



ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

2020 GENERAL ELECTION

Introduction

The General Election on Saturday, 08 February provides ARCO with ample opportunities:

- To inform election candidates of the absolute need to promote the rights, interests, quality of life, services, and welfare of retired officers, and eligible spouses or civil partners, and
- To advocate for the Defence Forces, including its personnel, its veterans, and the families of serving personnel.

Key Lobbying Issues – Manifestos - Programme for Incoming Government

Considering ARCO's aim and objectives, the Executive Committee will take cognisance of the Manifestos and Commitments of all Political Parties, Political Alliances, and Independents participating in this election, and, in particular, the Programme for the incoming Government.

Accordingly, during the election campaign, ARCO's members should focus on the following issues:

- **Pensions:** Repeal of FEMPI, Statutory based Pension Parity, Negotiation Rights for Pensioners, Application of Increase in MSA for Military Pensions in Payment.
- **Defence:** Veterans' Policy, Establishment of an independent, statutory based, and permanent Commission on Defence.
- **Welfare:** Fair Deal, Medical Card, Household Package.

Independent Candidate – Kildare South Constituency

Commandant Cathal Berry (Retd) is running as an Independent candidate in the Kildare South Constituency. "*Defence Forces Families*" is one of Cathal's election priorities, reflecting the views of the extended Defence Forces Community, including ARCO. As a former Defence Forces colleague, and as a member of ARCO, the Executive Committee welcomes Cathal's decision to put himself before the electorate, and wishes him well.

In the above circumstances, in solidarity with serving personnel and their respective families, the Executive Committee recommends that ARCO's membership actively supports, as appropriate, Cathal's candidacy as an Independent for Dáil Éireann.

A member of the 72 Cadet Class, on commissioning in 1997, Cathal was appointed to the Infantry Corps. His service included postings in the 5 Infantry Battalion, Cadet School, Army Ranger Wing and in the Medical Corps. Overseas service included tours of duty in the Balkans, Lebanon and Chad.

For more information, please visit Cathal's website: www.cathalberry.ie

Executive Committee - 16 January 2020