

**REPORT
OF THE WORKING PARTY
ON THE
COMMUNITY WELFARE SERVICE**

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- E.H.B. Document (June 1995).
- 5 Discussion Papers.
- Survey Questionnaire to C.W.O.s.

1. (a) TERMS OF REFERENCE AND AIMS OF REPORT

The parties (E.H.B., S.I.P.T.U., I.M.P.A.C.T.) agreed to establish a Working Party to examine and make recommendations on the delivery of Community Welfare Services in the Eastern Health Board area, considering inter alia the E.H.B. document of June 1995 and any other relevant matters. The Working Party may make recommendations under such headings:

- Staffing and staff ratios.
- Workload and workload measurement.
- Organisation.
- Procedures and policies.

(b) PROGRAMME OF WORK

The Working Party met on 16 occasions in the period commencing 5th July 1995. The programme of work comprised:

- Review of the Supplementary Welfare Allowance/C.W.O. Mission, and key external and internal factors relevant to the Group's Terms of Reference. The Group then identified priority issues for consideration.
- Consideration of 5 Discussion Papers prepared by members of the Group.
- Review of the June 1995 E.H.B. document.
- Field visit of some members to Northern Ireland.
- Discussion of comparator information from the Department of Social Welfare.
- Discussion with the system's developer of I.S.T.S. re capabilities implementation and interim capability.
- Field visit and survey of 9 districts (3 of each at High - Mid - Low in CARA Stats) to ascertain similarities and differences in caseload characteristics, non-quantifiable work and variations in case payment types.

- Analysis of a survey form circulated to district C.W.O.s for a week's time analysis and to ascertain characteristics and non-quantifiable features of their work.
- Review of organisation and delivery of Housing Supplements including issues relating to customers, C.W.O. work, Management, staffing and operations.
- Development of a formula for workload measurement based on quantifiable and non-quantifiable features of C.W.O. work.
- Detailed analysis and discussion of elements comprising the formula, the resource implications and what constitutes a "*reasonable workload*". A target number of points (resulting from the formula) has been agreed as a "*reasonable workload*". This is an indicator of workload and a tool for examining workloads at variance from the target points; it is not an automatic "*trigger*". The formula will be re-calculated at each year's end.
- Formulation of the Working Party's Recommendations.

(c) **CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION**

The setting up of the Working Party followed on an industrial dispute concerning the workloads of Community Welfare Officers. The level of workload has been a recurring industrial relations problem in the service, with no agreed method of measuring workload.

The recent workload problem relates to steadily increasing case numbers and payments, in particular of housing supplements (which have expanded to over 40% of all payments).

Indeed there has been the addition of 30 posts to the service over the last 5 years to address increased workload. However, there are startling variations in caseload statistics between districts from a high of 1,167 cases per annum to a low of 300 cases per annum; and the types of payments also varies widely between districts.

CARA statistics provide information on number of cases and payment, and payment types, but are insufficient to the objective of having a meaningful workload measurement tool. A traditional guide of 100 cases per week has been used, but with the development of the service is no longer accepted. There is general agreement that time spent on certain types of cases is greater than others, and that there is a substantial amount of C.W.O. work and time that is non-quantifiable such as refusals, visits, level of investigation, information giving, clerical work, etc.

An additional feature of workload is the current level of computer support, resulting in significant manual tasks. This will change significantly when the I.S.T.S. system comes on stream in late 1996.

In June 1995, the E.H.B. prepared a paper on the issues and difficulties related to workload. That paper proposes that a Centralised Unit be established to handle all aspects of Housing Supplements.

The Working Party, then, has considered the relevant situation and issues surrounding the Community Welfare Service and workload, comprehensively explored the nature of workload, addressed the issue of structure and service for Housing Supplements, and intensively focused on developing a workload measurement formula and the parameters of a “*reasonable workload*” based on principles of as much as possible, being: *Simple, Verifiable, Equitable*.

The Group members have worked exceptionally hard and well together, and it is our hope the fruits of this labour will be of benefit to the staff, management and users of the Community Welfare Service.

The Working Party wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Hugh Kane, S.C.W.O., who was a member of the Group until he had to withdraw due to illness.

We also wished to acknowledge and express appreciation to Anne Halpin for her significant effort and support as Secretary to the Working Party.

2. PRIORITY ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE WORKING PARTY’S TASK

The Working Party discussed the Mission, and key external and internal factors relevant to C.W.O. work.

- (i) The **Mission** of the C.W.O. needs to be more clearly stated. Common values are needed for consistency and uniformity (hopefully this will be made explicit in the Strategic Management Initiative).

Regarding the Group’s task, the Mission is defined as:

- Administer S.W.A. in a customer-friendly, efficient and effective manner. Most people in this category, approximately 80%, see the C.W.O. purely for payment purposes, and do not need the C.W.O. Welfare Role.
- Provide information, referral, advocacy, etc. These people, approximately 20%, require a greater or varied level of welfare service.

(ii) Key External Factors:

- Numbers of customers/clients has greatly increased and at best will stabilise.
- Rent and mortgage supplements have greatly increased.
- Debt management/money advice centres run by community organisations are increasing because the Community Welfare Service workloads only allows payment function.
- Government policy.
- Interface with the Department of Social Welfare.
- C.W.O.s as end-providers: scheme of last resort.
- Higher expectation from consumers.
- Changing face of the public service; public service bashing.

