Annual Report 2020

“Supporting members through knowledge sharing, reflective practice, collaboration and networking.”

ACESA
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE AGENCIES

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Chairperson's Letter



Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present you with the 2020 ACESA Annual Report, for what has truly been an exceptional year for all of us. Little did we know when we met at our AGM in the Radisson Hotel on 11th March 2020, that a year would pass without us meeting in person again.

While the last year has provided many challenges, it is one I believe ACESA can look back at and feel proud. Firstly, because of the vital role played by you and the teams you lead. Across all of our organisations, be they on the frontline in terms of healthcare or supporting education, the arts or our economy, ACESA member agencies have stepped up and shown the value of a strong public service in supporting the common good. You have achieved this through innovation and adapting to the needs of the public you serve. Thank you.

As a network, ACESA has also innovated and adapted to meet the needs of the members we serve. Particularly in terms of how we deliver our events, which are so core to the value of the ACESA network. Not only did we match the number of events of previous years, but we also actually delivered fourteen events in 2020, up from eight the previous year. Among the inspiring speakers we heard from were Dublin Football Manager Dessie Farrell, Assistant Garda Commissioner Paula Hilman and Deborah Somorin, founder of Empowering the Family. Mid way through the year we brought together a fantastic panel of speakers to inspire us to think about the workplace of the future, something that will be a big part of our roles in the coming years.

We held a number of events where we provided an opportunity for members to share their experiences of dealing with the impact of Covid-19, and the learnings from these were particularly useful in our interactions with DPER, including David Cagney, Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service, who featured in two of our briefings in 2020.

Of course, the events we organise mean nothing if we don't have your involvement. Your attendance at our events, the challenging questions you pose and the feedback you give us so we can continue to deliver high quality networking events, even in an online world.

I want to thank my fellow Board members, who gave such commitment to our organisation over the past year. At our AGM in 2020, we endorsed a new strategy for ACESA. Like any strategy, it is the implementation that really matters, and I am so pleased to be able to report that we now have a clear plan, which will provide an enhanced offering to members in the future, including more structured peer support opportunities, a new and improved library of resources in the members' section of the website, and a more diverse offering of briefings and networking events. I want to thank all of our Board members for their increased commitment, and those of you who are now members of our four subgroups, which will assist us in delivering on our strategy.

I look forward to working with three new members of the Board in 2021. Unfortunately, that means we are saying goodbye to three of our colleagues - Ray Dolan, Patricia Gilheaney and Marian O'Sullivan. All three have given incredible service to the ACESA Board and have brought different strengths from which we all benefit. I also want to thank them for their friendship and good humour. Being on the ACESA takes commitment and dedication, but because of the involvement of people such as Ray, Patricia and Marian it is also fun and enjoyable. I will miss their contribution, while safe in the knowledge that we are not saying goodbye, and they remain active members of the network.

Finally, and again, thanks to all of you, our members. Without a strong diverse and active membership ACESA is nothing. I look forward to another successful year, and above all, I look forward to meeting many of you in person some Wednesday morning at Chester Beatty before too long.

Pamela Byrne

ACESA Chairperson

Introduction

ACESA is the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies in Ireland. The Association provides a forum for Chief Executives to discuss issues of mutual concern and enables them to develop and express a collective voice on issues that affect the sector.

ACESA achieves this by hosting briefing sessions on topics of common interest to CEOs, conducting an Annual Survey to learn more about the issues impacting on the work of CEOs and government agencies, and by providing support and an information network for members.

The Core Function & Purpose of ACESA is to:

> Promote, develop and optimise the value of the ACESA network to CEOs by enhancing our approach to knowledge sharing in the pursuit of best practice

> Identify matters of interest to members, providing a forum for joint exploration and shared learning

> Develop considered and evidenced based positions on matters of interest to members

State Agencies carry out a range of work that has a huge impact on Irish citizens. The work of our members is varied, but collectively, our member agencies:

> Protect citizens and consumers

> Uphold fundamental rights

> Provide vital services such as housing, road safety and social care

> Promote and protect culture and heritage

> Protect the environment and promote sustainable practices

> Support Irish business

> Drive Irish research and innovation

> Regulate professions

> Set and maintain standards of excellence

> Promote Ireland abroad

ACESA Governance

ACESA is a company limited by guarantee. The work of ACESA is overseen by an elected Board, the members of which are elected at the ACESA Annual General Meeting.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



PAMELA BYRNE ACESA CHAIRPERSON, FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

Dr Pamela Byrne is the CEO of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) where she is responsible for overall strategic management. Having previously held senior positions in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and Abbott Nutrition, Pam has extensive experience of the food regulatory environment, as well as expertise in risk assessment and food safety management at both national and international levels. Pamela was the Chair of the Management Board of the Joint Programming Initiative A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life for the last 5 years. She is also the Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Institute of Food and Health at University College Dublin, Ireland.



