

Association of Retired Commissioned Officers

DOCUMENTS

27TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

01 OCTOBER 2021

- Notification
- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes: 26th Annual General Meeting

Camaraderie Through Service





NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE 27th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 27th Annual General Meeting of the Association of Retired Commissioned Officers (ARCO) will be held on Friday 01 October 2021 at 1100 hrs.

The ARCO Executive Committee, at a meeting on 20 August 2021, having considered the Government's and HSE's advice on Covid 19, decided not to convene the AGM at a physical venue. Instead, the AGM will take place on line by means of a virtual conference platform. i.e. Zoom.

Those wishing to register for the AGM should notify the Secretary by email NLT **Sunday 26 September 2021**, (Contact details below). Those registered for the AGM will be provided, by means of email, details of the electronic link to gain entry to the virtual meeting conducted on the Zoom platform, some days before the AGM. Apologies from those unable to attend will be read out on the day of the AGM.

Members are reminded that:

- In accordance with ARCO's rules, the Secretary should receive motions for the AGM at least 42 days in advance of the meeting. Such motions shall be in hard copy form and shall be signed by the Proposer and Seconder.
- Nominations to fill vacancies for Officers, Regional Representatives and Trustees must be sent, in writing, to the Secretary of ARCO to arrive at least 42 days before the AGM. Each nomination must be signed by the proposer and seconder, both of whom must be members of the Association

Draft Minutes of the 26th AGM and the Draft Agenda for the 27th AGM are enclosed.

The distribution of this AGM notification is by means of email to those members with an email account. The notification will be distributed by mail to those members whose email address remains with eircom, and to those members who don't have an email account. In parallel, the notification will be posted on ARCO's website. It is requested that revised email addresses be provided to the Membership Secretary, especially those who may have changed from an eircom address.

Col Brendan McAndrew (Retd)

Secretary ARCO

Tel: 087 9009 157

29, Farmleigh Close, Blackrock, County Dublin.

email: brendanamcandrew@gmail.com



27th Annual General Meeting - Virtual Meeting - Zoom Platform

1100hrs on Friday 01 October 2021

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Opening Address by President
2. Minutes of 26th AGM – 02 October 2020
3. President’s Report
4. Report of the Secretary
5. Report of the Treasurer to include audited accounts
6. Report of the Membership Secretary
7. Elections of Officers and Regional Representatives
8. Election of Trustees and Appointment of Auditor
10. Any Other Business
11. President’s Closing Remarks

Colonel Brendan McAndrew (Retd)

Secretary

ARCO



26th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS (ARCO), HELD ON A VIRTUAL PLATFORM, ON 02 OCTOBER 2020

1. ATTENDANCE

Thirty-five members attended the meeting and apologies were received from ten members. (Listings attached to file copies of these minutes)

2. PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

As President, Brig Gen Paul Pakenham welcomed the members in attendance to the 26th Annual General Meeting of ARCO, conducted by Zoom on account of Covid-19 restrictions. Prior to the meeting, the Secretary circulated the following documents:

- Calling Notice with Agenda,
- Draft Minutes of the 2019 AGM which was held on 04 October 2019, and
- Motion on ARCO's revised Rules, for due consideration at 2020 AGM.

The President advised that those members who confirmed their attendance for the 2020 AGM, and those who conveyed apologies were provided, by means of email, the Agenda, the Audited Accounts for the period ended 31 July 2020, Nominations for Election, and the proposed revised Rules for due consideration at the AGM.

3. TRIBUTE TO DECEASED MEMBERS

The President said that, regrettably since the 2019 AGM, the Association's membership was advised of the deaths of 15 esteemed colleagues. Attendees stood for a moment of reflection, in honour and memory of those fallen comrades. Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a n-animeacha dhílis.

4. MINUTES OF 25th AGM - 02 OCTOBER 2019

The President noted that the minutes of the 25th AGM was mailed to members on 30 August and he recorded his thanks to the Defence Forces Printing Press for their printing services to ARCO. He invited comments on matters arising from the minutes. No matters were raised. Col R. Heaslip proposed the adoption of the minutes and Col C. McNamara seconded. The minutes were adopted unanimously by the members present.

5. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

In presenting his report, the President focussed on both internal and external outputs, addressing numerous issues such as Relevance, Governance, Pensions, Communications, Defence Community, Military Transition Programmes, Networking and, finally, the President took the opportunity of formally launching ARCO's support to the Defence Forces Monitoring Programme.

25th Anniversary. ARCO hosted a successful reception on 16 October 2019 in the St Stephen's Green Club, Dublin, marking the Association's 25th Anniversary. Attendees included the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Members of the Oireachtas, Representatives from Political Parties, the Defence Forces, the Department of Defence, RACO, PDFORRA, RDFRA, CAOGA, DFBF, Veterans Associations, Retired Public Servants Associations, and the Media. Senator Michael McDowell SC was the Guest Speaker.

