



An tSeirbhís um Cheapacháin Phoiblí
Public Appointments Service

Annual Report 2015

“

*maintaining a
culture of fairness
and impartiality*

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Chairman's Statement

On behalf of myself and my fellow Board Members, I am pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report of the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

As is clear from this report, PAS has successfully filled a wide range of very diverse and complex posts for public service clients in 2015 while also advancing a challenging programme of large-volume recruitment campaigns. The aim of achieving sustainable growth in the volume of business handled was achieved in 2015 with a 36% increase in campaigns handled and a 59% increase in assignments as against the previous year. In all recruitment campaigns, PAS continued to maintain the distinctive culture of public service recruitment based on the values of fairness and impartiality; attempting at all times to provide excellent customer service in an innovative way that ensures value for money.

A main strategic priority for PAS is to provide the best candidates to clients for appointment. PAS has continued to work with the Top Level Appointments Committee, to assist it in carrying out its recruitment functions at the most senior levels in the Civil Service. Every effort has been made by PAS to attract and select the highest-quality candidates for such posts, and feedback from clients would suggest that PAS has been successful in this area.

PAS was also successful in attracting high-quality candidates for other posts at various levels, including a range of posts at graduate level. I was particularly pleased when PAS received the GradIreland Award for Best Graduate Recruitment Website and to see the further development of gradpublicjobs.ie as a one-stop portal for graduates to get information on opportunities in the Irish Public Service and across the EU.

In 2015, PAS had a significant focus on the assessment part of the recruitment process, rolling out a wide range of new online assessments at the initial stages of large-volume campaigns and increasing the use of assessment centres for these campaigns; these approaches are proven to greatly increase the likelihood of selecting the best person for the role. The work undertaken by PAS to attract and select the highest-quality candidates has been a success, with 97% client satisfaction with the quality of candidates assigned to them.

2015 was a very busy year for local authority recruitment. In addition to filling vacant Chief Executive posts in local authorities, PAS also conducted a number of large-scale nationwide campaigns for local authorities which saw the introduction of online tests for Local Authority applicants.

It has been very satisfying to see how successful PAS has been in taking on the enhanced role in relation to appointments to State Boards and I believe that PAS has made a very positive contribution in this area.

Throughout 2015 PAS continued to seek out and act upon feedback from all customer groups in order to increase the quality and efficiency of the services provided, and this focus on the customer is apparent in all of the work that PAS is involved in.

The workforce in PAS has continued to be committed, dedicated and flexible, with a focus on providing the best possible service to customers, despite the large increase in the volume of work with a limited increase in resources.

I would like, on behalf of the Board, to acknowledge the excellent work of the Chief Executive, Ms. Fiona Tierney, and all the staff of the office in continuing to provide a top-quality service to all of the customers of the Public Appointments Service.

Ms. Judith Eve
Chairman

CEO's Statement

In our Annual Report for 2014, we noted how the conversation around recruitment and resourcing changed during that year and how the focus moved from managing with less to addressing emerging skill gaps and new resourcing needs in a measured and efficient manner. During 2015, we have seen this trend continue and, indeed, accelerate. As a key element in how the civil and public service responds to these resourcing challenges, PAS played a major role again this year in supporting client organisations across the Civil and Public Service in meeting their needs for talented and competent people.

During 2015, our Statement of Strategy for 2014 – 2016 served to guide our operations and helped ensure that the organisation delivered effective services while also investing in our own internal capacity to deliver our services in efficient and cost-effective ways. I am pleased that our Strategy is working well as we move forward on its implementation and that it complements and supports the implementation of other overarching strategies, such as the Civil Service Renewal Plan, which was published in October 2014.

Our 2015 Annual Report gives details on our operations and performance across all of our business areas. The various sections of the Report, which are based on the objectives set out in our Strategy Statement, illustrate the scale and complexity of the work which PAS undertakes on behalf of client organisations. Some of the key highlights of 2015 include:

- Consolidation of the open process for advertising and assessing applications for positions on State Boards with 304 vacancies advertised across 70 State Boards and over 4,600 applications assessed by year-end,
- Successful assignment of 109 Hospital Consultants with a 48% reduction in the time taken to fill these posts,
- Public competitions completed for a range of management roles in the Civil Service, including at the key senior management level of Principal Officer and 32 campaigns completed on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC) for posts up to Secretary General level,
- The first ever national competitions completed for posts in the Local Authority sector at Director of Service, Senior Executive Officer and Senior Planner levels,
- Client organisations reporting 97% satisfaction with the quality of candidates assigned to them,
- Over 28,000 candidates successfully tested through our online system for ten campaigns, and
- Our dedicated graduate recruitment website, Gradpublicjobs.ie, winning the GradIreland Award for Best Graduate Recruitment Website 2015.

While PAS, in keeping with its Statement of Strategy, continues to invest in e-enabled options in delivering on its core business, there can be no doubt but that the continued success of the organisation is highly dependent on the ongoing commitment of its people. During 2015, the staff and management of PAS gave unstintingly of their energy and imagination on a daily basis and I, once again, applaud their diligence in ensuring all candidates applying for roles through PAS are treated fairly and professionally. The positive climate we have built together within PAS was acknowledged in 2015 when we retained our accreditation under the Excellence through People award scheme.

I am also highly appreciative of the contribution of the members of the Board of PAS and of the PAS Audit Committee in supporting me in my role as Chief Executive and as Accounting Officer. Likewise, I am very happy to acknowledge, on behalf of all the staff of PAS, the support from, and positive engagement shown by, colleagues from across the civil and public service as we worked together to serve the public interest over the course of 2015.

Fiona Tierney
Chief Executive

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About
the Public
Appointments
Service

Introduction

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider for client¹ organisations in the civil and public service. PAS is responsible for the sourcing, assessment and delivery of quality candidates via recruitment and redeployment.

PAS is also responsible for running some internal promotion campaigns in the public service. The activities of PAS are primarily focused on the sourcing of candidates² for roles in the Civil Service; the most senior roles in Local Authorities; hospital consultant roles in the public health service; trainee Garda for An Garda Síochána; and a range of leadership and specialist roles across the civil and public service.

In 2015, PAS processed more than 64,000 applications, conducted 8,869 interviews and made 5,256 appointments to a range of complex roles across a diverse range of client organisations.

Recruitment to the civil service and a range of other public bodies operates under the provisions of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Acts, 2004 to 2013. Under this legislation, PAS was established as a central recruitment organisation for the broad public service, in succession to the previous Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commissioners which had been created at the foundation of the State. PAS operates under licence from the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) and is independent in its operations. PAS must comply with the Codes of Practice published by the CPSA which ensure that fair and open processes are in place for all applicants. Where the Codes do not apply, PAS adheres to the same core principles in carrying out its functions.

Mission and Values

Our vision is to be the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider of choice in the public service.

We are committed to the values of:	
Fairness and Impartiality	providing resourcing solutions that recognise that all eligible people should have an equal opportunity to compete for posts, where processes are fair, transparent, and free from bias or discrimination;
Independence	providing a recruitment service that is merit-based, quality focused, objective, and free from influence;
Value for Money	ensuring that our processes and systems are both efficient and effective, and provide a value for money service to our clients and the public;
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	examining our approach to service provision and looking for innovative ways of delivering and continuously improving the professionalism of our services;
Collaboration and Consultation	recognising the value of meaningful engagement, consultation and collaboration with stakeholders, taking opportunities to promote and enhance collaborative approaches;
Excellent Customer Service	treating our clients, candidates and colleagues with dignity and respect and providing a professional service which focuses on improving quality and value.

¹ "Client" is the term used in PAS to denote organisations using PAS to deliver on their recruitment needs.

² "Candidate" is the term used in PAS to denote people applying for roles.