GINNY HANRAHAN ACESA VICE-CHAIRPERSON, CORU

Ginny Hanrahan is the Chief Executive Officer and Registrar of CORU, the Regulator for Social Care Professionals. As Chief Executive Officer and Registrar, Ginny is responsible for leading CORU and for successfully implementing the Health and Social Care Professionals Council's Statement of Strategy for 2017-2021. Ginny works closely with the Council and its relevant committees and provides strategic leadership, direction and governance across all elements of the organisation. Ginny is responsible for working with and co-ordinating the Registration Boards, to ensure protection of the public, through setting the required standards for the professions they regulate as well as supporting effective governance and regulation. Ginny is currently the President of the Council for Licence, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) for international regulators of professions and holds an M.Sc in Executive Leadership.



JOHN MCDAID ACESA TREASURER, LEGAL AID BOARD

John McDaid is the Chief Executive of the Legal Aid Board, the body responsible for the provision of the State's civil legal aid scheme and its family mediation services. The Board is also responsible for the administration of a number of criminal legal aid related schemes. John worked as a solicitor in private legal practice in Australia and Dublin before joining the Board. He worked as a managing solicitor in a number of the Board's law centres before taking up a senior management position. He was appointed Chief Executive in 2014. He holds a Masters of Science in Business Practice from the IMI / UCC.



HILKKA BECKER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Hilkka Becker, a lawyer with over 20 years professional experience specialising in asylum, migration and human rights law, is the Chairperson of the International Protection Appeals Tribunal. She previously served as a part-time Member of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal, was Senior Solicitor at the Immigrant Council of Ireland, Legal Advisor with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), worked in private practice and as Legal Officer with the Irish Refugee Council. Hilkka is a member of the International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges (IARMJ), a member of the Justice and Home Affairs Group and of the Germany Group of the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) and a Fellow of McLaughlin College at York University, Toronto.



ROSALIND CARROLL PERSONAL INJURIES ASSESSMENT BOARD

Rosalind Carroll is the Chief Executive of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board (PIAB), the state body which assesses personal injury compensation. She took up her role in March, 2020, having previously been CEO of the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), the regulatory body for the rental sector. Ms Carroll's experience as a senior executive has included positions at the Housing Agency as Head of Regulation and Head of Housing Services, as well as roles in the Department of the Environment and Dublin City Council, covering housing, regulation and programme management.



RAY DOLAN SAFEFOOD

Ray Dolan is the Chief Executive Officer of Safefood, which promotes food safety and provides nutritional advice in the interests of improved public health. Ray is a qualified accountant and holds a Masters in Public Administration. He is a Board Member of the Institute of Public Administration and a member of the audit committee for the Ulster Scots Agency. Ray has previously held positions with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Controller and Auditor General and the European Space Agency. He has a keen interest in the management of change and corporate governance. Ray has taken part in leadership challenge programmes and has also lectured in management accounting.



JOHN FARRELLY MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

John Farrelly is Chief Executive of The Mental Health Commission, Ireland's mental health service regulator. prior to this he was Ireland's first Charities Regulator and Deputy Chief Inspector of Health and Social Services. Educated at the Royal College of Surgeons, Honorable Society of King's Inns, Harvard, Smurfit Business School, University College Dublin, John's professional goal is to develop efficient/effective organisations which deliver optimum public service through skilled, determined and compassionate people.



PATRICIA GILHEANEY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS

Patricia Gilheaney is Ireland's Chief Inspector of Prisons. The Office of Inspector of Prisons carries out regular inspections of prisons and reports on its findings to the Minister for Justice. Patricia's interest in the protection of human rights stems from her psychiatric and general nursing background. In her previous career, Patricia served as Chief Executive of the Mental Health Commission where she led the development and implementation of the regulatory system for mental health services including the development of the first set of standards for mental health services in Ireland. Patricia was appointed an Adjunct Professor in the School of Law in the University of Limerick in May 2020.



MARIAN O'SULLIVAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Dr Marian O'Sullivan is the Director General of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA). Her role, in working closely with her senior management team and the Board of the IPA, is to provide vision, strategic leadership and management to the IPA. Marian has over 30 years' experience working in the Irish University, Institute of Technology and Public Sector. She has worked in a wide range of senior management, research and lecturing positions. Marian holds a BSc & PhD in Microbiology, an MSc in Executive Leadership and an IoD Diploma in Company Direction.



JIM O'TOOLE BORD IASCAIGH MHARA

Jim O'Toole is Chief Executive Officer of Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency. Jim has a wealth of experience in business development, global food marketing, sustainability development and change leadership. Jim previously was Director of Meat & Livestock and Sustainability Development in Bord Bia. Jim is a Board Member of the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). He holds a Master's Degree in Agricultural Science from University College Dublin and has completed professional development programmes at Harvard Business School, Cranfield University and Ashridge Business School.

2020 AGM

The eighth AGM and Dinner was held on 11th March.