Relevance. Substantial benefits are accruing from ARCO's 2019 Workshop titled "ARCO's Future Relevance in the Evolving Environment", including succession planning, the need to be relevant to retirees of all categories and genders, and the requirement for new ideas, new culture, and new trends. The Relevance Action Plan (2019 – 2020) consisted of five components namely: Governance, Information, Membership, Website and Communications. Since the 2019 AGM, the associated 37



tasks were addressed, and the Relevance Action Plan was formally closed by the EXCOM in August 2020.

Governance. The Association's Rules form the basis of ARCO's effective governance, transparency and accountability. Consequent to a priority from the 25th AGM, during Q2 and Q3, the EXCOM reviewed the Association's Rules, which included an aim and revised objectives adopted at the 2019 AGM. The associated Working Group consisted of Brig Gen Gerry McNamara, Col Senan Downes and Col Brendan McAndrew. The review process was informed by advice offered by Col Billy Nott. The EXCOM endorsed the revised Rules at its August meeting. A proposal to adopt the revised Rules was formally presented for adoption during the 2020 AGM. In order to advance ARCO's objectives adopted at the 2019 AGM, the EXCOM endorsed an Information Strategy, a Social Media Concept, a Mentoring Concept, and a Networking Concept.

Pensions. Pensions and pension related issues remain a major focus of the EXCOM's endeavours. ARCO's strategy focuses on the Restoration of Pensions, the Determination of Pensions, Pension Negotiation, and Abatement. In advancing pension related issues, ARCO is a proactive member of the Alliance of Retired Public Servants and is formally represented on its Council. The Alliance has 148,000 affiliated members. ARCO's lobbying document promulgated during the 2020 General Election included a section on military pensions.

Military Service Allowance. Since October 2019, ARCO strongly advanced the argument that absolutely no grounds exist, for not including the 2019 MSA increase in those military pensions that were already in payment on 03 July 2019. This position was reflected in four submissions made to the Minister of State with Responsibility for Defence on 31 October, 16 December, 15 January and 05 March, followed by a fifth submission on 17 July to the Minister for Defence. The Department of Defence had referred the issue to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. All submissions are available on ARCO's website.

Disability Pensions. Information on Disability Pension Benefits was published on the Department's website on 21 October 2019. As a response from the Department on ARCO's submission on the appeals mechanism for Disability Pension applications, failed to address all of the issues advanced by the association, the EXCOM will revisit the legislative provisions, the application procedures, the assessment process, and the appeals mechanism in 2020.

Parity. Under the provisions of the Public Sector Pay Agreement, which provides for parity over the period of the agreement, half of the 2% increase awarded from 01 October, should be reflected in military pensions. ARCO has noted the Government's announcement, made in September, to unwind FEMPI cuts for salaries up to €150,000 between October 2020 and July 2021, moving towards full restoration of cuts for military pensions in payment.

Pay Negotiations. ARCO will be encouraging the Alliance to be fully engaged in the next round of pay negotiations for public servants. In this context, during October, ARCO will be making a submission to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, focussing on parity and representation. The attention of ARCO members employed in the Public Sector is directed at a circular released on 17 September by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, prescribing for the application of the 40-year pensions benefit cap. The circular (13/2020) is available on our website.

Communications. The President made the following points in respect of ARCO's Communications Strategy:

- ARCO Website Update. The redesigned website was launched on 11 April. The project was implemented by ARCO's Webmaster, Dermot Kelly, supported by the ARCO Web Manager, Comdt Billy Campbell.



- ARCO Brand. In September, ARCO's website domain was transferred from *iARCO.info* to *ARCOIreland.com*. The acquisition of 'ARCOIreland' as the Association's brand, is a significant communications development. The brand is used for our Social Media Platforms' handles.
- Social Media Platforms. ARCO's Social Media Platforms provide cost effective and efficient communications support for its membership, provide a marketing tool for the Association, and, in parallel, convey appropriate and relevant information to ARCO's Target Audience. The EXCOM has yet to fill the appointment of Social Media Coordinator. ARCO's LinkedIn platform went live on 13 May, Twitter on 14 May, and Facebook on 16 May. Links to the three platforms are available on the Website's Home Page. The President acknowledged the support provided by Lt Col Stuart McNamara in acquiring ARCO's new brand, and his advice during the establishment of ARCO's social medium platforms. Currently, LinkedIn has 527 followers, Twitter has 340 followers, Facebook has 170 Followers.
- Articles. An Cosantóir published an ARCO article in its June edition, and an article titled *Relevance of ARCO in 2020* was published in the summer edition of the Signal Journal.
- Text-a-Service & Newsletters. The President acknowledged Comdt B. Campbell's endurance whilst managing the ARCO Website and Texting Service. He placed on record the EXCOM's appreciation of the Newsletter Editor – Col Declan Carbery, who produced Newsletters 37 and 38 since the last AGM.

