



CONNECT

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*“Níl aon tinteán
mar do thinteán féin”*



9TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, INEC, KILLARNEY, CO. KERRY
9TH TO 11TH MAY 2018



CONNECT

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Editorial

Dear Colleague,

The CWU Biennial Conference will take place in early May in Killarney. The Conference, as usual, will debate and discuss the activities of your Union over the past two years, while at the same time setting out a strategy for the coming years. It is, as always, an extremely important occasion for your Union as the Conference is effectively the parliament of the CWU and it is the occasion when your elected delegates make important decisions including the election of the National Executive Council, which between Conferences makes key decisions in relation to the CWU.

Conference has seen a number of controversial decisions made over the years and invariably after any controversial decisions, members who are individually opposed to those decisions, will often write and complain to me here at Union Head Office. For example, the CWU's involvement in the Right2Water and Right2Change movement came about directly as a result of motions passed at our Conference. When I am contacted in relation to such motions, the members concerned will usually claim that the process was undemocratic in that they as individuals did not receive a vote on the motion concerned. Of course, that position normally indicates that the member concerned did not attend the Branch's Annual General Meeting and did not take part in the debate at that meeting which decided to submit motions to Biennial Conference. It is my belief that democracy in the trade union movement, in particular in the CWU, is practised at almost its purest form. Members in each Branch across the country get the opportunity to put motions forward to their own Branch AGM and/or to discuss other motions put forward by their colleagues. Those motions are then further discussed, debated and voted upon at the Biennial Conference by the elected

delegates of every branch in the country. That process is clearly laid down in the Rules and Constitution of the Union and those Rules and that Constitution can also be amended through proposing amendments to rule at your AGM and having them voted upon at the Conference. Of course, it does take some time and dedication to help establish Union policy and/or to change the manner in which the Union is operated, but many members through their Branches have proved conclusively over the years, that it is possible to do so. Many benefits that members reap today are as a direct result of other members taking the trouble to become involved in the democratic process within their Union, as not to do so and then to complain after the event, is never going to lead to any level of success.

One of the more controversial motions discussed and passed at our last Conference was in relation to the Trade Union campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment. To my surprise, the motion, which instructed the Union to become involved in the Trade Union campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment, was overwhelmingly supported by the floor and carried almost unanimously. Listening to the debate that day, it was clear to me that the vast majority of the delegates in favour of Repealing the 8th Amendment, were in favour of allowing women a choice in this difficult area. At no stage, either then or to-date, was there ever any indication that the position adopted by the Union was in favour of abortion. Abortion is a highly emotive issue and people's opinion vary for many different reasons. Issues of religion, sex, sexual orientation and conscience, clearly come into the debate and the matter can be further complicated by quite vitriolic positions being adopted on some occasions by both sides of the debate. There is also clear evidence that forces outside of the country, particularly from the United States, have been pouring money into the 'no campaign' and some of the graphic images being used and the deliberate lies being

circulated have no place in the debate.

From my perspective and indeed on the basis of the debate which took place at our Conference, I know that our delegates views reflect the reality of abortion in Ireland today. It seems that many people would rather

ignore the fact that thousands of Irish women have had to leave the country for an abortion due to many diverse reasons. It is also a fact that on a daily basis abortion pills are used, many of which are sourced from unreliable providers. You will also see from the survey your Union was involved in, that abortion is a workplace issue and that the less well-off suffer disproportionately as a result of the 8th Amendment. Almost everybody I have spoken to who supported the motion at Conference have made it clear to me that they see this as an issue of choice and that they are on this occasion pro-choice and not pro-abortion. They believe that with so many different circumstances it is really an issue that should be left to the person who is pregnant i.e., the woman concerned. They believe we should trust the women of Ireland to make the right decisions for themselves often under extremely difficult circumstances. They expect that those women be they mothers, wives, daughters, sisters or friends should be able to make that choice with the best advice and support and that the decision should rightfully be theirs to make. The only way those women can make that choice in the right circumstances is if the country supports them by voting to Repeal the 8th Amendment.



*Steve Fitzpatrick,
General Secretary, CWU*

Maternity Policy and Procedure An Post



On a regular basis the Union receives requests from members for information regarding their entitlements under Maternity Legislation. Separately the Union had concerns at the manner in which some maternity related issues were handled by the Company. To assist matters the Union sought an agreement on a guidance document which could be issued to both Managers and Staff. Following detailed discussions a new policy and procedure document has been finalised which covers the following issues:

Legal Entitlements

- The entitlement to Maternity Leave extends to all female staff regardless of how long they have been working for the Company or the number of hours worked per week. Additional unpaid maternity leave may also be availed of.
- All female employees who are pregnant, who have recently given birth, or who are breastfeeding up to the 26th week after the date of confinement are protected under Irish Law.
- Employees are entitled to 26 weeks' maternity leave plus the option to avail of 16 weeks' additional unpaid maternity leave. At least 2 weeks must be taken before the end of the week of the baby's expected birth and at least 4 weeks after. The employee can decide how to take the remaining weeks.
- The following rights also apply:
 - (i) paid time off for medical appointments, examinations and tests related to the pregnancy and for both ante-natal (other than the last three classes) and post-natal care.
 - (ii) An expectant father is entitled, on a once-off basis, to paid time off to attend the last two antenatal classes before the birth

- (iii) full entitlement to annual leave and public holiday benefit while on maternity leave and additional maternity leave
- (iv) The right to have a risk assessment carried out
- (v) Health and Safety leave, where appropriate
- (vi) Time off work or reduced hours to allow breastfeeding
- In addition to the above employees are protected from dismissal or suspension when on maternity leave and are entitled to return to their normal job or a similar position with same pay and grade.

Maternity and Maternity Related Leave

The policy and procedures agreement outline how maternity leave and additional maternity leave should be applied for. It also provides an explanation as to what maternity related leave is. This refers to time off for attendance at Ante-Natal and Post-Natal medical appointments, and separately refers to time off for attendance at Ante-Natal classes. In summary

- Employees are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal and post-natal care without loss of pay for pregnancy related medical appointments and post-natal care appointments.
- For the first appointment as much notice as possible should be given and after that the appointment card should be produced as evidence
- The time off for such visits includes the time travelling to and from each visit
- Pregnancy is not an illness and there is no requirement on employees to produce a sick note or sick certificate for such visits.
- Employees are also entitled to time off without loss of pay for attendance at one set of antenatal classes (other than the last three classes in the set). She must notify her Manager in writing of the times and date of each class as soon as possible and at least two weeks before the date of the first class
- Male employees are entitled to, on a once off basis, paid time off to attend the last two antenatal classes before the birth.

Payment during Maternity Leave

All pregnant employees, other than those employed from time to time on a casual basis, (this refers to staff employed for short periods of less than 13 weeks), can avail of paid Maternity Leave. All pregnant employees including casual staff may avail of time off for attendance

Postal Update

at Ante-Natal and Post-Natal medical appointments, and for attendance at Ante-Natal classes.

An employee on a fixed-term contract is entitled to full maternity leave. However, if her fixed-term contract ends before the last day of maternity leave, this counts as the last day of maternity leave. This means that if the fixed-term contract ends during maternity leave, then the employee's contract of employment terminates on that date. In circumstances where the employee concerned becomes entitled to a permanent contract or continues in employment following the expiry of their current contract then they should continue on maternity leave.

Employees who pay the reduced PRSI Contributions will receive their normal pay during the first 26 weeks of maternity leave. Part time employees who work additional basic hours will have their payment calculated on a pro rata basis according to the number of basic hours worked in the 12 months prior to the commencement of the Maternity Leave

Employees who pay the full PRSI contributions are entitled to Maternity Benefit from the state. In such circumstances the Company will pay the difference between the Maternity Benefit and the employees normal salary.

Impact on Terms and Conditions of Employment

Paid Maternity Leave and Maternity Related Leave are reckonable as service for incremental, superannuation and other relevant purposes, including probation and seniority. This leave is also deemed to be "time worked" for the purposes of calculating an employee's annual leave entitlement and does not affect an employee's entitlement to other statutory leave such as Parental Leave, Adoptive Leave or additional Unpaid Adoptive Leave.

Pension contributions will continue to be made during paid Maternity Leave. While the 16 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave is also classified as time worked and is considered service it is not reckonable for pension purposes.

An employee on Paid Maternity Leave or additional unpaid Maternity Leave qualifies for paid leave in lieu of any Public Holiday occurring during the period of leave.

Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Leave

Once the employee notifies the Manager of her pregnancy s/he will carry out a risk assessment and provide her with a copy of 'Assessment of Risk during Pregnancy' guide. Some of the risks that will be assessed include

- Manual Handling
- Prolonged Standing

- Longer Working Hours – Overtime
- Cycling and Seat Belt Wearing
- Night /Shift Work

In circumstances where the employee's continued presence at work, during the pregnancy or immediately after maternity leave, would put the employee's or her child's health at risk and that risk cannot be adequately addressed through altering work and/or attendance requirements, Health and Safety Leave will be applied.

An employee is entitled to full pay for the first three weeks of Health and Safety Leave. Such a period of Health and Safety Leave will reckon as service in all aspects. If Health and Safety leave extends beyond three weeks, the employee will continue to be paid subject to the same arrangements and limits that apply to all employees under the Company's Sick Pay regulations. Any such period of Health and Safety Leave will reckon as service on the same basis as if it were a period of Sick Leave and will not be recorded on the Attendance Support and Management Process [ASMP].

Returning to work

Following Maternity Leave an employee is entitled to return to work to the same job, under the same contract, terms and conditions as would have applied before she went on maternity leave (or in certain circumstances suitable alternative work under terms or conditions of employment that are not substantially less favourable than those of her contract of employment immediately before the start of the period of absence from work while on protective leave). The right to return to work is conditional on compliance with the appropriate notification procedures under legislation. The employee must provide the Company with written notification four (4) weeks in advance of her intention to return to work.

Communication and confidentiality

As the earliest stages of pregnancy are the most critical ones for the developing child it is in the employee's best interest to let her line manager know that she is pregnant as soon as she becomes aware of it. This will help local management and pregnant employees assess the risk to their health and safety so that the woman concerned can continue to work safely in An Post until she takes maternity leave.

Information provided by the employee to her line manager or local HR Department will be treated as confidential and will only be disclosed to other parties within the Company (e.g. the Occupational Health Service) where absolutely necessary and the employee will be advised of this in advance.

Update on Occupational Health and Safety An Post

The Union and the Company recently completed a review of the An Post Policy for communication on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). This review examined the manner in which the Company and its staff interact on health and safety. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the communications process was effective, fit for purpose and operated to the benefit of all staff.

To ensure the active participation of staff and the effective communication with staff on OSH the following arrangements are in place:

1. Joint Conciliation Council Health and Safety Sub Committee. This is the National Consultation Forum
2. Safety Representatives
3. Safety Committees

As part of its commitment to Health and Safety An Post will ensure that Occupational Health and Safety information is provided, received and understood across the Company. The types of communication used by An Post includes the Safety Statement, Occupational Health and Safety Policy, Safety Training, Staff Safety booklets, Staff Briefing notes, Company Circulars and Safety Notice Boards.

Joint Conciliation Council Health and Safety Sub Committee

The JCC Health and Safety Committee has been in operation since 2007. In the main the Committee has worked well and has agreed many policies of benefit to the staff. However in some instances its work has been hindered by failures on the company's part to respond to office issues raised by Safety Reps. The Union contended this failure is attributable to the lack of involvement of Operations Management in the Committee.

To address the Union's concerns, we have reviewed the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee and we have agreed the following:

The Health and Safety Sub Committee will consist of:

- (a) Management Representatives are nominated by An Post. The An Post nominees will include managers from Human Resources, Safety and Environment and the Mails and Retail business units. The nominated HR Manager will be the Principal Company Side Representative and Chairperson of the Health and Safety Sub Committee.
- (b) Staff Representatives as nominated from the Staff Panel (Representative Trade Unions) within An Post. The JCC Staff Side Secretary will be the

Principal Staff Side Representative and Secretary of the Health and Safety Sub Committee.

Role of JCC Health and Safety Sub Committee

- Promote best Health and Safety practice across the Company
- Review the Health & Safety Policy annually
- Review Health, Safety and Welfare Policies as considered appropriate
- Seek solutions to general safety issues which arise Companywide
- Review information and data relating to accidents, dangerous occurrences and instances of occupational ill-health at Company places of work.
- Receive updates on communications with employees and employee training procedures relating to health and safety
- Address issues arising from reports submitted by safety representatives where such issues have not been resolved through the normal reporting procedures
- Address any issue referred to the Committee by the Joint Conciliation Council
- Review the number of safety representatives and the training they have received
- Agree terms of reference for all Safety Committees
- Review the compliance of the Safety Committees with their Terms of Reference
- Arrange for joint visits to any workplace where the Sub Committee considers that such a visit is appropriate

Safety Committees

Safety Committees have been established in some of the larger workplaces where there are more than one safety rep or a number of different shifts. These have been established to facilitate and coordinate safety participation and consultation in these offices. At the moment they operate in the four Mail Centres and the GPO.

The Union expressed our misgivings about their operation. We believed that they needed to be reinvigorated as they were failing to fulfil their terms of reference, had become talking shops and were not proactively examining health and safety issues.

Following a review of their operation we have agreed the following which we believe will give the Safety Committees the tools and resources they need to address health and safety issues in a proactive manner.

Postal Update

The JCC Health & Safety Sub Committee will determine the workplaces where Safety Committees are to be established and the number of staff and management representatives to sit on each Safety Committee. In all cases a majority of members of a Safety Committee will be staff representatives selected by the staff.

In addition, the following has been agreed

1. Safety Committees should only be set up in locations where there is more than one Safety Representative.
2. The times at which the meetings of the Safety Committee take place should be compatible with the efficient operation of the office or premises concerned. However, the meeting shall be held during working hours and without loss of remuneration
3. Committee members have an entitlement to time off from their normal duties in order to attend meetings.
4. The senior management representative should act as Chairperson at committee meetings.
5. The Secretary of the Safety Committee, who will be one of the staff representatives, will maintain minutes, reports and submissions. The Secretary will record recommendations and decisions. Actions will be agreed with the Chairperson at the end of each meeting. Minutes will be issued within two weeks of any meeting. Copies of all meeting agendas and minutes will be forwarded to the Principal Management and Staff Representatives of the JCC Health & Safety Sub Committee.
6. Recommendations or decisions of the Committee should be acted upon by the management representatives.
7. Committees may invite individuals to meetings with special expertise or knowledge who may be able to make contributions on particular topics (For example, H.R. Managers, Transport Staff, OHA's).

Appropriate items for consideration by the safety committee could include the following:

- Progress on the implementation of the Safety Statement
- Examination of the accident record since the last meeting
- Special consideration of any recent serious accidents or dangerous occurrences
- Practical safety and health suggestions or solutions from management or employees
- The provision and use of protective clothing and equipment
- Special activities such as 'Safety Weeks'
- Safety and health training needs and reports on safety training courses attended by management or employees

- Changes in the workplace that may have a substantial effect on safety and health
- Review of nonconformities, corrective actions and preventive actions during the preceding period.
- Consideration of Safety Representatives' reports or comments
- Issues requiring referral to the Health and Safety Section for information or expert opinion.
- Recommendations / reports / discussion on safety procedures / rules
- Any representations made to management on any matters relating to safety, health and welfare
- The review of safety and health audit reports
- Seeking Solutions to health and safety issues which arise
- Reviewing communications and employee training procedures relating to safety and health.

The JCC Health and Safety Committee will review the operation and effectiveness of Safety Committees on an ongoing basis. We have sought employee nominees to the four Mail Centre Safety Committees and once they are to hand the first meetings will be organised.

Safety Reps

Section 25 of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 entitles employees to select a safety representative to represent them on safety and health matters in consultations with their employer.