(iii) Key Internal Factors:

- Anxiety about introduction of new technology; amalgamation with Social Welfare or Local Authorities (because of Housing Supplements).
- What will C.W.O.'s end up doing?
- Workload/Stress: The situation will just go on.
- Ancient processes.
- High degree of C.W.O. flexibility/discretion.
- The need for discretion.
- Difficulty of refusals.
- Varied work methods and system
- Is the purpose to keep the numbers of eligible recipients as low as possible or to maximise full entitlement

Priority Issues Relevant to the Working Party's Task:

The Working Group then summarised the following Priority Aspects (from the attached chart) relating to the Working Party's areas of consideration.

- Numbers of customers.
- Rent/Mortgage Supplements.
- Government Policy re Services and Workload.
- C.W.O. as end provider - "End up doing"?
- What is "meaningful" work? Impact on staff.
- Skills/Training re workload changes.
- Common Values: Discretion and Principles of "Consistency and Uniformity".
- Varied Work Methods and Systems.
- Risk Management: Emphasis and Role.
- Ancient Procedures and New Technology.
- Specialisation or Generic.
- 80/20 Customers/Clients: What should be structure of C.W.O. Role?
- Demand and Targeting.
- There is a vacuum in direction.
- Boundaries and Flexibility of Structure.

Following on this, the Group set out a Programme of Work beginning with Discussion Papers on selected Priority Issues.

PRIORITY ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE WORKING PARTY'S TASK

<p>Mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express and define re: Working Party's task 	<p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service is reactive, demand-driven • Must anticipate demand - until now '<i>where we have been</i>' is reviewed but not '<i>where we are going</i>'. The need for forecasting • Lack of agreement on new initiatives • Changes in policy do not take account of its implications
<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialisation or generic? • Skills smothered in workloads • A lot of training for a public service, and this is welcomed • High skill level - over skilled? 	<p>Systems (Processes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overly manual/clerical (time on payments, not problems) • How much time not spent with customers? • Should be efficient, accurate, speedy for (80/20) → majority of customers, with C.W.O. attention to serious/difficult cases • People coming to C.W.O.: may be reactive • Concentrated and compressed time for customers • New demand (Housing) impacts on other payments and service, substitutes • Shouldn't assume can't control demand • Investigation/Control • How to target/segment • Guidelines on discretion - balance? Impact on caseload? • What parameters within C.W.O. control?
<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want meaningful work • Mix and levels • Training and allocation of duties • Balance of experience • Ambivalence about welfare role +/- • Skilled and trained staff 	<p>Structures (Organisational)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmented: Social Welfare/Housing Benefit to same customer • Geographic boundaries • Local <i>V</i> Central contact • Efficiency/drudgery • Generic <i>V</i> Specialist role • Local/flatter management • Very fixed structures • Relevance of link with Community Care

3 . SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AGREED BY THE WORKING PARTY IN THE FOLLOWING PAPERS: (PAPERS IN APPENDICES)

(a) WORK METHODS AND SYSTEMS: Discussion Paper by Brendan Baker/Se O'Connor circulated.

(i) Income Maintenance

Basic Payments are 25% of all C.W.O. payments.

- Lone Parents: 5% of all payments.
Time lag too long; unacceptable.
It is unclear why there are variances in the length of time it takes the Department of Social Welfare to process applications.
- U.A.: Small, but bigger than expected.
Short term/pending.
Should be addressed departmentally.
- D.B.: Turn around quick - not a problem.
- D.P.M.A.: 5% of all payments.
Longest pending category.
- Sick no Benefits: 5% of all payments.
Allow access to Social Welfare Medical Referee.
- 25% of Workload on basic payments is too high - not what S.W.A. set up for. Should be short term intervention. Should only be exception.
- Refugees: No status, No R.S.I. number.

(ii) Supplements: Addressed separately in report.

(iii) Exceptional Needs Payments

20% only of all C.W.O. payments: This is too low as it is the kernel of S.W.A.

- Discretion - Varies at S.C.W.O. level.
- Affected by Workload.
- Liberal approach brings extra demands.
- High Supplements impact is less use of discretion.
- It is necessary to agree the interpretation of E.N.P.s and discretion at S.C.W.O. level with basic qualifications and discretion outside that.
- Appropriate use of discretion translates as S.W.A. not for supplementary income, but for additional need.

(iv) **Information Giving:** To provide information as required; but not as primary function. This was the original intention of S.W.A., but is not operated in practice now.

C.W.O.s should:

- Have knowledge of primary information and links, i.e., C.I.C., Customer Services, Health/Social Welfare.
- Be pro-active: Need customer friendly summary information. Use of Notice Boards.
- Confusion/lack of information creates queries. High level of queries to E.H.B. Customer Services.

(v) **Advocacy:** C.W.O.s should act as supports rather than substitutes.

(vi) **Liaison with other Professionals, Agencies and Voluntary Bodies:** Regular contact needed and noted. C.W.O. should not feel sidelined by other disciplines.

