



18 February 2015

Ms Margaret Falsey  
PAC Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

**2013 Annual Report and Appropriation Accounts of the C&AG;  
Vote 33: Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
Chapter 9: Accounting for National Gallery Expenditure**

**National Library of Ireland Financial Statements 2012**

A Chara

I refer to your letter of 4 February 2015 in relation to the undertaking given by me at a meeting of the Committee on 29 January 2015 to supply further information on matters raised during the course of the examination.

Please find attached the following documents which I am forwarding on foot of that undertaking:

**1. Airstrips on Inishbofin Island and at Cleggan, Co Galway**

Note 1 attached sets out

- the policy and feasibility assessment background to the projects;
- the salient facts regarding the development of the airstrips, including the key works carried out and the capital costs;
- a clarification regarding the maintenance costs arising; and
- the current position regarding options for the disposal of the airstrips.

The note also includes an assurance regarding adherence to capital appraisal and procurement guidelines and the obtaining of any necessary Department of Finance sanctions.

With regard to my reference at the Committee hearing on 29 January last to a cost of the order of €300,000 arising in 2014 in regard to maintenance of the airstrips on the three Aran Islands, Inishbofin and Cleggan, I would like to take this opportunity to clarify that the bulk of those costs related to management of the Aran Islands facilities, which are fully functioning aerodromes with significant air and passenger traffic. The lower level management costs relating to Inishbofin and Cleggan amounted to a total of €13,000 (excluding VAT) in 2014, which ensured appropriate insurance cover, keyholder services and airstrip security at the two sites. The corresponding amount for the previous 18 months was €30,000 (excluding VAT).

With regard to direct maintenance costs, it may be noted that the airstrips at Cleggan and on Inishbofin are not derelict and are maintained appropriately. In this regard, the Department has spent some €51,700 since their completion on necessary maintenance and other works to ensure the assets are kept in good order and appropriately safeguarded.

## **2. Compliance Review of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies**

Note 2 attached sets out the position regarding a review of compliance with the 2009 *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* in bodies funded from the Department's Vote, which was undertaken in late 2013 and 2014. Twelve bodies in total were reviewed. Copies are provided of

- the generic letter and template that issued to the Directors/CEOs of the bodies; and
- the reports provided by the Department to the Directors/CEOs on the completion of the compliance review in each case, including all of the recommendations made, both common and specific.

## **3. Commemoration of 1916 Rising**

The *Ireland 2016* initiative, which was launched by the Taoiseach in November last, aims to develop, coordinate and deliver a programme to honour and remember those who fought and died in the 1916 Rising. It will also reflect on the legacy of that period and look towards the future, based around 5 themes, as set out in the Government's framework plan:

- *Remembering the past*
- *Reconciling and respecting all traditions*
- *Presenting Ireland to the world*
- *Imagining our future*
- *Celebrating our achievements.*

The *Ireland 2016* initiative will seek to build positive engagement with the citizens of Ireland across the Government, State agency and community sectors. It is anticipated that a more developed set of commemorative events, based on the framework plan launched last year, will be approved by Government in the coming weeks. I will be in a position to revert to the Committee at that stage with more detailed information about those events.

Mise le meas



Joe Hamill  
Secretary General