ACESA

ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE AGENCIES

Annual Report 2022



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Chairperson's Letter



Dear Colleagues

I am delighted to present you with our annual update on the activities of ACESA. This past year has been a busy but productive year for our organisation, with the delivery of our conference – 'Ireland's Public Service: 2030 and Beyond'. This was an opportunity for us to gather, reconnect, and engage on important challenges and opportunities facing us. This was particularly welcome after several years of isolation. 100 members, alumni, and other guests, gathered in Limerick to explore a wide range of topics including the future of work, our shared island, digitalisation, and gaining a deeper understanding of the hopes of our younger citizens. An overview of the conference is contained in this report and also housed on the ACESA website for future reference. The learnings from the conference are already influencing our briefings and events, and it is the intention of the board to make sure that the conference outputs guide its work in future. Make sure you take some time to reflect on the learnings and ideas as you tackle the challenges ahead.

I am delighted that almost 70 of our members participated in our annual survey this year. This gives us rich data to inform our work and our dealings with central government and is an important annual check-in for ACESA. The many comments from members and great satisfaction gained from membership of ACESA is wonderful to read, and a testament to the value that membership provides. It is interesting to read about the changes in challenges being experienced by CEOs, with Brexit and Covid-19 falling down the scale, and talent management rocketing up as one of the great challenges ahead.

Speaking of Covid-19, we thankfully emerged from lockdown and began to meet again in person in 2022, a welcome relief after a few years of only meeting on screens. Our first in person event out of lockdown was our 2022 AGM at Dublin Castle, where our guest speaker was Dr Linda Doyle, Provost of Trinity College Dublin. Linda's topic 'Leadership for a Good Society' was I believe a very apt and thought provoking one. As public sector leaders of Ireland's State Agencies delivering for citizens, striving for 'a good society' is key to what we are all striving for in our various fields.

In July, we were hosted by our former Vice Chair Ginny Hanrahan at CORU offices, for a discussion on how best to face the 'dragon's den' - an Oireachtas committee hearing. Chaired by former TD Derek Nolan, we received great insights from the lively and informative discussion between Josephine Feehily, formerly of the Revenue Commissioners and former Minister Pat Rabbitte.

We returned to our 'home' at Chester Beatty in September. Unfortunately, due to some changes at Chester Beatty, we no longer have that venue available to us. I would like to take this opportunity, to express our gratitude to our ACESA colleagues, Fionnuala Clarke and her team for the warm welcome they gave us over many years. We will miss it but hope to return in the future.

The Board continued to implement our strategy throughout the year. The strategy, devised and agreed by members in 2020 has I believe, helped us to make a greater impact as an organisation. We now have a seat at the table, through the 'Our Public Sector' initiative led by DPER, and many other forums. We have a roadmap to guide us on journey ahead.

As part of the strategy implementation, we dipped our toe into the area of providing access to coaching, and several members are now accessing the Senior Public Service Coaching programme. Our next step as an organisation is to explore a third level partnership to provide 'Executive Leadership' for members. I look forward to seeing what the next board achieve in this important work.

All this work would not be possible without the work of my colleagues on the board and the support we get from Dermot Ryan. Each one of them have given me invaluable support, and I am so grateful to all my fellow board members over the past number of years for your advice and friendship.

This is the last annual report I will present as Chairperson of ACESA, as I will step down from Board membership at the AGM. It has been a great honour to chair this organisation for the last five years, and to work with my fellow board members and the wider membership to advance our strategy so that we can provide this unique forum for learning and engagement for state agency CEOs.

I am proud of the advances we have made, and I look forward to continuing as a member and meeting many of you at our monthly briefings and other events for years to come.

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 was founded in 2011, and since then has grown to a network of 104 CEOs of state agencies, all of which carry out a range of work that has a huge impact on Irish citizens.

The work of our members and their agencies is hugely varied, but collectively they:

> 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

The 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

ACESA achieves this through several activities including:

> **Events & Networking:**
Hosting a wide range of both online and in person events for members. The diverse range of events includes guest speaker events, panel discussions on topics of interest, and 'Action Learning' events where members can share experiences and best practice.

> **Evidence Based Positions:**
ACESA is a voice for State Agency CEOs in relation to the ongoing reform and development of Ireland's public services. Through events, surveys, and other methods, we develop considered and evidenced based positions on matters of interest to members. An Annual Membership Survey allows ACESA to track the unique experiences of CEOs for use in several fora.

> **Sharing Information:**
Through the ACESA website, members have access to a library of information on issues such as HR, flexible working, and research presented at ACESA events by guest speakers.

ACESA operates in line with its Vision and Strategic Priorities, which were adopted by the membership in 2019 and can be viewed on the ACESA website here: https://acesa.ie/acesa-strategic-priorities/

The vision and strategic priorities are constantly monitored by the ACESA Board.

Ireland's Public Service: 2030 and Beyond
ACESA Conference 2022

The October 2022 ACESA Conference saw 100 Public Service Leaders from across the country gather in Limerick to hear from Irish and international experts discuss topics including the climate challenge, our shared island, the economic and social outlook, and how our public service can meet the many challenges it faces.



Our keynote speaker at our October ACESA Conference was Minister Darragh O'Brien TD, photographed here with ACESA Board Member John McDonagh; Ginny Hanrahan, Conference Organising Committee/ACESA Board Member and Pamela Byrne, Chair of ACESA.

Day 1

The first day of the conference was opened by the MC for Day 1, Shane Coleman from Newstalk.

