

## **Written Answers.**

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**The following are questions tabled by Members for written response and the ministerial replies as received on the day from the Departments [unrevised].**

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*Questions Nos. 1 to 30, inclusive, answered orally.*

*Questions Nos. 31 to 52, inclusive, resubmitted.*

*Questions Nos. 53 to 59, inclusive, answered orally.*

*Question No. 60 lapsed.*

*Questions Nos. 61 and 62 answered orally.*

### **Rural Recreation Policy**

63. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the programme of work laid out by his Department for rural recreation development this year; the new aspects to the programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33739/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** Comhairle na Tuaithe, which is chaired by my Department, has agreed a priority list of activities in line with the objectives of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy, to be undertaken in the short to medium term and to be kept under review. The renewal of Walks Scheme contracts in respect of 14 trails involving almost 900 participants will be finalised by the end of this year. A Pilot Mountain Access Project to establish a formal management structure to enable access to the McGillicuddy Reeks is being developed.

The Department has affiliated to the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group (VSCG) whose objective is to develop shared and consistent approaches to creating safe access to the countryside. An information leaflet on Access and Liability has been prepared which provides clear and concise information regarding the legal position in relation to access to private land and occupiers liability. The Department, with the assistance of the State Claims Agency, is developing a National Indemnity Scheme for landowners in rural areas to indemnify them against claims for personal injury or damage to property from recreational users of their land. A review of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy will begin in September which will consider how best to expand the implementation of the Strategy on a national basis.

The Department, in conjunction with the National Trails Advisory Committee (NTAC), the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport and the NRA, is participating in a review of the National Cycle Policy Framework, in particular in the area of recreational cycling. The completion of these and other initiatives is subject to resource constraints, but the Minister secured

approximately €600,000 in additional funding for the Rural Recreation budget this year. This funding will assist in maintaining the network of National Waymarked Ways and other priority walking routes of regional or national significance, the establishment of the State Agencies Network and the preparation of a National Plan for the development of State lands and waters for recreation purposes.

### **Local Authority Housing Waiting Lists**

64. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government having regard to the more than 100,000 families currently on various local authority housing lists throughout the country, in some cases for up to ten years and the fact that such applicants, if unemployed, have to rely on social welfare rent support which they forfeit if they take up employment, if he will consider a direct build of local authority housing to meet this requirement and thereby meeting the housing needs of applicants, a reduction in the cost of rent support, an employment disincentive and much needed employment in the construction sector with obvious resultant economic benefit; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33652/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** The Government’s housing policy statement, published in June 2011, clearly identifies that the priority for Government will be to meet the most acute needs of households applying for social housing support. I am determined to ensure that the social housing programme optimises the delivery of social housing and the return for the resources invested. To achieve this, it is essential that we tailor the use of available Exchequer supports to prevailing conditions and explore the full range of solutions to address housing needs.

The financial parameters within which we will be operating for the coming years rule out a return to large capital funded construction programmes. The Government is committed to responding more quickly and on a larger scale to social housing support needs through a variety of mechanisms, including through increased provision of social housing. In July 2012 I announced details of a three-year funding programme of €100 million to deliver some 800 new units of voluntary and local authority owned social housing. I am monitoring expenditure under my Department’s housing programme for 2013, together with the level of contractual commitments extending into 2014, with a view to a decision later this year on approving some limited new construction and house purchases over the period to end 2014.

Delivery of social housing will be significantly facilitated through more flexible funding models such as the Rental Accommodation Scheme and leasing but the Government is also committed to developing other funding mechanisms that will increase the supply of permanent new social housing. Such mechanisms will include options to purchase, build to lease and the sourcing of loan finance by approved housing bodies for construction and acquisition. There is also obvious potential, across a range of housing programmes, for the Government’s objective of sourcing and providing suitable residential units for use as social housing to be aligned with the commercial objectives of the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA). My Department and the Housing Agency are engaged with NAMA to ensure delivery of housing units for social purposes. In spite of the current challenging circumstances, I expect the final outcome for 2012 to be in the region of 5,000 housing units, and it is provisionally estimated that in the region of 5,000 units will be provided for social housing in 2013.

### **Homelessness Strategy**

65. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his position on the supports local authorities should provide for those

made homeless when their dwelling is condemned such as the families of Priory Hall, Dublin. [33782/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** Local authorities are the designated authorities with powers to enforce the statutory requirements arising under the Fire Services, Building Control and Planning and Development legislation, all of which is at issue in Priory Hall and in other potential condemned dwellings. The local authorities are also the designated housing authority under the Housing Acts. Neither I nor my Department have a direct role or responsibility in relation to the exercise of these statutory responsibilities.

With regard to homelessness, my Department’s role involves the provision of a national framework of policy, legislation and funding to underpin the responsibilities of housing authorities in addressing homelessness at local level. Statutory responsibility in relation to the provision of accommodation and other services for homeless persons rests with the housing authorities.

Under the 1988 Housing Act a housing authority may consider an individual as homeless if there is no accommodation available that the individual can reasonably occupy and the individual is unable to provide accommodation from their own resources. Where the housing authority has deemed an individual as homeless, the housing authority may, under Section 10 of the Act, provide the individual with such assistance as the authority considers appropriate, including arranging lodgings or contributing to the cost of accommodation.

In the case of Priory Hall, I am aware of the significant efforts that have been made by Dublin City Council, with the assistance of my Department, to provide for the needs of residents to date and I understand that the Council will continue to work proactively on behalf of the residents towards achieving the much needed resolution of the issues at Priory Hall.

My Department has previously assisted Dublin City Council, in consultation with NAMA, in securing alternative temporary accommodation for many of the residents. In excess of €1.1 million has been contributed to date towards emergency accommodation costs and the costs necessarily incurred by Dublin City Council, in the context of a judgment of the High Court, in providing emergency and temporary accommodation for households evacuated from Priory Hall. Costs incurred accommodating evacuated residents from Priory Hall between October and December 2011 were considered appropriate for recoupment under the homelessness Section 10 funding arrangements and these amounted to €227,368. The remaining costs of €887,000 related to rehousing the social housing tenants, providing alternative accommodation for residents of privately owned apartments and other costs. The overriding priority in Priory Hall, and in any other potential cases, is to ensure the optimum outcome for the households concerned and to facilitate as early as possible a return to their homes. In this respect, it will be necessary to ensure that these homes are made fit for purpose and that the costs of so doing fall where they should. In the case of Priory Hall, I have specifically asked Dublin City Council to do all within its powers to achieve this objective and have asked my Department to continue to liaise closely with the City Council in this regard.

### **Property Taxation Administration**

66. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government further to Parliamentary Question No. 149 of 19 June 2013, if he will indicate precisely the definition he applies to equalised basis; if he will share the detail of any specific formula or guiding principle he will be employing in order to distribute the 20% discretionary fund taken from local property tax receipts; if a needs and resources model will be employed in relation to same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33651/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** The local government funding model will change considerably in 2014. Under the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012, commencing in 2014 the Minister for Finance will pay into the Local Government Fund an amount equivalent to the Local Property Tax paid into the Central Fund during that year; this revenue will be allocated to local authorities from the Fund. In addition, the establishment of Irish Water and its financial relationship with the local government sector will have a considerable impact on local authority financing.

The Local Property Tax is expected to have multiple benefits, including a more sustainable and resilient system of funding for local authorities and therefore a sounder financial footing for the provision of essential local services; greater local scope for financial decision making concerning service provision - in particular, the inclusion of the local variation mechanism from 2015 will further increase the autonomy of local authorities; and, a strengthening of democracy at local level with a more active relationship between local authorities and local electorates. A stronger democratic relationship and clearer lines of accountability can only have a beneficial impact on service provision from the perspective of the service user.

The Government has indicated an intention to move, from 2014, to 80% retention of all Local Property Tax receipts within the local authority area where the Tax is raised. The remaining 20% of the Tax collected nationally will be redistributed on an equalised basis to local authorities within the context of the annual allocations of General Purpose Grants. The approach used to allocate the 20% of Local Property Tax revenue available for equalisation will depend on factors such as overall yield and yields at individual local authority level. The priority will be to support those local authorities with weaker funding bases. The details will be decided in the context of Budget 2014.

An important purpose of the changes to the funding of the local authorities is to place the local government sector on a more sustainable financial footing. The concept of financial sustainability should not solely be considered in terms of national recovery from our current economic circumstances over the short to medium term; longer term viability and the connection with the citizen are also important elements. The changes which are currently under way are intended to deliver a model of funding which is sustainable in the broadest sense.

### **Seniors Alert Scheme Issues**

67. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of money made available for the seniors' scheme this year, the amount sanctioned to date and the amount paid out; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33738/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** The Department manages the Seniors Alert Scheme which aims to encourage and assist the community's support for older people by means of a community-based grant scheme to improve the security of people over 65 years of age. The budget allocation for 2013 for the Seniors Alert Scheme is €2.35m. The Scheme provides grant assistance towards the purchase and installation of equipment to enable older persons without sufficient means to continue to live securely in their homes with confidence, independence and peace of mind. Grant support is available towards the purchase and installation of personal monitored alarm systems and all applications for grant support must be submitted through community and voluntary groups registered with the Department. The Scheme is demand-led and approximately €1.377m has been paid to date this year, which has benefitted approximately 6,000 older people. Information on the Seniors Alert Scheme, payments made to date and the

list of voluntary registered groups can be obtained at [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

*Question No. 68 answered with Question No. 58.*

### **Dormant Accounts Fund Administration**

69. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the programmes he intends to run under the dormant accounts fund this year; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33733/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** I have allocated €6.385 million for Dormant Accounts Measures in 2013, which includes €2.835 million to cover once off costs such as health and safety training, personal protective clothing, necessary equipment and materials, that will be incurred by local authorities providing placements in the Department of Social Protection's (DSP's) Local Authority Employment Initiative, with the remainder to be used to meet existing contractual commitments.

The Disbursement Plan of 2009, put in place by the Dormant Accounts Board, will be replaced later this year by a new disbursement scheme in accordance with the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2012. My Department is consulting with relevant Government Departments and other stakeholders as appropriate in relation to drafting the disbursement scheme. The new scheme will be submitted to Government for approval and, in accordance with the 2012 Act, laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas. It will operate from next year.

The legislation also provides for the preparation of an action plan each year following the making of a scheme. The plan, which will also be subject to consultation, must indicate the programmes or types of projects that may apply for disbursement and the maximum funds available. Different amounts may be specified in the plan in relation to a particular class or classes of programme or project. Once the plan is adopted, a copy must also be laid before each House of the Oireachtas.

Government Departments and agencies will still have to source monies for dormant accounts programmes and measures from their Exchequer allocations, in the same way as with any other funding programmes. When the monies expended on dormant accounts measures and programmes are reimbursed from the Dormant Accounts Fund, the refund is to the Exchequer rather than to the spending Department. For this reason, dormant accounts expenditure is subject to the same constraints within Departments as any other spending programmes. At a time of severe budgetary pressures, resulting in reduced allocations across Government Department Votes, there is a need to prioritise funding programmes. Expenditure on new dormant accounts measures or programmes could potentially reduce spending on other existing programmes, and would serve to increase Government debt levels. However, this is a matter I am prepared to keep under review, particularly in the context of any improvement to the budgetary situation.

### **Waste Management Issues**

70. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the legislation in place prohibiting a local authority from negotiating contracts whereby waste collection companies would pay local authorities for the recyclable waste they collected. [33804/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** I published A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland in July 2012. The publication of the policy confirmed the retention of side by side competition in the household waste collection market and also brought much needed policy certainty to the waste sector, particularly in terms of facilitating planning and investment decisions. The policy further sets out a range of proposals significantly to revise the existing regulatory regime to ensure, *inter alia*, that waste collected is managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, that mandated service levels are delivered and that Customer Charters are put in place by all waste collection providers. The work of developing new regulatory structures to give effect to these proposals is underway and my Department is engaging with a range of key stakeholders in relation to the detailed design of the new system. It is my intention that the revised regulatory regime will deliver both enhanced environmental performance and a quality service for consumers. Contractual agreements relating to issues such as the transfer of household waste collection services by a local authority to a private sector waste collector, or remuneration for recyclable waste collected, are matters for the relevant local authority and waste collector concerned.

*Question No. 71 answered with Question No. 58.*

### **Local Authority Housing Repossessions**

72. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of shared ownership homes that have been repossessed; the number still occupied by the person who entered into the shared ownership agreement; and the number that have been returned to the local authority stock for reallocation. [33784/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** The Government is acutely conscious of the difficulties many households are facing in terms of mortgage arrears. Where any borrower, either from a local authority or from a private financial institution, is facing difficulties in meeting mortgage repayments, they should engage proactively and constructively with the lender to seek to achieve an agreed solution. The services of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service are also available to such borrowers and support is available through the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme. Local authorities have long been the lenders of last resort servicing the housing loans needs of less affluent members of society. In the present economic circumstances it is to be anticipated that the ability of some borrowers to service housing loans may become restricted and that a number of loans may fall into arrears.

Section 34 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 provides local authorities with powers to deal flexibly with distressed borrowers, and they have demonstrated sensitivity over the years in this regard. In March 2010 my Department issued guidelines to local authorities, based upon the Central Bank's first Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears, which continued the tradition of handling arrears in a manner sympathetic to the needs of the particular household, while also protecting the position of the local authority concerned.

To reflect the content of the Central Bank's Code of Conduct – which was informed by the deliberations of the Expert Group on Mortgage Arrears and Personal Debt – my Department also issued guidance to local authorities in June 2012 in consultation with the County and City Managers Association. This will further enable local authorities to provide a range of flexible repayment options for households in difficulty. In particular, the introduction of a Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP), which closely mirrors the suite of options available in the commercial sector, presents borrowers in difficulty with a range of alternative payment op-

tions, which can be accessed to ease the particular circumstances of each case. This includes, in cases of certain unsustainable mortgages, the facility of mortgage-to-rent. Local authorities have been restructuring loans for some time using their own internal practices. The guidelines he approach across the whole sector, introduce a systematic structure to this area and provide borrowers with a transparent and accessible model for arrears resolution. Statistics in relation to the numbers of Shared Ownership mortgages, local authority repossessions, and a range of related issues, can be found on my Department's website, [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

### **Pyrite Remediation Programme Implementation**

73. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will confirm that the testing of the underfloor fill to IS 398-2, as part of the pyrite remediation process will not be done by an independent geotechnical company retained by the homeowner and that the report and results will not be made available to the homeowner by Pyremco. [33616/13]

106. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will confirm that the structural reports prepared to comply with IS 398-1, as part of homeowners' applications included in the pyrite remediation process will not be reviewed by the Pyrite Resolution Board. [33615/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 73 and 106 together.

The issues raised are operational matters for the Pyrite Resolution Board and will be considered by the Board in the context of the finalisation of the pyrite remediation scheme and its effective implementation when rolled out to affected homeowners. Under the proposed pyrite remediation scheme, the Board will have oversight of the various stages of the scheme and will ensure that the process is undertaken in a fair and transparent manner. In addition, the Board will ensure that all works and ancillary matters are carried out in accordance with the relevant parts of I.S. 398:2013 - Reactive pyrite in sub-floor hardcore material. The Board will work closely with the not-for-profit entity to be established by the construction sector stakeholders to carry out the remediation works to ensure the delivery of the maximum possible progress in remediating dwellings that fall within the scope of the pyrite remediation scheme.

### **RAPID Programme**

74. **Deputy Micheál Martin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of meetings organised since March 2011 at national level between his Department and the chairs and co-ordinators of the RAPID teams; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33730/13]

86. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the dates on which the RAPID national co-ordinating committee has met since he was appointed Minister; if he has attended these meetings; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33728/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 74 and 86 together.

The National Monitoring Committee for the RAPID programme met on 6 October 2010. My Department last met with RAPID Chairs and Coordinators at a conference in February 2012 as part of an extensive consultation process in the context of the development of local government reform proposals. As part of my continuing engagement with both the local development and local government sectors, I have met with many of the Chairs and Coordinators at different

times and in various fora. No meeting of the National Monitoring Committee is scheduled at present. I am keen that a focus is maintained on all RAPID areas, through the range of local and community development interventions which are available on an area basis. Enhanced alignment between local government and local development is intended to improve the targeting of such local development activity. In that context, there will be an opportunity for a stronger, collaborative, focus to be put on support for RAPID areas. In implementing local government reform decisions, my Department will continue to consult, as necessary, with relevant stakeholders.

### **Forbairt na nOileán**

75. D'fhiafraigh **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** den Aire Comhshaoil, Pobail agus Rialtais Áitiúil cé mhéid airgid atá fágtha lena cheadú ag Comhar na nOileán Teo faoi Chlár Leader i leith oileáin Chonamara agus mhórhíir Chonamara faoi seach; cén uair a bheidh cead ag Comhar na nOileán Teo an t-airgead seo a cheadú; agus an ndéanfaidh sé ráiteas ina thaobh. [33936/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I gcomhréir leis an gcur chuige 'ó bhun aníos' ar na gnéithe LEADER den Chlár Forbarta Tuaithe(CFT) 2007-13, is iad na Comhlachtaí Forbartha Áitiúla (CFÁ) na príomh cinnteoirí maidir le leithroinnt mhaoiniú tionscnaimh. Déantar na cinntí seo i gcomhheacs an stráitéis forbairt áitiúil de na grúpaí aonair agus i gcomhréir le rialacha oibriúcháin an chláir agus rialacháin AE.

Tuigim, bunaithe ar an eolas atá curtha ar fáil do mo Roinn ag Comhar na nOileán, an CFA atá freagrach as seachadadh na gnéithe LEADER den Chlár Forbartha Tuaithe (CFT) 2007-2013 i nGaeltacht Chontae na Gaillimhe go bhfuil an maoiniú ar fad a bhí ar fáil acu i leith Ceantar na nOileán, Contae na Gaillimhe geallta acu anois. San áireamh anseo tá dhá thionscnaimh mhóra de luach deontais iomlán €382,599.35 atá faoi láthair ag dul faoi bhun próiséas ceadúcháin i mo Roinn; Samhláim go gcríochnófar an próiséas seo go luath.

Tuigim freisin go bhfuil €140,000 fós ar fáil do thionscnaimh cháilithe i leith ceantair Ghaeltacha ar mhórhíir Chontae na Gaillimhe. Tá Comhar na nOileán ag obair faoi láthair le roinnt tionscnóirí le cinntiú go ngealltar an t-airgead seo le tionscnaimh cáilithe chomh luath agus féidir.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

76. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the estimated amount of money to be spent on the creation of additional councillors in County Dublin under the Putting People First proposals; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33770/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The total cost of allowances for additional councillors in the Dublin local authorities is currently estimated to be around €1.5 million per annum. This additional cost will arise from reducing the degree of representational imbalance currently in the Dublin authorities and should also be viewed in the context of overall savings in allowances, which are currently estimated at €3.68 million per annum, which will arise from the reduction of 1,627 local authority members nationally to 949.

### **Rental Accommodation Scheme Administration**

77. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will investigate claims by officials that Exchequer funding for Dublin City Council's rental accommodation scheme falls short annually by approximately

€1.5 million following a statement that this is not possible. [33776/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I refer to the reply to Question No. 55 of 12 June 2013 which outlines the position in this matter.

### National Spatial Strategy

78. **Deputy Michael Moynihan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the timescale for the development and implementation of a new national spatial strategy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33757/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** The 2002 National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is Ireland’s first national strategic spatial planning framework. It provides the spatial vision and principles to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions through the co-ordinated development of nine gateway cities and towns, and nine hub towns, together with complementary policies to activate the potential for lasting economic development in their hinterlands and wider regions. The NSS serves as a strategic context for spatial planning in Ireland by regional authorities in their regional planning guidelines role, and for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála in their statutory planning functions. It also seeks to influence investment priorities particularly in transport, housing, water services, communications, energy, health and education infrastructure.

While the existing NSS remains in place, together with Minister Hogan, I will be bringing proposals to Government shortly for a roadmap to develop a successor strategy that will take account, *inter alia*, of our significantly changed economic circumstances and to contribute to sustainable national recovery. A new strategy is expected to be in place in 2015.

### Social and Affordable Housing Expenditure

79. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the full costs of providing social housing via the rental accommodation scheme and long-term leasing broken down by council; if he will provide details of the average rents paid for one, two and three bedroom homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33648/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** In 2012, under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative just over €20 million was recouped to local authorities. Under the Rental Accommodation Scheme in the same year just over €125 million was recouped. This is broken down by Council in the table below. To date the Social Housing Leasing Initiative has delivered 4,114 homes for social housing use. At the end of Quarter 1 2013 local authorities had transferred a total of 44,316 households from Rent Supplement (RS). Of these 26,129 were housed directly under RAS with the remaining 18,187 accommodated under other social housing options.

Under the Social Housing Leasing Initiative the current average monthly rent for a 1-bed privately owned housing unit is €540 per unit per month. For a 2-bed unit it is €578 per month and for a 3-bed unit €593, giving an overall average rent of €583 per unit per month.

The amount of rent paid to private landlords through RAS is a matter for individual authori-

ties, having regard to the need to obtain value for money. However, from data included in local authority financial returns to my Department in 2011, the average monthly rent paid to a private landlord for 2011 was €563. For the same period the current average monthly rent for a 1-bed privately owned housing unit was €479 per unit per month. For a 2-bed unit it was €563 per month and for a 3-bed unit €646 per month.

Local Authority	Leasing Recouped in 2012 - €	RAS Recouped in 2012 - €	Overall - €
ATHLONE TOWN COUNCIL	269,088		269,088
ATHY TOWN COUNCIL	104,368		104,368
BIRR TOWN COUNCIL	62,473		62,473
BRAY TOWN COUNCIL	94,942		94,942
BUNCRANA TOWN COUNCIL	255,879		255,879
BUNDORAN TOWN COUNCIL	4,777		4,777
CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL	137,040	2,875,606	3,012,646
CARLOW TOWN COUNCIL	79,484		79,484
CARRICK-ON-SUIR COUNCIL		353,554	353,554
CASHEL TOWN COUNCIL	11,985	232,432	244,417
CASTLEBAR TOWN COUNCIL	136,054		136,054
CAVAN COUNTY COUNCIL	24,909	1,815,162	1,840,071
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL	225,180	2,286,016	2,511,196
CLONMEL BOROUGH COUNCIL	83,942	1,453,672	1,537,614
CORK CITY COUNCIL	809,524	5,368,399	6,177,923
CORK COUNTY COUNCIL	2,142,602	6,654,151	8,796,753
DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL	510,375	2,047,163	2,557,538
DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL	163,713		163,713
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL	3,279,535	16,833,718	20,113,253

Questions - Written Answers

Local Authority	Leasing Recouped in 2012 - €	RAS Recouped in 2012 - €	Overall - €
DUN LAOGHAIRE/ RATHDOWN COUNTY COUN- CIL	684,636	5,174,389	5,859,025
DUNDALK TOWN COUNCIL	1,210,358		1,210,358
ENNIS TOWN COUNCIL	97,540		97,540
ENNISCORTHY TOWN COUNCIL	23,031		23,031
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL	1,999,292	8,261,414	10,260,706
GALWAY CITY COUNCIL	978,508	4,415,560	5,394,068
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL	58,617	2,527,919	2,586,536
KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL	38,839	4,767,187	4,806,026
KILDARE COUN- TY COUNCIL	566,470	4,756,217	5,322,687
KILKENNY COUN- TY COUNCIL	235,067	2,991,551	3,226,618
LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL	550,694	1,114,935	1,665,629
LEITRIM COUNTY COUNCIL	2,183	435,586	437,769
LETTERKENNY TOWN COUNCIL	169,796		169,796
LIMERICK CITY COUNCIL		3,905,608	3,905,608
LIMERICK COUN- TY COUNCIL	92,368	2,058,890	2,151,258
LONGFORD COUNTY COUN- CIL	116,234	1,441,226	1,557,460
LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL	105,308	1,347,881	1,453,189
MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL	193,681	4,101,799	4,295,480
MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL	458,617	1,664,806	2,123,423
MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL	2,262	1,222,347	1,224,609
NENAGH TOWN COUNCIL	95,187		95,187

Local Authority	Leasing Recouped in 2012 - €	RAS Recouped in 2012 - €	Overall - €
NORTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL	111,269	2,079,673	2,190,942
OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL	312,073	1,135,938	1,448,011
ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL	34,915	1,916,963	1,951,878
SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL	73,873	2,233,549	2,307,422
SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL	115,615		115,615
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL	2,183,792	13,375,087	15,558,878
SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL	91,814	1,320,445	1,412,260
TEMPLEMORE TOWN COUNCIL	228,279		228,279
THURLES TOWN COUNCIL	68,995		68,995
TIPPERARY TOWN COUNCIL	3,863	356,087	359,950
WATERFORD CITY COUNCIL	261,783	2,437,118	2,698,901
WATERFORD COUNTY COUNCIL	317,978	1,482,836	1,800,814
WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL	511,934	1,793,833	2,305,767
WESTPORT TOWN COUNCIL	30,336		30,336
WEXFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	26,763		26,763
WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL	287,684	3,124,686	3,412,370
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL		4,066,565	4,066,565
Overall	20,735,524	125,429,966	146,165,490

### Dormant Accounts Fund Deposits

80. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the net amount transferred into the dormant accounts fund net of repayments to the

financial institutions each year since the inception of the fund; the total amount transferred; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33735/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Under the Dormant Accounts legislation, balances on dormant accounts with banks, building societies and An Post and the net encashment value of certain life assurance policies are paid into the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF), which is managed by the National Treasury Management Agency. The primary purpose of the legislation is to reunite the original account holders with their moneys, including all interest due. In addition, the legislation also provides that disbursements from the fund may be made for charitable purposes or for purposes of community benefit.

Information on net inflows to the Dormant Accounts Fund, net of repayments to the financial institutions each year since the inception of the Fund are set out in the table below. Full details of all inflows, outflows and liabilities on the Fund can be found in tabular form on [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie) in the Dormant Accounts section of the Community and Voluntary Supports area under the Community heading.

**Net amount transferred into the Dormant Accounts Fund, net of repayments to the financial institutions from 2003 to date**

Year	Inflows minus repayments to financial institutions
2003	€ 174,984,306
2004	€ 38,746,660
2005	€ 21,960,684
2006	€ 41,788,552
2007	€ 40,998,527
2008	€ 21,094,769
2009	€ 23,223,601
2010	€ 19,455,009
2011	€ 19,872,026
2012	€ 23,336,387
2013	€ 35,598,549

*Question No. 81 answered with Question No. 58.*

### Local Authority Housing Maintenance

82. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to retrofit social housing across the country; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33767/13]

95. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the work he is undertaking to improve the number of houses being retrofitted with efficient insulation in the social housing stock. [33779/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 82 and 95 together.

Under my Department's Social Housing Investment Programme, local authorities are allo-

cated funding each year in respect of a range of measures to improve the standard and overall quality of their social housing stock. Since the introduction of the Energy Efficiency measure in 2009, funding of almost €100 million has been provided to local authorities for the retrofitting of older and substandard housing stock. Over that period, some 7,760 dwellings have been improved. Over the past two years there was a particular focus on vacant properties and my Department provided around €52.5 million for the refurbishment of some 4,770 houses and apartments. This year's programme includes a retrofitting measure aimed specifically at improving the energy efficiency of older apartments and houses by reducing heat loss through the fabric of the building. On 1 March 2013, I announced capital allocations of €10 million to local authorities in respect of energy efficiency retrofitting works for this year.

Earlier this month, I announced a new €50 million three-year energy efficiency investment programme for local authority homes. This is a key part of the Government's additional €150 million capital investment in the economy over 2013-2014 aimed at stimulating growth.

This programme will target the 25,000 least energy efficient local authority homes. This will result in warmer homes and lower energy bills for thousands of families and will also create around 1,000 jobs in the sector. I intend to announce capital allocations to local authorities very shortly in order that contracts can be commenced as soon as possible. This programme will operate nationwide and homes in all local authority areas will benefit under this measure. My Department met recently with housing practitioners from all local authorities with the objective of getting work started as quickly as possible. Some €10 million of the €50 million programme is available for spending in 2013.

### Homelessness Strategy

83. **Deputy Richard Boyd Barrett** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans for homeless services across the country; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33647/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** I refer to the reply to Priority Question 57 on today's Order Paper. I recently published a Homelessness Policy Statement in which I outlined the Government's aim to end long-term homelessness by the end of 2016. The statement emphasises a housing-led approach which is about accessing permanent housing as the primary response to all forms of homelessness. The availability and supply of secure, affordable and adequate housing is essential in ensuring sustainable tenancies and ending long-term homelessness. When I published the statement I announced a set of indicators which will be used to demonstrate the dynamics of homelessness as it is addressed. These indicators will give a clearer picture of homelessness in Ireland and, in quantifying its ongoing extent, will support the bringing forward of realistic and practical solutions.

Expenditure on homeless accommodation and related services of approximately €50 million will be funded by my Department and housing authorities in 2013. While it is clear that a proportion of funding must be used to provide sufficient bed capacity to accommodate those in need of emergency accommodation, it is equally important that resources are channelled to deliver more permanent responses in a more focused and strategic way. Arrangements are being put in place to provide for the delegation of homelessness funding to the lead housing authority in each of the 9 regions in 2013. These arrangements will seek to ensure that the measures being pursued by housing authorities reflect the housing-led approach, that actions are in place towards achieving the target of ending long-term homelessness by the end of 2016 and that evidence to support progress will be presented through the reports on the indicators.

## Waste Management Regulations

84. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a detailed update on his Department's development of a new domestic waste policy setting out a range of proposals to significantly revise the existing regulatory regime; and when he expects this process to conclude. [33805/13]

114. **Deputy Derek Keating** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a progress report on his plans to introduce legislation to provide for standards and quality of service by private contractors providing refuse collection services in the State; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33619/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 84 and 114 together.

The Government's national waste policy, A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland, sets out a range of measures which will significantly revise the current regulatory regime for household waste collection to ensure, *inter alia*, that waste collected is managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, that mandated service levels are delivered and that Customer Charters are put in place by all waste collection providers. The work of developing new regulatory structures to give effect to these proposals is continuing and my Department is engaging with a range of key stakeholders in relation to the detailed design of the new system.

Following the publication of the waste policy, I wrote to the waste management industry in relation to the development of Customer Charters and I understand that a number of waste collection providers have already put in place a Customer Charter ahead of the development of the new regulatory regime. I also intend to initiate a public consultation process shortly on the environmental regulation of household waste collection further to inform the detailed development of the new regulatory regime. It is my intention that the new approach would deliver both enhanced environmental performance and a quality service for consumers.

## Departmental Bodies

85. **Deputy Micheál Martin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the date of the last meeting of Comhairle na Tuaithe; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33741/13]

89. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the latest date on which he attended a meeting of Comhairle na Tuaithe or the national co-ordinating committee of RAPID; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33742/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions No. 85 and 89 together.

Comhairle na Tuaithe (The Countryside Council) continuously supports and oversees the implementation of the National Countryside Recreation Strategy and its associated schemes, programmes and activities, including the Walks Scheme. The last meeting of Comhairle na Tuaithe was held in Dublin on 13 June 2013. On average Comhairle na Tuaithe meets 4 to 5 times a year. All of these meetings have been chaired by my Department, and I have not to date attended a meeting. I am satisfied with the level of progress being achieved by Comhairle and the number of initiatives, such as the Pilot Mountain Access Scheme and the proposed National

Indemnity Scheme, being progressed on its behalf.

With regard to RAPID, the National Monitoring Committee for the RAPID programme met on 6 October 2010. My Department last met with RAPID Chairs and Co-ordinators at a conference in February 2012 as part of an extensive consultation process in the context of the development of local government reform proposals. As part of my continuing engagement with both the local development and local government sectors, I have met with many of the Chairs and Coordinators at different times and in various fora. No meeting of the National Monitoring Committee is scheduled at present. I am keen that a focus is continued on the RAPID areas, through the range of local and community development interventions that are available on an area basis. Enhanced alignment between local government and local development is intended to improve the targeting of such local development spend. In that context, there will be an opportunity for a stronger, collaborative focus to be put on support for RAPID areas. In implementing local government reform decisions, my Department will continue to consult as necessary with relevant stakeholders.

*Question No. 86 answered with Question No. 74.*

### **Proposed Legislation**

87. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to publish legislation for the levy to fund pyrite reparation work before the summer recess; and, if not, when he will commit to same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33774/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I attach a high priority to putting in place the necessary structures to deliver a resolution for affected homeowners who have been waiting for a considerable period of time for effective solutions to their pyrite problems. Following Government approval on a general scheme for a Pyrite Remediation Bill, work is advancing, as a matter of urgency, on the development of the Bill and it remains my intention that it will be published and enacted in the shortest possible timeframe.

Since its establishment earlier this year, the Pyrite Resolution Board has made excellent progress on developing the scope and detail of a pyrite remediation scheme, including the terms and conditions of the scheme dealing with eligibility, assessment criteria, procedures, priorities etc. In late May, the Board launched the initial phase of its website ([www.pyriteboard.ie](http://www.pyriteboard.ie)) where it provides an outline of the proposed remediation scheme including the scope of the scheme, the application process and also detailed guidance and information for homeowners on how to identify significant pyritic damage and on the steps involved in the assessment of such damage. The next phase of the Board's website will include an on-line application system which it is intended will be available in the next month or so. Affected homeowners can register their interest on the website now and will be notified when the application system goes live.

*Question No. 88 answered with Question No. 58.*

*Question No. 89 answered with Question No. 85.*

### **Planning Issues**

90. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local

Government the timescale for the investigation of planning procedures and practices in six local authorities to be carried out by independent planning consultants; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33664/13]

109. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the action he will take with regard to inquiries into planning irregularities in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33766/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 90 and 109 together.

I refer to the reply to Priority Question No. 53 on today’s Order Paper, which sets out the position on these matters.

*Question No. 91 answered with Question No. 58.*

### **Capital Assistance Scheme Funding**

92. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown of the way the new funds announced for disability housing will be used; and the criteria that will have to be met in order to access this funding. [33773/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** Under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS), funding of up to 100% of the approved cost is available for the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of persons with specific categories of housing need including older people, people with an intellectual, physical or mental health disability, the homeless, returning emigrants and victims of domestic violence. My Department’s involvement with the voluntary and co-operative housing schemes relates primarily to the provision of funds for individual projects. The detailed administration of the schemes, and the certification that projects comply with the terms and conditions of the funding schemes, are the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

Last month, my Department invited local authorities to submit a programme of house purchases, to be funded under the CAS, with particular focus on the provision of accommodation which will facilitate people with a disability to live independently within communities. Local authorities have been asked to submit a prioritised list of proposals to my Department by 16 July, 2013. Approvals will be based on the prioritisation afforded to individual proposals by local authorities and the level of housing need locally. I intend to announce details of the approved projects in August.

*Question No. 93 answered with Question No. 58.*

### **Housing Assistance Payments Implementation**

94. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide an up-to-date projected timeline for the establishment of the new housing assistance payment and the transfer of responsibility for same to local authorities; if estimations have been made of the amount of staff required to administer the new scheme; if his attention has been drawn to these figures; if pilot areas have been established and if he will provide details of the pilot schemes; if he will estimate the total cost of setting up the new system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33188/13]

104. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a commitment as to when the transfer of responsibility for rent supplement to local authorities will be complete; and if he will provide an update on the work needed to achieve this. [33783/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I propose to take Question Nos. 94 and 104 together.

In March 2012, the Government approved in principle the transfer of responsibility for recipients of rent supplement with an established housing need from the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to local authorities using a new Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). My Department and the Department of Social Protection have been working closely on the legal, policy and operational issues involved in this project.

Work has also been ongoing with the County and City Managers Association (CCMA), through the Project Steering Group, in overseeing plans for the implementation of HAP. In June a Project Implementation Team was initiated, which will be responsible for detailed planning and implementation during the testing and roll-out phases. The CCMA has identified Limerick as the lead authority to drive implementation in the local government sector. The other authorities involved in the test phase are:

- South Dublin County Council
- Louth County Council
- Kilkenny County Council
- Waterford City Council
- Cork County Council
- Monaghan County Council.

A detailed business process design for HAP is currently under way which involves input from all the relevant key stakeholders. Following the completion of the business process design the implementation team will, in conjunction with my Department, develop a plan for the test phase in the above local authorities. It is intended that the test phase of HAP would be carried out in early 2014, subject to the necessary housing and social welfare legislative provisions being in place, including in regard to facilitating deduction of rents at source from welfare payments. Government approval in these regards will be sought in the near future. Once the test phase is complete, the scheme will be extended to other local authorities.

In respect of the staff resources, the CCMA, through involvement in both the Project Steering Group and the Project Implementation Team, is providing ongoing advice in relation to the resources that will be required by local authorities to implement HAP. This input will continue as the detail of the scheme is developed further this year.

*Question No. 95 answered with Question No. 82.*

### **Proposed Legislation**

96. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the timeframe for the introduction of legislation to implement his Putting People First local government policy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33769/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Wide-ranging and detailed legislation is required to provide for the range of measures set out in the Action Programme for Effective Local Government. Work on drafting the Local Government Bill 2013 is proceeding satisfactorily and I am firmly committed to ensuring that the Bill will be published in good time to facilitate enactment well ahead of the 2014 local elections.

### **RAPID Programme**

97. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of money available for projects under the RAPID programme this year from the specially dedicated RAPID fund; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33732/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I have provided funding of €2 million for the RAPID Programme in 2013. This will be used to meet my Department's existing contractual commitments on RAPID projects throughout the country, mainly Sports Capital top-ups and CCTV systems; these are jointly funded with the Departments of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Justice and Equality, respectively.

### **Dormant Accounts Fund Administration**

98. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he intends making any money available from the dormant accounts fund for small projects in RAPID areas this year and also for flagship projects nationally; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33736/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I have allocated €6.385 million for Dormant Accounts measures in 2013, which includes €2.835 million to be used to support labour activation measures in local authorities, with the remainder to be used to meet existing contractual commitments, including a small residual spend on the RAPID additionality measure for the 5 new towns afforded RAPID status in recent years and a jointly-funded flagship project for the development of an Integrated Services Centre in the Mitchel's regeneration area in Tralee, County Kerry.

Under the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2012, my Department is in the course of preparing a new disbursement scheme in consultation with relevant Government Departments. Every euro spent from the Dormant Accounts Fund is regarded in accounting terms as a potential Government liability and adds to Government debt levels, which have a ceiling set by the EU, the IMF and the ECB. In the current economic climate, our priority is to ensure that funding is targeted on a needs basis and spent efficiently and effectively. This applies to dormant accounts disbursements as well as to supports for the community and voluntary sector generally. I have also provided €2 million in my Department's estimates for 2013 for RAPID, which will be used to meet existing contractual commitments on RAPID projects throughout the country, mainly Sports Capital top-ups and CCTV systems, jointly funded with the Departments of Transport, Tourism and Sport and Justice and Equality respectively. Expenditure under this heading is not reimbursed from the Dormant Accounts Fund.

### **Climate Change Policy**

99. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there has been any contact or discussions between his Department and his Northern Ireland Assembly counterpart, Mr Alex Atwood, on climate change legislation.

[33802/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I refer to the reply to Question Nos. 42 and 44 of 18 September 2012. As the national climate policy and legislation development Programme matures, I look forward to sharing our experience and achievements with my counterparts in Northern Ireland, in the context of ongoing bilateral engagement and exchanges on environment policy matters.

### **NAMA Social Housing Provision**

100. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide an update on the delivery of housing from the National Asset Management Agency special purpose vehicle; and if he will provide a breakdown of where these units have been delivered. [33777/13]

102. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of houses identified, selected and transferred from the National Asset Management Agency for social housing to date; the additional progress that has been made with the provision of social housing via NAMA; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33772/13]

107. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will indicate progress to date in increasing the number of properties transferred from the National Asset Management Agency to Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council to increase the stock of social housing provision at the disposal of both of these local authority areas. [33617/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 100, 102 and 107 together.

At the end of Quarter 2 2013, 296 properties have been delivered for social housing from NAMA's portfolio, with contracts signed in respect of a further 101 properties. This brings the overall total number of residential properties completed or committed to social housing under this initiative to date to just under 400 properties. It will continue to be my Department's objective in 2013 to maximise the delivery of social housing using all of the resources available.

NAMA continues to work closely with my Department, the Housing Agency and with local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies in relation to the delivery of social housing. To date, NAMA has identified over 4,200 residential properties controlled by its debtors and receivers under this initiative as being available for social housing. Demand has been confirmed by the local authorities for 1,621 of these properties with a further 596 properties currently being evaluated.

The local authorities have confirmed that of the properties identified, 1,242 are considered unsuitable by reference to sustainable planning and housing policy or are located in areas with no demand. A further 812 properties have been sold or privately let by their owners or receivers since they were identified by NAMA.

To date, of the properties identified by NAMA, demand has been confirmed by Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council for 228 units. Of this 55 are completed and operational, all of which are in the Dublin City Council area, 88 are at an advanced stage of negotiations and 85 are being appraised.

To help further streamline delivery, NAMA has also established a special purpose company, National Asset Residential Property Services Ltd (NARPs), for the purpose of acquiring properties from its debtors and receivers where necessary to speed up direct leasing to AHBs. NARPs acquires houses and apartments and makes them available to the AHBs where the AHBs have confirmed demand for, and contracted to lease, the properties. NAMA has advised me that, to date, AHBs have contracted to lease 36 properties through NARPs.

Quarterly updates in relation to the delivery of NAMA sourced units are available at [www.housing.ie](http://www.housing.ie).

### **Air Quality**

101. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in view of the joint North-South study on air quality, if he agrees that in order to avoid fuel poverty alternative energies and fuels must be available at affordable prices before any ban is imposed on bitumen coal. [33797/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The ban on the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous fuel (or ‘smoky coal ban’) was first introduced in Dublin in 1990 in response to severe episodes of winter smog that resulted from the widespread use of smoky coal for residential heating with consequential health impacts, often on those in lower socio-economic areas where its use predominated and where air quality was worse. Air quality monitoring carried out by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows that the ban proved very effective in reducing particulate matter and sulphur dioxide levels in Dublin. The ban was subsequently extended in several phases and now applies in 27 cities and towns, including all urban areas with a population greater than 15,000 people.

The burning of solid fuel for residential heating makes a disproportionate contribution to air pollution, which generally occurs within residential communities where it is most used and where exposure, including to vulnerable groups, can be highest. Products offered for sale in breach of the ban may be of inferior quality, creating more pollution in a person’s community and in their home. Research indicated that the ban in Dublin resulted in over 350 fewer annual winter mortality deaths. Additional benefits of the ban were identified through the stimulation of a move away from solid fuels, which generally are less efficient and more polluting, to more efficient and less polluting gas and oil. The additional benefits in reduced fuel costs to consumers were estimated at €184 million per year.

Data from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) indicates that the effective cost of fuel for home heating using ‘smoky’ coal in an open fire is around 15 cent per kilowatt hour (c/kWhr) whereas the price for natural gas using a boiler meeting the Building Regulations is half that at around 7.5c/kWhr.

The SEAI data also indicated that while on an energy basis the cost of manufactured smokeless coal is marginally more expensive than ‘smoky’ coal (less than 5%), the more even burn of smokeless coal means that it can be managed so that it lasts longer and may be less expensive in overall terms. There are a wide range of modern smokeless coals and other products available that are cleaner, easy to burn, and which generally provide more energy per bag and more consistent heat over a longer period with both consumer and health and environmental benefits.

The Government has an energy poverty strategy; ‘Warmer Homes – A Strategy for Affordable Energy in Ireland’ which was published by the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources towards the end of 2011. The strategy identified the extent and impact of energy poverty, the existing measures in place and the actions required looking forward.

Energy poverty is a factor of income, energy prices and the thermal efficiency of the home. The most cost-effective means of protecting households from energy poverty is to improve the thermal efficiency of the home. The Better Energy Warmer Homes scheme (BEWH), administered by the SEAI, funds energy efficiency improvements in the homes of the elderly and vulnerable, making the homes more comfortable, healthier and more cost effective to run.

*Question No. 102 answered with Question No. 100.*

### Regeneration Projects Status

103. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide an update on the delivery of housing units as part of the Limerick regeneration project. [33781/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** My Department currently supports an ambitious programme of regeneration at six locations across the country, including Limerick City. A particular focus of the 2013 programme in Limerick is to deliver, as a priority, a solid and workable implementation strategy which will act as a roadmap for physical, social and economic regeneration in the coming years. Construction contracts, recently completed or due to commence in 2013, will deliver over 170 new housing units within the regeneration areas.

To date some 1,000 households from within the regeneration areas have been relocated on foot of a robust housing acquisition programme over recent years. An overview of the new housing projects which are under construction or will get to construction in 2013, together with those being progressed to construction stage, is set out in the following table:

Projects – completed or due to start in 2013	No. of Units	Status	Cost estimate
Cliona Park	34	Completed February 2013	€5.5m
Southill Sheltered Accommodation Scheme	35	Under construction	€5.8m
Vizes Court Phase 2	29	Under construction	€4.3m
Lord Edward Street	79	Expected on-site in Quarter 3, 2013.	€12.7m
Projects – being progressed through planning and procurement.	No. of Units	Status	Cost estimate
Sheep Street/Athlunkard Street	10	Approval issued	€1.7m
College Avenue, Cliona Park	68	Approval issued	€10.7m
Southill Area Centre	67	Approval issued	€10.5m
Council Depot, Cosgrave Park (Phase 1)	28	Approval issued	€5m
Council Depot, Cosgrave Park (Phase 2)	18	Approval issued	€2.8m
Gap Site at Cliona Park	2	Approval issued	€0.3m
Palm Court	26	Approval issued	€3.9m

*Question No. 104 answered with Question No. 94.*

### **Water Services Provision**

105. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the extent to which any review of requirements in terms of capacity and transmission in respect of domestic drinking water has been undertaken, with particular reference to the sourcing of future supplies in line with both domestic and industrial requirements and the minimisation of losses through deteriorating transmission systems; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33653/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The overall strategy of investment in water services is to ensure that the timing and scale of investment facilitates economic and other development, achieves compliance with statutory requirements and promotes environmental sustainability objectives. The main vehicle for achieving these objectives for public domestic water supplies is the multi-annual Water Services Investment Programme.

The current Programme, which runs to the end of 2013, provides for the commencement of contracts with a value of over €800 million in relation to water supply infrastructure. This includes contracts to address deficiencies in the quality of supply, to improve the overall capacity of the system and an accelerated programme of mains rehabilitation. The Programme also provides for the advancement of a further range of schemes through planning, for progression to construction in future investment cycles.

The development of the programme followed a comprehensive review of investment requirements initiated in 2009 involving an assessment of needs for water and sewerage services by each water services authority and taking account of reports by the Environmental Protection Agency on drinking water quality and an assessment by Forfás of the requirements of enterprise in Gateways and Hubs, as well as River Basin Management Plans.

In addition, a detailed project appraisal is undertaken during the planning phase of each scheme, which determines issues such as the appropriate source of water, projected future demand and the most cost effective solution to meeting needs. There is, therefore, a strong evidence base, from technical assessments, environmental monitoring and policy studies to underpin the strategic direction of water services capital investment. In order to create efficiencies, improve service delivery and achieve cost savings in the delivery of water services, the Programme for Government provides a series of reforms to be advanced in the water sector, including the establishment of Irish Water. An implementation strategy for the establishment of Irish Water has been finalised and is available on my Department's website. As part of this strategy, a specific work-stream is considering the matters arising in the proposed transfer of the responsibility for capital programme delivery from the 34 local authorities to Irish Water. This includes the development of the capital investment programme for 2014 to 2015 and the development of a capital transition plan to manage the orderly transition from current arrangements to the new arrangements to be put in place by Irish Water.

*Question No. 106 answered with Question No. 73.*

*Question No. 107 answered with Question No. 100.*

### **Housing Adaptation Grant Application Numbers**

108. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and

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Local Government his plans to deal with the large number of persons waiting extended periods for adaption grants in order to make their homes suitable to meet their special physical needs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33775/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** On 22 February 2013 I announced capital allocations to local authorities under the suite of Grants for Older People and People with a Disability amounting to €42.750 million. This year I allocated local authorities the full amount of their contractual commitments and the balance of the available funding was allocated on the basis of each authority’s share of the new applications in hand in January 2013.

A small capital reserve was set aside to deal with any acute or particular difficulty which might arise in the operation of the schemes over the course of the year. Following requests from 13 local authorities for supplementary funding, I subsequently approved additional allocations totalling €1.2 million. I am continuing to keep the level of funding available under active review.

My Department is currently reviewing the operation of the grant schemes in consultation with the local authorities and groups representing older people and people with disabilities with the objective of targeting those in most need and ensuring that the maximum numbers of households can benefit from these schemes. I intend to announce revised terms and conditions for the grant schemes later this year.

*Question No. 109 answered with Question No. 90.*

### **Priory Hall Development**

110. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will indicate when an announcement will be made on the resolution of the appalling problems faced by householders at the Priory Hall estate in Donaghmede, Dublin 13. [33618/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The resolution process in respect of the problems associated with the development at Priory Hall, which I understand is ongoing, arose in the context of legal proceedings which were adjourned to afford relevant parties the opportunity to work together, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Finnegan (retired President of the High Court), to identify a way forward in relation to the complex problems at Priory Hall. Neither I nor my Department is a party to those proceedings. Given that the matter is before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further other than to continue to urge all concerned to afford Mr. Justice Finnegan the opportunity to complete the task which he is undertaking.

### **Wastewater Treatment Inspections**

111. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the expected number of inspections of wastewater treatment systems in 2013 and 2014; the expected failure rate and estimated amount of money to be spent on remedial grants; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33771/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 assigns responsibility to the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) to make a National Inspection Plan for domestic wastewater treatment systems. The National Inspection Plan 2013: Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems was adopted and published by the EPA in February 2013. The Plan provides for a minimum of 1,000 inspections to be carried out by the water services authorities (the 34 county and city councils) in the 12 month period commencing in July 2013. Details of the minimum number of inspections for each council area are included in the Plan. The EPA has indicated that it will review the Plan in 2014.

It is not possible at this time to estimate what the failure rate for inspections might be or how much will be spent on remedial grants. However, based on the number of inspections to be carried out and the grant amounts that I have provided for in the Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Financial Assistance) Regulations 2013, I am satisfied that there is adequate provision in my Department's Vote for this purpose.

### **Dormant Accounts Fund Administration**

112. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if it is intended to introduce legislation to reduce the liability on the State for the reimbursement of dormant accounts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33734/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Dormant Accounts Act 2001 together with the Unclaimed Life Assurance Policies Act 2003, the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005 and the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2012 provide a framework for the administration of unclaimed accounts in credit institutions (i.e. banks, building societies, An Post and insurance companies) and unclaimed life assurance policies in insurance undertakings. The legislation requires the institutions/undertakings to take steps to identify and contact the owners of dormant accounts and unclaimed life assurance policies.

The main purpose of the legislation is to reunite account holders or policyholders with their funds in credit institutions and insurance undertakings and in this regard, such institutions and undertakings are required to take steps to identify and contact the owners of dormant accounts and unclaimed life assurance policies. The fund consists of a reserve account from which reclaims and various expenses are paid and an investment and disbursement account from which investments and disbursements are made.

The transfer of monies to the Dormant Accounts Fund takes place on the basis that the beneficial owners of the monies have a guaranteed right to reclaim their property at any time in the future. The Dormant Accounts fund derives, in the main, from private bank and building society accounts and must be handled and invested prudently having regard to the constitutionally guaranteed right to private property and the confidential nature of the relationship the credit institutions enjoy with their customers. I have no plans at present to amend this legislation.

### **Domestic Violence Policy**

113. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to address the need for specific emergency housing for victims of domestic abuse and plans to work with advocacy groups like Women's Aid and Safe Ireland to determine what is needed. [33785/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Gov-**

**ernment (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** Responsibility for the development and provision of services to support victims of domestic abuse rests with the Minister for Health and is delivered through the Health Service Executive. In addition Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, which was established in June 2007 as an executive office of the Department of Justice and Equality, works to ensure the delivery of a co-ordinated response to issues of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence across Government. Actions to ensure effectiveness and consistency in housing responses for victims of domestic violence are set out in Action 10 of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014. My Department is developing the necessary guidance to implement this action.

My Department’s responsibility is in respect of homelessness which in some cases involves the provision of current funding, under Section 10 of the Housing Act 1988, towards the operational costs of refuges for the victims of domestic abuse. Statutory responsibility in relation to the provision of accommodation and related services for homeless persons rests with the housing authorities. My Department has no function in regard to, nor is it involved in, decisions on operational matters.

Persons who are forced to leave their homes due to domestic violence may, however, be placed in accommodation arranged by local authorities without having to be entered on the waiting list. In the longer term, victims of domestic violence may qualify under Section 20 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 for entry on a waiting list for social housing support if, in addition to meeting the normal eligibility criteria, the housing authority considers that their current accommodation is unsuitable, having regard to particular household circumstances or on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds.

My Department is keeping the social housing assessment provisions under review and will consider what wider discretion might be given to housing authorities by way of Regulations to address the individually difficult and complex cases which may present to them.

Under my Department’s Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) funding is available to Approved Housing Bodies for the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of persons with specific categories of housing need including victims of domestic violence. My Department’s involvement with the CAS relates primarily to the provision of funds for individual projects. The detailed administration of the scheme, including the appraisal of proposals, the certification that projects comply with the terms and conditions of the funding scheme and the processing of applications for funding, are the responsibility of the relevant housing authority. Approvals are largely based on the prioritisation afforded to individual proposals by the local authority in question.

*Question No. 114 answered with Question No. 84.*

### **Tourism Data**

115. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Taoiseach in view of the latest tourism figures which show an increase in the number of visitors here, if he will provide details of the impact of these increases on the numbers of tourists arriving through Cork Airport and those using the Cork-Roscoff ferry link; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34200/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach (Deputy Paul Kehoe):** The Central Statistics Office publishes a range of information on tourism and transport. With respect to the information requested by the Deputy the latest information which can be provided is for April

2013. The following table shows the total number of trips through Cork Airport and on the Cork to Roscoff ferry route, for the period January to April for each of the last 4 years.

In line with international standards for statistics on tourism and travel a trip is defined as a journey (usually including the return) from one place to another, for any purpose (i.e. both tourism and non tourism). The number of trips is calculated as the average of the number of outward and inward journeys. The Central Statistics Office receives passenger number figures from the airport authorities and ferry companies. It should be noted that the figures include passengers of all residencies, both Irish and non-Irish, as it is not possible from the sources in question to separately identify Irish/ non-Irish residents.

Table : Number of trips via Cork Airport and Cork-Roscoff ferry

-	Cork Airport	Cork Airport	Cork-Roscoff Ferry	Cork-Roscoff Ferry
-	Number of Trips	Annual change (trips)	Number of trips	Annual change (trips)
January- April 2010	298,815	-	6,105	-
January- April 2011	303,843	5,029	4,870	-1,235
January- April 2012	311,298	7,455	5,321	451
January- April 2013	309,033	-2,265	5,375	54

### Job Losses

116. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Taoiseach the number of net job losses in the economy for each year from 2006 to 2013. [34710/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach (Deputy Paul Kehoe):** The Central Statistics Offices compiles information on jobs created and destroyed and, by deduction, jobs lost by linking P35L returns from the Revenue Commissioners with the CSO Business Register. The information relates to all employing enterprises from key sectors of the business economy as classified by the standard European classification of economic activity NACE Rev.2 B-N excluding activities of holding companies. The data is only available for the years 2006 - 2010.

Job creation for an enterprise in a given reference year is measured as the positive difference in the number of paid employees recorded with non-zero reckonable pay in the reference year compared with the previous year. Job creation in the business economy as a whole is the sum of all enterprise job creation.

Job destruction for a given reference year is measured as the negative difference in the number of paid employees recorded with non-zero reckonable pay in the reference year compared with the previous year. Job destruction in the business economy as a whole is the sum of all enterprise job destruction. It should be noted that when interpreting figures, job destruction for a particular year means that these jobs were identified in the previous year but not in reference year, but some of these jobs may have disappeared sometime during the previous year.

An estimate of net job losses can be derived by subtracting total jobs destroyed from jobs created.

Table 1 - Net job losses for the Business Economy, 2006 - 2010

Total Business Economy (excluding activities of holding companies)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
Jobs as measured by employment records (Number)	1,972	2,119	1,987	1,646	1,540
Job creation (Number)	354	375	218	169	184
Job destruction (Number)	198	228	350	512	291
Net Job losses (Number)	-155	-147	132	343	107

### Income Data

117. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide details of the average weekly income in the south of Ireland in comparison with Northern Ireland and Britain for the most recent five years for which information is available. [34727/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach (Deputy Paul Kehoe):** Statistics on income are compiled from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). The latest results are for 2011. Comparable results are available using Eurostat definitions of income and equivalence scale (which differ from the definitions used nationally) across the EU including the United Kingdom. Results are not available separately for Northern Ireland. The results for the most recent five years for which the information is available are shown as follows:

#### Average weekly individual\* income by country and year, SILC 2007-2011

Year		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average weekly individual income	Republic of Ireland	€498.05	€513.78	€491.28	€454.81	€438.60
	UK	€475.72	€437.04	€371.62	€393.20	€398.39

\*Individual income = equivalised income

### Exports Data

118. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Taoiseach the total value of exports for the most recent five years for which data are available by sector and by destination. [35306/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach (Deputy Paul Kehoe):** The information requested by the Deputy is set out in tables 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D below.

**Table 1A : Value of Goods Exports by Product Category 2008-2013 (€million)**

SITC (Rev 4) Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
00 Live animals other than animals of Division 03	248	296	339	357	330	77

Questions - Written Answers

SITC (Rev 4) Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
01 Meat and meat preparations	2,390	2,185	2,407	2,762	2,978	1,188
02 Dairy products and birds eggs	1,442	1,114	1,431	1,777	1,647	658
03 Fish, crustaceans, molluscs and Preparations thereof	333	324	371	416	522	235
04 Cereals and cereal preparations	282	237	217	266	283	123
05 Vegetables and fruit	278	235	228	225	232	96
06 Sugars, sugar preparations and honey	107	103	83	90	111	53
07 Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and manufactures thereof	254	249	268	284	362	170
08 Feeding stuff for animals (excl unmilled cereals)	169	163	189	212	235	110
09 Miscellaneous edible products and preparations	1,583	1,374	1,472	1,485	1,430	670
11 Beverages	1,162	1,007	1,117	1,086	1,123	404
12 Tobacco and tobacco manufactures	75	72	87	92	85	33
21 Hides, skins and furskins, raw	70	54	97	123	112	53
22 Oil seeds and oleaginous fruits	3	1	2	9	16	1
23 Crude rubber (incl synthetic and reclaimed)	2	1	1	1	1	1
24 Cork and wood	71	67	102	108	112	51
25 Pulp and waste paper	60	46	60	53	52	22
26 Textile fibres and their wastes	115	100	118	133	144	59
27 Crude fertilisers and minerals (excl coal, petroleum and precious stones)	81	81	83	148	142	57

SITC (Rev 4) Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
28 Metalliferous ores and metal scrap	809	530	888	1,096	1,045	432
29 Crude animal and vegetable materials nes	102	91	93	94	107	44
32 Coal, coke and briquettes	56	53	58	65	68	35
33 Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	757	534	949	1,251	1,567	279
34 Gas, natural and manufactured	12	7	21	38	30	5
35 Electric Current	7	1	-	-	4	3
41 Animal oils and fats	36	17	23	47	47	20
42 Fixed vegetable fats and oils	3	2	3	6	7	3
43 Animal or vegetable fats and oils, processed waxes	2	1	1	2	2	1
51 Organic chemicals	17,816	18,130	19,722	19,969	20,078	7,965
52 Inorganic chemicals	116	59	90	147	192	88
53 Dyeing, tanning and colouring materials	62	60	171	145	160	84
54 Medical and pharmaceutical products	16,750	21,722	23,959	26,393	24,520	8,972
55 Essential oils perfume materials toilet and cleansing preparations	5,455	5,459	5,818	5,777	6,245	2,794
56 Fertilisers (other than those of Division 27)	2	2	2	2	3	1
57 Plastics in primary forms	247	216	266	313	304	135
58 Plastics in non-primary forms	261	229	304	320	326	154

Questions - Written Answers

SITC (Rev 4) Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
59 Chemical materials and products nes	3,516	3,438	2,904	2,965	3,209	1,369
61 Leather leather manufactures nes dressed furskins	21	19	21	24	27	10
62 Rubber manufactures nes	52	44	51	56	65	28
63 Cork and wood manufactures (excl furniture)	216	166	198	200	220	97
64 Paper, paper-board and articles thereof	149	115	117	131	143	59
65 Textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products	183	141	160	169	155	57
66 Non-metallic mineral manufactures nes	282	219	251	227	284	105
67 Iron and steel	90	53	73	95	106	49
68 Non-ferrous metals	97	76	81	90	77	27
69 Manufactures of metals nes	571	412	497	666	610	230
71 Power generating machinery and equipment	587	477	623	706	790	330
72 Machinery specialised for particular industries	500	426	395	495	468	213
73 Metalworking machinery	45	31	27	25	28	9
74 General industrial machinery and equipment nes and parts nes	1,211	895	1,111	1,338	1,354	561
75 Office machines and automatic data processing machines	9,329	6,677	4,463	3,562	3,686	1,541
76 Telecommunications and sound equipment	1,318	1,001	818	708	994	303

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SITC (Rev 4) Description	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
77 Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances and parts	4,793	3,339	2,730	2,873	2,612	982
78 Road vehicles (incl air-cushion vehicles)	249	271	180	195	215	101
79 Other transport equipment	333	708	241	468	390	167
81 Prefab buildings plumbing and electrical fixtures and fittings	135	103	102	99	92	45
82 Furniture and parts thereof bedding, Cushions etc	102	85	95	95	96	46
83 Travel goods, handbags and similar containers	14	16	26	38	29	6
84 Articles of apparel clothing accessories	153	160	358	371	362	82
85 Footwear	28	26	51	54	53	12
87 Professional, scientific and controlling apparatuses	2,806	3,008	3,249	3,380	3,613	1,469
88 Photographic apparatus optical goods watches and clocks	901	934	1,111	1,066	1,115	442
89 Miscellaneous manufactured articles	4,764	4,845	5,378	5,127	5,487	2,214
Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere	1,981	2,464	2,711	179	484	193
Unclassified estimates	752	832	643	534	596	284
Total	86,394	85,803	89,703	91,228	91,981	36,108

**Table 1B : Value of Goods Exports 2008-2013 by Country of Destination (€million)**

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
Austria	393	326	310	291	331	125

Questions - Written Answers

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
Belgium	12,253	14,510	13,553	13,227	13,619	4,481
Bulgaria	65	40	49	59	67	27
Cyprus	32	49	32	25	33	13
Czech Republic	333	289	451	450	339	172
Germany	6,089	6,012	6,401	6,285	7,508	3,012
Denmark	528	400	405	462	523	230
Estonia	47	21	22	21	24	8
Spain	3,590	3,488	3,469	3,049	2,779	1,150
Finland	335	274	295	297	384	159
France	5,019	4,637	4,559	4,951	4,400	1,721
Great Britain	14,300	12,305	12,617	12,845	13,779	4,995
Greece	362	380	316	310	256	121
Hungary	197	178	162	214	275	117
Italy	3,007	2,793	2,749	2,992	2,674	1,046
Lithuania	24	14	33	32	55	14
Luxembourg	145	140	76	56	67	24
Latvia	56	34	42	60	73	20
Malta	22	20	31	24	24	11
Netherlands	3,028	2,848	3,092	3,123	3,315	1,539
Poland	747	640	602	609	681	319
Portugal	422	407	418	453	387	151
EU Country not specified	67	52	61	10	27	43
Romania	257	290	258	337	353	160
Sweden	873	684	683	874	799	317
Slovenia	28	26	41	24	32	13
Slovakia	70	62	62	60	62	28
Northern Ireland	1,565	1,292	1,326	1,422	1,444	585
Total EU	53,855	52,211	52,115	52,563	54,311	20,602
Australia	746	749	781	708	724	285
Brazil	183	215	243	284	256	115
Canada	394	436	559	627	781	323
Switzerland	2,561	2,449	3,562	3,686	5,070	1,487
China*	2,325	2,415	2,407	2,330	2,168	835
India	161	161	161	204	235	101
Japan	1,708	1,738	1,749	1,743	2,100	720
South Korea	485	354	289	301	356	134
Mexico	541	465	499	548	680	302
Malaysia	1,063	836	590	385	241	91
Norway	498	474	425	407	298	171

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Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan-May)
Russia	344	245	377	506	603	293
Saudi Arabia	378	422	497	521	626	330
Singapore	556	485	531	545	513	224
Thailand	141	161	144	134	138	48
Turkey	402	392	437	457	455	196
Taiwan	225	253	172	192	129	47
United States	16,674	18,661	21,111	21,601	18,157	8,089
South Africa	312	219	280	305	283	102
Country unknown	196	111	123	56	45	11
Other countries	2,645	2,353	2,652	3,124	3,812	1,601
Total	86,394	85,803	89,703	91,228	91,981	36,108

\*Includes Hong Kong and Macao

**Table 1C – Exports of Services by Category**

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	€ million
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Item	Exports						
Services	57,069	67,960	67,947	67,602	74,311	81,468	90,295
Transport	2,334	2,908	3,010	3,045	3,657	4,352	4,609
Tourism and travel	4,258	4,426	4,287	3,555	3,106	3,010	3,022
Communications	432	516	597	426	386	479	627
Insurance	8,738	8,799	8,155	7,300	7,965	8,057	8,910
Financial services	6,214	7,440	6,595	5,794	6,326	6,594	7,073
Computer services	18,298	21,726	23,876	24,352	27,889	31,413	35,681
Royalties/Licences	737	865	1,017	1,216	2,192	3,603	3,888
Other business services	15,399	20,571	20,047	21,319	22,151	23,369	25,932
Merchandising	5,301	8,816	7,368	7,395	7,126	N/A	N/A

Questions - Written Answers

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	€ million
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Other trade related services	514	1,404	1,101	1,297	1,624	N/A	N/A
Operational leasing	5,439	5,803	5,764	5,729	6,699	6,812	7,496
Legal, accounting and other professional services	333	285	658	573	402	N/A	N/A
Advertising and market research	*	190	199	329	367	N/A	N/A
Research and development	355	515	500	653	420	N/A	N/A
Architectural engineering and other technical services	582	466	399	476	364	N/A	N/A
Management services between affiliates	*	797	903	750	980	N/A	N/A
Other	1,872	2,294	3,157	4,119	4,169	N/A	N/A
Other services n.e.s.	662	710	365	590	640	594	555

N/A Not available but included in the aggregates

\*Suppressed for confidentiality reasons but included in 'Other business services' total

Table 1D - Exports of services classified by country

-	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Region/ Country	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports
Algeria	*	15	*	10	15
Argentina	38	40	30	29	40
Australia	416	609	633	632	609

-	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Region/ Country	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports
Austria	379	428	476	513	428
Bahamas	45	37	16	8	37
Bahrain	20	22	24	*	22
Barbados	*	22	58	61	22
Belgium	965	1,095	1,507	1,580	1,095
Bermuda	834	863	1,117	1,306	863
Brazil	112	122	199	218	122
British Virgin Islands	*	34	14	16	34
Bulgaria	*	44	51	*	44
Canada	536	612	557	608	612
Cayman Islands	*	423	505	751	423
Chile	21	27	28	35	27
China	947	1,233	1,425	1,533	1,233
Colombia	39	40	51	62	40
Congo	*	10	13	N/A	10
Croatia	31	35	48	49	35
Cyprus	138	12	*	*	12
Czech Re- public	248	310	375	364	310
Denmark	501	680	752	811	680
Egypt	67	397	151	223	397
El Salvador	*	*	*	*	*
Estonia	34	41	40	20	41
Ethiopia	*	12	15	16	12
Finland	387	460	547	636	460
France	2,982	4,591	4,832	4,493	4,591
Germany	5,795	6,644	6,670	6,673	6,644
Gibraltar	*	20	5	10	20
Greece	121	186	264	*	186
Guernsey	46	35	55	19	35
Hong Kong	146	181	200	115	181
Hungary	225	267	288	410	267
Iceland	42	139	44	*	139
India	242	374	423	582	374
Indonesia	60	58	83	109	58
Isle of Man	*	26	81	42	26
Israel	153	189	199	271	189
Italy	3,836	4,430	4,192	4,363	4,430
Jamaica	*	17	*	18	17
Japan	881	897	1,152	1,052	897

Questions - Written Answers

-	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Region/ Country	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports
Jersey	*	121	122	83	121
Jordan	*	26	*	25	26
Kazakhstan	*	49	70	62	49
Kenya	*	50	73	82	50
Korea, Republic of (South Korea)	698	605	442	295	605
Kuwait	*	*	37	43	*
Latvia	*	74	62	31	74
Lebanon	*	*	25	22	*
Liechtenstein	*	2	4	*	2
Lithuania	*	*	*	26	*
Luxembourg	837	881	921	860	881
Malaysia	55	56	100	113	56
Malta	*	10	9	9	10
Mexico	110	129	70	66	129
Morocco	*	35	61	48	35
Namibia	*	*	19	N/A	*
Netherlands	1,876	2,674	2,817	3,113	2,674
Netherlands Antilles	88	74	*	N/A	74
New Zealand	59	55	61	69	55
Nigeria	43	55	76	83	55
Norway	392	556	619	701	556
Pakistan	13	26	26	37	26
Panama	*	*	*	N/A	*
Philippines	55	51	40	75	51
Poland	573	797	818	562	797
Portugal	476	716	575	546	716
Qatar	40	56	40	54	56
Romania	66	108	135	104	108
Russian Federation	465	1,165	1,244	983	1,165
Saudi Arabia	101	159	188	162	159
Singapore	213	267	323	336	267
Slovakia	78	121	239	97	121
Slovenia	23	46	50	43	46
South Africa	556	590	536	547	590
Spain	1,613	2,056	2,017	2,491	2,056
Sweden	1,076	1,354	1,382	1,256	1,354
Switzerland	1,140	1,384	1,599	1,651	1,384

-	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Region/ Country	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports	Exports
Taiwan, Province of China	273	267	364	359	267
Thailand	16	22	31	22	22
Tokelau	*	*	*	*	*
Tunisia	*	23	24	26	23
Turkey	233	269	310	305	269
Ukraine	*	97	93	56	97
United Arab Emirates	169	303	382	393	303
United Kingdom	12,853	15,758	15,289	13,682	15,758
United States	5,461	6,120	4,708	4,341	6,120
Uruguay	13	18	*	N/A	18
Venezuela	27	20	28	N/A	20
International Organisa- tions	31	*	37	*	18
Not geo- graphically allocated 1	5,490	4,388	4,352	*	6,165
Marginal trade 2	114	155	147	202	151
World total	57,069	67,960	67,947	67,602	74,311

N/A Not available but included in world total

1 This category covers data supplied by respondents without a geographical breakdown

2 Subtotal for countries for which exports and imports are less than €10m

\* Suppressed for confidentiality reasons but included in world total

### Departmental Reports

119. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide in tabular form the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34410/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The table provides details of external reports commissioned by my Department from March 2011 to mid July 2013.

