



Public Appointments Service

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

publicjobs.ie



An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service

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Chairman's Statement

I am pleased, on my own behalf and on behalf of my fellow Board Members, to present the 2009 Annual Report of the Public Appointment Service.

2009 has been a very challenging year for PAS. The organisation experienced a reduction in the demand for recruitment services as a result of the Government's moratorium on recruitment and promotion announced at the end of March. The moratorium provided that limited recruitment could continue during the year, but the specific sanction of the Minister for Finance was required for each post. In response to this challenge, the Board and the MAC agreed a strategy to ensure, where possible, that the limited recruitment activities available across the public service were channelled through PAS to ensure the best use of resources. In addition, the strategy looked at opportunities to reduce costs and at the same time maximise the use of our resources to the advantage of the public service.

PAS engaged with all existing clients and with new clients across the public service to ensure that these organisations availed of PAS' extensive selection, testing and recruitment processes when undertaking recruitment activities. The organisation continued to be able to attract well qualified candidates for the recruitment campaigns run throughout 2009. Details of these recruitment activities are set out in this report.

PAS has also engaged in non-recruitment projects with public service organisations. During 2009 we supported the Companies Registration Office of the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment and the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform by undertaking work on their behalf.

A reduction of 29% in staff numbers was also achieved during 2009 by temporarily seconding staff to areas of the public service which were under significant pressure.

A very considerable reduction in advertising costs was achieved during the year by a greater emphasis on the use of the www.publicjobs.ie website by PAS and other public service organisations.

These initiatives were possible because of the commitment, dedication and flexibility shown by our work force who responded quickly to changing circumstances by taking on additional work and readily agreeing to work in other organisations.

PAS constantly strives to improve the quality of the services provided to its clients and the public, and continues to benchmark itself against recognised leaders in the selection and recruitment sector. This approach continued in 2009.

I would like, on behalf of the Board, to acknowledge the work of the Chief Executive, Mr. Bryan Andrews, and all the staff of the office in continuing to provide a quality customer service to all our customers.

Mr. Eddie Sullivan
Chairman
Public Appointment Service

Chief Executive's Statement


The Government's moratorium on public service recruitment and promotion came into effect from the beginning of April and resulted in a significant reduction in the typical large volume recruitment activities of PAS (i.e. rolling campaigns for clerical and executive recruitment to the public service, campaigns to maintain promotion panels for civil service grades, rolling campaign for recruitment of recruit Gardaí). While our overall budget allocation has been reduced accordingly and we have been required to make a significant reduction in our staffing levels there continues to be a steady level of recruitment to the public service, where such recruitment has been specifically sanctioned by the Minister for Finance in order to ensure minimum impact on the delivery of public services. In these difficult circumstances, PAS continued to strive to meet and exceed, where possible, the expectations of our clients and to ensure that we are adding value in terms of the wide range of services and supports that we offer.

Our senior executive recruitment campaigns continued to attract high calibre candidates and we have succeeded in filling a number of very key public service positions including a new Director General for FAS, a CEO for the Dublin Transportation Authority and a Director General for the Institute of Public Administration. We also supported the Top Level Appointment Committee in filling key civil service positions at Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General level. The nationwide rolling campaign to recruit members for the Garda Reserve continued and was particularly successful in 2009 with over 690 appointments. Over 17,000 people applied for the temporary Clerical Officer competition and over 550 appointments were made. A wide variety of jobs were also successfully filled in the Local Authority sector, including positions for County Manager, Assistant City Manager, Head of Finance, Fire Officer, etc.

Some of our major recruitment activities were on behalf of the Health Service Executive (HSE). We ran campaigns to identify quality candidates for a number of senior positions at National Director, Assistant National Director and at regional level. Following agreement on the hospital consultant contract we ran very successful campaigns to fill hospital consultant positions throughout the country and over 160 recommendations for appointment were made. We also supported the HSE in recruitment of suitably qualified people for key front line roles including emergency medical technicians and emergency medical controllers.

Throughout the year, we have continued to grow the **publicjobs.ie** brand and have attracted a wide range of publicly funded organisations to make use of the site to advertise the recruitment opportunities. We have supported many public service organisations with a range of consultancy and testing services including the Nursing Careers Centre, the Defence Forces, HIQA and the Irish Aviation Authority. We have been working closely with the Central Statistics Office on the development of self assessment materials to support recruitment and selection as they prepare for the challenge of conducting the Census of Population in 2011. We have provided job analysis services to a number of public service organisation including Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown and An Bord Bia. As part of the programme of rationalisation of State Agencies, we supported the reintegration of agencies back into the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Social Protection. We have worked closely with the Department of Finance in defining the role that PAS will play in providing an efficient and effective scheme of redeployment of staff at all levels across the public service.

A welcome development during the year was the involvement of PAS in a new approach to the appointment of people to State Boards. The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communication, Energy and Natural Resources sought the assistance of PAS in supporting



them to undertake an open campaign to seek expressions of interest for Members of the RTÉ Board and of the Broadcasting Authority for Ireland. Candidates selected through the process appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee in public session before being recommended for appointment. Four names for each Board were forwarded by the Committee to the Minister. This is a new approach to the filling of appointments to State Boards and it has generated considerable interest from the public. We also provided assistance with the processing of applications for other State Boards (i.e. NAMA, FAS).

I would like to pay particular tribute to all of our staff for their professionalism, flexibility, hard work and dedication to the organisation over the past year. With the reduced level of recruitment activity, we have had to reduce our level of staffing. This was achieved through the temporary transfer of resources to other Departments / Offices and a policy of not filling vacancies. I appreciate the willingness of our staff to support PAS by availing of this opportunity for a temporary transfer to other organisations during this period. I also acknowledge the flexibility shown by the staff remaining in the organisation in helping us to meet the needs of our customers both candidates, clients and interview board members. It is important, however, that we strive to retain the necessary core expertise and professionalism with the capability to provide an excellent shared service both now and into the future to our wide range of public service clients.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution and excellent support that has been given to me and to my Management Team throughout the year by the Board under the stewardship of Chairman, Eddie Sullivan. 2010 will also be a very challenging year for PAS and the public service as a whole and I look forward to working closely with the Board to address those challenges. We will continue to engage with our client base to ensure that we provide the most efficient and effective service to meet their needs and ensure that our resources and expertise are used to the best advantage in support of the public service transformation programme.

