

FOI DOF/2026-0285

Request

RE: IRC306699 (General Service G6 competition)

1. Detailed breakdown by department, group, division as to where these TP's are and note the reason for the TP i.e. maternity, special project etc
2. Can you provide details as to what DoF is doing about linking these vacancies to the recent competition IRC306699 (General Service G6 competition) to ensure staff who have proven their ability at this grade secure posts as they would have expected having competed in the competition?

Clarification received 26/06/26

For clarity, I wish my request under DOF/2026-0285 to be answered by reference to:

- a. the amended/revised information provided under FOI DOF/2026-0172;
and
- b. the most up-to-date available position at month-end May 2026.

For the avoidance of doubt, my request relates to general Grade 6 posts currently being covered by temporary promotion and how those arrangements sit alongside the live IRC306699 General Service Grade 6 merit list.

In relation to the term "vacancies", I am referring to any General Grade 6 role where:

- The role is currently covered by temporary promotion and is not substantively filled, regardless of the reason cited by the business area or department

Please provide, for all Grade 6 temporary promotion arrangements identified in the amended FOI information and/or the May 2026 data, a breakdown showing:

- Department;
- Group;
- Division;
- Reason for the temporary promotion, for example vacancy cover, maternity cover, absence cover, project work, temporary additional duties or other reason;
- Date the post first began to be covered by temporary promotion;
- Length of time the advertisement for the temporary promotion stated that it was for and if it could be extended. If it could be extended what was the length of time stated;
- Length of time the post has been covered by temporary promotion in total;
- Date the current incumbent took up the temporary promotion

- Length of time the current incumbent has occupied the role on temporary promotion;
 - If the post is still held by the initial successful candidate, has it exceeded the timeframe of the post and any relevant extension, if it has what action is taking place to fill this vacancy,
 - Whether the post is substantively vacant on HR records or in financial budget planning or forecasts;
 - Whether the post has been considered for filling from the IRC306699 merit list;
 - If not, the recorded rationale for this decision
 - Whether there is any plan to regularise, end, advertise or substantively fill the role.
 - Please provide the information in tabular format (e.g. Excel), where possible
3. I would also be grateful if the Department could confirm as policy holders:
- a. What formal governance, assurance, and oversight arrangements (including boards, reporting mechanisms, and frequency of review) are in place...to ensure compliance to the NI Civil Service Commissioners that appointments are made fairly and on merit and in line with the Civil Service Code
 - b. Who is responsible for reviewing the continued use of temporary promotion at this grade;
 - c. Whether across departments any internal review, audit, assurance exercise or equality analysis has been carried out in relation to Grade 6 temporary promotion arrangements;
 - d. Whether any further review is planned;
 - e. How the Department assures itself as policy holder that ongoing temporary promotion arrangements are consistent with recruitment principles, fairness, transparency and consistency;
 - f. Whether equality screening, equality monitoring, or any assessment of Section 75 impacts has been undertaken in relation to maintaining temporary promotion arrangements where a live merit list exists, and if so, please provide details or copies of such analysis
 - g. Copies of any relevant policies, guidance, or instructions issued to departments relating to the use of temporary promotion at Grade 6

Please ensure all information reflects the position as at 31 May 2026 unless otherwise stated

DoF response

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

Q1 - Please provide, for all Grade 6 temporary promotion arrangements identified in the amended FOI information and/or the May 2026 data, a breakdown showing:

- a. Department;
- b. Group;
- c. Division;
- d. Reason for the temporary promotion, for example vacancy cover, maternity cover, absence cover, project work, temporary additional duties or other reason;
- e. Date the post first began to be covered by temporary promotion;
- f. Length of time the advertisement for the temporary promotion stated that it was for and if it could be extended. If it could be extended what was the length of time stated;
- g. Length of time the post has been covered by temporary promotion in total;
- h. Date the current incumbent took up the temporary promotion
- i. Length of time the current incumbent has occupied the role on temporary promotion;
- j. If the post is still held by the initial successful candidate, has it exceeded the timeframe of the post and any relevant extension, if it has what action is taking place to fill this vacancy,
- k. Whether the post is substantively vacant on HR records or in financial budget planning or forecasts;
- l. Whether the post has been considered for filling from the IRC306699 merit list;
- m. If not, the recorded rationale for this decision
- n. Whether there is any plan to regularise, end, advertise or substantively fill the role.

Response:

Q1 a to c. The management and recording of temporary promotions are the responsibility of individual business areas in Departments. Temporary promotions can be for several different business reasons, such as covering vacant posts, special exercises etc.