Name of Consultant	Details of Report Commissioned	€
QTS	Health and Safety Consultancy – Health and Safety Statement 2011	1,270.50

Name of Consultant	Details of Report Commissioned	€
QTS	Health and Safety Consultancy – Health and Safety Statement 2012	1,270.50

### Commemorative Events

120. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide a breakdown of the total cost to his Department, for its involvement in the recent JFK50 commemoration events; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34434/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The costs arising from my Department's involvement with these events relate to the provision of protocol and press services in Wexford on Saturday 22 June 2013. The cost to date for these is €288.

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

121. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board member and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34520/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The National Economic and Social Council is the only State agency under the aegis of my Department. There are 32 Council Members, 1 Chairperson and 1 Deputy Chairperson. No fees or expenses were paid to either the chairperson or deputy chairperson of NES. The following National Economic & Social Council Members claimed travel and subsistence expenses for 2012 and 2013 to date.

NESC Council Members who claimed expenses 2012 and 2013 to date	Fees	2012	To date 2013
Michael O'Sullivan	Nil	€4,196.96	€1,859.44
Mary Daly	Nil	€543.29	€1,753.51
Frank Allen	Nil	€954.96	€478.36

\*Michael O'Sullivan and Mary Daly are based outside of Ireland.

Appointments to the National Statistics Board (NSB) are made in line with the provisions of Section 18 of the Statistics Act 1993.

The Chairperson is eligible to receive an annual stipend of €8,978 and four of the seven Board members are eligible to receive an annual stipend of €5,985. One member has declined to receive a stipend payment. The other members are serving Civil Servants and receive no additional remuneration for serving on the Board. All members are entitled to claim expenses.

-	2012 National Statistics Board - Payments (Stipend + expenses)	-	-
Members	Annual Stipend Gross Amount	Expenses 2012 Travel & Subsistence	Annual Total
Patricia O'Hara (Chair)	€8,978.00	€247.30	€9,225.30
Ciaran Dolan	€5,985.00	€660.54	€6,645.54
Fergal O'Brien	€5,985.00	€0.00	€5,985.00

-	2012 National Statistics Board - Payments (Stipend + expenses)	-	-
Paul Sweeney	€5,985.00	€0.00	€5,985.00
Philip Lane	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
John Callinan	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
Michael McGrath	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
Padraig Dalton	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
	Total		€27,840.84
	2013 National Statistics Board - Stipend Payments		
Members	Quarterly Stipend Gross Amount	Expenses 2013 Travel & Subsistence	Total to date 12-7-13*
Patricia O'Hara (Chair)	€2,244.50	€0.00	€4,489.00
Ciaran Dolan	€1,496.25	€0.00	€2,992.50
Fergal O'Brien	€1,496.25	€0.00	€2,992.50
Paul Sweeney	€1,496.25	€0.00	€ 2,992.50
Philip Lane	€0.00	€0.00	€ -
John Callinan	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
Michael McGrath	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
Padraig Dalton	N/A Civil Servant	€0.00	
	Total		€ 13,466.50

\* To date in 2013 two stipend payments have been made.

### Departmental Expenditure

122. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State sponsored bodies chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34536/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is the only State Agency under the aegis of my Department.

Non Commercial State Sponsored Body	Salary of Director
National Economic and Social Council (NESC)	€164,892 per annum*

\*The salary shown is with effect from 1st July 2013 and is inclusive of an allowance in lieu of superannuation.

### Departmental Expenditure

123. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34552/13]

125. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction to all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; and the company name

and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34584/13]

**The Taoiseach:** I propose to take Questions Nos. 123 and 125 together.

The below table details the expenditure by my Department on professional services, where professional services withholding tax has been applied, from 1 June 2012 to end May 2013.

**Expenditure on Professional Services from 01/06/12 to 31/05/13**

Company Name	€
Caroline Erskine	€36,564.90
Centre For European Negotiation	€27,659.75
Design Factory	€4,040.55
Geralyn Downey	€200.00
Grafton Medical Practice	€189.00
MM Motion Design	€13,284.00
Power Design	€1,279.20
Red Dog Design Consultants	€1,740.45
Terminal Four Ltd	€140,010.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>€224,968.46</b>

Savings of €44,994 would be available to the Exchequer if a 20% reduction was applied.

**Departmental Expenditure**

124. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34568/13]

127. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction to training and development for his Department. [34616/13]

**The Taoiseach:** I propose to take Questions Nos. 124 and 127 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is contained in the tables:

Courses and Programmes	Costs	Number of people
Post Graduate	10,469	4
Graduate	7,240	3
Certificates	7,630	3
Language Training	4,275	5
Management Development	2,244	8
Leadership Development	7,500	16
IT Skills Training	8,655	48
Masterclass in Public Policy	1,425	3
Introduction to Policy Analysis	no cost*	21
Government Financial Procedures	no cost*	20
The Legislative Process	no cost*	31

Courses and Programmes	Costs	Number of people
Creating and Maintaining Departmental Records	no cost*	53
Effective Use of eTenders Website	195	1
New Single Public Service Pension	288	2
Interview Board Training	700	3
IT Network Training	316	2
The Changing Role of the Clerical Officer	no cost**	14
Health and Safety Training	500no cost*** 176 (materials)	428
Total	51,613	269

\* Training workshops facilitated by DOT members of staff with expertise in the these areas.

\*\* This training programme was provided in collaboration with the Department of Social Protection and incurred no cost.

\*\*\* This training was provided free of charge by the OPW.

A reduction in the 2012/13 academic year training and development expenditure of my Department would be as follows:

2012/13 Spend	Less 5%	Less 7%	Less 10%	Less 12%	Less 15%	Less 17%	Less 20%
51,613	49,032	48,000	46,452	45,420	43,871	42,839	41,290
Saving	2,581	3,613	5,161	6,193	7,742	8,774	10,323

EU Presidency training was provided from the Presidency budget for staff across Departments and facilitated 319 people at a cost of €38,335.

*Question No. 125 answered with Question No. 123.*

### Exchequer Savings

126. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide in tabular form the annual saving to the Exchequer of 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction to travel and expenses for his Department. [34600/13]

**The Taoiseach:** My Department's 2013 budget allocation for administration subhead (ii) travel and subsistence is €390,000. Expenditure in this subhead from 1 January to end June was €162,172. In addition expenditure in respect of travel costs associated with the administration subhead (viii) EU Presidency from 1 January to end June was €51,283.

The following table provides details of the annual savings to the Exchequer of reductions between 1% and 20% to travel expenditure based on a projected annual spend of €375,628 including both subheads (ii) and (viii):

%	1%	5%	7%	10%	12%	15%	17%	20%
Estimated savings	€ 3,756	€18,781	€26,294	€37,563	€45,075	€56,344	€63,857	€75,126

*Question No. 127 answered with Question No. 124.*

### Exchequer Savings

128. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34632/13]

**The Taoiseach:** There are five Special Advisers employed by my Department, four of whom are my Special Advisers and one of whom is Special Adviser to the Government Chief Whip.

The details requested in relation to their salaries is set out in the following table.

The 1st point of the Principal Officer (standard scale) in €75,647.

The salary cost for special advisers employed in my Department in 2012 was €581,236. The comparative full year figure for Special Advisers employed in this Department in 2010 was €1,072,920.

Position	Current Salary
Chief of Staff	€156,380
Special Adviser	€156,380
Special Adviser	€81,676
Special Adviser	€81,676
Special Adviser to the Chief Whip	€81,676

### Programme for Government Implementation

129. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34687/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The programme for Government is a 5 year plan and progress is reported on an annual basis. The most recent report, published last March, sets out progress made right across all of Government in implementing these commitments. The timeline for delivery of the commitments is over the lifetime of the Government.

The following table outlines the current status of the PfG commitments which come under the remit of my Department.

The Programme for Government sets out an ambitious programme of Oireachtas and Constitutional reform.

A wide range of Dáil reform measures have already been introduced with plans to introduce further reforms over the coming months.

Following its inaugural meeting in 2012 the Constitutional Convention has considered a

wide range of issues including reducing the voting age, the role of women, same-sex marriage and electoral reform.

Preparations are underway for a referendum on the abolition of the Seanad to be held this Autumn.

Commitment	Status
We will require Departments to publish Regulatory Impact Assessments before Government decisions are taken, thereby offering a further channel to obtain the views of civil society on new rules and regulations.	In Progress
Abolition of the Seanad	In Progress
We will establish a Constitutional Convention to consider comprehensive constitutional reform, with a brief to consider, as a whole or in sub-groups, and report within 12 months on the following: Review of our Dáil electoral system, Reducing the presidential term to 5 years and aligning it with the local and European elections, Provision for same-sex marriage, Amending the clause on women in the home and encourage greater participation of women in public life, Removing blasphemy from the Constitution, Possible reduction of the voting age, Other relevant constitutional amendments that may be recommended by the Convention.	In Progress
Reduce the number of committees and give key committees constitutional standing: the Dáil needs fewer but stronger committees, resourced properly.	Completed
We will introduce a role for the Ceann Comhairle in deciding whether a Minister has failed to provide reasonable information in response to a question	Completed
The chief executive of every state funded body will be required to attend the relevant Oireachtas committee on a regular basis to answer oral parliamentary questions that can be submitted by any member, on a similar basis to the attendance of Ministers before the full Dáil.	Action Required
We will amend Dáil standing orders to ensure that replies to written questions are furnished within a specified number of days, even during Dáil recess.	Action Required
To make the oral question process more effective, we propose to increase the time allocated to oral question. To provide balance, there will be a reduction in the number of oral questions being submitted to one per member.	In Progress
A member must be present in the chamber when his or her question is reached, although they may defer to another member the right to ask a supplementary question	In Progress
We will legislate on the issue of cabinet confidentiality.	Cabinet Confidentiality is provided for in Constitution
We propose an Investigations, Oversight and Petitions Committee of the Oireachtas. It would be a powerful committee, constructed on the lines of the Public Accounts Committee, bi-partisan in structure and chaired by a senior member of the opposition.	Completed

Commitment	Status
The Committee would receive parliamentary petitions from individuals and groups in the community seeking the redress of grievances connected with the public services of the State and with the public administration generally. Its functions would be to act as a “clearing house”, directing complaints to those bodies most competent to act on them: the Ombudsman, the Data Protection Commissioner, the Local Government Auditor, the Oireachtas committee that has oversight of the relevant Department, and so on.	Completed
We will refer to the Constitutional Convention, the issue of reducing the Voting Age to 17 and giving citizens the right to vote at Irish embassies in the presidential election.	In Progress
We will ask the Constitutional Convention, which is examining electoral reform, to make recommendations as to how the number of women in politics can be increased.	Completed
We will introduce a new code of practice for the use of the government jet, ensuring transparent and cost effective travel.	Use of jet much reduced
We will give committees the power to introduce legislation, while a new 10 Minute Rule will allow backbench TDs to introduce their own Bills. We will also tackle the huge over-use of guillotines to ram through non-emergency legislation	In Progress
We will introduce a package of changes that will bring about a 50 per cent increase in Dáil sitting days. Dáil Éireann will in future meet four days a week. There will be a summer recess of just six weeks and significantly reduced breaks at Christmas and Easter. We will abandon the practice of providing a “mid-term break” – a full week off at St Patrick’s Day and Hallowe’en. When the Dáil is not in session the Committees shall agree by roster that a particular Committee shall meet in the Dáil Chamber.	In Progress
We propose to break the Government monopoly on legislation and the stranglehold over the business of the Dáil, by providing that the new Friday sittings will be given over exclusively to committee reports and private members’ business except where urgent government business must be taken.	In progress
We will enhance the democratic process by involving public representatives at an earlier stage of the legislative process, particularly before Bills are published. We will amend cabinet procedure instructions so as to allow government to publish the general scheme of a Bill so that Oireachtas Committees can debate and hold hearings at an early stage.	Completed
While recognising that there may be exceptional circumstances in which debate may need to be concluded by a given deadline, we will restrict the use of guillotine motions and other procedural devices that prevent Bills from being fully debated, so that guillotining is not a matter of routine as it has become at present, particularly at the end of a session.	In Progress
We will also deal with the related problem of legislation being shunted through at high speed and will ensure that Dáil standing orders provide a minimum of two weeks between each stage of a Bill, except in exceptional circumstances.	Action Required

Commitment	Status
In order to enhance the role of the legislative committees, we will organise a committee week every fourth sitting week. The Dáil plenary will sit only for questions, including Leaders' Questions and the order of business and the remainder of the day will be taken up in committee.	Action Required
We will establish a petition system to the Dáil, similar to that operating in the European Parliament, to be managed by a specific Dáil committee that will investigate and report on petitions which raise issues warranting attention.	Completed
We will enhance the parliamentary relationship with the European Parliament in conjunction with Ireland's MEPs. These arrangements will include regular attendance by MEPs at relevant Dáil committees.	Completed
We will significantly revamp the adjournment debate format. It will be renamed the topical issue debate. There will be a minimum of 5 topical issues. These will be taken in the middle of the day and there will be provision for questions at the end. A Minister or Minister of State from the relevant Department will be present and there will be an end to the practice of one junior Minister reading out scripts on behalf of a number of Departments about a range of issues of which he or she knows nothing.	Completed
The standing orders on urgent issues are used regularly to attempt to raise issues that are not urgent and such requests are almost invariably refused. We will make the Dáil rules for raising urgent issues more meaningful by requiring a minimum number of signatories for such a request. In future, Standing Order 32 requests will not be read out.	Completed
The Taoiseach will be obliged to brief the Oireachtas prior to attending European Council meetings and to engage with the Oireachtas in debate on EU issues of national significance and concern.	Completed
The Oireachtas will devote a full week each year to debating major EU issues of concern to Ireland such as the Draft Annual Work Programme, Green and White Papers and proposals for EU budget co-ordination.	In Progress
The Oireachtas will be linked up with the Irish offices of the European Commission and the European Parliament in communicating Europe to the Irish people. Outreach programmes, meetings and competitions particularly in schools will be organised and TDs and Senators invited to participate.	In Progress
Under the Lisbon Treaty provisions the Oireachtas is entitled to receive all documents produced by the EU Commission at the same time as the EU institutions and the Irish Government receive them. We will ensure all EU documents are forwarded to the Oireachtas through the Ceann Comhairle and the Cathaoirleach. They will transmit them to the Oireachtas library and the relevant Committees. Every TD and Senator will be informed of the documents as they arrive, so that they can engage in EU matters that concern or interest them.	Completed

Commitment	Status
We propose that Oireachtas Committees will play the major role in scrutinising the EU in the coming years. Greater emphasis will be placed on deepening the involvement in EU matters of the Oireachtas committees that shadow the work of each Government Department. We will oblige all sectoral committees to deal with EU matters that come within their remit within a defined period of time.	Completed
Committees will be supplemented by a system of subcommittees and a system of rapporteurs who have a particular interest in an area of policy or scrutiny and who volunteer to carry out an in-depth study for the relevant committee.	In Progress
The Regulatory Impact Assessments prepared for Ministers on all EU Directives and significant Regulations will be forwarded automatically to the relevant sectoral Oireachtas Committees. These Committees should advise the Minister and the Joint Committee on European Affairs as to whether the transposition should take place by Statutory Instrument or by primary legislation. Where primary legislation is recommended the full Oireachtas plenary process should be followed.	In Progress
All Ministers will be obliged to appear before their respective Committees or before the Committee on European Affairs prior to travelling to Brussels for meetings of the Council where decisions are made.	Completed
We will reduce the size of the Department of the Taoiseach, transforming it into the equivalent of a Cabinet Office that oversees the delivery of a new Programme for Government.	Completed
Require Departments to carry out and publish Regulatory Impact Assessments before Government decisions are taken.	In Progress
Prioritise a programme of law reform arising out of the recommendations made by the Law Reform Commission.	In Progress
We are fully committed to the EU2020 strategy and its creation of employment and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.	In Progress
We will commission an independent audit into the transposition and implementation of EU legislation, placing priority on laws and regulations that caused concern or deemed burdensome to Irish business. We will put in place a mechanism across Government to accelerate implementation of directives, involving relevant Departments and the Attorney's Office.	In Progress
We will rationalise regulators to strengthen consumer regulation and promote the consumer interest.	In Progress

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

130. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Taoiseach if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34703/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The following table provides details of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by my Department since March 2011, the ser-

vice provided and the total cost of each service.

Year	Supplier Name	Service Provided	Total Cost
2012	Caroline Erskine	EU Communication Advisory Service	€25,830
2013	Caroline Erskine	EU Communication Advisory Service	€35,593

### Data Retention

131. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Taoiseach further to Parliamentary Question No. 123 of 9 July 2013, the changes in the filing and retention of documents in his Department that have been introduced since this Government came into office. [34908/13]

**The Taoiseach:** As I mentioned in my reply to Question No. 123 of 9 July 2013, all records and data, electronic and paper based, held in the Department are maintained in compliance with the provisions of the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 and the National Archives Act 1986 and in compliance with the records management guidelines set out by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

I have made clear in the House before my concern at the paucity of documentation held in my Department relevant to the decisions taken by the previous Government in September 2008 and my determination to ensure that more comprehensive records are maintained in relation to future decisions taken by the Government on issues of significant national importance.

### Departmental Websites

132. **Deputy Micheál Martin** asked the Taoiseach the reason his Department's website was changed; the person who undertook this work; the cost of same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34914/13]

**The Taoiseach:** My Department recently upgraded its website primarily because the version of the content management system on which the website is built had reached end of support. An upgrade was required to ensure that the website remains operational.

While carrying out the upgrade a number of other necessary changes were made.

- A new splash page was added to give users a choice of using the Irish or the English version of the site, a commitment in the Department's Official Languages Scheme;
- A cookies permission prompt was implemented to comply with the EU Cookies Directive;
- Some content restructuring took place to reflect organisational structure changes that have taken place in the Department; and
- the design was refreshed.

This work was carried out by pTools which is the company that originally built the website and who provide ongoing support for the website and the underlying content management system.

The total cost of the work done was €9,014.50 including VAT.

*Questions - Written Answers*  
**Departmental Legal Costs**

133. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Taoiseach if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34989/13]

**The Taoiseach:** My Department has not sought legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General.

**Official Travel**

134. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Taoiseach if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agency ensures the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35446/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is the only State agency under the aegis of my Department.

A limited amount of overseas travel is undertaken by staff of NESC. NESC has appropriate procedures in place governing travel by staff members. All travel undertaken is in accordance with these procedures and associated costs approved at the appropriate level.

**Exchequer Savings**

135. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35805/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is the only State agency under the aegis of my Department. No fee is payable for membership of the NESC.

Although the National Statistics Board (NSB) is not classified as an agency under my aegis, I am providing the following for the information of the Deputy. Under the Statistics Act, 1993, the National Statistics Board comprises a Chairperson and seven Board members. My functions in relation to the NSB were delegated to the Government Chief Whip, Minister of State Paul Kehoe T.D., on the 22 March 2011.

Appointments to the NSB are made in line with the provisions of Section 18 of the Statistics Act 1993. The Chairperson is eligible to an annual stipend of €8,978 and four of the seven Board members are eligible to an annual stipend of €5,985. The other members are serving Civil Servants and receive no additional remuneration for serving on the Board. The costs of the Board are met from the CSO Vote.

The following table shows the potential saving to the Exchequer if the amount of the stipend was reduced by 25%.

% Reduction	Potential saving
25%	€8,229.50

## Departmental Bodies

136. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Taoiseach if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36222/13]

**The Taoiseach:** The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) is the only State agency under the aegis of my Department.

## Passport Applications

137. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will revisit the old system of supporting Deputies helping their constituents in their passport applications in cases of emergency; if he will advise on how best to handle passport applications relating to funerals, a family illness abroad, weddings, lost passports abroad and so on under the current system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34176/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The Department advises people resident on the island of Ireland to apply for their passports through the Passport Express service. However the Department recognises that passport applicants may on occasion require a faster turnaround service. Priority at public counters in Dublin and Cork is given to those travelling at short notice where the fastest turnaround time for these applications is three working days. Appointments for Molesworth Street can be made at *www.passportappointments.ie*. Additionally an emergency same day service is also provided for those whose travel plans are necessitated by an emergency such as the death or illness of a family member. Applicants in such situations should contact the Molesworth Street or Cork public offices or the out of hours duty officer service, where, on provision of proofs of the emergency situation as detailed above, a passport will issue. The Passport Service endeavours to provide all citizens with the best possible service consistent with resource constraints. The Passport Express arrangement, which involves an element of pre-checking, is the most efficient means of achieving this. Dealing with individual applications on an exceptional basis inevitably involves a diversion of resources which results in a delay in the processing of other applications. The facility whereby applications for passports could be submitted through Members of the Oireachtas and accorded priority treatment was discontinued in 2010 and I have no plans for its reintroduction.

## Passport Applications

138. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will support the case of a person (details supplied) in relation to a lost passport in the United States; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34177/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The Consulate in New York was been in contact with the couple in question last weekend. It transpired that their passports had not been lost but rather misplaced in their hotel room. Therefore the issuance of temporary passports to return home was not required.

## Undocumented Irish in the USA

139. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the actions he has taken to ensure that the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 is supported in the US Congress and in particular in the US

House of Representatives; his views on the legislation's progress thus far; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34185/13]

166. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will report on the plight of the undocumented Irish in the United States; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35308/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 139 and 166 together.

I very much welcome the adoption earlier this month by the US Senate to approve a bill that provides for comprehensive reform of the American immigration system. This is a very positive development that takes us another step closer towards addressing the problems faced by undocumented Irish emigrants in the US and will allow them to emerge from the shadows. I strongly welcome the provisions in the Bill passed by the Senate to address the concerns of our undocumented and the specific E3 provisions for Ireland that provide extensive legal pathway for future migration flows between Ireland and the US.

I am particularly pleased that the Bill includes provisions that will allow for continuation of the summer J1 visa programme. Earlier drafts of the bill had threatened the future viability of the programme. I raised these concerns directly with Senator Patrick Leahy, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am pleased that the Bill as passed by the Senate no longer classifies J1 summer participants as foreign workers, which would have imposed significant additional requirements on them and their potential employers. Earlier texts had also proposed a further fee of \$500 to be paid by the sponsoring organisations; the Bill as passed introduces a fee of \$100, and the conditions surrounding payment of this fee would allow for it to be paid by either the sponsoring organisation or the participant.

I pay tribute to hard work and persistence of Senators Leahy, Schumer, McCain and other members of the US Senate bipartisan group who brought forward the original proposals. I also welcome the considerable bipartisan support that has emerged in support of the Senate bill and hope that this bodes well for its further prospects.

The prospects for a successful outcome remain uncertain as the focus now moves to the House of Representatives. To reinforce Ireland's interest in the issue, I visited Washington DC last week where I met with a range of Senators and Congressmen and Congresswomen from both parties. I met with a range of the most significant Congressional leaders on immigration issues from both sides of the US political divide, including Chairman Peter King (R-New York) and Cong. Richard Neal (D-Massachusetts) of the Friends of Ireland Congressional Group; Cong. Paul Ryan (R-Wisconsin), Chair of House Budgetary Committee; Cong. Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia), Chair of House Judiciary Committee and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif) and Senator Patrick Leahy and Senator John McCain among others. I also raised immigration reform at senior official level in the White House. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my appreciation for the active support we continue to receive from a number of Irish community organisations, some of whom I met during my Washington visit. In pressing to secure a solution for the undocumented, we continue to work closely with them. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, through the Emigrant Support Programme, has provided funding to a number of organisations active in this area.

We will closely follow developments over the coming weeks, and will co-ordinate closely with our friends in Congress, the Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Irish community groups in the US.

## **Overseas Development Aid Issues**

140. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the position on the new policy for international development, One World, One Future; the priority areas for engagement; if the new policy will mean more effective use and deployment of resources; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34186/13]

141. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the position on the new policy for international development, One World, One Future, the public consultation process in developing this policy and for gauging the reaction thereto; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34187/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Joe Costello):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 140 and 141 together.

On 5 May 2013, The Tánaiste and I launched One World, One Future - Ireland's Policy for International Development.

This new policy emanates from a commitment in the 2011 Programme for Government to review the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid. The review examined the progress made by the aid programme over the past 6 years and reassessed the changing context, in Ireland and overseas, in which we operate. A comprehensive public consultation process reached over 1000 people directly, through public meetings throughout the country and overseas. It involved meetings with NGOs, members of the Oireachtas, the Private Sector, Diaspora groups and other stakeholders. It also encouraged interested parties to submit written submissions. Over 160 of these were received and are now available on the Irish Aid website. The review process has been widely recognised as good practice in participatory policy making.

One World, One Future sets out the framework for Ireland's engagement in international development over the coming years – a framework which will help bring greater coherence to our work, and enable us to better plan for and measure more comprehensively the results which our development efforts are achieving.

It defines our vision of a sustainable and just world where people are empowered to overcome poverty and hunger and fully realise their rights and potential. It identifies three clear goals: (1) reduced hunger and stronger resilience; (2) sustainable development, inclusive economic growth; and (3) better governance, human rights and accountability.

It also sets out 6 priority areas for action around which we will plan and manage our resources: a) Global Hunger b) Countries that are fragile c) Climate Change and Development, d) Trade and Economic Growth, e) Essential Services, f) Human Rights and Accountability.

Given our leading role on hunger, it is perhaps not surprising that this framework places achieving Food and Nutrition Security centre stage, but we are also signalling an evolution in our approach by increasing our focus on responding to situations of fragility, giving even more attention to human rights, ensuring that greater emphasis is placed on inclusive and equitable economic growth and promoting more rounded relationships with our Key Partner Countries by bringing economic and political relations further into the dialogue.

One World, One Future, has been very positively received by Irish Aid partners. Civil Society organisations have welcomed the renewed focus on Human Rights, Climate Change and addressing inequality. African governments have welcomed the emphasis placed on more rounded partnerships based on mutual respect and mutual interest.

Moving this policy forward is a major priority. Over the coming weeks and months, I will consult with our stakeholders and with members of the public once again. They have played an important role in developing this Policy and their views as to its implementation are equally

important.

### **Consular Services Provision**

142. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if there is any assistance his Department can offer the family of an Irish citizen (details supplied) on life support in a foreign hospital who are trying to have him repatriated; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34340/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The person referred to by the Deputy first came to the attention of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 24 June 2013, when a family friend contacted the Embassy of Ireland in Kuala Lumpur and our Honorary Consul in Bangkok. My Department has been providing consular assistance through our Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, the Honorary Consul in Bangkok and the Consular Assistance Section in Dublin and will continue to do so for as long as required. Our Honorary Consul in Bangkok is in direct contact with the family. My Department does not have funds to assist with medical repatriations.

### **Northern Ireland Issues**

143. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will meet the Greater Ardoyne Residents Collective, as requested, 19 of whom face prosecution for engaging in a peaceful protest contrary to EU rights to assembly. [34373/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The matters to which the Deputy refers pertain to the arrest of a number of persons by the PSNI. I am advised that these persons have been charged subsequently with criminal offences by the Public Prosecution Service of Northern Ireland. Under the Hillsborough Agreement, of which the Irish Government is a co-guarantor, responsibility for policing in Northern Ireland is now a devolved matter. The Chief Constable is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board which has cross community representation. As part of the Good Friday Agreement, a Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland was established to provide independent and impartial investigation of the new police service. Complaints of alleged misconduct by the PSNI can be made to the Police Ombudsman, who in turn is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly, through the Minister for Justice.

As is the case in this jurisdiction, the Public Prosecution Service of Northern Ireland is independent in the exercise of its functions. In these circumstances, it would be inappropriate for me to seek to influence any of these bodies in their decision making.

### **Departmental Reports**

144. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34404/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** My Department is responsible for two Votes – Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade) and Vote 27 (International Co-operation). The Department commissions external expertise where highly specialised skills are not available within the Department and particularly where ongoing independent evaluation of programmes and projects is required. During the course of their engagements these consultants/experts may prepare reports and other documentation for the Department. In-depth analysis of issues by external experts has informed - and continues to inform - my Department's policies, allowing for more targeted use of resources and greater accountability

in the allocation of budgets.

The following tables set out the details of external reports commissioned under Vote 28 and Vote 27 since March 2011.

External Reports commissioned under Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade)

Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of publication
06.09.2012	Mike Williams	Evaluation of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation	€12,246.64	Expected July 2013
16.11.2012	PA Consulting Group	Evaluating the value of the economic relationship between the United Kingdom and Ireland.	Irish contribution of €72,494.48 represents 50% of costs, balance paid by UK government	Expected July 2013
11.02.2013	Bronagh Hinds & Karen Mc-Minn	1325 Mid-term Progress Report on implementation of Ireland's National Action plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2011-2014.	€16,920.12	10 June 2013
06.05.2011	Peter Mc Evoy	Evaluation of a number of Organisations funded by the Emigrant Support Programme(ESP)	Not finalised. Maximum budgeted for is €15,000.	Not Published

External Reports commissioned under Vote 27 (International Cooperation)

Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of Publication
28.04.2011	Kevin Moore	Support to the Governments of Zambia and South Africa to develop Special Economic Zones for the promotion of inward investment and employment	€13,581	Not Applicable – see footnote*

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Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of Publication
28.04.11	Paul Sheane	Support to the Governments of Zambia and South Africa to develop Special Economic Zones for the promotion of inward investment and employment	€9,965	*
05.05.2011	Stefanie Meredith	Review of Irish Aid Support for Product Development Partnerships in developing countries.	€10,100	*
05.05.2011	Samia Saad	Review of Irish Aid Support for Product Development Partnerships in developing countries.	€9,198	*
05.05.2011	Paud Murphy	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work).	€9,064	*

Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of Publication
05.05.2011	80:20	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work).	€9,870	*
05.05.2011	Eilis Murray	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work).	€6,068	*

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Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of Publication
05.05.2011	ISOS	Development Education Reviews - to examine the current funding support and engagement in each of the priority areas identified in the Development Education strategy (primary, post primary, third level, adult, community and youth work).	€42,247	*
01.06.2011	Bernard McLoughlin	Review of the Irish Aid Centre, Dublin	€6,143	*
01.06.2011	Cathal Higgins	Preparation of a report on the programme of education sector budget support towards school infrastructural development in Karamoja region and skills development in the oil sector (Uganda)	€5,000	*
12.09.2011	Humanitarian Policy Ltd	Review of Security Policy & Practice among Irish Aid Humanitarian Partners	€33,930	*
12.08.2011	Mike Williams	Review of Humanitarian Programme Plan for Irish Aid	€18,742	*
09.01.2012	Cathy Roche	Review of the Our World Awards 2005-2011	€6,300	*

Date of Commission	Experts/Consultants	Matter Reported On	Cost (€)	Date of Publication
18.05.2012	Everywhere Consulting	Feasibility Study on the Establishment of a Humanitarian Hub at Shannon Airport	€40,584	*
01.06.2012	Fintan Farrelly	Review of the Irish Aid Strategic Environmental Partnership Programme	€6,000	*
01.11.2012	John Paton	Africa Strategy Scoping Exercise	€9,900	*
01.11.2012	Mike Williams	Review of Misean Cara	€15,099	*
01.03.2013	Bronagh Hynes & Karen Mc-Minn Consultants	Report on the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan on UNSCR (United Nations Security Council Resolution) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security	€11,193	*
01.02.2013	Mary Jennings	Review of HRD (Human Rights and Democratisation) Scheme Irish Aid Palestine	€15,500	*
01.04.2013	ASTEC Global Consultancy Ltd	Review of Irish Aid Financial Policies and Procedures	€33,000	*

\*Reports commissioned by the Department in relation to Irish Aid matters are generally for internal management usage and not for publication. However, many are published on the *Iris-haid.ie* website or, in appropriate cases, can be made available on request.

### Foreign Conflicts

145. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the reason Ireland, the EU and the UN are staying silent about the overthrow of an elected president in Egypt; his views on what will happen to the democratic process in view of the military coup; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34420/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I am following events in Egypt with great concern. I very much regret the loss of lives, estimated at around 100 persons, and the many casualties since the onset of the current crisis. Incidents such as the heavy loss of life outside the Republican Guard HQ in Cairo on 7 July must be thoroughly and impartially investigated. It is not correct that Ireland, the EU and the UN have stayed silent about this crisis. In my own public comments, I have remarked that no one who truly holds to democratic values can view with equanimity what was, to all intents and purposes, a military takeover. I continue to believe that, as a matter of principle, a military intervention of this kind which sets aside a country's established constitutional and democratic order cannot be condoned. EU High Representative Ashton issued a declaration on 14 July, on behalf of the 28 member States, which made clear the EU's deep concern at recent developments in Egypt. This declaration stated that the military must accept and respect the constitutional authority of the civilian power as a basic principle of democratic governance and that it was of the utmost importance that Egypt should return rapidly to a legitimate government and democratic structures. I note that UN Secretary General Ban has also expressed deep concern about events in Egypt following the 3 July suspension of the Constitution and the removal from office of President Morsi and his government.

The immediate priority is for all political actors in Egypt to show restraint, to refrain from any recourse to violence and to dedicate themselves urgently to the task of charting a political way forward which must be respectful of the aspirations and orientations of the entire population.

Ireland and its EU partners believe that the only solution to the situation we are facing in Egypt is to promote a fully inclusive process of political dialogue and reconciliation aimed at the swiftest possible restoration of democratic rule and civilian-led Government, following free and fair legislative and Presidential elections. The interim President, Mr. Al-Mansour, has proposed a road-map for the restoration of the constitution and of normal democratic government, which now needs to be discussed and agreed by all parties in Egypt. It is also essential for all actors and those now in positions of responsibility in Egypt to commit to, and to ensure, the full protection of basic human rights, fundamental freedoms and rule of law.

The interim Presidency and all those in positions of influence must reach out to all political forces, without exception, and must ensure all strands of Egyptian society can contribute to the building of a genuine democracy and improved economic circumstances. Conciliatory moves to defuse the current crisis, including the release of those detained for political reasons, are also essential.

As I have stated previously, Egypt and its people are experiencing a difficult transition to democracy. Ireland and its EU partners are fully committed to providing whatever support we can to assist the Egyptian people along this path.

### **Election Monitoring Missions**

146. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will consider prioritising sending experienced election observers and agents on further election observer missions as part of the EU and OSCE missions when requested to select persons from the approved roster; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34442/13]

147. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will outline upcoming election observer missions that his Department intend to send delegations to, including observers for missions organised by the European Union, the Organisation

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for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Council of Europe, the United Nations and the Carter Centre; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34454/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Joe Costello):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 146 and 147 together.

International election monitoring missions play an important role in the promotion of democracy and human rights. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade maintains a roster of observers for election monitoring missions. We aim to ensure that Ireland is represented at an appropriate level in international observation missions for both elections and constitutional referendums. Irish observers participate primarily in missions organised by the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). However, they have also participated in missions organised by the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the Carter Centre.

So far in 2013, Ireland has participated in election observation missions in Jordan, Armenia, Kenya, Paraguay, Pakistan, Albania and Mongolia. The Department decides on a case by case basis which election observation missions Ireland should participate in. Currently, there are no outstanding invitations from international bodies for Irish participation in election observation missions, although notifications are expected from both the EU and the OSCE over the coming months.

When it is decided to nominate observers to a particular mission, the Department seeks expressions of interest from all observers on the election roster. A list of suitably qualified observers is drawn up, taking into account the specific criteria for the mission, including local or regional experience, and language proficiency. Gender balance and length of time since serving on a mission are also key factors in the selection process. Following completion of the internal selection process, a draft list of nominees is submitted for Ministerial approval.

In the case of European Union election observation missions, the final selection of observers from the list of approved nominees submitted by the Department rests with the European Commission. In the case of OSCE election observation missions, all the observers nominated by the Department are usually selected.

I am confident that the establishment this year of the new election observation roster, comprising 200 highly qualified individuals with a strong mix of skills and experience, will ensure that Ireland can consistently nominate the best qualified people for election monitoring missions. At this point, I do not envisage changes to the procedure by which members of the new roster will be nominated for missions.

### **Overseas Development Aid Issues**

148. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if a cost benefit analysis of Ireland's membership of the Asian Development Bank has been carried out in view of the fact that the new development policy is facilitating membership of the African Development Bank; the amount our membership has cost since 2006; the impacts Ireland's membership has had on poverty eradication; the way his Department measure the efficacy and relevance of our membership; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34500/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Joe Costello):** The Minister for Finance has the lead responsibility in Government for Ireland's membership of the Asian Development Bank. Ireland joined the Bank in 2006, in line with the Government's Asia Strategy to increase Ireland's engagement in Asia. Ireland's 'paid-in' subscription

on joining the Bank in 2006 was €8.4 million. Ireland also contributed €1.6 million to two trust funds of the Bank, the Gender and Development Cooperation Trust Fund and the Governance Cooperation Trust Fund. All of this funding was provided from non-voted Central Fund expenditure, under the authority of the Minister for Finance. In 2011, the Minister for Finance decided that Ireland would contribute to the Bank's Capital Increase, which involves further contributions of €8 million over ten years. In addition, since joining the Asian Development Bank, Ireland has contributed €51million from Central Fund expenditure to the Asian Development Fund which provides concessional loans and grants to the poorest countries in Asia. In 2012, Ireland, through the Department of Finance, pledged to contribute €20 million to the tenth replenishment of the Asian Development Fund, to be provided over nine years. The first instalment was provided to the Fund this month. All these contributions are counted as part of Ireland's overall Official Development Assistance.

Ireland's relationship with the Asian Development Bank is managed by the Department of Finance. The Bank's operation is reviewed at its annual meeting, at which Ireland is represented by officials of the Department of Finance. There is ongoing review of the work of the Bank by its Internal Evaluation Department, which independently and systematically evaluates Bank policies, strategies and operations. This process is important in providing feedback on the effectiveness of its operations and the achievement of development outcomes. The most recent Annual Evaluation Review, for 2013, is available on the Bank's website, at [www.adb.org/site/evaluation](http://www.adb.org/site/evaluation).

The Asian Development Bank is also regularly reviewed by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), of which Ireland is one of seventeen members. MOPAN assesses the organisational effectiveness of the major multilateral organisations which its members fund. The most recent MOPAN review of the Bank's work, in 2011, noted that it is implementing reforms to improve its organisational effectiveness, especially in relation to making transparent and predictable aid allocation decisions, presenting information on performance and monitoring external results. The Government's new Policy for International Development, "One World, One Future", confirms the strong focus of Ireland's development assistance programme on some of the poorest countries and communities in sub-Saharan Africa. In line with this commitment, we will explore any potential benefits of membership of the African Development Bank, particularly in the context of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Africa Strategy, and in consultation with the Department of Finance.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

149. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board to include the chair and board member and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34514/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** There are no State Bodies under the aegis of my Department.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

150. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide in tabular form the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34530/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** There are no State Bodies under the aegis of my Department.

### Departmental Expenditure

151. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; and the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34546/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** My Department engages professional services in a number of areas where the required skills are not available in-house and it is more cost-effective to source them externally. Details of payments in the period in question are included in the following tables in respect of Vote 27 (International Co-operation) and Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade). There are also costs incurred on professional fees at missions abroad where advice is sought from time to time on a range of local matters.

Vote 28 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013	Amount - €	Supplier
INTERPERTATION/TRANSLATION SERVICES	1,000	KL COMMUNICATIONS
INTERVIEW BOARD FEES	1,800	MARIE CROSS Total
INTERVIEW BOARD FEES	1,600	MELANIE PINE Total
INTERVIEW BOARD FEES	1,200	SEAN MCDONALD Total
TRAVEL CONTRACT MANAGEMENT FEE & INSURANCE	9,299	CLUB TRAVEL Total
LEGAL EXPENSES (excl. SETTLEMENT COSTS)	29,063	STATE CLAIMS AGENCY Total
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING (INC. PHOTOS)	694	IRIS OIFIGIUIL Total
LEGAL FEES	4,296	ROSLING KING SOLICITORS
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING (INC. PHOTOS)	6,192	TRUVO Total
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING (INC. PHOTOS)	430	BANK OF IRELAND Total
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING (INC. PHOTOS)	400	INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	221	ICC INFORMATION LTD Total
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	200	ADRIENNE CANDY & ASSOCIATES Total
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	500	AVONDALE MEDIA SERVICES Total
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	2,700	HOLGER LONZE PRES. AWARD
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	16,920	BRONAGH HINDS & KAREN McMINN
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	6,150	VERMILLON DESIGN PRES. AWARD
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	19,770	SPEAR DESIGN PRES. AWARD

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OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	8,940	SPEAR DESIGN PRES. AWARD
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	3,435	SPEAR DESIGN PRES. AWARD
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	1,624	BCT COMMUNICATIONS LTD Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	2,487	BRIDGE INTERPRETING Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	16,250	CENAD Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	874	CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS LTD Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	800	CW SYSTEMS INTEGRATION Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	2,000	EMCO CUMARSAID TEO Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	990	EMERGENCY CARE PRODUCTS Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	8,480	HIGH PERFORMANCE Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	6,115	ICS SKILLS TRAINING & CERTIFICATION Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	12,083	INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	1,200	MELANIE PINE Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	2,691	P L & ASSOCIATES Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	7,245	PATRICK SUTTON T/A COMMUNICATE Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	7,116	SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL & AFRICAN STUDIES
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	1,000	SURESKILLS Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	2,400	THE IRISH TIMES Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	14,050	TIGER CONSULTING Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	200	TRISH MURPHY Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	1,173	VERSION 1 SOFTWARE Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	14,530	WRIGHT CONSULTANCY Total
TRAINER FEES & TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIP	1,036	EUROPUS TEO Total

Vote 28 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013	Amount - €	Supplier
TRANSLATION SERVICES	41	WORD PERFECT TRANSLATION SERVICES LTD Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	179,340	B T IRELAND Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	350	BLUEWAVE TECHNOLOGY Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	14,421	CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS LTD Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	263,801	ISAS Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	176,825	IT ROLLOUT CONSULTANCY Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	282,010	JK NETWORK ARCHITECTURE DESIGN LTD Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	1,026	MONGEY COMMUNICATIONS LTD
ICT OUTSOURCING	3750	WARD SOLUTIONS Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	107,972	ZERO DOWNTIME LTD Total
ICT OUTSOURCING	3,882	FUSIO
ICT OUTSOURCING	250	LGMA
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	2,909	1E Ltd Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	2,635	AMS LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	2,263,980	BEARING POINT Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	31,096	BUSINESS & SCIENTIFIC Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	35,469	BUTLER AGENCIES Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	158,808	CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	81,191	CORE INTERNATIONAL LTD. (IRL) Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	23,639	CW SYSTEMS INTEGRATION Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	57,263	DELL COMPUTER Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	176,451	INTEGRITY SOLUTIONS LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	2,539	KROLL ONTRACK Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	23,678	MICROMAIL Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	79,704	MICROSOFT Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	70,388	ORACLE EMEA LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	830	PAESSLER AG Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	6,356	REPLIWEB INC Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	369,236	SAGEM IDENTIFICATION Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	13,442	SOFTWARE ONE UK LTD Total

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Vote 28 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013	Amount - €	Supplier
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	35,000	SOFTWORKS COMPUTING Ltd Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	10,801	STREAMING LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	13,670	SURFBOX ORMONDE TECHNOLOGIES LTD
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	3,943	SYSTEM DYNAMICS Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	6,751	SYSTEM VIDEO Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	17,639	VERSION 1 SOFTWARE Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	20,178	WARD SOLUTIONS Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	45,113	WORLDREACH SOFTWARE CORPORATION
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	1,781	YCACQUIRERSYSSTE Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	9,852	ZERO DOWNTIME LTD Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	21,392	ZINOPY Total
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	3,630	DIARMUID P KELLY & ASSOC'S Total
PREMISES PROFESSIONAL FEES	3,800	KEYTRAINER IRELAND LTD Total
PREMISES PROFESSIONAL FEES	719	NIFAST Total
PREMISES PROFESSIONAL FEES	6,150	KEELVAR SYSTEMS LTD Total
PREMISES PROFESSIONAL FEES	6,150	THE SIA MANAGEMENT COMPANY LTD Total
Vote 27 - 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013	Amount - €	Supplier
TRAVEL CONTRACT MANAGMENT FEE & INSURANCE	18,705	CARLSON WAGONLIT IRELAND
TRAVEL CONTRACT MANAGMENT FEE & INSURANCE	7,489	CLUB TRAVEL
TRAINER FEES	2,113	CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS
TRANSLATION SERVICES	1,082	WORD PERFECT TRANSLATION LTD
ICT OUTSOURCING	15,989	ISAS INFORMATION SECURITY & ASSURANCE SERVICE
ICT OUTSOURCING	119,049	SABEO CONTRACTING SERVICES
ICT OUTSOURCING	177,399	TERMINAL 4 SOLUTIONS
ICT OUTSOURCING	75,585	MAXMEDIA
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	142,613	CORE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	7,600	DATA COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED

Vote 28 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013	Amount - €	Supplier
SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE (I.T.)	35,420	EQUINITI ICS LIMITED
CONSULTANCY COSTS-FEES	15,683	AISLING SWAINE CONSULTANCY LTD
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	7,093	ANNEMARIE CUNNINGHAM
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	1,400	BERNARD MCLOUGHLIN
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	2,673	BERNARD WOOD + ASSOCIATES LTD
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	3,053	DR MARGARET FITZGERALD
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	76,704	EMMA WARWICK
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	15,791	FITZPATRICK ASSOCIATES
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	1,800	GERALD CAWLEY
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	15,600	GRACE KELLY HARTNETT
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	3,690	HUNTER MCGILL
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	53,625	INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION DEV
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	143,160	ITAD LTD

Vote 27 - 1st June 2012 to 31st May 2013 - Description	Amount - €	Supplier
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	4,200	JIM KINSELLA
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	3,800	MAIRTIN O FAININ
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	6,642	NICHOLAS FREELAND
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	30,466	NUIM CENTAL ACCOUNT
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	3,025	PROF HELEN O'NEILL
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	4,800	RODNEY RICE
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	1,862	RONAN TIERNEY
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	14,950	TONY TAAFFE
CONSULTANCY COSTS - FEES	20,021	VICKY DILLON

### Departmental Expenditure

152. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 provided for employees of his Department. [34562/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The information requested by the Deputy is provided in the following table:

### Expenditure on Third Level Courses and Training Programmes Sept 2012 to June 2013

Nature	Cost - €
Third Level (Refund of Fees Scheme)	67,006
Language Tuition	143,134
Other Courses & Programmes	47,880
Total	258,020

Refunds of fees arise in cases where staff of the Department undertake qualifying third-level courses in their own time and receive financial assistance under a scheme sanctioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade strongly encourages and supports its staff in this regard, particularly where courses are directly relevant to the work of the Department. Courses currently funded include public policy & management, international law, aspects of development cooperation, international relations and European affairs.

Given the nature of diplomatic service my Department also makes a significant investment in language tuition. Expenditure under this heading was higher than usual in 2012 in the lead-up to Ireland's EU Presidency, when additional courses on chairing meetings and negotiation skills were also provided. Other courses and training programmes regularly delivered include a comprehensive pre-posting training programme with modules on trade promotion, economic themes, provision of consular services, personal safety, public diplomacy and human rights. Training is also routinely provided for staff in key areas such as management development, performance management, leadership, positive working environment, macro-economics, communication skills, social media and customer service. In-house expertise is used wherever possible.

### Exchequer Savings

153. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction to all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34578/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** Further to my reply to Question No. 151, the total amounts spent on professional fees including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and other external service provision in the period between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013 are as follows:

Votes	Amount
Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs and Trade):	€4,859,005
Vote 27 (International Cooperation):	€1,033,082
Total Both Votes:	€5,892,087
20% of Total:	€1,178,417

### Exchequer Savings

154. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction to travel and expenses for his Department.

[34594/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** A breakdown of the Department's administrative budgetary allocation for 2013 was published in the Revised Estimates Volume which shows the Department's allocation for Travel and Subsistence as follows:

Votes	Amount
Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs)	€6.382 m
Vote 27 (International Cooperation)	€2.2 m
Total:	€8.582 m

The percentages specified would be equivalent to the following:

2013 allocation	1%	5%	7%	10%	12%	17%	20%
8,582,000	85,820	429,100	600,740	858,200	1,029,840	1,458,940	1,716,400

### Exchequer Savings

155. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction to training and development for his Department. [34610/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** Expenditure on Training and Development in my Department in 2012 was €503,045. Based on that figure, the percentage reductions specified by the Deputy would result in the following outcomes:

-	5% €	7% €	10% €	12% €	15% €	17% €	20% €
Resulting reductions in expenditure	25,152	35,213	50,304	60,364	75,456	85,517	100,608

### Exchequer Savings

156. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34626/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** Details of the salaries paid to my Special Advisers, which are commensurate with the responsibilities attaching to their positions, are provided in the following table.

Position held	Annual Salary with effect from 1 July 2013
Chief Adviser - Office of the Tánaiste	€156,380
Economic Adviser - Office of the Tánaiste	€144,550
Special Adviser - Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade	€81,676
Special Adviser – Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade	€75,647

With effect from 1 July 2013, the first point of the Principal Officer standard scale is €75,647.

### Programme for Government Implementation

157. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34681/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I have set out in the following table the current status of each of the recommendations in the Programme for Government for which the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has primary responsibility. Those commitments which continue to be in progress represent sustained and ongoing actions, rather than discrete undertakings for which a completion date is envisaged.

Further consideration of the proposal to transfer the Passport Service to the Department of Justice and Equality is on hold pending the introduction of a number of service enhancements, which my Department is undertaking as part of the Government's Integrated Reform Delivery Plan. Considerable progress has been made to date in delivering these enhancements.

A feasibility study was carried out during 2012 into the development of a humanitarian hub at Shannon Airport. The conclusion from this assessment was that there is limited feasibility to the idea of developing the airport in the manner in which was envisaged in the Programme for Government commitment. This view is based on an assessment of costs and benefits and is a result of consultation with a large number of international humanitarian actors and potential end users of such a hub. This will therefore not proceed and this action is completed.

#### Jobs Programme

IN PROGRESS	Initiate a long-term strategy to develop new markets in emerging economies
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#### Increasing Exports

CURRENT STATUS	-
COMPLETED	We will establish an Export Trade Council to strengthen cooperation and coordination across all key departments and agencies involved in promotion and development of trade and exports, whose membership will be divided equally between government and private sector representatives who have experience in establishing and growing export-oriented business.

CURRENT STATUS	-
COMPLETED	We will position Ireland to develop better trade relationships with emerging economies, including the establishment of local trade and investment teams. These teams will execute detailed local market plan, with progress against targets reviewed annually.
COMPLETED	We will develop cultural and diplomatic links with emerging markets including a scholarship scheme.
IN PROGRESS	We will actively develop the export of educational services.

### **Innovation and Commercialisation**

IN PROGRESS	We will progressively implement the recommendations in the Trading and Investing in the Smart Economy Report
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### **The National Parliament and the European Union**

CURRENT STATUS	-
COMPLETED	We propose that the week in which the 9th May, “Europe Day” falls will be the occasion for a week-long parliamentary debate on Ireland’s priorities within the EU. The debate will review the national progress in implementing the current year’s work programme and focus on identifying the major issues of concern to Ireland for inclusion on the following year’s EU Draft work Programme.

### **Passports, Citizenship, Immigration and Asylum**

CURRENT STATUS	-
PENDING	Consideration will be given to transferring the passport service from the Department of Foreign Affairs to the Department of Justice to operate as an Independent Executive Agency under the aegis of that Department.

### **Foreign Affairs, ODA and Defence**

CURRENT STATUS	-
IN PROGRESS/COMPLETED	We will ensure that our diplomatic network aids the repair of our reputation through a transparent and responsible approach to winning inward investment and we will recall Ireland’s Ambassadors within 100 days of this new government for briefings on a new approach to promoting and marketing Ireland as a country to do business in.
COMPLETED	We will review the 2006 White Paper on Overseas Development Aid.

CURRENT STATUS	-
IN PROGRESS	In times of humanitarian crises, we will unite NGOs that provide humanitarian aid to create a single appeals mechanism for national fundraising and public response. This will maximise publicity for the cause, the receipt of emergency funds and ensure the effective and co-ordinated dispersal of emergency aid. The State will financially support these NGOs in their response.
IN PROGRESS	We are committed to the 0.7% of GNP target for Overseas Development Aid. We will seek to achieve this by 2015.
COMPLETED	We will position Ireland, in particular Shannon airport, to become an international hub for the storage and distribution of emergency humanitarian supplies.
IN PROGRESS	We will seek to establish a Civilian Corps, which could allow some job seekers use and share their skills in developing countries while retaining some job seeker's benefit.
COMPLETED	We will enforce the prohibition on the use of Irish airspace, airports and related facilities for purposes not in line with the dictates of international law.

### Departmental Expenditure

158. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34697/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** There are no organisations or agencies under the aegis of my Department.

### Foreign Conflicts

159. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if Ireland attended a Friends of Syria meeting in Tunisia and the person who invited the State. [34825/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I represented Ireland at the first International Conference of the Friends of the Syrian People held in Tunis on 24 February 2012. I did so at the formal invitation of the Tunisian Government. During my visit to Tunis, I held bilateral meetings with President Marzouki of Tunisia and with the then Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr; I also delivered our national address at the Conference.

### North-South Ministerial Council

160. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will outline the issues discussed at the recent North-South Ministerial Council; the proposals for follow-up action; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34911/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The most recent meeting of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) in plenary format was held in Dublin Castle on 5 July 2013. At the meeting, discussions covered a wide range of financial, economic and EU matters, including the economic challenges faced in both jurisdictions, the work being undertaken to address the global economic crisis, bank restructuring and NAMA. The success of Ireland's Presidency of the EU and progress made on key issues of mutual interest North and South was acknowledged, as was the co-operation between our administrations during our Presidency term, which had seen Northern Ireland Executive Ministers involved in Presidency-related events and our Ministers briefing their Executive counterparts on Presidency-related issues at NSMC meetings.

There was particular welcome for the provision of €150 million in the EU's Multi-annual Financial Framework towards a new PEACE programme, the achievements in regard to Common Agriculture Policy Reform and Common Fisheries Policies and the impact of transnational EU programmes.

We thanked the Executive for the provision of meeting facilities and staff by the Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels and for the provision of seconded staff from the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The Plenary also saw a discussion on the levels of youth unemployment in both jurisdictions and the action being taken to tackle this issue. Ministers considered the opportunities for collaboration to address this important matter including through the EU's new Youth Guarantee and to work with relevant stakeholders to maximise the impact of the Youth Guarantee.

We welcomed the success of the G8 Summit which had acted as a showcase worldwide and discussed how its positive impact and the potential of major tourism events including 'The Gathering' and Derry UK City of Culture 2013 can be maximised.

There was also a discussion on the opportunities for both administrations to co-operate in developing trade opportunities in, and building business links with developing markets such as China, Brazil and India. The role of the Irish Embassy network in supporting the Northern Ireland Executive during trade visits was acknowledged.

In addition, there was agreement to co-operate on the new *Building a Prosperous and United Community* economic package for Northern Ireland which followed the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy.

Ministers noted the commencement of the consultation with key stakeholders in the North West on the future development of the North West Gateway Initiative and that a report on the outcome of this exercise will be brought to a future NSMC Institutional meeting.

With regard to the St. Andrews Agreement Review we noted that Term of Reference One of the Review is now largely complete; that senior officials from both administrations have met and initiated a work programme to take forward Terms of Reference Two and Three; on expanding the areas of North-South co-operation, and that they will conclude their work and present a report with proposals to the next NSMC Institutional meeting in the autumn.

The plenary was characterised by excellent exchanges with our Northern colleagues on topics of mutual interest and we will continue to work with them to identify additional opportunities where there is scope for further North-South economic co-operation.

## **Consular Services Representations**

161. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the interaction that the Irish Consulate General had recently with the Governor of West Virginia in the United States; if he will outline other related events; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34939/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** As part of the Government's economic promotion efforts led by Ambassador Collins in Washington, the Consulate General in New York has undertaken a series of visits to the States for which it has consular responsibility. These visits are aimed to broaden the Consulate's economic networks and include outreach to key local leaders, networking with the local Irish communities, and briefings for the media on the Government's work to restore Ireland's economy. In connecting with the Irish community in West Virginia, which is very well established and includes a sizeable Scots-Irish element, every opportunity was taken to promote The Gathering. The visit of the Deputy Consul General to West Virginia, from 8th to 11th July included each of these elements. The Deputy Consul General paid a courtesy call on the Governor of West Virginia, Earl Ray Tomblin, which provided an opportunity to update the Governor on the economic situation in Ireland and also to explore possible areas of collaboration. The Governor has visited Ireland on a number of occasions, most recently in 2009 when he visited Belfast, Dublin and a number of other locations. The Governor expressed interest in visiting Ireland again on a future occasion with a view to enhancing the business links, which include investments in West Virginia by a number of Irish companies. The Deputy Consul General also visited the principal institutions of higher learning in West Virginia to encourage collaboration with Ireland, both in terms of students travelling to Ireland for their overseas study and in the area of research and development. His visit provided him with an opportunity to follow-up on the recent visit to Ireland by a group of fifty business students of the University of Charleston, who had spent time in Dublin and Limerick where they connected with a number of their university counterparts. He also met with the leadership of the leading educational institution in the state, West Virginia University, which has a number of collaborative agreements with Irish counterparts and are keen to develop these further. The West Virginia University is in the midst of substantial capital development and has already been working to build on what it views as many similarities with the Irish university sector and areas of potential collaboration. Similarly, the Wheeling Jesuit University is in development phase and is interested in seeking closer international collaboration. There is potential to develop research collaboration given that the University is host to the National Technology Transfer Centre.

The Deputy Consul General met with members of the Irish community in Charleston and Wheeling, mainly Irish by heritage as their ancestors came to West Virginia in the post-Famine period. He also met with some of the Irish-born religious who have played a role in the development of the education and health sectors in West Virginia. Their contribution is widely acknowledged by West Virginians of all faiths.

In his outreach to the media in West Virginia, the Deputy Consul General met with the editors of the main business news publications, and briefed them on the economic recovery in Ireland and highlighted Ireland's attractions as a location for West Virginia's companies to access the European Union market.

## **Departmental Legal Costs**

162. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if

he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34983/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** My Department generally seeks advice on domestic legal matters from the Office of the Attorney General. Depending on the subject matter, litigation is dealt with on my Department's behalf by the Attorney General's Office, the Chief State Solicitor's Office or the State Claims Agency who engage lawyers to act for the Department where necessary, including for personal injuries claims and other matters. The costs of any external solicitors or counsel engaged for such matters are not charged to my Department's Votes. The Chief State Solicitor's Office provides legal advice in relation to commercial contracts and public procurement matters and the Department has not engaged external private sector legal advice on these matters for any of the years 2011 to 2013, inclusive.

The Department's Missions abroad engage local legal advisers from time to time to deal with a range of miscellaneous matters. The costs incurred are relatively small and gathering and compiling the detailed data requested by the Deputy in the time available is not possible.

### **Road Projects Issues**

163. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his plans to meet the Northern Ireland Secretary of State and members of the Northern Ireland Executive on the need to put in place adequate funding to enable the Narrow Water bridge project proceed to construction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35100/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** On 9 July Louth County Council announced that the Narrow Water Bridge project was on hold. Consultations are under way between the SEUPB and the relevant stakeholders, and I shall await the outcome of these consultations before considering any further action.

### **Air Navigation Order**

164. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Question No. 562 of 9th July 2013 the procedure of notification that is required to be given to Ireland when aircraft enters Irish airspace, passes through Irish airspace or lands in Ireland carrying Heads of State or Heads of Government from other nations on military of State aircraft; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35141/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The provisions of the Air Navigation (Foreign Military Aircraft) Order 1952 apply in relation to Heads of State or Heads of Government who are passing through Irish airspace on board military aircraft. Advance notification of such requests is provided by the accredited Embassy of the country whose military or government aircraft is due to pass through or land in Irish airspace and such requests are submitted through diplomatic channels. Permission for such aircraft to overfly or land in the State is subject to assurances that the aircraft are unarmed, carry no arms, ammunition or explosives, do not engage in intelligence gathering, and that the flights in question do not form any part of military exercises or operations.

## Monument to the International Brigades

165. **Deputy Ann Phelan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the action that can be taken by the Government regarding a recent decision by the Spanish supreme court to remove a memorial to the International Brigades who fought in the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939 (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35191/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I am aware of the decision in June of the Superior Appeal Court in Madrid to instruct the public Madrid Complutense University to remove the monument to the International Brigades which was installed inside its grounds on 22 October 2011. The ruling of the Superior Appeal Court was that the installation of the monument was illegal as the University had never sought the relevant urban planning permission. The original decision to locate the monument at the University was, I understand, inspired by the fact that some of the heaviest fighting in 1936 between Nationalist and Republican forces in Madrid took place in the grounds of that University. I am aware that there are other existing monuments to the International Brigades in Spain, including in the Madrid region in the area around the Jarama river, south of the city, where one of the most important battles took place. I understand that the ruling of the Appeal Court is final and that there is no further judicial appeal. While, like many other people in this country, I personally regret the decision, it is not possible for the Irish government to intervene in an internal matter which arises from a judicial ruling relating to the application of Spain's planning laws.

*Question No. 166 answered with Question No. 139.*

## Departmental Websites

167. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will list all the Twitter accounts for which officials in his Department have had and currently have responsibility for monitoring and updating. [35408/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** @dfat-irl is the official Twitter account of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It is managed by the Department's Press Office. Other Department accounts: @Irish\_Aid - provides information about Ireland's overseas aid programme; @dfatravel - provides information on consular and passport matters, including travel advice; @DisarmamentIRL - provides information on Ireland's work on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

Ireland's Diplomatic Missions on Twitter: Europe - @irlembberlin - Embassy of Ireland, Berlin; @IrelandRepBru - Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union, Brussels; @IrelandEmbGB - Embassy of Ireland, London; @IrishEmbBelgium - Embassy of Ireland, Belgium; @IrishEmbVilnius - Embassy of Ireland, Lithuania; @IrlEmbMadrid - Embassy of Ireland, Madrid; @IrlEmbParis - Embassy of Ireland, Paris; @IrlEmbRome - Embassy of Ireland, Rome; @IrishEmbFinland - Embassy of Ireland, Helsinki; @IrishEmbSweden - Embassy of Ireland, Stockholm; @IrishEmbMalta - Embassy of Ireland, Valletta.

The Americas - @IrelandEmbUSA - Embassy of Ireland, Washington D.C.; @IrelandAtlanta - Consulate General of Ireland, Atlanta; @IrelandBoston - Consulate General of Ireland, Boston; @IrelandChicago - Consulate General of Ireland, Chicago; @IrelandinNY - Consulate General of Ireland, New York; @IrelandSanFran - Consulate of Ireland, San Francisco; @IrishEmbMexico - Embassy of Ireland, Mexico.

Asia-Pacific - @IrishEmbJapan - Embassy of Ireland, Tokyo; @IrishEmbKorea - Embassy

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of Ireland, Seoul; @irlembaustralia - Embassy of Ireland, Canberra; @IrelandSydney – Consul-ate General of Ireland, Sydney.

Middle East - @IrelandEmbUAE – Embassy of Ireland, Abu Dhabi.

Africa - @IrelandinZambia - Embassy of Ireland, Lusaka.

Irish Ambassadors on Twitter: @DanMulhall – Ireland’s Ambassador in Berlin (moving to London September 2013); @EamonnMcKee – Ireland’s Ambassador in Seoul (moving to Tel Aviv August 2013).

### **Passport Applications**

168. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the position on a passport application in respect of a person (details supplied); if he will expedite the application; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35435/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** A passport for the person in question was issued by the Department on 8 July, 2013 and was dispatched by diplomatic bag to our Embassy in Helsinki on 11 July 2013. The applicant in question should contact the Embassy to arrange collection early next week.

### **Passport Applications**

169. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Question No. 64 of 10 July 2013, the position regarding the issuing of a second passport (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35442/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The issuance of second passports with concurrent validity is tightly controlled so as to minimise the scope for fraud and identity theft. As outlined in Question No. 64 of 10 July 2013, the Passport Service does operate a system to provide a second passport to Irish citizens who travel regularly to countries where possession of an entry/exit stamp or visa from another state would likely prevent a person’s entry into that country. Each case is examined individually and the applicant must demonstrate a compelling need for a second passport based on regular travel to the particular country in question. In most such cases, the second passport is required for business purposes and in such cases applicants are required to include a letter from their employer detailing the circumstances of their case and to provide sample travel plans which show travel into the countries concerned. The Passport Service does not issue second concurrent passports for once off or infrequent holiday travel to a destination where such issues arise. In such cases, passport holders are advised to renew their passport before travelling to a country where they might be refused entry. If, on the other hand, a passport holder wishes to renew their passport before the 10 years’ validity has expired they are only required to complete the standard application form and submit their current passport.

### **Human Rights Issues**

170. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views on the increasing use of self-immolation by protestors in Tibet; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35449/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The Government has followed ongoing issues in Tibet with concern and I am saddened and concerned by the increasing number of Tibetans, many of them young people, who have resorted to self-immolation. On behalf of the EU, the High Representative Catherine Ashton issued a

declaration on 14 December 2012 on Tibetan self-immolations. This declaration was issued with the support of Member States, including Ireland. The declaration conveyed our concern at the restrictions on expressions of Tibetan identity, which appear to be giving rise to a surge of discontent in the region. While respecting China's territorial integrity, the EU called upon the Chinese authorities to address the deep-rooted causes of the frustration of the Tibetan people to ensure that their civil, political, economic and social and cultural rights are respected, including their right to enjoy their own culture, to practise their own religion and to use their own language. This declaration also called on Tibetan community and religious leaders to use their influence to help stop this tragic loss of life.

Ireland together with our EU partners believes that constructive dialogue between the Chinese Government and the representatives of the Dalai Lama is the best way to address differences and tensions in Tibet and to reach a solution that respects Tibetan culture, language, religion and identity. It is important for the long-term peace and stability of the region that the two sides come to an agreement on the future of Tibet. To this end, we continue to encourage a resumption of meaningful dialogue.

The promotion of human rights is an important dimension of European foreign policy, as enshrined in the Treaty of the European Union. Constructive dialogue remains the EU's preferred channel for working to improve the human rights situation in China. Human rights are discussed as part of regular political dialogue as well as during specific human rights dialogues, the most recent of which took place on 25 June. That Dialogue allowed the two sides to have a detailed exchange of views on a wide range of human rights issues. It provided an opportunity for the EU to express concerns regarding the rights of persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities.

Bilaterally, Ireland continues to convey its concerns about the situation in Tibet directly to the Chinese authorities through contacts in both Dublin and Beijing.

### **Diplomatic Representation Issues**

171. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Question No. 113 of 7 May 2013, if the review of the Irish network on Honorary Consuls worldwide has concluded in view of the fact that he said the review would be completed by mid-2013; if he will outline the main points of the review; the date on which he intends to publish the review; if the review will be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35459/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I expect my Department's review of Ireland's Honorary Consul Service to be completed in the coming months. I will take a decision on the distribution of the report when I have had the opportunity to read it.

### **Diplomatic Representation Issues**

172. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 66 of 29 May 2013 and 121 on 11 June 2013, if he will confirm the exact number of Corps Diplomatique or CD sign usage on Irish car registration plates; the number of CD signs that are allocated to each diplomatic mission here and if he will outline such in tabular form; if a central register is kept in his Department or that of the Revenue Commissioners to enable members of An Garda Síochána to verify particular vehicles using

CD signs on vehicles; if he will detail the privileges that CD signs grants drivers of vehicles on Irish roads; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35460/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** As outlined in my replies of 29 May 2013 and 11 June 2013, my Department is currently reviewing the practice prevailing in other European countries covering CD vehicle identification procedures and it is hoped that this review will be completed by the Autumn. There is at present no system for the issue of CD vehicle plates to members of the diplomatic corps.

The privileges and immunities of accredited members of diplomatic missions are governed by the Diplomatic Relations and Immunities Acts 1967, which in turn give effect in Irish law to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961. The issue of CD vehicle plates is not provided for in the Vienna Convention, and their presence on a vehicle is not determinative of an entitlement to privileges and immunities, but rather is typically a visual indication that a vehicle is being used by a member of a diplomatic mission. Accordingly, the fact that there is currently no system for the issue of CD vehicle plates does not affect in any way the privileges and immunities to which the staff of a diplomatic mission are entitled.

On being notified to my Department in accordance with Article 10 of the Vienna Convention, the members of diplomatic missions are issued with identity cards which may be produced to assist members of An Garda Síochana to verify their status under the Convention.

### **Human Rights Issues**

173. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if missions to Burma are being refused entry to Rohingya IDP camp; how they can address the human rights issues of the Rohingya persons; if he will outline what Ireland has been doing at UN level on this matter; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35489/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I refer the Deputy to the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 131 of 9 July outlining recent decisions taken by the EU in relation to Myanmar/ Burma. Myanmar/Burma is continuing to undergo a process of long-awaited transformation. Ireland and our EU partners recognise that significant progress has been made, but that complex challenges remain. We continue to urge the Government of Myanmar/Burma to address these challenges, particularly issues in regards to the Rohingya minority, through the relevant bilateral and multilateral channels. At the 22nd session of UN Human Rights Council in March, Ireland supported an EU-led resolution which highlighted a number of human rights issues in Myanmar/Burma requiring action, including extending the mandate of the special rapporteur, and invited the Government to set a timetable for the opening of an OHCHR country office.

At the 23rd session of the UN Human Rights Council in May/June, Ireland and our fellow council members adopted a Presidential Statement regarding the Situation for Muslims in Myanmar/Burma. Human Rights Council members expressed deep concern at the gross violations of human rights against Muslims, including the Rohingya community, and urged the government there to grant full citizenship rights to the Rohingya in Rakhine, and review the 1982 citizenship law.

Ireland stands ready to share its experiences and to assist the process of democratisation in Myanmar/Burma. Together with our EU colleagues, we want to continue to encourage the government in Myanmar/Burma to continue on its path of democratisation and reform and to address further issues of concern.

### **Human Rights Issues**

174. **Deputy Seán Crowe** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if his attention has been drawn to the huge peaceful protests organised by agrarian unions in north-eastern Colombia; that they are protesting against the appalling security situation and the socio-economic conditions that prevail there; that the Colombian Government's response has been brutal, scores of peasant farmers have been seriously wounded by the authorities, and four persons are reported dead; and if he will raise the issue with the Colombian authorities. [35500/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** I am following closely the situation in north-eastern Colombia. I understand that this is an area of social and economic under-development, where the presence of illegal armed groups and a high level of militarisation also contribute to tensions. Recent protests in this area have, most regrettably, resulted in clashes between protestors and Colombia's security forces and these have led to injuries and to the tragic loss of four lives. At my request, officials have raised these events with the Colombian authorities and are also in touch with the European External Action Service. The challenging socio-economic conditions faced by local communities in this region are serious and need attention. Progress on these issues can best be made in a context of peace and trust. I understand that while there has been some dialogue on issues of concern, tensions remain high. In my view, it is important that citizens who engage peacefully in the political and social developments of their society can do so without fear of risks to their personal security. It is also, of course, important that all parties operate within the rule of law. I urge all involved to address issues of insecurity so as to foster conditions for peace and sustainable development.

