

Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)

Seirbhís Chúnaimh
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse



Activity Report 2018



An Roinn Caiteachais
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform

**SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING
WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE**



See Appendix 5 [About the CSEAS](#) for further details



The CSEAS plays a key part in the Civil Service ethos of promoting employee wellbeing and organisational effectiveness

13% of Civil Servants made contact with the CSEAS in 2018

The CSEAS supports the employer's duty of care to its employees under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 in the area of psychosocial issues

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FOREWORD

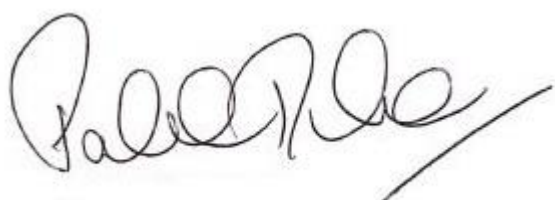
I am delighted to present the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) Activity Report 2018. Centralised within my Department, the CSEAS is an essential component of the Human Resource (HR) structure within the Civil Service. It provides information and support to staff and management on a regional basis. I realise the importance of focusing on staff health and wellbeing and the CSEAS ably supports this endeavour on an ongoing basis. The CSEAS complements the work carried out by management and HR in the development and maintenance of a healthy and resilient workforce.

In 2018, 13% of civil servants availed directly of CSEAS services. In addition, 225 presentations on a variety of wellbeing topics were delivered across Departments/Offices. These figures are significant indicators of the positioning of the CSEAS as a key resource for all staff in the area of health and wellbeing. CSEAS service delivery includes the provision of individual support to staff and management in addressing work/life challenges. The CSEAS also delivers pro-active group initiatives aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills in areas such as positive mental health, stress management, building resilience, harmony at work etc.

The CSEAS remains of upmost importance in the continued renewal process in the Civil Service. The People Strategy for the Civil Service (2017-2020) sets the strategic HR objectives. By strengthening HR capability, the Civil Service aims to position itself as an employer of choice attracting and retaining staff who are engaged, skilled and committed. Central to the delivery of these priorities, are effective people managers who can manage and develop staff and their talents.

The CSEAS provides assistance to managers who are supporting staff experiencing difficult work and/or life challenges. The CSEAS People Managers' Guide was developed as a resource for managers dealing with issues that frequently arise in the workplace. The soft launch of this Guide took place in November 2018. Hard copies of the Guide will be available in 2019.

I would like to thank the CSEAS for their ongoing support to an evolving workforce in the Civil Service. I wish the CSEAS continued success and I have every confidence in the ability of the Service to support staff and management in dealing with any challenges they may face now or in the future.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paschal Donohoe', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paschal Donohoe T.D.

Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform

INTRODUCTION

The Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) activity in 2018 is presented in this Report, with a detailed breakdown of service usage, profiled by reference to grade, Department/Office, region, gender and presenting issues.

In 2018, 13% of civil servants contacted the CSEAS of which, 8% availed of one-to-one support in relation to a variety of presenting issues. This indicates the pivotal role the CSEAS plays in promoting and maintaining a healthy and resilient workforce.

A key feature of this role is the range and volume of presentations delivered by the CSEAS across government departments and offices on a variety of health and wellbeing topics (see [Appendix 2](#) for details).

Engagement with all stakeholders is key to ensuring that the CSEAS responds to the ongoing and emerging needs as the Civil Service continues its process of renewal (see [Appendix 4](#) for details).

The People Strategy for the Civil Service 2017-2020 seeks to position the Civil Service as an employer of choice. Action 6 of the Strategy commits to providing support for people managers and HR Divisions to assist them in responding to staff facing challenging life events. The soft launch of the CSEAS People Managers' Guide in 2018 is a significant contribution to this initiative.

The panel to the right represents a brief summary of CSEAS key facts for 2018. The main body and appendices of the Report provide a more in-depth analysis of CSEAS activities during the year.

CSEAS Key Facts 2018

- 13% of serving civil servants contacted the CSEAS during the year of which
 - 8% availed of one-to-one support
- The numerical breakdown of the above percentages are :
 - 4,540 civil servants contacted the CSEAS of which
 - 2,971 engaged in one-to-one casework
 - 1,569 telephoned/emailed the central CSEAS helpdesk and/or sought information only from individual Employee Assistance Officers (EOOs)
- 11,139 sessions* were provided
- 10% of work-related issues were manager consultations about staff wellbeing concerns
- 225 presentations were delivered across Government Departments and Offices on health and wellbeing related topics
 - Based on average attendance patterns at these presentations, the CSEAS addressed approximately 4,900 civil servants
- CSEAS responded to 4 workplace critical incidents
 - 41 staff members personally impacted by critical incidents received one-to-one support
- People Managers' Guide soft launch took place in November
- CSEAS Connect Newsletter – 4th and 5th issues were published
- CSEAS was present at Union Conferences highlighting the Service

** Sessions refer to service user contacts/contacts on their behalf (face-to-face, phone, email, text)*

CSEAS 2018 ACTIVITY SNAPSHOT

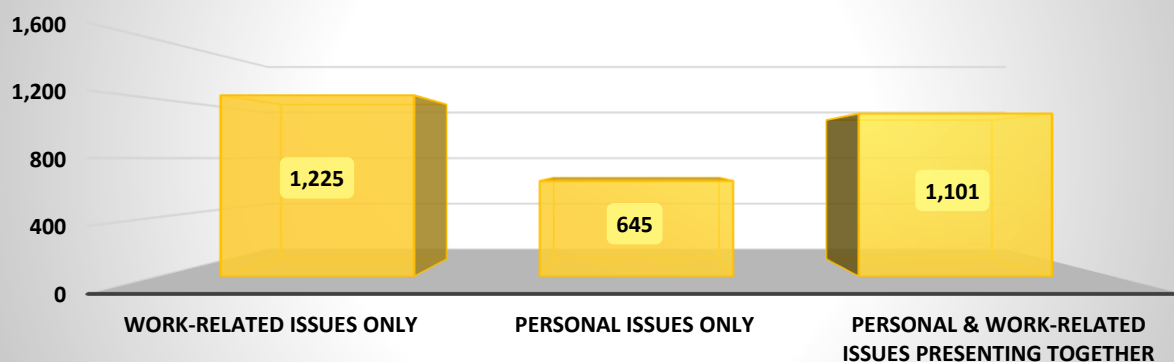
See [Appendix 1](#) for details

13% of Civil Servants contacted the CSEAS in 2018

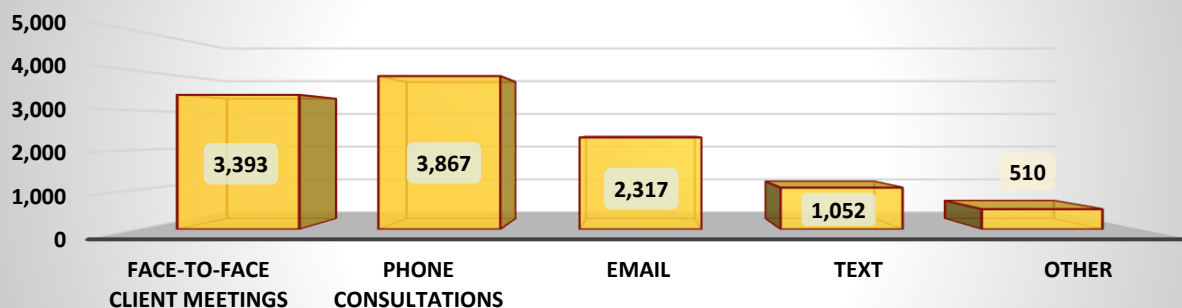
8% of the above represents one-to-one casework – the balance comprises CSEAS Helpdesk contacts and information requests

CSEAS Casework 2018

Total one-to-one casework = 2,971



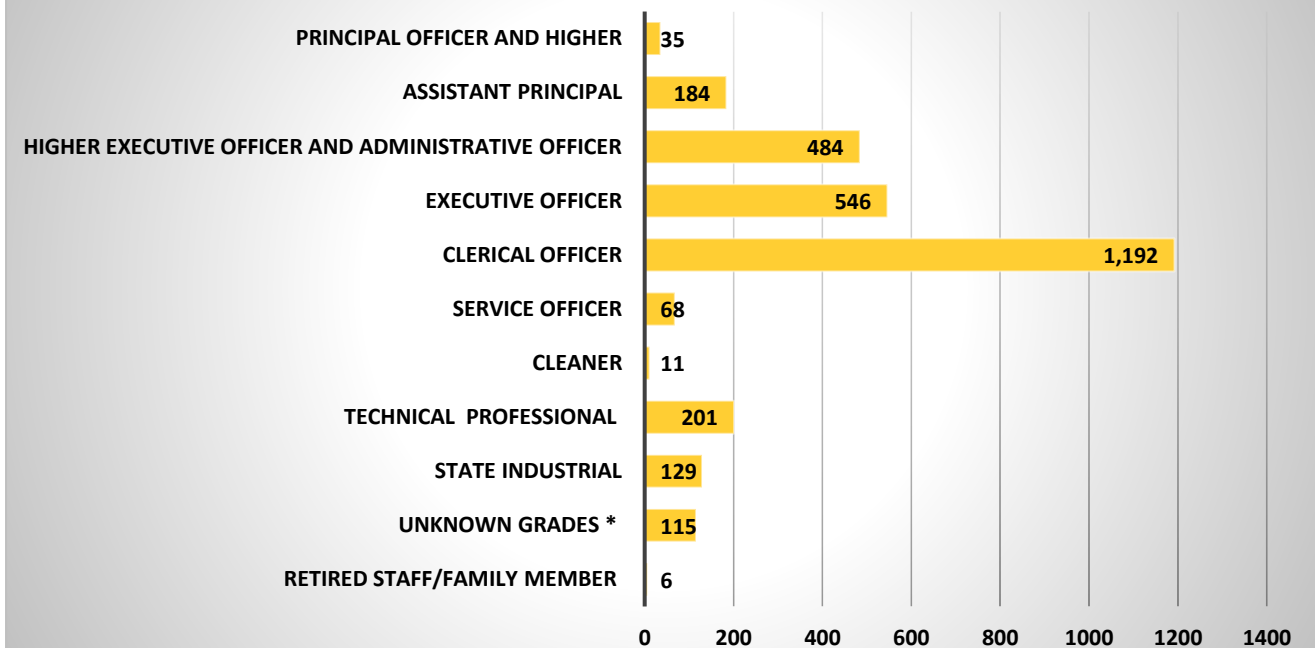
Total Sessions* 2018 = 11,139



*A session is any contact with or on behalf of a service user. Other sessions include service user contacts outside of face-to-face meetings, phone consultations, email or text.

