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**An Roghchoiste um Iompar agus Cumarsáide**  
Breithniú ar Imleabhar Meastachán Athbhreithnithe (ATHBH) 2023

Feabhra 2023

**Select Committee on Transport and Communications**  
Consideration of Revised Estimates Volume (REV) 2023

February 2023



## Introduction

The Select Committee on Transport and Communications met with the Minister for Transport and Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD, to examine the spending allocations and associated performance metrics for the following Votes:

- **Vote 29, Programme D: Connectivity and Communications Delivery**
- **Vote 31 Transport**

Standing Order 95(3) of Dáil Éireann states:

*“The principal purpose of Committee consideration of matters of policy, governance, expenditure, and administration under paragraph (1) shall be— (a) for the accountability of the relevant Minister or Minister of State, and (b) to assess the performance of the relevant Government Department or of a State body within the responsibility of the relevant Department, in delivering public services while achieving intended outcomes, including value for money.”*

Select Committees are tasked with consideration of the annual Revised Estimates for Public Services (or REV)<sup>1</sup> that fall within their remit. While Select Committees have no role in approving the Estimates, it is an ongoing opportunity for the Committee to examine Departmental expenditure, to make the budgetary process more transparent, and to engage in a meaningful way on relevant performance issues.

The Committee subsequently sent a message confirming completion of its consideration to the Clerk of Dáil Éireann on 8 February 2023 in accordance with Standing Order 101 of Dáil Éireann. Under Standing Order 100(2) of Dáil Éireann, this message is deemed to be the report of the Committee.

## Reporting on REV consideration

Furthermore, Standing Order 215A of Dáil Éireann states:

*Consideration of Estimates by Committees: Report of Committee on Estimate*

*215A. (1) Subject to Standing Order 215(2) and unless the Dáil shall otherwise order, Committees shall complete their consideration of Estimates referred to them*

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<sup>1</sup> The Revised Estimates (comprised of Ministerial Votes / Vote Groups) are included in the Revised Estimates Volume (or REV). REV2023 was published on 14 December 2022.

*pursuant to that Standing Order not later than 60 days after such Estimates have been so referred.*

***(2) Any report that a Committee proposes to make arising from its consideration of an Estimate shall be made within a further period of 14 days.***

Under SO215A(2), this report summarises issues arising from the Committee's consideration and will be laid before the Dáil and sent to the Minister for consideration. This report will also be provided to the Committee on Budgetary Oversight which will examine all Select Committee reports, collate the information to identify any common issues or concerns, as well as examples of best practice, and make recommendations for the improvement of the consideration process.

## **Committee commentary on consideration of REV2023**

In a letter sent to the Minister from the Committee Cathaoirleach, a short, non-technical Departmental briefing was requested on 7 December 2022. Briefings were received from the two Departments on 31 January, 1 February, and 2 February 2023. The public hearing with the Minister was held on 8 February 2023. The briefing was comprehensive, the engagement with the Minister was substantial, and the Committee was satisfied.

Specific allocations that were queried by the Committee were the following:

### **Vote 31 - Transport**

#### **Programme B- Sustainable Mobility and public transport**

The Committee queried funding for the implementation of the five-year Connecting Ireland rural mobility plan<sup>2</sup>. Phase one of the programme commenced in 2022. The Minister stated that while initial implementation has been slow, funding for the programme has doubled year-on-year for the first two years, and this trend is expected to continue.

#### **Programme C- Road Networks and Road Safety**

The Committee highlighted that the 2023 estimate for subhead C.3, National Roads Investment, was 8.1% less than the previous year. The Minister stated that this reflected the

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<sup>2</sup> [Connecting Ireland - National Transport](#)

prioritisation of 2:1 ratio for investment in new public transport projects and new road projects outlined in the programme for government.

### **Vote 29, Programme D - Connectivity and Communications Delivery**

The Committee noted that the estimated allocation for the National Broadband Plan (subhead D3) had increased 8.8% on the previous year. The Minister noted that the pandemic had delayed the rollout of the NBP by one year. However, deployment work has since escalated, with delivery targets for the end of January 2023 already being exceeded.

The Committee noted that the estimated allocation for the National Cyber Security Centre (subhead D6) had increased by 144% on the previous year. The Minister outlined the plans to expand the staffing complement of the NCSC from 43 to 60, and to move the centre to a new purpose-built facility later in 2023.