(vii) **Summary/Conclusion:** **Paper on Work Methods and Systems**

- Income Maintenance, Supplements and E.N.P.s: This work is quantifiable.
- Non-Payment Services, Information, Advocacy, liaison, etc.: Demand for and time spent on, but not quantifiable; should be allowed for.
- 25% workload on basic payments is too high. This should only be short term intervention/exception. E.N.P.s at 20% only is too low.
- C.W.O.s
 - Should be pro-active.
 - Should have knowledge of primary information and links.
 - Should act as supports rather than substitutes.
 - Should liaise with other professionals, agencies, etc.
- Automated Systems should apply to: Income Maintenance, Supplements, Information.

Recommendations

- Performance Improvements required from:
Department of Social Welfare - Income Maintenance.
Eastern Health Board - D.P.M.A
- Group proposes interpretation of E.N.P.s, and parameters of discretion be agreed at S.C.W.O. level.

(b) BOUNDARIES AND FLEXIBILITY: Discussion Paper by Michael Hanratty/Nigel Nolan/Fergal Black was circulated.

The objective of this paper was to list and briefly explore various options for administering the Community Welfare Service.

- To look at rigidity of present geographic boundaries, many of which are long set and ad hoc.
- Central to that: Work Measurement mechanisms. O & M good at measuring quantity, but not quality.
- Caseload criteria : Always has been the number of people paid per week which is inadequate at this stage.

(i) There is a need to categorise and weight activity and types of cases using statistics and proxy indicators to allow for non-quantifiable work and the limitations of current statistics.

I.S.T.S. - Doesn't count cases, but will count claims and duration of claims, which obviously effects measurement of C.W.O.s Workload.

(ii) Area for Discussion: Housing Supplements

Effects of centralising Rent/Mortgage Supplements:

- Stabilises workload.
- Distances from mainstream.
- Frees up for meaningful work.

(iii) Options

- Centralise all aspects: Take out of district C.W.O. role - releasing them from Rent/Mortgage duties.
- Centralise payments: Keep applications and investigations local.
- Keep all aspects local.

(c) SPECIALISATION/CENTRALISATION: Discussion Paper by Michael Hanratty/Fergal Black/Nigel Nolan/Brendan Baker circulated.

Rent/Mortgage Supplements have increased to over 40% of payments. This figure would have been substantially higher if the move from weekly to monthly payments had not occurred.

Model Proposed For Discussion: Application processing/investigation and payments to be central, with outreach capacity specifically for Housing Supplements.

Group to consider:

- Centralise Payments = Shift of some resources to a Central Unit.
- Local Input = Some shift of resources to central, but specialisation/local input for Investigations/Applications.
- Centralise Payments, all related functions and outreach = Shift of resources to Centre.

(d) COMMON VALUES: Discussion Paper by Kieran Burke circulated.

- *Values* rather than guidelines need to be defined for discretion and emergency payments.
- Inculcation of Values
 - As a benchmark at recruitment.
 - Incorporated into C.W.O. training process.
- Exercising Discretion is more complex than following guidelines: Legal basis for discretion.
- Can't be prescriptive - but values can be parameters.
- "Liberal" (plentiful) often means greater workload.
- Discretion should be Exceptional.

We have to recognise that the values system we adopt can and will impact on workloads/resources.

(e) DEVELOPING ROLE OF C.W.O: Discussion Paper by Pat Lennon/Brendan Baker circulated.

Future development of the C.WO. role will concentrate on non-payment areas:

- Information giving, advocacy, budgetary management, individual empowerment, aspects of counselling.
- There are opportunities for greater C.W.O. involvement in and liaison with local community groups. There are many Community Development Boards in existence, some funded or assisted by the Board, and the potential for C.W.O. involvement should be explored.

- Additional training and education will be an essential part of future development. The Board should commit itself to providing the necessary training for staff who wish to develop their talents. Encouragement should be given to staff to identify and explore future possibilities. A census of the qualifications of existing staff and invitations to suggest future courses of study would be useful.
- The question of generic versus specialist officer will come into focus as future roles become clearer, and should not be addressed until then.

Central to any discussion of the future role, there must be agreement as to the size and make up of a C.W.O.'s caseload, otherwise areas of development and specialisation will be ancillary to a caseload that may preclude any meaningful work in other directions.

4. ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY OF HOUSING SUPPLEMENTS: Discussion Paper entitled "A Vision of Centralised Rents" prepared by Nigel Nolan.

Core element of Model: Housing Supplements removed in their entirety from local offices.

2 proposed models were drawn up for the Group's consideration:

- (i) Local Management Proposal.
- (ii) Central Management Proposal.

SEE SUMMARY FOLLOWING

- Questions arising:**
- Which is better for customer?
 - Which is better for C.W.O?
 - Which is better for specialised C.W.O?
 - Which is better for management? authority/control?
 - Which is better administratively?
 - Office space, mix of C.W.O./Clerical, how and where files are housed and accessed.

Recommendation

After comprehensive discussion and consideration, the Working Party recommends the Central Management Proposal (Details are outlined in Summary of Recommendations).