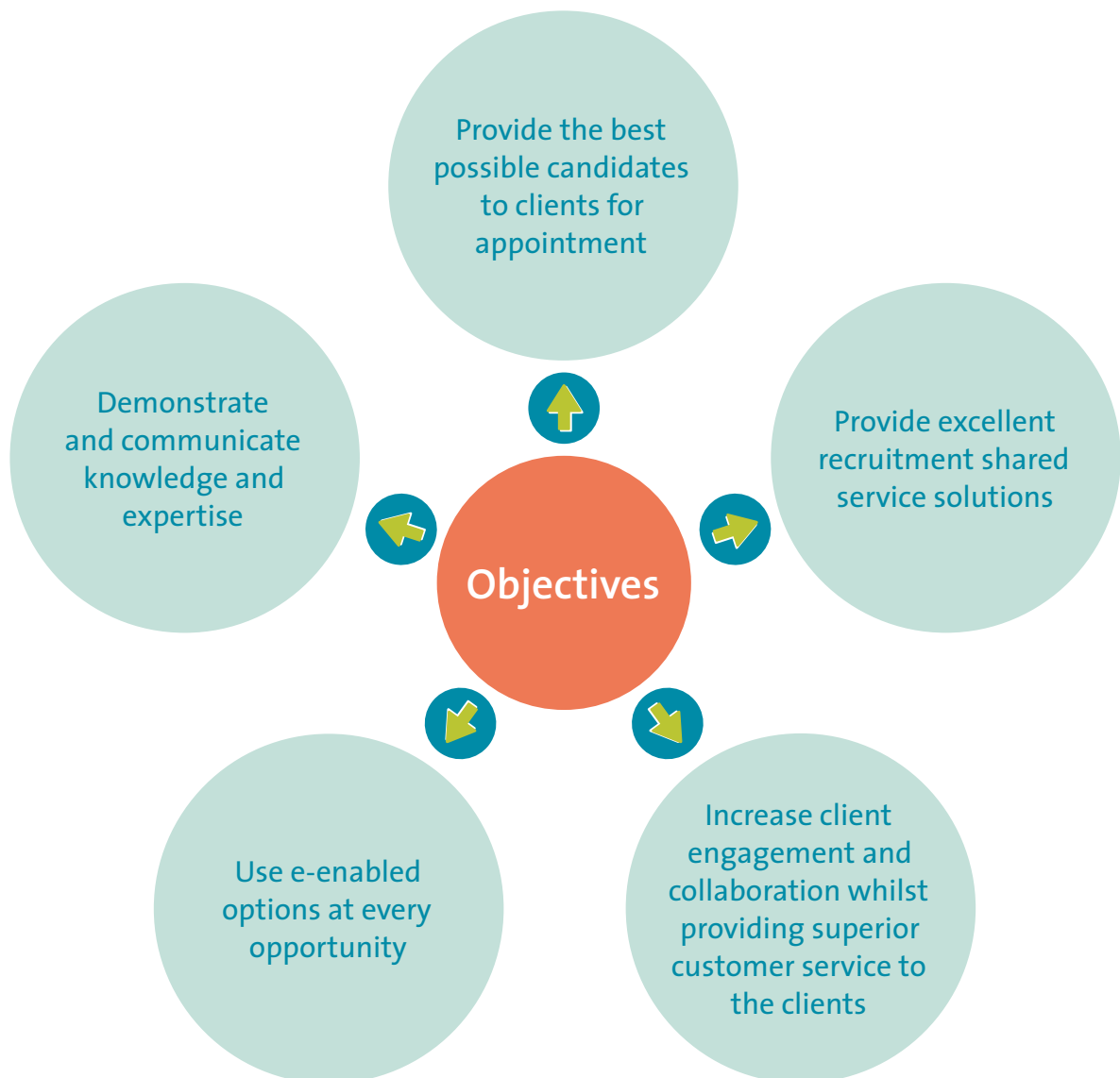
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The Strategic Objectives and Achievements of the Public Appointments Service

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of PAS are shown in the diagram below. These are published in the current Statement of Strategy 2014 – 2016.



Operational Highlights in 2015

The main achievements in 2015 included:

- › Consolidation and development of the State Boards process (with 4,699 expressions of interest processed in relation to 304 vacancies on 70 State Boards)
- › Delivering on demand for new Garda Trainees with 885 names sent to Garda Headquarters in 2015
- › Successful assignment of 109 Hospital Consultants with a 48% reduction in the time taken to fill these posts
- › Panels established for a range of management roles in the Civil Service, including Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Assistant Principal and Principal Officer
- › Completion of 32 campaigns on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC)
- › Panels put in place for posts nationwide in the Local Authority sector, at Director of Service, Senior Executive Officer and Senior Planner levels
- › Clients organisations reporting 97% satisfaction with the quality of candidates assigned to them
- › More than 28,000 candidates successfully tested through our online system for 10 campaigns
- › Our dedicated graduate recruitment website, Gradpublicjobs.ie, won the GradIreland Award for Best Graduate Recruitment Website
- › PAS retained its accreditation under the “Excellence Through People” award scheme

2015 saw two particular changes on previous years:

- › In continued support of a return to the recruitment market by public service bodies after the moratorium of previous years, PAS managed a number of large-volume campaigns, some of which had not been conducted since the start of the moratorium.
- › PAS also played a major role in relation to the revised process for filling positions on State Boards, which led to progress in widening the pool of potential appointees to Chair and Non-Executive roles on State Boards during 2015.

Provide the best possible candidates to clients for appointment

The main strategic priority of PAS is to provide the best possible candidates to client organisations for appointment, and to do this in a timely and cost-effective way. To that end, PAS continued to develop its approach to marketing to ensure that the best candidates are aware of, and are applying for, roles in the public service. PAS also continued to develop its approach to assessment and selection to ensure that the best candidates are coming through the assessment and selection process.

Our approach to selection included the use of online assessments at the initial stages of our large-volume campaigns, including measures of verbal, numerical and inductive reasoning, and situational judgement exercises. In addition to the advances that have been made in online testing which now enable PAS to manage the large volume of applicants, we have continued to improve the sophistication of the measures used when people come through to later stages in a campaign (including developing our competency-based interview approach and increasing the use of assessment centres³) as discussed below.

PAS uses a wide range of tools to assess candidates to ensure that those recommended for appointment are suitably capable and competent to fulfil the roles on offer, and the competency-based interview is a key element in this. In order for competency-based interviews to be effective, PAS trains its interviewers in how to elicit evidence against each of the competencies relevant to the particular role. This training is supplemented with a comprehensive written interview guide which summarises the PAS approach and provides suggested lines of enquiry to interview board members. Based on the experience of managing competency-based assessment systems, PAS has recently introduced a number of changes and enhancements in how competency-based interviews are used.

Extensive occupational psychology research has proven that the use of assessment centres greatly increases the likelihood of identifying good job performers for roles; Assessment Centres were used in 2015 for a number of campaigns (including Garda Trainee, Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Assistant Principal and Principal Officer).

Senior Executive Recruitment

In line with Government policy, there has been an increased focus on open recruitment to all positions in the civil and public service, including those at the most senior levels. During 2015, PAS was successful in attracting high-quality candidates to come forward for senior executive roles.

Many of the most senior roles in the Civil Service are filled by the Top Level Appointments Committee (TLAC), a standing interview board appointed by the Government and comprising an independent Chairman, six private sector nominees and six Secretaries General from the Civil Service. PAS supports TLAC in carrying out its functions in relation to open recruitment to positions at Secretary General and Assistant Secretary Levels.

In 2015, TLAC completed 32 recruitment campaigns for senior civil servants. Four of these competitions were specialist roles and PAS carried out the final interview process with representation from TLAC. From these campaigns, 30 appointments were made (TLAC was unable to make recommendations for two

³ "Assessment Centre is a competency based assessment process whereby candidates complete a range of competency based assessment techniques such as interviews, group exercises, role plays or presentations.

campaigns). Three of these posts were at Secretary General level, four at Deputy Secretary level and the remaining 23 at Assistant Secretary General level, or equivalent.

TLAC retained external executive search services to complement the PAS recruitment campaign for two specialist posts. In addition to retained search for these posts, many campaigns were supported by the internal executive search function within PAS. The objective of the search process is to ensure that the widest possible pool of suitable candidates are available for the most senior Civil Service positions.

The use of an in-depth assessment⁴ as an input to the TLAC process was trialled in early 2015 and it was agreed to include this in the process for all Secretary General level posts.

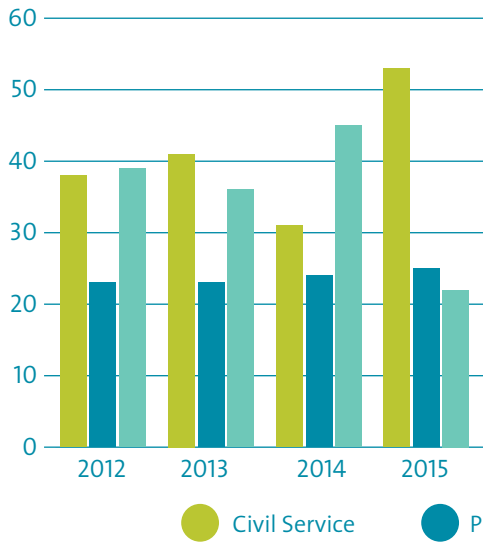
A review of the senior executive campaigns completed in 2015 identified the following trends:

- › There was an overall decrease in the average number of applications for TLAC posts in 2015. While the number of applications varied considerably from post to post, each TLAC level post advertised in 2015 attracted an average of 25 applications compared with an average of 29 in 2014. Overall there were 789 applications for the 32 roles in 2015.
- › The number of women, applying for, and being appointed to, TLAC level posts increased in 2015. In 2015, 29% of all applications were from women, an increase on 27% in 2014 and on 21% in 2013. Women also accounted for 33% of the successful candidates, again an increase on previous years.
- › Greater numbers of Civil Servants applied for TLAC posts in 2015 and the proportion of applicants coming from the Civil Service increased substantially to 53%, compared with just 31% in 2014.
- › The proportion of applications from the private sector, in contrast, decreased substantially from 45% to 22% overall.

