



Ms. Brenda Shannon,
Corporate Services,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24

14th April 2026

Your ref: EM/0326

Dear Brenda,

I have been asked by Ms. Helen McEntee, T.D., Minister for Defence to acknowledge receipt of your authority's recent motion in relation to Civil Defence and to note the contents.

The Minister has asked me to outline a number of issues which may be of interest to your members. Last year, officials from the Department gave briefings to local elected representatives through the Association of Irish Local Government on the functioning of Civil Defence. This continued engagement can only improve our joint understanding of the role of Civil Defence in Ireland. To that end, the Department is committed to an ongoing review of the Civil Defence fleet. This includes working with Local Authorities and Civil Defence Units across the country on a programme of fleet modernisation and replacement, funded through both the Dormant Accounts Fund and through grant aid from the Department's annual budget.

This review includes the examination of the most effective use of existing transport assets, the appropriateness of continuing use of assets, and the purchase of replacement vehicles.

The Hagglund vehicles, referred to in your motion, date from the 1980s. While these are certainly all-terrain vehicles, they are not independent vehicles and must be transported to the location of their intended use. Both the vehicles and the transporters must be stored and maintained, which is a significant factor for ageing vehicles.

This, however, is only a contributing factor to the decision. The key consideration is the continuing appropriateness for duty.

The Hagglund vehicles have been in operation since 2009/2010. During that time, they have been called into action for a very small number of duties and have rarely been requested in recent years because all civil defence units now have access to their own fleet of 4-wheel drives. The detail of duties in recent years (provided by one of the volunteers in the Hagglund unit and verified to system records) is as follows:

2025 (February)	Requested to provide assistance to Limerick Civil Defence but in fact was only used for one duty over the course of the six days that the vehicle was located in Limerick.
2019 (June)	Requested to be on standby for President Trump's visit to Doonbeg. Not actually used.
2018 (Storm Emma)	On call for the Eastern Region during a prolonged (7 day) weather event.
2018 (Clare)	Assistance with the transport of equipment over marshy ground for a historical body recovery.
2017 (Laois)	Tasked to a flood event in Mountmellick
2015/16 (Longford)	Tasked to a flood event.
2015 (Kerry)	Tasked to an event where a road had been washed away.

The above represents 7 events over the past ten years. There are 3-4 other taskings in the lifetime of these assets with the organisation. It is notable that there was no request for these vehicles during the late 2025 or early 2026 weather events.

The Minister has been advised that the Dublin Civil Defence Officer approached Department officials to discuss the withdrawal of these units from the service. These vehicles are 40 years old The ongoing costs of maintenance for both and Hagglands and

for the associated transporters would be better utilised on modern vehicles, which the Dublin Officers are actively researching. On the basis of the above information, the Department, in consultation with the Civil Defence Officer, took a decision to discontinue the use of the Haaglund vehicles in Civil Defence and dispose of them appropriately.

The Minister has asked me to reassure your Members that the Department will continue the ongoing fleet replacement programme, to ensure that our Civil Defence units have modern, fit-for-purpose vehicles. There are more than 170 4x4 vehicles in place across the service and the relevant officers with Dublin Civil Defence are actively exploring other additions to the fleet. This may include vehicles which would be more appropriate to and complement the modern Civil Defence fleet, such as 6x6 vehicles that can be more easily moved to the required location. One such vehicle is already in use in Kerry Civil Defence.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Beltran

Private Secretary to the Minister for Defence

Ms Helen McEntee TD