



conference 2014

Civil Service  
Group  
Annual Delegate  
Conference

Slieve Donard Hotel  
Newcastle

Agenda 2014

Tuesday 27th May 2014

## Timetable

### Tuesday 27th May 2014

10:30 a.m.	Tea/Coffee	
11:00 a.m.	Chairperson's Address	
11:15 a.m.	Appointment of Scrutineers and Tellers Adoption of Standing Orders Report No.1	
11:30 a.m.	Pay	Motions 1 – 2
11:45 a.m.	Managing Attendance	Motion 6
11:55 a.m.	Privatisation and Reforms	Motions 10 – 13
12:25 p.m.	Health and Safety	Motions 17 – 20
12:50 p.m.	Pensions	Motion 24
1:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>	
2:30 p.m.	Staffing	Motions 28 – 33
3:20 p.m.	Accommodation	Motions 38 – 40
3:40 p.m.	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>	
4:00 p.m.	General	Motions 44 – 48
4:30 p.m.	Guillotined Motions	
5:00 p.m.	Close of Conference	

## Special Notice to Delegates

The Standing Orders and Standing Orders Committee Report No 1 should be read in conjunction with the list of motions. In accordance with Standing Order 37, Branches wishing to move reference back to Standing Orders Report No 1 or at any part of it, should notify their intention to do so in writing to the Secretary, NIPSA Standing Orders Committee, Harkin House, 54 Wellington Park, Belfast, BT9 6DP not later than **11.00 a.m., Tuesday 20th May 2014.**

Those branches who have so notified their intention to move reference back of Report No 1 will be required to meet the Standing Orders Committee prior to Conference on **Friday 23rd May 2014.**

Only those branches who have complied with Standing Order 37 will be permitted to move reference back of Standing Orders Committee Report No 1.

Branches should note that reference back of Standing Orders 1 to 43, or any amendment to them, is not permissible. This rule does not apply to any additional Standing Orders included in Standing Orders Committee Report No 1.

# Standing Orders for Conferences

1. These standing orders will apply to General and Group Conferences until they are amended or rescinded by a motion adopted by an annual Delegate General Conference. If any such motion is adopted it shall not come into effect until the conclusion of the conference at which it is adopted.

## Reports of Standing Orders Committee

2. Subject to the provisions of these standing orders, the Standing Orders Committee will draw up reports for each conference, setting out its recommendations on the timetable, agenda and such other matters as it considers necessary for the business of the conference. The reports of the Standing Orders Committee will be presented to the conference for consideration and decision.
3. The Standing Orders Committee may, if it considers it necessary recommend **additional standing orders** on matters not covered in these standing orders. Such additional standing orders shall apply only to the conference at which they are adopted.
4. The first report of the Standing Orders Committee to an Annual Conference hereinafter referred to as "**Report No 1**", shall comprise the agenda, which shall contain all the motions received in accordance with these standing orders and the Committee's recommendation on the timetable and other matters.

## The Agenda

5. The Standing Orders Committee will include in a **primary agenda** those motions which require a decision by conference and will place the remaining motions in a secondary agenda.
6. In each section of the primary agenda any motions which relate to pay and conditions of service shall be placed at the beginning of the section.
7. The **secondary agenda** will include the following categories:
  - (a) Category A - motions which are covered by a composite or comprehensive motion on the primary agenda.
  - (b) Category B - motions which restate existing union policy.

(c) Category C - motions which can be dealt with by correspondence with Union Headquarters.

(d) Category D - motions which are competent to be dealt with by a body established under rule 6.9(a) of the rules of the Union and which are to be remitted to the General Council for reference to that body.

(e) Category X - motions which the President has ruled are out of order.

8. **Composite motions** will be used whenever possible to cover a number of motions directed at the same issue. The motion selected as a composite is the one which, in the opinion of the Standing Orders Committee, incorporates the points made in motions covered by it.

9. **Comprehensive motions** will whenever possible be constructed by the Standing Orders Committee to cover motions, when although directed on the same issue, contain a number of diverse points. The Standing Orders Committee will recommend who should move a comprehensive motion.

10. The passage of a **composite or comprehensive motion** does not imply acceptance of the detailed variants in the motions which they cover.

11. Motions which seek to **amend the rules of the Union or the annexes to them or which would require an amendment to the rules of the Union or the annexes to them** will be out of order, unless they are presented in a form which sets out clearly the wording of the amendment(s) necessary.

12. An emergency motion shall deal only with urgent business which has arisen since the final date for the submission of motions to conference and shall require a decision by conference. The Standing Orders Committee shall include in Report No 1, the procedure for dealing with emergency motions.

13. The Standing Orders Committee shall have the sole authority to decide whether or not a motion is competent for consideration as a matter of urgency. It shall publish those motions which it considers to be emergency motions in a report which shall also include provisions for their discussion.