The breakdown of Grade 6 General Service temporary promotion arrangements identified in the amended FOI information for DoF/2026-0172 and at Month End May 2026 is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Department and Group	Division	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172	As at Month End May 2026
DAERA, Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group	DAERA, Environment Marine & Fisheries Directorate	1	0

Department and Group	Division	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172	As at Month End May 2026
DAERA, Food, Farming & Rural Affairs Group	DAERA, Area Based Schemes Development Division	2	2
	DAERA, CAFRE	1	1
	DAERA, Rural Affairs Division	1	1
DAERA, Northern Ireland Environment Agency	DAERA, NIEA Waste & Industrial Pollution Regulation & Enforcement Division	4	4
DAERA, Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group	DAERA, Animal Health and Welfare Policy Jubilee House	1	1
DE, Inclusion, Improvement & Workforce Services	DE, Early Years, Childcare and Children's Strategy Directorate	1	1
	DE, Education Workforce Directorate	2	2
	DE, Qualifications, 14-19 Strategy & Youth Work Policy Directorate	1	1
DE, Policy, Delivery and Infrastructure	DE, Teaching and Learning Excellence Directorate	1	1
DE, Services & Sustainability	DE, Corporate Services and Governance Directorate	1	1
	DE, Finance Directorate	1	1
DfC, Communities, Place & Local Government Group	DfC, Local Government & Housing Regulation Division	1	0
DfC, Corporate Services Group	DfC, Digital, Security and Information Services Division	1	1
	DfC, People and Property Division	1	1
DfC, Engaged Communities Group	DfC, Historic Environment Directors Office	1	1
	DfC, Infrastructure Planning & Delivery Support Division	1	1
	DfC, Social Inclusion Policy Division	1	1
DfC, Housing and Sustainability Group	DfC, Housing and Sustainability Division	0	1
DfC, Operational Delivery Group	DfC, Child Maintenance Service Division GB	1	1
	DfC, Debt Management Benefit Security & Make the Call Wraparound Service	2	2
	DfC, Pensions Disability and Carers Directorate	1	1
DfC, Work and Health Group	DfC, Benefit Delivery Directorate	1	1
	DfC, Central Services Directorate	1	1
	DfC, Labour Market Policy and Delivery	1	0
	DfC, Social Security Policy and Legislation Division	1	1
DfE, Energy Group	DfE, Energy Strategy & Corporate Services Directorate	1	1

Department and Group	Division	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172	As at Month End May 2026
DfE, Management Services and Regulation Group	DfE, Finance Directorate	1	1
DfE, Skills and Education Group	DfE, Apprenticeships, Careers & Vocational Education	1	1
	DfE, Higher Education	0	1
DfI, Climate, Planning and Public Transport Group	DfI, Public Transport, Taxis, Bus, and Freight Policy Division	1	1
	DfI, Railways, Transport Regulation and Climate Division	1	1
DfI, Transport and Road Asset Management (TRAM)	DfI, Asset Maintenance Division	0	1
	DfI, Engineering Services	1	1
	DfI, Transport Planning & Policy Division	1	1
DfI, Water and Departmental Delivery	DfI, Corporate Strategy and Performance Directorate	1	1
	DfI, Sustainable Drainage Division	1	1
DoF, DSF Digital, Security and Finance Shared Services	DoF, DSF Integr8 Programme	2	2
DoF, IFI International Fund for Ireland Group	DoF, IFI International Fund for Ireland Division	1	1
DoF, SPAR Strategic Policy and Reform Directorate	DoF, SPAR Division	1	1
DoH, Chief Digital Information Officer Group	DoH, Chief Digital Information Office Directorate	1	1
DoH, Nursing & Midwifery Advisory Group	DoH, Nursing & Midwifery Advisory Division	1	1
DoH, Resources & Corporate Management Group	DoH, Health Estates Directorate	2	2
	DoH, Investment Directorate	1	1
	DoH, Public Inquiries and Public Safety Directorate	1	1
DOJ, Access to Justice Directorate	DOJ, Causeway Services Division	1	1
	DOJ, Criminal Justice Policy and Legislation Division	1	1
	DOJ, Justice Performance Division	1	1
DOJ, Forensic Science NI	DOJ, FSNI Reporting Services Directorate	1	1
DOJ, Justice Delivery Directorate	DOJ, Corporate Engagement and Communications Division	2	2
	DOJ, Enabling Access to Justice Division	1	1
	DOJ, Financial Services Division	2	2