It is important that I should acknowledge the very significant contribution made by people, from a wide variety of backgrounds and representing many sectors, who act in the capacity of Interview Board members for PAS. This is an essential element of the service we provide to our clients and our candidates. We are fortunate that we are able to draw from a pool of talented people whose expertise and capability ensure that we make good appointments in a fair and transparent manner. Many of the people who act in this capacity do so on a voluntary basis, in addition to their day to day roles, and I would like to acknowledge and appreciate their commitment and dedication to the mission and remit of the Public Appointments Service.

Bryan Andrews
Chief Executive Officer



The Public Appointments Service

Our Mission

We will deliver the highest quality recruitment, selection and related human resource services that will support the growth of a world class public service

The Public Appointments Service was established in October 2004 following the dissolution of the Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commissioners by the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004.

The Public Appointments Service is the centralised provider of recruitment, assessment and selection services for the Civil Service. We also provide recruitment and related human resource advisory services to Local Authorities, the Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána and other public bodies.



Members of the Board

- **Mr. Eddie Sullivan,**
Chairman, former Secretary General,
Public Service Management and
Development, Department of Finance
- **Mr. Bernard Carey,**
Assistant Secretary, Department of
Health and Children
- **Mr. Bryan Andrews,**
Chief Executive of the Public
Appointments Service
- **Mr. Dan Murphy,**
former General Secretary, Public
Service Executive Union
- **Mr. Michael Errity,**
Assistant Secretary, Department of
Finance
- **Ms. Bernie Gray,**
Independent HR Consultant
- **Ms. Breda Power,**
Assistant Secretary, Department of
Enterprise, Trade and Employment
- **Ms. Michelle Shannon,**
National Director, Irish Youth Justice
Service
- **Mr. Des Dowling,**
Assistant Secretary, Department of
the Environment, Heritage and Local
Government



The Management Advisory Committee

- **Mr. Bryan Andrews,**
Chief Executive
- **Mr. Niall Leavy,**
Head of Research and Business Development
- **Ms. Mary Flynn,**
Head of Recruitment Services
- **Ms. Aine Gray**
Head of Assessment Services
- **Mr. Tommy Quinn**
Head of Corporate Services

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Our **STRATEGY**
for
2008 - 2010



Our Strategy for 2008 – 2010

Overarching Goal: *PAS will provide to its clients throughout the public service, access to an international standard, professional recruitment system*

Goal 1: Highest Standard of Recruitment and Selection Systems

Ensure the highest standard and most effective recruitment solutions that will attract and select the best people to positions in the public service

Goal 2: Focused Candidate Relationship Management

Provide all aspiring applicants for positions in the public sector with a service that will meet and exceed their expectations

Goal 3: Education, Research, Development and Benchmarking

Ensure that an education and research service is in place to provide relevant and timely information that will expand the human resource knowledge base in the public service

Internal Supporting Strategies that will assist in delivering these goals

- ◇ Information and Communication Technology
- ◇ Human Resource Best Practice and Support for all Staff
- ◇ Finance and Corporate Governance



GOAL 1

Highest Standard of Recruitment and Selection Systems

Highest Standard of Recruitment and Selection Systems

Ensure the highest standard and most effective recruitment solutions that will attract and select the best people to positions in the public service

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) recognises that the sourcing and identification of suitably qualified people with appropriate experience to occupy positions at all levels is critical to the future effectiveness and success of the Irish Public Service. We recognise the need for continued client involvement in the process and the need to deliver our services in the most efficient and cost effective manner.

In 2009 PAS proactively engaged with all clients across the public service at each stage of the recruitment process to ensure that our services were delivered to the highest standard.

Due to the moratorium on recruitment, only priority posts were filled (including a significant number of senior level posts) in the Civil Service, and there was a large decrease in the overall number of appointments made.

The Public Appointments Service continued to have significant involvement with the HSE during 2009, particularly in the area of Consultant recruitment and other senior posts.

The Local Authority sector has also continued to request this office to assist them in filling priority posts.

In 2009 PAS became involved, for the first time, in the selection process for appointment to State Boards. We believe that this is an area where our expertise can be further used to source and select high quality board members who are committed to public service.

Civil Service Sector

During the year, almost 20,000 applicants were attracted to apply for vacancies or promotional opportunities throughout the Civil Service. Following the moratorium on public service recruitment, only essential posts were filled; this led to a significant decrease in general public service recruitment.

PAS ran a major campaign for temporary Clerical Officers (almost 17,000 applications were received) and a campaign for Staff Officer in the Department of Social and Family Affairs in Buncrana.

PAS was also involved in redeploying staff across the civil service. This involved the movement of surplus staff from a

Department/Office to fill priority vacancies in another Department/Office.

Several priority senior management positions in the Civil and Public Service were filled through competitive process during the year. These included:

- Member of the Garda Inspectorate
- Deputy Director of Conciliation Services in the Labour Relations Commission
- CEO Designate, Housing & Sustainable Communities Agency
- CEO Designate, Local Government Management Agency
- Director, Midland Regional Authority
- CEO Dublin Transport Authority
- CEO Carlow VEC
- CEO Louth VEC
- Director General in FÁS
- CEO Equality Authority

- Director of Translations, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
- Coastal Unit Sector Managers in the Irish Coast Guard
- Head of Directing Division in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Garda Recruitment

The Garda Reserve continued to attract a good level of interest with applications processed on an ongoing basis throughout 2009. An appointment was also made to Executive Director of Finance.

