

Separately, the Equipment Plan, while not a project in its own right, provides the over-arching framework for, *inter alia*, many of the capability commitments contained in the White Paper, including those broken down as individual projects from 29A to 29G in the White Paper implementation programme. In this regard, the review as part of this element of the Update

noted the good progress that has been made with a mid-life upgrade programme for the Army's fleet of 80 MOWAG Armoured Personnel Carriers (project number 29A) which will extend the utility of the fleet and provide greater levels of protection, mobility and firepower. Other recent enhancements that were noted as part of the review included the acquisition of ten new Armoured Logistic Vehicles (project number 29D) which will provide essential force protection overseas.

It was noted that significant work has also been advanced in relation to updating the Air Corps' fleet of aircraft, with the imminent replacement in 2020 (arising from project number 29B) of the existing Cessna fleet with three larger, more capable, fixed wing utility Pilatus PC 12 aircraft which are being equipped for ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance). Good progress has also been made for the replacement of the CASA Maritime Patrol aircraft (number 29C) and, following a tender competition, a preferred bidder has now been identified and contract negotiations are ongoing.

The review also considered the substantial progress that has been made on the Naval Service ship replacement programme which has now seen four new Offshore Patrol Vessels delivered between 2014 and 2018 which is beyond the commitment, to complete a three ship programme, made in the White Paper. In light of this progress, it was decided as part of this element of the Update that project number 29F, which relates to the replacement of the two Coastal Patrol Vessels and provision of counter-mine and counter-IED capabilities, will remain paused pending other decisions which may dictate how best to proceed. Related to this, the review also noted that planning is underway for the replacement of the current Naval Service flagship LÉ Eithne with a new Multi-Role Vessel (project number 29E).

In relation to the various priorities that were identified in the White Paper should additional funding become available (project number 29G), it was noted that 24 Armoured Utility Vehicles (4x4s) have subsequently been funded, further enhancing force protection overseas. However, in relation to the National Development Plan 2018 to 2027, which provides €541m. in capital funding for Defence over the period to 2022, this does not make provision for any of the other service led priorities. These would include radar surveillance capability for the Air Corps, further ships for the Naval Service and additional armoured vehicles and air defence

capabilities for the Army. Arising from this element of the Update, finalisation of the Capability Development Plan and the Equipment Plan have been identified as being necessary requirements to see how any of these specific priorities might proceed, in the event of additional funding becoming available.

Another important project currently underway relates to the White Paper commitment to take measures to further enhance the capabilities of the Army Ranger Wing (project number 28) and, as part of this element of the Update, it was noted that a draft report was due to be submitted by the project team to the project sponsors.

3.6 Review of Chapter 7 Projects: Defence Human Resources

The Defence workforce comprises civil and military personnel with a broad range of skills sets and experience who must work together collaboratively in order to successfully deliver defence outputs. The continued successful delivery of defence outputs requires well-trained, motivated, experienced and capable personnel. The White Paper acknowledges that there is an ongoing requirement to continually review and update human resource management strategies for the Defence Forces, civil service staff of the Department and civilian employees to align them with evolving organisational demands and Government initiatives. This chapter of the White Paper commits to the maintenance of a Permanent Defence Force (PDF) establishment of at least 9,500 personnel, considers future requirements and idenfies key human resources developmental areas for the years ahead.

All projects arising from commitments made in this chapter were reviewed as part of this element of the Update and further details are contained in Appendix D. Amongst these were six projects that have been finalised and formally closed. These include four linked projects (numbered 41, 42, 55 and 57) which were concerned with Defence Forces' manpower planning towards delivery of an effective and efficient workforce mix, the need for the Defence Forces to attract recruits from all backgrounds and to increase female participation, as well as development of a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Other closed projects reviewed as part of this element of the Update were the development of a scheme for commissioning officers from enlisted ranks (number 45), and the initation of

a programme of targeted recruitment to address priority vacancies amongst Civilian Employees (number 62). In relation to the latter, the review led to a decision being taken that there is a continuing requirement to ensure that project outcomes continue to be built into working practices.

A key conclusion drawn from this element of the Update is the importance of the project that provides for the conduct of a gap-analysis of skill-sets within the PDF to identify the frequency of gaps and appropriate measures to address them (number 39). The review identified that this project is key to commencement of certain other projects, including a number of RDF related commitments, such as those concerning the First Line Reserve and the proposed Specialist Reserve. As a result, this project (number 39) has now been prioritised and work on it is expected to get underway shortly.

In relation to the project that is to review contracts of service for all ranks of enlisted military personnel in the context of capability requirements and associated appropriate age profiles (number 40A), the review resulted in it being agreed that this project also needs to be priorisised, that a tight timeframe is required and that further assistance from the IPA may be sought, if required.

A key project in this area relates to the commitment to implement the Defence Forces' competency framework. This will be used for recruitment, development, performance management, and promotion in the Defence Forces and requires the design, development and implementation of merit based promotion systems, at all ranks, to enable personnel to realise their full potential across all ranks and services and for the organisation to succession plan over the period of the White Paper. As part of this element of the Update, the sponsors reviewed progress with this project (number 36) (which is merged with the review of the Defence Forces' performance management and annual appraisal systems (number 44)) and, noting that the progress of a pilot scheme had been impeded by an injunction, it was agreed that the project will now progress in two phases – the first of which is to deal with officers.

3.7 Review of Chapter 8 Projects: The Reserve Defence Force (RDF)

The service of members of the Reserve is valued by Government and the White Paper provides for the future development of the RDF to ensure its continued viability. This chapter of the White Paper considers the findings of the 2012 VFM review of the RDF and its recommendations. The roles that Government have assigned to the RDF are also set out, as are force structure and RDF human resources matters.

All projects arising from commitments made in this chapter were reviewed as part of this element of the Update. Amongst the decisions taken were that a number of projects related to the RDF should be merged in order to avoid duplication of effort. Details of the outcome of the review in relation to all RDF projects are contained in Appendix D.

The White Paper recognises the value in harnessing the skills of former members of the PDF for a period of Reserve service. As such, the Government decided to retain the First Line Reserve but that the terms and conditions of membership are to be revised and the case for the current gratuity is to be examined. While the project to implement this commitment (number 65) has not yet commenced, the review recognised that the FLR is a potential resource to address gaps in the Air Corps and Naval Service. It was agreed that this project needs to be considered, however, in the broader context of the RDF generally and that it should be merged with project number 66 which relates to a commitment to develop the necessary regulatory changes and service criteria of the FLR. Also, it was noted that this merger will offset work involved in the project arising from the commitment to review the Defence Acts (number 67) in the context of potential crisis situations where activation of the Reserve is appropriate. The need for awareness of priorities and sequencing of these projects was noted.

In the White Paper, it is recognised that individual members of the RDF may, by virtue of their professional civilian qualifications or in the case of members of the FLR, professional military skills, have professional skills that, on occasion, may not be readily available in the PDF. In this context, the Government decided that a panel of such professionally qualified members of the Reserve, to be known as the Specialist Reserve, should be established and that engagement of these personnel will be one of the options considered in addressing any skills

gaps that emerge in the PDF. The relevant project (number 70) to implement this commitment is currently paused and, following the review as part of this element of the Update, it was decided that this should remain the case pending the outcome of the PDF gap analysis project (number 39) which is expected to commence shortly. Similarly, in relation to the projects, not yet initiated, dealing with the proposed increase of 100 in the establishment of the Naval Service Reserve (number 68) and for proposals to be brought forward for a scheme that would allow a small number of suitably qualified RDF personnel to undertake operational duties at home and overseas (number 74), it was agreed that work should not commence until the PDF gap analysis project has concluded.

3.8 Review of Chapter 9 Projects: Civil Defence

Civil Defence volunteers provide essential supports in time of need and, in the White Paper, the Government committed to the continued development of Civil Defence around its central strategic objective of supporting the Principal Response Agencies in a variety of emergency and non-emergency situations.

All three projects arising from commitments made in this chapter were reviewed as part of this element of the Update and further details are outlined in Appendix D. A key commitment made was to enhance liaison under the Framework for Major Emergency Management and guide the continued development of Civil Defence in response to evolving requirements. In this regard, a project (number 79) was initiated to provide for the establishment of a new Inter-agency Guidance Team (IGT), under the leadership of the Department of Defence (Civil Defence Branch) and otherwise comprising representation from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, An Garda Síochána, the Defence Forces, the HSE and local authorities through the participation of the County and City Management Association and the Civil Defence Officers' Association. The review noted that this project has been successfully implemented and is now closed. Through the new IGT, the Department of Defence is able to ensure that Civil Defence core services remain relevant to changing needs at national, regional and local level and that Civil Defence remains an effective volunteer based emergency support organisation.

In relation to the two remaining Civil Defence projects, both of which have yet to be initiated, the review noted that arising from work that is underway at Ministerial level, the project providing for new governing legislation for Civil Defence (number 78) could be considered for early commencement, while the project relating to Civil Defence SLAs (number 80) should not commence until after number 78 has concluded.

3.9 Review of Chapter 10 Projects: White Paper Implementation

This chapter sets out the approach to implementation of the White Paper. It provides that the overall planning period for implementation is foreseen as ten years. This builds on the successful approach adopted in respect of the first White Paper on Defence. It takes account of the need to provide sufficient stability for policy and planning purposes given the particular nature of defence. Accordingly, the arrangements for implementation involve some significant innovations and these are reflected in the various projects which were reviewed as part of this element of the Update, with further details outlined in Appendix D.

Notwithstanding the overall goal of maximising policy certainty and endurance over as long a planning horizon as possible, the White Paper recognised that appropriate review mechanisms are required to provide for policy revision or recalibration. As such, it provided for establishment of a fixed cycle of three year defence reviews. The Government's intention is that these will assure foresight, flexibility, poise and overall preparedness in terms of defence planning and provision. This White Paper Update, which commenced in 2018, is the first iteration in this cycle, and will be followed by a more comprehensive Strategic Defence Review. Concurrent with this Update, a specific White Paper project (number 86) is underway in order to establish a framework for the conduct of these fixed cycle reviews. In preparation for the Strategic Defence Review, it was ageed as part of the review of this project, that work on it needs to conclude once this Update has been finalised, having regard to, *inter alia*, lessons learned from the conduct of this Update.

The White Paper also provides that a specific defence funding study will be established to capture, in a new way, the expected long-term costs of meeting Ireland's defence requirements. While this project (number 88) was initially to be completed by the end of 2015, the review noted that this commitment in the White Paper was overtaken by the

further publication, later in 2015, of the Government's Capital Investment Plan 2016 to 2021 and further iterations since then, including the National Development Plan 2018 to 2027 which provides €541m. in capital funding for Defence over the period to 2022. Nevertheless, the review noted that this project has now commenced with a view to its completion before the Strategic Defence Review gets underway.

Another project arising from a commitment made in the White Paper relates to successful delivery of the defence component of the Financial Management Shared Services (FMSS) project, which is being led by the National Shared Services Office in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. While the review noted that the timelines for the roll-out of FMSS have changed, progress with the project dealing with the defence component (number 84) has been maintained throughout and will continue.

4. Consultation with the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence - Tuesday, 5th March 2019

Before commencement of work on this White Paper Update, the Minister with responsibility for Defence decided that the process should include consultation with the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence. Accordingly, the Minister wrote to the Chairman of the Joint Committee on 28th August 2018 seeking to open a dialogue with members in relation to both the White Paper Update and the White Paper implementation project to establish, as a permanent feature of the future approach to defence policy, a process of fixed cycle defence reviews.

The Minister met with the Joint Committee on 5th March 2019 in this regard. In advance of the meeting, members of the Committee were provided with comprehensive briefing material on the ongoing White Paper Update and the implementation project seeking to establish a fixed cycle of defence reviews. [A full transcript of the Minister's meeting with the Joint Committee is contained at Appendix A.]

The following is an analysis of issues raised by members during the Minister's meeting with the Joint Committee.

4.1 List of White Paper Projects

Following publication of the White Paper, a total of 95 separate projects were identified to be completed over a ten-year period. As the delineation of projects was made as a White Paper implementation measure, a list of such projects was not available to be appended to the published White Paper. In addition, many of the actions referred to therein were already fully embedded in the day-to-day business of the Defence Organisation.

However, a suggestion made at the Minister's meeting with the Joint Committee was that it would be useful to have an appendix or accessible list of all White Paper projects that could assist the public in terms of understanding the range of such projects and in order to gauge progress with implementation.

The implementation projects identified following publication of the White Paper cover aspects that were fresh initiatives and capability decisions arising out of the White Paper and, therefore, it is important to contextualise such a list of projects. The White Paper covers all aspects of defence policy and there is a large cross section of on-going work that would not be captured by a list of White Paper projects. As such, there is a danger that a published list of projects may be interpreted as covering all aspects of the White Paper and Defence Organisation outputs and outcomes and may lead to an undue focus on these projects, which have an overall ten year implementation span, and would not be reflective of the wider range of work that must be carried out alongside White Paper implementation.

Nevertheless, there is certainly merit in the suggestion and in fact it is already the case that a list of all White Paper projects has been publicised in a response to a Parliamentary Question in 2017. In these circumstances, it has been decided to publish, in full, the current list of all 95 White Paper projects at Appendix C of this Report. This will help ensure that the commentary on the review of implementation of the White Paper, contained in Chapter 3 (and Appendix D), should be clearer for readers to interpret. While the published list can certainly be a useful reference tool, it must be emphasised, however, that this does not encompass the broader workload and range of priorities within the Defence Organisation and encompassed in the White Paper. The totality of work is reflected more broadly in the Department of Defence and Defence Forces Strategy Statement 2017-2020 and in each Annual Report of the Organisation.

4.2 Consultation

In his Opening Statement to the Joint Committee, the Minister referred to the fact that the comprehensive consultation process, which contributed to the development of the White Paper, had commenced with a Green Paper on Defence which was published in 2013 and which formed the basis of a public consultation and led to receipt of a total of 122 written submissions.

It was noted that many of these submissions came from civil society and there was support expressed at the Committee meeting for further engagement with civil society. The importance of utilising the breadth of corporate knowledge available was also mentioned.

Consultation with civil society is regarded as being an important part of engendering a wider debate, than normally takes place, about defence issues across society and with stakeholders. The Department of Defence will look at ways to enhance and shape such consultation as part of the process of conducting future defence reviews. In light of their national importance, the Government's view is that defence matters should ideally attract all party support and there is an acknowledgement in the White Paper of the strong tradition within the chambers of the Oireachtas of support for national interest defence issues. In this spirit, the White Paper committed to a process of all-party consultation to seek to put proposals for defence reviews in place on a consensual basis, and subject to appropriate refinement through these consultations, consideration is to be given in due course to putting the review process on a statutory footing. The Minister's meeting with the Joint Committee embraced the process of all party consultation outlined in the White Paper and the Government is committed to ensuring that any process of consultation in the context of future reviews will continue to include engagement with members of the Oireachtas.

The extent of consultation that is to be carried out at each review cycle will be addressed as part of the White Paper project (no. 86) that is focussed on the establishment of the new fixed cycle defence reviews. The observations of the Committee on the importance of consultation will feed into the work of the project team. The level of consultation that will be undertaken for future reviews will depend on a number of factors, including decisions concerned with other aspects of the review cycles, such as the time-periods covered and the focus of future reviews. From international comparison carried out to date as part of the project, it is apparent that many countries engage in wide-ranging consultation when conducting defence reviews. In both New Zealand and Canada, this includes consultation with the general public on a large scale, with town hall style meetings, as well as interaction with defence experts and analysts. This level of consultation tends to be during the development of cornerstone policy documents, in the same way that the 2013 Green Paper sought to engage the public during the development of the 2015 White Paper. At the other end of the spectrum, some countries do not engage in any form of express public consultation on defence policy development.

4.3 Fundamental policy changes and legislation

The White Paper represents Government policy on Defence and it is not intended that this Update will re-open fundamentals of defence policy that were settled when the Government approved the White Paper in 2015. These fundamentals include the fact that Ireland will continue to maintain its policy of military neutrality. The White Paper also sets out key principles on capability development that have led to associated progress on rolling multi-annual equipment and infrastructure plans. Developments at international level, including Ireland's decision to participate in the EU's Permanent Structured Co-operation Agreement (PESCO), remain consistent with the approach in the White Paper. As such, changes to matters of fundamental policy were not considered as part of this Update.

