



## 60 YEARS Peacekeeping

"This year marks the 60th anniversary of Ireland's participation in UN peacekeeping. For six decades, tens of thousands of Irish women and men have worn the blue helmets and berets on UN peacekeeping operations, particularly on missions in Africa and the Middle East. Our Prime Minister stated here at UN Headquarters in July: "We are as proud of the blue helmet as we are of the harp or the shamrock" – two emblems that are closely associated with Ireland.

Today, there are more than 500 Irish Defence Forces personnel deployed on UN peacekeeping missions, including more than 350 women and men on the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon, a mission that we have been contributing to for 40 years now. Ireland is the highest per capita European Union contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping with deployments to 6 UN missions across the Middle East and Africa."

The Tánaiste, Mr Simon Coveney, at the General Assembly of the UN on 29 September 2018.

## The Defence Forces and Peacekeeping

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*By Prof. Ray Murphy*

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Since participation in the UN observer mission in Lebanon (UNOGIL) in 1958, peacekeeping has become a major operational role of the Defence Forces. To date 87 Irish personnel have lost their lives on UN missions. Ireland's first major involvement in peacekeeping was in the Congo (ONUC) in 1960. The equipment, training and other military aspects of Irish involvement today compares favourably with the Congo in the early 1960's. The first army battalions that formed up for



duty in the Congo were not well equipped. Soldiers arrived to the sweltering heat in heavy bullswool uniforms and with bolt-action rifles. The strength of the army then was around 8,000 and

most of the men were absorbed doing routine barrack duty. This meant there was little time training and basic military skills were lacking.

Although ONUC proved a baptism of fire and steep learning curve, to its credit Ireland did not waver in its support for the mission. An Irish contingent was still in the Congo when a request was received for another unit to participate in the UN peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. At one stage there were over 1,000 troops in Cyprus while the strength of the Army was less than 8,000 personnel. Given the relatively small size of the Defence Forces, a large number of officers have also served in senior command and staff appointments with UN peacekeeping missions, most recently Maj Gen Michael Beary as Force Commander UNIFIL. In this way Ireland has been consistent in its support for the UN and related peacekeeping operations since the late 1950's.

The UN Secretary-General again requested that Ireland contribute a unit to form part of the UNIFIL in 1978. Ireland is still contributing troops to this mission and despite its often hazardous nature; the Government has generally expressed its continued support. The Irish contribution to UNIFIL was, up to recently, an example of the evolution in Irish participation from stand alone exclusively Irish battalions, to joint battalions with another state. The practice of working with the Finns emerged from the experience with KFOR, but it was more a 'marriage of



convenience' than a policy or strategy driven decision based on common goals. Nonetheless, the arrangement was considered to serve the interest of all parties.

## Guidelines governing Irish Participation in Peacekeeping

The 1996 White Paper on Foreign Policy set out guidelines to be taken into account when deciding whether or not to participate in UN peacekeeping. The White Paper on Defence (2000) set out additional factors for consideration, including:

- on-going developments in UN peace support operations;
- the evolution of European security structures;
- and the resource implications for the defence budget.

Owing to the number, size and complexity of operations, it was deemed necessary to develop a selective response to requests based on certain factors, including an assessment of whether a peacekeeping operation is the most appropriate response to the situation; how the mission relates to the priorities of Irish foreign policy; the degree of risk involved and the level of existing commitments.

It is difficult to access the application of the guidelines to particular missions as this is not reflected in parliamentary debates and government decisions in cabinet are confidential. However, it does appear that risk assessment, mission resources and overall cost are significant factors.

## Impact of peacekeeping

As Ireland did not participate in UNPROFOR, the negative impact this mission had on other European countries participation in UN peacekeeping did not occur here. Risk assessment was one factor in Ireland's decision not to participate, another was the commitments to other UN missions at the time. Amongst these was a Transport Company to UNOSOM II from August 1993 to January 1995. It also maintained a substantial commitment to UNIFIL in Lebanon until 2001.