## The Timetable

14. The Standing Orders Committee will arrange motions in the primary agenda into sections and specify periods of time for the discussion of each section and for other conference business. If alterations to the timetable become necessary during the course of a conference the Standing Orders Committee shall submit recommendations to the conference. For such an alteration it is not necessary to resort to the procedure set out in Standing Order No 35.
  15. The time allotted to each section of the agenda shall be adhered to as far as possible.
  16. The Standing Orders Committee may recommend an opportunity, before motions in a section of the agenda are discussed, for the General Council to place before the delegates any **factual material necessary to bring up-to-date the annual report** in respect of subjects to which the section relates. The time allocated for this purpose to a speaker for the General Council shall be limited to 4 minutes, subject to the President's discretion in exceptional circumstances.
  17. Motions shall be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. The time allotted to each motion shall be at the discretion of the President.
  18. In order to make the maximum use of conference time for the discussion of motions on which there may be differing opinions, the General Council will indicate which **motions, if any, on the primary agenda it is willing to have adopted without discussion**. These motions will be listed in a report of the Standing Orders Committee and by adopting the report the conference will carry the motions.
  19. **Motions which are not taken because of lack of time** shall be dealt with as if they had been remitted by conference to the General Council.
- Orders Committee, his or her name and office before speaking on any point.
23. Speeches by movers of motions shall be limited to **4 minutes** and other speeches to **3 minutes**, but these times may be varied at the discretion of the President.
  24. The mover of a motion on the agenda shall have the **right of reply** at the close of the debate upon the motion, if anyone has expressed opposition to the motion.
  25. Immediately before the mover of a motion on the agenda exercises his or her right of reply or before the vote is taken if there is no right of reply or it is waived, a **speaker on behalf of the General Council** will be afforded the opportunity of addressing conference.
  26. A **motion may be withdrawn** only by the proposers with the approval of conference.
  27. No one other than a delegate or a member of the Standing Orders Committee may address conference unless authorised by the General Council.
  28. Speakers must on all occasions confine themselves strictly to the matter under discussion.
  29. **Points of information** shall be allowed only at the discretion of the President.
  30. If the President, rises **to call a member to order**, or for any purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereon resume his or her seat and no other member shall rise until the chair is resumed.
  31. **The ruling of the President** on any question under standing orders or on points of order or explanation, shall be final unless challenged by not less than 10 delegates. In the event of such a challenge the President shall vacate the chair. The Vice-President, failing whom a member of the General Council, shall then take the chair and shall put it to the vote that the ruling of the President be upheld. Unless two-thirds of the delegates present and voting vote against the motion that the ruling of the President be upheld, the ruling of the President shall stand. When the result of the vote has been declared, the President shall resume the chair and proceed in accordance with the result of the vote.
  32. Subject to the rules of the union, a **card vote** may be taken. Card votes for, against or abstaining on the motion under debate will be collected simultaneously.

## Conduct of Debates

20. It shall **not be necessary to second motions** or emergency motions included in a Standing Orders Committee report which has been adopted by conference.
21. If the **mover of any motion is not present** when it is called, the President may invite a Branch or the General Council, to move the motion. If the motion is not moved, it will be deemed to have fallen.
22. Each **speaker shall announce his or her name** and Branch or, in the case of a person speaking on behalf of the General Council or the Standing

33. No question which has not been included in Report No 1 of the Standing Orders Committee and no emergency motion shall be decided on a card vote.

## Procedural Motions

34. Motions on procedural matters must be moved **and** seconded by delegates or members of the General Council. The mover of a procedural motion may speak on the motion only once and no other speeches shall be allowed save as provided elsewhere in these standing orders.
35. **These standing orders** or any part of them or any provision of a Standing Orders Committee report made under them shall be **suspended** if a motion to that effect is supported by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting. The mover of such a motion shall be allowed by the President sufficient time to explain the purpose of the proposed suspension within the time limit for speeches then applying. If the motion is seconded the President shall similarly allow the Standing Orders Committee to reply before taking the vote.
36. When the motion to adopt a report of the Standing Orders Committee has been moved the President may call any Branch or the General Council, which wishes to move reference back to vary or delete a part of the report. The Standing Orders Committee may reply to such a **reference back** before it is voted upon. If subsequently the motion to adopt the report is carried, the report shall have effect as amended by any reference back accepted by the conference.
37. Reference back of Report No 1 of the Standing Orders Committee or any part of it, must be notified to the Committee in writing at least one week before the start of conference and should be discussed with the Committee before the conference. The Standing Orders Committee shall announce arrangements for such discussions.
38. A debate shall be closed if:
- (a) A motion **“that the vote now be taken”** is carried but such a motion cannot be put to Conference until the opportunity to oppose the motion under debate has been given. Then if such a motion is moved and seconded it shall be put to the vote without discussion. Such a motion shall not be moved or seconded by a delegate who has previously spoken in the debate. If such a motion is carried the mover of the motion under debate shall, before the motion is put exercise any right of reply that s/ he may have but no other speeches shall be allowed.

- (b) A motion **“that conference proceed to next business”** is carried but such a motion cannot be put to Conference until the opportunity to oppose the motion under debate has been given. Then if such a motion is moved and seconded it shall not be moved or seconded by a delegate who has previously spoken in the debate. If such a motion is carried, conference shall proceed forthwith to the next item on the agenda.

39. A motion **“that this motion be remitted to the General Council”** may be moved and seconded by delegates or members of the General Council. The debate on the original motion may continue after the motion to remit it to the General Council has been proposed and seconded, unless the President decides otherwise. At the conclusion of the debate the mover of the original motion shall exercise his or her right of reply, following which the President shall immediately put to conference the proposal that the motion be remitted to the General Council. If the motion to remit is carried, conference shall proceed forthwith to the next item on the agenda, otherwise the original motion will be put to conference.