Defence Community. Of the 21 associations catering for retired public servants, ARCO is the only association with formal access to a member of Government. ARCO values this unique position, and actively engages with the Minister of Defence. This engagement includes formal meetings on an annual basis. Unfortunately, a meeting scheduled in February 2020 was postponed on account of the General Election, and the 30 September 2020 meeting was deferred on account of Covid-19 restrictions.

Since its establishment in 1994, in addition to formal meetings with the Chief of Staff, ARCO has benefitted from a mutually supportive interface with all members of the General Staff, the GOCs and FOCNS. The COS hosted a meeting with ARCO on 09 September. The 2020 quarterly meetings hosted by the Department of Defence and Defence Forces Headquarters for the recognised Veterans' Associations were deferred on account of Covid-19. The last such meeting was held on 23 October 2019.

ARCO was represented at the Defence Forces Remembrance Ceremony on 04 December, the Air Corps Commissioning Ceremony on 06 December and the Army Commissioning Ceremony on 20 February at which, Lt Turlough Gallagher, 27 Inf Bn, a qualified doctor from Tattyreach County Tyrone, was the recipient of An Claidheamh Gascíochta, and the National Day of Commemoration in July. Unfortunately, restrictions associated with Covid 19 resulted in the cancellation, of Veterans' Day, the Annual Mass in Arbour Hill, and the Easter Sunday Ceremony.

On account of limitations on the number of attendees, ARCO was unable to attend the Naval Service Commissioning Ceremony, or Reviews of Overseas Units. Likewise, on account of Covid-19, the Regional Meetings planned for Custume Barracks, Athlone on 21 April, and Cathal Brugha Barracks Dublin, (23 June) were postponed. These meetings will be rescheduled for 2021. ARCO retains a fruitful relationship with RACO on matters of mutual interest such as Pensions, Veterans' Policy, Commission on the Defence Forces, the independent Permanent Pay Review Body, and ARCO's Membership Campaign. ARCO retains a fruitful interface with the Irish Defence Forces Officers' Club.

Veterans' Associations. The President said ARCO remains actively engaged with ONE and IUNVA, in advancing the interests of Defence Forces Veterans. The Combined Veterans Strategy, published on 07 December 2018, forms the basis of agenda items for meetings with the Department of Defence.



ARCO strongly recommends that an Office for Veterans' Affairs, consisting of personnel from the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, be established, without delay. He said that identifying the Combined Veterans' Strategy as a starting point, ARCO continues to advocate the absolute requirement to articulate and institutionalise an inclusive and comprehensive Government's Veterans' Policy.

National Security Strategy. ARCO welcomes the Government's decision to develop the inaugural National Security Strategy. As part of the national consultative process, albeit with a restricted timeframe of 25 days within the festive season, on 28 December, made a comprehensive submission to the National Security Analysis Centre in the Department of An Taoiseach. Whereas a wide range of security issues falling under the domain of defence were discussed in ARCO's submission, its format reflected the following four issues, provided by the National Security Analysis Centre on 05 December:

- Principle Threats (Risks) to Ireland's National Security,
- National Security Strategic Goals (Objectives),
- Relevance of Traditional National Security Policies and Approaches, and
- Required Strategic Capabilities Approaches (Means).

The submission was subsequently posted on ARCO's website and circulated by the Regional Representatives.

Commission on the Defence Forces. Arising from the provisions of the Programme for Government, ARCO welcomed the Government's decision to establish a Commission on the Defence Forces. Representing ARCO, the President participated in the IDFOC's webinar on the Commission on the Defence Forces on 23 July.

On 16 September, ARCO submitted its recommendations to the Minister for Defence, on the Composition and Terms of Reference for the Commission on the Defence Forces. The scope of the Commission's endeavours should not be limited to the Defence Forces, but must encompass the wider parameters of Ireland's Defence Policy. Likewise, the establishment of the Government's Permanent Pay Review Body should not have to wait until the Commission reports (expected by December 2021). As advanced on previous occasions, ARCO strongly contends that a statutory based, independent Permanent Pay Review Body should be established without delay, and that military pensions fall within its remit.

ARCO's submission was posted on its website and circulated by the Regional Representatives. The submission received considerable traction in the media and on social media platforms.

Networking: The President said that, in January, availing of the competencies of Philip Quinlan and Paul Amoroso, and in consultation with the IDFOC, the EXCOM endorsed a Networking Concept, which has the potential of accruing significant benefits for ARCO.

On an annual basis, it is envisaged that ARCO will run at least two Networking Events, in various locations in Ireland, in order to consolidate the Defence Community network, raise ARCO's profile, and attract new members. The audience will consist of members of ARCO, and the wider Defence Community, encompassing the Defence Forces, Department of Defence, Representative and Veterans' Associations, and beyond. The EXCOM intended to host a 4-panel Networking Event during Q4, in the Keadeen Hotel, facilitating a discussion on a topic related to the subject of security and defence, with a focus on one or more dimensions of land, sea, air, space, and cyber. However, on account of Covid-19, during its August meeting, the EXCOM decided to defer any Networking Events until 2021.