Together with our partners in the EU, Ireland will continue to support activities in Colombia that promote peace, truth, justice, reparation and reconciliation.

### **Human Rights Issues**

175. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will continue to raise the allegations of forced organ harvesting in China directly with his counterparts in the Chinese Government, and at European Union level; if he will examine the need for legislation, at national and European Union level; if he will prohibit the trafficking and use of such organs in the State and in the EU; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35525/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** The Government follows closely reports of human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners, including reported cases of organ harvesting, and is concerned about the situation. Human rights issues, including the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners, are issues discussed regularly with the Chinese authorities during both bilateral and multilateral meetings. Through the formal framework of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which was established in 1995, the EU continues to share with China its experience in the field of human rights protection and promotion, and to urge China to take clear steps to improve the human rights situation. The latest session of this dialogue took place on 25 June 2013 and provided the EU with the opportunity to express its concerns about a wide range of human rights issues in China, including the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities, deprivation of liberty, and criminal and administrative punishment. At this meeting, the EU also asked about measures taken so far by China to ratify the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, signed in 1998 in view of China's undertaking made during the 2009 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to ratify the Covenant at an early date.

16 July 2013

In February 2013, officials from my Department met with representatives of the Irish Falun Dafa Association. During this meeting the Irish Falun Dafa Association discussed the issue of organ harvesting and ways in which human rights issues are raised with Chinese authorities by both Ireland and the EU.

Officials in my Department met again with representatives of the Falun Dafa Association and human rights lawyers on 9 July regarding the issue of organ harvesting.

In relation to measures taken to ensure no Irish company, organisation or individual becomes involved in the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, a Common Position adopted by the European Council in 2008 outlines that Member States shall deny an export licence if there is a clear risk that military technology or equipment to be exported might be used for internal repression.

Ireland, together with our EU partners, will continue to address human rights issues with China, including those related to the Falun Gong, in frequent and regular dialogue, through our contacts in both Dublin and Beijing and through the relevant multilateral channels, including at the United Nations Universal Periodic Review of human rights in China, scheduled for October 2013.

### **Official Travel**

176. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agency ensures that the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36046/13]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Eamon Gilmore):** There are no state agencies under the aegis of my Department.

### **Household Charge Collection**

177. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Finance the reason a householder cannot pay the €200 household charge from payroll in the same way as local property tax is deducted, as is outlined in legislation (details supplied). [34352/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that in accordance with section 156 of the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended), where the Household Charge for 2012 has not been paid by 1 July 2013 the arrears amount is increased to €200 of Local Property Tax. The arrears amount will be included as part of the LPT liability in respect of the property and will be collected by Revenue. I am further informed that the process to transition the collection of Household Charge arrears from the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) to the Revenue Commissioners is underway and will progress further when the Commissioners receive a file from the LGMA of those property owners who have paid the Household Charge. At that stage, Revenue will still have a significant amount of work to do to match the LGMA's Household Charge register with their own LPT register in order to identify any non-compliant Household Charge cases.

The immediate priority for Revenue, therefore, is to ensure that they have the most accurate details of these non-compliant cases and, in the short-term, it will not be possible to facilitate payment of arrears of Household Charge by way of deduction at source from salary and wages. I am advised, however, that Revenue's computer systems are being updated to allow payment of the arrears by all of the various payment options available, including by means of deduction

at source, and they expect to have the necessary changes completed by the end of September.

In the meantime, property owners can pay the €200 arrears by cheque, postal order or similar which should be sent to Local Property Tax Branch, Revenue Commissioners PO Box 1, Limerick. The Commissioners recommend that taxpayers note their Property ID and PPSN or tax reference number on the back of the cheque or postal order.

Property owners are requested to include the following information with their payment: Property ID (if available) and address details of the property for which the customer is paying the arrears; Customer's name; Customer's PPSN or tax reference number; and Confirmation that the payment is for Household Charge arrears

With these details, a property owner can also pay by telephone using debit or credit card by calling the LPT Helpline on 1890 200 255.

Further information is available in the Frequently Asked Questions on payment of Household Charge arrears, which are on Revenue's website [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie).

### Tax Credits

178. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Finance the reason persons in long-term relationships but who are not married or in a civil partnership cannot transfer their tax credits to their partner and if consideration has been given to addressing this issue. [34643/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The position is that where a couple is cohabiting, rather than married or in a civil partnership, they are treated as separate and unconnected individuals for the purposes of income tax. Each partner is a separate entity for tax purposes and, therefore, cohabiting couples cannot file joint assessment tax returns or share their tax credits and tax bands in the same manner as married couples. The basis for the current tax treatment of married couples derives from the Supreme Court decision in *Murphy vs. Attorney General* (1980), which held that it was contrary to the Constitution for a married couple, both of whom are working, to pay more tax than two single people living together and having the same income.

However, a cohabiting couple where both partners are working get, in total, the same tax credits as a married couple or couple in a civil partnership (i.e. €3,300). In addition, the same amount of income is subject to tax at the 20% rate (i.e. €32,800 each). This equates to the €65,600 threshold in the case of a married couple or couple in a civil partnership.

If both cohabitants earn in excess of the standard rate band (i.e. €32,800), then they both pay tax at 41% on any income in excess of €32,800. Married couples or couples in a civil partnership where both individuals work get the same treatment.

The difference between the two groups in relation to income tax is the ability of married couples or civil partners to transfer certain tax credits such as the personal/married credits and part of the tax bands, i.e. the tax band of €65,600 available to married couples or couples in a civil partnership with two incomes in 2013 is transferable between spouses up to a maximum of €41,800. This is of benefit where one of the individuals earns less than the 20% tax threshold of €32,800 or where one of the individuals has no income.

Cohabitants do not have the same legal rights and obligations as a married couple or couple in a civil partnership. Therefore, there is no reason they ought to be accorded similar treatment to couples who have a civil status which is recognised in law. Any change in the tax treatment

of cohabiting couples can only be addressed in the broader context of future social and legal policy development in relation to such couples.

### **Tax Reliefs Application**

179. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance if he will consider facilitating tax relief on physiotherapy expenses without the requirement of a referral from a general practitioner; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34190/13]

256. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Finance his plans to meet representatives of the Irish society of Chartered Physiotherapists to discuss amending section 469 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. [34724/13]

257. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Finance if an amendment will be made to the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 to return to the situation where patients would be allowed to claim reimbursement for physiotherapy expenses when they self-referred; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34726/13]

278. **Deputy Dominic Hannigan** asked the Minister for Finance his plans to amend the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 to allow patients who attend physiotherapy clinics without referral from a general practitioner or other relevant professional to claim reimbursement through the tax system as was the case prior to 2011; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35099/13]

282. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Finance if he has given consideration to amending the Taxes Consolidation Act to allow patients to claim reimbursement for physiotherapy expenses when they self-refer; if he has carried out a review of this matter; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35121/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 179, 256, 257, 278 and 282 together.

Income tax relief in respect of health expenses is allowable in accordance with section 469 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. This legislation provides for tax relief for health expenses incurred in the provision of health care. Health care is defined for the purposes of that legislation as the prevention, diagnosis, alleviation or treatment of an ailment, injury, infirmity, defect or disability and includes care received by a woman in respect of pregnancy. Health care does not include routine ophthalmic or dental treatment.

The section provides that tax relief must be either for the costs of the services of a practitioner, defined as a person registered on the register established under the Medical Practitioners Act 2007, or diagnostic procedures carried out on the advice of a practitioner, which includes “physiotherapy or similar treatment prescribed by a practitioner”. Eligibility for tax relief is limited to expenses relating to treatment considered necessary and appropriate by a qualified practitioner.

Section 469 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 consolidated all previous legislation pertaining to relief for health expenses, in particular section 12 of Finance Act 1967 which introduced the relief in the first instance. That section also required that physiotherapy or similar treatment be prescribed by a practitioner before qualifying for relief. This requirement has, therefore, been part of the qualifying criteria since the introduction of relief for health expenses and I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that guidance and instructions to staff have remained unchanged in this regard.

This issue was raised during the debates in the Seanad on Finance Bill 2013, during which

I agreed to re-examine the matter during the course of this year.

My officials are currently in the process of examining the issue and have requested additional information from the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists to assist them in the examination of the matter. To date, the additional information sought has not been provided.

Furthermore, I am advised that the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists recently met with the Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly T.D., on this issue and I am currently awaiting his views on the issue.

When the analysis is completed and the findings are presented to me, I will make any necessary decision in the context of Finance (No. 2) Bill 2013.

### Living City Initiative

180. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance if in view of the fact that Cork city has had a decline in population between the two most recent censuses of population and that the city, similar to both Limerick and Waterford, has a negative relative deprivation index, he will consider extending the pilot phase of the living city initiative to include Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34206/13]

181. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance the anticipated cost to the Exchequer of the living city initiative and the expected economic impact of the scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34207/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 180 and 181 together.

The Finance Act 2013 includes a section on the Living City Initiative which introduces a scheme of tax incentives focusing on the regeneration of the historic centres of some of our main cities. The scheme which will be introduced by Ministerial order, will apply in the first instance on a pilot basis only to specified regeneration areas in Waterford and Limerick.

I indicated in my Budget Statement in December last year that I would examine proposals for a targeted incentive for already identified regeneration areas. The tax relief that will apply under this scheme will operate for five years from the date of commencement. However, it is my intention that before it begins, the scheme will be subject to an *ex ante* cost benefit analysis and, subject to a positive outcome from the analysis, I will seek EU approval under State Aid rules for this initiative to be commenced for Limerick and Waterford cities.

The Deputy might like to know that the tender for the cost benefit analysis project has been awarded and I expect to have the final report before this year's Budget.

As regards the anticipated cost of this measure to the Exchequer, it will depend entirely on take up of the initiative.

### Money Laundering

182. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Finance if he will reconsider the application of anti-money laundering regulations to prize bond purchases of €100 or less; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34215/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** European legislation has been adopted to protect the financial system and certain professions and activities from being misused for money laundering and financing of terrorism purposes. The anti-money-laundering obligations applicable in Ireland derive from the Third EU Money-Laundering Directive. The Criminal

Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 was enacted in July 2010 to transpose the Third Money Laundering Directive (2005/60/EC) and its Implementing Directive (2006/70/EC) into Irish Law. Part 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 2010 sets out the obligations of “designated persons” in relation to customer identification. One such obligation set out in the Act is the obligation to conduct customer due diligence, prior to the establishment of a business relationship. Customer due diligence refers to the identification of customers and that of any beneficial owners of financial products associated with the customer.

An Post and the Prize Bond Company are deemed to be a “*designated person*” under the Criminal Justice Act 2010 as they fall within the definition of a “*financial institution*”. In light of this, An Post and the Prize Bond Company are required to comply with the relevant provisions of the Act in relation to the sale of Prize Bonds to customers. This means, in practical terms, that customer due diligence must be conducted on all purchases of prize bonds, irrespective of value.

The extent to which any particular person or product may be exempted from the customer due diligence requirements of the Act is determined by reference to the Act having regard to the underlying Directives.

The Central Bank of Ireland has no discretion to exempt certain firms from the requirement to comply with the Act.

In light of the above, I am exploring with the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) and my colleague the Minister for Justice whether or not exemptions available under the Directives may be applied to small value purchases of prize bonds facilitated on behalf of the State by An Post and the Prize Bond Company.

### **EU Budget Contribution**

183. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will detail Ireland’s contribution to the EU for 2013; how this was calculated and the amount it would have been if redomiciled companies were excluded from our gross national income statistics. [34222/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Ireland’s contribution to the EU budget is an obligation of EU membership and is a charge on the Central Fund under national legislation. The contribution formula for the EU budget is comprised of Traditional Own Resources – principally customs duties collected by member States on behalf of the EU; a VAT based payment; a residual balancing component paid according to each member State’s share of EU Gross National Income (GNI) and a payment towards a number of rebates for certain member States, also linked to GNI. As of July 1, Ireland has contributed a total of €1,030 million to the European Union budget during 2013. This comprises €96 million in respect of Traditional Own Resources, €140 million in VAT related contributions, €738 million in respect of GNI payments and €56 million in respect of rebates. We are notified on a monthly basis by the European Commission for a call-up of funds under these various headings.

The first preliminary outturn for 2013 Irish GNI is likely to be released by the CSO in March 2014. As is the norm, this will be the first point when data for Ireland’s GNI for 2013 will be available and is provisional as more detailed annual estimates will not be available until June 2014. I understand that the CSO does not intend to produce a quarterly series showing the impact of redomiciled companies on GNI (owing to the volatility around dividend payments by these companies to their shareholders). It is anticipated that the annual impact of the redomiciled companies on GNI will be available in June 2014. In advance of this information, it is not possible to estimate the likely impact from redomiciled companies on the 2013 Irish contribution to the EU budget.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

184. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance further to Parliamentary Question No. 109 of July 2013, the basis on which the Special Liquidators have two years from the date of their appointment to make filings in the Companies Registration Office. [34230/13]

185. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm the filing obligations of the special liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation in the Companies Registration Office since the date of their appointment. [34231/13]

186. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the special liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation have complied with all their obligations to file in the Companies Registrations Office since the date of their appointment; and, if not, the specific filing obligations that have not been complied with. [34232/13]

187. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the specific filings that have been made in the Companies Registration Office by the special liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation since the date of their appointment. [34233/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 184 to 187, inclusive, together.

In responding to these questions, the Special Liquidators have advised that consideration has to be given, not only to the Companies Acts, 1963 – 2012 (the Companies Acts), but also the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation Act, 2013 (the IBRC Act), the Ministerial Instructions issued to the Special Liquidators under the IBRC Act on 7 February 2013 and 10 May 2013 respectively (the Ministerial Instructions), the Rules of the Superior Courts (the Court Rules) and EC (Reorganisation and Winding up of Credit Institutions) Regulations, 2011 (CIWUD), in accordance with which IBRC is being wound up.

The IBRC Act has modified or disapplied some provisions of the Companies Acts which would apply in the normal course to an ordinary official liquidator.

Per Section 306 of the Companies Act 1963 and per Order 74, rule 130 of the Superior Courts, the Special Liquidators will file a statement “commencing at the date the Liquidator was first appointed and brought down to the end of the two years from the commencement of the winding up” and subsequent statements will be sent “at intervals of one year”.

The Special Liquidators have confirmed that they have complied with all obligations to file in the CRO (Companies Registration Office) to date.

Per Section 227 of the Companies Act 1963, the Special Liquidators are required, within 21 days after their appointment to publish in the CRO Gazette a notice of their appointment and to deliver to the registrar of companies a copy of the Court Order appointing them. The Special Liquidators confirm that the E60 (Irish Bank Resolution Corporation Act 2013 (Special Liquidation) Order 2013) was received by the CRO on 7 February 2013.

In addition to the E60, the Special Liquidators have confirmed that other filings made in the CRO since their appointment are:

1 B2 – change in registered office (at 11 February 2013);

2 Amended Memorandum and Articles (at 6 February 2013) – the insertion of Article 41A to the Articles of Association; and

3 G1 – Special Resolution (at 6 February 2013); Notice that the insertion of Article 41A to

the Articles of Association was passed as a special resolution of the Company.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

188. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the special liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation have complied with all their obligations to file in the High Court since the date of their appointment; and, if not, the specific filing obligations with the High Court that the special liquidators have not complied with since the date of their appointment. [34234/13]

189. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the filings that have been made in the High Court with regard to the special liquidators' obligations as liquidators since the date of their appointment. [34235/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 188 and 189 together.

I have been advised by the Special Liquidators that they do not have any obligation to file any document in the High Court.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

190. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the basis and reasoning for the removal of section 313 of the Companies Act 1963 by the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation Act 2013. [34236/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Irish Banking Resolution Corporation Act 2013 provided that section 313A of the Companies Act 1963 shall not apply to the liquidation of IBRC. The said section 313A provides that, on the making of a winding up order or an order appointing an examiner to a company, the liquidator or examiner concerned may obtain a copy of the order from the Central Office of the High Court. This section bears no relevance to the liquidation of IBRC as IBRC was liquidated by a Special Liquidation Order and there was no relevant order made by the High Court and filed in the Central Office. In any event, the Special Liquidation Order, as a statutory instrument, is a document of public record freely available and the Special Liquidator has been provided with a copy of that order.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

191. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the basis for his stated reasons of commercial confidentiality and sensitivities in respect of his refusal to confirm the amount of legal and professional fees being incurred by the special liquidators since their appointment. [34237/13]

192. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the reason for his information black-out on the payments of legal and professional fees by Irish Bank Resolution Corporation with the public interest. [34238/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 191 and 192 together.

The Special Liquidators will fully comply with their reporting obligations and as such the liquidation accounts will be filed with the CRO after two years of the liquidation and yearly

thereafter. These accounts will include detail on the costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Special Liquidators in that period.

As is normal in liquidations of companies, all costs, charges and expenses properly incurred by the Special Liquidators in relation to the winding up of IBRC, including the Special Liquidators' fees, will be paid out of the assets of IBRC in priority to all other claims.

The Special Liquidators are responsible for maximising the recovery of the assets of IBRC for the benefit of its creditors. I am advised that the Special Liquidators are keenly aware of their obligations in that regard but that disclosure of commercially sensitive fees and expenses, beyond what is legally required, could potentially have a detrimental impact on the liquidation.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

193. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the members of the credit committees of the special liquidators of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation. [34239/13]

194. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the person who employs the members of the credit committees of the special liquidators at Irish Bank Resolution Corporation. [34240/13]

195. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the remuneration of the members of the credit committees of the special liquidators at Irish Bank Resolution Corporation. [34241/13]

196. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he approves all decisions of the members of the credit committees of the special liquidators at Irish Bank Resolution Corporation. [34242/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 193 to 196, inclusive, together.

I am advised by the Special Liquidators that for the larger regulatory group exposures, the Group Credit Committee ("GCC") of IBRC (in Special Liquidation) decides on all credit decisions. The GCC is chaired by the Chief Risk Officer. The Local Credit Committees of IBRC (in Special Liquidation) are chaired by one of the four direct reports to the Chief Risk Officer. Quorums comprise two credit risk staff members, one business manager and one Special Liquidator nominee.

All decisions are unanimous, otherwise the proposal is withdrawn. Members of the credit committees are chosen in line with IBRC (in Special Liquidation) group policies and procedures. The Department of Finance is not represented on the Credit Committees and I do not have any role in approving the decision of the members of those committees.

I have been advised by the Special Liquidators that they cannot comment on the remuneration packages of individual staff members of IBRC (in Special Liquidation).

### **IBRC Liquidation**

197. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of fees paid to date to a person (details supplied) on behalf of Anglo Irish Bank-Irish Bank Resolution Corporation since vacating their position as Attorney General on 9 March 2011. [34244/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Special liquidators that due to commercial confidentiality and sensitivities and also client-solicitor confidentiality, the Special Liquidators are not in a position to provide these details.

### **NAMA Expenditure**

198. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of fees paid to date to a person (details supplied) on behalf of the National Asset Management Agency since vacating their position as Attorney General on 9 March 2011. [34245/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I have been informed by NAMA that in the period since March 2011, it has paid fees of €6,624 to the individual in question.

### **Central Bank of Ireland Issues**

199. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of fees paid to date to a person (details supplied) on behalf of the Central Bank since vacating their position as Attorney General on 9 March 2011. [34246/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Central Bank that, for reasons of commercial sensitivity, it is not its policy to disclose information on fees paid to individuals or individual firms. The Central Bank points out, however, that it provides information from time to time in relation to different expenditure categories.

### **IBRC Expenditure**

200. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amount and details of pension entitlements paid out to the former directors and non-executive directors of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation since the date of nationalisation of the bank. [34247/13]

201. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amounts and details of any pension lump sum paid out to the former directors and non-executive directors of the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation since the date of nationalisation of the bank. [34248/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 200 and 201 together.

I am advised that the pension schemes are operated independently from the bank under distinct rules and legislation. Pension entitlements are paid from the funds of the relevant schemes and in accordance with the rules of the particular scheme. I am advised by the Special Liquidators that they cannot comment on the emoluments of individual staff members of IBRC (in Special Liquidation).

### **Banks Recapitalisation**

202. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance why the audited accounts prepared by Ernst and Young for Anglo Irish Bank for the year ending 30 September 2008, signed off on by Mr. Alan Dukes and others in February 2009, one month after the bank's nationalisation, did not reflect the serious and fatal liquidity crisis revealed in the disclosures from the Anglo tapes that clearly existed in Anglo Irish Bank from March 2008 onwards. [34249/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I refer the Deputy to his Parliamentary Question - 163 - of Tuesday, 9th July. The audited accounts of Anglo Irish Bank for the year ended 30 September 2008 reported that the bank was not insolvent at that time. However, it is now clear that the full extent of the evolving problems in global financial crisis or the property market were not envisaged in any assessment of the bank at that time. In the course of 2009/2010 the extent of the problems became clear and the level of impairments on assets increased substantially necessitating further injections of capital to sustain the capital position of the bank. In terms of the liquidity issues being encountered by the Bank in 2008, the Deputy will be aware that a State guarantee was put in place on 29 Sept 2008 which included Anglo Irish Bank.

### **Banking Sector Investigations**

203. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the consideration that is being taken against the former directors and non-executive directors and officers of Anglo Irish Bank regarding their obligations under the Companies Acts in regard to reckless trading. [34250/13]

204. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if a director of Anglo Irish Bank was found to have acted in reckless or fraudulent manner that such a director or shadow director would be pursued in accordance with the Companies Acts and held personally liable for the debts of the bank in order to achieve some recovery and sanction in the public interest. [34251/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 203 and 204 together.

The Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement is responsible for the enforcement of breaches of company law and it is the function of the director of the ODCE to investigate if the former members of the Board of Anglo Irish Bank complied with their regulatory responsibilities and duties. As there are currently a number of court cases ongoing into matters at Anglo Irish Bank it would not be appropriate for me to comment further as it could prejudice the proceedings.

It is the responsibility of the investigating body to request the former members of the Board of Anglo to explain their actions and provide a report on the affairs of the bank. I do not give instructions to the ODCE as it is not my role and it would not be appropriate for me to do so.

The DPP has now issued proceedings against three former executives in Anglo Irish Bank in relation to various offences under the Companies Act's. It is hoped that these cases will be progressed through the Courts in the first half of next year. Due to the sensitive nature of those issues, it would be inappropriate for me or the bank to comment further at this time.

### **State Banking Sector**

205. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if any bank in which the State has shares avails of the use of the public auctions auctioneering service provided by a company (details supplied) which specialises in bank repossessed and bank receivership properties. [34253/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I can inform the Deputy that the banks in which the State has shares have provided me with the following information in relation to whether they avail of public auctions auctioneering service provided by the company whose details are supplied.

**Permanent TSB** - I am informed by Permanent TSB that it does not currently avail of the use of public auctions auctioneering service provided by the company whose details are supplied.

**AIB** - AIB has informed me that it uses sales agents to market its repossessed properties, and in certain instances appoints receivers. In these instances, both the sales agent and the receiver has an obligation to seek the best price for the asset being disposed of. On occasion, the sales agent will recommend, or the receiver will decide on public auction as offering the best route to sale, including auctions by the company whose details are supplied. In relation to repossessed properties AIB may also on occasion use public auction as a method for sale.

**Bank of Ireland** - I am informed by Bank of Ireland that it engages various external service providers where it is deemed necessary to support the business of the group. As a commercially quoted public company Bank of Ireland respects the commercial rights of any such parties and as such avoids commenting on whether or not such arrangements exist with specific suppliers or on the specifics of any such arrangements where they exist.

### **NAMA Transactions**

206. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the National Asset Management Agency avails of the use of public auctions auctioneering services provided by a company (details supplied). [34254/13]

208. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the position on a connected personal relationship between any director of a company (details supplied) and any property developer whose development and investment properties are under the control of the National Asset Management Agency. [34257/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 206 and 208 together.

As the Deputy is aware NAMA has acquired loans from the five participating institutions and is not the owner of properties. The Agency's role is that of a secured lender. The Agency does not directly manage or sell properties securing its loans. In line with NAMA Board guidelines, NAMA requires that the sale of property assets by debtors and receivers is conducted by suitably qualified professional sales agents and that all such sales are openly marketed. I am advised by NAMA that the appropriate sales and marketing strategy for all asset disposals is determined by a range of factors, including asset class, location and the value of the property, and having regard to NAMA's objectives as set out in section 10 of the NAMA Act. NAMA advises that, by reference to these considerations, its debtors and receivers draw from a large number of suitably qualified sales professionals in the sale of their properties.

As the Deputy is aware, NAMA is prohibited under Sections 99 and 202 of the NAMA Act from disclosing confidential information, including the identity of its debtors and details relating to their properties.

### **IBRC Sale of Assets**

207. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if Irish Bank Resolution Corporation avails of the use of public auctions auctioneering services provided by a company (details supplied). [34255/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Special Liquidators have advised that in relation to connections where there are receivers appointed over assets, those receivers assess and recommend which method and agent to use for the sale of assets. The Special Liqui-

dators have confirmed that there are instances where receivers, acting as agent for the borrower and-or borrowers, appoint the company mentioned to sell assets.

*Question No. 208 answered with Question No. 206.*

### **NAMA Code of Conduct**

209. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the necessary protections in place to ensure no National Asset Management Agency or State controlled bank property sales take place between connected or conflicted parties. [34258/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by NAMA that where it approves the sale of any loan or approves the sale of any secured property by a debtor, it requires a confirmation that the purchaser is not connected to the debtor or other obligors. In line with this, NAMA Board guidelines require that sales agents prepare a final report and recommendation, which includes, *inter alia*, confirmation that the sales agent has reviewed the purchaser's declaration relating to connected party sales and a statement disclosing any commercial relationship between the agent, debtor, purchaser or purchaser's ultimate beneficial owners in the past five years and how any actual or perceived conflict of interest was managed during the sales process. I am further advised that AIB ensures that an appropriate market value is achieved for each asset sale. AIB uses various processes to achieve this on a case by case basis, as well as having a robust and externally validated property valuation policy and a Conflicts of Interest policy. Other controls range from external valuations, the use of auctions, the utilisation of an auctioneer unconnected to the borrower and solicitor confirmation that the transaction is at arm's length. The exact method used depends very much on the circumstances of each case.

PTSB's policy is that offers on all property sales are considered on a case by case basis and against two independent valuations.

### **Securities and Exchange Commission**

210. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the position on any Securities and Exchange Commission filing irregularities by Allied Irish Banks in the United States. [34259/13]

211. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the nature of any Securities and Exchange Commission filing irregularity by Allied Irish Banks in the United States. [34260/13]

212. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if there is any connection between the resignation in April of a person (details supplied) from the Irish Central Bank and any issue that arose regarding Securities and Exchange Commission filing irregularities by Allied Irish Banks in the United States. [34261/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 210 to 212, inclusive, together.

I have been informed by AIB that there have been no SEC filing irregularities by AIB. I have also been informed by AIB that in light of the reforms introduced in the United States by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the SEC is actually "required" to periodically review the filings of all reporting companies, including AIB. This review process typically results in one or more comment letters from the SEC staff requesting information that helps them better understand the disclosures made and/or requiring or suggesting ways to improve disclosures in the future.

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Correspondence between AIB and the SEC staff in regard to the filing of AIB's Annual Report on Form 20-F for the year ended 2011 can be located on the SEC website (see link below). AIB have informed me that, although enhanced disclosures and further information were requested and agreed to by AIB, a review of correspondence that the SEC has published in relation to companies would highlight that the comments made in relation to AIB have not been materially more or less detailed or burdensome than those made by the staff in relation to most other European banks which have filed reports with the SEC in recent years. Furthermore, there has been no suggestion of any filing irregularities in the correspondence between AIB and the SEC. <http://www.sec.gov/cgi-bin/browseedar?action=getcompany&CIK=0000850364&owner=exclude&count=40&hidefilings=0>.

I have also been informed by the Central Bank that there is no connection between the events outlined by the Deputy.

### **Bond Redemption**

213. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm that in June 2013 AIB was unable to repay a €3.5 billion loan owed to the National Treasury Management Agency. [34262/13]

214. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm any bond default by AIB and provide full details of same. [34263/13]

215. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he has authorised the acceptance of AIB shares instead of cash repayments for bonds repayments due by AIB. [34264/13]

216. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide details of all instances where AIB bank shares have been accepted to meet bond payment dates. [34265/13]

217. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the value that was put on AIB shares taken in as payment in meeting any bond application. [34266/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 213 to 217, inclusive, together.

I have been informed by AIB that with regard to the €3.5 billion 2009 Preference Shares held by the NPRFC, AIB has not paid any cash dividend to date (coupon rate of 8% amounting to €280 million). In settlement of this non-payment, AIB shares were issued to the NPRFC as follows: **Year of Settlement No of Shares Issued:** 2010 - 198,089,847; 2011 - 1,247,273,565; 2012 - 3,623,969,972; 2013 - 4,144,055,254.

The process for determining the number of shares paid was determined in line with the 2009 Preference Share Subscription Agreement.

2009 Preference Shares do not have a repayment date and were not due for repayment in 2013. The coupon on the 2009 Preference Shares was paid in shares in May of 2013 as per AIB's stock exchange announcement, a link to which is provided as follows: [http://www.aib.ie/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=AIB\\_Investor\\_Relations/AIB\\_Press\\_Releas/aib\\_d\\_press\\_releases&cid=1367253399001&c=AIB\\_Press\\_Releas&channel=IRHP&position=notfirst](http://www.aib.ie/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=AIB_Investor_Relations/AIB_Press_Releas/aib_d_press_releases&cid=1367253399001&c=AIB_Press_Releas&channel=IRHP&position=notfirst).

I have also been informed by AIB that with regards to the 2009 Preference Share Agreement AIB has never defaulted on the dividend payment owed on these preference shares. As per the terms of the agreement the dividend can be paid in either cash or shares.

The AIB Preference Shares were issued to the National Pensions Reserve Fund Commis-

sion (NPRFC) on 13 May 2009. Under the terms of the Preference Shares, a non-cumulative discretionary cash dividend at 8 per cent per annum may be paid on the anniversary of the issue of those shares if the Board of Directors of AIB decides to pay the dividend. It was necessary for the cash dividend to be discretionary in order to comply with the regulatory capital requirements in place at the time of the issue of the Preference Shares. However, if the discretionary cash dividend is not paid, AIB must issue bonus AIB ordinary shares to the NPRFC equal in value to the cash dividend. As the bonus AIB ordinary shares are issued to the NPRFC under the terms of the 2009 Preference Shares, no additional direction or authorisation from the Minister for Finance is required for the issue of such shares.

The value of the AIB shares held by the NPRF at 31 March 2013 and pending completion of an independent valuation review, comprised:- Ordinary shares, provisionally valued at €0.0079 per share;- Preference shares, provisionally valued at end 2012 valuations of 66% of par.

The final year end valuation will be reflected in the Fund's audited financial statements for 2012 which will be published in July 2013.

### State Banking Sector

218. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm the percentage of shares now held by the State in AIB. [34267/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Annual Report and Financial Statements 2011 of the National Pensions Reserve Fund Commission showed that the Fund's ownership of Allied Irish Bank was 99.8% at 31 December 2011. In May 2012 the National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF) received a dividend of ordinary shares in lieu of a cash dividend on its preference shares. The NPRF has advised that that due to the dilution effect, the ownership was very marginally increased as shown in the following table:

-	NPRF Holdings	Total Shares	% Ownership
Before Dividend	516,237,363,722	517,117,096,249	99.830%
Dividend	4,144,055,254	4,144,055,254	-
After Dividend	520,381,418,976	521,261,151,503	99.831%

### Banking Licence Applications

219. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if AIB is in full compliance with its banking licence requirements with the Central Bank and European Central Bank. [34268/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Compliance with the banking licence is a matter for the Central Bank and I have been informed by the Central Bank that Allied Irish Banks plc holds a banking licence under Section 9 of the Central Bank Act, 1971. This licence allows the bank to conduct banking business. As defined in the Act, "banking business" means business which consists of—(a) the business of accepting deposits payable on demand or on notice or at a fixed or determinable future date, but excluding deposits with a trader from persons employed by him in his trading business or from his customers in the normal course of his trading business and deposits or instalments in respect of the letting or selling of goods under a hire-purchase agreement or a credit-sale agreement, or (b) the business aforesaid and any other business normally carried on by a bank.

### Banking Sector Issues

220. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will list the consultant fees accumulated by AIB in 2011 and 2012; if the bulk of these fees were paid to a company (details supplied); and if he is satisfied with the tendering process which was run by the bank. [34298/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I have been informed by AIB that in line with normal practice and for reasons of commercial sensitivity, the bank does not publicly disclose the details of contracts with individual external service providers. AIB utilises the expertise of a number of different third party firms on a case by case basis, subject to an evaluation of the bank's requirements, costs and the relevant external parties. AIB is focused on a significant cost reduction programme and, as part of this process, has policies and procedures in place in respect of the appointment of external third parties. All external service provider contracts entered into by the bank comply with AIB's policy in relation to engaging external service providers.

### **IBRC Investigations**

221. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance further to the statement made by former public interest director at Anglo Irish Bank, Mr. Alan Dukes, that decisions about evidence to be given to investigations into the banks were made at board meetings and that minutes from those meetings were made available to his Department and the Central Bank, if he will state, categorically, that those minutes did not contain references to recorded telephone conversations of bank employees; if he will also confirm whether members of his Department read the minutes of the bank's meetings; and if he is satisfied to stand by his statement that his Department was unaware of the tapes made at Anglo Irish Bank. [34299/13]

225. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the minutes of all board meetings held at Anglo Irish Bank following its nationalisation, and subsequently the minutes of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation board meetings are a matter of public record; if these minutes will be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas; or if these minutes have been seized as part of the ongoing criminal investigation into events at Anglo Irish Bank. [34303/13]

272. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the papers relating to and furnished to directors at Anglo Irish Bank board meetings provided for the Department of Finance or the Central Bank following the bank guarantee in September 2008; if these papers referenced the existence or content of recordings made at Anglo Irish Bank on employees' telephone lines; if the papers make reference to the Garda requesting these tapes; and the dates the papers were received. [34943/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 221, 225 and 272 together.

As the Deputy will appreciate a vast quantity of information in relation to IBRC was provided to and held by the Department of Finance on a monthly basis as part of its normal engagement with the bank; these included monthly management reports, financial and other presentations, internal and external auditor reports, external adviser reports and monthly Board papers which frequently extended to hundreds of pages. In relation to the Board packs, specifically these were provided to the Department on a monthly basis since August 2011. Officials from the Department of Finance monitored this information extensively and relied on it as part of their on-going engagement with the bank.

The Board papers would have contained many references to the efforts being made by the bank in dealing with the legacy issues relating to Anglo Irish Bank and INBS and also the on-going compliance with all investigations into the bank. These would have included the various

documentation and other requests received by the ODCE, GBFI, CARB etc. in the context of their investigations. As indicated in my response to Parliamentary Question No. 220 on 2 July last, IBRC provided the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation audio recordings in respect of 18 employees of the bank whose lines were recorded in 2010.

Neither I nor my Department have any role in the ongoing Garda or other regulatory investigations into Anglo Irish Bank or any other Irish Bank. It would be completely inappropriate for the Department of Finance to act outside its legal powers and interfere with any investigation that could compromise potential future criminal or civil investigations by the bodies responsible under statute.

As the Deputy will be aware all debts owing to IBRC remain due and enforceable following the liquidation of the bank; in that context I am advised that the minutes of the board meetings of IBRC are not a matter of public record as they contain a large amount of material which could be considered legally privileged or commercially sensitive, even following the liquidation of the bank.

However this documentation will obviously be available to any banking inquiry which may be set in the future. The Government is determined to ensure the public is informed about what happened in Irish Banks and has published the Houses of the Oireachtas (Inquiries, Privileges and Procedures) Bill which, once enacted, will provide the legal framework for such a banking inquiry to be held within the current constitutional parameters.

### **IBRC Investigations**

222. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he is satisfied with the admission from the former public interest director at Anglo Irish Bank, Mr. Alan Dukes, that he was aware of the existence of the Anglo tapes, that he had been briefed on the content of the tapes and that he did not see fit to inform the ongoing investigations into Anglo, the Central Bank or the Government of the tapes. [34300/13]

224. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he is satisfied that after admitting he was aware of the content of the Anglo tapes, the former public interest director at Anglo Irish Bank, Mr. Alan Dukes, did not see fit to suspend and investigate the employees recorded on the tapes following his appointment as chair of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation in 2010. [34302/13]

226. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance his views that, in his role as public interest director at Anglo Irish Bank, Mr. Alan Dukes should have informed the Nyberg banking commission of the existence of recorded telephone conversations in Anglo Irish Bank and made those tapes available to it. [34327/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 222, 224 and 226 together.

I am satisfied that Mr Dukes in his position as public interest director from December 2008 and later as Chairman of IBRC has co-operated fully and openly with all ongoing investigations into the bank. As the Deputy is aware there are a number of investigations progressing into Anglo Irish Bank which the Board and senior management of Anglo/IBRC have fully co-operated with to date. During his time with the bank they have provided a vast amount of information to the Chartered Accountants Regulatory Body (CARB), Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation (GBFI), Office of Director of Corporate Enforcement (ODCE), the then Financial Regulator (FR) and the Nyberg Banking Commission to assist with each of those investigations this in-

cluded the provision of certain recordings to the GBFI.

The role of a public interest director is not to interfere or direct the investigations that are being conducted by the appropriate authorities into Anglo Irish Bank or any other Irish Bank. It would be completely inappropriate for a public interest director to act outside of his or her legal powers and interfere with any investigation that could compromise potential future criminal or civil investigations by the bodies responsible under statute. Mr Dukes in his roles with Anglo-IBRC has facilitated the investigations to the maximum possible extent and that all material required by the authorities was supplied. It was important during the course of the investigations that staff rights were protected and that due process was followed whilst ensuring the authorities got the information they required.

### **Banking Sector Issues**

223. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he is now aware of which telephone lines were recorded in Anglo Irish Bank; and if he knows, if he will list who the other persons recorded on the tapes are, outside of the three we have heard to date. [34301/13]

274. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance when his Department first learned of the existence of, as distinct from the content of, the Anglo Irish tapes. [34945/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 223 and 274 together.

All Banks record phone calls for a variety of reasons in the normal course of business and this was known to the Department. I can confirm that the recordings of 18 staff were provided to the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigations in 2010. Due to ongoing litigation it would not be appropriate for me to provide a list of the persons recorded as it could prejudice those proceedings.

*Question No. 224 answered with Question No. 222.*

*Question No. 225 answered with Question No. 221.*

*Question No. 226 answered with Question No. 222.*

### **Public Interest Directors Responsibilities**

227. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will set out the responsibilities he believes the role of public interest director in a State owned or partially State owned bank entails. [34328/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As I have stated many times before, the primary duty and responsibility of the public interest directors as well as all the other directors is to ensure that the institution on whose board they serve is run properly and appropriately. They serve on many Bank committees as well as the Boards themselves and their breadth of experience brings a deeper and wider knowledge base and understanding to all the Banks which they serve. Our stated policy is get the Banks fully functioning and run on a commercial, cost effective and independent basis to ensure their value as an asset to the State. The public interest directors have an essential role to play in assisting our aims.

Of course, the legal position is that any director appointed to the board of the covered institutions whether under the Credit Institutions (Financial Support) Scheme 2008 or otherwise is subject to the requirements of company law in relation to the discharge of their responsibilities

as a company director. As such, the director is legally bound to act in what he or she believes are the interests of the separate legal entity that is the institution itself. These are the directors so-called fiduciary responsibilities. To address the scope for actual and perceived conflicts between the fiduciary duties of the directors of financial institutions under company law and the wider public interest in circumstances where those institutions have received huge financial support from the State, legal clarity, not just to the role of the public interest director but to that of the entire boards of those institutions, was provided under Section 48 of the Credit Institutions (Stabilisation) Act 2010. It provides that the overriding duty of directors of the covered institutions relates to the public interest as set out in the Act. This recognises the fundamental role that all public interest directors serve.

### **Public Interest Directors Issues**

228. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will put before Dáil Éireann any job description, advice, guidance given to Mr. Alan Dukes on his appointment as a public interest director in Anglo Irish Bank in December 2009. [34329/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The legal position is that any director appointed to the board of the covered institutions whether under the Credit Institutions (Financial Support) Scheme 2008 or otherwise is subject to the requirements of company law in relation to the discharge of their responsibilities as a company director. As such, the director is legally bound to act in what he or she believes are the interests of the separate legal entity that is the institution itself. These are the directors so-called fiduciary responsibilities. To address the scope for actual and perceived conflicts between the fiduciary duties of the directors of financial institutions under company law and the wider public interest in circumstances where those institutions have received financial support from the State, legal clarity, not just to the role of the public interest director but to that of the entire boards of those institutions, was provided under Section 48 of the Credit Institutions (Stabilisation) Act 2010. It provides that the overriding duty of directors of the covered institutions relates to the public interest as set out in Section 4 of the CISA Act.

Section 4 of the Credit Institutions (Stabilisation) Act 2010 states: 4. The purposes of this Act are—(a) to address the serious and continuing disruption to the economy and the financial system and the continuing serious threat to the stability of certain credit institutions in the State and the financial system generally, (b) to implement the reorganisation of credit institutions in the State to achieve the financial stabilisation of those credit institutions and their restructuring (consistently with the state aid rules of the European Union) in the context of the National Recovery Plan 2011 - 2014 and the European Union/International Monetary Fund Programme of Financial Support for Ireland, (c) to continue the process of reorganisation, preservation and restoration of the financial position of Anglo Irish Bank Corporation Limited begun with the Anglo Irish Bank Corporation Act 2009, (d) to continue the process of preservation and restoration of the financial position of building societies through the issue of special investment shares under section 18 (1A) of the Building Societies Act 1989, (e) to protect the interests of depositors in credit institutions, (f) to address the compelling need— (i) to facilitate the availability of credit in the economy of the State, (ii) to protect the State's interest in respect of the guarantees given by the State under the Act of 2008 and to support the steps taken by the Government in that regard, (iii) to protect the interests of taxpayers, (iv) to restore confidence in the banking sector and to underpin Government support measures in relation to that sector, and (v) to align the activities of the relevant institutions and the duties and responsibilities of their officers and employees with the public interest and the other purposes of this Act, (g) to preserve and restore the financial position of a relevant institution,

and- (h) to empower the Court to impose reorganisation measures through orders made in reliance on the CIWUD Directive.

I am satisfied that with twenty years' experience in politics, four Ministerial portfolios and three and a half years as Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Dukes had reasonable experience to assess what was in the public interest.

### **Public Interest Directors Issues**

229. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if job descriptions were provided for public interest directors as they were appointed to the banks; if they underwent interview procedures or were appointed; the person who made the decisions about their appointments; and if they are reviewed in their roles and how frequently. [34330/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As I have stated many times before, the primary duty and responsibility of the public interest directors, as well as all the other directors, is to ensure that the institution on whose board they serve is run properly and appropriately. They serve on many Bank committees as well as the Boards themselves and their breadth of experience brings a deeper and wider knowledge base and understanding to all the Banks which they serve. Our stated policy is to get the Banks fully functioning and run on a commercial, cost effective and independent basis to ensure their value as an asset to the State. The public interest directors have an essential role to play in assisting our aims.

Of course, the legal position is that any director appointed to the board of the covered institutions whether under the Credit Institutions (Financial Support) Scheme 2008 or otherwise is subject to the requirements of company law in relation to the discharge of their responsibilities as a company director. As such, the director is legally bound to act in what he or she believes are the interests of the separate legal entity that is the institution itself. These are the directors so called fiduciary responsibilities. To address the scope for actual and perceived conflicts between the fiduciary duties of the directors of financial institutions under company law and the wider public interest in circumstances where those institutions have received huge financial support from the State, legal clarity, not just to the role of the public interest director but to that of the entire boards of those institutions, was provided under Section 48 of the Credit Institutions (Stabilisation) Act 2010. It provides that the overriding duty of directors of the covered institutions relates to the public interest as set out in the Act. This recognises the fundamental role that all public interest directors serve.

As the Deputy will be aware this Government has not appointed any public interest directors to the boards of the Banks since taking office. I understand that in addition to their other experiences, the public interest directors currently on the boards of the covered institutions were nominated by my predecessor on the basis of the Minister's assessment of their civic mindedness and sense of where the public interest lies to inform their view of what was in the institution's interest. I am advised that the Department of Finance held generic briefing sessions on the CIFS scheme in general and on the fiduciary duties of non-executive directors for individuals on the panel from which the covered institutions appointed public interest directors but that there was no job description or scope of work set out for them as this was determined under company law. In addition, for this reason public interest directors did not have a formal reporting relationship to the Minister or to the Department of Finance.

The public interest directors serve at Ministerial request and it is the prerogative of the Government to request them to step down or be replaced.

The public interest directors at Bank of Ireland do not have a specified time in office as

stated in response to PQ 49476/12. The same situation applies to the public interest directors at AIB. In PTSB, there are currently no public interest directors as they stepped down at the AGM in May 2013.

### **Mortgage Arrears Proposals**

230. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Finance the way in which each bank is meeting the Central Bank's targets for mortgage arrears resolution; if he will provide a breakdown of the sustainable offers made, that is, split mortgage, debt for equity, capitalised arrears and so on, per bank and overall; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34337/13]

259. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he has received all the information due from the banks on 30 June regarding mortgage targets; if he will set out the number of banks that met the 20% requirement for sustainable solutions for mortgage holders. [34760/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 230 and 259 together.

The Central Bank has advised me that over the coming period, the Bank will commence publication of additional statistics, designed to provide more information on the level of progress in relation to mortgage arrears resolution. One such additional measure will be the number of newly agreed loan modifications during each reference quarter. This will be captured for both temporary and permanent restructure types. A second additional measure will be the performance of restructured loans. Reporting performance against specific resolution targets, as well as the full suite of KPI's published by the Central Bank on a quarterly basis, should provide a more complete measure of progress in addressing arrears cases.

The Mortgage Arrears Resolution Targets document, published last March, sets out the specific reporting requirements by the individual institutions. Institutions are required to report their performance against public targets on a quarterly basis to the Central Bank. These returns are due to be submitted to the Central Bank not later than 22 working days after quarter end.

The first quarter in which the targets became operational was Q2, ending in June 2013. Therefore, I shortly expect to have information regarding the banks' progress in this regard.

### **Departmental Reports**

231. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34403/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The following table sets out the names, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by my Department since March 2011 as requested by the Deputy:

Name of Consultant	Date of Commission	Cost	Date or Expected date of Publication	Name of Report
Charles River Associates	June 2011	€50,000	Summary findings published on Department of Finance website June 2011	Acquisition by Allied Irish Banks of EBS Building Society
Mazars	October 2011	€52,543.50*	November 2011	SME Lending Demand Study April 2011 - September 2011
Mazars	October 2011	€60,885*	July 2012	SME Lending Demand Study October 2011 - March 2013
Deloitte & Touche	November 2011	€ 61,553	May 2012	External Review of the Compilation of General Government Debt Statistics
BDO/Amarach	June 2012	€64,698	December 2012	Consultation on film relief
Grant Thornton	September 2012	€31,807.80	November 2012	Assessment of Credit Review Office
Red C	October 2012	€61,438.50*	November 2012	SME Credit Demand Survey April 2012 - September 2012
Red C	October 2012	€59,593.50*	June 2013	SME Credit Demand Survey October 2012 - March 2013
Mercer Ireland	October 2012	€146,370	March 2013	Remuneration Review of Covered Institutions
Brendan Ryan BL	December 2012	€900	Provided to the Department in January 2013 – was not published	Narrative of Public Financial Procedures in Ireland

Name of Consultant	Date of Commission	Cost	Date or Expected date of Publication	Name of Report
Crowe Horwath	May 2013	€36,850.80	To be completed by the end of August 2013, not yet determined if the full results of the report will be published	Survey of Companies in relation to the R&D Tax Credit

\*AIB and Bank of Ireland have reimbursed or will reimburse costs to Department of Finance

### Property Taxation Collection

232. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Finance if a review of the payments committed by households in regards to the local property tax in each local authority at the end of May has been conducted; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34414/13]

294. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide a breakdown, by local authority, of the amount of revenue he expects to raise annually from the local property tax; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35364/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 232 and 294 together.

I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that in excess of 1.56 million LPT Returns were filed up to the end of June 2013 and approximately €126.5 million had been transferred by Revenue to the Exchequer.

As I previously indicated to the House in response to Parliamentary Questions, the Commissioners advised that it would not be possible to provide details of the type sought by the Deputies until work in relation to the LPT Register, which includes the processing of Local Property Tax (LPT) Returns and very large volumes of correspondence from property owners, is further advanced. This work is ongoing and is likely to continue for some time as returns and payments are still being filed each day by property owners. The number of returns filed has now reached 1.57 million.

Yesterday, 15 July, was the payment date for the first of the monthly direct debit payments and 21 July is the payment date for single debit authority (electronic cheque) payments. Any analysis carried out before these have been successfully run would be unsound.

Revenue has advised that they will make some initial data publicly available as soon as possible.

### Property Taxation Administration

233. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Finance if the Revenue Commissioners will transfer all of the local property tax income to the local government fund for 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34415/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Section 157 of the Finance (Local Prop-

erty Tax) Act 2012, as amended, provides that, in each financial year commencing with 2014, the Minister shall pay from the Central Fund or the growing produce thereof into the LGF an amount equivalent to the LPT, including any interest paid thereon, paid into the Central Fund during that year. Receipts from the Local Property Tax received in 2013, which already total €126 million in the period to end-June, will remain in the Exchequer and will be used to reduce the deficit.

### **Budget 2014 Issues**

234. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if he is supportive of retaining the 9% VAT rate for the tourism sector; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34430/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Any proposal to maintain the 9% rate into 2014 will be considered in the context of Budget 2014.

### **Tax Avoidance Issues**

235. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Minister for Finance if he will pursue with the Revenue Commissioners the requirement for a tracking mechanism for former employees who switched to being C2 operators without any intervening period of unemployment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34492/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the former Relevant Contracts Tax (RCT) regime, which incorporated the “C2” ceased in December 2011. However, I am assuming that they Deputy’s question relates to the risk that an employee who becomes self-employed will not register, pay appropriate taxes, etc.

The position is that the new electronic system for RCT, eRCT, which was introduced by Revenue provides a significant safeguard in such situations in relation to contractors in the construction, forestry and meat processing sectors. With the elimination of the C2 certificate, eRCT requires principal contractors to automatically deduct 20% tax on payments made to all new sub-contractors that they engage. This operates as a significant disincentive to those principals and sub-contractors who may seek to collude to manipulate what is effectively an employer/employee relationship into one of self-employment for the purposes of reducing the tax and PRSI liability of the sub-contractor and the PRSI charge for the employer.

I am also informed that Revenue’s hand in detecting possible arrangements between principal contractors and former employees is significantly strengthened under the eRCT regime by the access the Commissioners now have to quality information on contracts, the ability to monitor transactions in realtime and the facility to adjust the tax rate of a sub-contractor to 35% if required in cases of non compliance. As well as reducing the administrative burden on principal contractors, this new system has also minimised the likelihood of errors and opportunities for abuse, including employment misclassification.

Further details on the eRCT system are available on Revenue’s website at [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie). If the Deputy has specific information about suspected abuse, he should bring the matter to the attention of the Revenue Commissioners.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

236. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34513/13]

304. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35800/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 236 and 304 together.

The details requested by the Deputy are contained in the following table:

Name of Board	No Of Board Members	Fees paid to members in 2012	Expenses if any paid to board members 2012	Estimates annual savings if 25% cut applied to fees payable to board members
Irish Fiscal Advisory Council	5	In the first half of 2012, an annual stipend of €5,000 (pro-rata) was payable to Members unless they were employed in the Irish public sector. With effect from 1 July 2012, the fees payable to Council Members are based on those payable to Directors of Category 2 Non-Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies, which are set from time to time by the Dept. of Public Expenditure and Reform. The relevant fees are €20,520 for the Chair and €11,970 for Members. The fees, which are being paid on a pro-rata basis in 2012, are not payable to members of the Irish public service.	Travel and subsistence costs incurred in 2012: €25,723.	In the event that all board members were employed outside of the Irish public service - €17,100.
Financial Services Ombudsman Council	6	5 members each receive €12,600 per annum and one member the chairperson receives €21,600 per annum	€5,108	€21,150

Name of Board	No Of Board Members	Fees paid to members in 2012	Expenses if any paid to board members 2012	Estimates annual savings if 25% cut applied to fees payable to board members
National Treasury Management Agency Advisory-Committee	Up to 7 Members	Chairperson is paid €45,000 per annum Ordinary Member are paid €22,500 per annum Secretary General of the Department of Finance receives no fee in respect of his membership.	Total Expenses paid to board members in 2012 amounted to €32,121 Expenses relate to travel and accommodation costs incurred primarily by non-Irish based members.	€11,250 per annum in respect of the Chairperson €5,625 per annum in respect of each ordinary member in receipt of fees
State Claims Policy Committee	7 Members	Chairperson: €13,713 per annum Ordinary Member: €9,142 per annum 2 members (serving civil servants) received no fees in respect of their membership (one of these members replaced the other as a member during the year). 1 member waived their fee.	Nil	€3,428 per annum in respect of the Chairperson €2,285 per annum in respect of each ordinary member in receipt of fees
National Pension Reserve Fund Commission	7 Members	Chairperson: €51,424 per annum Ordinary Member: €34,283 per annum. The Chief Executive of the NTMA as an ex officio member receives no fee in respect of his membership.	Nil	€12,856 per annum in respect of the Chairperson €8,571 per annum in respect of each ordinary member in receipt of fees

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Name of Board	No Of Board Members	Fees paid to members in 2012	Expenses if any paid to board members 2012	Estimates annual savings if 25% cut applied to fees payable to board members
National Development Finance Agency Board	8 Members	Chairperson: The Chief Executive of the NTMA is Chairperson of the NDFA. As an ex-officio member he receives no fee in respect of his membership. Ordinary Member: €12,600 per annum The Chief Executive of the NDFA as an ex officio member receives no fees in respect of his membership. Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform receives no fee in respect of his membership. 1 member waived their fee.	Nil	€3,150 per annum in respect of each ordinary member in receipt of fees
National Asset Management Agency Board	9 Board Members	Chairperson: €150,000 per annum Ordinary Member: €60,000 per annum while for one ordinary member (who is also Chairperson of the Credit Committee) receives €75,000. 3 members (the Chief Executives of the NTMA and NAMA who are ex-officio members and another member of the NAMA Executive) receive no fees in respect of their membership.	Total expenses paid to board members in 2012 amounted to €60,247 Expenses relate to travel and accommodation costs incurred primarily by non-Irish based members.	€37,500 per annum in respect of the Chairperson €15,000 per annum in respect of each ordinary member in receipt currently in receipt of €60,000 per annum and €18,750 in respect of the ordinary member currently in receipt of €75,000 per annum
ReBo (Credit Union Restructuring Board)	13	€21,945.00 (September to December 2012 only)	€11,393.01 (September to December 2012 only)	€16,459.00
Credit Union Advisory Committee (CUAC)	6	€16,055 was paid in total to members of the committee	€4,516.18	€4,014.00

**Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration**

16 July 2013

237. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34529/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In response to the Deputy's question, details in respect of salaries paid to all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of my Department are as follows:

In 2012 the Chief Executives of the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA), the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) and the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) received the salaries set out in the following table:

Name of Body	Salary
NTMA	€416,500
NDFA	€297,000
NAMA	€365,500

The Chief Executives agreed to waive 15 per cent of their salary following a request by the Minister for Finance and this adjustment is reflected in the above.

The remuneration packages of each of the Chief Executives are published in the respective annual reports of each agency.

The Chief Executive of Credit Union Restructuring Board is currently on the following salary scale Year 1 €90,355, Year 2 €93,972 and Year 3 €97,607. This scale does not reflect changes that may occur with effect from 01 July 2013.

### Departmental Expenditure

238. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34545/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am assuming that the Deputy in her question is only referring to situations where the fees paid were subject to professional services withholding tax. Based on this assumption my Department has supplied me with the figures set out as follows for the period 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013:

Consultant	Cost - €	Service supplied
Mazars	60,885.00	Small and medium sized enterprise lending demand study October 2011 to March 2012. AIB and Bank of Ireland reimbursed the costs to the Department of Finance
Red C	61,438.50	Small and medium sized enterprise credit demand survey April 2012-September 2012. AIB and Bank of Ireland reimbursed the costs to the Department of Finance
Grant Thornton	31,807.80	Assessment of Credit Review Office

Consultant	Cost - €	Service supplied
A&L Goodbody	1,414.50	Company secretarial fees
Arthur Cox	2,579,609.55	Legal services
Matheson	670,790.68	Legal services
Deloitte and Touche	61,552.77	Compilation of General Government debt statistics
BDO and Amarach Consulting	64,575.00	Film Credit Tax Scheme
Mercer	140,000.00	Remuneration Review of Covered Institutions

### Departmental Staff Training

239. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 provided for employees of his Department. [34561/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Department of Finance continues to invest in staff development in order to supplement the skills and qualifications of our teams through a combination of internal and external training and development initiatives. Under the revised Statement of Strategy 2011-2014, the Department aims to improve training in order to develop greater technical, management and leadership skills. Using the performance management and development system (PMDS), the Department will review our staff's performance, and identify any skills requiring enhancement to ensure our training resources are used most effectively. The Department also undertook a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA) survey in late 2012 which has also assisted in identifying the training and development needs of staff within the Department.

The following is a list of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012/2013 academic year provided for employees by the Department of Finance. Please note some of the academic courses are still ongoing and will be concluding over the coming months.

No:	Course Title	Cost - €
1	Associate of the Irish Taxation Chartered Tax Advisor Programme	1,748.50
2	Associate of the Irish Taxation Chartered Tax Advisor Programme	1,963.50
3	Bachelor of Arts Degree	2,900.00
4	Certificate in Safety & Health in Work	2,295.00
5	Certified Project Management Diploma	2,250.00
6	Change Management Certification	2,900.00
7	Chartered Tax Advisor Programme - Part One	1,248.50
8	Chartered Tax Advisor Programme - Part One	1,130.50
9	M.Sc in Economics	7,449.00
10	M.Sc in Investment, Treasury & Banking - DCU	7,597.00
11	Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis	7,900.00
12	Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis	2,500.00
13	Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis	2,500.00

No:	Course Title	Cost - €
14	Professional Accountancy Examinations	1,600.00
	Total:	44,382.00

The Department has completed 36 training programmes this year and has given training to 499 participants (please note some staff members may have participated in more than one training programme). The following training courses have been undertaken and are a mixture of internal and external training programmes:

No:	Course Details	Cost
1	AP Leadership & Management Development Course	€8,640.00
2	Microsoft Training Sessions	€8,125.00
3	PMDS Information Session	€0
4	FOI Training Course	€0
5	Fiscal and Economics Conference, 'Enabling a Growth Friendly Tax System'	*
6	Lunch & Learn Seminars	€0
7	Diploma in Tax Policy & Practice	*
8	Coaching SPS Programme	*

\*Cost yet to be confirmed

In addition to the training programmes outlined above, it is envisaged that the following training courses will be held later this year:

Course Details
Legislative Process Training in association with the AGO – discussion ongoing
Public Financial Procedures Training in association with PER – discussion ongoing
PMDS Performance Conversation Training
Coaching Programme (proposal under development)
Pilot Mentoring Programme
Project Management Training Programme - Out to Tender
Lunch and Learn Seminars – 7 planned

### Exchequer Savings

240. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction to all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34577/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Based on my reply to Parliamentary Question No. 240 of 16 July 2013, the gross expenditure by my Department on professional fees was 3.672 million euros. A 20% reduction on this would yield savings of €734,000.

**Exchequer Savings**

241. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34593/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The following table sets out the Department of Finance’s travel and subsistence expenditure for 2012:

-	2012
Travel and Subsistence for Domestic and Overseas Travel	€392,000
EU Presidency Travel	€80,791

My Department has calculated the annual savings to the Exchequer based on the percentage reductions being applied to the figure of €392,000 (i.e ignoring the non-recurring Presidency amounts)

% Reduction	Saving euros
1	3,920
5	19,600
7	27,400
10	39,200
12	47,040
15	58,800
17	66,649
20	78,400

**Exchequer Savings**

242. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34609/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The current allocation for training and development for 2013 in the Department of Finance is €311,000. The Department of Finance continues to invest in staff development in order to supplement the skills and qualifications of our teams through a combination of internal and external training and development initiatives. Under the revised Statement of Strategy 2011-2014, the Department aims to improve training in order to develop greater technical, management and leadership skills. Using the performance management and development system (PMDS), the Department will review our staff’s performance, and identify any skills requiring enhancement to ensure our training resources are used most effectively. The Department also undertook a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA) survey in late 2012 which has also assisted in identifying the training and development needs of staff within the Department.

The Department of Finance has completed 36 training programmes to date this year and has given training to 499 participants (please note some staff members may have participated in

more than one training programme).

The annual savings to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in this allocation are outlined in the following table:

Reduction	Potential Saving
5%	€15,550
7%	€21,770
10%	€31,100
12%	€37,320
15%	€46,650
17%	€52,870
20%	€62,200

### Exchequer Savings

243. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34625/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In my Department, I have appointed Mary Kenny and Eoin Dorgan as special advisers. Their salaries are outlined as follows.

Name	Salary at 30 June 2013	Salary from 1 July 2013 (post implementation of the Haddington Road Agree- ment)
Mary Kenny	€89,898	€84,706
Eoin Dorgan	€86,604	€81,676

The pay scales for Principal are outlined below:

Date		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
01-Jul-13	Haddington Road	€75,647.00	€78,670.00	€81,676.00	€84,706.00	€87,258.00 NMAX	€89,906.00 LS11	€92,550.00 LS12
01-Jan-13	Budget 2009	€80,051.00	€83,337.00	€86,604.00	€89,898.00	€92,672.00 NMAX	€95,550.00 LS11	€98,424.00 LS12

### Money Laundering

244. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Minister for Finance if his attention has been drawn to concerns raised by the Irish Post Masters Union regarding the requirement for anti-money laundering regulations to be complied with in respect of the sale of prize bonds over €25 in value; if he sees merit in its suggestion that this limit be set at €100; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34638/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** European legislation has been adopted to protect the financial system and certain professions and activities from being misused for money laundering and financing of terrorism purposes. The anti-money-laundering obligations

applicable in Ireland derive from the Third EU Money-Laundering Directive. The Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 was enacted in July 2010 to transpose the Third Money Laundering Directive (2005/60/EC) and its Implementing Directive (2006/70/EC) into Irish Law. Part 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 2010 sets out the obligations of “designated persons” in relation to customer identification. One such obligation set out in the Act is the obligation to conduct customer due diligence, prior to the establishment of a business relationship. Customer due diligence refers to the identification of customers and that of any beneficial owners of financial products associated with the customer.

An Post and the Prize Bond Company are deemed to be a “*designated person*” under the Criminal Justice Act 2010 as they fall within the definition of a “*financial institution*”. In light of this, An Post and the Prize Bond Company are required to comply with the relevant provisions of the Act in relation to the sale of Prize Bonds to customers. This means, in practical terms, that customer due diligence must be conducted on all purchases of prize bonds, irrespective of value.

The extent to which any particular person or product may be exempted from the customer due diligence requirements of the Act is determined by reference to the Act having regard to the underlying Directives.

The Central Bank of Ireland has no discretion to exempt certain firms from the requirement to comply with the Act.

In light of the above, I am exploring with the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) and my colleague the Minister for Justice whether or not exemptions available under the Directives may be applied to small value purchases of prize bonds facilitated on behalf of the State by An Post and the Prize Bond Company.

### **Banking Sector Issues**

245. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide details of the persons who were the partners and senior executives responsible for conducting the PwC project Atlas - Anglo Irish Bank Corporation plc - over the duration of the three parts of the report, phase 1, phase 2, phase 3; if any of the partners or senior executives who were part of the team or were involved in the aforementioned PwC report is part of the team currently valuing the liquidated Irish Bank Resolution Corporation loan book; the names of the partners and senior executives who have worked on both mandates; the total number of staff who have worked on both mandates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34644/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It would not be appropriate for me to disclose the details of the persons who were partners and senior executives of the PwC Project Atlas engagement. The Special Liquidators have confirmed that they have received confirmation from PwC that no members of their valuations team are subject to any actual or perceived conflicts *vis-a-vis* IBRC.

### **IBRC Mortgage Loan Book**

246. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the total number of firms which tendered to the special liquidator for the mandate to value the Irish Bank Resolution Corporation loan book; if PwC offered the lowest fees for the job or if there were other criteria which led it to win the valuation mandate; if he will detail such criteria; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34645/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Special Liquidators invited a number of firms (5) for the tender on tranche 1 and for tranche 2(14). The Special Liquidators have

confirmed that PwC were not the lowest on fees. The criteria used were as follows, for which each respondent was graded:

- Process/ Execution methodology and ability
- Knowledge of the portfolio and recent relevant credentials
- Delivery team experience
- Fees.

The Special Liquidators have appointed UBS and PwC to value different segments of the IBRC loan portfolio.

### **IBRC Legal Cases**

247. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the person who is responsible for assessing whether there is merit in the continuing legal corporate entity of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation suing the former auditors of Irish Nationwide Building Society and current special liquidators of IBRC, KPMG; if he will confirm that IBRC is suing Ernst and Young for its role in auditing Anglo Irish Bank; if he will further confirm that he is considering instructing the special liquidator to sue his own company as special liquidator for the role his company played in auditing Irish Nationwide Building society; if KPMG is not going to be sued by IBRC for the role it played as auditor of Irish Nationwide Building Society, the reason this is the case; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34646/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In November 2012, the then Board of IBRC, after taking legal advice, decided to institute proceedings against Ernst and Young the former auditors of Anglo, for their role in the audit of the Anglo accounts. I am advised that these proceedings have been continued by the Special Liquidators following their appointment in February 2013. In respect of INBS, I am advised by the Special Liquidators that following the reconstitution of the Board of INBS in late 2009, the new Board conducted (over 2010-2011) a wide ranging investigation into historic lending practices and corporate governance issues in INBS. This included an investigation into the role played by the former auditors of INBS, KPMG. Following these investigations, the then Board of INBS, on foot of legal advice, made a decision not to institute proceedings against KPMG the former auditors of INBS. This decision was taken before the Special Liquidators were appointed in February 2013. It is understood that the decision was taken on the basis of legal advice to the effect that there was no legal liability on the part of the auditors. The Department of Finance was informed of the decision taken at the time.

### **IBRC Liquidation**

248. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide details of the names of the partners and senior management responsible in KPMG for the auditing of Irish Nationwide Building Society and Irish Life and Permanent; if he will confirm if any of these partners, senior managers, or staff members who audited Irish Nationwide Building Society and Irish Life and Permanent are responsible for any of the work currently being undertaken by KPMG in the liquidation of Irish Bank Resolution Corporation; if he will name these partners or senior managers, as well as detailing the total number of staff who have worked on both mandates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34647/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Special Liquidators that there are two members of KPMG who are currently involved in the Special Liquidation who had previously worked on the audit of IL and P at a senior management and partner level.

I am further advised that, prior to those individuals carrying out any work in the liquidation, the Special Liquidators considered this position and came to the view that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the work currently being undertaken by these individuals in the Special Liquidation of IBRC and their previous roles in relation to the audit of IL and P.

### **Banking Sector Issues**

249. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if his attention has been drawn to news reports in Spain that Deloitte may lose its Spanish licence to operate in the country as an auditor as a result of the very serious violations found by the Economy Ministry's ICAC Accounting and Audit Institute in its investigation of the firm's role as Bankia's auditor; if he will confirm whether these types of measure are being considered; if any adverse findings are made against auditors for the way they audited the Irish banks that subsequently required taxpayers' money; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34648/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As Minister for Finance, I cannot comment on individual cases, nor do I have any role in relation to the supervision of auditors.

### **Mortgage to Rent Scheme Administration**

250. **Deputy Joan Collins** asked the Minister for Finance the number of lenders operating in the Irish property market who are prepared to operate the mortgage to rent scheme; the number of mortgage restructurings which have been initiated by lenders under the mortgage to rent scheme; and the number of split mortgages with the parking of both capital and interest payments which lenders have offered under the mortgage arrears resolution process. [34655/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Mortgage to Rent scheme is a Government initiative to help homeowners who are at risk of losing their homes due to mortgage arrears. A pilot scheme was established in February 2012 and was extended nationally in June 2012, targeting those low income families whose mortgage situation is unsustainable and where there is little or no prospect of a significant change in circumstances in the foreseeable future. The scheme will enable eligible families to remain in their homes, while ownership is transferred to an approved housing body which, in turn, rents it to the original owners. The Housing Agency, which manages the scheme, has advised that the lenders currently operating the scheme are:

- AIB
- EBS
- BOI
- PTSB
- KBCI
- Pepper
- Start Mortgages
- Nua Homeloans
- Ulster Bank

- Danske Bank
- Haven Mortgages.

The Housing Agency has advised me that, based on the latest available information, 1,289 cases have been submitted by lenders and of these, 847 are still in the system, with a total of 510 approved for customer contact.

The necessary overall strategy and building blocks to address the mortgage arrears problem are now in place. These include the Central Bank mortgage restructuring targets initiative, the new Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears, the fundamental change to personal insolvency legislation, including the provision of new, more accessible and less penal resolution mechanisms to debtors, as well as a comprehensive mortgage information and advice service.

The onus is now on lenders to move to address individual arrears cases in a comprehensive and speedy manner. The Deputy will be aware that the latest Central Bank data on mortgage arrears and repossessions shows that at end March 2013 there were 144 split mortgage restructures. I expect the banks to increase the number of “split mortgage” and the other long-term restructured mortgage arrangements over the remainder of this year.

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

251. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34680/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Programme for Government contains 53 commitments within the remit of the Department of Finance and significant progress has been made in implementing these commitments: 30 commitments have been implemented, 15 are ongoing or under way, one is a matter for the independent Fiscal Council, two are a matter for the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, while 5 are under review or cannot be introduced in the manner in which they are stated in the Programme for Government. I would note that the commitments identified as on track are well advanced. The Department of the Taoiseach published the Programme for Government Annual Report 2013 which outlined progress for all Programme for Government Commitments to March and is available at [www.taoiseach.gov.ie](http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie). Since the publication of that report there has been further progress in a number of areas including the extension of the maximum weighted average maturities on our EFSF and EFSM loans by up to 7 years, the introduction of the Property Tax on 1 July 2013 and continuing augmentation of the skills set of the Department.

The timeline for delivery of the commitments is over the lifetime of the Government.

