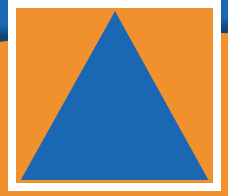




CIVIL DEFENCE

Cosaint Shibhialta



2023



Foreword



Tá an-áthas orm Iris Cosanta Sibhialta na bliana seo a chuir i láthair. Bliain thar a bheith gnóthach a bhí in 2022 don Chosaint Shibhialta. Cuireadh tús leis an mbliain le go leor srianta Covid i bhfeidhm, ach thug ár gclár vacsaínithe an-rathúil, ina raibh ról suntasach ag Cosaint Shibhialta, deis dár saol pobail filleadh ar an ngnáthshaol. Mar aitheantas ar sheirbhís iontach ár n-oibríthe deonacha le linn na paindéime, i mí na Samhna, bhronn mo réamhtheachtaí, an tAire Coveney, boinn speisialta Covid ar oibríthe deonacha Cosanta Sibhialta ó gach cearn den tír ag searmanas i bPáirc an Chrócaigh. Is comhartha buíochais iad na boinn seo don Rialtas as an tseirbhís iontach a thug oibríthe deonacha Cosanta Sibhialta do cheart a bpobail ó thús na paindéime i Márta 2020.

As the pandemic was easing, we were faced with another major challenge following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We can be very proud of the welcome given by Irish people to 86,000 Ukrainians who have found sanctuary on our shores. Civil Defence again played a significant role in establishing and operating rest centres and providing transport and other services for our Ukrainian guests.

2023 will see the launch of the new Volunteer and Equipment Management System (VEMS). A great deal of time and money has been invested in this new system which will change the way Civil Defence is managed. Volunteers will have access to VEMS through their smartphone or tablet. They will receive and be able to reply to updates about their training and duties. VEMS will make life easier for Civil Defence Officers by streamlining and automating many routine administrative tasks. VEMS will provide the Department of Defence with timely information on Civil Defence activities across the country.

In December 2022 the Government gave permission for the publication of a new Civil Defence Bill. Civil Defence has for many years operated under a variety of legislation, including the 1939 Air Raid Precautions Act. The new Bill is aimed at providing a modern consolidated legislative basis for Civil Defence. We expect this Bill will progress through the Oireachtas during the coming months.

An additional €500,000 was allocated to Civil Defence in 2022 from the Dormant Accounts Fund. As in recent years this money was used to help modernise Civil Defences vehicle fleet. A further €400,000 will be provided in 2023. This money is a symbol of the Government's commitment to the ongoing development of Civil Defence.

With the easing of the pandemic, 2022 saw a return to much more normal activity for Civil Defence. This included a resumption of training as well as many of the community events that Civil Defence supports right across the country.

Finally, I want to thank all our volunteers and their officers for their commitment to Civil Defence. I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming months.

Micheál Martin TD

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence



I want to take this opportunity to thank the Civil Defence volunteers for their continued commitment and efforts during 2022. In particular, I would like to commend your work with displaced Ukrainian people seeking support in Ireland. I want also to thank the Civil Defence Officers and Assistant Civil Defence Officers for their efforts over the past 12 months. I know you put in many long hours organising and supporting the volunteers in dealing with the challenges posed, particularly setting up temporary rest centres and transporting persons to accommodation. I look forward to meeting many of you in person during the coming months.

With best wishes,

Jacqui McCrum,

Secretary General, Department of Defence

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Civil Defence 2022

Civil Defence Activities:

From 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022 Civil Defence volunteers completed **3,635** taskings.

Taskings were undertaken as follows:



Vehicle Fleet Grant Aid:

Grant-Aid totalling **€995,182**

was paid to Local Authorities towards the upgrade of the Civil Defence vehicle fleet.