The guest speaker for the AGM was Siobhan O'Shea, Director of Client Services at CPL. Siobhan spoke on the importance of diversity and inclusivity, not just because it is the right thing to do, but she showed how it can impact positively on culture, performance and outcomes.

Members also conducted the formal business of the AGM, including adoption of the annual report and annual accounts, the election of board members, and the adoption of the Vision Statement and Strategic Priorities.

Vision Statement & Strategic Priorities

At the 2020 AGM ACESA endorsed a new Vision Statement and Strategic Priorities. The statement and priorities were agreed after a process involving the Board and wider membership, guided by Peter Ryan of RA Consulting.

Vision Statement

To support members through knowledge sharing, reflective practice, collaboration and networking.

Strategic Priorities

Core Functions & Purpose

> Promote, develop and optimise the value of the ACESA network to CEOs by enhancing our approach to knowledge sharing in the pursuit of best practice
> Identify matters of interest to members, providing a forum for joint exploration and shared learning
> Develop considered and evidenced based positions on matters of interest to members

Briefing Sessions

> Leverage the Network's collective knowledge and experience through mutual networking, information sharing and proactive updates
> Ensure accessibility of: (i) knowledge/information and (ii) membership events by enhancing delivery channels, knowledge repositories and opportunities for networking
> Survey membership to determine areas of particular (niche/ specialist) subject matter interest and develop channels for learning/information sharing

Research Focus & Future Needs

> Develop and agree research agenda which reflects members' priorities, recognises value-for-money and supports CEOs
> Encourage knowledge sharing and collaboration by promoting awareness of ACESA research – both national and international – as well as relevant initiatives being undertaken by member organisations
> Develop: (i) knowledge base of membership queries and (ii) inventory of best practice/ lessons learned across comparable organisations – both Irish and overseas
> Explore interest in establishing peer support or mentoring type arrangements into the future

Projects, Reach, Communications & Future

> Redesign membership survey to reflect ACESA's development while also providing an important channel for communication and feedback
> Prioritise internal communications (on matters of benefit/ interest to members) while recognising the potential value associated with external messaging and profiling of ACESA
> Continue to develop ACESA as a support network and resource for CEOs – promoting same to existing as well as prospective members

Throughout 2020 a subgroup of the Board which included Pamela Byrne, Hilkka Becker, Rosalind Carroll, Ray Dolan and Jim O'Toole devised an implementation plan which will see the strategy become a reality in the coming years.

Board Meetings

The Board of ACESA met on ten occasions in 2020. Like all organisations, ACESA adapted to the Covid reality from March, and seven of the ten Board meetings were held online. Like so many organisations, ACESA moved many of its activities, including Board meetings to an online platform.



Pictured above is a screenshot of an ACESA Board meeting in 2020.

Board Subgroups

Two Board Subgroups were established in 2020:

Vision Statement & Strategic Priorities Implementation

The subgroup members included Pamela Byrne, (Chair of Subgroup), Hilkka Becker, Rosalind Carroll, Ray Dolan and Jim O'Toole. The group devised an implementation plan which will see the statement and priorities become a reality in the coming years.

Membership Survey Subgroup

This subgroup members included: Ginny Hanrahan (Chair of Subgroup), Pamela Byrne, Patricia Gilheaney and Marian O'Sullivan. The group ran a procurement process which selected M.CO to design a new survey. The group also guided M.CO throughout the process.

ACESA Membership

Membership of ACESA is open to chief executives of organisations that fulfill the following criteria.

- The Agency is a public benefit entity that is established by statute or otherwise to perform public functions.
- The Agency derives a large portion of its current revenue from the Exchequer or a Departmental budget.
- The Agency is not an explicitly commercial body involved in the trading or sale of goods and services.
- The Agency has a national remit.
- The Agency is organisationally distinct from its parent Department.
- The Agency has some discretion over personnel and financial resources.
- The Agency has sufficient autonomy over decision-making in its policy field(s) to render it as a distinct entity within the State apparatus.
- The Agency has an expectation of continued existence.

Current Membership

At the end of 2020, ACESA had 94 members. A full membership list can be seen at Appendix 1.

New Members

A number of new members joined us in 2020. In many cases, we have still not had the opportunity to meet them in person. We very much welcome them all, are pleased to have their contributions, and hope to share a coffee and face to face conversation with them before too long.

Our new members in 2020 were:

- Ger Casey, Grangegorman Development Agency
- Andrea Feeney, State Examination Examinations
- Arlene Forster, The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- Aideen Hartney, National Disability Authority
- Aileen Healy, Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission
- Maureen Kennelly, The Arts Council
- Paddy Lavelle, Education and Training Boards Ireland
- Aoife MacEvilly, Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Gina McIntyre, EU Programmes Body
- Orla O'Brien, Irish Blood Transfusion Board
- Francis O'Donnell, Inlands Fisheries Ireland
- Mairead O'Driscoll, Health Research Board
- Rosemary Steen, Design & Crafts Council Ireland
- Sam Waide, Road Safety Authority
- Peter Walsh, Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Mark Wilson, The Probation Service

ACESA Alumni

The Alumni Group now includes 38 former ACESA CEOs. Together they have vast experience over a wide range of public agencies and issues. These former colleagues are an invaluable support to current Association members in various ways. Alumni members attend ACESA Briefing Sessions, continuing their engagement with us. We thank them for their contributions and ongoing support.