In the context of the White Paper reference to legislative provision for the conduct of fixed cycle reviews, a concern raised during the Minister's meeting with the Joint Committee was whether changes to the concept of Irish neutrality, amending the triple-lock system and developing a defence industry might be envisaged. In this regard, the White Paper provides that consideration is to be given to "putting the review process on a statutory footing" but this commitment simply relates to the question of whether future defence reviews should be mandated periodically in law, as happens elsewhere. White Paper project number 86 is focussed on the establishment of the new fixed cycle of defence reviews, and the project team will consider this issue, but there is no connection between this and issues such as neutrality, the triple lock and developing our defence industry.

Clearly, however, the development of a regular fixed cycle of reviews presents an opportunity to foster a wider debate about defence policy in general. Whether, and how, these future reviews should be used to generate such a debate is an issue that will be considered as part of the project. Any debate on defence arising from future reviews will, almost inevitably, feature expressions of contrary views on Ireland's current policy of military neutrality, notwithstanding any desire by Government to seek to confine the debate to certain aspects of defence policy only.

Regarding concern about seeking to develop an Irish defence industry, the position is that there are no plans to change Ireland's approach in this regard. Nevertheless, the White Paper

points out that the Defence Forces have participated in a wide range of activities with Irish-based institutions in relation to the development of research, innovation, technology and education/training initiatives which have the capacity to contribute to Defence Forces' capability and capacity development. Importantly, the primary purpose of these activities will continue to be consistent with the White Paper and, as such, will seek to support Defence Forces' capability development for crisis management while leveraging the opportunities which may arise to support innovation, growth and jobs in Irish based industry and thus contribute to economic development.

4.4 Reserve Defence Force

In relation to the RDF, the Joint Committee has had frequent engagement with the Minister in recent years and the Minister has undertaken to continue to further develop this engagement. The Government recognises the important role that the RDF plays in contributing to Ireland's defence capability. The White Paper is clear that there is a continued requirement to retain and develop the RDF and it is currently on a developmental path arising from commitments made, both in the White Paper and also in the Programme for a Partnership Government.

A point made during the Minister's engagement with the Committee was there is a need to inject new life into the Reserve. Clearly, a key challenge is to recruit, train and retain sufficient personnel to meet the Reserve establishment provided for in the White Paper. However, it is also necessary to strike an appropriate balance in terms of both PDF and RDF recruitment to deliver the desired effects in terms of maintaining the capacity of the Defence Forces to undertake all roles assigned by Government and to advance the single-force structure. The priority in recent years has necessarily been on recruitment to the PDF. While the Defence Organisation remains committed to the development of the RDF, within the framework set out in the White Paper, this must be in the context of other priorities and having regard to the security environment and resource availability.

In July 2018, the Chief of Staff assigned responsibility for the role of Director of the RDF to the Director of Combat Support Branch and ISTAR. In this context, immediate plans are to provide guidance, across all units and formations with RDF assets, for the development of their

capabilities in line with both the single force concept and the role of the RDF, as laid down by Government in the White Paper.

Engagement will also continue with the Reserve Defence Force Representative Association (RDFRA) on key issues of importance to them. RDFRA have been identified as a key stakeholder in the relevant White Paper projects and their views will be sought on appropriate matters as projects mature and progress.

4.5 Department of Defence staff

The Committee raised issues in relation to defence management and staff skilling issues in the Department of Defence. In the nature of the discussion with the Committee, it did not seem to be clear to the members that the Department has civil and military branches. These are provided for under the Defence Acts, 1954-2011. The Secretary General heads the civil element while the Chief of Staff heads the military element, known as Defence Forces Headquarters. Both civil and military elements provide supports to the Minister in the management of defence. While the Secretary General is the Minister's principal policy adviser, the Chief of Staff is his principal military adviser. The discussion with the Committee ranged over some strategic as well as more detailed defence issues and in this context did not extend to capturing the role of the SMC which is a joint civil-military committee providing a forum for high-level discussion of major defence policy issues. The SMC members are the Secretary General, the Chief of Staff, the three Assistant Secretary Generals, the Director, the two Deputy Chiefs of Staff and the Assistant Chief of Staff. The General Officer Commanding the Air Corps and the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service attend in respect of matters affecting their services. Close co-operation on all matters between civil and military elements are a priority. The SMC meets on a monthly basis. Separately, and in accordance with the White Paper, the Minister may convene as necessary, and no less than quarterly, meetings of the civil-military leadership of the Department.

The Committee had questions in relation to skilling and expertise. It is relevant, in this regard to note that below SMC, across the Department, there are numerous joint civil-military working groups, and less formal joint working arrangements where civil and military personnel, at all levels, collaborate closely while respecting the separate lines of authority

within the Department's civil and military branch structures. The White Paper contains a commitment to consider new types of civil-military working and to build on the success of the Office of Emergency Planning, within which, for more than a decade, civil and military personnel have worked together successfully in a single branch.

There is a strong commitment to continuing professional development both on the civil side of the Department and all across the Defence Forces including Defence Forces Headquarters. In relation to the former, the Department's recently published people strategy "Ag Obair Le Chéile" has a strong emphasis on continuing personal and professional development, be it through the Civil Service wide One-Learning programme or at departmental level through a mix of formal and informal learning which is tailored to the needs of the individual and the job. Similarly, the concept of "life-long learning" is also highly valued and promoted amongst enlisted and officer personnel serving in military branches of the Department, principally through the Leadership, Management and Defence Studies programme (see section 5.12 for more details).

Recruitment for the Civil Service is predominantly carried out on behalf of departments by the Public Appointments Service, and civil service staff are assigned to the Department of Defence in order of merit as vacancies occur. Civil Service staff in the Department have a wide range of relevant qualifications, up to and including PhD. level, across a variety of disciplines including law, policy analysis, political science, finance, and conflict studies. Department staff are supported with costs of fees through the Refund of Fees Scheme for undertaking courses of study relevant to the work of the Department and this typically includes courses in international relations, public administration, strategic studies, and policy analysis.

Staff are also provided, on an ongoing basis, with job-specific training once assigned to posts in the Department, as well as elements which are of general application, in order to ensure they have the capabilities to fully discharge their duties. In addition, under the EU's CSDP, courses provided by the European Security and Defence College are offered to staff members on an on-going-basis.

The engagement with the Committee reinforces the importance of continued investment in HR development and the drawing on relevant civil and military expertise in the management of defence.

4.6 Overview of consultation

Engagement at Ministerial level with the Joint Committee has re-enforced the importance of a fixed cycle of review process.

Among other things, it has highlighted the importance, in the democratic parliamentary setting, of a reflective approach which connects policy formulation and implementation in ways that are relevant to the changing security context. It has re-enforced the importance of connection with the citizen and the need for defence to serve society's needs.

It has also re-enforced the necessity to develop our defence approach, as in other countries, in a manner that reflects the preferences of our own people and fundamental policies such as that of military neutrality, while ensuring that our Defence Forces can contribute to and operate effectively in the international setting.

The meeting with the Committee also highlighted that the approach taken to this and future updates and reviews must take account of the evolving international setting, not least the recognition that our security is a product of a wide range of policy influences and factors. These must be captured as effectively as possible.

The question of resourcing, like all other sectors, will necessarily always feature as a matter to be resolved as part of national budgetary decision-making, but the fixed cycle review process can provide pointers as to gaps and future pathways to address resourcing issues.

Finally, the consultation with the Committee affirms that, in defence, there is no end-point, but rather the process of review seeks to ensure that, in developing an approach and ensuring we have relevant defence policies and capabilities, these are geared to the future and not the past.

5. Developments since publication of the White Paper

This Chapter encompasses issues and events that have occurred, since the publication of the White Paper on Defence in 2015, which are outside the matters addressed in earlier chapters. Important human resources issues, which have emerged in this period, are dealt with first. This is followed by a description of developments in the wider context including those arising from the Programme for a Partnership Government, national security, EU and overseas domains.

5.1 Defence Forces Climate Survey

The Defence Forces Climate Survey, which was published in 2016, was commissioned on foot of a recommendation contained in the third Independent Monitoring Group (IMG) Report. In line with a similar survey carried out in 2008, approximately 11% of personnel were sampled.

Follow up work to the initial findings in the Survey was conducted by the University of Limerick researchers via focus groups. The resulting report entitled *Workplace Climate in the Defence Forces Phase 2: Results of the Focus Group Research* was published in July 2017 and further explored the issues raised in the original survey. These include pay and conditions (particularly pay for the lowest paid members of the Defence Forces), vacancies, recruitment and retention, promotion systems, performance management, leadership, culture, morale, stress and work-life balance.

Issues raised in the survey are being addressed in a number of ways, including implementation of the White Paper, the Government's recently published High Level Plan to implement the Report of the Public Service Pay Commission (PSPC) and the Defence Forces' work programme. Other actions arising from the Climate Survey will be progressed through the Conciliation and Arbitration process.

5.2 Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020

The Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 provides for increases in pay ranging from 6.2% to 7.4% over the lifetime of the Agreement. The focus of these increases is weighted in favour of those on lower pay. To date, under this Agreement, the increases due from 1

January 2018, 1 October 2018, 1 January 2019 and 1 September 2019, have been paid to PDF personnel. Further increases in pay are scheduled in 2020. By the end of the current Agreement, the pay scales of all public servants (including members of the Defence Forces) earning under €70,000 per annum will be restored to pre-Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (FEMPI) levels. The restoration of the 5% reduction to allowances cut under FEMPI legislation is also scheduled in the Agreement.

5.3 Recruitment and Retention

The Government is committed to maintaining a PDF establishment of 9,500 serving personnel. At the end of October 2019, the whole time equivalent strength of the PDF stood at 8,762 personnel, comprising 7,063 Army personnel, 738 Air Corps personnel and 961 Naval Service personnel.

In order to return to an establishment strength of 9,500 personnel, a number of new recruitment initiatives have been taken including the fact that the competition for General Service Recruits now remains open throughout the year to maximise the Defence Forces training capacity and give applicants more opportunities to apply.

Retention challenges within the Defence Forces are reflective of the current economic circumstances and attractive job opportunities in the private and commercial semi-state sectors. The level of training and experience gained by members of the PDF makes them very attractive to private sector employers.

The Government tasked the PSPC with conducting a comprehensive examination of recruitment and retention challenges in the Defence Sector. The PSPC submitted its Third Report to the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform in May 2019. The PSPC's Report was accepted by Government on 4th July 2019. The recommendations in the Report include:

- An increase of 10% in Military Service Allowance (which will boost the earnings of the majority of Defence Forces personnel by between €602 and €675 per annum);

- Full restoration to pre-Haddington Road levels of certain Defence Forces allowances cut in the Haddington Road Agreement, including the restoration of Premium rates for certain weekend duties; and
- Re-introduction of the retention/loyalty bonus for Air Corps' pilots.

Implementation of these recommendations is now underway following acceptance of the PSPC Report by the PDF representative associations (the Permanent Defence Force Other Ranks Representative Association (PDFORRA) and the Representative Association of Commissioned Officers (RACO)).

Following publication of the Report, Government released a High Level Plan entitled "Strengthening our Defence Forces – Phase One". The aim of the Plan is to implement the Third Report of the PSPC, including a range of improvements in remuneration, and put the building blocks in place for further initiatives. A new joint civil-military Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established to facilitate full implementation of the Plan. The new plan, based on the PSPC's recommendations, will result in reprioritisation of some of the existing White Paper human resources related projects. The new PMO, under the direction of the Minister, will ensure that existing projects are assimilated into the new work programme in an effective way. The PMO will also provide staff support to project sponsors and facilitate close coordination with the non-Defence contributors, namely the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

5.4 Equality and Diversity

A Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the Defence Forces was developed in 2017.

5.5 Training and Education

The Defence Forces has continued to value and promote education and supports the concept of "life-long learning" whereby personnel are encouraged to up-skill and re-skill so that they can adapt to the complex and changing demands and deliver effective military capability. The scale of education and training supports provided over the period 2016 to 2018 is illustrated by the fact that some 3,800 courses were held encompassing over 47,000 Defence Forces' attendees.

The Leadership, Management and Defence Studies (LMDS) programme for enlisted personnel has continued to develop and to be a source of success for the Defence Forces and its members. At the end of 2018, the number of Defence Forces' personnel who have joined the programme since its inception in 2012 has risen to 2,826. The LMDS programme for officer personnel has similarly continued to develop and to be a source of success for the Defence Forces. Officers have completed level 7, level 8 and level 9 degree qualifications under the LMDS programme, with 223 Officers completing Level 9 Masters Degrees since its inception in 2007.

5.6 Review of the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme

A scheme of Conciliation and Arbitration (C&A) for members of the PDF provides a formal mechanism for the Representative Associations to engage with the Official side on matters which come within the scope of the scheme.

In light of the many changes in the industrial relations landscape since the inception of the scheme in the early 1990s, the Minister with responsibility for Defence initiated a fundamental review of the scheme in early 2018. The report of the review was published on 2nd October 2018 and is available at http://www.defence.ie/en/news/publications. The parties to the scheme subsequently commenced a process to implement the report's recommendations and the assistance of the Workplace Relations Commission has been sought in this regard.

5.7 New Ombudsman for Defence Forces

With effect from 6th July 2018, and following an open competition run by the Public Appointments Service, Mr Justice Alan Mahon was appointed as the new Ombudsman for the Defence Forces, for a three year period.

5.8 Organisation of Working Time Act 1997

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, in conjunction with the Department of Defence and the Department of Justice and Equality, is currently considering the legislative manner by which the activities of both the Defence Forces and An Garda Síochána can be encompassed within the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997. The

Defence Forces have undertaken significant work in examining the nature of the duties of the Defence Forces and how the Working Time Directive can be applied to its members. Implementation of the Working Time Directive is a complex process and work remains ongoing at the time of this Update.

5.9 Veterans

The Government remains committed to supporting and providing funding to both the Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel (ONE) and the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA). In 2018, the annual grant to ONE increased from €44,000 to €100,000 while a grant of €11,000 is paid to IUNVA annually.

The Defence Organisation has also worked closely with ONE to bring to fruition their plans to establish additional Veteran Support Centres around the country. In 2018, six new Centres were opened while work is continuing with a view to opening additional Centres.

5.10 Programme for a Partnership Government

The Programme for a Partnership Government (PfG) agreed in 2016 sets out 14 separate commitments in the Defence area (see Appendix E). Achievements on implementation of the PfG include:

- A total of 42 separate White Paper implementation projects have been initiated and, of these, 15 have been completed and closed, while a number of others are currently close to completion.
- In 2016 and 2018, a new Offshore Patrol Vessel was delivered under the Naval Service ship replacement programme.
- Three new fixed wing utility aircraft for the Air Corps were ordered in 2017 and the first two aircraft are due for delivery in 2020.
- The procurement process is close to finalisation for the purchase of two new Maritime Patrol Aircraft to replace the Air Corps' two CASA aircraft.
- The mid-life upgrade and maintenance programme for the Army's fleet of 80 MOWAG Armoured Personnel Carriers commenced in 2016 and is ongoing.
- Over €30m has been invested in building works in military installations and barracks across the country since 2016.

- While the strength target for the PDF of 9,500 personnel has not been met, there has been continuous recruitment (over 2,000 inductions between 2016 and 2018) and the Government's recently published High Level Plan to implement the Report of the PSPC will further address recruitment and retention challenges.
- The rate of female participation in the Defence Forces has risen to 6.7% in 2018, with 13.5% of cadet inductions in 2018 being female.
- An inter-agency guidance team to support and develop Civil Defence was established and has met on five occasions.
- A 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal was awarded, as a special acknowledgement from Government, to all members of the PDF and the RDF who served during 2016.
- Under the Defence Enterprise Initiative, the recent approvals of the Defence Enterprise Governance Arrangements, the Intellectual Property Policy and the Defence Enterprise Strategy serve to encourage further engagement and to identify collaborative opportunities that will develop Defence Forces capabilities while contributing to Irish research, innovation and enterprise development.
- Companies and research institutes continue to engage with the Defence Forces on a regular basis and avail of the expertise offered while three projects involving the Defence Forces have successfully secured funding under the Horizon 2020 Programme which is the largest EU research and innovation programme on record, with almost €80 billion of funding available over a seven year period.
- Six iterations of the Defence Forces Employment Support Scheme have been held since it was launched in 2016 and an interim review of the Scheme in 2018 recommended that it continue on the basis of one course being held per annum.

5.11 Strategy Statement 2017-2020

In accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Management Act 1997, a new Department of Defence and Defence Forces Strategy Statement, covering the period 2017–2020, was approved by the Taoiseach, as Minister for Defence, in 2017. Development of the Strategy Statement followed consultation with staff throughout the Defence Organisation, the Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence, as well as with the Defence Forces' Representative Associations. The Strategy Statement provides the strategic

framework for the Department and the Defence Forces for the period 2017-2020 and is available to view on the Department of Defence website http://www.defence.ie.