Assistance to the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC)

The Public Appointments Service continues to assist TLAC in selecting applicants for positions in the most senior ranks of the Civil Service. Most notable in the work completed during 2009 was the conducting of high profile campaigns to assist TLAC in filling senior positions in the following departments:

- ◇ Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- ◇ Office of Public Works
- ◇ Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
- ◇ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- ◇ Department of Foreign Affairs
- ◇ Director Met Eireann
- ◇ Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs

Local Authority Sector

There was a significant decrease in recruitment for the Local Authority sector. Essential posts were filled as:

- Head of Finance
- Fire Officer
- Engineer
- Planner

- Librarian
- Law Agent

During the year the Public Appointments Service also attracted high calibre candidate fields to fill positions as Assistant City Manager in Dublin City Council and County Manager in Clare County Council.

Health Sector

The Health Service Executive (HSE) continues to be a significant client for the Public Appointments Service. Our previous arrangement with the HSE, which involved the assignment of both a senior manager from PAS to advise on all matters pertaining to recruitment and selection and the secondment of an Occupational Psychologist to provide them with professional advice and services on a nationwide basis, continued in 2009. This collaborative arrangement has proven very beneficial and it is anticipated that the arrangement will continue for the near future.

Throughout the year the Public Appointments Service was involved in the recruitment of senior executives for positions in the HSE. These important positions, which are central to the future success of the HSE included:

- Head of National Press and Media Relations
- National Director of ICT
- National Director Planning & Performance
- National Director of Operations
- National Director Clinical Care & Quality
- Assistant National Directors
- Regional Operations Director
- Head of Legal Services
- Legal Specialists

In addition to these senior administrative posts the organisation continued to recruit medical and paramedical personnel of the highest quality for hospitals and medical

facilities throughout the country, including a significant number of Hospital Consultant posts. This included:

- 169 Hospital Consultants
- 3 Senior Area Medical Officers
- 3 Community Ophthalmic Physicians
- 8 Physicists
- 1 Pharmacist
- 1 Biochemist
- 1 Director of Nursing
- 15 Psychologists
- 1 Senior Clinical Engineering Technician

PAS is also supporting the HSE in the development of job descriptions/competency profiles for certain management posts across a number of HSE services areas and functional departments. The objective is to undertake a programme of Job Analysis across a number of distinct health service work environments to establish common and core knowledge, skills and attributes which will enable the preparation of a bespoke competency framework which can be tailored to meet the needs of the HSE transformational agenda and beyond. Two areas have been proposed as initial areas on which to focus, i.e. a hospital environment (Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown) and potentially a PCCC area. The Job Analysis of twelve management roles in Connolly Hospital was completed in December, and a report was sent to the HSE describing the competencies required for performance across the management roles. A training course on Job Analysis techniques for senior managers has been scheduled for January 2010.

Assistance with the Selection Process for State Boards

The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communication, Energy and Natural Resources asked PAS to seek expressions of interest for Members of the RTÉ Board

and of the Broadcasting Authority for Ireland. Following a paper sift, shortlisting interviews and preliminary interviews were held (supported by PAS). Candidates selected through the process appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communication, Energy and Natural Resources on 16th December in public session before being recommended for appointment. 4 names for each Board were forwarded to the Minister.

This is a new approach to the filling of appointments to State Boards and it has generated a lot of interest from the public.

PAS also provided assistance with the processing of applications for other State Boards.

Additional Consultancy and Testing Services

A range of additional consultancy and testing services were provided to public service bodies in 2009. These are discussed below:

- ◇ An internal Computer Operator/Programmer campaign was run for the Department of Social and Family Affairs
- ◇ Campaigns were run for Assessment Manager, Information Scientist, Legal Adviser, Statistician/Mathematician, Head of Health Technology (Research and Planning), Senior Health Economist, and Head of Health Technology in the Health Information and Quality Authority
- ◇ Over 1800 applicants were processed for the 'mature code' student nursing positions on behalf of the Nursing Careers Centre
- ◇ PAS also provided support to the Central Statistics Office in their recruitment of Enumerators, Field Supervisors and Senior Managers for the Census. Through a series of workshops, self assessment questionnaires were designed to

- encourage potential candidates to reflect on the requirements of the Enumerator and Field Supervisor roles before applying. These self assessment questionnaires provide detailed information on the varied challenges faced by these staff
- ◇ Tests for an internal Firefighter campaign in Dublin Airport Authority were run in January
 - ◇ A screening service was provided to the HSE for Emergency Medical Controller (selection tests held in May) and Emergency Medical Technician (selection tests held in February and March)
 - ◇ The Department of Foreign Affairs asked PAS to facilitate the holding of the UN National Competitive Recruitment Examinations (NCRE) 2009 exams. The NCREs enable entry into the UN at P2 level in geographically allocated posts in the UN Secretariat. The NCREs were held worldwide in February and PAS hosted the tests in Ireland
 - ◇ The Health and Social Care Professionals Council requested PAS to fill two posts at AP level (*Head of Registration and Education and Head of Legal Affairs and Fitness to Practice*) and a Clerical Officer post
 - ◇ PAS was requested to conduct selection tests for Aviation Executive for the Irish Aviation Authority. Testing of the 108 candidates took place on 21st and 22nd April
 - ◇ For the first time, the Public Appointments Service provided assistance to the Defence Forces in their recruitment of cadets. PAS provided the Defence Forces with an order of merit following exams within a tight timeframe. PAS was involved in the provision of verbal and numerical tests and the development of a new job simulation exercise, the administration and scoring of tests, and the training of interview board members for the final interview board
 - ◇ PAS ran a training course in Belfast on behalf of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (NIJAC) on the use of role-plays in selection. This interactive course was tailored around a new selection system for the role of County Court Judge. Feedback from the delegates and management at NIJAC was very positive and subsequent invitations to do similar work in 2010 have been received
 - ◇ The Department of Health and Children asked PAS to conduct the reintegration process on their behalf in respect of two agencies under their aegis (i.e. National Council on Ageing and Older People and the Women's Health Council). This was to allow staff from those agencies to be considered for established positions in the civil service. The selection process involved a board(s) of assessors considering documentation in relation to an individual's skills, competencies and level of experience, and determining the level/grade at which they would enter
 - ◇ A request was received from An Bord Bia for assistance, initially around the development of competencies as a basis for recruitment. A workshop was held with senior managers in Bord Bia to identify the future-focused skills required for the organisation in the next two to five years. Working in partnership with PAS, the participants defined these skills in terms of the required behaviours for Sector Managers/ Trade Marketing Specialists. In addition, a number of developmental activities for each of the future-focused skill areas were documented and this information will be used to support staff development
 - ◇ PAS also provided advice and assistance, as requested, to public sector bodies undertaking their own recruitment, in addition to providing

Interview Training and interview facilities.

