

An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications



27 January 2022

Ms Sarah Cremin
Secretariat
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2
D02 A272

Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (Vote 29)
Ref: S0681 PAC33

Dear Ms Cremin,

I refer to your letter of 10 January 2022 regarding the late submission of the 2019 and 2020 accounts of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

Further details on the nature of the “internal delays” that caused the late submissions and the steps taken to prevent a recurrence is detailed below.

The 2019 accounts were received by the Department on the 12th June 2020. Minister Ryan assumed office on the 27th June 2020. Due to the short timeline between Minister Ryan taking office and the summer recess the Department did not finalise the internal submission to the Minister before the Dáil summer recess. The accounts were originally laid on the 17th November 2020. The 2019 accounts were re-laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas on the 1st November 2021 as it was found that these accounts were originally submitted with the incorrect audit certificate date

The 2020 accounts were received by the Department on the 29th June 2021. In 2021, there was significant staff turnover in the relevant division. As a result of the accounts being received close to the summer recess coupled with staff vacancies, the Department did not finalise the internal submission to the Minister before the Dáil summer recess. The accounts were laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas on the 18th October 2021.

The Department is working with with relevant Agencies on the issue to agree interim deadlines that will ensure the timely production and submission of agency Accounts in line with the requirements set out in Circular 24/2021. The Department has introduced a central tracking system to monitor compliance with agreed deadlines.

Should you require any clarification or additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Deirdre King in my Department, by email at deirdre.king@DECC.gov.ie or by phone at 087 7053711.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Griffin
Secretary General