Although it is difficult to assess the impact of UN peacekeeping on the Defence Forces, it is evident that what is generally referred as 'overseas service' has always been viewed as a welcome respite from routine at home. It also boosted morale and recruitment while increasing the income of personnel by way of overseas allowances. However, it was the new sense of purpose, which the army felt in the 1960's that provided the most significant boost to morale.

More importantly, peacekeeping operations have consistently provided a training ground for an army of Ireland's size and resources. The training and exercising of units for UN service annually is probably the most obvious non-monetary benefit of Ireland's present level of commitment to UNIFIL and UNDOF. Contributions to other missions allow officers to hold

appointments in international forces that would otherwise not be open to them.

Although the Irish commitment to the UNOSOM forces in the 1990's was quite

small, the decision to participate had significant implications. It was the first time Irish soldiers participated in a Chapter VII peace enforcement operation and it set a precedent that marked a watershed in Irish peacekeeping activities thereafter and a realisation that Ireland could be left behind in the changing nature of the international security environment unless it too adapted to events.



In 1999, Ireland agreed to contribute a transport company to Kosovo as part of KFOR. There was nothing radical in this decision, and their role was similar to that performed by the Irish contingent with UNOSOM II.

Nonetheless, Irish involvement in the former Yugoslavia set the scene for a longer-term re-orientation of participation in peacekeeping away from the more traditional roles of the past. Ireland later participated in the UN approved international intervention in the then East Timor. Although the contribution was modest, initially a platoon of special forces and later a regular infantry platoon, Irish involvement lasted until May 2004. In the same year, Ireland also joined the NATO led PfP, thus paving the way for more significant involvement in UN approved but potentially NATO or EU led crisis management/peacekeeping operations. Although Ireland advocates for a strong EU contribution to UN peacekeeping, there is no evidence that this has led to a reduction in the commitment to UN led peacekeeping.

Ireland agreed to contribute to the traditional peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in 2001 and the more robust UNMIL (Liberia) operation in 2003. According to the Minister for Defence at the time, the decision to send troops to Liberia was not taken lightly. It was the largest commitment to any mission since UNIFIL and it posed many risks. The deployment indicated a commitment to a UN commanded Chapter VII peace enforcement mission with deterrence a key principle. In addition to the 90 Inf Bn, the ARW was also deployed as a special operations force under the direct command of the Force Commander. Later, the Irish/Swedish Quick Reaction Force provided the main mobility and firepower





resources for UNMIL. They were also the only European contingents operating on the ground at the time. Irish troops with UNMIL were involved in a number of high profile incidents.

## EUFOR TCHAD/RCA and MINURCAT

The 2007 decision to participate in an EU mission to Chad/CAR marked a significant evolution in Irish participation in peacekeeping. This was the first occasion that EU/UN cooperation adopted the model



whereby an EU military force and a UN mission were combined under a single UN mandate. EUFOR was a bridging operation to facilitate the simultaneous deployment of a UN police mission and other elements under the UN MINURCAT operation. Although it did have adequate military capability, this was intended for deterrence, not combat. From an Irish perspective, the mission was seen as operationally and logistically challenging. There was also controversy regarding what was seen as the premature withdrawal of Irish forces from MINURCAT, but this was linked to uncertainty over the renewal of the mandate and logistical issues.

## United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)



Since September 2013, the Defence Forces have contributed a contingent to UNDOF. Although the decision reflected well on Irish willingness to prevent the collapse of the operation following the withdrawal of Austria and Croatia, the clash with a Syrian rebel group

in 2014 led to a re-evaluation of Irish participation. Thereafter, the commitment to UN peacekeeping was going to be more conditional. This can be attributed to increased expectations over military capabilities, the need for realistic mandates and the responsibility of the government to ensure it respected the duty of care to Irish soldiers. At the international level, the decision to replace the Austrian contingent did much to challenge the perception that Ireland was risk averse when it came to peacekeeping.