Other Services

- ◇ PAS also undertook a project to provide assistance to the Companies Registration Office in the development of a Reference Address Database for registered companies and business names. The data clean-up project will support improved data quality and a higher take-up of electronic filing options and will also reduce the cost of form completion by CRO clients. The success of eFiling in the CRO is a major assistance in dealing with increased workloads and permits the transfer of staff to support pressure points elsewhere in the Department. Ten staff from PAS were allocated to work on this project
- ◇ As part of our commitment to shared services, PAS ran the staff survey for the Courts Service. Working in partnership with the Courts Service, the project team designed, built and hosted a Staff Survey for the Courts Service. The web based survey was very successful with a high participation rate. Feedback from the Courts Service has been very positive.

Developing a Service in Executive Recruitment

A dedicated research function to support Senior Executive Recruitment campaigns continued in 2009 with a number of projects being developed further including the Senior Management/Executive Database. This will be an invaluable tool to the organisation in terms of strategically maximising our use of candidate information. It will enable us to:

- ◇ provide clients with a market leading public sector selection service;

- ◇ facilitate the identification and attraction of high quality managers and professionals from other sectors into the Public Service;
- ◇ establish and develop a high quality and responsive research capacity in the areas of mapping, profiling and understanding internal and external organisational structures and senior executive talent markets.

The database is now populated with over 35,000 people from over 5,600 organisations.

PAS also continued with the roll-out of personality questionnaires and profiling of candidates across the range of senior executive recruitment campaigns. There was a very good reaction from selection boards on the additional value the profiles add to the process. Feedback from candidates has also been very positive. PAS also introduced a new on-line and cost-efficient facility for administering and managing the personality questionnaires.

Developing Selection Tools and Methods

PAS has been to the forefront in the emergence of new methodologies appropriate for use in the assessment of candidates for Public Service positions and deploying these in order to further professionalise the recruitment process. PAS has adopted a continuous improvement cycle in relation to assessment techniques and aims to develop a comprehensive library of tests that can support a highly flexible recruitment programme. In 2009 this has led to developments in the areas of e-testing, campaign reviews and test development.

E-Testing Strategy

Over the course of 2008 and 2009 a significant item bank of 25 parallel tests has been built up at clerical officer level. Once the item bank was developed, the

next step was to migrate the new tests onto the Testwise platform. This was a significant piece of work as new software had to be designed in order to ensure that the transfer could happen effectively; this has now been completed and the tests are available for use.

Campaign Reviews and Test Development

A self-assessment test system and Careers Toolbox was developed and made available on publicjobs.ie in 2009. The purpose of the project was to ensure a better calibre of applicant by providing people with good quality information on their likely performance on actual tests.

Following the development of self-assessment tests for potential applicants at clerical level, a new Executive Officer Job Simulation Exercise has been developed for the Self Assessment System. The Job Simulation Exercise involves scenarios typical of that which would occur in the role. These scenarios pose a dilemma and the candidate is required to indicate one of five answer options as to what they would do if they were faced with the dilemma. Job Simulations, typically, have good validity and are seen as very relevant by candidates.

The significant changes in the operating environment of PAS presented a strong opportunity to carry out a significant review of approaches to selection, including the interview. The review incorporated integrating information from national and international benchmarking, as well as ensuring a good understanding of practice across the public sector in Ireland, and will blend retaining best selection practice with maximising efficiency.

Decentralisation - Central Application Facility (CAF)

During the year the Public Appointments Service continued to assist the Department

of Finance in the gathering of applications for relocation under the decentralisation programme. Through the generation of reports and statistics, the office has been able to ensure that individual departments and offices have been able to progress their own decentralisation programmes efficiently.

Monitoring our Service to Customers

Implementation of Customer Action Plan 2008-2010

Our Quality Customer Service (QCS) Action Plan and Customer Charter for 2008-2010 was reviewed and updated in 2009. These documents are available on publicjobs.ie.

The importance of ensuring that all members of staff are fully briefed on our service standards and the necessity of achieving these standards is recognised. The contents of the Action Plan and Charter were promoted at briefing sessions for all staff in 2009.

Since the beginning of 2005 the office has had a comprehensive measurement programme in place to monitor the achievement of our various service standards published in our customer action plan. During 2009, comprehensive external and internal on-line surveys were issued to candidates, clients, selection board members and staff.

• Candidate Survey

During the year over 1200 candidates completed candidate surveys on the level of service provided to them by the office. The feedback from these survey showed a high level of approval with the service they received from staff and the quality of the recruitment process.

• Client Survey

All of our clients who used our services in 2009 were asked to participate in an online survey in December. Feedback from this

survey showed a high level of approval with the quality of staff assigned by PAS, and the quality of service provided by PAS staff.

• **Interview Board Member Survey**

A critical and valuable group of people who assist the Public Appointments Service in delivering its services are those people who act as interview board members. In 2009 the results of the online survey of this group demonstrated a very significant satisfaction rating with the service provided to them by the staff of PAS with 95% of the respondents rating the service as good/excellent.

▪ **Customer Comment Cards**

In 2009 we monitored all completed comment cards and forwarded suggestions to the appropriate area for consideration.

In recognition of the fact that customer surveys/panels and continuous monitoring are not ends in themselves, the organisation, in 2009, put in place action plans to tackle issues raised in each of our surveys. Some of the developments introduced in 2009 as a result of feedback from customers included:

Candidates

Self-assessment tests to enable people to get an understanding of their potential test performance have been developed at clerical officer level. These tests, which are now available on publicjobs.ie, extend the service offered to candidates. Following a successful pilot, the next stage of the project is to make the graduate tests (which have also been developed) available on publicjobs.ie.

