

Seirbhís Chúnaimh
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse



Civil Service Employee
Assistance Service

Activity Report 2012



Mission Statement

“To offer a quality resource and support service for all staff which positively affects both individual health and well-being and organisational effectiveness”

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Executive Summary

During 2012, the CSEAS was available to 32,000 civil servants across all Government Departments/Offices throughout the State.

In June 2012, the CSEAS was restructured as a shared service under central management within the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER). A number of existing Employee Assistance Officers (EAOs) transferred across to the new service and new EAO appointments were made. Concerted efforts were made by all concerned to ensure a smooth transition during the restructuring period.

A key objective during 2012 was the set-up and development of the restructured CSEAS while maintaining service to clients. In addition, an awareness campaign was undertaken to inform all relevant stakeholders including HR Divisions and staff across the Civil Service of the restructured service.

The CSEAS was pleased to introduce a single central point of contact for ease of access by all service users – see Appendix 1 for CSEAS contact details.

During 2012 2118 contacts were made with the CSEAS, with many of the service users presenting with multiple issues, some requiring a number of client sessions. Contacts were spread throughout the 26 counties. Interestingly, the gender breakdown of service users across the Civil Service indicated a greater use of the CSEAS by males than by females. A breakdown of the statistics is shown in Section 2.

The CSEAS continued to offer support to HR Divisions and management in the areas of sick leave, underperformance, disciplinary and inter-personal issues where there were welfare-related concerns.

A new Record Management System was introduced to ensure efficient record management, with the potential, going forward, for the compilation of up to date information and statistics on usage patterns and issue presentation.

2012 represented a year of tremendous change for the CSEAS. The first quarter saw depleted staff resources with limited service delivery in some Departments/Regions. Mid-year saw the formal restructure of the Service put in place and the recruitment of additional EAOs across the regions. By year end the centralised and regionalised service was fully functioning and delivering the new model of service to all stakeholders. We look forward to 2013 which will see the first full year of the roll out of the new shared service.

CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE (CSEAS)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The CSEAS, under central management in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) is an important shared service element of the Human Resources structure in the Civil Service. It plays a key part in an ethos of promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. The CSEAS provides a wide range of free and confidential supports to staff and management designed to assist employees to manage personal difficulties, which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life.

Professional standards apply with regard to confidentiality. Confidentiality is between the client and the Service.

Exceptions to confidentiality are:

- Life-threatening situations to the individual, other parties or the public
- Where non-disclosure of information could compromise the CSEAS
- Where the CSEAS becomes aware of a possible breach in criminal law
- Where there is a statutory responsibility to report
- Where required by a court or legal process to do so

- 1.2 The 2012 Activity Report of the CSEAS provides information about, and a summary of the activities undertaken and services provided during the year.

- 1.3 2012 was a very challenging and progressive year for the CSEAS. The first half of the year saw a depleted service with staffing resources reduced to almost 50% of its staffing levels in previous years. This arose as a result of retirements and non-filling of vacancies pending the restructure.

- 1.4 EAOs who had, under the previous model of service delivery, been employed on a departmental basis, worked as a team in the first half of the year to ensure continuity of service. Unavoidable delays in the recruitment of EAOs and the sourcing of accommodation led to a longer than expected transitional phase. By necessity, service during that period was reactive in nature with limited availability in the regions outside Dublin.

- 1.5 In June 2012 the CSEAS was restructured as a shared service. Existing EAOs transferred across to the restructured service, and eight additional EAOs joined the already strong team. A new head office was established in St Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2. Five new regional centres were set up in Castlebar, Cork, Limerick, Sligo and Tullamore. EAOs based in these areas are accommodated by various Departments/Offices in the regions, namely (i) Public Expenditure & Reform, (ii) Agriculture, Food and Marine, (iii) Central Statistics Office,

(iv) Foreign Affairs and Trade and (v) Social Protection. The cooperation of the departments/offices concerned is much appreciated.

1.6 The benefits of this restructure to a centralised shared model of service delivery include:

- Ease of access for all stakeholders – central point of contact by phone and e-mail
- Regional centres
- Continuity of service if designated EAO is unavailable
- Team collaboration
- Sharing of learning and experience
- Control of costs within a budgetary framework
- Standardisation of service delivery

1.7 The transition to the restructured service posed technological challenges in linking EAOs based in Departments other than DPER, to the DPER network. The efforts of the IT staff both in DPER and the hosting Departments are gratefully acknowledged. The persistence, dedication and collaboration by all concerned in resolving the issues were much appreciated.