A number of former members became part of our Alumni in 2020.

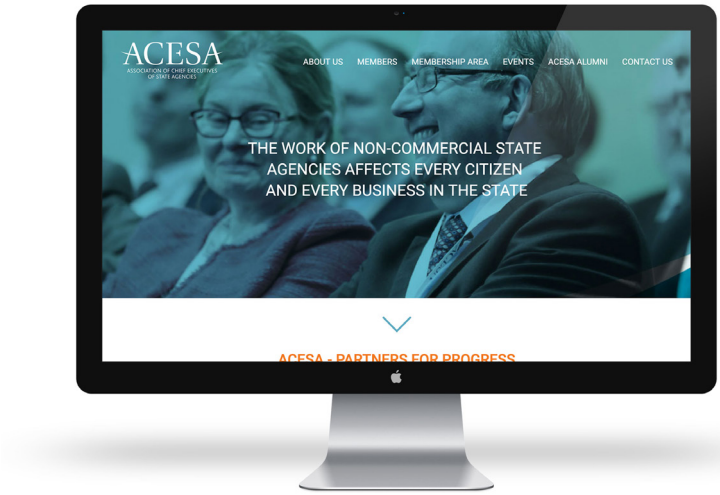
- Ciaran Byrne
- John Hammond
- Paul McGowan
- Michael Nolan
- Mary Elling Ring

ACESA SECRETARIAT

ACESA's day to day work is carried out by Dermot Ryan of Dermot Ryan Advisory. Having worked as a senior adviser to public sector, not for profit and political leaders for many years in both Ireland and Australia, Dermot provides support to the Chairperson; assists in membership development; manages ACESA's finances; manages ACESA events; the ACESA website and carries out Company Secretary functions. Dermot's work with ACESA greatly increased in 2020, and he played a pivotal role in supporting the Board to adapt our offering to members in response to the pandemic.

ACESA Website

The ACESA website www.acesa.ie has a dedicated private section for members only.



The Members Section contains:

- ACESA reports and publications, including Annual Reports and the CEO Guide.
- Reports of ACESA Breakfast briefings, including presentations and documents for downloading.
- Minutes of all ACESA Board meetings.

Information Sharing

Members frequently use the network to share information and seek support from other members.

Throughout 2020, a number of queries were distributed, covering topics such including:

- The impact of COVID-19
- Governance and Compliance
- Strategic planning
- HR Challenges
- IT
- Digital Support

Membership Survey

ACESA redesigned the annual Membership Survey in 2020. The aim of the redesign was to improve how the survey data was captured and to reflect the new ACESA vision and strategic priorities. 73 members took part in the survey, a response rate of 77%.

The new approach split the survey into two components:

> Providing a database of details of members' organisations.

> An annual survey on key strategic issues.

Summary of findings

Membership Database

ACESA has a diverse membership and is continuing to attract members across all sectors. In terms of organisational and management challenge, there is also a wide range. The range of scale can be seen in budgets from under €1million to over €20million, but the majority of members would be over €5million. Similarly most members are managing large numbers of staff, with the majority managing over 50 staff.

Benefits of ACESA membership

Although the members come from diverse organisations, with a range of remits, the majority are highly likely to recommend ACESA membership to other Chief Executives. The main benefits members cite are practical support and sharing best practice with peers. There are also strong networking opportunities, promoting best practice and learning from other's experiences.

Future Directions

ACESA members show most interest in opportunities to learn from experts and each other through classes and meetings. COVID unsurprisingly is one of the biggest challenges facing members for the future. On the other hand, some members see COVID as presenting new opportunities around remote working, technology, collaboration and working with central government. The biggest internal challenges for members are around talent retention and staff management. In terms of opportunities, most members saw a real opportunity from improved technology, increasing Agency collaboration and, for approximately half of members, increased funding.

Leadership skills and support

The majority of members have over three years in their current role, though a significant number are recent appointees. Of those appointed in the last two years, two thirds are first time Chief Executives – indicating potential to share learnings. A key skill identified by almost all members is the ability to provide strategic direction, but the soft skills of communication and relationship building are also important.

Organisational trends

ACESA members have been engaged in a great deal of strategic planning, while also dealing with real time adaption to the COVID crisis. Finding new ways to communicate with the public has been a been a key organisational change as well. On the innovation side, introducing the support systems to allow for better collaboration and communications have been key innovations for two thirds of members. There was a strong willingness to share experiences and lessons learned and a wealth of projects suggested. The sources of funding varies, but most have multiple sources of support and 49% generate some level of own funding. While 74% felt additional funding would help to achieve their organizational goals, the scale of increase on average was around 24%.