Selection Board Members

New catering facilities were put in place for Selection Board Members; feedback on the new arrangements has been very positive.

Facilities

An Emergency Egress Plan for the safe evacuation of customers with a disability was developed and implemented in 2009. A range of additional Equality Resources were also put in place.

Telephone Service

Additional HelpDesk staff were put in place to coincide with STAR go-live (see page 26).



GOAL 2
FOCUSED CANDIDATE RELATIONSHIP
MANAGEMENT

Focused Candidate Relationship Management

Provide all aspiring applicants for positions in the public sector with a service that will meet and exceed their expectations

Access to high quality candidates is an asset to be cultivated and we recognise the need for the professional management of this key strategic relationship. We have introduced new initiatives and developed our systems and services to give candidates access to high quality information and personal contact in order to encourage them to consider seriously, careers in the public service.

Publicjobs.ie Development

The office's eGovernment programme advanced significantly during the year. The Selection, Testing, Assessment and Recruitment (STAR) programme went live in November. This project involves the development of customer and staff services through our publicjobs.ie website.

There continued to be a significant reduction in the size of newspaper advertisements placed and prospective applicants directed towards publicjobs.ie. This approach, while resulting in major cost savings, has not had any adverse impact on the quantity and quality of applications being received.

Other public service bodies were also encouraged to use publicjobs.ie to advertise any vacancies they might have.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity Related Initiatives

A range of equality and diversity related initiatives were introduced or progressed in 2009, including:

- ◇ PAS worked with the Department of Finance to facilitate a "job shadowing" initiative for two people with a disability
- ◇ An Emergency Egress Plan to ensure the safe evacuation of customers with a disability was

- developed in 2009; all staff were made aware of their role in this Plan
- ◇ Awareness raising campaigns were held in conjunction with Intercultural and Anti-Racism Week and International Day of People with Disability
- ◇ The role of the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) was promoted throughout the year and meetings took place with all staff with a disability.

Monitoring

Our Equality Monitoring/Access Committee met throughout the year to monitor compliance with the requirements of the Disability Act, our own Equality and Diversity Policy and the Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities. Reports on compliance with the Disability Act requirements and the requirements of the Equality and Diversity Policy were provided to the committee, and to date all aspects of both have been fully complied with. No complaints or queries in relation to access have been received to date. All publications were produced in an accessible format, as required.

Candidate Relationship Management Programme

Our Candidate Relationship Management Programme was developed with a view to improving the facilities available to, and communication with, candidates.

Official Languages Compliance

In 2009 a survey was conducted in relation to non-attendance at tests as in recent years this had been an issue with a large percentage of applicants not turning up for tests after they had been scheduled. The survey was issued to all applicants for the Recruit Prison Officer who did not attend for the test (48% of applicants). The main reasons for non attendance were identified and measures put in place to address any issues.

The Public Appointments Service provides for delivery of its services through the Irish language, as agreed in its scheme under the Official Languages Act, 2003. In line with our Scheme, we produced all publications and displayed all posters in both Irish and English. We maintained a list of staff capable of providing a service to the public in both Irish and English.

PAS launched an online Irish Translation procurement tool called *Mearfhocal* in 2009. This procurement tool was designed to simplify and assist the office in procuring a variety of translation and associated services. All *Foras na Gaeilge* approved Irish Translators were invited to register with *Mearfhocal* subsequent to its launch.

A large, teal-colored abstract graphic that resembles a stylized wave or a torn piece of paper. It has a jagged, lightning-bolt-like shape on the left side. The text is placed within the teal area.

GOAL 3

Education, Research, Development and Benchmarking

Education, Research, Development and Benchmarking

Ensure that an education and research service is in place to provide relevant and timely information that will expand the human resource knowledge base in the public service

PAS recognises the need to keep ahead of trends in recruitment and selection, to lead on best practice and share our expertise with clients and other interested parties.

Research Advisory Panel

PAS initiated a Research Advisory Panel in 2005 to help shape the advancement of public service selection, assessment and development by promoting discussion and debate on topical issues of particular interest to public service organisations and HR practitioners in general. Membership of the panel consists of a cross section of senior HR managers and experts from across the Civil/Public Service, academia and private sector.

The current project on Public Service Leadership Competencies is on target. An online survey on the use of competencies across the Public Service was carried out in order to help inform this project. The survey showed that a large proportion of organisations responding are using competencies and that the majority would support the development of a set of Public Service competencies and a PAS Competency Toolkit. The draft competency framework was examined by an Expert Group on competencies, which had a number of leading experts from around the world, from both the public and private sectors.

Other Research

A Master's student in Occupational Psychology from the University of Sheffield conducted research with PAS in relation to the use of the Occupational Personality Questionnaire as part of the selection process for senior management posts.

This research sought to examine the relationship between candidates' profiles and their interview assessments and to identify any broad trends in terms of the profiles of those from different sectors and with different levels and types of experience. The research provided greater insight into the personality profiles of people applying for senior level posts and the type of characteristics that contribute to success in the process.

An evaluation of the selection process for Mature Code Nursing was carried out and the results were presented to the Board of An Bord Altranais in late 2009. PAS recommended the use of a job simulation exercise to the Board. This was accepted, and a proposal has been sent to An Bord Altranais to conduct this work in early 2010.

Visiting delegations

During the year, the office continued to facilitate requests from various international organisations to visit our facilities and hear more about our approach to recruitment and selection. During the year, the office was pleased to welcome delegations from:

- ◇ Belgium
- ◇ Serbia
- ◇ Finland
- ◇ Bulgaria

International Benchmarking

PAS recognises the need to consistently benchmark its activities against other

recognised leaders in the area of recruitment and selection. Through learning from other organisations, a programme of constant improvement can be maintained in the office. During 2009 we continued this benchmarking process through formal contact between this office and equivalent colleagues in:

- Northern Ireland
- UK
- Belgium
- Canada

National Expert to the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)

The Public Appointments Service continued this year to provide a National Expert to work in EPSO in Brussels. While this is a significant investment for the Public Appointments Service, it does acknowledge the absolute importance of ensuring that Ireland is well represented at the European Union in Brussels.

PAS hosted a meeting of the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) Network of Public Sector Recruitment Experts from all member states in October in our offices in Chapter House.

Key Presenters at National/International Conferences

The office continued to disseminate its research findings and particular recruitment knowledge and expertise at various conferences.

A member of the PAS Occupational Psychologist team presented a paper entitled “*Testing people with disabilities: what works?*” at the European Association of Work and Occupational Psychology in conjunction with Kenexa. The paper shares some of the insights from the experience of using on-line tests to test people with disabilities.

A large, abstract teal graphic with a white lightning bolt shape on the left side, pointing towards the right. The graphic is positioned in the upper half of the page.

Internal Supporting Strategies

Information and Communication Technology

PAS recognises the critical importance of developing and maintaining Information Technology that can support the business of the office and can support the efficient running of a high volume recruitment business. Much progress was made in the area of ICT in 2009, including:

- ◇ Development and release of the STAR application which has revolutionised the way PAS carries out its core business. STAR (Selection, Testing Assessment and Recruitment) went live on 5th November. This is the third phase of our e-government programme and it enabled the delivery of numerous improvements and self service options for clients and candidates. It was designed to enable PAS to manage and support the complete recruitment process. Where previously a diverse range of systems and manual processes were being used, STAR provides a single unified application and database. This will result in more stream lined business processes and provides a single information repository enabling enhanced reporting. These developments will also result in a more efficient and effective service to clients
- ◇ Pre and post live support of the STAR project from a network, hardware and IT security perspective
- ◇ The provision of remote access to documentation for Members of the Board in advance of their meetings
- ◇ Further consolidation of our server estate through our server virtualisation program facilitating a 'greener' ICT strategy
- ◇ Commencement of a major upgrade of our desktops operating systems through the rollout of Microsoft's Windows 7
- ◇ Upgrade of our e-mail gateway allowed for the provision of an e-mail encryption facility
- ◇ Maximising the potential of existing technologies within the office by utilising Citrix as a tool to allow us to provide remote support
- ◇ First line support through our IT Helpdesk for all systems, software and hardware throughout the office.

Human Resource Best Practice and Support for all Staff

Partnership

The approach to change, decision making, employee engagement and communication in the Office is through the Partnership model. A review of the membership of Partnership took place during the year to ensure all grades and areas were adequately represented; this resulted in a number of new members joining. To ensure that Partnership continues to operate in an effective manner a Partnership Action Plan was agreed by the Committee and implemented in full during the year.

Training and Development

We continued our commitment to training, further developing staff expertise and continuing professional development.

The Learning and Development Plan for the organisation was approved through Partnership. The following are some of the main training interventions provided in 2009:

- Bullying and Harassment Awareness training
- A range of Health and Safety related training
- Recruitment Manager Development Programme
- Executive Coaching
- A range of IT related training (e.g. word, excel).

A total of 13 staff members were also supported in attaining professional/ education qualifications through the refund of fees scheme. In addition, staff were encouraged to keep up to date with current developments in their professional field through membership of professional bodies and relevant publications.

A review took place in relation to the impact of training and development initiatives on organisational performance and

competency development. This involved examining reports from the on-line training evaluation system in relation to improvements identified by both staff member, and their manager, in competence following a training intervention.

Wellness Programme

Consistent with the office's policy of contributing, where possible, to issues affecting the quality of life of staff, we completed another in our series of Wellness Programmes during 2009. This programme included:

- ◇ Information sessions from the Irish Cancer Society and the Irish Heart Foundation
- ◇ Healthy recipe information in ChapterHouse (staff magazine) to encourage staff to adopt healthy eating habits and to give them some information as to how they can prepare healthy food
- ◇ A session on the new Drugs and Alcohol Policy as part of our Business Awareness Day programme
- ◇ Walking Challenges to promote Irish Heart Week.

Performance Management

The ongoing implementation and integration of the PMDS (Performance Management and Development System) into the business of the Office continued in 2009. Training in conducting effective and fair assessments was provided for all staff and feedback from staff on this training was very positive. A PMDS Monitoring Team ensured compliance with the PMDS process, reviewed current procedures and ensured fairness and consistency with regard to performance ratings.

In 2009 the office developed online PMDS forms. While the focus is internally initially,

this initiative could become a shared service for other Civil Service Departments/Offices.

Staff Attitude Survey

We conducted a Staff Attitude Survey and achieved a participation rate of 89%. Overall the results were very positive. A workshop was conducted with a sub-group of our Partnership Committee, and an Action Plan was developed (and implemented) to address issues arising from the survey.

Redeployment

Following a review of the recruitment environment and the organisation's staffing levels PAS moved to ensure that the full capacity of its staff was utilised to maximum effect for the benefit of the civil service and the tax payer.

This included the temporary redeployment of 11 staff members to various Departments/Offices around the civil service to cover for critical vacancies that

occurred due to permanent staff leaving under the term time scheme during the summer months. These positions would previously have been filled through temporary recruitment.

Following a series of briefing sessions with all staff, and meetings with individual staff members and staff representative groups, we sought requests for volunteers for temporary secondments to other Departments/Offices. Our extensive communications programme focused on highlighting the benefits to staff in availing of opportunities for temporary secondments and aimed to encourage staff to think positively about the secondments. 20 voluntary temporary secondments have been put in place with the Department of Social and Family Affairs and 5 with Garda HQ.

This has led to a 29% reduction in staffing levels from our previously agreed numbers (i.e. from 153 to 109.26).

Finance and Corporate Governance

Board of the Public Appointments Service

Meeting on six occasions during the year, the Board of the Public Appointments Service, under the chairmanship of Mr. Eddie Sullivan, worked its way through a substantial work agenda. The Board gave particular attention to issues relating to performance on key strategic priorities, financial governance and risk management. At each meeting the Board was provided with detailed activity and financial reports and updates on areas such as risk, internal audit, and progress in relation to our main strategic objectives.

