



**An Bord Pinsean -
The Pensions Board**

Authority for Pensions

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Verschoye House, 28/30 Lr. Mount Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 613 1900 Fax: (01) 631 8602
www.pensionsboard.ie

New Pensions Board Chief Executive Officer

On Friday 10 November 2006, Brendan Kennedy was selected by the Pensions Board to succeed Anne Maher as its Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Tiarnan O Mahoney, Chairman of the Pensions Board, said he looked forward to working with Mr. Kennedy. "Brendan has done fantastic work with the Pensions Board in the two years since he joined. He possesses the right skill set for this demanding job which includes pensions regulation and policy advice. Brendan will head up a strong Executive team and will have the Board's full support."

Mr. Kennedy joined the Pensions Board as Actuarial Adviser in 2004. In this role, he has been involved in a wide range of Board activities, including regulatory issues and the preparation of the National Pensions Review and the report on Special Savings for Retirement.

Before joining the Board, Mr. Kennedy worked in life insurance and in actuarial consultancy. He is a Dubliner and is an actuary by training.



Brendan Kennedy
CEO

Farewell to Anne Maher

After 10 very successful years, Anne Maher completed her term of office as CEO of the Pensions Board on Thursday 30 November 2006.

Anne is a Board member of the Irish Accounting and Auditing Supervisory Authority, the Health Insurance Authority and of the Professional Oversight Board (UK). She is also a member of the FTSE Policy Group, a Governor of The Pensions Policy Institute (UK), and a member of the EU Committee of European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Supervisors. Her background is a law degree from University College Dublin.

On her last day with the Board, she won the award for Outstanding Industry Contribution at the European IPE awards.

Anne, as Chief Executive, has played a leading and major part in the development of pension systems in Ireland. At all times she was totally committed to the interests of the individual in the street and this resulted in the Board seeking practical and effective solutions to pension issues. We wish her well in her future roles.



Towards 2016

The latest social partnership agreement *Towards 2016* contains a number of references to pensions and the Pensions Board. The agreement endorses the targets of the National Pensions Policy Initiative (NPPI) for improvements in pension coverage for 70% of the total workforce over age 30. The social partners also commit to increasing pension coverage generally in the economy through appropriate models and to co-operate at national and workplace level, through regular discussion and dialogue on pensions matters.

Key aspects of the agreement include:

Partnership Pensions Review. The Government has agreed to engage with employers and trade unions, in a process to be supported by appropriate expertise and taking account of the reports of the Pensions Board and of the operation of the annuity market, in the context of a comprehensive approach to future pensions policy. The outcome of this exercise will feed into the formulation of the Government's Green Paper on National Pensions Policy.

As part of this review, the Pensions Board has been asked to research benefit design options in the occupational pensions area. This will involve examination of current design issues in both Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution arrangements with a view to producing guidance as to designs which encompass the positive elements of each arrangement while adjusting the costs and risks to the parties involved.

Work on this project is at an advanced stage. It is anticipated that the report will be submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach before the end of the year following consideration by the Board. The paper will then be considered by the social partners as part of the Pensions Partnership Review process.

Green Paper on National Pensions Policy. The Government is committed to publishing a Green Paper on Pensions Policy outlining the major policy choices and challenges in this area. The Government are committed to responding to the consultations on foot of the paper's publication within 12 months of the ratification of the agreement by developing a framework for comprehensively addressing the pensions agenda over the longer-term.

Progress to date. A number of meetings of the Partnership Pensions Review Group were held in October and November. These meetings were attended by representatives from a number of Government Departments, IBEC, ICTU and the Pensions Board.

Trusteeship Review

A report on the issue of trusteeship was forwarded by the Pensions Board to the Minister for Social and Family Affairs on the 8 November 2006, for consideration and approval.

The main objectives of the Review were to:

- Evaluate the trust model of pension scheme governance;
- Identify potential regulatory and governance improvements that can be made to enable the trust model to perform more effectively, and;
- Examine the supports in place for trustees.

The Board concluded that the trust model continues to offer a robust framework for protecting pension schemes that justifies its continuance. The availability of alternative options, for example contracts and master trust arrangements, is also important in allowing choice of the most appropriate form of pension provision.