It is important that safety representatives have the knowledge and skills to perform their role effectively. In order to provide Safety Reps with some of the tools to undertake their role we have recently finalised an agreement with An Post which sets out how Safety Reps should operate and what they can and can't do. In addition, the agreement sets out the following:

Role of Safety Rep

- This entails consulting with and making representations to management on health and safety issues in their workplace
- Safety Reps are not the enforcers of safety and they are not responsible for safety standards – Managers are. However, Safety Reps can assist managers to achieve and maintain the required standards of safety in the workplace.

Training

- It is essential that Safety Representatives have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their function effectively. The Safety Representative must attend a formal training course and his / her manager must facilitate the Safety Representative's attendance at the training course.

Selection of Safety Reps

- The staff in the office select the safety rep. It is a

matter for them to decide the details of that election. Once elected the Safety Representative must be available to all employees regardless of whether they are a member of a Trade Union or not.

- While it is our preference to have Safety Reps selected at our AGM's we have included as part of the agreement a process whereby Safety Reps may be elected in the workplace
- The 2005 Act does not specify how long a Safety Rep should be selected for but the Health and Safety Authority in its guidelines recommends that a Safety Rep once selected should remain in office for three years and we have agreed to operate on that basis.
- There should be provision for a review on an annual basis and this should take place at the AGM. At the end of the three year term the outgoing Safety Representative is eligible for re-election.

Facilities

The employer must provide the Safety Representative with reasonable facilities to consult with employees or to prepare any submissions or reports.

Consultation and Representation

A Safety Rep may consult with, and make representations to, the employer on safety, health and welfare matters relating to the employees in the place of work. The employer must consider these representations and act on them if necessary. The intention of these consultations is to prevent accidents and ill health, to highlight problems, and identify means of over-coming them.

The Safety Rep has the right to make representations on staff complaints in regard to health and safety issues. All issues should relate to a genuine risk to the safety and health of staff. If safety issues cannot be resolved locally, the matter should be referred to the Operations Manager, who can if necessary request advice from the Safety and Environment Section. The agreement provides for the following process when making representations:

- The Manager and the Safety Rep should hold two review meetings annually.
- Safety Reps and Managers should also consult with each other regarding matters which are, or could become, safety issues.
- Managers and Safety Reps should document all consultations and representations.
- When making representations to the Manager regarding a safety concern, the Safety Rep should set out the nature and detail of the concern.
- The Safety Rep must allow a reasonable period of time for the Manager to address safety concerns raised with him/her. (A 'reasonable period of time' should reflect the scale and urgency of the issue

that has been represented)

- Following a reasonable period of time, the Safety Rep should make a follow up enquiry with the Manager regarding the status of a representation.
- If the Safety Rep still has a safety concern the matter can be escalated to the next level
- Safety concerns should be escalated through the Safety & Environment section. When escalating a safety concern the Safety Rep should clearly set out the nature of the concern and include details of representations already made to management locally.
- If the matter remains a concern after these representations the Safety Rep can bring it to the attention of Secretary of the JCC Health and Safety Sub Committee for consideration by that body.

Inspections

Safety Representatives have a right to carry out inspections of the workplace that they represent to identify hazards and risks to safety and health. They should give reasonable notice of any planned inspection to the Manager of the workplace. The Manager must not unreasonably withhold consent to the inspection.

- The frequency of inspections can be agreed locally, depending on the level of risk and the scale of the operation, but generally they take place twice a year.
- To make the inspection more meaningful and to help ensure that the necessary improvements are made the Manager should accompany the Safety Representative on these inspections.
- A copy of the Safety Inspection Report should be forwarded to the Manager and he / she should act on issues raised if necessary.
- A Safety Rep also has the right to inspect immediately where an accident or dangerous occurrence has taken place, or where there is an imminent danger or risk to the safety, health and welfare of any person.
- The Safety Rep has the right to investigate accidents or incidents in the place of work to find out the causes and help to identify any remedial or preventative measures necessary. These investigations should be independent of, and separate from, any investigations carried out by the Company.
- The Safety Rep must not interfere with anything at the scene of the accident.

HSA Inspections

A Safety Representative may also:

- Accompany a HSA Inspector carrying out an inspection under Section 64 of the 2005 Act, other

than the investigation of an accident or dangerous occurrence (although this may be allowed at the discretion of the inspector).

- At the discretion of the HSA Inspector, and when the employee concerned so requests, be present when the inspector interviews the employee about an accident or dangerous occurrence at a place of work.
- Make verbal or written representations to HSA Inspectors, including about the investigation of accidents or dangerous occurrences.
- Receive advice and information from HSA Inspectors in relation to safety, health and welfare at the place of work.

Information to be provided to Safety Rep

In addition to the information that should be supplied to all employees Section 9 (3) provides that Safety Representatives must have access to information on:

- Risk assessments prepared under Section 19 of the 2005 Act
- Information on reportable accidents, occupational injury and dangerous occurrences

Safety Reps must be provided with a copy of the Safety Statement on request and details of any internal or external safety audit carried out in the workplace as part of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System. Safety Reps will also be advised if a Health and Safety Inspector arrives to carry out an inspection.

Consultation with Other Safety Reps

The agreement provides that Safety Reps can consult and liaise with other Safety Reps appointed in An Post, whether or not they work in the same place of work. In this regard the Company has agreed in principle to the release of Safety Representatives to attend Regional Safety Meetings organised by the Union and it is hoped to commence these in 2018.

An Post – Permanent Appointments

The CWU continues its efforts to secure permanent appointments for temporary staff at An Post. Prior to July 2016 appointments to permanent posts were dealt with in accordance with the Monitoring Group Determination issued in July 2011. This provided that appointment of temporary staff should take place once they had completed three years' service and subject to there being a fillable vacancy.

In July 2016 as part of the Labour Court Pay Agreement, revised staffing arrangements including provision for future permanent appointments were introduced as follows:

- Temporary staff with over two years continuous unbroken employment with the Company will be appointed subject to the condition that they are required for ongoing work requirements.
- Where temporary staff have intermittent broken employment during the two-year period which generally does not exceed four

weeks in any year, they may be considered for appointment where the other conditions are met.

- Temporary staff with over two years in continuous service and whose contracts of employment are terminated will be paid the terms of the approved Voluntary Severance (VS) scheme available in the Company at the time their employment with the Company ceases.
- The Company reserves the right to terminate their contract of permanent employment at any time during the period prior to reaching four years of continuous unbroken employment with the Company, in circumstances where there is no further work requirement for them

However, a difference of opinion emerged between the Union and the Company regarding staff recruited prior to the 1st July 2016 which the Monitoring Group clarified as follows:

- 1) Employees who receive a permanent appointment and whose date of commencement of continuous employment is prior to 1st July 2014 (i.e. 2 years continuous service up to 1st July 2016) are not comprehended by the "last-in first-out" redundancy provisions of the determination.

- 2) Employees who receive a permanent appointment and whose date of commencement of continuous employment is on or after 1st July 2014 are comprehended by the “last-in, first-out” redundancy provisions of the determination
- 3) The Company should appoint all employees who have 2 years continuous service on 1st July 2016, or after, unless there are acceptable reasons not to do so.

In February 2018 the Company confirmed a further 94 permanent appointments but set out they would receive a new contract. Subsequently, the Monitoring Group issued a further Determination on the 6th March 2018 as follows:

The Monitoring Group notes that the Company is in the process of implementing a revised process so that the issue of the permanent appointment of staff, in the context of the determination of 4th July 2016, are implemented on an ongoing monthly basis replacing the occasional reviews performed every 6-12 months heretofore. Having considered the matter of the contract type issued following the most recent review, the Monitoring Group is of the view that the following criteria should be applied to this particular group of 94 staff (subject to the exception referred to below), and in future, when making appointments:

- (i) *Those staff who were employed by the Company on or after the 1st July 2014 should be appointed to permanent staff status on the new terms and conditions of employment as set out in the revised contract of employment. These terms and conditions of employment are in accordance with those set out in our determination of 4th July 2016.*
- (ii) *Those staff who were employed by the Company prior to the 1st July 2014, and who had ongoing periods of employment that did not involve a break in service or lay-off in excess of 26 consecutive weeks prior to 1st July 2014, should be appointed to permanent staff status on the old terms and conditions of employment as set out in the former (old) type contract of employment.*
- (iii) *Those staff who were employed by the*

Company prior to the 1st July 2014, and who had ongoing periods of employment that did involve a break in service or lay-off in excess of 26 consecutive weeks which extended beyond 1st July 2014 should be appointed to permanent staff status on the terms and conditions of employment as set out in the revised contract of employment, as in (i) above.

In relation to the group of 94 staff, ten fall into category (iii) above. Given the particular circumstances relating to this group of 94, as represented to the Monitoring Group by the parties, these ten individuals should, exceptionally, be issued with the former type contract of employment. The Monitoring Group has issued a separate list to the parties confirming the names of the ten individuals concerned. Based on our analysis of the data reviewed jointly with Company and Union representatives, we believe that from the group of 94 staff, a total of 57 should now be appointed to permanent staff status on the old terms and conditions as set out in the former type contract of employment. Therefore 37 staff from the group of 94 should be appointed to permanent staff status on the revised (new) terms and conditions

The staff concerned will be issued with amended contracts over the next few weeks. No agreement has been reached on the date on which the contracts should commence for seniority purposes etc. and this remains the subject of discussion between the Union and the Company.

Going forward appointments will now be reviewed on a monthly basis which is replacing the annual review of appointments. In that regard branches are asked to be vigilant in future in ensuring that members who fulfil the criteria as set out above are appointed in a timely manner. Any issues that arise should be raised with management in line with the agreed procedures.

Finally, the Union has been successful in achieving 232 appointments since 2016, in addition to successfully having additional staff permanently uprated from part time to full time. Furthermore, as detailed above achieved 94 appointments this year with the majority appointed to the old contracts. Against a background of reducing overall staff numbers in An Post this will be a welcome development for the people concerned.



An Post Employees'
Credit Union

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOAN

- New kitchen?
- Time to convert the garage?
- Convert that space out the back into a real garden?
- Energy saving?

For a loan of €6,000 over four years, the weekly repayment will be €34.29 and the total amount repayable will be €7,132. Annual rate of interest 8.9% typical APR 9.2%. All loans are subject to approval, lending terms and conditions.

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Safety Representatives – online course

In the Winter 2017 issue of Connect we highlighted the BeSmart.ie online risk assessment and safety statement tool from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). We advised that this resource in addition to the Safety Representative Resource Book demonstrated the ongoing commitment from the Health and Safety Authority to support and develop Safety Representatives.

As further evidence of this support the HSA on Thursday 8th March 2018 launched a short online course for safety representatives. This course is designed for both new and existing safety representatives and is available on the Health and Safety Authority's elearning portal www.hsaelearning.ie.

The aim of the course is to raise awareness of the role of the safety representative and to provide health and safety information relevant to the role. This course will also be very helpful to anyone wishing to take on the role of a Safety Representative. It should be stressed that this course does not replace training but rather it provides information that will be useful as part of the training process. The course is free and is about 30 minutes

long and it will help learners to understand the positive impact safety representatives have in the workplace. On completion learners should be able to:

- Identify key sections of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Describe the role (functions) of a safety representative
- Identify the rights of a safety representative
- Understand the basis of risk assessment, and
- Source information and resources available to safety representatives

This course is also suitable for employers, employees and safety committee members. The CWU would recommend that anyone attending health and safety training would complete this course before attending the training.

The HSA learning sites also has many other courses which may be of interest. All of the courses are free of charge. Other topics covered include Workplace Transport and Managing Bullying and Harassment. All that is required is for you is to register with the site.

Welcome to Health and Safety Authority on-line learning

Welcome to the Health and Safety Authority's portal for health and safety courses on-line. Our courses are free of charge and accessible 24/7. Learn new skills and help prevent accidents and injury by taking a short on-line course. Browse our courses and find one that suits you whether you're in education or work. It's simple. Just register, take the course whenever you wish and then download your certificate of completion when finished.

If you're a teacher, lecturer, employer or manager, you can also register a group to take a course using the **HSA Group Manager facility**.

The Education Team, HSA

Browse courses by categories:

 Sector of Employment	 Topic
 Post-Primary School	 Primary Schools
 Further and Higher Education	 Small Business

STRONGER TOGETHER

CONGRESS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions



Workers'
Memorial
Day Ireland

Remember the dead,
fight like hell for the living

Friday, 28th April, 2017

Workers' Memorial Day

**"Remember the dead;
fight like hell for the living"**



The Occupational Safety and Health Act in the US became legally effective on April 28th 1971. This significant piece of legislation sought to ensure that employers provide employees with an environment free from recognized hazards, such as exposure to toxic chemicals, excessive noise levels, mechanical dangers, heat or cold stress, or unsanitary conditions.

The American trade union confederation, AFL-CIO, used the passing of the Act to declare that 28 April should be marked as a commemorative day for those who had died or been injured at work. In 1984, the Canadian Union of Public Employees did the same in Canada. This led, in 1991, to the Canadian federal government declaring April 28 to be a National Day of Mourning. Various official commemorations are held to this day, and the Canadian flag is flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset on all federal government buildings.

The idea has spread globally over the years and up to 80 countries now mark Workers' Memorial Day, many of them with official recognition by the state. Everywhere, the purpose is the same. We seek to commemorate those who have died or been injured because of their work.

While every year we still have too many people who die in accidents at work – 47 died in 2017 in the Republic – many more are affected by occupational illnesses. Some of these prove fatal while countless others suffer from both physical and psychosocial disorders arising from their work. Alongside our commemoration therefore, we also try to use the day to create awareness and to commit ourselves to creating safer workplaces. This is why we use the motto based on the words of Cork-born Mary "Mother" Jones – Remember the dead; fight like hell for the living. [see below] Trade unions have been the crucial force in the past in protecting workers and raising

the bar to ensure people can return home safe and well after their day's work. There is no room for complacency and we need to continue this work.

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones (1830? — 1930)



*"Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living."
Irish-born Mother Jones was a champion of the country's weakest and neediest during the period of America's great industrial growth. For countless workers she was both goad and inspiration in their struggles to organize for mutual protection. Her flaming rhetoric and fearless campaigning helped swell the ranks of the United Mine Workers, who called her the Miners' Angel. With the look of an angel and the tongue of a mule skinner, she tramped the land, venting her searing invective against the shame of child labor and worker exploitation. A*

magnificent scold, she was a ringing voice on behalf of miners' colossal struggles in West Virginia, Colorado and Pennsylvania. Jones suffered imprisonment, personal attacks and unbelievable hardships for her efforts to ease impoverished lives.

US Department of Labor

Congress has marked the day for many years, with trade union events being held in Dublin and Belfast. In 2015 our commemoration was given official backing in the Republic when the then Minister for Business and Employment, Ged Nash T.D., called on the HSA, employers and public bodies to join with Congress in making the day a truly national event henceforth. This joint cooperation has continued every year since.

Congress is asking all of its affiliated unions, trades councils and the Congress Centres Network to get involved in marking the day. While April 28th falls on a Saturday this year, there are still many ways in which you can mark the day.

Congress, alongside trade unions around the world, has for many years celebrated Workers' Memorial Day on April 28th. In 2015 our commemoration was given official backing. The then Minister for Business and Employment, Ged Nash T.D., called on the HSA, employers and public bodies to join with Congress in making the day a truly national event henceforth. In 2018, we continue our partnership with HSA, Ibec and CIF in marking the day and trying to increase consciousness of the importance of health and safety. The CWU has always fully supported this day.

