



Statement of Services

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Rules of the Library & Research Service from the Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann relative to Public Business.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this *Statement of Services* is to give information to Members and to other users about the services available to them from the Oireachtas Library & Research Service.

The rules of the Oireachtas Library & Research Service are published with the Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann relative to Public Business, and are included as an appendix to this document. The rules state that a *Users' Entitlement Guide*, approved by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission on 19th October 2006, outlines the information and research services to which Members and other users are entitled. This *Statement of Services* (agreed by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission on 17 July 2012) replaces that *Users' Entitlement Guide*.

2. Role of the Oireachtas Library & Research Service

The Oireachtas Library & Research Service (L&RS) is responsible for delivering information and research services to support the work of both Houses, Committees and individual Members in respect of their parliamentary duties (see appendix: rules of the Library & Research Service, paragraph 1).

The L&RS delivers expert services which are impartial, timely, value-added, responsive and accessible. The information and research services include

- on-demand research and reference services to individual Members. These services are designed to support Members who are well-informed to carry out their parliamentary and representational duties.
- regular research briefings to the Houses of the Oireachtas and on-demand research and reference services to Committees. These services are designed to contribute to a well-informed parliament.
- information literacy training to help users find the information they need, and to evaluate and use it effectively. The training is designed to increase users' capability to undertake their own information and research work, and to make more efficient and effective use of L&RS staff resources by focussing on expert research.
- access to the L&RS collection of newspapers, books, journals, parliamentary material and databases. The purpose of this collection is to meet the wide-ranging information and research needs of users. There is 24/7 desktop access to much of the collection together with L&RS information services and research

briefings. Selected elements of the L&RS collection and research briefings are available to the public at oireachtas.ie

- Members' Reading Room providing access to many of our services, and access to print newspapers, journals and reference collection. The room is equipped with PCs and is WiFi-enabled for laptop use.

3. Provision of services to users

The Library & Research Service (L&RS) primarily delivers information and research services to Houses of the Oireachtas users but also provides a limited service to other users.

3.1 Houses of the Oireachtas users

The primary users of the Oireachtas Library & Research Service are Members of both Houses and their staff, Committees of the Houses and staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service. A limited service is provided to former Members of the Houses and Members of the European Parliament (see appendix: rules of the Library & Research Service, paragraph 5).

The L&RS services available to Houses of the Oireachtas users are outlined below.

Members who are not holders of Ministerial Office, and Members who are holders of Parliamentary Office have access to the following services when engaged in parliamentary or representational duties:

- Legislative analysis service;
- Regular research briefings on topical issues;
- On-demand research, analysis and reference services. These on-demand services are provided on a first-come, first-served basis to agreed deadlines;
- Information literacy training;
- Access to the L&RS collection;
- Access to the Members' Reading Room, Leinster House.

Members who are holders of Ministerial Office have access to the Members' Reading Room, Leinster House including access to reference services. On-demand research and analysis services are not provided to these Members or to their staff. These Members' departments can provide them with access to the L&RS services

that are available via the Houses of the Oireachtas ICT network should they so wish. The Houses of the Oireachtas Service charges departments for this access.

Former Members and Members of the European Parliament have access to the Members' Reading Room, its PCs and the L&RS collection on a reference basis. The L&RS does not provide these users with on-demand research services.

Committees have access to a range of research services which are outlined in the *Library & Research Service/Committee Secretariat Protocol*. This Protocol is reviewed and agreed annually in consultation with the Committee Secretariat.

Members' staff have access to the same services as Members who are not holders of Ministerial Office (when undertaking work on behalf of a Member) with the exception of the Members' Reading Room. Members' staff and party researchers may collect materials on behalf of Members from the Reading Room. The L&RS focus for this group of users is on information literacy training to enable them to carry out research for Members. Interns assigned to Members do not have access to the L&RS.

The staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service has access to the same services as Members who are not holders of Ministerial Office with the exception of the Members' Reading Room. The L&RS focus for this group of users is on information literacy training to support them in their work for parliament.

Political correspondents (accredited by the Houses of the Oireachtas Service) who have access to the Oireachtas ICT network will have access to the L&RS services and resources made available on this network. The Houses of the Oireachtas Service charges political correspondents for this access. No other services are provided to political correspondents.

3.2 Other users

The L&RS provides limited services to users outside of the Houses of the Oireachtas including officials from government departments, other libraries, academic researchers and members of the public.

