



**An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán**
**Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media**

Oifig an Ard-Rúnaí
Office of the Secretary General

Éilis Fallon
Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee
Leinster House
Dublin 2

June 2021

Dear Éilis,

I refer further to your letter dated 9 June 2021, Ref: S0429 PAC33, in connection with the timely submission of 2019 Accounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas as required under Circular 7 of 2015 to Accounting Officers, for National Library of Ireland, Screen Ireland and National Museum of Ireland not being met.

As you will appreciate the past year was an exceptionally difficult one for all Government Departments and Agencies due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, which necessitated a pivot to remote working across the Department. The situation was further complicated for this Department by the restructuring of the Department following the formation of the new Government during the summer and the associated formal Transfer of Functions process.

These factors combined to create a significant backlog of work on the sections concerned, many of which were also heavily involved in the development of the Department's sectoral response to COVID-19. The resultant pressures on the staff involved in these areas regrettably contributed to a delay in the processing of Annual Reports and Accounts, including the notification to the PAC of the reasons for the delay in publication and provision of a copies of the relevant documents to the Committee.

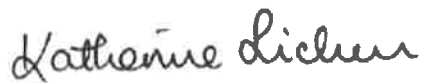
Notwithstanding the particular circumstance of the year gone by I accept that the Department should have notified the Committee where various delays arose.

I am confident that with the completion of the transition to the new configuration of the Department and remote working arrangements now embedded throughout the organisation, the requirements of the Circular 7/2015 will be fulfilled going forward. I have also taken the following steps to ensure that accounts are presented to the Houses of the Oireachtas within the required time limits going forward:

- Circular 7/2015 has been circulated within the Department again
- State Bodies under the Aegis of the Department have been reminded of the Circular and its requirements.
- The Department's Management Board will be provided with regular updates in relation to the Department's performance in relation to these regulations.

I trust that these steps will lead to the necessary improvements and clarifies the position to the satisfaction of the Committee

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Licken".

Katherine Licken

Secretary General