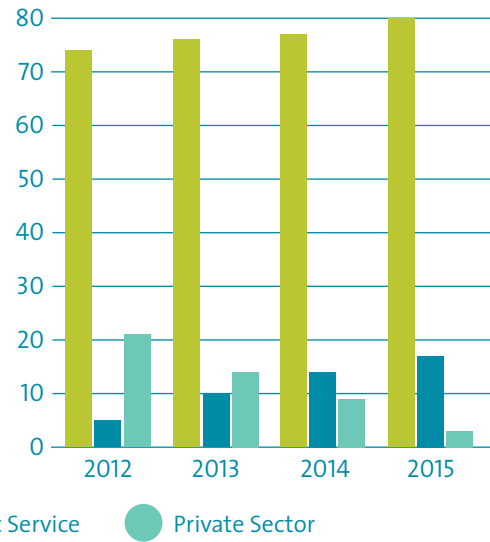
The number of appointments from outside the Civil Service continued to fall somewhat from previous years with 20% of appointees being non-Civil Service candidates, compared with 23% of appointments in 2014 and 24% of appointments in 2013.

⁴ In-depth assessment means a thorough competency based approach to assessment where candidates would typically undertake psychometric tests followed by an Assessment Centre.

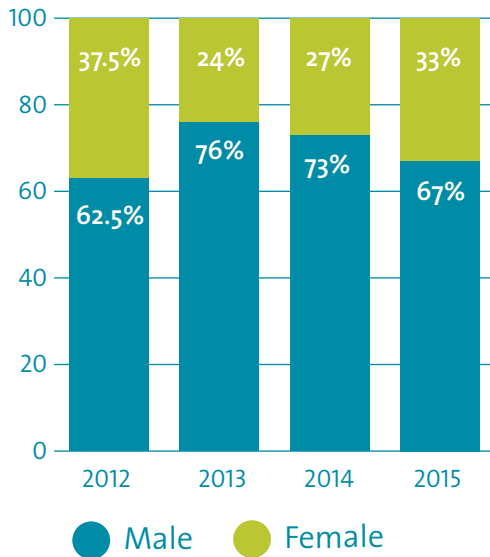
TLAC % Applications Received by Sector



% Successful Candidates Recommended to Minister/ Government – by Sector



% TLAC Successful Candidates – by Gender



PAS also carries out the recruitment processes for specialist senior executive positions in the civil service and wider public service. These generally involved extensive campaigns with a three-stage assessment process (including shortlisting, preliminary and main interviews), to ensure that the successful candidates possess all of the required skills and experience for the role. Campaigns in this category in 2015 included Deputy Chair of the Labour Court and Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman Designate.

PAS achieved its target in 2015 of filling at least 95% of advertised vacancies. However, there are some roles where PAS is finding it more challenging to source candidates. In 2015, PAS managed the recruitment process for a number of specialist roles primarily in HR, IT and Finance at a senior level in Government Departments and the broader Civil Service. Feedback from our executive search function suggests that candidates have been very interested in these roles, particularly given the opportunity to make a difference at a senior level in large scale organisations, such as Government Departments. However, the challenge has been that the remuneration (salary and benefits) the candidates currently earn is at least 30% higher than that on offer in the Civil Service. Notwithstanding the pay issue, the general perception of candidates has been that these are excellent opportunities but that, prior to being approached to consider applying, they had not been aware that the Civil Service was recruiting from outside the public sector.

Remuneration has become more of a competitive issue in public service recruitment as private sector organisations use remuneration as part of their overall approach to develop, attract and retain talent. This has now become a real disincentive to potential candidates from the private sector who are interested in working in the public service.

Graduate Recruitment

Our dedicated graduate recruitment website, Gradpublicjob.ie, which was launched in 2014, is the primary online gateway for graduate opportunities in the Irish public service. The website was awarded the Best Graduate Recruitment Website at the GradIreland Awards in 2015. In 2015, gradpublicjobs.ie was developed further as a single, one-stop portal for graduates to find out about opportunities in both the Irish Public Service and in a range of international organisations, such as the European Union, the United Nations and the OECD. PAS is working with other Civil Service bodies to ensure that this site will help to increase the representation of Irish graduates and employees in the EU institutions and internationally, while also raising awareness about the range of exciting career opportunities available to Irish graduates with relevant qualifications and potential.



In a highly competitive market for graduates, PAS ran a number of successful recruitment campaigns in 2015, promoting the attractive terms and conditions available to graduates in the public service and the recently introduced Graduate Development Programme. The marketing and communication programme is discussed in detail on page 18. As a result, panels were put in place in 2015 for positions at Executive Officer and Administrative Officer level in the Civil Service and Third Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Executive Officer (EO)

In December 2014 two competitions were advertised in parallel for posts at Executive Officer level; an interdepartmental competition for serving civil servants with at least two years' service; and a public competition for people holding certain educational qualifications. Many applicants applied for both streams. An additional stream was drawn from this competition for those who could demonstrate fluency in the Irish language. It has been a number of years since similar competitions were held and since the lifting of the moratorium, there is significant pent-up demands for appointments to fill vacancies in public service bodies. To keep pace with this demand, further groups of candidates are being processed through to final selection stages by PAS. Over 10 assignments were made to the end of 2015.

Graduate Economist in the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES)

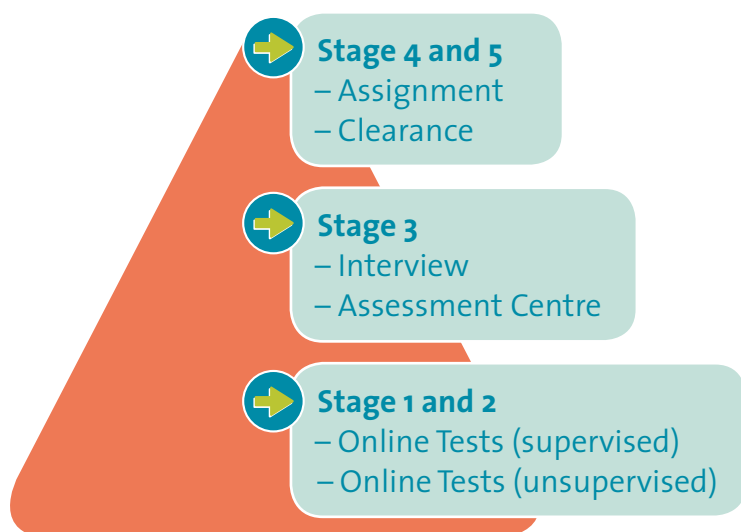
Following a review of the successful 2014 campaign for Administrative Officer (AO) in IGEES, PAS separated this campaign from the mainstream AO campaign, and marketed it as a Graduate Economist post, ensuring that all relevant universities and colleges were aware of the campaign. 136 applications were received and verbal feedback from the client indicates that they were pleased with the quality of the candidature.

Administrative Officer (AO)

PAS ran a very successful AO campaign in 2015 which resulted in high-quality candidates being identified for appointment. Graduates already working in the Civil Service assisted PAS in promoting these attractive roles to potential candidates through attendance at targeted careers fairs and through publishing the profiles of recent appointees on the gradpublicjobs.ie website. Almost 300 candidates were called to the assessment centre stage of the process; 187 were placed on the panel of successful candidates, with 41 appointments made in 2015.

Other Civil Service High-Volume Campaigns

PAS conducted a range of selection tests and interviews for Civil Service campaigns including Clerical Officer (CO), Assistant Principal Officer (AP), Principal Officer (PO), in addition to the annual Temporary Clerical Officer campaign. In the CO and AP campaigns (as with the EO) demand from client organisations far exceeded the anticipated number of vacancies. This has meant the PAS had to test and interview additional batches of candidates when it became clear that actual demand was much greater than that communicated to PAS in advance of the campaigns. The selection process for most high-volume campaigns is set out in the chart below.



Temporary Clerical Officer

14,143 candidates applied for the Temporary Clerical Officer in 2015, with 10,568 completing the online questionnaire. Vacancies in a wide range of client organisations were filled from this panel, with 1,824 posts being filled in 2015.

Clerical Officer

A Clerical Officer competition was advertised in June 2014 and assignments were made on a continual basis throughout 2015, with approximately 1,297 assignments being made in 2015. While the demand continues for clerical recruits, the level of interest from candidates is declining. It is expected that a new campaign will be advertised in May 2016.

Assistant Principal

In May 2015, public and interdepartmental competitions were advertised for Assistant Principal. Similar to the EO, most of the candidates applied for both streams. The majority of applicants were civil servants. Of the first group to be brought through to the end of the selection process, 94 were placed on the panel. Up to the end of 2015, 13 candidates had been assigned, the remaining candidates were awaiting special security clearance or were awaiting positions outside of Dublin.

In addition to the public and interdepartmental competitions, candidates could also opt to be considered for appointment as First Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Up to the end of 2015, eight individuals were assigned to that Department.

Principal Officer

The Principal Officer campaign attracted just over 1,450 candidates, and all applicants were invited to take initial online assessments in March. An extensive quality-assurance exercise was conducted on this campaign and candidates were asked for feedback on all aspects of the process. Over 80% of those who provided feedback on the exercises felt these were relevant or very relevant to the role of Principal Officer. The top 334 candidates were invited to attend the Assessment Centre stage of the process, which took place in May. This comprised:

- › Supervised re-testing of the Analysis and Job Simulation Exercises
- › Strategic Exercise, where candidates were given a brief and were required to write a report and make a presentation summarising their analysis of the situation, and
- › Interview with a panel of experienced interviewers from the public and private sectors

A total of 164 candidates qualified at the assessment centre. Feedback from the 230 candidates who completed the survey for this campaign indicated that it was a challenging but fair and well-run selection process. More than 90% felt that the fairness of the exercises was adequate, good or very good. Almost 85% felt that the questions asked during the interview and strategic exercise were good or very good, and almost 75% of respondents felt that the level of difficulty of the exercises was good or very good.