Session 1

Ireland: Towards 2030 and Beyond, The Economic and Social Outlook

Moderated by Shane Coleman

The panel participants were:

> Alan Barrett, Director, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)
> Pamela Byrne representing ACESA/Agencies
> Stephen Kinsella, Professor of Economics, University of Limerick
> Deirdre Mortell, Rethink Ireland

Among the topics covered was the potential vulnerability due to the reliance on foreign direct investment which accounted for 82% of corporation tax receipts in 2020. The full discussion can be viewed here: Session 1 Video

Address from Minister Darragh O'Brien TD

The Conference keynote address was given by Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Minister was introduced by the Conference Organising Committee Chair, Ginny Hanrahan. In his address, Minister O'Brien paid credit to ACESA members and asked them to help unleash the huge potential of the public service for long term gains. You can also view the address at this link: Keynote Address Minister O'Brien

Session 2

The Public Service: Rising to the Challenges, delivering for the public through digital solutions

Moderated by Garrett Blaney of ComReg

The panel participants were:

> Victor Dominello MP, New South Wales Australia Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government
> Yuliya Garyacha, former advisor to the Ukrainian government and Digital Strategist at McCann Fitzgerald
> Anna Shakespeare, CEO, Pobal
> Ben Welby, Policy Analyst, Digital Government & Open Data, Organisation for Economic Co-operation, and Development (OECD)

The Minister from Australia, joining the discussion virtually from Sydney, spoke of the huge transformation in terms of digital delivery in his State. There was a particular welcome for Yuliya Garyacha, a former advisor to the Ukrainian government, whose sobering address proved how even in the most unimaginable of times, digital delivery can be so empowering for citizens. You can view a recording of this discussion here: Session 3 Video

Ireland's Public Service: 2030 and Beyond
ACESA Conference 2022 Continued

Session 3
The Climate Challenge and the role for Ireland's Public Service
Moderated by Laura Burke of the Environmental Protection Agency

The panel participants were:
> Tom Arnold, Irish Government Special Envoy for Food Systems
> Anne Graham, CEO, National Transport Authority
> Paddy Hayes, Chief Executive, ESB
> Aisling Maloney, Climate Activist
> Elaine Nevin, National Director, ECO-UNESCO

The discussion covered a 'global to local' approach, with practical tips on what agencies can do and how government and business ultimately must take a big picture view to solutions. Aisling Maloney provided a youth perspective, pointing out that to get to the conference in Limerick from Roscrea would have taken her hours. The full discussion can be viewed here: Recording of Climate Panel Discussion

Session 4. After dinner address
Former Senator and broadcaster Marie Louise O'Donnell delivered an entertaining yet thoughtful after dinner address on the Thursday night of conference.

Peppered with funny anecdotes, she also had a serious message about the importance of public service, and how the care and attention of individual public servants does not go unnoticed. This care and attention needs to be a collective endeavour.

Day 2
Hilkka Becker took up the task of MCing for Day 2, and seamlessly brought all the discussions together.

Session 5
The Workplace of the Future
Moderated by Rosalind Carroll of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board

The panel participants were:
> Shirley Comerford, Assistant Secretary of the Public Service Workforce Division
> Marien den Boer, Coordinator of the Netherlands' Hybrid Working Programme
> Michael Maness, Co-Founder, Subculture Systems
> Hilary Murphy Fagan, National Shared Services Office

This has of course been an issue which has exercised so many of our members since Covid, but the panellists urged the audience to take a much longer and strategic view of the topic, with an emphasis on overall culture, not just the physical challenges. The video of this session can be viewed here: Session 5 Video



The 2022 ACESA Conference, Ireland's Public Service: 2030 and Beyond was attended by public sector leaders from across Ireland. All the conference sessions were filmed and can be viewed in the Membership Area in the ACESA website.

Ireland's Public Service: 2030 and Beyond
ACESA Conference 2022 Continued

Session 6
Freshly Ground Theatre and the National Youth Council of Ireland

Throughout the conference, we were joined by a group of young citizens who are part of Freshly Ground Theatre in Tallaght. In association with the National Youth Council of Ireland, they observed the conference sessions and provided a response through a mixture of creative expression and panel discussion.

In an at times funny presentation, they pulled no punches about the challenges they see in terms of the climate, housing, and other issues, and put it up to ACESA members to ensure there is meaningful engagement with young people in the future. A recording of their contribution can be viewed here: Session 6 Video

Session 7
Public service cooperation on a Shared Island
Moderated by John Farrelly of the Mental Health Commission

The panel participants were:
> John McDonagh, Waterways Ireland
> Gina McIntyre, Chief Executive, Special EU Programmes Body
> Aingeal O'Donoghue, Shared Island Unit, Department of An Taoiseach
> Sir David Sterling, Chairperson, Chief Executives Forum Northern Ireland

The complexities and possibilities of delivering services across the island, particularly since the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union were discussed in this session. A full recording can be viewed here: Session 7 Video

Final session
Public service cooperation on a Shared Island
Moderated by ACESA Chair Pamela Byrne

To end conference, ACESA Chair Pamela Byrne moderated a discussion with ACESA Alumni.

The panel participants were:
> Maurice Buckley
> Deborah Somorin
> Ruth Graham

Deborah, who heads up the organisation 'Empower the Family', reflected on the importance of strong public services to support people to realise their potential, particularly those with challenges, including those from migrant communities. A recording of the discussion can be viewed here: Final Session Video

Conference Interaction

The slido tool was used during the conference to increase interaction and allow attendees to join the conversation. Details of the poll and other results can be found here: Conference interaction

The conference website remains live and can be visited here: ACESA Conference Website

All the sessions can be viewed online here: ACESA Conference videos



Visual artist, Ruth Graham, captured learnings from conference in a visual graphic note.



There was a high level of interaction with conference attendees, including the use of tools such as slido.

ACESA Events

Events remain the primary offering of the organisation, and in 2022 ACESA delivered several in person and virtual events. We were particularly delighted to be back at Chester Beatty once again, and we thank Fionnuala Clarke and her team for the warm welcome. Eight key events were delivered in 2022. This was significantly less than 2021, a deliberate decision to ensure ACESA efforts and resources were targeted towards the October conference, and to reflect the welcome return to attending events in person.