The following table sets out all Programme for Government commitments assigned to the Department of Finance, and the current status of each commitment:

Programme for Government

Department of Finance – Progress on Commitments

Commitment	Status
We will seek a reduced interest rate as part of a credible re-commitment to reducing Government deficits to ensure sustainability of our public finances.	Achieved
We will re-commit to structural reforms required to accelerate growth, job creation and debt sustainability.	D/PER
We will attach the utmost priority to avoiding further down-grades to our sovereign credit rating by setting further capital spend by the State on bank recapitalisation at a level that is consistent with national debt sustainability.	Achieved
In this regard, we will defer further recapitalisation of the banks until the solvency stress tests are complete and known to the new Government. Earlier recapitalisation in advance of publication of the stress tests will not contribute to market stability and confidence.	Achieved
We remain committed to a smaller banking system that reduces its reliance on funding from the Irish and European Central Banks and volatile market sources. In order, however, to limit further calls on the State to cover bank losses from distressed asset sales, bank de-leveraging must be paced to match the return of more normal market conditions and demand for bank assets.	In progress
As an interim measure, we will seek to replace emergency lending to our banks with medium-term, affordable, official financing in a way that can restore confidence among other potential lenders in the liquidity position of our banks.	Achieved
We will end further asset transfers to NAMA, which are unlikely to improve market confidence in either the banks or the State.	Achieved
We will ensure that an adequate pool of credit is available to fund small and medium-sized businesses in the real economy during the re-structuring and down-sizing programme.	In progress
We will introduce a comprehensive special resolution regime for dealing with bank insolvencies.	Achieved
The Government accepts that enabling provisions in legislation may be necessary to extend the scope of bank liability restructuring to include unsecured, unguaranteed senior bonds.	Review
The new Government will seek to dispose of the public stakes in the banks as soon as possible at the best possible return to the taxpayer.	In progress
We will create an integrated decision making structure among all relevant State Departments and Agencies to replace the current fragmented approach of State bodies in dealing with the financial crisis.	Achieved
The new Government will re-structure bank boards and replace directors who presided over failed lending practices. We will ensure that the regulator has sufficient powers of pre-approval of bank directors and senior executives. To expedite this change-over we will openly construct a pool of globally experienced financial services managers and directors to be inserted into key executive and non-executive positions in banks receiving taxpayer support.	Achieved

Commitment	Status
We will insist on the highest standards of transparency in the operation of NAMA, on reduction in the costs associated with the operation of NAMA, and that decision-making in NAMA does not delay the restoration of the Irish property market.	In progress
Once the banking sector has been restored and is functioning effectively, we will introduce a bank levy based on the size of a bank's liabilities (other than shareholder capital).	Review
We recognise the important role of Credit Unions as a volunteer co-operative movement and the distinction between them and other types of financial institutions. In Government, we will establish a Commission to review the future of the credit union movement and make recommendations in relation to the most effective regulatory structure for Credit Unions, taking into account their not-for-profit mandate, their volunteer ethos and community focus, while paying due regard to the need to fully protect depositors savings and financial stability.	Achieved
We support the future development of the IFSC as a source of future employment growth, subject to appropriate regulation. We will establish a taskforce on the future of the financial services sector to maximise employment opportunities in financial services for staff leaving employment as a result of downsizing.	In progress
We will ensure that the investigations into failures in the banking system are adequately resourced.	D/PER
All remuneration schemes at banks subject to state support will undergo a fundamental review to ensure an alignment of interest between banks, their staff and the taxpayer.	Achieved
Cut the 13.5% rate of VAT to 12% up to end 2013	Achieved
We will exempt from VAT service companies that export more than 90% of their output.	Not being pursued
Subject to a cost benefit analysis, we will amend the RD tax credit regime to make it more attractive and accessible to smaller businesses, in the following ways: companies with RD expenditures of under €100,000 will be entitled to full tax credit on those entire expenditures as opposed to just the increment over the base year, with marginal relief for companies with expenditure just over €100,000, we will allow companies to offset the RD credit against employers. PRSI as an alternative to corporation tax, to cut down on red tape in the applications process, companies in receipt of a Research, Technology and Innovation (RTI) grant from one of the development agencies will be automatically deemed as entitled to the RD tax credit.	In progress
We will direct the Revenue Commissioners to examine the feasibility of introducing – on a revenue neutral basis – a Single Business Tax for micro enterprises (with a turnover of less than €75,000 per annum) to replace all the existing taxes on sole traders and small businesses to cut compliance costs and make starting a business much less daunting.	Review

Commitment	Status
We will create a Strategic Investment Bank that will become a provider of finance to large capital projects, a conduit for venture capital and a lender to SMEs.	In progress
The Government will put in place a parallel, commercially-financed investment programme in key networks of the economy to support demand and employment in the short-term, and to provide the basis for sustainable, export-led jobs and growth for the next generation. Streamlined and restructured semi-States will make significant additional investments, over and above current plans, over the next four years in “next generation” infrastructures in energy, broadband, forestry and water. These investments – and the accompanying semi-state restructuring process – will be financed and pro-actively managed by a New Economy and Recovery Authority (NewERA), which will absorb the National Pension Reserve Commission.	In progress
We believe it is appropriate, in order to enhance international credibility, to stick to the aggregate adjustment as set out in the National Recovery Plan for the combined period 2011-2012.	Achieved
In preparation for Budget 2013, we will review progress on deficit reduction, and draw up a plan which will achieve the objective of reaching the 3% of GDP target for the General Government Deficit by the target date of 2015.	Achieved
Should Ireland succeed in obtaining a lower interest rate on its loans, this should be offset against the aggregate adjustment required over the term of the programme.	Achieved
We believe that achieving the 3% of GDP deficit target should be seen as an intermediate step in the process of restoring the public finances, and that further reductions in the general government deficit as a share of national income will be required thereafter	In progress
As part of our fiscal strategy the new Government will: Keep the corporate tax rate at 12.5%	Achieved
Maintain the current rates of income tax together with bands and credits. We will not increase the top marginal rates of taxes on income.	Achieved
We will reduce, cap or abolish property tax reliefs and other tax shelters which benefit very high income earners.	Achieved
We will also ensure the implementation of a minimum effective tax rate of 30% for very high earners.	Achieved
Consider, arising from the previous Government’s deal with the IMF, various options for a site valuation tax. Any site valuation tax must take into account the significant number of households in mortgage distress and provide local government with a reliable stream of revenue	Achieved (As per Government decision to introduce Local Property Tax)
We will limit the top rate of VAT to 23%	Achieved
We will review the Universal Social Charge	Achieved
We will ensure that tax exiles make a fair contribution to the Exchequer	Achieved

Commitment	Status
We will establish an independent Fiscal Advisory Council (FAC), separated from fiscal decision-makers in government, that would undertake official fiscal macroeconomic projections and monitoring. Its functions would include identifying and advising on cyclical and counter-cyclical fiscal policies and structural deficits; the cyclical or temporary nature of particular revenues; and the need to maintain an appropriate and effective tax base. The Fiscal Advisory Council will be independent of Government and will report to the Dáil and the public.	Achieved
The modelling assumptions and inputs of the Fiscal Advisory Council will, as far as possible, be open to public scrutiny and its outputs would be freely available to external bodies, including in particular, the opposition parties.	Matter for the Fiscal Council
We will open up the Budget process to the full glare of public scrutiny in a way that restores confidence and stability by exposing and cutting failing programmes and pork barrel politics.	In progress
We will reform the Department of Finance by bringing in new leadership and skills to restore its capacity and credibility in financial and macroeconomic management. Specifically, we will make an external appointment of an economist of international repute to head up the Department's Budget and Economic Policy division.	In progress (New leadership in place) (Recruitment process underway for Chief Economist)
We will bring new talent and skills into the Department of Finance.	Achieved (Ongoing)
Tax incentives for private hospital developments will cease.	Achieved
Increasing mortgage interest relief to 30% for First Time Buyers in 2004-08 (from the current sliding scale of 20% to 25% depending on the year the mortgage was taken out), financed in part by bringing forward the abolition of relief for new buyers from June 2011.	Achieved
Directing any mortgage provider in receipt of State support to present Government with a plan of how intends to cut its costs, over and above existing plans, in a fair manner by a sufficient amount to forego a 25 basis point increase on their variable rate mortgage.	Achieved
Introducing a two year moratorium on repossessions of modest family homes where a family makes an honest effort to pay their mortgage.	In progress (Policies in respect of Mortgage Arrears in progress)
We will ensure that the Central Bank and the Financial Regulator supervise credit institutions' mortgage lending practices comprehensively and intensively.	In progress (whilst respecting the independence of Central Bank and Financial Regulator)
Where credit institutions fail to adequately control mortgage lending risks, the Central Bank will impose loan-to-value ceilings on mortgages, caps on loan-to income multiples, limits on the term of new mortgages, and more rigorous procedures for verifying borrowers' incomes.	In progress

Commitment	Status
Increase the penalty for tobacco smuggling for commercial purposes and provide robust detection measures to counteract such smuggling.	Achieved
Seek to combat drug supplies at source by providing x-ray scanners at major ports; greater patrols along coastline and increasing presence of Customs officers at smaller airports.	Review
Tightly regulate moneylenders.	Achieved
We will accelerate Capital Allowances on software purchases against income tax and corporation profits tax from 8 to 3 years subject to a cost benefit analysis.	In progress
We will exempt farm diesel from further increases in the carbon tax.	Achieved

### Consultancy Contracts Expenditure

252. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Finance if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34696/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Central Bank of Ireland has advised my Department that it does not currently engage nor has it procured any such services over the last five years. In 2011, a one off specific service was provided by an external PR adviser at a cost of €169.40. However they have also advised my Department that as part of the National Payments Plan, marketing agencies have been and will be engaged to assist in developing communications plans relating to specific, defined public policy initiatives (e.g. the on-going public information campaign around Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) implementation, and the running of a 'rounding pilot' to reduce the need for 1c/2c coins). These agencies have been and will be selected through competitive tender processes, and the costs of these will be split between the Central Bank, the Department of Finance and industry. The Financial Services Ombudsman Bureau have advised my Department that they do not employ the services of a public relations firm or communication consultants and that all such work is dealt with internally by Financial Services Ombudsman Bureau staff.

The National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) has supplied my Department with the information set out below. NTMA does not maintain an internal press office. Instead, its internal communications resources are supported by an external service provider (appointed following a public procurement process) – currently Gordon MRM - in order to offer a full press office and communications service (including out-of-hours contacts for the media) across all the NTMA's business areas: Debt Management, National Asset Management Agency (NAMA), National Pensions Reserve Fund, National Development Finance Agency, State Claims Agency, NewERA and during 2011 the Banking Unit. These arrangements were initially put in place during 2010 in light of a significant increase in the volume of domestic and international media queries being received by the NTMA and associated bodies. In September 2012 the NTMA re-tendered for the provision of these services. Following the tender evaluation process the NTMA awarded a new contract to Gordon MRM in December 2012. The initial contract, in place to end 2012 was based on an hourly rate for services provided. During the term of this contract a 20% reduction in the hourly rate was agreed with effect from June 2011 until the end of the contract. The new contract, which commenced in January 2013, is based on a fixed fee and it is

anticipated that this will result in a significant reduction in the overall fees paid by the NTMA. NAMA draws on the NTMA's shared services in a number of areas including its outsourced press office facility. NAMA reimburses the NTMA in respect of the costs of these services attributable to NAMA. The overall costs incurred for the provision of the services above (ex VAT) were as follows:

Year	€
2011	€205,388 (of which €112,353 was charged to NAMA)
2012	€223,723 (of which €142,653 was charged to NAMA)
2013	€72,817 (to end June) (of which €36,329 was charged to NAMA)

In the light of the sovereign debt crisis the NTMA also engaged Powerscourt – a London based communications consultancy - for international communications initiatives in the funding and debt management area. Total costs (ex VAT) incurred for the provision of the services provided by Powerscourt from January 2011 were as follows:

Year	€
2011	74,395 euros
2012	10,257 euros
2013	12,103 euros (to end June)

### Motor Tax Yield

253. **Deputy Brian Stanley** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm that €150 million was taken in the form of motor tax in budget 2013; and if he will confirm where this money was redirected. [33803/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As the Deputy correctly points out, Motor Tax is one of the major sources of Local Government funding. However, the increase in revenue associated with Budget changes in motor tax over the last two years was destined for the Exchequer to reduce the deficit. As stated in the Revised Estimates for Public Services, a return, to be agreed between the Ministers for the Environment, Community and Local Government and Public Expenditure and Reform, of up to a maximum of €150m is to be made out of the Fund. This remains the intention and monies are expected be paid over in late 2013.

### NAMA Loan Book

254. **Deputy Brian Stanley** asked the Minister for Finance the position local authorities hold in order of priority as creditors when the National Asset Management Agency takes over unfinished housing developments that have outstanding development levies owed by them to the respective local authorities. [33806/13]

255. **Deputy Brian Stanley** asked the Minister for Finance the names of companies that are now in the National Asset Management Agency which owe development levies to local authorities; and if he will outline, in tabular form, the amount owed by each company to each local authority. [33807/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 254 and 255 together.

NAMA has acquired loans from the Participating Institutions that are secured, in the main, on unsold property at time of acquisition. I am advised by NAMA that, in respect of such unsold property, it requires its debtors and receivers to comply with all statutory obligations. NAMA advises that this includes the payment of development levies as they fall due, on foot of a valid planning permission, for development. NAMA further advises that it works closely with debtors and receivers to ensure that any such liabilities are appropriately addressed. NAMA's role relates only to those properties that secure its acquired loans. It has no role in relation to other properties, including properties sold prior to its acquisition of loans from the Participating Institutions. The Deputy may also wish to refer to pages 36 and 37 of the Agency's recently published Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2012, which include extensive information on NAMA's approach to unfinished housing developments, including its requirement that debtors and receivers prepare, in line with best practice in this area, a Site Resolution Plan with input from stakeholders including residents, the local authority and the bond holder.

NAMA is prohibited under Sections 99 and 202 of the NAMA Act from disclosing confidential information, which is specifically defined to include information relating to its debtors and their properties. Accordingly, the provision of the type of information sought in the Deputy's second question cannot be provided.

*Questions Nos. 256 and 257 answered with Question No. 179.*

### **Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears**

258. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Finance the procedure in place where an official of a financial institution does not offer the code of conduct for mortgage arrears from the Central Bank of Ireland to a client who is in mortgage distress; the details of the reprimand and if it is required; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34728/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Central Bank's Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears (CCMA) is a statutory Code issued under Section 117 of the Central Bank Act 1989 and lenders are required to comply with the CCMA as a matter of law. The Central Bank has advised me that it has the power to administer sanctions for a contravention of the CCMA under part IIIC of the Central Bank Act 1942.

The CCMA applies to the mortgage lending activities of all regulated entities, except credit unions, operating in the State, including:

- A financial services provider authorised, registered or licensed by the Central Bank of Ireland; and
- A financial services provider authorised, registered or licensed in another EU or EEA Member State and which has provided, or is providing, mortgage lending activities in the State.

The CCMA applies to the mortgage loan of a borrower which is secured by his/her primary residence.

Under the CCMA, lenders must apply the protections of the Code to borrowers in the following circumstances:

- i. Borrowers in arrears and in pre-arrears
- ii. In the case of joint borrowers who notify the lender in writing that they have separated or divorced, the lender should treat each borrower as a single borrower under the CCMA (except to the extent that an action requires, as a matter of law, the agreement of both borrowers).

Chapter 3 of the CCMA deals with the appeals process and provides that a lender must

have an appeals process to enable a borrower to appeal in relation to a decision of the lender, including:

- (a) where an alternative repayment arrangement is offered by a lender and the borrower is not willing to enter into the alternative repayment arrangement;
- (b) Where a lender declines to offer an alternative repayment arrangement to a borrower; and
- (c) Where a lender classifies a borrower as not co-operating,

and for this purpose must establish an Appeals Board to consider and determine any such appeals submitted by borrowers.

Section 50 of the CCMA states that the Appeals Board must be comprised of three of the lender's senior personnel, who have not been involved in the borrower's case previously. At least one member of the Appeals Board must be independent of the lender's management team and must not be involved in lending matters. In addition, the lender must apply Provisions 10.7 and 10.12 of the Central Bank's Consumer Protection Code 2012 to deal with complaints submitted by borrowers in relation to the lender's treatment of the borrower's case under the CCMA, or the lender's compliance with the requirements of the CCMA.

*Question No. 259 answered with Question No. 230.*

#### **NAMA Legal Issues**

260. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if his attention has been drawn to a letter sent on 17 June from the National Asset Management Agency to a number of litigants in a case in New York, where the issue of Anglo Irish Bank overcharging interest on loans is being heard, the contents of which include an implicit threat to the litigants to cease their action or face potential loan foreclosure and receivership; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34762/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In line with long-standing practice, I do not comment on matters which are before the Courts.

#### **NAMA Legal Issues**

261. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if his attention has been drawn to evidence given in a trial currently taking place involving the National Asset Management Agency and a person (details supplied) where it has been alleged that David Drumm in his role in Anglo Irish Bank at the time, agreed to the transfer of interest in a loan that was held in this person's name to other members of their family; if his attention has been drawn to a verbal transfer of loan interest being a practice in Anglo Irish Bank; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34763/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** It would not be appropriate for me to comment on this matter which is currently before the courts.

#### **NAMA Loan Book**

262. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the number of asset management companies that have been commissioned by the National Asset Management Agency to date; their names; the total value of the assets being managed by these third party companies; the individual and total fees being paid to these third party companies; and his views on NAMA, an asset management company, choosing this policy of commissioning third parties to manage its assets. [34764/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by NAMA that it has not commissioned any asset management companies. NAMA carries out its own asset management and debtor management directly and otherwise its loans are serviced by the two participating institutions and, in the case of the former IBRC portfolio, by the Special Liquidators to IBRC.

### **Garda Investigations**

263. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if his attention has been drawn to the allegations made in a national newspaper on Tuesday, 9, July by the former Irish Life and Permanent chairman (details supplied), where they state they made a statement to the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement and the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation on the window dressing of Anglo Irish Bank's end of year books for 2008 but that there has been no follow-up on their affidavit; and in addition that they were informed that the Anglo Irish Bank life deposits were outside the scope of the investigation. [34765/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I can inform the Deputy that allegations made in a national newspaper by the person whose details were supplied relate to an investigation currently being led by the Garda and it would therefore be inappropriate for me or the Central Bank to provide any information on this matter. The Deputy will be aware that the Terms of Reference for the Nyberg investigation are a matter of public record and are included in the Nyberg report.

### **Garda Investigations**

264. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if it was a policy of the Central Bank of Ireland in the years leading up to 2008 and following to allow banks to make deposit transfers between themselves to address deficiencies in end of year accounts; if this was an overt policy of the Central Bank of Ireland or if the bank simply tolerated the policy, as has been alleged. [34766/13]

265. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance his views on the statement made by former Irish Life and Permanent chairman (details supplied) that support provided by Irish Life and Permanent to Anglo Irish Bank arose solely as a result of a request by the Central Bank of Ireland and Financial Regulator, and that the two had requested Irish Life and Permanent to protect the stability of the Irish financial system. [34767/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 264 and 265 together.

As the Deputy will be aware the Garda is currently leading an investigation into these matters and it would therefore be inappropriate for me or the Central Bank to provide any information on this matter.

### **Banking Sector Issues**

266. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will confirm that Anglo Irish Bank sought as a solution to its difficulties on 29 and 30 September 2008 the provision of short-term liquidity support; and if he will explain the reason an alternative to a blanket guarantee, if proposed, was ruled out. [34780/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised that Anglo Irish Bank would have discussed a number of funding options with the authorities during September 2008. For more detail as to why the ultimate option of a blanket guarantee was adopted, I understand that my predecessor as Minister for Finance gave a detailed account of the lead up to the Gov-

ernment decision to introduce a bank guarantee to the Joint Committee on Finance and the Public Service on 26 February 2009. This transcript is available on the Oireachtas website and the Minister was thanked by Deputies from all parties for the full and frank account he gave to the Committee at that time. <http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/DebatesWebPack.nsf/committeetakes/FIJ2009022600003?opendocument>.

In addition, Department of Finance officials gave extensive testimony to the Committee of Public Accounts on 22 July 2010 setting out information prepared during 2008 that related to the Bank Guarantee. The Committee of Public Accounts published documents obtained from the Department of Finance. These documents included a presentation by Anglo Irish Bank to the Department in September 2008. These documents are available at:<http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/Committees30thDail/PAC/Reports/document1.html>.

### Tax Yield

267. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the revenue that could be raised for the Exchequer with the Standard Fund Threshold for pensions reduced to the amount proposed by budget 2013; the income ceiling link for pension tax reliefs reduced to €70,000 per annum, and the tax relief for pension contributions standardised. [34782/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In Budget 2013, I announced that changes to the maximum allowable pension fund at retirement for tax purposes (the Standard Fund Threshold - SFT) and other possible changes to give effect to the commitment in the Programme for Government to cap taxpayers' subsidies for pension schemes which deliver pension income of more than €60,000 will be put in place in 2014. A figure of €250 million was included in the Budget 2013 arithmetic for this measure and was, as clearly stated in the Budget 2013 documentation, a provisional figure pending further detailed analysis of the changes necessary to give effect to the Programme for Government commitment. That analysis is ongoing and involves consideration of changes to the SFT as well as other potential alternative changes relating to the treatment of supplementary pension arrangements.

As regards the proposal to have the income ceiling link for pension tax reliefs reduced to €70,000 per annum, I assume that the Deputy is referring to the current annual earnings cap of €115,000 which operates to limit the level of tax-relieved personal pension contributions in any one year. The annual earnings cap acts, in conjunction with age-related percentage limits of annual earnings, to put a ceiling on the annual amount of tax relief an individual taxpayer can obtain on pension contributions.

A breakdown of the cost of tax relief on employee contributions to occupational pension schemes is not available by income tax rate, as tax returns by employers to the Revenue Commissioners of employee contributions to such schemes are aggregated at employer level. An historical breakdown is available by tax rate of the tax relief claimed on contributions to personal pension plans — Retirement Annuity Contracts (RACs) and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (PRSAs) — by the self-employed and others, to the extent that the contributions have been included in the personal tax returns of those taxpayers.

There is, therefore, only a limited statistical basis for providing definitive figures. However, by making certain assumptions about the available information, the Revenue Commissioners inform me that the combined estimated full year yield to the Exchequer from reducing the current annual earnings cap of €115,000 to €70,000 and confining tax relief to the standard rate of 20% in respect of individual contributions to occupational pension schemes, RACs and PRSAs would be about €555 million.

## **Departmental Expenditure**

268. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of fees paid to a person (details supplied) by his Department since vacating the position as Attorney General on 9 March 2011. [34910/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** My Department has made no payment of fees to the person (details supplied) for the period in question.

## **Tax Collection**

269. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if it is preferred policy by the Revenue Commissioners to recover tax liabilities to seek judgments on the homes of previously self-employed persons as opposed to accepting settlements or instalment orders; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34919/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Firstly, I would like to briefly comment on Revenue's approach to tax collection and in particular its overall compliance and debt management approach. Revenue has a strong focus on making sure that every individual and business complies with the responsibility to pay the right amount of tax or duty, including any interest and penalties which are due, in full and on time. This is an appropriate and correct focus for Revenue and one that I fully endorse. Delays in the collection of tax revenues properly due adds to the level of Government borrowing and public debt interest and confers an unfair competitive advantage on non-compliant businesses. Revenue also has to guard against so-called "phoenix" businesses where tax debts are left unpaid from a previous business.

Where payment of a tax debt in a single sum is not possible for the taxpayer or business, perhaps due to temporary cashflow difficulties, then Revenue may, and regularly does, agree to a phased payment arrangement. In such circumstances the onus is on the taxpayer or business to make realistic proposals to Revenue that will see the debt being addressed in the shortest possible timescale. A key condition of any such arrangement is that current taxes are paid as they fall due.

I note that in 2012 Revenue granted in excess of 16,000 instalment arrangements covering €124 million of debt to taxpayers experiencing cashflow difficulties. I am very happy that this level of concession clearly confirms Revenue's commitment to assist viable businesses during our current economic difficulties.

Remedying late or non-compliance is preferably achieved through engagement with the business or taxpayer, but when that engagement is only partially forthcoming, or perhaps not at all, then Revenue has no option but to utilise measures such as the charging and collection of interest or the deployment of effective enforcement measures to secure payment of the tax debt, to encourage future voluntary timely compliance and to ensure a 'level playing field' for the vast majority of taxpayers who meet their obligations in full and on time.

In circumstances where Revenue has to use enforcement measures to secure collection of outstanding taxes, the type of enforcement deployed will always depend on the specific circumstances of a case. However, Revenue generally refers such cases to either the Sheriff or Solicitor in the first instance. Where the Solicitor option is deployed, there is the possibility of judgments being secured through the Courts which result in instalment orders, or in judgment mortgages being placed on properties. Revenue has confirmed to me that the use of judgment mortgages is normally to secure a tax debt in the event of a property being sold by the taxpayer. It does not necessarily mean that Revenue intends to "force" sale of the property, and the Deputy may wish to be aware that as a matter of operational policy, Revenue has never forced the sale of a

family home.

### Money Laundering

270. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Finance the regulation in place for money being transferred out of the country through over-the-counter media such as Western Union, Moneygram and so on; the controls and checks in place to ensure it is not the reward of illegal activity; the tax rules that apply to this money; and the amount that has been transferred in this way in each of the past three years. [34929/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Central Bank that all firms involved in money transmission or money remittance are required by it to hold an appropriate authorisation to provide the service. All firms involved in money transmission or money remittance are deemed to be a “*designated person*” under the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 (as amended) as they fall within the definition of a “*financial institution*”. In light of this such firms are required to ensure that they have appropriate procedures and controls in place to prevent and detect money laundering.

No specific tax rules apply to transfer of money, however in line with the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010, a report must be forwarded to the Revenue Commissioners if the transfer of money gives rise to suspicion on the part of the transferor. The Central Bank advises that no data are available with regard to the amounts that are transferred in this way.

### Tax Collection

271. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if capital gains tax is collated in such a way as to be able to determine the revenue that would be raised if capital gains tax was higher on vacant land that has benefited in value from rezoning-planning developments; and what the revenue would be if capital gains tax on those occasions was charged at 50%, 60%, 70% and 80%, respectively. [34931/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that they do not have data on “vacant land”. I am further advised that the Central Statistics Office and the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government do not have data on undeveloped land which would enable a yield from a higher rate of CGT, as proposed, to be estimated.

*Question No. 272 answered with Question No. 221.*

### Banking Sector Regulation

273. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if an observer on behalf of the Central Bank or the Department of Finance was ever present at an Anglo Irish Bank board meeting subsequent to the 2008 bank guarantee; if there was a capacity for the presence of such an observer; if so, on what dates the observers were present and on whose behalf; and if the observers ever heard a reference to the existence or content of recorded phone conversations of the bank’s employees. [34944/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Relationship Framework, which was established on 29 March 2012 enabled representatives of the Minister to attend Board meetings in an observer capacity. The representative attended in a passive capacity only and did not play an active role in the meetings. The Board meetings were held monthly and a representative of the Department was usually present. To the best of our knowledge, the content and existence of the tapes was not discussed at the Board meetings following March 2012. I

have been advised by the Central Bank that subsequent to the 2008 Guarantee, the Central Bank implemented a more intensive supervisory approach to covered institutions subject to the Credit Institutions (Financial Support) Scheme 2008. This more intensive approach includes attendance at committee and board meetings periodically. The purpose is to observe internal governance in operation, in order to understand the decision making process and also to be aware of individual risks across the covered institutions. The Central Bank does not participate in such meetings and Central Bank officials are not part of the decision making process at those meetings, nor do they otherwise participate in the management of the covered institution. The Central Bank may subsequently follow up items discussed for clarity to raise concerns e.g. how a particular committee operates.

I have been informed by the Central Bank that as Central Bank officials attend board meetings as part of their supervisory responsibilities they are not able (under Section 33AK) to divulge relevant information. Nevertheless they have informed me that they would take action if relevant matters came to their attention through attendance at these meetings.

*Question No. 274 answered with Question No. 223.*

### **Central Bank of Ireland Investigations**

275. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance when the Central Bank of Ireland first learned of the existence of, as distinct from the content of, the Anglo Irish Bank tapes. [34946/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised that the Central Bank would have been aware of the existence of recorded phone conversations in Anglo Irish Bank. Banks record phone calls for a variety of reasons in the normal course of business and this was known to the Central Bank; however this was not a regulatory requirement. I have been advised by the Central Bank that it was not aware of these tapes or the content contained therein. The Central Bank is carefully studying the various transcripts emerging. This is something that is viewed very seriously. The Central Bank will be liaising with the Garda in this regard and is also examining whether or not breaches of regulatory requirements may have occurred arising from the information contained in the transcripts.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

276. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Finance if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34982/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In general, my Department uses the services of the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Chief State Solicitor for legal advice. However, it also uses outside legal advisers in circumstances requiring legal services of a specific nature. The costs associated with the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Chief State Solicitor are borne by their respective Votes. The following table sets out the information sought by the Deputy in relation to legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General paid by my Department for the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013.

Advisor	Cost 2011	Cost 2012	Cost 2013 (YTD)	Reason
David Lennon BL	€7,638	Nil	Nil	Nyberg Commission of Inquiry Discovery Report
Garret Byrne BL	€6,939	Nil	Nil	Nyberg Commission of Inquiry Discovery Report
Matheson	Nil	€289,604	€670,791	Advice on transactions undertaken by the Minister in relation to Irish Life.
Arthur Cox	€1,169,614	€2,929,427	€981,012	Advice relating to Bank Guarantee Scheme.
David Barniville SC	€36,402	Nil	Nil	Advice in relation to Credit Institutions Stabilisation Act.
Niamh Hyland BL	€24,657	Nil	Nil	Advice in relation to Credit Institutions Stabilisation Act.

### Tax Credits

277. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Finance if the parents of a child with a hearing disability (details supplied) in Dublin 3 qualify for the incapacitated child tax credit scheme. [35017/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The position is that the Incapacitated Child Tax Credit can be claimed where the child is permanently incapacitated either physically or mentally from maintaining himself or herself. I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that a hearing disability is regarded as being permanently incapacitating only if there is severe and permanent deafness affecting both ears which cannot be corrected by a device such as a hearing aid. If the disability is of this nature, the child's parents can claim the credit by completing the claim form for Incapacitated Child Tax Credit, which is available from the Revenue website *www.revenue.ie*. On completion, the form should be sent North City Revenue District, 14-15 Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin 1.

*Question No. 278 answered with Question No. 179.*

### Disabled Drivers Grant Eligibility

279. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if tax relief will be provided for a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35111/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that Section 134(3) of the Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and Statutory Instrument No: 353 of 1994 (Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations, 1994 (as amended) provide for permanent relief from the payment of specified maximum amounts of

VAT and VRT for persons registered under the scheme. The person (details supplied) purchased a new vehicle in July 2012. An Application Form (DD1) was received in Revenue's Central Repayments Office on 6 July 2012 and an Exemption Notification issued on 10 July which permitted the vehicle to be registered exempt from VRT. Invoices in respect of the purchase and adaptation of the vehicle were received on 23 July 2012 and a cheque issued in respect of the VAT repayment due on 10 August 2012.

Where a person avails of relief under this scheme in respect of a new vehicle, the vehicle must be retained in the applicant's possession for at least two years from the date of purchase. Disposal of the vehicle will be allowed within that time period, provided the applicant makes a refund to the Revenue Commissioners of a portion of the amount of VRT-VAT relief granted on the vehicle. This calculation is based on the formula contained in Regulation 15 of the Disabled Drivers and Passengers (Tax Concession) Regulations, 1994. The Revenue Commissioners have advised that the person (details supplied) may purchase a new vehicle at this stage and avail of relief under the Disabled Drivers/Passengers Scheme in respect of the new vehicle provided she refunds €5,896 of the relief granted on the previous vehicle.

### Tax Code

280. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will set out the effective tax rates paid by income earners in certain categories (details supplied). [35112/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the information requested, estimated by reference to the income tax year 2013, is set out in the following table.

#### All Income Earners for Income Tax Year 2013

Range of Gross Income	Effective Rate
€	%
1,001 – 20,000	0.6%
20,001 – 32,800	4.4%
32,801 – 50,000	9.9%
50,001 – 70,000	15.0%
70,001 – 100,000	18.8%
100,001 – 125,000	22.3%
125,001 – 150,000	24.2%
150,001 – 175,000	25.6%
175,001 – 200,000	26.1%
200,001 – 250,000	26.4%
250,001 – 300,000	27.3%
300,001 – 400,000	28.0%
400,001 – 500,000	28.7%
200,001 – 1,000,000	29.2%
1,000,001 – 2,000,000	27.6%

The figures of average effective income tax rates are calculated as the percentage of total income tax liability to gross income.

It should be noted that gross income is as defined in Revenue Statistical Report 2011.

These figures are estimates from the Revenue tax-forecasting model using actual data for the year 2010 adjusted as necessary for income and employment trends in the interim. They are therefore provisional and likely to be revised.

It should be noted that a married couple who has elected or has been deemed to have elected for joint assessment is counted as one tax unit.

### **European Banking Sector**

281. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance his views on comments (details supplied) by Commissioner Barnier on 10 July stating that the proposed bank resolution scheme would not have fully protected the State from the collapse of Anglo Irish Bank. [35119/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The Deputy will be aware that under the Irish Presidency on 26 June 2013 EU Finance Ministers agreed a common position on the proposal for a harmonised bank recovery and resolution regime, which sets out provisions governing how resolution is carried out and how the costs are shared. This EU-wide resolution framework for the managed resolution of banks and investment firms will give national resolution authorities all the tools to prevent crises from emerging in the first place, and address them early on in the process if they do. If the financial situation of a bank deteriorates beyond repair, national authorities will have a common toolkit and roadmap to manage the failure of banks in an orderly fashion, with a “bail-in” mechanism to call on shareholders and creditors when attributing losses of failed banks. The bail-in tool will significantly reduce the cost of bank restructuring for the State if future crises emerge.

Where bail-in is applied, the institutions’ creditors would be written down in a pre-defined order to enable the institution to regain viability. In short, shareholders would bear losses first. Once shareholders claims have been exhausted subordinated creditors would then be written down. Only when these claims have been exhausted could senior creditors be written down, with preference for eligible deposits over €100,000 of natural persons, small, medium and micro-entities. A minimum 8% of total liabilities including own funds must be bailed-in before Member States are afforded a limited flexibility to use other sources of funding including public support.

The Council agreement provides that covered depositors i.e. deposits up to €100,000 that are protected under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DGS) will always be excluded from bail-in. These depositors will be fully protected in any resolution action.

The Deputy raises a question on the specific application of the new bank resolution rules to Anglo Irish Bank in a hypothetical scenario. In the event that the bail-in tool was available when the crisis struck and that Anglo had been put into resolution other decisions surrounding Anglo may have been taken differently, by regulators and by creditors. Even with the benefit of hindsight it would not be possible to estimate with any degree of certainty if the existence of the bail-in tool would have avoided the need for any State support for Anglo.

*Question No. 282 answered with Question No. 179.*

### **VAT Rates Reductions**

283. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Finance his plans to reduce the 23% VAT rate on furniture; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35132/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The VAT rating of goods and services is subject to the requirements of EU VAT law with which Irish VAT law must comply. Under the

VAT Directive Member States may only apply the reduced VAT rate to those goods and services which are listed under Annex III of the VAT Directive. Annex III does not provide for a reduced rate of VAT to be applied to furniture. As such, the only rate that may apply to furniture is the standard rate, which in Ireland is 23%.

### **Vehicle Registration Issues**

284. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for Finance if registration number plates for Tipperary vehicles will change following the merger of north and south county councils next year; the way this will affect motor dealerships and motorists alike; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35146/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that in the context of Local Government reform regulations will be drafted to amend the vehicle registration number plates for counties Tipperary, Limerick and Waterford. When finalised and signed by the Revenue Commissioner, it is intended that these regulations will come into effect from 1 January 2014 and will result in a single registration plate of “T” for Tipperary, “L” for Limerick, and “W” for Waterford, for vehicles first brought into use on or after 1 January 2014. Where a vehicle has been first brought into use in another country prior to 1 January 2014, and subsequently is imported and registered in Ireland after 1 January 2014, the current registration plates (TS, TN, L, LK, W, and WD) will be used for these pre-2014 vehicles. This is to maintain the integrity of the numbering system in place for the years prior to 2014.

The changes are not expected to have an impact on either motor dealerships or motorists, as the registration numbers will continue to be assigned by Revenue at the time of registration of the vehicle.

### **Corporation Tax**

285. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the once-off saving that could be made for the Exchequer if he ended the provision allowing companies to carry back losses for tax rebate purposes. [35154/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The availability of relief for losses incurred in a business is a well established feature of the corporation tax regime, which is in recognition of the fact that a business cycle runs over several years and that it would be unbalanced to tax profits in one year and not allow losses in another. Under Irish tax legislation a company incurring a trading loss in an accounting year can carry that loss back for offset against profits in the immediately preceding year. The carry back of a trading loss is limited to one accounting year back and there must be profits in that year for the provision to be of use to a company. A trading loss in an accounting year may also be carried forward for offset against trading profits of the same trade in subsequent years. Ireland follows the international norm in this regard. I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that the potential saving to the Exchequer, if future claims by incorporated bodies for losses to be offset against previous year's profits were to be disallowed, would depend on the amounts of losses incurred by companies and the extent to which there are profits in the preceding accounting year against which such losses would otherwise be available for set-off. It is not possible to anticipate what these would be.

By way of illustrating this latter point, data from corporation tax returns for 2010 and 2011 (the latest years available) show that for 2010 the amount of trading losses carried back for offset against profits earned in a previous year was €445 million, while the comparable figure for 2011 is in the region of €552 million. The actual saving to the Exchequer in respect of those years under the Deputy's proposal would depend on the tax rate applicable to the profits of the companies concerned but assuming that this was the standard 12.5% rate, the savings under the

proposal would have amounted to about €56 million in 2010 and about €69 million in 2011. The Deputy should note, however, that the estimated savings for 2010 and 2011 are not necessarily indicative of what the savings might be for future years. Also, since under the proposal companies could continue to carry forward losses for offset against future profits, the estimated Exchequer savings outlined would be temporary in nature.

I should add that losses incurred in a trade are a fact of business life and the provision of relief for such losses is a standard feature of our tax code and that of all other countries in the OECD. It would be difficult to justify taxing business income without taking due account of business losses.

### **Tax Yield**

286. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance the current treatment of undistributed reserves in companies; if he will set out the revenue that could be raised for the Exchequer if the tax-free lump sum on retirement for directors, who withdrew them from the undistributed reserves, were reduced to €200,000 and capital acquisitions tax, at a rate of 40%, was applied to the remainder of the money drawn down. [35156/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The tax treatment of undistributed reserves in companies is dealt with by sections 440 and 441 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. Section 440 provides for an additional charge of corporation tax (referred to as a surcharge) on undistributed investment and estate income of close companies. A close company will be liable to a surcharge of 20% on any investment and rental income that is not distributed within 18 months of the accounting period in which that income was earned. Section 441 provides for a similar surcharge of 15% on 50% of any trading or professional income of a professional service close company that is not distributed within 18 months of the relevant accounting period. €2,000 may be retained by a close company without incurring a surcharge.

A close company is a company under the control of five or fewer participators, or of more than five participators who are directors, including their associates. Broadly speaking, a participator is any person with a share or interest in the capital or income of a company. A service company is a close company whose business consists of carrying on a profession or providing professional services or which exercises an office or employment.

With regard to the treatment of tax free lump sums on retirement, I assume that the Deputy is referring to an *ex-gratia* lump sum which might be awarded out of company funds to a director on ending employment with a company and not a pension lump sum paid out of the director's approved pension scheme.

Section 123 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 imposes, (subject to a number of exemptions and reliefs provided under section 201 and Schedule 3 of that Act), a charge to income tax in respect of *ex-gratia* payments made by employers on the termination of an employment, where the payment would not otherwise be chargeable to income tax under general income tax law.

Statutory redundancy payments are exempt from income tax. In addition, *ex-gratia* redundancy payments or retirement gratuities in excess of the statutory redundancy amount can qualify for exemption, with the exempt amount varying according to the number of years service of the individual, the level of earnings in the last three years of employment and the individual's entitlement to any tax-free lump sum from an approved pension scheme.

The maximum tax-free element of an *ex-gratia* payment made in respect of termination of an employment or office is limited to €200,000. This overall limit is a lifetime cap and applies

in all cases other than where an ex-gratia payment is made on death or disability.

There is a separate, additional maximum lifetime tax-free limit of €200,000 on ex-gratia payments made on the death of an employee/director or where the payment is made solely on account of disability of, or injury to, the employee-director.

In the circumstances, charging the excess over €200,000 of any payment at a rate of 40% as capital acquisitions tax, rather than at the marginal income tax rate of 41% plus USC, would result in a loss to the Exchequer.

### **Tax Rebates**

287. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Finance if a person (details supplied) in County Kildare is due a tax refund; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35166/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I have been advised by the Revenue Commissioners that they have reviewed the income tax liability of the person concerned for the years 2009 to 2012 inclusive. On the basis of the information available to them the person concerned is not due a refund of tax. PAYE Balancing Statements (P21s) for 2009 to 2012 inclusive will issue shortly to the person concerned.

### **NAMA Transactions**

288. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if the National Asset Management Agency has advanced a project completion loan to a person (details supplied); the amount of the loan that has been advanced and the project for which this loan has been advanced. [35179/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** As the Deputy is aware, NAMA is prohibited under Sections 99 and 202 of the NAMA Act from disclosing confidential information, including details relating to individual debtors and their properties.

### **NAMA Transactions**

289. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance if Anglo Irish Bank advanced a loan to a person (details supplied) in 2009; if so, his views on a loan being advanced to this person, despite their being a member of the Maple ten; and his views on whether a loan like this should not have drawn the attention of the public interest directors in the bank. [35180/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Special Liquidators that they are not in a position to comment on individual cases. The information requested is confidential in nature and it would not be appropriate for the Special Liquidators to release such information.

### **Disabled Drivers Grants**

290. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Finance the position on VAT and VRT in respect of a disabled person (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35181/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that Section 134(3) of the Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and Statutory Instrument No. 353 of 1994 (Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers (Tax Concessions) Regulations, 1994 (as amended) provide for permanent relief from the payment of specified maximum amounts of VAT and VRT for persons registered under the scheme. The legislation specifies that, where a person satisfies the Revenue Commissioners that s/he is a Disabled Driver who complies

with all the conditions of the Disabled Drivers Scheme, that person shall be entitled to relief in respect of a vehicle with an engine capacity of up to but not greater than 2,000 c.c. It also specifies that relief is subject to a maximum limit of €9,525 in respect of a driver. Following a review, certain changes have been made in the administration of the scheme to ensure that the provisions of Section 134(3) of the Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and SI 353/1994 are being adhered to correctly and that all applications are dealt with strictly as outlined in the legislation.

The person (details supplied) is currently a beneficiary under the scheme and relief was granted on his current vehicle on the basis that it had to be retained for a specified period, which, in this case, expires on 1 December 2014. The person submitted an application form DD1 to change his vehicle on 1 July 2013 and was advised that he could not do so until 1 December 2014. The Revenue Commissioners have made further contact with the person by telephone to clarify the circumstances and he understands the position.

### **Credit Availability**

291. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Finance if he is satisfied that the banks are making adequate credit available to small and medium-sized businesses; the amount which was made available in 2012 and to date in 2013. [35270/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Access to finance for SMEs is a key aspect of An Action Plan for Jobs 2013. It is the Government's vision that all viable businesses operating in Ireland should have the opportunity to access sufficient finance to meet their enterprise needs in a manner that supports growth and employment in the economy. The Government has imposed SME lending targets on the two domestic pillar banks for the three calendar years, 2011 to 2013. Each bank was required to sanction lending of at least €3 billion in 2011, €3.5 billion last year and €4 billion in 2013 for new or increased credit facilities to SMEs. Both banks have achieved their 2011 and 2012 targets and the recent Credit Review Office (CRO) report commented "At the end of quarter 1, both banks' sanctions are on or near where they would be expected to meet the target, taking account of the seasonality which has been identified over the past two years."

The pillar banks are expected to lend to viable businesses both for investment and working capital purposes. The CRO is available to assist businesses which have been refused credit. The recent CRO report shows that the Office upheld the credit appeal in 135 cases or 57% of cases decided. The upheld appeals have resulted in €16.8m credit being made available to SMEs and farms, protecting 1,297 jobs. This shows that there is a strong prospect of success for SMEs going to the CRO and I would strongly encourage SMEs refused credit to seek a review by the Office.

The latest data provided by the Central Bank indicate that the drawdown of new lending by non-financial SMEs from credit institutions in Ireland was €587m in the first quarter of 2013. Figures for the equivalent period in 2012 show drawdowns of €579 million. Figures for the full year 2012 show drawdowns of €2.56 billion.

For the Deputy's information, the relevant statistics for credit made available to small business are accessible at: [http://www.centralbank.ie/polstats/stats/cmab/Documents/ie\\_Table\\_A.14.1\\_Credit\\_Advanced\\_to\\_Irish\\_Resident\\_Small\\_and\\_Medium\\_Sized\\_Enterprises.xls](http://www.centralbank.ie/polstats/stats/cmab/Documents/ie_Table_A.14.1_Credit_Advanced_to_Irish_Resident_Small_and_Medium_Sized_Enterprises.xls)

### **Budget 2014 Issues**

292. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Finance if he will extend the 9% VAT rate for the hospitality sector for the next 12 months in view of the fact that budgetary targets

are being met; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35347/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Any proposal to extend the 9% rate for the hospitality sector into 2014 will be considered in the context of Budget 2014.

### **Budget 2014 Issues**

293. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Finance following on from the decision to reduce the VAT rate from 13% to 9% and the significance of this reduction to the tourism sector here and the very positive implications it has had on the industry in creating and maintaining jobs, giving value for money (details supplied), if he will support the calls to keep the VAT rate at 9% and ensure that Ireland has a strong and competitive tourism industry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35359/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Any proposal to maintain the 9% rate for tourism related services will be considered in the context of Budget 2014.

*Question No. 294 answered with Question No. 232.*

### **Tax Yield**

295. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of revenue he expects to raise from the local property tax from July to December this year; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35365/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** According to Budget estimates prepared by my Department the expected yield for 2013 from Local Property Tax is €250 million. I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that they are confident that this amount will be achieved.

### **Departmental Functions**

296. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Finance the steps he is taking to ensure that conditions do not exist for the re-emergence of a property bubble in the future; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35366/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** While my Department does not attempt to target property prices, it does closely monitor the property and construction sectors as part of its remit for overall economic performance. In that context, my Department has recently established an inter-agency property group, which brings together key departments and agencies to consider the challenges and opportunities relating to the sector. More broadly, overall economic policy is oriented towards securing sustainable levels of growth over the medium to long term.

### **Departmental Functions**

297. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Finance the analysis that has been done by his Department on the role played by the impact of high inflation, due to lack of control of interest rates, in creating the current economic crisis; the way his Department proposes to deal with a possible recurrence of such high inflation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35367/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Ireland's inflation rate during the boom was high by European standards, with Ireland's rate of HICP – the comparative measurement of inflation across Europe – on average 1.3 percentage points higher than the euro area aver-

age between 1999 and 2007. This served to erode Ireland's competitiveness; making it more difficult for Irish firms to compete on the world stage and more vulnerable to external shocks. This manifested in a loss of Ireland's share of world trade from 2002. Looking to the current situation, HICP inflation increased in Ireland by 0.7 per cent year-on-year in June and has averaged just 0.8 per cent over the first half of the year, compared to an average of 1.6 per cent in the euro area. Indeed Irish inflation has now been below, or on par with the euro area average for every month since March 2008. This has led to a significant improvement in economy-wide competitiveness over the period, with consumer prices having improved in relative terms by 14 percentage points compared to the euro area since 2008.

Looking to the future, my Department expects inflation to remain at modest rates for the next few years. Indeed, the European Commission expects Irish inflation rates to be below European rates in both 2013 and 2014.

### Tax Credits

298. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Finance further to Parliamentary Question No. 74 of 3 July 2013, if he will set out the increase in the effective tax rates that would be incurred if the measures set out in the Parliamentary Question were applied (details supplied). [35450/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the increases in the effective income tax rates, estimated by reference to 2013 incomes, that would be brought about by reducing the main personal income tax credits, but not the employee tax credit, in the manner mentioned by the Deputy in Parliamentary Question No. 74 (Ref Number 32383/13) of 3 July 2013 are set out in respect of each specified income range as follows:

Range of Gross Income	Reduction in tax credits Increase in effective rates of income tax. Percentage points %
€100,000 to € 150,000	+ 1.3
€ 150,001 to € 200,000	+ 1.4
Over € 200,000	+0.8

If the impact of a new third tax rate of 48% on taxable income over €100,000 is included with the reductions in tax credits already mentioned the corresponding combined increases in the effective income tax rates are estimated as follows:

Range of Gross Income	Reduction in tax credits and new top tax rate of 48% Increase in effective rates of income tax Percentage points%
€100,000 to € 150,000	+ 1.7
€ 150,001 to € 200,000	+ 2.8
Over € 200,000	+ 4.6

The figures for increases in effective income tax rates are obtained by calculating the tax increases arising from the changes as a percentage of the total gross income of income earners in each of the specified income ranges.

It should be noted that the income ranges shown in the above table relate to Gross Income as defined in Revenue Statistical Report 2011.

These figures are estimates from the Revenue tax-forecasting model using actual data for the year 2010 adjusted as necessary for income and employment trends in the interim. They are therefore provisional and likely to be revised.

It should also be noted that a married couple who has elected or has been deemed to have elected for joint assessment is counted as one tax unit.

### **Budget 2014 Issues**

299. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if he will retain VAT at 9% for labour intensive services and tourism related services; if he recognises the considerable success of the reduction in VAT for such services in 2011; if he recognises that the State has benefited enormously from the provision of employment, the generation of extra economic activity and a reduction of pressures on the social protection system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35469/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Any proposal to maintain the 9% VAT rate for tourism related services will be considered in the context of Budget 2014.

### **VAT Rates Reductions**

300. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Finance if he will reduce the rate of VAT payable by ice cream parlours to 9% in recognition of the labour intensive nature of the business and the heavy dependency that such businesses have on tourism; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35483/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am advised by the Revenue Commissioners that the standard rate of VAT, currently 23%, applies to the sale of ice cream, as it does to most confectionery and sugary foods. In this respect, ice cream parlours selling ice cream to customers must charge the 23% rate on the supply of ice cream. A reduction in the VAT rate on ice cream would lead to pressure to apply a similar reduction to the wider confectionary and sugary foods area which would be costly to the Exchequer. I therefore have no plans to change the VAT treatment of ice cream sold by ice cream parlours.

I would point out that where ice cream is provided as part of a meal by a caterer, such as a restaurant, the meal, including the ice cream element, is liable to VAT at the 9% reduced VAT rate.

### **Tax Yield**

301. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Finance the amount of corporation tax separately on trading income and on non-trading income that has been paid to the Exchequer by all manufacturers of prescription pain killer tablets in each of the past five years and the percentage of overall corporation tax paid by those manufacturers in each of the past five years. [35490/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** I am informed by the Revenue Commissioners that statistics are not available which would enable the information requested by the Deputy to be provided. Prescription pain killers are classified within the same economic sector as a wide range of other pharmaceutical products and could not be separately identified without conducting a protracted investigation of the Revenue Commissioners' records with the commitment of significant resources.

## Budget 2014 Issues

302. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Finance if he will introduce further measures which would help the sale of new cars by reducing the VRT tax and so on; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35504/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** Any amendment in the VRT area will be considered in the context of the annual Budget.

## Prize Bonds

303. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Finance if he will review the new anti-money laundering requirements for prize bonds costing more than €25; his views on raising this to €100 in view of the difficulties for persons who wish to give prize bonds as gifts, as has been a tradition in this country; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35526/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** European legislation has been adopted to protect the financial system and certain professions and activities from being misused for money laundering and financing of terrorism purposes. The anti-money-laundering obligations applicable in Ireland derive from the Third EU Money-Laundering Directive. The Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 was enacted in July 2010 to transpose the Third Money Laundering Directive (2005/60/EC) and its Implementing Directive (2006/70/EC) into Irish Law. Part 4 of the Criminal Justice Act 2010 sets out the obligations of “designated persons” in relation to customer identification. One such obligation set out in the Act is the obligation to conduct customer due diligence, prior to the establishment of a business relationship. Customer due diligence refers to the identification of customers and that of any beneficial owner of financial products associated with the customer.

An Post and the Prize Bond Company are deemed to be a “designated person” under the Criminal Justice Act 2010 as they fall within the definition of a “financial institution”. In light of this, An Post and the Prize Bond Company are required to comply with the relevant provisions of the Act in relation to the sale of Prize Bonds to customers. This means, in practical terms, that customer due diligence must be conducted on all purchases of prize bonds, irrespective of value.

The extent to which any particular person or product may be exempted from the customer due diligence requirements of the Act is determined by reference to the Act having regard to the underlying Directives.

The Central Bank of Ireland has no discretion to exempt certain firms from the requirement to comply with the Act.

In light of the above, I am exploring with the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) and my colleague the Minister for Justice whether or not exemptions available under the Directives may be applied to small value purchases of prize bonds facilitated on behalf of the State by An Post and the Prize Bond Company.

*Question No. 304 answered with Question No. 236.*

## Official Travel

305. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Finance if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure that there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agency ensures that the objec-

tive of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36045/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** In response to the Deputy's question agencies under the aegis of my Department have supplied me with the following information in regard to their policy regarding overseas travel undertaken by staff members on behalf of the agency concerned.

#### **National Treasury Management Agency**

Overseas travel by NTMA staff is an operational matter for the NTMA Chief Executive. The NTMA has business relationships with market participants across the range of its business activities and overseas travel is a necessary part of the performance of the NTMA's business functions.

Under the NTMA travel policy it is a duty of each Senior Executive to ensure that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of persons travelling on official business is kept to a minimum, consistent with the needs of the business unit. They are required to ensure that all travel should be planned so as to reduce the total amount of travel to a minimum consistent with efficiency and that alternatives to travel, such as telephone conference calls or video conferencing be considered.

All overseas travel must be authorised in advance and the reasons for travel must be set out. Reporting on overseas business is carried out as part of the normal reporting of business activities.

#### **The Irish Fiscal Advisory Council**

The Irish Fiscal Advisory Council was established on a statutory basis on the 31 December 2012 under the Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012. The deputy should be aware that the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council is an independent body. The Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012 states that the Fiscal Council may regulate its own procedures and therefore matters relating to the overseas travel undertaken by that agency are a question for the Council themselves.

The Council have advised me that any staff travel undertaken is considered necessary and commensurate to business requirements. Approval is given for all travel and it is directly related to official business requirements. The Council have confirmed that travel undertaken is related to business meetings or training courses, the objective of which cannot be achieved through other means. Finally, the Council staff debrief colleagues on the work undertaken and the objectives achieved following their return.

#### **Financial Services Ombudsman's Bureau**

Travel undertaken by staff of the Ombudsman's Office is undertaken only when required for business reasons. All potential travel is discussed with the Ombudsman before being undertaken. Individual staff representing the Bureau on business would always advise the Ombudsman of meetings attended.

#### **Central Bank**

Under the Central Bank Acts and the Statute governing the European System of Central Banks, the Central Bank is an independent institution not subject to the Minister for Finance or the Government in the discharge of its functions. The management of travel arrangements for the staff of the Bank is determined by the executive of the Board of the Bank.

## Departmental Bodies

306. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Finance if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36217/13]

**Minister for Finance (Deputy Michael Noonan):** The information requested by the Deputy is contained in the following table:

List of non-commercial State sponsored Bodies

Name of Body
National Treasury Management Agency
National Pensions Reserve Fund Commission
National Development Finance Agency
Credit Union Restructuring Board (ReBo)

In addition the New Economic and Recovery Authority has been set up on a non-statutory basis within the NTMA.

The State Claims Agency (SCA) carries out its functions through the NTMA.

## Apprenticeship Programmes

307. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the extent to which a motor mechanic apprenticeship or alternative is available in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare who has completed the leaving certificate and who is anxious to obtain placement as indicated; if there is a list of suitable sponsors, including with State and semi-State agencies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34320/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** To become an apprentice, you must be at least 16 years of age and have a minimum of grade D in any five subjects in the Junior Certificate or equivalent. Where individuals do not meet the minimum requirements they may be registered as an apprentice by an employer if:

- they satisfactorily complete an approved preparatory training course and assessment interview or

- they are over 18 years of age with a minimum of three years relevant work experience and satisfactorily complete an assessment interview.

Apprentices must be employed and registered in their chosen occupation by an employer who has been approved by FÁS. Lists of approved employers are not released in general. Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on Jobs Ireland. Jobs Ireland can be accessed easily and in a number of ways – through the Internet at [www.jobsireland.ie](http://www.jobsireland.ie) or on special touch screen (WATIS) kiosks in Employment Services offices provided by the Department of Social Protection. Where State-Semi-State agencies instigate a recruitment plan for apprentices, these are generally advertised in the national newspapers.

## School Transport Appeals

308. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will ensure that

an appeal lodged by a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath is approved. [34421/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):**

The case referred to by the Deputy, in the details supplied, has been the subject of an appeal to the School Transport Appeals Board. This Board is independent of my Department and I understand that the case was considered at their meeting of 20 June. The Board has informed the family directly of their determination on the matter.

### **School Transport Provision**

309. **Deputy Brian Walsh** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the profit or loss incurred by Bus Éireann in respect of the provision of the school transport scheme each year since 2004. [34427/13]

310. **Deputy Brian Walsh** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if Bus Éireann's profit and loss accounts in respect of the school transport scheme will be made available for each year since 2004. [34428/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):**

I propose to take Questions Nos. 309 and 310 together.

Bus Éireann, which operates school transport services on behalf of my Department, maintains a separate account for the School Transport Scheme. This account is audited each year by independent auditors and accounts in respect of the last number of years are available on my Department's website.

### **Schools Building Projects Expenditure**

311. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total capital cost of school buildings in 2013 and 2014. [34847/13]

313. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total capital cost of school buildings in 2013 and 2014. [35282/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 311 and 313 together.

The total capital allocation available to my Department for the school sector (primary and post-primary) in 2013 is €369 million. In 2014 the expected capital allocation for the school sector is €461 million. The capital allocation for both 2013 and 2014 includes costs associated with the PPP Programme. The 2014 is subject to the budgetary process later in the year.

### **Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme Numbers**

312. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of persons in receipt of the vocational training opportunities scheme in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and estimated total costs in 2013; his plans for the future of the payment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34897/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):** The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) provides second chance education and training courses of up to two years duration for people who are 21 years of age or over, and who are at least six months unemployed. People participating in VTOS who are in receipt of Job

Seekers Benefit or Job Seekers Allowance receive a payment in lieu of this from the Education and Training Board (ETB) for the duration of their course. These payments are funded by my Department.

People participating in VTOS who are in receipt of a Disability Allowance or One Parent Family Payment continue to receive their payment from the Department of Social Protection.

In 2010, there were 5,702 learners enrolled on the VTOS programme, 4,251 of whom were in receipt of a VTOS training allowance from VECs. In 2011, there were 5,650 learners enrolled on the VTOS programme, 4,211 of whom were in receipt of a VTOS training allowance from VECs. In 2012, there were 5,637 learners enrolled on the VTOS programme, 4,335 of whom were in receipt of a VTOS training allowance from VECs.

A total of €79 million funding was provided by my Department in both 2010 and 2011 and almost €80 million in 2012 for the VTOS programme. This included pay and non-pay costs and included the cost of allowances paid to learners. A similar budget has been provided for 2013.

Data on learners are compiled from an annual survey of VTOS learners conducted at the end of December each year. I provided the Deputy with a breakdown of 2012 VTOS participants by county on 8 April 2013. The data for 2013 will be compiled from the annual survey due to be undertaken at the end of December 2013 and a breakdown of this data will be available in early 2014.

*Question No. 313 answered with Question No. 311.*

### **Special Educational Needs Staffing**

314. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason his officials requested the National Council for Special Education to make the announcement of the resource teacher and special needs assistant allocations to schools at the same time; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34180/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The NCSE, through its network of local Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs), is responsible for processing applications from schools for special educational needs supports, including the allocation of resource teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to schools. The NCSE operates within my Department's established criteria for the allocation of Special Education supports and the staffing resources available to my Department.

All schools were advised to apply to the NCSE for resource teaching and SNA support for the 2013/14 school year by 15 March 2013. Following that deadline, the NCSE processed all these applications as expeditiously as possible in order to allow schools and principals sufficient time to plan for the coming school year. The NCSE initially published details of the allocations for SNAs and resource teaching hours for the 2013/14 school year on Wednesday, 19 June 2013. While the extent of demand for resource teaching posts may have been known to my Department in advance of the announcement, the extent of SNA demand only became known just prior to the announcement. As in previous years, it was decided to simultaneously announce resource teaching allocations and SNA support allocations simultaneously. This could only be done once the full demand for all special education supports was known. In particular, this approach gives schools clarity on their supports for the coming year.

As the Deputy will be aware, there will not now be any reduction to resource teaching time for children on the level which applied last year. Full details of resource teaching and SNA allocations for all schools can be found on [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

### **Schools Building Projects Status**

315. **Deputy Michael Moynihan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide an update on the proposed extension of a school (details supplied) in County Cork. [34192/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** In March 2012, the school referred to by the Deputy was allocated devolved funding under my Department's Additional Accommodation Scheme for the provision of two Resource Rooms. In October 2012, the school was allocated additional funding for the provision of access ramps to the front entrance and play areas at the school.

In June 2013, the school again applied for additional funding on the basis that the post-tender costs exceeded the amount of grant allocated. Following a visit to the school by officials from the Building Unit of my Department and an examination of the tender documentation it emerged that the school had increased the scope of works from what was approved. The school authorities were advised that the application for additional funding was unsuccessful as the Department was satisfied that the grant provided was sufficient to provide the level of approved accommodation. The school authorities have been advised to reduce the scope of works to that approved by the Department.

The Deputy will appreciate that there are many competing demands on my Department's capital resources and in this context it must prioritise applications for the provision of much needed additional mainstream classroom accommodation.

### **School Accommodation**

316. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details of the number of schools in County Cork that have benefited from additional accommodation approval in the past 12 months; the amount of money given by his Department to these schools to provide same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34196/13]

317. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details of the number of schools in County Cork that have benefited from emergency works approval in the past 12 months; the amount of money given by his Department to these schools to provide same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34197/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 316 and 317 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is available on my Department's website at [www.education.gov.ie](http://www.education.gov.ie) by clicking on "Schools and Colleges", then "Building Works" and selecting the relevant headings. The Deputy will appreciate that information on the levels of funding approved are commercially sensitive and cannot be released until the projects have been fully completed.

### **Schools Building Projects Application Numbers**

318. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the progress being made on developing new schools in Cork city, Douglas and Carrigaline areas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34198/13]

319. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if his Department has information on the expected increased demand for primary and secondary school places in Cork city, Douglas and Carrigaline areas, over the next five to ten years; the measures being taken to meet this demand; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34199/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 318 and 319 together.

Three new schools are already planned to assist in meeting the need for extra pupil places in the areas to which the Deputy refers. In this regard, a new primary school will open in September 2013 in the Douglas-Rochestown area of Cork city under the patronage of Educate Together. In addition, two new Post-Primary schools are to open in the Carrigaline area. The first of these is a Gaelcholáiste that will commence operation in September 2014 under the patronage of the Cork Education and Training Board. The second is an English medium post primary school which is due to open in 2016. The application process for patronage of this second school is currently under way and the closing date for receipt of applications was 12 July 2013.

### School Funding

320. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on extra funding in 2013 in respect of a school (details supplied) in Dublin 13 to deal with increased running costs; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34288/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The finances of recognised primary schools are a matter for the Boards of Management of these schools. Boards should budget in such a way as to enable them to meet their commitments and their expenditure should not exceed their income. The running costs of recognised primary schools are not budgeted for individually by the Department. It would not be feasible to grant aid over 3,300 schools in this way. The running costs of these schools are met by my Department's schemes of capitation and ancillary services grants. I have no plans to amend the present capitation funding arrangements.

### School Textbooks Rental Scheme

321. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the annual cost of providing free school books for all children in the State. [34304/13]

322. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the current cost of the book rental scheme and the way it operates. [34305/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 321 and 322 together.

The information sought by the Deputy is not readily available to my Department; however, one estimate from publishers' sources suggests that the Irish school book market is worth approximately €60 million per annum.

At present, my Department provided approximately €15m in total to first and second level schools by way of book grants in 2012 and the same level of funding was provided in 2013.

As the Deputy may be aware I launched new "Guidelines for Developing Textbook Rental Schemes in Schools" on 28 January last. These Guidelines provide practical advice to primary and post-primary schools on how rental schemes can be established and operated. The aim of

the Guidelines is to help as many schools as possible to start such book rental programmes.

The publication of these Guidelines follows a survey of schools by the Department, and which I published in May 2012. This had a 99% response rate at primary level, and showed that 76% of primary schools operate a book rental scheme. At second level, the response rate was lower, at 44%. Of those which did respond, 88% of those in the VEC sector and 73% of those in the Community and Comprehensive sector operated a book rental scheme.

I believe these results show that we have a good foundation to build on across the country. I hope that schools that are not yet operating book rental schemes will be encouraged to use the Guidelines to introduce them. If they do, it will result in substantial savings for parents. Schools which already have rental schemes can save parents up to 80% of the cost of buying new books.

A special “Guide for Parents” was also published, to inform them of how the schemes operate and how parents can help schools to establish and run them. I have been very clear in my support for book rental schemes. All of us who are parents know how expensive textbooks can be and what a burden it places on already hard pressed families at the start of every school year.

I am pleased to see the high level of book rental schemes in operation at primary level and I believe that these Guidelines will encourage this practice across all schools in our education landscape.

I also published a Report on Textbook Rental Schemes in Schools and the Allocation of Textbook Grants by the Department of Education and Skills in May 2012. This report presented four policy options to encourage schools to establish textbook rental schemes. None of the options is ideal, each one involves a trade-off of advantages and disadvantages.

I will continue to monitor the number of schools operating book rental schemes, and if it proves necessary consider further steps to encourage schools to do so.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

323. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if his attention has been drawn to the significant delays in speech and language therapeutic input for children of schoolgoing age and that the Health Service Executive has stated these delays of one year and over will grow due to increasing demands and constraints on the service that waiting times of more than one year will remain for each subsequent block of therapy session required; and the provision he has made for these children when they inevitably require special needs assistance in class. [34346/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that my Department provides an extensive range of supports for pupils with Specific Speech and Language Disorder (SSLD), including provision for the establishment of special classes for Specific Speech and Language Disorder in primary schools. Speech and Language Therapy services are provided to these classes by the Health Service Executive (HSE).

Pupils who are not enrolled in a special class for SSLD and who meet the criteria for Specific Speech and Language Disorder, as outlined in my Department’s Circular 0038/2007, may qualify for additional teaching support where he/she is enrolled in mainstream school.

There are approximately 4,932 pupils at Primary level and 912 pupils at Post Primary level for whom resource teaching hours were allocated to schools to support pupils enrolled with

SSLD for the current academic year. Pupils with mild speech and language difficulties may qualify for supplementary teaching support from within the school's general allocation of learning support/teaching support.

Pupils with SSLD who also have significant care needs may also qualify for access to Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support. It is important to note that SNAs and teachers have separate yet complementary roles. The class teacher is responsible for educating all pupils in his/her class, including any pupil with a special educational need. In this task, the teacher may be supported by a learning support teacher and/or resource teacher. SNAs are allocated to schools to enable them to support pupils with disabilities who also have significant care needs.

Finally, I wish to advise the Deputy that the provision of health supports, including Speech and Language Therapy services, is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive. I advise the Deputy to refer her question in this regard to my colleague, the Minister for Health, for his attention and reply.

### **Departmental Agencies Issues**

324. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, all appointments made to the National Council for Special Education consultative forum since March 2011; the tenure of each appointment; the rationale for the appointment of each person; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34366/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy will be aware that under Section 22 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) is required to appoint a Consultative Forum to consult on matters relating to the performance of its functions.

The Act requires that the NCSE consults with the Minister, parents associations, voluntary bodies, recognised trade unions, staff associations, the National Disability Authority (NDA), the Psychological Society of Ireland and other persons having a special interest in or knowledge relating to the education of children with disabilities. The NCSE is required to have regard to the desirability of having members of the Forum who themselves having special educational needs, their parents and representatives. I have requested the NCSE to provide the Deputy with details of the appointments made to the Forum since March 2011.

### **Special Educational Needs Staffing**

325. **Deputy Áine Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if resource hours will be reduced in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Cork. [34367/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), through its network of local Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs), is responsible for processing applications from schools for special educational needs supports, including the allocation of resource teaching support to schools. The NCSE operates within my Department's established criteria for the allocation of Special Education supports and the staffing resources available to my Department. All schools were advised to apply to the NCSE for resource teaching and SNA support for the 2013-14 school year by 15 March 2013 and the NCSE has published details of Resource Teaching allocations for all schools on its website *www.ncse.ie*, based on the number of valid applications received. The NCSE has been authorised to restore the level of resource teaching alloca-

tions which can be provided for students with special educational needs to 2012-13 levels. It is a matter for schools to monitor and utilise their allocation of additional teaching support to best support the needs of identified pupils, in accordance with my Department's guidance. All schools have the names and contact details of their local SENO. Parents may also contact their local SENO directly to discuss their child's special educational needs, using the contact details available on [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

### **Education Schemes**

326. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on a review of July provision hours in respect of children (details supplied) in County Donegal; the reason these children are not being treated individually; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34368/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy will be aware that the July Education Programme is available to all special schools and mainstream primary schools with special classes catering for children with autism that choose to extend their education services through the month of July. My Department also provides for a July Programme for pupils with a severe-profound general learning disability. Where school based provision is not feasible, home based provision may be grant-aided.

The allocation of home based provision to siblings for July Provision is reflective of the school grouping principle. This is where one teacher is allocated to a class of six pupils at the appropriate educational level, primary or post primary. Accordingly it is considered appropriate, as in a school situation, that a tutor can provide tuition at the appropriate educational level to more than one sibling at that level simultaneously in the home.

However, in recognition of the differing needs of some siblings, separate allocations were considered on a case by case basis. Applications in this regard required supporting documentation including professional reports from a psychologist or a letter from the principal of the school detailing the existing arrangements currently in place for the respective children and providing reasons why they cannot be tutored together in the home.

An appeal regarding the joint allocation to the siblings to whom the Deputy refers was unsuccessful and the original decision was upheld.

### **Departmental Staff Recruitment**

327. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if a person who is currently employed at executive officer level in an Irish university can transfer to a similar level in his Department. [34384/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Over the last number of years, my Department has been obliged under the Employment Control Framework (ECF) to significantly reduce its staffing numbers. In 2013 the Department will further reduce its level of staffing in order to meet its ECF target by the end of the year and it is anticipated that such reductions will continue to be required over the coming years.

My Department does not therefore have any fillable vacancies, nor do we anticipate having any in the medium term. If my Department did have a fillable vacancy with sanction from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to fill the post, we could seek to transfer an

individual at the appropriate equivalent level, from the wider education sector's redeployment panel. I understand that there are currently no individuals at this or equivalent level working in the wider education sector who have been declared as surplus on the redeployment panel.