1.8 The integration of both the new and more experienced EAOs was successfully consolidated through mentoring and peer support, team meetings and project work. All these elements served to foster good working relationships, shared learning experiences and made optimum use of existing resources and skills to deliver an effective and efficient service.

1.9 A key priority for 2012 was the embedding of the restructured service across the Civil Service. A proactive publicity campaign was initiated. Introductory presentations on the restructured CSEAS were delivered. Advertorials were placed in various relevant publications. The CSEAS website was redeveloped and progress has been achieved on developing links with relevant websites. This campaign will continue into 2013.

1.10 Another key objective during 2012 was building links with HR Divisions. Briefing presentations were delivered to the Personnel Officers Network; meet-and-greet introductory sessions were arranged between HR and CSEAS staff; and workshops were organised to seek HR input into service delivery requirements.

1.11 A new electronic Records Management System was developed which allows for efficient record management and reporting. Going forward this improved reporting system will greatly enhance the quality of information available and inform trend identification through the availability of statistical data. Thanks are extended to the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the Civil Service, for allowing the functionality of its bespoke IT system to be shared with the CSEAS. Appreciation is also extended to the staff in CMOD for developing the system for the CSEAS.

1.12 The restructured service required the development of governance procedures, service delivery protocols, and internal systems for standardisation of service delivery. This process began in June 2012 under the guidance of the CSEAS Advisory Committee, with EAOs' active participation in projects to advance these objectives.

2. Review of Casework Activity 2012

2.1 Introduction

During 2012 a total of 2,118 contacts were with the CSEAS which is approximately 7% usage throughout the Civil Service.

Contacts with the CSEAS during 2012 are detailed in this section in the form of tables.

CSEAS Contacts 2012

Casework	Total Cases 2012	As a % of total cases
Work Related Issues	698	37%
Personal Issues	643	34%
Personal & Work Related Issues presenting together*	338	18%
Correspondence Only	211	11%
Total	1890	100%
Information Only Contacts	228	
Total	2118	

* From July 2012 onwards a new electronic record management system became operational which allowed for the identification of those service users presenting with both Personal and Work Related Issues. [Jan-June casework was categorised solely by reference to the main presenting issue].

Casework activity can be complex in nature, involve more than one issue and may require multiple meetings. A considerable input in terms of time and expertise by the EAO may be required. Looking at casework from a purely statistical perspective does not reflect the nature and complexity of individual situations.

228 staff members contacted the CSEAS seeking information on a variety of issues such as Civil Service regulations, community services, counselling services and Social Welfare issues. With the availability of internet and intranet facilities, the occurrence of contacts of this nature has decreased in recent years. However, the CSEAS still offers the facility as a staff member may also wish to discuss the issue to which the information refers.

The CSEAS is an important resource for HR and line managers who may contact the service for advice and support when concerned about a staff member. EAOs can assist by facilitating a discussion on how best to proceed, appropriate intervention options and advice on supporting the staff member. Referral of the staff member to the CSEAS is also considered as an option.

2.2 Breakdown of Casework by Departments 2012

Department	Total number of cases 2012	% of overall contacts	As a % of serving staff in each Dept.
Agriculture, Food and Marine	161	8.5%	5%
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	68	3.6%	11%
Attorney General	12	0.6%	9%
Central Statistics Office	33	1.7%	4%
Chief State Solicitors Office	12	0.6%	5%
Children and Youth Affairs	5	0.3%	3%
Communications, Energy and Natural Resources	14	0.7%	5%
Courts Service	160	8.5%	16%
Defence	29	1.5%	8%
Education and Skills*	42	2.2%	3%
Environment, Community and Local Government**	107	5.7%	13%
Finance	17	0.9%	5%
Foreign Affairs and Trade	71	3.8%	6%
Health	19	1.0%	5%
Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	30	1.6%	4%
Justice and Equality***	144	7.6%	6%
Office of Public Works	82	4.3%	5%
Oireachtas	9	0.5%	2%
Property Registration Authority	56	3.0%	9%
Public Expenditure and Reform	14	0.7%	4%
Revenue Commissioners	384	20.3%	6%
Social Protection	371	19.6%	5%
Taoiseach	13	0.7%	6%
Transport, Tourism and Sport	24	1.3%	5%
Valuation Office	7	0.4%	5%
Group ****	6	0.4%	1%
Total	1890	100%	