Events formats included:

> Guest Speaker events

These events have been a feature of ACESA since our foundation, and generally take place on the last Wednesday of the month.

> Panel Discussions

We hosted two panel discussions in 2021, bringing together a variety of views on a particular topic in a moderated discussion.

> Best Practice Events

At these events, members from within the network share projects and experiences which other members can learn from and use in their own agency.

> Action Learning Events

In these events, members can share experiences and solutions of particular challenges in facilitating breakout sessions.

Guest Speaker, Panel Discussions, and Best Practice events generally take the form of a presentation from our guest(s); followed by a moderated Q&A and discussion. Our 2022 events were moderated by ACESA Chair Pamela Byrne, Rosalind Carroll, and Ginny Hanrahan.

Pre-Event Networking

This initiative was introduced in 2021 to try and replicate our pre-event breakfast at Chester Beatty. Members are invited to log on to our events 15 minutes in advance of the event proper and are allocated randomly to breakout rooms where they can network informally with other attendees. Although not quite the same as the in-person coffee, members have given positive feedback for the initiative.

Evaluations

All registered attendees are invited to complete a very short evaluation of each event. Throughout 2022 members indicated a very high level of satisfaction for our events, and members also gave very useful feedback which is used to improve future events, which was considered by the Briefing & Events Subgroup.

All ACESA events are held in line with the Chatham House Rule.



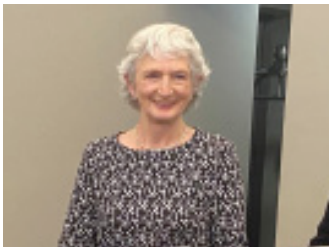
Former Minister Pat Rabbitte, Josephine Feehily, Pamela Byrne and Derek Nolan at the ACESA Event 'Into the Dragon's Den', which took place at CORU offices in July 2022.



Patricia Carey, Niall Cussen, Ginny Hanrahan and John Farrelly at an ACESA Event.

ACESA Events Continued







1. Resilience I'm a State Agency CEO, Get Me Out of Here

Date: **26th January**
Speaker: **Rosemary Keogh, CEO, Irish Wheelchair Association (Online Event)**

Our first Breakfast Briefing for 2022 featured guest speaker, Rosemary Keogh, MSc, CEO of the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) and Chair of the National Disability Services Association. Rosemary shared her research in CEO Resilience, and the importance of leaders seeing their own well-being as key not just to their own personal growth, but to the success of the organisation they lead.

As part of a Masters in Work & Organisational Behaviour, Rosemary completed a qualitative research study on the well-being of Irish CEOs that work with non-exec boards, and the factors that influence that. The study, based on interviews with CEOs across medium to large organisations in the not-for-profit sector, sheds light on the well-being effects of working with non-exec boards; crisis management (financial, reputational, sectoral, and of course Covid-19); and the loneliness of life as a CEO.

The session including the moderated Q&A provided valuable and thought-provoking insights on CEO motivation, attitudes to vulnerability and how – or if – CEOs cope with stress and mitigate against burnout. Rosemary shared some thoughts and tips on how we can all be better at looking after our own well-being.

2. ACESA Members & DPER: Working in Partnership for the Public Good

Date: **16th February**
Speaker: **David Moloney, Secretary General, DPER. (Online)**

David Moloney spoke to members about his experience in the civil service and his views on the need for reform in the public sector. During the event, he drew on his experience as a public servant from the Department of Health to his tenure as Secretary General at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

- Several key issues in the public sector that need to be addressed in the future such as the public's trust in government and how best to serve changing demographics.
- He emphasised strategic planning capabilities in the public sector, the need for collaborative working and co-creation in public management and evaluation.
- The importance of partnership, working with the public and service users to create trust and legitimacy in services.
- The plans for civil service renewal in 2020 and the progress being made on diversity, equality, and inclusion, one of the greatest challenges facing the public sector.
- Digitalisation of the civil service and its emphasis on innovation and efficiency. He also spoke about the role of the public sector in tackling climate change with the creation of new carbon budgets.

3. Leadership for a Good Society

Date: **9th March**
Speaker: **Professor Linda Doyle, Provost & President, Trinity College Dublin (Also the 2022 AGM).**

The 2022 AGM represented the first in person event for ACESA since the 2020 AGM. Almost 50 ACESA members and Alumni gathered at Dublin Castle to hear guest speaker Professor Linda Doyle, Provost & President, Trinity College Dublin. Linda gave a very inspiring and thoughtful address on the topic of 'Leadership for a Good Society'. A full report can be read on page 11 of this annual report.

ACESA Events Continued

4. Achieving Impact in Public Service

Date: 30th April

Speaker: Sylda Langford

Sylda Langford spoke about her background and training in social policy and social work which led her to the civil service, and shared her experiences with members. Among the points she raised were:

- As a policymaker and legislator working in parallel with the political system, Sylda emphasised better relationships and cooperation across government departments.
- Public sector leaders must be professionals, generalists, and researchers with regards to parliamentary questions.
- Trust is key for effectiveness in the civil service. Work should be delegated, and cooperation should be forthcoming - Departments should be constructive with DPER.
- Sylda shared what she believed are the key features of good leaders: motivation, vision, resources, and an action plan.

5. The Diversity & Inclusion Agenda: Why Public Sector Leaders should care

Date: 27th April

Speaker: Margot Slattery, Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion, ISS World Services. (Online Event)

Margot addressed members on the subject of "The Diversity & Inclusion Agenda: Why Public Sector Leaders should care". Margot began her presentation with the definitions of diversity and inclusion. She discussed:

- Diversity;
- Equity;
- Equality;
- Inclusion;
- Belonging; and
- How best to implement these goals in organisations across the public sector.