If the Deputy wishes to forward details of a particular case, I will ask my officials to look into the matter.

### **Schools Building Projects Status**

328. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide details of school building projects, including emergency works, building extensions, prefab replacement and new-build projects, that have been announced since 1 January 2013, at primary, post-primary and third level, broken down by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34387/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information for primary and post primary schools requested by the Deputy is available on my Department's website at [www.education.gov.ie](http://www.education.gov.ie) by clicking on "Schools and Colleges", then "Building Works" and selecting the relevant headings. There have been no announcements in relation to third level building projects since 1 January 2013.

### **Consultancy Contracts Issues**

329. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34401/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested is being collated at present and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

### **School Transport Provision**

330. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if provision will be made in the forthcoming academic year to facilitate bus transport for post-primary students in Celbridge, County Kildare who are currently attending Leixlip Confey College, County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34412/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):** Under the terms of the Post Primary School Transport Scheme, children are eligible for transport where they reside not less than 4.8 kms from and are attending their nearest education centre as determined by the Department-Bus Éireann, having regard to ethos and language.

Bus Éireann, which operates the school transport scheme on behalf of my Department, has advised that the children in question are not attending their nearest education centre and are therefore not eligible for school transport.

Consideration cannot be given to the establishment of services for children who are not eligible for school transport.

### **Site Acquisitions**

331. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a school (details supplied) in County Wicklow has been asked for a local contribution in view of the fact that the site was given in lieu of the local contribution at the time; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34448/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** As the Deputy will be aware, a new 3 classroom school building was constructed in 2010 for the school to which he refers using public funds. At the time, payment of a local contribution of €63,000 was required for projects of this nature. The school authority indicated that they would transfer the school site to my Department. However, the proposed transfer did not proceed and the school authority decided to pay the local contribution to my Department. The site remains in the ownership of the relevant diocesan trust.

### **State Examinations Commission**

332. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason unemployed teachers have lost out again on exam supervisory posts this summer in view of eight to ten jobs going to full-time or retired staff; the reason this is happening; if the figure of eight to ten posts going to full-time or retired staff is correct; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34456/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The State Examinations Commission has statutory responsibility for operational matters relating to the certificate examinations including organising the holding of examinations, determining procedures in places where examinations are conducted including the supervision of examinations and making arrangements for the marking of work presented for examination. In view of this I have forwarded your query to the State Examinations Commission for direct reply to you.

### **Schools Building Projects Applications**

333. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on a school extension application (details supplied) in County Wicklow; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34462/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I can confirm to the Deputy that the school to which he refers has an application with my Department for large scale capital funding. I wish to advise the Deputy that my Department recently sanctioned a devolved grant to facilitate the provision of 3 additional mainstream classrooms at the school to meet immediate accommodation demand. This project is currently under way. This funding is in addition to the €700,000 grant provided in 2010-2011 to provide for additional mainstream classrooms and some specialist accommodation, also to cater for increasing enrolments. Following on from the success of the 2012 prefab replacement scheme which provided funding for the replacement of over 458 prefab units, I recently announced that a further 46 schools would be offered grants in 2013 to build permanent accommodation to replace 115 prefabs, subject to the schools meeting certain criteria. All 46 schools have now been written to, including the school referred to by the Deputy, and school responses are currently being assessed to determine the level of accommodation to be replaced under this scheme. The school in question will be notified of the outcome of this assessment shortly.

### Exchequer Savings

334. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the net and gross annual saving to the Exchequer if VEC chief executive officers' salaries were capped at €100,000. [34481/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy will be aware that, on 1 July 2013, the 33 VECs were replaced by 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs). Accordingly, I propose to answer the Deputy's question by reference to the Chief Executives of the ETBs. There are three categories of ETBs for the purposes of pay scales for Chief Executives. Based on the mid point of these scales, my Department estimates that the gross annual saving to the Exchequer, were pay for the Chief Executives to be capped at €100,000, is of the order of €144,000. As Chief Executives are employees of and paid by the ETBs, information relating to the net saving is not available.

### Exchequer Savings

335. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the annual saving to the Exchequer if current State subsidies to private schools were withdrawn; if he will provide a single figure and not a list of schools with accompanying figures. [34482/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** In December 2011 I announced that an analysis of fee income in the 55 fee charging schools would be carried out. This was in order to inform future policy decisions about the nature and extent of Exchequer funding provided to fee charging schools.

The report published in January 2013 is an analysis of the funding position of the 55 schools which charge fees; it is not an audit. It shows the funds available to these schools through charging fees, which are not available to secondary schools in the Free Scheme.

The Report shows that fee charging schools have a discretionary income of €81.3 million that would not be available to similar sized schools (i.e. size as determined by enrolment) in the free scheme.

The Report is available at <http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Fee-Paying-Schools-Analysis-of-Fee-Income.pdf>.

### Student Grant Scheme Applications

336. **Deputy Eric Byrne** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a person (details supplied) was refused a grant; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34490/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that the applicant referred to by the Deputy was issued with a decision on 10 May 2013 advising her that she was deemed ineligible to receive a grant. I understand from SUSI that incomplete documentation had been received. If an individual applicant considers that she-he has been unjustly refused a student grant, or that the rate of grant awarded is not the correct one, she-he may appeal, in the first instance, to SUSI. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student

Grant Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form will be available on request from SUSI.

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

337. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34511/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Details relating to the non-commercial State agency boards under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills which are paid fees can be downloaded from my Department's website - <http://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Agencies/Details-of-Membership-of-State-Boards/Board-Fees.pdf>. The day to day management of agencies, including the payment of expenses in accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines, is a matter for the management of each agency and is generally available in the annual reports and accounts of agencies. Additional information is available from the websites of the bodies in question, and information on an annual basis is generally collated in their annual reports which are available on their websites.

Information details of fees paid and current members of each board can be found in the following table.

Board Fees as at 12th July, 2013

Body	Chairperson Rate	Members Rate [Note 1]
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	n/a	n/a
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	€20,520	€11,970
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)		See Note 2
Grangegorman Development Agency	€8,978	n/a
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	€11,970	€7,695
Irish Research Council	n/a	n/a
Léargas	n/a	n/a
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	n/a	n/a
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	n/a	n/a
National Council for Special Education	n/a	n/a
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	n/a	n/a
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)		See Note 3

Body	Chairperson Rate	Members Rate [Note 1]
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)		See Note 3
Residential Institutions Statutory fund (RISF)	n/a	n/a
Skillnets Ltd	€8,978	€5,985
State Examinations Commission	n/a	n/a
The Teaching Council	n/a	n/a

**n/a = Not Applicable**

Note 1: Public servants who sit on State boards or who may be nominated to such boards independently of their public service employment are not paid remuneration in the form of board fees

Note 2: The Chairperson of the Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse (CICA) is a member of the Judiciary and is not paid by the CICA. The ordinary members of the Commission, who were all salaried are not currently on the payroll.

Note 3: The Chairman of the RIRB is paid an annual salary equivalent to a serving President of the Circuit Court subject to abatement to take account of his pension.

In relation to the RIRC, the Chairman's salary is linked to his former Supreme Court judicial salary subject to pension abatement. Since October 2011, the Chairman has taken a 50% voluntary reduction in his salary.

The other board members of both the RIRB and the RIRC are paid a per diem rate and pension abatement applies in the case of members receiving a pension from the State. The per diem rate from 1st January 2011 is €668.

### **Members of Boards under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills**

Body	Name
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	John Carr (Chairperson)
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Mairéad Ní Chualáin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Anna Ní Chartúir
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Bernadette Ní Dhuibhir
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Cathnia Ó Muircheartaigh
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Fíona Uí Uiginn
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Clodagh Ní Mhaoilchiaráin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Bríd Uí Lubhaing
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Yvonne Ní Mhurchú

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Name
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Máire Nic Niallais
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Mícheál Ó Broin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Séan Ó Tuairisg
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Bláthnaid Ní Ghréacháin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Máire Ní Chuinneagáin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Deirbhile Nic Craith
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Robert Cronin
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Daithi Sims
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Michael Doherty
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Máire Uí Chonghaile
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Seosamh Ó Coinne
An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	Kevin De Barra

Body	Name
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Michael Dempsey (Chair)
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	John McKeon
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Michael Moriarty
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Emer Gilvarry
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Annette Hughes
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Paddy McDonagh
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Brendan Murphy
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Sean O'Longáin
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Margaret Sweeney
An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS)	Paul O'Toole (DG FÁS)

Body	Name
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	Judge Sean Ryan
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	Ms. Marion Shanley
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	Ms. Anne Mc Loughlin

Body	Name
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	Mr. Fred Lowe
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	Ms. Mary Fennessy

Or before that should that Board be dissolved by the Minister in accordance with the legislation

Body	Name
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. John Monahan (Chair)
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Dr. Noel O'Connor
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Ms Maeve Maguire
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Cllr Áine Clancy
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Dick Gleeson
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Brendan Sharkey
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Jim Curran
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Ms Anne O'Connor
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Ciarán Nevin
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Damien Kilgannon
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Frank Magee
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Mr. Peter Murray
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Ms Deirdre Prince
Grangegorman Development Agency (GDA)	Ms Elva Duffy

Body	Name
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr. John Hennessy (Chairperson)
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Dr Maeve Conrick
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Dr Maria Meehan
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Prof Ellen Hazelkorn
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Cllr Brendan Byrne
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr John Dolan
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr Eamonn Grennan
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Prof Eileen Harkin Jones
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Prof. Marijk van der Wende
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Professor Anthony Staines
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Ms Siobhan Harkin
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Ms Kathleen Lough
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr Gordon Ryan
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Dr Jim Mountjoy
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr Paddy Cosgrave
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Dr Brian Thornes
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Dr Mary Canning
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr Bahram Bekhradnia
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Mr. John Logue

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Name
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Orla Feely (Chairperson)
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor John Brewer
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Mr Ivan Coulter
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Anita R. Maguire
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor James Gleeson
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Alan F. Smeaton
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Dr Thomas M. Cooney
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Caroline Fennell
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Rowena Pecchenino
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Sheila Greene
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Professor Sean Ryder
Irish Research Council (IRC)	Dr Eucharia Meehan

Body	Name
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Michael McLoughlin (Chairperson)
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Des O'Loughlin
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	James Doorley
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	John Gilmore
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Fidelma Collins
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Hugh MacConville
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Gerardine Skelly
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	VACANCY

Body	Name
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr. Barra Ó Briain (Chair)
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr Paul King
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr. Peter Brown
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms. Shira Mehlman
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms. Patricia McDonagh
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms. Eilis Coakley
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr Colum Layton
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms. Breda Naughton
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms. Fidelma Collins
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr. Jim Mullin

Body	Name
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Mr. John Wynn
National Centre for Guidance Education (NCGE) Management Committee	Ms Elaine Quinn

Body	Name
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Brigid McManus (Chairperson)
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Declan Kelleher, (Vice Chairperson)
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Michael Redmond (Vice Chairperson)
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Clive Byrne
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Deirbhile Nic Craith
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Marie Griffin
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Nóirín Hayes
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Christina Henehan
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Philip Irwin
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Bernie Judge
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Dr. Daire Keogh
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Marie Therese Kilmartin
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Mary Lillis
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Pádraig MacFhlannchadha
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Dr. Rose Malone
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Hilary McBain
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Patricia McCrossan
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Dr. Kara McGann
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Jim Moore
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Michael O'Brien

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Name
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Seán Ó Coinn
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Bryan O'Reilly
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Sr. Betty O'Riordan
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Bríd Uí Riordán
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Eileen Salmon

Body	Name
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Eamonn Stack (Chair)
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Seán Ó Murchú
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Prof Mark Morgan
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Philip O'Callaghan
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Maureen Costello
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Jenny Ennis
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Eithne Fitzgerald
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Michael Coughlan
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Mary Friel
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Helen Guinan
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Joan Russell
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Pat Kinsella
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	James O'Grady

Body	Name
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Mr. Gordon Clark (Chair)
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Dr. Padraig Walsh (Chief Executive)
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Dr. Barbara Brittingham (international expert)
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Ms. Una Buckley (learner representative)

Body	Name
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Dr. Margaret Cullen
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Ms. Mary Danagher
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Dr. Ann Louise Gilligan
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Ms. Joanne Harmon
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Mr. John Logue (USI nomination)
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Mr. James Moore

Body	Name
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Judge Esmond Smyth (Chairperson)
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Ms. Samantha Cruess Callaghan
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. Harry Bugler
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. Fionnuala O'Loughlin
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Mr. John Campbell
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. William Delaney
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. Helen Cummiskey
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. Ruth Pilkington
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Ms. Ann O'Brien
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Dr. Mary Bluett
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)	Ms. Dariona Conlon

Or until such time as the Board has completed its functions whichever is earlier.

Body	Name
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Judge Francis D. Murphy (Chairperson)
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Mr. Brendan Gogarty
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Mr. John Dalton
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Ms. Ita Mangan
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Judge John F. Buckley

Questions - Written Answers

Body	Name
Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC)	Mr. Colm Gaynor

Or until such time as the Board has completed its functions whichever is earlier.

Body	Name
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Ms. Sylva Langford (Chairperson)
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Mr. Paddy Doyle
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Ms. Bernadette Fahy
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Ms. Phyllis Morgan
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Mr. Martin Power
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Mr. Damian Casey
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Mr. Austin Currie
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Mr. Tom Daly
Residential Institutions Statutory Furnd (RISF)	Ms. Katherine Finn BL

Body	Name
Skillnets Ltd	Domhnall MacDomhnaill (Chairperson)
Skillnets Ltd	Karl McDonagh
Skillnets Ltd	Mairead Divilly
Skillnets Ltd	Niall Saul
Skillnets Ltd	Brendan McGinty
Skillnets Ltd	Ian Talbot
Skillnets Ltd	George Hennessy
Skillnets Ltd	Peter Rigney
Skillnets Ltd	Nuala Keher
Skillnets Ltd	Henry Murdoch
Skillnets Ltd	Terry Hobdell
Skillnets Ltd	Paul O'Brien
Skillnets Ltd	Eamonn Devoy

Body	Name
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Mr Richard Langford (Chairperson)
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Mr Joe Harrison (Deputy Chairperson)

Body	Name
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Mr Martin Carney
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Dr Brian Fleming
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Dr Caroline Hussey

## Teaching Council

Body	Name
The Teaching Council	Michael Ó Gríofa (Chair)
The Teaching Council	Dympna Mulkerrins
The Teaching Council	Eimear Marie Cole
The Teaching Council	Brid Ní Raghallaigh
The Teaching Council	John Conlon
The Teaching Council	Kathleen O'Connor
The Teaching Council	Milo Walsh
The Teaching Council	Derbhile De Paor
The Teaching Council	Diarmuid Ó Murchú
The Teaching Council	Ms Anne McElduff
The Teaching Council	Mr Declan Kelleher
The Teaching Council	Lily Cronin
The Teaching Council	Christopher Maginn
The Teaching Council	Noel Buckley
The Teaching Council	Bernadine O'Sullivan
The Teaching Council	Fergal McCarthy
The Teaching Council	Marie Humphries
The Teaching Council	Kieran Christie
The Teaching Council	Mr Michael Barry
The Teaching Council	Ms Elaine Devlin
The Teaching Council	Ms Bernie Ruane
The Teaching Council	Mr Michael Gillespie
The Teaching Council	Prof Michael Hayes
The Teaching Council	Ms Marie McLoughlin
The Teaching Council	Dr Andrew McGrady
The Teaching Council	Dr Joe O'Hara
The Teaching Council	Ms Eileen Flynn
The Teaching Council	Dr Ken Fennelly
The Teaching Council	Ms Joan Russell
The Teaching Council	Mr Patrick McVicar
The Teaching Council	Ms Áine Lynch
The Teaching Council	Eleanor Petrie
The Teaching Council	Marie Clarke
The Teaching Council	Frank Turpin
The Teaching Council	Dr Séan Rowland
The Teaching Council	Deirdre Matthews
The Teaching Council	Brendan McCabe

**Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration**

338. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34527/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The details requested in relation to the annual salary of all non-commercial State Sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of my Department are outlined on the table.

Agency	Remuneration*
An Chomhairle um Oideachais Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	The remuneration of the CEO is calculated in accordance with the salary scale of Senior Inspector.
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	The CEO/Secretary of the Commission is an Assistant Principal Officer, i.e. a civil servant on secondment.
Residential Institutions Statutory Fund Board	Equivalent to Principal Officer in the civil service.
FÁS	The Director-General's salary is for that of a Category 2 agency, i.e. above that of an Assistant Secretary General in the civil service.
Grangegorman Development Agency	The CEO is paid at the rate that relates to a Category 4 agency. (Principal Officer in the civil service).
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	The CEO grade is linked to that of Assistant Secretary in Civil Service
Irish Research Council	There is no CEO, as it comes under the auspices of the HEA.
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	Salary scale of €92,730 - €114,366, which related to the Principal Officer (Higher Scale) in the civil service.
National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)	Remuneration is equivalent to school principal salary scale, based upon an Adult Education Guidance Coordinator's salary, qualifications allowances and a principal's allowance to serve as Director.
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	Equivalent to Deputy Chief Inspector salary scale.
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	Equivalent to Assistant Secretary General in the civil service
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	Total remuneration €133,888 of which €88,505 was pensionable Difference between the office-holder's university salary and the CEO's rate of remuneration.**
Residential Institution Redress Board (RIRB)	The CEO/Secretary is a Principal Officer on secondment.

Agency	Remuneration*
Residential Institution Review Committee (RIRC)	The CEO/Registrar is a retired Court Registrar who is paid one day per week, taking into account pension abatement.
Skillnets Ltd	€119,136. This represents a voluntary reduction of 10%
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	Equivalent to Assistant Secretary General in the civil service.
The Teaching Council	Equivalent to Principal Officer (Higher) in the civil service.

\*Salary scales can be downloaded from the Department of Finance website

\*\*Difference between the office-holder's university salary and the CEO's rate of remuneration.

### Departmental Expenditure

339. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accounting; and the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34543/13]

341. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accounting; and the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34575/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 341 and 339 together.

The information requested is being collated at present and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

### Departmental Expenditure

340. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 provided for employees of his Department. [34559/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information sought by the Deputy is contained in the table. Staff engage in relevant third level and further education programmes in their own time to broaden and maintain their learning and competencies and to build capability to enable the Department meet current and future challenges. My Department also provides a range of targeted training courses annually in areas, including financial training, legal training, Freedom of Information (FOI), business process improvement (BPI), IT technical and end user training, management and leadership. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is also provided for members of the Inspectorate and Psychological Service (NEPS) to address their priority training and development needs.

Cost of third level programmes for the 2012/2013 academic year paid to date.

Course	College/University	Cost
BA Human Resource Management	National College of Ireland	4,017.27
MSc in Information Systems Strategy	Dublin City University	5,655.00
Doctorate of Education/ Doctorate Education Psychology (4 staff)	NUI Maynooth	17,734.00
Diploma Sa Ghaeilge	NUI Maynooth	1,000.00
Diploma in Public Management	Institute of Public Administration	2,500.00
PhD in Complex Systems and Computational Social Science	University College Dublin	3,600.00
Corporate MBA	University of Limerick	8,160.00
Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management	Institute of Public Administration	2,500.00
MSc Spatial Planning	Dublin Institute of Technology	1,335.00
BA in Law (3 staff)	Athlone IT	7,500.00
BSc in Information Technology	Dublin City University	1,650.00
Diploma in Payroll Management	Irish Payroll Association (IPASS)	1,590.00
Bachelor of Business Studies	Institute of Public Administration	2,980.00
Diploma in Law	Institute of Public Administration	2,750.00
BA in Public Management (3 staff)	Institute of Public Administration	8,460.00
BA in Public Administration	Institute of Public Administration	2,820.00
Certificate in Civil Service and State Agency Studies (4 staff)	Institute of Public Administration	3610.00
Diploma in Official Statistics	Institute of Public Administration	1,450.00
Train the Trainer (FETAC Level 6)	Midland School of Childcare	500.00
MA in Public Management	Institute of Public Administration	5,000.00
Diploma in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Dublin Counselling and Therapy Centre	4,700.00
-	Cost of Academic Programmes	89,511.27

Question No. 341 answered with Question No. 339.

### Exchequer Savings

342. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34591/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** My Department's travel and subsistence allocation for 2013 is €1.59 million. This allocation supports key functions within my Department such as the provision of schools inspections, psychological services to schools and oversight of capital projects.

The savings that would be associated with reductions in travel and subsistence allocation as queried by the Deputy are shown below: 1% - €15,900; 5% - €79,500; 7% - €111,300; 10% - €159,000; 12% - €190,800; 15% - €238,500; 17% - €270,300; and 20% - €318,000.

### Exchequer Savings

343. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34607/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information sought by the Deputy is provided in the table. The training budget meets the cost of training and development for the Department's staff in administrative, professional, technical and service grades, and aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff to build capability to enable the Department meet current and future challenges and promote personal development of staff.

Between 2008 and 2012 expenditure on training (excluding the National Educational Psychological Service) was reduced by 50% to less than €0.5 million. Expenditure on staff training in NEPS reduced by over 20% since 2008 although the number of psychologists employed by my Department increased. In addition NEPS operates a range of programmes at school level (e.g. Incredible Years, Friends for Life) through which training is delivered by NEPS staff to teachers for delivery to students.

Expenditure	Percent- age Reduc- tion						
Expendi- ture on Staff Training and Development in 2012 (Excl. Psychologi- cal Service - NEPS)	5% reduction	7% reduc- tion	10% reduc- tion	12% reduc- tion	15% reduction	17% reduc- tion	20% reduc- tion
478,266	23,913	33,479	47,827	57,392	71,740	81,305	95,653
Expenditure on Training and Develop- ment in 2012 (NEPS)							
108,854	5,443	7,620	10,885	13,062	16,328	18,505	21,770

Expenditure	Percent- age Reduc- tion						
Total Expen- diture in 2012							
587,120	29,356	41,099	58,712	70,454	88,068	99,810	117,423

### Exchequer Savings

344. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement, paid to his special advisers. [34623/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The following tabular statement gives the current salaries of my Special Advisers and the annual saving to the Exchequer if their salaries were capped at the first point of the Principal Officer grade, post the implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement. Officials at my Department wrote to the Department of Finance at the time of the appointments and requested sanction to place the individuals on a point of the pay scale for the position nearest to their earnings before appointment. They have not received any salary increase since March 2011. In accordance with the terms of the Ethics in Public Office Acts copies of the appointees' contracts of employment together with details of their qualifications were laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas on 28 October 2011.

Appointee	Position	Salary	Annual Saving if salary was capped at the first point of the Principal Officer salary scale (€75,647)
John Walshe	Special Advisor	€87,258	€11,611
Deirdre Grant*	Special Advisor	€81,673	€6,026

\*Maternity leave absence temporarily covered by Siobhán Creaton since 30th April 2013 who is currently being paid at the first point of the Principal Officer grade.

### Education Grants

345. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the back to education grants available to stay-at-home mothers who do not have enough credits and are not in receipt of social welfare payments and wish to avail of the opportunity to do a full or part-time course to enhance their chances of returning to the workplace. [34641/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The main financial support available to students attending further or higher education is the Student Grant Scheme administered by Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI). Under the terms of the scheme, grant assistance is awarded to students who meet the prescribed conditions of funding, including those relating to nationality, residency, previous academic attainment and means. In order to be considered for a grant a student is required, under Section 8(1)(b) of the Student Support Act 2011, to be in attendance on a full-time basis. To determine eligibility for the 2013/14 academic year the student should submit an online grant application to SUSI via [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie). Eligibility

for welfare support is determined and administered by the Department of Social Protection. Any change to its qualifying criteria for the back to education allowance is a matter for my colleague, the Minister for Social Protection.

### **Post-Leaving Certificate Courses**

346. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the non-EU student fee could be waived in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Wicklow; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34662/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):** Access to Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses for non-Irish nationals in the following categories is available under the same conditions as apply to Irish nationals: EU nationals; persons who have refugee status in Ireland – be that convention or programme refugee status; persons in the State as the spouse of an EU national, where the EU national has moved from one country to another within the EU to work; persons (including their dependent spouse and children) who have been granted leave to remain in the State on humanitarian grounds; persons who have permission to remain in the State as the parents of a child born in Ireland - such a right is not extended to siblings of the Irish born child; and those asylum applicants covered by the terms of a Government decision of 26 July 1999. These participants may have to pay a registration charge to cover the cost of exam fees, student services, uniforms or course equipment. In addition a €200 PLC participant charge is also payable unless learners can claim an exemption. Full medical card holders, BTEA recipients and those eligible for maintenance grants are exempt from paying this participant charge. All other categories must pay the full economic fee currently €3,653 per annum. As the person referred to by the Deputy does not come under any of these categories she is required to pay the full economic fee. The administration and collection of the economic fee is a matter for the PLC College and Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board which has responsibility for the day to day management and running of the college.

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

347. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34678/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Information relevant to the Deputy's question is currently being compiled. A further reply will issue to the Deputy as soon as possible. Broadly speaking, I am satisfied with the amount of progress made to date and I believe that by the conclusion of the Government's full five year term, much of the ambitious reform agenda set out in that document will have been implemented.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

348. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34694/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested by the Deputy in respect of agencies is not held centrally by my Department. The awarding of contracts, the expenditure incurred, and the procurement arrangements by agencies under the aegis

of my Department is an operational matter for the agencies themselves. If the Deputy has an interest in a particular agency then officials in my Department will request the agency concerned to provide the relevant information in so far as it is possible. All bodies under the aegis of my Department are aware of the need to achieve value for money while conducting procurement. The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies outlines the responsibilities of state bodies in this regard and my Department regularly updates the aegis bodies on developments in relation to public procurement policy and practices. For the Deputy's information details of agencies within the remit of my Department can be downloaded from the Department's website - this information is updated when any relevant changes occur - at <http://www.education.ie>.

### Special Educational Needs Services Provision

349. **Deputy Nicky McFadden** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the way in which a proposed new model to improve the way resources for children with special educational needs are allocated to schools will be developed; the organisations and representative bodies involved in consultations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34729/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy is referring to the comprehensive policy advice recently published by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) on Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Schools, which is available on its website [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie). The NCSE consulted widely with parents of children with special educational needs, representative bodies and the education partners in preparing this policy advice. *Inter alia*, the report recommends that under the new resource allocation model proposed by the NCSE in the report, children should be allocated additional resources in line with their level of need, rather than by disability category. I have, as suggested by the Report, requested the NCSE to establish a Working Group to develop a proposal, for consideration, for a new model for the allocation of teaching supports for children with Special Educational Needs based on the profiled educational needs of children in schools. Mr Eamonn Stack, who is the NCSE Chairperson and former Chief Inspector in my Department, will chair this working group and the group, which will include parents, will begin its work immediately. The work of the group will be a matter for the working group itself. The group will report to me in September on the progress of its work, to develop advice on how to reform the way the substantial additional teaching resources for pupils with special educational needs are allocated in the school system.

### Special Educational Needs Staffing

350. **Deputy Tom Barry** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if there is a method of geographically prioritising or moving between panels for teachers who have children with special needs. [34745/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The core function of the re-deployment arrangements is to facilitate the redeployment of all surplus permanent teachers to other schools that have vacancies. The redeployment of all surplus permanent teachers is key to the Department's ability to manage within its payroll budget and ceiling on teacher numbers. Thereafter, schools are required under the panel arrangements to fill permanent vacancies from supplementary panels comprised of eligible fixed-term (temporary/substitute) and part-time teachers. The redeployment arrangements for the 2013/14 school year are set out in the Staffing Circular 0013/2013 and the FAQ document on Main Panels, both of which are available on the Department's website. Surplus permanent-CID holding teachers may opt to accept a post outside the 45 km radius of their former school within their existing panel area. The arrangements

for panel access for fixed term (temporary/substitute) and part-time teachers for the 2013/14 school year are set out in Department Circular 0038/2012 which is available on the Department's website. The supplementary panel set up in accordance with the arrangements set out in this circular will be used for appointments to full-time permanent posts in primary schools but only where those posts are not otherwise required to facilitate the redeployment of surplus permanent and CID holding teachers.

### **Education Grants**

351. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the grants available to a person (details supplied) in County Donegal. [34785/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The main financial support available to students attending higher education is my Department's Student Grant Scheme. Under the terms of the Student Grant Scheme, grant assistance is awarded to students who meet the prescribed conditions of funding, including those which relate to nationality, residency, approved course, previous academic attainment and means. Currently maintenance support is not available for students entering postgraduate courses. However, those who meet the qualifying conditions for the special rate of grant will be eligible to have their postgraduate tuition fees paid up to the maximum fee limit of €6,270. A postgraduate student may qualify to have a €2,000 contribution made towards the costs of their fees. The income threshold for this payment is €31,500 for the 2013/14 academic year, increasing relative to the number of family dependants. The Deputy will appreciate that in the absence of all of the relevant details that would be contained in an individual's application, it would not be possible to say if the student would qualify for a student grant. To determine eligibility for the 2013/14 academic year the student should submit an online grant application to Student Universal Support Ireland via [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie). Eligibility for welfare support is determined and administered by the Department of Social Protection. Any change to its qualifying criteria for the back to education allowance is a matter for my colleague, the Minister for Social Protection.

### **Special Educational Needs Services Provision**

352. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Education and Skills his views on the cuts made regarding special needs assistants and that no further cuts be made to special education. [34787/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the level of resources being devoted to supporting children with Special Educational Needs has been maintained at €1.3 billion this year. This includes provision for 10,575 Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and nearly 10,000 Learning Support and Resource Teachers. These resources have been protected despite the ongoing severe financial position and a requirement to make expenditure savings across a range of areas. I wish to clarify also that there has been no reduction to the overall number of SNA posts being provided for schools for the coming school year. This provision remains at 10,575 posts, which will ensure that all children who qualify for access to SNA support for the coming school year will receive access to such support. It is important to note that the level of SNAs required to support children with special educational needs changes from year to year in line with the enrolment of different children with different care needs. The care needs of individual children can also change from year to year. The NCSE takes these factors into account when allocating SNAs to schools. Therefore, even if the number of students receiving SNA support rises, this does not necessarily mean that the required number of SNAs to support their care needs should rise by a similar percentage. The initial allocation of SNAs for the coming school year will support about 22,000 pupils. This is at about the same level supported in December 2012, despite the passing of 6 months. To date the NCSE

has allocated over 10,490 SNA posts to schools which leaves over 80 posts available for allocation during the school year. The NCSE has advised that they have processed all applications for SNA support this year and have allocated the level of SNA support to schools that it considers will meet the care needs of all qualifying pupils. These allocations have been made in line with DES policy and there has been no change in the policy or its application this year. Details of the SNA allocations which have been made to schools by the NCSE for the 2013/2014 school year are now available on the NCSE website [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie), which provides details of the SNA allocations for each school on a school by school and per county basis.

### **Pupil-Teacher Ratio**

353. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the projected annual savings to be made in increasing the pupil-teacher ratio in Gaeltacht schools from September 2013 onwards. [34831/13]

355. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the number of gaelscoileanna affected by the changes to the pupil-teacher ratio from September 2013 onwards; and if he will provide details of those schools that will lose a teaching post as a result of the change in staffing schedules. [34833/13]

356. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills his views that the favourable pupil-teacher ratio for gaelscoileanna reflected the greater challenges facing small and developing gaelscoileanna implementing a full curriculum through Irish and the inequalities relating to the lack of resources and supports at these schools; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34834/13]

357. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if the decision to increase the pupil-teacher ratio in gaelscoileanna impedes schools in Gaeltacht areas delivering the curriculum through Irish; and his views on the concerns that some schools will require an additional 20 plus pupils to maintain their current staffing levels. [34835/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 353 and 355 to 357, inclusive, together.

The Government has protected front-line services to schools to the greatest extent possible in Budget 2013 and there will be no reduction in teacher numbers in primary schools for the 2013/14 school year as a result of the budget. The DEIS scheme for disadvantaged schools is also fully protected with no overall changes to staffing levels or funding as a result of the budget. Schools in Gaeltacht areas have historically operated the same staffing schedule as ordinary schools for the creation of a classroom teaching post at primary level. A slightly more favourable schedule operated for the Gaeltacht schools to retain a post between the bands of four and twelve classroom teachers. The standardisation of the staffing schedule for Gaelscoileanna so that it is the same as that which applies to primary schools generally was one of a number of measures introduced in Budget 2011 by the previous government to control and reduce teacher numbers. These changes came into effect from September 2011. Given the financial constraints in which this country now finds itself, it is not possible to reverse these changes.

The criteria used to allocate teachers to schools, including Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools, are published annually on the Department's website. The key factor for determining the level of staffing resources provided at individual school level is the staffing schedule for the relevant school year and pupil enrolments on the previous 30 September. The staffing arrangements for the 2013/14 school year are set out in Circular 0013/2013 which is available on the website. The staffing schedule is the mechanism used for the allocation of classroom teachers to all primary schools. It operates in a clear and transparent manner and treats all similar types

of schools equally irrespective of location. It currently operates on the basis of a general average of 1 classroom teacher for every 28 pupils with lower thresholds for DEIS Band 1 schools.

The Staffing Schedule significantly advantages small primary schools. For example, a 2-classroom teacher school with 30 pupils has an average class size of 15 pupils. In contrast, a typical 10-classroom teacher school with 272 pupils has an average class size of 27.2 pupils. One of the savings measures in Budget 2012 was a phased increase in the pupil threshold for the allocation of classroom teachers in small primary schools, including Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools. The impact of the budget measure means that the staffing levels in small primary schools will no longer be as favourable as they were previously but they will still be better than the Staffing Schedule general average of 28:1 that operates in medium to larger schools. A new appeals process for small schools was introduced as part of the Budget 2012 measure. This enables small schools that are due to lose a classroom post as a result of the budget measure to retain the classroom post on the basis of their projected enrolments. The allocation process at individual school level is currently under way. The final staffing position for all schools will ultimately not be known until the autumn. At that stage the allocation process will be fully completed and all appeals to the Staffing Appeals Board will have been considered.

### Exchequer Savings

354. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the projected annual savings that are to be made in cutting the Gaeltacht grant for teachers delivering the school curriculum through the medium of Irish; the teaching through Irish allowance and the island allowance. [34832/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Government approved a number of measures relating to public service allowances following a public service wide review of allowances and premium payments conducted by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. There was no specific figure attributed as a saving for the abolition of the Gaeltacht, Teaching through Irish and Island allowances for new beneficiaries to teaching. The total of such allowances paid to current beneficiaries is in the order of €5.3 million. Savings will therefore relate to levels of turnover among such teachers in future years.

*Questions Nos. 355 to 357, inclusive, answered with Question No. 353.*

### Gaelscoileanna Issues

358. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide an update on his plans to overhaul the school admissions policies and the way he intends to bring to an end the practice of Irish-medium schools prioritising the enrolment of pupils from Irish-speaking families at primary and second level. [34836/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** As the Deputy is aware, I have indicated that I will shortly bring to Government draft heads of a Bill – the Education (Admission to School) Bill 2013. I will seek to publish the Bill in draft form to allow a full public discussion, including inputs from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection and the education partners. I also intend to publish draft regulations that I plan to make when the Bill is enacted. In bringing forward these proposals, my policy objective is to ensure that every child is treated fairly and that the way in which schools decide on applications is structured, fair and transparent. As the Bill and the Regulations will be published in draft form, they will also be subject to a lot of detailed scrutiny before becoming law. I will be reflecting carefully on the views expressed in the consultation process to ensure they strike the

right balance between school autonomy and fairness in our education system.

### **Legal Matters**

359. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34980/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Information relevant to the Deputy's question is currently being compiled. A further reply will issue to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Education Grants**

360. **Deputy Martin Ferris** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason a person (details supplied) in County Kerry attending Queen's University, Belfast, was told that they were not entitled to assistance under the Student Grants Scheme as they were attending a course outside the State, when the rules clearly state that Queen's is one of the qualifying colleges in the North of Ireland; and if he will ensure that this is not happening to other students; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35019/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The Deputy is correct in stating that full-time postgraduate courses of not less than one year duration in Queen's University, Belfast are approved under the Student Grant Scheme. I understand that the grant application from the student in question was unsuccessful and that she appealed this decision to the appeals officer in Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) who upheld the original decision as the reckonable income was over the limit for a postgraduate grant. Where an appeal is turned down in writing by SUSI and the applicant remains of the view that the scheme has not been interpreted correctly in his or her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the independent Student Grants Appeals Board.

### **Education and Training Provision**

361. **Deputy Ann Phelan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on vocational training in the hospitality industry (details supplied) in which there has been training for the past two years; his plans to alter this situation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35124/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Fáilte Ireland's remit includes that it "encourage, promote and support the recruitment, training, and education and development, of persons for the purposes of employment in connection with the tourism industry in the State". However, my Department has a broader concern that training and education offerings are aligned with the needs of industry. Officials of my Department met representatives of the hospitality industry to discuss the issue and we will continue to examine the availability of genuine job opportunities in this area and examine the training offerings in that light. It should be noted that FÁS has recently developed a small number of foundation level courses in catering and hospitality through its Local Training Initiatives, Community Training Centres and Specialist Training Providers. These awards-modules are offered in response to specific local requests where there is a recognised employment opportunity.

### **Education and Training Boards Issues**

362. **Deputy Ann Phelan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the opportunities for the vocational education committees to participate in the hospitality industry (details supplied);

and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35126/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):** Education and Training Boards (ETBs) formerly Vocational Education Committees are already involved in providing hospitality courses as part of their further education programmes. The Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) programme and the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) offer a number of hospitality courses on a full or part-time basis at levels 3 to 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). SOLAS, the new education and training authority, is being established as a funding and oversight body under the aegis of my Department to ensure the provision of 21st century high-quality further education and training programmes to learners. Section 9 of the Further Education and Training Bill 2013 provides that SOLAS, once established, will prepare and submit to the Minister, a strategy in respect of further education and training. SOLAS will promote Further Education and Training provision that is relevant to individual learner needs and national skills needs, this includes the needs of business and future skills needs.

### **School Accommodation**

363. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the findings of the report following the pilot study of school accommodation in five areas as announced by his Department in June 2012. [35142/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The purpose of the pilot study undertaken by my Department was to develop an inventory of education infrastructure and related community assets in five areas in the country. The geographic areas included for the pilot study were Tuam, Navan, Clonmel, Portlaoise and part of Limerick City. The research information gathered from this pilot study was in a format compatible with current Department information systems, such as the Geographic Information System (GIS). This allows my Department to overlay the new information such as site maps, floor plans and other data on to its current GIS mapping system. It is the intention that this expanded inventory data will now be developed on an incremental basis at a national level.

### **School Accommodation**

364. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide a list of schools in County Limerick that have been approved for additional accommodation and emergency works from January 2012 to July 2013 and a value for each of these projects; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35182/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested by the Deputy is available on my Department's website at [www.education.gov.ie](http://www.education.gov.ie) by clicking on "Schools and Colleges", then "Building Works" and selecting the relevant headings. The Deputy will appreciate that information on the levels of funding approved are commercially sensitive and cannot be released until the projects have been fully completed.

### **School Textbooks Rental Scheme**

365. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the efforts being made by his Department to ensure that all resource material and relevant textbooks relating to the school curriculum at primary and post primary level are made available to teachers and pupils. [35272/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** It is a matter for the Board of Management of each individual school to decide on school policy in relation to the use and choice of textbooks. The Department's Inspectorate, in its work with schools, promotes active learning approaches rather than over-reliance on textbooks and workbooks. The Department has issued Guidelines for Developing Textbook Rental Schemes in Schools and these outline a number of strategies to avoid the need for workbooks or to allow workbooks to be reused from year to year. *Scoilnet.ie* is the Department's official education portal. It contains curriculum relevant digital resources and supports for use by teachers. The site is being redeveloped in 2013 and will support the inclusion and sharing of learning objects. The website will become a repository of Open Educational Resources (OER) where the assets and resources developed by teachers, former support services and others involved in education can be centrally collated and found. The site currently has approximately 13,000 existing resources. The Department provides funding towards the provision of ICT equipment for both Primary and Post-Primary schools where an extension/refurbishment project or a new school building is being provided. For Primary Schools the allocation is €5,000 per mainstream classroom. For Post-Primary Schools the amount of funding for ICT equipment is calculated based on the Schedule of Accommodation and the subjects being taught in the school.

### Student Grant Scheme Applications

366. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if a person (details supplied) in County Laois will be considered for fees which were incurred as part of the approved course they attended; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35302/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** As part of the Government's budgetary considerations and the Comprehensive Expenditure Review carried out in 2011, a decision was made to abolish payments by this Department towards the cost of attendance at Gaeltacht courses by students commencing their programme of primary initial teacher education. The decision came into effect for the 2012-13 academic year. As the Deputy will be aware, priority is being given to protecting resources for front line services in the coming years. However, to assist with the costs of the Gaeltacht placement, primary initial education students who are in receipt of a student grant which includes a 100% fee grant, or who would have qualified for a full fee grant but for the Free Fees Schemes, can apply for funding towards travel and accommodation costs under the field trip element of a fee grant, subject to the normal terms and conditions of the student grant scheme. Students in third-level institutions experiencing exceptional financial need can apply for support under the Student Assistance Fund. This Fund assists students, in a sensitive and compassionate manner, who might otherwise, due to their financial circumstances, be unable to continue their third level studies. Information on the fund is available through the Access Officer in the third level institution attended. The fund is administered on a confidential, discretionary basis.

### Schools Building Projects Expenditure

367. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding his Department has granted in respect of capital building and refurbishment projects, as well as rental accommodation and to which schools, in Lismore, County Waterford, in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35331/13]

368. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding his Department has granted in respect of capital building and refurbishment projects, as well as rental accommodation and to which schools, in Waterford city, in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35332/13]

369. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding his

Department has granted in respect of capital building and refurbishment projects, as well as rental accommodation and to which schools, in Dungarvan, County Waterford, in each of the past five years. [35333/13]

370. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the funding his Department has granted in respect of capital building and refurbishment projects, as well as rental accommodation and to which schools, in towns (details supplied) in County Waterford, in each of the past five years. [35334/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 367 to 370, inclusive, together.

The capital funding provided to primary and post-primary schools in County Waterford (includes Waterford City) in each of the years 2008 to 2012 was as follows: 2008 - €14.584 million; 2009 - €10.887 million; 2010 - €13.609 million; 2011 - €13.502 million; and 2012 - €4.019 million. Expenditure on rented accommodation over the same five year period in County Waterford was as follows: 2008 - €1.661 million; 2009 - €1.106 million; 2010 - €0.879 million; 2011 - €0.679 million; and 2012 - €0.579 million. The Deputy will appreciate that without the specific school names and school roll numbers it is not possible to supply data in respect of any given geographical area due in particular to confusion that may arise with the identification of addresses. My Department in most instances is in a position to provide data in respect of schools that are clearly identified and will oblige if requested.

#### **Schools Building Projects Expenditure**

371. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the monetary value per school invested by his Department in primary and post-primary schools in Galway West since March 2011, including new school builds, emergency funding and extensions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35357/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** A total of €26,102,698 has been invested in the schools infrastructure in Galway between March 2011 to the end of June 2013, of which €17.103 million related to primary schools and the remainder related to post-primary schools. Full details of the Department's capital programme are published annually on the Department's website at *www.education.gov.ie*.

#### **Physical Education**

372. **Deputy Jonathan O'Brien** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will respond to concerns raised by the National Activity Planning Group that physical education will be downgraded from 180 hours to 100 hours over the three years of the junior certificate curriculum; and what are his plans for PE at post-primary level. [35372/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The new Junior Cycle is focused on helping students make a greater connection with learning, improving the quality of learning and teaching that takes place in schools and will ensure better literacy and numeracy outcomes for all our young people. The importance of physical activity in schools is reflected in the new Framework for Junior Cycle, which I launched in October 2012. A short course in PE is currently being designed by the NCCA. It will be available for consultation in the autumn and it will be available for schools to implement from September 2014. This short course will be designed for 100 hours duration. Schools may choose to incorporate this short course into their junior cycle programme, either for certification purposes or not for certification. Alternatively, they may choose not to opt for the new course and may instead continue to use existing courses or other approaches to meet the requirements in this area. Therefore, there is no basis

for the concerns expressed by the National Activity Planning Group. Understandably, some concerns have been expressed that the proposed reforms will result in the downgrading of certain subjects taught in second level schools. I want to assure you that this is certainly not the intention of the reforms and I am satisfied this will not be an unintended consequence either. Overall, I am in favour of leaving the decision on what is offered at the discretion of the school, and of students having as broad a range of options to choose from that reflects their interests. Curriculum choice is important in motivating students to learn and to remain in school to completion of senior cycle. I have every confidence that the changes envisaged in the Framework for Junior Cycle will ensure that the place of physical education will be retained and given a new impetus across the junior cycle curriculum.

### **School Accommodation**

373. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the number of prefabs in primary and secondary schools here at the end of March 2011; the number that have been replaced since, providing a breakdown of the figures by 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number projected to be replaced by end of 2013; the spend on construction of replacement classrooms for prefabs in each of those years including to date in 2013 and projected spend to end of 2013; the saving on prefabs in each of those years and to the end of 2013; his long-term plans for this issue; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35381/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** There were 1,694 prefabricated units being rented at end of March 2011 at a cost of €23.2 million in primary and post-primary schools. This compares with 1,490 units being rented at end of March 2012 at a cost of €19.7 million and 1,273 units being rented at end of March 2013 at a cost of €17.5 million. Please note that one prefab unit may consist of one or more classrooms and/or ancillary accommodation. This reduction results from the delivery of projects from my 5 year Capital Plan and the 2012 Prefab Replacement Initiative.

The Deputy will be aware that under my Department's 2012 Prefab Replacement Initiative, approval was given to 170 schools nationally to replace 458 prefab units with permanent accommodation. In excess of €42 million was allocated for this initiative of which €27.2 million has been paid to date. Of these a total of 142 projects have gone to construction and 55 of these have been completed. The total rental savings achieved by the 55 completed projects are in the region of €1million. These figures will be subject to change as further projects are completed. The initiative will result in savings of approximately €5m per annum on the rental of prefabs in these schools in the coming years.

In June this year, I announced a further Prefab Replacement Initiative to replace in the region of 115 prefabs in 46 schools with permanent accommodation. A total of €15 million has been allocated in 2013-14 and this further initiative will result in additional rental savings of €2.5 million per annum. Replacing prefabs is part of the Government's €475 million education infrastructure plan for 2014. The Plan will provide modern, high quality accommodation for pupils and teachers and construction related jobs for workers around the country.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

374. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the amount spent or invested by his Department over the past twenty years on capital infrastructure, summer or emergency works and other schemes for school buildings on educational buildings (details supplied) in Dublin 8; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35382/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The capital funding that issued to the school in question since 2000 amounts to almost €400,000. The funding was issued under the following programmes: 2000-2011 Minor works Grant (included a PE equipment grant on two occasions) - €87,054; 2011 Summer Works Scheme - €109,773; 2005 Summer Works Scheme - €125,770; 2004 Minor Capital Works - €17,961; 2003 Consultant Fees - €4,356; 2002 Furniture - €1,918; 2000 Windows - €51,917.

*Question No. 375 withdrawn.*

### **Schools Building Projects Administration**

376. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the number of new primary or secondary classrooms that have been built or provided for, including the replacement of prefabs, since 1 March 2011 by his Department; the cost of same and the projected number of classrooms to be built by the end of 2013 and the cost of this building work; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35384/13]

377. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide a breakdown by county of the number of new primary and secondary classrooms that have been built since 1 March 2011, including the replacement of prefabs, and a breakdown by amount spent in each county for these capital works in that time; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35385/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 376 and 377 together.

In the primary school sector new permanent mainstream classrooms are provided under the Large Scale Projects Programme, the Additional Accommodation Programme and the Prefab Replacement Initiative. In 2011 a total of 413 classrooms were delivered on the completion of 42 large-scale projects and 267 classrooms were provided under the Additional Accommodation Scheme. In 2012 a total of 421 classrooms were delivered on the completion of 39 large scale projects and 212 classrooms were provided under the Additional Accommodation Scheme. Data in respect of 2013 will not be available until the end of the year. The Deputy will be aware that under my Department's 2012 Prefab Replacement Initiative, approval was given to 170 schools nationally to replace 458 prefab units with permanent accommodation. In excess of €42 million was allocated for this initiative, of which €27.2 million has been paid to date. Of these a total of 142 projects have gone to construction and 55 of these have been completed. The total rental savings achieved by the 55 completed projects are in the region of €1million. These figures will be subject to change as further projects are completed. The initiative will result in savings of approximately €5 million per annum on the rental of prefabs in these schools in the coming years.

In June this year, I announced a further Prefab Replacement Initiative to replace in the region of 115 prefabs in 46 schools with permanent accommodation. A total of €15 million has been allocated in 2013-2014 and this further initiative will result in additional rental savings of €2.5 million per annum. In the post-primary school sector the provision of permanent school places is measured in terms of the Long Term Projected Enrolment (LTPE). In 2011 a total of 8,640 permanent school places were delivered in the post-primary sector with the completion of 9 large-scale projects and 42 additional accommodation projects. In 2012 a total of 5,541 additional permanent school places were delivered in the post-primary sector with the completion of 9 large-scale projects and 29 additional accommodation projects. Data in respect of 2013 will not be available until the end of the year. In 2011 the total expenditure on large scale projects amounted to €205 million and on additional accommodation amounted to €56 million. In 2012 the total expenditure on large scale projects amounted to €224 million and on additional

accommodation amounted to just over €56 million. It is not possible to predict accurately the number of classrooms that will be completed in 2013 due to the many variables that can arise on the school building programme. Capital funding available for the delivery of classrooms is on a par with last year but actual expenditure and the level of drawdown of such funding varies from month to month and the 2013 outturn will only be available at year end. Data on a county basis are not readily available.

### **Education Grants**

378. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the total number of higher education maintenance grants awarded in the last academic year; the number awarded to students with a parent working in agriculture or the farming sector; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35386/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The statistical breakdown requested by the Deputy will not be made available to my Department by the grant awarding authorities until the end of the academic year.

### **Special Educational Needs Services Provision**

379. **Deputy Michael Lowry** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will change Special Education Circular 02/05 to include Down's syndrome as a low incidence disability; if he will ensure that children with Down's syndrome are given access to maximum resource hours; if he will commit to making a decision on this matter prior to the summer recess; if he will provide an update on the progress that has been made since meeting representatives of Down Syndrome Ireland on 25 June; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35437/13]

382. **Deputy John Deasy** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason Down's syndrome is not on the list of 11 low incidence disabilities that qualify for resource teaching hours in view of the fact that it occurs in 0.2% of the population; the action that is being taken to deliver a more appropriate model than GAM to meet the complex learning needs of children with Down's syndrome following the critical report of the Children's Ombudsman. [35502/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 379 and 382 together.

I wish to explain to the Deputies that pupils with Down's syndrome attending mainstream schools may receive additional teaching support in primary schools, either under the terms of the General Allocation Model (GAM) of teaching supports, if the pupil's educational psychological assessment places the pupil in the mild general learning disability/high incidence disability category, or through an allocation of individual additional resource teaching hours which are allocated by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), if the child is assessed as being within the low incidence category of special need, as defined by my Department's Circular Sp Ed 02/05. Pupils with Down's syndrome may be allocated resources under the category of mild general learning disability, or under the categories of moderate general learning difficulty or Assessed Syndrome, in conjunction with another Low Incidence disability. I wish to advise the Deputies also that the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has a formal role under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004 in advising me in relation to any matter relating to the education of children and others with disabilities. My Department requested that the NCSE consider the issue of whether Down's syndrome should be reclassified as a low incidence disability in all instances, regardless of assessed cognitive ability, in the context of its preparation of comprehensive advice on how the educational system supports children with special educational needs in schools. The NCSE report on Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Schools has now been published and is available on

the NCSE website *www.ncse.ie*. The report recommends that under the new resource allocation model proposed by the NCSE in its report, children should be allocated additional resources in line with their level of need, rather than by disability category. The NCSE has recommended that in the short-term, pupils with Down's syndrome who are in the Mild General Learning Difficulty (Mild GLD) category should continue to be supported by schools' Learning Support allocation in the same way as other pupils with a Mild GLD. The NCSE policy advice did not recommend that an exception should be made for children with Down's syndrome who are in the mild general learning difficulty range, over other children who are in the mild range and who also may have other co-morbid conditions. However, the NCSE report states that it is confident that the introduction of a new allocation model will overcome the difficulty posed by all children with mild general learning disabilities, including children with Down's Syndrome, who have additional difficulties and who can be supported according to their level of need and in line with their learning plan process. In the meantime, schools are reminded that they can differentiate the level of learning support granted to ensure that available resources are used to support children in line with their needs. I have requested the NCSE to immediately proceed to establish a Working Group in order to develop a proposal for consideration for a new Tailored Allocation Model, which is set out as one of the principal recommendations of the report. In the course of my recent meeting with Down Syndrome Ireland a number of issues were raised which I consider merit further examination. Accordingly I have asked my officials to consider these issues further and to provide a full response to Down Syndrome Ireland on the issues raised as soon as possible.

### **Schools Building Projects Expenditure**

380. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, the schools in County Kerry that have received or have been allocated funding since March 2011 for summer works schemes, emergency works, additional accommodation, new school buildings and any other capital investment, the amount involved in total and the amounts in respect of each development; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35471/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** In the period from March 2011 to the end of June 2013 a total of just over €26 million was invested in schools infrastructure in County Kerry, of which €17 million related to primary schools and the remainder related to post-primary schools. In the absence of specific school details it is not possible to provide the Deputy with the breakdown of the beneficiaries of these investments although full details are published on my Department's website at *www.education.gov.ie* annually. If there are specific schools that the Deputy has a particular interest in he may of course revert with details and I shall procure the relevant information regarding same for him.

### **Education and Training Provision**

381. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills further to Parliamentary Question No. 131 of 10 July 2013, if he will outline the specific education and training supports to lone parents and the unemployed and the nature of referrals from the Department of Social Protection; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35488/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** FÁS Training Programmes are open to all unemployed individuals. In relation to determining the eligibility of individuals to participate in FAS Training Programmes this is generally a matter for the Department of Social Protection. In addition, all further education programmes are open to lone parents and the income support they receive while on these programmes is a matter for the Department of Social Protection. It is a matter for the Department of Social Protection through their new Intreo

system to refer unemployed individuals and lone parents to an appropriate training or education provider, depending on their individual entitlements and requirements.

*Question No. 382 answered with Question No. 379.*

### **Public Sector Pensions Issues**

383. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on a pension review in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 5. [35507/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The pension application referred to by the Deputy is one of many being processed by officials in the Pension Unit of my Department. As the Deputy will appreciate, all applications to the Pension Unit are addressed in priority order with greatest priority given to first time applicants for retirement. As the person to whom the Deputy refers is already in receipt of pension payment and the application is for a revision of pension due to additional teaching service having been accrued since his original retirement, the application is assigned a lower priority. Officials in the Pension Unit of my Department will shortly be in contact with the person in order to progress the application.

### **Student Support Schemes Issues**

384. **Deputy Charlie McConalogue** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the position on the Student Universal Support Ireland application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Donegal; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35513/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Officials in my Department have confirmed with Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that while details of social welfare income has been supplied other income details is outstanding. When the requested documentation is returned the student will be notified directly of the outcome. If an individual applicant considers that she/he has been unjustly refused a student grant, or that the rate of grant awarded is not the correct one, she/he may appeal, in the first instance, to SUSI. Where an individual applicant has had an appeal turned down, in writing, by SUSI, and remains of the view that SUSI has not interpreted the scheme correctly in his/her case, an appeal form outlining the position may be submitted by the applicant to the Student Grant Appeals Board. The relevant appeal form will be available on request from SUSI.

### **School Transport Provision**

385. **Deputy Martin Heydon** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the reason annual school transport charges for category B have increased, while the other categories, A, A1, C and D, remain unchanged; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35522/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills (Deputy Ciarán Cannon):** The Category B charge referred to by the Deputy is the charge applicable to children who are eligible for school transport under the terms of my Department's Primary School Transport Scheme. This charge, which was introduced in 2011, was increased in 2012 as part of the budgetary process from €50 to €100 per school year. The charge assists in ensuring that seats provided on buses are utilised to the maximum extent possible. This level of charging, which equates to 55 cent per day per child for a return journey to school, is still very modest when compared with the average unit cost of some €1,000 per year for each child transported. Eligible primary children who hold valid medical cards (GMS Scheme) are exempt from paying charges. All school transport charges remain unchanged for the 2013-14 school year.

### Student Support Schemes Issues

386. **Deputy Emmet Stagg** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will advise the reason the IT section of Student Universal Support Ireland has failed to answer a security breach notified to them on 29 May 2013. [35547/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** Officials in my Department have been informed by Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) that the issue raised by the Deputy has been reviewed internally. SUSI are currently reviewing their approach regarding the provision of password information in an email in a way that will retain user friendliness and user security. I also understand from SUSI that: 1. All passwords and bank details in the system are encrypted; 2. A user account become blocked after 8 failed attempts and the account is blocked for 20 minutes; 3. HTTPS is used, so all communication is over an encrypted channel; and 4. The database is located behind Revenue firewalls and has the same level of protection as any Revenue portal. SUSI ensure that safety and security audits are carried out on all streams of information control and continuously monitor, review and amend their security systems in line with best practice.

### Exchequer Savings

387. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35798/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information requested by the Deputy is contained in the following table in respect of those bodies currently under the aegis of my Department that are paid fees from the Exchequer, namely: Commission into Child Abuse, Foras Áiseanna Saothair, Grangegorman Development Agency, Higher Education Authority, Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB), Residential Institutions Review Committee (RIRC), and Skillnets Ltd.

### Remuneration/Fees Applicable in 2013

Agency Name (and Website Address)	Chairperson	Ordinary member	Chairperson with 25% reduction applied	Ordinary member with 25% reduction applied
Commission into Child Abusewww. childabusecom- mission.ie	See Note 1	See Note 1	See Note 1	See Note 1
Foras Áiseanna Saothairwww. fas.ie	€20,520	€11,790	€15,390	€8,842.50
Grangegorman Development Agencywww. ggda.ie	€8,978	€0	€6,733.50	€0
Higher Educa- tion Authority- www.hea.ie	€11,970	€7,695	€8,977.50	€5,771.25

Agency Name (and Website Address)	Chairperson	Ordinary member	Chairperson with 25% reduction applied	Ordinary member with 25% reduction applied
Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB)www. rirb.ie	See Note 2	See Note 2	See Note 2	See Note 2
Residential Institutions Re- view Commit- tee (RIRC)See RIRB website	See Note 2	See Note 2	See Note 2	See Note 2
Skillnets Ltd- www.skillnets.ie	€8,978	€5,985	€6,733.50	€4,488.75

**Note 1:** The Chairperson of the Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse (CICA) is a member of the Judiciary and is not paid by the CICA. The ordinary members of the Commission, who were all salaried are not currently on the payroll.

**Note 2:** The Chairman of the RIRB is paid an annual salary equivalent to a serving President of the Circuit Court subject to abatement to take account of his pension.

In relation to the RIRC, the Chairman's salary is linked to his former Supreme Court judicial salary subject to pension abatement. Since October 2011, the Chairman has taken a 50% voluntary reduction in his salary.

The other board members of both the RIRB and the RIRC are paid a *per diem* rate and pension abatement applies in the case of members receiving a pension from the State. The *per diem* rate from 1 January 2011 is €668.

### Official Travel

388. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure that there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agency ensures that the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36043/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** With regard to official overseas travel, my Department's agencies are required to adhere to Civil Service procedures as set out in guidance in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2009), the Foreign Travel Guidelines 2009 issued by the Department of Finance and any additional guidance as provided from time to time by central Departments. Agencies are cognisant of the need to achieve economy and efficiency in their expenditure on official travel and the board of the agency is required to satisfy itself that the agency is in adherence with the principles of its travel policy and that the internal audit process is effective in insuring that it is fully complying with the policy. In addition each agency is required to furnish, in conjunction with its annual report and accounts, a comprehensive report which includes affirming that all appropriate procedures for financial reporting including travel are being carried out.

### Departmental Bodies

389. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Education and Skills if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36215/13]

**Minister for Education and Skills (Deputy Ruairí Quinn):** The information the Deputy has requested is included in the following table. Details of all bodies under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills are available on my Department's website <http://www.education.ie>. List of State agencies under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills:

Agency	Website
An Chomhairle um Oideachais Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)	<a href="http://www.cogg.ie">http://www.cogg.ie</a>
Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)	<a href="http://www.childabusecommission.ie/">http://www.childabusecommission.ie/</a>
FÁS	<a href="http://www.fas.ie">http://www.fas.ie</a>
Grangegorman Development Agency	<a href="http://www.ggda.ie">http://www.ggda.ie</a>
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	<a href="http://www.hea.ie">http://www.hea.ie</a>
Irish Research Council	<a href="http://www.ircset.ie/">http://www.ircset.ie/</a>
Léargas - The Exchange Bureau	<a href="http://www.leargas.ie">http://www.leargas.ie</a>
National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE)	<a href="http://www.ncge.ie">http://www.ncge.ie</a>
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	<a href="http://www.ncca.ie">http://www.ncca.ie</a>
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	<a href="http://www.ncse.ie">http://www.ncse.ie</a>
Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	<a href="http://www.qqi.ie">http://www.qqi.ie</a>
Residential Institution Redress Board (RIRB)	<a href="http://www.rirb.ie">http://www.rirb.ie</a>
Residential Institution Review Committee (RIRC)	
Residential Institutions Statutory Fund (RISF)	
Skillnets Ltd	<a href="http://www.skillnets.ie">http://www.skillnets.ie</a>
State Examinations Commission (SEC)	<a href="http://www.examinations.ie">http://www.examinations.ie</a>
The Teaching Council	<a href="http://www.teachingcouncil.ie">http://www.teachingcouncil.ie</a>

### Public Sector Pensions Expenditure

390. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the remuneration, termination lump sums or pensions entitlements that have been paid or are due to a person (details supplied) arising directly from leaving their position as former Attorney General held from 14 June 2007 to 9 March 2011. [34243/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In answer to the Deputy's question, based on information provided by the Office of the Paymaster General, the individual concerned was paid the following amounts:

Year	Amount
2011	€99,442
2012	€81,886.16
2013	€10,350.41
Total	€201,378.57

### National Lottery Funding Disbursement

391. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the proceeds of the National Lottery fund from 2008 to 2012. [34291/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The amount of revenue (surplus) generated by the National Lottery through the sales of National Lottery tickets (i.e. its turnover net of prizes and all costs) is shown in the following table.

National Lottery surplus transferred to the Exchequer

Year	€ - million
2008	268
2009	264
2010	244
2011	230
2012	220

### Flood Prevention Measures

392. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if funding will be made available for a project (details supplied) in Dublin 3. [34657/13]

425. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the funding available to an organisation (details supplied) in Dublin 3. [35131/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brian Hayes):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 392 and 425 together.

As a result of local opposition, Dublin City Council decided in 2011 not to proceed with a flood defence scheme for Clontarf which had been brought through the planning process. Since then the Council has been involved in further consultation with local interests and it is my understanding that a Joint Working Group has been established with representative from Dublin City Council, Clontarf Residents Association and Clontarf Business Association to consider possibilities for the development of the Clontarf Promenade which will include flood defence measures.

Should a new scheme emerge from the deliberations of the Joint Working Group it will be open to the Council to seek funding from the Office of Public Works for the cost of the flood defence element only of such a scheme if such a flood defence element is found to be financially viable and environmentally acceptable and if it provides the standard of flood protection applicable to OPW funded schemes.

It is not possible to say at this stage what the position on the availability of funding will be as this will depend on the amount sought, the number of other flood defence schemes being de-

veloped nationally at the time the funding request is received and the associated pressures and demands on the OPW's capital funding allocation.

The OPW does not provide funding to local community or voluntary groups to undertake professional and independent services in relation to such projects.

### **Public Procurement Regulations**

393. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the barriers to micro and small and medium-sized enterprises in tendering for public contracts. [34851/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In relation to improving access for small and medium-sized enterprises my Department has issued guidelines (Circular 10/10) that require public bodies to promote participation of such enterprises in the award of public contracts. The guidance does not distinguish between micro-enterprises and other SMEs, and the approach set out is intended to be applicable to them all. These guidelines set out positive measures that contracting authorities are to take to promote the involvement of smaller enterprises in a manner that is consistent with the principles and rules of the existing public procurement regulatory regime. The guidance also highlights practices that are to be avoided because they can unjustifiably hinder small businesses in competing for public contracts. The key provisions of the guidance include:

- supplies and general services contracts with an estimated value of €25,000 or more to be advertised on the *www.etenders.gov.ie* website;
- less use of "restrictive" tendering procedures and greater use of "open" tendering;
- ensuring that the levels set by contracting authorities for suitability criteria are justified and proportionate to the needs of the contract;
- sub-dividing larger requirements into lots where this is practical.

In order to promote and improve such practices the National Procurement Service (NPS), which will be transferring into the new Office of Government Procurement (OGP), established its "Working Group to assist Small and Medium Enterprises" in February 2012 to facilitate open discussion on the issue of public service procurement. The Working Group consists of representatives from the NPS, the Health Service Executive, the Irish Business and Employers Federation, the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association, Chambers Ireland, and the Small Firms Association. The Group has met on a number of occasions and has raised many issues relating to procurement and particularly how these issues impact on SMEs. Resulting from these discussions the NPS has issued two circulars to all buyers in, and suppliers to, the public service with the aim of improving practice in the procurement arena.

In order to encourage greater SME participation the NPS, over the past three years, has conducted a targeted programme of education for suppliers who wish to learn more about doing business with the Irish Public Service. This programme consists of seminars, workshops and large scale 'meet the buyer' events hosted nationwide. To date the NPS has facilitated workshops and presented at seminars to over 4,500 SMEs nationwide. Parallel with these events the NPS also works closely with business representative bodies such as ISME and IBEC to provide briefings for their members.

Circular 10/10 has been in place for just over two years. It is clear that there is a need to ensure greater consistency in relation to the implementation of this circular. In this regard, I

am arranging for my Department to remind public bodies about this aspect of the public procurement guidance and the importance of contracting authorities ensuring they implement it appropriately.

Reform of public procurement is one of the major projects of key strategic importance in the Government's Public Service Reform Plan, which was published in November 2011. Procurement of supplies and services accounts for around €9 billion of current spending by the State per annum. This represents a very significant portion of overall spending and it is, therefore, essential that the Public Service achieves maximum value for money and operational efficiency in its approach to public procurement.

In this regard, the NPS has put in place a number of national arrangements designed to secure better value for money from leveraging the public service's buying power in relation to a range of goods and services that are commonly purchased across the public service. These national arrangements have benefits that include:

- cash savings;
- administrative savings from reduced duplication of tendering;
- greater purchasing expertise;
- improved consistency; and,
- enhanced service levels.

In some instances the take up of the NPS arrangements has been low. In order to increase the usage of the NPS arrangements and thereby secure best value for money, the Government decided that it should be mandatory for public service bodies to use specified national procurement arrangements. Last year my Department issued Circular 06/12 which implements the Government decision by making it a mandatory requirement that public service bodies avail of specified national arrangements put in place by the NPS.

While the key purpose of Circular 6/12 is to enable the State to do more with less by aggregating procurement to secure better value for money, it is worth noting that such aggregation arrangements can be implemented in a manner that achieves value for money with a minimal negative impact, or indeed a positive impact, on SMEs. While a number of the categories of goods and services mandated under the Circular are suited to single supplier national arrangements, these need not be accepted as the norm. The greater use, where appropriate, of multi-supplier frameworks can address local supplier issues while also ensuring ongoing cost competitiveness of the framework itself. Such multi-supplier frameworks may also offer SMEs the opportunity to participate in national level contracts, thereby offering valuable reference work when competing for public procurement contracts in other jurisdictions.

In relation to plans for further reform of public procurement, an external review of the central procurement function was commissioned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The report of the review, which was published late last year, found that significant savings can be achieved through the implementation of a transformational change to the central procurement model. In December 2012, arising out of recommendations in the report the Minister announced the appointment of a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) to lead a key element of the Government's Public Service Reform agenda. The new approach to public procurement will involve:

- integrating procurement policy, strategy and sourcing in one office;
- strengthening spend analytics and data management;
- much greater aggregation of purchasing across public bodies to achieve better value for money;

- examining the specifications set out for goods and services;
- evaluating demand levels to assess how demand and volume can be reduced; and
- strengthening supplier and category management.

Since the appointment of Paul Quinn, CPO, on 28 January 2013, he has initiated and completed a series of engagements (workshops and one-to-one meetings) with key stakeholders within the public sector and their representatives in relation to the development of the proposed governance structures, implementation plan, transition arrangements and savings targets for the procurement function. The following sectors were engaged in workshops/meetings: Health, Education, Local Government, Defence, Justice, and other Central Government Departments.

To summarise: we in government want better value for money for our substantial procurement spend and we want Irish SMEs, where necessary, to form alliances and networks to ensure they can tender on a competitive basis for this work. To ensure the reform process takes account of the needs of stakeholders, further consultations will be undertaken with employees and workers' representatives as the new Office for Government Procurement is established. We are committed to ensuring that SMEs are fully engaged in the process and will be encouraged, where necessary, to form alliances and networks to ensure they can tender on a competitive basis for this work.

### **Public Procurement Regulations**

394. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the barriers to micro and small and medium-sized enterprises in tendering for public contracts. [35286/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In relation to improving access for small and medium-sized enterprises my Department has issued guidelines (Circular 10/10) that require public bodies to promote participation of such enterprises in the award of public contracts. The guidance does not distinguish between micro-enterprises and other SMEs, and the approach set out is intended to be applicable to them all. These guidelines set out positive measures that contracting authorities are to take to promote the involvement of smaller enterprises in a manner that is consistent with the principles and rules of the existing public procurement regulatory regime. The guidance also highlights practices that are to be avoided because they can unjustifiably hinder small businesses in competing for public contracts. The key provisions of the guidance include:

- supplies and general services contracts with an estimated value of €25,000 or more to be advertised on the [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) website;
- less use of "restrictive" tendering procedures and greater use of "open" tendering;
- ensuring that the levels set by contracting authorities for suitability criteria are justified and proportionate to the needs of the contract;
- sub-dividing larger requirements into lots where this is practical.

In order to promote and improve such practices the National Procurement Service (NPS), which will be transferring into the new Office of Government Procurement (OGP), established its 'Working Group to assist Small and Medium Enterprises' in February 2012 to facilitate open discussion on the issue of public service procurement. The Working Group consists of representatives from the NPS, the Health Service Executive, the Irish Business and Employers Federation, the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association, Chambers Ireland, and the Small Firms Association. The Group has met on a number of occasions and has raised many issues relating to procurement and particularly how these issues impact on SMEs. Resulting from these discussions the NPS has issued two circulars to all buyers in, and suppliers to, the

public service with the aim of improving practice in the procurement arena.