* includes The State Exams Commission

** includes Met Éireann

*** includes The Legal Aid Board, Probation Service and The Prison Service

**** C&AG's, Ombudsman, PAS and DPP are grouped together to protect confidentiality

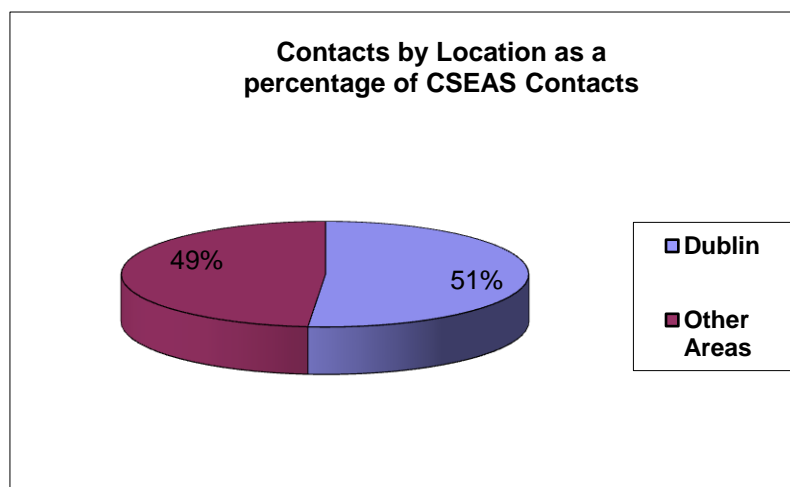
The Departments/Offices with the highest numbers of staff have the highest number of CSEAS contacts, which is to be expected. For example larger Departments/Offices such as the Revenue Commissioners account for 20.3% of the CSEAS casework contacts, Social Protection 19.6% and Agriculture, Food and Marine 8.5%.

The Departments which have the highest number of users as a percentage of serving staff are the Courts Service at 16%, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government at 13% and Department of Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht at 11%.

As the new Records Management system is embedded over a longer time period, specific data will be available to assist both the CSEAS and Departments/Offices in determining trends in usage of the service and will help inform future policy.

2.3 Breakdown of Casework by Region 2012

LOCATION	Number of Cases
Dublin	971
Other Areas	919
TOTAL	1890



The new model of service delivery under the restructured CSEAS ensures, for the first time, a dedicated regionalised structure. Regionally based EAOs deliver service to all Departments/Offices within their region. With 47% of Civil Service staff based outside Dublin¹, the need to locate regionally was a priority for the new service. Dublin based EAOs deliver service to the counties in the Eastern region. EAOs based in Castlebar, Cork, Limerick, Sligo and Tullamore deliver Employee Assistance Services to the rest of the country.

Embedding the new regionalised restructure has been on-going during 2012 with the regional EAOs developing links with the Regional Offices and HR Divisions.

Our new Records Management system, in place since July 2012, allows us to present the breakdown of casework by individual county from July 2012 – see table below.

¹ Based on figures obtained from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

2.4 Breakdown by County for all Departments from July – Dec 2012

County	Total Cases in CSEAS by County July – Dec 2012	Total Staff in Civil Service by County (figures from DPER September 2012)	% usage by county across the Civil Service July - Dec 2012
Abroad *	6	354	2%
Carlow	4	194	2%
Cavan	10	375	3%
Clare	10	483	2%
Cork	63	2014	3%
Donegal	26	811	3%
Dublin	391	14556	3%
Galway	29	840	3%
Kerry	38	717	5%
Kildare	11	945	1%
Kilkenny	14	367	4%
Laois	20	567	4%
Leitrim	3	256	1%
Limerick	26	1275	2%
Longford	22	595	4%
Louth	37	521	7%
Mayo	36	578	6%
Meath	24	551	4%
Monaghan	4	151	3%
Offaly	21	441	5%
Roscommon	12	243	5%
Sligo	70	845	8%
Tipperary	31	780	4%
Waterford	34	646	5%
Westmeath	25	924	3%
Wexford	29	766	4%
Wicklow	5	137	4%
Total	1001	30932 **	100%

* Department of Foreign Affairs staff posted abroad.

** Excludes (i) Garda Civilians who do not come within the remit of the CSEAS, and (ii) Industrial Staff for whom the breakdown by county is not available.

2.5 Breakdown of Casework by Grade 2012

Grade	Total Cases 2012	% of total CSEAS contacts	Total staff serving in grades linked to salary for that grade
Assistant Principal	120	6%	3475
Clerical Officer	759	40%	10656
Cleaner	15	1%	128
Executive Officer	257	14%	6274
Higher Executive Officer/AO	235	12%	6522
Principal Officer and higher	27	1%	1435
Service Officer	78	4%	563
Staff Officer	72	4%	1516
State Industrial	61	3%	1472
Retired staff	53	3%	-
Technical – Professional	120	7%	-
Family member *	39	2%	-
Unclassified **	54	3%	-
Total	1890	100%	32041 ***

* CSEAS contact with family members mostly related to bereavement issues. e.g. death of a serving or retired staff member

** Unclassified refers to CSEAS cases where the grade is unknown

*** Includes Industrial Grades. Excludes (i) Garda Civilians who do not come within the remit of the CSEAS, and (ii) Professional/Technical grades.