Margot spoke about her own experience and industry knowledge at ISS and the business case for diversity and inclusion and their economic benefits. She highlighted the crucial reasons behind the inclusion agenda and the 'why' behind diversity. She mentioned the risks of bias, the challenge of their prevalence in everyday life and how to overcome the challenge of bias. Margot concluded her address with a comprehensive overview of the dimensions of diversity and inclusion and the concrete steps members can take with a view to achieving these goals. Members were keen to hear more about how to best achieve change and make progress on the diversity and inclusion agenda. Questions were asked about how to avoid 'box ticking exercises' and the need for inclusive language in public sector organisations.

6. Into the Dragon's Den: Making an Oireachtas Committee Appearance

Date: 13th July

Panel Moderator: Derek Nolan, Head of Public Policy, Airbnb

This in person evening event took place on 13th July at CORU offices, where members were kindly hosted by Ginny Hanrahan and her team. In a panel discussion moderated by Derek Nolan, former TD and current Head of Public Policy with Airbnb, Josephine Feehily, formerly of the Revenue Commissioners, and former Minister Pat Rabbitte shared their tips for success in a lively discussion. A lively and informative discussion took place, with topics such as how to prepare, the need (or not!) for reform, and the need to focus on the main KPI – Don't make the headlines from your appearance!

7. Future of ACESA Events. Chester Beatty

Date: 7th September

Speaker: Alistair Hodgett, Polwarth Strategy

At this event in Chester Beatty, Alistair Hodgett of Polwarth Strategy guided attendees through several questions regarding the future of ACESA events, including the mix of online, in person and hybrid, themes, event formats and other topics. The outcome of the session is being used by the Briefing & Events Subgroup to guide ACESA events in future. A copy of Alistair Hodgett's report can be downloaded here: ACESA facilitation report 7th September 2022 Details of Events, including past events and associated documents, a calendar of future planned events can be accessed on the ACESA Website here: ACESA Events

8. Climate Leadership through Energy Efficiency: The Leadership Role for State Agency CEOs

Date: 27th April

Speaker: Declan Meally, Director of Business, Public and Transport Sectors, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

Declan Meally, Director of Business, Public and Transport Sectors, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland presented to ACESA members and Alumni on the important role that state agencies play/can play in terms of the climate challenge, with a particular focus on energy efficiency. While giving some very practical tips on how members can reduce their energy use today, Declan also outlined the significant challenges that lay ahead in the coming years, and the importance of government taking a strategic approach to innovative solutions long term. ACESA Vice Chair Rosalind Carroll moderated a Q&A discussion. A copy of Declan's presenatation can be downloaded here: Declan Meally Presentation.

ACESA AGM & EGM

The 2022 AGM represented the first in person event for ACESA since the 2020 AGM. It was held on March 9th in Bedford Hall, Dublin Castle. Almost 50 ACESA members and Alumni gathered at Dublin Castle to hear guest speaker Professor Linda Doyle, Provost & President, Trinity College Dublin. The formal business including the adoption of our annual report and accounts, and confirmation of new board members followed.

On the same evening, an EGM was held to vote on a proposed amended Constitution (Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association – "Memo and Articles of Association").

The proposed memo and arts were amended by the Membership Subgroup of ACESA, which was established to examine ACESA's membership structure. The subgroup took the view that the memo and arts need to be updated, and as such, proposed an amended Memo and Arts for adoption at the EGM.

The main changes proposed included:

1. Changes to the criteria of what constitutes a Chief Executive, to make sure that we do not exclude suitable potential members with other position titles.
2. Changes to the criteria of what constitutes a member agency, so as not to exclude commercial state agencies.
3. Clarity of who can qualify for 'Alumni' membership. This is an area which has evolved organically, and subgroup members recommended that clarity be brought to who qualifies and what the status of their membership should be.
4. The removal of several clauses that would have permitted the Board to take significant decisions such as the purchase of property, without referring to the wider membership.
5. The document was not gender neutral and was updated to correct this.
6. There was a reference to 'charitable' that suggested ACESA is a charity, which it is not. This reference was deleted.
7. Several minor edits to bring the ACESA Memo and Articles of Association into line with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

ACESA
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE AGENCIES

The EGM unanimously adopted the new Memo and Arts, which can be read here: Memo and Arts.

After the event, members enjoyed a dinner at the Hyatt Centric Hotel in The Coombe.

Leadership for a Good Society

The following is taken from the address to the 2022 ACESA AGM by Guest Speaker Professor Linda Doyle, Provost & President, Trinity College Dublin. 9th March, Bedford Hall, Dublin Castle, Dublin 2.

As someone who has worked in a public service setting for most of my adult life, I am hugely passionate about the need for good leadership in our public service, and therefore was so thrilled to be asked to address the ACESA AGM at Dublin Castle recently.

I believe we need to be very clear on what we mean when we talk about good leadership as it is not an end in itself. For me, it is about how we achieve a good society. For me, leadership is about service rather than power. It is about building trust and growing relationships. It is about empowering people. It is about transparent decision-making. It is about including diverse voices to make good decisions. It is about taking responsibility.

And, within that, it is my ambition to ensure that Trinity College Dublin remains a 'good university', so that we can contribute to creating a 'good society'.

To be a good university, we need to look beyond KPIs such as university rankings and financial earnings. Borrowing from 'The Good University' by Raewyn Connell, I want to lead a university that is democratic, engaged, truthful, and creative.

> **Democratic**
This does not simply mean that people should have a voice, but that they are fully empowered to express that voice.

> **Engaged**
Engagement must be real and never a tick-box exercise. To really engage we must challenge in a positive way and I want Trinity to be a challenging experience for both staff and students.

> **Truthful**
This is all about honesty and transparency, so that we can build relationships based on trust, including the courage to disagree respectfully.

