

Óglaigh na hÉireann

The Irish Defence Forces

The Defence Forces are the armed forces of Ireland. They consist of 3 Permanent Defence Forces and a Reserve Defence Force.

The Permanent Forces are:

- The army
- The air corps
- The naval service



The President, Michael D. Higgins, is the **Supreme Commander** of the Defence Forces. Defence Forces officers are commissioned by the President. The Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin, **acts on the President's behalf** and reports to the Government.

The Defence Forces' headquarters are in Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

The Chief of Staff is Lieutenant General Seán Clancy.

The roles of the Permanent Defence Forces are:

- ▶ To defend the State against armed attacks.
- ▶ To assist An Garda Síochána when requested.
- ▶ To participate in peacekeeping missions in support of the United Nations.
- ▶ To provide ceremonial services on behalf of the Government.
- ▶ To contribute to maritime (sea) security, including the delivery of a fishery protection service.

THE PERMANENT DEFENCE FORCES

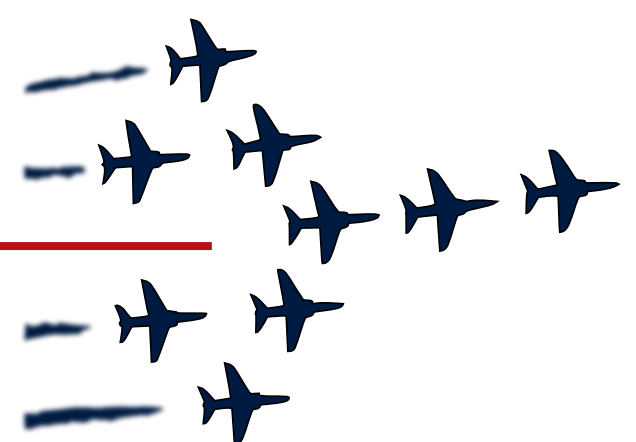
Army

The army is the largest service in the Defence Forces. It organises and trains ground forces and air defence units to carry out all roles assigned by the Government. There are two brigades or subdivisions of the army, one based in Cork and the other in Dublin. There is also a training centre based in the Curragh Camp, Kildare.



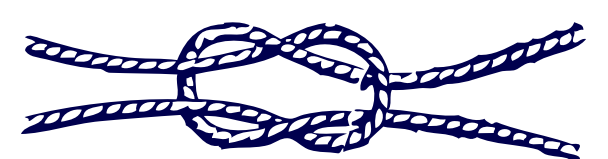
Air Corps

The air corps is the air component of the Defence Forces and is based at Casement Aerodrome, Dublin. It organises and trains airborne command and control units. The primary role of the air corps is to support the army in maintaining the security of the State. It is also responsible for the Ministerial Air Transport Service which provides air transport for the President and Government.



Naval Service

The navy protects the State at and from the sea. It is based on Haulbowline Island in Cork. Among its duties are to defend the State's territorial seas, conduct maritime surveillance and provide a specialist diving team.





Reserve Defence Force

The Reserve Defence Force is a part-time volunteer force. Its primary role is to increase the capacity of the Permanent Defence Force to carry out its roles in crisis situations. In non-crisis situations it trains to carry out this duty. It is made up of 3 services:

- First Line Reserve
- Army Reserve
- Naval Service Reserve

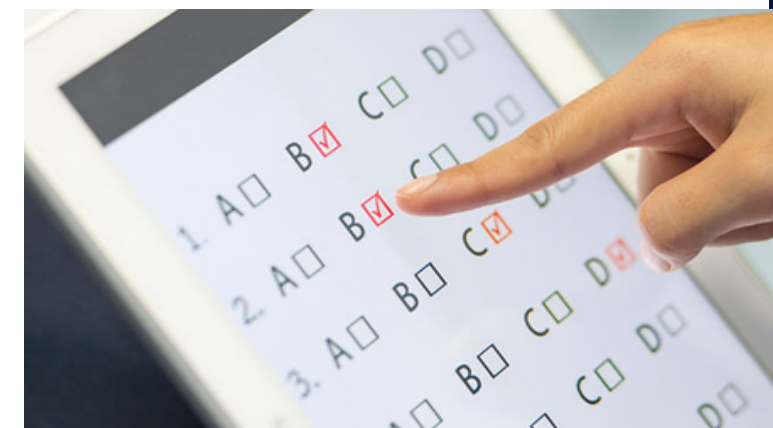


The Reserve Defence Force also provides logistical support, armed escorts and performs ceremonial duties at State events.

THE INDUCTION PROCESS

Psychometric Testing

All applicants who meet the minimum eligibility criteria will be invited to take an online Psychometric Test.



