

FOI DOF/2026-0302

Request

RE: IRC306699 Grade 6

1. How many substantive Grade 6 vacancies are currently being filled by temporary promotions across the NICS?
2. What steps are being taken to ensure departments comply with the NICSHR instruction of 11 December 2025 to prioritise the merit list over temporary arrangements?
3. What is the current anticipated timeline for reaching my position on the merit list?

DoF response

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

1. DoF does not hold data to determine whether vacancies currently being progressed by NICSHR are being covered by temporary promotion arrangements. The management and recording of temporary promotions are the responsibility of individual business areas within Departments, and such promotions may be used for a range of business reasons, including covering vacant posts or supporting specific exercises.

The HR system allows line management to select a reason for a temporary promotion from a predefined list, which includes “vacant post.” In some cases, temporary vacancies may instead be managed through level transfer of staff from other areas or by redistributing work among existing staff, taking account of individual workloads. Additionally, a business area may have a vacant post that has not yet been requisitioned to NICSHR for filling.

However, DoF centrally holds data on the number of NICS staff temporarily promoted to Grade 6 where the recorded reason on the HR system is “vacant post”. The table below sets out the number of staff on temporary promotion to Grade 6, split between General Service and Non-General Service, for this recorded reason, as at the end of May 2026 (the most recent figures available at the time of the request).

NICS Staff on Temporary Promotion (TP) to Grade 6 with TP Reason recorded on HR System as 'Vacant Post'

Occupational Split	Headcount
General Service	31
Non-General Service	26
Total	57

Source: HRConnect Month End May 2026

2. Responsibility for identifying vacancies that need to be filled rests with individual departments. Temporary promotion arrangements are managed directly by line management within Departments and can be for a number of different reasons – not just vacant posts.

The communication which issued from NICSHR on 11 December 2025, was in relation to a planned round of allocations from competition IRC306699. This communication was a recommendation to Departments that merit lists should be used to fill vacancies that are currently occupied through temporary promotion, to ensure vacant positions do not remain open when qualified candidates exist on merit lists.

It is not possible to tell from central records held, how many vacancies which have been declared to NICSHR are currently being filled by individuals serving on temporary promotion. It should also be noted that not all Grade 6 General Service vacancies or TP arrangements relate to vacancies which are suitable to filled by Competition IRC306699.

3. NICSHR does not hold this information. Further postings from the merit list for Competition IRC306699 will be made in merit order dependent on the number of suitable vacancies submitted to NICSHR by Departments.