> **Creative**
We have enormous creativity in Trinity, and I want to be part of an environment where all this creativity can be unleashed for good.

Added to these are sustainability and diversity:

> **Sustainable**
This is broader than environmental concerns and includes social and economic sustainability. It also includes financial sustainability, and this is a particular challenge for Trinity.

> **Diverse**
It is vital that we have a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations etc., but not just because people from these backgrounds have the right to be part of the Trinity story, but because Trinity and Ireland will benefit from their inclusion.

I am passionate about leading Trinity in the coming years with these values central to our mission. I am hopeful that ACESA members, as public service leaders, will also consider these values and make them central to their organisations and their work on behalf of the public good. I very much look forward to partnering with you on this journey.

The formal business of the AGM, including the adoption of our annual report and accounts, and confirmation of new board members followed.



Professor Linda Doyle, Provost & President, Trinity College Dublin

ACESA Governance

ACESA is a company limited by Guarantee, and our work is overseen by an elected Board, which is elected at the Annual General Meeting. In 2022, the Board undertook a day of governance training to ensure Board members are clear on their responsibilities, and to look at Board procedures to make sure they meet desired standards of transparency and accountability. The Board of ACESA guided the work of the organisation throughout 2022, meeting 11 times.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



PAMELA BYRNE FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND (ACESA CHAIRPERSON)

Dr Pamela Byrne is Chief Executive Officer of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland since 2015. She holds a PhD in Environmental Toxicology from University College Cork (UCC); an MSc in Aquatic Resource Management from Kings College, University of London; a BSc in Zoology from UCC and a Higher Diploma in Environmental Law from the University of Aberystwyth in Wales. She is an Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Food and Health in University College Dublin and holds an Executive Certificate in Public Leadership from Harvard Kennedy School of Executive Education and a certificate in Public Policy Analysis from the London School of Economics.

Dr Byrne was appointed Chief Executive of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in March 2015. Prior to this, she held the role of Director of Regulatory Policy and Intelligence with Abbott Nutrition. Having previously held senior positions in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, she 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.

Dr Byrne is Board Chair of the Irish Management Institute; Vice Chair of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority; and the Chair of the Governing Committee of the Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre (APC) in University College Cork.



ROSALIND CARROLL: PERSONAL INJURIES ASSESSMENT BOARD (VICE-CHAIRPERSON)

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.



JIM O'TOOLE – BORD BIA/BORD IASCAIGH MHARA (ACESA TREASURER)

Jim O'Toole is Chief Executive Officer of Bord Bia, the agency responsible for the promotion, trade development, and marketing of Irish food, drink, and horticulture in Ireland and globally. He was appointed to the role in November 2022 having previously served as CEO of Bord Iascaigh Mhara (April 2017 – October 2022). Jim has a wealth of experience in business development, global food marketing, sustainability development, and change leadership. He 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.

ACESA Governance continued



HILKKA BECKER - INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPEALS TRIBUNAL

Hilkka Becker, a lawyer with over 25 years professional experience specialising in asylum, migration, and human rights law, is the Chairperson of the International Protection Appeals Tribunal, ensuring that the functions of the Tribunal are performed efficiently, and that the business assigned to each member is disposed of as expeditiously as may be consistent with fairness and natural justice. Hilkka 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); she is also a member of EU and International Law Committee of the Law Society of Ireland, the Justice and Home Affairs Group, the Germany Group of the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) and she is a Fellow of McLaughlin College at York University, Toronto.



PATRICIA CAREY: ADOPTION AUTHORITY OF IRELAND (BOARD MEMBER UNTIL DECEMBER 2022)

Patricia Carey was elected to the Board of ACESA at our 2022 AGM, when she was serving as CEO of the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI). She stepped down from the role in December 2022 and as she was no longer a full member of ACESA from that date, her membership of the Board automatically ceased. Patricia has considerable previous experience in the non-profit sector, having worked in various support and education settings with the Traveller Community and as the Director of Services for the Society of St Vincent de Paul for 13 years. She is on the Boards of Caranua, the state's redress scheme for survivors of institutional abuse, and BelongTo, the national organisation supporting LGBTI+ young people in Ireland. She holds a BA and H Dip from NUI Maynooth and postgraduate qualifications from the Irish Management Institute and the Institute of Public Administration. The Board and ACESA membership thank Patricia for her service and look forward to her continued involvement in ACESA as a member of our Alumni network.



BRIAN DOHERTY- LEGAL SERVICE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Brian Doherty is the Chief Executive Officer of the Legal Services Regulatory Authority, the body charged with the regulation of legal professionals in the State and the maintenance and improvement of standards of legal services. A former barrister he was called to the Bar in Northern Ireland in 1996 and initially practiced in Belfast. He joined the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland when it was set up in 2000 as one of the first civilian investigators, working on allegations of misconduct against the then RUC, later the PSNI. In 2007 he moved to the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission as a Senior Investigating Officer, later progressing to Acting Deputy Director of Investigations. He returned to the Police Ombudsman of Northern Ireland in 2014 to run the Current Investigations Directorate. Brian took up post as the CEO of the LSRA in September 2017. Brian holds a Masters in Criminology and Criminal Justice Management from Queens University Belfast and a Doctorate in Criminology from the University of Portsmouth.



JOHN FARRELLY - MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION & DECISION SUPPORT SERVICE

John Farrelly is Chief Executive of The Mental Health Commission, Ireland's mental health service regulator which in 2023 will commence the Decision Support Service pursuant to the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act. John previously occupied the positions of Charities Regulator and Deputy Chief Inspector of Health and Social Services. Educated at the Royal College of Surgeons, Honourable Society of King's Inns, Harvard, Smurfit Business School, University College Dublin, John is currently completing a Doctorate in Governance at the IPA. John's professional goal is to develop efficient/effective organisations which deliver optimum public service through skilled, determined, and compassionate people.