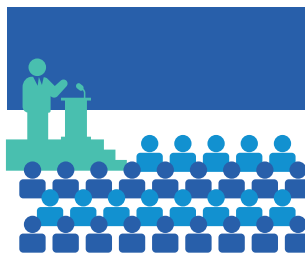


College Training:

A total of **491** training courses were completed



2,917
Certificates have issued



2,988
Students received training

Training was conducted in the following disciplines:



Casualty



Communications



Rescue



Welfare (Food Safety)



Manual Handling



An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence

Covid-19 Medal Presentation Ceremony



Tipperary volunteers

On 29th November the Minister for Defence and Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney T.D. honoured Civil Defence volunteers for their work during the COVID-19 pandemic at a ceremony in Croke Park.

Minister Coveney commissioned a special COVID-19 medal for all volunteers who undertook duties during the COVID-19 crisis. In total, this medal will be presented to circa. 1,500 volunteers.

The medal consists of a cross, bearing the Irish civil defence harp logo, to signify extraordinary leadership, dedication, sense of duty, personal example and courage in assisting communities during the covid-19 pandemic.

Civil Defence volunteers undertook 9,500 taskings during the pandemic, since March 2020, in support of the Local Authorities, HSE and An Garda Síochána.



Limerick volunteers



Westmeath volunteers with Minister Simon Coveney and Secretary General Jacqui McCrum



Roscommon volunteers

A Volunteer's Perspective - Michael Florin Cahill

A lot of people ask me, what is Civil Defence?, What do you do? Do you get paid? Is it worthwhile? I tell everyone the same thing, it is an amazing voluntary organisation that allows you to serve your community, help people in need and learn the best of skills that stay with you for life. Civil Defence, put simply, is the best and I recommend it to anyone who has a flare for getting involved and stuck in.

To the unknowing, Civil Defence is a statutory organisation that provides backup to the main primary response agencies such as fire, ambulance and Garda. These duties are all voluntary but you are trained to a minimum standard in areas such as welfare, communications, medical, radiation monitoring and search and rescue. It now has over 3000 volunteers across the country and has provided vital support to the PRA's and local communities in times of severe weather, local events, the COVID-19 Pandemic and, most recently, the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis. Without Civil Defence, basic day to day community support could have been almost impossible. The commitment that each member gives is exemplary and a true acknowledgment of the community spirit that exists in this country.

I joined Civil Defence from the day I was born! My father was involved in the local Carlow unit as Assistant Civil Defence Officer at the time. Everyday I would see him going to duties and training and I started to get the urge to get involved. I started getting tours of the facilities, pretending to drive the big jeeps and fire engine, and this in turn led me to getting my honorary uniform as a "little Civil Defender". Once the time came, I was sure to make it official and I joined and started on my path to getting qualified enough to go on actual duties and drive actual jeeps. These courses varied from communications to powerboat licence to even becoming a drone pilot



Michael Florin Cahill and Ashling Hutton

for search and rescue. These are things that I would never have dreamed of doing if I hadn't known about Civil Defence. All the courses that I have done since joining, stand with me as I go through my career whether it is in media drone filming or first aid at accidents I come across or working on people and safety management. We also get to meet and support other counties in times of need, as well as times of fun, such as regional competitions. I remember being part of the winning team once during the regional competition held in Wexford before the pandemic and the sense of achievement and the camaraderie was just special. It is something that I have not seen in any other organisation or company I have worked for or been a part of.

The commitment can be a lot but you get out of it what you put in. Civil Defence requires plenty of hours for duties and training in various conditions but the reward of recognized courses and getting into the best of events such as Electric Picnic and the Ploughing are just some of the perks of the job. We would normally train twice a week in Carlow and this could be a mixture of practicing emergency scenarios with other emergency services, doing boat training and maintenance or refreshing out of date courses. There can be tough days, especially during a search for a missing person who may be found alive or deceased. While this is tough, the support from fellow members, the CISM protocols and free confidential counselling service ensures that volunteers are well equipped to deal with whatever situation is thrown at them.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoy what I do and appreciate the fact that I was basically born into the organisation. Few countries have what we do and when visitors see what Civil Defence does, they are full of nothing but admiration and praise. That self satisfaction and the opportunity to work with some amazing people make Civil Defence an institution to be proud of and I look forward to the many years ahead.



Our People

Civil Defence welcomed a number of new personnel to Civil Defence Officer (CDO) and Assistant Civil Defence Officer (ACDO) roles during the course of 2022.