## Miscellaneous

40. In the **absence of the President** the Vice-President shall preside at conference. In the absence of both the President and Vice-President, the General Council shall elect a member of the Council to preside. The use of the term “President” in these standing orders shall be construed to include the person, other than the President, who presides at conference in accordance with this standing order.
41. Delegates must give one week’s notice in writing to the General Secretary of their intention to ask any question on **the annual report** or the **financial statement**.
42. Delegates must give one week’s notice in writing to the General Secretary of their intention to move a **reference back** of part of the **annual report** and **financial statement** specifying which section(s) they propose to refer back. A motion to refer back the annual report or financial statement must be moved and seconded by delegates. The mover of the motion may speak on the motion only once and no other speeches shall be allowed, save that a speaker on behalf of the General Council will be afforded the opportunity of addressing Conference.
43. During conference **smoking** will not be permitted.



# Standing Orders Report No.1

1. A Primary and Secondary Agenda have been devised in accordance with Standing Orders 5, 6 and 7.
2. Composite Motions have been used in accordance with Standing Order 8. Comprehensive Motions have been used in accordance with Standing Order 9.
3. Delegates representing Branches whose motions are covered by either a Composite Motion or Comprehensive Motion which their Branch is not due to propose shall be afforded an opportunity to speak to the relevant Composite or Comprehensive Motion.

<b>Motions</b>	<b>Motions covered by it</b>
Comprehensive Motion No.6	52 – 54
Composite Motion No.10	55
Composite Motion No.28	56
Comprehensive Motion No.44	57 – 58

4. In order to expedite Conference business, Standing Orders Committee recommend that delegates wishing to speak to a Motion once it has been moved, occupy seats reserved for such persons at the front of the Conference Hall. Only those delegates who comply with this procedure may be called upon to address Conference.
5. In accordance with Standing Order 12. Branches are hereby informed that Notice of Emergency Motions must be submitted in writing to the Standing Orders Committee at Harkin House not later than **12 noon on Thursday 22nd May 2014**. Such submission must be signed by two Branch Officers and indicate the date of the General Meeting at which the Emergency Motions were adopted by the Branch.

**Signed: B White (Chairperson)**  
**D Gillian**  
**M McKee**  
**J McCloskey**





# **Primary Agenda**

**Motions in this Agenda are due to be discussed.**

## ● Pay

### *Motion No.1 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)*

Conference condemns the policy of attacking civil service pay in order to address economic instability under government austerity measures. While some progress has been made in recent years under the equal pay settlement and the Comprehensive Pay and Grading review, Conference is aware that a number of pay problems still exist and need to be addressed.

Conference believes that the NI Executive decision to adopt the civil service pay remit from Whitehall will mean any ground made in recent years to address pay anomalies and equal pay issues is in danger of being abrogated. Conference calls on the Executive Committee to ensure that attempts by Treasury to abolish pay progression for civil servants does not become the policy of the NI Executive. Conference also calls on the Executive Committee to continue to negotiate the application of pay progression in addition to increases in rates of pay reflective of increases in the cost of living.

### *Motion No.2 (Branch 8)*

Conference, we have all now suffered from a reluctantly accepted two year pay deal which ends this August 2014. This pay deal was essentially a pay cut and when you add in the additional pension contributions that have been paid out over the last three years; this is even more of a cut in income for all households. There has already been an announcement of another limit on public sector pay rises this year of 1% and talk of not even honouring increments due. Our members cannot continue to go forward in this era of austerity on a further cut in their take home pay, especially when you consider the range of other cuts coming down the line. When you look at inflation and the cost of living today, we are paying more for less. We cannot accept less to pay for more in this year's wage negotiations. In considering this Conference therefore calls on the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate for a wage increase which

- (1) Is a pay increase as a minimum in line with inflation:
- (2) Has increments automatically paid that are due or alternatively have the scale renegotiated to a two point scale where the current highest point is the rate for the job;
- (3) Is a single year deal.

If these goals cannot be achieved then Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to consider industrial action up to and including strike action to achieve these goals.

**Motions No. 3 – 5 unallocated**

## ● Managing Attendance

### ***Comprehensive Motion No.6 (to be moved by Branch 228)***

**Conference is concerned that some NICS departments are failing in their duty of care to staff in their treatment of sickness absence. This arises when Managing Attendance Teams are pressured to consider an individual's absence against the absence target set for their department, but without sufficient, or perhaps any consideration of the mitigating factors for absence.**

The organisation of personnel management in various departments has led to a decline in the sense of corporate responsibility for staff welfare and well-being, with functions broken up into different silos. As a result, staff who may be absent as a result of stress, arising for example, from the delays in Dignity at Work and Grievance procedures, following the disastrous outsourcing of this function to HR Connect, may still be issued with a written warning, even though another arm of the department may be negligent in failing to ensure such investigations are completed in a timely manner. Similarly, evidence gathered at sick absence interviews, indicating that a transfer or other innovative alternative would assist in a return to work, is not always acted upon and despite this, civil servants continue to be denigrated in the media for what is too often termed “unacceptable” absence rates.

Accordingly, Conference urges the incoming Executive Committee to:

- Collate details of such cases, suitably anonymised, so that these failures by departments can be highlighted at Central Whitley Committee and in the media as and when our attendance levels are challenged;
- Seek to ensure there are adequate resources in place to ensure decisions can be made within a reasonable time period from when a member is back to work;
- Seek to negotiate a change to the terms of the existing managing attendance policy to include a clause to apply a ‘time served’ period between the latest return to work date and the date of the warning being issued, in turn reducing extended warning periods;
- Press for fully documented decisions which explain the factors considered in making that decision and ensure a tick box exercise cannot be used;
- Engage with NICS management to investigate fully the increasing trend of warnings to discover reasons for the increase and try to prevent this from increasing further.