HELEN HALL – POLICING AUTHORITY

Helen Hall is the Chief Executive of the Policing Authority, the body which oversees the performance of the Garda Síochána in delivering policing services to the public. She has over 30 years of experience in oversight and audit roles - including with Price Waterhouse Coopers in Dublin; the United Nations, and the World Bank in Malawi; as a partner with Deloitte Southern Africa; and with the UN World Food Programme in Rome. In 2006 she joined the team setting up the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority, the body responsible for oversight of the accounting and auditing profession and became its Chief Executive in 2012. She is a Chartered Accountant and holds an MA in Criminology.

ACESA Governance continued



GINNY HANRAHAN - CORU

Ginny Hanrahan is the inaugural CEO/Registrar of CORU - the regulator for Health and Social Care Professionals since 2008. CORU currently regulates 25,000 professionals from 12 professions, including social workers, physiotherapists, and optometrists and are working with 5 other professions towards regulation including social care worker, psychologists, counsellors, and psychotherapists. Ginny previously worked in health and social care services, acute hospital, community, and mental health with her last role as Head of Clinical Services in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin. She previously worked as an Occupational Therapist in Ireland, UK, and Australia. She is past president of CLEAR - Council for Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation for international professional regulators. She holds a Masters in Executive Leadership (UU) and in Community Health (TCD).



JOHN MCDONAGH – WATERWAYS IRELAND

John McDonagh is Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland having joined the organisation in 2019. Waterways Ireland is one of six North-South Implementation Bodies, established under the British-Irish Agreement Act of 1999. It is the cross-border navigational authority responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of 1,200 km of inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes. Waterways Ireland creates social, economic, and environmental well-being value of €600m annually. Since taking up this position, John has concentrated on addressing the key strategic challenges of the organisation including leadership and organisational capacity gaps; strengthening organisational governance, risk, and controls; and focusing on the development of a strategic 10 Year Long Term Plan. Prior to his appointment in Waterways Ireland, John spent much of his career in senior roles such as Retail Director and Country Manager in Shell Ireland. More latterly, John was Sales and Marketing Director with Liberty Insurance where he was responsible for the award-winning brand launch in Ireland. Throughout his long career John has also consulted across multiple sectors. John is an English & History graduate from UCD, and he holds a master's degree in finance.

ACESA SUBGROUPS

Several ACESA members and Alumni also sit on subgroups, to assist with the implementation of ACESA's strategy. Each Subgroup is chaired by a Board member, who both chairs the group and reports back to the Board. We thank Subgroup members for their commitment in deliver for ACESA members.

THE CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBGROUPS IS AS FOLLOWS:

Briefing & Events Subgroup
Garrett Blaney, Brian Doherty, Helen Hall, (Subgroup Chair), Marian O'Sullivan, Anna Shakespeare.

Conference Subgroup
Patricia Carey, Ger Casey, Patricia Gilheaney, Anne Graham, Ginny Hanrahan (Subgroup Chair).

Membership Subgroup
John Farrelly (Subgroup Chair), Rónán Ó Domhnaill, Mairéad O'Driscoll, Jim O'Toole, Liz Pope, Kevin Prendergast.

Peer Support & Coaching Subgroup
Pat Bennett, Patricia Byron, Hilkka Becker, Rosalind Carroll (Subgroup Chair), Helen Martin.

ACESA EXECUTIVE SERVICES

The work of the Board and subgroups is supported by Dermot Ryan, who provides executive services to ACESA. Dermot has provided services to ACESA since 2019 and has developed the offering to assist us in providing a greater range of support to members. A public affairs practitioner for over 25 years, Dermot has a background in working for senior leaders in politics, public sector organisations, and not for profits.

ACESA Finances

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022 €	2021 €
Turnover		
Membership fees	106,445	88,016
Operating expenses		
Executive service fee	(100,737)	(59,892)
Printing, postage and stationery	(3,880)	(492)
Advertising	(2,399)	-
Training fees	1,000	-
Conferences and Events	(56,551)	-
Legal and professional	(1,538)	-
Consultancy fees	(6,012)	(13,504)
Auditors remuneration	(3,493)	(2,337)
Bank charges	(102)	(72)
Total operating expenses	(175,712)	(76,297)
(Deficit)/Surplus	(69,267)	11,719

ACESA Membership

Membership is open to all CEO and CEO equivalent of Irish State Agencies. We welcomed several new members in 2021 and said goodbye to many of our friends. Those who do depart are of course welcomed to remain connected as part of our Alumni network.

New members in 2022 included:

- Helen Brophy, Institute of Public Administration
- Anne Marie Caulfield, Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland
- Suzanne Costello, Institute of Public Health
- Ciairín de Buis, The Parole Board
- Angela Fitzgerald, HIQA
- Phil Fox, The Teaching Council
- Paschal Hayes, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority
- Mark Kelly, Office of the Inspector of Prisons
- Joanne Kissane, The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
- Barbara O'Leary, The State Laboratory
- Una May, Sport Ireland
- Joanne Walsh, Water Safety Ireland

Several ACESA members retired or moved on to new roles in 2022 including:

- Sandra Collins, National Library
- Shirley Comerford, Public Appointments Commission
- Ray Dolan, Safefood
- Patricia Gilheaney, Office of the Inspector of Prisons
- Isolde Goggin, The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
- Ita Kinahan, The State Laboratory
- John Leech, Water Safety Ireland
- Marian O'Sullivan, Institute of Public Administration
- Sharon McGuinness, Health and Safety Authority

Engaging with Government

ACESA engages with central government in several ways, beyond the day-to-day engagements members have in their role as CEO. This allows for an exchange of information and learning to support innovation and better delivery of public services.