Organisation and Delivery of Housing Supplements

Discussion:

Which is better for?	CENTRAL	LOCAL
Customer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "User" friendly ← • Files : Less complications of logistics • Greater Uniformity & Consistency • Less Queuing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → • "User" friendly • Local knowledge to a degree • Human face
CWO's:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses ← • Part of Team • Central locations • Specialise ← 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → • Expenses • Part of Area Team • Inclusive to Area reduces Isolation • Specialise → • Protection - Job Security • Rotation Possibility
C.W.O./ Housing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist Team ← • Central Location allows Customer Access • Mobility ← 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → • Specialist Team • Remain in Area • Existing Relationships/ interests • Mobility →
Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free up resources & local space ← • "Out of hair" of S.C.W.O. • Control to target & flexibility • Uniformity & consistency • Dedicated Management focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → • Free up resources & local space • S.C.W.O. Keeps control of Area
Admin:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File/info: Security • Greater flexible back-up of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of existing space

HOUSING SUPPLEMENTS

CENTRAL MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL <i>ALL FUNCTIONS CENTRAL</i>	LOCAL MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL <i>CENTRAL PAYMENTS; DISTRICT MANAGEMENT; C.W.O./HOUSING</i>
<p>Customer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally available info & freefone • Generally available applications • Apply at outreach clinics; by post; central office • Visit & assessment by central C.W.O. based on "loose" geographic patches • C.W.O. makes decision and gives file to central office for processing & payment • Advise customer via computer letter • Emergency Payments: In Central Unit <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment to Customer/Landlord/Building Society • Frequency of payment • Verifications • Should role be specialist/generic/rotating within C.W.O. team <p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central reporting structure for C.W.O.(s) • No local management separate, stand alone structure 	<p>Customer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications from varied locations to minimise calling in + freefone • Customer applies by post or by attending C.W.O./Housing (info. needed e.g. customer services, posters, etc.) • Local Housing Officer reports to S.C.W.O. in Area • C.W.O./Housing makes customer visit & assessment • Approval from S.C.W.O. • C.W.O./Housing Advises customer • File sent to Central Unit for processing of payment with review date notified on Automated Systems centrally • Review procedure <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Payments • Payments to Customer/Landlord/B. Society • Should role be specialist/generic/rotating? • C.W.O./Housing workloads with applications/reviews? • In Low Housing Areas, Adjust C.W.O./Housing "District" <p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central processing is clerical, not C.W.O. grade • No other local Management change

5. FIELD ANALYSIS OF 9 DISTRICTS AND SURVEY OF ALL C.W.O.S

A Sub-Group carried out an analysis, a field survey and interviews in 9 districts from 9 different areas and with a representative mix of case types (based on CARA Stats as Low - Medium - High number of cases in 1994; 3 districts for each level) and circulated a questionnaire to all C.W.O.s on quantifiable aspects of their work and how their time is allocated over a one week period.

CARA STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE 9 DISTRICTS:

1. Cases Paid in 1994

	High Caseload Districts	Mid-Range Caseload	Low Caseload Districts	Average
Basics	438	329	167	311
Housing	646	123	159	309
Other Supplements	162	136	92	130
Clothing	350	312	180	281
Other E.N.P.s	621	780	342	581
Totals	1,060	677	444	727

2. Payments Made in 1994

	High Caseload Districts	Mid-Range Caseload	Low Caseload Districts	Average
Basics	2,077	1,593	841	1,504
Housing	4,327	850	2,212	2,463
Other Supplements	809	732	836	792
Clothing	496	476	270	414
Other E.N.P.s	766	1,156	463	795
Totals	8,475	4,867	4,622	6,027

3. Breakdown of Payments in 1994 for the “9” Districts

	High Caseload Districts	Mid-Range Caseload	Low Caseload Districts
Basics	24.5%	33.1%	18.3%
Housing	51.0%	17.7%	47.9%
Other Supplements	9.5%	15.2%	18.0%
Clothing	6.0%	10.0%	5.8%
Other E.N.P.s	9.0%	24.0%	10.0%

4. Some Demographic Features of the “9” Districts

	High Caseload Districts	Mid-Range Caseload	Low Caseload Districts
Average Population	18,020	12,035	8,773
% of population under 18 years of age	27.4%	43.5%	24.2%
G.M.S. (Medical Cards)	38.2%	48.6%	28.2%
Unemployment Rate (1986 Census)	15.0%	21.2%	11.4%
Back to School Clothing & Footwear Scheme - 1994: Average Cases Paid Per District	371	508	230

ANALYSIS OF THE 9 DISTRICTS

Characteristics of Districts

High Caseload Districts:

- High number of private rented accommodation, single people and lone parents.
- Low numbers of Exceptional Needs Payments.
- Large queues.
- A requirement for a lot of clerical preparation.

Mid-Range Caseloads:

- High number of Local Authority housing.
- High number of Exceptional Needs Payments.
- High number of long-term unemployed.
- High number of second generation unemployment.
- High number of families and lone parents.
- High percentage of payments are “In Kind” and for “Clothing”.

Low Caseload Districts:

- High percentage of Exceptional Needs Payments.
- Supplements usually paid weekly.
- Stable areas.
- Compact Districts.
- Older population.
- Tight control and consistency.
- Usually groups of C.W.O.s in same health centre.

Comments from the 9 District Interviews

Teams of Community Welfare Officers ‘not on’?