Military Transition Programmes. As part of its outreach programme, ARCO conducted six 6 weeks of consultations with JP Morgan's Military and Veterans' Affairs Section, located in London. During



its August meeting, the EXCOM discussed J.P. Morgan's inaugural Dublin based, 6-month Military Transition Programme (February – July 2021) for Defence Forces officers and enlisted personnel, who have retired in the last two years. After an EXCOM decision, an information flyer was posted on ARCO's website and social media platforms on 26 August. A significant number of retired Defence Forces personnel participated in the Orientation Day on 09 September. Both the Chief of Staff and RACO expressed their compliments on ARCO's initiative regarding Military Transition Programmes. ARCO continues to engage with JP Morgan, other similar bodies, and with RACO, on Military Transition Programmes.

Mentoring. On behalf of the EXCOM, the President took the opportunity to formally launch ARCO's support for the Defence Forces Monitoring Programme. Arising from the EXCOM's Mentoring Concept (20 Mar 20), ARCO members will shortly be invited to submit expressions of interest to participate, as mentors, on a voluntary basis, in the Defence Forces Mentoring Programme. Following the competition of the inaugural Defence Forces Mentoring Programme, and orientation day will be conducted on Q2 of 2021, for those interested to participate in the programme. Thereafter, the Defence Forces will provide appropriate training to those ARCO members who have been selected for particular programmes. It is envisaged that the first of such programmes involving ARCO mentors will take place in Q3 of 2021. Reinforcing ARCO's motto, and its outreach programme with serving officers, this mentoring initiative reciprocates the investment and experiences accruing from service in the Defence Forces.

Conclusion. While operating on a voluntary basis, the governance and management of the Association is exercised under the direction of the President, by the Executive Committee. Accordingly, the President took the opportunity of sincerely complementing ARCO's Officers, Regional Representatives and those co-opted on to the EXCOM, for their steadfast support in advancing the Association's ethos, values and objectives during 2020, thus supporting to the best of our ability, the interests and needs of our membership.

The President advised that the Vice President, Col George Kerton, the Secretary Lt Col J. Ahern, the Treasurer Lt Col Richard Cummins, the Membership Secretary, Col Dick Heaslip, the Webmaster, Comdt Billy Campbell, and Newsletter Editor, Col Declan Carbery deserve special recognition. The EXCOM appreciates the work of Brig Gen Liam MacNamee, Lt Col Sean Scanlon and Lt Col Seamus Rouine in advancing ARCO's interests within the Defence Forces Benevolent Fund, CAOGA and the Alliance of Retired Public Servants. In the same light, the President formally acknowledged the guidance, advice and support he personally received from the immediate Past President – Cmdr Gerard O'Flynn, during the last 12 months. With three decades of continuous service to the Defence Community, ARCO's posture for the short to medium term is to protect its legacy, whilst advancing reality and relevance.

6. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary said, a total of 23 members served on the EXCOM, including the officers, the regional representatives, Lt Col Sean Scanlon who serves on the CAOGA Board representing retained members of CAOGA, Brig Gen Liam MacNamee who represents ARCO on the DFBF Board and Col Declan Carbery, who edits the Newsletter. Comdt Billy Campbell manages the web site and the texting service. Lt Col Seamus Rouine represents ARCO at Alliance of Retired Public Servants meetings. Col George Kerton, the Vice President was double hatted as a representative of the Eastern Region until January this year after which Captain Philip Quinlan was co-opted to represent the Eastern Region. Col Brian Monahan and Col Brendan McAndrew were also co-opted at the January meeting to understudy the roles of Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

Social Media platforms have become a key to effective internal and external communications for organisations. ARCO now has a presence on all the major social media platforms. It is an area that warrants the addition of a dedicated member of the EXCOM so we are seeking to recruit a Social



Media Coordinator to fulfil that function. In respect of communications, ARCO have also updated its public relations presentation in terms of a revised flyer, a new general information leaflet and additional banners or pullups. These are necessary to present a professional image when, the opportunity arises, at events such as Defence Forces Open days and other events which ARCO organises or in which we participate.

On another point of information, the Secretary recalled the posting on the ARCO Website that advised that the processing of the military pension payroll is transferring from Galway to Tullamore, becoming effective for the payment of military pensions with effect from October 2020. The customer relations team, based in Killarney, with specific payroll and pension expertise, provides the helpdesk support to personnel in receipt of military pensions. The contact details for the desk are posted on the ARCO Website. It is important to note that the Military Pensions Administration function remains with the Department of Defence, in Galway and the contact details are on the ARCO Website.