ACESA is a member of the 'Our Public Service' Public Service Management Group and is also a member of the Board of the Institute of Public Administration.

In 2022, ACESA also made a formal submission to the Independent Review Panel established to review. Senior Public Service Recruitment and Pay Processes. The ACESA submission can be read here: ACESA Submission

ACESA also engaged with colleagues in DPER during 2022 on how to strengthen engagement through the Senior Public Service Initiative.



The Minister Darragh O'Brien TD and ACESA Chair Pamela Byrne

ACESA Communications

Three editions of 'ACESA News' were published in 2022. Highlights across the year included: Guest Articles: In 2022 these were penned by Professor Linda Doyle, Provost of Trinity College Dublin, Marianne Cassidy, DPER, and Minister Darragh O'Brien TD.

The newsletter also features updates on ACESA events, news from member agencies and the Member Focus section which allows us to get to know each other in more detail.

The 2022 editions of ACESA News can be read in full here:

> March 2022 Edition

> July 2022 Edition

> December 2022 Edition

The ACESA website now has an expanded membership area which includes::

> Documents shared by members and guests at ACESA events.

> A database of members queries.

> A section on Executive Coaching opportunities facilitated by ACESA

> A section on the 2022 ACESA Conference.

> Contact details for other ACESA members.

> Access to minutes of all ACESA Board meetings, AGMs, and other significant meetings

> A comprehensive account of ACESA's 2022 Conference.

LinkedIn

Are you following ACESA on LinkedIn? If not make sure to visit our page and follow now. ACESA on LinkedIn.

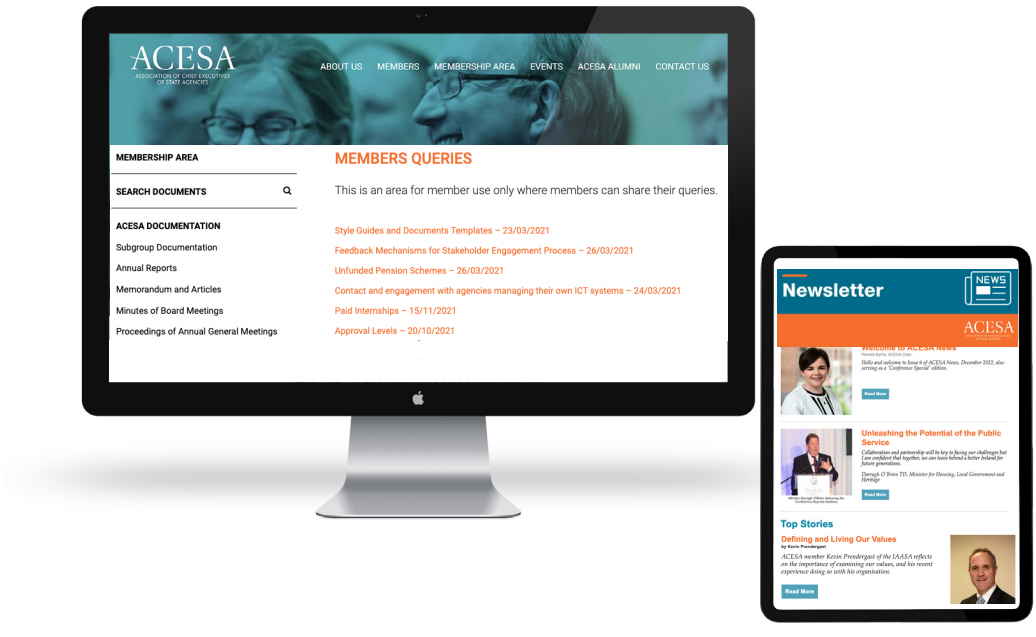
At the end of 2022 ACESA had almost 600 followers on LinkedIn, representing a significant increase during the year. (Almost trebled). The page includes organic content of interest to members and shares members and members' agencies' own LinkedIn posts. If you or your agency has a post you would like promoted on the LinkedIn page, simply email it to dermot@acesa.ie

Pulse Surveys

Three pulse surveys were conducted with the membership throughout 2022 to take the temperature of members regarding the issue of Returning to the Workplace. The results of the pulse sureys can be accessed here.

Are you using the ACESA website membership area?

To access the membership section, you must have a unique username and password. If you do not have these, please email dermot@acesa.ie and Dermot will organise it for you.



Membership Survey

The 2022 ACESA membership survey was completed by 69 members, which gives us a very clear picture of the experiences of state agencies and their CEOs in the past year. A summary of the findings is included here. The full report can be accessed in the membership area of the website here.

Top three skills required as Chief Executive of a State Agency



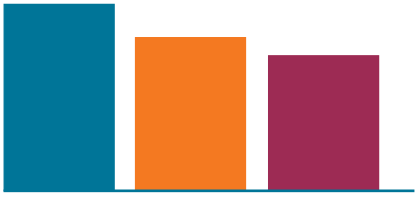
- **94%** Leadership and strategic direction
- **84%** Building relationships and communications
- **58%** Judgment and decision making

Organisational changes during the last three years



- **94%** New strategic plan
- **73%** Introduction of new legislation
- **68%** Staff restructuring

Areas with the most potential to improve public sector performance in the next few years



- **62%** Focusing on outcomes and results
- **51%** Digital or egovernment
- **45%** Increased collaboration with other agencies

The biggest challenges that may impact on ability to deliver



- **68%** Talent management
- **54%** Under resourced in terms of staffing
- **33%** Inflation/Increased costs

Membership Survey continued

Innovation projects undertaken in the last three years



- **79%** Use of social media for communication
- **75%** Collaborative and partnership with other agencies
- **60%** Online service provision to service users

Key benefits of ACESA membership



- **74%** Guest Speaker & Panel Discussion Events
- **57%** Providing a forum to share best practice
- **48%** Practical support from colleagues through 'Member Queries"

Benefits of ACESA Membership - in your own words!

