



Croke Park Implementation Body reports €289m in pay savings

On 15th June, the Croke Park Implementation Body published its first annual report on progress under the Agreement. The role of the Body is to drive implementation of the Agreement and the Action Plans developed in each sector of the Public Service. Its Report deals with the savings generated and reform delivered over the first year of the Agreement.

The Body concluded that “solid and measurable” progress has been made by the parties to the Agreement in the first year. It found that sustainable paybill savings of €289m were achieved during the review period. These savings were driven primarily by a 5,349 reduction in staff numbers. Other factors such as reductions in overtime costs and paybill savings resulting from changed work practices, rationalisation etc. also contributed to these savings.

The Report also details examples of non-pay savings worth some €308m generated through better use of resources – re-organising work and achieving greater internal efficiencies. It also highlights examples of redeployment, reform and reconfiguration of services taking place across the public service.

While acknowledging the important progress that has been made, the Body has cautioned, however, that

there is a need for more “urgency and ambition” in the coming weeks and months, in light of the fiscal situation and it has pointed to some of the issues that need to be taken forward as a priority. The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform has welcomed the progress achieved but has agreed with the Body’s assessment about the need to up the pace of implementation over the remainder of 2011.

“We need to move forward quickly to build on the important progress that has been achieved to date and accelerate the delivery and implementation of urgently needed reform.”

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr. Brendan Howlin, T.D.

Examples of savings and progress highlighted in the Implementation Body’s report:

- A voluntary early retirement scheme and voluntary redundancy scheme for certain staff categories were implemented in late 2010, under which 2,025 people (or 1,626 whole-time equivalents) left the public health service.
- The restructuring of the Medical Laboratories working day and week, which will lead to a full year saving of some €5m.
- Reconfiguration within the prison service which has avoided the need for additional recruitment.
- Reduction of 2,000 posts of responsibility in primary and post-primary schools, with a consequential saving of the order of €10m annually. These posts broadly equate to promotion posts in teaching and their number will continue to decline in line with the ongoing moratorium.
- Substantial progress on organisational rationalisation and restructuring in the Defence Forces.
- The introduction of additional working time in schools, which will avoid in particular potential costs for supervision before and after school and which will deliver benefits for parents (many schools are using this time to hold parent teacher meetings at times more suitable to working parents).
- The National Public Procurement Office has facilitated savings of €39m in procurement costs across Departments and Offices.
- Major redeployment into the Department of Social Protection, including 507 staff from Government Departments, in response to the increased demands created by the increase in the Live Register and the transfer of almost 1,000 staff in the Community Welfare Service from the HSE by the end of 2011. This is one of the first major cross-sectoral redeployment initiatives under Croke Park and will mean a better, more integrated service to clients and will generate savings for the Exchequer. In addition, work is underway to transfer up to 700 staff into the Department from Fás.
- Outsourcing of safety camera operations in An Garda Síochána with full roll out of the Safety Camera project (6,000 hours of speed monitoring carried out by GoSafe every month) freeing up Gardaí for other critical frontline duties.

Solid progress made...but a lot more to do!



The Implementation Body will be conducting another round of reporting in October and this represents another important milestone in the

context of delivery under the Agreement. Public Service bodies will be required to submit reports setting out the very latest state of play on the various

commitments in their Action Plans. It is hoped that substantial progress can be reported on the remaining priority issues by this point and this will be important if the Agreement is to be judged as being on track. Another important development on the horizon is the Government’s Comprehensive Review of Expenditure which will be concluded by the autumn. The framework of the Croke Park Agreement will be critical to delivering the further restructuring and reform that will flow from this process and Action Plans will need to be reviewed towards the end of the year to take account of this.

The First Progress Report and supporting documentation relating to the annual review are available on the Body’s website: www.implementationbody.gov.ie

Conference on Croke Park Agreement – One Year On

Building on the series of highly successful Public Service reform conferences over the past year, a half-day conference on “The Croke Park Agreement - One Year On” took place on the morning of Thursday, 30th June.

The conference was fittingly held in the Croke Park Conference Centre and featured senior speakers from Government, the Croke Park Implementation Body and Public Service management and trade unions. P.J. Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Implementation Body, chaired the proceedings and the opening address was given by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin, T.D.

Shay Cody, General Secretary of IMPACT and member of the

Implementation Body, gave a staff side perspective on the implementation of the Agreement and discussed the staff contribution to reform across the Public Service. Robert Watt, Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and also a member of the Implementation Body then set out the next steps in the reform process.

In the second session of the morning, Michael Scanlan, Secretary General of the Department of Health, and Niamh O'Donoghue, Secretary General of

the Department of Social Protection, discussed changes in the health sector and the Department of Social Protection respectively.

With almost 400 delegates in attendance, interesting discussions took place involving the audience and speakers during panel discussions.

Details of this and future events can be seen at: www.per.gov.ie



Ms Elaine Cassidy and Mr Richard Troy, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform



Left to Right: Mr P.J. Fitzpatrick (Chair of Implementation Body), Mr Charles Collier, Ordnance Survey Ireland and Ms Geraldine Murphy, Ordnance Survey Ireland



Mr Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform



Delegates at the Conference



Mr Raymond Philpott and Ms Pauline Treanor from the Rotunda Hospital



Mr Michael Scanlon, Secretary General, Department of Health and Ms Niamh O'Donoghue, Secretary General, Department of Social Protection



Left to Right: Ms Eilish Hardiman, National Paediatric Hospital Development Board, Mr Tim Duggan, CMOD, Ms Ginny Hanrahan, Health & Social Care Professionals Council