Damien Dollard took over the mantle of Civil Defence Officer in Laois following the retirement of Liam Preston.

A total of 8 Assistant Civil Defence Officer posts were created. Carmel Prior was appointed to Cavan, Gary Cassidy was appointed to Kerry, Shannon Reid was appointed to Kildare, Leann Curtis was appointed to Limerick, Tommy Walsh was appointed to Mayo, David Treanor was appointed to Meath, Claire Keane was appointed to Roscommon and Paraic Kelly was appointed in an acting capacity to Kilkenny.

John Ryan retired from his position as Civil Defence Officer in Cork. Katherine Peacock resigned from her position as Civil Defence Officer in Kilkenny.



Claire Keane ACDO (Roscommon)



Damien Dollard CDO (Laois)



John Ryan Retired CDO (Cork)



Paraic Kelly ACDO (Kilkenny)



Shannon Reid ACDO (Kildare)



Tommy Walsh ACDO (Mayo)



Liam Preston Retired CDO (Laois)



Gary Cassidy ACDO (Kerry)



David Treanor ACDO (Meath)



Carmel Prior ACDO (Cavan)



Leann Curtis ACDO (Limerick)



Katherine Peacock former CDO (Kilkenny)

Support to Ukrainians seeking protection in Ireland

During 2022 Civil Defence volunteers undertook 838 taskings supporting Ukrainians seeking protection in Ireland.

These volunteers were able to utilise a fleet of Civil Defence Vehicles including four-wheel drive jeeps, vans, ambulances and minibuses.

Ukrainian displaced persons related tasks undertaken by Civil Defence volunteers included;

- Setting up and assisting with management of Emergency Rest Centres
- Transporting displaced persons from Emergency Rest Centres to pledged accommodation
- Transporting displaced persons to medical appointments
- Collecting medications from pharmacies on behalf of displaced persons
- Transporting displaced persons to school registrations
- Providing tentage for Emergency Rest Centre sites



Ukrainian Ambassador Visits Limerick



Cavan Rest Centre Set Up



Kilkenny Ukrainian support



Cork North



Littleton Rest Centre, Tipperary



Meath Temporary Rest Centre

Technical Update

Communications Course, Phoenix Training Centre, Dublin

On Saturday 10th September, a Communications Instructor Practical Assessment took place in our Phoenix Training Centre, Dublin. On completion of their Instructional Methods Module students will go forward to deliver Communications training in their units.



Communications Course, Civil Defence Headquarters, Roscrea

On Saturday 20th August students came to Civil Defence Headquarters, Roscrea from all over the country to complete their Communications Instructor Practical Assessment. They were tested in their equipment knowledge and completed scenario based exercises.



Radiation Exercise

Scenario: On Saturday 22nd October a Nationwide Alert was sent to all Civil Defence Units informing them that an incident had occurred in a Nuclear Power Plant in another jurisdiction and the National Emergency Co-ordination Group (NECG) had been convened.

The exercise was the first one using our new Komtek D3M Personal Radiation Detectors (PRDs). Training on the use of the PRDs and the taking of samples was delivered on-line. Unfortunately the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were not in a position to offer training in their labs in 2022 but hope to do so in 2023.



All units mobilised and took grass and soil samples as per instructions given. Gamma Radiation Dose Rate readings were transmitted over the National Digital Radio Service Network (TETRA) to a Comcen/Ops Room stood up by CD Branch in the Phoenix Training Centre, Dublin (Ratra). The sample locations were inputted to KML and CSV files which were sent to the EPA who uploaded them to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) portal.

The importance of this role cannot be overstated, as, in the event of a nuclear emergency, readings and samples taken by Civil Defence Volunteers in the reactionary phase provide important data to the EPA and decision makers in the NECG. Technology is being assessed to streamline this process and add more value to the service that the Civil Defence volunteers provide to their communities.

K9 Assessments



On the weekend of 15th-16th October Civil Defence K9 teams underwent their annual assessment in a range of environments. The Handlers DMR radios were tracked using our Mapyx Search Management software, providing force protection for our volunteers and situational awareness for search managers, developing our integrated capability for the communities they serve when tasked by the Principal Response Agencies.

