

# CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

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13 October 2017 – 20 October 2017



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved at 00:01 on Thursday 26 January 2017.



Wednesday 18 October 2017

Department of Defence

Niamh Smyth asked the Taoiseach and Minister for Defence the implications for the Defence Forces of a hard border post-Brexit; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Paul Kehoe:** As part of a whole of Government approach, the Department of Defence is engaged in forward planning for the UK exit from the EU. While the implications for the border will emerge during the course of the negotiations, it is this Government's stated goal to try to ensure that the current on-island border arrangements are maintained to the greatest extent possible. The fact of a UK exit from the EU does not of itself give rise to additional border security requirements at this time.

Primary responsibility for the internal security of the State rests with the Department of Justice and Equality and An Garda Síochána. Responsibility for the security aspect of border control rests with An Garda Síochána while the Revenue Commissioners also have responsibilities relating to their particular mandate.

Among the roles assigned to the Defence Forces in the White Paper on Defence is the provision of Aid to the Civil Power which, in practice, means to provide assistance and support to An Garda Síochána when requested to do so. The Defence Forces also provide support to the Revenue Commissioners on request.

The Defence Forces at all times keep operational plans under constant review. There is ongoing close liaison between An Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces regarding security matters and regular coordination and liaison meetings take place. I wish to re-assure the Deputy that my Department is monitoring the ongoing situation to ensure that my Department and the Defence Forces are fully prepared to address any potential issues arising in the defence area on foot of Brexit.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2017-10-18a.486&s=border+2017-10-13..2017-10-20#g487.q>

**Wednesday 18 October 2017**

**Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation**

Roisin Shortall asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the criteria required to apply for the €300 million Brexit loan scheme for SMEs announced in budget 2018; when details of the scheme will become available from the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

**Frances Fitzgerald:** The Brexit Loan Scheme will provide affordable working capital financing to Irish businesses that are either currently impacted by Brexit, or will be in the future. The new Scheme will be delivered by the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) through commercial lenders to get much needed working capital into Irish businesses.

The criteria for the Brexit Loan Scheme are still being finalised. Broadly, the Scheme will be open to businesses of up to 499 employees that can demonstrate that they are exposed to the impact (or potential impact) of the Brexit vote. They must also use the loan to meet working capital or cash flow requirements.

Further details of the scheme will be provided over the coming weeks. SBCI will issue an open call inviting lending institutions to participate before the end of October. The scheme is expected to be in place early in the new year. It is anticipated that the scheme will remain open until 2020.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2017-10-18a.135&s=brexit+2017-10-13..2017-10-20>

**Wednesday 18 October 2017**

**Department of Defence**

Éamon Ó Cuív asked the Taoiseach and Minister for Defence the contacts he and his Department have had with the EU institutions and also with other EU member states in the past six months; the nature of their discussions on defence matters; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Paul Kehoe:** There is significant ongoing engagement by Ireland with the EU Institutions and with other EU member States on the important area of security and defence. These meetings take place both bilaterally, and within the institutional framework of the European External Action Service, the EU Military Committee and the European Defence Agency.

My officials participate in all meetings of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the Political-Military Group (PMG) as well as other relevant Council preparatory bodies. My officials also participate in the European Defence Agency (EDA) meetings. Ireland is represented on the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) composed of the (CHODs) of the Member States who, on a day to day basis, are represented in Brussels by the from the Permanent Representations of the member States.

Senior officials from my Department participate in meetings with their counterparts from other member States in Brussels, along with bilateral meetings in Brussels and at capital. These include, the regular meetings of the Defence Policy Directors from the member States and senior level meetings within the framework of the EDA.

As the Deputy will appreciate, the formal and informal meetings of Ministers at EU level, which I attend, provide a significant opportunity to engage bilaterally with Defence Ministers from other member States on issues of concern to Ireland, both within the scope of the Ministerial but also more broadly. When attending European Council meetings, I also avail of the opportunity to engage in informal bilateral discussions with my EU counterparts en-marge of the meetings which is an important aspect of Ministerial attendance. At these meetings, I have raised Ireland's key considerations in the area of security and defence, as and when the opportunity arises. This also includes the issue of Brexit where I have emphasised Ireland's concerns in order to ensure that these are fully reflected in the EU position during ongoing negotiations.

The main discussions at EU level on Defence over the last six months have centred on implementation of actions envisaged under the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy. The Global Strategy provides the EU with a guiding framework for external action under the Common Foreign and Security Policy. We have also discussed current EU operations, capability development and key security and defence challenges, along with Commission initiatives on the European defence industrial and technology sector, and the establishment of the European Defence Fund.

**Source:** <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2017-10-18a.38&s=brexit+2017-10-13..2017-10-20#g40.r>