The L&RS facilitates the supply of documents laid to government department officials. Generally government libraries are responsible for the provision of library

and information services to their departmental officials. The L&RS co-operates with other libraries on an individual basis.

The L&RS historical collections are accessible on a reference basis only to bona fide researchers by arrangement with the Head of Collections. This access is subject to the L&RS rules for external readers, copyright legislation and licence agreements.

The L&RS provides a reference service to members of the public to support their Houses of the Oireachtas-related research. Members of the public with general information queries will be referred to public libraries or other libraries as appropriate.

The L&RS makes some of its topical briefings and collections available on the Houses of the Oireachtas website (oireachtas.ie).

3.3 Provision of services to users

Service	Members; Members who are holders of Parliamentary Office; Committees; Members' staff and party researchers (on Members' behalf).	Members who are holders of Ministerial Office.	Former Members and Members of the European Parliament	Houses of the Oireachtas Service staff	Accredited political correspond ents	General public
Legislative analysis service	✓	✓ (subject to their Department's paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	x	✓	✓ (subject to them paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	x
Regular research briefings	✓	✓ (subject to their Department's paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	x	✓	✓ (subject to them paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	x
On-demand research service	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓ (limited to Oireachtas- related research)
Borrowing from the L&RS collections	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x
Information skills training	✓	x	x	✓	x	x
Access to the Reading Room including reference services	✓ (Members' staff and party researchers - to collect materials only)	✓	✓	✓ (to collect materials only)	x	x
Desktop access to L&RS collection and information services	✓	✓ (subject to their Department's paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	✓ (via the PCs in the Members' Reading Room only)	✓	✓ (subject to them paying for access to the Oireachtas ICT network)	x
Oireachtas.ie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4. Using the services and the collections

All L&RS policies regarding use of its services and collections may be accessed from its home page (<http://library>) on the Oireachtas intranet.

4.1 Service availability

There is 24/7 desktop access to much of the L&RS collection of newspapers, books, journals, parliamentary material and subject databases and research briefings. Members and their staff can submit research queries to the L&RS via the L&RS central email address at any time. Limited services are available via the Reading Room post-6pm on sitting days. Departments and agencies can lay documents before the Houses of the Oireachtas 24/7 via oireachtas.ie

4.2 Access to the Members' Reading Room

The rules of the L&RS state that access to the Members' Reading Room is restricted to Deputies, Senators, former Members, Members of the European Parliament and Officers of the Oireachtas (see appendix: paragraph 5).

In practice Members' staff, party researchers and Houses of the Oireachtas Service staff have access to the Reading Room to collect materials.

4.3 Service priorities

The L&RS is committed to the delivery of its full range of research services in a timely and responsive manner consistent with our level of resources.

We prioritise our research briefings to the Houses of the Oireachtas (such as our legislative analysis service) in order for us to respond in a timely manner to the parliamentary schedule.

We work with our user groups to fulfil their research needs as follows.

The *Library & Research Service/Committee Secretariat Protocol* defines the parameters and priorities for our on-demand research service to Committees, and the staff resources available for it.

For the Members' on-demand research service we give priority to Chamber-related research. During periods of high demand the L&RS may limit the number of concurrent queries Members may place with the L&RS and/or employ other short-

term strategies to manage demand. Members will be advised of any limitations when submitting queries.

For our on-demand reference service we give priority to requests from individual Members where the material is not accessible electronically and is directly related to work in the Houses.

4.4 How you can use our research

The L&RS produces its on-demand research papers and regular research briefings for Members to use as they wish. However Members should reproduce L&RS products accurately and in a manner and context which is in no way misleading as to their intended meaning and application. L&RS products should not be

- o attributed to individual L&RS staff members. The Oireachtas Library & Research Service can be acknowledged as a source and corporate author. Where practicable the impartial nature of the Library & Research Service and its services should be highlighted.
- o used without appropriate attribution in academic work. The L&RS will notify the relevant institutions/s should its work be plagiarised.
- o used in connection with advertising, endorsement or any form of undignified association.
- o used in any circumstances which are knowingly or potentially defamatory of individuals, companies or organisations.

Individual Library & Research Service staff members are available to discuss the contents of their research papers with Members and their staff. They are not available to discuss those papers with third parties including the media, lobby groups, constituents or members of the general public.

Arrangements for providing clarification for work undertaken on behalf of Oireachtas Committees are provided for in the *Library & Research Service/Committee Secretariat Protocol*.