The ‘patch’ system can work well when workloads are o.k., but it can be inflexible.

C.W.O. ‘group working’ is important.

Appointments Only day is very beneficial.

Annual leave substitutes could be used better (targeted better).

Dissatisfaction with not being able to have greater *welfare* and *community* role.

Difficult Types of Cases:

In middle class/private housing areas; Previously self-employed cases; Desertion cases.

Non-Quantified Workload Factors

Common To All Community Welfare Officers:	Particular To Some Community Welfare Officers:
Clerical work Time in clinic Numbers interviewed Advocacy Visits Time with S.C.W.O. Investigation Numbers refused Involvement with: (a) Voluntary Bodies (b) Other statutory Bodies Phone calls Appeals Liaison with other C.W.O.s Recoupments Meetings	Information giving Travelling Debt Management Housing difficulties Mental patients Talks to groups A.I.D.S. related work Case conferences Internal health centre interaction with: - Public Health Nurses - Social Workers - Community Psychiatric Nurses Clinics in more than one health centre Turnover

Involvement With Other Agencies

Common To All Community Welfare Officers:	Particular To Some Community Welfare Officers:
St. Vincent de Paul E.S.B. GAS Company Local Authorities Social Welfare Officers Dept. of Social Welfare Employment Exchanges Social Workers (non health board) Gardai Psychiatric Service (external to health centre) Prisons Trinity Court Other drug centres Addiction Counsellors FAS V.E.C.'s Other Schools Family Law Court Other Court appearances Dept. of Social Security (U.K.) F.L.A.C. (Free Legal Aid Centres) Other legal groups	Public Representatives Home-makers Aer Concern (Aer Lingus charity) Other Charity Groups Parents Alone Lending Agencies Credit Unions Community Information Centres Welfare Rights Groups M.A.B.S. (Debt Management Groups) Wardens for the elderly Refugee agency Lions Club CERT Emigrant Advice Focus Point Threshold Simon Probation Service

Results to Questionnaire: Sent to 125 District C.W.O.s with 43 responses amounting to 35% response and from a broad mix of Districts

The response rate was affected by the annual leave period, and the tight timeframe allowed, but the Working Party is satisfied the response is sufficiently representative.

	Average Per Week
Advertised Clinics Times	6.25 hours
Actual Clinics Times	9.65 hours
Numbers Interviewed	144
Number of those Interviewed who were Paid	85
Phone Queries - Number: - Duration:	51 3 hours
Advocacy - Number: - Time:	9.5 1.8 hours
Visits - Number: - Duration	23 4 hours
Time spent with S.C.W.O.	1.5 hours
Time spent on Investigation	5.4 hours
Number of Refusals	8
Time spent Travelling	4.75 hours

Results to Questionnaire: Average of 3 Districts from each of the High, Mid-Range and Low CARA Stats Categories

	Average Per Week
Advertised Clinics Times	6.25 hours
Actual Clinics Times	10.5 hours
Numbers Interviewed	163
Number of those Interviewed who were Paid	98
Phone Queries - Number: - Duration:	59 4.25 hours
Advocacy - Number: - Time:	16.25 1.5 hours
Visits - Number: - Duration	22 4.25 hours
Time spent with S.C.W.O.	1.5 hours
Time spent on Investigation	5.2 hours
Number of Refusals	12
Time spent Travelling	4.75 hours

ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

CARA Statistics on Each of the Categories

	Low	Mid-Range	High
“Average” No. Of (CARA) Cases Yearly	424	695	1,016

Investigation Time Per Interview/Per Case Paid for Each Category

	Low	Average	High
No. Interviewed (p.w.)	105	163	225
No. interviewed who were paid	47	98	156
% interviewed who were paid	45%	60%	69%
% interviewed who were not paid	55%	40%	31%
Time spent on Investigation	385 mins.	310 mins.	250 mins.
Investigation Time Per Interview	3 mins. 40 sec.	1 min. 54 secs.	1.07 secs.
Investigation Time Per Case Paid	8 mins. 1 sec.	3 mins. 10 secs.	1 min. 36 secs.

Clinic Times Per Interview/Per Case Paid for Each Category

	Low	Average	High
No. Interviewed (p.w.)	105	163	225
No. interviewed who were paid	47	98	156
Actual Time spent in Clinics	600 mins. (10 hours)	630 mins. (10.5 hours)	705 mins. (11.75 hours)
Clinic Time Per Interview	5 mins. 43 secs.	3 mins. 52 secs.	3 mins. 8 secs.
Clinic Time Per Case Paid	12 mins 46 secs.	6 mins. 26 secs.	4 mins. 31 secs.

Some Conclusions

The CARA “Low” Districts:

- Had the highest level of investigation.
- Their clinics times (both advertised and actual) are similar to the mid-range and high categories.
- Have the same time on the phone as the mid-range category.
- Have the same time spent on advocacy as the high category.
- Have the same time spent with S.C.W.O. as the mid-range and the high categories.

The CARA Mid-Range Districts:

are **higher** than the “average workload” category in 6 workload factors:

- Number of phone calls.
- Number and duration of visits.
- Investigations.
- Refusals.
- Travelling.

In these same 6 workload factors, they are **higher** than the CARA High Caseload category.