Governance

There was a wide variation in levels of autonomy by organisation. The lowest level of autonomy is around staffing - particularly in the dismissal of staff. The area where increased autonomy would be most welcomed is in hiring and promoting staff. Strong progress has been made in introducing the pillars of governance of state bodies.

The full report and a presentation of the findings are available for members to download in the membership section of www.acesa.ie

Changes in staff numbers 2020
Most members had staff increases



- **56%** Increased staff numbers
- **39%** No change
- **5%** Decreased

Issues are impacting on attracting and retaining talent
Attracting and retaining talent is a challenge for members



- **46%** Insufficient renumeration packages
- **43%** Limited promotion opportunities
- **34%** Lack of autonomy in hiring
- **11%** Organisation resources are too stretched causing high turnover

Changes in budget 2020
59% received a budget increase



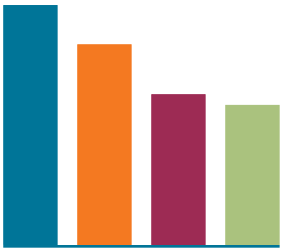
- **59%** Increased
- **35%** No change
- **6%** Decreased

Additional funding
75% of respondents require additional funding



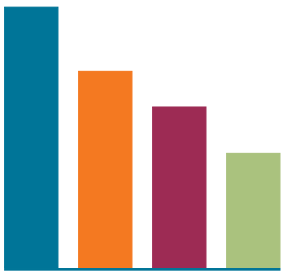
- **48%** require additional funding of 5-25%
- **25%** have adequate funding
- **22%** require additional funding of 30-50%
- **5%** require additional funding of 51-100%

Opportunities to improve service delivery in 2021
Technology and collaboration are key



- **67%** Technological improvements
- **56%** Increased collaboration with other agencies
- **42%** Increased funding
- **39%** Better access to skilled support

Challenges to service delivery in 2021
Two of the top three challenges relate to internal resource issues



- **73%** Ongoing Covid-19 crisis
- **55%** Talent management
- **45%** Under resourced in terms of staffing
- **32%** Brexit

ACESA Events

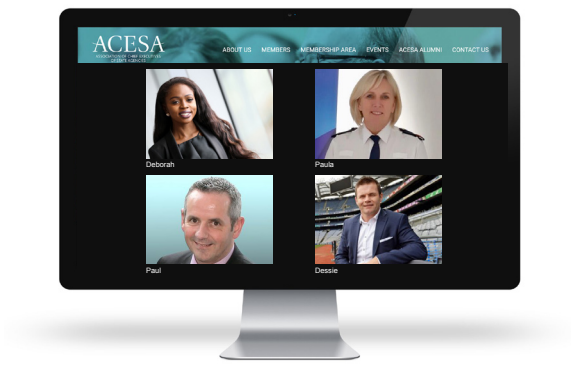
2020 was certainly a different year in terms of ACESA Events. After beginning the year meeting at Chester Beatty, from 11th March, all our events moved to using an online platform. This brought some benefits, in particular greater participation in our events by members based outside of Dublin. In a post Covid world we envisage continuing to allow members to access our events online, but in the form of hybrid sessions.

We thank ACESA member Fionnuala Clarke and her team for the use of their facilities for our in-person events when they were possible, and we look forward to meeting in person at Chester Beatty in the future.

In 2020, fourteen ACESA events were delivered, up from eight the previous year. Five of these sessions were 'Covid Challenges' events, where we facilitated group discussions among our members to share the challenges the pandemic brought and in particular the innovative solutions that many were delivering.

The increased number of events reflects the desire for greater networking and support during Covid times and we can be proud of how ACESA has responded to the unique challenges the past year has brought.

Further notes and copies of presentations are available for members to download in the membership section of www.acesa.ie



This year's speakers included, from top left, Deborah Somorin (Empowering the Family), Paul Reid (HSE), Paula Hilman (Garda Síochána) Dessie Farrell (Compete with Compassion).

1. Shaping ACESA's Future

Member Consultation on ACESA Strategic Priorities

Date: 22nd January 2020

Location: Chester Beatty

Speaker: Peter Ryan, RA Consulting

At our inaugural event in 2020, the Board was joined by Peter Ryan from RA Consulting, to consult members on the ACESA Vision Statement and Strategic Priorities. Members were split into four breakout groups, where they discussed ACESA's futures under four topics: Core Function & Purpose; Briefing Sessions & Events; Research Focus and Future Needs; Projects, Reach & Communications.

The information gathered was shared with members and the Board, and helped to shape the final Vision Statement and Strategic Priorities which were endorsed at the 2020 AGM.

