

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

By email: PAC@oireachtas.ie

Your ref: S1204 PAC33

06 March 2023

Dear Ms Cremin,

Thank you for your letter of 01 March 2023 with questions arising from the meeting of the Committee of Public Accounts on 09 February 2023. I will address each of the Committee's queries in turn.

1. The circumstances of the former Chief Executive Officer's retirement in light of the reference in the correspondence to 'termination of employment';

The reference to "termination of employment" was part of a direct quote from the transcript of the Committee's meeting on 22 September. The quoted words "an absolute standard feature of settlements that are made around termination of employment" were spoken by Mr Seamus McCarthy, Comptroller and Auditor General, in the general context of Non-Disclosure Agreements.

As has previously been explained, in 2021 the former CEO applied for and was granted early retirement, and thereby terminated his employment in September of that year.

2. Clarification as to what was sensitive about this situation;

The terms of the former CEO's employment were treated as confidential and not publicly disclosed, a practice in relation to which the IHRB had previously received a derogation from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The same sensitivity was accorded to the terms surrounding the end of his employment.

3. Whether the confidentiality of the terms is legally binding and if so, what is the legal basis for this.

The Settlement Agreement between the IHRB and its former CEO is a formal legal contract which was drafted by solicitors and agreed and signed by the parties on the basis that the fact and terms of the settlement would not be disclosed other than to the extent required by law

or court order or on the part of the IHRB to its legal and professional advisors. The IHRB remains bound by this contract.

In addition, I am pleased to advise the Committee that the Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board (IHRB) has now published our 2021 Annual Report – our first since the IHRB was established in 2018 and assumed the role of the Racing Regulatory Body. The report illustrates the extent of the IHRB's work to safeguard the reputation of Irish horseracing and the welfare of its participants, both horse and rider, and pays tribute to all our staff and volunteers who make racing possible and work daily to uphold its integrity. It is available [on the IHRB website](#)¹.

I and my colleagues wish to thank the Committee for their continuing interest in the integrity work of the Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board as well as for their ongoing support of the horseracing industry. We look forward to engaging with the Committee further in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Darragh O'Loughlin
Chief Executive Officer

¹ <https://www.ihrb.ie/pdf.php?f=IHRBAnnualReport2021.pdf>