Well Done Scooby, Max, Mist, Rossi and Archie and all the handlers for their time and commitment.

Sonar Operator Training:

On the weekend of 12th-13th November Mariteqs delivered Sonar Operator Training on new PUWMA portable units to Galway and Monaghan Civil Defence volunteers, increasing our operational capability to support An Garda Síochána in missing person searches. Another technical solution to assist our communities.



Training Review

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Programme



Civil Defence College delivered an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) programme, with students coming from 17 different Local Authorities. The course started in November 2021 but, due to the Pandemic and Government restrictions on travel and local training, it continued into August 2022. The restrictions were a major

disruption to the course and, as a result, the course lasted for much longer than originally anticipated, as students had to wait for restrictions to lift before they could complete their clinical placements. The College Learning Support Portal (LSP) proved to be a very valuable asset in the delivery of the course content to the students and their tutors, allowing for a Blended Learning approach to be used.

To date, 53 students have successfully passed their NQEMT exam and OSCE's. The function of the NQEMT examination is to establish and maintain a national professional standard in emergency medical technology. This is a benchmark process, which assesses the knowledge and skills for competent practice as a professional Emergency Medical Technician in Ireland. PHECC is empowered to award the NQEMT

to successful candidates. Holders of the NQEMT may apply to PHECC for entry onto the PHECC register. This is the national professional register for pre-hospital practitioners. Congratulations to all Civil Defence members who were successful in the NQEMT during 2022. These new EMT's will be a great benefit to their Local Authority units when providing support at community events.

We would like to thank the National Ambulance Service (NAS) for giving us access to the learning material for the course & facilitating our students with clinical placements, the students and all their Tutors for their dedication and patience with the changes that had to be made due to the pandemic, and to the College Staff for their assistance in running this course. It would not have been possible without everyone working together.



Instructor recertification



Civil Defence has approximately 150 First Aid instructors, who are responsible for training and upskilling approximately 2,500 volunteers in areas such as Cardiac First Response (CFR), which makes up part of the Civil Defence Minimum Training Standard. They are also responsible for training and upskilling in First Aid Response, (FAR) and Emergency First Response (EFR). In order to do this, instructors must hold an in-date instructor qualification, which is certified by the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC). To maintain this accreditation, all instructors have to be recertified every two years. This recertification was done by bringing all the instructors to the Civil Defence College for a full day's training, which includes theory and practical skills.

The instructors can now complete the theory section through blended learning from the comforts of their own home, at a time that's convenient for them. When they have completed this

element and passed the MCQ's, they will then be issued with a certificate as proof that they've successfully completed the online section. They will then be offered a choice of location for one of the practical sessions that are run in the different regions. This helps to cut down on the travel time for the instructors.

The dates and venues are dependent on the availability of the Tutors for the different locations. Civil Defence are privileged to be able to call on PHECC-registered Facilitators, Tutors and Assistant Tutors to carry out this all-important recertification. The college would like to thank everyone for their participation in this new process.



Food and You

The College was delighted to host the Food Safety Authority at Roscrea for a Food Safety and You conversion programme for our existing Welfare Instructors. Civil Defence worked closely with the FSAI to support this new course and its rollout within the organisation. Food Safety and You is all about promoting safe handling of food and ensuring our volunteers welfare support is in line with the FSAI's expectation. This one day conversion workshop focused on changing practices and allergens in the food handling space.

Some twelve volunteers joined us on the programme, coming from all corners of the country. As part of the programme update, new instructor course materials was circulated and reviewed.



Our thanks to CDOs, Volunteers and in particular the training team at FSAI for making the day such a success. The FSAI will be working with us

on training new instructors in the months ahead and we look forward to learning from their experience and expertise in this area.