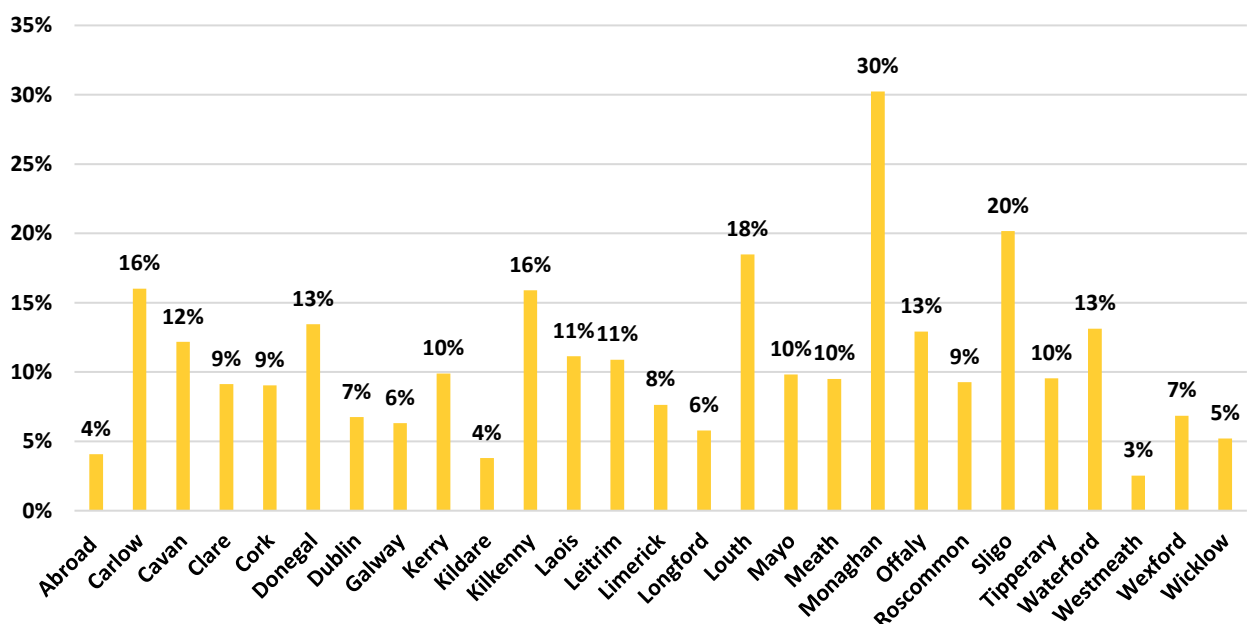
CSEAS Casework by Grade 2018

Total one-to-one casework = 2,971

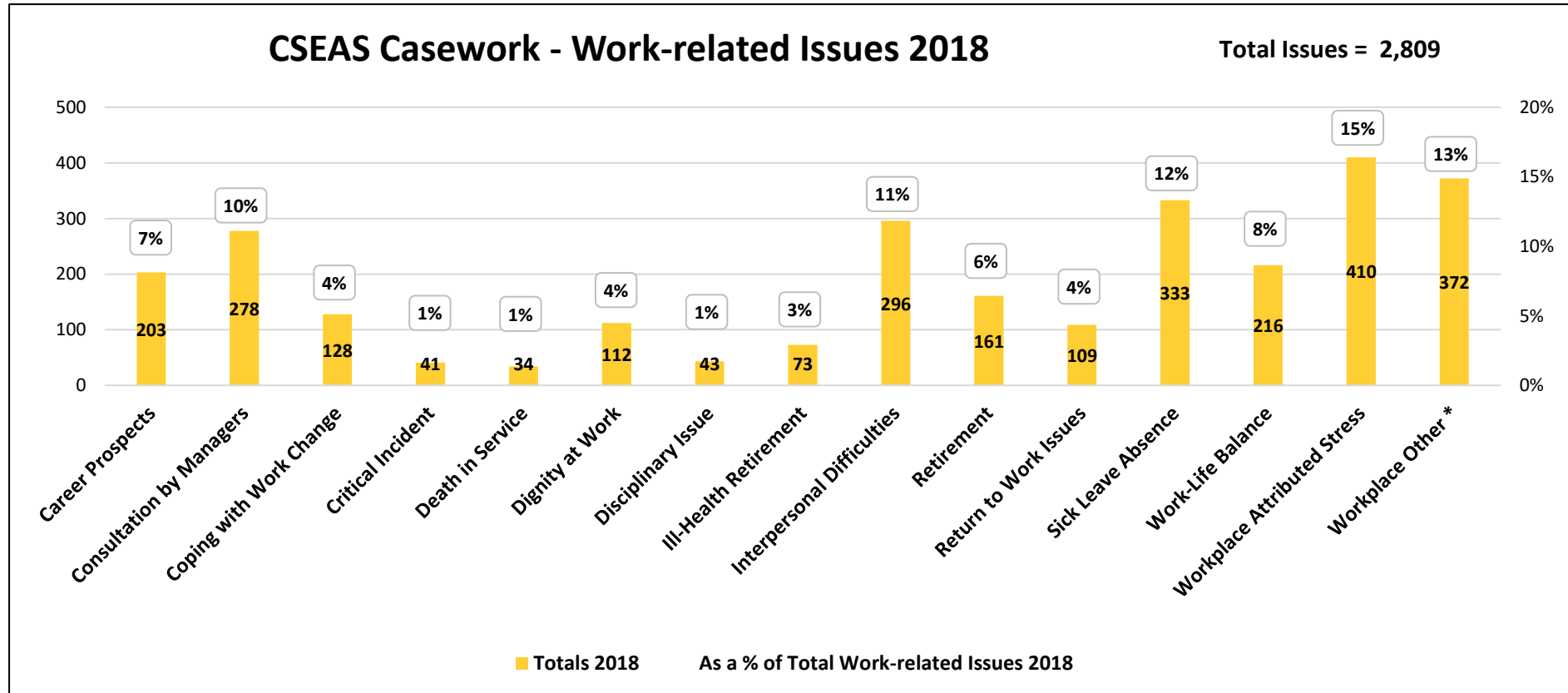


* Unknown Grades refers to CSEAS cases where the grade was not disclosed by the service user

% Usage (serving staff) by County across the Civil Service 2018

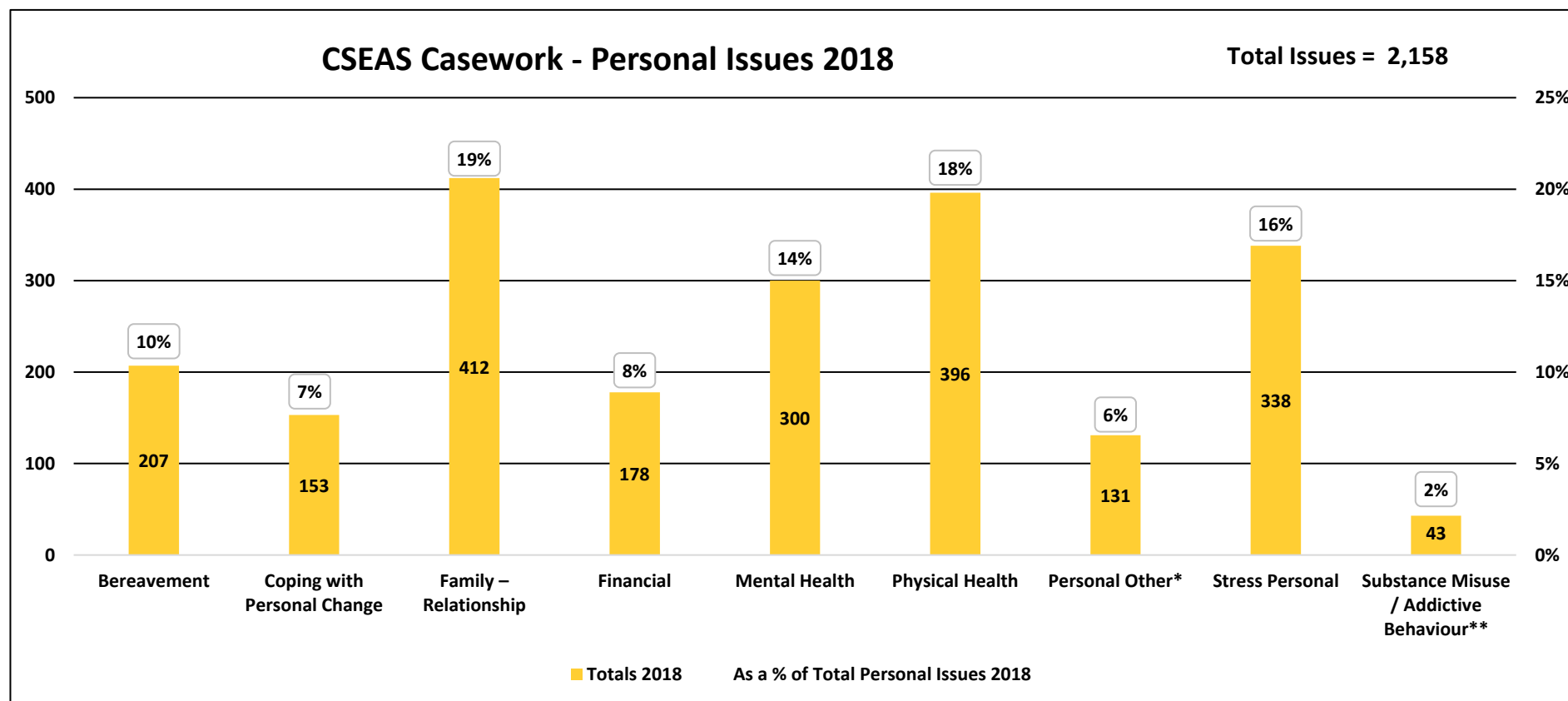


One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:



