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**AN BILLE SEIRBHÍSÍ POIST AGUS TEILEACHUMARSÁIDE  
(LEASÚ), 1988  
POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES  
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1988**

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**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

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The principle purpose of this Bill is to improve the responsiveness of the two Companies to customer needs and complaints. It also contains provision to extend the public accountability of the Companies.

The main provisions of the Bill are as follows:—

- (1) It places a new duty on the Companies to move towards levels of services and of charges that are as good as the best standard prevailing in the European Communities.
- (2) It requires the publication by the Companies of the following details of its performance:
  - (i) a comparison of charges and of management performance with other E.C. Member States;
  - (ii) a separate profit and loss account for different components of its business;
  - (iii) a quarterly report of performance on key indicators of quality of service to the customer (including delays, faults, the level of complaint and charges).

It also requires the Companies to publish before the start of the financial year (a) the borrowing targets agreed with the Minister and (b) an appraisal of major investment projects for the year ahead.

(3) It makes the Companies subject to the normal obligations to consumers conferred by the Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act, 1980.

(4) It requires the Companies to have written contracts with its customers.

(5) It requires the Companies to draw up a Code of Practice for consumers, which would set out the standard of service that customers may expect, and clear procedures for resolving customer complaints. This code will be monitored by the Ombudsman.

(6) It allows the Minister, by order, to require the Companies to pay half of the Ombudsman's costs relating to it.

(7) It requires the Minister to take account of the performance of each Company in relation to quality of service, before agreeing to any increase in charges.

Richard Bruton,  
May, 1988.

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