Other High-Volume Campaigns

Garda Trainee

PAS invested significant time, expertise and resources in meeting the client requirements for Garda Trainees in 2015. Names of successful candidates from the 2014 campaign were forwarded to An Garda Síochána up to the end of 2015. As of that date, a small number were still under consideration. This followed a comprehensive four-stage assessment process including online psychometric tests, assessment centre and interview.

An Garda Síochána were very satisfied with the calibre of candidates and the quality of the process used. A new campaign was advertised in November 2015.

Local Authority Recruitment

In addition to filling Chief Executive posts in local authorities, PAS also conducted a number of large-scale nationwide campaigns for local authorities during 2015. Posts at Director of Service level began to be filled in July 2015 with 20 vacancies filled from the first national campaign for posts at this level across the Local Authority sector. The first national Senior Executive Officer campaign was advertised in March 2015, attracting more than 1,200 candidates, and saw the introduction of online tests for Local Authority applicants. Sixteen vacancies were filled in 2015 from the first tranche of main interviews. Other large-volume campaigns included Engineering and Planning grades with vacancies at Senior Planner level being filled in October and ongoing campaigns for Senior Executive Planner, Senior Engineer and Senior Executive Engineer.

Other vacancies across the sector filled in 2015 included senior-level IT and finance posts and, most notably, posts at Head of Enterprise level (the first filling of such posts for Local Enterprise Offices).

Professional and Technical Recruitment

PAS recruits for a diverse range of senior professional posts in the Civil Service, Local Authorities and the wider public sector. The Professional and Technical Recruitment Units in PAS advertised 74 campaigns during 2015. A total of 328 candidates were recommended for appointment to professional and technical posts in 2015.

In an attempt to increase efficiencies in the recruitment and selection process, certain campaigns were held to fill vacancies in professional grades across the public service, including Solicitor, Legal Researcher and Accountant posts. This approach ensured that PAS had panels in place for these roles, which allowed for vacancies arising to be filled more quickly. In all, 46 appointments were made from these campaigns to eight client organisations in 2015.

2015 saw increased engagement with the Education sector. One critical campaign identified was for Early Years Inspector within the Department of Education and Skills. This campaign was run to very tight deadlines and all targets were met. Eleven appointments were made to these new roles.

Hospital Consultant Recruitment

PAS, in conjunction with the HSE, plays a central role in the recruitment of medical consultants to the public health service. In 2015, 109 hospital consultants were recommended for appointment. Following an extensive consultation process with the HSE, the number of selection board members for these campaigns was reduced to five members (from a previous eight/nine members). This greatly increased the efficiency of the process and allowed for selection boards to be arranged in a shorter timeframe. Due to this change, and other process improvements, the number of days to fill a Hospital Consultant post has decreased by 48% (from an average of 352 days for 2014 campaigns to 182 days from 2015 campaigns).

State Boards

Following a Government decision in September 2014 to reform the process for making Ministerial appointments to State Boards, PAS took on an enhanced role in the processing of applications for appointments to State Boards. A set of “Guidelines for Appointments to State Boards” was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, and these new guidelines have been in operation since November 2014.

Under the Guidelines, PAS is assigned responsibility for:

- › Agreeing the specification for the Board vacancy with the Department involved (with appropriate input from the current Chair of the relevant State Board)
- › Advertising the vacancy on www.stateboards.ie and promoting awareness of the vacancy through general and targeted initiatives
- › Providing and managing an effective online application process
- › Convening and supporting an assessment panel of suitably experienced people who review all expressions of interest against the published selection criteria
- › Working in conjunction with New Era in accordance with an addendum to the Guidelines for the five State Boards for which New Era has a statutory responsibility to advise the Minister
- › Forwarding for the consideration of the relevant Minister, a list of those applicants deemed by the assessment panel to be potentially suitable for appointment from among whom the Minister may then select persons for appointment
- › Undertaking initiatives to raise public awareness of the new arrangements in the interest of encouraging applications for State Board vacancies from among as broad a pool of experienced and competent people as possible
- › Publishing a quarterly update on activity on www.stateboards.ie.

Our dedicated web portal, www.stateboards.ie, was officially launched by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform at a reception in PAS in February 2015. More than 200 appointments were made to 53 State Boards via the new open process during 2015.



PAS acknowledges the support of Departments and State Board Liaison Officers (SBLOs) in facilitating the new process. A network of SBLOs was established and met twice in 2015. PAS also participated in a joint seminar in association with the IPA and the Governance Forum for Chairs of State Bodies during May. This latter event also demonstrates the very positive engagement by, and interest from, current State Board Chairs in the process. PAS also held two information sessions for departmental staff with responsibility for State Boards; these were well attended and positively received.

In keeping with the intention of paragraph five of the Guidelines regarding wide access and participation by the public in the appointments process, PAS has engaged with a wide range of people from the public, private and voluntary sectors to assist on assessment panels. Assessment panels to date have involved people from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience. Again, the experience is of a positive and widespread welcome for the new process and a clear willingness from these people, many of whom already have other demanding commitments, to assist in the process.

Positive feedback has been received on the efficiency and effectiveness of the specification and assessment process from Government Departments. In particular, there is widespread general satisfaction with the quality and calibre of the names being put forward from PAS for consideration for appointment. Of the vacancies advertised in 2015, there were only three technically-specific roles where suitable candidates were not identified for consideration by Ministers within the time available. The learning from these is that, in cooperation with Departments and State Boards, PAS should commence targeted search work earlier in the process, which should increase the success with these very unique roles.

The public engagement programme with external stakeholders undertaken by PAS has been wide-ranging and has included meeting and presentations to relevant groups.

PAS undertook a media campaign in June 2015, which included national press and radio advertising to publicise the new arrangements. At least 70% of all adults would have heard the radio advertisements

on national radio at least once during the seven-day campaign. Follow-up interviews were also done on-air with a range of local radio stations over a two-week period. The campaign resulted in a significant increase in traffic to the State Boards website and an increase in the numbers of people registered with PAS to receive email alerts on State Board vacancies. PAS ran a further radio advertising campaign in late 2015 to build on the momentum created by the June campaign.

From a position at the start of the year where the new process was as yet unproven and where the PAS role could, potentially, have given rise to risk to the reputation of the organisation, we had moved, by year end, to a position whereby the process had proven itself in practice and where PAS was seen as having managed the challenges and risks in a very capable and positive way.

Marketing and Communications

In 2015, the emphasis in relation to marketing and communication was to build momentum, in line with the increase in recruitment activity, and following the excellent start achieved in 2014 when PAS re-introduced the civil and public service to the graduate market. The focus was very much on increasing visibility and presence across a broader range of careers events and, identifying new and novel ways of engaging with talent in an effort to attract them to careers in the public service. PAS has also undertaken research to establish a baseline to underpin a strategic approach to reaching out to and engaging new audiences on the variety of career opportunities in the public sector.

Some of the key initiatives and achievements in this area, included:

- Participating in the National Student Challenge for the first time;
- Contributing to the 'Transformation of Graduate Recruitment and Development' project, which was shortlisted for the inaugural Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards;
- 82% of recent graduate entrants to the new public service Graduate Development Programme participating in the new 'Inside Buzz' survey;
- Commissioning a national survey on brand awareness in relation to PAS and the publicjobs.ie website.

National Student Challenge

The Challenge, which was open to third-level students across Ireland, started with an online competition, with the top 60 students invited to take part in the National Student Challenge main event in March 2015 in University College Dublin.

The day was extremely interactive and highly engaging. The students were put through six different exercises set by six leading graduate employers in Ireland (including PAS). PAS used the 'exercise' as an opportunity for the students to learn, in a fun and energising way, about the public service in Ireland. The National Student Challenge is a very useful way to raise the visibility of the variety of interesting career opportunities in the public service in an engaging manner with high-potential students from educational institutions right across Ireland. The feedback received from students themselves about PAS participation in the event was excellent.

Participation in the Graduate Recruitment and Development' project

Throughout 2014 and 2015 PAS has worked closely with colleagues in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to transform how the Civil Service attracts and retains a strong graduate cohort and develops them into leaders. Through an active working group, chaired by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 12 Departments and Offices collaborated on designing a graduate development programme for the civil service. The programme has created a successful model for cross-Departmental collaboration in learning and development. It has demonstrated how staff can come together to create and deliver training on topics relevant to staff across the Civil Service. The overall project of transforming graduate recruitment and development in the public service (joint submission by PAS and our colleagues in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform) was shortlisted for an award at the inaugural Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards in December 2015.