Opportunity to hear thought leaders and discuss issues of mutual interest.

ACESA provides a useful public sector network of CEOs and platforms for discussion on topical issues within the Public Sector.

It acts as an important peer support group which is critical for CEOs.

Peer support, professional learning, excellent relevant topics, and speakers.

The seminars are an important way to keep up-to-date with a wide range of topics relevant to senior leaders of any public body.

Great network of support, advice, and mentorship.

It's a great network to share knowledge and build contacts.

Appendix 1 ACESA Members

Membership of ACESA is open to the CEO/CEO equivalent of government CEOs. Acting/Interim CEOs are entitled to membership benefits also. The following are our CEO members, (including Interim/Acting) at the time of publication:

Agency	Name	Website
Abbey Theatre	Mark O'Brien	www.abbeytheatre.ie
Adoption Authority of Ireland	Philip Crosby	www.aai.gov.ie
Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority	Susanna Lyons	www.ahbregulator.ie
The Arts Council	Maureen Kennelly	www.artscouncil.ie
Bord Bia	Jim O'Toole	www.bordbia.ie
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	Caroline Bocquel	www.bim.ie
An Bord Pleanála	Oonagh Buckley	www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/home
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland	Celine Craig	www.bai.ie
Charities Regulatory Authority	Helen Martin	www.charitiesregulatoryauthority.ie
Chester Beatty	Fionnuala Croke	www.cbl.ie
Citizens Information Board	Fiona Coyne	www.citizensinformationboard.ie
An Coimisinéir Teanga	Rónán Ó Domhnaill	www.coimisineir.ie
Commission for Aviation Regulation	Cathy Mannion	www.aviationreg.ie
Commission for Communications Regulation	Garrett Blaney	www.comreg.ie
Commission for Railway Regulation	Brian Higgisson	www.crr.ie
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	Jim Gannon	www.cru.ie
Commissioners of Irish Lights	Yvonne Shields	www.cil.ie
Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	Kevin O'Brien	www.tca.ie
Corporate Enforcement Authority	Ian Drennan	cea.gov.ie
CORU	Ginny Hanrahan	www.coru.ie
The Courts Service of Ireland	Angela Denning	www.courts.ie
The Dental Council of Ireland	David O'Flynn	www.dentalcouncil.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
Failte 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
Gambling Regulatory Authority of Ireland	Anne Marie Caulfield	
Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission	Aileen Healy	www.gardaombudsman.ie
Grangegorman Development Agency	Ger Casey	www.ggda.ie

Appendix 1 Continued

Agency	Name	Website
Health and Safety Authority	Mark Cullen	www.hsa.ie
Health Insurance Authority	Laura Brien	www.hia.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
HIQA	Angela Fitzgerald	www.hiqa.ie
Housing Agency	Bob Jordan	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	Helen Brophy	www.ipa.ie
Institute of Public Health	Suzanne Costello	www.publichealth.ie
International Protection Appeals Tribunal	Hilkka Becker	www.protectionappeals
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 Prison Service	Caron McCaffrey	www.irishprisons.ie
Law Reform Commission	Richard Barrett	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
Medical Council	Leo Kearns	www.medicalcouncil.ie
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	John Kearney	www.ncse.ie
National Disability Authority	Dr 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 & Midwifery Board of Ireland	Sheila McClelland	www.nursingboard.ie
Oberstown Children Detention Campus	Damien Hernon	www.oberstown.com

Appendix 1 Continued

Agency	Name	Website
Office of the Inspector of Prisons	Mark Kelly	www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie
Office of the Ombudsman	Elaine Cassidy	www.ombudsman.gov.ie
Office of the Planning Regulator	Niall Cussen	www.opr.ie
Office of the Regulator of the National Lottery	Carol Boate	www.rnl.ie
Parole Board	Ciairín de Buis	www.gov.ie/en/organisation/parole-board
Personal Injuries Assessment Board	Rosalind Carroll	www.injuriesboard.ie
The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland	Joanne Kissane	www.thepsi.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
Probation Service	Mark Wilson	www.probation.ie
Property Registration Authority	Liz Pope	www.prai.ie
Property Services Regulatory Authority	Maeve Hogan	www.psr.ie
Quality and Qualifications Ireland	Padraig Walsh	www.qqi.ie
Residential Tenancies Board	Niall Byrne	www.prtb.ie
Road Safety Authority	Sam Waide	www.rsa.ie
Safefood	Gary Kearney	www.safefood.eu
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	Paschal Hayes	www.sfpa.ie
Skillnet	Paul Healy	www.skillnetireland.ie
SOLAS	Andrew Brownlee	www.solas.ie
Special EU Programmes Body	Gina McIntyre	www.seupb.eu
Sport Ireland	Una May	www.sportireland.ie
State Examinations Commission	Andrea Feeney	www.examinations.ie
State Laboratory	Barbara O'Leary	www.statelab.ie
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	William Walsh	www.seai.ie
Teaching Council	Lynn Ramsey	www.teachingcouncil.ie
Teagasc	Frank O'Mara	www.teagasc.ie
Tourism Ireland	Niall Gibbons	www.ireland.com
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Peter Walsh	www.tii.ie
Údarás na Gaeltachta	Tomás Ó Siocháin	www.udaras.ie
Veterinary Council of Ireland	Niamh Muldoon	www.vci.ie
Water Safety Ireland	Dr Joanne Walsh	www.iws.ie
Waterways Ireland	John McDonagh	www.waterwaysireland.org
Western Development Commission	Allan Mulrooney	www.wdc.ie

ACESA
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF STATE AGENCIES

WEBSITE
ACESA.IE

EMAIL
SECRETARIAT@ACESA.IE