Things you can do:

(Visit the Congress Workers' Memorial day website: <https://www.ictu.ie/healthandsafety/workers-memorial-day/> from where you can download all the elements you might need for some of the suggestions below)

- Get involved by using the national Workers' Memorial Day Ireland logo on your website, social media presence, presentations, email signatures and displays in the weeks leading to 28 April;
- Print and display the memorial poster in as many workplaces as possible;
- Observe a minute of silence and reflection on 28th April, if it is a workday for you;
- Hold a service of remembrance and solidarity for workplace safety.
- Circulate safety and health messages throughout workplaces and review risk assessments and update Safety Statements (see http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Managing_Health_and_Safety/Safety_Representatives_and_Consultation/ from HSA to help you in this)
- Promote the day on Websites/Social Media/Newsletters use the hashtag **#WorkersMemorialDay** and use the poster

suggested along with your own message;

- Arrange In-house safety training sessions or a toolbox talk during the week leading up to 28 April
- Press release to your local/national media marking your event/the day;
- Publish a piece in your union journals or work newsletters;
- Make and wear the simple purple ribbon "forget-me-knot" which has become associated with the day (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workers%27_Memorial_Day#/media/File:WMD_ribbon.jpg)

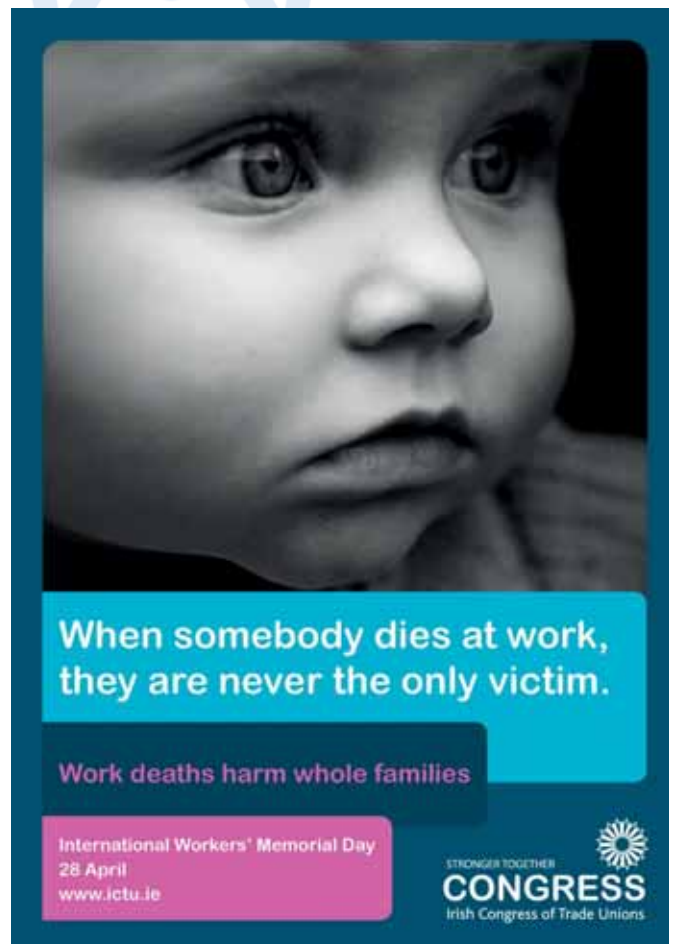
April 28th presents an important opportunity to *remember* and to consolidate everyone's focus around a single day. Please mark the date in your calendar and make the commitment to contribute to this most important challenge.

Congress is asking all unions, trades councils and centres to actively support the event and to let us know what you plan; or let us know afterwards what you have done. Drop us a line at safety@ictu.ie

Contact Frank Vaughan in Congress for any further information.

Congress has made available some resources, including the logos and posters, and suggestions as to what unions might do at <http://bit.ly/WMD2018>

April 28th presents an important opportunity to remember and to consolidate everyone's focus around a single day.





sold again?

On December 20th eir issued a press release stating that a consortium led by NJJ Telecom Europe, the private investment firm of telecoms investor and operator Xavier Niel, had agreed, alongside Iliad SA, a fully integrated operator in France with nearly 20m subscribers, to acquire a majority of eir. Assuming the sale goes ahead, the French billionaire will have sole control of eir via the holding companies in a company called Carraun Telecom Holdings Ltd. It is understood that he is spending around €1 billion on the purchase to acquire 64.5% which will value the company at €3.5 billion (including the €2 billion debt). This would mark the seventh change in ownership of eir in less than two decades.

As part of the deal, the current CEO Richard Moat will step down and Carolan Lennon, formerly managing director of the networks and wholesale division, has been announced as chief executive designate. It was also reported that, on foot of the sale, 45 senior staff in the company would share €100 million in exchange for their shares as part of the transaction.

At the time of writing, the sale was still subject to regulatory approval and the new strategic direction of the company will not be clear until the new senior management team are in place but it is expected that the priorities will probably be to increase eir's share of the mobile market and reduce its €2.1 billion debt burden. This ownership change represents the first time in a long time when the company has been under the control of a telecoms company and Neil has said 'We are a long-term investor in the telecoms

sector and bring global knowhow to eir.'

The withdrawal of the company from the National Broadband Plan (NBP) is being seen by some as an early indication that the company will focus more on urban and sub-urban fibre deployment.

Who is Xavier Neil?

His digital career began when he was just 17 when he saw the potential to market soft porn and chat lines via the French national Minitel service (which is essentially teletext with a keyboard). His investments went on to include sex shops and peep shows which, though they led to a brush with the law, also made him a millionaire by 24. He founded France's first internet service provider, Worldnet, which he sold just before the dotcom bubble burst. Over the years, his eye for innovation and interest in telecoms has continued and in 1999 he was the first person in France to make an electronic box available that combines internet, telephone and television services, through his company Free. In 2012, he disrupted the mobile telecoms market in France when he undercut the competition by offering unlimited services for €19.99 monthly. He also owns a controlling share in Le Monde newspaper as well owning the rights to the song 'My Way' which is famously associated with Frank Sinatra. His other telecoms interests include Orange Switzerland and Monaco Telecom among others. In an interview given in early 2018 he said of the purchase of eir, "I like the historic operator, so I want to go in this direction." His net worth is estimated at €8.3 billion.

eir withdraws from NBP

In January 2018 eir announced its withdrawal from the NBP. The decision by the company will likely have a profound effect on the process and comes just as it was expected that announcements would be made on who the successful bidders were. Commentators have said that it throws the process into disarray.

It was expected that the company would win at least one if not both of the State contracts available under the scheme. The result is that just one bidder, enet, remains in the process. enet, which is backed by specialist telecoms investor Granahan McCourt, currently operates the State's Metropolitan Area Networks (Mans), a series of telecommunications networks built around 94 towns. It was recently sold to the Irish Infrastructure Fund for between €150 million and €200 million.

Siro, the joint venture between Vodafone and the ESB had withdrawn from the process in 2017 following the decision of the Department of Communications to remove 300,000 premises from the intervention map and allow eir to proceed with its commercial plan to deploy fibre to these communities.

eir has said that it made the decision to withdraw based upon the significant commercial issues and complexity within the tender process, together with growing uncertainty on a range of regulatory and pricing issues that reside outside of the NBP process. One of the issues to emerge was the fact that the process would have required the company to establish a duplicate wholesale operation, costing tens of millions of euro.

Minister for Communications, Denis Naughten has said that the NBP will continue on regardless of this development and pledged that the 540,000 premises covered by the plan will have high speed broadband access in the next three to four years. Officials from his department said that in terms of enet-SSE's ability to deliver fibre to 542,000 premises around Ireland, if and when it emerges as the final winner in September, it will be able to contract the build to contractors such as KN, which has already gained vast experience rolling out networks for eir and other broadband providers. Surprisingly the boss of enet, Conal Henry, resigned from his position in late February which only adds to the uncertainty that exists around the future of the NBP.

State tries to block release of broadband bidder contract

The matter of releasing details of contract is now due before the Court of Appeal next year

In an unprecedented move, the state is to go to the Court of Appeal in an attempt to prevent the release of an existing contract it has with the sole remaining bidder for the national broadband plan.

The Department of Communications has been ordered by the Information Commissioner and, more recently, the High Court to release details of a contract it has with enet to manage and operate fibre-optic cable networks in Ireland's towns and cities.

Fianna Fáil TD Stephen Donnelly has compiled data which shows that, of the 40,000-plus Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to government departments in the last eight years, only two have ended up in the courts, including this case which is now due before the Court of Appeal next year.

enet is the only remaining bidder for the government plan to deliver high-speed broadband to the more than half a million most isolated homes and businesses in the country.

This follows the withdrawal of the ESB/Vodafone venture Siro and, more recently, eir. The contract is due

to be awarded later this year.

enet already has a state contract to manage and operate fibre-optic cable infrastructure in towns and cities known as the Metropolitan Area Networks or Mans.

Journalist Gavin Sheridan sought details of this contract under FOI in 2015. The Department refused to release the information, but the Information Commissioner reversed this decision.

The department appealed against this, but its case was dismissed in the High Court. The matter is now due before the Court of Appeal next year.

Donnelly has asked Minister for Communications Denis Naughten to withdraw the appeal and allow the details of the existing enet contract to be released.

"The government is willing to undermine a cornerstone of transparency in Ireland to keep that contract secret. Why? It's a small contract with a pretty small company to do something seemingly innocuous: manage some fibre," Donnelly told The Sunday Business Post. *"But it's now the company likely to be awarded a much bigger contract to manage a vast broadband network across Ireland."*

BT UK seals deal with Union to shut final salary pension scheme

The deal covers mostly engineers in BT's Openreach network subsidiary.

BT has sealed a deal with its biggest trade union to close its defined benefit pension scheme, reducing fears that its already massive funding deficit will further expand.

The telecoms giant said it had agreed with the Communications Workers Union (CWU) UK that 20,000 rank and file staff would be moved into a more predictable defined contribution scheme.

The deal removes the threat of potentially damaging industrial action and resulting extended broadband outages. The CWU had previously warned that active members of the BT pension scheme must be allowed to continue accruing benefits linked to their final salary.

Instead the scheme, Britain's largest private sector pension with a total of more than 300,000 members including retirees and ex-employees, will be shut. BT won CWU approval by agreeing to make more generous payments into its defined contribution scheme. Maximum company contributions will be increased to 11pc of salary, from 8pc.

BT will also set up a new "hybrid" scheme that it said will combine the benefits of defined benefit and defined contribution pensions for lower-paid workers.

Chief executive Gavin Patterson said: "I feel it's critical that we provide fair, flexible and affordable pensions for all our people.

"I'm committed to helping them save for retirement, so I'm pleased we've reached an agreement with our unions.

"These changes also bring far more financial certainty for the company in terms of our future pension arrangements."

The BT pension scheme was closed to new

members in 2001 but has continued to accrue liabilities that have outpaced its assets. It has an estimated funding deficit of £14bn on liabilities approaching £60bn.

BT chief executive Gavin Patterson is seeking to curb pension top-up payments.

The closure of the scheme is one element of a campaign by BT to reassure trustees that it can fill the black hole. The company is currently in triennial talks on top-up payments, which are currently up to £724m per year and due to last until 2030.

Fears that BT will face even higher bills amid low returns for the pension scheme's investments due to historically low interest rates are a major factor behind its depressed share price. BT shares are at their lowest level since November 2012.

CWU UK official, Andy Kerr, said plans for a hybrid pension scheme for lower-paid workers were an "innovative solution that will share future risk between BT and our members".

Union approval is a boost to Mr Patterson's campaign following the High Court defeat of a bid to switch the index used to calculate pension payout increases. BT wanted to use the Consumer Prices Index but was told by the court it must stick with the more generous Retail Prices Index.

The third prong of BT's attack on its pension deficit is an ongoing attempt to transfer ownership of its network assets to the pension scheme in event the company goes bust.

Talks with trustees and the Government, which underwrites the BT pension scheme, are due to be concluded by summer.



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CWU Supports the 6th Annual Green Ribbon Campaign



Say 'No' to Mental Health Stigma – wear the Green Ribbon this May

Research has shown the stigma and discrimination associated with a significant mental health problem is, for some people, almost as difficult to manage as the experience of being unwell. Stigma can act as a barrier to seeking help, speaking out and recovery^[1].

It may never be possible to totally eliminate inaccurate and hurtful comments, actions and headlines. It is, however, already evident that as people with self-experience and their families speak up and out about their experiences, people listen, and many relate with empathy to those experiences^[1].

1 in 4 people will experience a mental health difficulty during their lifetime according to the World Health Organisation. Research commissioned by See Change last year shows 4 in 10 people would conceal a mental health from their family, friends or colleagues. Stigma therefore may touch all of us in some way.

See Change, established in 2010, is Ireland's national stigma reduction programme. We work as a partnership of over 100 organisations to reduce the stigma associated with mental health difficulties.

Our vision is that every person in Ireland can be open and positive about mental health, understanding it as a normal part of the ups and downs of life.

In May 2018, the See Change Partnership will roll out the sixth annual Green Ribbon campaign. This year we are encouraging Ireland to Say 'No' to Mental Health Stigma. 500,000 Green Ribbons will be distributed nationwide and free of charge in conjunction with hundreds of local and national events.

This movement is led by our See Change ambassadors, a group of 60 people with experience of mental health difficulties, who are sharing their stories to spark a national conversation. See Change ambassadors will demonstrate how to start a conversation in your home, school, college, workplace or community.

This May, the ask is simple - wear the Green Ribbon and show your support for ending the stigma against mental health. Take two and start a conversation with someone you know about it!

Article Produced by See Change

To promote the campaign, we have included a green ribbon in this issue of Connect for each of our members to wear as a sign that we want to challenge the stigma around mental health issues.

You can order additional free Green Ribbons at
www.seechange.ie/greenribbon

^[1] Byrne, P. (2000). *Stigma of mental illness and ways of diminishing it. Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, Vol. 6, 65-72.

Study highlights the impact of “Abortion as a Workplace Issue”

In 2017, members were invited to participate in a research project entitled *Abortion as a Workplace Issue*. The purpose of this research was to provide an evidence base for UNITE the Union, Unison, Mandate, the CWU Ireland and the GMB on its members’ views on abortion, how it affects them as workers and to explore members’ views on legislative reform in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The research was conducted by an all-woman team of researchers at Ulster University, led by Dr. Fiona Bloomer.

At the last BDC, a motion was passed which sought that the incoming National Executive Council join the

growing ‘Trade Union Campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment’ in order to campaign for a referendum. On foot of the motion the Union felt that this was important research to participate in.

The research team subsequently produced a comprehensive report which highlighted how current legislation surrounding access to abortion across the island of Ireland is an issue in the workplace and consequently an issue for trade unions.

Members may access the report through both the union website and on the ICTU website.





G.S. Circular No. 04/18

INFORMATION

20th March 2018

Re: CWU Education Grant Scheme 2018

Dear Colleague,

The Union is pleased to invite applications for our Education Grant Scheme which is open to members and their dependants.

For the purposes of the CWU Education Grant Scheme, “dependant” is defined as :

- A child or adopted child of a member;
- The husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner of a member; and/or
- A person for whom a member is acting in the place of a parent (including but not limited to a child or adopted child of a member's husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner).

The CWU Education Grant Scheme is made up of the following three categories:

1. Gaeltacht Awards

Up to 20 awards will be made each year for Gaeltacht students to help cover the cost of their participation in a Gaeltacht course. The grant will help cover course materials, tuition fees and accommodation for up to 22 days to a maximum value of €350. This payment will be made to those successful in the draw retrospectively on production of the course receipt. The Gaeltacht award is for courses held this **summer, 2018 only**.

2. Second Level Awards

Up to 30 awards will be made annually to second level students. Each award will be worth €400 to help with the purchase of schoolbooks and class materials.

Members studying for the Junior and/or Leaving Certificate as mature students can also apply for this award.

For those successful in the draw, it will be necessary to get the Union's confirmation form signed and stamped by the secondary school confirming the grant winner is a student for the upcoming September 2018 term. The form will be provided by the Union to the grant winners.

3. Third Level Education Awards

The third level category will offer up to four awards annually. The award will be worth €2,000 for each year of study up to a maximum of four years. These awards will be made to Union members or members' dependants involved in study or research at Diploma, Degree, Post Graduate Diploma or Post-Graduate Degree level. In line with the aforementioned levels of study, if members are not sure which course they or their dependant will be doing they may indicate this on the enclosed application form as “to be decided”.