## Conclusion

Today participation in multi-national peace support, crisis management and humanitarian relief operations is one of the primary roles of the Defence Forces. Despite this there has been a distinct lack of informed debate concerning the role of the Defence Forces and the move from traditional UN police operations in favour of quasi-enforcement operations. At the same time the changing nature of peacekeeping has led to a demand for multinational peacekeeping forces that are fully integrated in accordance with recognised international standards for interoperability. The development of more formal bilateral relations with other states is also becoming an increasing feature of Ireland's security and peacekeeping arrangements. Peacekeeping in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia set the scene for a longer-term re-orientation of Irish participation in international operations. This reflected the move to more complex operations often led by regional organizations with UN approval. Irish military have adapted successfully to such missions, but there remains an ongoing need to keep up to date in training, and to ensure equipment levels and standards complement this.

European states, including Ireland, remain concerned about putting personnel in harm's way and their duty of care. A major weakness in many current UN operations is combat support service. Although the strength of the Defence Forces is small by international standards, the level of training and the equipment issued to soldiers is high.

In 2005 the Minister for Defence made proposals for participation of Irish troops in EU rapid-reaction forces. This was the background to the Defence (Amendment) Act, 2006 that provided a legal framework for participation in UN approved EU, AU and OSCE missions. It also clarified the situation with regard to defence force personnel undertaking training related activities abroad. For many, this was evidence of a growing commitment to EU led operations. The most important political and legal caveat relating to Irish participation remains the requirement for UN approval and the so called 'triple lock'. The small size of the Defence Forces and the economic circumstances of the Irish state are also factors.



*Prof. Ray Murphy*

# DF Veterans' Day: 13 May 2018



*The Veterans' Day Ceremony was held in Collins Barracks, Dublin on 13 May. The event, which was hosted by the Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM and the General Officer Commanding 2 Bde, Brig Gen Howard Berney, was attended by The Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr. Paul Kehoe, T.D. The Minister welcomed our members along with members, of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) and the Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women (ONE) to Collins Bks. to acknowledge the contribution that former servicemen and women have provided to the State, both here at home and around the world.*

The Minister stated that " This is a very special year for the Defence Forces as it marks significant anniversaries in relation to Ireland's UN peacekeeping role – it is the 60th anniversary of Ireland's first participation in a UN peacekeeping mission and it is the 40th anniversary of our first deployment to Lebanon as part of the UNIFIL mission. The UNIFIL mission is the one UN mission that is most familiar to Irish people given our length of service and depth of commitment. Ireland's participation down the years in UNIFIL has illustrated the very positive and practical difference that small countries can make in the world's troubled regions".



The Minister continued, "UN peacekeeping continues to be one of the most flexible and effective tools available to the international community in responding to crises around the world. For 60 years now the men and women from the Irish Defence Forces have contributed to the cause of peace all around the world in places like Lebanon, the Congo, the Golan Heights, Chad, Liberia, East Timor and Syria (to name but a few) serving with honour and distinction. Today, Irish troops are deployed in UN, EU and NATO led missions in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Currently, there are almost 640 members of the Permanent Defence Force serving in 9 overseas missions, including UNIFIL, UNDOF and Operation Sophia in the Mediterranean Sea". He also stated "Participation in overseas peacekeeping has been an important dimension in meeting Ireland's international obligations as a member of the United Nations. But this is entirely dependent on the commitment of Defence Forces personnel over the years to serve overseas in often difficult, challenging and dangerous circumstances".

The Minister concluded his remarks by saying "The commitment, service and loyalty of members of the Defence Forces while on overseas service has contributed to the high regard in which Ireland is held within the international community. Our voice and influence in international institutions such as the UN and the EU help Ireland to promote its values of justice and tolerance and to advance our national strategic interests. I would like to commend members of the Defence Forces, whether serving or retired, for that commitment and to thank you, your families and your loved ones for the inevitable sacrifices that this has involved".

# Defence Forces Contributory Pension Scheme for Spouses and Children

ARCO EXCOM



ARCO has recently become aware that some spouses, and children, of deceased officers have been refused pensions by the Department of Defence. This issue has arisen because of the fact that there are two Contributory Spouses and Children's Pension Schemes for personnel of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF): the Original and the Revised Schemes. The Original Scheme restricts beneficiaries to spouses and children of marriages which take place prior to leaving public service employment, whereas the Revised Scheme covers post-retirement marriages, and children born outside of marriage, adopted children and children born after retirement.