Department and Group	Division	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172	As at Month End May 2026
DOJ, NICTS Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service			
	DOJ, NICTS Legacy Inquest Unit Division	1	1
	DOJ, NICTS, HIA Redress Board Division	2	2
DOJ, NIPS			
	DOJ, NIPS Headquarters & Prison Service Headquarters	1	1
	DOJ, NIPS ROD	2	2
DOJ, Safer Communities Directorate			
	DOJ, Community Safety Division	0	1
	DOJ, Director of Safer Communities Division	1	1
	DOJ, Protection and Organised Crime Division	1	1
PPS, Corporate Service Functions, Senior Management			
	PPS, Corporate Services Resource Management	1	1
Grand Total		68	69

Source: HRConnect

Q1d. The breakdown of Grade 6 General Service temporary promotion arrangements identified in the amended FOI information for DoF/2026-0172 and at Month End May 2026 by reason (as recorded by relevant line management) is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2

TP Reason (Grouped)	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172	As at Month End May 2026
Vacant Post	31	31
Chain	15	15
Special Exercise	17	18
Other	5	5
Grand Total	68	69

Source: HRConnect

Q1e to g. With the exception of DoF (see below), this information is not held. NICS HR does not hold information in relation to posts covered by temporary promotion arrangements, only members of staff currently acting in a TP arrangement.

Q1h to i. Tables 3 and 4 below provide the start date (as recorded by relevant line management) and duration of the temporary promotion arrangements identified in the amended FOI information for DoF/2026-0172 and at Month End May 2026. This relates to the post holder.

Table 3

TP Duration	Years (TP Start Date)	Months (TP Start Date)	As Reported in DoF/2026-0172
Under 6 Months	2025	Nov	3
		Dec	3
	2026	Jan	2
		Feb	3
		Mar	5
6-12 Months	2025	May	1
		Jun	2
		Jul	3
		Sep	5
		Oct	6
1-2 Years	2024	Jun	3
		Jul	1
		Sep	2
		Oct	1
		Nov	4
	2025	Feb	1
		Mar	2
	2022	Jun	1
		Nov	2
		Dec	1
		Mar	1
		May	2
		Nov	1
		Dec	1
	2024	Feb	1
		Mar	2
		Apr	3
Over 4 Years	2019	Mar	1
		Jul	1
	2021	Jan	1
	2022	Jan	1
		Feb	1
		Apr	1
Grand Total			68

Source: HRConnect

Table 4

TP Duration	Years (TP Start Date)	Months (TP Start Date)	As at Month End May 2026
Under 6 Months	2025	Dec	2
	2026	Jan	2
		Feb	2

TP Duration	Years (TP Start Date)	Months (TP Start Date)	As at Month End May 2026
		Mar	6
		Apr	2
		May	1
6-12 Months	2025	Jun	2
		Jul	3
		Sep	6
		Oct	6
		Nov	3
1-2 Years	2024	Jun	3
		Jul	1
		Sep	2
		Nov	4
	2025	Feb	1
		Mar	2
2-4 Years	2022	Jun	1
		Nov	2
		Dec	1
	2023	Mar	1
		May	2
		Oct	1
		Nov	1
		Dec	1
	2024	Feb	1
		Mar	1
		Apr	3
Over 4 Years	2019	Mar	1
		Jul	1
	2021	Jan	1
	2022	Jan	1
		Feb	1
		Apr	1
Grand Total			69

Source: HRConnect

Q1 j to n. With the exception of DoF (see below), this information is not held.

Q1e to g. DoF only

There were 4 temporary promotion arrangements in DoF in both April and May relating to the same post. Details of

- the date the post first began to be covered by temporary promotion.
- the length of time the advertisement for the temporary promotion stated that it was for and if it could be extended. If it could be extended what was the length of time stated;
- the length of time the post has been covered by temporary promotion in total;

are provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5

	Date first covered	Length of time advertised	Length of time covered in total (at Month End May 26)
TP arrangement 1	November 2025	6 months with option for extension	7 months
TP arrangement 2	July 2024	6 months with option for extension	23 months
TP arrangement 3	February 2025	Initial 6 months, subject to review	15 months
TP arrangement 4	June 2024	Up to 6 months with possibility of extension	23 months

Q1 j. DoF only

The 4 TP arrangements in DoF are still held by the initial successful candidate; they have not exceeded the timeframe and relevant extensions.