Members who have already commenced approved

courses can also apply.

Awards will be made on an annual basis for each year of study. Awards will not be given for a repeat year.

For those successful in the draw for the third level award, it will be necessary to provide documentation indicating acceptance onto the course by the college which confirms that the grant winner is a student for the upcoming 2018 academic year.

Application Criteria for the three Grant Scheme Categories:

1. The successful applicant must be in benefit when both the application and the payments are made and for the duration of the course as relevant.
2. For transparency purposes, applications must be made on the **current 2018** official form and no other version of the form will be processed. Photocopies of the forms and faxed copies are also acceptable.
3. The form must be dated and signed by the member applying.
4. Only one application per member, per dependant, per category will be accepted. However, members may enter each of the three categories if they or their dependants are attending the Gaeltacht, second level or third level institutions. (For example, if a member has more than one dependant in second level they should send in a separate application for each dependant).
5. Grants will be awarded by means of a draw which will take place at a date and time to be decided by the National Executive Council.
6. The decision of the National Executive Council on all matters relating to this scheme shall be final.
7. Grants will be non-transferable and must be claimed by **December 1st, 2018**.

Review and Monitoring of Scheme

This scheme will be launched to coincide with the upcoming academic year from September 2018. Again, for the Gaeltacht award this refers to courses held this **summer, 2018**. The Union is committed to monitoring this scheme and it will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Education Committee considering the applications received, budgeting and requirements of members. Comments and feedback from members on the operation of the scheme is invited.

Members must ensure that they fill out the correct form for the relevant category. Also, due to the volume of forms received by Head Office it will not be possible to confirm receipt of individual applications on behalf of members.

It will be the responsibility of each member to ensure that their forms are returned on time to Union Head Office as late applications will not be accepted. In that regard we would ask members to post their forms directly to Union HQ. All forms must be returned to Union Head Office by **Friday, May 18th, 2018** to the following address: **Communications Workers' Union, William Norton House, 575-577 North Circular Road, Dublin 1**.

Queries

Members who have any queries on the scheme or the application process are encouraged to contact Union Head Office directly for further assistance.

CWU GAELTACHT GRANT 2018 ENTRY FORM

I hereby declare that I am an in-benefit member of CWU and I wish to enter my application below for inclusion in the draw for the Gaeltacht Grant which is to take place in accordance with the conditions stipulated in CWU General Circular 04/18

(PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS)

NOTE: Closing date for entries is Friday, May 18th 2018 and only successful applicants from the draw will be notified.

Name of Gaeltacht

Name of Applicant

Address

.....

Name of Union Member

Address

.....

Contact Telephone Number

Relationship to Applicant*

Place of Employment

Address

.....

Union Branch Staff Number

I agree to be bound by all conditions and decisions of the National Executive Council.

DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of entering the Education Grant Scheme draw and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

Signed: **Date:**

* For the purposes of the CWU Education Grant Scheme, “dependant” is defined as:

- A child or adopted child of a member;
- The husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner of a member; and/or
- A person for whom a member is acting in the place of a parent (including but not limited to a child or adopted child of a member’s husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner).

CWU SECOND LEVEL AWARDS 2018 ENTRY FORM

I hereby declare that I am an in-benefit member of CWU and I wish to enter my application below for inclusion in the draw for the Second Level Awards which is to take place in accordance with the conditions stipulated in CWU General Circular 04/18

(PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS)

NOTE: Closing date for entries is Friday, May 18th 2018 and only successful applicants from the draw will be notified.

Name of Applicant

Address

.....

Name of Union Member

Address

.....

Contact Telephone Number

Relationship to Applicant*

Place of Employment

Address

.....

Union Branch Staff Number

I agree to be bound by all conditions and decisions of the National Executive Council.

DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of entering the Education Grant Scheme draw and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

Signed: **Date:**

* For the purposes of the CWU Education Grant Scheme, “dependant” is defined as:

- A child or adopted child of a member;
- The husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner of a member; and/or
- A person for whom a member is acting in the place of a parent (including but not limited to a child or adopted child of a member’s husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner).

CWU THIRD LEVEL AWARDS 2018 ENTRY FORM

I hereby declare that I am an in-benefit member of CWU and I wish to enter my application below for inclusion in the draw for the Third Level Awards which is to take place in accordance with the conditions stipulated in CWU General Circular 04/18

(PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS)

NOTE: Closing date for entries is Friday, May 18th 2018 and only successful applicants from the draw will be notified.

Course Title

Educational Institute:

Duration of Course: No. of years remaining:

Name of Applicant

Address

.....

Name of Union Member

Address

.....

Contact Telephone Number

Relationship to Applicant*

Place of Employment

Address

.....

Union Branch Staff Number

I agree to be bound by all conditions and decisions of the National Executive Council.

DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of entering the Education Grant Scheme draw and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

Signed: **Date:**

* For the purposes of the CWU Education Grant Scheme, “dependant” is defined as:

- A child or adopted child of a member;
- The husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner of a member; and/or
- A person for whom a member is acting in the place of a parent (including but not limited to a child or adopted child of a member’s husband, wife, civil partner or co-habiting partner).



CWU Added Benefits

A Guide to making claims from various CWU Funds

The CWU has valuable added benefits for its members, which include the Medical Benefit Fund, Social Benefit Fund, Hardship Fund, Mortality Fund and the Orphans' Pension Scheme. On the following pages there will be an explanation of how each fund operates, along with the procedure to follow if you wish to make a claim from any of these Funds.

MEDICAL BENEFIT FUND

This is an additional contribution fund and is NOT covered by your normal Union subscription. The current rates to participate in the Medical Benefit Fund are: €3 per week; OR €6 per fortnight; OR €13 per month.

Members may make one claim in each category below and, subject to the limits outlined, the treatment date must be within a 12 month calendar year. All expenses must be claimed in the year that the expenditure is incurred and there is no retrospection of claims. There is a cut-off date of the second Friday in January for receipt of claims for the previous year; no claims with receipts dated the previous year will be processed after this under any circumstances.

Dental Grant	Up to €305.00
Optical Grant	Up to €152.00
Surgical & Medical Appliances	Up to €152.00

All claims must be made using the official claim form and sent to Union Head Office. Claims for children up to the date of their 18th birthday only; you must include date(s) of birth for any claims relating to your children. Original receipts are required for processing. These receipts will not be returned; you may need to copy your own receipts for tax purposes before submission.

Please be advised that Asthmatic Inhalers are **not** covered under Surgical & Medical Appliances, as these relate to medication.

Laser Eye Surgery is **not** covered under the Optical Grant.

Under Surgical & Medical Appliances, the following items will be paid on a once-off basis (not yearly) to a maximum of €152.00 (this list is not exhaustive):

- Hearing Aids
- Wheelchairs
- Nebulizer machines
- Lifts on shoes - inside soles (medically prescribed only)

- Blood Pressure machines (medically prescribed only)
- Surgical Stockings (medically prescribed only)

Please note, under no circumstances will medication, prescriptions, and/or doctor/ consultant's fees be paid.

MEDISAN

The illnesses catered for by the Fund usually necessitate prolonged treatment. The Fund provides assistance for members suffering from Tuberculosis, Psychiatric Illness, Cardiac Disease, Renal Failure, Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's disease, Insulin-dependent Diabetes, Diseases of the Central Nervous System, Cancer and Addictions. With the ever-increasing cost of medical attention and treatment you will find yourself faced with considerable financial strain apart altogether from a possible reduction in pay if you are unfortunate enough to contract any of these illnesses. Membership of Medisan gives you affordable benefits for only €1.50 a week.

Membership of the Fund will assist towards the following:

- Income assistance during periods of reduced pay
- Assistance towards the cost of surgery and other treatment
- Assistance towards consultations and drugs
- Assistance towards the cost of counselling and therapy
- Assistance towards the cost of convalescence
- 50% match up of VHI shortfall up to a specified maximum.

While it is true that you, like the majority of members, may never require the assistance of the Fund, you will be helping your less fortunate colleagues who do, and ensuring help for yourself should the occasion arise.

Your spouse/partner and children can also benefit — the fund will assist with the payment of the cost of maintenance in an approved facility.

A copy of the rules of the Fund may be had on application from Ray Lawlor, 5th Floor Telephone House Marlborough Street Dublin 1.

SOCIAL BENEFIT FUND

This Fund is available to those paying contributions of either 1% basic pay + 13 cents OR 1% basic pay + 26 cents only.

Subject to the CWU Rules & Constitution, and on production of the requisite documentation (meaning payslips and Medical Certs), an “In Benefit” member on reduced pay (inclusive of Social Welfare payments), following a continuous or accumulative absence of either 13 or 26 weeks from duty (in accordance with the sick pay regulations of the relevant company), resulting from illness or accident, may be paid an amount up to 70% of their basic pay while a member of the Union. This payment may be paid for a **maximum of 18 months in any period of 4 years** in accordance with the following scale:

0 - 6 months	Up to 70% of basic pay
6 - 12 months	Up to 65% of basic pay
12 - 18 months	Up to 60% of basic pay

Payments will cease after this period except in the most extreme of hardship circumstances. Applications for continuation or otherwise of Social Benefit outside of this period will be considered on their merits by the NEC Finance Committee, which will make a recommendation to the National Executive Council. The decision of the National Executive Council on such applications will be final.

To make a claim from the Social Benefit Fund, a member must request a form, through their Branch, and submit it along with **ALL** of the following supporting documentation:

1. Consultant’s Report
2. Payslip showing **FULL PAY**
3. Medical Certificate(s) covering the date(s) of absence
4. **ALL** payslips showing reduced pay to date

Once your application has been approved and processed, you are required to submit weekly/monthly payslips and a Medical Certificate which covers the absence. If you do not provide a Medical Cert which covers the same period as your payslip(s), your claim will not be processed. **The responsibility for submitting the requisite documentation on time and in full rests solely with the individual member; CWU Head Office will not chase up documentation.**

The following is an **example** of how Social Benefit is calculated for a member on Pension Rate of pay and is for information purposes only (i.e. the figures are not specific to any individual claim). Payment is made on a fortnightly basis by Electronic Fund Transfer and a monthly basis by cheque.

Basic Pay	€530.00		
70% of pay	€371.00	€742.00	2x 70% of basic pay
Less Social Welfare	€193.00	– €386.00	2x Social Welfare
Less wk1 pay	– €35.00		Payment from Company WEEK 1
Less wk2 pay	– €35.00		Payment from Company WEEK 2
Social Benefit due		€286.00	

A member is only entitled to make one claim from either the Social Benefit Fund or the Medisan Fund; you cannot claim from both Funds at the same time.

HARDSHIP FUND

Applications for financial assistance from the Fund are considered on their merits by the Finance Committee and grants are made in certain, limited circumstances, subject to the sanction of the National Executive Council. To apply, complete the form on page ?? and submit it to the General Secretary in CWU Head Office, through your Branch/Section Secretary, for consideration by the Finance Committee.

MORTALITY FUND

A member may be paid €635 on the death of their spouse/civil partner. The estate of a member may be paid €5,080 on their death. A member may nominate during their lifetime to whom the sum shall be payable. A Retired Member may be paid €635 on the death of their spouse/civil partner. The estate of a Retired Member may be paid €1,270 on their death. A Retired Member may during their lifetime nominate to whom such payment may be made. **There is only one mortality benefit payment due per member.**

To apply, obtain a form from Union Head Office through the Branch/Section Secretary, complete same and return with copy of Death Certificate. In certain cases the Union may also require sight of the grant of probate or letters of administration, whichever is applicable.

ORPHAN’S PENSION SCHEME

In the event of a member’s death in service, a sum of €20 per week (paid monthly) may be paid in respect of each dependent child, until that child reaches the age of 18 years. This scheme is a **FREE** benefit to all members. To register your children with the scheme, please complete the form on page ?? and return it to CWU Head Office.



**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION
MEDICAL BENEFIT FUND – CLAIM FORM**



PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS

I wish to apply for a grant from the Fund in respect of Dental/ Optical/ Surgical& Medical Appliances:

BRANCH _____ **STAFF No** _____

MEMBER'S NAME _____ **MOBILE** _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

BANK DETAILS

NAME OF BANK: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME ON ACCOUNT _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

IBAN:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ACCOUNT No. _____ **SORT CODE:** _____

Please tick box(es) and enter amount(s) in the categories that you wish to claim under:

DENTAL ☐ € _____

OPTICAL ☐ € _____

SURGICAL & MEDICAL APPS ☐ € _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF CLAIM: € _____

DATA PROTECTION

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of processing your claim from the Medical Benefit Fund and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

SIGNED _____ **DATE:** _____

Return the form, along with your receipt(s), to CWU Head Office

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Original receipts required for processing. Treatment date must be on the receipt. If claiming for children, include date(s) of birth on the receipt(s).



**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION
CWU ORPHANS' PENSION SCHEME**



PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS

BRANCH _____ **STAFF No** _____

MEMBER'S NAME _____ **MOBILE** _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

FULL NAME(S) OF CHILD(REN) OF BIRTH

DATE(S)

DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of processing your request from the Hardship Fund and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

SIGNED _____ **DATE:** _____

Return the form, along with your receipt(s), to CWU Head Office



**COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION
MEDISAN**



PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS

AUTHORITY FOR DEDUCTION FROM PAY

TO BE SIGNED BY SUBSCRIBERS TO MEDISAN.

I, the undersigned, hereby express my willingness, and undertake to have the sum of:
(please tick appropriate box)

Weekly paid ☐

Monthly paid ☐

Fortnightly paid ☐

Postmasters monthly ☐

Other (Please Specify): _____

deducted from my wages/salary every week / fortnight month, by

_____ **(state name of company) to be paid over to**
the Honorary Treasurer of Medisan.

Full name in BLOCK letters: _____

PRIVATE ADDRESS: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

Office of Employment: _____

Staff/Payroll Number: _____ **Date:** _____

Signed: _____

Employee of (State Company): _____

DATA PROTECTION:

The information collected here will only be used for the purpose of joining the Medisan scheme and will not be shared with any third-party. If you consent to the use of your data for this purpose, please sign the form below.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

To: _____ **(Employer)**

The above has now been registered as a member of the Fund. Please arrange for the collection of his/her contributions.

Date: _____ **Signed:** _____

Please return completed application form to:

Ray Lawlor
5th Floor, Telephone House
Marlborough Street, Dublin 1



It's Fake News time again in pursuit of water charges and the privatisation of water

The *Beast from the East* and *Storm Emma* have provided right-wing politicians and the mainstream media with a badly needed opportunity to promote domestic water charges, again. This time, however, they have to resort to fake news because we now have evidence to contradict every single aspect of their claims.

That won't stop them from demonising water protesters and childishy blaming them for water shortages though.

On the 6th March the *Irish Sun* published an article by Adam Higgins with a headline:

“THE STATE OF WATER - TDs say Ireland needs water charges to prevent future pipe chaos in storm weather, as 20,500 people are without water.”

The article continues, *“Speaking to the Irish Sun, Fine Gael's Alan Farrell said if water charges had been brought in then the country could avoid the current water chaos from happening again in the future.”*

He said: *“The water restrictions at night are as a result of critical supply issues. Critical supply issues are, of course, a direct result of the inability of Irish Water to invest in the infrastructure in the same way they might have been able to do had they been in receipt of direct household funding.”*

So there you have it. Domestic water charges would have prevented water shortages. How is it, then, that the United Kingdom faced the exact same water shortages following the exact same storm when they have had water charges in place since the 1980s?

This is the same TD who made the argument in 2015 on RTE's Claire Byrne show that domestic water charges needed to be implemented so that commercial water charges could be reduced for multinational corporations.

In reference to water usage increasing by 10% during the storm, Green Party TD Eamon Ryan added:

“There's little doubt that the current water shortages are being caused mainly by leaks, but households running taps continuously contributed. In some cases, people had no water because their neighbours were running taps constantly.”