Grades up to and including Clerical Officer had highest interaction with the CSEAS at 45% of total contacts. This group represents approximately 35% of staff employed across the Civil Service.

30% of CSEAS contacts came from the Staff Officer/Executive Officer/ Higher Executive Officer & Administrative Officer grades. This group represents approximately 45% of staff employed in the Civil Service.

CSEAS contacts at AP grade and higher was 7%. This group represents approximately 15% of staff employed in the Civil Service.

CSEAS contacts at State Industrial grade was 3%. This group represents 5% of staff employed in the Civil Service.

Usage of the CSEAS during 2012 by retirees was 3% of total CSEAS contacts. Of the total of approximately 20,000 retired staff, this represents a usage of 0.3%.

2.6 Breakdown of Casework by Gender 2012

Gender	Total Cases 2012	As a percentage of CSEAS total cases	Total gender breakdown for Civil Service	As a percentage of Civil Service Gender totals
Female	992	52%	18934 (59%)	5%
Male	898	48%	13299 (41%)	7%
Total	1890	100	32233 *	

* This figure comprises established Civil Servants (30,932) and Industrial Grades (1,301). Excluded are 171 Industrial staff for whom gender breakdown is not available.

Contacts with the CSEAS during 2012 were slightly higher for females at 52%. As a percentage of the gender distribution across the Civil Service, a slightly higher percentage of the male population (7%) availed of the CSEAS. This challenges the commonly held view that women are more likely than men to seek help and assistance when issues arise.

2.7 Breakdown of Casework by Referral Source 2012

Referral Source	Total Cases 2012	% of total cases 2012
Self Referral	1233	65%
HR Divisions	401	21%
Line Management	163	9%
Other*	93	5%
Total	1890	100

* Other refers to Colleagues, Family Members, CMO, and Trade Union

Self Referral (65%)

It is encouraging to see that most casework in 2012 was the result of self-referral. This suggests that staff members take personal responsibility for dealing with and resolving their own personal or work related problems. Staff attended the CSEAS for a variety of reasons. Regardless of the issue, the CSEAS is an important resource for staff members who are facing challenges in either their personal and/or working lives. EAOs are trained professionals who offer support and assistance to staff in developing strategies to cope with, and hopefully move towards, resolution of difficulties.

HR Divisions (21%)

HR staff may contact the CSEAS where there is concern for a staff member and initially seek advice or guidance in the situation, with the option of referring the individual to the service. The CSEAS supports the HR function by:-

- Supporting HR in the implementation of Civil Service policies and management guidelines e.g. Managing Underperformance, Management of Sick Leave, Positive Working Environment, Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy
- Supporting the employer's duty of care for its employees' welfare under Health & Safety legislation
- Supporting the employer's requirements to make reasonable accommodation for the needs of persons with alcohol addiction
- Providing direct services to Civil Service staff at times of personal and/or work-related challenges/difficulties so as to maximise staff contribution towards organisational effectiveness

Line Management (9%)

Referral from line managers is encouraged, as they are often best placed to identify staff in difficulty. Line managers may be working alongside or managing staff members who, because of the challenges they face, may be absent from work on sick leave or not performing to their full potential in the workplace. Early referral and intervention increases the opportunity for employees to reach an early resolution of their difficulties, which, if left unchecked, have the potential to adversely affect work performance and work relationships. Line managers often contact the CSEAS for guidance in dealing with a staff member for whom they have a concern.

Other Referrals (5%)

Referrals may come from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and/or Trade Unions. The Office of the Paymaster General may also make referrals to the CSEAS in relation to retired staff members.

Summary

The impact of life challenges experienced by an individual can have a ripple effect on co-workers. Staff members may also be impacted when close family members, friends or colleagues are facing challenges in their lives. Supporting and assisting staff in the resolution of issues can have a wide ranging impact on organisational effectiveness. It is encouraging that the CSEAS is recognised as a valuable resource for individual staff members, HR Divisions and line managers when issues arise.

Referral to the CSEAS is an option used regularly by HR Divisions and line management to provide support and, where possible seek resolution of difficulties for the staff member.

Enhancing linkages with the CMO, Trade Unions, HR Divisions and line managers is a priority objective for the restructured CSEAS into the future.