The L&RS welcomes feedback and comment on its research papers (available at oireachtas.ie) from members of the general public. However, it is unable to respond to such feedback or to supply copies of the sources referred to in the research papers.

All users should take note of the disclaimers accompanying research papers.

4.5 How we reuse our research

The L&RS routinely reuses the research it has undertaken for individual Members in order to answer on-demand queries from other Members, or to provide research briefings for all Members. The name of the Member who commissioned the research is not made available.

The L&RS makes some of its regular research briefings available on the Houses of the Oireachtas website (oireachtas.ie). The Houses of the Oireachtas owns the copyright for all work produced by the L&RS. These research papers can be used by members of the public as they wish with due reference to the *Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000*.

4.6 Copyright and our collections

The use of library materials, including photocopying, is governed by legislation such as the *Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000*. The L&RS copyright policy details the conditions under which material may be copied by Members or on their behalf. A copyright declaration form must be signed when a request is made to the L&RS for copying of material on behalf of an end user who requires the material for the purpose of research and private study. A set of guidelines for photocopying is available beside the self-service photocopier in the Members' Reading Room.

The use of electronic databases is governed by the terms of the appropriate licence. In general material required for research or private study may be printed or downloaded within the terms and conditions of the database provider. The use of the computers in the Members' Reading Room is governed by the Houses of the Oireachtas acceptable usage policy.

4.7 Borrowing from the collection

Members, their staff and staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service may borrow publications from the L&RS collection. Members are held responsible for the return of publications borrowed by them or on their behalf.

Members may borrow up to twenty items for a twelve week period. Other users may borrow up to twenty items for a four week period. An email will issue to individual users on a weekly basis advising them of any books that are overdue. Users may

renew books directly via the Liberty system or through the Reading Room staff provided that the items have not been reserved by another user. Users may renew their books twice before being required to return them to the Reading Room. Users may reserve up to five books at any one time.

The L&RS provides Members and staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service with an inter-library loan service subject to cost.

The L&RS purchases books and other items in line with its Acquisition and Collecting Policy. Suggestions for purchase may be made to any member of L&RS staff.

Some parts of the collection are not available for loan. These include newspapers, reference collection, journals, and the historical collection.

5. Services that we do not provide

To ensure that the resources of the Library & Research Service are used effectively and for parliamentary or representational purposes only the L&RS is unable to respond to the following categories of enquiry:

- a) constituents' enquiries (as opposed to briefing Members on issues of concern to their constituents).
- b) requests that require the L&RS to undertake primary research such as surveys.
- c) requests to draft bills and amendments to bills, motions, speeches, lectures and articles. (The Bills Office provides a legislative drafting service.)
- d) requests for legal or financial advice – Library & Research Service staff do not have professional indemnity.
- e) requests arising from personal, business or commercial interests of Members (or of their staff, family, friends or constituents).
- f) requests for personal information about a Member or individual where this is not already in the public domain.
- g) requests to assist Members or their staff, families or constituents with their academic studies.
- h) requests that are deemed to be trawling and/or vague.
- i) requests to purchase materials on behalf of sections of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service, or to find/purchase materials on behalf of individual staff who are undertaking academic studies.
- j) requests for high-volume photocopying.

- k) ICT skills training or set up and use of the Oireachtas ICT network. This is the responsibility of the ICT and Training Units.

6. Contacts for further information

The key contact person for further information about library and research services is Madelaine Dennison, Head of Library and Research Services, who is available at 01 618 4735 or madelaine.dennison@oireachtas.ie

Other contacts are:

- Maria Fitzsimons, Head of Research,
01 618 4734, maria.fitzsimons@oireachtas.ie
- John McDonough, Head of Collections,
01 618 4733, john.mcdonough@oireachtas.ie
- Reading Room/central enquiry desk,
01 618 4701/4702

Appendix

OIREACHTAS LIBRARY & RESEARCH SERVICE

RULES

(As adopted by the Joint Library Committee, 17th May 1939 and amended on 11th April 1962, 10th July 1974, 29th September 1983 and 10th May 2007.)

1. The Library & Research Service is responsible for delivering information and research services to support the work of both Houses, Committees and individual Members in respect of their parliamentary duties. The Service also manages the procedures relating to the laying of documents before the Houses.

2. The direction and control of the Library & Research Service shall be vested in the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission, which shall be empowered to add to, alter or cancel these rules as occasion may require.