The Secretary said that the ARCO EXCOM met in plenary session on seven occasions since the 2019 AGM, three times in Cathal Brugha Barracks Dublin and on four occasions by video link. The Secretary expressed ARCO's appreciation of the support which it receives from all levels of the Defence Forces in terms of facilitating meetings and other ARCO events in Defence Forces locations and particularly the support of the Printing Press which printed the documentation for this meeting and the Family Support Booklet. The booklet was approved by EXCOM on 21 February and posted on Website. The booklet was prepared by Comdt Billy Campbell and Col Billy Harrington and is dedicated to the memory the late Col Harry Crowley.

For some years, ARCO occupied an office premises in the old dental surgery in the Curragh Camp. However, in February, ARCO was informed that the authorities were not prepared to divert funds to carry out necessary repair and maintenance of the building. The office was primarily used as a storage space. The annual rent was €492 and Annual Public liability insurance cost €526. The EXCOM decided to hand back the premises. The OIC Military Archives facilitated having an ARCO collection within the Archives, whereby the EXCOM deposited their material in ARCO's collection. Lt Col Richard Cummins has kindly taken on the role of archivist for the project. The benefits to ARCO are that the files will be stored in a state-of-the-art archive under proper storage conditions and will be available to ARCO as required. The files will in time become available to the general public under the 30 year rule. This means that ARCO files created in 1993 would become available in 2023.

The Secretary said affiliation to the Alliance of Retired Public Servants remains an important strand of ARCO policy. The central objective of the Alliance is to preserve the value of Public Service Pensions into the future. The views put forward on many media platforms that Public Service Pensions, at their current level, are unsustainable will become ever more plausible in what is likely to be a harsh economic climate in the years immediately ahead. A central plank of Alliance strategy is to gain some form of participation in National pay negotiations. The Alliance also tries to keep pensions issues as high as possible on the agenda of the Congress of Trade Unions and many of those on the Alliance Council have been involved with ICTU in various capacities during their working lives.

ARCO, IUNVA and ONE are uniquely privileged among retired public service associations in that we have the institutionalised routine of meeting DOD officials on a quarterly basis as well as an annual meeting with the Minister for Defence. ARCO receives great support and goodwill from all levels of the Defence Forces. Other public service retirement associations do not have equivalent access to or support from their former employers.



The Secretary reported that in November 2019, he and the President were invited, along with representatives of IUNVA and ONET to a meeting at the Leopardstown Park Hospital. The hospital they traditionally catered for veterans of the British Forces. They are now interested in reaching out to Defence Forces veterans who might need their services as they feel that the ethos of their institution is particularly suited to those with a military background. ARCO will continue to engage and perhaps developments will emerge that might be of benefit to Defence Forces veterans.

Commemoration Ceremony for Col Justin MacCarthy DSM, Glasnevin, 14 December. ARCO will host a ceremony at the Army Plot in Glasnevin, commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the military funeral of Col Justin MacCarthy DSM, who served with ONUC. Col MacCarthy was the first Defence Forces officer to die in the service of peace with the United Nations. He was buried with full military honours on 14 December 1960.

Final Report. This is my final report as Secretary. It has been a privilege and a pleasure as well as a rewarding experience to serve on the EXCOM under five Presidents each of whom brought their own style to the office and oversaw a steady improvement to the Association. I thank the members and successive executive committees for their friendship, help and courtesy. I thank Col Brendan McAndrew for taking up the job. I'm sure he will improve the Secretarial function hugely. I wish him a very happy tenure.

Col Senan Downes proposed the adoption of the Secretaries report, Brig Gen Gerry McNamara seconded, and it as adopted unanimously.

The President said that, on behalf of all members, he conveyed appreciation to the Secretary, Lt Col J. Ahern for his administrative support to the Association throughout 2020. As Lt Col Ahern is standing aside as Secretary at this AGM, on behalf of all ARCO's members, the President conveyed his sincere appreciation of Lt Col Ahern's commendable service and steadfast commitment to ARCO, since 2006 as a representative of the Eastern Region, and as Secretary since 2009. He said Lt Col Ahern has kindly accepted an invitation to be coopted on to the EXCOM, retaining the Pensions Portfolio, and as ARCO's representative on the Council of the Alliance.

7. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

The Treasurer, Lt Col Richard Cummins presented the accounts for the Year 31 July 2019 to 31 July 2020. His report was based on the audited statement of accounts prepared by the Honorary Auditor Comdt Pat Casey.

	€
Year-end balances were: Current a/c Balance	20,108.43
Savings a/c Balance	14,183.16
An Post Savings A/C	20,600.00
Computer	10.00
Chain of Office	<u>1,063.00</u>
Net Assets	<u>55,964.59</u>

The Treasurer said, Comdt Pat Casey once again, audited the ARCO accounts for the financial year ended 31st of July 2020. He thanked Comdt Pat Casey for his work on behalf of the EXCOM.



The report compares this year's accounts with last's years based on the audited accounts and comments on membership payments and financial projection for 2020/21.