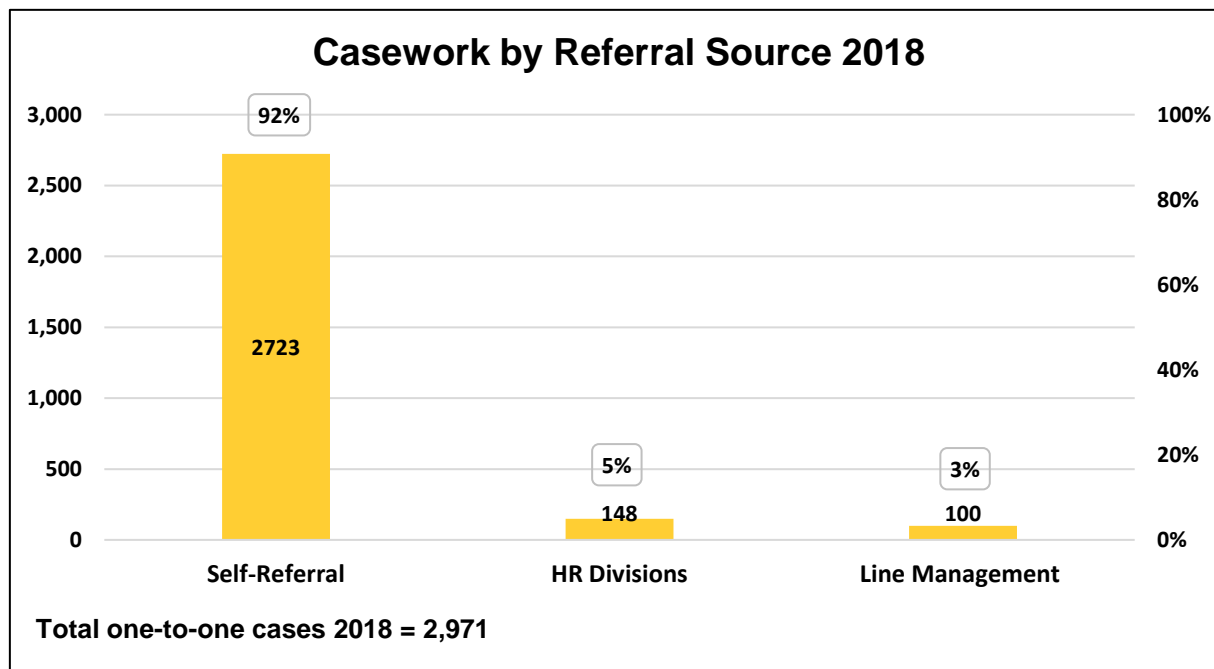
*This category includes issues such as probation, personal hygiene and workplace issues/challenges excluding those categorised

One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:



* This category include issues/challenges excluding those categorised

** This category includes issues with alcohol, drugs, gambling, internet etc.



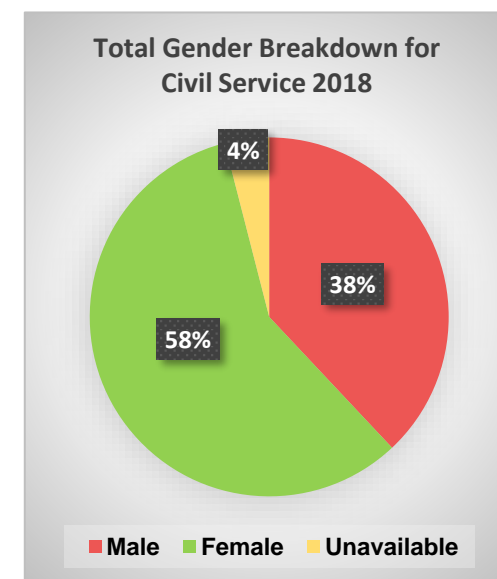
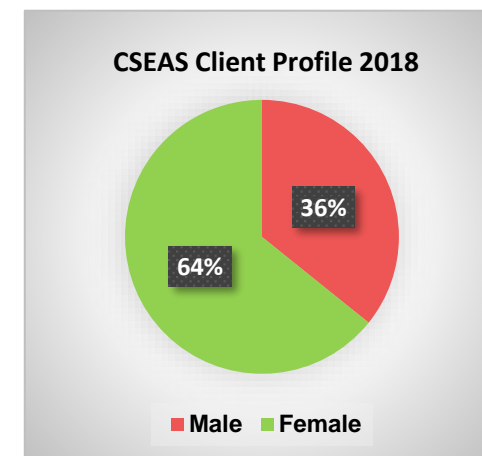
Casework by Referral Source 2018

Self-referrals are service users who contact the CSEAS directly.

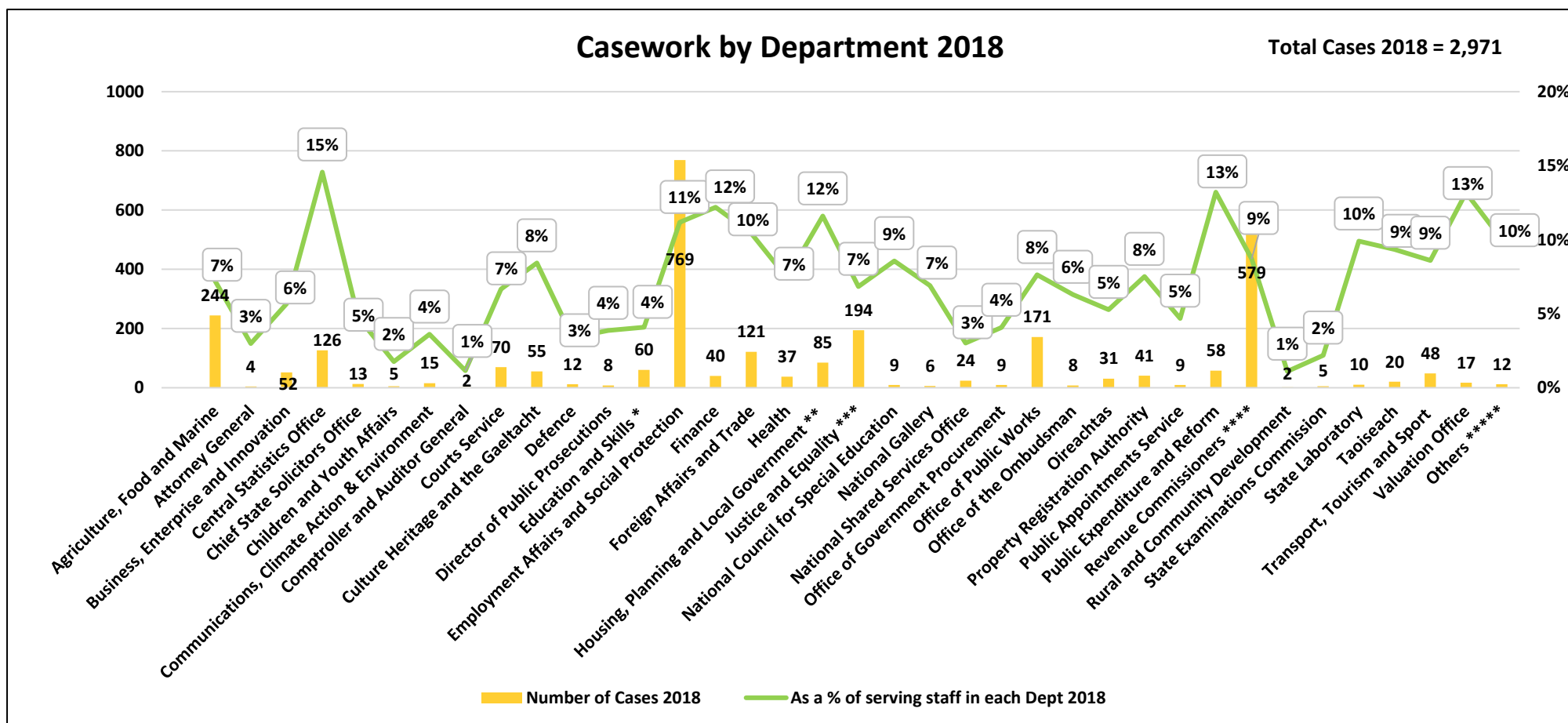
Self-referrals also include suggested referrals to the CSEAS by the following:

- HR
- Line Manager
- CMO
- Colleague
- Union

In 2018, the CSEAS HR/Management Referral process was revised in light of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018. As of that date, the CSEAS can only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).



4% figure above includes 1,802 State Industrial staff for whom a breakdown by gender is not available



- * includes National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse and the Residential Institutions Redress Board
- ** includes Met Éireann
- *** includes civil servants in the Irish Prison Service, IHREC, Legal Aid Board, Data Protection Commission and Policing Authority
- **** includes Tax Appeals Commission
- ***** President's Establishment, Garda Ombudsman, National Library, National Museum

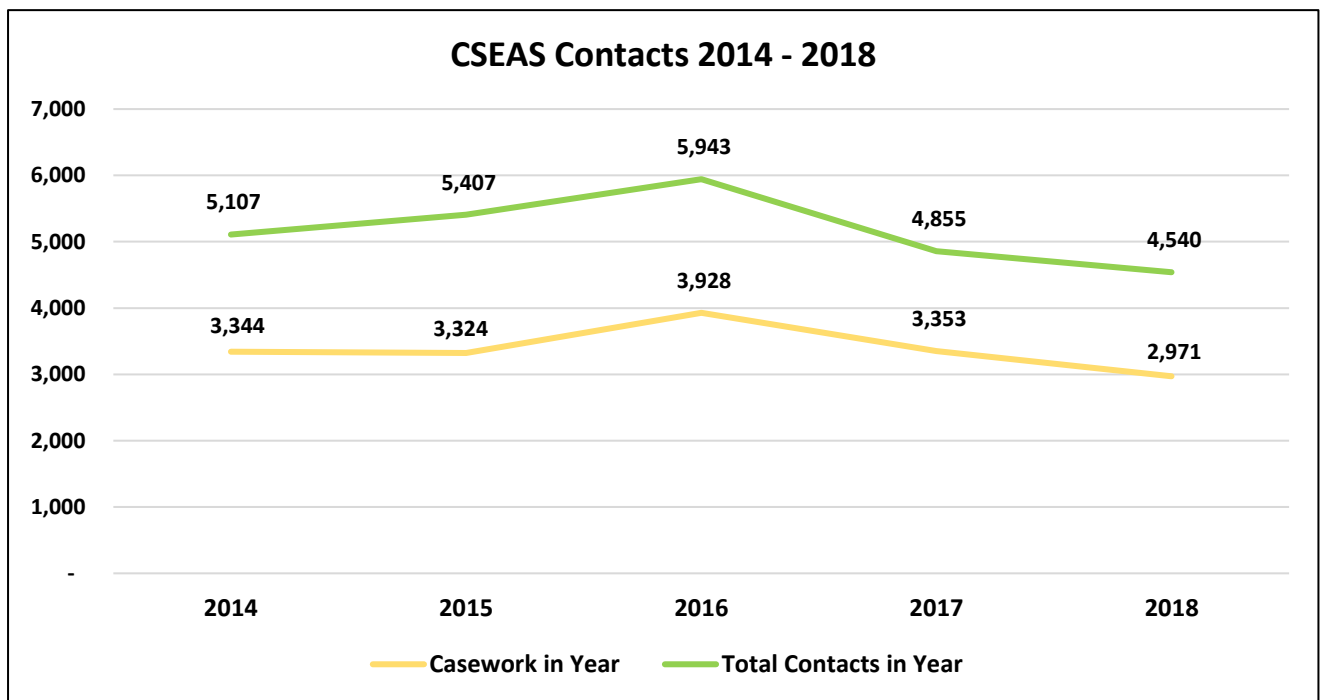
STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES AT A GLANCE

Ongoing engagement with its stakeholders is a vital component in the work of the CSEAS. See [Appendix 4](#) for details.

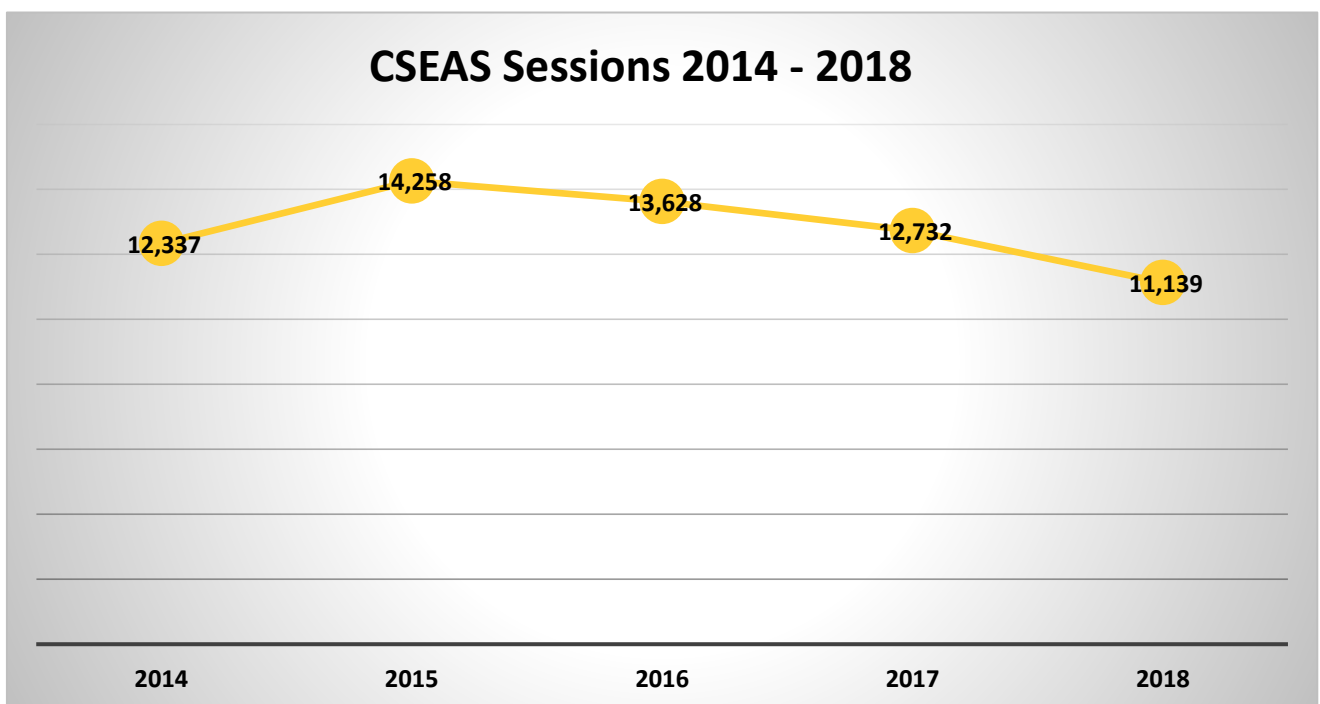


* See Appendix 6 [CONTACTING THE CSEAS](#)

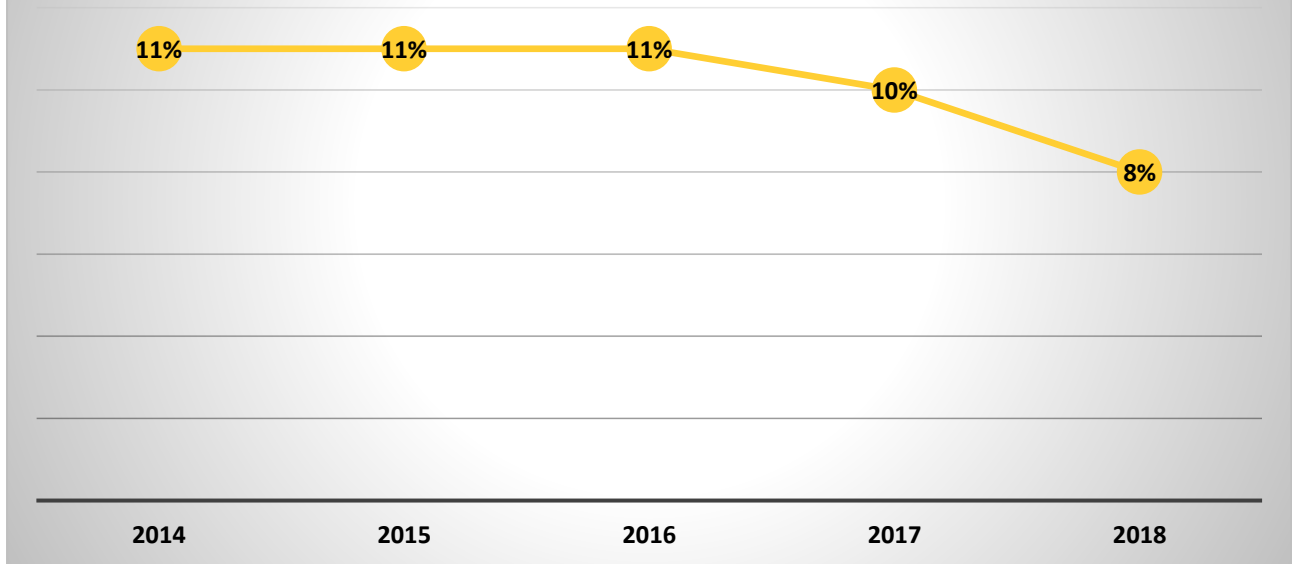
CSEAS ACTIVITY TRENDS 2014 - 2018



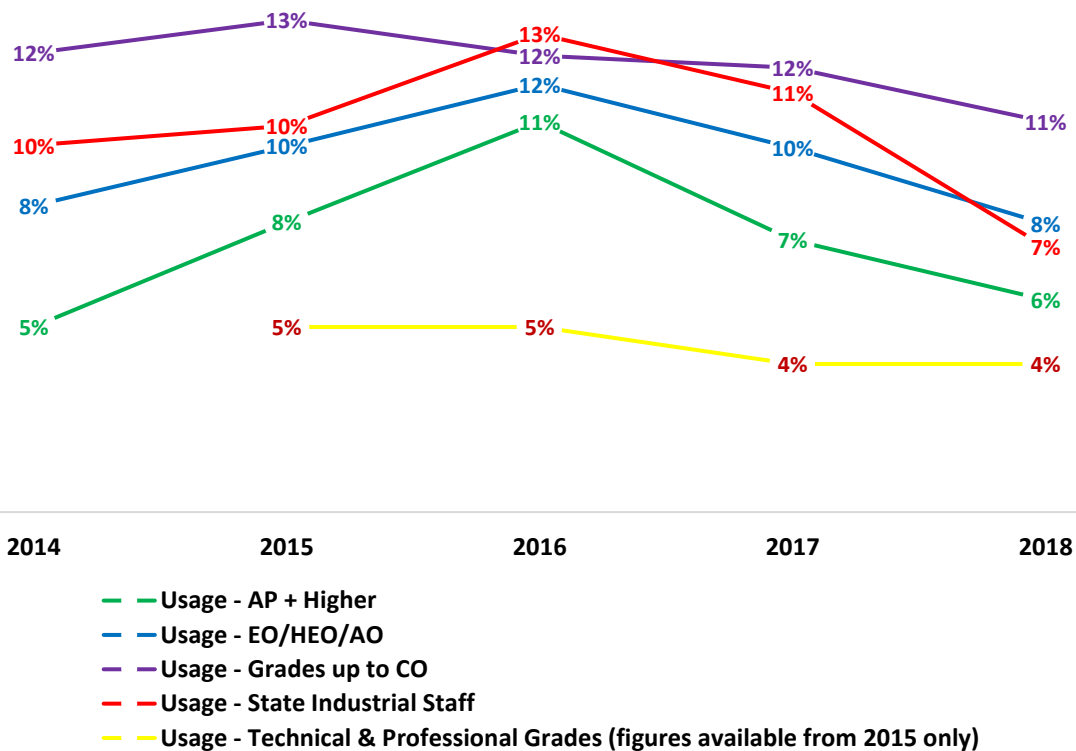
— “Total Contacts in Year” include callers/emails to the central CSEAS helpdesk and email address together with callers to individual Employee Assistance Officers requesting information only



CSEAS one-to-one usage across the Civil Service 2014 – 2018

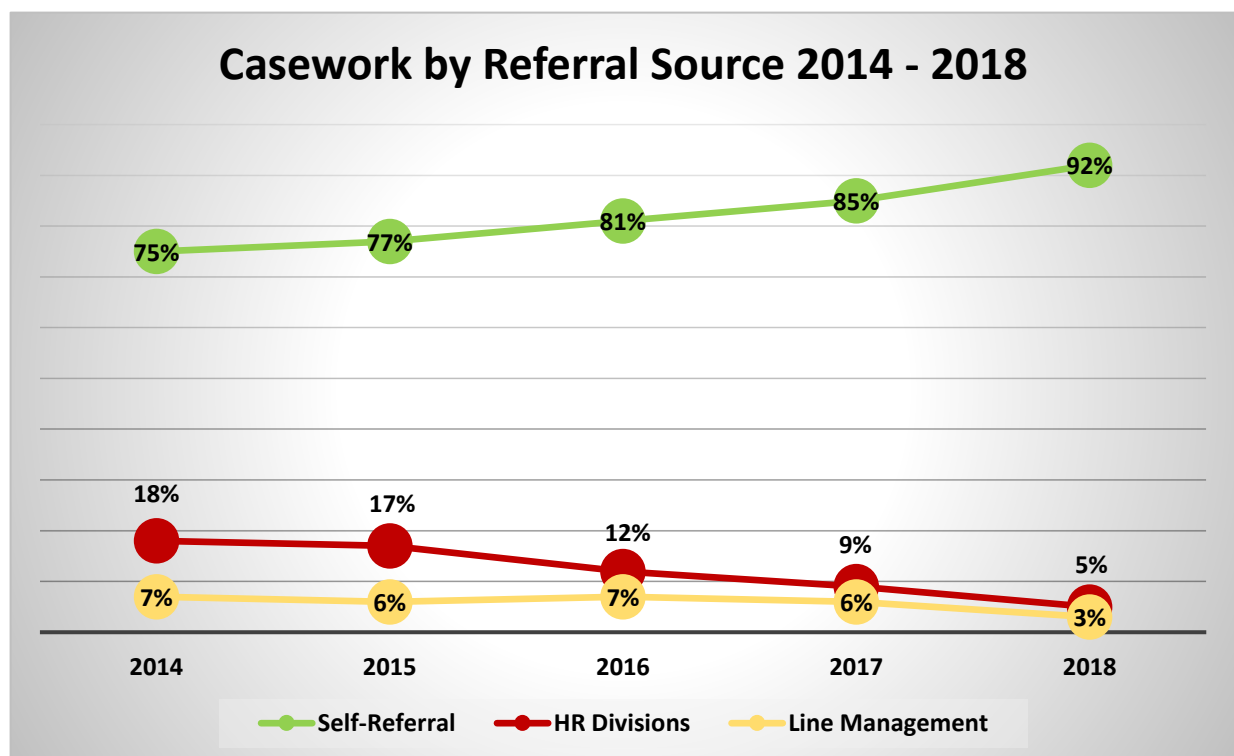


CSEAS one-to-one usage by Grade 2014 - 2018





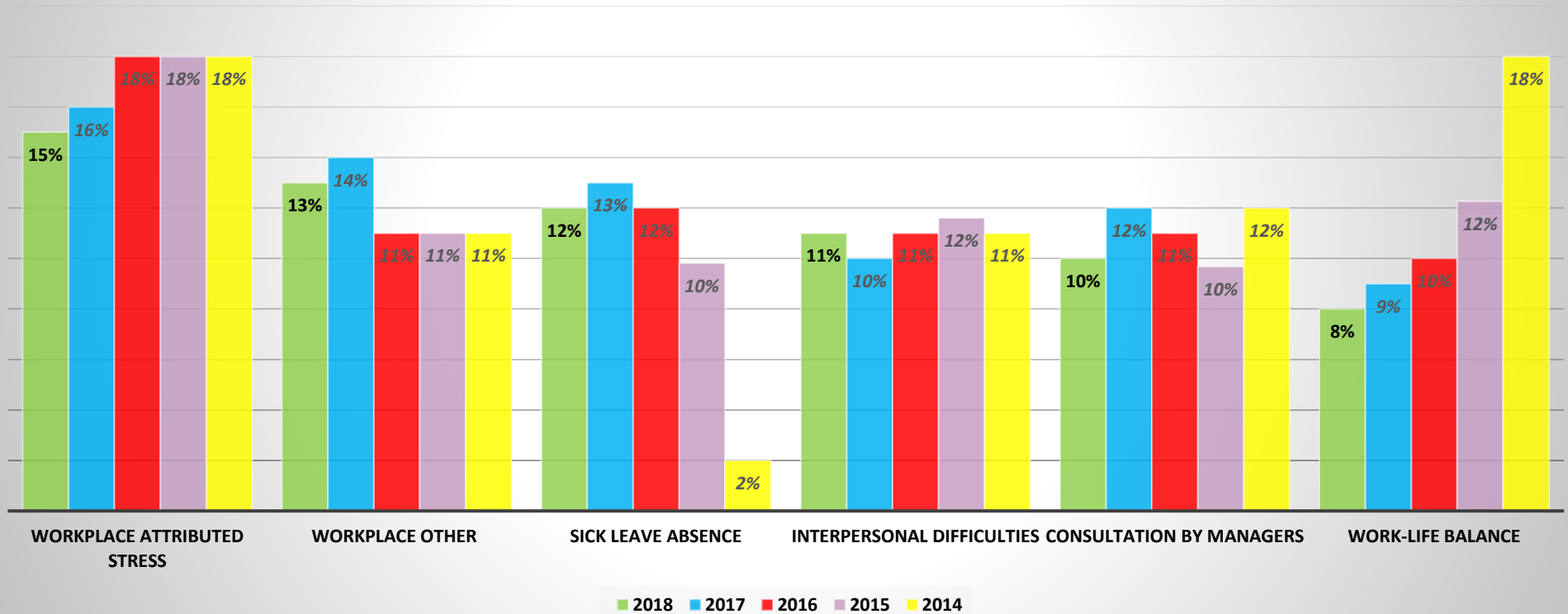
* Consultation by managers in their role as People Managers



CSEAS Casework

Top six work-related issues presenting as a % of total Work-related Issues in 2018

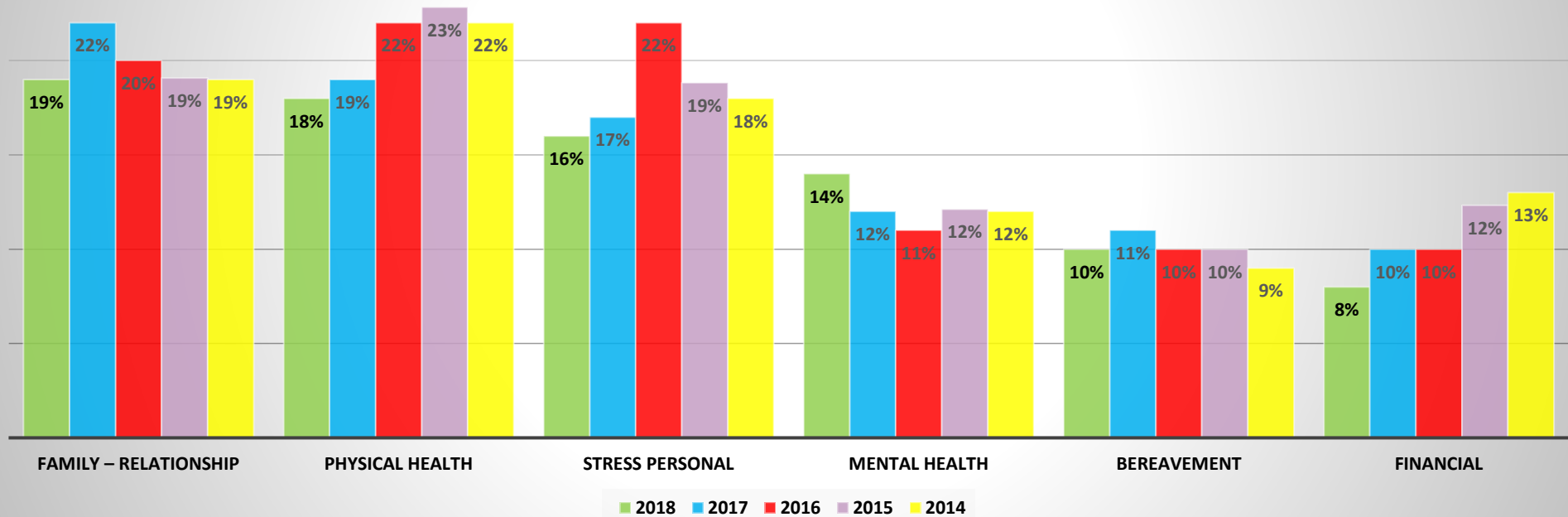
2014 to 2017 are shown for comparison purposes



“Workplace Other” includes issues such as probation, personal hygiene and other miscellaneous issues/challenges not categorised on the CSEAS database

CSEAS Casework

Top six personal issues presenting as a % of total Personal Issues in 2018
2014 to 2017 are shown for comparison purposes



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: DETAILS OF CSEAS ACTIVITY 2018

Table 1: CSEAS Casework by Department/Office

	Number of Cases 2018	As a % of serving staff in each Department 2018	Total serving staff (Established & State Industrial) at end Sept 2018
Agriculture, Food and Marine	244	7%	3,383
Attorney General	4	3%	134
Business, Enterprise and Innovation	52	6%	916
Central Statistics Office	126	15%	865
Chief State Solicitor's Office	13	5%	274
Children and Youth Affairs	5	2%	284
Communications, Climate Action & Environment	15	4%	415
Comptroller and Auditor General	2	1%	174
Courts Service	70	7%	1,051
Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht	55	8%	653
Defence	12	3%	354
Director of Public Prosecutions	8	4%	207
Education and Skills *	60	4%	1,465
Employment Affairs and Social Protection	769	11%	6,880
Finance	40	12%	328
Foreign Affairs and Trade	121	10%	1,160
Health	37	7%	498
Housing, Planning and Local Government **	85	12%	733
Justice and Equality ***	194	7%	2,837
National Council for Special Education	9	9%	105
National Gallery	6	7%	87
National Shared Services Office	24	3%	795
Office of Government Procurement	9	4%	221
Office of Public Works	171	8%	2,239
Office of the Ombudsman	8	6%	127
Oireachtas	31	5%	587
Property Registration Authority	41	8%	546
Public Appointments Service	9	5%	192
Public Expenditure and Reform ****	58	13%	439
Revenue Commissioners *****	579	9%	6,658
Rural and Community Development	2	1%	181
State Examinations Commission	5	2%	228
State Laboratory	10	10%	101
Taoiseach	20	9%	214
Transport, Tourism and Sport	48	9%	558
Valuation Office	17	13%	129
Others *****	12	10%	120
Total	2,971		36,138

* includes National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse and the Residential Institutions Redress Board

** includes Met Éireann

*** includes civil servants in the Irish Prison Service, IHREC, Legal Aid Board, Data Protection Commission and Policing Authority

**** includes the National Shared Services Office up until June 2018

***** includes Tax Appeals Commission

***** President's Establishment, Garda Ombudsman, National Library, National Museum

Table 2: CSEAS Casework by County

County	Total CSEAS Cases by County 2018	Total serving staff by County at end Sept 2018*	% Usage (serving staff) by County across the Civil Service 2018
Abroad **	16	392	4%
Carlow	33	206	16%
Cavan	46	378	12%
Clare	49	536	9%
Cork	204	2,255	9%
Donegal	114	847	13%
Dublin	1,171	17,340	7%
Galway	65	1,028	6%
Kerry	90	910	10%
Kildare	40	1,053	4%
Kilkenny	75	472	16%
Laois	70	628	11%
Leitrim	33	303	11%
Limerick	112	1,467	8%
Longford	36	622	6%
Louth	114	617	18%
Mayo	61	621	10%
Meath	74	778	10%
Monaghan	39	129	30%
Offaly	68	526	13%
Roscommon	23	248	9%
Sligo	176	873	20%
Tipperary	85	891	10%
Waterford	83	632	13%
Westmeath	27	1,064	3%
Wexford	58	846	7%
Wicklow	9	173	5%
Location unavailable		303	
Total	2,971	36,138***	

