



**Houses of the  
Oireachtas Commission  
Coimisiún Thithe  
an Oireachtais**

*Minutes of the Commission  
Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2009*

1. The first meeting of the Commission of 2009 took place at 4.15 p.m. in Room 2, Leinster House.

**2. MEMBERS PRESENT.**

Deputy John O'Donoghue, T.D., Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson), Senator Pat Moylan, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad (Deputy Chairperson), Senator Paul Bradford, Mr. Kieran Coughlan, Secretary General, Deputy Tom Hayes, Senator Cecilia Keaveney, Deputy Séamus Kirk, Deputy Michael Mulcahy, Deputy Pat Rabbitte and Senator Jim Walsh.

Apologies were received from Deputy Dan Neville.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.**

The minutes of the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2008, were agreed by the Commission.

*90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Dáil.*

Arising from the minutes, the Commission referred to the Special Joint Sitting of both Houses of the Oireachtas held in the Mansion House earlier that day to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the first sitting of Dáil Éireann. The Ceann Comhairle welcomed and acknowledged the co-operation received from all of the party leaders and members of the Oireachtas in the planning of the event as well as the commitment of the officials who organised the event.

**4. RATIONALISATION OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES.**

The Commission discussed proposals in relation to the rationalisation of members' allowances and agreed to recommend to the Minister for Finance the introduction of a monthly all-in standardised parliamentary allowance on a cost neutral basis encompassing attendance recording and deductions for non-attendance that will make the system more simple and streamlined for members of the Oireachtas and more verifiable and accountable from a public perspective. The system for deductions for non-attendance is to be worked out in discussions between officials from the Department of Finance and the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The Commission agreed that the recommendations be now forwarded to the Minister for Finance for his consideration given his statutory responsibility to determine by regulation the rates and the conditions governing the payment of allowances.

**5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

*Public relation services of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission.*

Members requested that the issue of the public relations services of the Commission be discussed at the next meeting.

**6. ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

JOHN O'DONOGHUE, T.D.,  
Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission.  
Dated: