

Central Bank issues Prohibition Notice to Ms Geraldine Harford under the Fitness and Probity Regime

The Central Bank has issued a Prohibition Notice to Ms Geraldine Harford, former Assistant Manager of Rush Credit Union Limited (In Liquidation), prohibiting her from carrying out any controlled functions, including pre-approval controlled functions, in any regulated financial service provider for an indefinite period. The prohibition arises from a Central Bank investigation into Ms Harford's involvement in unauthorised transactions on accounts at Rush Credit Union.

Seana Cunningham, Director of Enforcement and Anti-Money Laundering, said:

“This prohibition notice has been issued pursuant to the Central Bank’s fitness and probity regime following the Bank’s investigation into financial irregularities at Rush Credit Union.

The Central Bank’s fitness and probity regime is in place to ensure that individuals performing key roles in regulated financial services firms are competent and capable, and act honestly, ethically and with integrity. The regime sets out the fitness and probity standards that those individuals must comply with, and places an obligation on the firms to ensure the compliance of their employees with these standards.

The prohibition of individuals for an indefinite period of time from performing specific roles in financial firms is the most serious outcome under the fitness and probity regime. This is the fourth prohibition notice issued by the Central Bank since its introduction.

It is imperative that individuals in positions of responsibility in financial services firms are committed to and demonstrate the highest ethical standards of practice and behaviour. This latest prohibition notice demonstrates that when individuals working in financial services firms do not comply with the Central Bank’s fitness and probity standards, the Central Bank will take action.”

Additional information

1. The Prohibition Notice is effective from 20 December 2017.
2. The Central Bank of Ireland is limited in its ability to disclose certain details of this case, due to ongoing criminal investigations.
3. The fitness and probity regime was introduced under the Central Bank Reform Act 2010. The regime allows the Central Bank to prohibit persons, by way of a Prohibition Notice, where a person is found to lack fitness and/or probity. The Prohibition may apply to a particular controlled function or any controlled function (including pre-approval controlled functions or ‘PCFs’) and may apply for a defined period of time or indefinitely.
4. In addition to the power to prohibit individuals the Central Bank Reform Act 2010 also confers the following powers upon the Central Bank:

- A 'Gatekeeper Function' which allows the Central Bank to assess the fitness and probity of individuals before they are appointed to senior roles (PCFs) in regulated firms. Since the Gatekeeper Function was introduced in 2012 a total of 45 individuals have withdrawn PCF applications on being called for interview; and
 - The power to sanction firms who employ individuals performing controlled functions who do not comply with fitness and probity standards. Further information on the Central Bank's Administrative Sanctions Procedure can be found [here](#).
5. Further detail on the fitness and probity regime can be found [here](#).
 6. Liquidators were appointed to Rush Credit Union on 21 November 2016. Further information can be found [here](#).
 7. This is the fourth Prohibition Notice issued by the Central Bank. Details of previous Prohibition Notices can be found [here](#).