

FOI DOF/2022-0453

**Request**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would be most grateful if you could provide me with the following information:

- i) When it was decided that transfer lists, used previously as a means of movement and career development, should be stopped.
- ii) The reason(s) why the decision at i) was made.
- iii) Why, in the present day, any movements can only be made within one's own Department, and following consultation with one's ascending managerial hierarchy at that.

**Clarification received 21/11/2022:**

Back in my early days in the Civil Service, one could request a location or developmental job transfer, and I was fortunate enough to get a move from Netherleigh into the City Centre within 6 months of putting my name down on the locational transfer list. As I am now almost 18 long years in the same job, I would dearly love to find something new to do, but am stymied at every turn because these locational/development lists were phased out somewhere along the line. I'd like to know when those type of lists were stopped and why.

**DoF Response**

I can confirm the department holds the information requested.

- i) The Central Transfer list was replaced by the Elective Transfer policy in March 2009.
- ii) The Elective Transfer policy was introduced to allow staff to compete for vacancies that arose at the same grade and discipline i.e. it did not involve promotion. The aim of the new policy was to introduce a simple, fair and transparent system of filling vacancies that did not require additional specialist skills or experience.

This method for filling vacancies provides staff, subject to their line manager's approval, with the opportunity to put themselves forward for posts that they had an interest in. The importing line managers (of at least Staff Officer level) would then make the final decision as to who should fill the post.

- iii) Before raising a vacancy requisition with NICHR to be filled, a Department must first optimise the allocation of its existing skills / staff resources to deliver business priorities which includes sideways moves through departmental transfer processes.

On receipt of a vacancy requisition from a department, NICSHR considers all available existing supply (e.g. career break returners, existing merit lists, etc) and if there is no supply, then consideration is given to initiating a new recruitment competition. Where a new recruitment competition is deemed necessary, then consideration is given to the most appropriate method to fill the vacancy, with the relevant options set out in the Vacancy Management Policy, which includes the use of elective transfers. The Elective Transfer Policy also requires the applicant to discuss a prospective application for an elective transfer opportunity with their line manager, to ensure that business needs can be met in the event the applicant is successful.