In both instances, neither TD was asked for evidence, a core element of a journalist's role. Instead they were given free rein to spout whatever pro-water charges diatribe they wanted without any request to justify their claims.

The truth is that water usage increased during the

extreme weather because people were confined to their homes for a number of days where they had to cook, clean, shower and flush toilets. This is sometimes referred to as living, with hygiene.

Incidentally, this only serves to prove Right2Water's argument that those who would have been impacted hardest by a metered water charging regime would be our poorest and most vulnerable citizens - pensioners, the underemployed, unemployed and the disabled - because they spend a disproportionate amount of time in their homes.

The *Sunday Business Post* published an editorial recently: *“Storm Emma water crisis shows folly of scrapping charges.”* The article rightly condemned the water crisis, but apportions blame in entirely the wrong direction.

“There was a predictable response from the opposition – spend more money on the country's water infrastructure. But some of the calls were coming from the very TDs who fought to abolish water charges. That meant Irish Water lost €239 million which was being billed to customers,” said the editorial.

“To put that in perspective, Irish Water is spending around €125 million per year on reducing leaks in the public water services. All that income from water charges would have replaced a lot more leaky pipes.”

So the *Sunday Business Post* is still under the illusion that every penny from domestic water charges would have been spent fixing leaks?

Can the editor explain how Irish Water were going to pay for the metering of households which was to cost more than €800 million?

What about operating the Abtran call centre which cost €9.2 million in 2014; €30.2 million in 2015; €21.2 million in 2016 and €15.2 million in 2017 – a total of €75.8 million? In fact, an answer to a Parliamentary Question asked by Joan Collins TD states: *“The reduction in costs paid to Abtran since 2016 is reflective of the suspension of domestic billing”*. So you can thank water protesters that up to €30m is now going towards fixing leaks rather than on a call centre.

Further costs for Irish Water included consultancy fees of more than €90 million, with ongoing operations consultancy costs of €7 million per year. The advertising costs for the firm were approximately €3 million per annum. The postage and billing system was costing €6 million per annum (not to mention the environmental

damage of 6 million bills being printed and posted on an annual basis). The ongoing costs for the maintenance and replacement of meters is estimated to cost €50 million per year, but that would be quite conservative.

All of this adds up, and as Senior Executive Engineer for Water, Gerry Concannon stated to government representatives back in 2010: “the cost of unmetered water is currently about €350 per annum per domestic unit. When all of the costs of metering involving installation, maintenance, administration and replacement are considered, this cost almost doubles in the medium term.”

As Fianna Fail TD Stephen Donnelly pointed out a number of years ago:

“Not one penny of the money they’re demanding you pay will be used to run, or to upgrade, the water system.

In fact, even if everyone paid their water bill, every penny of the money would be spent on the admin involved in issuing us with bills.”

But, why would anyone want to double the cost of water infrastructure? Especially economists who are supposed to understand these things.

Take, for instance, Ronan Lyons, Assistant Professor of Economics with Trinity College, who got in on the act with a ridiculous tweet:



Notwithstanding the fact he has no evidence that householders were doing this, it was pointed out to him that leaving taps running doesn’t work, and that perhaps an education campaign would be appropriate in that regard.

Shortly after he was backed up by Stephen Kinsella, Senior Lecturer in Economics at the University of Limerick and columnist with the Sunday Business Post.



A number of activists immediately came onto the thread with information and facts which neither Lyons nor Kinsella appeared to know or understand. Yet they maintained their position, implying they support water charges for two key reasons (myths):

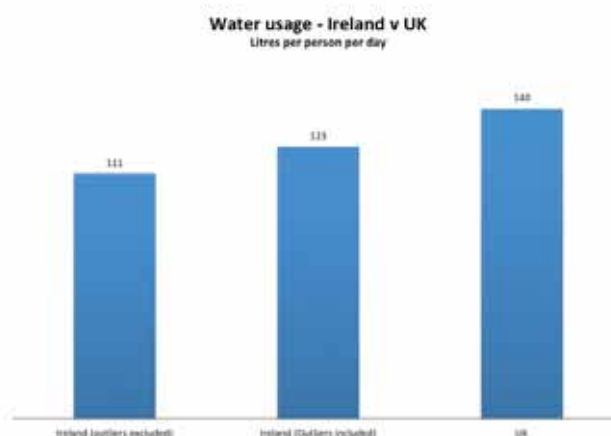
1. Conservation: Domestic charges reduce consumption levels – when people have to pay for water, they use less.
2. Investment: Water charges would provide an income stream enabling Irish Water to borrow and upgrade infrastructure.

Let’s address both of these issues.

Conservation

Firstly, let’s look at water usage. The government appointed “expert commission on water” produced a well-researched report which showed that Irish households use between 15-25% less water than UK households – where they have had domestic water charges since the 1980’s.

- Average Irish usage when outliers (leaks) are excluded: 111 litres per person
- Average Irish usage when outliers (leaks) are included 123 litres per person
- Average UK usage: 140 litres per person



The Water Commission's report stated:

“Irish Water presented consumption data to the Expert Commission based on metered consumption to date, which indicated that domestic consumption is relatively low in Ireland with average consumption of 123 litres per capita (compared, for example, to 140 litres per capita in the UK).”

“While comparison of domestic consumption with other European countries is difficult due to differing methods of measurement and because the data can be out of date, this most recent consumption data suggests that Ireland is at the lower end of the spectrum of EU countries with regard to domestic consumption.”

Greek economist Yanis Varoufakis explained in his recent book that economists generally cannot comprehend a world outside of commodities. They know the price of everything, but the value of nothing. Nothing can exist outside the world of supply and demand and therefore they find it impossible to understand what they believe is irrational human behaviour. He uses blood donations as a way to illustrate his point.

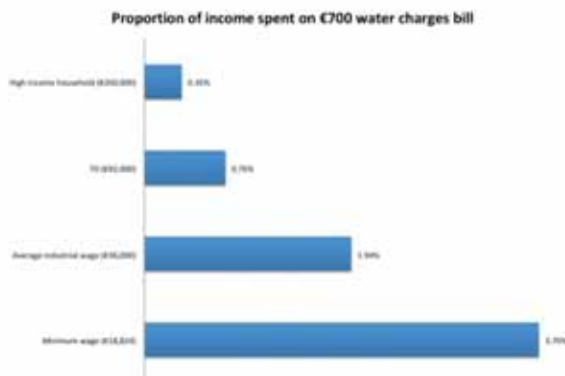
Countries who pay for blood donations have a lower uptake than countries who rely on unpaid donations. This is because when you commodify an item, it loses its goodwill factor. A donor who was willing to donate blood on the basis that they wanted to help someone in need may feel cheapened by the process of being paid, and change their mind about donating.

Water is no different. When you introduce a cost, in many instances, high income households in particular will use more of it stating: “I’m paying for it anyway, so I can use as much as I want,” as they fill up their swimming pool for the second time in a week.

This is important to understand because high income households will never worry about a €700 bill coming through their door.

On the other hand, a householder on the minimum wage will spend a much higher proportion of their income on the same bill – and again, as stated throughout the Right2Water campaign, domestic water charges are an attack on the standard of living for the poorest in our society.

And before anyone says: “Oh, but there’d be allowances and exemptions,” we all know how that worked out with bin charges.



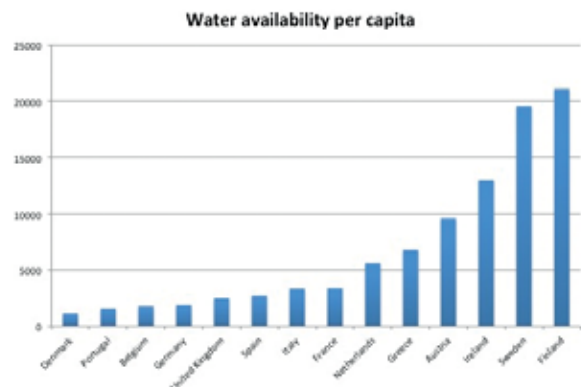
Throughout the recent “water crisis” we were told to conserve water because it is a “scarce resource”, and it is. Globally water is becoming more scarce as populations increase and industry uses it.

But throughout all of the lectures by TD's, the media and economists, not once has any of them called for the real polluters and users of our water to pay appropriately for their usage.

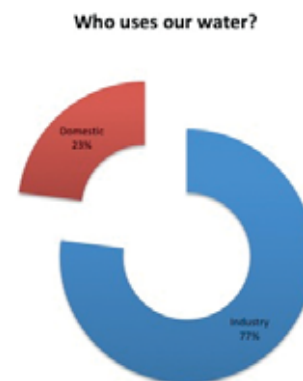
Most domestic households use water to cook and clean. Most businesses use water in the pursuit of profit. This is an important distinction, yet it is businesses that use most of our water, but for some, householders are expected to pay the bulk of the bills.

According to a 2005 joint report entitled The Wealth of the Poor – Managing Ecosystems to Fight Poverty, produced by the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank among others, Ireland has 13,003 m³ of “Actual Renewable Water Resources” available per capita.

Compare this with our closest neighbours in the UK where they have 2,474 m³ per capita, or Germany 1,866. We are a water rich country, and again, as the expert water commission stated, we have five times more water available to us than France and fifty times more water available than Israel.



But here's the thing...according to the same report, industry uses 77 percent of our water while domestic households use only 23 percent.



So why such an emphasis on households reducing consumption? Irish Water's own estimates, which they have admitted need to be reduced, are that domestic

water charges could reduce household consumption by 6 percent. Do the maths - 6% of 23% is 1.38%.

So, pro-domestic water charges campaigners are arguing to double the cost of our water infrastructure – by introducing meters, call centres, billing systems, advertising, etc – so that we can reduce consumption by a maximum level of 1.38 percent?

And that's before we take into account that 50 percent of all water is leaked before it gets to the household meaning you can reduce the 1.38 percent by half. It hardly seems worth it.



Try looking at this chart and asking yourself, if you had €2 billion to spare, where would you target expenditure to reduce wastage of water? Would you fix leaks, target commercial water charges or implement a highly expensive domestic metering programme?

In fairness to the expert water commission, they echoed Right2Water's calls for abstraction charges. In Ireland. If you weren't already aware, companies like Britvic (Ballygowan), Glenpatrick Spring and Kerry Spring can extract unlimited amounts of water from our wells, bottle that water, and then sell for a profit without paying a single cent in fees.

But what about commercial water charges?

Well, the expert water commission highlighted a serious flaw in the system. They say that half of all businesses are refusing to pay their water bills.

In fact, Irish Water inherited €100 million of debt in relation to unpaid commercial water charges while a further €50 million of debt was written off. Taking account of the figures published for 2015, where Irish Water's financial statement said that non-domestic revenue brought in €219,872. It's interesting that

Link to the Financial Statements

UISCE WATER

C1 Revenue

	2015 €'000	2014 €'000
Domestic revenue	232,299	-
Non-domestic revenue	219,872	248,066
Government subvention revenue	389,909	438,122
Total	841,127	687,188

this is significantly down on the previous year, before domestic water charges had been implemented, where non-domestic charges raised €248,066.

It's not possible that Alan Farrell's announcement on RTE that domestic charges were being brought in to give corporations a cut in their rates was true, is it?

Either way, we can extrapolate that if there is a 50 percent non-payment rate in commercial water charges, and Irish Water took in approximately €220,000 in 2015, then if they pursue the commercial non-payers, we could raise revenue of more than €400,000 per annum from this source.

This, combined with abstraction charges, exploration of increased commercial charges and ring-fencing revenue from the government subsidy (as suggested by the expert commission on water) would provide the necessary income stream for the badly needed investment cited by so many of the pro-water charges lobby.

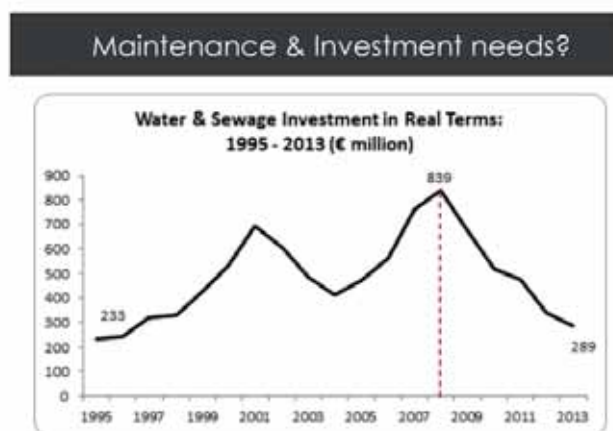
Investment

The argument goes – if we have domestic water charges it will be a guaranteed revenue stream that Irish Water can then use to borrow from the markets. This will then help us to fund the upgrading of our antiquated water infrastructure.

If there's one thing everyone agrees, it's that water needs to be paid for and our current infrastructure desperately needs upgrading.

We lose an enormous amount of water to leaks. In some parts of the country, like Dublin, up to 57 percent of all water is leaked through holes in the pipes. This is a scandal.

So who is responsible? The government are. Between 2008 and 2013 the Irish government cut water funding by 65 percent. As recently as 2015, the Irish government of Fine Gael and Labour cut the government subvention to Irish Water by almost €40 million, while allowing commercial companies a reduction of €30 million.



The argument that we need domestic water charges in order to raise funds so we can borrow is a problem for a number of reasons. Firstly, we have given more than €3 billion in tax cuts in recent years, predominantly aimed

at the highest earners and businesses. This could have done an awful lot to upgrade our water infrastructure.

Hospitality Sector VAT rate	€620m
Budget 2015	
• Income Tax Change (41% - 40%)	€405m
• USC Changes	€237m
Budget 2016	
• USC Threshold Change & Cut	€772m
• Earned Income Credit Changes	€61m
• Knowledge Development Box	€50m
• Motor Tax Cuts	€43m
• Capital Acquisitions Tax	€33m
• Capital Gains Tax (Entrepreneur Relief)	€27m
• Employers PRSI Threshold Changes	€7m
Budget 2017	
• USC Thresholds and Cut	€390m
• Earned Income Tax Credit	€58m
• Capital Acquisition Tax Thresholds	€22m
• DIRT reduction	€9m
Budget 2018	
• Increased higher income tax threshold	€132m
• USC cuts	€177m
TOTAL:	€3,043 BILLION

Secondly, our government can borrow at record low rates at this moment in time, yet Irish Water would have to borrow at a much higher interest rate off the markets. I'm reminded of a podcast where renowned economist Ann Petifor illustrated the idiocy in this argument.

She pointed out that hospital trusts in the UK are currently borrowing at interest rates of up to 15 percent, yet the UK government can borrow at 0.35 percent. So why doesn't the government borrow and upgrade the hospitals? The same can be said of our water infrastructure.

Having said that, why would you take out a credit union loan with interest rates if you have the savings to buy the item outright? They could, if the will was there, stop giving tax cuts to the wealthy and fix the infrastructure immediately. But that doesn't help them financialise water.

The argument made by Stephen Kinsella on his Twitter account is that water issues will be fixed quicker in the UK due to their investment model they have. What he didn't realise is that on average, every household in the UK is paying £80 per year to service debt and dividends incurred by water companies. That's 27 percent of all water bills that is lost to the system because of borrowing and privatisation – which, no matter what anyone tells you, is the end outcome for the imposition of water charges.

Privatisation

Everyone will tell you that there is no privatisation agenda when it comes to water, but very few are campaigning or arguing in favour of a referendum on water ownership. Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and Labour will say they are opposed to water being privatised, but not enough to give us a referendum so we can prevent future privatisation.

These are the same political parties who have collectively supported privatisation of Aer Lingus, Bord Gais, Eircom, Irish Sugar, Irish Life Assurance, Irish Steel, British and Irish Steam Packet Company, Irish Fertiliser Industries, ACC Bank, ICC Bank, Cablelink, Great Southern Hotels, as well as opening up vital public services to privatised competition including - transport, electricity, postal services, healthcare, education.

Why would anyone question their honesty when they say they don't want a privatised water industry? But even if all those political parties were being honest, there is another threat.

