

To : Robert Watt, Secretary General Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Dr Dorothy Scally, Chairman, Top Level Appointments Committee

From : Fiona Tierney, CEO Public Appointments Service

Subject : TLAC 519, Secretary General, Department of Justice and Equality

Date : 16 October 2014

1. The Public Appointments Service, on behalf of the Top Level Appointments Committee, was asked in August 2014 to hold a recruitment campaign to select a Secretary General in the Department of Justice and Equality.
2. The position was advertised in the national media on 29 August 2014, and job alerts issued from www.publicjobs.ie to 3558 potential candidates who had registered an interest in senior management roles in the civil and public service. The vacancy was also advertised on our social media feeds including Linked In and Twitter.
3. The application window for this campaign closed on 18 September 2014, and seven valid applications were received.
4. A shortlisting Board met on 3 October 2014 and having assessed the applications, called three candidates to Preliminary interview. The Board members were:

Bernie Gray, external consultant, Chairman

Pat O'Doherty CEO ESB

Terence O'Rourke, Chairman, Enterprise Ireland etc.

Dermot Gallagher, former Secretary General in the Department of Foreign Affairs

Robert Watt, Secretary General, D/PER

Martina Rooney acted as PAS representative

5. The preliminary interviews took place yesterday 15 October. The interview Board comprised the same members as the shortlisting Board above. No candidate qualified at preliminary interview to be recommended for interview by TLAC for this role. This is the first time to my knowledge that this situation has arisen at Secretary General level.

6. On average, TLAC campaigns attract a higher number of applicants for Secretary General level roles than on this occasion.

Secretary General	No of applications
Defence (2013)	13
Communications Energy & Natural Resources (2013)	20
Environment (2014)	21
Justice and Equality (2014)	7

7. The fact that this campaign attracted a low level of applications may be attributed to a number of reasons, including the context in which the vacancy arose, the very significant challenges existing in the sector, the huge media interest and scrutiny of matters under the aegis of this Department, the terms and conditions on offer for the role.
8. I regret to have to inform you of this outcome, and I will await your views on how best to proceed. Candidates will be informed of the results today.