They have a higher take-up of G.M.S. applicants;
a higher percentage of unemployed;
a higher percentage of Back to School Clothing applications; and
a higher percentage of under 18 year olds in their populations.

CARA High Caseloads:

are higher than *average workloads* in:

- Numbers interviewed.
- Numbers of interviewed who are paid.
- Time spent on telephone.
- Advocacy (numbers of).
- Time spent on visits.
- Time spent travelling.
- Actual clinics times.

They are also higher than the Mid-Range category in these.

Other Key Results from Questionnaires

“What other options do you see for administering Rent/Mortgage Supplements”?

Retain Housing Supplements in S.W.A.	5	11.6%
Transfer Housing Supplements from S.W.A.	38	88.4%
Total:	43	100%

A further breakdown of those who opted for removing Housing Supplements

To Dept. of Social Welfare	18	41.9%
To Other Health Board Structure	20	46.5%
Total:	38	88.4%

6. (a) **WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT: WEIGHTINGS, FORMULA AND RESULTS**

PRINCIPLES: SIMPLE, VERIFIABLE, EQUITABLE

The Working Party identified those features that impact a C.W.O. workload that comprise:

- A. CARA Stats.
- B. Local demography.
- C. Features which are non-quantifiable in CARA Stats, but featured in the Surveys.
- D. Exceptional features.

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Statistics</i> : • Basic • Housing • Other • Clothing • Other E.N.P.'s • New Cases 		B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demography</i> : • Population • < 18 year olds • G.M.S. • Unemployment • Back to School Clothing/ Footwear Scheme 	
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Non-quantifiable in Stats</i> : • Clerical • Time in Clinic • # Interviewed • #/Duration of phone calls • Visits: #/duration • Refusals • Time with S.C.W.O. • Advocacy • Interviewed, not paid 		D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exceptional:</i> • Multi Sites + travel • Geography + Remoteness • Health Related Work • Miscellaneous Exceptional Factors 	

In chart on previous page, Demography (Box "B") determines the caseload stats breakdown (Box "A"). For example, a high number of families with children under 18 years of age (both traditional and single parent families) will mean a district can be expected to have a high number of Exceptional Needs Payments. A "flat-land" district will probably have a high number of single people, and it can be expected that the district will have a high number of rent supplements.

Therefore, B determines A.

Since every action in "A" generates a response in non-quantifiable work "C", it can be said that the breakdown of payments (Box "A") determines the level of the non-quantified work (Box "C").

Therefore A determines C.

ANY WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT/WEIGHTING CRITERIA SHOULD TAKE COGNISANCE OF THE DETERMINANTS OF: [B] DEMOGRAPHY DETERMINES → [A] CARA STATS WHICH DETERMINES → [C] NON-QUANTIFIABLE ASPECTS.

This must be the starting point both for examining an existing district's workload and in deciding a new district's workload.

WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT FORMULA: WORKSHEET

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
WEIGHTING 1 - 3 ALL PAYMENT TYPES	BTS CLOTHING CASES PAID	TOTAL CASES AT YEAR END (PROXY FOR NEW CASES)	MULTI- LOCATION (+ 10%)	WICKLOW/ KILDARE HEALTH & MUTLI- LOCATION (+ 25%)

Weighting
x CARA Stats
cases

CARA Stats

Add - on

Add - on

Workload Measurement Formula (See Attached Chart): Applied to 125 Districts (Excluding Area 14). Total points score is indicator of workload.

- **Column 1 from CARA Stats:** Total number of cases paid in a given year are weighted using a 1-2-3 weight mechanism for non-quantifiable work in all payment types (see page attached).
- **Column 2 Back to School:** Number of cases.
- **Column 3 from CARA Stats:** Number of cases at year end.
(Total cases at year end is readily identifiable measure of turnover. Serves as proxy for new cases, as turnover affects workload).
- **Column 4 Multi-location:** Add 10% of overall E.H.B. average.
- **Column 5 Health and Multi-location additional weighting of 25% of average points (Kildare/Wicklow only).**

The formula for workload measurement uses CARA Stats for quantifiable work, and provides for non-quantifiable work by weighting each payment type **relative** to the non-quantifiable features highlighted in the field survey of 9 Districts and the C.W.O. Survey.

Total points per district, then:

- **Is an indicator of workload and a tool for examining workloads which are above or below an agreed band of points; it is not an automatic “trigger”**
- **Based on that, adjustment between districts will occur to cater for districts above and below the band.**
- **If removal of Housing Supplements to a Central Unit goes ahead, then district C.W.O. workload change to varying degrees - and a shift of resources to a Central Unit will also occur.**

WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT FORMULA: WORKSHEET

	COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5			
DISTRICT	WEIGHTING 1 - 3 ALL PAYMENT TYPES	BTS CLOTHING CASES PAID	TOTAL CASES AT YEAR END (PROXY FOR NEW CASES)	MULTI- LOCATION (+ 10%)	WICKLOW/ KILDARE HEALTH & MUTLI- LOCATION (+ 25%)	SUB-TOTAL POINTS INCLUSIVE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTS	LESS HOUSING SUPPLEMENTS	TOTAL POINTS EXCLUDING HOUSING SUPPLEMENTS