5.12 Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

PESCO is a capability development initiative aimed at supporting the EU's capacity to respond to international crises, including in support of the UN. Ireland's participation in PESCO, since its establishment in December 2017, affirms Ireland's position as a fully committed EU Member State and enhances our capacity to influence the future EU agenda on CSDP.

While not changing Ireland's existing security and defence arrangements, participation in PESCO will enhance our military capabilities for participation in UN mandated peace support operations; enhance interoperability and, working with our EU partners, thereby ensuring that our troops are equipped with the latest and best equipment and training. There are currently 47 PESCO projects that are being developed and Ireland is currently a participant in two - (1) The EU Training Mission Competence Centre and (2) Upgrade of Maritime Surveillance - and is an observer on a further nine projects.

5.13 European Defence Fund (EDF)

In June 2018, the European Commission proposed a new regulation establishing the EDF under the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). The EDF is intended as an instrument to foster competition and innovation in the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB). It aims to trigger cooperative programmes that would not happen without EU financial support and, by supporting research and development activities, to provide the necessary incentives to boost cooperation at each stage of the industrial cycle.

The Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR) and the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) are the Pilot programmes of the EDF. The EDF Regulation brings together the Research (PADR) and Capability Development (EDIDP) "Windows" of the Fund into a single EDF Regulation to provide financial support during the 2021-2027 MFF. The Commission proposal was that the Fund would have a budget of €13 billion, over seven years, however the latest Presidency proposal in early December 2019 is for a budget of just over €6 billion. Both the Pilot Programmes and the EDF are designed to improve the

competitiveness, efficiency and innovation capacity of the EDTIB throughout the Union particularly focussed on the innovation capacity of SMEs.

5.14 Status of Forces Agreements

Ireland's commitment to provide professional peacekeepers to international peacekeeping missions under UN mandates was reinforced when Government and Dáil approval was granted for the EU and NATO PfP Status of Forces Agreements. A Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) is designed to regulate the legal and administrative arrangements as applied to members of foreign forces operating within the State where they are deployed. The EU and NATO PfP SOFAs are the standard agreements which apply in relation to EU and NATO led overseas crisis management operations. They provide the Irish Defence Forces, serving on such operations, with the same immunities and privileges as all other contributors without the requirement for complex side agreements between Ireland and other contributors, which had been the case until these SOFAs came into effect on the 1st April this year.

5.15 Brexit

Arising from the UK's decision to leave the EU, the uncertainties around the form Brexit will take have persisted, and indeed increased over recent months, bringing with it a stronger focus on the potential implications of a no-deal Brexit. The Defence Organisation remains fully engaged with planning for Brexit to address potential challenges arising. A senior official, with responsibility for Brexit related matters, represents the Department of Defence on the inter-departmental Senior Officials Group and EU and Brexit Groups led by the Department of the Taoiseach that are engaged with the identification of key strategic, operational and policy issues arising. Department officials also attend the Brexit Co-ordinators Group and relevant Sectoral Groups chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Defence Forces also continue to engage in prudent planning for a broad range of contingencies. There is ongoing close liaison between An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces regarding security matters and regular coordination and liaison meetings take place.

5.16 National Security Management

The Cabinet Committee on Security is a new cabinet committee covering issues relating to justice, defence, Garda reform and national security. The existence of a cabinet level

committee facilitates necessary Ministerial involvement in the broad dimensions of security as well as a range of specific matters requiring Ministerial and Government consideration and decision. Among these is the follow-up to the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing. This Commission was established by the Government in May 2017 in order to carry out a fundamental examination of all aspects of policing in this State and to bring forward proposals to the Government for the future of policing. The Commission reported in September 2018. Implementation of the Commission's Report is now being overseen by a High Level Steering Board and an Implementation Group on Policing Reform, with Department of Defence input.

Arising from the Commission's recommendations, a new National Security Analysis Centre (NSAC) has been established under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach. A Director has been appointed to NSAC. One of the key roles of the Director is to support the National Security Committee chaired by the Secretary General to the Government. Among other things, NSAC will have responsibility for the development of a National Security Strategy. The associated work and operation of the new Centre will help refine and shape the national security architecture and future approaches across government to assessing the security environment, including in the context of future fixed cycle defence reviews. The Cabinet Committee's remit also includes oversight of implementation of the Government's High Level Plan to implement the Report of the PSPC on recruitment and retention issues in the PDF.

5.17 Strategic Emergency Management - National Structures and Framework

As part of the work of the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning, a review of the existing national-level structures and processes was initiated in 2014 and culminated in the approval by Government in July 2017 of the "*Strategic Emergency Management (SEM): National Structures and Framework"*. The aim of the SEM Framework and its associated annexes is to ensure that all state bodies can react quickly and efficiently to any large-scale emergency.

5.18 Capability Development – Equipment and Infrastructure

The National Development Plan provides for a total of €541 million for Defence over the period 2018-2022. This level of capital funding will allow the Defence Organisation to

undertake a programme of sustained equipment replacement and infrastructural development across the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service as identified and prioritised in the White Paper and builds on the significant investment programme over recent years.

Equipment plans and infrastructure plans have been developed in order to guide the equipment and infrastructure project priorities across the White Paper based on the available funding envelope. Major acquisitions and investment since the White Paper include:

- A €68m maintenance and upgrade programme on the Army's fleet of 80 Armoured Personnel Carriers.
- A new Offshore Patrol Vessel was delivered to the Naval Service in both 2016 and 2018 under the ship replacement programme. In total, four new vessels were delivered under the programme which amounted to a total investment of €288m (since 2010).
- Planning is now underway for the acquisition of a Multi-Role Vessel to replace the Naval Service flagship LÉ Eithne.
- The first phase of the Mid-Life Extension Programme of the Naval Service's two P50 class vessels has commenced with the aim of ensuring the reliability of the vessels for the next 15 years.
- Three new PC12 aircraft are currently being built for the Air Corps. These are being equipped for ISTAR tasks with delivery currently scheduled to commence in 2020.
- A tender competition is also close to finalisation for the replacement of the Air Corps' two CASA Maritime Patrol Aircraft.
- Some €37m worth of infrastructure development projects are currently at various stages of implementation. These projects include the upgrade and modernisation of facilities used by Defence Forces personnel such as accommodation, dining and locker facilities across the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service.

5.19 Overseas Operations

5.19.1 United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

The Defence Forces are currently serving as part of UNIFIL based in Sector West of UNIFIL's area of operations. Due to other National commitments both Finland and Estonia withdrew from the Irish-Finnish Battalion in UNIFIL in November 2018 and 106 additional Defence

Forces personnel were deployed to the UNIFIL mission to cover the backfilling of the absent Finnish contingent for a 12 month period from November 2018 to November 2019.

Subsequently, in November 2019 Polish and Hungarian elements have been integrated to replace the Finnish contingent. The Government remains strongly committed to the maintenance of peace and security in Lebanon through continued participation in UNIFIL.

5.19.2 United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)

The Irish contingent deployed with UNDOF in the Golan Heights is tasked primarily to serve as the Force Mobile Reserve, providing a Quick Reaction Force, which is on standby to assist with on-going operations within the UNDOF area of responsibility. Following significant events in August 2014 in the area of separation that led to the mission relocating temporarily from Camp Faouar on the Syrian side of the area of separation to Camp Ziouani on the Israeli side, the process to return to the Syrian side commenced in 2016 with the enhancement of force protection measures at Camp Faouar. The Irish contingent has now fully re-deployed to Camp Faouar on the Syrian side.

The continued presence of the UNDOF mission remains an important element in ensuring stability on the Golan Heights and the Middle East region.

5.19.3 Naval Service deployment to the Mediterranean

In October 2017, the Naval Service began participating in the EU Naval Mission, Operation Sophia. In accordance with the mandate for the mission, the Naval Service role involved surveillance and intelligence gathering operations, search and rescue operations and disposal of migrant boats and Force Protection Operations. The deployment of Irish Naval vessels in the Mediterranean over the period 2015-2018, initially as part of the humanitarian mission, Operation Pontus and subsequently as part of Operation Sophia, has been an important element in Ireland's response to the migration crisis in the Mediterranean and resulted in a combined total of 18,228 people being rescued in the Mediterranean by Irish Naval vessels. Tragically, 75 bodies were also recovered by the Naval Service during that period.

A decision was adopted by the European Council on 29th March 2019 to extend the mandate of Operation Sophia for 6 months with a temporary suspension of its naval assets while Member States continue working on a solution related to disembarkation.

5.19.4 European Union Training Mission – EUTM Mali

A contingent of PDF personnel have been deployed to EUTM Mali since March 2013. Ireland's contribution to the mission increased from 18 to 20 personnel in June 2017. Irish personnel are based in the mission headquarters in Bamako and in Koulikoro Training Centre. The objective of this mission is to improve the capacity of the Malian Armed Forces to maintain security in Mali and restore the authority of the Malian Government and the territorial integrity of the Malian State. Alongside standard infantry training, training is being provided in international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians and human rights.

Separate to the EU mission and following Government and Dáil approval, a small contingent of Army Ranger Wing personnel deployed in September 2019 (as part of a larger Special Operations Force led by Germany) to MINUSMA, which is the UN mission providing support to the Malian Government.

5.19.5 Other Overseas Mission Areas

In addition to the four previously described overseas missions, the Defence Forces personnel are currently serving in eight other mission areas. These are as follows:

- United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)
- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)
- Kosovo Force (KFOR)
- United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)
- European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EU BiH)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- United Nations Headquarters New York (UNNY)
- European Union Military Staff (EUMS)

On average, the Defence Forces has 660 personnel deployed across the 12 mission areas on a daily basis.

5.20 Commemorations

Both the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces played very significant roles in the success of the various 1916 centenary commemorations held in 2016. Related to this, in a very significant undertaking between September 2015 and March 2016, the Defence Forces formally delivered a National Flag and a copy of the Proclamation to some 3,200 primary schools in the State.

6. White Paper Update 2019 - Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

The conclusions from the White Paper Update relate, firstly, in respect of the substantive issues considered in the Update and, secondly, any lessons drawn in relation to the process of undertaking the Update.

In overall terms, Defence remains of paramount importance to this State and as a vital element of overall security policy, provides the bedrock of stability and prosperity across political, social, economic and environmental domains.

6.2 Update – main conclusions

6.2.1 Security Environment

The Update has clarified that while the essential aggregate level of threat facing this State has not altered in a way to justify increasing the overall stated level of threat, the position has developed and changed in the period since 2015. Threats to security, involving attacks leading to loss of life have occurred in, and threats to civil life remain as a feature of, our near neighbourhood. Furthermore, events internationally impact increasingly on our political, social, economic and environmental well-being, in ever more complex ways and patterns. The threats in the cyber domain and from espionage have been assessed as increasing since 2015. The wider political global environment presents as ever more complex and uncertain. The presence and activities of groups within Ireland with real or aspirational terrorist intent will continue as a security preoccupation of Government and relevant departments and agencies.

The implications of all matters considered in this Update are described later in this Chapter. At this point, it is sufficient to state that the Update reconfirms the approaches in the White Paper, including the roles of the Defence Forces, and continued development of defence capabilities to meet a range of current and contingent requirements. In addition, it reinforces Ireland's active approach to international engagement as an absolute necessity in the present and likely future security environment. The undertaking of the updated security environment assessment, as a practical exercise and in terms of what it says, reconfirms the need for a

more evolved approach to national security management in Ireland. The steps taken to establish NSAC are very relevant in this context.

6.2.2 National Security Management

The Government have decided to establish NSAC, under the aegis of the Department of the Taoiseach, and a Director has been appointed. A priority for the new Director is to get NSAC up and running as quickly as possible and to establish it as an important evolution of the management of national security. The White Paper noted the need to keep such arrangements under review. The Update reconfirms this necessity and the role in which an elaborated National Security Strategy will play in this context.

The Update, as well as the commitment to the new NSAC, reinforces the contribution of drawing from a wide range of information sources, and sharing the results of these, to underpin high quality analysis. The Update also reinforces the discrete but complementary roles of the various Departments and Agencies with responsibilities in the areas of national security. Some of these roles are primarily policy in nature while, in other cases, the role is primarily in the operational sphere. However, the net effect is to demand a mutually supportive approach driven by a national set of requirements elevated above any single sectoral perspective. The Update has also confirmed the contribution of international engagement as contributing to analysis, preparedness and response to threats to security. International engagement comprehends our stance through participation in international bodies, our connectedness to these and being tapped into latest thinking, in terms of formulation of strategies, as well as capability building opportunities.

The Update also reconfirms a feature noted from the White Paper, the need for greater debate on security matters in the public domain, while retaining appropriate levels of confidentiality, especially in the operational sphere. As in all aspects of public policy, a more informed approach, on national security and defence matters, will contribute to better decision-making on policy direction and resource allocation.

The experience of this Update also underlines the importance of a National Security Strategy. The Strategy, which is to be developed under the auspices of NSAC, should identify and

elaborate on inter-dependencies and serve to inform and enhance debate in the public domain on security matters. In this context, for defence and wider security, the Update also reconfirms the necessity of the connectedness between planning, strategy, delivery of capability (current and contingent) and operations.

6.2.3 International Setting

Inter-dependency could be viewed as the strongest theme bearing on Ireland's position on security and defence matters in Europe and the World. It has been noted widely that Ireland's defence policy approach of military neutrality is not isolationist. It cannot provide a protective buffer against global events or developments in the security environment which impact on this country. The White Paper Update has served to underline the importance of Ireland's participation in this international sphere because such participation is the primary means by which we can shape events or policies taken individually or collectively by other States that may impact here.

The White Paper Update has tracked international security developments, some of which Ireland has helped shape. Ireland's interests in political, social, economic and environmental areas involve a current or potential security dimension in which there can be a defence component. The White Paper Update validates the active approach taken in the civil-military defence arena in conjunction with, and often in support of, other Departmental leads.

The shaping of defence policy is guided by its evolving place in this broad security setting. In this regard, our very active engagement in the UN, the EU, NATO PfP and the OSCE, remain central components of our security policy. Ireland's positive engagement in multilateral defence and security arrangements, reinforced by Ireland's contributions to international crisis management operations, help shape policy and security outcomes with the goal of advancing our values and interests and contributing to international peace and security and global social and economic development, with a particular emphasis on developing states.

The White Paper Update also reconfirms, in terms of developing defence capabilities, the importance of engagement in the worldwide defence and military sphere both to contribute

to and to benefit from interaction with our partners in the UN, EU, NATO PfP, as well as a range of bilateral State contacts.

Overseas peace support operations are a very tangible manifestation of Ireland's foreign and security policy. These are delivered through a strong policy-led approach, along with the determination, building and retention of relevant military capabilities. The contribution of capability development planning and execution is highlighted further on in this Chapter. However, it is necessary to note the importance of this in the international sphere on its own account. Furthermore, with the increasing complexity within most of the theatres in which overseas peace support deployments arise, or are likely to arise, this Update notes an added imperative for strong capability planning and execution. The complexity referred to comprehends a range of influencing factors leading, in some circumstances, to the expectation of higher intensity military operations to create the safe and secure environment for political engagement essential to the achievement of the peaceful outcomes ultimately sought.

In recording the evolution of security policy features, especially in the EU through PESCO and other CSDP initiatives, the Update captures the increasing rigour which governs questions of the level of military capacity and, at policy level, the associated guiding level of ambition. Increasing transparency, as well as the practical aspects of security cooperation, generate a requirement to underpin policy ambition or aspiration with practical defence capabilities which can be independently observed to serve current security requirements.

The 2015 White Paper's comprehensive approach captured the range of projects which will contribute to stronger capabilities across a series of specified areas. The Update validates the necessity of this work, and in addition, puts the spotlight, into the future, on the optimum means to ensure that deployable and effective military capabilities are available in the circumstances likely to be required in this evolving international setting to meet Government priorities. The Update reinforces Ireland's engagement with NATO PfP, through the Planning and Review Process as an essential element in giving greater definition to what needs to be done. In addition to this as a partner country we have access to, and have utilised, the evaluation of capabilities as a part of the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC) process.

The Update was undertaken while Brexit has continued to evolve. The precise security implications of Brexit remain hard to predict, albeit that the overall setting in which security resides may be adversely impacted. It is not clear, at this point, that any particular implications call for a defence response beyond what is committed in the White Paper, through an active policy-led approach along with the on-going enhancement of a range of capabilities to best deliver the roles of the Defence Forces as determined by Government. In this context, the Defence Forces' roles, in the domestic security domain, remain very important. Prudent planning remains the essential relevant focus against the backdrop of the UK's stated position, the Withdrawal Agreement and the responsibility, in the first instance, of the Department of Justice and Equality, along with An Garda Síochána, for internal security matters and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners for customs issues.