'Inside Buzz' Survey

In mid-2015 PAS chose to include a relatively new surveying and reporting facility, called 'Inside Buzz', as an important element of the drive to attract top quality graduates to opportunities in the public service. This facility can be used by graduate jobseekers to find out what it's really like to work for the top graduate employers. It surveys recent graduate entrants (anonymously) on different aspects of their employment and the programme they are involved with to see how different organisations rate against one another. It allows new graduates to get a view of what the employment is really like and to judge how companies and organisations compare in terms of culture, benefits, interaction with management, responsibility and challenge of work, and much more. The support from client organisations in the public service was excellent, and the overall response of recent entrants to the public service was exceptional at 82% (the highest recorded of any of the participating employers). The results, quantitative and qualitative, are very positive and provide a valuable insight into how new entrants feel about different aspects of their employment experience in different parts of the public service.

Brand Awareness Survey

PAS commissioned a nationally representative quantitative survey of more than 1,000 adults in September 2015. The primary purpose of this survey was to establish the level of awareness of PAS and the publicjobs.ie website. The survey was also designed to provide useful insights into typical job-seeking behaviours and preferences across the key demographic groups, as well as their openness and interest in considering a career in the public sector.

The key findings included:

- Health, Local Government and Education are the areas which attract the most interest;
- Awareness of PAS and publicjobs.ie was lower than expected;
- People aged 16 – 34 are most open to and have positive opinions about careers in public service;
- A significant shift towards online / digital job sourcing is clearly evident.

The findings provide a very useful baseline across a range of demographics and some constructive insights that can inform key messaging in future brand development and awareness raising campaigns. A strategy is currently being developed in relation to raising the profile of publicjobs.ie and attracting more people to consider a career in the public service.

Provide excellent recruitment shared service solutions

PAS aims to be the recruitment and resourcing shared service provider of choice in the public service through providing a lean and efficient model for recruitment and resourcing, by meeting the vast majority of client needs, and enabling staff to be valued as expert recruiters.

In order to achieve this objective, it is vital that PAS continuously measures performance and client satisfaction and that we can demonstrate and adapt to a sustainable growth in business.

PAS has a programme in place to evaluate the achievement of the Standards of Service Delivery (as set out in the Quality Customer Service Action Plan and Statement of Strategy). Reports on the achievement of these standards are evaluated by the Management Team and by the Board of PAS on a regular basis.

In 2015, the average time taken to run a professional and technical recruitment campaign was less than the 16-week target agreed with clients; the average time taken to run a senior executive campaign was less than the 12-week target agreed with clients. The average times were based on an analysis of all relevant campaigns run by PAS. However, the unanticipated level of demand for Clerical Officer and Executive Officer has meant that these roles have not always been filled as quickly as clients require.

PAS have set challenging quantitative standards for the delivery of its services to differing customer groups. PAS conduct a number of annual customer surveys in order to ascertain whether the service standards set for these groups are being achieved and how these groups rate all of the services that are provided. These surveys include Client, Selection Board Member, Candidate and Staff Surveys. Reports on the outcome of the Customer Surveys are provided to the Board. The results of the client and staff surveys are discussed on pages 23 and 29 respectively. The results of the candidate and selection board member surveys are discussed below.

Candidate Feedback

Two candidate surveys were conducted in 2015; one for those who applied for campaigns with tests (i.e., large-volume campaigns); and one for candidates who applied for professional, technical or senior executive roles. The results of these surveys (as can be seen below) were generally positive with the main exception to this being the quality of feedback provided by PAS.

(Senior Management and Professional/Technical Campaigns) (1054 responses)

Quality & Timeliness	Positive Response Rate
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to interview	83%
Satisfaction with time taken to issue interview result	77%
Satisfaction with language used in correspondence	82%
Satisfaction with the quality of questioning at interview	75%
Satisfaction with fairness of the interview	73%

Satisfaction with the quality of feedback provided	37%
Satisfaction with the timeliness of feedback	69%
Dealings with Staff	
Satisfaction with level and quality of information provided	77%
Satisfaction with helpfulness of staff	86%

(Large Volume Campaigns) (2,940 responses)

Quality & Timeliness	Positive Response Rate
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to test(s)	83%
Satisfaction with advance notice in relation to interview	81%
Satisfaction with the relevance of test questions	51%
Satisfaction with time taken to issue test result	76%
Satisfaction with time taken to issue interview result	78%
Satisfaction with language used in correspondence	90%
Satisfaction with the quality of questioning at interview	77%
Satisfaction with fairness of the interview	76%
Satisfaction with quality of feedback	47%
Satisfaction with the timeliness of feedback	72%
Dealings with Staff	
Satisfaction with level and quality of information provided	81%
Satisfaction with helpfulness of staff	89%

The area of feedback quality was prioritised for investigation in 2015, and was one of the strategic issues examined at a PAS Board meeting. PAS took action to improve the quality of feedback in relation to tests, shortlisting and interviews, including piloting a new approach to providing test feedback and the provision of increased guidance and briefings to selection boards.

Selection Board Member Feedback

The 2015 selection board member survey had very high satisfaction levels in each area (as can be seen below). All selection board members were asked for additional feedback on our services and for suggestions for improvements. A lot of very positive feedback was received, and all viable suggestions are being implemented in 2016 as part of the selection board member survey action plan.

Quality and Timeliness of Process and Documentation	Positive Response Rate
Receipt of board documentation in time to prepare	93%
Satisfaction with quality of supporting documentation	97%
Satisfaction with training/briefing received	89%
Candidates given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their suitability	89%
Satisfaction with measures to ensure confidentiality of the process	100%
Satisfaction with service provided by staff	97%

Feedback included:



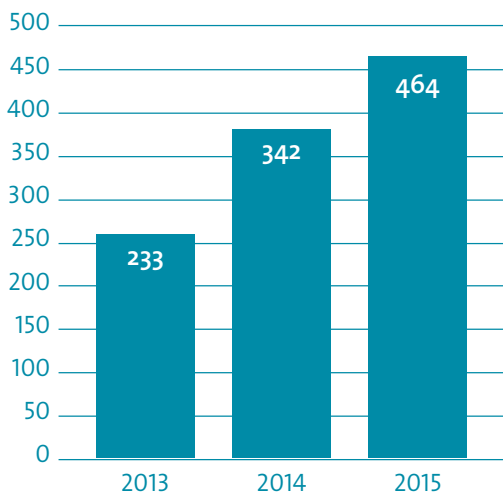
“Overall my experience with PAS is in the category of highly professional and responsive organisation”



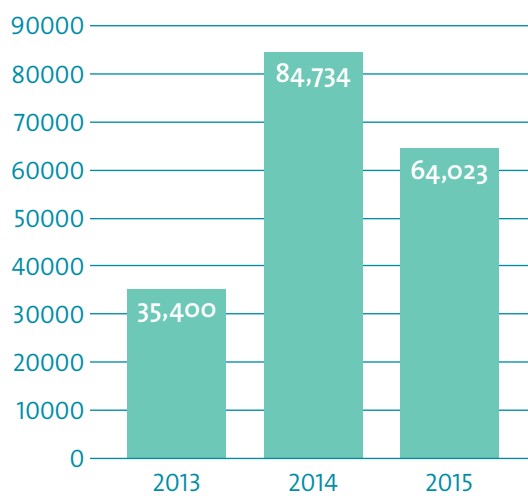
“I am particularly impressed by the quality of the briefing and advice received from the officials who attend the interviews and who guide us in a most professional but entirely neutral and impartial manner. PAS, in my view, can be very proud of its exceptionally high standards and professionalism”.

The aim of achieving sustainable growth in volume of business handled was achieved in 2015 with a 36% increase in campaigns handled over the previous year. There was also a 59% increase in the number of assignments made.

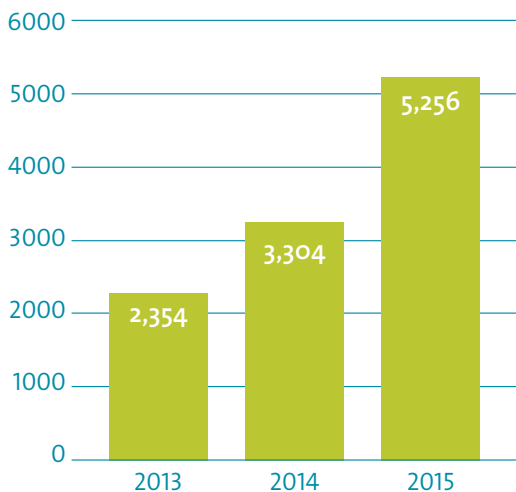
No. of Campaigns Advertised



No. of Applications



No. of Assignments



Increase client engagement and collaboration while providing superior customer service to our clients

PAS commits, in its Strategy Statement, to embedding a client relations culture and promoting collaborative approaches to improving outcomes, through clear points of contact and support and by providing clients with an informed, seamless, efficient service that meets all of their needs.

PAS has continued to work with, and involve, clients throughout 2015. Clients continue to approach PAS for assistance with their recruitment needs and would like more involvement from PAS in areas outside of the traditional remit of PAS (including areas not covered by the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) legislation), should PAS resources allow. Decisions in relation to the provision of such assistance are made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the workload in PAS at that particular time.