Weighting
x Cara Stats
cases

Cara
Stats

Add - on

Add - on

Workload Measurement - Weighting of Payment Types Relative to Non-Quantifiable Features Identified in the Survey

PAYMENT AREA	WEIGHTING
BASIC	
Pen U/A U/B (Ord)	1
Pen U/A U/B Appeals	2
Pen D/B / OIB	1
Pen LPA (Ord)	1
Pen LPA Appeals	2
Pen Other DSW	1
Pen DSS	2
Pen HB (D.P.M.A., etc.)	2
Pen Wages	1
Pen Compensation	1
Trade Disputes	3
S.N.B.s	2
Grad. U/B D/B	1
Other Basic	2
SUPPLEMENTS	
Rent	2
Mortgage Local Auth.	2
Mortgage - all others	2
Heating	1
Diet	1
Travel	1
Former H.A. cases	1
Other Supplements	1
EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS	
E.S.B.	3
Gas	3
Other Fuel	3
Rent Arrears	3
Rent (Deposits/Advance)	2
Mortgage Arrears	3
Bedding	3
Furniture/Furnishings	3
Household Appliances	2
Clothing & Footwear	1
Prams & Buggies	1
Travel	1
Funeral Expenses	3
Minor Repairs	2
Payments in Kind	3
Other E.N.P.s	2
MISCELLANEOUS	
Sect. 213	3
Sect. 216	3
National Fuel Scheme	1
Home Helps	1
Back to School	1

Why weight by cases rather than payments?

- Rewards good management.
- Managing cases is dealing with the person, not the result.
- Based on 80/20 rule; will cater for generality of cases.

Cases in Pending U/A (Ord.)

- Board's and Department of Social Welfare's policy is that C.W.O.s do not pay. Discretion for emergency cases is permitted.
- There must be a clear policy and recommend that this difficulty has to be articulated in report.

Cases in Category 14 (other basic): Mis-coding appears high and should be addressed. Coding must be defined.

Category 14 should include: Refugees, no entitlement, pending maintenance.

6. (a) AVERAGE DISTRICT WORKLOAD BASED ON WORKLOAD MEASUREMENT FORMULA

Table 6 (a) (i): Inclusive of Housing Supplements; including Multi-location (10% of Average) and Health/Multi-location (25% of Average; Kildare/Wicklow).

Total No. of Points	Average per District	No. of Districts
465,908	3,727	125

Table 6 (a) (ii): Options agreed for discussions of “Reasonable Workload”

Using Average Target of	No. of Districts Required	Surplus Districts	Band of Workload; Points Outside Band “Trigger” a Review
3,600 Points	99	26	3400 - 3800 Points
3,500 Points	102	23	3300 - 3700 Points
3,450 Points	105	20	3200 - 3600 Points
3,400 Points	105	20	3200 - 3600 Points

WORKING PARTY’S RECOMMENDATION IS A TARGET OF 3,450 POINTS AND A BAND OF 3400 TO 3700 POINTS

6. (b) PROCESS USED IN COMPUTING POINTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVING HOUSING RELATED PAYMENTS

Table 6 (b) (i): Workload Points for Housing Related Payments

Payment Type:	No. of Cases:	X Weighting:	Workload Points:
Housing Supplements	41,295	2	82, 590
Rent deposits	3,456	2	6,912
Sub-Total:			89,502

Table 6 (b) (ii): Workload Points Involved in the Removal of Housing Related Payments

Cases Removed From System:	Housing Supplements Workload Points:	Total Workload Points:
0	89,502	89,502
10,000	89,502	99,502
30,000	89,502	119,502
41,295	89,502	130,797

When Housing Supplements are removed, the number of workload points removed from the system will not correspond exactly because cases in receipt of Housing Supplements may also receive other types of payments. The number of cases which will be removed from the system can only be guessed at. The Working Party chose the mid-point, i.e., 20,000 cases as a reasonable estimate.

Table 6 (b) (iii): Workload Reduction by Removing Housing Supplements and Deposits

Total Workload Points:	465,908	465,908		465,908	465,908
Less Housing Workload Points:	89,502	99,502		119,502	130,797
Revised System's Total Workload Points:	376,406	366,406		346,406	335,111
% Reduction:	19.2%	21.4%		25.6%	28.1%

Table 6 (b) (iv): No. of Districts Required Given Different Average Workload and Total Workload Points

Total Workload Points: Average Workload	376,406	366,406	356,406	346,406	335,111
3300	114	111	108	105	102
3350	112	109	106	103	100
3400	111	108	105	102	99
3450	109	106	104	100	97
3500	108	105	102	99	96
3550	106	103	100	98	94
3600	105	102	99	96	93
3650	103	100	98	95	92
3700	102	99	96	94	91

**THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDS THE TARGET
“REASONABLE WORKLOAD” AS 3450 REQUIRING 104 DISTRICTS**

6. (c) **FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING WORKLOADS IN THE CENTRALISED HOUSING SUPPLEMENT UNIT: Discussion Paper by Kieran Burke/Nigel Nolan circulated.**

This paper sets out, in table form, the factors to be considered in determining the workloads of Community Welfare Officers in a centralised housing supplement unit. The tables assisted the Working Party in making recommendations in relation to the Central Unit.