Motions No.7 – 9 unallocated

## ● Privatisation and Reforms

### ***Composite Motion No.10***

#### ***(to be moved by the Executive Committee)***

Conference recognises that the threat of privatisation and outsourcing of functions of Civil Service and other related bodies remains a major challenge to members’ interests and that this is exemplified by various privatisation initiatives across a range of Civil Service Group areas.

Examples of such regressive and unacceptable privatisation proposals include the planned transfer of Soft Services in the Department of Social Development and the award of contracts to Resource NI to carry out a range of policing related functions. Conference congratulates NIPSA members working in the NICS Superannuation Branch on their campaign of opposition to the potential privatisation of pension administration and their role in ensuring that work continues to be delivered by NI civil servants.

Conference notes that there are other potential privatisation plans being considered by NICS Departments and other bodies and calls upon the Executive Committee to:

- **Carry out research and seek information in a proactive manner to identify the which functions are being targeted for privatisation;**
- **Develop a strategy which facilitates early intervention by the union to block any privatisation proposals at the earliest opportunity;**
- **Encourage members in areas threatened by privatisation to actively participate in actions and campaigns to prevent privatisation of the services they deliver; and**
- **To highlight to members the potential effectiveness of threatening or taking industrial action as part of broader campaigns to stop the privatisation of functions and services.**

### *Motion No.11 (Branch 228)*

Conference is concerned that Enterprise Shared Services are preparing to reproduce the HR Connect system, despite the problems evident with it and the dissatisfaction recently expressed by staff in the NICS Staff Attitude Survey. It seems clear that the due diligence tests that are required on the letting of major IT contracts are not taken seriously by either the UK Government or the NI Assembly.

Not even repeated failures of delivery and evidence of tax avoidance by some household names in business consultancy and in the major accountancy companies have been enough to stop further contracts being awarded. Most recently millions of pounds of taxpayers' money has been written off in the disastrous IT contracts to deliver the new Universal Credit.

And in the NICS, the TRIM system was out of use for most of February and March, possibly compromising the requirements of the Freedom of Information legislation.

It is also clear that the monitoring for compliance in these contracts by DFP's Enterprise Shared Services is not credible given the clear conflict of interest that arises from that department's role in negotiating their terms. Because of the public interest in these contracts, the Executive Committee is directed to raise need for the existing contracts in place to be examined by the NI Audit Office and to further consider whether NIPSA should undertake its own review, examining evidence of poor compliance by the same contractors in similar contracts in other jurisdictions.

### *Motion No.12 (Branch 113)*

Conference calls on the Executive Committee to produce a document detailing exactly how civil servants are suffering with the on-going war on public provision/services, including cuts in pensions, compensation payments, flexible working and the increased threat of privatisation and job cuts, and to highlight the NIPSA response to these attacks.

Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to mount a serious campaign in defence of our terms and conditions and to keep members fully apprised of developments which affect their employment and which are a threat to their employment.

Conference further instructs the Executive Committee to explore all options, including legal action to defend our members' interests and to safeguard jobs and employment conditions.

### *Motion No.13 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)*

Conference is conscious of the UK government's continued attack on civil service jobs, pay and pensions. In the past year there has been a greater emphasis in attacking the terms and conditions of service under which civil servants are employed.

Conference is concerned that these attacks have manifested themselves under the guise of the reform agenda and what is referred to as workplace flexibilities. Conference calls on the Executive Committee to ensure that all proposed changes to terms and conditions of employment are dealt with under Central Whitley negotiations. In particular:

- Attempts by individual departments to effect changes to terms and conditions across the NICS should be resisted;
- Broader reform issues such as welfare reforms or the introduction of Universal Credit should not be the vehicle to effect change to terms and conditions of service across the NICS;
- NICS Management should present proper justification for any proposed changes rather than using broad statements such as business needs which are often undefined;
- Proposals should only be accepted following consultation with members and only where the changes are to their benefit.

#### **Motions No. 14 – 16 unallocated**

### ● **Health and Safety**

#### *Motion No.17 (Branch 113)*

Conference recognises that the austerity agenda of the Westminster Government and the implementation of Universal Credit has led to an increase in attacks against colleagues in DWP Jobcentre Plus offices in Great Britain.

Conference reaffirms that staff working in difficult situations have the right to carry out their jobs without fear of threat or injury either inside or outside of work.

Conference, whilst empathising with those claimants suffering under the Tory driven austerity agenda, calls on management of the Department of Employment and Learning and the Social Security Agency to ensure that a zero tolerance approach is taken to all instances of unacceptable customer behaviour and instructs the incoming Executive Committee to advise management in the strongest possible terms that the health, safety and well-being of our members is of paramount importance, including that NIPSA will use all options at our disposal to defend our members, including industrial action where our members' health and safety is put at risk.

#### *Motion No.18 (Branch 53)*

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to seek to ensure that NICS Management engage urgently with the Health and Safety Executive to agree a timetable for Health & Safety Risk Assessments on stress to be carried out in each department.

#### *Motion No.19 (Branch 113)*

Conference acknowledges the total ban on smoking which was implemented in all NICS Departments and Buildings on 1 January 2005. Conference welcomes the benefit that this policy has had on the health and well-being of staff, contractors and visitors to official premises.

Conference also notes that all NICS Staff are employed under the same terms and conditions as defined in the NICS Handbook, and that the NICS Handbook does not currently contain reference to Electronic Cigarettes.

