



# Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993

## 1993 CHAPTER 49

### PART IX

#### MODIFICATION AND WINDING UP OF SCHEMES

##### *Modification*

#### **132 Applications to the Board to modify schemes (other than public service schemes).**

- (1) On an application made to them in respect of an occupational pension scheme or a personal pension scheme by persons competent to make such an application, the Board may make an order—
  - (a) authorising the modification of the scheme with a view to achieving—
    - (i) any one or more of the purposes specified in subsection (2); or
    - (ii) any one or more of such other purposes as may be prescribed; or
  - (b) modifying the scheme with a view to achieving any one or more of those purposes.
- (2) The purposes referred to in subsection (1)(a)(i) are—
  - (a) to enable the scheme to provide for the transfer of accrued rights (including any transfer credits allowed under the scheme) to another scheme (whether an occupational or personal pension scheme) with a view to the acquisition, for those whose rights are transferred, of rights under the other scheme in connection with change of employment or otherwise, and for the allowance of transfer credits;
  - (b) to enable the scheme to be one to which section 159 applies or to have included in or removed from it provisions designed to avoid the effect of the rules of law relating to perpetuities;

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- (c) without prejudice to section 135(2), to comply with the voluntary contributions requirements;
  - (d) to enable the trustees or managers of the scheme, or others concerned with or having rights under it, to enter into alternative arrangements having regard to any provision of this Act, or of any other enactment (enacted or made or to be enacted or made) amending or replacing any such provision or making provision for similar purposes; or
  - (e) in the case of an occupational pension scheme only, to enable the scheme—
    - (i) to be so treated that an employment to which it applies may be contracted-out employment by reference to it;
    - (ii) to qualify for the approval of the Inland Revenue for the purposes of Chapter I of Part XIV of the <sup>M1</sup>Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 or to provide benefits enhanced up to the limits suitable in a scheme for which such approval is sought;
    - (iii) to provide for accrued rights to benefit (whether in payment or not), so far as payable out of the resources of the scheme, to be surrendered by beneficiaries (at their option and not otherwise, so long as the scheme remains in force and is not being, or to be, wound up) in exchange for other rights assured by means of one or more policies of insurance or annuity contracts, or by other means; or
    - (iv) without prejudice to section 135(2), to comply with the preservation requirements <sup>F1</sup>. . .
- (3) An order under subsection (1)(a)—
- (a) shall be framed so as to confer the power of modification on such persons as the Board think proper (who may include persons who were not parties to the application made to the Board); and
  - (b) shall include such directions as the Board think appropriate, having regard to the purposes of the order, indicating the modifications which they consider to be called for.

#### Textual Amendments

**F1** Words in s. 132(2)(e)(iv) repealed (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3213 (N.I. 22), arts. 119, 168., Sch. 1 para. 27, Sch. 5 Pt. I (with 118(5)(6)); S.R. 1995/477, art. 2(b), **Sch. Pt. II**

#### Marginal Citations

**M1** 1988 c. 1.

### 133 Persons competent to make applications under s. 132.

The persons competent to make an application under section 132(1) in respect of a scheme are—

- (a) the trustees or managers of the scheme;
- (b) any person other than the trustees or managers who has power to alter any of the rules of the scheme;
- (c) in the case of an occupational pension scheme only, any person who is an employer of persons in service in an employment to which the scheme applies; and

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- (d) such other persons as regulations may specify, in relation to any category of schemes into which the scheme falls, as being proper persons to make such an application in respect of a scheme of that category.

### **134 Further provisions concerning the Board's powers under s. 132.**

- (1) The Board shall not entertain an application for an order by them under section 132 unless they are satisfied that the purposes of the application—
  - (a) cannot be achieved otherwise than by means of such an order; or
  - (b) can only be achieved in accordance with a procedure which—
    - (i) is liable to be unduly complex or protracted, or
    - (ii) involves the obtaining of consents which cannot be obtained, or can only be obtained with undue delay or difficulty.
- (2) Subject to subsection (1), the Board may on such an application make (with the consent of the applicants) any one or more such orders as are specified in section 132(1).
- (3) The extent of those powers is not limited, in relation to any purposes for which they are exercisable, to the minimum necessary to achieve those purposes.
- (4) The Board shall not make an order under section 132(1) unless they are satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to make it.
- (5) The Board shall not make any such order under that section as would, or might in their opinion, result in any existing or prospective entitlement of a member of the scheme, in respect of a period before the coming into operation of the order or of any modification which the order authorises, being diminished or curtailed without his consent, unless they are satisfied that it is in the interests of the generality of members that the order should be made.
- (6) In considering whether or not to make an order under that section, the Board shall have regard—
  - (a) to the structure and character of the scheme and the benefits provided by it;
  - (b) to the provisions of this Act and Chapter I of Part XIV of the <sup>M2</sup>Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 ; and
  - (c) to all the circumstances in general.
- (7) Regulations may provide that in prescribed circumstances subsections (4) and (5) shall not apply to occupational pension schemes or shall apply to them with prescribed modifications.