Table 6 (c) (i): Housing Supplements - Year to end December 1994

CARA Code:	Payment Type:	No. of Cases:	No. of Payments:
15	Rents	33,445	238,071
16	Mortgage - L.A.'s	3,287	21,992
17	Mortgage - Others	4,563	25,445
	Total:	41,295	285,508

* Includes Area 14, but excludes Dist. 0122 for the year and Dist.s 0202 and 0208 from Aug. to Dec.

Table 6 (c) (ii): Rents Deposits

*It was agreed that Rent Deposits should come under the remit of the Central Unit; but that arrears should continue to be handled at local district level, as arrears are more of a debt management issue.

CARA Code:	Payment Type:	No. of Cases:	No. of Payments:
27	Rent deposits*	3,456	3,685

* Includes Area 14, but excludes Dist. 0122 for the year and Dist.s 0202 and 0208 from Aug. to Dec.

Table 6 (c) (iii): Average No. of New Cases

CARA Code:	Payment Type:	Average No. of New Cases:
15	Rents	1,830
16	Mortgage - L.A.'s	107
17	Mortgage - Others	222
	Total:	2,159

* Averages determined for April, May, June, and July 1995.

Table 6 (c) (iv): An Average Month's Housing Supplements

CARA Code:	Payment Type:	No. of Cases:	No. of Payments:
15	Rents	15,788	20,278
16	Mortgage - L.A.'s	1,517	1,732
17	Mortgage - Others	2,025	2,217
	Total:	19,330	24,227

* Averages determined from CARA Stats For April, May, June and July 1995.

Table 6 (c) (v): An Average Month's Rent Deposit-Exceptional Needs Payments

CARA Code:	Payment Type:	No. Of Cases:	No. Of Payments:
27	Rent Deposits	291	299

* Averages determined from CARA Stats For April, May, June and July 1995.

Table 6 (c) (vi): For Each Housing Supplement Case, What Tasks Have To Be Done ?

Application form arrives:

- opened, set-up indexed and assigned to a C.W.O. by Clerical Officer

C.W.O. receives application form, examines it, lists actions required, "deficiency letter" sent if necessary, provisional calculation of supplement, check data base and determine if visit required or other follow up investigation.

Visit:

- valuation / reasonable rent
- verification of residence
- standard of accommodation

Decision on application:

- finalise calculation
- authorisation
- communicate decision

Determine review / risk assessment.

Set up payment.

Continue / Stop Payment:

- verification of a) rent paid; b) income
- review

Client - C.W.O. Communication:

- letters
- phone calls
- face to face

Where ?

- Central office
- Outreach office

Table 6 (c) (vii): Some Workload Factors of C.W.O.s in the Centralised Housing Supplements Unit

No. of C.W.O.s (exclusive of substitutes)	New Cases / Change of Address = Visits p.w. (note 1)	“Monthly Payments” per week (note 2)	Reviews per week (note 3)	Rent Deposits (note 4)
10	50	446	50	7
15	33	297	33	5
25	20	178	20	3
30	17	149	17	2
35	14	127	14	2
40	12	111	12	2

**THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDS STAFFING OF 20 - 21 C.W.O.S,
2 S.C.W.O.S AND 8 CLERICAL STAFF**

1. Figures determined using the average number of New Cases in Table 6 (c) (iii).
2. Figures determined using the average Cases Per Month in Table 6 (c) (iv) and where the number of payments is equal to the number of cases per month.
3. The review figure is the same as the New Cases figure because each case is in payment for 6 months (approx.) under the present system and the assumption is made that each case should be reviewed at least once.
4. The Rent Deposit figure is determined using the Number of Payments figure in Table 6 (c) (v).

7. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- No. 1:** The Strategic Management Initiative should address the Mission forward of the Community Welfare Service.
- No. 2:** Performance improvements are required in regard to extended pending of Income Maintenance (Dept. of Social Welfare) and D.P.M.A. (E.H.B.).
- No. 3:** The Common Values derived from the Strategic Management Initiative should ensure greater consistency and uniformity in policy interpretation.
- No. 4 (a):** A Centralised Unit should be established for all functions, operations and payments of Housing Supplements and Rent Deposits.
- (b):** 20 C.W.O.s, 2 S.C.W.O.s and 8 Clerical staff should be allocated.
- (c):** Policies and procedures should be developed to maximise efficiency, customer service and controls.
- (d):** We are advised that system support can readily be developed in advance of I.S.T.S.
- No. 5:** The Formula for Workload Measurement proposed in the Report should be applied as a tool and indicator for Workload Measurement. It will be re-calculated at each year's end.
- No. 6:** We propose the target average for a "*reasonable workload*", exclusive of Housing Supplements, based on the Formula, should be 3,450 points and a band of 3400 - 3700 points. This should be re-calculated at each year end. Potentially, adjustments will occur within all districts and areas, further, 21 Districts become surplus for possible transfer to Central Unit.
- Where a S.C.W.O. considers the Formula to not correctly reflect workload in a district, an analysis of the specific quantifiable (CARA Stats) and non-quantifiable (as listed based on Survey) features of that district should occur.
- No. 7.:** There should be a full review of the implications of these Proposals within 6 months of implementation.