The Code of Practice for the Board was updated following the introduction of the new Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

Internal Audit

The Committee signed off on the Annual Report in February, which was then submitted to the Accounting Officer. The Chairman of the Internal Audit Committee presented the Annual Report of the Committee to the Board at their meeting in March.

The Internal Audit Committee met on four occasions and were presented with the following audit reports:

- Customer Service Standards Review
- Report on Attendance Management Systems in PAS
- Budget Profiling
- Performance Management and Development System
- Business Continuity
- Health and Safety Review

During 2009 there were a total of 19 recommendations from six audit reports. 12 of these were implemented and

progress on the remaining recommendations is in line with the relevant reports.

The Internal Audit Committee also requested a review of the status of the recommendations of all previous audit reports. The Committee was satisfied that the recommendations have been, or are being, implemented.

The Committee also drafted and agreed to the Strategic Audit Plan 2010-2012.

Risk Management

Reflecting the importance of ensuring that, where possible, all risks are identified and appropriate measures taken to mitigate the effects, the Risk Management Group met on four occasions in 2009.

The Group carried out an analysis of risk in the organisation with a view to facilitating the Internal Audit Committee when drafting the Strategic Audit Plan 2010-2012.

The Group discussed their role in the business continuity process and agreed to liaise with the Emergency Planning Team with a view to ensuring that all recommendations of the Audit Report on Business Continuity are implemented and that the plan is adequately tested.

The Corporate Risk Register was also reviewed by the Board at their meetings in March and November.

Project Governance

An important feature of corporate governance in the Public Appointments Service is the active management of all strategic projects to ensure maximum value and output from each project launched. Central to this objective is the work of the

Project Board and the internal Project Office. The Project Board is responsible for tracking all strategic projects in the office and monitoring the level of resources being invested and the progress being made.

Procurement

The office is guided by the Public Procurement Guidelines and Policies published by the Procurement Unit in the Department of Finance. The Procurement Officer progressed the development of a Corporate Procurement Plan to provide strategic direction in purchasing to achieve value for money, procurement effectiveness and the corporate goals of PAS.

Relationship with the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) and the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA)

The presence of external auditors is an inevitable and normal part of the recruitment business in the public sector. Apart from the annual examination of our finances by the C&AG's office, the Public Appointments Service have regular contact with the CPSA with regard to its auditing of recruitment campaigns to the standards established in their published Codes of Practice.

The office welcomes the independent nature of these audits as a means of ensuring high standards are maintained in all aspects of the recruitment business.

A large teal graphic element with a jagged, lightning-bolt-like shape in the center. The word "APPENDICES" is written in white, bold, uppercase letters on the right side of the teal shape.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Summary of Recruitment Activity 1 January – 31 December 2009 (for the purpose of this report, all similar recruitment activity is combined together under single headings).

	Total Number of Applications Received	Number Interviewed	Number Assigned/ Recommended
Civil Service and Other Related Activity			
Clerical (including temporary recruitment)	16,998	825	584
Administrative (including Garda Reserve)	3,745	1,048	761
Senior Management and Professional	1,549	255	88
TOTAL	22,292	2,128	1,433
Local Appointments			
Local Authorities	369	140	21
Health Sector	1,347	432	212
TOTAL	1,716	572	233
	Total Number of Applications Received	Number Tested	Number of Names Forwarded to Client
Additional Selection/Testing Services Provided			
Civil Service	79	53	56
Health Service Executive	1,045	329	225
Mature Nursing 2009	1,844	1,298	923
Miscellaneous	202	1,075	635
TOTAL	3,170	2,755	1,839
	Total Number of Applications Received	Number Interviewed	Number Assigned/ Recommended
OVERALL TOTAL	27,178	2,700	1,666

A more detailed breakdown of these statistics is available on request

APPENDIX II

Results of Candidate, Selection Board Member & Client Surveys, and other Service Standards

Results of Candidate Surveys

<i>Notice Received</i>	<i>Positive Response Rate</i>		<i>Negative Response Rate</i>	
	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 1	Survey 2
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to test	93%	88%	7%	12%
Test Familiarisation Booklet available on website in adequate time	93%	91%	4%	2%
Satisfaction with timeliness of test result	90%	85%	10%	15%
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to interview	90%	92%	9%	8%
Satisfaction with timeliness of interview result	85%	84%	12%	16%
<i>Candidates with Special Needs (3% of respondents)</i>				
Special requirements identified on application form	60%	N/A	40%	N/A
Did a member of staff respond to your request to be contacted	100%	N/A	0%	N/A
Was accessible material provided if requested	100%	N/A	0%	N/A
Satisfaction with services provided to address any special needs	50% good 50% average	N/A	0%	N/A
<i>Response to Requests</i>				
Written correspondence acknowledged within 3 days	72%	73%	18%	19%
Full response received within 10 days	75%	74%	17%	16%
All correspondence in clear and simple language	83%	84%	17%	16%
Satisfaction with the quality of interview feedback received	58%	57%	39%	43%
Appeal dealt with within timescales set in CPSA Codes (7% and 6% of respondents appealed)	50%	60%	42%	20%
Requested publications made available in Irish in a timely manner	60%	50%	40%	50%
<i>Dealings with Staff</i>				
Staff were courteous	96%	85%	4%	0%
Staff were knowledgeable	93%	84%	7%	6%
Staff were helpful	94%	84%	6%	2%
Staff were efficient	92%	78%	8%	8%
<i>Website:</i>				
Clarity	83%	77%	3%	6%
Ease of use	79%	89%	6%	10%
Application Procedure	83%	75%	3%	8%
Quality of information	91%	53%	7%	7%
<i>Overall Satisfaction</i>				
Satisfaction with the quality of the recruitment process	86%	80%	14%	19%