2. Strategic Workforce Planning

Date: 26th February 2020

Location: Chester Beatty

Speaker: Property Registration Authority Team Members and DPER OPS2020 Team

Members of the 'Our Public Service 2020' Team at DPER joined us for this event to learn more about strategic workforce planning. ACESA member Liz Pope and members of her team from the Property Registration Authority presented to the event on their experience. Attendees were then split into breakout groups to discuss their experiences to date, their key challenges in the area, and ideas for how ACESA members can mainstream strategic workforce planning in their agencies.

3. Diversity and Inclusivity in your organisation: Does it really matter? ACESA AGM and Annual Dinner

Date: **11th March 2020**

Location: **Radisson Blu, Dublin 8**

Speaker: **Siobhan O'Shea, CPL**

The 2020 AGM was held just before the country went into its first lockdown, and was for many of us, the last time we gathered in person. The guest speaker for the AGM was Siobhan O'Shea, Director of Client Services at CPL. Siobhan spoke on the importance of diversity and inclusivity, not just because it is the right thing to do, but she showed how it can impact positively on culture, performance and outcomes.

Members also conducted the formal business of the AGM, including adoption of the annual report and annual accounts, the election of board members, and the adoption of the Vision Statement and Strategic Priorities. The event ended with a dinner, the last time ACESA members gathered in person to network.

4. Covid-19: Communications & Engagement with Staff

Date: **8th April 2020**

Location: **Online**

After the announcement of the first lockdown, the Board responded by hosting a session for members where they were supported to share some of the challenges they were grappling with as a result of the pandemic. The event was well received and evolved in the following months to a number of events where smaller groups were facilitated to share challenges and innovations in respect of the pandemic.

5. Challenges and innovations in Covid

Date: **15th April 2020**

Location: **Online**

This was the second in a number of events held in 2020 to provide an opportunity for members to share some of the challenges they were experiencing as a result of the pandemic. Members were dispersed into three separate online meetings to allow for greater participation.

6. Future Business Planning During Covid-19

Date: **22nd April 2020**

Location: **Online**

This event provided an opportunity for members to discuss how to ensure future business planning is prioritised, despite the challenges of the pandemic. Members were dispersed into three separate online meetings to allow for greater participation. A number of issues were explored including: Strategic Planning; Legislative Challenges; Governance; Risk Management; Serving the Public; Recruitment; Budgeting; Supporting Staff; Operations & Logistics.

7. Leadership in Challenging Times

Date: **29th April 2020**

Location: **Online**

Speaker: **Dessie Farrell, Compete with Compassion**

In April ACESA hosted its first Guest Speaker event of 2020, with special guest Dessie Farrell, Dublin Football Manager, and Co-Founder/CEO of the 'Compete with Compassion' organisation. Dessie gave an overview of his career, and in particular his experience leading in times of adversity. He spoke of the three 'C's' - Courage, Compassion and Culture, and the need for all three to be prioritised for successful leadership.

Dessie laid out what he sees as the six principles of a winning culture: Authentic leadership; Clear & compelling purpose; Core values; Standards of Behaviour; United team of 'A' players; Processes & systems. Members were particularly taken with Dessie's call for leaders to 'Run to the Roar' and placing courage central to their game plan.

8. Interpreting the Covid Roadmap

Date: **20th May 2020**

Location: **Online**

At this event, members had an opportunity to reflect on how their organisations and teams were continuing to meet the needs of the public despite the ongoing Covid challenges. Member discussions were facilitated by board members in three groups and issues covered included: Remaining open/Returning to the workplace; HR Challenges/supporting staff; Managing Leave; IT Capacity; Working from Home; Serving the Public; Governance/ Board Issues.

ACESA Events continued

9. Leadership in a Time of Uncertainty

Date: **27th May 2020**
Location: **Online**
Speaker: **Terri Morrissey, This Is**

The guest speaker at the May briefing was Terri Morrissey, current Chair of 'This Is' and a former CEO of the Psychological Society of Ireland. A recognised expert in leadership and coaching, Terri led members through how to remain strong in uncertain times. She discussed the principles of 'VUCA' - Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity, and how these impact on leadership. Terri spoke of the key necessities for coping with uncertainty: Taking Responsibility; A Sense of Purpose; Knowing the Uncontrollable.

10. The Future Work Environment

Panel Discussion

Date: **24th June 2020**
Location: **Online**
Speakers: **Maurice Buckley, OPW; David Cagney, DPER; Patricia Carey, Adoption Authority of Ireland; Simon Claydon, HM Revenue and Customs; Daniel Gerson, OECD**.