PAS conducted a client satisfaction survey in 2015 and the results demonstrate that clients are very positive about their engagement with PAS (as can be seen below) except in the area of timescales for meeting recruitment needs. This was due in part to the unanticipated level of demand for grades such as Clerical Officer and Executive Officer in locations throughout the country. PAS is engaging with clients to address this issue for future campaigns.

Meeting Client Needs	Positive Response Rate
Satisfaction with our understanding of their recruitment needs	94% (23% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with timescales for meeting recruitment needs	40% (7% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with quality of staff assigned to them	97% (37.5% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with value added by PAS	82% (32% very satisfied)
Dealings with Staff	
Satisfaction with quality of advice provided by staff	100% (57% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with the level of courtesy demonstrated by staff	100% (75% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with efficiency in dealing with queries	85% (44% very satisfied)
Satisfaction with quality of support provided	81% (33% very satisfied)

Our targets for client satisfaction include 95% client satisfaction with the quality of new entrants and for PAS demonstrating an understanding of client recruitment needs. We achieved 97% and 94% client satisfaction in these areas respectively.

A new Client Relations Management function will be established in 2016 to communicate with clients in relation to their recruitment needs and to set expectations in relation to delivery. The new client relations management function will aim to make further progress in relation to a programme of service level agreements with clients.

Use e-enabled options at every opportunity

A further strategic objective of PAS involved maximising the use of IT solutions, including e-recruitment across our main delivery channels. This is to be achieved through increased engagement of target groups via online platforms, making progress towards an end-to-end online recruitment service with a significant move away from the use of paper in the process. Progress was made in this area in 2015, particularly in relation to paperless boards and online assessment.

Paperless Boards

In 2015 there was a continued focus on removing paper from PAS processes and delivering more services digitally. A pilot of a solution for digital interview material for interview boards was conducted in 2015. Following this pilot PAS went to tender for a paperless solution, ultimately engaging a supplier to provide a solution that offers considerable cost savings and increased information security, alongside functionality that can be extended beyond paperless interview boards to also provide remote working and business continuity solutions.

Publicjobs.ie

The aim of the publicjobs.ie website is to provide a comprehensive online recruitment facility that is easy to use and effective for both clients and candidates. The site continues to develop based on changing business practices and feedback received from users. Enhancements in 2015 included updates to the Job Alert functionality to significantly reduce the number of emails being received by registered users. There has also been a significant amount of analysis work carried out on other areas of functionality within the site including the way in which positions are advertised and the job taxonomy. In the candidate survey, conducted in 2015, there was a very high level of satisfaction with publicjobs.ie and gradpublicjobs.ie.

(Senior Management and Professional/Technical Campaigns)

Website	Positive Response Rate
Ease of use	85%
Quality of information	92%

(Large Volume Campaigns)

Website	Positive Response Rate
Ease of use	91%
Quality of information	91%

Online Assessment

In 2012 the Board of the Public Appointments Service endorsed a move to online testing for large volume recruitment campaigns. The purpose of the change was to maximise the efficient use of resources, particularly since the Public Appointments Service was working with significantly reduced staff numbers at that time.

Online testing was initially introduced for specialist graduate and third secretary campaigns in 2012 and 2013 and the online testing worked very effectively. The feedback from both candidates and staff members was that it was a fair and convenient approach to tests and candidates preferred taking tests at their convenience rather than coming to take paper and pencil tests at regional centres. In moving to an online approach, PAS was very mindful of the importance of adhering to best practice under the nine grounds of the equality legislation and online campaigns are designed in such a way as to use a range of assessment instruments and to avoid adverse impact; PAS monitor all of the online assessments very carefully to this end. PAS also devote significant resources to facilitating people with disabilities and the experience is that online tests are very helpful and fair in this regard.

In 2015, 28,269 candidates completed online tests for 10 campaigns. PAS has found that online testing is a very effective and efficient approach to managing large volume campaigns. Evidence collected by PAS has found that people doing well on the online tests are performing very well at subsequent assessment stages, and PAS has had positive feedback on the calibre of people being appointed from recent campaigns.

In 2015, PAS introduced the use of technology into the Assessment Centre campaigns, with the introduction of the E-tray to both the Executive Officer and Assistant Principal campaigns. An E-tray is a dynamic and interactive online assessment exercise which replicates tasks faced in the work context. Candidates are provided with information about a work situation which would be typical of the type of tasks faced by job-holders. As time passes in the exercise they get e-mail and phone call messages that they have to respond to in real time and they also have to produce some written output, which is done online. Candidates have responded very positively to what they have seen as challenging but realistic assessments.

Demonstrate and communicate knowledge and expertise

PAS is committed to providing evidence-informed expertise to the public service and positioning PAS as a valued expert contributor to key interdepartmental and sectoral HR resourcing related fora. In 2015 PAS focused on contributing to the wider strategic HR agenda, working with clients on assessment development, and continuing to focus on the area of benchmarking in order to share and increase awareness of good practice.

PAS recognised the developments in strategic HR in the civil service and the importance of involvement in working groups with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and others, including:

- › Civil Service Renewal Process
- › Civil Service Personnel Officers Network
- › Assistant Secretary Network
- › Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies
- › Civil Service Graduate Development Programme Implementation Group
- › Head of ICT Network
- › Quality Customer Service Network

PAS contributes to these networks by sharing its experience of recruiting, its knowledge of the marketplace challenges and its awareness of current and emerging good practices in recruitment and selection.

Assessment Development

In addition to the development of the E-trays discussed previously, PAS has delivered on a programme of development of new selection tools in 2015. PAS is a leader in the development of online assessment questionnaires and they have proven to be a very efficient and effective sifting tool alongside online tests. PAS developed a new bespoke assessment questionnaire for Temporary Clerical Officers and for Firefighters in Dublin Fire Brigade. As well as acting as an efficient assessment tool, the questionnaires are useful in giving candidates an insight into the realities of the role so they can self-select out of the process if the role would not suit them, thereby improving the overall suitability of the candidate field. A new graduate-level situational judgement test was also designed in 2015, in close partnership with graduates and their line managers in a range of government departments.

Training

Due to the high levels of activity in PAS, there is strong demand for PAS Representatives (people who work with interview boards to uphold the Codes of Practice, act as note taker and provide advice and guidance to the board). PAS held two training sessions for PAS representatives in 2015. The first session was a refresher course for existing PAS representatives. The second was for a group of people new to PAS; participants were offered the opportunity to shadow existing PAS Representatives before being used in this critical role.

Benchmarking

PAS has continued benchmarking of ongoing practice in the area of assessment, and as well as sharing learning at a number of industry events, a member of the Assessment Services Unit delivered a paper to the Division of Work and Organisational Psychology Conference of the British Psychological Society on “High stakes recruitment in the public eye”. The presentation was an opportunity for PAS to share its learning of selection and recruitment in the context of high volumes of candidates and in an environment characterised by public and media interest. The paper focused on the Garda Trainee campaign in particular and shared the methodology for the campaign as well as the quality assurance processes. The role and impact of social media was highlighted as well as some of the issues faced by PAS and how they were handled and addressed.

The Association of Test Publishers (ATP) held their annual conference in Dublin in 2015. This is a significant international event at which the heads of HR convene to discuss developments in assessment methodologies. For the two days preceding the conference a Special Interest Group meeting of the ATP for the public sector took place. At the request of European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), PAS hosted this meeting in Farmleigh House. Attendees included senior representatives from a range of bodies such as EPSO, Australian Medical Council, European Central Bank, United Nations Population Fund, the World Bank, the UN and the Council Of Europe as well as representatives from a number of member states including the UK, Sweden, Malta, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Estonia, and test publishers from around the world. PAS co-presented a paper at the conference with EPSO titled “*The Competency Based Approach – the challenges, the future, the alternatives*” and presented a second paper on self-selection and self-assessment tools. Feedback on the event was very positive.

In September 2015 PAS facilitated a one-week study visit from a delegation of 17 Civil Servants from Bosnia and Herzegovina (including those with leadership roles in Civil Service Agencies and Government ministries) as part of an EU funded project. PAS delivered an engaging and informative programme covering areas such as efficient recruitment and selection, improving existing recruitment and selection policies, capacity building in central and peripheral HRM units and the development of HR planning, with expert speakers from within PAS and from a number of other Departments / Offices, including Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Office of the Revenue Commissioners and the Commission for Public Service Appointments.

As part of our role in supporting the drive to increase awareness of career opportunities for graduates in EU institutions and international organisations, PAS attended the Career Development Roundtable (CDR) and Careers Fair, in Madrid in November 2015. The two-day CDR had a well thought through agenda with five parallel streams of seminars / workshops, all with high relevance to public service related recruitment activity and good practice.

Enablers – Our People

It is recognised that staff are the key element in delivering our demanding work programme each year. PAS aims to provide challenging and interesting work to allow staff to deliver to their full potential; to strengthen the focus, capabilities and skills of staff; to embed a culture of continuous improvement; and maintain effective communication throughout the organisation.

PAS is committed to being a learning organisation which recognises and makes best use of the contribution of all of its staff.