Q1k to n. DoF only

In relation to the 4 TP arrangements in DoF, details of

- Whether the post is substantively vacant on HR records or in financial budget planning or forecasts;
- Whether the post has been considered for filling from the IRC306699 merit list;
- If not, the recorded rationale for this decision
- Whether there is any plan to regularise, end, advertise or substantively fill the role.

are provided in Table 6 below.

Table 6

	Substantively vacant on HR or Financial budget planning or forecasts	Has post been considered for filling from IRC306699 merit list and reason	Plans to regularise, end, advertise or substantively fill the role
TP arrangement 1	Y	N – requires specific skills/experience	Intended that the post will be filled by a specialist competition
TP arrangement 2	Y	N – requires specific skills/experience	Expected that the role will conclude within next 9-15 months
TP arrangement 3	Y	N – requires specific skills/experience	Intended that the post will be filled by a specialist competition

TP arrangement 4	N	N – time bound exercise	When time bound exercise concludes the TP arrangement will end
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Q2 - *Can you provide details as to what DoF is doing about linking these vacancies to the recent competition IRC306699 (General Service G6 competition) to ensure staff who have proven their ability at this grade secure posts as they would have expected having competed in the competition?*

Response:

It is not possible to tell from central records held, how many temporary promotion arrangements at Grade 6 level have had a related vacancy declared to NICSHR. Temporary promotion arrangements are managed directly by line management within Departments and can be for a number of different business reasons – not just vacant posts. NICSHR has recommended 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 should also be noted that not all TP arrangements to General Service Grade 6 will be for a post which is suitable to filled by Competition IRC306699 due to some posts at this grade having specific skills/specialist eligibility requirements. The management and recording of temporary promotions and the declaration of vacancies to NICSHR are the responsibility of individual business areas in Departments.

Q3 - *I would also be grateful if the Department could confirm as policy holders:*

a – *What formal governance, assurance, and oversight arrangements (including boards, reporting mechanisms, and frequency of review) are in place...to ensure compliance to the NI Civil Service Commissioners that appointments are made fairly and on merit and in line with the Civil Service Code?*

Response:

Internal appointments are generally made on merit following a selection process. Governance, assurance and oversight arrangements are set out in the NICS Career Opportunities and Promotion policy. The policy requires all promotion activity to reflect the core principles of merit, fairness, openness, transparency and consistency.

b – *Who is responsible for reviewing the continued use of temporary promotion at this grade?*

Response:

The management and review of temporary promotions are the responsibility of individual business areas within Departments. Management information is available to departments on the number and duration of temporary promotions and are subject to regular review.

c – Whether across departments any internal review, audit, assurance exercise or equality analysis has been carried out in relation to Grade 6 temporary promotion arrangements?

Response:

Management information is available to all departments on the number and duration of temporary promotions and are subject to regular review.

The Career Opportunities and Promotions policy provides for temporary promotions in the Civil Service. That policy is currently under review.

d – Whether any further review is planned?

Response:

The Career Opportunities and Promotions Policy is currently under review.

e – How the Department assures itself as policy holder that ongoing temporary promotion arrangements are consistent with recruitment principles, fairness, transparency and consistency?

Response:

The management and review of temporary promotions are the responsibility of individual business areas within departments. Management information is available to all departments, including departmental boards and Permanent Secretaries, on the number and duration of temporary promotions and are subject to regular review.

f – Whether equality screening, equality monitoring, or any assessment of Section 75 impacts has been undertaken in relation to maintaining temporary promotion arrangements where a live merit list exists, and if so, please provide details or copies of such analysis?

Response:

Temporary promotions may be used to meet a range of business and management needs, for example, to cover sick absence, maternity leave, a specific project or the creation of a temporary post. It may also be necessary to temporarily fill a substantive post left vacant until such times as the vacancy can be filled through level transfer, substantive promotion from an internal competition or external recruitment.

The continued need for a temporary promotion, and whether a vacancy should instead be substantively filled, is a matter for the relevant business area to determine, taking account of operational requirements and workforce planning considerations. In doing so, business areas are expected to apply the Career Opportunities and Promotion policy, including the use of appropriate selection arrangements, to support fairness, transparency, consistency and merit in temporary promotion decisions.

g – Copies of any relevant policies, guidance, or instructions issued to departments relating to the use of temporary promotion at Grade 6.

Response:

As above, the Career Opportunities and Promotion policy provides for temporary promotions at section 17. You can access a copy of the policy via the link below.

[1.05 Career Opportunities and Promotion](#)