- Income. This year's income of €19,735 is an increase of €635 on last year and is due to increased membership. This breaks down as €18,000 from pension deductions and the balance from direct payments to our bank.
- Expenditure. The total expenditure for the year was €19,533.02, an increase of €4,776.50 on the previous year.

The main areas of expenditure were:

- Admin Expenses. There was expenditure of €2,079.94, a decrease of €1,211.76 on the previous year. This was due to the reduction in committee meetings at Cathal Brugha Barracks due to the Covid 19 lockdown.
- Newsletter. The expenditure of €2,103.29 represents the cost of two issues of the newsletter whereas last year's figure is the cost of one issue.
- Donations. The amount of €100 was paid to the Defence Forces Printing Press for printing the AGM minutes. There were no other donations during this financial year.
- AGM Costs. The AGM cost €2,298, an increase of €416 on the previous year, and is due to the increased cost of the lunch at McKee Barracks.
- Texting Service. The costs were €3,238.59, an increase of €1,127.91 on the previous year. The breakdown of the cost is €1,024.59 for the annual contract with Saadian and the balance of €2,214 on 40,000 text units. In the previous year we bought 20,000 text units.
- Postage. The cost of postage was €3,542.45, an increase €1,167.15. €504.25 of this is the cost of the mail box. The balance of €3,038.20 was the cost of posting AGM material and newsletter. Postal charges increased in the year. It now costs €1 for an ordinary letter in Ireland and €1.70 for overseas. All our AGM material has to go in A4 size envelopes due to size and volume. Cost is €2 per item in Ireland and €2.70 overseas.
- ARCO Office. The ARCO office costs are similar to last year at €1,018.25. This cost will not appear next year as the office has been closed and handed back to DOD.
- Miscellaneous. The €3,640 shown here is the cost of the ARCO 25th Anniversary event held in the St Stephens Green Club.
- Balance Sheet. The balance sheet shows that ARCO has €55,093.57 in cash assets of which €34,493.57 is available on demand. The remaining €20,600 is in an An Post savings plan due to mature in November 2022.

Payment of Annual Subscription. 720 members paid by pension deduction in 2019/20 at €25 per member. 113 paid by standing order or by other means. However not all these members pay €25 per annum. The breakdown is as follows: 15 @ €25 per head, 3 @ €15 per head, 94 @ €12.70 per head, 1 @ €10 per head.

All these members paying below the going rate have been advised of the various changes in the rate of subscription, but have yet to rectify their situation. 94 of these members provided their pension number to ARCO on joining the association.

Financial Projection 2020/21 (based on current membership)

Income.

Pension Deductions - 740 members x 30 = €22,200

Pay through bank - 113 members pay say € 1,800

Total = €24,000

Expenditure.

Admin Expenses — 3,000, Newsletters — 2,200, Donations — 1,100, AGM Costs — Zero for 2020/21,

Text Service — 3,300, Audit — 100, Postage- 3,600, Website - 4,000,



Bank Charges — 50, Networking Events x 1 — 5,000, Pullups, Flyers & Folders- 2,000
Total = €22,850.

Col R. Heaslip proposed the adoption of the Treasurer's report and Col S. Downes seconded. The report was adopted unanimously by all members present.

On behalf of all members, the President conveyed the members' appreciation to Lt Col Richard Cummins for advancing ARCO's Financial Framework throughout 2020, and to our Honorary Auditor Comdt Pat Casey for auditing our 2020 accounts.

As Lt Col Cummins was standing down as Treasurer, and retiring from the EXCOM, on behalf of all ARCO's members, the President conveyed his sincere appreciation of Lt Col Cummins excellent service and notable commitment to ARCO, since 2010 representing the Air Corps Region, and as Treasurer since 2011.

8. REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Currently, ARCO has 858 members. For practical administrative reasons, members are associated with the region in which they now reside, except for those who served in the Air Corps and Naval Service, who are directly aligned with the component in which they served. Each region is represented on the ARCO EXCOM by two representatives.

Composition of Membership

- ARCO membership is predominately male with only 17 female members (2%).
- 38 new members were registered since the last AGM.
- 19 members are resident overseas.
- The regional spread of our members is as follows: East 228; Curragh 188; West 139; South 136; Air Corps 89; Naval Service 78.
- 15 members died since our last AGM Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha

Recruitment of New Members. ARCO is continuously seeking to recruit new members and does so by arranging with DF COMO to pass on membership material to retiring officers, attending and briefing pre-retirement course etc. However, the best return is from direct personal contact at ex-army social gatherings by enthusiastic Regional Representatives and other members. Over the last few years, a feature of those presenting themselves for membership is that 25% of that annual intake comes from those who retired in that year. The other 75% comes from those who have long since retired but respond positively when propositioned directly regarding ARCO membership by Regional Representatives.

