ANNEX A

FOI DOF/2026-0140

Request

1. The written criteria and guidelines the Doctor's use/adhere to for making their assessment on for part 1 of the ill health retirement process – psychological assessment I believe – plus assessing Doctor's required qualifications and or Title

2. The written criteria and guidelines the Doctor's use/adhere to for making their assessment on for part 2 of the ill health retirement process – assessment by internal Doctor - plus assessing Doctor's required qualifications and or Title

3. The written criteria and guidelines the Doctor's use/adhere to for making their assessment on for the first appeal of the ill health retirement process – assessment by an independent Doctor - plus assessing Doctor's required qualifications and or Title

4. The written criteria and guidelines the Doctor's use/adhere to for making on for the level 3 appeal of the ill health retirement process – assessment by an independent Doctor - plus assessing Doctor's required qualifications and or Title

The above should include how they make the decision as to low rate, high rate and refusal for each part please.

I also wish to be supplied with a copy of the ill health policy for staff please.

DoF response

I can confirm the department holds some of the information requested.

1. The Department can confirm that the written criteria and guidance used in assessing ill-health retirement process for members of the NICS pension scheme are set out in the Medical Retirement Benefits guidance**.** For NICS Departments, this function is undertaken by the Occupational Health Service (OHS). For civilian staff employed by PSNI, the scheme medical adviser is Occupational Health & Wellbeing (OH&W) based at PSNI Seapark. The doctors providing advice are qualified and experienced medical practitioners with training in occupational medicine. The relevant extract on the Medical Retirement Process from the Medical Guidance document is provided at Annex C (attached separately).

2. See response at Question 1.

3. See response at Question 1. The first appeal of the ill-health retirement process is undertaken by a Medical Advisor who did not make the original decision and additional medical evidence must be provided. The relevant extract on Medical Retirement Appeals from the Medical Guidance document is provided at Annex C (attached separately).

4. An independent doctor is commissioned via a contract with 352 and is an experienced occupational physician not employed by NICS or working in NICS or previously involved with the pension appeal cases they are forwarded at that appeal stage. All medical evidence relied upon in reaching the original medical advice is provided to the independent doctor, together with any additional medical evidence submitted by the pension scheme member for consideration at the appeal stage. The relevant extract on Medical Retirement Appeals from the Medical Guidance document is provided at Annex C (attached separately).

5. The Medial Appeals Process applies when there is a dispute based on medical opinion / advice in the cases of retirement on the tiered medical retirement benefits. The relevant extract on Medical Retirement Appeals from the Medical Guidance document is provided at Annex C (attached separately).

6. A copy of the ill health policy for staff is provided at Annex D (attached separately).