In order to encourage greater SME participation the NPS, over the past three years, has conducted a targeted programme of education for suppliers who wish to learn more about doing business with the Irish Public Service. This programme consists of seminars, workshops and large scale ‘meet the buyer’ events hosted nationwide. To date the NPS has facilitated workshops and presented at seminars to over 4,500 SMEs nationwide. Parallel with these events the NPS also works closely with business representative bodies such as ISME and IBEC to provide briefings for their members.

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Reform. The report of the review, which was published late last year, found that significant savings can be achieved through the implementation of a transformational change to the central procurement model. In December 2012, arising out of recommendations in the report the Minister announced the appointment of a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) to lead a key element of the Government's Public Service Reform agenda. The new approach to public procurement will involve:

- integrating procurement policy, strategy and sourcing in one office;
- strengthening spend analytics and data management;
- much greater aggregation of purchasing across public bodies to achieve better value for money;
- examining the specifications set out for goods and services;
- evaluating demand levels to assess how demand and volume can be reduced; and
- strengthening supplier and category management.

Since the appointment of Paul Quinn, CPO, on 28 January 2013, he has initiated and completed a series of engagements (workshops and one-to-one meetings) with key stakeholders within the public sector and their representatives in relation to the development of the proposed governance structures, implementation plan, transition arrangements and savings targets for the procurement function. The following sectors were engaged in workshops/meetings: Health, Education, Local Government, Defence, Justice, and other Central Government Departments.

To summarise: we in government want better value for money for our substantial procurement spend and we want Irish SMEs, where necessary, to form alliances and networks to ensure they can tender on a competitive basis for this work. To ensure the reform process takes account of the needs of stakeholders, further consultations will be undertaken with employees and workers' representatives as the new Office for Government Procurement is established. We are committed to ensuring that SMEs are fully engaged in the process and will be encouraged, where necessary, to form alliances and networks to ensure they can tender on a competitive basis for this work.

### **Flood Prevention Measures**

395. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the total amount of capital investment made by his Department in flood defence improvements in the past five years; if he will provide a breakdown of each project in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35340/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brian Hayes):** During the period from 2008 to 2012, the Office of Public Works expended €186.9 million on its Capital Budget for Flood Relief Activities throughout the country. Approximately €135 million of this amount was spent directly on major flood relief projects during this period with a further €23.5 million approx. expended on the Minor Works Scheme where OPW provides funding to Local Authorities for flood relief works and studies up to a limit of €0.5 million for each project. The details of the minor works projects funded by OPW can be found on the OPW website [www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie). The main part of the balance of expenditure in the period was related to the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) project which is a major study of the most vulnerable flood risk areas in the country.

The following table sets out the investment directly attributable to projects either at design stage, construction stage or post construction:

Questions - Written Answers

Flood Relief Project	2008 (Costs in €,000s)	2009 (Costs in €,000s)	2010 (Costs in €,000s)	2011 (Costs in €,000s)	2012 (Costs in €,000s)
Mallow, Co Cork	4,900	7,729	2,639	4,657	3,383
Clonmel, Co Tipperary	5,550	7,439	5,487	11,275	4,129
Ennis, Co Clare	2,873	4,695	1,996	2,391	287
Fermoy, Co Cork	127	1,679	3,481	1,114	5,852
Carlow Town, Co Carlow	0	0	223	1,088	2,731
Johnstown, Co Kildare	0	38	814	1,470	715
Mornington, Co Meath	128	645	1,656	1,134	479
Tolka River, Dublin and Meath	191	859	1,061	15	1,897
Claregalway, Co Galway	0	0	176	1,445	801
Waterford City	30	500	2,700	600	3,183
Tullamore, Co Offaly		22	0	14	799
Bray, Co Wicklow	223	299	1,727	0	7,074
River Dodder, Dublin	2,196	2,764	1,529	791	2,149
Templemore FRS	0	59	8	0	40
Wad River, Dublin	0	104	34	0	0
Enniscorthy, Co Wexford	93	106	13	0	40
Arklow, Co Wicklow	90	120	10	0	43
Bandon, Co Cork	0	0	20	187	114
Lower Lee (Cork City)	0	0	0	6	0
Skibbereen, Co Cork	0	0	0	0	8
Dunkellin River, Co Galway	0	0	160	73	0
Ballymakeera, Co Cork	0	0	0	5	11
Crossmolina, Co Mayo	0	0	0	0	12
Raphoe, Co Donegal	0	34	0	0	0
Clontarf, Dublin	0	0	553	0	0
Ballymacoda, Co Cork	0	210	22	0	0

Flood Relief Project	2008 (Costs in €,000s)	2009 (Costs in €,000s)	2010 (Costs in €,000s)	2011 (Costs in €,000s)	2012 (Costs in €,000s)
Harry's Mall, Limerick	0	38	0	0	0
Kilkenny City	787	1,180	0	0	0
Leixlip, Co Kildare	2,019	777	0	0	0
Mullingar, Co Westmeath	130	233	0	0	0
New Ross, Co Wexford	0	125	110	0	0
Newcastle West	0	300	67	0	0
Spencer Dock, Dublin	880	159	0	0	0
Minor Works Scheme (Contri- butions to Local Authorities)	0	1800	9,660	5,237	4,752
Minor Works Scheme (Direct Works undertaken by OPW)	776	145	551	480	140

In addition to the capital investment programme, the OPW spent a further €85 million during this period on its ongoing programme of maintenance of existing arterial drainage schemes. The OPW currently has ten major flood relief schemes at construction with a further 26 schemes at various stages of planning and design. The Government has allocated €44.5 million for capital related flood relief activities in 2013.

### Public Sector Staff Recruitment

396. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the projected annual cost of lifting the public recruitment embargo; and if this cost can be broken down for frontline staff. [34308/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** There is no embargo on recruitment in the public sector, rather there are annual staffing ceilings agreed out to end 2014 and a moratorium on recruitment and promotion for so long as public sector organisations are in excess of these ceilings. When public sector organisations are within these ceilings there is scope for some recruitment and there has continued to be targeted recruitment to key posts and services particularly Health and Education.

Given our fiscal position it is imperative that the public sector continues to reduce and control its costs, which necessarily involves maintaining a tight control on staffing levels. We cannot afford to return to the 2008 peak staffing levels in the Irish public sector, nor is it sensible. Through enhanced productivity and reform initiatives such as shared services we can achieve more effective, streamlined public services that delivers better value for money.

## Open Government Partnership

397. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the outcomes of the recent open government partnership meeting held in Dublin; if future meetings are to take place; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34362/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The inaugural public meeting of the citizen and civil society Open Government Partnership network took place at the Wood Quay Venue beside Dublin City Council offices on Wednesday, 10 July 2013. This was organised by Transparency International Ireland to commence the co-ordination of civil society input for the development of Ireland's Open Government Partnership national action plan.

I participated in the first session of the meeting and was very encouraged by the strong and constructive engagement by the network with the objectives of the OGP. I look forward to receiving a report on the proposals of the network for the national action plan in the early autumn.

A blog on the main highlights and key themes discussed at the meeting can be found together with presentations, videos and other material at [www.ogpireland.ie](http://www.ogpireland.ie).

I understand that two further public meetings will be held on 8 August and 5 September. Members of the public and civil society organisations are also invited to send submissions or proposals for the national action plan. Further details can also be found on the above website.

## Consultancy Contracts

398. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34408/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's question the following table outlines the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of each external consultant of all external reports commissioned by my Department since its inception in 2011:

Name of External Report	Costs	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Name of External Consultant
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€35,819.80	16 May 2011	June 2011	MKO Partners Ltd
Report on Reasons Behind Voter Behaviour in the Oireachtas Inquiry Referendum 2011	€41,043.20	23 November 2011	January 2012	Red C Research and Marketing Ltd.

Name of External Report	Costs	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Name of External Consultant
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€31,586.40	23 March 2012	13 June 2012	Grant Thornton
Independent verification of savings arising under the Public Service Agreement	€24,206.40	4 February 2013	3 July 2013	Grant Thornton
Capacity and Capability Review of Central Procurement Function	€30,750.00	May 2012	14 August 2012	Accenture
Options for the next National Lottery licence	€615 (including VAT)	7th February 2012	N/A (The final Report was completed and submitted to the Department in March 2012)	Davy Corporate Finance

In the course of its normal business activity, the Office of Public Works engages external technical consultants on many of its projects, primarily architectural and engineering. The costs of these consultants would be included in the overall project costs. The Office of Public Works has not engaged any external consultants for the purposes of producing external reports for publication.

### Exchequer Savings

399. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual net and gross saving to the Exchequer, following implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement if TDs' salaries were capped at €75,000 per annum. [34463/13]

400. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual net and gross saving to the Exchequer, following implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement, if Senators' salaries were capped at €60,000 per annum. [34464/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 399 and 400 together.

The remuneration of members of the Oireachtas was reduced on 1 July 2013 in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013. This represented a further 5.84% reduction in remuneration for TDs, from €92,672 to €87,258. Sen-

ator's salaries have been reduced to €65,000, in line with the legislation, which provides that the reductions in the legislation shall only operate to reduce remuneration to that level.

The estimated gross saving to the Exchequer should a cap of €60,000 be applied to the basic pay of all Senators and a cap of €75,000 be applied to all TDs, as suggested by the Deputy, is set out in the following table:

Positions	Current Cost per annum	Capped Cost per annum	Gross Annual Saving
TDs	€14,484,828	€12,450,000	€2,034,828
Senators*	€3,900,000	€3,600,000	€300,000

\*There are currently 59 Senators, but the estimate has been calculated for the full complement of 60.

It is not possible to estimate the net saving to the Exchequer which would arise from the application of the suggested pay caps as deductions, such as PRSI and income tax, are calculated on an individual basis.

### Exchequer Savings

401. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department. [34465/13]

412. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34518/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 401 and 412 together. In response to the Deputy's questions I can only provide information on behalf of my Department only but I understand a copy has already been submitted to other Departments in the meantime. The following table gives a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board under the aegis of my Department in 2012:

State Board	Number of Members	Name of Member	Fees Paid	Expenses Paid
Civil Service Arbitration Board - Civil Service, Defence Forces, Gardaí and Teachers Arbitration Boards	6	John Doherty, Chairperson	€552 per day wef 1 July 2013	Nil
		Gerard Barry	€392 per day wef 1 July 2013	Nil
		Tom Wall	€4,346 per annum wef 1 July 2013, for 11 sitting days	Nil
		George Maybury	€392 per annum wef 1 July 2013	Nil

State Board	Number of Members	Name of Member	Fees Paid	Expenses Paid
		Hugh Flaherty	€392 per annum wef 1 July 2013	Nil
		Brendan Duffy, Adjudicator	€295 wef 1 July 2013	Nil
National Lottery Board	7 (6 Serving)	Donal Connell	Nil	Nil
		Dermot Griffin	€11,000	€6,911
		Micheál Ó' Muircheartaigh	€12,600	Nil
		Oliver Wilkinson	€12,600	Nil
		Caroline Murphy	€12,600	Nil
		Peter Quinn	Nil	Nil
		James Hyland	Nil	€3,165
Public Appointments Service	9 (2 vacancies at present)	Eddie Sullivan, Chairman	€11,970	Nil
		Des Dowling, Assistant Secretary – Dept of Environment, Community and Local Government	Nil	Nil
		Dr. Deirdre O'Keeffe, Assistant Secretary – Dept of Justice & Equality	Nil	Nil
		Patricia Coleman, Director – Dept of Public Expenditure & Reform (resigning from Board)	Nil	Nil
		Seán McGrath – National Director of HR in the HSE (resigned and replaced by) Barry O'Brien – National Director of HR in the HSE in September 2012	NilNil	NilNil

Questions - Written Answers

State Board	Number of Members	Name of Member	Fees Paid	Expenses Paid
		Judith Eve – former Chairperson of the Civil Service Commissioners, Northern Ireland	€7,695	€286.99 (in respect of travel from Belfast for Board meetings)
		Dr. Eddie Mollloy – Management Consultant	€7,695	Nil
		Dan Murphy – former General Secretary of the PSEU	€7,695	Nil
		Bryan Andrews as CEO of the PAS held office on an ex officio basis (replaced by) Fiona Tierney, CEO, PAS in March 2012	Not paid as Board members – part of CEO role	NilNil
Outside Appointments Board	5 in total, (1 vacancy at present)	Robert Watt – Secretary General Dept of Public Expenditure and Reform	Nil	Nil
		Martin Frazer – Secretary General Dept of An Taoiseach	Nil	Nil
		Breege O'Donoghue	Nil	Nil
		Peter Malone	Nil	Nil

The annual saving to the Exchequer if all of the above State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% would amount to €2,590.75.

### Exchequer Savings

402. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the net and gross saving to the Exchequer if all public sector pay, excluding hospital consultant pay, were capped at €100,000. [34466/13]

403. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the net and gross saving to the Exchequer if all public sector pay was capped at €100,000. [34467/13]

407. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

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the number of public sector workers in receipt of salaries within the following the bands (details supplied). [34472/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 402, 403 and 407 together.

I refer to my replies to Questions Nos. 162, 163, 166, 167 and 171 of 8 November 2012. Data are currently being collated to reflect the implementation of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act, 2013 and its effect on salary pay bands.

### **Departmental Bodies**

404. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial state sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department. [34468/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's questions the following non-commercial State-sponsored bodies come under the aegis of my Department: Special European Union Programmes Body and the Institute of Public Administration.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

405. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all commercial state company chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34469/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's questions I can confirm that there are no commercial State companies under the remit of my Department.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

406. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of the annual salaries of all non-commercial state sponsored body chief executive officers. [34471/13]

413. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial state sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34534/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 406 and 413 together.

In response to the Deputy's questions I can only provide information on behalf of my Department only but I understand a copy has already been submitted to other Departments in the meantime.

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is a non-commercial State sponsored body under the aegis of my Department and the salary of the current Director General is €188,952. Reductions resulting from the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 should have been applied since 1 July 2013.

The Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) is another non-commercial State

sponsored body under my aegis and the salary of the current Chief Executive is €97,324.50. My Department contributes half of this salary, with the remainder contributed by the Department of Finance and Personnel Northern Ireland.

*Question No. 407 answered with Question No. 402.*

### Exchequer Savings

408. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for all Government Departments. [34473/13]

417. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34598/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 408 and 417 together.

In response to the Deputy's questions I can only provide information on behalf of my Department only but I understand a copy has already been submitted to other Departments in the meantime. The total annual cost of travel and expenses incurred by my Department in 2012 amounted to €215,155.82 and similarly €2,758,347 for the Office of Public Works. The following tables outline the percentage annual savings to the Exchequer of reductions to travel and expenses in my Department and the Office of Public Works:

### Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Potential Annual Savings in Travel and Expenses

Savings to the Exchequer	Details
1%	€2,151.55
5%	€10,757.79
7%	€15,060.91
10%	€21,515.58
12%	€25,818.70
15%	€32,273.37
17%	€36,576.49
20%	€43,031.16

### Office of Public Works

Potential Annual Savings in Travel and Expenses

Savings to the Exchequer	Details
1%	€27,583.47
5%	€137,917.35
7%	€193,084.29
10%	€275,834.70
12%	€331,001.64

Savings to the Exchequer	Details
15%	€413,752.05
17%	€468,918.99
20%	€551,669.40

It should also be noted that while the majority of travel and subsistence paid relates to subsistence which are set amounts that can be reduced or increased there are also incidental expenses which are the payment of actual costs incurred by the claimant.

### Exchequer Savings

409. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for all Government Departments. [34474/13]

418. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34614/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 409 and 418 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table. The training and development budget for 2013 is €175,000. Expenditure on staff training and development in my Department is a valuable investment. It assists staff in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to enable the Department meet its strategic priorities, supports workforce planning, develops a continuous learning culture within the Department and provides a range of learning and development measures which contribute to enhanced staff performance, development of potential and engagement.

Training and Development	-	-
-	Budget	Saving
-	€175,000.00	-
5% Reduction	€166,250.00	€8,750.00
7% Reduction	€162,750.00	€12,250.00
10% Reduction	€157,500.00	€17,500.00
12% Reduction	€154,000.00	€21,000.00
15% Reduction	€148,750.00	€26,250.00
20% Reduction	€140,000.00	€35,000.00

### Oireachtas Members' Remuneration

410. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, details of the following Oireachtas allowances (details supplied) [34475/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The allowances payable to certain officeholders in the Oireachtas, following the application of the Financial

Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013, are set out in the following table:

Position	Allowance (in addition to TD/Senator salary)
Ceann Comhairle	€70,282
Leas Ceann Comhairle	€34,381
Cathaoirleach	€38,160
Leas Cathaoirleach	€19,846
Leader of the Seanad	€15,255

The allowances payable to the Whips in the Dáil and Seanad (per S.I. No 347 of 2011) are set out in the following tables. It should be noted that while provision was made for allowances to be paid to the Whip of the Socialist Party and to the Whip of the People before Profit Alliance, neither of those parties has the required two Deputies to be eligible for the allowance.

Whips in Dáil Éireann Allowance (in addition to TD salary)

Party	Amount
Fianna Fáil Party Whip	€17,480
Sinn Féin Party Whip	€5,520
Assistant Government Whip	€13,800
Fianna Fáil Assistant Whip	€8,740
Sinn Féin Assistant Whip	€2,760
Fine Gael Assistant Whip	€6,900
Labour Party Assistant Whip	€5,520

Whips in Seanad Éireann Allowance (in addition to Senator salary)

Party	Amount
Government Whip	€2,682
Assistant Government Whip	€792
Fianna Fáil Whip	€2,682
Independent Group of Nominee Senator's Whip	€792
Independent Group of University Senator's Whip	€792

### Exchequer Savings

411. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer if all Ministers' Special Advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the Principal Officer grade. [34476/13]

419. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide in tabular form the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisors pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement paid to his special advisors. [34630/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 411 and 419 together.

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In response to the Deputy's questions I can only provide information on behalf of my Department but I understand a copy has already been submitted to other Departments in the meantime. The following table gives a breakdown of total annual savings to the Exchequer if the pay of my special advisers was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade:

Name	Annual Salary Post-Haddington Road	1st Point Principal Officer Grade	Savings (if capped at 1st Point Principal Officer Grade)
Anne Byrne	€84,706	€75,647*	€9,059
Ronan O'Brien	€106,880	€81,080**	€25,800
Total	€191,586	€156,727	€34,859

\*principal officer standard scale

\*\*principal officer higher scale

*Question No. 412 answered with Question No. 401.*

*Question No. 413 answered with Question No. 406.*

### Departmental Expenditure

414. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34550/13]

416. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34582/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 414 and 416 together.

In response to the Deputy's question the following table lists all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy paid by my Department between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013:

### Professional Fees

1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013

Company Name	Details	Amount
Davy Corporate Finance	Financial and Commercial Advice in relation to competition for the award of the next National Lottery Licence	€568,875.00 (incl. VAT)

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Company Name	Details	Amount
Peter Smyth Management Consultancy	Provision of Expert Assistance in the establishment of the Office of Government Procurement	€36,900.00
Richard Humphreys	Legal Advice & Statute Law Reform Director	€96,253.65
Ciara Kennedy	Statute Law Reform Programme Manager	€33,701.00
Kieran McGovern	Independent Mediation for the civil service grievance procedures	€2,795.16 per annum
Inge Clissmann	Fee paid in respect of role as Chairperson of the Civil Service Disciplinary Board. Fee paid for each sitting day.	€8,276.40 total paid during this period in respect of 11 cases.
Step Performance Group	Executive coaching	€6,740.00
People Resources	Executive coaching	€5,205.00
SevenPCS Ltd	Executive coaching	€9,087.55
James McCabe	Clinical Supervision	€280.00
Karen Ward	Clinical Supervision	€75.00
Melissa Darmody	Clinical Supervision	€400.00
Michael O'Mahony	Clinical Supervision	€300.00
Ms Olive Bourke	Clinical Supervision	€310.00
Mr. Gerry Myers	Clinical Supervision	€75.00
Seven	Coaching	€1,125.00
Creative A.D. Ltd	Revision of Logo	€104.55
Eolas	Contractor Fees	€94,125.00
Brightwater	Contractor Fees	€13,462.00
Harvey Nash	Contractor Fees	€2,890.00
System Dynamics	Contractor Fees	€7,215.00
Ann Clarke	Advisory Services (Social Impact Bonds)	€15,719.89
Word Perfect Translation Service	Translation of documents for ECJ case C66/12 August 2012	€1,486.01
Word Perfect Translation Service	Translation of documents for ECJ case C66/12 Feb 2013	€514.88
Accenture	Review of Central Procurement	€30,750.00
Grant Thornton	Independent Verification of savings arising under the Public Services Agreement	€31,586.40
Grant Thornton	Independent Verification of savings arising under the Public Services Agreement	€24,206.40

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Company Name	Details	Amount
Deloitte	Consultancy Support for Public Service Reform	€17,835.00
Ashville Media Services	Design of Taoiseach's Public Service Excellence Awards brochure	€861.00
IPAG (Ireland) Ltd	Development of Ireland Stat website	€5,056.85
Accenture	Implementation Partner for Civil Service Human Resources and Pensions Shared Services Project	€2,994,979.00
Deloitte	Provision of Consultancy for Payroll and Banking and Finance Shared Services Projects	€129,150.00
Total		€4,146,490.74

The annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in professional fees paid by my Department would amount to €829,298.14.

### Departmental Expenditure

415. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 provided for employees of his Department. [34566/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table.

#### Third Level Courses

Course details	College	Cost per year per person	No. of participants
M.Sc. in Economic Policy Studies	Trinity College	€9,585	1
M.Sc. in Economic Science in Policy Analysis	IPA	€3,950	1
M.Sc. in HR Strategies	DCU	€7,506	1
M.Sc. in Work & Organisational Behaviour	DCU	€8,572	1
BA in HRM	National College of Ireland	€3,800	2

Course details	College	Cost per year per person	No. of participants
Professional Diploma in Official Statistics	IPA	€1,450	1
Certificate in Audit Skills	IPA	€5,250	1
French Language	Alliance Francaise	€1,500	1
Higher Diploma in Counselling & Psychotherapy	Dublin Business School	€3,495	1
Conflict Resolution & Mediation	Mediation Northside	€1,145	1
Certificate in Civil Service & State Agency Studies	IPA	€950	1

*Question No. 416 answered with Question No. 414.*

*Question No. 417 answered with Question No. 408.*

*Question No. 418 answered with Question No. 409.*

*Question No. 419 answered with Question No. 411.*

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

420. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34685/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's question, in the following table I have provided an update on the status of my Department's commitments under the Programme for Government. As can be seen from this update significant progress has been made in my Department.

The progress identified to date clearly shows that the Government has focused its attention on the decisions and reforms needed to achieve economic and financial stability, which provide a platform for economic recovery. My Department is determined to continue to implement our Programme for Government commitments – to restore the public's confidence in our economy and to achieve a strong and sustainable economy.

Many of the reforms in the programme are ambitious and need careful sequencing and expertly executed delivery plans. Some may take the whole lifetime of the Government to complete.

### **Programme for Government Commitments Department of Public Expenditure and Reform July 2013**

Commitment	Current Status
We will draw up a new National Development Plan that reflects Ireland's changed economic circumstances, covering the seven-year period 2012-2019. The plan will be based on a comprehensive study of Ireland's public investment priorities over that period.	Completed - (A new NDP was not undertaken but the five year Exchequer capital framework was laid out in "Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2012-2016: Medium Term Exchequer Framework" published in November 2011. A new five year framework will be set out as the period of the current framework comes to a close.)
In the initial years, when resources will be most heavily constrained, we will prioritise investment in school building, non-national roads, healthcare, and in job-creation.	Completed
We will insist that major capital projects are subjected to proper cost-benefit analysis and evaluation, improving future productivity and growth prospects, and that the value-for-money obtained is significantly enhanced compared to the most recent period.	Completed
The new NDP will be based on traditional exchequer capital spending, plus other resources to be invested from the National Pension Reserve Fund, on the basis of obtaining a return on investment and that does not impact the Government Balance Sheet.	In Progress (no new NDP - see above – but there is a 5 year Exchequer framework and a new PPP programme)
In developing the new NDP, we will re-examine the investment programmes of the semi-state companies to ensure that they are in line with new economic circumstances.	Completed
In order to ensure that public enterprise plays a full role in Ireland's economic recovery, we will create a holding company to manage the state's holdings of the semi-states, and to co-ordinate investment in key priority areas identified by the Government, including energy, water and forestry.	Completed
Over time, we also propose to finance the investment programme from the sale of certain state assets. We will target up to €2 billion in sales of non-strategic state assets drawing from the recommendations of the McCarthy Review Group on State Assets when available. Assets will only be sold when market conditions are right and when adequate regulatory structures have been established to protect consumer interests.	In Progress

Commitment	Current Status
Re-prioritise capital funding for smaller projects that deal with specific immediate problems. Smaller projects are more labour intensive and more likely to be carried out by local contractors increasing short-run domestic economic impact. Investment priorities will include education, health and science and technology.	Completed
Conduct a Comprehensive Spending Review to examine all areas of public spending and to assess effectiveness of spending programmes and value for company.	Completed
Accelerate capital works that are 'shovel ready' and labour intensive including schools and secondary roads.	Completed
We will reform public procurement to become a tool to support innovative Irish firms and to allow greater access to Irish small and medium sized businesses.	Completed
We will introduce new legislation to protect all small building subcontractors that have been denied payments from bigger companies.	Completed
A referendum to amend the Constitution to reverse the effects of the Abbeylara judgement to enable Oireachtas committees to carry out full investigations.	Completed
A referendum to protect the right of citizens to communicate in confidence with public representatives.	In Progress
All appointments at Principal Officer level and above will be open to external competition and at least one-third of such appointments will be reserved for candidates from outside traditional civil service structures for a 5-year period.	In Progress
Pin down accountability for results at every level of the public service – from Ministers down – with clear consequences for success and failure. Ministers will be responsible for policy and procurement and public service managers for delivery.	In Progress
Where appropriate, agency boards will be scrapped and agency managers will report directly to Ministers and their Departments on performance against targets.	Action Required

Commitment	Current Status
Put in place a Whistleblowers Act to protect public servants that expose maladministration by Ministers or others, and restore Freedom of Information.	In Progress
There will be no more “golden handshakes” for public servants that have failed to deliver.	Completed
Overhaul TLAC (Top level Appointments Commission), with the chairperson and the majority of members drawn from outside the public sector.	Completed
Introduce a reformed incentive system for all grades within core Government departments to reward cross-departmental teams that deliver audited improvements in service delivery and cost effectiveness.	Action required
Go beyond the recommendations of An Bord Snip to rationalise core processes that are duplicated across the public service, by establishing shared back-office operations for information technology, human resource management, payments and entitlement applications, business inspections and procurement.	In Progress
Review the Local Government Efficiency Review as part of our Comprehensive Spending Review.	Completed
Make substantial cuts to the number of State bodies and companies.	Completed
Instigate a Government-wide review to identify and eliminate non-priority programmes and outsource, where appropriate, non-critical functions.	In Progress
Rather than giving fixed budgets to traditional public service providers like the HSE, VECs and FÁS, we will put resources into the hands of citizens to acquire services that are tailored to better suit their needs and less expensive for the taxpayer.	In Progress
Establish a new model of financing social interventions – called Social Impact Bonds – that share audited exchequer savings with charitable and voluntary organisations.	In Progress
Where appropriate we will open up the delivery of public services to a range of providers.	In Progress

Commitment	Current Status
We will give schools, hospitals and other public service bodies new freedoms – within strict budgets and new accountability systems – to set their own staffing needs, automate routine processes and adapt work practices to local staff and customer needs.	In Progress
We will legislate for a reformulated code of laws, replacing both the Ministers and Secretaries Acts and the Public Service Management Act, which will spell out the legal relationship between Ministers and their civil servants and their legal accountability for decisions and for management of Departments.	In Progress
The system of implied general delegation of a Minister’s statutory powers to civil servants will be abolished and replaced by a fixed and determined system of delegation of specified powers to specified officers.	In Progress
Where a responsibility is delegated through several civil service grades, each grade will be held accountable for their element of it and departmental officials giving evidence to Oireachtas committees will be obliged to speak on their own behalf for their delegated responsibilities and, where appropriate, defend themselves and their actions.	In Progress
Delegation orders will spell out the functions of the Minister in supervising the exercise of delegated powers: the Minister will be responsible for ensuring that adequate standards are maintained; outputs are delivered as determined or agreed; and procedures are in place to provide the Minister with the necessary and correct information to enable him or her to respond to problems of administration and to give an account of those problems, and of any necessary corrective action, to the Dáil and to the public.	In Progress
We will bring to an end the unacceptable executive practice where no record is kept of ministerial involvement with an issue and resulting decisions.	In Progress

Commitment	Current Status
We will review the grading structure of the civil service and public service and reduce number of management grades. Public service managers will be given greater autonomy in deciding how they use staffing budgets and resources to achieve agreed outcomes.	In Progress
We will remove barriers to mobility across the public service. As part of this we will create a new tier of senior public service management structures, where senior officials are rotated across the public sector to nurture the collaborative culture needed to tackle the biggest cross-cutting social and economic challenges.	Completed
High level strategic goals will be reflected in individual goals, in a new performance management and development system for staff. Staff recognition schemes will be developed and devolved, with particular emphasis on team awards. Staff will be encouraged to put forward suggestions for improving service delivery and organisation efficiency and effectiveness.	In Progress
Government services websites, public offices, telephone services, and helplines will be reconfigured to facilitate access to a broad range of government services through a single point of contact.	In Progress
Ministers' salaries will be reduced, political expenses vouched for and severance payments for ministers axed.	Completed
No political pensions will be paid to sitting TDs and in future no retired politician will get a political pension until the national retirement age. Politics must be about service to the public, not financial gain for politicians.	Completed
Amend the Constitution to Give Dáil committees Full Powers of Investigation: The Abbeylara Supreme Court decision currently limits the ability of Dáil committees to hold investigations into crucial issues of public concern, such as the banking crisis.	Completed

Commitment	Current Status
<p>A statutory duty on anybody established by or under statute, or with a majority ownership or funding by the State, to submit to the same parliamentary questions regime as applies to Government departments. This will involve a liability to provide answers to written questions within a specified number of Dáil sitting days. (We will however recognise the special position of bodies with a commercial mandate operating at arm's length from Government).</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>We will amend the rules to ensure that no senior public servant (including political appointees) or Minister can work in the private sector in any area involving a potential conflict of interest with their former area of public employment, until at least two years have elapsed after they have left the public service.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>Restrictions on the nature and extent of evidence by civil servants to Oireachtas committees will be scrapped and replaced with new guidelines for civil servants that reflect the reality of the authority delegated to them and their personal accountability for the way in which it is exercised.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>The Committee would be the formal channel of consultation and collaboration between the Oireachtas and the Ombudsman, responsible for receiving and debating her annual and special reports and for ensuring that her criticisms and recommendations are acted upon. For that purpose, she would attend as a regular witness before the committee.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>We will legislate to restore the Freedom of Information Act to what it was before it was undermined by the outgoing Government, and we will extend its remit to other public bodies including the administrative side of the Garda Síochána, subject to security exceptions</p>	<p>In Progress</p>

Commitment	Current Status
We intend to end the heavy dependence on a very limited pool of extremely expensive private solicitors firms providing legal services to the State and agencies, look at ways to require agencies to seek legal advice from the CSSO and not from the private sector in order to save costs, and ensure that legal work at the bar for the State is spread more equitably rather than confined to a very limited pool as at present.	In Progress
We will progress the Statute Law Revision Project in order to enhance public accessibility to the statute book.	In Progress
We will extend Freedom of Information, and the Ombudsman Act, to ensure that all statutory bodies, and all bodies significantly funded from the public purse, are covered.	In Progress
We will introduce Whistleblowers legislation.	In Progress
We will introduce a statutory register of lobbyists, and rules concerning the practice of lobbying.	In Progress
We will abolish the additional pay for Ministers who leave office. We will restrict the payment of pensions to politicians so that in future a member can only qualify for a pension at the national retirement age (currently 65) and upon leaving public life. We will cap taxpayers' subsidies for all future pension schemes for politicians (and indeed for everybody) that deliver income in retirement of more than €60,000.	Part Complete/Part in Progress
We will legislate and change Dáil standing orders to ensure the absolute confidentiality of information entrusted to members of the Dáil by their constituents or informants, and ensure that such information cannot be compulsorily disclosed through the legal process except with the consent of the informant.	In Progress
Every public body will set out clear and unambiguous long, medium and short term strategic priorities, which will be clearly communicated to public service and citizens. Strategic priorities will be translated into high level goals for all Departments, on a 'whole of government' basis, and in consultation with Ministers.	In Progress

Commitment	Current Status
<p>Performance indicators will be identified to monitor progress on high level priorities. Annual reports of departments and agencies will include output statements and audited financial accounts prepared on generally accepted accounting principles. The performance information provided in output and outcome-focused measurement will feed into the decision making process for future plans at political and senior management level.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>The reform process will provide for increased delegation of budgets, subject to detailed plans, relevant performance reporting and audited accounts compiled in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>Detailed business cases will be required for major projects, with review and reporting requirements built in to the plan. Sanctions will be imposed at an early stage for significant overruns.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>We will change the current emphasis on performance reporting to performance management. All medium to long-term projects that involve significant public spending will be subject to cost benefit analysis, and to on-going evaluation. The results of programme evaluations will be published and programmes not meeting their objectives will be wound down.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Performance and progress will be published in a new, audited annual Public Service Delivery Reports. Oireachtas Committees will expose any failure to hit milestones and targets. Each sectoral Committee will take on new powers, similar to those wielded by Public Accounts Committee, to hold Ministers and public servants to account for value for money. This will feed into Oireachtas consideration of the next Budget.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>
<p>Where appropriate, agency boards will be scrapped and agency managers will be accountable directly to Ministers.</p>	<p>Action Required</p>
<p>We will bring forward the annual Estimates cycle, so that it becomes more timely and relevant. It will in future start at the beginning of the preceding year and conclude by the summer.</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Commitment	Current Status
The annual Estimates will in future distinguish between monies being allocated to maintaining the existing level of service for existing programmes and money to support new programmes or policy decisions.	Completed
The Book of Estimates will be accompanied by a detailed performance report on what the previous year's spending had achieved. It will also give details of the level of performance achieved by agencies under service delivery agreements with Government.	In Progress
Oireachtas members will be given, from within existing resources, dedicated resources for the proper scrutiny of the Estimates.	In Progress
We will give the Comptroller and Auditor General the extra powers needed to carry out value-for-money audits of State programmes.	In Progress
We will publish cost-benefit analyses for major infrastructure proposals and "tax expenditures" in advance of Government approval.	Completed
Public sector bodies will be required to publish balance sheets and to move to accruals from cash-flow accounting.	In Progress
Every Purchase Order by a Government Department or agency for more than €20,000 will be published online. We will give the Comptroller and Auditor General and Oireachtas Committees the extra powers needed to carry out value-for-money audits of State programmes.	Completed
Public bodies will be required to openly compete for budget resources by publishing pre-budget spending requests, and what they would deliver in return for such allocations to help deliver Programme for Government.	Completed
We will conduct a Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) to examine all areas of public spending, based on the Canadian model, and to develop multi-annual budget plans with a three-year time horizon. This plan will be presented to the Dáil for debate. It will assess effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes, and value for money.	Completed

Commitment	Current Status
The CSR will examine the number, range and activities of bodies funded significantly from public purse, including at local government level, and reduce numbers where appropriate. In future, when proposing a new agency, it will be necessary to prove that the proposed new functions cannot be carried out within the existing framework.	Completed
We will, subject to there being no compulsory redundancies and to the protection of front line services: Reduce the total number of public sector employees by between 18,000 and 21,000 by 2014, compared to the total number at the end of 2010. Reduce this number by a further 4,000 by 2015.	Completed
We will extend the remit of Ombudsman to third level institutions.	In Progress
Review existing tendering processes for legal services by Government and State and semi-State agencies to ensure value for money and end anti-competitive practices. The Government directed that a robust analysis be carried out to evaluate how to give effect to a beneficial merger of Coillte with Bord na Móna to create a streamlined and refocused commercial state company operating in the bio-energy and forestry sectors	In Progress  In Progress

### Departmental Expenditure

421. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34701/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's question the following table outlines the names of external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of my Department since its formation.

#### External Public Relations, Communication Consultants & Organisations

From July 2011 to June 2013

Company Name	Details	Expenditure
Wilson Hartnell	Communications advice on publicity around senior level and other recruitment campaigns	€10,197.00 (not including professional services withholding tax deducted at 20%)
Q4PR	Conference October 2012 – PR consultancy services supporting IPA Conference	€3,000.00
Q4PR	Organising IPA Yearbook & Diary launch event December 2012	€2,000.00
Q4PR	Conference October 2011 – PR consultancy services supporting IPA Conference	€2,500.00
QRPR	Organising IPA Yearbook & Diary launch event December 2011	€2,000.00
Media Contact.ie	Media HQ 2-users 12 Month Online Subscription	€1,929.95
Institute of Public Administration	Logo Year Book 2012	€193.60
Media World Ltd	Broadcast Audio Recording CD	€49.20
Newspaper Licensing Ireland Ltd	National Newspaper License	€1,726.92
Aegis Media Ireland Ltd (Brindley Advertising)	Advertising in Irish Times, Irish Independent, Irish Examiner and Foinse	€3,788.57
Institute of Public Administration	Logo Year Book 2013	€196.80
Kildare Times Ltd	Castletown House Advert – Nat Tree Week Feature	€295.20
Impression Design & Print	3 Issues of The Link Magazine adverts including artwork	€830.25
Institute of Public Administration	Advertising Year Book	€1,814.30
Aidan Sweeney Photography	Photographic Services (at Ennis Town Council offices of Fergus Flood Relief Contracts with Minister)	€230.00
Maxwell Photography	Photography	€346.86

### Official Engagements

422. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the parameters of his recent address to the Bureau of European Policy Advisors high-level seminar of the European Commission in Brussels on 9 July 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34708/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA) is a service of the European Commission, reporting directly to the President of the Commission and under his authority. The Bureau is composed of a professional staff of advisers, policy analysts and support staff whose role is to provide professional advice to the President and the Commissioners and to formulate recommendations on issues regarding the policy of the European Union.

On 9 July 2013 I took part in a high-level seminar organised by BEPA which brought together specialists and practitioners to share their insights and experience in the field of public-sector innovation and discuss the opportunities for, and challenges to, further progress at a European and Member State level. The seminar was also addressed by the President of the Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso.

In my speech I reflected on Ireland's recent Presidency of the Council of Ministers and went on to discuss Ireland's Public Service reform programme, including the importance of innovation, recent developments in the reform programme and the Haddington Road agreement.

The full text of my speech is available at <http://per.gov.ie/2013/07/09/address-by-brendan-howlin-td-minister-for-public-expenditure-reform-to-european-commission-bureau-of-european-policy-advisors-on-high-level-seminar-on-public-sector-innovation/>.

### Departmental Legal Costs

423. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34987/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's question the following table outlines the legal advice received outside the Office of the Attorney General by my Department from 2011 to date:

#### Legal Advice received (Outside of the Office of the Attorney General)

##### From July 2011 to date in 2013

Name	Issues on which legal advice sought	Amount
Legal Advisor	Provision of legal analysis and advice on the policy options and proposals on Reform priorities. Preparation of legislative proposals (e.g. General Schemes of Bills) relating to the Government Reform agenda.	€53,758.69

Name	Issues on which legal advice sought	Amount
Legal Advisor	Provision of legal analysis and advice on the policy options and proposals on Reform priorities. Preparation of legislative proposals (e.g. General Schemes of Bills) relating to the Government Reform agenda	€43,109.35

### Departmental Expenditure

424. **Deputy Joe Higgins** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in respect of an event held in the Pearse Museum in St. Enda's Park, Rathfarnham, last autumn which was addressed by the Minister of State in his Department, Deputy Brian Hayes, regarding the planned works in the park, if he will provide information on the content of the meeting; the way it was advertised and by whom; the other public representatives who were notified and the refreshments that were provided at the meeting at a cost to the Exchequer. [35008/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brian Hayes):** An event took place on Wednesday, 24 October 2012, in the Pearse Museum, St. Enda's, Rathfarnham, hosted by Minister Brian Hayes T.D., to mark the launch of an exhibition being held in the Museum – *“Revolution: Photographs of Revolutionary Ireland 1913-1923”*. Speakers on the night were Minister Hayes and the Museum Curator, Mr. Brian Crowley.

The occasion was also used to officially recognise and celebrate the Museum's full accreditation to the Heritage Council's "Museums Standard Programme of Ireland" and the Minister took the opportunity to outline the pivotal role that the Museum will play in the lead up to the Centenary Commemoration of 1916. The Minister also noted the repair works to two historical bridges on the site. No advertising costs were incurred with invitations issuing through the Minister's Office to those on the Pearse Museum invitation lists, local residents who live in the vicinity of the Museum, and guests of Pádraig Óg Ó Ruairc author of the book being launched.

A small reception of light refreshments was provided at a cost of €407.23.

*Question No. 425 answered with Question No. 392.*

### National Lottery Staff

426. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the future of current national lottery staff; if staff will return to An Post and have their current contractual agreements maintained; if they will move to the new national lottery company with their current contractual agreements maintained; if he will provide an update on current LRC discussions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35144/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The issue of future arrangements regarding staff in the National Lottery is now under consideration at the Labour Relations Commission. It is expected that further discussions will take place in the

coming weeks. No decisions have yet been taken in relation to the future of current National Lottery staff.

### Exchequer Savings

427. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the expected carryover of current expenditure savings from 2013 into next year for his Department. [35210/13]

428. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the expected carryover of capital expenditure savings from 2013 into next year for his Department. [35227/13]

429. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the expected unspent capital expenditure from 2013 into next year for his Department. [35244/13]

430. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, the expected unspent current expenditure from 2013 into next year for his Department. [35261/13]

431. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the expected carryover of public sector pay savings from 2013 into next year [35267/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 427 to 431, inclusive, together.

It is too early in the year to predict what level of current and capital saving, if any, will be available at year end and-or what the current and capital carryover into 2014 might be.

As the Deputy will be aware, Departments are entitled to apply to carryover unspent capital up to a maximum of 10% of their Voted capital allocation into the next financial year. Proposals for capital carryover are usually submitted to my Department as part of the normal Budget preparations and indicative figures for capital carryover are included in the Budget Estimates. The exact figure for capital carryover is confirmed in the Ministerial Order dealing with deferred surrender of unspent capital which must be made by me, as Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, no later than 31 March the following year.

The end June Exchequer returns showed that €927 million in capital was drawn down by Departments and Offices. This is €137 million (12.9%) behind the level that had been profiled in the period. A variance of this order is not unusual and there can be variations in spending patterns between Departments with some ahead of target. Departments have not indicated that they expect any significant savings by year end and so capital expenditure is expected to return to profile by then.

The Medium Term Expenditure Framework, which was first introduced in the *Comprehensive Expenditure Report 2012-2014* proposed that carryover of unspent funds would also be allowed in the area of current expenditure. Departments will now be permitted to carry over unspent current funds (including pay as appropriate) from one year to increase the current expenditure ceiling for the next year. This will be subject to certain limits and safeguards and subject to my final approval. A circular will be issued to all Departments detailing the operational arrangements for current carryover subject to the enactment of the Ministers and Secretaries (Amendment) Bill 2013 which sets out the provision for multi-annual expenditure ceilings on a statutory footing.

The end-June Exchequer returns showed that Departmental spending remains in line with profile to date with gross voted expenditure at €25,187 million as at the end of June (1.2% or €301 million below profile).

### **Departmental Expenditure**

432. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide the details of the budget allocated to capital expenditure in tabular form; the amount spent in tabular form; the amount carried forward for each of the years 2012 and to date in 2013 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35268/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** The budget allocated to capital expenditure is outlined in the Revised Estimates Volume 2013 which is available on my Department's website. Capital expenditure to end June is set out in the end-June Exchequer returns which are available on the website of the Department of Finance. With regard to the amount of capital which was carried over into 2012 and 2013, these figures are available in the Revised Estimates Volumes for 2012 and 2013.

### **Public Procurement Regulations**

433. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the number of notifications of the appointment of an arbitrator under the capital works management framework notified to the national procurement policy unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform since 2011 in respect of work carried out by his Department and agencies under the auspices of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35321/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I would like to refer the Deputy to my response to a question tabled by him on 1 July 2013 (Parliamentary Question No. 416 refers), which sets out that the Arbitration Rules for use with the Public Works and Construction Services Contracts (AR1) require that each arbitrator appointed to an arbitration case under the Capital Works Management Framework notify the National Public Procurement Policy Unit (NPPPU) in my Department of their appointment within 14 days after accepting appointment. Notification of arbitrations to the NPPPU is a matter for the arbitrators appointed to a case and is not the responsibility of the individual Department or agency involved. To date one notification of appointment has been received in my Department.

### **Value for Money Reviews**

434. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the cost of the value for money assessment by the National Development Finance Agency on the proposed waste to energy incinerator in Poolbeg, Dublin, in 2007; the projected cost of the current value for money assessment under way; his views on whether this is an appropriate use of public funds; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35387/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** As the Deputy is aware from my reply to a related question on 4 July my Department has the same role in relation to PPP projects as it does in relation to capital investment projects generally. It sets the overall capital investment framework and the basic principles to be observed for the appraisal, assessment, procurement and evaluation of projects. It does not have a direct role in delivering individual projects (either PPP or traditional Exchequer capital projects). This is primarily the responsibility of the Sponsoring Department-Agency.

In accordance with the guidance issued by my Department, the National Development Fi-

nance Agency (NDFA) has the role of providing an opinion to the Sponsoring Agency (Dublin City Council) in relation to the value for money testing on a PPP project. In essence, the NDFA role in this project boils down to comparing the Net Present Value (“NPV”) of the private sector bid with the NPV of the agreed benchmark. The value for money assessment will be completed internally by the NDFA on receipt of all required documentation, and without the use of consultants. Careful consideration of all aspects of a project, including costs, benefits and financing, before significant commitments are entered into, represents value for money and accords with best practice.

### **National Monuments**

435. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the reason the majority of the Garden of Remembrance at Parnell Square is inaccessible to wheelchair users or those with impaired mobility; if and when an accessibility appraisal was carried out; the outcome of this appraisal; his plans to address these concerns; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35396/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brian Hayes):** When the Garden of Remembrance was designed in 1940 and opened in 1966 as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Easter Rising the provision of universal access was neither a planning requirement nor considered a necessity. Universal access to the sunken pool and grassed areas was not provided.

As part of the planning application submitted to Dublin City Council in October 2012 for the proposed “Journey of Light Memorial” to the Victims of Abuse in Institutions to be located at the western end of the Garden of Remembrance, an accessibility appraisal, which took into account the existing layout of the Garden, was carried out and submitted to Dublin City Council in November 2012. Planning permission for the proposed Memorial was granted on 19 May 2013. However this was appealed to An Bord Pleanála before the 6 June 2013 deadline and a decision of An Bord Pleanála is expected by 8 October 2013.

If approved, the Journey of Light Memorial project will address the majority of accessibility issues including the sunken pool area. Universal access to the main plinth area, where the Children of Lir statue is located, will then be the outstanding issue and it is hoped to address this in due course, mindful that any proposed interventions will have to have regard to the uniqueness and status of the Garden.

### **Appointment of Ombudsman**

436. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform further to Parliamentary Question No. 145 of 10 July 2013, when he expects the current Ombudsman to step down from her current position upon taking up her new role as European Ombudsman; the discussions he had held on this matter with officials in his Department; if he or officials in his Department received correspondence from any person to date seeking to be appointed Ombudsman; if he will be issuing a notice to call for expressions of interest for persons seeking to become the Ombudsman; if the position will be advertised through the Commission for Public Service Appointments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35448/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** It is envisaged that the current Ombudsman will remain in her post until end-September. The process of appointing her successor is under consideration by the Government at present. It would be inappropriate at this stage of the Government’s deliberations to make any further comment on the matter.

### Public Private Partnerships Data

437. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he will provide, in tabular form, details of the international banks that invested in the Irish public private partnership market each year between 2000 and 2012. [35456/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** I am informed by the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA), the State's centre of expertise for the specialist procurement of PPP projects, that the International debt funders (at closing) in Irish PPPs to date are as follows:

Project	FC Date	International Debt Funders
National Maritime College	2003	European Investment Bank (EIB), Bank of Scotland
5 Schools PPP Pilot	2003	Barclays
N4 N6 Kilcock Kinnegad	2003	EIB, Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria (BBVA), Santander
M1 Dundalk Western Bypass	2004	EIB, Societe Generale, Depfa, Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC)
M8 Rathcormac Fermoy Bypass	2004	EIB, Internationale Nederlanden Groep (ING), KBC
Cork School of Music	2005	Barclays
N25 Waterford Bypass	2006	EIB, BBVA, Santander
N7 Limerick Southern Ring	2006	EIB, Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS), Meridiam
Courts of Criminal Justice	2007	KBC
Convention Centre Dublin	2007	Depfa, Barclays
M3 Clonee Kells	2007	BBVA, Santander, Credit Agricole
N6 Galway to East Ballinasloe	2007	EIB, Banesto, Fortis, MedioCredito Centrale (MCC), Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS)
M50 Upgrade	2007	EIB, La Caixa, Fortis, MCC, RBS
M7 M8 Portlaoise Castletown Culahill	2007	EIB, Societe Generale, ING
Schools Bundle 2	2010	EIB, Nationale Investeringsbank Capital (NIBC)
Schools Bundle 3	2012	EIB
N11 Arklow Rathnew	2013	EIB

Our domestic banks would also have been involved in the funding of these projects.

Details of funders for individual transport projects are available on the National Roads Authority website: <http://www.nra.ie/PublicPrivatePartnership/FinancialInformationonContractsAwarded>.

Details of funders for individual accommodation projects is published in the presentation "Sourcing Funding Capital – Innovative ways to finance infrastructure development" which is available on the NDFA website: [www.ndfa.ie/TenderCompetitions/MarketUpdates](http://www.ndfa.ie/TenderCompetitions/MarketUpdates).

## Public Private Partnerships Data

438. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if there is a central record of all public private partnerships, including those at a planning stage or those deferred or cancelled, with information on associated costs to date, work undertaken to date and work required to completion. [35457/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** A list of all Public Private Partnership projects currently under contract is published on the PPP website [www.ppp.gov.ie/ppp-projects](http://www.ppp.gov.ie/ppp-projects). Details of associated costs to date and nominal value of remaining PPP payments are included. The PPP website also contains details of PPP projects which are being planned.

Further information, including details of the competitive process for individual PPP projects and the indicative timeframe for these is available on the website of the National Development Finance Agency, the State's centre of expertise for the specialist procurement of PPP projects: [www.ndfa.ie/TenderCompetitions/projects.htm](http://www.ndfa.ie/TenderCompetitions/projects.htm).

The Comptroller and Auditor General also includes a chapter "Financial Commitments under Public Private Partnerships" in his annual report each year which also give details of expenditure to date on PPP projects. The 2011 C&AG chapter included details of expenditure associated with deferred projects.

In line with the normal division of responsibilities in relation to expenditure, my Department has responsibility for setting the overall policy approach for Public Private Partnership projects, while the details of the actual projects is a matter for the relevant Ministers and their Departments and agencies.

## Official Travel

439. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure that there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agency ensures that the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36048/13]

**Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (Deputy Brendan Howlin):** In response to the Deputy's questions I can confirm that the Institute of Public Administration, although a body under the aegis of my Department, has its own governance structures in place and is answerable directly to the Institute of Public Administration Board.

## State Bodies Functions

440. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the role and objectives of the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority. [34252/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Irish Auditing & Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA) was established under the Companies (Auditing and Accounting) Act, 2003 (the Act) and conferred with the majority of its functions in February 2006 when the Act was commenced. Its role is to support and enhance public confidence in the accountancy profession and financial reporting through the exercise of effective, independent oversight and the promotion of adherence to high standards.

Pursuant to the 2003 Act and the Transparency (Directive 2004/109/EC) Regulations 2007

IAASA has four primary objectives:

- supervision of how the Prescribed Accountancy Bodies regulate and monitor their members
- monitoring of the periodic financial reporting of certain entities whose securities have been admitted to trading on a regulated market in the EU
- promotion of adherence to high professional standards in the auditing and accountancy profession
- acting as a specialist source of advice to the Minister on auditing and accounting matters.

In general, the system for the regulation and supervision of the accountancy and auditing profession in Ireland is one of regulation by the profession under independent supervision by a statutory authority. Under this system, the prescribed accountancy bodies are responsible for regulating their members.

A prescribed accountancy body is one that comes under the supervisory remit of IAASA and there are nine prescribed bodies in Ireland as follows: ACCA - Association of Chartered Certified Accountants; AIA - Association of International Accountants; CIMA - Chartered Institute of Management Accountants; CIPFA - Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy; ICAEW - Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales; ICAI - Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland; ICAS - Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland; ICPAI - Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland; IIPA - Institute of Incorporated Public Accountants.

The role of IAASA is to supervise the manner in which the accountancy bodies perform their regulatory functions and, if necessary, take appropriate action to ensure that the accountancy bodies are fully adhering to their own approved regulations and procedures.

### **Trade Agreements**

441. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the EU-India free trade agreement meeting in Brussels on 15 April 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34916/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The competence for the EU's common commercial policy lies with the European Union. Under Article 207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Commission conducts the negotiations on behalf of the EU. In that context, EU Commissioner for Trade, Karel De Gucht, met with Indian Commerce and Industry Minister, Anand Sharma, in Brussels on 15 April 2013. As I understand it, the meeting provided the opportunity to assess progress made up to that date and to identify remaining issues.

Negotiations on an ambitious and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement between the EU and India were launched in June 2007. While an agreement has not yet been finalised, I understand that negotiations are at a crucial phase as negotiators attempt to bridge the remaining gaps between the sides.

### **Job Creation Numbers**

442. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of jobs created in Cork in the past 12 months which have been supported by his Department or associated agencies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34208/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Employment

data for Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland are collected annually as part of the Forfás Annual Employment survey. Employment figures for 2012 are outlined in the following tabular statement and figures for 2013 are not yet available.

Enterprise Ireland's mission is to partner with entrepreneurs, businesses, and the research and investment communities to develop Ireland's international trade, innovation, leadership, and competitiveness. The ultimate objective is increased employment and prosperity in Ireland.

Cork, as Ireland's second city, has grown over the past decade into a globally recognised location for foreign direct investment, attracting several billions of euros in investment by overseas companies. In recent years, the IDA Ireland supported foreign direct investment base has expanded with the addition of software, customer support and shared services activities.

The County and City Enterprise Boards (CEB) in County Cork will continue to ensure that available funds are targeted to maximise entrepreneurial development and will work with microenterprise businesses on an ongoing basis. The following tabular statement outlines the jobs created by the Cork Enterprise Boards for 2012.

**Number of Jobs created by Enterprise Ireland Client Companies in Cork**

Year	2012
Jobs Created (Full Time)	1,663

**Number of Jobs created by IDA Ireland Client Companies in Cork**

Year	2012
Jobs Created (Full Time)	2,162

**Jobs Created by the Cork County and City Enterprise Boards for 2012**

County Enterprise Board	Full-Time Jobs Created	Part-Time Jobs Created	Whole Time Equivalent
Cork City	52	19	61.5
North Cork	59	12	65
South Cork	179	97	227.5
West Cork	83	58	112
Total	373	186	466

**Job Creation Issues**

443. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the funding that has been provided by his Department and associated agencies to support job creation in Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34209/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the time available it has not been possible to provide the information requested by the Deputy. I will arrange to have it forwarded to him as soon as possible.

**Research and Development Funding**

444. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he

will provide details of the funding provided by his Department and associated agencies for scientific research; the amount of such funding allocated to educational institutions in Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34210/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock):** The use of scientific research has a crucial role to play in supporting economic recovery and in driving sustainable employment in the current environment. A wide range of programmes are being delivered by the Enterprise Agencies - IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland, to promote research and innovation and give Irish enterprise a competitive edge in the global market place.

For the current year, 2013, the Exchequer allocations from my Department to the agencies within its remit involved in funding research are as follows:

**Enterprise Ireland – Subhead B4 – Research and Development** is in receipt of €131.7 million from my Department, (of which €127 million is capital and €4.7 million current funding).

**Science Foundation Ireland** has a budget in 2013 of €162.35 million, (of which €152.3 million is capital and €10.05 million current).

The **Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions**, aimed at delivering world class research infrastructure, has been allocated €44.34 million, (of which €16.7 million is capital and €27.6 million current funds).

**IDA** has been allocated €124.32 million, (of which €86 million is capital and €38.32 million current funds).

In addition, my Department provided an allocation of €2.9 million capital funding in 2013 to the **Tyndall National Institute**, based in Cork. This core grant is an essential component in the continued successful operation of the complex research support infrastructure within Tyndall.

It will be my aim to enable the research funding agencies within the remit of my Department to continue to support scientific research and thereby help enterprise to be sustainable and to grow and provide jobs in this country for Ireland's workforce.

#### Science Foundation Ireland Funding Allocated to Educational Institutes in Cork

With regard to the amount of funding allocated to educational institutions in Cork, currently there are 118 live SFI supported grants being led by Cork based institutions spanning University College Cork, the Tyndall National Institute, Cork IT and Teagasc, Moorepark, Co Cork. The total awards value of these awards is €172 million, of which existing commitments amounting to €92 million remains over the period to 2019. It is also important to note that the Cork based institutions are partners in numerous other live SFI research awards which are being led by institutions elsewhere in the country.

#### Discover Science & Engineering Funding

In March 2012, responsibility for the Discover Science and Engineering Programme (DSE) transferred from Forfas to SFI. The DSE programme seeks to promote the awareness and engagement of the Irish public with science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) among students, teachers and members of the public. Funding for the DSE programme through SFI in 2013 amounts to approximately €1.6 million. This supports hundreds of events and exhibitions held nationally involving many thousands of schools, institutions, teachers and students. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of funding on a county basis given the nature of the

DSE programme supports which also includes contributions from various partners. However, examples of some of the DSE activity of direct relevance to Cork this year are as follows:

- Cork Electronics Industry Association (CEIA) was selected to manage and run an Irish national CanSat competition in 2013. Coláiste an Phiarsaigh, Glanmire, Co. Cork was the winning school.

- Cork IT hosted one of the ‘SciFest’ science fairs in 2013. Scifest is a series of one-day science fairs hosted nationwide by the Institutes of Technology.

- “Engineering your Future”, a week-long, hands-on programme for Transition Year students, which is designed to introduce them to the exciting and diverse world of engineering, included a session in Cork IT, attended by 40 students.

- 78 schools in Cork achieved an Award of Science and Maths Excellence in 2012/2013 school year.

- Further details regarding the annual expenditure per programme and per institution can be found on SFIs website at [www.sfi.ie](http://www.sfi.ie).

#### The Programme for Research in Third-level Institutions

The Programme for Research in Third-level Institutions (PRTLTI) funding operates in various cycles, with Cycle 1 commencing in 1998 and the latest, Cycle 5 awards, being announced in July 2010. PRTLTI funding is a mixture of exchequer and private funding. A list of the Cycles 4 and 5 PRTLTI project awards which are led by Cork based institutions is outlined in the following tables. It is important to note that the Cork institutions would also be partners to many other PRTLTI projects which are being led by other institutions nationally. Further details can be found at [www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie).

Table 1: List of PRTLTI Cycle 4 Projects and Programmes which are led by higher education institutions in Co. Cork

Project/Programme Title	Lead Institution	Capital funding (€m)	Recurrent funding (€m)	Total Award value (€m)
Biomedical Science (Graduate Training Programme) and establishment of MMI	UCC	N/A	1.85	1.85
National Programme on (Bio)Pharmaceuticals & Pharmacological Sciences	UCC	0.5	0.69	1.19
Environment Graduate Programme	Cork IT /UCC	1.7	1.82	3.52
The Irish National E-Infrastructure	UCC	0.25	0.25	0.50

Project/Programme Title	Lead Institution	Capital funding (€m)	Recurrent funding (€m)	Total Award value (€m)
National Food and Health Collaborative Research Programme	UCC	4.06	0.75	4.81
Humanities Serving Irish Society	UCC	0.20	1.24	1.44
National Programme of Research on Knowledge, Innovation, Society and Space	UCC	N/A	0.92	0.92
Nanoscience and Nanoscale Technologies for Ireland	Cork IT /UCC	6.85	3.88	10.73
National Biophotonics Imaging Platform	UCC	3.70	0.95	4.65
Networked Embedded Systems	Cork IT	6.45	7.63	14.08
UCC Biosciences Cell Biology and Cell Signalling New Space	UCC	3.00	N/A	3.00
-	-	26.71	19.98	46.69

Table 2: List of PRTL I Cycle 5 Projects and Programmes which are led by higher education institutions in Co. Cork

Project/Programme Title	Lead Institution	Capital (€m)	Current (€m)	Total (€m)
Translating Biosciences into Health	UCC	19.10	N/A	19.10
Centre for Research in Advanced Therapeutic Engineering	Cork IT	3.30	N/A	3.30
Digital Arts and Humanities Structured PhD Programme	UCC	N/A	1.29	1.29

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Project/Programme Title	Lead Institution	Capital (€m)	Current (€m)	Total (€m)
Structured PhD Education for Life Sciences	Cork IT	N/A	0.29	0.29
Environmental Research Institute at the Maritime and Energy Cluster, Ireland	UCC	7.50	0.91	8.41
Food and Health: Generating wealth through innovative and collaborative research	UCC	2.90	0.50	3.40
Graduate Research Education Programme in Engineering	UCC	N/A	1.04	1.04
A National Graduate Education Programme in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology	UCC / Tyndall	N/A	0.91	0.91
A National Graduate Education Programme in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology	Cork IT	N/A	0.30	0.30
Irish Transgenic Network	UCC	0.26	0.50	0.76
Molecular Medicine Ireland Clinical & Translational Research Scholars Programme	UCC	N/A	1.08	1.08
Molecular and Cellular mechanisms underlying inflammatory processes	UCC	N/A	1.57	1.57
Telecommunications Graduate Initiative	UCC	N/A	0.49	0.49

Project/Programme Title	Lead Institution	Capital (€m)	Current (€m)	Total (€m)
Tyndall Flexi-Fab for Applied Convergent Nano-technologies	UCC/Tyndall	4.46	0.61	5.07
-	-	37.52	9.50	47.01

### Enterprise Ireland

A list of payments by Enterprise Ireland to Cork based educational institutions in 2011 and 2012 (latest full year data available) is outlined in the following table. These payments relate to programmes and activities such as Innovation Vouchers, Commercialisation Fund, Innovation Partnerships, New Frontiers Programme, International Collaboration and Technology Centres.

**Table 3: List of EI Payments to Cork based educational institutions**

Name of Institution	2011	2012
Cork Institute of Technology	2,354,568	2,561,202
NUI - Cork	6,743,305	6,949,014
Tyndall National Institute	4,271,196	3,771,873
Grand Total	13,369,068	13,282,090

### Research and Development Funding

445. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the measures being taken to align funding for scientific research with industry and enterprise needs, job opportunities and societal goals; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34211/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock):** In February 2012, the Government agreed to the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group as a whole of Government policy goal. The report recommended the alignment of the majority share of competitive State funding in research and innovation for the next five years with the 14 areas of opportunity identified by the Steering Group. The areas, which include sectors such as food, health, ICT, manufacturing, energy, and innovation in services and business processes, were identified on the basis of existing strengths of the enterprise base, opportunities that exist in terms of the global marketplace and those which are most likely to deliver economic and societal impact, and jobs.

Following publication of the report in March 2012, the Prioritisation Action Group (PAG) was established, under my chairmanship, to drive implementation of research prioritisation, and it includes representatives of all research funders and relevant Government Departments. A number of working groups were then established by the PAG and charged with developing Action Plans for each of the Priority Areas. Each Action Plan was validated through a process of external stakeholder engagement which involved researchers and industry in the relevant areas and publication of the Action Plans was recently approved by Government. The Action Plans represent the detailed blueprint for actions to be taken by funding Departments and funding agencies to realign the majority of competitive public research funding around the priority

areas over the next five years.

A Framework of Metrics and Targets for Monitoring the Impact of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Investment has also been approved for publication. The Framework of metrics and targets will firstly monitor the impact of public STI investment, and, secondly, monitor the impact of the implementation of Research Prioritisation on the 14 Priority Areas. The purpose of setting these targets is twofold; to stretch the public enterprise support system in order to maximise the impact of public investment in R&D; and to assess the success over time of the implementation of Research Prioritisation.

Implementation of Research Prioritisation is very much the Government's priority STI goal and a key pillar of An Action Plan for Jobs 2013 is "Using Research and Innovation to Drive Job Creation". Building on success to date, I am looking forward to continued implementation of the Research Prioritisation exercise, as we seek to enhance the effect and impact of our research investment in order to deliver high quality, sustainable jobs.

### **Regional Development**

446. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation regarding efforts to boost research and innovation at regional level, his views on the Cork Declaration arising from the WIRE2013 Conference held in UCC and how this declaration has been used by the Government as contributing to the output of the Irish Presidency of the European Council; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34212/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Sean Sherlock):** The role of Government is to create the conditions where enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation can flourish and quality employment opportunities can be grown and maintained. Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, the enterprise development agencies under the aegis of my Department, in conjunction with the relevant City and County Enterprise Boards, support enterprise development in the regions. The Government is committed to delivering national recovery and economic development, and the role local authorities play in promoting this at a local level is essential to the overall national effort. The sustainability of our regions will be significantly shaped by interaction with the international economy – in terms of investment, tourism and the growth of indigenous businesses.

In the European context, the European Union is putting clear emphasis on policies that will return us to growth and create more and better jobs. Encouraging and supporting regional excellence in innovation is a key component of ensuring that European regions continue to flourish. The European Union plays an essential role in giving researchers from every corner of the EU the opportunity to develop their competences and to find suitable partners to collaborate with.

The theme of the recently concluded Irish EU Presidency was Stability, Growth and Jobs. Growth is increasingly related to the capacity of regional economies to change and innovate. Regions and cities have become the primary spatial units where knowledge is transferred, innovation systems are built and competition to attract investments and talents takes place.

The purpose of the WIRE 2013 conference, which was organised by Enterprise Ireland and the European Commission, was to contribute to regional policy development in the areas of research, innovation and learning at both European and regional level. The occasion of the conference was used to enhance policy formation for effective regional development.

There were four central themes which will form the basis for the Declaration:

- C – COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
- O – OUTWARD LOOKING
- R – REGIONAL DIMENSION
- K - KNOWLEDGE

The conclusions of the conference will form the basis of a WCork Declaration”; this will be used as formal input by Ireland’s Presidency of the EU, to the Competitiveness Council and will be circulated to leading European regional representative organisations and communities, forming a key output of the Irish Presidency.

#### IDA Site Visits

447. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of visits carried out by the Industrial Development Agency to Mullingar, Athlone and Longford since 2011 and the outcome of such visits. [34360/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I am informed by IDA Ireland that, from the beginning of 2011 to date in 2013, there have been a total of 25 site visits by potential investors to County Westmeath, but there have been no such visits to County Longford. Details of the number of site visits in each of the years in question are set out in the following tabular statement.

Following on from these site visits, I understand that some further due diligence is on-going by some of the companies involved, while others have chosen other locations for their investments, both nationally and internationally. In addition, some announcements for the region are pending.

IDA Ireland has explained that, as Ireland competes for high quality investments, the concept of scale is crucial. Leading global corporations require a significant population pool, access to qualified talent, world standard physical and digital infrastructure coupled with the availability of sophisticated professional and business support services.

Counties Westmeath and Longford form part of IDA’s Midlands Region along with counties Offaly, Roscommon and Laois. In the Midlands Region IDA markets the towns of Athlone, Tullamore and Mullingar as the urban centres of scale in the region with other locations such as Portlaoise, Roscommon and Longford being marketed as locations which are open for business but only to clients whose requirements can be met by those locations.

In the region as a whole, there are currently 44 IDA Ireland client companies employing over 5,000 people. IDA Ireland has formed strong relationships with these companies and, having regard to the fact that 70% approximately of all FDI investments won by IDA is from the existing client base, continues to work closely with them in order to ensure their long term sustainability and to encourage their growth, development and continuing reinvestment in their sites.

Table showing the number of site visits by potential IDA investors to County Westmeath in each of the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013

-	2011	2012	2013 to date
Co Westmeath	15	7	3

**Job Creation Numbers**

448. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of jobs announced by Industrial Development Agency supported companies and by Enterprise Ireland supported companies since 1 January 2013, broken down by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34392/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** To date in 2013, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have announced approximately 6,500 jobs. Details of the job announcements by IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland are set out in the following tabular statement. These jobs are expected to come on stream over the next three years. It must be remembered that for a variety of reasons, some job creation projects are not announced.

Table I: Job announcements by Enterprise Ireland supported companies since January 2013

NO.	DATE	COMPANY	LOCATION	JOBS
1	6/3/2013	HPSU 2012	Various – across counties	1,600 new jobs over three years in 97 new start ups located across all regions
2	26/3/2013	OnePageCRM	Galway	12 new jobs
3.	26/4/2013	Storm Technology	Dublin & Galway	21 new jobs
4.	26/4/2013	Opensky	Kildare	30 new jobs over 18 months.
5	13/4/13	Glanbia Ingredients Ire Ltd	Waterford/ Kilkenny boarder (Belview)	1600 direct and indirect jobs, 450 construction jobs.
6.	2/5/2013	FeedHenry	Waterford & Dublin	100 jobs
7.	24/5/2013	Advant Medical	Galway	34 jobs
8.	24/5/2013	Cubic Telecom	Dublin	70 new jobs within the next 3 years
9.	24/5/2013	VoiceSage	Dublin	10 jobs over the next 2 years

Table II: Job announcements by IDA Ireland supported companies since January 2013

DATE	COMPANY	LOCATION	ORIGIN	INVEST	JOBS	PROJECT ACTIVITY
09/1/2013	Hauawei	Cork City and Dublin	China	n/a	50	To provide leading customer services to telecoms operators both in Ireland and internationally. Future expansion at the sites will extend R&D functions to cover a wider range of IT software projects.

DATE	COMPANY	LOCATION	ORIGIN	INVEST	JOBS	PROJECT ACTIVITY
10/1/2013	Omnipay	Dublin	USA	n/a	30	To develop and extend its global payments processing platform, which currently processes more than one billion transactions on behalf of 31 merchant acquiring banks and payment processors worldwide.
14/01/2013	Vistakon	Limerick	US	100M	300	Expansion of its manufacturing operations and create 100 new highly skilled jobs
29/01/2013	10Gen	Dublin	USA	N/A	60	Creating 60 jobs in Dublin with the establishment of its European HQ
29/01/2013	Etsy, Inc	Dublin	USA	N/A	n/a	Establishing a new EMEA HQ in Dublin – leading online marketplace for handmade and vintage items.
29/01/2013	Loop1 Systems Inc.	Cork	USA	N/A	17	Creating 17 new jobs in Cork with the establishment of a sales, customer support and technical centre providing training and professional services to multinational companies using the SolarWinds Suite of software.
29/01/2013	Whitehouse Analytical Labs	Cork	USA	N/A	35	Analytical testing facility, has chosen Ireland for its first round of international expansion, and is to create 35 new jobs in Cork.
29/01/2013	IMSTech GmbH	Cork	USA	N/A	35	A provider of manufacturing solutions for the life sciences sector, is to establish a research and manufacturing competency centre in Cork with the creation of 35 highly-skilled jobs.
29/01/2013	PE Lynch	Dublin	USA	n/a	20	A producer of algorithmic trading software for banks and brokers, is to establish its European headquarters in Dublin with the creation of 20 new jobs
12/02/2013	Genzyme	Waterford	USA	44 Million		The investment will increase the site's diversity of products by adding the filling of Sanofi's Lantus® (insulin glargine), the number one insulin brand worldwide
14/02/2013	eBay	Dundalk	US	n/a	450	European customer base of the company's eBay Marketplaces and PayPal businesses with an enhanced experience in the areas of customer services, sales and compliance.