Members Contact Information. Col Heaslip said that, in recent years ARCO has relied on the texting system as the most immediate and effective means of communicating with members. However, there continues to be a shortfall of almost 15% of ARCO membership who have not provided a mobile phone number. He reminded members that if they are not receiving the ARCO text messages it means ARCO does not have a mobile phone number on record for them. 16% of members have not provided an email address. In addition, recent problems with Eircom as a service provider for email were highlighted to members via the ARCO texting system and all were referred to the ARCO website for further detailed information. About 30 members reacted to that email and took action to notify ARCO of a change in their email address. He said there are still significant gaps in the information from members regarding mobile phone numbers and a reliable up-to-date email. This situation can only be resolved by members taking action themselves to notify ARCO of any changes in their contact details. This can be done through the contact facility on ARCO website (arcoireland.com).



Col Brendan McAndrew proposed the adoption of the Membership Secretary's Report, Col Senan Downes seconded and it was adopted unanimously by the members present.

As Col Dick Heaslip is standing aside as Membership Secretary, and retiring from the EXCOM, on behalf of all ARCO's members, the President conveyed his sincere appreciation of Dick's admirable service and remarkable dedication to ARCO since 2006 representing the Curragh Region, and as Membership Secretary since 2008.

9. APPOINTMENT OF HON AUDITOR AND TRUSTEES

Auditor. The President thanked Comdt Pat Casey for his work as Auditor. He said that, in accordance with Rule 18, nominations to fill vacancies in respect of Hon Auditor and Trustees were formally submitted and received by the Honorary Secretary. According to Rule 4, the Honorary Auditor shall audit ARCO's accounts for presentation to the Annual General Meeting.

Lt Col J. Ahern proposed that Comdt P. Casey be reappointed and Col R. Heaslip seconded. The appointment was agreed unanimously.

Trustees. The President said the following had indicated their willingness to continue as ARCO Trustees and asked for a proposer and seconder for those named: Col B. Nott, Capt R. Murphy and Lt Col P. Godfrey. The election of the nominees was proposed Col R. Heaslip and seconded by Col C. McNamara. The three trustees were unanimously elected.

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

The President Brig Gen P. Pakenham, proceeded with the election of members to the ARCO EXCOM. In accordance with Rule 18, nominations to fill vacancies for Officers, EXCOM Members, Hon Auditor and Trustees were formally submitted and received by the Secretary prior to the AGM. The following members have been proposed and seconded for either an Officer appointment or as a member of the EXCOM. All those nominated have indicated their willingness to accept the positions, if elected. No other nominations were received.

The President advised the attendees of the nominee, proposer and seconder for each position and requested the support of those present for the nominees. Those listed below were elected unanimously.



Cooptions. The President said that, arising from paragraphs 16 of the Association’s Rules, the incoming EXCOM will co-opt members to perform specific functions such as:

Members Elected Fill Positions on the ARCO Executive Committee 2020/2021			
Appointment	Nominee	Proposer	Second
President	Brig Gen P. Pakenham	Col G. Kerton	Lt Col J. Ahern
Vice-President	Brig Gen S. Ó Giolláin	Col G. Kerton	Brig Gen P. Pakenham
Secretary	Col B. McAndrew	Lt Col J. Ahern	Col M. Lucey
Treasurer	Col B. Monahan	Lt Col R. Cummins	Lt Col S. Kennedy
Membership Secretary	Col D. Bergin	Col R. Heaslip	Lt Col J. Ahern
Regional Representatives			
Eastern Region	Col G. Kerton	Comdt P. CASEY	Lt Col M. McCarthy
Eastern Region	Capt P. Quinlan	Comdt W Campbell	Capt P. Amoroso
Southern Region	Col J. Long	Lt Col M. Baston	Col W. Harrington
Southern Region	<i>TBA</i>		
Western Region	Brig Gen G. McNamara	Col J.J. Curley	Col Eamonn Caulfield
Western Region	Brig Gen P. O’Halloran	Col S. Downes	Col A. Kilfeather
DFTC Region	Lt Col S. Rouine	Comdt P. G. Ahern	Comdt G. Harney
DFTC Region	Capt P. Amoroso	Col C. McNamara	Lt Col S. Rouine
NS Region	Cmdr G. O’ Flynn	Capt D. Barry (NS)	Cmdr P. O’Donnell
NS Region	Capt D. Barry (NS)	Cmdr Paul Keaney	Cmdr G. O’Flynn
AC Region	Brig Gen P. Fry	Lt Col R. Cummins	Capt R. Bonar
AC Region	Capt R. Bonar	Lt Col R. Cummins	Brig Gen P. Fry

- Representative on the Board of the DFBF, Brig Gen L. MacNamee,
- Editor of the ARCO Newsletter, Col D. Carbery,
- Website Manager: Comdt B. Campbell, and
- Alliance Delegate/Pensions: Lt Col J. Ahern



In accordance with ARCO Rules, all elected individuals will take up office on the day following the AGM, i.e. 03 October, and will note that the next meeting of the EXCOM is scheduled for Friday, 20 November.

