

Reference No: E107/1/78 ; **Date:** 19/05/80

Circular 14/1980:- Facilities for non full-time representatives of staff associations/unions

A Dhuine Uasail

I am directed by the Minister for the Public Service to inform you that he has accepted an agreed recommendation of the General Council (Report 855) under the scheme of conciliation and arbitration for the civil service relating to facilities for non full-time representatives of staff associations/unions.

2. I am, accordingly, to convey sanction for the application of the following arrangements in respect of staff associations and unions which hold official recognition for the purpose of the scheme of conciliation and arbitration. For convenience, certain existing arrangements are also included in this Circular.

Special leave for meetings, conferences etc.

3. Special leave with pay may be granted to non full-time representatives of staff associations/unions shortly before and/or after any meeting with the Official Side for the purpose of the conciliation and arbitration scheme, or any other meeting with management, to enable the representatives to discuss the subject matter of that meeting. Special leave with pay may also be granted in respect of one Departmental Council staff panel meeting per month to such representatives who are also members of the panel.

4. Within limits, as indicated, special leave with pay may be granted as necessary for attendance at the conferences/meetings listed below to non full time representatives of staff associations/unions who are duly authorised in respect of the conference/meeting in question:

Association/Union meetings

annual delegate conferences - the limit is two days a year,
special delegate conferences - the limit is one day a year,
executive meetings (excluding branch executive/committee meetings) - there is a limit of twenty five days a year;

Conferences of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions

annual conferences and special delegate conferences - no limit applies.

5. The grant of special leave under paragraphs 3 or 4 above, which will apply also to time necessarily spent travelling to and from the meeting in question, is subject to the officer's Department/Office being prepared to release the officer for the period in question, having regard, for instance, to the exigencies of official work. The grant of special leave under paragraph 4 is subject to the following additional conditions:-

(i) submission to his/her Department/Office by the officer in question of a written application for the leave, giving details of the purpose for which the leave is sought and other relevant information, at least two weeks (save in exceptional circumstances) before the date on which the leave is due to commence;

(ii) recoupment to the Department/Office by the association/union concerned of a sum calculated at half of the mean of the officer's scale or half of the officer's actual pay, whichever yields the

lesser amount, for the period of special leave. (For this purpose mean of scale should be calculated by adding the minimum and maximum of the officer's scale and dividing by two. Annual amounts should be rounded to the nearest pound and weekly amounts to the nearest penny.)

Special leave for training courses

6. Non full-time representatives of staff associations/unions may be granted up to a limit of five days special leave with pay in any year to attend training courses which are designed specifically for such representatives and which are organised by their associations/unions or by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. The grant of such special leave, which will apply also to time necessarily spent travelling to and from the course in question, is subject to the following conditions:

(i) submission of the relevant Department/Office by the officer's association/union of an application in writing, accompanied by a syllabus for the course, at least two weeks (save in exceptional circumstances) before the date on which the special leave is due to commence;

(ii) the content of the course being related to the proper activities of a recognised staff association/union, and relevant to the role of the applicant as representative;

(iii) the Department/Office being prepared to release the officer for the period in question, having regard, for instance, to the exigencies of official work.

A representative should not, save in exceptional circumstances, be allowed special leave more than once in respect of the same course. Separate sessions of a course organised on a modular basis should, however, be taken as constituting a single course.

Other facilities

7. Non full-time representatives of associations/unions should be allowed reasonable use of official telephones for association/union activities provided such use does not interfere with official work. Subject to any Departmental rules about the display of material, association/union notices may be posted on notice boards on official premises. Additional notice boards may be provided, where appropriate, for this purpose. Association/ union notices should not be posted on notice boards in public offices.

Notification to new recruits of details of association/union recognised for their grade

8. New recruits should be provided with written details of the association/ union recognised for their grade in the following form:

The recognised association/union for your grade is

Should you wish to obtain further information about the association/ union please contact:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Staff associations/unions will be responsible for providing particulars of the relevant branch officials and for keeping this information up to date. In the event of an association/union failing to provide such details it is sufficient to provide new recruits with the name of the association/union concerned.

General

9. This Circular supersedes Circular 26/74 and Circular Letter 1/77. The special leave provisions of this Circular are effective from 1 January 1980, the remaining provisions from the date of this Circular. Further provisions relating to special leave for staff representatives are contained in paragraph 7 of the conciliation and arbitration scheme.

10. This Department should be consulted about any questions of doubt or difficulty which may arise concerning the provisions of this Circular. Departments/Offices are reminded that the relevant General Council Report (No 855) acknowledges the right of the Staff Side to raise with the Official Side any cases where it is felt that the special leave or other facilities provided for in the agreement are being unreasonably withheld.

Mise le meas
William P Smith

(It will be noticed that this Circular has a different typeface to that which has been used up to now in these documents. The changed typeface (12 pitch instead of 10 pitch as used hitherto) is one of this Department's measures to economise in the use of paper for Circulars, Confidential Circulars and other documents for large-scale reproduction.)