2.8 Breakdown of Casework by Case Category 2012

The following table represents the number of issue types presenting for the 1890 cases in 2012. This higher figure of 2500 demonstrates the fact that many individuals present to the CSEAS with multiple issues.

Case Category			
Work related Issues	Totals	As a % of total work related issues	As a % (rounded-up) of total issues (excluding correspondence cases)
Bullying	42	3%	2%
Career Prospects	59	5%	2%
Death in Service	23	2%	1%
Disciplinary Issue	20	2%	1%
Harassment	17	1%	1%
Ill-Health Retirement	26	2%	1%
Interpersonal Difficulties	169	13%	7%
Management Support	209	17%	8%
Personal Hygiene	1	0%	0%
Retirement	63	5%	3%
Sexual Harassment	3	< 1%	0%
Violent Incident	13	1%	1%
Work Life Balance	219	17%	9%
Work Related Stress	213	17%	8%
Workplace Other	184	15%	7%
Total	1261	100%	51%
Personal Issues		As a % of total personal issues	As a % (rounded-up) of total issues
Bereavement	108	9%	4%
Family – Relationship	247	20%	10%
Financial	130	10%	5%
Physical Health	277	22%	11%
Mental Health	217	18%	9%
Substance Abuse	49	4%	2%
Gambling	3	< 1%	0%
Stress Personal	159	13%	6%
Personal Other	49	4%	2%
Total	1239	100%	49%
Total Work Related + Personal Issues	2500		

Casework Explained

2.8 (1) Work Related Issues

Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Interpersonal Issues (17%)

These categories are inter-linked as problems in these areas are often complex and in some instances a combination of factors is involved. Where interpersonal issues arise early intervention is recommended to avoid escalation. A useful guide in these matters is "A Positive Working Environment, An Anti-Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy for the Civil Service". Circular 23/2005 refers.

Involvement of the EAOs with staff can include the provision of confidential support in (i) discussing issue(s), (ii) advising on the relevant policies, (iii) liaison, as appropriate with line management, (iv) information on mediation if appropriate. In accordance with CSEAS procedures for supporting two or more parties involved in a conflict situation of any kind, each party is offered independent EAO assistance.

Work-Life Balance Issues (17%)

Work-life balance issues can be attributed, in the main, to discussions with employees on, for example, long commutes to work, work-sharing, carer's leave and other special leave options. By way of another example, staff members caring for elderly or sick family members, or where there are family changes due to the recession, may avail of the CSEAS to explore their options before deciding on a way forward. Issues discussed may include wider implications for the individual such as pension and social welfare entitlements, social services available to help with family needs and other consequences.

Management Support (17%)

Management requests for support and/or advice highlight the relevance and importance of the CSEAS to managers in relation to their concerns about staff members. EAOs can assist managers with (i) information on particular issues and procedures, (ii) appropriate intervention with the individual and (iii) referral of the staff member to the CSEAS.

Work Related Stress (17%)

Staff Members can feel under pressure at work for a variety of reasons such as work-load, difficult working relationships and communication problems. Assistance offered includes helping individuals to examine their experiences, reflect on their internal attributes which might contribute to stress and explore other factors outside of work which might have a bearing. Where appropriate, the EAO may encourage a staff member to approach line management for help in resolving some of the issues. On-going support is provided to help the staff member through stressful periods.

EAOs correspond with staff members absent on sick leave due to work-related stress. On notification of such instances by HR Divisions, the EAO offers to meet the individual and to provide support in helping to determine the source of the stress with a view to resolving the issue. In so doing, the CSEAS is assisting Departments/Offices in their duty of care to its staff, whereby all efforts are made to alleviate any causal factors.

Remaining Work Related Issues Combined Total (32%):

Career Prospects (5%) Death in Service (2%) Disciplinary Issues (2%) Ill Health Retirement (2%) Personal Hygiene (<1%) Retirement (5%) Violent Incidents (1%) Workplace Other (15%)

The above combined, incorporates a number of case categories. These individual categories may be small in terms of case numbers, yet they can impact significantly on those affected e.g. where a violent incident occurs to one person it has a detrimental effect on him/her and can also affect others around them. Likewise, death in service affects both next of kin and the deceased's colleagues in the workplace. CSEAS support at such times can be crucial for the individual and for organisational effectiveness.

2.8(2) Personal Issues

Personal problems may impact on work performance. EAOs are in a unique position to help employees gain a better understanding of how to manage their own well-being when either personal or work life is difficult. Such support enables staff to work at their optimum and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the workplace.