* Figures from DPER as at end Sept 2018

** Staff posted abroad figure does not include local recruits

*** Includes State Industrial Staff. Excludes Garda Civilians and Prison Officers as they do not come within the remit of the CSEAS

Table 3: CSEAS Casework by Grade

	Total Cases 2018	2018 Cases as a % of Serving Staff in each grade	Numbers in grades 2018 ¹
Assistant Principal	184	7%	2,653
Clerical Officer	1,192	10%	11,398
Cleaner	11	11%	99
Executive Officer	546	7%	7,477
Higher Executive Officer/Administrative Officer	484	8%	5,751
Principal Officer and Higher	35	3%	1,167
Service Officer	68	12%	556
State Industrial	129	7%	1,802
Technical Professional	201	4%	5,533
Unknown Grades *	115	-	83
Retired Staff / Family Member **	6	-	-
Total	2,971		36,519***

¹Separating General Service Grades from Professional & Technical Equivalents

* Unknown Grades refers to CSEAS cases where the grade was not disclosed by the service user

** This category relates mainly to Death in Service/death of a retired staff member

*** Includes local recruits serving abroad who do not come within the remit of the CSEAS

Table 4: CSEAS Casework by Category

One-to-one clients using the CSEAS often wish to discuss a combination of issues. These issues are reflected individually in the figures below:

Work-related Issues	Totals 2018	As a % of total Work-related Issues 2018
Career Prospects	203	7%
Consultation by Managers	278	10%
Coping with Work Change	128	4%
Critical Incident	41	1%
Death in Service	34	1%
Dignity at Work	112	4%
Disciplinary Issue	43	1%
Ill-Health Retirement	73	3%
Interpersonal Difficulties	296	11%
Retirement	161	6%
Return to Work Issues	109	4%
Sick Leave Absence	333	12%
Work-Life Balance	216	8%
Workplace Attributed Stress	410	15%
Workplace Other *	372	13%
Total	2,809	100%
Personal Issues	Totals 2018	As a % of total Personal Issues 2018
Bereavement	207	10%
Coping with Personal Change	153	7%
Family – Relationship	412	19%
Financial	178	8%
Mental Health	300	14%
Physical Health	396	18%
Personal Other*	131	6%
Stress Personal	338	16%
Substance Misuse / Addictive Behaviour**	43	2%
Total	2,158	100%
Overall Total	4,967	

* These categories include issues such as personal hygiene, probation and other challenges excluding those categorised

** Includes issues with alcohol, drugs, gambling, internet etc.

APPENDIX 2: CSEAS HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROMOTION 2018

At the request of Government Department/Offices, the CSEAS is available to deliver presentations/workshops on a variety of topics. These sessions are tailored to suit the specific needs of the requesting Department/Office and may cover a variety of topics within the same presentation. The CSEAS aims to be flexible in accommodating the needs of management and staff in these instances. The table below outlines our work in this area in 2018 categorised by Department/Office.

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Information on the CSEAS	6	6
Business Enterprise and Innovation	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
Central Statistics Office	Information on the CSEAS	1	2
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	1	
Chief State Solicitor's Office	Building Resilience	2	3
	Stress Management	1	
Children and Youth Affairs	Information on the CSEAS	1	2
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
Communications, Climate Action and Environment	Information on the CSEAS	4	4
Courts Service	Bereavement	1	4
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	1	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers	1	
Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Information on the CSEAS	1	11
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	10	
Defence	Positive Mental Health	1	1
Education & Skills	Information on the CSEAS	5	6
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
Employment Affairs and Social Protection	Bereavement	2	56
	Building Resilience	12	
	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	
	Information on the CSEAS	20	
	Mindfulness	1	
	Planning for Retirement	2	
	Positive Mental Health	3	
	Stress Management	15	

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
Finance	Bereavement	1	3
	Information on the CSEAS	2	
Foreign Affairs and Trade	Information on the CSEAS	5	8
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	Suicide Awareness *	1	
	Work/Life Balance	1	
Fórsa Conference	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
Health	Stress Management	1	1
Housing, Planning and Local Government	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls /Distressed Customers	1	2
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
Justice and Equality	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	2	19
	Information on the CSEAS	10	
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	1	
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
	Stress Management	4	
Legal Aid Board	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
National Council For Special Education	Information on the CSEAS	1	3
	Positive Mental Health	1	
	Stress Management	1	
National Shared Services Office	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
Office of Government Procurement	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	5
	Information on the CSEAS	4	
Office of Public Works	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	9
	Information on the CSEAS	2	
	Mindfulness	1	
	Planning for Retirement – Input to courses run by OPW	3	
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
	Stress Management	1	
Office of The Comptroller and Auditor General	Building Resilience	1	1

Department/Office/Others	Topic	Number	Total
Office of the Ombudsman	Information on the CSEAS	3	3
Office of the Revenue Commissioners	Bereavement	8	45
	Building Resilience	1	
	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls /Distressed Customers	2	
	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	10	
	Information on the CSEAS	14	
	Planning for Retirement	1	
	Positive Mental Health	4	
	Stress Management	5	
Oireachtas	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	1
President's Establishment	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
Property Registration Authority	Bereavement	2	2
Public Expenditure and Reform	Building Resilience	1	8
	Information on the CSEAS	6	
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
Rural and Community Development	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	2
	Information on the CSEAS	1	
State Laboratory	Health and Wellbeing / Self-Care	1	1
Taoiseach	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	1	2
	Suicide Awareness *	1	
Transport, Tourism and Sport	Dealing with Difficult Phone Calls /Distressed Customers	3	9
	Information on the CSEAS	2	
	Positive Working Environment / Dignity at Work / Harmony at Work	1	
	Self-Care for HR staff	1	
	Stress Management	1	
	The CSEAS as a Resource for Managers	1	
Valuation Office	Information on the CSEAS	1	1
TOTAL			225

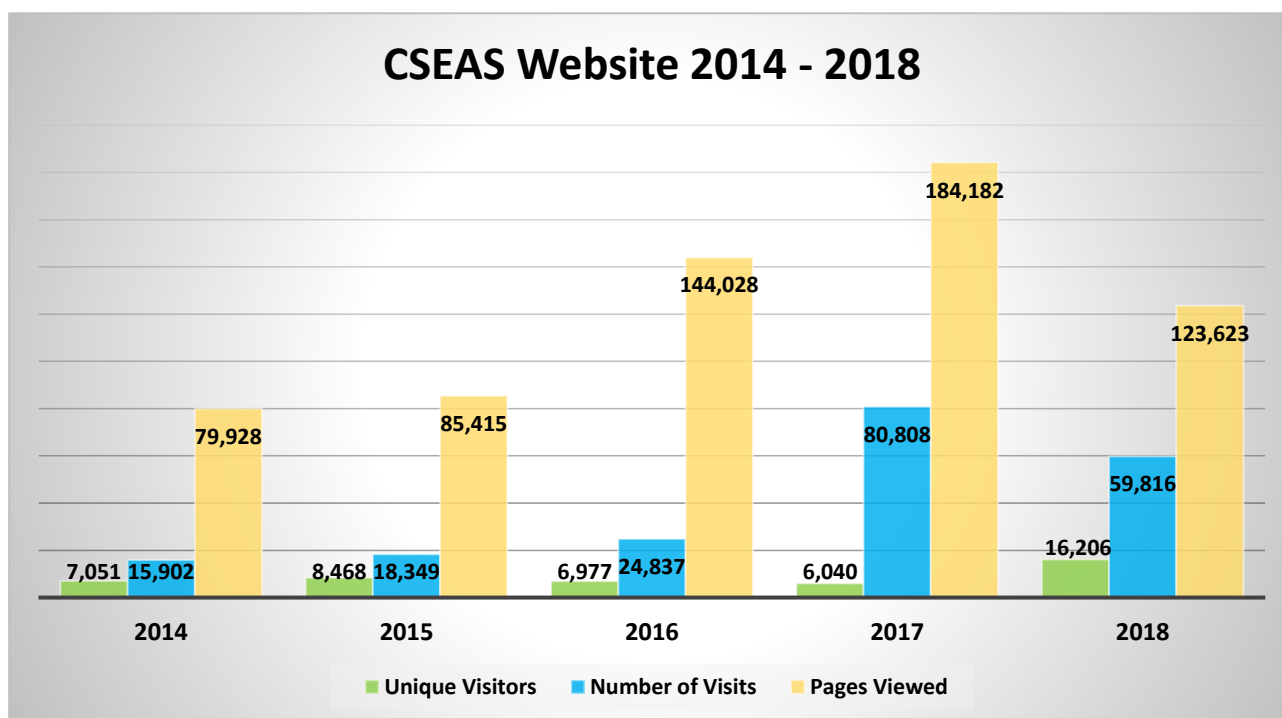
* In addition to presentations on Suicide Awareness outlined above, the CSEAS also provided support to over 450 civil servants who underwent training in managing situations involving a risk to life

APPENDIX 3: CSEAS ELECTRONIC PLATFORMS

In 2018 the CSEAS Twitter account was used as an informational tool to highlight new CSEAS publications and impart CSEAS news, together with retweeting useful links. CSEAS Tweets are sent on a wide variety of topics which seek to raise awareness of and promote health and wellbeing.

The CSEAS website is a key communication platform which provides comprehensive information and support on a wide range of health and wellbeing topics. As well as being an important reference point for staff, it highlights CSEAS publications, events and news.

The CSEAS website had a total of 16,206 unique visitors in 2018, representing a significant increase from last year. A contributing factor to this increase occurred in June 2018. The method of capturing and analysing website data changed, giving a more accurate representation of the number of visits and users on the site. The CSEAS acknowledges the ongoing expertise and support from OGCI0 in the maintenance of the website.



APPENDIX 4: STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES

A vital component in the work of the CSEAS is our ongoing engagement with stakeholders*. This is done in a number of ways, including on-the-ground engagement with HR personnel; management workshops with HR Divisions and line managers; working directly with service users; linkages with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Civil and Public Service Mediation Service (CPSMS) and other relevant bodies; attendance at Trade Union conferences; representation from the stakeholder groupings on the CSEAS Advisory Committee.