Conference acknowledges that different departments have different policies regarding the use of Electronic Cigarettes, and whilst this is currently a minor

issue we are concerned that by departments implementing their own policies they are effectively creating differing terms and conditions of staff working in different departments.

Conference condemns those departments which have effectively changed the terms and conditions of their employees without the necessary legal obligation of consultation and negotiation with Trade Union Side.

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to demand an end to differential treatment across NICS departments, and, in the absence of scientific, medical or legal reasons, and end to the ban on electronic cigarettes.

### *Motion No.20 (Branch 70)*

Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate the introduction of an allowance to be paid to all staff who perform the role of qualified first aider in the workplace.

### **Motions No.21 – 23 unallocated**

## ● Pensions

### *Motion No.24 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)*

Conference condemns the continuing attacks on the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) as a result of the decision of the NI Assembly to adopt the Public Sector Pensions Bill which will abolish the final salary pension schemes for many existing staff and increase the PCSPS(NI) pension age.

Conference asserts that the campaign of industrial action initiated by the trade unions in 2011 was completely justified and regrets that the unity demonstrated on 30 November 2011 was short lived thus weakening the campaign to defend civil service pensions.

Conference acknowledges that NIPSA has continued to resist the additional employee pension contributions that were implemented in 2012 and 2013 with the third increase scheduled for April 2014 and congratulates all those members who continued to lobby MLAs and the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Conference acknowledges that for many low paid members the real increases in contributions were camouflaged by the changes to the personal tax allowances and that this in turn tended to deflect members attention away from the real additional contributions they have made.

Conference calls upon the Executive Committee to ensure that the Pensions campaign continues and that we highlight to members that the three years of additional employee contributions for staff in the PCSPS (NI) may well be supplemented by further additional employee contributions depending on the outcome of the valuations to be carried out by the Pensions Actuary and that these increases while being shielded by annual tax changes represent a real attack on take home pay and members' standards of living.

### **Motions No.25 – 27 unallocated**

## ● Staffing

### ***Composite Motion No.28***

#### ***(to be moved by the Executive Committee)***

Conference continues to be concerned at the lack of a promotion outlet for a number of grades within the general service discipline. Particular problems are experienced at Administrative Assistant and Administrative Officer levels in the absence of promotion opportunities.

While recognising that any legitimate equality issues need to be addressed in relation to imbalances, Conference is concerned that NICS Management have relied on dated data in making this assertion. Conference believes that more recent census data should be used to determine if the previously stated imbalances still exist and/or exist to such an extent as to continue with promotion embargo's at these grading levels. Conference therefore calls on the Executive Committee to renew its efforts to have promotion boards at Administrative Officer and Executive Officer II re-instated.

### *Motion No.29 (Branch 150)*

Conference calls upon the Executive Committee to seek to ensure that, if the relocation of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Headquarters from Belfast to the North West goes ahead:

- (1) as many of the posts across all grades from AA to senior civil service transfer; *and*
- (2) their work transfers also.

Conference feels that this is necessary to ensure that the transfer does not become a cherry picking exercise which sees a large quantity of selective work and posts not coming to the North West.

### *Motion No.30 (Branch 312)*

Conference notes the increase in projects and impediments on permanent recruitment has led to an increase in NICS Fixed Term Contract staff. Members on these contracts should be treated no less favourably than permanent employees in relation to securing permanent employment (the Fixed Term Employee Regulations (NI) 2002 specifically protect Fixed Term workers). Current NICS policy however will bar such staff from competitions that could lead to permanent posts and this runs counter to the regulations. Conference calls on the Executive Committee to negotiate an end to such anomalies. Consideration should also be given to ensure fixed term staff are treated no less favourably than permanent staff in other opportunities.

### *Motion No.31 (Branch 149)*

Conference calls on the Executive Committee to challenge HR policy of recruiting new staff from external boards when NIPSA members are stranded on closed promotion lists, in some cases for five or six years. This has resulted in the farcical situation whereby NIPSA members are temporarily promoted, carry out their duties satisfactorily, yet cannot apply if the post becomes permanent because their list is closed. This practice severely restricts members career development opportunities lowers staff morale and motivation and leads to a disillusioned and discontented work force.

### *Motion No.32 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)*

Conference is aware that departments were asked to produce financial estimates to reflect budgetary savings of both 4% and 6% for the 2014/15 financial year. In view of the current vacancy and casual employment rates, Conference calls on the Executive Committee to provide fresh guidance to NICS branches about seeking to have all posts filled substantively once they become vacant.

Conference is conscious of the overtime policy that sets out the circumstances under which overtime requests can be approved. However, Conference is concerned that non-operational and non-emergency overtime (voluntary overtime) is also masking the impact on services due to vacancy rates. Conference believes that the need to address this issue should also form part of the fresh guidance to members and that local representatives ensure that all requests for overtime are carefully monitored and subject to proper consultation under NICS and NIPSA procedures.

### *Motion No.33 (Branch 303)*

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to recognise the downgrading of the Assistant Scientific Officer (ASO) grade in the NICS and non departmental bodies such as AFBI. Our members at these grades have been carrying out many duties and tasks of the next grade which is Scientific Officer (EOI Equivalent) for many years but have seen little reward. Recruitment at this grade in recent years has become *de facto* degree level, and we ask that a regrading of these posts is urgently required. We ask that the Executive Committee press for progress on this issue.