6.2.4 Human Resources

The White Paper contains a chapter devoted to delivering an approach to human resources in the Defence Forces taking account of the absolute importance of this element of capability. Similar importance is attached to human resources management in the civil branches of the Department of Defence and in Civil Defence. Human resources issues in the Defence Forces have remained an area of very significant attention in recent times. This is not surprising as the Defence Forces cannot do what Government requires unless it can recruit and retain the necessary personnel with the appropriate skills. The challenges faced are not unique to Ireland's military and can also be observed internationally. Addressing these human resources imperatives is an absolute requirement and one which has received very significant attention by the Minister and civil and military management and has engaged the input of a range of external parties including the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. It is clear that all dimensions of human resources management will require unrelenting attention into the future. A High Level Plan has been developed to implement the Report of the PSPC on recruitment and retention issues in the PDF and this will be the principal focus with the White Paper in this regard.

6.2.5 Defence Investment

The multi-annual capital programme, launched as *Project Ireland 2040*, increased the overall level of investment in Defence. Understandably, during the economic crisis, investment in

Defence, as elsewhere, was significantly curtailed. However, the impact of this period of reduced investment allied to the relatively low absolute levels of investment, tightly constrain the building of capability as fast as would be desirable. Absolute levels of spend, even with the increases under *Project Ireland 2040*, remain low against comparable international benchmarks. In addition, assessed against the natural equipment life-cycles, some in the areas of secure communications, transport, aircraft and ships have reached or are about to reach their end of life. While new investment provides some additions to capability, much of the planned investment falls into the category of retaining capability.

The demands on capability, at home but especially abroad, continue to become more sophisticated and dynamic. Present funding levels result in major equipment platforms being replaced only very sequentially, or over extended periods of acquisition. The new Equipment Development Plan currently being finalised, provides an updated process to identify and prioritise equipment investment over the medium term. However, given current allocations, many of the equipment requirements identified cannot be advanced for some time. Others, identified in the White Paper as being suitable for investment, should additional investment become available, for the present, fall outside what can be prioritised within existing budgets. The need to take account of climate change objectives will be a further consideration in relation to future investment. The inclusion, in the White Paper, of a commitment to proceed with a new Multi-Role Naval Vessel arises, in part, from the effects, including more difficult sea conditions, observed in the maritime domain as a result of climate change.

An area in which investment has been particularly constrained is that of physical infrastructure. As well as training lands and ranges, this chiefly covers military facilities in barracks, comprising accommodation, support, training and all other aspects of running and maintaining defence operations across land, air and sea. While there have been very important modernisation projects completed in the last few years, there is continuing potential for additional investment in such military facilities. In order to advance projects in an effective and manageable way, a focussed five year infrastructure programme, utilising the investment provided for in *Project Ireland 2040*, will be launched in January 2020. This will provide the means to channel available funds to where these will have the strongest impact, while acknowledging the potential for additional investment.

In summary, given what was acknowledged already by Government in the 2015 White Paper, it is not surprising that the present Update should identify continuing potential for additional capital investment in equipment and infrastructure. The Defence Organisation continues to pursue all strategies to increase absolute levels of investment and to get best value, and maximum capability possible, in its approach to procurement.

Developments in relation to EU funding arrangements for defence related activity under the next Multi Annual Framework will bear on future investment approaches. While these have not taken detailed shape in the period of this Update, the position is evolving quickly, including in relation to the potential for Irish enterprise to respond to business opportunities that would support Defence Forces' capabilities, while also benefitting from such funding more broadly.

6.2.6 Capability and Capability Planning

One of the strongest conclusions coming through the White Paper projects review as a whole was the need to build a stronger and more integrated approach to capability planning and delivery. It is a reality that individual projects will necessarily focus, in the first instance, on those elements of capability with which they are primarily concerned. However, to succeed in delivering capability at Defence organisational level, no single area of capability can operate in isolation. Thus, for example, measures to develop human resources through new training initiatives may require an additional infrastructural measure. New and better equipment is only as good as the availability of relevant personnel trained to utilise it and having access to appropriate infrastructure to operate, store or maintain the equipment. Comprehensive analysis and determination of cross-cutting capability requirements is the best means of optimal prioritisation of effort.

There is a specific White Paper project dealing with capability development, including developing a process to embed this into the strategic management function of the Defence Organisation. This Update strongly reinforces the necessity for this project and the need for it to be accelerated. The contribution of all projects to some or a number of elements of capability, along with their associated inter-dependencies, would suggest that the Capability

Development Function should, taking account of the work already in progress, be given greater prioritisation in the immediate period ahead.

It would not have been possible within the scope of the Update to complete an end-to-end review of all capabilities in order to confirm existing capabilities or re-order these. The approach taken in the review of White Paper Projects did allow for some degree of individualised analysis of progress and combined with the updated assessment of the security environment, and review of changes generally in the Defence setting since 2015, allowed for a high-level appraisal of areas of capability which would warrant particular attention. Those identified as warranting specific attention include the importance of further development of special forces capabilities, enhancing ISTAR, addressing deficiencies in radar capabilities across all domains, building cyber capacity for the present and the future, as well as emerging equipment requirements involved in providing enhanced levels of force protection for deployment in future overseas missions. Capability planning must retain a balanced approach across the roles of the Defence Forces, taking account of international and domestic security domain requirements.

The gap in Defence Forces personnel strength below establishment is an undesired capability deficiency in itself. Similarly, the lack of contingency due to personnel shortfalls, which a full establishment would retain, is a capability gap worth noting on its own. This can be especially marked in the case of specialist areas, which in their nature are smaller in scale and more vulnerable to gaps in strength and/or experience.

6.2.7 Defence Forces Organisation

In the nature of a White Paper Update, it was not intended to conduct an organisational review. A range of individual White Paper projects either bear directly on organisation or have organisational implications. Some of these involve how the organisation is structured and managed and some relate to the resources allocated to particular roles and functions. A combination of factors have resulted in gaps between the establishment provided for in the White Paper and actual Defence Forces strength. In large measure, operations have been maintained. In this regard, without giving rise to any compromise on safety, necessary mitigation measures have been taken. However, inevitably there is reduced contingency and

operations conducted on an "as available" basis operate at a level below what they could be at full strength. Particular pressures are coming to bear in relation to the scope of Air and Naval operations and the operational availability of some aircraft and the overall number of ships.

That said, overseas operations have continued at a high and indeed higher tempo, with enlarged deployments to Lebanon and a naval deployment to the Mediterranean continued in the period since 2015. In addition, significant urgent or critical requirements in the security or aid to the civil power domains have been met to a very high standard.

HR policy is directed in large measure to assure that for the future, the Defence Forces have the personnel in the roles required at the correct overall strength level. This is not the position at present and there are difficult shortfalls in certain key areas, including pilots, air traffic control, engineering, ordnance, communications as well as naval general and specialist roles. In addition, this Update gives recognition to the possibility of the need for additionality in certain areas including special forces, cyber, safety management, headquarters (including capability development and joint operations) and other specialist areas. However, given the gap between existing establishment and current strength, the immediate focus must remain in filling these existing gaps to get to the White Paper strength of at least 9,500 personnel. Taking account of this position, the Minister for Defence will prioritise specialist elements where a robust case emerges while also working to bring overall numbers to the agreed establishment strength.

6.2.8 Review of specific White Paper projects

The importance of prioritised advancement of the Capability Development Function has been outlined earlier but the review of White Paper projects also drew specific attention to a number of other key themes to be considered in the overall project prioritisation exercise coming from the conclusion of the Update.

In particular, the project to conduct a gap-analysis of skill-sets within the PDF to identify the frequency of gaps and appropriate measures to address them has been identified as a key to commencement of certain other projects, including a number that relate to the RDF, the First

Line Reserve and the proposed Specialist Reserve. The gap-analysis project is, however, one that the Minister with responsibility for Defence included in his prioritised list of Tranche 2 projects earmarked for commencement. Project planning, as well as work to agree a methodology to identify gaps, are now underway.

While the immediacy of the requirement to commence a specific defence funding study, as identified in the White Paper in 2015, was overtaken by subsequent capital funding commitments, now covering the period to 2022, there will be benefit in progressing this project with a view to its completion prior to finalisation of the approaching Strategic Defence Review.

Also of significance is the fact that the Secretary General and Chief of Staff, who are joint sponsors of the review of high level command and control, noted that this project is of major significance.

6.2.9 Defence Management

Chapter 10 of the White Paper deals very comprehensively with the management of defence and a range of initiatives are underway in this important area. As outlined earlier, the progress in implementing the White Paper, with 42 major projects initiated so far (of which 15 are completed), underlines the contribution of civil and military personnel working effectively in joint teams to achieve common goals. Beyond the achievement of the individual outcomes, the transformational quality of the project management based approach is a significant wider organisational benefit. The continued internal evolution and maturing of the approach to project management, along with the Department (civil and military) leadership of Our Public Service 2020 Action 10 (*To embed programme and project management in the Public Service*), will continue to reinforce the contribution of this approach to beneficial public outcomes.

Strategic management of Defence continues to be led by the Minister with responsibility for Defence and the enhanced arrangements, in terms of senior level meetings, has contributed to the positive development of defence policy and capability in support of Government priorities. It has also provided the means to provide the right focus on addressing challenges even if these challenges, particularly in the human resources area, are not necessarily

amenable to easy quick solutions. This Update confirms the need for a continued concentration of effort by senior civil and military management working together to a joint and agreed agenda. The development of a prioritised approach to issues (under the framework of the White Paper, the Strategy Statement covering the Defence Organisation and relevant business and annual plans) reinforce the approach of a joint vision and an enabling set of actions.

The Update also confirms the benefit, in public policy terms, of the White Paper on Defence in comprehending all aspects of defence. Compared to other sectors, which do not have a single all-embracing policy framework, the White Paper, evolved further by means of the commitment to a process of fixed-cycle reviews, provides for the management of Defence through a common holistic and strategic framework with an integrated set of projects, priorities and timelines.

6.3 Conclusions in relation to the Update Process

The process of undertaking this Update has confirmed the value of taking stock of the position in relation to Defence in the period since publication of the White Paper on Defence in 2015.

In assessing the Update process, the following conclusions have been reached:

- The opportunity to conduct a structured update of the security environment, drawing on the input of all relevant Departments and Agencies, is a critical element and an essential foundation for all other aspects of the Update.
- There is significant value to all of the Departments and Agencies in their engagement on the updated assessment of the security environment for their own purposes and to reconfirm the indivisible nature of security and its broad context embracing a range of policy and operational areas, well beyond the singularity of defence provision alone.
- The Update has provided an opportunity to maintain a forward looking stance at the strategic level with the prospect of advancing further innovation.
- While the White Paper implementation process has involved a concerted project management led approach, the Update has provided the means and opportunity to step above this to review overall progress and to assess more strategically the linkages

between different projects. It has also given Project Sponsors and Leads the licence to consider whether the original scope and relevance of projects remain valid.

- In addition, the adoption of a project management led approach has proved valuable in facilitating and promoting civil-military leadership of projects. It is recognised that it will be beneficial to incorporate the senior sponsorship component into project management structures on other defence initiatives into the future.
- Viewed from the perspective of the totality of projects contained in the White Paper, the Update process has been very useful in terms of management of relevant workflows, not least in future prioritisation of projects and sequencing, while it has also recognised work already underway across the Defence Organisation that is addressing commitments made in the White Paper (outside of the formalised project management process).
- The review of White Paper Projects, as part of the Update, also highlighted the relevance of correct identification of project stakeholders and gave emphasis to the different contributions of such stakeholders. This can be developed further having regard to their distinct roles and determination of the optimal timing and modalities of their input.
- The Update has taken longer than was originally envisaged. This is a combination of it being the first time it has been done as well as other work pressures. Momentum, however, was maintained throughout, even if individual phases of work took longer than planned. It is concluded that a dedicated staff will be required to undertake the future Strategic Defence Review.
- There is scope to develop a more evolved approach to the consultative process with the Oireachtas to enhance the process of parliamentary engagement and provide sufficient opportunities for parliamentary input to the process.
- The Update has underlined the absolute necessity for the process of fixed cycle reviews established under the White Paper and, furthermore, gives emphasis to the necessity for the intended comprehensive nature of the next review which will be a Strategic Defence Review.

6.4 The Future

The process of completing this Update, along with the issues that have been identified for attention, provide comprehensive validation of the decision in the 2015 White Paper to introduce a process of fixed cycle reviews. The implementation of a permanent approach to this will now be advanced quickly.

The existing White Paper project to design the long-term approach to fixed cycle reviews will now be accelerated so that the Strategic Defence Review can take shape and commence on a timely basis.

Appendices

A. Transcript of Oireachtas Committee meeting

Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Defence debate - Tuesday, 5 Mar 2019

White Paper on Defence Update: Discussion

Brendan Smith, Chairman

In the second part of today's meeting, we will meet the Minister of State, Deputy Paul Kehoe, to discuss the White Paper update on fixed-term reviews. The Minister of State is very welcome. I also welcome his officials and thank them for the briefing in advance of the meeting. Before we begin, members, witnesses and persons in the Public Gallery are requested to ensure that for the duration of the meeting mobile phones are turned off completely or switched to airplane, safe or flight mode, depending on their device. It is not sufficient to put phones on silent mode, as this will maintain interference with the broadcasting system.

I draw the attention of witnesses to the fact that by virtue of section 17(2)(l) of the Defamation Act 2009, they are protected by absolute privilege in respect of their evidence to the committee. However, if they are directed by the committee to cease giving evidence on a particular matter and they continue to so do, they are entitled thereafter only to a qualified privilege in respect of their evidence. They are directed that only evidence connected with the subject matter of these proceedings is to be given and they are asked to respect the parliamentary practice to the effect that, where possible, they should not criticise or make charges against any person, persons or entity by name or in such a way as to make him, her or it identifiable.

Members are reminded of the long-standing parliamentary practice to the effect that they should not comment on, criticise or make charges against a person outside the House or an official either by name or in such a way as to make him or her identifiable.

Minister of State at the Department of Defence (Deputy Paul Kehoe)

I thank the Chairman and members of the joint committee. I very much welcome this opportunity to engage with the committee on two connected processes currently being undertaken within my Department with civil and military involvement, namely, the ongoing White Paper update for 2018 and 2019 and the White Paper implementation project, which is focused on the establishment of a fixed cycle of defence reviews as a permanent feature of defence policy.

I look forward to listening to and noting the comments and observations of committee members present today. I particularly want to stress that these are new developments in our approach to defence policy. I am very much in listening mode today and I appreciate that any new ways of doing things, particularly when it comes to defence, should ideally attract broad support across the Houses. This has been a long-standing tradition which I am keen to maintain.

As members will be aware, the White Paper on Defence, which was approved by the Government in July 2015, provides the strategic and comprehensive defence policy framework for the ten-year period up to 2025. As such, the White Paper is the Government's medium-term policy on defence. It is the second White Paper on Defence. Its predecessor, the first White Paper, dated back to 2000. The comprehensive consultation process that led to the approval of the current White Paper commenced with publication of a historic Green Paper on Defence in July 2013. This initiated a public consultation on the White Paper and in doing so it broke new ground by actively encouraging open debate and

critical thinking about Ireland's future defence policy requirements. In response to the Green Paper my Department received a total of 122 written submissions and follow-on meetings with a wide variety of stakeholders and interested parties were subsequently held.

In addition to the public consultation process, officials from the Department of Defence liaised extensively with a broad range of Government Departments and agencies with a common interest in security or which avail of the services of the Department, the Defence Forces and Civil Defence. There was also consultation with international organisations with a particular focus on international peace and security-related peace support and crisis management operations. These included the United Nations, the European External Action Service, the European Defence Agency and NATO's Partnership for Peace.

The consultation process concluded by bringing all stakeholders together for an open policy debate, with an opportunity for those that made contributions to hear the views of a range of panellists and to debate and express their opinions. This was held in Farmleigh House in May 2015. All who attended found the event to be useful and thought provoking. In addition, a final opportunity to engage on and contribute to the White Paper then under development was afforded to Members of the Dáil and statements were taken in the House at the end of June 2015. The views of all those who contributed throughout the process were carefully considered and there is no doubt that the White Paper has benefited from having had these valuable inputs.

The policy framework set out in the White Paper is designed to be flexible and responsive. This is important, given the dynamic nature of the current security environment. It is also designed to enable the defence organisation, comprising the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, to be adaptive to these changing circumstances and to use our resources as efficiently as possible.

