

23rd June 2009

Annual Report shows massive rise in Claims to Employment Appeals Tribunal

The 2008 Annual Report of the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) was published on the 23rd June 2009.

The Tanaiste said, "the EAT's workload has increased rapidly, as it mainly deals with issues relating to termination of employment - unfair dismissals and decisions where there is a dispute regarding redundancies. Since the beginning of 2009, for example, the EAT has received over 4,300 claims compared to 1,900 in the same period in 2008 with claims under the Redundancy Payments Acts trebling.

"Notwithstanding the increase in claims, the Tribunal is coping well with its present resources. This is mainly due to a series of efficiency initiatives, which have resulted in more hearings and the listing of more cases per hearing," concluded the Tánaiste.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY :

* The number of cases referred to the Tribunal increased from 3,173 in 2007 to 5,457 in 2008 – an increase of 2,284 cases or 72%.

* There was an approximate doubling and in one case a trebling of referrals under the usual Acts. The number of redundancy referrals rose by 121% to 1,407 in 2008. The number of cases referred under the Unfair Dismissals Acts rose to 1,538 in 2008, which is an increase of 36.5% on the number referred in 2007. Adjudicating unfair dismissal cases accounts for approximately 85% of the Tribunal's workload in terms of the time spent on hearings.

* The number of appeals from the Recommendations and Decisions of Rights Commissioners referred to the Tribunal also rose significantly to 447 in 2008 from 246 in 2007, which is an increase of 81%.

* There was a substantial increase in the Tribunal's output over 2008. The number of cases disposed of rose from 2,807 in 2007 to 4,007 in 2008, which was an increase of 1,200 or 43%.

* The Tribunal made significant progress in reducing the waiting period for hearings in 2008. The waiting period in Dublin was reduced from 20 weeks to 16 weeks and in provincial areas it was reduced from an average of 51 weeks in 2007 to an average of 31 weeks in 2008