The President welcomed the newly elected Officers: Brig Gen Seamus Ó'Giolláin (Vice President), Col Brendan McAndrew (Secretary), Col Brian Monahan (Treasurer) and Col Des Bergin (Membership Secretary). He also welcomed the newly elected Regional Representatives: Capt Philip Quinlan (East), Capt Tony Doonan (South), Brig Gen Peter O'Halloran (West) and Capt Paul Amrioso (Curragh). He said, the election of 8 new members of the EXCOM represents a 42% turn-over of the committee and reflects one of the outcomes arising from ARCO's 2019 Relevance Workshop.

On the occasion of retirement of Col Senan Downes, Col Con McNamara, Col Billy Harrington and Lt Col Michael Baston, all of whom are highly respected members of the EXCOM, on behalf of ARCO's membership, the President conveyed his sincere appreciation of their significant service and distinguished commitment to the Association, since 2006, 2010, 2016, and 2015 respectively, when they were elected as one of the Representatives of the Western Region, Curragh Region and Southern Regions.

11 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MOTION

Rules. The President reminded the meeting that, pursuant to Rule 18, motions for an Annual General Meeting shall be received by the Secretary, in hard copy form, duly signed by the Proposer and Seconder, at least one month in advance of the meeting.

Overview. The President said that, following a review of ARCO's Rules, an associated motion was formally endorsed by the EXCOM on 21 August. In compliance with ARCO's Rules, on 30 August, the membership was informed, by means of normal post, of the intent to table this motion at the 26th AGM. On 05 September, the proposed revised Rules were posted on ARCO's website, and members were duly informed of the posting by means of text-a-message. Finally, on 30 September, members participating in the virtual AGM received by email a PDF version of the proposed revised Rules.

No other motion has been received for the 2020 AGM.

The President proceeded with the motion that the 'revised Rules, version 01 September 2020 be adopted.

Proposing the motion, Brig Gen G. McNamara said that he took great pleasure in proposing the motion to adopt the new rules of the Association. The rules went through many drafts, and he thanked Col Senan Downes and Col Brendan Mc Andrew for their assistance and support. He duly recommended the Rules be adopted by the membership of ARCO. He thanked the President for his unstinting support."

Col Senan Downes seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by the members present.

12. Any Other Business

Cmdr G. O'Flynn referred to pension provisions laid down in Department of Public Service and Reform circulars which precluded retired Defence Forces personnel, in some Public Service employments from receiving full Defence Forces Pensions and Gratuities. He expressed the hope that the incoming EXCOM would devote some time identifying those effected as there are a considerable number involved.



13. President's Closing Remarks

Decisions. During the Annual General Meeting, fruitful deliberations took place which resulted in the following decisions:

- Approved the Secretary's Report, the Treasurer's Report and the Membership Secretary's Report,
- The election of Officers, Regional Representatives, Trustees and Honorary Auditor, and
- The adoption of ARCO's revised Rules.

Current Priorities. Serving the Defence Community for three decades, ARCO's priorities derive from its specified objectives as prescribed in the Association's Rules.

In the coming 12 months, the EXCOM's focus will be on the following eight issues:

- Addressing the payment of the MSA increase for those military pensions in payment on 03 July 2019.
- Actively engaged with the Alliance of Retired Public Servants in advancing ARCO's Pension Strategy, including the repeal of FEMPI legislation, pension parity and negotiation rights for public servants,
- Reviewing the regulations and procedures associated with Disability Pensions,
- Participating in Defence Forces Mentoring Programmes,
- Hosting Networking Events, subject to the Covid-19 restrictions,
- Engaging with third parties in Military Transitional Programmes,
- Extending its membership base,
- Advancing the Combined Veterans' Strategy along with ONE and IUNVA, and
- Preparing a framework for the elaboration of a Veterans' Policy.

Vote of Thanks. The President said he wished to convey the Association's appreciation for the Defence Forces for their support throughout the year.

The EXCOM remains grateful for the support provided by ARCO's membership in advancing the Association's objectives, and, in particular, for members' attendance at the 26th Annual General Meeting.

14 Conclusion

In conclusion, the President commended the proactive engagement of all attendees on issues associated with the agenda, with the subsequent deliberations providing Food for Thought for the incoming EXCOM and will shape the ARCO's direction for 2021.

The President encouraged all Members to maintain a practical and positive interest in advancing ARCO's ethos and objectives, thereby promoting, safeguarding and protecting the interests of members, and spouses or civil partners of deceased members.

The Annual General Meeting is hereby adjourned and will reconvene in October 2021, in McKee Barracks, subject to Covid-19 Restrictions.

Signed _____

04 October 2020

Lt Col Joseph Ahern (Retd) Secretary

Signed: _____

Brig Gen Paul Pakenham (Retd), President

04 October 2020