

**ANNUAL REPORT
2025/2026**

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1. ROLE AND REMIT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE APPEAL BOARD

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeal Board (CSAB) was established in 1974 under a Central Whitley Council agreement. The Appeal Board is a non departmental advisory body which acts independently when discharging its responsibilities. Unlike Industrial Tribunals the Appeal Board is a lay body and does not follow legal procedures.

The functions of the Appeal Board are:

- To decide whether or not a Department or Agency's decision to dismiss, or to retire an individual early, was fair and whether the proper procedures had been followed;
- To consider appeals from civil servants who have been refused permission by their Department to participate in political activities;
- To consider appeals against a proposal to withhold superannuation benefits; and
- To consider appeals against a Departmental decision not to pay compensation, or to pay less than the maximum, in cases of dismissal on grounds of inefficiency.

If the Board upholds an appeal, it may:

- Recommend that the appellant be reinstated, re-employed or move straight to an award of compensation; or if the Board considers that some other action is more appropriate, it will recommend accordingly;
- Recommend the granting of permission to take part in political activities;
- Specify the payment of superannuation; or
- Specify compensation to be paid by the Department/Agency.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CIVIL SERVICE APPEAL BOARD:

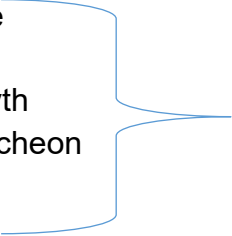
CHAIRPERSON: David Trelford
(Management Side) Michael Cooke (from 01/12/25)

DEPUTY CHAIR: Bryan Milford
(Trade Union Side) Tony McMullan (from 01/12/25)

BOARD MEMBERS

Management Side

Bernie McNally
Jacqui Wallace
Heather Gould
Blaithnaid Smyth
Joanne McCutcheon
Mary O'Kane
Chris Smart



(01/12/25)

Trade Union Side - Non Industrial

Michael Robinson (01/12/25)
John McCloskey (01/12/25)

Trade Union Side - Industrial

Mr Alan Perry
Mr Gareth Scott

SECRETARIAT

Mrs Mary Grimley (Secretary to the Board)

This report covers the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. A statistical summary of the Board's work over the year (including comparative figures for the previous year) is contained in Appendix 1.

3. CHAIRPERSON REMARKS

As Chairperson of The Civil Service Appeal Board, it is my responsibility and privilege to introduce this report for the year 2025/2026.

As can be seen from the figures in the following sections, 2025/2026 was not consistent with previous years. There were changes made, including recruitment of new panel members, which enabled the secretariat to arrange monthly hearings.

I wish to record my thanks to the Secretariat as they have maintained an exceptional service throughout this year;

I wish to thank my fellow Board members for their support during the year.

I would also like to mention our esteemed colleague and Chair, Eileen McFarlane who sadly passed away in February 2025, she served on the CSAB Panel from 2014.

I would like to extend my thanks to David Trelford, Bryan Milford and Bernie McNally, whose time on the Board has ended, having served on the CSAB Panel for many years. I thank them for the time, care, and commitment they brought to the role. Their experience and balanced approach made a real difference, and their contribution is genuinely appreciated.

I commend this report to you.

Michael Cooke
CSAB Chairperson

4. APPEALS RECEIVED

The Board received 6 new appeals during this period and 12 cases were carried forward from the previous year.

5. APPEALS CONSIDERED

The Board considered 13 appeals during the period April 2025 to March 2026. All the cases heard were lodged by non-industrial employees. An analysis of appeals considered by the Board shows that in 2025/26 appeals were lodged against 5 different government Departments/Agencies. This information is contained within Appendix 2.

6. OF THE APPEALS RECEIVED

6.1 10 appeals were considered by the board on the grounds of the:

- decision to dismiss, or to retire an individual early, was fair and whether the proper procedures had been followed.

6.2 3 appeals were considered by the board on the grounds of the:

- decision not to pay compensation, or to pay less than the maximum, in cases of dismissal on grounds of inefficiency.

7. APPEAL OUTCOMES

Of the 13 appeals considered, the Board found not in favour of the appellant in 9 cases.

8. WITHDRAWN APPEALS

1 case was withdrawn during the reporting period.

9. STRUCK OUT APPEALS

No appeals were struck out during the reporting period.

10. PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Board's target is to ensure that the Hearing report incorporating the decision will issue within 21 days of the hearing date. This target was met.

11. Recommendations by the CSAB Panel from April 2025 – March 2026

The CSAB made no recommendations within the reporting year 2025/2026.

APPENDIX 1

COMPARISON OF STATISTICS FOR THE PERIOD 1 April 2023– 31 March 2026

Year	Appeals Received	Appeals progressed to Hearing
2023/2024	8	0 (7 awaiting hearing)
2024/2025	9	2 (12 awaiting hearing)
2025/2026	6	13 (4 awaiting hearing)

NUMBER OF CASES UPHELD/NOT UPHELD BY THE BOARD

Year	Cases upheld	Cases Not Upheld
2023/2024	0	0
2024/2025	0	2
2025/2026	4	9

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Considered 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

ANALYSIS OF CASES HEARD RECORDED BY DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY	NON - INDUSTRIAL	INDUSTRIAL	TOTAL
DAERA	1	0	1
DFC	5	0	5
DoJ (NIPS)	5	0	5
DE	1	0	1
DFI	1	0	1