It is within this context that the White Paper sets out the Government's intention to establish a process of fixed-cycle defence reviews. These are common internationally and give assurance that policy remains up to date and relevant to changing future circumstances. The White Paper specifically provides that these reviews are to have a three-year cycle, with every second review being more comprehensive in nature and, as such, would be styled a "strategic defence review". As set out in the White Paper, strategic defence reviews will commence in early 2021.

Before that happens, however, the White Paper also specifies that the first in the new cycle of reviews will be a White Paper update, which my Department commenced last July. Members will recall that I wrote to the committee last autumn to seek their views. In the interim, a considerable amount of work has progressed, but it is still relevant to obtain members' views, particularly on the long-term approach to the process of fixed-cycle reviews. I have not come to this meeting to advance any particular approach, speak to any particular element of the White Paper or argue any point in our discussion. We debate many issues at this committee and in the House and there are plenty of occasions for me to respond to particular points. This is not such an occasion, however. My approach today is simply to allow a space in which the White Paper update can take account of what committee members have to say. In conjunction with this, and most importantly for the long term, it will benefit all if we can put in place an effective, structured and systematic approach.

The White Paper represents Government policy on defence. It is not intended that the update will reopen fundamentals of defence policy that were settled when the Government approved the White Paper in 2015. These fundamentals include the fact that Ireland will continue to maintain its policy of military neutrality. The White Paper also sets out key principles regarding capability development that have resulted in the subsequent development of rolling multi-annual equipment and infrastructure plans. Developments at international level, including Ireland's decision to participate in the EU's

permanent structured co-operation, PESCO, agreement remain consistent with the approach in the White Paper. The White Paper also places a strong emphasis on the development of the human resources of the defence organisation and significant work in this area is under way.

In undertaking the update, we have focused primarily on an updated security assessment and an analysis of the range of projects being undertaken by way of implementation of the White Paper. The updated security assessment will be published as part of the update, reflecting a reconsideration of chapter 2 of the White Paper. As such, it is the product of an interdepartmental and inter-agency group comprising representatives of relevant Departments and agencies, including An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces. Such an assessment of the security environment will remain a key component of fixed-cycle reviews, as it will be used to situate appropriately the defence policy response in terms of the lead or supporting roles that defence plays.

In essence, it provides a fully considered and agreed common perspective for all elements involved in protecting the security of the State. As members will appreciate, it would be inappropriate for me to discuss the content of the assessment pending completion of all work being carried out as part of the overall update and, ultimately, its approval by the Government. As with the White Paper, the outcome will be published.

The second key strand of the update, which is well advanced at this stage, is a review of progress in the White Paper's implementation. Following publication of the White Paper, a total of 88 projects were identified to be completed over a ten-year period. From a programme management perspective, these have become 95 discrete projects, with the implementation of each being supported and monitored by a joint civil-military White Paper implementation facilitation team. As part of this strand, the review of progress with implementation has been broken into a four-stage process, involving high-level civil and military engagement. This process has involved a review of all 95 projects, with different considerations arising and being factored into the review of each, depending on its current status, that is, whether it has commenced or is now closed. Two of the four stages have now been completed while work on the final stage - the report capturing the outcomes of the reviews of each project - is under way.

Following completion of these two key strands of the update, and having regard to whatever views members may have, the next important phase of the update will be consideration of the implications of any change in the context of overall policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing. All of this work, including that carried out to date, is being overseen by a high-level civil-military steering group that meets regularly to review progress and the overall approach. It is my intention that, when all work is finalised, the White Paper update will be brought to the Government for approval of the outcome and for a decision on any change in approach that may be required.

The second aspect of my engagement with the committee is to listen to the views of members on the White Paper implementation project that is focused on the establishment of a fixed cycle of defence reviews as a permanent feature of defence policy. In this regard, the White Paper sets out the Government's intention that these defence review processes are to be given a new standing in public management terms. The White Paper specifically provides for a new set of arrangements to ensure that a strong strategic defence planning and decision making approach is taken. I have outlined the process already under way in terms of the first White Paper update and the commitment on the part of the Government to commence a strategic defence review in early 2021.

One of the White Paper implementation projects under way in the Department of Defence is focused on developing a formalised structure, to be approved by the Government, for these fixed cycles of defence reviews. This ongoing project, which is being undertaken by a civil-military team, is principally

considering the structure and processes for the future conduct of defence reviews and, in doing so, will draw from the experience gained in carrying out the current update. The project team has undertaken a broad-ranging study, including academic review and international comparisons, in order to identify the key elements that could shape the conduct of future defence reviews. When finalised, proposals in this regard will be brought to the Government for approval. Before that happens, however, it is the Government's stated intention in the White Paper to engage in a process of all-party consultation on the overall approach. This committee is an ideal forum to address that commitment.

There are a number of key elements being considered as part of the ongoing project and, subject to the committee's perspective, it is on the following questions, in particular, that I would appreciate views: whether legislative provision should be made for the conduct of fixed-cycle reviews; the extent to which the reviews should differ – for example, what should distinguish an update from a strategic defence review; the level and breadth of consultation for each; the frequency and timing of reviews; and whether, regardless of these reviews, there is a case for a continuing approach that includes provision for further White Papers and, if so, when, within the new cycle of reviews.

Having outlined the purpose of my seeking this engagement with the joint committee, and once again emphasising that my approach today is simply to take account of what committee members have to say, I look forward to listening to and considering their views on these important matters related to the White Paper on Defence.

Brendan Smith, Chairman
I thank the Minister of State for his detailed presentation on the work that is ongoing and for the update on the White Paper.

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan
I acknowledge the engagement with the committee. It is positive that we are meeting rather often on these matters.

The Minister of State mentioned a high-level civil-military steering group. Who exactly are the members of that group?

The Minister of State also referred to whether legislative provision should be made for the conduct of fixed-cycle reviews. What kinds of changes does he envisage that would require such provision? I am putting this in the context of a report I have been quoting recently and on which the Minister of State's MEP colleagues engaged at EU level, namely, Ireland and the EU: Defending our Common European Home. It contains some alarming comments - for example, on redefining the concept of Irish neutrality, amending our triple-lock system and developing our defence industry. It does not sit easily that such comments are coming from some MEPs when we are committed to Ireland's neutrality here.

It was great that the Minister of State received so many submissions. Many came from civil society. I am wondering about further engagement because, with defence, it is civil society that is most effective when anything goes wrong.

There is an increase in military expenditure. Does the Minister of State envisage further increases? There are concerns in this regard. I asked the Minister of State before about the multi-role vessel that was possibly being purchased.

I thank the Minister of State for the letter he sent me following up on my question on training. He outlined in it some of the training that takes place. I acknowledge the great work our peacekeeping forces do when on UN-mandated missions. My question was on interrogation training. The Minister

of State reverted to me on some of the other types of training. It is important to emphasise the importance of training on gender and refugee issues. We saw the so-called training for the Libyan coast guard was far from what it should have been. Our troops are much better trained. Given Irish troops' training on human rights and gender and refugee issues, could we more proactive in this regard? What happened in Libya and the Mediterranean was most unsatisfactory.

The Minister of State mentioned his role in planning for Brexit. I was in Belfield last week for the launch of our international development policy, A Better World. Was there engagement with the Minister of State's Department? How does he complement priorities in the new policy document with what we are seeing in the White Paper? Our role has been human rights based and humanitarian. Was there any engagement with the Department of Defence?

Deputy Paul Kehoe

I am not familiar with A Better World. I am not aware of any engagement. I may revert to the Deputy on that.

The White Paper update steering group has met at least monthly since the updating commenced last July. Meetings are chaired by a relevant assistant secretary and are attended by the assistant chief of staff and the heads of the Department's planning and organisation branch and the Defence Forces strategic planning branch. There is also a White Paper working group, which will consider any implications for overall defence policy requirements, associated tasks, capability development and resourcing. This group comprises the heads of the planning and organisation branch and Defence Forces strategic planning branch and the White Paper project team.

The fundamentals of the White Paper are not going to change but I am looking for members' views on it today. What changes would they like to see? What would they like to be added or subtracted? I am looking for the committee's views rather giving mine. Everyone should know my views on the White Paper because it was approved by the Government in 2015. We are now on the review stage. I sent briefing notes to all committee members. I wish to hear members' thoughts on the White Paper.

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan referred to the Fine Gael MEP group publishing its own paper on the future of Ireland's policy of neutrality. It is totally separate from Government policy. I always encourage political parties and individuals, be they Independents or otherwise, to engage in an open and honest debate on issues that affect everybody daily. These are issues that affect us. We would be doing no justice to society if we did not have open and honest discussions on them. The discussion paper reflects the MEP group's own thoughts and it was not endorsed by my political party. A group of MEPs came together and published the paper. It is not reflective of Government policy by any manner or means. I welcome everybody's comments, however.

We are increasing military expenditure year on year. The multi-role vessel about which the Deputy spoke is referred to in the White Paper. This is at the planning stage. It will be some time before we make a decision on it.

The Deputy talked about the Libyan coast guard. Through Operation Sophia, we are training it. I am not sure about the extent of training on gender issues, etc., but I can revert to the Deputy on that.

Regarding Brexit, defence organisations are currently engaged in prudent planning in response to Brexit. This includes active participation in the whole-of-Government framework developing a response to Brexit. Primary responsibility for the internal security of the State rests with the Minister for Justice and Equality, Deputy Flanagan, An Garda Síochána and the Customs and Excise. Prevention of trafficking is in the first instance a matter for the Revenue Commissioners and the Garda. There is

a Government Brexit team. An assistant secretary from my Department is on that team. We meet quite regularly. Responsibility for the security of the State rests solely with the Department of Justice and Equality. If it acquires aid to the civil power, it calls for the assistance of members of the Defence Forces or the Department of Defence.

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan

The four MEPs were not just testing the water to see what sort of reaction there would be because it was completely undermining our neutrality. I am alarmed by the fact that they made their comments in an open debate in the European Parliament. It is the Minister of State's party that is in government here. Therefore, there is no doubt about what occurred. Ireland has a very proud tradition of being involved in UN-mandated peacekeeping missions. That is what we should continue doing rather than getting diverted into other areas. Regardless of the assurances the Minister of State is giving, there is concern that we are moving away from our neutrality. I am very definitely of the view that we must be assured that our neutrality is sacred, as is fitting for an independent, sovereign state, and that we should not be brought further into the growing security agenda of the European Union. We should return to saving lives in the Mediterranean as opposed to being part of an agenda bringing people from the Mediterranean into the Libyan detention camps.

Deputy Jack Chambers

I thank the Minister of State for attending. The White Paper update indicates that 42 projects have been initiated, which is less than half the total number of 95. To date, only 11 of those 95 projects have been completed. It is clear, therefore, that there has been an under-delivery in terms of the White Paper. As I just stated to Senator Ned O'Sullivan, there is very little detailed information in the Minister of State's statement. It was just an exercise in grammar and language. He explained very little in terms of what he is actually doing with regard to many key issues. I have a number of questions about some of the key issues that are fundamental to the White Paper.

The Chief of Staff was before the Public Service Pay Commission recently. I was very surprised to hear that the Chief of Staff was joined by two officials from the Department of Defence and two from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. I would see that as a muzzling of military management regarding its plea to the Public Service Pay Commission. Why did the Minister of State and his Department seek to attend that meeting with the Chief of Staff? Why did they not allow him to exercise his discretion with the commission?

My second question relates to my shock at seeing the effective strength as of March 2019. We have 45% strength in the First Brigade, 45% strength in the Second Brigade, 34% strength at the Defence Forces training centre, 22% strength in the Air Corps and 23% strength in the Naval Service. This is a complete destruction of effective strength in our Defence Forces. Why did the Minister of State not address that in his White Paper update? Why did he not address the serious issues of retention and recruitment? There was not a word or syllable from the Minister of State about the significant exodus we are seeing and the failure to deal with it. We are seeing a significant spillover on an ongoing basis.

Could the Minister of State provide an update on the current recruitment campaign for the Naval Service and the Reserve? There are concerns that it has been either suspended or delayed because of a difficulty between the Department and others involved in the process. Can the Minister of State clarify whether the campaign is continuing as normal? What is the position regarding the recruitment campaign, which was well publicised by the Minister of State and others in recent months?

I also want to get the Minister's view on cyber capability and cybersecurity. Can he outline how many staff are in the cybersecurity unit? What have the Defence Forces provided for around cyber-capability in terms of personnel, resources and responsibilities? I understand that there are four positions. Is the

Minister of State satisfied that this is sufficient to protect us against the threats we face? Today, President Macron outlined the serious destabilising effect on democracies across Europe if we do not address significant cyber issues. How prepared is the Department for that? Can the Minister of State brief the committee on the capability development plan to achieve this capability?

Can the Minister update the committee on the ongoing EU Partnership for Peace in-depth evaluation of Ireland's military capability? In the interests of transparency, will he commit to publishing its contents when it has been concluded? Can he update the committee regarding where the Department is in the context of the implementation of the two PESCO projects to which it has signed up?

My next question concerns something that might not, but should be, mentioned in the White Paper. We saw the Departmental change that occurred in the Department of Finance during the recession and across a number of Departments. What is the Department of Defence doing to ensure it possesses staff with appropriate academic qualifications - such as degrees, masters degrees or PhDs - in international relations and security and defence? This is something that has been mirrored across other Departments. Could the Minister of State clarify how many members of staff are qualified in those areas? What are the Minister of State's plans to bring forward any legislation to allow the Reserve to provide time in terms of training, as is the norm in other countries?

Brexit was mentioned by a previous speaker. What bilateral discussions have taken place with the UK regarding a hard Brexit?

Has there been any contingency planning? Obviously, Ireland has an informal agreement on air defence cover and the Minister of State needs to clarify the position in respect of it. He needs to clarify what discussions his Department has had regarding those matters.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
Every detail sought by the Deputy can be found in the document. I am not sure if he has read the document cover to cover but it contains all of the information he is seeking.

Deputy Jack Chambers
Could the Minister of State provide an update?

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I came here looking for the views of the committee on the White Paper. The issue of pay has nothing to do with the White Paper. I am just seeking members' views. It would be totally remiss of me if I did not come before the committee in the context of reviewing the White Paper. I wrote to the committee in the autumn and stated that I would like the opportunity to come before it to ask members their views on the White Paper. I will appear before the select committee later today in connection with the Estimates and have no problem answering any of the questions the Deputy has just posed at that point. However, most of his questions do not relate to the White Paper. I say this genuinely. The White Paper is a ten-year project that we will review. If I was an Opposition spokesperson and the Minister of State did not come before the committee asking for members' thoughts and views on the specifics in the White Paper-----

Deputy Jack Chambers
I am not criticising the Minister of State in the context of his appearance before the committee.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I will go through the questions asked by the Deputy. Pay is not an issue for the White Paper but the Secretary General, the Chief of Staff and officials from the Department of Public Expenditure and

Reform met the Pay Service Pay Commission this morning. I do not determine who appears before the commission. As I have pointed out to the Deputy on numerous occasions, the commission is independent. I do not say "Send this one in" or "Do not send that one in". That is nothing to do with me. That is a matter for the commission. Nor is it anything to do with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. That is why we have an independent pay commission to look at the overall issue of pay. Nobody muzzled anybody. It is up to the commission.

The overall strength of the organisation is 94%. There is no delay in recruitment regarding the Reserve or enlisted members. A process relating to a competition will get under way shortly. For security reasons, I will not give the Deputy details regarding how many members of the Defence Forces are with the cyber unit in the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

Deputy Jack Chambers
As far as I am aware, there are none.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I have been reassured by the Chief of Staff that it is very well resourced and that we do our best to facilitate any requests put to us. Cyber issues are security matters for the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment-----

Deputy Jack Chambers
Cyber capability.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
The capability development plan is an ongoing project but it is a priority. A significant amount of work has been carried out in respect of it. The Deputy asked about qualifications in the Defence Forces. I will come back to him on that.

Deputy Jack Chambers
In the Department.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
In the context of amendments required for the DFR R5, structure of the Reserve Defence Force, RDF, and DFR S7, establishment of the Reserve Defence Force Representative Association, RDFRA, the regulations encompass a broad range of matters from finance to human resources to training matters to effectiveness criteria. Amendments of DFR S7 are linked to DFR R5. The former cannot be finalised with the latter being completed. Amendments are very complex and time-consuming and require extensive consultation. It is anticipated that the initial draft of the revised DFR R5 will be available within the coming months. The Office of the Attorney General has been snowed under due to Brexit, which has delayed all legislation. I am not stating that it has delayed this specifically but we depend totally on the staff of the Office of the Attorney General to assist us in drawing up legislation. This is very complex legislation. We have one opportunity to get it right and we want to ensure that we do so. I expect the revised DFR R5 will be available in the coming months.