Training and Development

- › A range of training and development programmes were put in place for staff in 2015, including a management development programme for section managers; disability equality testing training for those staff involved in testing candidates; and data protection, equality and plain English training for all staff.
- › PAS staff availed of our refund-of-fees scheme to undertake graduate and post-graduate courses of benefit to them and the organisation. PAS made the best use of the skills being developed by ensuring staff were placed in areas where their skills could best be used.

Human Resource Management Benchmarking

PAS was successful in the annual NSAI assessment for Excellence Through People (ETP) accreditation. The focus of ETP is to get organisations to look at their people as a key source of competitive advantage. The model helps organisations achieve business improvement by:

- › Putting the right human resource systems in place to maximise employee contribution;
- › Aligning people practices with the goals of the organisation;
- › Maximising the investment in human resource management.

The process for business improvement covers six core sections. These sections are:

- › Business planning and continuous improvement;
- › Effective communication and people engagement;
- › Leadership and people management;
- › Planning of learning and development;
- › Evaluation of learning and development;
- › Human resource systems and employee wellbeing.

The assessor was on site for the assessment, reviewing written evidence of compliance with the standard, and interviewing a selection of staff in the office. The assessor examined three of the six areas and followed up on recommendations made in the previous assessment in 2014.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity are central to the culture of the organisation. PAS ensure this through:

- › Equality-proofing all of the new assessment and selection techniques;
- › Conducting equality monitoring on all large-volume tests;
- › The implementation of our internal Equality and Diversity Policy and Accessibility Action Plan which are monitored by the Equality Monitoring Group (who also monitor adherence to the requirements of the Disability Act);
- › Including Equality and Diversity issues as part of the Corporate Orientation Programme for all new staff; and providing Disability Awareness and Diversity Awareness training for staff;
- › The development of a booklet entitled 'Features and services of the Public Appointments Service for customers with special needs'. This information booklet highlights the various aspects of the accessible recruitment service provided and the physical accessibility of the office in general. It focuses on reassuring customers with special needs that PAS has the facilities and services necessary to allow them take part in the recruitment process of their choice in a fair and impartial manner. This booklet is available on the website.
- › Involvement in the WAM Programme – Willing Able Mentoring Programme. This is a work placement project held in conjunction with the Equality Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, AHEAD and PAS. This programme encourages graduates to undertake a six-month work placement. 40 candidates were interviewed for this programme in May 2015. PAS took on one successful graduate to work on the area of marketing for six months; other graduates were offered placements in other Government organisations.

Staff Engagement

PAS is able to deliver on a very large workload because of the flexibility and commitment demonstrated by staff. PAS ensure that staff are engaged through ongoing leadership, staff development and communication.

In the Civil Service wide Employee Engagement Survey, PAS staff participated at a level of 86% compared to a civil-service average of 42%. PAS scored very well in the results on engagement, which underpins the excellent work staff do to deliver for clients and candidates. In the survey, PAS scored highest in three out of four of the main categories (set out below):

Area	PAS Score	Highest Score	Average Score
Well-being	81%	81%	75%
Employee Engagement	77%	77%	70%
Commitment to the Organisation	63%	63%	48%
Coping with Change	72%	73%	69%

PAS also conducted its own staff survey earlier in 2015, and satisfaction levels were very high. There were high staff satisfaction levels in some key areas which are set out below.

Area	Positive Response Rate
My manager allows me to take responsibility for my work	100%
I received the training and development required to carry out my job	90.5%
I think this is a healthy and safe place to work	87%
I feel that people treat each other with respect	94%
I feel I can use my initiative to make suggestions for improvements in the work I do	95%
I think the office provides good facilities for staff with disabilities	94%
I would speak highly to people externally about the work we do	94%
I go the "extra mile" to deliver for our customers	100%

An action plan has been put in place to address any issues identified in both surveys and to implement suggestions received from staff as part of this process, including suggestions which relate to improved services to external customers. This action plan will be implemented through the Partnership Committee and the Senior Management Team.

Quality Improvement Programme

PAS has implemented a quality improvement programme which consists of the implementation of a Quality Action Plan. The actions included in the plan are based on areas identified for improvement from a range of sources, including feedback from customer groups; recommendations from internal quality reviews of campaigns; feedback from reviews conducted by internal reviewers or decision arbitrators under the CPSA Code of Practice review processes. The actions range from business improvement initiatives to improvements to the services provided to candidates, clients and selection board members.

PAS also started a number of Lean Business Projects in 2015, a number of which were implemented. The outstanding projects have been incorporated into one of the various Strategic Projects identified for delivery in 2016.





Governance and Management

The Board of PAS

The Board of PAS was established in 2004 under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004. The Code of Practice for the Board was drawn up in accordance with “The Combined Code of Corporate Governance” and “The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies”, published by the Department of Finance. It reflects the legislation governing this Office (i.e. the 2004 Act). The Code of Practice was revised in 2015. The Board discusses operational activity levels, finances and risk, as well as a number of key strategic issues at each meeting.

The Board of PAS

Chairman

Ms Judith Eve, former Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Commissioners

Board Members

Ms Fiona Tierney, Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service

Mr Paul Lemass, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government

Dr Eddie Molloy, HR Consultant

Ms Anne-Marie Taylor, HR Consultant

Ms Eimear Kenny, Senior HR Executive






Ms Oonagh McPhillips, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice and Equality

Mr Damien McCallion, National Director, HSE

Mr David Cagney, Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Management Board

The Corporate Senior Executive team, known as the Management Board, meet formally on a fortnightly basis to discuss matters with a strategic focus. The meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive. In addition to these meetings, the Management Board and all senior managers, meet on a weekly basis to consider operational recruitment matters and the corporate affairs of the organisation.

Members of the Management Board	
Name and Role	Responsibilities
<p>Fiona Tierney, Chief Executive, Public Appointments Service</p> 	<p>Implementation of Board policy and strategy, and the management and operation of the Public Appointments Service</p>
<p>Niall Byrne, Head of Corporate Affairs and State Boards</p> 	<p>Providing all of the support corporate services to allow PAS deliver on its work programme including developing the use of e-enabled options and ensuring the enablers in relation to people, governance, technology, processes and facilities, are provided. Responsible for the PAS role in relation to State Boards</p>
<p>Niall Leavy, Head of Strategic Projects</p> 	<p>Demonstrating and communicating PAS knowledge and expertise, including benchmarking and research, developing and implementing a marketing and social media strategy, and working on strategic projects.</p>
<p>Áine Gray, Head of Assessment Services</p> 	<p>Design and implementation of best-practice assessment processes to select candidates for our clients, and provision of assurance in this area.</p>
<p>Margaret McCabe, Head of Recruitment and Selection</p> 	<p>Overall responsibility for managing the running of all recruitment campaigns handled by PAS.</p>

Members of the Management Board	
Name and Role	Responsibilities
<p>Mary Flynn, Lead Manager, Justice Group</p> 	<p>Delivery of recruitment services in relation to Garda Trainee, Garda Reserve and Prison Officer and management of the Justice sector / agencies; provision of advisory services.</p>
<p>Michelle Noone, Head of Executive Search, Marketing and Communications</p> 	<p>Using executive search methodologies to identify high-quality candidates for Senior Executive and Board level appointments.</p>

Organisation Structure

The Recruitment and Selection Services Unit (RSSU) carries out the core business functions of PAS. RSSU consists of seven recruitment teams and a clearance and assignment team, each headed up by a Recruitment Manager. Each team has a core responsibility, but the structure is flexible enough to focus resources where demand is greatest at any given time. A specialist team has also been established with responsibility for the State Boards process.

RSSU is assisted by the Office's key support units: Assessment Services, Executive Search and Marketing, Information Technology, Finance Unit, Customer Relations and Operations Support, Human Resources Unit, and Business Support Unit.

The main purpose of the Assessment Services Unit is to provide assurance that PAS selection processes deliver required outcomes and are in compliance with the obligations of PAS, both under the law and under relevant statutory Codes of Practice. This unit develops and delivers appropriate and specific assessment processes which are relevant, effective and fair to candidates. The implementation, on-going monitoring and evaluation of such processes is also carried out by the Unit.

The Executive Search Unit supports the recruitment units, primarily the Senior Executive Recruitment and State Board functions. The objective of this Unit is to source and attract a pool of highly qualified potential candidates for TLAC and the broader civil and public sector. Roles are typically at Secretary General, Assistant Secretary, Head of Function, Board-level Non-Executive or areas of specialist expertise. Candidates are typically sourced from the public and private sector in Ireland and internationally.

The Marketing Unit is responsible for ensuring that PAS is the recruitment and resourcing provider of choice in the public sector by marketing to potential candidates in the civil, public and private sectors through advertising, promotion at events, social media and industry publications. The Unit also promotes client organisations by raising awareness of potential roles and opportunities through the gradpublicjobs, publicjobs and stateboards website brands.