Physical (22%) and Mental (18%) health issues

Those with physical or mental health problems can be self-referred or directed to the CSEAS by line managers, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), HR divisions or other concerned parties. EAOs supply a range of supports including, information, guidance and/or referral to outside agencies. HR divisions refer employees absent on long-term sick leave to the CSEAS which allows for proactive intervention and supports the principles of the Civil Service Management of Sick Leave Policy (Circular 09/2010)

Family - Relationships (20%)

Issues under this heading may include marital/relationship breakdown, domestic violence, sexual orientation, family illness, care of young children, difficulty with adolescent children and concerns around ageing parents. Information can be required on protection, barring and maintenance orders and legal resources in general, and support services provided by the HSE and other relevant agencies. Resolution sometimes required liaison with bodies involved in family law, mediation, responding to domestic violence and counselling.

Stress – Personal (13%)

People may experience stress in their personal lives which in turn affects their ability to function. The CSEAS provides support to those affected by assisting them in enhancing their coping skills, using stress management techniques and referral to appropriate support agencies, where necessary. Stress can be both short or long term and in the case of the latter, early intervention is important.

Financial (10%)

Cases in this category arise for a variety of reasons ranging from difficulties with money management to financial hardship caused by unforeseen life events. Financial problems tend to accompany other personal crises e.g. addiction, marital breakdown etc. In dealing with some cases referral to the Money Advice & Budgeting Service (MABS), the Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS), Credit Unions and other financial institutions may be necessary. The pressure of pay cuts combined with the other general prevailing economic difficulties, e.g. one partner in a family losing a job, parents helping adult children who have run into financial difficulty, can present under this category. Issues can include difficulty in budgeting, arrears on mortgages, credit card debt and life event demands e.g. prolonged absence on sick leave.

Bereavement (9%)

EAOs can provide practical and emotional support for staff grieving due to personal loss. Short-term support with referral options to bereavement agencies can be provided. Practical support can be given on matters such as benefits and pension entitlements from the Department of Social Protection. Bereavements can include sudden deaths, death by suicide and other losses e.g. separation, divorce.

Remaining Personal Issues Combined Total (8%)

Substance Abuse (4%) /Gambling (<1%) /Personal Other (4%)

The above issues can be smaller in terms of case numbers, yet they can impact significantly on those affected. For example, in relation to a substance abuse case the CSEAS plays a role under the Civil Service Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy. The Policy provides a general framework of guidelines for the management of such issues. The CSEAS has a role in providing support and assistance for individuals, HR Divisions, line management and others affected during all stages of such a process.

Multiple Issues

Staff members may present with one or more issues. Our new record management system has provided us with statistics on those presenting with multiple issues from July – December 2012 which indicated an average of 2 presenting issues per user. Going forward, the CSEAS will be in a position to provide more detailed analysis in this regard for 2013 and beyond.

Of the contacts made in the period July-December 2012, 338 service users presented with both work and personal issues. Unresolved issues in one area can impact on the other e.g. a member of staff may be in difficulty at work because of attendance patterns and/or performance issues. The cause may, for example, be due to marital separation, financial worries as a result and the attending stress that can accompany these issues. EAOs are in a unique position to help employees achieve better understanding of how to manage their own wellbeing when either their personal or work life is challenging. Such support enables staff to work to their optimum and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the workplace.

Multiple Sessions

Contacts per user can range from a single session contact to multiple sessions. Some service users may require longer term support. For example within the framework of the Civil Service Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy, staff members may require on-going support from the CSEAS on a monthly basis for up to two years, as part of their recovery programme. The CSEAS will be in a position to provide more detailed analysis in this regard in 2013 and beyond.

2.8(3) Correspondence Cases

Correspondence Type	Totals	As a % of total correspondence cases
Sick Leave Correspondence	153	73%
Bereavement Correspondence	58	27%
Totals	211	100%

In the case of formal referrals from HR Division and/or line managers, the CSEAS will proactively seek to engage with the staff member and offer support. This arises where the CSEAS is advised of staff:

- Absent on long term sick leave
- Absent from work due to stress
- Who experience a bereavement
- For whom it is felt that CSEAS support may be helpful

3. Additional Activity 2012

3.1 Introduction

A key priority following the restructure of the CSEAS in June 2012 was the development of a communications strategy to ensure the embedding of the CSEAS across the Civil Service. Key activities in this regard are detailed below

3.2 Delivery of Presentations

The last quarter of 2012 provided the opportunity for EAOs to visit Departments and Offices across the regions and to deliver presentations to publicise the restructured CSEAS. The table below highlights the presentations undertaken during this period. Presentations will continue to be delivered in 2013.