Deputy Jack Chambers
A couple of my questions were not answered. I asked about-----

Deputy Paul Kehoe
Sorry, the Deputy asked about Brexit and the memorandum of understanding. Any consultation I have had with my ministerial colleagues in the UK relates to a memorandum of understanding. Brexit has no impact on that whatsoever. That was signed in 2015 and it is working extremely well. There is

significant communication between my Department, the British Ministry of Defence, our Defence Forces and the British Armed Forces. The memorandum of understanding that was signed between their Minister, Michael Fallon, and our then Minister, Deputy Simon Coveney, will stand. Brexit has no impact on that.

Deputy Jack Chambers
The last question I asked was about the EU Partnership for Peace in-depth evaluation of Ireland's military capability, which is ongoing. Will the Minister of State publish it?

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I will come back to the Deputy on that.

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
Since the White Paper was published, I have engaged through a number of parliamentary questions. I find the way the White Paper is laid out strange. There is no harm in it. If one reads through it, one will just about find what the tasks and targets are. The Minister of State mentioned 95. We were originally told it was 88. There is no list within the White Paper itself so sometimes it is very difficult to judge. Most other documents of that scale have the target, purpose and timeframe in which it is hoped that goals will be achieved at the end. I know the Minister of State has supplied some of that material to me since. It makes it difficult for people looking in to gauge whether the Minister of State, Department or military authorities are successful in achieving what has been set out. It is quite obvious that we are not achieving some goals.

There is a chapter on retention of soldiers. Recruitment is being achieved. We have seen people being recruited and cadets being sworn in recently. I congratulate them. There is a dilemma that we have discussed in the committee, of recruitment and retention and the problems that creates for military authorities while trying to plan for the future. If one has a cohort of older, more experienced soldiers leaving and newer recruits, it makes it difficult to plan major events, overseas operations, fisheries protection operations or for whatever skills are then missing. In recent years, air ambulances have not been able to provide the full cover that is expected of the Defence Forces by the public. It is conditional on their availability but the public has, or at least had, a view that the Defence Forces are available as an aid to the civil power. The military authorities can only do that if they have the personnel and equipment required. We have seen a number of occasions where they have been constrained or where it has created difficulties relating to a lack of soldiers or equipment.

An issue I have with regard to the role of the Defence Forces is that there should be greater concentration on preparing the Defence Forces for more operations abroad, such as disaster relief and infrastructural works. They have shown in Ireland that they can do that. They have been quite good if a bridge goes down, for example.

The change to a two brigade system meant the loss of one of the engineering units and a lack of equipment for disaster and humanitarian relief. I have a different view to most recent Governments, which seem to have embraced the EU battlegroup role for the Irish Defence Forces rather than peacekeeping and helping in disaster zones around the country.

My criticism of the review is that the White Paper should be made more accessible. The Minister of State set out the 95 targets or tasks so that when the cyclical reviews come up, it is easier for people on the outside to comment and say that they want there to be more focus on certain matters. Brexit has really changed much of what was set out in the White Paper. The Minister of State is here this week and it is maybe a pity that it is not next month, since we might have some surety about it then. That will impact on the call on the Defence Forces relating to Border duties. There are stories about

gardaí being trained. There is a plan already in place to put some of the new recruits in the Border region in preparation for a possible hard border. We saw the issue of fisheries last week. That will become a greater problem or duty for the Defence Forces in the near future if we do not have the agreement that we intend. The Defence Forces and the Department, when preparing the White Paper, would not have been aware of Brexit coming down the track. They would not have been focusing as much on that aspect of security. While I know it has been done, that suggests a need to continually review the security situation as the Brexit issue develops.

I have raised this issue before so it is more of a comment than a question. The first duty of the military authorities and the Department is to respect and protect the members of the Defence Forces and to enhance morale. There are a number of issues and events that have happened in recent years which are contributing to lowering that morale. I have not heard any problem with regard to protection of soldiers. I think they are happy with the protection. Respect of soldiers has been brought into question by the lack of proper wages and proper health and safety standards in the past.

Brendan Smith, Chairman
I will take Senator O'Sullivan. We are running into time constraints again and have the select committee soon.

Senator Ned O'Sullivan
I will keep it very tight. I welcome the Minister of State and his officials. It is good that the Minister of State wanted to engage with us. Having said that, maybe I was ill-prepared for the meeting or my expectations were different, but I am disappointed and underwhelmed by what the Minister of State has to say to us. He says he wants to listen to our views but at the same time, for anyone looking in from outside, White Papers and Green Papers are like dancing on the head of a pin. People want to know where the beef is and what the Minister of State's vision is for the Defence Forces. We cannot treat White Papers and Green Papers as an ongoing circle of bureaucracy.

The Defence Forces are highly respected and held in high regard by the public, and rightly so. As Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan said, their work as peacekeepers in the UN is exemplary and something of which we are all very proud. We are also proud of the profile the Army has in many State functions. I particularly welcomed its activities in schools during the 1916 centenary. It is also lovely to see the Army band in communities. When there are weather and climate crises, the Army plays a role and this is also appreciated. These are the upsides as far as I can see but there are some serious downsides. The Minister of State said the White Paper is not the place to speak about Army pay or all of the resignations and buy-outs from the Army. Perhaps we will have another day for that. Is the Minister of State concerned about morale in the Defence Forces? The morale of any force, be it the Garda, Army or Naval Service, is important. It is important for us as committee members to know whether the Minister of State is happy with the state of morale in our Defence Forces.

Insofar as the White Paper deals with it, will the Minister give us an update on where we are with Army property? There has been a lot of speculation that some of our big barracks, such as Cathal Brugha Barracks, will be used for housing. I am not saying it is good or bad; I would just like to know the future of Army property in rural towns, such as Listowel, where we used to have slua halls and FCA property. What is the future for this type of property, as the Minister of State sees it?

Does the Minister of State have plans to inject new life into the RDF? Recently in the Seanad I mentioned to him that I thought the FCA was an exemplary force that gave a lot of young people in Ireland training in life skills, a sense of patriotism and something useful. The Army has a very low profile in the country. This is not necessarily a bad thing. I am not looking for militarisation. The Army

has a very low profile, particularly outside of Dublin. This is something the Minister of State could look at by reviving and putting more funding into voluntary reserve forces, such as the FCA used to be.

The Army has done very well so far in the centenary of commemorations. We are halfway through the commemoration the War of Independence. Shortly, we will move on to commemorating the Civil War. There were no angels on either side of that terrible sad divide and republicans, no more than anyone else, committed atrocities. Nonetheless, some major atrocities were committed by the State and the army of the Free State in the name of the people. Statements were made in the Dáil by the Minister for Defence at the time that need to be corrected. Has the Minister of State taken an advanced view on how this will be handled? It is a very sensitive area and nobody is looking for triumph in this regard, particularly not me. It would be as well for the Minister of State to have a plan to deal with these issues as they will undoubtedly arise.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I will respond to Deputy Ó Snodaigh first. There are 88 projects in the White Paper but a number of them have subprojects and rather than trying to hide the figure of 88, I said 95. I hope that explains it.

Recruitment and retention are challenges for the Defence Forces but it is a challenge for defence forces throughout Europe and armed forces throughout the world. When I speak to my European counterparts, they face the same issues I do. We have funding for a full strength of 9,500. The Government has provided this. Recruitment will be open in the next short while. I do not have the exact date but it will be shortly. This is with regard to Reserve personnel, enlisted personnel and cadets.

With regard to the ambulance service out of Athlone, I am not sure there have been constraints. It has been fully operational and is very successful. No one has stated to me it has been unable to fly. If it has been unable to operate, it must have been for a specific reason.

When the helicopter is being serviced it tries to provide-----

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
Last year, for instance, flights at night were restricted-----

Deputy Paul Kehoe
It is because of the type of helicopter we have that we do not fly at night time.

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
Sometimes it was because personnel were not available on certain nights.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
We have a memorandum of understanding with the HSE that we will provide the service when available.

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
It was not a criticism-----

Deputy Paul Kehoe
I know.

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
It is provided when it is available but if it is not available, that suggests there is a shortage that needs to be addressed.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
To date, the Defence Forces have been able to honour all asks by the Government, at home or overseas. The Deputy referred to operations abroad and perhaps assisting abroad where there is a catastrophe. At present, where we are on peacekeeping duties we reach out into the communities.

The Deputy also referred to the reorganisation and the number of engineers. We reduced from three brigades to two brigades but there was no reduction in the number of engineers. The key aspects of the reorganisation included consolidating understrength units into a smaller number of full strength units and a reduction in the number of headquarters and the associated redeployment of personnel from administrative and support functions to operational units.

With regard to Brexit, when the White Paper on Defence was published, it was not even born. There have been a large number of changes since then. I will not pre-empt what will happen next week. The defence organisations are engaged in prudent planning in response to Brexit. This includes active participation in the whole-of-Government framework developed in response to Brexit. Primary responsibility for the internal security of the State rests with the Department of Justice and Equality, my colleague, the Minister, Deputy Flanagan, An Garda Síochána and the Revenue Commissioners. There is ongoing close liaison between An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces regarding security matters, with regular co-ordination and liaison meetings.

The Deputy raised fisheries protection. There are implications for increased monitoring, patrolling and inspecting of Irish controlled waters. This will depend on the outcome when the UK departs. It will be a matter for the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority in association with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. As I stated earlier, a senior official at assistant secretary level in the Department is leading the input into the deliberations of the framework established throughout the Government. The management board also maintains oversight of all Brexit-related matters in the Department.

Avoiding a hard border on the island is fundamental to the draft Brexit agreement reached between the EU and UK Government. There are no plans to introduce a new Army barracks or Defence Forces base in the greater Border region. However, the Defence Forces keep operational plans under constant review. I am satisfied the operational readiness and deployability of the Defence Forces is such that they can respond effectively to whatever is required by the State or the Government. The White Paper was originally put together in 2015 and the security situation is a fundamental part of the White Paper review. In my opening statement I referred to reviewing the security situation of the State. If Senator Ned O'Sullivan reads what I said about the objectives of the White Paper, that is the meat. That is my vision. It is the Government's vision of where we see the Defence Forces over the next ten years. That is why, as I stated earlier, it is important that we review the White Paper. The strategy statement sets that out very clearly.

Morale is very important within any organisation, be it a political party, the Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána, a Department or the HSE. However, leadership is as important as morale. That is my leadership and that of military management and civil management. I have an excellent team around me, military and civil. It is very important that we show leadership. Of course we have our challenges but every organisation has its challenges.

On the role of the Reserve, I have stated on numerous occasions that it is an important platform for the organisation as a whole and that it plays a very important role within the organisation. Numbers

have been dwindling because younger people have more opportunities now than they did 20 or 30 years ago. The Government has provided the funding for full training days for the reserves. There is no lack of funding for their training days. They are well funded.

Over the past 25 years, my Department has disposed of a range of properties deemed surplus to military requirements. Since 1998, under the barracks consolidation programme, the sale has been completed of 12 of the 14 barracks closed under this programme. They were Fermoy, Castleblayney, Naas, Ballincollig, Clancy Barracks in Dublin, Monaghan, Longford, Cavan - they were new barracks - Letterkenny, Kildare, Clonmel and Lifford. The sale of Castlebar barracks to Mayo County Council will be completed in the near future.

The newly established Land Development Agency, LDA, has identified Columb barracks in Mullingar, which closed in 2012, as a viable solution to the provision of residential units, and it will form a significant contribution to the 3,000 units to be targeted by the agency in this first tranche of the provision. Project management branch has, on my instruction, continued to liaise with the relevant officials in the LDA and the transfer of the site to the agency is a priority, subject to terms and conditions that are yet to be agreed.

Currently, €37 million worth of capital projects are at various stages, from design to tender to construction. These include the replacement of the major secure storage facility, phases 2 and 3, in the Defence Forces training centre, €10.2 million; the construction of new gymnasiums in Sarsfield barracks in Limerick and Stephen's barracks in Kilkenny, €6 million; locker block refurbishment in Cathal Brugha barracks, Dublin, €3.8 million; upgrade and refurbishment works at the cook house and dining hall in Custume barracks, Athlone, €4.1 million, which is under construction at the moment; the upgrade of accommodation blocks in Pearse barracks in the Curragh, €3.1 million; upgrade and refurbishing works in the apprentice hostel in Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel, €3.3 million; the upgrade of the oil wharf and installation of fire protection and detection and a fire-fighting system in the naval base on Haulbowline, €2.4 million; the upgrade of one and two block accommodation facilities in Cathal Brugha barracks, €2.4 million; and the upgrade of seven block accommodation facilities in Connolly barracks at the Defence Forces training centre, €2.1 million.

The White Paper project is also under way to put in place a five-year plan for the programme. The list of works identified as part of the project will be prioritised for delivery based on military needs and will be updated annually to form the basis of the selection of capital projects under the programme into the near future, and new start projects to be commenced in 2020 will be informed by the projects.

Senator Ned O'Sullivan
The Minister of State liked that question.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
Absolutely. I also want to make it clear that there are no plans for the sale of Cathal Brugha barracks.

The decade of commemorations is the responsibility of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Deputy Madigan. Following on from the work done on the 1916 commemorations, which were really successful, there is an all-party commemorations committee. We must be very careful in the context of the decade of commemorations. If an all-party committee worked for the 1916 commemorations, there is no reason it should not work for the decade of commemorations.

Brendan Smith, Chairman
I thank the Minister of State. There is a vote in the Dáil. I will make just one quick comment to the Minister of State. Departments and statutory agencies often have a habit of having the usual

consultees on the development of Green Papers or White Papers. We do not respect corporate knowledge enough. I would love to see people who may have left the Department and the Defence Forces and those who have served overseas get the opportunity to contribute. One thing we are very bad at is recognising corporate knowledge and its importance. Deputy Ó Snodaigh referred to this matter as well.

We have a select committee meeting on Estimates immediately-----

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
Chairman-----

Brendan Smith, Chairman
Is it one quick comment?

Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh
A point I made was not addressed. When one reads the White Paper, the 88 or 95 projects do not jump out immediately. One must read the whole document, which is fine, but for members of the general public to try to gauge whether we are being successful and whether we are achieving those projects, it would be a useful exercise if they were available with the White Paper or as an appendix or something in the future.

Brendan Smith, Chairman
I thank Deputy Ó Snodaigh. May I just-----

Deputy Paul Kehoe
Chairman-----

Brendan Smith, Chairman
Very quickly.

Deputy Paul Kehoe
The Deputy has a point. We might be able to do that. To address the Chairman's point, my assistant secretary to my left has worked on the White Paper since 2000 so he has almost 20 years of corporate knowledge in this area. He is very well versed in-----

Brendan Smith, Chairman
I am not suggesting otherwise. However, the good knowledge that exists is often written out of the script in all respects and not just in the Department.

I thank the Minister of State and the members for their engagement this afternoon. The joint committee stands adjourned until Thursday, 4 April 2019, when we will meet the former Tánaiste, Mr. Eamon Gilmore, to discuss conflict resolution and the Colombian peace process. I remind members that the select committee will meet immediately after the vote in the Dáil.

The joint committee adjourned at 2.55 p.m. until 10 a.m. on Thursday, 4 April 2019.

B. White Paper Implementation – latest statistics

Latest Statistics	
Total number of Projects	**95**
Total number of Projects currently initiated	**42**
Total number of Projects formally Closed	**15**
Total number of Projects currently Paused	**6**

C. List of White Paper projects

Project No.	Projects per Chapter Chapter 3	Page No.	Current Status[16]
1	It is important that the approach to the assessment of security and associated arrangements governing this are kept under review. Any necessary measures to enhance these will be taken in the light of consideration of developments and approaches at national and international levels.	24	External engagement on project definition underway
2	The Defence Organisation will develop both civil and military capabilities and capacity across the full spectrum of activity, including defence policy and administration, so as to support the comprehensive approach to crisis management, post conflict stabilisation and Security Sector Reform. It will also develop, in concert with partners and other like-minded states, joint initiatives to this end.	29	Not yet commenced
3	Review Ireland's declared contribution to United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) and the EU Headline Goal; to include consideration of the potential deployability of the full range of Defence Forces' capabilities including Army, Air Corps and Naval Service capabilities and assets on peace support and crisis management operations.	29	Not yet commenced
4	Progress options for building on existing bilateral relations through staff exchanges, exploring the option of Defence Attaché appointments to key EU member states/third countries where appropriate, developing bilateral MOUs and more regular civil/military staff to staff engagements.	29	Not yet commenced
5	Engagement with the Connected Forces Initiative (CFI), the Planning and Review Process (PARP), and the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC).	30	Closed
6	Opportunities will continue to be identified to expand Ireland's participation in multi-national capability development projects within the framework of the EDA in support of Defence Forces' operations, capacity and capability**....**	31	Not yet commenced
7	Engage with other stakeholders, in response to matters raised by the United Nations Secretary General, to explore the contribution of gender focused measures in peacekeeping, particularly in relation to the appropriate deployment of female personnel.	31	Underway
8	Develop the new Institute for Peace Support and Leadership Training at the Curragh by (1) Evaluating the new concept; (2) Advancing its objectives; to showcase the initial concept during 2016.	34	Underway

[16] Based on the outcome of the Review of White Paper Implementation (Chapter 3 and Appendix D refer), a number of changes will be made to the overall prioritisation and sequencing of certain projects listed here. Furthermore, the Government's High Level Plan to implement the Report of the PSPC will result in reprioritisation of some human resources related projects and their assimilation into the new work programme.