HR Divisions

Attendance by the CSEAS manager at **Civil Service HR Managers Network** meetings ensures the CSEAS participates in the HR Manager forum on best practice HR management in the Civil Service. It is also an opportunity for CSEAS management to network across the Civil Service.

Regular attendance by the CSEAS at the **Employee Relations Network (ERN)**, a forum for HR practice discussion by HR personnel at all levels, ensures a collaborative approach in addressing HR case management issues in the Civil Service.

On request from HR Divisions, the CSEAS contributes to **Health and Wellbeing** programmes organised within Departments/Offices. CSEAS staff deliver presentations on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, Harmony at Work, Stress Management, Building Resilience, Positive Mental Health, Mindfulness etc.

CSEAS management hosts **CSEAS/HR Managers Workshops** to gain feedback on CSEAS service delivery. This fosters CSEAS/HR Division relationships and communications.

The CSEAS delivers **Self-Care Awareness for HR Staff workshops** to HR Divisions on request. This initiative is in recognition of the requirement to support HR staff in their own self-care.

Management

The CSEAS takes every opportunity to develop on-the-ground linkages with managers. The CSEAS proactively engages with people managers by providing support for those managing staff where there are personal and/or work-related issues.*

In 2018, this support included delivering a comprehensive guide to assist managers in supporting staff experiencing work and/or life challenges. Input was regularly sought and incorporated from, relevant parties across the Civil Service. The People Managers' Guide soft launch took place in November 2018. Hard copies of the Guide will be available in 2019.

* CSEAS protocols on confidentiality and GDPR are adhered to at all times

CSEAS presentations for managers are delivered on request. Relevant topics include the CSEAS as a Resource for Managers and Conflict Resolution Skills.

Service Users

The CSEAS operates an on-duty Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) service via the CSEAS Helpdesk during office hours (Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm, Fri: 9am to 5.15pm, except bank/public holidays). The CSEAS also operates a central email service.

One-to-one client consultations are central to the work of the CSEAS. These contacts offer support and guidance to staff who may be experiencing personal and/or work-related difficulties.

The CSEAS engages in Health & Wellbeing promotion at the request of Departments/Offices through the delivery of presentations on a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, Harmony at Work, Stress Management, Building Resilience, Positive Mental Health, Mindfulness etc.

Internal and External Links

The **Chief Medical Officer (CMO)** for the Civil Service is a member of the CSEAS Advisory Committee. Linkages with the Office of the CMO can be very valuable, particularly in supporting those absent on, or returning from, sick leave. See www.cmo.gov.ie for more information. The Office of the CMO may refer civil servants to, or suggest involvement with, the CSEAS either directly or through HR Divisions.

The CSEAS has links with the **Civil and Public Service Mediation Service (CPSMS)**. See <http://hr.per.gov.ie/mediation/> for more information. A member of the CSEAS team is a trained mediator and is listed on the CPSMS panel.

Each year members of the CSEAS team have a presence at the Civil Service **Trade Union Conferences** to promote the services available from the CSEAS.

The CSEAS is represented on the Management Committee of the **Public Service Friendly Society (PSFS)**. The Society provides financial support and advice to members of the Society who find themselves in financial difficulties. By fostering a strong relationship with the Society, the CSEAS can assist in supporting civil servants with financial concerns. Full details about the PSFS are available at www.psfs.ie

The CSEAS is represented on the **Healthy Ireland Workplaces Framework** sub-group of Healthy Ireland (HI). HI has developed this national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Ireland over the coming generations. The Healthy Workplace initiative is an integral part of driving the Healthy Ireland agenda and makes an important contribution to healthier communities. CSEAS core values and objectives, as set out in the Mission Statement (page ii), align directly with the aim of this sub-group.

The General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) came into effect on 25th May 2018. The CSEAS is represented on the **HR GDPR Working Group** within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform which consists of members from several government departments/offices.

APPENDIX 5: ABOUT THE CSEAS

Who We Are

The CSEAS is the Employee Assistance Programme for the Irish Civil Service. It is a centralised service, operating on a regional basis, within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) providing supports and services to all civil servants. It plays a key part in an ethos of promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. Provision of this service is a recognition that staff are a valued resource, whose continued wellbeing contributes to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Civil Service. The CSEAS supports the employer's duty of care to its employees under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 in the area of psychosocial issues such as stress, bullying and harassment, alcohol and drug misuse.

What We Do

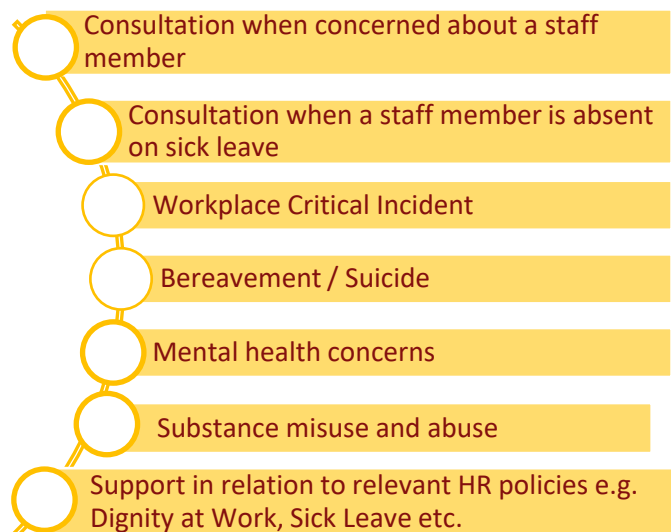
Support to Staff

The core element of the work of the CSEAS is supporting staff. It is a free and confidential¹ service provided to civil servants at times of personal and/or work-related difficulties. Such difficulties, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life. An on-duty Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) is available to provide support and assistance to service users through the CSEAS Helpdesk during office hours (Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm, Fri: 9am to 5.15pm except bank/public holidays). The CSEAS also operates a central email service.



Support to Managers

The CSEAS continued to proactively engage with managers² throughout 2018 by providing support for those managing staff experiencing personal and/or work-related issues. In 2018, this support included delivering a comprehensive guide to assist managers in supporting staff experiencing work and/or life challenges. Input was regularly sought and incorporated from, relevant parties across the Civil Service. The People Managers' Guide soft launch took place in November 2018. Hard copies of the Guide will be available in 2019.



¹ Details on confidentiality and exceptions to this are available on the CSEAS website www.cseas.per.gov.ie

² CSEAS protocols on confidentiality are adhered to in engagement with HR/management

CSEAS support to managers includes the facility to anonymously³ discuss staff issues arising. This allows managers obtain support and guidance in dealing with the situation, explore options for managing it and consider the benefit of suggesting the use of the CSEAS to the staff member. In 2018, the CSEAS HR/Management Referral process was revised in light of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018. As of that date, the CSEAS can only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

Support to HR

Working with HR Divisions, the CSEAS engages in early interventions to help staff minimise sick leave absences, assist in return to work and to restore work capacity⁴. CSEAS management hosts CSEAS/HR Managers Workshops to seek feedback on service delivery and to consider how the CSEAS can provide ongoing support to HR staff.

In 2018, the CSEAS continued to roll out Self-Care Awareness for HR Staff workshops. Based on organisational needs, workshops are delivered in-house with local HR staff or at CSEAS Headquarters with a mix of HR staff groupings.



CSEAS support to HR Divisions includes the facility for HR personnel to anonymously discuss issues that can impact on staff wellbeing such as sick leave, absenteeism, return to work, underperformance, disciplinary issues, inter-personal difficulties. This allows HR personnel obtain support and guidance in dealing with the situation arising, explore options for managing it and consider the benefit of suggesting the use of the CSEAS to staff members. In 2018, the CSEAS HR/Management Referral process was revised in light of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018. As of that date, the CSEAS can only accept formal referrals from HR/Management where there is a risk to life e.g. suicidal intent or, where the referral has been recommended by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

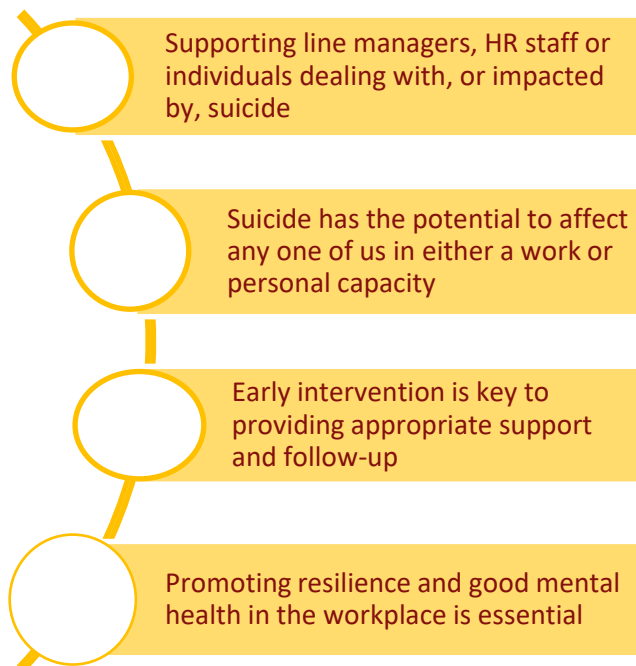
³ Consultations should be on an anonymised basis bearing in mind GDPR obligations

⁴ CSEAS protocols on confidentiality are adhered to in engagement with HR/management

Responding to Suicide in the Workplace

In 2018, 41 civil servants who had been affected by suicide or had suicidal ideation, availed of CSEAS supports and services. "Connecting for Life", Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020, recognises the importance of developing guidance, training and support to workplaces in relation to suicide prevention. Throughout 2018, the CSEAS provided support to over 450 civil servants who underwent training in managing situations involving a risk to life.