In June ACESA hosted this panel discussion, bringing together a panel of speakers including international guests. Given the impact of the pandemic on the work environment, the theme of the discussion proved very popular. The panel, comprised of public sector leaders in Ireland and internationally made initial statements, and then a moderated discussion and Q&A was facilitated by ACESA Chair Pamela Byrne. Key learnings from the event included:

> Leadership is key - how do we make sure CEOs are supported to have those skills?
> Communication is key all the time with your staff, bring them with you
> Flexibility for staff needs to be equitable - staff have different experiences and capacity
> Evidence of improvement in employee engagement
> Data is key - gather your data consistently
> Staff engagement key (including with Trade Unions)
> 3-5-year strategies need to allow for organisations to adapt
> The 3 'F's:

Be forward looking - technology changes happening generally, how can they be integrated to improve delivery of public sectors

Be flexible - most public services designed for different era - need to be more flexible and agile

Fulfil - Recognise the mission of the public service. Opportunities for need to learn and go, our staff are individuals and have different wants and needs

11. The Future Working Environment

Date: **10th July 2020**
Location: **Online**
Speaker: **David Cagney, DPER**

Following his participation on the panel discussion event in June, David Cagney agreed to be our guest speaker for July's briefing. The session served as an opportunity for members to learn more about the government's plan regarding the future working environment for the civil and public services. David addressed many specific questions on topics including working from home policies, building culture when working remotely, and the role of technology in assisting new ways of working.

12. Covid Mid Term Plan (Covid Challenges)

Date: **30th September 2020**
Location: **Online**

This event took the form of smaller groups of member discussions facilitated by ACESA Board members. A number of common themes emerged including: The challenges of moving staff back to an office environment; Addressing COVID fatigue; Managing staff who are working remotely; Positive actions that can help with an organisation's 'culture', and how to ensure Boards are supported.

13. Building Resilience

Date: **4th November 2020**
Location: **Online**
Speaker: **Deborah Somorin, Empowering the Family**

Deborah Somorin was our guest in November 2020. She is the founder of Empowering the Family, which empowers young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed through educational opportunities. Deborah gave an inspiring account of her journey and how she has coped with adversity and now uses her experience to help others faced with the same challenges.

14. Does your leadership style influence culture and deliver purpose?

Date: **25th November 2020**
Location: **Online**
Guest Speaker: **Paula Hilman, Assistant Commissioner, Garda Síochána**

Paula Hilman was the final guest of 2020 at ACESA events. An Assistant Commissioner with An Garda Síochána, Paula recounted her career in the PSNI, and how coming to a new organisation meant huge challenges in terms of adjusting to a new culture. She spoke of the key of always remembering the organisation's key purpose and making sure that your leadership style and culture supported this.

ACESA Finances

The Association's finances are overseen by the Board's Treasurer, John McDaid, and managed day to day by the ACESA Secretariat. A report is prepared and submitted at each Board meeting for approval, ensuring full transparency and accountability in how members' fees are spent. Ronan Leech & Co act as ACESA's Auditors and are happy to answer any queries from members.

DETAILED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT – FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020 €	2019 €
Turnover		
Subscriptions	81,295	79,650
	81,295	79,650
Gross profit	81,295	79,650
Gross profit percentage	100.0%	100.0%
Overheads		
Administrative expenses		
Secretarial fee	35,971	34,185
Events	5,334	10,385
Communications	15,075	4,457
Printing	3,457	9,246
Company secretarial and registration fees	873	873
Training	-	2,049
Stationery	-	305
Telephone	-	270
Auditors remuneration	(1,127)	(1,127)
Bank charges	100	81
	61,937	62,978
Operating profit/(loss)	19,358	16,672
Operating profit/(loss) percentage	23.8%	20.9%
Profit/(loss) before taxation	16,672	16,672