9	Explore further areas of greater synergy with departments and agencies with responsibility in the maritime area to ensure the best and most efficient use of all state resources. This will encompass a more risk based approach and the use of new technologies.	40	Not yet commenced
10	Ask the Chair of the National Maritime Security Committee to initiate an examination of maritime security arrangements, including governance arrangements with a view to bringing forward recommendations, if required, to enhance the provision of maritime security.	40	Paused
11	A review of Ireland's National Risk Assessment (NRA), including those emergencies/crises that may threaten or impact on national security, will be undertaken in late 2015 by a subgroup of the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning.	41	Closed
12	Develop an Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment with regard to support Computer Security Incident Response Team – Ireland (CSIRT-IE).	43	Closed
13	Develop an SLA with Irish Aid relating to participation by members of the Defence Forces in the Emergency Civil Assistance Team (ECAT) initiative.	47	Closed
Chapter 4			
14	The Department and the Army Equitation School will develop more formal arrangements with equitation bodies such as Horse Sport Ireland, Teagasc, Royal Dublin Society, National Sports Campus and the Institute for Sport. The School will be reviewed to maximise its utility for nurturing talent while promoting the Irish horse.	51	Not yet commenced
15	To develop the Defence Forces School of Music, including possible linkages with relevant educational institutions.	51	Not yet commenced
16	Based on the outcome of the pilot, and having considered the report of the Emergency Aeromedical Support [EAS] Working Group, the establishment of a permanent service was approved by Government in July 2015. The Government's decision provided that whilst the current service model will continue, the service will be subject to ongoing review in the context of ensuring a sustainable long term service arrangement.	52	Not yet commenced
17	The Department will identify opportunities for co-operative collaborative engagement between the Defence Forces and Irish-based enterprise and research institutes, including third level colleges.	53	Paused
18	Develop the Defence Enterprise Initiative further including establishing a Security and Defence Enterprise Group to support Irish-based enterprise in their engagement with the European Defence Agency (EDA) and in accessing EDA and Horizon 2020 programmes, to the benefit of Irish Enterprise and Defence Forces capability.	54	Paused
19	In the context of ongoing engagement it will be necessary to resolve the issues of intellectual property rights and possible endorsement of	54	Closed

	such products or research. Develop a policy on intellectual property rights and endorsement.		
20	In consultation with Enterprise Ireland, the Department and Defence Forces will examine current procurement processes with a view to improving the potential for Irish enterprise to compete for Defence contracts.	54	Not yet commenced
21	In pursuing its overall goal and consistent with capability requirements, the Department will give appropriate stimulation to innovation networks which may include state actors, institutes of higher education, research centres and progressive entrepreneurial companies.	55	Paused (merged with 17)
22	Develop a new employment support scheme with the direct involvement of the Defence Forces.	55	Closed
23	The Department will give serious consideration to developing renewable energy solutions on defence lands and installations.	56	Closed
24	The Department will initiate a new Bill which will revoke all existing Red Cross legislation with certain provisos.	56	Paused
Chapter 6			
25	Fuse information from the land, air and maritime domains into a joint Common Operational Picture (COP).	62	Underway
26	The Secretary General and Chief of Staff will jointly undertake a review of the current high level command and control structures in the Defence Forces, having regard to international best practice on military command and control and drawing upon external expertise. This will include a review of structures for managing joint operations and intelligence.	63	Underway
27	From a national view point and having regard to the need to minimise threats to the safely of personnel, the Department of Defence will examine the option of maintaining a rapid deployment capacity, at Company level, to support or reinforce overseas contingents if the situation so demands.	65	Not yet commenced
28	Measures will be taken to further enhance the capabilities of the Army Ranger Wing in particular with the aim of increasing the strength of the Unit considerably.	65	Underway
29[17]	Incorporate the following into the High Level Planning and Procurement Group's (HLPPG) work agenda and in due course a new equipment plan, which will form a sub-set of a broader capability development plan.	66	----
29A	Implement the most cost effective approach to maintaining Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) capabilities	66	Underway
29B	Replace existing five Cessnas, with three larger aircraft suitably equipped for Intelligence, Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) tasks.	66	Underway

[17] This is not a project in itself but is the overarching heading for the seven capability projects 29A to G.

29C	Replace existing CASA 235s with consideration being given to larger more capable aircraft.	66	Underway
29D	Procure a small number of Armoured Logistic Vehicles for Overseas missions	66	Closed
29E	Replace the LÉ Eithne with a Multi-Role Vessel (MRV) enabled for helicopter operations and have a freight carrying capacity.	66	Underway
29F	Replace the two existing Coastal Patrol Vessels, the LÉ Ciara and LÉ Orla with similar vessels with counter-mine and counter-Improvised Explosive Device (IED) capabilities.	66	Paused
29G	In the event of additional funding becoming available, beyond that required to maintain existing capabilities, consideration will be given to the development a primary radar surveillance capability, acquisition of additional ships for the Naval Service and additional APCs and variants, Light Tactical Armoured vehicles and additional air defence capabilities for the Army in line with the Capability Development Plan.	66	Not yet commenced
30	Consider the development of a more capable air combat/intercept capability as part of the White Paper update	68	Not yet commenced
31	The Department will develop a detailed capability development plan, building on the work completed as part of the White Paper process.	68	Underway
32	Fulfil requirement to carry out major building refurbishment in areas including Haulbowline, Casement Aerodrome, McKee Barracks and the Curragh Camp.	69	Underway (merged with 33)
33	Develop a co-ordinated 5 year infrastructure development plan that reflects, on a priority needs basis, an approach for all infrastructure development requirements for the life time of the White Paper. The first step of the plan is to assess the main barracks and facilities.	70	Underway
34	Review the current training lands portfolio and the necessary infrastructure to develop them to meet the standards required by the Defence Forces.	71	Not yet commenced
35	Undertake a review of the legislative framework to ensure that it is fit for purpose.	71	Not yet commenced
Chapter 7			
36	Implement the Defence Forces' competency framework, currently being developed, for recruitment, development, performance management and promotion.	73	Underway
37	Design, develop and implement a merit based promotion system for all ranks.	73	Not yet commenced
38	Undertake, in the medium term, a review of civil and military roles/functions to determine the optimum mix of civil service, civilian and military personnel to address both operational and support roles within the Defence Organisation.	74	Not yet commenced
39	Conduct a gap-analysis of skill-sets within the PDF to identify the frequency of gaps and appropriate measures to address them.	74	Not yet commenced

40	Conduct, in the medium term, a review of HR policies in relation to recruitment, training and education, performance management, reward systems, and retention and retirement policies alongside appropriate age profiles for personnel across the Defence Forces.	75	Not yet commenced
40A	Conduct a review of contracts of service for all ranks of enlisted personnel of the Defence Forces in the context of capability requirements and associated appropriate age profiles.	75	Not yet commenced
41	The Defence Forces will review and develop rolling medium term manpower planning requirements so as to deliver an effective and efficient workforce mix. Current personnel policies to support this will be further developed and implemented.	75	Closed
42	The Defence Forces will raise awareness and attract recruits from all backgrounds so the Defence Forces, both Permanent and Reserve, reflect the society that they serve. The Defence Forces will assess the effects of ongoing initiatives in the medium term.	75	Closed
43	Review external accreditation to ensure an appropriate balance is achieved between maintaining required skills and capability, and retention and retirement/exit objectives.	76	Not yet commenced
44	The Defence Forces will review its performance management and annual appraisal systems to ensure that they fully support the Defence Forces capability requirements consistent with the new Integrated Competency Framework. (Linked to No. 36)	77	Underway (merged with 36)
45	Develop and incorporate a scheme of commissioning officers from enlisted personnel ranks.	77	Closed
46	Consider a scheme to enable lateral career moves within the Defence Forces across the three services.	77	Not yet commenced
47	Develop succession planning and smoother processes for filling key posts.	77	Not yet commenced
48	Identify and examine any impediments to maximise the candidate field for promotion consistent with service and performance.	78	Not yet commenced
49	The Department will undertake a review of the overall pay and allowance structures with a view to the simplification and standardisation of the remuneration system in the Defence Forces.	78	Not yet commenced
50	Conduct a programme of reviews of the terms and conditions applying across the services, ranks and technical staff with a view to greater standardisation within the overall system.	78	Not yet commenced
51	Implement a range of systems, procedures & scheduled training to ensure PDF preparedness for transition to civilian life after military service.	78	Not yet commenced
52	Develop a career platform or portal for exiting personnel to give them a direct bridge to employers to assist them in making the transition to a career in civilian life.	78	Not yet commenced
53	Defence Forces Human Resources will create a career portfolio for interested exiting members of the PDF listing their military qualifications alongside the level of the qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) where relevant.	78	Not yet commenced

54	The Department's Human Resources Branch will provide support in CV preparation for exiting civilian employees.	78	Not yet commenced
55	Develop further initiatives to encourage more women to apply for the Defence Forces and to increase female participation at all ranks.	79	Closed
56	Conduct a survey to identify any impediments to the advancement of women in the PDF.	79	Underway
57	Develop and actively manage a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in the Defence Forces, building on existing policies in relation to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and equality.	79	Closed
58	Operational requirements, overseas postings, training courses, career courses and the availability of development opportunities will be reviewed to ensure that they do not discriminate on the basis of gender or familial responsibility, while retaining the integrity of the course and training requirement.	79	Not yet commenced
59	Further develop the supports available to exiting personnel and veterans.	85	Not yet commenced
60	The Department will commence an organisational capability review within the next twelve months.	87	Not yet commenced
61	The Department will explore opportunities for joint training with Defence Forces' personnel in light of the "Comprehensive Approach".	88	Not yet commenced
62	Regarding Civilian Employee vacancies, the Department will, in the short term, initiate a programme of targeted recruitment to address priority vacancies. In the medium term, the Department will identify the areas that are most in need.	89	Closed
63	The Department will establish a planning group consisting of representatives of Civilian HR and the military authorities to undertake a gap analysis to identify supply and demand and will identify core requirements. It will examine the existing service delivery model and make recommendations on a service delivery framework.	89	Not yet commenced
64	The Department will examine the existing approach where a catastrophic injury is incurred with the objective of creating a less adversarial system.	92	Not yet commenced
Chapter 8			
65	Revise the terms and conditions of First Line Reserve (FLR) membership and examine the case for the current gratuity.	97	Not yet commenced
66	Develop the necessary regulatory changes and service criteria (of the FLR) in consultation with all stakeholders.	97	Not yet commenced
67	The Department will review the provisions of the Defence Acts and bring forward proposals for any changes that may be required in order to reflect the possible crisis situations where activation of members of the Reserve may be appropriate.	98	Not yet commenced
68	Establishment of the Naval Service Reserve (NSR) increased to 300.	99	Not yet commenced
69	Consideration will be given to the activation of Reserve Sub-Units for short periods of training with PDF Units or other support tasks.	99	Not yet commenced

70	Establish a panel of professionally qualified members of the Reserve, to be known as the Specialist Reserve.	100	Paused
71	Conduct a skills survey to identify individuals in the FLR, Army Reserve (AR) and NSR with relevant professional qualifications and their potential availability.	100	Paused (merged with 70)
72	The Department will identify the options available to underpin the engagement of the members of these Specialist Reserve, whose personal circumstances would allow them to undertake required tasks, including on overseas missions.	100	Not yet commenced
73	Progress, in consultation with the Representative Associations, the possibilities for members of the Reserve with specialist skills to assist the PDF in a voluntary unpaid capacity.	100	Not yet commenced
74	The Secretary General, in conjunction with the Chief of Staff, will bring forward proposals for the operation of a scheme that affords a small number of suitably qualified members of the RDF the opportunity to undertake operational duties at home and overseas.	100	Not yet commenced
75	Replace the term "effective" with the term "active".	100	Not yet commenced
76	The Department will give consideration to the establishment of a database of former members of the AR, NSR, FLR and PDF who could be called upon to volunteer in a crisis situation, by listing these as an "Inactive Reserve".	100	Not yet commenced
77	The Department will incorporate the review of progress on the implementation of the findings of the 2012 Review of the RDF into the overarching review process.	101	Not yet commenced
Chapter 9			
78	Progress new Civil Defence legislation with a view to providing a more modern aggregated piece of governing legislation.	104	Not yet commenced
79	The Department (Civil Defence Branch) will take the lead role in the Government's new Inter-agency Guidance Team (IGT) being established in order to enhance liaison under the Major Emergency Management.	104	Closed
80	Explore opportunities for further Civil Defence Service Level Agreements (SLAs).	105	Not yet commenced
Chapter 10			
81	The Secretary General and the Chief of Staff will develop a plan that seeks to optimise mutual civil-military synergies and consider further models of integrated working between the various civil and military branches of the Department. (includes consideration of a central procurement cell)	110	Not yet commenced
82	The Secretary General, in conjunction with the Chief of Staff, will prepare a specific short-term review to assess the increased capacity required in staffing in international fora.	110	Not yet commenced
83	The Department and Defence Forces will put in place further joint civil-military training initiatives, building on the new induction course.	110	Not yet commenced

84	The Department will ensure the successful delivery of the defence component of the Financial Management Shared Services.	111	Underway
85	Assess the future geographical layout of the Department taking account of a forthcoming organisational capability review of the civil service branches and the outcome and timing of further shared services developments.	112	Not yet commenced
86	The Government intends putting in place a new fixed cycle of defence reviews; every three years there will be a White Paper update with a strategic defence review every 6 years. The Government will consider putting the new review process on a statutory footing, having engaged in a process of all-party consultation to seek to put the proposals for defence review on a consensual basis.	114	Underway
87	Develop further procurement approaches that are more collaborative or involve joint procurement through engagement with other countries or through the European Defence Agency (EDA) and increased recourse to direct purchasing on a Government to Government basis...	116	Not yet commenced
88	The Government are establishing a specific defence funding study to capture in a new way the expected long-term costs of meeting Ireland's defence requirements using a ten year planning horizon linked to the proposed new framework of fixed cycle reviews. A comprehensive approach, linked to the new defence review architecture, needs to provide a fully elaborate picture for Government of the choices and their resource implications.	117	Underway

D. Report of the review of White Paper implementation[18]

Review of Chapter 3 Projects: National Security - Defence Policy Response

Tranche 1/Active Projects

Three projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for projects numbered 7, 8 and 10 to be discussed further at Stage 2. Specifically in relation to project 7, the sponsors noted that this project is progressing towards closure.

Paused Projects

One relevant project, number 13, was reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that as a Project Plan had been finalised in August 2018, there was no requirement for this project to be discussed further at Stage 2. Subsequently, work has been completed and this project has formally closed.

Tranche 2 Projects

One project, number 3, was reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that in light of developments, including the fact that the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) had been replaced by the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS), this project should be deferred for a period of 12 months and, as such, that there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting.

Closed Projects

Three projects fell for review under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting in respect of projects numbered 5, 11 and 12.

Merged Projects

There were no projects falling for review under this category.

[18] This review of White Paper implementation, as presented in this Appendix, took place over a number of months and, as such, reflects each project's status at the time. The "Current Status" of each project is reflected in Appendix C.

Projects not yet initiated

Four projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for projects numbered 2 and 4 to be discussed further at Stage 2 as work is already progressing in these areas in any event. The sponsors also agreed that there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting for projects numbered 6 and 9 but, in relation to number 6, they agreed that commencement should be considered only in the context of the outcome of project number 31 (see Review of Chapter 6 Projects), and in light of the EU's Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) and Permanent Structured Co-operation (PESCO).

Review of Chapter 4 Projects: Other Policy Requirements

Tranche 1/Active Projects

Two projects were reviewed under this category. The sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to give further consideration to project number 19 at Stage 2 but they noted that projects numbered 17 and 18 are awaiting the closure of number 19 before they can re-commence (both have been paused). The sponsors also agreed the basis upon which project number 19 can proceed to closure *vis*. that the Closure Report would address the issue of incentivising innovation. Shortly afterwards, this project was formally closed.