When asked what his position was and whether he would support a referendum on water ownership, Stephen Kinsella said:

"A referendum on it would have my support. But legislation probably the best way to do it."

The response from Right2Water's David Gibney was:

"So what happens when we get another bailout in the not so distant future and the EU, ECB and IMF (and others) demand privatisation – like, say, Portugal, Greece or Italy?" Silence from Mr Kinsella.

The only reason Ireland was not forced to privatise our water during our bailout 8 years ago was because there were no meters and therefore no revenue stream, so no ability to make profits from our water. The first step towards changing that is metered water charges. So in 5 or 10 or 20 years time, it is possible outside organisation will force Ireland to sell off its water if it is not enshrined in the constitution.

Don't believe us, look at these two quotes from Credit Suisse.



Or what about Citigroup Chief Economist Willem Buiter:

"Water as an asset class will, in my view, become eventually the single most important physical-commodity based asset class, dwarfing oil copper, agriculture commodities and precious metals."

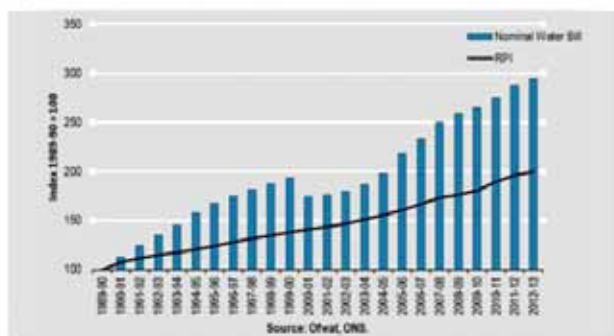
There is no question, the financial services world is after our water. One of the reasons is that water is now three times more profitable than oil or gas in the UK.

But what happens when you privatise water? Here's a chart of how water prices increased in the UK compared to the average retail prices. Water has increased at double

the rate. And the end result? Water poverty in the UK is now at 23.6 percent compared to 0 percent in Ireland. This is something we should be proud of.

4. HOUSEHOLD WATER BILLS

Figure 3: Average water bills and retail prices, 1989-90 - 2012-13



Water companies in the UK have been criticised for their refusal to pay taxes. In 2013 in Britain, private water companies made profits of €2.81 billion, paid shareholders €2.55 billion, while only paying €101 million in taxes. Seven companies paid no taxes whatsoever. Thames Water, one of the largest in the UK, paid an effective corporation tax rate of 0.128% between 2008 – 2013.

2013 figures from House of Commons Library. The minus figures are the amount the firms get in capital allowance tax relief

	Tax	Profit	Dividends
Northumbrian Water	-£10.6m	£204m	£190m
Severn Trent	-£12.6	£238m	£72m
Thames Water	-£5m	£145m	£231m
Welsh Water	-£4.5m	£14m	£0 (loss for profit firm)
Yorkshire Water	-£62.3m	£186m	£256m
Sembcorp Bournemouth Water	-£467,000	£10m	£3m
Portsmouth Water	-£527,000	£3.1m	£1.4m
Anglian Water Services	£5.9m	£301m	£357m
Southern Water Services	£22m	£179m	£43m
South West Water	£30m	£164m	£133m
United Utilities Water	£76.8m	£311m	£223.5m
Wessex Water Services	£12.5m	£140m	£140.7m
Bristol Water	£2.3m	£15.4m	£14.7m
Dee Valley Water	£60,000	£4.4m	£2.84m
South East Water	£2.6m	£41.7m	£31.1m
South Staffordshire Water	£2.6m	£14.6m	£13m
Sutton and East Surrey Water	£1.8m	£6.9m	£5.6m
Affinity Water	£12.9m	£56m	£153m
Cambridge Water	£2.6m	£14.6m	£13m

In summary

In summary

Today we learned the sad news that one of the worlds greatest intellectuals, Stephen Hawking, has died. He once said:

“The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, it is the illusion of knowledge.”

So when Ronan Lyons, a senior economist says that water charges would have prevented water shortages, one would question whether this erroneous statement is through ignorance, or through assumed knowledge.

When people with actual expertise in this matter came to Ireland to talk about our water crisis, they were completely ignored.

Not one media outlet interviewed Maude Barlow or covered the two speeches she made. Maude, if you don’t know, has written four books on water and was an advisor to the UN on water, along with dozens of other accolades. She is widely recognised as one of the worlds leading experts on water. Her statement simply didn’t fit the medias and right-wing agenda.

“The Irish system of paying for water and sanitation services through progressive taxation and non-domestic user fees, is an exemplary model of fair equitable and sustainable service delivery for the entire world”

When the European Water Movement, the activists who are battling against water shut-offs and water poverty all across Europe released their statement on the water privatisation agenda in Ireland, they were also completely ignored.

“It is clear that the best method of securing access to water, and securing funds for infrastructural investment, is through general taxation.

“The European Water Movement views the struggle of the Irish people to abolish water charges, and to secure a referendum enshrining public ownership of Ireland’s water system, as yet more evidence of a real European people’s movement to democratise water management.”

When Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director for Food and Water watch provided the Irish media with some relevant and valuable information about water, again, ignored. Remember, Wenonah is based in a country where up to 70,000 families had their water shut off in one city alone, Detroit.

“Metering and water pricing, the policies that many economists have advocated for encouraging conservation, is a wrong minded strategy.”

“This market-oriented pricing reform is fundamentally flawed. It assumes that households can or will reduce water use when faced with metering and higher prices. However, residential water use is a small fraction of water withdrawals and even draconian water price increases will have little impact on household water consumption. For most households, water goes towards essential uses like drinking, cooking and sanitation; consumer demand for water does not really change, regardless of price. Economists call this price inelasticity. Consumers will not drink twice as much water if the price of water falls by half, nor will they reduce the amount of water they drink by half if the price of water doubles. A Food & Water Watch review of the economic literature found only a very modest

consumer response to rising water prices. Households generally reduce water use slightly in the face of even steep price increases.

Maybe we don't get balanced coverage because the Irish media, who are currently struggling to make a profit, with many relying on paid advertorials from the government, were also receiving up to €3 million per year in advertising revenue from Irish Water?

Even when the government's own "expert commission on water" published the facts and figures behind our water usage - supporting what Right2Water Ireland has been saying for years - the line from the media was that we need water charges.

Put simply, water can be paid for through three distinct methods:

1. Metered domestic charges (England, France)
2. Local rates (Northern Ireland, Scotland)
3. General taxation (Republic of Ireland)

The question everyone should be asking is, which is the optimum method of paying for water from an environmental, economic and social perspective.

With abstraction charges, effective commercial water charges and government subvention, Ireland can ensure we never have water poverty while at the same time providing the badly needed investment in our water infrastructure.

Don't let ill informed 'know-it-all' economists or the media spin their ignorance or their propaganda in pursuit of a neo-liberal policy of water commodification and financialisation. They did it in housing, health, education and other sectors of our society with devastating impacts, let's keep our water out of their ideology and their ideology out of our water, and let's not make the mistakes that the rest of the world has already made - and is paying for now.

Oh, and if you protested against the introduction of water charges, you are a hero, and you should be proud. Do not let them blame you for water shortages, that responsibility is entirely down to those who refuse to tackle the real wasters (commercial enterprises) and those who cut funding for water infrastructure (Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Labour and the Green Party).

Now, can we please stop the waste of money on meters, advertising, call centres, consultants, etc, and use the savings to fix the damn pipes? And finally, sign the petition and call on your local TDs to support a referendum on water ownership.

For more, read "Why can't we have an mature debate about water" published by Right2Water more than a year ago.

This article was submitted by Dave Gibney, Mandate, who was a member of the CWU and Dublin Postal Delivery Branch and attended Conference as a delegate.

GET INTO PRINT!

Anyone wishing to submit articles or photos to appear in the Connect journal, please either:

EMAIL TO:

imelda@cwu.ie

OR POST TO:

**Imelda Wall,
Communications Workers' Union,
William Norton House,
575 North Circular Road,
Dublin 1.**

**Wear your
Union Badge**



Some tips for taking photos for the Journal

For best results:

- (1) Use a flashlight to light up the face(s) of the person/people you are photographing. Most digital cameras and mobile phones have an in-built flashlight.
- (2) Try to position people where light shines *towards* the faces of those you are photographing.

Don't have light *behind* the person/people, as it only makes their facial features difficult to see.

Don't put people *under* lights, as that casts shadows down their faces.

- (2) Take photos in a bright place where you can see people clearly.
- (3) Don't stand too far away from the person/people you are photographing. Sometimes a head and shoulders shot is sufficient for purpose.

If you're photographing a presentation, include the Union Scroll and/or other presentation item in the photograph.

- (4) Take more than one photo, so you can choose the best one to include in the Connect journal.

Register To Vote

All you need to know, and do,
to get on the Register of Electors



At our last Biennial Conference the following motion was passed and it was agreed to publish the following information annually.

“Conference acknowledges the large number of younger people who are not listed on the voting register and the ensuing lack of engagement in civic life that entails from same. Therefore, Conference instructs the incoming National Executive Council to undertake an annual campaign among all our union members to promote the benefits of being listed on the electoral register.”

DUBLIN CLERICAL & ADMIN BRANCH

Are you registered to vote? **CheckTheRegister.ie** to see if you’re on the register of electors. If you’re registered, great. If not, don’t worry! They’ll guide you through it.

The annual electoral register deadline is in November each year for all new voters and those looking to change their details. If a vote is called (e.g. a general election, Presidential election or referendum) you can also apply to be added to the register (known as the supplement to the register), **but your application must be received by your local authority at least 15 days before polling day, not counting Sundays or public holidays.** To be included on the supplement to the Postal or Special Voters list, you must apply by **28 days before polling day.**

How do I register?

There are two types of registers that you can apply to be on. Which one you apply for depends on the time of year that you’re filling out the application.

Supplementary Register

If there is an election or a referendum coming up and you’re not included in the register of electors, then you can apply to be included on the supplementary register.

Draft Register of Electors

The draft register of electors is published on the 1st of November each year. This shows a list of the people included on the official Register of Electors on the 15th of February the following year.

To be included in the Draft Register, you must send in your application form **before November 25th.**

The register which will come into force on 15th February 2019 is on display from 1 November to 25 November 2018. This means if on 15th February 2019, you are aged 18 or over, you should check that your name, address and other details are present and correct on the Draft Register.

If there is a mistake, tell your local Council before 25th November 2018.



Irish Coast Guard Two Hundred Coast Guard Volunteers Apply to Trade Union for Help

Report by Tom MacSweeney, Deputy Editor, Marine Times

*Published
with permission from
"The Marine Times"*

The following article appeared in the Marine Times and is a reflection on the unacceptable position Coastguards across the country find themselves in, with their dealings with management. These Volunteers have no access to any independent scrutiny of any of the sanctions or decisions made by their managers. The CWU have, for many years, tried to help these people to get recognition for the fantastic service they provide to our communities and we will continue our efforts to ensure that fair and transparent procedures are drawn up within the Irish Coastguards.

Two hundred Coast Guard Volunteers from units at various parts of the Irish coastline have applied to the Communications Workers' Union for membership.

This is the latest development in the on-going personnel difficulties within the Coast Guard. The number is one-fifth of Coast Guard volunteer strength.

The CWU is Ireland's premier union for the postal, telecommunications and call centre sectors. It has members in both State and private sectors.

The decision by so many members reflects the core difficulty identified within the structure of the Coast Guard, which is the lack of a representative system for volunteers, independent of and outside of its internal appeals procedure and establishing the statutory position of volunteers. *"The present appeals system is entirely 'in-house' and is decided by the Coast Guard Director," appellants who have been through the system told me "and generally appeals were dismissed and information often refused."*

One appellant said: *"In my appeal I claim that my case wasn't followed in the procedures laid down and mediation was not offered to me and witness statements on my behalf were ignored."*

The Coast Guard does not comment publicly on the outcome of appeals. His paper is still waiting for a response to queries sent to the Department of Transport, under which the Coast Guard operates, on November 21 of last year.

Possible Legal Action

A number of Coast Guard volunteers who have been

dismissed for various reasons, are in discussions with legal advisors pertaining to possible action against the Department and the Coast Guard. It is possible joint actions may be undertaken.

More incidents involving the dismissal of members have been reported to the Marine Times. Since first reported a few months ago, incidents have since been referred to us from Counties Waterford, Wexford, Dublin, Louth, Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Clare. In most instances members involved are reluctant to have their names used in public.

"There is a feeling of personal upset, embarrassment, the effect on your reputation in your local community. It is a blot on your reputation which you want to have removed," one dismissed member in the West of Ireland told me.

"Having spent a year-and-a-half in the unit, you don't know the half of the hassle in the Coast Guard. One guy I was with reached the age limit and his thanks was a text saying not to come to training again and someone will pick up your gear. He had been a volunteer for over seven years," was the text on an Email from a Dublin unit.

I had a long conversation with a West of Ireland unit member of fourteen years, who had been a temporary Officer in Charge, but later found himself the target of complaints which, he claimed, were unsubstantiated, but appeared to be because, he alleged; *"when management appointed a new OIC, the aim was to get rid of the previous personnel. I cannot understand Coast Guard Management. All I wanted was to be a unit volunteer,*

to help people in trouble. That is why volunteers join the Coast Guard. But it has gone far from that. There is a bureaucracy there now and there are people who are gung-ho for the uniforms, the jeeps, the boats, the buildings, they want a Coast Guard that is like a Navy."

Check the boats

In the past month I have also been told that I should look into the system used for the purchase and maintenance of Coast Guard boats. *"Check the types of boats that were bought and from where. Check about the maintenance,"* I have been told.

Lifejackets

Similar comments and suggestions have been made from sources about the lifejackets which have been issued to volunteers and about the locations of Coast Guard buildings: *"Why are there big buildings in exactly the same town where there are existing lifeboat stations?"*

Evocative and Emotional

One of the most evocative and emotional discussions I have had is with the member who told me he was *"deeply hurt and disheartened by the way I was treated, by the way my reputation has been affected in my local community. I am being counselled because of the effects on me and on my family. All I ever wanted to be was someone who would help others, who would have the training and support to do that, but instead I was dismissed by a text, I haven't after several months been told why. I have asked for information and files about me, but they haven't been made available to me. No one in my unit made any complaints against me, so my fellow volunteers told me."*

Dismissal notices have been sent out by text, by letter and by registered letter, according to informants.

No Boat Logs

In the course of our reporting of this story, we have discovered that there is an issue with the keeping of boat logs. The communication of a Coast Guard management officer in response to a request made by a volunteer for a copy of a boat log for 2013 and 2014, placed responsibility on volunteers: *"There is no such Log provided for any Coast Guard Units. Boat logs are a personal issue and individually retained by volunteers."*

We have a copy of that note and have published it.

Volunteers are not Staff

The Department has stated that volunteers are not staff, which appears to be the centre of personnel difficulties. I have been told that a system had existed where OICs (Officer-in-Charge) and Deputy OICs were paid directly from the Coast Guard/Department, but this was changed a number of years ago and such personnel were told to

make claims for expenses and grants. This removed them from direct Departmental employment.

Minister Ross and 'Volunteer Element'

In February of last year, the Minister for Transport admitted in the Oireachtas in response to Senator Keith Swanick that he was aware that *"the volunteer element"*, - the description he used - *"has expressed concerns regarding its legislative standing."*

He said that there was no need to *"place the Coast Guard on any additional statutory footing. Indeed, it is difficult to identify any specific need for legislation or to establish what would be the purpose of any legislation. Legislating for a voluntary group would give rise to very complex matters."*

Senator Swanick disagreed with Minister Ross and maintained that *"there is a need to put the Coast Guard on a statutory footing."* He said there were "real and valid concerns" amongst the volunteers and the Minister should listen to them.

What is surprising volunteers is the lack of further senior political interest in pursuing difficulties identified within the Coast Guard.