The Revised Scheme was introduced with effect from 1985. Membership is compulsory for personnel joining the DF on or after the date of introduction. When the Revised Scheme was introduced serving personnel were supposed to be have been given an option to join by a certain date, and that any person who did not exercise an option to join by the required date could not subsequently be admitted to membership of the new Scheme.

It is understood that when this scheme was revised in 1985 a number of officers both at home and on United Nations service may have fallen through the cracks and missed out on the briefings for various reasons. It is also understood that some members of the Defence Forces were not fully briefed on the implications of opting not to join the revised pension scheme.

ARCO is aware that the Department of Defence 'deemed' a number of officers not to have joined the revised scheme as it appears that the Department has no record of receipt of the acknowledgement form or the option form. The Department did not inform those so 'deemed' of this determination in 1985 or at any time during their service or since they retired. When these officers retired from the Defence Forces the Department deducted monies from their gratuities and informed them in writing that this represented the balance of contributions for the Spouses'

and Children's Pension Scheme.

However, the letter did not specify which Scheme the officers concerned were in. The practice has been that if an officer married after retirement, or had a child outside of marriage, and that officer was NOT in the amended scheme his surviving widow or qualified child would NOT receive a pension. This was the position across the entire public service. However in recent years a limited appeals process for spouses' and children's scheme membership options was established to examine individual cases and to allow appeals that meet any one of the following criteria:

- (i) where there is no evidence that an option was provided to the individual public servant in the first place;
- (ii) where there is medical evidence to indicate that the person making the decision not to join the scheme was of sufficiently unsound mind not to appreciate the consequences of his or her decision, and
- (iii) where a member of the original scheme declined to join the revised scheme in circumstances where there would have been no reasonably foreseeable adverse financial consequences for the individual (in terms only of his or her scheme contributions) had he or she instead opted to join the revised scheme.

However, ARCO has concerns that in the past, spouses and children may have been refused pensions and would like to have such cases re-examined. ARCO is now aware that procedures have been put in place by the Department of Defence to ensure that any future case initially found ineligible, will be considered within the parameters of the limited appeals process. An officer must have fully contributed to the Original Scheme to be considered for this appeal mechanism.

The Executive Committee is pleased that procedures have been put in place by the Department of Defence and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to deal with future cases where

eligibility is in question. This should result in such cases being dealt with speedily. ARCO considers it essential that each retired officer be fully apprised of their current standing in relation to the revised scheme and understands that letters to all future retirees will be amended to include appropriate wording to give the name of the Scheme of which they are a member. However, if you were commissioned before 01 June 1985 and are unsure as to which scheme you are a member of, you should check with Pensions Administration Section in Galway. (Pension Admin, DOD, Renmore, Galway H91 AN2E Tel 091-743824/743838). The Executive Committee would also be interested to know if you are aware of any case in which a spouse has been denied a pension. If so, please contact your Regional Representative.

## Contacts

Link to [www.defence.ie](http://www.defence.ie)

Queries on Defence Forces pensions should, in the first instance be referred to:

- PSSC Helpdesk, Payroll Shared Service Centre, Áras an tSáile, Renmore, Galway, H91 AN2E.
- Telephone: 076 1002 702.
- Email [militarypensions@pssc.gov.ie](mailto:militarypensions@pssc.gov.ie).

Queries on Defence Forces pension terms or entitlements should in the first instance, be referred to:

- Pensions Administration Section, Finance Branch, Department of Defence, Áras an tSáile, Renmore, Galway, H91 AN2E.
- Telephone: 091 743 900, or Lo-Call 1890-426444 (extension 3900).