Search Instructors



Over the summer months our existing Search Instructors had an opportunity to reconnect and participate in CPC, where they focused on confirming skills and identifying new opportunities for search practices. Based in Ratra, instructors were allocated into two teams and invited to create a search scenario which would form the basis of a missing person role-play exercise in an urban setting. As part of designing their role-

play exercise, instructors considered what search tactics could be effectively used in an urban setting, what unique challenges would likely be encountered, and key teaching points which could be communicated to search responders. Our Ratra range presented many opportunities to discuss hazards, risks and controls in a search context and, in particular, how both TIE and SET models operate in an urban setting. Each team role-played both instructor, and

student, with the site divided into two exercises to promote shared learning. Using role-play, instructors had an opportunity to Plan – Do – Review their scenario.

2022 also saw two intakes of students complete the Search Instructor Programme. Hosted at Westmeath Civil Defence Headquarters, students explored teaching practices, search theory, critical thinking, evidence based search, search skills, risk management, scenario development and assessment. Our use of Lough Ennell, and its proximity to a nearby camping park, provided volunteers with an opportunity to create appropriate role-play exercises. This included developing realistic scenarios, integrating appropriate use of evidence based search practices, and factors to be considered in both day and night search to create realistic and though provoking learning environments.

Our thanks to volunteers and all who assisted with planning, organising and delivering the programmes.

Swiftwater



2022 was another busy year for Civil Defence in terms of Swiftwater, with a new class of Instructors being signed off on by our training provider, R3 Safety & Rescue. This class of Instructors, from over 10 local authorities, can now deliver courses locally to their fellow Volunteers, from Water Awareness up to Swiftwater and Flood First Responder.

2023 will also be busy for Civil Defence in terms of Swiftwater, with over 50 Instructors due to complete their recertification process. This year will be the first time since the Pandemic that in-person skills workshops will be carried out as part of the recertification process, a welcomed return to hands-on training in an environment that our Instructors and Responders are likely to find themselves in during a Swiftwater-related call-out in their localities.

Finally, 2023 will see a new Online Instructor Update being deployed by Rescue 3 Europe, which makes up part of the Instructor Recertification process. There are currently three elements to Instructor Recertification:

1. Online Instructor Update
2. In-person Skills Workshop
3. Deliver a course within the 2-year period

The 2021 Online Update proved a big success, providing Instructors a more flexible recertification process which they could fit around their busy schedules. The 2023 Online Update will continue this trend, allowing Instructors & Responders to continue providing much valued Swiftwater and Flood services in their localities.

Manual & People Handling

2023 will see the release of updated versions of both the Manual and People Handling Responder courses. This update was developed in conjunction with Instructors & CDOs in order to provide all stakeholders with a course tailored for the needs of Civil Defence Volunteers on the ground.

One of the main elements of these updates is the addition of the Scenario-based training element. This element includes the development of real-world training scenarios, which Instructors can use in either the initial training of Volunteers in order to practice newly-learned skills in recertification training, to revise on key concepts, or during certification periods in order to refresh skills. These scenarios, created by Instructors, are a great addition to both courses, and allow for our more experienced Instructors to pass on their skills and knowledge to recently certified Instructors new to the area.

These scenarios, developed for both the Manual and People Handling courses, cover a range of core services, and will prepare Volunteers for the types of activities that they'll be involved in during call-outs and events, ensuring both their safety and the safety of the public. This suite of scenarios will be available to Instructors through the Learning Support Platform (LSP), with additional scenarios being developed by both Civil Defence College & Volunteer Instructors throughout the year.



Civil Defence Throughout The Year

Storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklyn (Feb)



Civil Defence Units countrywide were placed on standby for deployment from 16th February on foot of an adverse weather forecast.

On Wednesday 16th February Donegal Civil Defence was activated to deploy sandbags to the Clarendon Drive, New Row and the pier area of Donegal Town. Two 4WD vehicles, two trailers and four volunteer members were deployed. On Saturday 19th February six Donegal volunteers deployed sandbags to Lifford Town. Two 4WD vehicles, one van and two trailers were utilised. On Sunday 20th February AFS and SWI crews responded to flooding in Lifford, following the bursting of river banks. 13 volunteers were deployed, utilising two 4WD vehicles, one van, a communications vehicle and two trailers.