### **Motions No.34 – 37 unallocated**

## ● **Accommodation**

### *Motion No.38 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)*

Conference is alarmed at the lack of proper consultation in relation to accommodation matters and in particular moves to new locations. Conference calls on the Executive Committee to raise with NICS management the need to return to the former established consultation arrangements including:

- early engagement with Trade Union Side at the appropriate level;
- the provision of floor plans for the proposed new location including timely site visits; and
- a return to agreed accommodation standards taking account of health and safety, risk assessment and the associated environmental impact on the ability for staff to undertake their jobs.

Conference is concerned that the Workplace NI standards imposed since the demise of Workplace 2010 do not provide adequate accommodation and is entirely motivated on the basis of squeezing as many staff as possible into one location as a cost cutting exercise.

### *Motion No.39 (Branch 228)*

Conference is concerned that the default position in favour of open plan offices under SIB-driven Workplace 2010, now Workplace NI programme, is detrimental to staff morale and damaging to productivity.

A study by researchers at the University of Sydney Faculty of Architecture, has confirmed this, following a survey of 42,000 workers in the USA. The study highlighted many of the problems already identified in the Post Occupancy Report into Clare House, a pilot for these working arrangements, notably



around “sound privacy”, stating “our results categorically contradict the industry-accepted wisdom that open-plan layout enhances communication between colleagues and improves occupants’ overall work environmental satisfaction.”

Other reports have linked open plan offices to health problems such as high stress and high blood pressure, as reported by the BBC.

As early as 1982, a report cited by the British Psychological Society Research Digest, found open plan offices discouraged communication among employees due to a lack of privacy.

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to bring the terms of this resolution and the relevant research to DFP and to the Assembly’s Finance Committee, for the protection of our members and in the interests of the taxpayer.

#### *Motion No.40 (Branch 312)*

Conference views with concern current policy of the Government and NICS to undermine and reduce standards of NICS accommodation. The welcome demise of Workplace 2010 was followed by the adoption of Workplace NI standards without consultation and agreement with NIPSA. Members now must deal with the consequences of this.

New LPS accommodation in Lanyon Place will see 870 staff move under WPNI standards without meaningful consultation. TUS requests for space standards and calculations remain unanswered and members now face loss of facilities and possible overcrowding.

Conference gives full support to Branches facing such concerns and calls on Executive Committee to seek to ensure members are not forced into sub-standard or overcrowded accommodation.

#### **Motions No.41 – 43 unallocated**

## ● **General**

### ***Comprehensive Motion No.44 (to be moved by Branch 307)***

**Conference notes that subsistence allowances payable to NICS staff on official duty have not increased for a number of years. Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate with Management Side to secure an increase in the current rates of subsistence payable for over five hours, ten hours and overnight stays. Conference also calls on the Executive Committee to negotiate an increase to the mileage rates.**

**The new rates should be reflective of the increases in the cost of living and fuel prices that members have had to endure over a considerable number of years.**

#### *Motion No.45 (Branch 228)*

Conference is concerned that the processes used and the time taken to conduct investigations into Dignity at Work complaints and other investigations by HR Connect and departmental staff, are taking so long that they are too often ‘out of time’ for any remedy that might be available at Industrial Tribunal. Conference therefore instructs the Executive Committee to raise with CHR the need for an audit across departments to identify the respective times taken across the NICS departments for such investigations and to determine what improvements can be made. NIPSA representatives should in the meantime be aware of the need to lodge cases on a ‘protective basis’ to ensure that a fair remedy and any compensation due, is not denied to our members.

### *Motion No.46 (Branch 108)*

Conference expresses its continued opposition to the injustice of the Equal Pay settlement to the PSNI/former PSNI, PPS and DOJ/former NIO members. Conference would like to commend the activists that stood up and continue to do so in defiance in collective action against this injustice.

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to keep this issue in the forefront of their business and to maintain the pressure in relation to this campaign in an attempt to pursue financial recognition of the service given by PSNI/former PSNI, PPS and DOJ/former NIO members.

### *Motion No.47 (Branch 8)*

A new performance management framework and core competency framework for the NICS is being pushed through by management. This framework if implemented will be used as a tool by management to dismiss staff who they see to be 'underperforming' and not as a tool to improve performance. In certain departments such as DSD and particularly within the child maintenance service this will not be a good thing. Within the child maintenance service we have managers who will admit to what a difficult job AO's have and then push for those AO's to be dismissed as inefficient for sometimes not achieving unobtainable personal targets. We need to ensure that this new framework cannot be used detrimentally in any area of the civil service, especially DSD, but that it will be used as is meant, a tool to improve performance. Conference therefore calls on the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate with management to ensure that adequate checks and balances are in place to ensure this doesn't happen and that there are measures in place to deal with managers who try to use this in such a manner as is not currently practiced.

### *Motion No.48 (Branch 113)*

Conference expresses serious concern at the amount of detrimental changes to NICS policies that adversely affect our terms and conditions without proper consultation. Conference recognises the need to involve the NIPSA membership at all stages of consultation and negotiation in order to defend our hard won terms and conditions from attack by management. With that in mind conference instructs the Executive Committee to fully consult with all Branches in relation to any proposed changes by management to existing terms and conditions contained in the NICS handbook.

### **Motions No.49 – 51 unallocated**

# **Secondary Agenda**

**Motions in this Agenda are  
not to be discussed.**

# Category A

## Motions covered by composite/comprehensive motions contained in the Primary Agenda.

### ***Comprehensive Motion No.6***

#### *Motion No.52 (Branch 228)*

Conference is concerned that some NICS departments are failing in their duty of care to staff in their treatment of sickness absence. This arises when Managing Attendance Teams are pressured to consider an individual's absence against the Absence Target set for their department, but without sufficient, or perhaps any consideration of the mitigating factors for absence.