Similarly, the sponsors noted that project number 23 was close to being finalised and, as such, agreed that there was no requirement to give further consideration to this project at Stage 2. Subsequently, work has been completed and this project has formally closed.

Paused Projects

Three projects, numbered 17, 18 and 24, were reviewed under this category. The sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to discuss these projects at Stage 2 but they agreed that the following sequencing should be applied: Project number 19 (currently an Active project – see above) needs to be completed first and, following this, number 18 can re-commence with a revision of the project plan and, at that stage, consideration should then be given to a merger with number 17. However, if number 17 (already merged with number

21) is not being merged with number 18, then it should remain paused, pending completion of number 18.

The sponsors also noted that project number 24 is currently paused in light of the need to consider options arising from legal advice received.

Tranche 2 Projects

Two projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for projects numbered 15 and 16 to be discussed further at Stage 2. The sponsors also noted that project work on number 15 had recently commenced while work on number 16 is due to begin shortly.

Closed Projects

One project, number 22, was reviewed under this category. The sponsors agreed that this project should be further discussed at Stage 2 with the two project leads. At the subsequent Stage 2 meeting, the outcome of the recent review of the Employment Support Scheme was discussed whereby it is now to continue on the basis of one iteration annually. The Scheme arising from this project has been very successfully implemented, has been systemised and is ongoing and, as such, it was agreed that there was no requirement for a Stage 3 meeting.

Merged Projects

The sponsors noted that projects numbered 17 and 21 have been merged and agreed the proposed sequencing outlined above (under paused projects in respect of number 17).

Projects not yet initiated

Two projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for projects numbered 14 and 20 to be discussed further at Stage 2. In relation to number 14, although not yet initiated, it was noted that work in this regard continues in the background while, similarly, in relation to number 20, measures taken by the Office of Government Procurement mean that companies are now better placed to compete for defence contracts.

Review of Chapter 6 Projects: Capability Requirements

Tranche 1/Active Projects

Seven projects were reviewed under this category. The Secretary General and Chief of Staff have jointly taken the sponsor role in relation to project number 26. While they agreed that there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting, they also emphasised that this project is of major significance, and that the implications for other projects, and policy developments such as implementation of the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, will all need to be considered in due course.

In relation to the other six projects, the relevant project sponsors agreed that given the progress made to date that there was no requirement to give further consideration to projects numbered 28, 29A, 29B, 29D, 31 and 33 at Stage 2. In relation to number 28, the sponsors noted that a draft report was due to be submitted, while the capital projects numbered 29A, 29B and 29D were all progressing well and, as such, further consideration was not required. Subsequently, work has been completed on project number 29D and this project has formally closed.

In relation to project number 31, the sponsors noted that the project team's work in this regard is well underway but clearly more time is required for this to be completed. This was identified by the sponsors as a key project that needs to be prioritised, notwithstanding the need for an extension of time. When completed, the outcome of this project will provide the framework for a number of other key projects.

Meanwhile, the sponsors noted that work on a related project, number 33, was progressing, and that this had previously been merged with number 32 (which is linked to number 34). While a meeting of the project leads was identified as a requirement to progress project number 33, it was agreed by the sponsors that the issues are within the framework of the project plan, and as such there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting. The sponsors noted progress made to date towards the development of a five-year plan, including an assessment of future needs of all military installations against forecasted operational activities.

Paused Projects

One project was reviewed under this category. The sponsors agreed that project number 29F should remain paused, pending other decisions which may dictate how it is to proceed, and, therefore, there was no requirement to give further consideration to it at Stage 2.

Tranche 2 Projects

Three projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that, given the progress made to date, there was no requirement to give further consideration to projects numbered 25, 29C and 29E at Stage 2. Specifically in relation to number 25, the sponsors noted that whilst the project has not yet been initiated, work on a joint Common Operational Picture has nevertheless been on-going and is close to completion. Good progress was also noted in relation to capital project number 29C while work is underway on project number 29E.

Closed Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Merged Projects

One project was reviewed under this category. As mentioned above under Tranche 1/Active Projects, project number 32 was previously merged with number 33 and is currently active as part of that project. As such, the sponsors agreed there was no requirement to discuss this project any further at Stage 2.

Projects not yet initiated

A total of five projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to give further consideration to projects numbered 27, 29G, 30, 34 and 35 at Stage 2. However, they agreed that early initiation of number 27 should be considered and that one of the initial outputs should be to examine the actual requirement. In relation to number 29G, it was noted that while additional armoured vehicles have been funded, the National Development Plan 2018 to 2027, which provides €541m. in capital funding for Defence over the period to 2022, does not make provision for these service led priorities. Finalisation of the Capability Development Plan and the Equipment Development Plan was

identified as being a requirement to see how any of these might proceed, in the event of additional funding becoming available. Furthermore, it was agreed by the sponsors that project number 30 cannot be considered for commencement unless and until the radar capability aspect of number 29G has progressed.

The sponsors noted that, as mentioned above under Tranche 1/Active Projects, project number 34 is linked to project number 32 which was previously merged with number 33 – which is expected to close shortly. They also noted that number 35 will require a large scoping exercise which itself will be a significant undertaking. However, the sponsors agreed that there is no pressing need to consider commencement of this project as issues that require legislative change are currently being dealt with on an on-going basis.

Review of Chapter 7 Projects: Defence Human Resources

Tranche 1/Active Projects

Five projects fell for review under this category and the sponsors agreed that four of them, projects numbered 41, 42, 55 and 57 (which it was noted is linked to number 58), are all linked and each scheduled for early closure. As such, the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for these projects to be discussed further at Stage 2. Since then, all four of these projects have been finalised and formally closed.

It was noted that the above projects are all linked to project number 45 which, at the time was close to completion and has subsequently closed. As such, it did not need to be addressed at Stage 2.

Paused Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Tranche 2 Projects

Three projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that that there is no requirement for project number 56 to be discussed further at Stage 2 as work was just about to commence.

The sponsors also agreed that project number 39 (which is linked with number 70) needed to be discussed further, with the project leads, at Stage 2 as they felt that there was a need for clarity about the nature and scope of this project. At the Stage 2 meeting, it was noted that a project team has been identified, that Capability (People) Development and Support Branch is to liaise with military colleagues and that it will be necessary to re-work the Project Initiation Document (PID) before a Project Plan is finalised. The sponsors noted that there is a need to agree a methodology to identify gaps, that work is on-going in this regard and, in these circumstances, they decided that there was no requirement for this project to progress to Stage 3.

In relation to project number 40A, the sponsors agreed that this project also needed to be discussed with the project leads, at Stage 2, and they noted that a PID and Project Plan were required. At the Stage 2 meeting, the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for Stage 3. They noted that a revised PID drafted by the Department, with the assistance of the Institute of Public Administration, had been sent to Human Resources Branch (J1) who will carry out the coordinating role for all of the Defence Forces in relation to this project. The sponsors agreed that a tight timeframe is required as this project needs to be progressed as it is a Ministerial priority. They also agreed that, if necessary, further assistance from the IPA may be sought.

Closed Projects

One project was reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for project number 62 to be discussed any further at Stage 2. However, as this project is focussed on priority vacancies, the sponsors also agreed that there is a continuing requirement to ensure that the desired outcomes from the project are being met and built into current working practices.

Merged Projects

One project was reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that project number 36, which is merged with number 44, needed to be discussed further with the project leads. At Stage 2, the sponsors noted that, due to an injunction, the progress of a pilot scheme had been impeded but the project is now progressing again with a Defence Forces working group

having been re-convened and, with revised timelines and modifications to the Project Plan, the work will progress in two phases – the first of which deals with officers. The sponsors agreed that as the project is now progressing, it should be left as a stand-alone project and that no further action is required. They also agreed that there was no requirement to initiate Stage 3.

Projects not yet initiated

A total of 19 projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for 13 of these projects, numbered 37, 38, 40, 43, 49, 50, 54, 58 (linked with 57), 59, 60, 61, 63 and 64, to be brought forward for further discussion at Stage 2.

However, in relation to project number 37, it was agreed that commencement must await completion of projects numbered 36 (merged with 44 - see above) and 56 which are both currently underway. Similarly, in relation to project number 38, it was noted that there are a number of linkages to other projects and the sponsors agreed that it would be desirable not to commence this project until number 39 (see Tranche 2 Projects above) has been completed.

In relation to project number 43, the sponsors noted that some aspects of this are progressing in any event through IT Carlow and Maynooth University. This progress wouldn't include, however, the requirement to consider whether an appropriate balance is being achieved, including in the context of the need to ensure an appropriate range of training and education provision.

The sponsors agreed that linked projects, numbered 46, 47 and 48, should be brought forward to Stage 2, for consideration of possible merger of all three. At Stage 2, following discussion, it was agreed to leave all three as stand-alone projects for now as, currently, there is no pressing need for any of the three to be prioritised and, as such, the possibility of a merger can be considered in the normal course of the White Paper implementation process. The sponsors also agreed that there was no requirement to initiate Stage 3 in respect of any of these projects.

It was also agreed by the sponsors that, as the current Public Service Stability Agreement will expire at the end of 2020, consideration should be given to commencement of project number 49 before then, and perhaps as part of what may become Tranche 3.

Regarding projects numbered 51, 52 and 53, the sponsors agreed that these should be discussed further with the project leads at Stage 2. In relation to number 51, it was noted at the Stage 2 meeting that although the project has yet to commence, work on aspects of it are already happening in the ordinary course of events. As such, it was felt that the requirement for the project may become moot over time. The meeting also discussed the possibility of a merger of all three projects. However, it was felt that, as none of these projects are likely to be earmarked for early commencement, this does not need to be addressed at this time and can instead be considered in the normal course of the White Paper Implementation process. It also agreed that there was no requirement to initiate Stage 3 of the process in respect of any of these projects.

Review of Chapter 8 Projects: The Reserve Defence Force (RDF)

Tranche 1/Active Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Paused Projects

There was one project, number 70 which is merged with number 71 (and linked to projects numbered 39 and 72), that fell for review under this category. The sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to discuss number 70 at Stage 2. They also agreed that this project should remain paused, at least until project number 39 has closed, as the gaps in the PDF need to be understood before project work should commence.

Tranche 2 Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Closed Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Merged Projects

One project fell for review under this category. Project number 71 is merged with number 70 which is to remain a paused project (see above).

Projects not yet initiated

A total of 11 projects were reviewed under this category.

The sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to progress projects numbered 69 and 73 to Stage 2 but noted that consideration could be given, in due course, to merging number 69 with other merged RDF projects. The sponsors also agreed that there is no requirement to discuss project number 72 (linked with number 70) at Stage 2 but decided that projects numbered 39 and 67 will both need to be concluded before this project can commence.

In relation to projects numbered 65, 66, 67, 68, 74, 75, 76 and 77, the sponsors agreed that all of these should be discussed at Stage 2 with the project leads in the context of possibly merging a large number of RDF projects. At the Stage 2 meeting, following discussion in relation to number 65, the sponsors noted that although this project has not yet commenced the First Line Reserve is a potential resource identified to address gaps in the Air Corps and Naval Service and, as such, good progress has been made with certain aspects of this project. However, the sponsors also noted that this project needs to be considered in the broader context of the RDF generally and, therefore, the sequencing of work needs to be managed to avoid duplication or unnecessary overlap. Accordingly, in the first instance, it was agreed that the project should be merged with number 66.

In relation to number 67, it was noted that an element of this project also relates to the FLR and that it is, therefore, linked to the newly merged projects numbered 65 and 66. However, because this project (number 67) is in respect of the entire RDF, it was agreed that it would not be appropriate to merge all three. The result, however, of merging numbers 65 and 66 will be to offset work involved in number 67 and, as such, the sponsors noted that there will need to be an awareness of priorities and sequencing of these projects. The sponsors also agreed that number 75 should merge with number 67 and, as such, this would be the "catch-all" project for the associated legislative requirements of number 65 (which is to be merged

with number 66). The question of merging project number 68 with number 67 was also discussed at Stage 2 but it was agreed to leave these as stand-alone projects, notwithstanding the civil sponsor's concerns about resource constraints. There was also discussion about the continued relevance of number 68 in the context of the current Naval Service Reserve strength. As regards when this project should commence, it was agreed by the sponsors that it should be linked with number 39 as the PDF gap analysis project will need to be completed before work starts on this project. They also agreed that the same applies to project number 74 which will remain as a stand-alone project but will not commence until after number 39 has concluded. The sponsors also agreed, following discussion at Stage 2, to leave projects numbered 76 and 77 as stand-alone projects.

Finally, they also agreed that there was no requirement to initiate Stage 3 for any of these projects.

Review of Chapter 9 Projects: Civil Defence

Tranche 1/Active Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Paused Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Tranche 2 Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Closed Projects

One project, number 79, fell for review under this category and it was decided that there was no requirement for this to be discussed further at Stage 2.

Merged Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Projects not yet initiated

Two projects fell for review under this category and, although project number 78 has not commenced, it was noted that the Minister is consulting with Civil Defence management and members. In this context, while it was decided that there was no requirement for this to be discussed further at Stage 2, it was agreed that this project could be considered for early commencement.

Similarly, it was also decided that there was no requirement for a Stage 2 meeting for project number 80 but it was agreed that it should not commence until project number 78 has concluded, pending decisions on legislative change and subsequent policy direction.

Review of Chapter 10 Projects: White Paper Implementation

Tranche 1/Active Projects

Two projects were reviewed under this category. The sponsors agreed that there was no requirement to give further consideration at Stage 2 to project numbers 84 and 86. However, as was agreed previously, and subsequently noted by Government in 2018, project number 86 should be finalised after the current White Paper Update has concluded.

Paused Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Tranche 2 Projects

One project, number 88, fell for review under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for it to be discussed further at Stage 2. The sponsors noted that the immediacy of the requirement to commence this project, as identified in the White Paper, had been overtaken by the subsequent publication, later in 2015, of the Government's Capital Investment Plan 2016 to 2021 and further iterations since then, including the National Development Plan 2018 to 2027 which provides €541m. in capital funding for Defence over the period to 2022.

Closed Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Merged Projects

There were no projects for review under this category.

Projects not yet initiated

Five projects were reviewed under this category and the sponsors agreed that there was no requirement for projects numbered 81, 82, 83, 85 and 87 to be discussed further at Stage 2.

In relation to number 82, the sponsors agreed that a Project Initiation Document needs to be finalised while, in relation to number 83, they noted a number of positive initiatives and, in this context, encouraged both Defence Forces Training Branch (J7) and the civil Human Resources Branch to continue ongoing arrangements and dialogue which should lead to further initiatives. The sponsors agreed that continued progress in these areas may bring sufficient momentum to consider commencing this project. The sponsors also agreed that, in respect of number 87, this Update should note that this project retains its importance notwithstanding various, and continuing, developments that have occurred, in any event, meaning that there is now a greater push in this direction at EU level.

E. Programme for a Partnership Government – Department of Defence led Commitments

PfG Commitment Description
We will introduce a pilot employment support scheme in 2016, providing 30-40 participants with skills and training identifiable with the Defence Forces.
An increased level of female participation in our Defence Forces, with the goal of doubling the rate of participation from the current 6% to 12% in the next 5 years.
The Office of Emergency Planning, will examine the potential for a Rapid Response Unit, led by the Department of the Environment, which could be deployed when necessary, to coordinate offers of help and assistance, to those experiencing hardship following a severe weather event.
Implement the White Paper on Defence.
Provide for moving from an eight to a nine ship naval flotilla, investment in armoured personnel carriers, logistic vehicles, modernisation of barracks including Custume Barracks Athlone, replacement of aircraft as necessary and provide for improvements at Casement Aerodrome Baldonnel.
Ensure at least 9,500 Permanent Defence Forces personnel and a full-strength reserve.
Support our veterans for the public service and outstanding contribution they have made to the State.
Ensure the strength, skills base and contribution of the Reserve Defence Forces are maximised and target full participation of the RDF at 4,000 personnel.
Prioritise the need to address the gap in female participation in the Defence Forces.
Support and develop Civil Defence, update legislation governing its role, and establish a coordinated inter-agency guidance team to deal with major emergency management issues.
Develop a new Institute for Peace Support and Leadership Training in the Curragh.
Encourage partnerships between the Defence Forces and the private sector with a view to increased research, innovation and enterprise development.
Award a 1916 medal to all members of the Permanent Defence Forces who are in service in 2016 and to serving members of the Reserve Defence Forces in 2016 as part of the single force concept.
We will work with the Northern Ireland Executive to agree a funding plan for the Atlantic Youth Trust initiative, which involves a new sail training vessel to facilitate youth development, mentoring and training on an all-island basis.