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DATE	COMPANY	LOCATION	ORIGIN	INVEST	JOBS	PROJECT ACTIVITY
18/02/13	Facebook	Dublin	US	n/a	100	Expansion in a broad range of roles including user operations, advertising, sales, policy and safety.
21/02/13	Quantcast	Dublin	US	n/a	100	Establishment of EMEA Operations Centre in Dublin
27/02/13	Guidewire	Dublin	US	n/a	75	To provide consultancy support and additional product development resources to support Guidewire's customers
01/03/2013	Worldwide TechServices	Limerick	US	n/a	62	Establishment of a European Headquarters
05/03/2013	FireEye	Cork	US	n/a	150	EMEA Technical Support Centre
21/10/13	Yahoo	Dublin	USA		200	Customer Support, Technology Operations, HR and Finance which will support Yahoos business across Europe, Middel East and Africa
21/03/13	McAfee	Cork	USA		60	Establishment of a Enterprise Engineering Group dedicated to provide fast, efficient engineering responses to sales opportunities for the company. Within this group McAfee will create a number of small specialised engineering teams in Cork that will be responsible for designing and building new features for its key enterprise customers.
20/03/13	Zendesk	Dublin	US	n/a	30	European Data Centre
26/03/13	Zurich	Dublin	USA	n/a	112	The establishment of two new IT hubs which will provide services to the Zurich businesses globally and in Europe. One hub will support Zurich's IT service management and the other will support Cyber Security Management
27/03/13	Consultancy Natural Power	Dublin	USA	n/a	20	Establishment of their headquarters in Dublin
28/03/13	Nypro	Waterford	USA	n/a	200	Establishment of an additional state of the art medical device manufacturing facility which will manufacture advanced respiratory and injectable devices for global healthcare and pharmaceutical customers.
8/04/13	Novartis	Dublin	Swiss	n/a	n/a	Business Services Centre

DATE	COMPANY	LOCATION	ORIGIN	INVEST	JOBS	PROJECT ACTIVITY
19/04/13	Marin Software	Dublin	US	n/a	35	Establishment of their International Headquarters. They are a leading provider of an advertising management platform for search, display, social and mobile,
19/04/13	ACI	Limerick	US	n/a	60	Expansion of their software centre.
01/05/13	Squarespace	Dublin	US	n/a	100	Establishment of its EMEA Centre in Dublin
30/05/13	Fujitsu	Dublin	Japan	n/a	n/a	Fujitsu to undertake a series of collaborative Irish research projects over the next three years as a test bed case to inform the global ICT giant's future strategy
04.06.13	Prometic	Dundalk	US	n/a	24	24 Jobs added to Global Operations Hub
10.06.13	UPC	Limerick	Europe	n/a	42	European Competency Centre
11.06.13	Groupon	Dublin	US	n/a	20	Experienced Software engineers, computer programmers, data scientists and computational markets fort its software centre in Dublin
13.06.13	EMC	Cork	US	100M	200	The opening of a new EMC office as part of a fresh €100 million investment in Ireland. The new full-time positions, spanning engineering, customer support, sales, finance, research and development and IT.
04.07.13	Becton Dickinson	Louth	US	3.5 Million	28	Investment in new equipment to manufacture state-of-the-art safety needles designed to help protect healthcare workers and patients from medical sharps injuries
11.07.13	Pfizer	Dublin & Cork	US	130 Million	250	Expansion of capacity and begin producing more advanced, complex therapies to deal with some of the most devastating and difficult to cure diseases

### Microenterprise Loan Fund Expenditure

449. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide details of the funding allocated under the microenterprise loan fund scheme since 1 January 2013, broken down by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34393/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Microfinance Ireland (MFI) opened for business on Monday, 1 October 2012. As of 30 June 2013, MFI has approved 79 loan applications to the value of €1.264 million, supporting 191 jobs. Detailed below is the latest set of data sought by the Deputy for the period 1 October 2012 to 30 June 2013.

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County	Received	Approved	County	Received	Approved
Dublin	44	19	Carlow	6	1
Limerick	22	7	Clare	5	2
Cork	22	6	Sligo	5	5
Wexford	12	4	Louth	5	2
Tipperary	12	2	Roscommon	5	2
Mayo	10	7	Laois	5	1
Meath	9	1	Monaghan	5	1
Kerry	8	5	Leitrim	5	0
Wicklow	8	4	Offaly	3	2
Waterford	7	1	Donegal	3	0
Galway	6	2	Longford	2	0
Westmeath	6	3	Cavan	2	1
Kildare	6	0	Kilkenny	1	1

### Departmental Reports

450. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34406/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The information is provided in the following tables.

#### January - July 2013

Name of Company/ Payee	Cost (€)	Date of Commission	Date of Completion
Janet Hughes	17,835	January 2013	April 2013
RSM McClure Watters	37,634	February 2013	September 2013

#### January – December 2012

Name of Company/ Payee	Cost (€)	Date of Commission	Date of Completion
Achilles Procurement Services Ltd	2,650	July 2012	August 2012
Fitzpatrick Associates	48,647	September 2012	October 2013
Version 1	29,667	January 2012	October 2012
Ward Solutions	14,111	February 2012	August 2012
Ward Solutions	16,590	February 2012	April 2012
Ward Solutions	8,394	December 2012	December 2012
Deloitte & Touche	102,872.62	January 2012	January 2013

**March – December 2011**

Name of Company/ Payee	Cost (€)	Date of Commission	Date of Completion
Rits	7,093	June 2011	August 2011
Rits	3630	November 2011	December 2011
Rits	4729	November 2011	December 2011
Maxima Ireland	8,276	August 2011	August 2011

For information I provide a similar question answered previously, on Tuesday, 22 May 2012, that provides information on work undertaken by consultants in the period 2008 – 2011.

**Deputy Joanna Tuffy** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total amount of expenditure on consultancy by his Department in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011; the numbers of consultants engaged by his Department in those years; the names of the consultancy companies awarded contracts; and the steps which have been taken to reduce the expenditure on consultancy and the reliance on consultants by his Department in these years and for the future. [25549/12]

Details of the information on consultancies requested by the Deputy for the period from 2008 to 2011 are set out in the following tables. My Department has, in line with Government policy, taken measures to reduce the level of expenditure on external consultancies. The number of consultancies undertaken has been significantly reduced and are undertaken on the basis of necessity and in instances where it is not possible to conduct the work in-house having regard to the nature of the work and the skills required.

**2011**

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Mr. John Travers	Facilitation of Code of Practice for Grocery Goods Undertakings (continuation of services provided in 2010)	€36,905
Reidy Brophy Limited	Facilitation of a focus group with business to develop a web portal on regulation affecting businesses	€3,570
Connolly Lowe	Legal Accounting Assignment for ODCE	€8,963
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€545
Una Ní Raifeartaigh	Opinion and Advices for ODCE	€1,210
Una Ní Raifeartaigh	Opinion and Advices for ODCE	€4,840
Karole Cuddihy	Legal Proofing of document for ODCE	€968
Una Ní Raifeartaigh	Opinion and Advices for ODCE	€454
Capital for Enterprise Ltd.	Design of Temporary Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme	€72,074
Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants	Assessment of the Productive Sector Operational Programme, 2000 – 2006	€15,730
Leo Burnett	Design work for publicity campaign re increase in National Minimum Wage Rate	€847

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Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
UCD (Dr Frank Walsh)	Review of ERO and REA Wage Setting Mechanisms	€15,000
Keating & Associates	To provide NERA with PR Consultancy Services re their information campaign on employment rights matters.	€18,770
Greater Heights Ltd	Learning needs Analysis(NERA)	€15,645
Mairéad Carey	Case Summaries for The Labour Court Annual Report 2010	€7,889
Rits	IT Security assessment of new hosting site established in the Revenue Hosting Centre, John's Road	€15,452
IBM	Lotus Notes healthcheck	€10,239
Maxima Ireland	Virtualisation Strategy Review – a short high-level assessment of the future opportunities available to the Department to virtualise some of its servers with a view to making cost savings.	€8,276
Declan Murphy	Legal advice	€605
Kilroys Solicitors	Legal advice in relation to Export Credit Insurance Recoveries	€9,231
Sia Management Group	DJEI Strategic Development Plan facilitation and consultancy support	€15,089
-	Total	€262,302

**2010**

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Mr. John Travers	Facilitation of Code of Practice for Grocery Goods Undertakings	€24,805
SIRA Consulting BV	Provision of training in the Standard Cost Model to facilitate measurement of administrative burdens	€9,950
SIRA Consulting BV	Support and Quality Assurance in respect of the measurement of administrative burdens	€8,531
Capgemini Consulting	Provision of training in use of the National Application Database – a system developed by the European Commission to assist countries in the collation and interrogation of results arising from their cross-Government administrative burden measurements	€4,963
Jacobs and Associates	Training support in the Standard Cost Model methodology for the measurement of administrative burdens in Ireland	€3,300
Connolly Lowe	Consultancy – Accountancy for ODCE	€12,778
Caroline Costello	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€424

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Paul Anthony McDermott	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€3,933
Brian Murray	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€5,288
Paul O'Higgins	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€3,933
Nessa Cahill	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€1,892
Tom Mallon	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€557
Brian Murray	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€4,564
Cyril O'Neill	Consultancy - Accountancy for ODCE	€2,056
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€424
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€333
Paul Anthony McDermott	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€1,210
Paul O'Higgins	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€1,210
Catherine Donnelly	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€4,235
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€3,237
Horwath Bastow Charleton	Consultancy - Accountancy for ODCE	€1,252
Nessa Cahill	Counsel's Opinion for ODCE	€3,896
Mr. Eoghan O'Briain	To assist the Dept. in the technical aspects of Emissions Trading, Climate Change and other related Environment work	€8,785
Keating & Associates	To provide NERA with PR Consultancy Services re their information campaign on employment rights matters	€29,011
Brendan Moran	Computer consultancy services (NERA)	€3,085
-	Total	€143,302

**2009**

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Finbar Flood	Enquiry commissioned under Section 38(2) of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act	€20,000
Tom Walsh	To provide technical and research support to the Department in relation to certain aspects of occupational health and safety and chemicals policy	€8,230
Keating & Associates	To provide NERA with PR Consultancy Services	€20,303
Mazars	Consultancy services to NERA business planning	€3,645
RITS	Consultancy services on Data Protection to NERA	€3,332
Brendan Moran	IT Consultancy Services NERA/ development of Information call centre solution	€10,935
Brendan Moran	IT Consultancy Services NERA/ development of T&S and Accounting data-base	€5,833

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Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Hewlett Packard Ireland	IT consultancy NERA	€4,538
Kilroys Solicitors	Provision of legal advice on Export Credit Insurance issues (as instances arise)	€32,336
Gartner Ireland	Access to international ICT analysts and research	€41,352
Trigraph Professional Services	Project Management Consultancy	€4022
Version 1	Analyse Oracle software usage and license compliance	€7,560
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion	€16,766
Brian Murray	Counsel's Opinion	€5,421
Philip Rahn	Counsel's Opinion	€3,353
Paul O'Higgins	Counsel's Opinion	€18,225
Paul Anthony McDermott	Counsel's Opinion	€18,225
Nessa Cahill	Counsel's Opinion	€3,130
Cyril O'Neill	Legal Costs Assessment for ODCE	€3,874
Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgarthaigh, UCD	Provision of independent accountancy advice regarding specific company law issues	€8,020
Michael Henry	Consultancy review of the draft Report on Health and Safety Information Obligations	€851
OLM Consultancy	Consultancy advice on the draft Report on Health and Safety Information Obligations	€1,094
Scannell Solutions Ltd	Consultancy advice on the draft Report on Health and Safety Information Obligations	€365
AD Little	Review of current supports to encourage the exploitation of IP emanating from Higher Education research	€30,000 (Departmental contribution)
-	Total	€271,410

**2008**

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
EPS Consulting	To measure the administrative burdens arising in Company Law, Employment Law and Health and Safety Law in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€58,249

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Scannell Solutions	To identify a list of priority information obligations arising from health and safety legislation for measurement in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€5,143
Arthur Cox	To Identify a list of priority information obligations arising from company law for measurement in order to contribute to the 25% target on administrative burden reduction	€2,226
UCD School of Law	To list the information obligations arising from employment law in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€4,650
NUI Galway	To list the information obligations arising from company law in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€5,102
University of Limerick	To list the information obligations arising in health and safety law in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€4,616
Bizmeasures Ltd	To test the feasibility of implementing the filing of XBRL financial statements	€31,683
Tom Ferris	To carry out a measurement of specific administrative burdens identified by the High Level Group on Business Regulation in order to contribute to the 25% target on reducing administrative burden for business	€5,707
Price Waterhouse Coopers	Assistance in ODCE investigation	€137,772
KPMG	Assessment of a named company's restructuring plan	€273,460
Institute of Public Administration (IPA)	To examine feedback from staff with a view to formulating an action plan to improve their working environment and thus help them to contribute more effectively to achieving my Department's business objectives	€19,867
CIRCA Consultants, SIA Group and International Panel of Experts	Review of the efficacy of the DSE Science Awareness programme by a panel of international experts	€105,082(Shared equally between the Department and Forfás)

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Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
CIRCA Consultants	The review was undertaken as part of initial Government decision in 2004 upon joining EMBL	€51,182 (Shared equally between the Department and Forfás).
DHR Communications	Dissemination of EQUAL Programme (PR)	€9,547
Computer Associates	To review the Department's Data Backup and Storage environment and produce a report with recommendations	€13,750
Keating Consulting Ltd	NERA (PR)	€63,189
Ellard Browne Ltd	NERA (Advertising)	€605
Cawley Nea Ltd	NERA (Advertising)	€27,410
Tom Walsh	To provide advice to the Department on the development of occupational health and safety policy and legislation and chemicals policy	€91,538
Arup Consulting Engineers	To support the Department in its review of Review of Dangerous Substances legislation	€116,487
Kilroy Solicitors	Legal Advice on Export Credit Insurance issues (as instances arise)	€16,263
Version 1	To prepare a report on the Insolvency BPR	€13,177
Version 1	To determine the feasibility of options for the upgrade of the RIR system	€10,328
RITS	Security Advice	€38,535
Gartner Ireland	Access to international ICT analysts and research	€41,352
IQ Content Ltd	Review of Department's Website	€41,261
IPA	Quality Assessment of SFI VFM Review	€3,630
Carr Communications	Communications (CRO)	€25,593
Open Interface	Website accessibility advice (CRO)	€3,993
Grant Thornton	Procurement and business solution advice (CRO)	€71,874
Millward Brown/IMS	Market Research for ODCE	€15,898
Mathias Kelly QC	Legal advice – investigations under section 19 of the Companies Act 1990	€167,171
Mary Donnelly	Research paper in connection with the Company Law Review Group's 2007 Annual Report	€500
Experian Ireland	Provision of statistical analysis of returns to the Companies Registration Office	€182
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Media Research for the Advisory Group on Media Mergers	€26,965

Name of Company/Payee	Purpose	Cost (€)
Emily Gibson BL	Legal Services for the Advisory Group on Media Mergers	€5,596
Form Creative Ltd	Advertising campaign for Work/Life Balance Day 2008	€4,994
Form Creative Ltd	Advertisement in Sunday Tribune re: Panel of Consultants	€3,179
Achilles Procurement Services Ltd	Consultancy – NERA case Management system	€602
Mazars	Audit services	€4,193
Remy Farrell	Counsel's Opinion	€6,595
Douglas Clarke	Counsel's Opinion	€1,029
John Hennessy	Counsel's Opinion	€2,541
Connolly Lowe	Legal Costs Assessment for ODCE	€535
Cyril O'Neill	Legal Costs Assessment for ODCE	€16,215
-	Total	€1,491,408

### Job Creation Issues

451. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the steps he and his Department have taken and plan to undertake to address the scourge of unemployment in counties Cavan and Monaghan; if he will advise of prospects in the pipeline; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34452/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Government's approach to tackling the unemployment problem is to focus resources on those individuals most at risk of long-term unemployment. In this context, together with the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Social Protection, I launched the JobsPlus initiative last week. This is a new employer incentive scheme operated by the Department of Social Protection which will incentivise businesses to hire jobseekers from the Live Register, boost job creation and reduce long-term unemployment. Much of the application and approval process for JobsPlus will be completed online at [www.jobsplus.ie](http://www.jobsplus.ie).

In terms of job creation in Cavan and Monaghan, Enterprise Ireland's (EI) activity is focused on the creation of new jobs through supporting entrepreneurs setting up new High Potential Start-Up Companies (HPSU), the retention and creation of new jobs in existing companies and in enhancing the innovation capability of Ireland at a national and regional level through support of research in companies and Third Level institutions. EI provides a range of supports for start-ups including: the Competitive Feasibility Fund for the North East Region (Cavan, Monaghan and Louth) launched in February 2013; the Competitive Start-Up Fund, the Seed and Venture Capital and Development Capital Fund; the HALO Business Angel Partnership Programme that is mandated to match business angels to appropriate projects; the New Frontiers Programme and the Innovation Voucher Initiative.

EI has 99 client companies in County Cavan employing in excess of 4,000 people. To date in 2013, over €621,000 has been approved to Cavan companies and €420,000 paid. In County Monaghan, Enterprise Ireland has 124 client companies employing almost 3,500 people. To date in 2013, over €1.4m has been approved to Monaghan companies and €599,000 paid.

The Cavan and Monaghan County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) support the micro-enterprise sector at local level. Support is available, subject to certain criteria, to promote and develop

indigenous micro-enterprise potential and to stimulate economic activity and entrepreneurship at local level, with priority being given to manufacturing and internationally traded services. In 2012, Cavan CEB paid out €234,185 to 20 projects and 477 people availed of Cavan CEB Training Programmes. To date in 2013, Cavan CEB has approved €234,500 in grant aid to 10 projects with the potential to create 47 full-time and 16 part-time jobs. In 2012, Monaghan CEB paid out €258,522 to 14 projects and 648 people availed of Monaghan CEB Training Programmes. To date in 2013, Monaghan CEB has approved grant aid of €171,220 to 6 start-up and developing companies with an expected job creation figure of 15.

Recent initiatives organised by these two CEBs to address job losses in the region, include:

- A €3.064 million project funded by the Special EU Programmes Body under the INTER-REG IVA Programme entitled “Harnessing Natural Resources”. Overall, it is estimated that the project will result in the creation of up to 100 jobs.

- An Information Event in Castleblayney, inviting all relevant agencies to come together under one roof to provide information and support to the unemployed.

The Government also established a Microfinance Loan Fund in 2012, to improve access to credit for entrepreneurs and to facilitate the growth and expansion of viable businesses. This is particularly relevant to entrepreneurs who don't have a track record in credit history, previous business experience, other assets to act as security etc. which financial institutions typically seek.

In accordance with its Horizon 2020 Strategy, IDA has invested in the provision of an extensive portfolio of property solutions in the North East Region which enhances its marketability for potential FDI opportunities. IDA will consider all opportunities to leverage its property portfolio in smaller population centres like Cavan and Monaghan in order to facilitate investment generation and job creation from the indigenous and non-traditional sectors of the economy.

*The following revised reply was received on 27 September 2013.*

Please note that the reply contained the following statement: “EI has 99 client companies in County Cavan employing in excess of 4,000 people. To date in 2013, over €621,000 has been approved to Cavan companies and €420,000 paid.”

It has been brought to the Minister's attention that this statement was not factually correct and the reply should have referred to payments of €621,000 and approval of €420,000.

## **Industrial Development**

452. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will take the appropriate steps to compel the Industrial Development Authority to act as a State body, treating all counties and potential locations for inward investment equally; if he has given any consideration to introducing performance targets by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34453/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In seeking to achieve balanced regional development and the broader goal of securing new foreign direct investment (FDI) projects for Ireland in a very competitive global environment, the concept of scale is crucial. In order to achieve balanced regional economic development, IDA prioritises the marketing of its Gateway locations within each region as the locations of critical mass and

highlights the opportunities provided by other locations on an opportunistic basis, which are within commuting distances of these Gateways.

I am mindful of the concerns that have been expressed to me by Deputies on all sides of the House about the level of site visits to certain regional locations. I have, accordingly, raised this matter with the CEO of IDA Ireland with a view to exploring what further initiatives can be taken to influence potential investors to invest in such locations. That having been said, however, locations outside of Dublin and the main urban centres already facilitate the presence of a large number of multinational companies who have invested over the years, span multiple sectors and employ significant amounts of people. The primary opportunity for regional locations is in respect of the existing client base and potential further investment opportunities from same. Approximately 70% of all FDI investments won by IDA is from the existing client base.

In order to ensure that Ireland can continue to compete globally for foreign direct investment, an in depth analysis of our FDI strategy with a view to informing the formulation of an appropriate strategy for the period post-2014 is currently being undertaken. This analysis, will take account of factors such as key trends emerging in FDI best practice internationally, Ireland's strengths in attracting FDI, any change to the EU's State Aid rules that may be introduced in the near future and our approach to regional development

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

453. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34516/13]

478. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35802/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 453 and 478 together.

The following table lists the fees for the Chairperson and Members, for each Board under the aegis of my Department. The Deputy should note that in some cases members may have opted to waive their fees, some members will be subject to the "one person one salary" principle and others are Department nominees at official level who are not entitled to fees and vacancies will exist on various boards from time to time. It is worth noting as of March 2013 of the 64 appointments to State Boards within my remit 36 were allocated under legislation to Department Representatives, social partners, nominees of other Ministers and nominees of prescribed bodies. The individual amounts paid to each member in board fees and expenses are a day to day matter for the respective Agencies. I have asked the Agencies to respond directly to the Deputy.

Body	Chairpersons Fees	Member Fees
Enterprise Ireland	€20,520	€11,970
Forfas	€20,520	€11,970
IDA Ireland	€20,520	€11,970
Labour Relations Commission	€20,520	€11,970
National Consumer Agency	€20,520	€11,970
Personal Injuries Assessment Board	€20,520	€11,970
Science Foundation Ireland	€20,520	€11,970

Body	Chairpersons Fees	Member Fees
Shannon Free Airport Development Company	€20,520	€11,970
Health and Safety Authority	€11,970	€7,695
Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority	€11,970	€7,695
National Standards Authority of Ireland	€11,970	€7,695
Crafts Council of Ireland	€11,970	€7,695
Intertrade Ireland	€11,970	€7,695
Company Law Review Group	€8,978	€5,985

### Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration

454. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34532/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The following table shows the annual salary of Chief Executive Officers of the non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of my Department at 30 June 2013. The Deputy should note that these salaries are subject to the reductions specified in the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 and were reduced accordingly with effect from 1 July 2013.

Agency	Annual Salary	Annual Salary
	PPC	Non- PPC
IDA Ireland	€189,115	€179,659
Enterprise Ireland	€189,115	€179,659
Science Foundation Ireland	€180,109	€175,999
Shannon Free Airport Development Co. Ltd.	€154,183	€146,473
The National Standards Authority of Ireland	€154,183	€146,473
The Health and Safety Authority	€153,885	€146,191
Forfás	€189,115	€179,659
The County Enterprise Boards	N/A	€67,115 to €87,126
Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority	€132,511	€125,886
The Personal Injuries Assessment Board	€168,379	€159,959
The National Consumer Agency	€137,554	€130,676
The Competition Authority	€164,464	€156,240
The Labour Relations Commission	€176,800	€168,000

### Departmental Expenditure

455. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34548/13]

457. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34580/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 455 and 457 together.

**Professional fees incurred 1 January 2013 to 31 May 2013**

Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
Arekibo Communications Ltd	61.50
Artefact	984.00
Barry Galvin	440.07
Brendan Byrne	125.00
Cyril O'Neill Legal Costs Accountants	678.96
Declan Murphy	15,842.40
John Madden	260.00
John McCarroll	21,463.50
KellKee Services	1,164.92
Michelle Madden	260.00
Pat Foley	165.00
Paul Anthony McDermott	2,460.00
Paul O'Higgins	3,997.50
Peter Fallon	748.94
Peter Fitzpatrick & Co. Legal Costs Accountants	4,323.45
Rochford Brady Legal Services	5,284.18
Tanika Design Ltd	2,595.30
Bibby Financial Services (Ireland) Limited	7,952.08
Digicom	3,785.29
DNM Technology Limited	522.75
Enterprise Registry Solutions Ltd	417,064.10
Qualcom Systems Ltd	8,680.03
Sabeo Technologies	4,062.69
Ardilaun Electrical	1,986.00
Arekibo	4,582.00
Baker Consulting	15,793.00
Beirne AV	4,252.00
Bizquip	1,089.00
Client Solutions	14,302.00
Dell Computers Ireland	5,373.00
Parallel Internet Ltd (pTools Software)	2,433.00
Paul McCann T/A CRES	368.00
Plannet21 Communications	10,555.00
Rits	7,531.00
Shannonside Audio/Video Ltd.	2,926.00
Sword SA	158,109.00

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Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
Ward Solutions	1,999.00
Zinopy	2,510.00
Martin Lynch	3,384.90
Francis Rochford	9,239.03
Ebow	11,872.00
Four Point Solutions EMEA Ltd	12,424.50
ServeCentric	3,468.60
System Dynamics Ltd	14,391.00
Baker Consultants Ltd	295.20
Behan & Associates Legal Cost Accountants	3,610.00
Fujitsu	7,211.00
Brendan Moran	1,249.00
VSR	2,516.00
Print Services	443.00
Walsh Graphic Design	208.00
Brunswick Press	319.00
Bibby Financial Services	5,319.00
Keatings & Assoc	1,661.00
Context	269.00
Lionbridge	357.00
Terminal Four	1,579.00
Philip Rahn	7,015.92
Shelly Horan	861.00
A&L Goodbody	59,745.00
Claire Bruton	1,236.00
Arthur Cox	5,712.00
Donal Dunne	1,449.00
Frank Nyhan & Assoc	6,672.00
Gerald Meaney	2,460.00
Gerard O'Brien	1,284.00
John Brosnan & Co	1,273.00
John Madden	125.00
Kennedy Fitzgerald	1,503.00
Leahy & Partners	2,806.00
Millards	923.00
John Hughes	3,871.00
Niamh Tuite	1,463.00
Noel A Farrell	1,035.00
O'Doherty Warren & Assoc	1,175.00
Peter D Jones	5,814.00
Rory Hayden & Co	3,571.00
Rory P Benville	8,268.00
Steen O'Reilly	1,415.00
Wolfe & Co	2,254.00

Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
Artemis Consulting Ltd.	1,476.00
Prof. Josh Lerner	4,988.75

The total amount of fees for 1 January to 31 May 2013 is €944,941.60 - 20% of this amount is €188,988.20.

**Professional fees incurred 1 June 2012 to 31 December 2012**

Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
ABC Investigations Ltd	1,692.48
Arekibo Communications Ltd	2,998.13
Barry Galvin	1,460.78
Brendan Byrne	715.00
Brian Murray	2,150.04
Brian P. Farren	56,580.00
Brosnan Investigations Ltd	147.60
Clever Cat Design	842.55
Cyril O'Neill Legal Costs Accountants	13,818.44
Declan Kelly	143.20
Declan Murphy	23,136.20
Denis McDonald	12,560.76
J+A Davis	470.34
KellKee Services	739.20
Maurice G. Collins	27,060.00
Paul Anthony McDermott	9,840.00
Paul O'Higgins	3,997.50
Peter Fitzpatrick & Co Legal Costs Accountants	10,307.40
PricewaterhouseCoopers	40,646.58
Rochford Brady Legal Services	9,158.98
Shelly Horan	7,334.49
Tom Power	1,845.00
Bibby Financial Services (Ireland) Limited	504.20
BT Communications Ireland Ltd	6,519.00
CTS – Corporate Translation Services	2,895.37
Digicom	4,686.25
DNM Technology Limited	24,216.40
Enterprise Registry Solutions Ltd	646,535.07
FCR Media Limited	2,554.34
Sabeo Technologies	27,800.02
SIRA Consulting	74,000.00
Lifeskills Training	2,100.00
Workstation Analysis	1,400.00
Integrated Risk Solutions	12,748.95
Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants	23,708.00

Questions - Written Answers

Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
Advance Systems (IRL)	2,756.00
Ardilaun	3,972.00
Arekibo Communications	4,877.00
Baker Consultants Limited	55,153.00
Bizquip	1,089.00
Client Solutions	20,457.00
Hibernia Services	6,464.00
Integrity Solutions	15,836.00
Local Government Management Agency	5,595.00
Plannet21 Communications	18,858.00
pTools Software (Parallel Internet)	31,780.00
Rits	12,142.00
Site Improve	1,676.00
Sword	217,222.00
Trigraph	2,445.00
Unity Technology	426.00
Version 1	29,520.00
Ward Solutions	22,506.00
Martin Lynch	6,166.06
Design Printworks Ltd	2,051.03
Achilles Procurement Services Ltd	2,559.94
Terminal Four Solutions Ltd	832.30
Four Point Solutions EMEA Ltd	27,368.15
Mairead Carey	6,789.60
ServeCentric	4,856.04
System Dynamics Ltd	9,594.00
Fujitsu	12,892.00
Access Expert	1,148.00
Brendan Moran	492.00
Print Services	123.00
Walsh Graphic Design	180.00
Brunswick Press	92.00
Hudson Killeen	594.00
Bibby Financial Services	1,554.00
Keating & Assoc	2,214.00
Context	989.00
Eurotext	261.00
Lionbridge	316.00
Terminal Four	3,174.00
AD Little	30,000.00
Deloitte	30,772.62
Paul Coughlan	4,270.00
Andrew Parkes	420.00
Power Design	4,946.70

Name of Company/Service Provider	Cost - €
Brian Murray	12,730.50
Paul Anthony McDermott	1,230.00
Paul O'Higgins	1,230.00
Shelly Horan	615.00
Úna Ní Raifeartaigh	2,178.12
John Hennessy	60,100.50
Michael McDowell	11,685.00
Kilroys Solicitors	2,498.70
Kilroys Solicitors	2,769.56
Noel J Travers	2,736.75
Conor Feeney	2,675.25
Siobhan Phelan	302.50
A&L Goodbody	98,154.00
Conor Power	799.50
Anthony Kerr	646.00
Arthur Cox	18,955.00
DH Sheridan & Co	2,985.00
Donal Dunne	4,023.00
Frank Nyhan & Assoc	6,612.00
Gerald Meaney	4,963.00
Geraldine Gillece	3,127.00
Gerard O'Brien	1,348.00
James A Boyle	1,273.00
John Brosnan & Co	5,830.00
Kennedy Fitzgerald	923.00
Kieran Madigan	1,273.00
Leahy & Partners	8,789.00
Malachy Boohig & Co	1,273.00
John Hughes	3,336.00
O'Doherty Warren & Assoc	928.00
Peter D Jones	3,140.00
Rory Hayden & Co	1,303.00
Rory P Benville	8,661.00
Rosemary Healy Rae	615.00
Shaun Boylan	2,992.00
Steen O'Reilly	2,829.00
Vincent Deane	2,546.00

The total amount of fees for 1 January to 31 December 2012 is €2,199,130.44 - 20% of this amount is €439,826.

### Departmental Staff Training

456. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes

and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34564/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The information requested by the Deputy is tabulated.

**Third Level Course provided for employees of DJEI 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013**

Name of course	Cost
Undergraduate Level	-
Certificate in Civil Service & State Agency	€5,187
Certificate in Data Protection	€1,110
Certificate in Public Procurement	€4,500
Professional Certificate in SME credit	€1,500
Diploma in Civil Service & State Agencies	€2,822
Diploma in Corporate, White Collar and Regulatory Crime	€3,600
Diploma Company Law	€1,250
Diploma in Legal Studies	€986
BA in Business	€1,500
BA (Hons) Business Information Systems	€2,750
BA in Business Management	€2,750
BA (Hons) in Business Management	€2,500
BA in Business Studies & Human Resources	€5,960
BA in Human Resource Management	€5,640
BA in Management Practice	€3,800
BA in Law	€5,500
BA (Hons) in Law	€2,000
Name of course	Cost
LL.B in Irish Law	€300
LLB (Hons) in Irish Law	€6,913
BA in Public Management	€13,395
BA (Hons) in Social Science	€1,720
BSc/Diploma in Information Systems	€5,970
Postgraduate Level	-
Professional Diploma in Employment Law	€13,800
Diploma in Leadership	€5,950
Leadership Challenge Programme	€5,300
Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation	€1,450
Postgrad. Dip in Public Management	€10,000
MA in HR Management	€5,000
MA in Public Management	€3,180
MSc in Business	€3,540
MSc in Economic Policy Studies	€9,699
MSc in Management	€7,850
Total Cost Third-level Courses	€147,422

**Other Training Courses and Programmes provided for employees of DJEI 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013**

Name of course	Cost
Administering Cisco Unified Communications Manager Training	€3,500
Automated External Defibrillator Training	€426
Assessing SME Viability in a Distressed Economy	€3,000
Communicating Effectively by Telephone	€0
Communication & Assertiveness	€3,100
Configuration Manager training course	€1,375
CPD Session Management & Professional Development	€550
CREST Procedure	€0
CREST Training	€0
Criminal Litigation	€540
Data Protection Level 1	€185
Deaf Awareness Workshop	€960
Dublin Meridian Programme	€5,500
E Docs Laid	€0
Effective Meeting Skills	€900
Employment Law	€570
Equality Complaints Processing	€0
Evacuation Chair Operator	€0
Facilitation Skills	€0
Name of course	Cost
Family Law Acts	€0
Fire Safety	€545
Fire Warden Training	€0
French	€725
Human Rights Training for Trainers	€0
Induction Training	€0
Intermediate Excel	€375
Intermediate/Advanced Word	€375
Internal Auditing a beginner's course	€2,581
Interviewer Skills	€1,300
Introduction to Excel	€375
Introduction to Internal Audit	€3,240
Introduction to Procurement	€0
Introduction to Project Management	€2,300
Introduction to the EU	€0
Legislative Process	€0
Manual Handling	€0
MS Project Essentials Course	€715
New Single Public Service Pension Scheme	€288
Occupational First Aid Refresher Course	€375
Online ICT Technical Training	€10,640
Oracle Database 11G - Admin Workshop	€2,950

Name of course	Cost
Oracle Training	€3,250
PMDS Information Session	€0
PQ Training	€0
PR Training	€1,900
Pre - Retirement Course	€0
Presentation Skills	€2,200
Press Release Training	€400
Problem Solving and Decision Making	€2,700
Project Management	€2,300
Public Sector & Family Law Pensions	€351
Records Management	€0
Safe Pass	€100
Speed - Smarter Reading	€2,225
Stress Management	€2,510
Teamwork	€850
Techniques for Effective Testing	€910
Telephone Skills	€600
Time Management	€0
Understanding Published Accounts	€5,250
Whiteboard Training	€480
WRCS Information Officer Training	€0
Writing Skills	€2,095
Total Cost Other Courses and Programmes	€75,511
Grand Total	€222,933

These data represent training courses and programmes provided centrally by my Department in the period 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 and provided by Offices of my Department in the period 1 September 2012 to 31 March 2013 – data for training provided by the Offices in Q2 2013 are not yet available.

Training shown at nil cost includes the following: training provided in-house by Departmental staff; training provided by the Training Policy Unit of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; places offered by training providers free of charge.

*Question No. 457 answered with Question No. 455.*

### Exchequer Savings

458. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34596/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The following table sets out the Travel and Subsistence expenditure for this Department for 2012 with the percentage reductions as requested by the Deputy. It is important to note that the figure of €454,000 includes the vouched costs of flights and other forms of travel, hotel and other expenses along with mileage and subsistence payments made in accordance with the rates gov-

erned by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

2012 expenditure	1%	5%	7%	10%	12%	15%	17%	20%
€454,000	€4,540	€22,700	€31,780	€45,400	€54,480	€68,100	€77,180	€90,800

### Exchequer Savings

459. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34612/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** In the most recent full financial year of 2012, my Department spent a total of €237,564 on training and development. This was a relatively modest investment in business-relevant skills development of the staff of the Department (864 currently - 810.38 full time equivalents). It is essential for delivery of the critical strategic mission of my Department that the staff have the necessary skills. A substantial proportion of expenditure in the area relates to the refund of fees to staff pursuing business related educational courses outside of normal working hours. The percentages of this spend requested by the Deputy are outlined in the following table.

DJEI Training and Development Expenditure in 2012 - €237,564

Percentage	Amount
5%	€11,878
7%	€16,629
10%	€23,756
12%	€28,508
15%	€35,635
17%	€40,386
20%	€47,513

### Exchequer Savings

460. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34628/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Adjustments to pay in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 and the relevant provisions of the Haddington Road Agreement have been implemented from 1 July 2013. The following table outlines the salary details of the two Special Advisers appointed by me as Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in line with the Guidelines for Ministerial Appointments and as sanctioned by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

Name	Salary Scale from 1/7/13	Current Salary (11/07/13)	Estimated Annual Saving if Pay Capped at 1st point on Principal Officer Scale*
Special Adviser	€118,840	€118,840	€43,193
Press Adviser	€75,647 - €92,550	€81,676	€6,029

\*Based on 1 July 2013 pay rates

### Departmental Schemes

461. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation when the review of the BMW region grants system will be undertaken; if submissions from interested groups, commercial and industrial interests will be permitted; the formula that will be applied regarding the review; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34666/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I believe the Deputy is referring to the mapping exercise associated with the Regional Aid Guidelines, which were adopted by the Commission on 19 June 2013. Regional Aid, also known as investment aid, is paid in the form of grants by the industrial development agencies to businesses in order to support new investment and new employment in productive projects in Europe's most disadvantaged regions. Such aid must be in accordance with each country's Regional Aid Map, as approved by the European Commission, which has responsibility for the Regional Aid Guidelines.

The new guidelines will enter into force on 1 July 2014. As a result, the current guidelines that were due to expire at the end of this year are to be extended for six month transition period. For the 2014-2020 Regional Aid Map Ireland's population coverage will rise from 50% to 51.28%. This is due to the overall share of regions where regional aid can be granted increasing from the current level of 46.1% to 47.2 % of the EU population. This means that enhanced investment grants can be paid to companies in the least economically developed regions of Ireland.

A revised Irish Regional Aid Map will have to be submitted to and approved by the Commission before the end of June 2014. For the 2014-2020 Irish Regional Aid Map, economic data such as unemployment and Gross Domestic Product for all counties, including those counties in the BMW region, will once again be analysed afresh when deciding which counties will be designated for Regional Aid. During the Regional Aid Guideline process thus far, my Department has consulted relevant stakeholders, including various Government Departments, the industrial development agencies, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Forfás, the Central Statistics Office, the Border Midland and Western Regional Assembly, the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, and the eight Regional Authorities. Further consultation will now take place with the above bodies and other relevant stakeholders. The deadline for the submission of the Irish map has yet to be communicated by the Commission.

### Programme for Government Implementation

462. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34683/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The timeline

for delivery of commitments under the Programme for Government, is over the lifetime of this Government. The position in relation to progress under each commitment, within the remit of my Department, is set out in the following table.

### Commitments in Programme for Government

Commitment	Progress to Date
1.2.4 Reverse the cut in the minimum wage	Cut reversed on July 1st 2011
1.2.6 Implement a number of sectoral initiatives in areas that will create employment in the domestic economy	Through the Action Plan for Jobs (APJ), a number of sectoral initiatives have been developed or are in progress, including in the following areas:- Green Economy- Manufacturing- Construction- Retail- Health/Life Sciences- Digital Games. Details of progress on each of these initiatives are contained in the quarterly progress reports on the APJ which are published on the Department's website <a href="http://www.djei.ie">www.djei.ie</a> .
1.4.2 We will create a new 'Home to Export' programme to share the expertise of exporting companies with firms currently reliant on domestic markets. Commitment met	Enterprise Ireland has an ongoing range of services to encourage new exporters, including online support and mentoring. In 2012, Enterprise Ireland established the Potential Exporters Division. Its role is to stimulate greater activity within companies across all regions and to reorient those demonstrating growth potential from the domestic to the international marketplace.
1.4.3 A 'Source Ireland' portal will be developed to market Irish goods and services abroad. Commitment met	A 'Source Ireland' portal has been developed to market Irish goods and services abroad.
1.5.2 We will support our indigenous digital game industry by reforming R&D supports available to the industry, setting aside funding from Innovation Fund Ireland for a seed capital scheme for Irish digital gaming start-ups, introduce a digital media component to Transition Year programmes and promote Ireland as digital gaming hub	The Department is currently working with the Digital Games Clustering Development Team for the purpose of assessing the suitability of the existing R&D tax Credit to the digital games sector. The Department is also assessing the case for a new financial instrument/relief to incentivise creative content development in the games sector. The intention is to complete this assessment in the timeframe for Budget 2014. Enterprise Ireland has confirmed that a number of the existing venture capital funds, along with those new funds coming on stream, have and will continue to invest in a range of software related projects including businesses in the digital game space. EI's Competitive Start Fund (€50K Equity) has had a significant impact on the early stage indigenous games sector since December 2010. Over this period, EI has completed 10 calls and has funded 16 Games companies. In addition Enterprise Ireland and the National Pensions Reserve Fund have made available up to €250m in equal amounts to attract investment by international venture capital funds in Ireland under the Innovation Fund Ireland. The Department of Education and Skills has explained that schools design their own programmes for TY and, consequently, may be providing courses that address digital media.

Questions - Written Answers

Commitment	Progress to Date
<p>1.5.5 We will develop a National Intellectual Property (IP) protocol to give predictability about the terms on which business can access IP created in Higher Education Institutions and the wider digital sector</p>	<p>The IP Protocol was published in June 2012, the purpose of which is to help the enterprise sector to access the research done in Ireland's universities, institutes of technology and other public research institutions. A key recommendation of the report centres around the establishment of a 'central Technology Transfer Office' to provide an effective interface between industry and the research community and to drive a world class technology transfer system in Ireland, ensuring it is responsive to the needs of both industry and academia. The recruitment of the Director of the cTTO is nearing completion and support staff for the cTTO are in place.</p>
<p>1.5.6 We will promote and support investment in technology research, development and commercialisation beyond basic research supported by Science Foundation Ireland, as well as removing barriers to innovation and accelerate exploitation of new technologies.</p>	<p>The IP Protocol, referred to above, will support both industry parties and research performing organisations in making their commercial negotiations on the exploitation of new technologies and ideas faster, more consistent and more transparent</p>
<p>1.5.7 We will target key technology areas and sectors where innovation can be applied including but not limited to high value manufacturing, advanced materials, nanotechnology, bioscience, electronics, photonics and electrical systems and information and communication technology.</p>	<p>The report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group recommended 14 areas of opportunity as well as underpinning technologies and infrastructure to support these priority areas which should receive the majority of competitive public investment in STI over the coming 5 years. Following publication of the report on 1st March 2012, the Prioritisation Action Group (PAG) was established, under the chairmanship and political leadership of the Minister for Research and Innovation Sean Sherlock TD, to drive implementation of research prioritisation under the broader authority of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs. Action Plans to drive implementation have been developed for each priority area and were approved by Government in June 2013. The PAG will oversee implementation of these Action Plans. A detailed Framework of Metrics and Targets has been drawn up as part of Research Prioritisation to measure the outputs and impact of funding provided, which will comprehend all of the 14 Action Plans for the respective Priority Areas, and this too was approved by Government in June 2013.</p>
<p>1.5.8 We will also focus on the application of technological innovation in established sectors of the economy like energy generation and supply, transport, creative industries, high-value services and architecture and construction by identifying challenges, establishing priorities and developing strategies which specify necessary actions to transition to more innovative approach.</p>	<p>See 1.5.7 above in relation to Research Prioritisation</p>

Commitment	Progress to Date
1.5.9 We will promote Ireland’s full engagement with the ‘Innovative Union’ proposals issued by the European Commission in October 2010 as one of the seven flagship initiatives under EU2020 Strategy, with the specific aim of refocusing R&D and innovation policy on major challenges and at turning inventions into products.	The Irish EU Presidency completed negotiations on a political agreement on Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation which will focus EU research funding from 2014-2020 on major societal challenges. The Irish EU Presidency also focused on measures to progress the European Research Area, a key component of Innovation Union. Ireland will continue to engage fully with initiatives proposed by the European commission in support of the Innovation Union strategy.
1.5.10 We will establish a network of Technology Research Centres focused on applied technological research in specific areas, to be linked to appropriate higher-education institutions. The centres will accelerate exploitation of new technologies by providing infrastructure that bridges gap between research and technology commercialisation. We will initially establish 3 additional centres focusing on biotechnology, nanotechnology and high value manufacturing. Further centres from a number of other areas will be selected at a later time.	The Irish EU Presidency completed negotiations on a political agreement on Horizon 2020, the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation which will focus EU research funding from 2014-2020 on major societal challenges. The Irish EU Presidency also focused on measures to progress the European Research Area, a key component of Innovation Union. Ireland will continue to engage fully with initiatives proposed by the European commission in support of the Innovation Union strategy.
1.5.11 We will support the development of an International Content Services Centre to make Ireland world leader in managing intellectual property.	The Department commissioned a Feasibility Study as part of the deliberative process around this proposal. The study was finalised in January 2013 and following consideration, proposals will be developed regarding the next steps to be taken resulting from the findings of the study
1.5.12 We will pioneer within the EU a model of ‘fair use’ in European Copyright Law, like in the USA, which effectively permits the use of portions of a copyrighted work so long as the normal economic exploitation of the originating work is not undermined. This will allow internet companies and other digital innovators to bring their services to market.	The US style “fair use” doctrine is being examined as part of the on- going review of copyright legislation by the Independent Copyright Review Committee, in accordance with its Terms of Reference. On completion of the Report, and following consideration of the recommendations, a recommendation regarding introduction of the doctrine will be made to Government.
1.6.3 We will reform the Joint Labour Committee structure, beginning with the appointment of independent chairpersons to JLCs, who will retain a casting vote. Reform options will examine the rate of pay for atypical hours.	Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012 came into effect on 1st August 2012*. The Act provided for a reform of the statutory wage setting mechanisms (JLCs and REAs), Review of the existing JLCs was carried out by the Labour Court and presented to the Minister. The Minister intends to publish the Review along with his proposals shortly. *The Supreme Court judgment of May 9th 2013 in the case of McGowan and others, Part III of the Industrial Relations Act 1946 to be unconstitutional thereby invalidating the registration of all REAs that were previously registered under the 1946 Act. Minister has announced his intention to put in place, as soon as possible, legislation that will be fully informed by the Supreme Court judgment.

Questions - Written Answers

Commitment	Progress to Date
<p>1.6.6 We will reduce the cost of Government imposed red-tape on business, in part by streamlining regulatory enforcement activities out of a merger and rationalisation of existing structures. We will create a Business Inspection and Licensing Authority that absorbs the existing business inspection activities of the Health and Safety Authority, and the National Consumer Agency.</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made with a reduction in administrative burdens of 25% achieved in the areas of Employment Law, Company Law and Health &amp; Safety Law; this amounts to potential annual savings for business of almost €208m million. My Department also coordinates the cross-Government measurement and reduction of administrative burdens towards the 25% target. The current estimated overall reduction is 19% which includes the 25% achieved by my Department, and the Revenue Commissioners and 30% achieved by the Central Statistics Office. The reform of the State's Workplace Relations Services will deliver a simplified two-tiered structure comprising a single body of first instance, the Workplace Relations Commission, and a single body of appeal, in effect an enhanced Labour Court. This proposal developed into a wider consideration of new measures to assist small businesses in their compliance with licensing and regulation, e.g. the Health &amp; Safety Authority (HSA) developed and launched a single licensing portal for occupational health &amp; safety and chemicals licensing requirements. See <a href="http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Business_Licensing_and_Notification_Requirements/">http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Business_Licensing_and_Notification_Requirements/</a> The HSA also developed "BeSMART" – a free online tool developed to help reduce costs for and the administrative burden on small business of meeting their legal obligations to prepare Risk Assessments and a Safety Statement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Current estimates put potential savings for the SME sector as a whole in the region of €60-€65m. See <a href="http://www.besmart.ie/">http://www.besmart.ie/</a></p>
<p>1.6.8 We will develop a Unique Business Identifier for use by all government departments and agencies that will facilitate the sharing of information within Government and reduce repetitive information requests from businesses.</p>	<p>This will be considered in the context of legislation to facilitate data sharing</p>
<p>1.6.10 We will introduce new legally binding voluntary commercial debt plan structures to allow small businesses to restructure debts without recourse to expensive court procedures.</p>	<p>The Company Law Review Group made recommendations in September 2012. Some of these recommendations are being implemented in the Companies Bill 2012, which has begun its enactment process. The remaining recommendations are to be the subject of further consideration by the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise &amp; Innovation in consultation with the Minister for Justice and are to take account of the experience of the new Insolvency Service of Ireland.</p>
<p>1.7.1 We will implement a temporary, partial credit guarantee scheme that will provide a level of insurance to banks against losses on qualifying loans to job-creating firms to get banks' lending again to industry and entrepreneurs. Commitment met</p>	<p>Fully implemented in Oct 2012</p>
<p>1.7.2 We will construct a €100 million Microfinance Start-Up Fund that will provide start-up loans and equity that draws funding from the NPRF and private institutional funds. Commitment met</p>	<p>Fully implemented in Oct 2012</p>

Commitment	Progress to Date
1.7.3 We will support the development of a more dynamic, venture capital industry in Ireland by seeking to attract top tier venture financing and investment companies to Ireland, such as Silicon Valley Bank. Commitment met	To date, under the IFI scheme four international venture capital funds have established a presence in the Ireland market. A further numbers of investments are in the pipeline. Furthermore, following a separate initiative by the NPRF Silicon Valley Bank is set to deploy US\$100 million of new lending commitments to fast-growing Irish technology, life science, cleantech, private equity and venture capital businesses over five years, subject to its usual lending criteria.
1.7.4 We will work to promote a greater appreciation of the co-operative model as a distinct form of organisation, ensure a level playing field between co-operatives and the other legal options for structuring enterprise activities, and provide a conducive framework for the full potential of the co-operative model to be realised, including in areas such as childcare, education, housing, energy retrofitting, environmental protection, transport and healthcare.	Legislation has been drafted to facilitate this commitment. This commitment goes across a number of Departments.
1.8.7 We will legislate to ban a number of unfair trading practices in the retail sector, such as 'hello money' from food suppliers.	Publication of Bill expected in Q3/Q4 2013
1.8.25 We will seek to establish Ireland as a renewable manufacturing hub to attract international and domestic investment.	In November 2012, the Government published a Policy Statement on Growth and Employment in the Green Economy which has the objective of attracting investment in the Green Economy in Ireland. A Consultative Committee on Jobs in the Green Economy has also been established to identify emerging opportunities for Ireland in the Green Economy.
1.9.1 The Government will promote the development of a vibrant and effective social enterprise sector. We will instruct agencies to view social enterprises as important stakeholders in rejuvenating local economies. We will continue support for social innovation projects for young people through (sic) education, community and voluntary structures.	Forfas prepared a Report on the potential of the Social Enterprise Sector in Ireland. The report highlights the fact that social enterprises cover a wide spectrum of activity and are currently supported by a number of Departments and agencies. The Forfas Report will be submitted to Government, prior to publication.
2.3.19 We will make good corporate governance the law, not an optional extra, and enact legislation to provide for binding code of practice for corporate governance, which will be obligatory for companies wishing to be listed on Irish stock exchange. Commitment met	Companies that wish to list on the main market of the Irish Stock Exchange must comply by law with the UK's Corporate Governance Code and the Irish Annex.
2.10.4 We will strengthen corporate governance legislation and enforcement.	The Companies Bill 2012 replicates the provisions of the Companies (Amendment) Act 2009 which granted additional powers to the ODCE to assist with enforcing Company Law. Additionally the Bill categorises and clarifies all offences under Company Law. As a result of the categorisation of offences and the introduction of uniform maximum fines and terms of imprisonment, a number of existing offences will carry higher penalties under the Bill. The Companies Bill 2012 has completed Second Stage in the Dáil
3.41.6 We will reform the current law on employees' right to engage in collective bargaining (the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2001), so as to ensure compliance by the State with recent judgements of the European Court of Human Rights.	Consultation process initiated December 2012. Written submissions received from stakeholders. Follow up meetings held. Legislative proposals to be presented to Cabinet in Q4 2013.

Commitment	Progress to Date
4.13.5 We will review and update Intellectual Property legislation currently in place to benefit innovation, develop a National Intellectual Property protocol to give clarity about terms on which business can access IP created in Higher Education Institutions, and clarify legislation relating to online copyright infringement and enforcement of rights relating to digital communications.	Re IP protocol- see 1.5.5 and 1.5.6 above. The independent Copyright Review Committee is, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, examining the current Copyright legislative framework to identify any areas of the legislation that might be deemed to create barriers to innovation and will make recommendations to resolve any problems identified (see ref. 1.5.12 above); Re: IP Protocol –see 1.5.5 and 1.5.6 above; Re: clarification of legislation relating to copyright infringement and enforcement: the European Union (Copyright and Related Rights) Regulations came into force in February 2012, clarifying that an injunction may be sought against intermediaries whose services are being used by third parties to infringe a copyright or related right.
4.15.3 We will enact the Fair Trade Act, which will ban a number of unfair trading practices in the retail sector such as ‘hello money’ which suppliers have to pay to secure a place for their goods on supermarket shelves.	Publication of Bill expected in Q3/Q4 2013

### Consultancy Contracts Numbers

463. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34699/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** External public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by Agencies of my Department and expenditure and services supplied, is a day-to-day matter for the individual Agencies concerned for which I have no direct function. I am referring the specific question to each of the Agencies within my remit with a request to respond to you directly.

### EU Commission Green Papers

464. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his plans to make a submission to the European Commission based on its recent Green Paper publication on unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food and non-food supply chain in Europe; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34930/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** On 31 January 2013, the EU Commission published a Green Paper on Unfair Commercial Trading Practices in the Business to Business (B2B) food and non-food supply chain in Europe. In response to this Green Paper, my Department submitted a copy of the report of the facilitator appointed in 2010 to explore, with the relevant stakeholders, the possibilities of achieving agreement on a Voluntary Code of Practice for Grocery Goods Undertakings. This report is available on my Department’s website at [www.djei.ie/publications/commerce/2011/reportgrocerycodemay11.pdf](http://www.djei.ie/publications/commerce/2011/reportgrocerycodemay11.pdf).

As the Deputy is aware, the Programme for Government contains a specific commitment to enact legislation to regulate certain practices in the grocery goods sector. I intend to give effect to this commitment by including an enabling provision in the Consumer and Competition

Bill. This Bill will also, *inter alia*, merge the National Consumer Agency and the Competition Authority, update and reform competition law on foot of a review of the operation and implementation of the Competition Act 2002 and give effect to the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Media Mergers. Work on drafting the Consumer and Competition Bill is ongoing and the Bill is included in the “A list” in the Government’s current Legislative Programme.

The Government is strongly of the view that it is important to ensure there is balance in the relationship between the various players in the grocery goods sector and that Ireland continues to have robust agri food and retail sectors, particularly given the importance of these sectors to the national economy. The introduction of a Code of Practice is intended to achieve such a balance taking into account the interests of all stakeholders in the grocery goods sector including the interests of the consumer and the need to ensure that there is no impediment to the passing-on of lower prices to consumers.

### Departmental Legal Costs

465. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34985/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The information requested by the Deputy for the period from 2011 to date in 2013 is set out in the following tables.

#### Legal Advice sought and received January 2013 to date 2013

Cost - €	Number of times advice sought
72,394.17	7

#### Legal Advice sought and received 2012

Cost - €	Number of times advice sought
251,538.29	26

#### Legal Advice sought and received 2011

Cost - €	Number of times advice sought
61,673.17	16

### Work Permit Applications

466. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the position on a work permit in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Galway; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35165/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** An application for a Green Card Employment Permit was received in respect of the person named. This ap-

plication was refused on 23 January 2013. Following a request for a review the refusal decision was upheld on the basis that the information on the application indicated that the employer was trading under a business name that was not registered with the Companies Registration Office. Registration of a business name is obligatory if any individual, partnership or body corporate is trading under a name other than their own true name. Under Section 13 of the employment Permits Act, 2006 it is not possible to revisit this application as the refusal decision has already been upheld on review. However a new application may be made and an employment permit may be granted subject to the normal criteria.

### Enterprise Ireland Expenditure

467. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total amount of grant assistance made available by Enterprise Ireland to companies in County Limerick during 2012 and the first six months of 2013; the number of positions created by Enterprise Ireland companies in County Limerick in 2012 and the first six months of 2013, to include those that received funds for the same period; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35186/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Enterprise Ireland's mission is to partner with entrepreneurs, Irish businesses, and the research and investment communities to develop Ireland's international trade, innovation, leadership, and competitiveness. The ultimate objective is increased employment and prosperity in Ireland. The companies that Enterprise Ireland works with are a vital source of employment in every county in Ireland.

Grant payments made available to EI supported client companies in Limerick in 2012 and year to date 2013 is outlined in Table 1. Employment data for Enterprise Ireland are collected annually as part of the Forfás Annual Employment Survey. Employment figures for 2013 will be available when the survey is completed in Q4. The number of full-time jobs created by Enterprise Ireland's client companies in Limerick in 2012 was 684.

Table 1: Payments made to EI client companies in Limerick

Year	(€)
2012	€3,175,023
Jan-Jun 2013	€352,764

### Productivity Levels

468. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will detail the productivity performance of the manufacturing sector here in comparison with that of Northern Ireland for the past ten years for which data are available. [35305/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Manufacturing is an essential component of the Irish economy. Up to 2003, productivity in the manufacturing sector grew by between 4 per cent and 8 per cent per year. Since 2003, annual productivity growth has slowed to between 2 per cent and 4 per cent. This decline mirrors a similar trend in the sector in most of the developed world. However, productivity in manufacturing has been increasing over recent years. Annual average growth rates in per hour labour productivity across

manufacturing sectors amounted to 5.6 per cent over the period 2007 to 2010 enhancing the competitiveness of Ireland's firms on international markets. In 2012 goods exports increased by 1% over 2011, reaching a total of €92 billion, the highest figure since 2002.

In terms of employment, 50,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing in 2008-2010. However, numbers have stabilised over the last two years and there are now 205,700 people directly employed in manufacturing (both full-time and part-time), and a similar number of people employed indirectly.

Forfás recently produced a very thorough analysis of manufacturing in Ireland today - *Manufacturing to 2020*. This strategy contains a number of key recommendations for the development of the manufacturing sector which my Department, along with a Manufacturing Development Forum comprised of industry representatives, are currently implementing. It is clear from Forfás' report that firms in the sector need to reposition themselves, to invest in identifying new market opportunities, to enhance their productivity and build innovative capacity so that they remain competitive and relevant to their existing and potential customers. To achieve these aims, a National Step Change initiative is needed that will assist Ireland's manufacturing sector move to the forefront internationally and to improve competitiveness, productivity and innovation. This will also involve Government putting the right initiatives in place and opening up existing agency programmes - that have a proven track record - to FDI manufacturing firms e.g. Enterprise Ireland's *Lean*. Work in this area is already under way.

Forfas' Manufacturing Strategy does not contain a comparative analysis with the same sector in Northern Ireland. However, the NI Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment produced a report in March 2006 - *The Future of Manufacturing in Northern Ireland* - which observed that there was over £4.5 billion of manufacturing exports sales in Northern Ireland in 2004-05; that 12.5% of total direct employment in Northern Ireland was in manufacturing, and that the sector generated almost 30% of the total economic activity of Northern Ireland businesses. I am confident that the recommendations in Forfs' Manufacturing Strategy's will assist Government Departments and agencies with the important tasks facing Ireland's manufacturing sector.

### Trade Data

469. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the total value of exports to the North of Ireland and imports from the North of Ireland for the most recent five years. [35307/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The following table provides data on goods trade between Ireland and Northern Ireland from 2008 - 2012.

#### Ireland - Northern Ireland Trade

Year	Exports - € m	Imports - € m
2008	1,564.53	1,261.31
2009	1,286.23	941.08
2010	1,326.14	989.72
2011	1,422.01	1,047.25
2012	1,448.90	1,029.06

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) provides services trade data for the United Kingdom as a whole and separate services data for Northern Ireland are not available.

### Job Creation Numbers

470. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of Enterprise Ireland supported jobs in Waterford for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35338/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** Enterprise Ireland's mission is to partner with entrepreneurs, Irish businesses, and the research and investment communities to develop Ireland's international trade, innovation, leadership, and competitiveness. The ultimate objective is increased employment and prosperity in Ireland. The companies that Enterprise Ireland works with are a vital source of employment in every county in Ireland.

Employment data for Enterprise Ireland are collected annually as part of the Forfás annual employment survey. Employment figures for 2013 will be available when the survey is completed in Q4. The number of jobs created by Enterprise Ireland's client companies in Waterford in 2010, 2011 and 2012 is set out in Table 1.

**Table 1 – EI Client Number of Jobs (Full Time), 2010-2012**

Year	Number of Jobs (Full Time)
2010	3,919
2011	4,217
2012	4,063

### Job Creation Numbers

471. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of Industrial Development Agency supported jobs in Waterford for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013 in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35339/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Forfas annual employment survey reports on the number of jobs gained and lost in the enterprise development agencies. The following tabular statement shows the number of permanent jobs in IDA client companies in Waterford in each of the three years 2010, 2011 and 2012. Figures for 2013 will not be available until year end.

Waterford is part of IDA's South East region along with counties Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. In marketing the region for new inward investment IDA concentrates its efforts on Waterford City and on the towns of Wexford and Kilkenny and the county towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan. In addition IDA actively engages with its existing client companies to ensure their long-term sustainability and to encourage their growth, development and continuing reinvestment.

Waterford has had a long and strong track record as a centre of manufacturing expertise but in more recent years there has been a significant growth in advanced manufacturing, particularly in the Life Sciences sector and also in the International and Financial Services sector.

Meanwhile, work is ongoing on the implementation of the South-East Employment Action Plan recommendations, with agencies and stakeholders working together to maximise benefits for the region. The South East Forum, established to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan, and which I met most recently in March this year, will continue to examine ways that would lead to job creation and investment opportunities in Waterford and the South East.

**Table showing the number of Permanent Jobs in IDA client companies in Waterford in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012**

Year	2010	2011	2012
Permanent employment	5,329	4,637	4,526

**IDA Site Visits**

472. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of IDA Ireland site visits to Waterford and the south east in 2011, 2012 and the first six months of 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35342/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I have been informed by IDA that in the period from the beginning of 2011 to date in 2013 there have been a total of 64 IDA sponsored site visits by potential investors to the South East region, of which 49 have been to Waterford, city and county. These site visits were from new companies visiting the location for the first time and from senior executives of existing IDA client companies. Details of the number of visits paid to Waterford and the South East region are set out in the following tabular statement. IDA's South East region consists of the counties of Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary.

At present there are 30 IDA companies in Waterford employing 4,526 people in full-time employment and another 504 people in temporary and part-time employment, while in the region as a whole there are 63 IDA client companies 11,884 people in permanent employment. In marketing the region for new inward investment IDA concentrates its efforts on Waterford City and on the towns of Wexford and Kilkenny and the county towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan. In addition, IDA actively engages with its existing client companies to ensure their long-term sustainability and to encourage their growth, development and continuing reinvestment.

Meanwhile, work is ongoing on the implementation of the South-East Employment Action Plan recommendations, with agencies and stakeholders working together to maximise benefits for the region. The South East Forum, established to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan, and which I met most recently in March this year, will continue to examine ways that would lead to job creation and investment opportunities in Waterford and the South East.

**Table showing the number of IDA sponsored site visits to Waterford and the South East in each of the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013**

Year	2011	2012	To date in 2013
Waterford	11	26	12
South East	13	34	17

**Industrial Development**

473. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of new start-up businesses that were established in Waterford in 2012 and in the first half of 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35348/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** I understand from the Central Statistics Office that they do not have the data in question. I should also point out that the Enterprise Development agencies, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the County and City Enterprise Boards, within the remit of my Department, support only a proportion of the start-ups that might be established in any county and they do not support all of the businesses that may have been established.

Both Waterford County Enterprise Board and Waterford City Enterprise Board continue to develop indigenous potential at a local level primarily through the provision of financial and technical support for the development of small and micro-enterprises. Enterprise Board statistics are collated on an annual basis and figures in respect of 2013 will not be available until the first quarter of 2014. In 2012, Waterford City Enterprise Board paid out funding of €316,507 to 21 projects and Waterford County Enterprise Board paid out €267,248 to 21 projects. These projects include start-up and established microenterprises. Between 2012 and to date in 2013, Enterprise Ireland has approved over €260,000 in Feasibility funding to 12 separate start-up projects based in Waterford. In addition, four Waterford based companies, first supported as HPSU's in 2011 were approved follow-on funding between 2012 and 2013, totalling €4 million.

To date, Enterprise Ireland has provided over €2.5 million in capital funding to ArcLabs in the Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), under its regional innovation strategy and continues to work with WIT to ensure the potential of emerging companies is maximised. Enterprise Ireland also works in partnership with WIT under Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers Programme. Under the 2012 Programme, 9 entrepreneurs are being incubated in WIT and provided with funding of €15,000 each over a six month period. New Frontiers 2013 in WIT is due to begin later this year.

Waterford is part of IDA Ireland's South East region along with counties Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. In marketing the region for new inward investment, IDA concentrates its efforts on Waterford City and on the towns of Wexford and Kilkenny and the county towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan. In addition, IDA actively engages with its existing client companies to ensure their long-term sustainability and to encourage their growth, development and continuing reinvestment. Waterford has had a long and strong track record as a centre of manufacturing expertise but, in more recent years, there has been a significant growth in advanced manufacturing, particularly in the Life Sciences, International and Financial Services sectors. At present, there are 30 IDA companies in Waterford employing 4,526 people in full-time employment and another 504 people in temporary and part-time employment.

Earlier this year, together with the Taoiseach, I announced that Nypro Healthcare, an IDA Ireland supported company, is to establish an additional state of the art medical device manufacturing facility in Waterford, which will result in the creation of over 200 new high quality jobs in Phase One. In addition, Sanofi announced that it will invest €44 million in its Waterford site.

The South East Employment Action Plan has a number of recommendations which the relevant agencies and stakeholders are charged with implementing and work is ongoing with agencies and stakeholders working together to maximise benefits for the region. The South East Forum, established to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan, will continue to examine ways that would lead to job creation and investment opportunities in the South East, including Waterford.

### IDA Staff

474. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he is assured that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in the Industrial Development Agency Ireland is necessary; if the organisation ensures that there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the organisation ensures that the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if on their return the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on company business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35369/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The authorisation of overseas travel for staff of the IDA is a day to day operational matter for the Agency and not one in which I have a function. IDA Ireland is a marketing organisation, whose mandate is to attract foreign direct investment to Ireland. The very nature of its business requires marketing executives to undertake travel overseas. IDA Ireland operates a robust travel policy in accordance with government guidelines and all travel undertaken by IDA executives complies with the policy. In accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, the Chairman of IDA furnishes me, each year, in conjunction with the Annual Report and Accounts of that body, a comprehensive report confirming, *inter alia*, that the Government's travel policy requirements are being complied with in all respects. The latest such correspondence which I have received from the Chairman of IDA was dated 26 June 2013.

### Enterprise Ireland Staff

475. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he is assured that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in Enterprise Ireland is necessary; if the organisation ensures that there is a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the organisation ensures that the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on company business overseas [35370/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** All travel undertaken by Enterprise Ireland staff is necessary to facilitate Enterprise Ireland delivering on its mandate to support and develop indigenous industry. If the objective of the travel can be achieved in an appropriate way through other means Enterprise Ireland staff do not travel. Overseas travel is undertaken for many reasons including, to support due diligence in evaluating investments, trade missions, trade fairs and other promotions, meetings and conferences and for research and policy development purposes.

Enterprise Ireland has a clear corporate travel policy that is designed to meet the business objectives of the agency. The policy lays out clear guidelines for staff in relation to modes of transport and hotels and accommodation that may be procured. The work undertaken on overseas travel feeds into the business process for which the travel was undertaken, a specific report is not prepared on each travel itinerary. The relevant Budget Manager approves travel itineraries in advance and Enterprise Ireland's contracted travel agent will then look for the most competitive and appropriate travel options. This provides a secondary checking system as the travel agent can only procure tickets that fall within the travel policy unless approved in advance by specific exception.

### Job Creation Issues

476. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will consider making funding available to support job creating bodies such as the west Cork jobs initiative as part of this year's pre-budget process; if his Department is in discussion with Enter-

prise Ireland in this matter; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35407/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Government currently recognises the impact that community groups can have as drivers of economic and enterprise activity. The model followed to date has involved the provision of Community Enterprise Centre space and the associated recruitment of centre managers through formal programmes administered by Enterprise Ireland. In May, I met with members of the West Cork Jobs Initiative, and I subsequently wrote to Enterprise Ireland on foot of the meeting. I understand that Enterprise Ireland met with persons involved with the West Cork Jobs Initiative last Friday. Enterprise Ireland is looking at ways to support local job creation initiatives, where appropriate and relevant, and is due to revert to my Department shortly with specific proposals in this regard.

### **Unemployment Levels**

477. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation his views on the main strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in relation to job retention and creation in County Kerry; if his attention has been drawn to the high live register figures in the county and the mass exodus of young persons from the county in recent years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35476/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** The Enterprise Development Agencies have been to the fore in delivering on the commitments set out in an Action Plan for Jobs. An Action Plan for Jobs 2013 will build on the success of the 2012 Action Plan. It includes 333 actions for delivery across all Government Departments and 46 Agencies or Offices. The Plan contains a range of policy actions to assist the development of indigenous enterprise. Employment retention and creation continues to be our primary objective in 2013. I am confident that the structure that we have created will deliver the type of actions needed to support the transition in our economy to sustainable growth.

Enterprise Ireland's activity in County Kerry is focussed primarily on the development of companies' export potential and in the creation of new jobs; through supporting entrepreneurs to set up new High Potential Start-Up Companies; on the retention and creation of new jobs in existing companies through support of company development and export plans. Enterprise Ireland also supports Research and Development in companies, and through collaboration with relevant Third Level institutions at a national, regional and county level. In County Kerry, this is primarily delivered in collaboration with Institute of Technology Tralee. Funding of up to €3 million for the Institute of Technology Tralee was announced this year by Enterprise Ireland. The funding includes €1.4 million for Shannon ABC (Applied Biotechnology Centre), an industry focussed Research, Development and Innovation Centre that is a collaborative response from the IT Tralee and Limerick IT to the needs of business.