The organisation of personnel management in various departments has led to a decline in the sense of corporate responsibility for staff welfare and well-being, with functions broken up into different silos. As a result, staff who may be absent as a result of stress, arising for example, from the delays in Dignity at Work and Grievance procedures, following the disastrous outsourcing of this function to HR Connect, may still be issued with a written warning, even though another arm of the department may be negligent in failing to ensure such investigations are completed in a timely manner. Similarly, evidence gathered at sick absence interviews, indicating that a transfer or different working arrangement would assist in a return to work, is not always acted upon and despite this, civil servants continue to be denigrated in the media for what is too often termed "unacceptable" absence rates.

Accordingly, conference urges the incoming Executive Committee, to advise our branch representatives and seconded officers in our TUS section offices to pass details of such cases, suitably anonymised, to the appropriate HQ Official so that these failures by departments can be highlighted at Central Whitley Committee and in the media as and when our attendance levels are challenged.

#### *Motion No.53 (Branch 8)*

These last few years have seen an increase in the amount of warnings being issued to members who have been absent due to sickness. Increasingly more you are seeing warnings being issued to members who have been off sick due to a disability. This is an unfair practice which needs to be stopped. You see on decision sheets that issues are considered, like a tick box exercise just listing everything, but not any detail on how each issue has been considered. Conference, it is disgraceful, that managing our members absences have been turned into a tick box exercise where our members suffer the consequences. Another issue which is an unfair practice is that you also have staff members back to work for months then being issued with a warning effective from the date of the decision which at times is four – six months after they have returned to work. This is unfair as members are being punished well past the two years the warning should be in place for. We therefore ask that action is taken to ensure there are adequate resources in place to ensure decisions can be made within a reasonable time period (perhaps this should be four weeks or less) from when a member is back to work.

Conference therefore calls on the incoming Executive Committee to launch a campaign to:

- (1) Ensure there is adequate resources for those areas and departments where there are currently unacceptable delays in dealing with managing attendance cases;

- (2) Negotiate a change to the terms of the existing managing attendance policy to include a clause to apply a 'time served' period between the latest return to work date and the date of the warning being issued, in turn reducing extended warning periods;
- (3) That a decision is fully documented to include how factors are considered to ensure a tick box exercise cannot be used and that any warnings are fully justified;
- (4) Investigate fully the increasing trend of warnings to discover reasons for the increase and try to prevent this from increasing further.

*Motion No.54 (Branch 53)*

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to ensure that the NICS cease their immoral and urgent implementation of the Managing Attendance Policy across departments that Management urgently engage with Trade Union Side to explore innovative alternatives rather than being warnings carte blanche.

**Composite Motion No.10**

*Motion No.55 (Branch 149)*

Conference is concerned at the loss of work within the NICS private sector. Conference calls on the Executive Committee to do all in its power to stop privatisation.

**Composite Motion No.28**

*Motion No.56 (Branch 113)*

Conference notes with concern that it is now approximately ten years since the last Internal Promotion Boards were held for the AA / AO grades. Conference therefore calls upon the Executive Committee to initiate a NICS wide campaign to highlight this injustice with the objective of securing Internal Promotion Boards for AA / AO grades.

**Comprehensive Motion No.44**

*Motion No.57 (Branch 307)*

Conference notes that subsistence allowances payable to NICS staff on official duty have not increased for a number of years. Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate with Management Side to secure an increase in the current rates of subsistence payable for over five hours, ten hours and overnight stays.

*Motion No.58 (Branch 70)*

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to set increased rates payable for necessary expenses regarding travel, subsistence and other allowances and to negotiate these new rates with Management.

The new rates should be reflective of the increases in the cost of living and fuel prices that members have had to endure over a considerable number of years.

# Category B

## **Motions which restate existing union policy.**

### *Motion No.59 (Branch 8)*

Conference is disappointed to note that management have refused to see and implement a disability leave policy for the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Management mistakenly feel that the special leave policy is sufficient and would cover disability leave. Management are wrong. The Northern Ireland Disability code of practice advises that best practice for employers is to have a disability leave policy in place which would deal with instances where staff members are off due to their disability, this would cover time off in relation to a disability for treatment and rehabilitation, which is a reasonable adjustment required by law for employers to make. As a large public sector employer the NICS should be introducing a policy in line with this code of practice and not the bare minimum of what they think they should do as per the law. Conference therefore asks the incoming Executive Committee to not accept management stance on this issue. Conference also instructs that they continue to push for a standalone disability leave policy for the NICS into the future. It also needs to be considered if test cases can be taken were members with a disability have been subject to inefficiency procedures as a result of their disability which may not have been the case had such a policy existed.

# Category C

## **Motions which can be dealt with by correspondence with Union Headquarters.**

### *Motion No.60 (Branch 27)*

Conference is concerned at the lack of information circulated by Secretariat teams on a regular basis to members within their respective departments and in particular DARD.

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to ensure that:

- (1) The Secretariat's produce a quarterly news sheet for circulation to members in their respective departments; and
- (2) That the Secretariat report is circulated amongst NIPSA members in their respective departments once it has been presented to and agreed by the Departmental Committee.

### *Motion No.61 (Branch 27)*

Conference is concerned at the lack of recruitment of new members within current departments and notes with disappointment the failure of the Secretariat teams to demonstrate leadership regarding recruitment of new members, particularly within DARD.

Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to ensure that an appropriate high level of importance is given to the recruitment issue particularly within DARD and that the Secretariat teams are asked to address recruitment within their respective departments as a matter of urgency.

# Category D

**Motions which are competent to be dealt with by a body established under Rule 6.9(c) of the Rules of the Union which are remitted to the Executive Committee for reference to that body.**

*Motion No.62 (Branch 42)*

We call on the incoming Executive Committee to oppose management attempts to undermine the Memorandum of Understanding and the events of our current industrial relations. Registered disagreements are an important part of the unions defence and should not be ignored or undermined by management.

*Motion No.63 (Branch 303)*

Conference notes with dismay that the recruitment into AFBI has become more erratic over the last year with staff at all levels being recruited on a mixture of fixed term and permanent contracts. This has included the starting grade of Assistant Scientific Officer (ASO) who have been recruited on a 36 month contract. We call on the incoming Executive Committee to pursue a campaign to stop the use of these unfair recruitment policies.

# Category X

## Motions which the Chairperson has ruled out of order.

**Motion No.64** is ruled out of order because it is in conflict with NIPSA Rules 1.3(a) – 1.3(f) and is insufficiently clear as a means of determining policy.

### *Motion No.64 (Branch 8)*

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to try and obtain ergonomic risk assessments for all staff as a necessity. This is due to an increase in injuries such as orthopaedic problems and repetitive strain injuries within some areas which could be preventable if proper individual ergonomic assessments were carried out, without them having to be requested.

**Motion No.65** is ruled out of order because it is in conflict with NIPSA Rules 1.3(a) – 1.3(f) and is insufficiently clear as a means of determining policy

### *Motion No.65 (Branch 150)*

Conference calls upon the Executive Committee to investigate the possibility of having promotion board interviews held in the North West of the province as opposed to everyone having to travel to Belfast to do their interview.

**Motion No.66** is ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear as a means of determining policy.

### *Motion No.66 (Branch 307)*

Conference calls on the incoming Executive Committee to negotiate with Management Side for the payment of an allowance similar to that paid to ICT staff and Accounts for specialist grades who are required to have a professional qualifications for the entry into the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

**Motion No.67** is ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear as a means of determining policy and is factually incorrect.

### *Motion No.67 (Branch 307)*

Conference calls on the incoming Civil Service Executive Committee to enter into discussion with Management Side to provide an opt out clause to those staff with 40 years service who no longer wish to contribute to a pension scheme.

Conference further calls on the Executive Committee to fully protect the rights of those who opt out of pension schemes.

**Motion No.68** is ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear as a means of determining policy and is factually incorrect.

### *Motion No.68 (Branch 312)*

Conference is alarmed at reports that the HR Connect contract has been extended without any consultation with NIPSA. Recent recruitment exercises saw delays of up to 40 weeks and basic errors in inefficiency correspondence only adds to stress experienced by members. The practice of adding line managers signatures to correspondence without their consent is evidence that NICS have abdicated proper control of NICS policy and procedures.



Conference instructs the Executive Committee to investigate the HR Connect, its current practices ensuring penalties are applied and that members are not personated in HR Connect correspondence.

# Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance

## Civil Service Group

### Annual Delegate Conference 2014

The following candidates have been nominated for election at Annual Delegate Conference 2014:

Candidate's Name	Grade	Candidate's Name	Grade
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#### Chairperson (1 Vote)

McNulty, J	SO	Morgan, M	EOI
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#### Vice Chairpersons (2 Votes)

Herron, M	EOI	Mulholland, B	FOIII
Malone, G	ICT4	Wilson, R	AO

#### Standing Orders Committee (1 Vote)

Candidate's Name	Grade
Holmes, J*	ICT Level 5

#### Executive Committee (16 votes)

Candidate's Name	Grade	Candidate's Name	Grade	Candidate's Name	Grade
Bannon, D	DP	Gates, C	DP	McNulty, J	SO
Boersma, I	EOII	Gibson, M	EOII	McNulty, R	AO
Brooks, W	AO	Harvey, S	SSOI	Morgan, M	AO
Clarke, H	AO	Herron, M	EOI	Morgan, M	EOI
Collins, L	SSOI	Higgins, G <sup>1</sup>	INSPG4	Mulholland, B <sup>3</sup>	FOIII
Creaney, T	SSOI	Hoy, L	AO	O'Lynn, E	SO
Crilly, D	AO	Hughes, S	AO	Renshaw, P	SO
Dale, P <sup>3</sup>	MCO	Kirk-Lyness, G	SO	Robinson, M	SO
Dobbin, M	AO	Loughran, M	SSOII	Rooney, M	AO
Doherty, E	EOII	Lowry, D	EOII	Russell, V <sup>3</sup>	HPTO
Doherty, R	AO	Lynn, B	EOII	Smyth, S	EOI
Dornan, B <sup>3</sup>	TG1	Malone, G	ICT4	Toner, D	AG7
Dugan, V	AO	McKeown, M	DP	Veighey, J	EOI
Fallis, S <sup>2</sup>	HSO	McKillop, T	EOII	Waddell, D	EOI
Farrell, E	AO	McLeish, T	AO	Wilson, R	AO

\* Returned unopposed

(1) Elected by virtue of Rule 29 (d) of the Civil Service Group Constitution

(2) Elected by virtue of Rule 29 (e) of the Civil Service Group Constitution

(3) Elected by virtue of Rule 29 (g) of the Civil Service Group Constitution





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