"A few politicians indicated that they would take up the issues, but have shied away from the situation, seemingly after pressure," I was told by a source involved in seeking representation for the personnel involved. *"However, we will continue to pursue the situation. There is a paper trail of cases, instances which should be dealt with. All that any volunteer wants is to be treated with dignity and respect. They are volunteers, that is what coastal people do. What is happening should not be happening. These are dedicated, and good voluntary people who are providing a service to the State, a vital coastal one which can involve them putting themselves in dangerous situations to help others. What has happened and is happening should not be going on. No one wants the Coast Guard damaged. It is a vital service and dependent upon volunteers."*

Reports not yet published

The external review of volunteering within the Coast Guard has not yet been published. This has been on-going for some time and is being undertaken by the British Maritime and Coastguard Agency. The Department of Transport has said that it is a general review of Coast Guard operations, but that it is unlikely to be published until after the final inquiry reports into the death of Doolin Coast Guard volunteer Cáitríona Lucas, who was assisting the Kilkee Unit on the water in the search for a missing man in Clare when its RIB (rigid inflatable boat) capsized. That tragedy occurred in September of 2016. The British-conducted review is one of a series of enquiries initiated after the Kilkee tragedy. The Irish Marine Casualty Investigation Board and the Health and Safety Authority are also involved in investigations.

Organising Nightline Staff Survey Update Results

The Nightline CWU committee have met with company management and presented to them the findings of a recent staff survey which was conducted in November 2017. There was a high response rate to the survey which provided workers with the opportunity to voice their concerns to their employer in a confidential manner. Workers reported extremely high levels of dissatisfaction with their employment in a number of areas which included low pay, unpaid sick leave, a 48-hour working week (that effectively means overtime is unattainable) and a lack of dignity and respect in the workplace. The survey made for stark reading and provided the committee with concrete evidence of the feelings amongst Nightline workers that could be presented to company management.

Of those who were surveyed:

- 90% felt they were not fairly paid for the work they do
- 88% felt that overtime arrangements were unfair
- 72% indicated a lack of confidence in company management to address their concerns
- 81% felt that they had no say about changes in their workplace
- 92% indicated that they do not feel valued or respected as Nightline employees

Having considered the contents of the survey and the broad number of issues that face workers in Nightline, members agreed that, in the first instance, they needed to address the three key issues of pay, sick pay and a 40-hour threshold for accruing overtime. The Nightline CWU committee have informed the company of the need to have these issues addressed for members and the company have indicated that they will have a response for the Union in early April.

In February Nightline Management indicated that they were unilaterally changing start times on the evening shift, resulting in a loss of two and a half hours work, and consequently pay, per week for our members. However, following pressure from the CWU the company has reversed its decision to implement the changes. Previously, the company would just implement such changes to the detriment of workers. However, this reversal by the company is a direct response to the power that Nightline workers have built by organising themselves in to the CWU and goes some way to redressing the feelings of 81% of respondents to the survey who felt they had no say in changes in their workplace. Union membership continues to grow in Nightline, a trend which gives workers greater agency in affecting the change they desire in their workplace.



HCL Limerick Training

In the last issue, we welcomed our new members in HCL Limerick and reported that work was underway to aid them in becoming active members of the CWU. A number of these new members expressed interest in becoming more involved with their union and volunteered to take part in union training.

We are happy to report that three of these new activists attended their first training course in CWU Head Office. Ian Quin, Braenard Clarke and Kevin Rynne completed a two-day course in both Organising and Grievance & Disciplinary Representation. It was a successful two days and these members now have the knowledge and skills to advise, guide and represent their fellow members in workplace issues.

This is the first step in establishing HCL Limerick Branch and we look forward to continuing this work over the coming months.

CWU disputes contract awarded to BT Ireland

The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) has described the decision to award the contract for delivering the 999 emergency call answering service (ECAS) to an anti-trade union company as *"rewarding bad behaviour"*.

BT Ireland was awarded the lucrative contract by the Department of Communications despite its poor record in relation to workers' rights. The contract was previously outsourced to another anti-union company, Conduit Global.

CWU members working in the ECAS staged two strikes last year in pursuit of a Living Wage and the right to be represented by a trade union. In the run up to the strike, BT/Conduit management introduced a 'toilet policy' which strictly policed how long 999 operators could spend in the bathroom. If workers spent too long in the bathroom, they were threatened with disciplinary action. BT/Conduit Global continue to refuse to pay the Living Wage or respect their employee's basic right to collective bargaining.

In addition, BT/Conduit Global were invited to

Leinster House to meet a cross party group of 27 TDs to discuss the dispute. However, despite profiting from a state contract, BT/Conduit Global refused to meet with the TDs.

CWU general secretary Steve Fitzpatrick said this decision *"effectively condones paying poverty wages and the denial of trade union rights"*.

"BT Ireland is a company that thinks it should be accountable to no one, whether it's their own workers who want to be represented by a trade union or the elected political representative of this state. This is a company who saw it as reasonable to demand that their workers seek permission to use the bathroom and report back to management afterwards. This is a company that refuses to pay a Living Wage to workers who deliver a vital public service. To award BT Ireland this contract for a second time is to endorse these disgraceful workplace practices."

The CWU's Labour Court case against Conduit will be heard on the 12th April.

BT Update

BT have agreed to enter into talks after CWU members in the company threatened six days of strike action in March. The dispute arose when BT management introduced compulsory redundancies in the field engineering team while at the same time advertising jobs for apprentices and junior field engineers. CWU members were furious at this display of contempt by BT bosses, and correctly identified this as a symptom of not having collective bargaining rights. Incredibly, BT recognise the CWU in the UK for collective bargaining purposes but refuse to allow their staff in the Republic of Ireland to exercise the same right.

CWU members voted 95% in favour of strike action in pursuit of the following things:

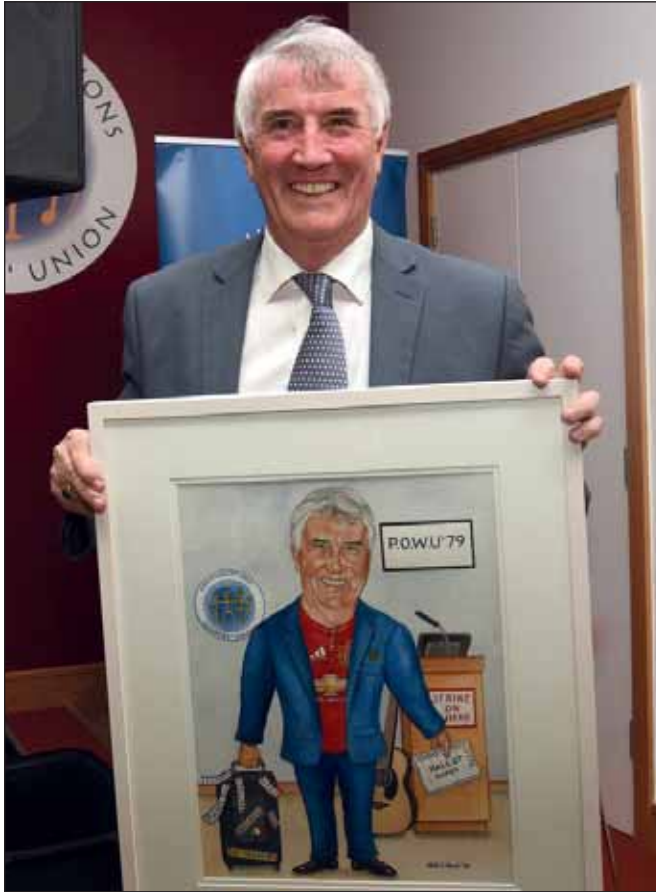
- Collective bargaining for BT field engineers
- Negotiations on redundancies
- Negotiations on pay and conditions of new field engineers

The Union threatened the company with six days

of strike action throughout March and, as a result, conceded to some of our demands. No one in BT Ireland was made compulsorily redundant and all redundancies took place on a voluntary basis, with an enhanced package of up to two years' pay. This was only achieved because CWU members organised themselves.

Based on the concessions outlined above and the engagement that took place locally with management, the Branch decided to postpone the planned action. At the time of writing, the Branch are reviewing the progress of the company proposals.

The CWU's membership has also grown considerably this year and we now have an even stronger Union Committee in place. For the first time, the BT Ireland Branch have a Secretary and Chairperson. This is a significant achievement by CWU members in the company, and lays a strong foundation on which to continue building the union in BT.



Terry Delany, Deputy General Secretary, CWU, Retires



Terry & Steve



Tommy & Dave Begg with Terry



Seán & Terry

Terry Delany Deputy General Secretary retired from his position at the end of December 2017.

Terry has been involved in the Union since he commenced working in An Post as a junior postman in 1968.

In 1979 he was elected as Branch Secretary of the Dublin Drivers Branch and the same year he was elected onto the National Executive Council. He became President of the Union in 1984 and he took up the position of National Officer of the CWU in 1986.

Though Terry came from a postal background, the then General Secretary of the Union, Mr David Begg gave Terry responsibility for areas within the Telecom

Sector. Terry very quickly adapted to his new role, and succeeded in doing some very significant agreements for our members down through the years.

Indeed one of the most important agreements he ever achieved on the eir side of the house is the Contractor Employment Standards Agreement and this was one of the last agreements Terry signed off on before he retired.

Terry's dedication, commitment, and loyalty to the Union and indeed the Trade Union Movement has resulted in our members greatly benefiting from all his hard work. We wish him, Noeleen and family a happy and healthy retirement.



Terry with past and present members of the Dublin Postal Drivers Branch



Terry with his family



Noeleen, Sinéad, Callum, Katie, Terry, Megan & Ryan



Paddy Redmond, Ray Lawlor, Terry & Christy Brannigan



Terry & John McEvoy, PhoneWatch



Derek Keenan, Drivers Branch Sec, with Terry



Paul O'Neill & Stephen Brannigan



Paddy Redmond & Terry



THE MONDAY CLUB

The Monday Club has many of the CWU Retired Members Branch as members who meet every Monday in Home Farm Football Club. Pictured are some of the members raising funds for charity while singing on the steps of the Mansion House before Christmas. Anyone wishing to join the Monday Club should contact Paddy Redmond or Christy Brannigan.

40 year's Service Celebrations



Pictured l to r: Dave Maher SOM, John Brennan COT1, William Pyne COT1, Noel Sheehan COT1 and Stephen Cunningham FLM

At a recent function in Mallow AEH, which was organised by Dave Maher, SOM ST6, 3 members of NRT3 South, John Brennan COT1, William Pyne COT1 and Noel Sheehan COT1, celebrated 40 years' service.

All members of the NRT South celebrated at a meal and presentation on the occasion which was a resounding success. Sincere thanks to Dave Maher from all the members of the team.

Staff who availed of VSS in Lifford

A presentation of Union Scroll and badge was made to Ronan Campbell, Assistant Treasurer, on the night of Lifford/Inishowen AGM. There were two other members who also availed of the VSS Scheme but were

unable to attend the presentation, namely Paul Mailey and Kathleen Lynch.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Branch to wish them all the best for the future.



Pictured l to r: Anthony McCrave (NEC), Ronan Campbell Assistant Treasurer, Lifford/Inishowen Branch, Michael Gallagher, Secretary, Paul Gallagher, Treasurer and Seamus McLaughlin, Chairman.

Padraig McCafferty Retires

Padraig McCafferty, Derrybeg Postman, retired recently from Letterkenny Postal Branch and is sorely missed by his colleagues and customers.



Ken Good presents Padraig with his Union Scroll.



Pictured l to r: Ken Good, Padraig McCafferty, Liam O Grady (Chairman) and John Lafferty (NW Managers Branch).

Gerry Clarke Retires

Union Scroll being presented to Gerry Clarke by Kevin Molloy, NEC, on his retirement.



Finbarr Hegarty Retires

Steve Cunningham, FLM, presented a token of appreciation from members of his NRT team to Finbarr in Mallow. Finbarr had 37 years' service, joining the NRT team in December 2008. He will be greatly missed and all his colleagues wish him health and happiness in his retirement.

Pictured l to r: Willie Pyne, Paudie Hickey, Noel Sheehan, John Lynch, Steve Cunningham, John Brennan, Finbarr Hegarty, Michael Concannon and Dermot Hayes.

Con Healy Retires

Con Healy joined eir, which was P&T at the time, back on 8th September, 1980, and retired on Friday 26th January, 2018. Con has over 37 years' service and we wish him and his family a long and happy retirement and thank him for all the service he has given over the years.

Tim O'Sullivan, FLM, presenting Con Healy with his Long Service Award.



Dublin Postal Delivery Branch Retirements



Michael Ryan, Fairview DSU



Brendan Heffernan, Harmonstown



Tony Carberry, Fortfield



Pat Spellman, Bannow Rd DSU



Fran Gorman, Bannow Rd DSU



David Byrne, Glenageary

Limerick District Branch AGM



Large attendance at the Limerick District Branch AGM which was held in the Brandon Hotel in Tralee

The well-attended, Limerick District Branch (LDB) AGM took place at the Brandon Conference Centre, Tralee on Feb 8th 2018 at 7-30 pm. The General Secretary Steve Fitzpatrick, National Officer Jimmy O Connor, National Officer Ian Mc Ardle and NEC member Tom Hayes all attended. Gerry Daly chairman of the Limerick District Branch chaired the meeting and Branch Secretary James Crowley gave the branch yearly report with Treasurer Pat Teahan.

Four motions were passed by the branch for the next Biennial Conference and an intense debate ensued on

the pension fund debacle. The Limerick District Branch gave a presentation on the pension fund/pension accord dealing with pay losses to members and savings to the company, which was well received and the GS requested a copy be sent on to CWU HQ. The GS spoke on the pension fund and specified that the NEC will pursue an in-depth policy to ensure that DB members receive their full pension entitlements. Standing orders were extended to allow speakers on the pension debate. Members took the opportunity after the meeting to speak individually with the GS.



Tom (centre) receiving his Union Scroll from Michael Moloney, Section Chairman Rathluirc Section, after almost 40 years' service. Treasurer DJ O'Sullivan is on right.



Anthony Maher, Limerick, (centre) receiving a Presentation from Pat O Sullivan (SOM) and Tom Roche (FLM), in recognition of his 40 years' service

DSU Retirements



*John Caldwell, Ennis DSU being presented with his Union Scroll by Miriam O'Brien (Chairperson) and Leonard Coote (Branch Secretary).
John retired on 29/12/2017*



*Tom Murphy being presented with his Union scroll by Miriam O'Brien (Chairperson) and Leonard Coote (Branch Secretary).
Tom also retired on 29/12/2017*

Liam Lyons Retires



*Liam Lyons retired on 29th September 2017 after 14 years' service with An Post Ballyhaunis.
Pictured l to r: Work colleagues: Geraldine Flynn, Helen Byrne, Bernadette Lyons (Liam's wife), Willie Broderick, Liam Lyons, and Michael Connelly.*

Gerry O'Donoghue Retires



A recent presentation for 40 years' service was made to Gerry O'Donoghue, Cork District Branch.

Pictured (back row) l to r:

*Neil Murphy, Daniel Keane, Denis Sheehan, John O'Rourke, Eugene O'Brien,
Kieran Murphy, Moss Ryan, and Liam Codon.*

Pictured (back row) l to r:

Joe Coleman, Alec Rose, FLM, Gerry O'Donoghue, Dave Quinlan, SOM, and Pat Griffin.



Tommy O'Leary Retires

Tommy O'Leary of the North Kerry Postal Branch, retired on the 29th December 2017.

Pictured on the left are:

*Johnny Boner, Tommy O'Leary,
Mikey Wall, Eileen O'Leary and
Siobhan Power.*

Pictured right:
*Johnny Boner, Mikey Wall,
Eileen O'Leary,
Eddie "Flash" O'Reilly
and Tommy O'Leary.*



Sligo Section Retirements



Pascal Connolly, NEC and Sligo District Branch, presents Vera McGowan with the Union Scroll on her retirement from eir after 39 years' service.