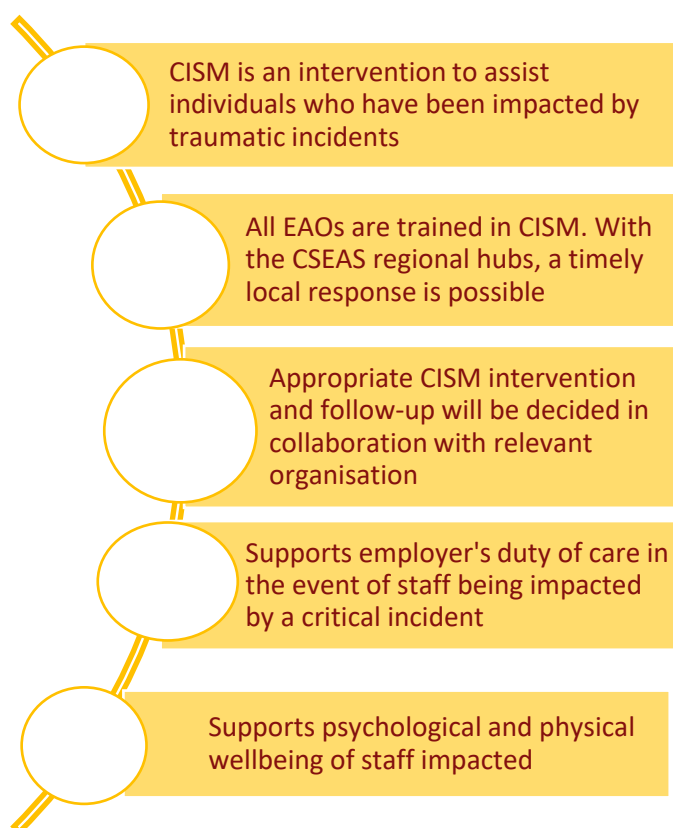
Promoting resilience and positive mental health in the workplace is essential for a healthy and effective workforce and, recognising this, the CSEAS offers a range of presentations, leaflets and information designed to assist and support those in psychological distress. All EAOs are trained in suicide first aid having attended the HSE's ASIST and/or safeTALK training.



Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

A critical incident in the workplace is an event out of the range of normal experience – one which is sudden and unexpected and may have a physical and/or emotional impact. In some cases it may involve the perception of a threat to life. These challenging events can have the potential to create significant distress and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms. CISM is a systematic approach to managing critical incidents, incorporating interventions developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events. In responding effectively and professionally to a workplace critical incident, the aim of a CISM intervention is to minimise the potential negative consequences for both the individual(s) and the organisation.

All EAOs are trained in CISM. Requests for CISM interventions for staff who are impacted by a critical incident can come from managers or HR Divisions. The CSEAS regional hubs facilitate a timely and locally



accessible response when required. During 2018 the CSEAS provided CISM interventions following 4 workplace critical incidents. In addition to availing of support in a group setting, staff can avail of one-to-one CSEAS support when impacted by a workplace critical incident. In 2018, the CSEAS provided support to 41 individual staff members affected by a critical incident.

Governance, Communications and Service Development

The **CSEAS Advisory Committee** oversees the structure of the CSEAS in the areas of governance, staffing and policy. Committee members comprise a Chairperson from DPER, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the Civil Service, HR Managers from a number of Departments/Offices and the Secretary to the Civil Service General Council Staff Panel. For full details, see [CSEAS Structure](#).

Fundamental to core CSEAS service delivery is the implementation of a strategic communications plan to ensure the smooth delivery of service. The CSEAS has a robust communications strategy which outlines how we communicate with customers across platforms. As well as a user-friendly website and Twitter presence, the CSEAS has a suite of publications including governance documents, leaflets, newsletters, booklets and guides. The CSEAS also delivers presentations to staff on health and wellbeing topics and participates in the HR Managers Network meetings and a number of working groups.

The CSEAS welcomes feedback from all stakeholders. In 2018, the CSEAS HR Survey issued to HR Divisions. The purpose of this survey was to ascertain HR staff's awareness and usage of the CSEAS and their views on CSEAS service delivery. The current CSEAS Action Plan has specific focus on key areas including CSEAS communications, support to managers, the Civil Service Health & Wellbeing Framework and the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018.

A key activity within the CSEAS is reviewing, refining and developing internal systems, protocols and guidelines. This assists in the delivery of a quality customer-centric service to all stakeholders. Throughout 2018, CSEAS processes and publications were reviewed in light of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR).



Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CSEAS team is committed to providing a quality service through its centres of expertise throughout the country. EAOs continually develop their skills through CPD such as formal training, shared learning, mentoring, buddy systems and peer support. This ensures continued high standards in service delivery benefitting both the individual and the organisation.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The CSEAS recognises the need to treat all client data in an appropriate and lawful manner. We are committed to complying fully with the Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR). GDPR came into effect on 25th May 2018.

The CSEAS now has

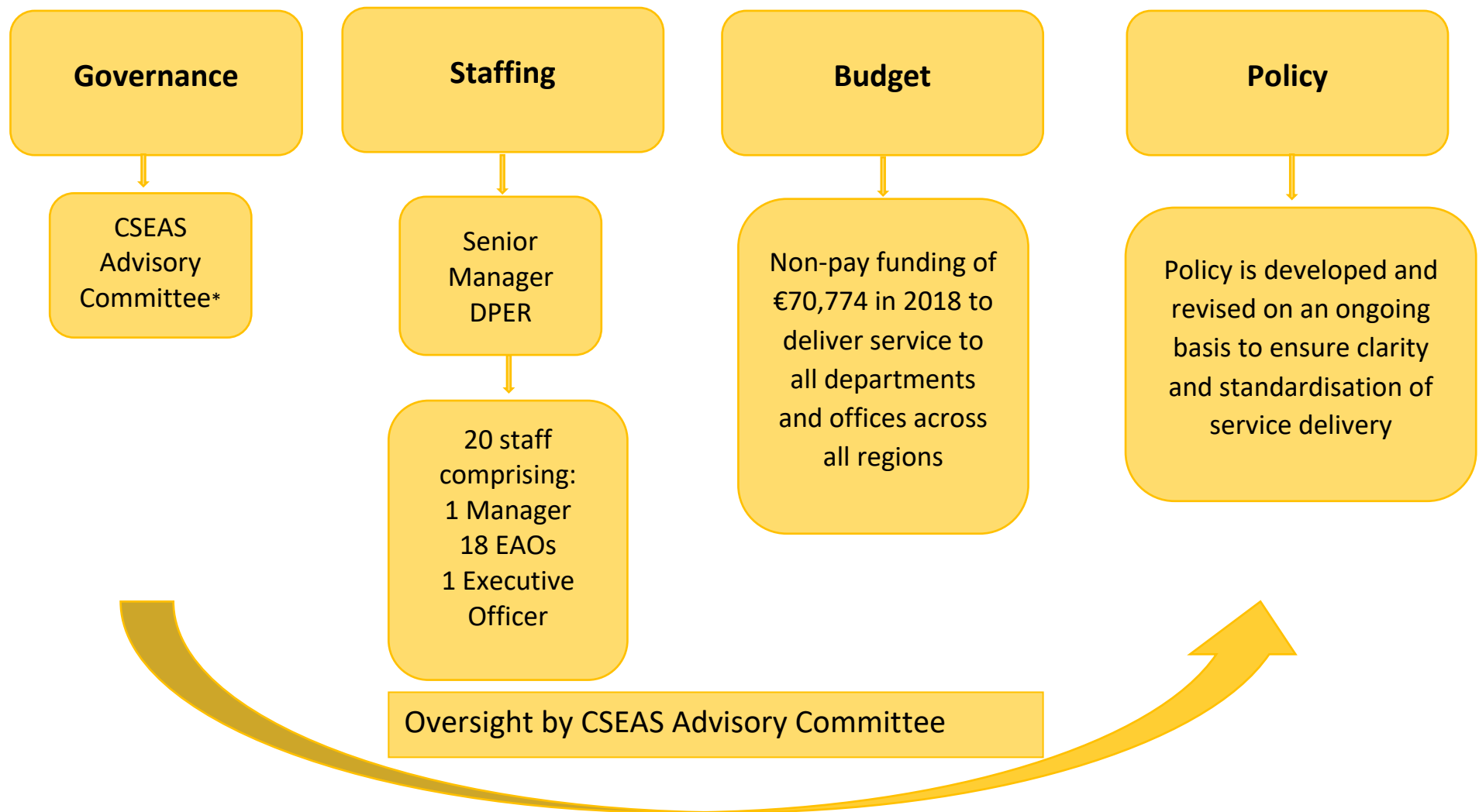
- a GDPR Statement
- a GDPR Consent Form
- revised the CSEAS HR/Management Referral process
- a GDPR page on the CSEAS website
- revised relevant CSEAS documents and publications to comply with GDPR

Staff Changes in the CSEAS

There were a number of staff changes within the CSEAS in 2018. The CSEAS bid a fond farewell to Brian Hennessy and Lorus Collum who retired in June and October, respectively. Brian worked as an EAO for many years providing service to numerous Departments/Offices in a number of locations. Lorus was appointed manager of the CSEAS in 2011 and was instrumental in the successful restructuring of the Service in 2012 as a centralised, regionalised element of the Civil Service HR structure within DPER. We wish both Brian and Lorus well in retirement.

The CSEAS is delighted to welcome Karen O'Connor (Administration Support Officer), Derek Hollingsworth (EAO) and Susan Clarke (CSEAS Manager). We look forward to working together in the future.

CSEAS Structure



* The CSEAS Advisory Committee comprises (1) A Chairperson who is a representative from DPER (2) The Chief Medical Officer for the Civil Service (3) HR Managers from a number of Departments/Offices: In 2018 HR Managers were from the Departments of (a) Employment Affairs and Social Protection (b) Finance (c) Foreign Affairs & Trade (d) Housing, Planning and Local Government (e) Justice and Equality. HR representatives from Departments change every 2 years on a phased basis, with some overlap to ensure continuity of experience on the Advisory Committee. (4) The Secretary to the Civil Service General Council Staff Panel. Current members of the CSEAS Advisory Committee can be viewed on the CSEAS website www.cseas.per.gov.ie

APPENDIX 6: CONTACTING THE CSEAS



**Central Phone
Number**

0761 000 030



cseas@per.gov.ie



www.cseas.per.gov.ie



CSEAS

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

4th Floor, St. Stephen's Green House

Earlsfort Terrace

Dublin 2

D02 PH42

Contact details for individual EAOs are available on the CSEAS website



On-duty EAO available at 0761 000 030

Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm*

Fri: 9am to 5.15pm*

***(except bank/public holidays)**



Follow us



@IRLCSEAS

CSEAS Managers



Lorus Collum



Susan Clarke

Administration Support Officers



Kellie May



Karen O'Connor

Employee Assistance Officers



Brian Hennessy



Deirdre Maye



Triona King



Bernie Moran



Geraldine Carey



Michael Stapleton



Ann Jordan



Margaret Fagan



Fran Scott



Carmel Dalton



Rosemary Branagan



Antoinette Mahon



Ann Duffy



Deirdre Farrell



Donna Casey



Philip O'Callaghan



Claire Delahunt



Claire Murphy



Derek Hollingsworth

CSEAS ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

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