Presentation Title	Department/Office/Network	Number	Total
CSEAS - Introduction to the Restructured Service	Agriculture, Food and the Marine	4	101
	Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	3	
	Central Statistics Office and Field Staff	13	
	Chief State Solicitors Office	1	
	Disability Liaison Officers Network	1	
	Defence	2	
	Education and Skills	2	
	Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission	1	
	Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	2	
	Justice and Equality	8	
	Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General	1	
	The Courts Service of Ireland	4	
	The Office of the Ombudsman	1	
	The Office of Public Works	1	
	The Office of the Revenue Commissioners	35	
	The Private Security Authority	2	
	The Probation Service	1	
	The State Laboratory	1	
Social Protection	18		
Stress Management	Education and Skills	1	12
	Health	1	
	Justice and Equality	1	
	The Courts Service of Ireland	2	
	The Equality Authority	2	
	The Office of the Revenue Commissioners	2	
	The State Laboratory	1	
Social Protection	2		
Planning for Retirement – Input to courses run by CSTDC or by various Departments	Agriculture, Food and the Marine	2	10
	The Civil Service Training and Development Centre (CSTDC)	7	
	The Office of Public Works	1	

Presentation Title	Department/Office/Network	Number	Total
Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work	Social Protection	1	1
Understanding Bereavement	Defence	1	1
Response to Traumatic Incident	Social Protection	1	1
Child Protection	The National Parks and Wildlife Service	1	1
CSEAS as a resource for Managers	Social Protection	1	1
TOTAL			128

3.3 Publication of CSEAS Advertorials

Conscious of the need to inform staff throughout the Civil Service of the restructured CSEAS, a schedule of advertorials was initiated. The following publications carried information on the CSEAS.

Departmental In-House Publications	Organisation	Date of Publication
Agri News	Agriculture, Food and the Marine	December 2012
Courts Service News	The Courts Service of Ireland	December 2012
Environment Matters	Environment, Community and Local Government	December 2012
In Brief	Director of Public Prosecutions	December 2012
RevInniu	The Office of the Revenue Commissioners	December 2012
Union Publications		
Aontas	Civil and Public Service Union	August/September 2012
Review	Public Service Executive Union	September/October 2012
General Publications		
Public Sector Times	Civil and Public Service	September /October 2012

3.4 Web based Developments

Electronic Publicity Sources	Progress to end of December 2012
CSEAS Website	Redevelopment of the website to include the various changes resulting from the restructured service. This will be on-going into 2013
Intranet facilities within Departments/ Offices	Contacts were made with Departments/Offices with a view to incorporating linkages to CSEAS Website within Departmental intranet facilities. This work is on-going.
Union Websites linkages to CSEAS Website	Civil and Public Service Union www.cpsu.ie Public Service Executive Union www.pseu.ie

3.5 Developing Links with HR Divisions and Regional Offices

- Presentations were delivered to the Personnel Officers Network to inform HR personnel of developments during and beyond the transition to the restructured CSEAS
- “Meet & Greet” sessions commenced between HR personnel and the new CSEAS to introduce the new EAO team (particularly HR personnel from those Departments with a wide spread of staff throughout the country)
- Conscious of the benefits of making personal contact with local managers and HR personnel, EAOs commenced a series of introductory meetings in regional Departments/Offices. The visibility of EAOs within the various Departments/Offices aids in increasing awareness of the service. This practice will continue into 2013
- EAOs have engaged in regular meetings with HR Divisions and this will be embedded further in 2013

3.6 Governance

Governance is provided by the CSEAS Advisory Committee. The CSEAS manager reports to the Advisory Committee at its quarterly meetings. The committee comprises:

- A Chairperson – a representative from DPER
- The Chief Medical Officer for the Civil Service
- Representatives from various Departments/Offices through the Personnel Officers Network. The representatives for 2012 were from the Departments of Justice & Equality, Social Protection, Defence and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners. These representatives will rotate on a 2 year basis. This will happen on a phased basis, commencing in the latter quarter of 2013, to ensure continuity of experience on the Advisory Committee
- The Secretary to the Civil Service General Council Staff Panel

Work has been on-going since the restructure to develop internal systems and protocols to deliver a quality customer-centric service to all stakeholders. Work commenced on the development of Protocols on Service Delivery to ensure clarity on the services available and to move towards a standardisation of service across all Departments/Offices. These protocols will be circulated to HR Divisions early in 2013. All policies will be kept under review and updated, as required, on an on-going basis, in keeping with best practices.

3.7 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

EAOs are trained to a professional level and are represented on the committee of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association Ireland (EAPA Irl).