Email [pensions.admin@defence.ie](mailto:pensions.admin@defence.ie)

Note. ARCO EXCOM have prepared an Information Brief in relation to the "Contributory Pension Schemes for Spouses and Children". This Information Brief is available on the ARCO website at [iarco.info](http://iarco.info)



# ARCO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2018/2019

*The following were elected at the AGM, which was held on  
05 October, 2018 in McKee Bks., Dublin.*

APPOINTMENT	APPOINTEE
President	Brig Gen Paul Pakenham
Vice-President	Col George Kerton
Hon Secretary	Lt Col Joe Ahern
Hon Treasurer	Lt Col Richard Cummins
Hon Membership Secretary	Col Richard Heaslip

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES	
Eastern Region	Col George Kerton
Eastern Region	Comdt Billy Campbell
Southern Region	Lt Col Michael Baston
Southern Region	Col William Harrington
Western Region	Brig Gen Gerry McNamara
Western Region	Col Senan Downes
DFTC Region	Lt Col Seamus Rouine
DFTC Region	Col Con McNamara
NS Region	Cmdr Gerry O' Flynn
NS Region	Capt Dave Barry Coopted at 1st EXCOM meeting
AC Region	Capt Ray Bonar
AC Region	Brig Gen Paul Fry

AUDITOR and TRUSTEES	
Auditor	Comdt Pat Casey
Trustee	Col Billy Nott
Trustee	Capt Ray Murphy
Trustee	Lt Col Pat Godfrey

CO-OPTIONS	
Newsletter	Col Declan Carbery
CAOGA	Lt Col Sean Scanlon
DFBF	Brig Gen Liam MacNamee

*ARCO congratulate Brig Gen Paul Pakenham (Retd) on his election as President of the Association. We would also like to thank Cmdr Gerry O'Flynn (Retd) for his excellent stewardship of ARCO during the period of his Presidency of the Association*

# Statement of Concern

ARCO issued the following statement ahead of a march on the Dáil on Wednesday, 19th September 2018. The march was organised by former soldiers and members of the Wives and Partners of the Defence Forces (WPDF).

*Statement of Concern from the Association of Retired Commissioned Officers (ARCO) on the serious deterioration of conditions of service and the depletion of strategic defence capabilities in the Defence Forces.*

The Association of Retired Commissioned Officers feels obliged to express its deep concern at the progressive deterioration of the conditions of service of members of the Defence Forces, and its dramatic impact on depleting the strategic capabilities required to deliver the Government's taskings, in the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service.

The Permanent Defence Force is currently struggling to cope with the continuous exodus of trained and experienced personnel of all ranks. The resulting depletion of leadership echelons and corporate military knowledge, is leading to a further strategic deterioration of defence capabilities, caused by the

inability to retain personnel across all ranks having the necessary skills and competencies, and the challenges encountered with attracting appropriate personnel to the Defence Forces.

It is regrettable that the loyalty, commitment, contribution and immense personal sacrifices made by personnel in implementing the strategic downsizing and reorganization of the Defence Forces, is undermined and negated by the lack of meaningful Government action in providing appropriate remuneration and enduring conditions of service for personnel of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

For many who served in the years that led to the establishment of the Gleeson Commission, it is extraordinary that we are witnessing a return to a similar set of circumstances by way of active protest undertaken by retired personnel, and the families of serving personnel, highlighting unsatisfactory Defence Forces remuneration and conditions of service.

ARCO calls on the Government to ensure there is a meaningful engagement between the Department of Defence, the Military Authorities and Representative Associations to identify and develop policies that will address, without delay, the serious retention and remuneration issues that are undermining the Defence Forces operational readiness, coupled with the morale and well-being of its personnel.

## Upcoming Events 2019

Date	Event
12 December 2018	Defence Forces Carol Service, Arbour Hill Church, Dublin. 20.00hrs
21 Jan 2019	Centenary of First Dail
17 March 2019	DF involvement in selected St Patrick's Day Parades
02 Apr 2019	Centenary of appointment of 1st Irish Female Cabinet Minister – Constance Markievicz as Minister for Labour
21 April 2019	Sigerson Monument Wreath Laying Ceremony, Glasnevin Cemetery
21 April 2019	Easter Sunday Commemoration, GPO, Dublin
08 May 2019	1916 Leaders Commemoration Ceremony, Arbour Hill, Dublin
18 or 19 May 2019	National Famine Commemoration, Location: TBC
?? May 2019	DF Veterans Day, Collins Barracks, Dublin. (National Museum of Ireland) at 1200hrs
16 – 21 May 2019	61st Annual International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Bookings: through Joe Walsh Tours
14 June 2019	Centenary of arrival in Clifden of Alcock & Brown after 1st non-stop transatlantic flight
14 July 2019	National Day of Commemoration. Location: TBC
July/Aug 2019	Ceremonial Guard, Merrion Square Memorial, Dublin
?? August 2019	Collins/Griffith Commemoration. Glasnevin Cemetery