Fitness Testing

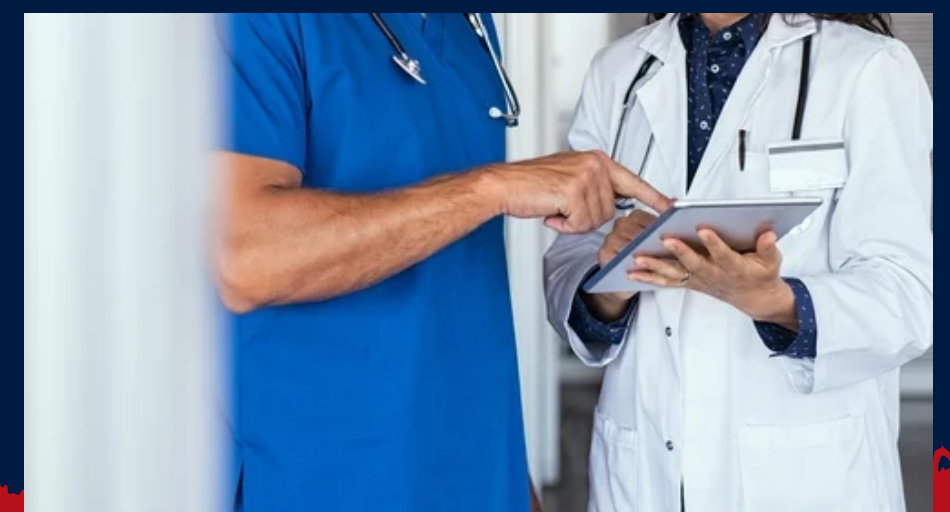
All candidates who are successful at the Psychometric Testing phase will then be invited to attend a Fitness Testing centre, where they will be required to complete the Defence Forces induction fitness test. This is a pass or fail test.



Interview

Candidates who are successful at the Fitness Assessment Centre will be asked to attend an interview which is held on the same day as the Fitness Test. The interview is competency based where candidates will be assessed under the following competencies:

- Ability to work under pressure
- Teamwork
- Motivation
- Career Orientation



Medical and Security Clearance

Candidates who are successful at the Fitness Test and Interview will then be called to attend a full medical examination. In conjunction with this all candidates will be security vetted by An Garda Síochána. Candidates will be required to pass both the medical examination and security vetting to be considered for induction. Candidates must also supply two references as part of the security vetting process.

Recruit Training (17 weeks)

The Recruit Training Syllabus is designed to produce a physically fit, disciplined, and motivated Two Star Infantry soldier with basic military skills. Recruit training is foundation military training. It is seventeen weeks in duration. It is followed by 3 Star training and at a later stage by Trained Soldier Specialist Training courses.

Phase 1: Induction (2 weeks)

This period will include a Defence Force orientation package, adventure training and information/motivational instruction to the recruit. The Induction period seeks to present a positive approach with the promotion of the Defence Forces as a progressive and forward looking organization. The period will also include personnel/logistical administration, some aspects of health and safety education and training, medical intake processing and an introduction to physical educational training. The training format will include both lecture and practical demonstrations.

Phase 2: Introductory Training Period (6 weeks)

Instructional focus will centre on Foot/Arms Drill, Rifle Marksmanship (to include the Recruits Annual Personal Weapons Test), GPMG, and Physical Fitness.



Phase 3: Tactical Training Period (6 weeks)

The main instructional focus during this phase will be tactical training and will culminate with the five day exercise in week 14. This training will focus on imparting to the recruit a thorough knowledge of Section level tactics.



Phase 4 - Final Training Period (3 Weeks)

The emphasis during this phase will be on the final approval of the recruit and preparations for the Passing Out Parade. Recruits who are deemed to have successfully completed the training programme receive their Unit assignment in the last week of the Recruit course.

Who can apply for enlistment into the Defence Forces?

- Irish Citizens
- A Refugee under the Refugee Act 1996
- Nationals of EEA States, i.e. The European Economic Area consists of the member states of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

Requirements

No formal education qualifications are required to join the Defence Forces as a recruit. However, you must satisfy the Interview Board and the Recruiting Officer that you possess a sufficient standard of education for service in the Defence Forces.

The height requirement for all candidates wishing to enlist in the Defence Forces is that they must be a minimum of 157.48cm.



Interview with a member of the Irish Defence Forces

Are there misconceptions out there about the work that the Defence Forces do?

I do think it's important for people to understand what we do. If there are misconceptions, this is mainly due to the fact that most of it is not in the public limelight. And our overseas missions are not as prevalent as they used to be. As a result, there's probably a less than full appreciation of what we do as part of our daily routine – and as part of our ongoing aid for the civil authority and the civil power.

For any young person beginning to think long-term about a career in the Defence Forces, what advice could you give?



While the entry requirements are not too testing for anyone in a good physical state, you can't just presume that you can instantly meet the physical fitness standards, with no prior attention to those issues. But leading a healthy life with regular exercise should get you there. If you have that basic foundation the Defence Forces will build on it, with some robust training – and that fitness will enrich the other parts of your life.

Can you describe your experiences of serving overseas?

It was invaluable to me. As a 25-year-old soldier in, say, Liberia, or in Beirut as the war-torn State was getting back on track, it was an amazing experience to be in the thick of it. But in Chad it was a different type of experience. The role there was as part of a more robust EU mission to ensure that the armed activist militias there were not impacting on the locals.



Remembering Private Seán Rooney.

Private Rooney was killed while serving on United Nations peacekeeping duties in Lebanon.

May He Rest in Peace.