Results of Selection Board Member Survey

Question	Responses ->			
What role have you played on Interview Boards?	Board Member/Chair 80%	Public Appointments Representative 8%	Both 12%	
Do you feel you had your Interview Board papers in adequate time to prepare for the Interview Board?	Yes 100%	No 0%		
Have you received training from the Public Appointments Service in relation to your role as a Board Member / PAS Representative?	Yes 38.5%	No 54%	Can't recall 7.5%	
Did you receive an information briefing session from a member of staff or Public Appointments Service representative?	Yes 92%	No 8%		
If yes, did you find this of benefit to you in your role?	Yes 95%	No 5%		
On average did you receive payment of fees?	Within 2 Weeks 45%	In excess of 2 weeks 52%		
On average (if entitled) did you receive payment for travel and subsistence?	Within 1 week 5%	Between 1-2 Weeks 29%	In excess of 2 weeks 66%	
How would you rate the quality of the following facilities:				
Interview Suites	Below Average 0%	Average 11%	Good 43%	Excellent 46%
Tea/Coffee	0%	19%	43%	38%
Lunch	10%	28%	40%	22%
Reception	0%	3%	36%	61%
Waiting Area	0%	17%	42%	41%
Restrooms	0%	16%	34%	50%
Overall, how would you rate the service provided to you by our staff?	Below Average 0%	Average 5%	Good 21%	Excellent 74%

Results of Client Survey

Current PAS Services	Positive Response Rate	Negative Response Rate
Satisfaction with our understanding of client recruitment needs	88%	12%
Satisfaction with recruitment process timescales	81%	19%
Satisfaction with quality of staff assigned/recommended by PAS	88%	12%
Willing to recommend PAS to other public bodies on basis of quality of service received	86%	14%
PAS has become more customer focused over recent years	85%	15%
Dealings with PAS Staff		
Availability of staff to handle your queries	87.5%	12.5%
Satisfaction with the quality of advice received	87.5%	12.5%
Courtesy of staff in providing the service	87.5%	12.5%
Satisfaction with speed/efficiency with which queries were dealt with	81%	19%
Additional Services Aailed of from PAS		
Additional services requested from PAS (Yes/No)	27%	73%
Satisfaction with the service provided in relation to timescale	83%	17%
Satisfaction with the service provided in relation to quality of service	80%	20%

Achievement of other Service Standards 2009

Service	Standard	Results Achieved
Client		
Provision of administrative staff on request to Clients	Panels in place for all general service grades for 80% of locations	Panels in place for CO, EO (Open, Fluency in Irish, and ICT), AO, HEO/AP/PO (Open) Panels for SO, EO (Confined and JSA), HEO (Confined and SA), AP/PO (Confined) have expired – no interdepartmental campaigns as a result of moratorium
Assignment to Senior Management and Professional/Technical positions	80% of campaigns to be completed within the timescale agreed with Client (as part of a Service Level Agreement)	Achieved – (with the <i>exception of particularly complex medical consultant cases where issues arose with clearance</i>)
	95% of campaigns to result in successful filling of vacancies	Achieved
Provision of other recruitment and selection related services (e.g. Job Analysis, part recruitment and selection options)	Timescale to be agreed with Client on receipt of request as part of a Service Level Agreement	Achieved
All Customers		
Provision of a suitable, accessible and informative Website – publicjobs.ie	99% uptime; Service restored within 2 hours of interruption being notified	Achieved
Provision of a quality service to all groups covered by the Equality Legislation and to applicants with special needs	All campaigns conducted in line with best practice in relation to equality and diversity	Achieved

APPENDIX III

Appeals

Appeals at the Different Levels in 2009

		Number Received
Initial Review	PAS Level 1	30
	PAS Level 2	34
Decision Arbitrator	PAS Level 3	13

APPENDIX IV

Progress on Key Performance Indicators as set out in Statement of Strategy 2008-2010

Overarching Goal – Access to clients to an international standard, professional recruitment system

Key Performance Indicators	Progress
95% of all recruitment campaigns to result in the successful filling of the relevant vacancies	Achieved
80% client satisfaction with services provided	Achieved
80% of all positions to be filled within timeframe agreed with client	Achieved (<i>with the exception of particularly complex medical consultant cases where issues arose with clearance</i>)

Goal 1 – Highest Standard Recruitment and Selection Systems

Key Performance Indicators	Progress
Establish (by mid 2009) a regionalised service	Ongoing
Give clients access to suitably qualified applicants to fill all vacancies for general service grades	Achieved
Launch STAR by mid 2009	Launched in November 2009
Customer Service Centre in place by December 2008	Customer HelpDesk in place
Increase test items by 100% by 2010	In progress
Youghal Office staffed by end 2009	On hold per Government decision
Public Service Agencies Relationship Manager appointed by early 2009	On hold due to current recruitment environment

Goal 2 – Focused Candidate Relationship Management

Key Performance Indicators	Progress
80% candidate satisfaction with the recruitment process	Achieved
Annual Diversity Audit relating to candidates in the recruitment process	In progress
Annual Accessibility Audit of website	Included as part of the STAR project
Increase number registered on publicjobs by 20% per annum	No longer applicable due to introduction of STAR – re-registration required

Goal 3 – Education, Research, Development and Benchmarking

Key Performance Indicators	Progress
Two Assessment/Selection related Seminars per annum	Not held in 2009 due to current recruitment environment
Four major pieces of research published in lifetime of Strategy	In progress (3 completed to date)
Strengthen contact with EPSO	Hosted Network meeting in October

APPENDIX V

Financial Report

EXPENDITURE

Our expenditure during 2009 is set out below:

	€000
Salaries	6,611
Travel & Subsistence	153
Incidental Expenses (including Training)	250
Postal and Telecommunications Services	183
Office Machinery	2,169
Office Premises Expenses	299
Consultancy Services	120
Advertising, Accommodation and Printing of Test Papers	227
Interview and Miscellaneous Competition Costs	358
Gross Total	10,370
Appropriation-in-Aid	557
Net Total:	9,813

On 7 August 2002 the European Community (Late Payments in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2002 came into effect and reduced the number of days for paying claims from 45 to 30 days. In 2009, there were 58 cases, where payments were not made within the prescribed time frame. A total of €999 was paid in penalty interest during 2009.







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