Climb Errigal Together (Apr)

Hundreds of people from the North West scaled Donegal's highest peak on 2nd April for the 'Climb Errigal Together' event.

All proceeds from the challenge were donated to the Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association and Pieta House. The climb in the heart of the Donegal gaeltacht, was one of 150 that had been organised nationally as part of "Climb with Charlie" – an initiative established by former RTE reporter, Charlie Bird, who was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease.

The event was supported by Civil Defence, An Garda Síochána, local bus operators, sports clubs and the Dunlewey Centre.

On the day, Civil Defence provided radio communications, medical cover, and mountain rescue for the climbers, whilst some of the more enthusiastic members along with the Civil Defence Officer, ventured the climb in aid of the cause.



Galway Search & Rescue (June)



On Saturday night 11th June 2022 Galway Civil Defence was activated by Galway Fire and Rescue Service to assist in the search for a missing 90yr old lady in the Glenamaddy area of Co. Galway.

The Galway Drone Crew and Clonberne Civil Defence Unit responded and reported to the An Garda Síochána on site. A number of agencies, including Civil Defence, An Garda Síochána, An Garda Síochána Air Support, Irish Coast Guard Rescue Helicopter R118, Roscommon Fire Service, Galway Search Dogs, National Ambulance Service and members from the local community searched the area until approximately 2am when the lady was located in a drain covered by high vegetation in a field approximately 1km from her home.

Civil Defence members utilising a 4WD Ambulance and Ranger recovered the casualty and treated her for hypothermia and other injuries before handing her over to National Ambulance Paramedics. There was fantastic cooperation during the course of the search between all the agencies and community.



Louth Fire (June)

Volunteers from Louth Civil Defence were activated on Tuesday evening 14th June to assist the Fire Services who were fighting a major fire at a local recycling plant. The Drone Team quickly responded and provided Fire Officers with valuable information and images of the commercial structure involved including aerial thermal imaging - an excellent example of inter-agency cooperation.



Béal na Bláth Centenary Commemoration 2022 (Aug)

Cork West Civil Defence provided medical, communications and drone support for the Commemoration Ceremony of Sunday 21st August in Béal na Bláth, Co Cork.

22 members of Cork West Civil Defence were on duty from 9am to 6pm.



Slieve Bloom Experiment (Sept)



On Tuesday the 13th September in the Slieve Blooms, Laois and Galway Civil Defence contributed to a collaborative project between the Irish Defence Forces, Tyndall National Institute & Trinity College Dublin which seeks to develop a drone radio relay system, to enhance radio communication for personnel operating in challenging environments.

Kilkenny Civil Defence – Assistance to ESB Networks (Oct)



On Tuesday morning, 4th October Kilkenny Civil Defence was tasked to assist ESB Networks who reported power lines down in the Talbotts Inch area of Kilkenny City and along the River Nore. The Boat and Swiftwater Team succeeded in getting the fallen power line into the Boat and across the river to the ESB crew.

Missing Person Search, River Finn, Co Donegal (Nov)



On Tuesday 15th November 2022, the multi-agency search operation, coordinated by An Garda Síochána, was stood down, when the body of a missing person was located by the Civil Defence Kayak Team. Civil Defence were assisted in the multi-agency search by An Garda Síochána, Coastguard Rescue 118 Helicopter and Donegal Mountain Rescue.

12 members of Donegal Civil Defence had supported An Garda Síochána, by conducting an extensive shoreline and river search of the River Finn using their Kayak Unit, Swiftwater Team, Drone Unit with communications support from their incident command unit.

Cork North Civil Defence - Team Hope Shoebox Appeal (Nov)

On Wednesday 16th November Cork North Civil Defence assisted Team Hope with their Christmas Shoe Box project. Civil Defence collected approximately 3,000 shoe boxes from 18 schools around the North Cork area which were kindly made and donated by the children in those schools. Civil Defence delivered the shoe boxes, in a truck provided by Cork City Civil Defence, to the Team Hope warehouse in Ballincollig for distribution.



New Members are always welcome. Enrolment enquiries may be made through your local Civil Defence Officer. Contact details are on our website

www.civildefence.ie