3. The Houses of the Oireachtas Commission shall, from time to time, issue such directions as to it shall seem expedient in regard to the Library & Research Service, and the duties of the Head of Library and Research Services and his or her staff.

4. The Joint Administration Committee set up by both Houses will assist and advise the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission in carrying out the rules and in suggesting further improvements and additions to the services.

5. The primary users of the Oireachtas Library & Research Service are Members of both Houses and their staff, Committees of the Houses and staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service. A limited service is provided to former Members of the Houses and Members of the European Parliament. No person shall be entitled to resort to the Members' Reading Room except Deputies, Senators, former Members, Members of the European Parliament and Officers of the Oireachtas, and such other persons as may receive a written order from the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission.

6. Except on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays, the Library & Research Service shall be open upon every day when either House of the Oireachtas is sitting, until the rising of whichever House is last sitting, and when neither House is sitting between the hours of 9.45 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.

7. The Users' Entitlement Guide, approved by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission on 19th October 2006, outlines the information and research services to which Members and other users are entitled. The Guide also outlines the general conditions of using the services and collections.

SEIRBHÍS LEABHARLAINNE & TAIGHDE AN OIREACHTAIS

RIALACHA

(Mar a ghlac Comhchoiste na Leabharlainne iad, an 17 Bealtaine 1939 agus mar a leasaíodh iad an 11 Aibreán 1962, an 10 Iúil 1974, an 29 Meán Fómhair 1983 agus an 10 Bealtaine 2007.)

1. Tá an tSeirbhís Leabharlainne & Taighde freagrach i seirbhísí faisnéise agus taighde a sholáthar chun tacú le hobair an dá Theach, Coistí agus Comhaltaí aonair i leith a ndualgas parlaiminteach. Déanann an tSeirbhís bainistiú freisin ar na nósanna imeachta a bhaineann le scríbhinní a leagan faoi bhráid na dTithe.

2. Beidh stiúradh agus cúram na Seirbhíse Leabharlainne & Taighde dílsithe do Choimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais agus beidh cumhacht acu cur leis na rialacha seo nó iad a athrú nó a chealú de réir mar is gá.

3. Déanfaidh Coimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais cibé treoracha is oiriúnach leis a eisiúint ó am go ham maidir leis an tSeirbhís Leabharlainne & Taighde agus maidir le dualgaís Cheann na Seirbhíse Leabharlainne agus Taighde agus a fhoirne nó a foirne.

4. Déanfaidh an Comhchoiste Riaracháin cúnamh agus comhairle a thabhairt do Choimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais maidir leis na rialacha a chur in éifeacht agus maidir le moltaí chun tuilleadh feabhsuithe a chur ar na seirbhísí agus chun cur leis na seirbhísí.

5. Is iad na Comhaltaí den dá Theach agus a bhfoireann, Coistí na dTithe agus foireann Sheirbhís Thithe an Oireachtais úsáideoirí príomha Sheirbhís Leabharlainne & Taighde an Oireachtais. Soláthraítear seirbhís theoranta d'iarchomhaltaí de na Tithe agus do Chomhaltaí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa. Ní bheidh duine ar bith i dteideal úsáid a dhéanamh de Sheomra Léitheoireachta na gComhaltaí ach amháin Teachtaí, Seanadóirí, iarchomhaltaí, Comhaltaí de Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus Oifigigh don Oireachtas, agus cibé daoine eile a gheobhaidh ordú scríofa ó Choimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais.

6. Ach amháin ar an Satharn, an Domhnach agus Laethanta Saoire Poiblí, beidh an tSeirbhís Leabharlainne & Taighde ar oscailt gach lá a bheidh ceachtar Teach den Oireachtas ina shuí go héirí do cibé Teach is déanaí a bheidh ina shuí, agus idir 9.45 a.m. agus 5.30 p.m. nuair nach mbeidh ceachtar den dá Theach ina shuí.

7. Déantar na seirbhísí faisnéise agus taighde a bhfuil teideal ag Comhaltaí agus ag úsáideoirí eile orthu a rianú sa Treoir Teidlíochtaí Úsáideoirí a cheadaigh Coimisiún Thithe an Oireachtais an 19 Deireadh Fómhair 2006. Déantar na coinníollacha ginearálta a bhaineann le húsáid na seirbhísí agus na mbailiúchán a rianú freisin sa Treoir.