The Board also believes that there are some improvements that could be made to ensure that the regulation and governance of trust based occupational schemes continue to offer the appropriate level of protection for scheme members. These changes to the regulatory regime should be made in a proportionate manner and only where necessary. Specific recommendations to enhance standards of scheme administration and to increase the standard of trustee ability have been made by the Board.

PA Consulting/Sunday Times Management Awards

The Pensions Board ranked among the five finalists shortlisted for the PA Consulting/Sunday Times Management Awards presented by the Taoiseach on 14 November last. These awards recognise management excellence and are open to all companies, public and private, North and South of the Border.

The overall award winner was Symantec, the American software company, with Autotrader Ireland, Netwatch and Dublin Port also shortlisted.

The presence of two public bodies on the list “is a reflection on the quality and depth of management within Ireland’s public sector” said Colm O’Reilly, managing director of PA Consulting. “This is an important indicator of how Ireland is becoming more competitive in all aspects of our economy”. The Pensions Board was shortlisted partly for its work in pushing pension provision to the top of the agenda in Irish public life.

It is a considerable achievement to be shortlisted and a reflection of the achievements of all of the staff of the Board this year. Our submission included the range of management processes within the Board, including the Partnership Committee, and the contribution of all staff in delivering on our strategic objectives.



An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern T.D. and Brendan Kennedy



Philip Dalton, Mary Hutch, Julie Walsh, Brendan Kennedy, An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern T.D., Gregory Whelan, Tom Dunphy, Jerry Moriarty

Update on Funding Standard Review

The Minister for Social & Family Affairs has asked the Pensions Board to review again the Funding Standard for defined benefit schemes. The Working Party of the Board is currently examining the issues and will report to the Board in early 2007.

Fees Payable to the Pensions Board.

The Board wishes to advise that the fee rates in respect of Occupational Pension Schemes and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts as set out in the Occupational Pension Schemes (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 2002 (S.I. No. 610 of 2002) and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (Fees) Regulations, 2002 (S.I. No. 506 of 2002) will remain at their current levels for 2007.

Notice to Subscribers to the Pensions Board Legislation Service

The Pensions Board will outsource the delivery of its Legislation Service from 1 January 2007 to Better Regulation Ltd, a private company who will provide an online version of the service.

Further information has been issued to all current subscribers to the Board's Legislation Service and is also available on our website under Publications/Legislation Service.

National Pensions Awareness Campaign (NPAC) 2006

The focus of the 2006 campaign was on **"Action & Adequacy"**, whereby campaign activity sought to drive pensions take-up by those with no pension and to get those with pensions to consider whether their pension arrangements would meet their needs in retirement.

Initiatives undertaken as part of NPAC 2006 included:

- Encouraging SSIA holders to invest some of their capital into a pension and keep the savings habit. This was done through media articles and radio interviews and the establishment of SSIA conversion calculators on the Pensions Board website.
- Targeting the print, radio, cinema, internet and TV that young people engage with most.
- Additional advertising through an array of ambient media, including posters on buses, 48 sheet admobiles and on-line banner links to the calculators on our website.
- Heavily promoting the Pensions Board website, particularly the pensions calculator, through all publicity activities.

- A Pensions Forum in Dublin Castle was held on 5 May 2006. This Forum was held to elicit the views of the many stakeholders who contribute towards the formulation of pension policy in Ireland.
- The publication of the “Pensions Checklist” in six foreign languages
- Joint ventures with State and Private sector recruiters (FAS/Failte Ireland/National Federation of Recruitment Agencies/Institute of Career Guidance Counsellors) to promote “First Job – First Pension”
- More ‘on the street’ activity at key events relevant to NPAC target groups such as the Women’s Mini Marathon and the National Ploughing Championships and promoting pensions to young people around music events like the Electric Picnic and Oxygen.



Sample advertising material NPAC 2006



Pensions Forum Dublin Castle May 2006
Minister Seamus Brennan, Anne Maher, Tiarnan O Mahoney



Tree Surgeon Rachel Bourke launches 2nd Edition of Women and Pensions Information Booklet



Mary Hutch launches National Pensions Action Week 2006 advertising campaign

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