The Audit Committee

The members of the Audit Committee are:

- Chairperson:** Ms Sylva Langford, former Director General, Office of the Minister for Children
- Members:** Mr Michael Culhane, Executive Director of Finance and Service, Garda Headquarters
Mr William Beausang, Assistant Secretary, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Board Nominee from February to June 2015)
- Mr Paul Lemass, Assistant Secretary, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (Board Nominee from June 2015)
- Mr Brian Murphy, Assistant Principal, PAS

The Audit Committee carries out functions in relation to the following areas:

- › Internal Control
- › Governance and Risk Management
- › Internal Audit
- › External Audit
- › Financial Management
- › Reporting Functions

During 2015, the Committee continued to focus on developing its role in providing an enhanced level of support to the Accounting Officer in all aspects of the internal audit function. A Strategic Audit Plan for 2016 -2018 was developed in 2015 and approved by the Audit Committee and the Board of PAS.

The following four audit reports were presented to the Internal Audit Committee during 2015:

- › Data Protection
- › Business Continuity
- › Payroll
- › Health and Safety

All audits were conducted by a firm of Internal Auditors who were retained (following a procurement exercise) for such audit services by PAS. No significant risk or assurance issues were identified as a result of any of these audits, and the Audit Committee was satisfied that the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the reports will strengthen the existing controls in these areas.

Risk Management

PAS has developed a Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Policy appropriate to the office. An internal Risk Management Group oversees the implementation and monitoring of this process. The Group report to the Internal Audit Committee at each meeting. Updates on current risks facing the organisation are given to the Board at each meeting. The Corporate Risk Register was completely reviewed in 2015; it is discussed by the Management Board on a regular basis.

Data Protection

Data is essential to the administrative business of PAS. In collecting personal data from our candidates, selection board members, suppliers and staff members, PAS has a responsibility to use it both effectively and ethically. In striking the necessary balance between an individual's right to privacy and the legitimate business requirements of PAS, it is critical that all staff work to the highest attainable standards. The PAS Code on the Protection of Personal Data was reviewed in 2015, and data-protection training was delivered to all staff (this was a compulsory training module for all staff in PAS) and is provided to all new staff as soon as they start work in PAS. Five data protection requests were received in 2015.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

PAS has one designated FOI Decision Maker and one Internal Reviewer (with an alternative for each role should the Decision Maker/Internal Reviewer be absent or involved in the subject matter in any way). 56 FOI requests were received in 2015. Ten requests for Internal Review of FOI decisions were received in 2015 and one requester made an application for further review to the Information Commissioner.

Compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003

In 2013 the PAS published its second Irish Language Scheme. This Scheme was based on the guidelines of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The content of the Scheme was informed by PAS experience of delivering on commitments made in the first Scheme; the submissions made by the public; ongoing feedback from customers; a review of the level of demand for services in the Irish language and suggestions put forward by staff of PAS. PAS continues to deliver on these commitments and to build on the progress achieved over the period of the last scheme. The Scheme is available on publicjobs.ie.

The Management Board keeps the effective operation of the Scheme under review. Responsibility for the day-to-day monitoring of the Scheme rests with senior management of the organisation. As the role of PAS evolves over time, every effort is made to take advantage of any new opportunities to enhance the service provided through Irish to members of the public. With respect to 2015, PAS was compliant with all commitments made in the scheme.

Guidelines for Appointments to positions not under the remit of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004

From time to time PAS is requested to conduct, or assist with, recruitment and selection processes which do not fall under the remit of this Act. In 2015, PAS developed Guidelines to provide guidance in respect of the recruitment processes conducted outside of the Act. The Guidelines also set out the requirements in relation to the conduct of candidates in the selection process. The Guidelines are based on the CPSA Codes of Practice thereby ensuring that a standardised and fair approach to recruitment is adopted in all campaigns conducted by PAS.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

Summary of Recruitment Activity 1 January – 31 December 2015				
	Total number of Applications Received	Number Interviewed at Prelims & Main		Number Assigned / Recommended
Civil Service				
Clerical including Temporary Recruitment	14,143	3,636		3,433
Administrative	24,566	1,371		341
Senior Management	418	140		14
Professional/Technical/Specialist posts	4,469	1,274		326
Total	43,596	6,421		4,114
Local Authorities	12,846	1,212		76
- Health Sector	451	99		111
Total	13,297	1,311		187
Garda		669		885
Processes conducted for public bodies outside of the remit of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004				
Other Public Service Bodies	739	169		40
Total	739	169		40
Top Level Appointments Committee	Total Number of Applications Received	Number Interviewed	Number of campaigns completed	Number of recommendations
Total	895	299	28	30

Selection/Testing Services Provided			
	Total Number of Applications Received	Number Tested	
Mature Code Nursing	1,639	1,368	
Total	1,639	1,368	
Overall Totals	Number of Applications	Number Interviewed	Number Assigned/Recommended
	60,166	8,869	5,256
Total Number of Campaigns Advertised 2015			
464			

State Boards		
Total Number of Applications Received	Number of Names Sent to Client for Submission to Minister	Number of Appointments Made
3,857	919	206

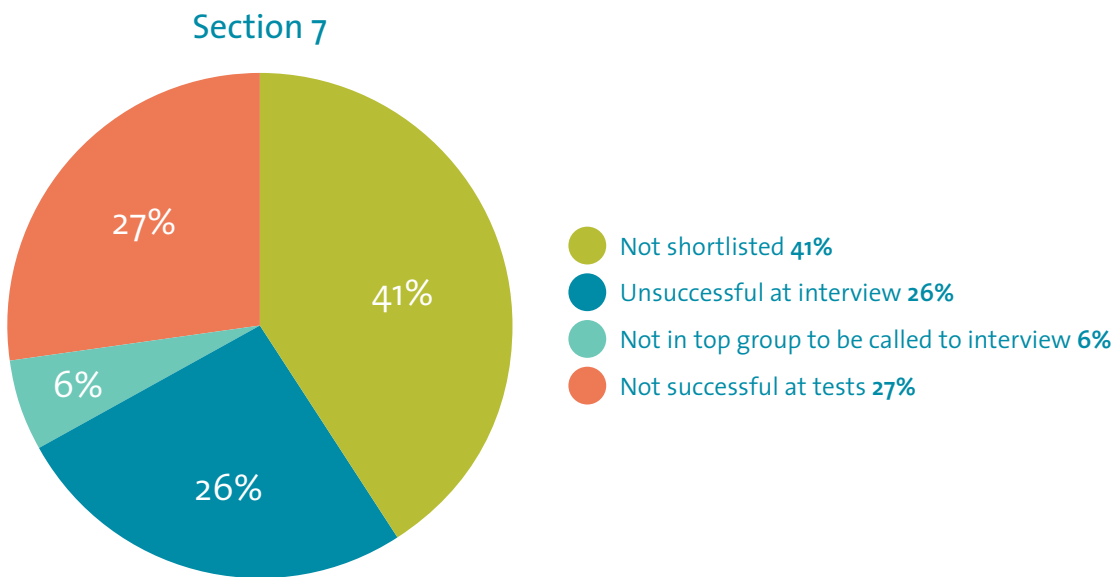
APPENDIX II

Requests for Review Appeals

The Commission for Public Service Appointments has published procedures to be followed when dealing with candidates' requests for review and candidates' complaints in relation to appointments processes. Requests for reviews and complaints received generally fall under Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice for Appointments to Positions in the Civil Service and Public Service. Section 7 deals with requests for review of a decision taken in relation to an application and Section 8 deals with allegations of a breach of the code of practice. The statistics for 2015 in relation to both Section 7 and Section 8 are as follows:

Section 7	Section 8
174	43

The chart below shows the breakdown of the selection stages involved in the requests for Section 7 reviews.



APPENDIX III

Overview of Energy Usage in 2015

The main energy usage relates to heating/lighting and providing water in the office in Chapter House.

In 2015, 878.59 MWh of energy was consumed, consisting of:

- › 734.6 MWh of electricity;
- › 143.99 MWh of fossil fuels;
- › 0 of renewable fuels.

Actions Undertaken in 2015

In 2015, PAS undertook a range of initiatives to improve the energy performance, including:

- › Raising staff awareness of energy savings through promotional material and reminders in relation to energy usage
- › Close monitoring and control of energy usage including manual interventions with the heating system controls
- › A reduction of 132.66 MWh of electricity was achieved on 2014 usage
- › A reduction of 116.40 MWh of fossil fuels was achieved on 2014 usage

PAS was included as a case study in the Making Progress section of the Annual Report 2015 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance prepared by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland for its Targeted Energy Management Programme. This programme resulted in a 53% reduction in natural gas usage and a 39% savings in energy costs.

Actions planned for 2016

In 2016, PAS intend to further improve the energy performance by undertaking the following initiatives:

- › Continue to raise staff awareness in relation to energy savings
- › Continue to manually intervene in heating system controls until building management system has been put in place
- › Upgrade local heating / air conditioning control panels for more efficient usage

APPENDIX IV

EXPENDITURE

		2015
		Outturn
		€000
i	Salaries, wages and allowances	5,218
ii	Travel and subsistence	86
iii	Training and development and incidental expenses	281
iv	Postal and telecommunications services	109
v	Office equipment and external IT services	748
vi	Office premises expenses	184
vii	Recruitment costs- research and corporate governance	56
viii	Recruitment costs - advertising and testing	1,023
ix	Recruitment Costs - interview boards	1,097
		8,802