Appendix 1
ACESA Members 2020

Agency	Name	Website
Adoption Authority of Ireland	Patricia Carey	www.aai.gov.ie
An Coimisineir Teanga	Rónán Ó Domhnaill	www.coimisineir.ie
An Comhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta	Muireann Ní Mhóráin	www.cogg.ie
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Jim O'Toole	www.bim.ie
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland	Michael O'Keeffe	www.bai.ie
Charities Regulatory Authority	Helen Martin	www.charitiesregulatoryauthority.ie
Chester Beatty	Fionnuala Croke	www.cbl.ie
Citizens Information Board	Angela Black	www.citizensinformationboard.ie
Commission for Aviation Regulation	Cathy Mannion	www.aviationreg.ie
Commissioner for Communications Regulation	Garrett Blaney	www.comreg.ie
Commissioner for Railway Regulation	Brian Higgisson	www.crr.ie
Commissioner for Regulation of Utilities	Aoife MacEvilly	www.cru.ie
Commissioners of Irish Lights	Yvonne Shields	www.cil.ie
Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	Isolde Goggin	www.tca.ie
CORU	Ginny Hanrahan	www.coru.ie
Design and Crafts Council of Ireland	Rosemary Steen	www.dccoi.ie
Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies	Eucharia Meehan	www.dias.ie
Economic and Social Research Institute	Alan Barrett	www.esri.ie
Education and Training Boards Ireland	Paddy Lavelle	www.etbi.ie
Environmental Protection Agency	Laura Burke	www.epa.ie
Fáilte Ireland	Paul Kelly	www.failteireland.ie
Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman	Ger Deering	www.financialombudsman.ie
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	Pamela Byrne	www.fsai.ie
Forensic Science Ireland	Chris Enright	www.forensicscience.ie
Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission	Aileen Healy	www.gardaombudsman.ie
Grangegorman Development Agency	Ger Casey	www.ggda.ie
Health and Safety Authority	Sharon McGuinness	www.hsa.ie
Health Products Regulatory Authority	Lorraine Nolan	www.hpra.ie
Health Research Board	Mairéad O'Driscoll	www.hrb.ie
Heritage Council	Virginia Teehan	www.heritagecouncil.ie
Higher Education Authority	Alan Wall	www.hea.ie
HIQA	Phelim Quinn	www.hiqa.ie
Housing Agency	John O'Connor	www.housing.ie
Housing Finance Agency	Barry O'Leary	www.hfa.ie
Inland Fisheries Ireland	Francis O'Donnell	www.fisheriesireland.ie
Insolvency Service of Ireland	Michael D McNaughton	www.isi.gov.ie
Institute of Public Administration	Marian O'Sullivan	www.ipa.ie
International Protection Appeals Tribunal	Hilkka Becker	www.protectionappeals.ie
Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority	Kevin Prendergast	www.iaasa.ie
Irish Blood Transfusion Service	Orla O'Brien	www.ibts.ie
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission	Laurence Bond	www.ihrec.ie
Irish Museum of Modern Art	Annie Fletcher	www.imma.ie
Irish Prison Service	Caron McCaffrey	www.irishprisons.ie
Law Reform Commission	Raymond Byrne	www.lawreform.ie
Legal Aid Board	John McDaid	www.legalaidboard.ie
Legal Services Regulatory Authority	Brian Doherty	www.lsra.ie
Local Government Management Agency	Paul Dunne	www.lgma.ie
Marine Institute	Paul Connolly	www.marine.ie

Agency	Name	Website
Mental Health Commission	John J Farrelly	www.mhcirl.ie
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment	Arlene Forster	www.ncca.ie
National Council for Special Education	Teresa Griffin	www.ncse.ie
National Disability Authority	Aideen Hartney	www.nda.ie
National Gallery of Ireland	Sean Rainbird	www.nationalgallery.ie
National Library of Ireland	Sandra Collins	www.nli.ie
National Museum of Ireland	Lynn Scarff	www.museum.ie
National Oil Reserves Agency	Pat Meehan	www.nora.ie
National Shared Services Office	Hilary Murphy-Fagan	www.nsso.gov.ie/home-3
National Standards Authority of Ireland	Geraldine Larkin	www.nsai.ie
National Transport Authority	Anne Graham	www.nationaltransport.ie
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland	Sheila McClelland	www.nmbi.ie
Office of the Inspector of Prisons	Patricia Gilheaney	www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie
Office of the Ombudsman	Elaine Cassidy	www.ombudsman.gov.ie
Office of the Regulator of the National Lottery	Carol Boate	www.rnl.ie
Ordnance Survey Ireland	Colin Bray	www.osi.ie
Personal Injuries Assessment Board	Rosalind Carroll	www.piab.ie
Pobal	Anna Shakespeare	www.pobal.ie
Policing Authority	Helen Hall	www.policingauthority.ie
Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council	Richard Lodge	www.phecit.ie
Private Security Authority	Paul Scallan	www.psa.gov.ie
Property Registration Authority	Liz Pope	www.prai.ie
Property Services Regulatory Authority	Maeve Hogan	www.psr.ie
Public Appointments Service	Shirley Comerford	www.publicjobs.ie
Quality and Qualifications Ireland	Padraig Walsh	www.qqi.ie
Residential Tenancies Board	Vacant	www.prtb.ie
Road Safety Authority	Sam Waide	www.rsa.ie
Safefood	Ray Dolan	www.safefood.net
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	Susan Steele	www.sfpa.ie
Skillnet	Paul Healy	www.skillnetireland.ie
SOLAS	Andrew Brownlee	www.solas.ie
Special EU Programmes Body	Gina McIntyre	www.seupb.eu
State Examinations Commission	Andrea Feeney	www.examinations.ie
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	William Walsh	www.seai.ie
The Arts Council	Maureen Kennelly	www.artscouncil.ie
The Courts Service of Ireland	Angela Denning	www.courts.ie
The Dental Council of Ireland	David O'Flynn	www.dentalcouncil.ie
The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland	Niall Byrne	www.thepsi.ie
The Probation Service	Mark Wilson	www.probation.ie
The State Laboratory	Ita Kinahan	www.statelab.ie
The Teaching Council	Tomás Ó Ruairc	www.teachingcouncil.ie
Tourism Ireland	Niall Gibbons	www.ireland.com
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Peter Walsh	www.tii.ie
Water Safety Ireland	John Leech	ttp://www.iws.ie
Waterways Ireland	John McDonagh	www.waterwaysireland.org
Western Development Commission	Tomás Ó Síocháin	www.wdc.ie

ACESA
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE AGENCIES

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