Pascal Connolly, NEC and Sligo District Branch, presents Gerry Clarke with the Union Scroll on her retirement from eir after 38 years' service.



David Melly is presented with the Union Scroll by Pascal Connolly, NEC and Sligo District Branch, following his retirement from eir after 37 years' service.



Michael Doyle is presented with the Union Scroll by Pascal Connolly, NEC and Sligo District Branch, following his retirement from eir after 39 years' service.

Galway Postal Branch Retirements



Paul, Michael O'Connell and Seán



Paul, Paul Hourigan and Seán



Paul, Brendan D'Arcy and Seán.



*John Flannery and Ger Thompson,
Area Office/PPC, Galway*



*Noel Cooke makes a presentation
to Kevin Lynam, Loughrea DSU*



*Noel Cooke presents Scroll
to John Kennedy*

CWU People



Paul, John Ring and Seán.



Paul, John Murray and Seán.



*Paul Kennedy
and
Seán McDonagh*



*Paul and
Pat Compton.*

Dublin Postal Clerks Branch Retirements



*Willie Mooney, NEC, presents Noel Durnin
with his Union Scroll.*



*Robert Norton receives his Union Scroll
from Willie Mooney, NEC.*

Cork Postal Retired Members' Party

Every year, the combined Cork Postal Branches hold an annual function for the retired CWU members from the combined Cork Branches. This is organised jointly by local activists and retired members. The event is funded for the day from the profits of the vending sweet and coffee machines in the Cork offices. The four local branches also subsidise the day with help from donations from the credit union and the CWU.

Each year, Paddy Redmond, Mickey O'Connor and

JJ Higgins from the Monday Club are invited along and are always delighted to attend and meet their Cork Comrades. This is a great networking opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones.

This year we had 89 retired colleagues at the function, which was a very lively affair with lovely food, great music and, of course, a singing-along.

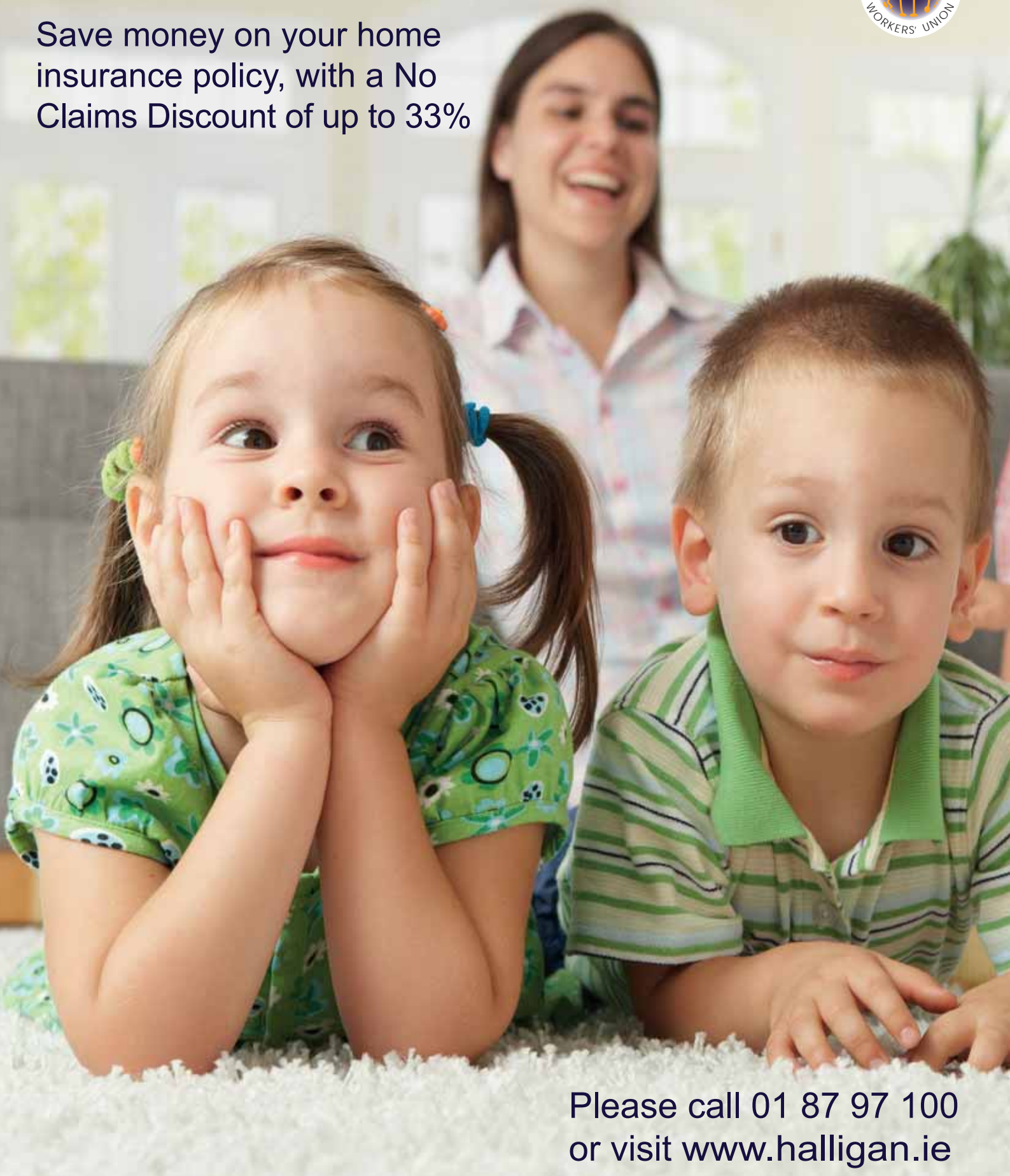
A great day was had by all who attended and we hope next year is as successful.



CWU Home Insurance



Save money on your home insurance policy, with a No Claims Discount of up to 33%



Please call 01 87 97 100
or visit www.halligan.ie

Ann Hamilton Retires



Anne Hamilton recently retired from An Post, following 28 years' service. She was based in Trim for most of those years, until Trim relocated to Enfield DSU in March 2015.

Anne will be greatly missed by her colleagues from Trim and her new found colleagues and friends in Enfield DSU. We all wish Anne a happy and healthy Retirement.

Rosemary Anderson Retires

Rosemary Anderson retired recently, following 25 years' service with An Post.

Over the years, Rose spent time in Collinstown, Delvin and 22 of those years in Killucan.

She will be greatly missed by her colleagues and friends in Killucan and we all wish her the best in her Retirement.



Pictured l to r: (Standing)
Jimmy Garty, Paul Bray,
(Branch Secretary) Barry Carr,
Enda Montgomery,
Gerry Maguire, John Mulligan,
and Adam Mitchell.
(Seated) *Rosemary Anderson*
and Margaret Mulligan
Postmistress Killucan Post
Office.

Portlaoise Postal Retirements



Marion Hughes and Tom Prendergast



Karen Stieldorf and Tom Prendergast



Bridget Carroll and Tom Prendergast



Anne Dunne and Tom Prendergast



Noreen Gavin and Bernie Coen Retire

Deirdre Medlar and Pat Geraghty, local CWU representative, pictured presenting Noreen Gavin, who retired after 13 years, and Bernie Coen who retired after 28 years' service, from Ballinrobe Post Office.



Derek Bond Retires

Derek Bond from the Dublin Postal Amalgamated Branch pictured being presented with his Union Scroll by NEC member, Adrian Scanlon, on the occasion of his retirement from the Dublin Mail Centre on 23rd February 2018. We wish Derek all the best for his retirement.

Liam Donohoe Retires

Retirement of Liam Donohue Postman in Belmullet after 20 years pictured with Malachy M Carron and Deirdre Medlar of Ballina Postal Branch.



Colman Barry – An Appreciation

Colman Barry, who passed away last year, was a former Branch Officer, National Executive member and President of the then PTWU. Colman, or Colie as he was better known, joined the then Dept. of Posts & Telegraphs as a postman in the Central Sorting Office, Sherriff St. Dublin in 1975 and joined the Postal Outdoor Branch there. He had previously worked in a variety of jobs in Dublin and London. It was in London he developed an interest in Trade Unions, joining the Transport Union & becoming active in the labour movement there.

He transferred from Dublin to Galway in 1976 and almost immediately became active in the Galway Outdoor Branch. He was elected to the Branch Committee in 1977 and in the years leading up to the major strike in 1979, he became a leading influence in the Union in Galway and among the activists around the country. These were difficult times, not only with the outdated and arcane treatment of staff, but also economically with Post Office wages having fallen behind similar employments on which they had been on par with some years earlier.

Once the union's pay claim was rejected it was inevitable that a strike would happen and so it did. It was during the nineteen week strike that Colie showed his true mettle. That struggle challenged the Union and its members in a way that had not been experienced before and it was people like Colie Barry who helped us through it. Picket duty, organising picket rotas, travelling the country to protests and meetings, not to mention counselling the hot headed and the lukewarm, was all part of his brief.

And it was that strike that changed his life as well. He took a job on the buildings to earn some money to get by, but unfortunately fell from a building and suffered a serious back injury. After a period in hospital, it emerged that his days as a postman were finished. After the strike was

settled, Colie joined what was later to become Eircom and became a Night Telephone Operator. He joined the Galway Night Telephonists Branch and again rose through the ranks and was nominated by the Branch to contest the election for a seat on the National Executive in 1983. He gained a seat on the NE and went on to play a significant role in the Union's affairs at national level, becoming President in 1987 and chairing the Annual Conference in Killarney.

He stood down from the Executive in 1990 but continued to take a strong interest in the Union. He subsequently retired from Eircom in 2003 to become a taxi driver.

Colie never did things by half. Whatever he did, he did it fully and he did it because he believed in it. A deeply religious man, he was a daily mass goer. He did not just practice, he gave practical expression to his beliefs, devoting his spare time to organisations such as the Vincent De Paul. He had a voracious appetite for knowledge and reading was his favourite pastime with sport a close second. He loved hurling, having played with his native Offaly at under 21 and briefly at senior before he emigrated.

In Eircom, and later with the taxi, he worked nights and most days. The house in Glenburren Park became a welcome respite for anyone passing, especially the An Post delivery staff. A welcome cup of tea and a chat about the affairs of the nation, or indeed the world, made it a better day for those whose pleasure it was to drop by for a visit.

A modest man, happy to work in the background, he never sought the limelight. He possessed an inner resolve that was often tested but he never wavered from his beliefs and his strong work ethic.

Colie will be missed, especially by his wife, Mary, sons, Patrick, Donal, Fergal and Colm and daughter, Aislinn. He will also be missed by all of us who shared his friendship and were the better for it.

Francis Gormley RIP

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of CWU Nightline committee member Francis Gormley on 31st January 2018.

During his time as a CWU activist, Francis made an enormous contribution to the Union. He was one of the very first members of the Union in Nightline and played a leading role in establishing the CWU within the company.

The esteem with which he was held among his fellow workers in Nightline was displayed in October 2017 when he was elected



by his colleagues to represent them on the CWU Committee.

In his role as a Union activist, he selflessly gave up much of his own free time in the cause of achieving better pay and conditions for every worker in Nightline. For that, we all owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

Our deepest sympathies go out to his family, friends and work colleagues in Nightline.

May he rest in peace.

Damian McKeon RIP

It was with great sadness we learned of the sudden and untimely death of Damian McKeon PDTM, on Sunday 11th February 2018.

Damian began work with Telecom Eireann in Dublin back in 1983 as a jointer and worked there until 1997 when he returned to Carrick on Shannon. He spent a number of years as a jointer in places like Carrick, Sligo, Ballina and Letterkenny before he turned his hand to planning in 2001.

Damien worked as a Designer all over the Western Region from Carrick to Burtonport to Spiddal. He was involved with the Carrick Social Club and was a lifelong CWU member, annually organising events such as Christmas and retirement functions.

His work ethic, his understanding of problems and his willingness to help were traits in his character he will long be remembered for. He had a



way around each issue that arose and nothing was too difficult for him.

He enjoyed his time as a part-time farmer and also enjoyed nothing better than a song or two, or pulling pints in his family pub Mc Keon's of Keshcarrigan. As if all that wasn't enough, he also played a big part in Scor for his local GAA club Kilturbrid.

To his children, Cian, Riona and Fionnan, and their mother Marian, his parents, Ben and Peggy, brother, Kieran, sisters, Jeanette, Barbara and Mairead, and to all his extended family, we extend our deepest sympathy.

As a true testament to the kind of man he was, over one hundred of his past and present work colleagues lined the road for a Guard of Honour as his remains were removed from the Church to his final resting place.

May Damian Rest in Peace.

Personal Details

Surname
Forename(s)

☐ Male ☐ Female

Date of Birth
Staff No.

Contact Details

Home Address
.....
.....
Work Tel..... Home Tel
Mobile
Email

Employment Details

Name of Company
and Agency (if applicable)
Employer's Address
.....
Your work location (if different)
Branch Name
Date of commencement with current employer / /
Current Grade/Job Title.....
Current Status: ☐ Managerial ☐ Parttime
☐ Non-Managerial ☐ Temporary
(tick all that apply) ☐ Call Centre/Customer Care ☐ Agency Worker
☐ Retail ☐ Contractor
Signature Date

OFFICE USE ONLY

CWU NO.

Branch Secretary Branch Name
(where applicable)

Unique Mandate Reference

Creditor Identifier: IE82ZZZ304979

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM IN BLACK CAPITALS



LEGAL TEXT: By signing this mandate form, you authorise (A) COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION to send instructions to your bank to debit your account and (B) your bank to debit your account in accordance with the instruction from COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS' UNION.

As part of your rights, you are entitled to a refund from your bank under the terms and conditions of your agreement with your bank. A refund must be claimed within 8 weeks, starting from the date on which your account was debited. Your rights are explained in a statement that you can obtain from your bank.

Any personal information provided by you to this Union will be used for purposes consistent with your membership of this Union. Other than the Company listed by you on the form, your details will not be revealed by the Union to any external body, unless the Union has your permission, or is under a legal obligation to do so.

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL THE FIELDS BELOW MARKED *

* Your Name:

* Your Address: Line 1
 Line 2

* City/Postcode: * Country:

* Account number (IBAN):

* Swift BIC:

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

Creditors Name: Communications Workers' Union
Creditors Address line 1: William Norton House
Creditors Address line 2: 575 North Circular Road
Creditors Address line 3: Dublin 1
Country: Ireland

TYPE OF PAYMENT: RECURRENT ☒

* Signature(s):
* Date of Signing:

What can We Do for You?

- Negotiate with your employer on your behalf on all matters
- Provide you with a personal service ranging from confidential, work-related information advice, to legal advice
- Assist you in your training and development needs and offer you a number of training courses free-of-charge
- Advise you on all issues related to Health and Safety
- Give you access to information on all aspects of your employment
- Keep you up-to-date and informed on developments in your sector via Union magazines, bulletins, your own section on the CWU website and a local presence in your workplace
- Include you in the bigger picture, as the CWU works on a national level with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions



Guide for completing Application Form

- Please complete both forms in BLOCK CAPITALS
- Please ensure you complete both the Application Form and the Direct Debit Instruction
- Please ensure you fill out all the information required
- Send completed Application Form, together with completed Direct Debit Instruction, to:

**The Membership Department
Communications Workers' Union
William Norton House
575 North Circular Road
Dublin 1**

INSTRUCTIONS TO PAYROLL

- Until further notice and commencing on _____, please deduct _____ from my basic pay in respect of my contribution under the Scheme of Deductions and Subscriptions to Staff Associations and pay that amount to the Communications Workers' Union, William Norton House, 575 North Circular Road, Dublin 1.
- I recognise that these deductions, being made solely as a measure of convenience to me, may be terminated at any time.
- I also recognise that the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the deductions have, in fact, been made from my pay rest with myself, and that beyond making remittances on foot of sums deducted for credit to the account of my Union, the Company accepts no responsibility of any kind in this matter.