

Unsustainable claims and duly awarded medals

The system was not robust or secure in all cases. Evidence emerged from various sources in 1949/50 of claims that were not sustainable or accurate but on which a medal had been issued, and in some cases the payment of a special allowance had been authorised. Following investigation by the Department additional measures were put in place. John McCoy and Séamus Robinson, former Divisional Commanders with the pre-Truce IRA and members of the Advisory Committee to the Referee were added to the verification and investigation process for the Service (1917-1921) Medal.

A major advance occurred in 1957 when the membership rolls of the Divisions, Brigades, Battalions and Companies of the IRA-as on 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922-were handed over by the Referee to the Department for use in the verification process. These membership rolls, mainly dating from 1935, were compiled by Brigade Committees of the Old IRA, included those for Cumann na mBan, Na Fianna Éireann, and the Irish Citizen Army (available online).

By 1966 the reinvestigation of medals issued prior to June 1957 was being waived where the applicant was listed on the pre-truce unit membership roll. Account was then taken of available written evidence from former veterans or any other corroborative evidence found in Department records.

Of the 38,000 service medals without bar issued prior to June 1957, 972 medals, on reinvestigation as at the end of 1969, are deemed not to have been duly awarded. Accordingly, applications for a special allowance in these case were not proceeded with.