CPD is important to ensure the EAOs are fully competent in their role. Engaging in on-going learning, skill enhancement and participation in committee activity aids in maintaining best practice in delivery of Employee Assistance Services. CPD during 2012 included;

Title of Training	Training Organisation
Addiction Information	HSE Stanhope Centre
Social Welfare Entitlements for Workers Workshop	EAPA Ireland
Intervention Following Traumatic Events	EAPA Ireland
The Role of Coaching in the Workplace	CIPD West.
SafeTALK (Suicide awareness)	HSE
Mediation Skills Refresher Course	Institute of Public Administration
Recovery Model (Mental Health Issues)	Mental Health Ireland
Managing Stress – 5 areas we can work on. Free Seminar.	PCI College

A mentoring programme for the newly appointed EAOs ensured effective induction to their new role. The model of service delivery facilitates a team environment whereby the wealth of qualifications and experience of its members are used to optimum effect. Shared learning facilitates this transfer of specialised knowledge for the benefit of all EAOs and the Service as a whole.

3.8 Liaison with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO)

The CMO is a member of CSEAS Advisory Committee. Liaison with the CMO can be very valuable, particularly in supporting those absent on sick leave. There is regular liaison between staff of the Office of the CMO and the CSEAS. This is often a two way process, where the EAO may suggest the involvement of the CMO and likewise the CMO may suggest a case referral to the CSEAS. This takes place either directly or through Department HR Divisions.

3.9 Liaison with the Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS)

The PSFS provides financial support and assistance to its members. With the economic downturn, the service has become an even more important resource of referral for the CSEAS and plays an important role in the well-being of many staff attending the CSEAS. Three members of the CSEAS were members of the Management Committee of the PSFS in 2012.

3.10 Liaison with Civil Service Trade Unions

EAOs may refer staff members to their various Trade Unions where it is identified that support or representation outside the remit of the EAO function is required. In cases of (i) disciplinary proceedings, (ii) investigations under “A Positive Working Environment” or (iii) situations being managed under the Civil Service Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy, the staff member may require support from both his/her Trade Union and the CSEAS.

Trade Unions can also be a source of referral of staff members to the CSEAS. Furthermore Trade Union publications allow the CSEAS to advertise its services to a large proportion of civil service staff.

3.11 Civil and Public Service Mediation Panel

During 2012 a Mediation Service in the Civil and Public Service was established. Trained and accredited mediators within the Civil and Public Service were invited to form a panel of mediators. Mediation, as an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) intervention, seeks to resolve conflict situations speedily and in confidence without recourse to a formal investigation, aiming to cause the minimum of stress to the individuals involved. A member of the CSEAS is a trained mediator and is a member of the panel.

4. Conclusion

The CSEAS proved itself to be extremely adaptable and resilient during its restructure in 2012. Under the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform the restructured service was the first shared service across all Government Departments/Offices. This major restructuring has been made possible by the strong buy-in from all the relevant stakeholders. The major components of the re-structuring included:

- The regionalisation and centralisation of the service to a more cost-effective and client-centric shared service
- A wide-ranging communications strategy allowing the CSEAS to re-introduce its service to civil service staff
- A central point of contact for ease of access by service users
- Most crucially, through this period of very significant change, a continued provision of direct service to all service users

Looking to the future, the benefits of the introduction of a new Records Management Database will provide the CSEAS with the ability to tailor statistical information for the benefit of the service internally as well as assisting Departments/Offices in identifying and measuring trends as they evolve. At a time of such huge change in the lives of civil servants, the ability to identify these trends will inform future CSEAS policy to best meet our clients' needs. It will also inform a proactive and early intervention approach to enhance employee wellbeing and organisational effectiveness.

The modernisation of the CSEAS as a shared service model heralds a new, exciting and challenging future for the service. The CSEAS team has proactively fostered excellent working relationships at all levels. The service remains committed to providing a highly professional, efficient and cost-effective service under the guidance of the new management structure and the CSEAS Advisory Committee.

Civil Service Employee Assistance Service

Phone 0761 0000 30
email: cseas@per.gov.ie

or
write to

CSEAS, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform,

3rd Floor, St. Stephen's Green House,

Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.



Lorus Collum
Manager



Derek Hollingsworth
Office Administration

Employee Assistance Officers



Maureen Byrne



Brian Hennessy



Una Meehan



Deirdre Maye



Triona King



Bernie Moran



Geraldine Carey



Michael Stapleton



Ann Jordan



Margaret Fagan



Fran Scott



Carmel Dalton



Rosemary Branagan



Antoinette Mahon



Ann Duffy



Rob Walsh



Deirdre Farrell



Philip O'Callaghan