#### **Marginal Citations**

**M2** 1988 c. 1.

### **135 Other functions of the Board as respects modification of schemes.**

- (1) If in the case of a scheme to which section 49 applies the Board are not satisfied as to the soundness and adequacy of any investments held for the purposes of the scheme (so far as relevant to the considerations of section 20(1)), they may by order—
  - (a) modify the scheme's rules, or

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- (b) direct the scheme’s trustees or managers to take such steps as the order may specify,
- with a view to ensuring that the guaranteed minimum pensions under the scheme are adequately secured to its beneficiaries, both present and future.
- (2) If the Board determine under section 130 that a scheme does not conform with the preservation requirements,<sup>F2</sup> . . . or the voluntary contributions requirements they shall, either at the time of issuing their determination or as soon afterwards as they think expedient—
- (a) by order direct the trustees or managers of the scheme or any other persons who have power to alter any of its rules to exercise such powers as they possess for modifying the scheme with a view to bringing it into conformity with those requirements (including in their order such directions as they think appropriate to indicate the modification appearing to them to be called for); or
- (b) if there is no person with power to modify the scheme as required by the Board, by order authorise the trustees or managers, or other persons named in the order (and, in particular, in the case of an occupational pension scheme, any employer of persons in service in an employment to which the scheme applies) to make that modification; or
- (c) themselves by order modify the scheme with a view to bringing it into conformity with the requirements in question.
- (3) The Board may exercise their powers under subsection (2) in relation to any scheme in respect of which they have issued a determination under section 130, and may exercise the powers together or separately.

#### Textual Amendments

**F2** Words in s. 135(2) repealed (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3213 (N.I. 22), arts. 119, 168, Sch. 1 para. 28, Sch. 5 Pt. I; S.R. 1995/477, art. 2(b), Sch. Pt. II

### 136 Effect of orders under ss. 132 and 135.

- (1) An order under paragraph (a) of section 132(1) may enable those exercising any power conferred by the order to exercise it retrospectively (whether or not the power could otherwise be so exercised) and an order under paragraph (b) of that section may modify a scheme retrospectively.
- (2) An order under paragraph (a) of section 135(2) may require persons to exercise a power retrospectively (whether or not the power could otherwise be so exercised), and an order under paragraph (b) or (c) of that section may operate retrospectively.
- (3) In this section “retrospectively” means with effect from a date before that on which the power is exercised or, as the case may be, the order is made, but—
- (a) in the case of an order under section 132(1), that date shall be such date as may be proposed for the purposes of this subsection by the persons applying for the order; and
- (b) in the case of an order under section 135(2), that date shall not be a date earlier than the operative date for the requirements.
- (4) In subsection (3)(b) “the operative date for the requirements” means—
- (a) in the case of the preservation requirements, 5th September 1973;

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- (b) in the case of the voluntary contributions requirements—
  - (i) as respects a personal pension scheme in so far as it is comprised in an annuity contract, 1st July 1988, but otherwise 4th January 1988, and
  - (ii) as respects an occupational pension scheme, 6th April 1988; <sup>F3</sup> . . .
- <sup>F3</sup>(c) . . . . .
- (5) Any modification of a scheme made in pursuance of an order of the Board under section 132(1) or 135(2)(b) or (c) shall be as effective in law as if it had been made under powers conferred by or under the scheme.
- (6) An order under section 132(1) or 135(2)(b) or (c) may be made and complied with in relation to a scheme—
  - (a) notwithstanding any enactment or rule of law, or any rule of the scheme, which would otherwise operate to prevent the modification being made;
  - (b) without regard to any such enactment, rule of law or rule of the scheme as would otherwise require, or might otherwise be taken to require, the implementation of any procedure or the obtaining of any consent, with a view to the making of the modification.

**Textual Amendments**

**F3** S. 136(4)(c) and the preceding word repealed (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3213 (N.I. 22), arts. 119, 168, Sch. 1 para. 29, **Sch. 5 Pt. I** (with art. 118(5)(6)); S.R. 1995/477, art. 2(b), **Sch. Pt. II**

**137 Modification of public service schemes.**

- (1) Nothing in the previous provisions of this Part applies to public service pension schemes but, subject to the provisions of this section, the appropriate authority shall, in relation to such a scheme, have power to make such provision for the modification of the scheme as could be made by an order of the Board under subsection (1)(b) of section 132 with a view to achieving any of the purposes mentioned in subsection (2) of that section in the case of a scheme other than a public service pension scheme.
- (2) In this section “the appropriate authority”, in relation to a scheme, means such Minister of the Crown or government department as may be designated by the Treasury or the Department of Finance and Personnel as having responsibility for the particular scheme.
- (3) The powers of the appropriate authority under this section shall be exercisable by means of an order—
  - (a) directly modifying the scheme (without regard, in the case of a scheme contained in or made under powers conferred by an enactment, to the terms of the enactment or any of its restrictions); or
  - (b) modifying an enactment under which the scheme was made or by virtue of which it has effect.
- (4) Any such order shall contain such incidental, supplementary and transitional provisions as the appropriate authority considers to be required for the purposes of the order, including provisions adapting, amending or repealing any such enactment as is referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection (3).

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