*The President and Executive Committee of ARCO wish all of their members a Happy and Healthy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year*



## Commissioning Ceremony: 34th Air Corps Cadet Class. An Cliaomh Gaisíochta



2/Lt Gavin Byrne, from Wexford Town, was presented with the ARCO Sword by Brig Gen Paul Pakenham (Retd), President of ARCO, at the recent commissioning ceremony for the 34th Air Corps Cadet Class. Gavin, who was born in 1995, achieved the highest standard in combined flying and ground school training. Having completed his Leaving Certificate in 2014, he completed one year of Science Education in Maynooth University before joining the Air Corps. His interests include rugby, swimming and science. Following his commission he has taken up a position in the Flying Training School as a Sqn Pilot and continues to fly the PC-9M.

## Welcome to ARCO's New Members:

Cmdr William Doyle	Lt Col Noel Murphy
Capt Declan Power	Col J.J. O'Reilly
Capt Dermot Rafferty	Capt Conor Twomey
Col Brian Monahan	

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This Newsletter is issued in Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter. The editor welcomes articles or items of interest, or suggestions as to what should be included. If you have any contribution or suggestion please send them to the Editor, Declan Carbery at [declancarbery@hotmail.com](mailto:declancarbery@hotmail.com) or post to Col Declan Carbery (Retd), 61, The Paddocks, Naas, Co. Kildare.

## Honouring Irish Peacekeepers

Trinity College will be hosting a reception, including drinks and finger food, on the evening of the 10th of January 2019 to honour current and veteran Irish peacekeepers. The event will take place from 7.30 pm in the historic Dining Hall buildings.



The event is part of GAP: The Soft Skills Summit: How to Train for Soft Skills Through Digital Games – A Case Study for Training Peacekeepers

The event will include a drink and finger food reception with keynote speeches from Major General Michael Beary, recently retired Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNIFIL and representatives from police and civilian peacekeeping.

## Deceased Officers

### *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-Anamacha*

Our condolences to the families and friends of those comrades who passed away since our last newsletter.

Col Thomas (Tommy) Dunne	25 Apr 2018
Comdt Anthony (Tony) Roe	27 Apr 2018
Comdt Colm Browne DSM	28 Apr 2018
Comdt Dave O'Regan (Snr)	28 Apr 2018
Comdt James (Jim) McPeake	10 May 2018
Comdt Geoffrey O'Byrne White (Comdt Geoff White)	11 June 2018
Lt Col Michael J. Harrington	22 June 2018
Comdt Harry Anderson	01 Aug 2018
Col Sean Mac Niocaill	17 Aug 2018
Comdt Hugh O'Donnell	11 Sept 2018
Comdt Jim Hayes	15 Sept 2018
Maj Gen Carl Dodd	18 Sept 2018
Capt Ray Tumulty	02 Oct 2018
Lt Col Micheál Mac Aogáin	03 Oct 2018
Capt James B. (Jim) Brady	01 Nov 2018
Capt Colm Moriarty	02 Nov 2018
Comdt Paddy Fitzgerald	05 Nov 2018
Col James (Jim) Mortell	13 Nov 2018
Comdt Brian McKevitt	26 Nov 2018

## Notification of Deceased Officers

It is ARCO's policy, and practice, to circulate information regarding the death of all serving or retired officers, regardless of their membership of ARCO and if we have information about the death in time. ARCO EXCOM relies, in many cases, of being informed of these deaths. The many Officers Clubs, Cadet Class representatives, Unit Associations and, both serving and retired colleagues share this info and we in turn circulate it to the wider group. On receipt of information, and following corroboration (RIP.ie/Newspaper notices etc) we will circulate such information through our Texting Service to all our members who have supplied an up-to-date mobile telephone number.