Enterprise Ireland works with approximately 125 client companies employing in excess of 3,500 in County Kerry. Enterprise Ireland has a number of supports and initiatives in place to assist these companies', depending on their stage of development. In relation to the development of a strong pipeline of high potential start-ups, Enterprise Ireland has the New Frontiers Programme, Ireland's national entrepreneurial development programme, in IT Tralee which commenced in June 2013 with 10 participants. The purpose of Enterprise Ireland's Competitive Start Fund is to accelerate the growth of start-up companies that have the capability to succeed in global markets and companies in County Kerry have been very successful in securing funding of €50,000 from the Fund.

In encouraging foreign direct investment to County Kerry, IDA Ireland promotes the county as part of the South West Region. IDA also endorses and supports the initiatives driven under

the “Succeed in Ireland” agenda which engages key stakeholders in the regions regarding opportunities for investment. IDA Ireland continues to compete for high quality investments at the higher end of the value chain. At the end of 2012, there were 12 IDA Ireland supported companies in County Kerry with total employment of *circa* 1,600 people.

The Kerry County Enterprise Board (CEB) provides a source of support for micro-enterprises in the start-up and expansion phases, promotes and develops indigenous micro-enterprise potential and stimulates economic activity and entrepreneurship at local level through both financial and non-financial assistance to project promoters. Job creation and retention are inherent considerations in the Board’s activities as it continues to engage and work with potential businesses on an ongoing basis with strong referral to sister agencies. In 2012, the Board paid out €253,502 to 39 project promoters and 871 people participated in the Board’s Training Programmes.

*Question No. 478 answered with Question No. 453.*

### Departmental Bodies

479. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36219/13]

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Richard Bruton):** My Department currently has the following non-commercial State-sponsored bodies supporting us in our work:

-	non-commercial State sponsored bodies
1.	Enterprise Ireland (EI)
2.	IDA Ireland
3.	Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
4.	Shannon Development
5.	County and City Enterprise Boards (35)
6.	The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)
7.	Forfás
8.	National Consumer Agency (NCA)
9.	The Competition Authority
10.	Irish Auditing and Accounting Standards Authority
11.	Personal Injuries Assessment Board
12.	The Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
13.	The National Employment Rights Authority (NERA)
14.	The Patents Office
15.	Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement (ODCE)
16.	Companies Registration Office (CRO)
17.	Office of the Registrar of Friendly Societies
18.	The Labour Court
19.	The Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT)
20.	The Equality Tribunal
21.	The Labour Relations Commission (LRC)

A Reform Programme under way will deliver a two tier Workplace Relations structure by merging the activities of the National Employment Rights Authority, the Labour Relations Commission, the Equality Tribunal and the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Labour Court into a new Body of First Instance, to be known as the Workplace Relations Commission. The appellate functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal will be incorporated into an expanded Labour Court.

In addition, the following reforms are also being progressed by my Department:

- merge the National Consumer Agency and the Competition Authority into one single entity;

- dissolve the 35 CEB's and restructure small business supports through collaboration with EI and the local authorities.

Plans are also at an advanced stage to:

- transfer relevant enterprise functions from Shannon Development to IDA, EI and Bord Fáilte and merge Shannon Development with Shannon Airport Authority;

- integrate Forfás into my Department;

- absorb the Secretariat to the National Competitiveness Council into my Department.

### **Pension Provisions**

480. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will respond to the issues raised in correspondence (details supplied) regarding a pension scheme wind-up. [34281/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The document the Deputy refers to entitled "*Pension Scheme Wind Up and Waterford Crystal*" relates to former workers at Waterford Crystal. This document follows a recent ruling by the European Court of Justice in response to a reference by the High Court seeking clarification of the interpretation of European law emanating from EU Directive 2008/94EC on the protection of employees in the event of the insolvency of their employer. Following the ECJ ruling, the matter will now revert to the High Court for consideration. Given this matter remains before the courts, it would not be appropriate that I comment further on any aspects of or possible issues arising from the case at this time. Careful and detailed consideration is of course being given to the ruling of the European Court of Justice, and will be given to the outcomes of the case before the High Court.

### **School Meals Programme**

481. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the projected cost of the school meals programme in 2014. [34306/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The school meals programme provides funding towards the provision of food services for disadvantaged children through two schemes. The first is the statutory urban school meals scheme, operated by local authorities and part-financed by this Department. The second is the school meals local projects scheme through which funding is provided directly to participating schools and local and voluntary community groups who run their own school meals projects. There is no automatic entitlement

to funding under the school meals local projects scheme and all applications are considered in light of the available budget for the scheme.

There are currently over 190,000 children in over 1,500 schools and organisations benefiting from the programme. Expenditure on the school meals programme in 2012 was €35 million. The Government has allocated an additional €2 million for the programme in 2013, bringing the total budget allocation to €37 million. The budget allocation for the school meals programme for 2014 will be decided and announced as part of the annual budgetary process.

### **Community Employment Schemes Funding**

482. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Social Protection the responsibility the vocational education committee has in relation to employees on community employment schemes part funded by them. [35542/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Community Employment (CE) programme is sponsored by groups wishing to benefit the local community, namely voluntary organisations and public bodies involved in not-for-profit activities. This includes vocational education committees who sponsor CE schemes. The role of the sponsor-employer, in relation to CE participants (employees) is to provide a meaningful work programme and training plan for each participant. The sponsor is required to facilitate the participants in undertaking training and development, appropriate to their progression and employment goals. In relation to participants the sponsor will at all times:

- be fully responsible for the management and the administration of the project;
- provide a safe and secure environment for all staff and clients of the service;
- comply with all the relevant statutory and legal obligations of a sponsor;
- comply with the terms and conditions laid down in the agreement with DSP;
- facilitate participant development and training that leads to employment.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Applications**

483. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a decision has been made on an application for domiciliary care allowance in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34171/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** An application for domiciliary care allowance was received from the person concerned on 7 June 2013. This application was referred to one of the Department's medical assessors who found that the child was not medically eligible for the allowance. A letter issued on 11 July 2013 advising of the decision. In the case of an application which is refused on medical grounds, the applicant is notified that they may submit additional information and-or ask for the case to be reviewed by another medical assessor. Alternatively, they may also appeal the decision directly to the Social Welfare Appeals Office.

### **Jobseeker's Allowance Applications**

484. **Deputy Pat Breen** asked the Minister for Social Protection when a decision on job-

seeker's allowance will issue in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Clare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34173/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The person concerned applied for Jobseeker's Allowance on 1 July 2013. The application is currently with a Social Welfare Inspector for investigation and he will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

485. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite a carer's allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34174/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 25 March 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

486. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite and award an invalidity pension appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34181/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 30 April 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing. The additional papers which have been provided by the Deputy will be brought to the attention of the Appeals Officer.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Disability Allowance Appeals**

487. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position on a disability allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Cork. [34195/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 12 November 2012. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers

and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### Defined Pension Benefit Schemes Issues

488. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will set out, in tabular form, the number of defined benefit pension schemes the closure of which has been notified to the pensions board in each year since 2008 and to date in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34221/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Defined benefit (DB) pension schemes are required to notify the Pensions Board when a scheme enters into a wind-up. The duration for the disbursement of scheme assets in a wind-up can vary and the Pensions Board monitors the process. The total number of DB pension schemes that have completed the wind-up process and whose closure has been notified to the Pensions Board since 2008 is 333. The breakdown by year is as follows:

Year	No of DB schemes wound up
2008	62
2009	85
2010	67
2011	65
2012	44
2013	10

The number of DB schemes has been reducing over many years: at December 2012, there were 933 DB pension schemes, down from 1,200 schemes in 2009, 1,500 in 2003 and just over 2,500 schemes in 1991.

The persistent funding difficulties of defined benefit (DB) schemes, due to increasing life expectancy and the financial downturn, have been well recognised and employers, unions and trustees have been making strenuous efforts to protect the viability of their schemes. This decline in numbers of DB schemes in Ireland is replicated in many other OECD countries.

Numerous measures have been taken to assist the sustainability of DB schemes over the last number of years.

The Funding Standard for DB schemes was suspended in 2008 following the downturn in the financial markets to give trustees and sponsoring employers adequate time to assess their schemes and consider a response to improve the funding position. The reintroduction of the Funding Standard was then delayed on a number of occasions, pending changes to legislation which were designed to help trustees respond to these challenges.

The changes introduced over a number of successive years, included making provision for trustees to restructure their schemes, introduced measures such as the sovereign annuity to as-

sist schemes improve their funding position and gave increased regulatory powers to the Pensions Board.

### **State Pensions Reform**

489. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Social Protection her plans to extend the State pension - transition which is currently payable to claimants aged 65 years beyond the proposed cut-off date of 1 January 2014; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34227/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Increasing State pension age and the abolition of the State pension (transition) are steps that have been taken to ensure the sustainability of pensions into the future. The decision to reform State pension was taken in the context of changing demographics and the fact that people are living longer and healthier lives.

The Social Welfare and Pensions Act, 2011 provides that State pension age will be increased gradually to 68 years. This will begin in 2014 with the abolition of the State pension (transition) thereby standardising State pension age for all at 66 years. The State pension age will be further increased to 67 years in 2021 and to 68 years in 2028.

It should be noted that until the 1970s, the standard age for receipt of State pension was 70 years of age. State pension transition was introduced in 1970 when it was known as the retirement pension. It was designed to bridge the gap between the standard social welfare pension age, which at that time was 70 years of age, and retirement age. Overtime, the age for State pension contributory was reduced to 66 years.

In terms of social welfare supports available to those at age 65 who are unable to remain in the workforce, the main social welfare payment available to those who leave employment before pension age is jobseeker's benefit. Persons who qualify for a jobseeker's benefit who are aged between 65 and 66 years are generally entitled to receive payment up to the date on which they reach pensionable age (66 years).

Consideration is under way of reviewing the needs of older workers who wish to work longer and in terms of the supports available within the social welfare system.

The recently published OECD report on the Review of the Irish Pension System confirms that reforms are necessary if we are to continue to put pension provision on a sustainable footing given the changes in demographics, the deficit in the Social Insurance Fund, and the difficult fiscal situation.

### **Farm Assist Scheme Appeals**

490. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a decision has been made on an appeal on a farm assist application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry. [34287/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an oral hearing of the appeal of the person concerned took place on 12 July 2013 and that the Appeals Officer is now considering the appeal in the light of all of the evidence submitted, including that adduced at the oral hearing. The person concerned will be notified of the Appeals Officer's decision when the appeal has been determined.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### Departmental Expenditure

491. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the amount that was spent on the core weekly social protection rates for each of the past five years; the amount projected to be spent in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34294/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The following table details the expenditure on weekly income support payments by programme made by the Department from 2008 to date. The 2013 data relate to the relevant expenditure included in the 2013 Revised Estimates Volume.

Programme	2008 Outturn	2009 Outturn	2010 Outturn	2011 Outturn	2012 Outturn	2013 REV Estimate
-	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
Pensions	5,489,783	5,834,853	5,880,350	6,072,755	6,259,412	6,447,170
Working Age Income Supports	3,999,404	5,754,073	6,043,560	5,757,915	5,591,989	5,288,599
Working Age Employment Supports	150,304	183,746	289,880	825,350	916,119	1,007,369
Illness Disability and Carers	3,194,619	3,427,986	3,428,594	3,312,412	3,207,899	3,216,600
Children	189,802	181,679	202,156	221,092	239,114	245,750
Total Expenditure on weekly payments	13,023,912	15,382,337	15,844,540	16,189,524	16,214,532	16,205,489

Some regular monthly payments are also made by the Department of which the most significant (€1.91 billion) is child benefit.

Expenditure on the working age employment supports programme has increased over the period in question. This increase is mainly due to the transfer of responsibility from FÁS to the Department for Community Employment, the Jobs Initiative, the Wage Subsidy scheme and associated schemes from 1 January 2011. In addition, responsibility for the Rural Social Scheme and the Community Services Programme transferred from the former Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to the Department of Social Protection in late September 2010.

The Department also incurs expenditure on a range of supplementary payments which are not included in the table. These include rent supplement, fuel allowance, free travel and the household benefits package.

### Departmental Expenditure

492. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the projected spend respectively on jobseeker's benefit and jobseeker's allowance for the first six months of the year to end of June; the projected amount for each for the full year 2013; if she will indicate the outturn to end of June 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34295/13]

493. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will pro-

vide, in tabular form, the projected number of claimants for both jobseeker's benefit and jobseeker's allowance for the first six months of 2013 and the year as a whole; and what the outturn for each was; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34296/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 492 and 493 together.

The following table details the information requested by the Deputy.

-	YTD End June 2013	2013 REV Estimate
Expenditure Jobseeker's Allowance Jobseeker's Benefit	€m1,528312	€m3098564
Total	1,840	3,662
Average Live Register Average number of recipients paid each week Jobseeker's Allowance Jobseeker's Benefit	425,000-291,98069,410	431,000-288,40081,450
Total	361,390	369,850

The 2013 REV Estimate as published provides the basis for the projected outturn for 2013 as a whole for both Jobseeker's Allowance and Jobseeker's Benefit.

#### Social Insurance Yield

494. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the projected amount of PRSI to be paid to the State for the first six months of the year to end of June and the projected amount for the full year 2013; the outturn to end of June 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34297/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Social Insurance Fund (SIF) income to the end of June was €3,516 million or €45 million (1.3%) in excess of the profile of €3,471 million. The 2013 Revised Estimates for my Department provide for an estimated SIF income of €7,100 million over the entire year.

#### Social Welfare Code Reform

495. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection the cost of increasing the fuel budget for six weeks. [34307/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The cost of increasing the duration of the fuel allowance season by six weeks is estimated at €48.5 million in a full year.

#### Back to Education Allowance Applications

496. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Protection if in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare they can transfer from jobseeker's allowance to the back to education allowance to coincide with the start of their course at the end of August next; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34319/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** It is open to the person concerned

to make an application for a back to education allowance at her local office in order to determine if she has an entitlement to the allowance.

### **Disability Allowance Appeals**

497. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite a decision on a disability allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34332/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 11 June 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Social Welfare Code Issues**

498. **Deputy Gerald Nash** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will consider the introduction of a system of collateral benefit reimbursement; if she will provide details on the total savings envisaged in her Department if such a measure was introduced in 2014; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34334/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Social welfare legislation does not currently provide for reimbursement to the Department by insurance companies in cases where adjustments may have been made to special damages awards on foot of social welfare payments received by plaintiffs.

The Department has undertaken a considerable amount of background work on this matter, including direct engagement with the Personal Injuries Assessment Board and the State Claims Agency, as well as extensive discussions with counterparts in Northern Ireland where a system of benefits reimbursement is in operation. Work in this area is continuing within the Department.

On the basis of an exercise undertaken in conjunction with the Personal Injuries Assessment Board, it is tentatively estimated that programme savings of the order of €21 million per annum could potentially be secured.

### **Money Advice and Budgeting Service Issues**

499. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will list the waiting times a person may expect for an appointment with the Money Advice and Budgeting Service in each county-office area. [34335/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), under the aegis of the Citizens Information Board, provides a high quality personal service to assist people who are over-indebted and need help and advice in coping with debt problems, in particular those on low incomes and people living on social welfare payments.

The Money Advice and Budgeting Service is made up of a network of 53 companies which includes 51 local companies and 2 national companies, MABS ndl and National Traveller MABS. In addition, the MABS National Telephone Helpline is available from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday and the MABS website can be accessed 24 hours a day at [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie). In 2013 funding of some €19 million has been provided to MABS.

Information and immediate support on all aspects of money management and personal debt is available from the MABS Helpline. In many cases the Helpline can provide the help and support people need. However, if a caller needs to avail of the face-to-face service provided by a MABS money adviser, they will be directed to a local MABS office.

MABS operate an appointment scheduling system and this means that in some cases clients may have to wait a number of weeks for the next available appointment. While waiting for an appointment, clients can use MABS free self-help materials to take holding action and to begin the process of assessing their situation. The MABS Helpline can also support clients while they are awaiting their first appointment with a MABS money adviser.

The Citizens Information Board (CIB), which has responsibility for MABS, compiles information on the waiting times in each MABS office on a quarterly basis and posts it to the [www.mabs.ie](http://www.mabs.ie) website. The most recent statistics available, compiled to end of June 2013, record that the average waiting time from first point of contact to first appointment with a money adviser is some 4.4 weeks. This is the average nationally and there are fluctuations between offices. Details are provided by county-office area in the following table.

Over half of MABS services have a waiting time of 4 weeks or less, 13 MABS services have a waiting time of above 4 weeks but no more than 6 weeks and eight have a waiting time greater than 6 weeks. MABS has dealt with over 2,000 emergency clients since the beginning of the year. These clients are seen immediately without any waiting period. MABS is currently working with over 24,000 clients.

I am satisfied that MABS provides a high quality personal service to assist people in overcoming their indebtedness and managing their finances.

#### Client Waiting Times and Numbers at 30 June 2013

MABS Company	Waiting time Average (Weeks)	Number awaiting first appointment
-	Weeks	-
Arklow & District	2.4	12
Athlone	1.6	7
Ballymun	5.4	32
Blanchardstown	5.8	62
Bray	1.6	25
Carlow	5.4	30
Cavan	2.4	19
Charleville	2.8	7
Clare	2	6
Clondalkin	4	27
Cork City	4.2	74
Cork North	2.8	23
Cork West	2.8	19
Donegal North	20.2	160

MABS Company	Waiting time Average (Weeks)	Number awaiting first appointment
Donegal South	6.2	4
Drogheda	5.6	95
Dublin 10 + 20 (Comac)	1.8	6
Dublin 12 Area	3.2	16
Dublin North City	6	42
Dublin North East	7.4	53
Dublin South East	1.8	20
Dún Laoghaire	4.4	28
Dún na nGall Iar- thar (Derrybeg)	2.2	1
Dundalk	0.8	4
Dundrum/Rath- farnham	4.4	33
Fingal	5.8	45
Finglas Cabra	2	14
Galway North	5	22
Galway South	6	75
Kerry	2.4	40
Kildare	6.8	119
Kilkenny	1.8	15
Laois	2	13
Leitrim	3.8	9
Liffey South West	2.6	16
Limerick	7	61
Longford	2.2	16
Mayo North	5	6
Mayo South	16	52
Meath	13.6	117
Monaghan	4.2	21
Mullingar	1.2	13
Offaly	8.6	24
Roscommon	4.6	12
Sligo	4	16
Tallaght	3.2	10
Tipperary North	3.2	18
Tipperary South	1.6	20
Waterford	0.8	13
Waterford West	0.6	0
Wexford	1.2	12

*Question No. 500 withdrawn.*

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

501. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position on an invalidity pension appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Cork. [34341/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 2 May 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Appeals**

502. **Deputy John McGuinness** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a domiciliary care allowance will be approved in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kilkenny; if she will confirm the amount of arrears due and the amount of the weekly payment. [34342/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The person concerned was notified on 11 July 2013 that her domiciliary care allowance appeal was successful. Domiciliary care allowance is a monthly payment of €309.50. Arrears of payment due to the person concerned, amounting to €3,714, has issued by cheque.

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

503. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a decision has been made on a review of a decision on a carer's allowance application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34343/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 25 June 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Jobseeker's Allowance Payments**

504. **Deputy Seán Ó Feargháil** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will issue arrears of jobseeker's allowance to a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34345/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an Appeals Officer, having fully considered all of the available evidence, has partially allowed the appeal of the person concerned by way of a summary decision. The person concerned was notified of the Appeals Officer's decision on 11 July 2013.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Jobseeker's Allowance Eligibility**

505. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the changes, if any, that have been made to jobseeker's allowance and jobseeker's benefit eligibility for employees who have been temporarily laid off or put on short time since 2011; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34359/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Jobseeker's benefit is a weekly payment to people out of work and covered by social insurance. If a person does not qualify for jobseeker's benefit they may qualify for means tested jobseeker's allowance. In 2012, my Department spent over €738 million on the jobseeker's benefit scheme and at the end of 2012 there were some 85,000 recipients of jobseeker's benefit. For the same period my Department spent €3.05 billion on the jobseeker's allowance scheme and at the end of 2012 there were 294,000 recipients of jobseeker's allowance.

Where an employee is put on short time working by their employer they may be entitled to the Systematic Short Time Scheme. Under this scheme the number of days an individual is working has been reduced systematically each week so that they are now working less than the normal working week in the employment concerned. For the days a person is not working they may be entitled to a social welfare payment.

In order to qualify for this scheme short-time working must be systematic in that there must be a clear repetitive pattern of employment each week. Persons temporarily laid off are not classified as short-time but may claim jobseeker's benefit subject to the same conditions as any other worker.

The main changes to the jobseeker schemes that affect workers on short time or those who have been temporarily laid off since 2011 are as follows:

- Budget 2012 provided for a change in payment week for jobseeker's benefit. Where a benefit recipient is working part-time or in casual employment their benefit entitlement is now calculated with reference to a 5 day, rather than a 6 day, week. This measure does not impact on the systematic short-time scheme, which has always been based on a 5 day working week.

- Budget 2012 also provided that Sunday working is now taken into account when calculating the amount of jobseeker's benefit or jobseeker's allowance to be paid. This measure only impacts where a recipient works on a Sunday.

- Budget 2013 provided that, from April 2013, the duration for which jobseeker's benefit is paid will be reduced from 12 months to 9 months for recipients with 260 or more contributions paid and from 9 months to 6 months for recipients with less than 260 contributions paid. This measure may reduce the duration of benefit to which a short-time worker will be entitled.

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

506. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position on an invalidity pension appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Cork. [34369/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare

Appeals Office that an Appeals Officer, having fully considered all of the available evidence, has decided to allow the appeal of the person concerned by way of a summary decision. The person concerned was notified of the Appeals Officer's decision on 8 July 2013.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Pension Provisions**

507. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection the action she has taken following the European Court of Justice ruling earlier this year that the State was in breach of its obligations under the terms of the EU insolvency directive regarding the pension entitlements of Waterford Crystal workers. [34385/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The ruling by the European Court of Justice was in response to a reference by the High Court seeking clarification of the interpretation of European law emanating from EU Directive 2008/94EC on the protection of employees in the event of the insolvency of their employer.

Following the ECJ ruling, the matter will now revert to the High Court for consideration. Given this matter remains before the courts, it would not be appropriate that I comment further on any aspect of or possible issue arising from the case at this time.

Careful and detailed consideration is of course being given to the ruling of the European Court of Justice, and will be given to the outcomes of the case before the High Court.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

508. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34409/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department will compile the information sought and will revert to the Deputy at the earliest possible opportunity.

*Question No. 509 withdrawn.*

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

510. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite a carer's allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Westmeath. [34501/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was referred to an Appeals Officer on 20 June 2013, who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

511. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will pro-

vide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of her Department. [34519/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The statutory bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection are the Citizens Information Board, the Social Welfare Tribunal, the Pensions Board and the Pensions Ombudsman (which does not have a board).

A breakdown of fees and expenses paid to each member of the boards in 2012 is outlined in the following table.

**2012 Year**

Agency/Board	Member	Fees - €	Expenses - €
Citizens Information Board	Noeleen Blackwell	Nil	Nil
	Michael Butler	5,985	Nil
	Laurie Carr (term ended March 2012)	1,443	Nil
	Pat Fitzpatrick	5,985	1,171
	Josephine Henry	5,985	Nil
	Sylda Langford (Chairperson)	Nil	Nil
	Eugene McErlean	5,985	Nil
	Michael McGaune	5,985	3,195
	Martin Naughton	5,985	Nil
	Sandra Ronayne	5,985	Nil
	John Sheehy	5,985	2,998
	David Stratton (appointed November 2012)	Nil	Nil
	Sean Sweeney	5,985	2,435
	Patricia Walsh (term ended March 2012)	1,443	Nil
	Fiona Ward	Nil	Nil
Margaret Zheng (term ended August 2012)	Nil	Nil	
Social Welfare Tribunal	Colin Walker - Chairperson	Nil	Nil
	Michael Carr	Nil	Nil
	Don O'Higgins	Nil	Nil
	Fergus Whelan	Nil	Nil
	Chris Rowland	Nil	Nil

Agency/Board	Member	Fees - €	Expenses - €
Pension Board	Jane Williams-Chairperson	11,970	Nil
	Kevin Finucane	Nil	Nil
	Noreen Deegan	7,695	Nil
	Brendan Johnston	7,695	Nil
	John McHale	Nil	Nil
	Terence Noone	7,695	Nil
	Emer O'Flanagan	7,695	Nil
	Rosalind Briggs	7,695	874
	Don O'Higgins	7,695	Nil
	Phelim O'Reilly	7,695	Nil
	Rachel Ryan	1,283	Nil
	Mary Walsh	7,695	Nil
	Niall Walsh	7,695	Nil
	Robin Webster	7,695	Nil
	David Owens	Nil	Nil
Patricia Murphy	Nil	Nil	

1. Noeleen Blackwell and Sylda Langford waived their Board fees and received no payments in 2012.

2. David Stratton, CIB staff representative and Fiona Ward, as representative of the Department of Social Protection are not eligible to receive any payments.

#### Pensions Board

1. Kevin Finucane waived his Board fees and received no fee payments.

2. Rachael Ryan waived her Board fees with effect from March 2012.

3. John McHale received no Board fees and resigned from the Board in February 2012.

4. David Owens and Patricia Murphy, as representatives of the Department of Social Protection and Department of Finance (i.e. serving civil servants) do not receive a fee.

#### Note:

The Social Welfare and Pensions Miscellaneous Provision Act 2013 provides for the restructuring of the Pensions Board with two distinct arms; one of which will be a three-person body, including an independent Chair, to provide oversight of pensions regulation, and the other a separate unpaid Pensions Council with a majority of members representing consumer interests and which will advise the Minister on pensions policy. This will be implemented in the coming months.

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

512. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of her Department. [34535/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The non-commercial State-sponsored bodies that operate under the aegis of the Department are the Pensions Board and the Citizens Information Board. The Office of the Pensions Ombudsman also comes within the remit of the Department.

Annual salaries (post-Haddington Road Agreement) are set out in tabular form.

Agency	Annual Salary
CEOCitizens Information Board	€ 112,577
CEOThe Pensions Board	€ 136,496
Pensions Ombudsman	€ 112,924

### Departmental Expenditure

513. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34551/13]

515. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34583/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 513 and 515 together.

The details of professional fees paid my Department for the period 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013 are set out in the following table.

Company	Category	Amount (€)
Accenture	IT	€1,065,222
Arthur Cox Solicitors	Legal	€3,703
BearingPoint Ireland Ltd.	IT	€3,865,764
Compasspoint Ltd.	Project Management	€3,852
Core International	IT	€41,362
Deloitte & Touche	Other	€46,845
Eustace Patterson Ltd.	Other (policy)	€31,530
Eversheds	Legal	€32,182
Fujitsu (Ireland) Ltd.	IT	€55,779
Gunne	Valuation	€6,386
Hewlett Packard Ireland Ltd.	IT	€536,285
Hyperion Systems Ltd.	IT	€19,832
Indecon International Economic Consultants	Evaluation	€48,982
Inpute Technologies Ltd.	IT	€47,106
John B O'Connor & Co. Solicitors	Legal	€258
KPMG	Actuarial	€128,750
LK Shields Solicitors	Legal	€5,177
Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Legal	€32,800
McCourtney Auctioneers Ltd.	Valuation	€14,008

Company	Category	Amount (€)
Naked Objects Group Ltd.	IT	€236,113
Nolan Farrell & Goff Solicitors	Legal	€22,297
Oonagh Gearty	Legal	€1,824
Paul Anthony McDermott BL	Legal	€1,030
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Consultancy	€26,780
Professor MX Fitzgerald	Adjudication	€316
Rits	Consultancy	€3,886
Technical Guidance Ltd.	Policy Review	€1,030
Terence Lyons & Co. Solicitors	Legal	€36,705
Tomkins & Co.	Trademarks	€3,896
-	Total:	€6,319,700

The potential savings to the Department by reducing these fees by 20% would be €1,263,940. The Legal category above may include payments in respect of legal settlements with third parties.

### Departmental Expenditure

514. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of her Department. [34567/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department is committed under its Learning and Development Strategy to provide opportunities for the education and development of its staff. The Department recognises that investment in learning leads to improved performance and productivity, increased employee engagement and better customer service.

Business areas offer development opportunities to staff through internal training, courses delivered externally or the Refund of Fees scheme.

From 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, staff attended 96 different external course types at a cost of €300,387.

The Department also operates the Refund of Fees scheme to encourage staff to pursue higher educational achievement outside of normal business hours. The scheme operates within the parameters of Department of Finance Circular 23/07. In the 2012-2013 academic year, 97 staff will participate in the scheme resulting in a total cost, when all fees are refunded, of €233,947.

Training method	Cost for academic year 2012/2013
External training	€300,387
Refund of Fees	€233,947

The full list of courses under both external training and the Refund of Fees scheme for the

period in question are listed in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1**

**External Courses: 1 September to 30 June 2013**

Course	Effectiveness
Absence Management	Measuring the Effectiveness of Training
Accounting Procedures	Media Skills
Administering Team Foundation Server 2010	Mediation Training
Advanced Access	Money Skills - Lunchtime Talks
Agewise	MS Office User Specialist
Agile Data Warehouse Design	MS TechEd
Agile Methodologies	MS VISIO 2010
Agile Project Management	Requirements Engineering
Agile Project Management Seminar	IT Project Management
Business Process Improvement	Non Violent Crisis Instructor
C# Programming Introduction	Management Training
C# Programming	Occupational First Aid Course
Certificate in Leadership in the Public Sector	Outlook Personal Productivity
Clear and Critical Thinking	Pensions Training
Computing	Plain English Seminar Training
Configuring Windows & Training	Plain English Writing
Configuring Windows 8	Planning for retirement
Conflict Management	PO Leadership & Competency Devpt
Courtroom Skills	PQ Process
Custom SharePoint 2010	Procurement in Public Sector
DCCM Training	Programming Introduction
Deaf Awareness	Programming with C#
Developing Research Outputs	Project Management
Developing Web Apps Using VS 2008	Project Management & Engineering Agile Project Course
Dispute Resolution	Agile Project Course
ECDL CTP Training Programme	Project Management for Team Members
Editing Skills	Public Financial Management
Effective Interviewing Skills	Quality in Social Research
Energy Conservation	Rent Supplement
EU Presidency Training	Requirements Engineering Course
Excel Intermediate Training	Risk Based Auditing/Planning
Facilitation Skills Training	Safe Pass System Training
First aid	Safety Representative
Freedom of Information	Scoping and Delivering IT Projects
Future of HR in Public Sector	Senior Management Training
Gaeilge (FETAC) Course	SharePoint 2010
Health and Safety	SQL Training

Course	Effectiveness
IDEA	Team Building Training Course
IIA/ FAP Conference	Train the Trainer
ILM Certificate in Leadership	Training Needs Analysis
InDesign Pro Skills	VDU Assessor Training
Industry Matters Conference	Visio Professional 2010 Customised Course
Intro. to Programming(2667A)	Web Design Training
Introduction to Corepay	Web Design with XHTML
Introduction To Internal Audit	Workplace Dis Man Programme
Leadership	Writing for the Web
Lean Six Sigma for Public Sector	XML Design & Build
Working successfully within Team Training	

**Table 2**

**Refund of Fees: Academic year 2012/2013**

Course	-
Accounting	Information systems & management
Adult guidance	Information technology
Adult learning & development	Irish
Applied social research	Irish law
Arts	IT
Business administration	Law
Business management HRM	Leadership & Management
Business studies	Personal and professional development
Business/commerce	Psychology
Computer science	Psychology & social science
Computing & IT	Psychology/counselling
Counselling & psychotherapy	Public accounts
ECDL	Public management
Forensic accounting	Science in IT management
Human Resource Management	Social science
Humanities	Statistics
Inclusion/disability studies	Training and continuing education
Information systems	Women/gender/society

*Question No. 515 answered with Question No. 513.*

**Exchequer Savings**

516. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for her Department. [34599/13]

517. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for her Department. [34615/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 516 and 517 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is provided in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Travel and Subsistence, 2013 REV Estimate**

Department of Social Protection	2013
Travel and Subsistence - Total 2013 Estimate	€5,692,000
1% Reduction Saving	€56,920
5% Reduction Saving	€284,600
7% Reduction Saving	€398,440
10% Reduction Saving	€569,200
12% Reduction Saving	€683,040
15% Reduction Saving	€853,800
17% Reduction Saving	€967,640
20% Reduction Saving	€1,138,400

**Table 2: Training and Development, 2013 REV Estimate**

Department of Social Protection	2013
Training and Development - Total 2013 Estimate	€1,169,000
5% Reduction Saving	€58,450
7% Reduction Saving	€81,830
10% Reduction Saving	€116,900
12% Reduction Saving	€140,280
15% Reduction Saving	€175,350
17% Reduction Saving	€198,730
20% Reduction Saving	€233,800

### Exchequer Savings

518. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all her special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if she will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to her special advisers. [34631/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The information requested by the Deputy in relation to the salaries of my special advisers is set out in the following tabular statement:

Title	Annual Salary Post Implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement	Savings if the salary is Capped at the 1st Point of PO Scale
Press Advisor	€75,647 (1st point of PO scale)	N/A
Special Advisor	€119,572	€43,925

As my special adviser was previously employed in the private sector on a salary package that was more than twice the highest point of the Principal Officer (standard) scale, I sought sanction from the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform for remuneration in excess of the applicable pay scale grade. A single point salary of €127,796 was sanctioned by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform effective from 29 July 2011 which represented a reduction of over one third in my special adviser's previous salary in the private sector at that time. The salary has been reduced in line with the Haddington Road Agreement as shown in the table.

### Invalidity Pension Appeals

519. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an invalidity pension appeal will be approved in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Carlow; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34658/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that the appeal from the person concerned was referred to an Appeals Officer who has decided to hold an oral hearing in this case on 13 August 2013. The person concerned has been notified of the arrangements for the hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### Carer's Allowance Appeals

520. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an appeal in respect of a carer's allowance application will be granted in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34659/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 29 April 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### State Pension (Non-Contributory) Appeals

521. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an appeal in respect of an application for a non-contributory widow's pension will be approved in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34660/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that an Appeals Officer, having fully considered all of the available evidence, including that adduced at the oral hearing, has decided to allow the appeal of the person concerned. The person concerned has been notified of the Appeals Officer's decision.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Invalidity Pension Applications**

522. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position on an application for an invalidity pension in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Meath; and if she will reverse this decision and in the future ensure all such decisions are transparent in order that citizens know the grounds on which they have been turned down. [34661/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Invalidity pension is a payment for people who are permanently incapable of work because of illness or incapacity and who satisfy the contribution conditions. Medical eligibility for invalidity pension is determined by the severity and expected duration of the medical condition.

All medical assessments and medical reviews are undertaken by fully qualified medical practitioners who have experience and specialist training/qualifications in occupational medicine as well as in human disability evaluation. Desk assessments of eligibility are based on medical reports and other evidence furnished by the applicant and the applicant's treating physician. The assessment is made in accordance with the Department's evidence based medical guidelines and protocols. The medical assessor provides to the deciding officer a considered medical opinion on the evidence provided in support of the claim for his or her guidance.

The Department received a claim for invalidity pension from the person concerned on 2 April 2013. The medical evidence provided by the claimant in support of her claim was examined by a medical assessor who was of the opinion, based on the evidence provided, that the person concerned does not satisfy the medical criteria for invalidity pension. The application for invalidity pension was disallowed by a deciding officer. The person in question was notified of this decision and the reason for it on 21 May 2013.

Further medical evidence was subsequently submitted by the claimant. This additional evidence, along with the original information, was evaluated by a different medical assessor who also expressed the opinion that the person concerned does not satisfy the medical criteria. The deciding officer confirmed the original decision and notified the claimant of the outcome on 12 July 2013, advising her of her right to appeal the decision to the independent Social Welfare Appeals Office.

### **Departmental Funding**

523. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of successful applications for funding under her Department's grants system for projects within County Kildare for each of the past four years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34670/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The following table shows the

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grants awarded to projects within County Kildare for each of the past four years from this Department.

Organisation	Address	Year and Name of Grant Scheme	Summary	Amount Awarded
Kildare Town Youth Project	Unit 1 & 2 Fairview Kildare Town Co Kildare	2010 - European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion Funding Initiative 2010	To explore the impact of poverty and social exclusion on a group of young people, their families and their communities through the production of a DVD. To hold a community launch to highlight issues and to give young people a voice.	€2,700.00
Newbridge Family Resource Centre	Dara Park, Newbridge Co Kildare	2010 - European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion Funding Initiative 2010	To facilitate a 7 week art programme, "An Inclusive Community" to explore social inclusion for 20 participants from the local community with all levels of intellectual abilities.	€4,900.00
Newbridge Family Resource Centre	Dara Park, Newbridge Co Kildare	2010 – United Nations International Day for Eradication of Poverty Public Awareness Funding Initiative – 17 October 2010	6 week programme on poverty and social exclusion at Irish and global levels with photo exhibition and official ceremony to close on 17 Oct 2010.	€4,000.00

Grants Paid by the former Dept of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs

Area	-	-	-	-
Newbridge Family Resource Centre	Dara Park, Newbridge Co Kildare	2011 – United Nations International Day for Eradication of Poverty Public Awareness Funding Initiative – 17 October 2011	To build links and challenging stereotypes by engaging a group of young people and older people together in a graffiti project where a derelict space is used artistically to provide a positive and attractive space.	€3,000.00

## Programme for Government Implementation

524. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government which come within her remit; if each commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34686/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Programme for Government commits to implementing a fundamental programme of reform of the system of social protection. The scale of this reform is challenging and wide-reaching. I am committed to working with the Department and its agencies in the delivery of the commitments in this Programme for Government and substantial progress on many of the commitments has already been made.

The second Annual Report which sets out the implementation status of my Department's main achievements in the Programme for Government was published by the Department of the Taoiseach in March 2013 and is available on [http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Publications/Publications\\_2013/Programme\\_for\\_Government\\_Annual\\_Report\\_20131.pdf](http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Publications/Publications_2013/Programme_for_Government_Annual_Report_20131.pdf). It is the Government's intention to publish the third Annual Report in March 2014 which will set out specific progress during 2013. The timeline for the delivery of my Department's commitments for Programme for Government is over the lifetime of the Government.

The status summary on the implementation of the commitments relevant to my Department is outlined in the following table.

### Commitments in the Programme for Government for which the Department of Social Protection has a primary role

Commitment	Status Summary
Halve the lower 8.5% rate of PRSI up to end 2013 on jobs paying up to €356 per week – announced in the Jobs Initiative.	Implemented.
Expand eligibility for the back to education allowance.	Implementation options under consideration and two new initiatives are currently being piloted.
The development of a new graduate and apprentice internship scheme, work placement programmes and further education opportunities for our young unemployed providing an additional 60,000 places across a range of schemes and initiatives – announced in the Jobs Initiative.	Implementation in progress.
Replacing FÁS with a new National Employment and Entitlements Service (NEES) so that all employment and benefit support services will be integrated in a single delivery unit managed by the Department of Social Protection. This integrated service would provide a 'one stop shop' for people seeking to establish their benefit entitlements; looking for a job; and seeking advice about their training options.	Implementation underway, including roll out of Intreo.

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Commitment	Status Summary
<p>The NEES will process citizen entitlements such as supplementary welfare allowances, higher education grants and welfare allowances. It will manage as much as possible means testing for State entitlements. It will also be responsible for employment referral and training supports provided by FÁS. This service will offer users a higher level of personalised employment counselling, with more frequent face-to-face interviews. Those on the live register who are identified as being most at risk of long-term unemployment will receive priority treatment for more intensive support. It will ensure active case management for people in need of assistance.</p>	<p>Implementation underway, including roll out of Intreo.</p>
<p>Maintain the standard 10.75% rate of employers PRSI.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p>Introduce a range of measures to tackle the problem of welfare fraud.</p>	<p>A range of measures have been implemented and further measures are under consideration.</p>
<p>Establish a Tax and Social Welfare Commission to examine entitlements of self employed and the elimination of disincentives to employment. The Commission will examine the interaction between the taxation and the welfare systems to ensure that work is worthwhile. In particular, it will examine family and child income supports, and a means by which self-employed people can be insured against unemployment and sickness</p>	<p>Implemented.Implementation in progress.</p>
<p>Convert the Money Advice and Budgeting Service into a strengthened Personal Debt Management Agency with strong legal powers.</p>	<p>The Personal Insolvency Act 2012 provides for a Debt Relief Notice (DRN) for persons with no assets or income with unsecured debts of no more than €20,000. With the assistance of an approved intermediary the Notice will allow for the full write off of qualifying unsecured debt after a 3 year supervisory period. At the request of the Minister, the Citizens Information Board agreed that MABS would act as Approved Intermediaries for the purposes of the provision of DRNs. Sanction has been given by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for 16 temporary staff to be assigned to MABS for up to 2 years to establish an Approved Intermediary Service (AIS) for the purposes of processing DRNs. An implementation process is underway and the CIB/ MABS are working closely with the new Insolvency Service to ensure that the appropriate structures are in place within MABS to implement this new and important statutory role. It is intended that the Approved Intermediary Service will be mainstreamed within the local MABS network over a 2 year period.</p>
<p>Make greater use of Mortgage Interest Supplement to support families who cannot meet their mortgage payments.</p>	<p>Implementation options under consideration.</p>
<p>Maintain Social Welfare rates.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>

Commitment	Status Summary
Committed to achieving the targets in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion to reduce the number of people experiencing poverty.	Implementation of the National Social Target for Poverty Reduction continues to be rolled out in 2013, including publication of a Social Impact Assessment of Budget 2013, the holding of the Social Inclusion Forum, publication of the first annual Social Inclusion Monitor, updating of progress towards the Europe 2020 poverty target in National Reform Programme 2013. The Department of Social Protection is continuing to work with relevant stakeholders on setting the sub-targets for children and jobless households, towards formulating proposals for these sub-targets during 2013.
We will examine the social protection system with a view to identifying and eliminating poverty traps including:-Amending the 30 hour rule for Rent Supplement and Mortgage Interest Supplement for people moving from welfare to work.Activating people on a reduced week who refuse extra day(s) employment. Over time, One Parent Family Payment will be replaced with a parental allowance that does not discourage marriage, cohabitation or work. Our tax, social welfare and other laws should not discourage people from getting married or cohabiting. For example, single mothers lose the One Parent Family Payment if they marry. Over time, we will transform it into a family income-based payment that does not discourage marriage or work.	Examination of poverty traps underway.Under consideration.Under consideration.Changes to the One Parent Family Payment (OFP) are currently being implemented on a phased basis between 2012 and 2016. The purpose of these changes is to move the scheme much closer to the jobseeker schemes, tackle the high levels of lone parents suffering from consistent poverty and to improve outcomes for lone parents and their families.
A zero tolerance approach to welfare fraud, underpinned by a major anti-fraud enforcement drive.	A range of measures have been implemented and further measures are under consideration.
As well as more regular face-to-face interviews with an integrated employment and entitlements service for those of working age, other anti-fraud measures will be undertaken using latest available technology and better sharing of data across government departments and agencies.	A number of measures have been implemented and more are under consideration. The Department engages in extensive sharing of data with other Departments and agencies.
Progressively reduce reliance on Rent Supplement, with eligible recipients moving to the Rental Accommodation Scheme.	Implementation in progress.
Review the operation of the Rent Supplement Scheme and introduce a code of conduct for rent supplement eligibility similar to that which operates for local authority tenants.	Implementation in progress in co-operation with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.
Pay rent supplement to tax-compliant landlords registered with the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) and offering decent quality accommodation, to root out fraud.	Implementation in progress.
Divert staff from elsewhere in public service to clear the social welfare appeals backlog, and introduce a consolidated appeals process.	Implemented.

Commitment	Status Summary
Put the household benefits packages out to tender, so that the Exchequer benefits from reduced prices.	Implementation not feasible based on advice from the Chief State Solicitors Office, the Commission for Energy Regulation and the Competition Authority as the Department is not the actual customer. Over the lifetime of the Programme there were ongoing negotiations with the major utility providers which did give improved deals and yielded savings. Other expenditure reducing measures have also been implemented. Other expenditure reducing measures have also been implemented.
Raise the issue of payment of Child Benefit in respect of non-resident children at EU level, and seek to have the entitlement modified to reflect the cost of living where a child is resident. We will examine all possible flexibility within European legislation to reduce the cost of this payment.	Issue has been raised and implementation of change in this area is unlikely.
Ensure that trans-gender people will have legal recognition and extend the protections of the equality legislation to them.	Proposals are being brought to Cabinet and it is intended that the outline heads of a Bill will be presented to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Social Protection in the autumn.
Reform the pension system to progressively achieve universal coverage, with particular focus on lower-paid workers, to achieve better risk sharing, and to provide for greater flexibility for those who wish to retire on a phased basis.	A number of measures have been implemented and further measures are under consideration.

### Departmental Expenditure

525. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations companies, communications consultants or communications companies used by organisations or agencies under the remit of her Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34702/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The statutory bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection are the Citizens Information Board, the Pensions Board, the Pensions Ombudsman and the Social Welfare Tribunal.

The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table.

Agency/ Board	Name of Company	Service Supplied	Expenditure
Citizens Information Board*	Marketing Network	0761 telephone number prefix campaign to promote public awareness of the new contact number for Citizens Information and Money Advice and Budgeting Service	€127,939 (excluding VAT)

Agency/ Board	Name of Company	Service Supplied	Expenditure
	Marketing Network	Mortgage Arrears Information helpline promotion, incl. radio, newspaper and online advertising	€80,400 (excluding VAT)
The Pensions Board	Q4	Public Relations	€16,236.93 (including Vat)
Pensions Ombudsman	Nil	Nil	Nil
Social Welfare Tribunal	Nil	Nil	Nil

\*The Citizens Information Board has not used public relations or communications consultants since 9 March 2011. However, a marketing company was used for promotional purposes and details of the expenditure are included in the table.

### Social Welfare Appeals Waiting Times

526. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of inspectors within her Department dealing with social welfare appeals; the number of appeals awaiting a decision; the average waiting time for an appeal; her plans to increase the number of inspectors; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34705/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I am advised by the Social Welfare Appeals Office that there are currently 41 Appeals Officers dealing with social welfare appeals. There has been a rapid and sustained increase in the number of appeals received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office since 2009 which has placed extraordinary pressure on the office. Up to 2009, the average number of appeals received was 15,000 per annum whereas in 2012, the office received 35,484 appeals. In order to manage this increasing workload, significant resources and efforts have been put into reducing backlogs and improving appeals processing times for appellants, including the assignment of 15 additional Appeals Officers, in addition to 10 former Community Welfare Service Appeals Officers who joined the appeals office in 2011, bringing the total number of serving Appeals Officers to 41 as mentioned above; reviewing and improving business processes; and implementing a new operating model within the appeals office.

In addition, a major programme of process redesign and modernisation is currently under way in the Department in relation to many of its scheme areas, aimed at reducing backlogs and reducing the time taken by the Department to respond to requests from the appeals office for submissions in relation to appeals. These measures have led to improvements in processing times and a significant increase in the number of appeals finalised from 17,787 in 2009 to 32,558 in 2012. The Chief Appeals Officer expects to finalise 6,000 more cases in 2013 than in 2012. Good progress is also now being made in reducing the number of appeals on hand from 20,414 at 1 January 2013 to 16,542 at 1 July 2013.

Appeal processing times are calculated from the registration date of the appeal to the date of its finalisation. They include all activities during this period, including time spent awaiting any clarification from the appellant, time in the Department for comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal put forward by the appellant, and any further investigation, examination or assessment by the Department's Inspectors and Medical Assessors that is deemed necessary. A considerable period of time is added to the process when an oral hearing is required

because of the logistics involved in this process. While this process carries an inherent delay in terms of finalising an appeal, it also crystallises the flexibility and accessibility of the appeals system.

The average waiting time for appeals peaked in 2011 when the average time for an oral hearing was 52.5 weeks and for a summary decision was 25.1 weeks. In 2012 these times improved by 10.3 weeks when the average time for an oral hearing dropped to 39.5 weeks while the time for a summary decision increased slightly to 27.8 weeks. The improvement has continued in 2013 with the average processing time up to June 2013 reducing to 36.2 weeks for those requiring an oral hearing and 27.6 weeks for a summary decision. By its nature and because it is a quasi-judicial function, the processing of appeals takes time and reflects the fact that, by definition, the appeal process cannot be a quick one.

### **National Carers Strategy Status**

527. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Social Protection her views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding carers. [34712/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The contribution that people provide in caring for members of their own family is critical for society. It was for that reason that the Government last year adopted the National Carers Strategy with a view to giving greater public recognition to carers and their work. Carers receive significant income supports from the Department of Social Protection so that people can continue living at home as long as possible – in fact the supports available to carers in Ireland are among the highest rates of income support in Europe. Expenditure on carers has increased significantly in recent years. In 2013 it is estimated to be €776 million compared with an estimated outturn of €771 million in 2012. The expenditure on carers in 2012 included: €509 million on carer's allowance; €24 million on carer's benefit; €135 million on the respite care grant and; €103 million on domiciliary care allowance. Carers also receive a free travel pass at an annual cost of €6 million and carers who reside with the care recipient are eligible for the household benefits package at an annual cost of approximately €30 million.

The respite care grant is available to all full-time carers regardless of their means while the income disregard and means test for carers allowance is the most generous in the social welfare system. Carers are entitled to an extra half-rate carer's allowance if they care for more than one person and a respite care grant for each care recipient. A person in receipt of certain qualifying payments and also providing full-time care and attention to another person may qualify for a half-rate carer's allowance while retaining their main social welfare payment.

Regrettably, I am not in a position to reverse last year's cut in the respite care grant. However, I should point out that both the Carers' Association and Care Alliance Ireland have made submissions to my Department in the context of Budget 2014, and representatives from both organisations attended the pre-Budget Forum which I hosted on July 5 last. The key points made by both organisations will be considered in the context of framing Budget 2014.

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

528. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when a carer's allowance appeal will be approved for a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34716/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 9 May

2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Child Benefit Eligibility**

529. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total cost of restoring the payment of child benefit to the children of asylum seekers living in direct provision accommodation. [34717/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department does not hold information regarding the number of children in direct provision. In order to qualify for payment of child benefit, a person must satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition. Section 246 (7) of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 lists persons who shall not be regarded as habitually resident and this includes those who are at any stage of the asylum process, or who have similar forms of request for permission to remain in Ireland, but in respect of whom such permission has not yet been granted.

### **Local Employment Service Issues**

530. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Social Protection to provide a table of local employment service providers showing the number of staff they employ, the grant they receive from the State and the number of individuals they place in work. [34722/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department contracts for the provision of the local employment service (LES) with 22 local development-community companies, the details of which are set out in the following list. These organisations deliver employment services through a network of offices and outreach clinics. The LES provide services for both jobseekers who are referred to them by the department for activation supports and those who are most distant from the labour market e.g. people who have a disability, lone parents, ex-offenders, etc. In the first six months of 2013, apart from placing 4,094 people into employment, the LES have also progressed 11,840 people into training/educational programmes.

As the Department may shortly be tendering for providers to augment the capacity of LES, I do not intend to publish figures or the payments made to individual LES contractors at this time.

#### **Local Employment Service (LES) Providers 2013**

Northside Partnership

Ballymun/Whitehall Area Partnership

Tolka Area Partnership (Dublin)

Bluebell, Inchicore, Islandbridge, Kilmainham & Rialto Co Ltd

Rathmines Pembroke Community Partnership Ltd

Blanchardstown Area Partnership

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership Co Ltd  
South Dublin County Ltd (SDC)  
Southside Partnership (Dublin)  
Co Kildare Local Employment Service Network  
Bray Area Partnership  
Monaghan Integrated Development  
Louth Leader Partnership  
Mayo North East LEADER Partnership Co Teoranta  
Galway City Partnership  
People Action Against Unemployment Ltd (PAUL) (Limerick)  
Cork City Partnership Ltd  
South Kerry Development Partnership  
North & East Kerry Leader Partnership Teo  
Waterford Area Partnership  
Waterford Leader Partnership Ltd  
Wexford Local Development

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

531. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will expedite a carer's allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34733/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** This application for carer's allowance was disallowed in November 2011 on two grounds, namely, that the person in question is not habitually resident in the State and that the care recipient is not in need of full-time care and attention. The person in question appealed this decision. Unfortunately, there has been a delay in the preparation of an appeal submission by the deciding officer and the transfer of the relevant papers to the Social Welfare Appeals Office (SWAO). The necessary papers will be forwarded to the SWAO for determination without further delay.

### **Black Economy Issues**

532. **Deputy Tom Barry** asked the Minister for Social Protection the action being taken to address black market activities, particularly in the area of construction. [34740/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** A key priority for Government is to ensure that fraudulent activity within the social welfare system is vigorously prevented and combated. A key element of this is the active policing of the black economy sector where there is a prevalence of social welfare fraud and tax non-compliance.

A range of specific activities are being undertaken to ensure that the black economy is appropriately targeted. These include:

- *Interagency co-operation* : In conjunction with other agencies and, in particular, with Revenue, the Department tackles shadow economy working by a combination of joint intelligence collation, assurance checks and outdoor operations, including inspections and direct investigations.

- *High Level DSP/Revenue co-operation*: The Department liaises bilaterally with Revenue through a High Level Group consisting of senior officials from both organisations. This mechanism ensures ongoing collaboration and interaction between the organisations, including oversight of activities designed to combat the black economy.

- *Operational Co-operation with Revenue*: In conjunction with Revenue, the Department undertakes site visits and inspections in the construction sector through assurance checks and outdoor operations, including inspections and direct investigations. Joint Investigation Units have been established between the Department and Revenue and these units play a key role in targeting particular types of shadow economy activity and workers in the employed sectors, including construction.

- *Working with Business and Unions*: The Department participates on the Hidden Economy Monitoring Group with Revenue, employer and union representative bodies. This Group provides a formal structure to monitor developments, share experiences and make proposals for combating the hidden economy.

- *Direct Investigations and Interventions*: Where intelligence or reliable reports are received about specific sectors or persons engaged in concurrent working and claiming or under declaration of income, then reviews of eligibility are immediately undertaken. Case interventions are undertaken based on assessments of compliance risks and other relevant information.

In addition, the Deputy should note that the Department has extensive legal powers to support the sharing of data for the purpose of controlling the entitlement and payment of benefits. Data are exchanged on an ongoing basis with agencies and, in particular, with Revenue to support its activities in combating shadow economy activity. The approach taken by the Department is frequently reviewed and is regularly adjusted to concentrate on the areas of greatest risk, based on its operational experience and credible information received from industry and business sectors.

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

533. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an application for carer's allowance will be granted in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34744/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 4 April 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal

based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **National Internship Scheme Eligibility**

534. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if a company (details supplied) in County Kerry will qualify as a JobBridge employer in view of the fact that its business is not solely trade-related; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34746/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The aim of JobBridge is to provide work experience placements for interns in order to assist in breaking the cycle where jobseekers are unable to get a job without experience. In order to protect the intern and to ensure the integrity of the JobBridge Scheme in achieving this aim a variety of control measures and criteria have been introduced. The Scheme is designed to guard against the displacement of apprentice positions and therefore placements in trades (mechanic, plumbing etc.) are not permitted under the terms and conditions of the Scheme.

### **Supplementary Welfare Allowance Eligibility**

535. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Social Protection if assistance will be given to a person (details supplied) in Dublin 15 in securing an emergency needs payment to help towards patient transport to their disability service; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34756/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** My Department's local staff in Dublin 15 have been in contact with Mr. Ryan's family in this instance. The advice given is that they should attend a meeting with an officer from the Department's welfare service at Roselawn Health Centre where all available options and choices will be discussed. It is hoped that this will happen next week.

*Questions Nos. 536 and 537 withdrawn.*

### **Social Welfare Benefits Data**

538. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for family income supplement in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34789/13]

539. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for family income supplement applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34790/13]

540. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline in tabular form the total number of applications for illness benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and

to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34791/13]

541. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for illness benefit applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34792/13]

542. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for invalidity pension in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34793/13]

543. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for invalidity pension applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34794/13]

544. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for the blind pension in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34795/13]

545. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for blind pension applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and 2012 to date. [34796/13]

546. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the number of applications for injury benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34797/13]

547. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for injury benefit applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34798/13]

548. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for disablement benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34799/13]

549. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline in tabular form the average waiting times for disablement benefit applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34800/13]

550. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for partial capacity benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals.

[34801/13]

551. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for partial capacity benefit applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34802/13]

552. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for domiciliary care allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34803/13]

553. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for domiciliary care allowance applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34804/13]

554. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for jobseeker’s benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34805/13]

555. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for jobseeker’s benefit applications in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the total waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34806/13]

556. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for jobseeker’s allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34807/13]

557. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for jobseeker’s allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34808/13]

558. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for carer’s allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year, the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34809/13]

559. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for carer’s allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34810/13]

560. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for carer’s benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals.

[34811/13]

561. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for carer's benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34812/13]

562. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for the half-rate carer's allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year; and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34813/13]

563. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for half-rate carer's allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34814/13]

564. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for the one-parent family payment in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34815/13]

565. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection to outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for the one-parent family payment in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34816/13]

566. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for health and safety benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34817/13]

567. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for health and safety benefit in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34818/13]

568. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for the back to work enterprise allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34819/13]

569. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for the back to work enterprise allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34820/13]

570. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for farm assist in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34821/13]

571. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for farm assist in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34822/13]

572. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the total number of applications for back to education allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the number of rejections per year; the number of appeals per year; the number of successful appeals per year and the number of outstanding applications and appeals. [34823/13]

573. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will outline, in tabular form, the average waiting times for back to education allowance in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and the average waiting times for appeals in those years and to date in 2013. [34824/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 538 to 573, inclusive, together.

The information requested by the Deputy in respect of 2009, 2010 and 2011 remains unchanged from that which was forwarded to him in reply to Questions Nos. 119 to 154, inclusive, on 24 October 2012.

The following tables set out the requested information in relation to 2012 and to date in 2013.

**Illness Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 61,042**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	286,534	245,319	1	4,452	68,881	36,855	2,653	325	15	1,283	651	42	501,461
May 2013	133,151	114,432	1	4,833	65,875	16,362	839	174	4	462	364	40	47965

**Jobseeker’s Allowance; Recipients May 2013 – 303,223**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	225,262	167,623	5	18,464	312,906	19,811	6,290	1,205	327	1,621	3,227	47	362,769
May 2013	88,074	67,715	4	15,513	318,736	7,734	2,403	475	128	335	1,464	20	242,542

**Jobseeker's Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 76,457**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	192,965	169,755	2	7,723	88,014	6,373	1,289	183	37	365	669	21	31519
May 2013	74,957	68,628	2	4,480	80,937	2,388	380	72	19	104	285	22	29365

**Family Income Supplement; Recipients May 2013 – 40,593**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks)	Appeals Pending Decision
2012 New Claims Renewals Totals	20,34129,58949,930	13,26428,11841,382	1615 N/A	7,3602,49110,851	N/AN/A53,009	7,3962,64910,045	301	33	9	88	115	23	31	147

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-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks)	Appeals Pending Decision
May 2013 New Claims Renewals Totals	9,94413,67023,614	9,55415,26224,816	12*7* N/A	1,8045412,345	N/ AN/ A42,938	5,9461,3587,304	143	14	1	28	41	29	41	203

Note: Currently FIS new claims are cleared within 2 weeks of receipt and there is no delay with Renewals.

**Carer's Allowance (Incl. Half Rate Carer's Allowance); Recipients May 2013 – 55,530**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	15,493	9,880	25	8,553	60,762	6,827	2,676	651	135	452	786	33	421,766
May 2013	5014	8,825	32*	3,103	58,633	5,594	1,879	468	54	431	735	28	351,941

Note: New claims for Carer's Allowance are currently awarded inside 8 weeks of receipt, the average processing time reflect appeals in the system following major clearance of backlogs in 2012 and early 2013. This will reduce as appeals are cleared.

**One-parent Family Payment; Recipients May 2013 – 87,586**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	15,493	9,880	25	8,553	60,762	6,827	947	171	56	247	405	27	43586
May 2013	5,919	4,628	12	2,820	90,406	604	270	74	21	86	178	33	34430

### **Injury Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 1,058 (includes Interim Illness Benefit)**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	13,641	10,927	N/A	491	1,525	1,101	13	2	0	1	7	19	6711
May 2013	5,603	4,776	N/A	223	1,281	417	8	2	0	1	4	35	5912

### **Invalidity Pension; Recipients May 2013 – 51,532**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	11,510	6,352	35	3,662	53,715	702	4,765	1,031	4	474	430	39	494,356
May 2013	4,085	4,369	56*	2,056	53,588	4,399	1,904	1,611	5	1,551	574	35	442,496

Note: New Invalidity Pension claims are processed within 6 weeks of receipt and have been for all of 2013, the average processing times reflect the number of appeals following major

backlog clearance in 2012 and early 2013. This will reduce as appeals are cleared.

**Domiciliary Care Allowance; Recipients May 2013 – 25,113**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	4,079	1,586	6	478	25,177	3,174	2,186	874	29	625	906	32	411,113
May 2013	1,857	770	8	733	25,846	916	572	343	10	328	389	31	37608

**Partial Capacity Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 955**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	1,819	939	N/A	831	1,564	49	67	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A67
May 2013	419	211	N/A	988	1,943	51	34	0	0	4	2	21	N/A92

**Carer's Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 1,643**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	1,788	2,021	N/A	255	1,893	769	183	43	8	66	48	27	3575
May 2013	790	743	N/A	325	1,968	259	49	27	2	17	36	24	2839

**Disablement Benefit; Recipients May 2013 – 14,223**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	1,436	1,384	N/A	1,699	15,901	254	409	110	47	50	210	36	46254
May 2013	463	327	N/A	1,653	15,876	163	170	51	7	29	85	32	39240

**Blind Persons Pension; Recipients May 2013 – 1,428**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	198	96	N/A	34	1,490	107	27	3	2	7	19	24	358
May 2013	76	29	N/A	47	1,475	34	16	2	0	1	7	25	N/A14

**Farm Assist; Recipients May 2013 – 10,785**

-	Claims Registered	Claims Awarded	Average time to Award (Weeks)	Claims Pending Decision	Claim-load (recipients and pending claims)	Claims Disallowed	Appeals Lodged	Appeals Allowed	Appeals Partly Allowed	Revised DO Decision	Appeals Disallowed	Average Time to Summary Decision (Weeks)	Average Time to Oral Hearing Decision (Weeks) Appeals Pending Decision
2012	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	271	25	31	40	113	23	45161
May 2013	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	135	21	14	9	62	25	30168

*Questions - Written Answers*  
**International Agreements**

574. **Deputy Michelle Mulherin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide details of the bilateral social security agreement between this jurisdiction and Australia and the social welfare payment to which it pertains; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34826/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Bilateral Social Security Agreement between Ireland and Australia originally came into force on 8 April 1992. The agreement was revised with effect from 1 April 2006. The main purpose of the Agreement is to protect the pension rights of people who have worked and paid reckonable social security contributions in both Ireland and Australia. The Agreement does this by allowing social security contributions paid in one country to be counted towards qualifying for certain payments in the other country.

The Irish payments covered under the Agreement are: state pension (contributory), state pension (transition), widow's, widower's or surviving civil partner's (contributory) pension, guardian's payment (Contributory), invalidity pension, and bereavement grant. The Australian payments covered under the Agreement are: age pensions, disability support pensions, and pensions for widows and widowers. The Agreement also sets out arrangements for insuring workers assigned by their employer to work temporarily in each country. In those circumstances a worker can continue to pay social insurance in the home country for up to 4 years. An information booklet published by the Department with further details of this agreement can be found on the Department's website at <http://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/sw87.pdf>.

### **Supplementary Welfare Allowance Applications**

575. **Deputy Michelle Mulherin** asked the Minister for Social Protection the reason a person (details supplied) in County Mayo has been refused supplementary welfare allowance; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34827/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Payment of supplementary welfare allowance, to the person concerned, was disallowed by a Designated Officer of the Department on the grounds that she failed to disclose her means. The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal in this case was referred to an Appeals Officer on 4 July 2013, who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Question No. 576 withdrawn.*

### **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

577. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an appeal for carer's allowance will be granted in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34837/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 4 July 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers

and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing. The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Child Benefit Rates**

578. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection her plans for the future of child benefit; if she intends to tax it or means test it; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34857/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Child benefit is a universal payment that assists parents with the cost of raising children and contributes towards alleviating child poverty. The estimated expenditure on child benefit in 2013 is around €1.9 billion and it is currently paid to around 613,000 families in respect of some 1.17 million children.

The Government is conscious that child benefit, as a universal payment, is an important source of income for families. While issues relating to changes in taxation policy are primarily a matter for my colleague, the Minister for Finance, I can confirm that the Government has not announced any plans to implement taxing or means-testing child benefit at this time.

In line with a commitment in the Programme for Government I established an Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare. The first report of the Group makes important recommendations on how child benefit could be maintained as a universal payment while reforming the system of child and family income supports. While some members of the Advisory Group found that taxation of child benefit is an attractive reform option, there was a strong preference in the Group for an approach based on a two-tier payment which would encourage work participation and allow for better flexibility in the targeting of support for different family types.

Given the range of complex issues involved, the Government has made no decision at this time on the core recommendations of the report. It is intended that the report will now contribute to a wider policy debate on the matter. In considering the proposals to reform child and family income support payments I expect that Government will also take into account further work by the Advisory Group on the issue of social protection and taxation supports for working age persons and more general developments in the budgetary and fiscal situation.

### **Social Welfare Benefits Numbers**

579. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of jobseeker’s benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34858/13]

580. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of child benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34859/13]

581. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of jobseeker's benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34860/13]

583. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of disability allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34862/13]

585. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of illness benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34864/13]

586. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of invalidity pension in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34865/13]

587. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of blind pension in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34866/13]

588. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of injury benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34867/13]

589. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of disablement benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34868/13]

590. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of domiciliary care allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34869/13]

592. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of carer's allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34871/13]

593. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of carer's benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34872/13]

594. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the respite care grant in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34873/13]

595. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the State pension (contributory) in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34874/13]

596. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the State pension (non-contributory) in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34875/13]

597. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of maternity benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34876/13]

598. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the one-parent family payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34877/13]

599. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the health and safety benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34878/13]

601. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of family income supplement in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34880/13]

602. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the back to school clothing and footwear allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county, the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34881/13]

603. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of widow's, widower's or surviving civil partner's non-contributory pension in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013, her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34882/13]

604. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of widow's, widower's or surviving civil partner's contributory pension in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013, her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34883/13]

606. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of widow's, widower's or surviving civil partner's non-contributory pension in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34885/13]

607. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the guardian payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34886/13]

609. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of family income supplement in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34888/13]

610. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the back to work allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34889/13]

611. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the back to work enterprise allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34890/13]

612. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the farm assist payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34891/13]

614. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the back to education allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34894/13]

620. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of rent supplement in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34903/13]

621. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of supplementary welfare allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34904/13]

622. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of mortgage interest supplement in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34905/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 579 to 581, inclusive, 583, 585 to 590, inclusive, 592 to 599, inclusive, 601 to 604, inclusive, 606, 607, 609 to 612, inclusive, 614 and 620 to 622, inclusive, together.

The information requested by the Deputy in respect of 2010 and 2011 remains unchanged from that which was forwarded to him in reply to questions 464, 465, 466, 468, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 486, 487, 488, 489, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 498, 506, 507 and 508 on 6 November 2012.

A copy of the 2012 Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services, that my Department laid before the Dáil and published on the website, contains the requested statistics in relation to 2012 and has issued to the Deputy under separate cover. I enclose for the Deputy’s information, in tabular format, the total number of recipients in each of the schemes referred to at the end of May 2013 along with the estimated scheme expenditure for 2013.

Scheme	Number of Recipients as on 31/05/2013	Rev 2013 - €000
State Pension (Non-Contributory)	95,542	957,300
State Pension (Contributory)	319,677	3,985,700
Widow/er’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Contributory Pension	116,941	1,340,100
Jobseeker’s Allowance	303,223	3,098,210
One Parent Family Payment	87,586	934,700
Widow/er’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Non-Contributory Pension	1,787	16,400
Basic Supplementary Welfare Allowance	27,639	161,400
Farm Assist	10,785	99,450
Jobseeker’s Benefit	76,457	564,200
Maternity Benefit	21,100	297,000

Scheme	Number of Recipients as on 31/05/2013	Rev 2013 - €000
Health & Safety Benefit	71	460
Back to Education Allowance	17,088	189,300
Back to Work Allowance	16	
Back to Work Enterprise Allowance	10,406	126,400
Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance	N/A	48,800
Disability Allowance	102,631	1,115,200
Blind Pension	1,428	15,300
Carer's Allowance	55,530	534,200
Illness Benefit	61,042	731,500
Injury Benefit	681	14,400
Invalidity Pension	51,532	600,800
Disablement Benefit	14,223	74,100
Carer's Benefit	1,643	24,300
Respite Care Grant	N/A	110,650
Domicilliary Care Allowance (Families)	25,113	106,800
Family Income Supplement	40,593	229,600
Child Benefit (Families)	613,993	1,911,720
Guardian's Payment (Non-Contributory)	432	4,950
Guardian's Payment (Contributory)	867	11,200
Rent Supplement	N/A	403,400
Mortgage Interest Supplement	N/A	41,820

### Jobseeker's Allowance Applications

582. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of jobseeker's allowance aged 18-19, 20-21, 22-24 broken down by county; the total amount spent on jobseeker's allowance on 18-24 year olds; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34861/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The total number of young persons under 25 years of age in receipt of jobseeker's allowance at the end of May 2013 was 58,797. A detailed breakdown of this number by county and age is contained in the following tabular statement. The cost of young persons in receipt of jobseeker's allowance is not segregated from the scheme expenditure.

### Jobseeker's Assistance Recipients at end of May, 2013

County	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24
Carlow	70	130	184	154	183	215	215
Cavan	63	114	152	173	187	211	203

County	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21	Age 22	Age 23	Age 24
Clare	97	168	179	178	237	245	241
Cork	199	498	654	639	831	956	954
Donegal	216	401	442	497	588	625	614
Dublin	1,182	1,905	2,057	2,218	2,392	2,610	2,555
Galway	107	282	310	403	476	528	528
Kerry	90	195	224	257	326	376	348
Kildare	163	326	337	358	410	406	393
Kilkenny	38	96	133	131	160	156	190
Laois	112	180	187	192	235	232	213
Leitrim	24	41	60	57	83	77	91
Limerick	125	293	363	349	439	531	509
Longford	38	105	102	131	132	147	109
Louth	186	329	355	361	435	436	454
Mayo	57	166	219	246	298	365	328
Meath	78	145	194	198	237	232	232
Monaghan	34	90	102	103	140	161	175
Offaly	114	173	218	232	263	265	235
Roscommon	32	51	74	72	83	119	100
Sligo	49	77	101	122	111	153	176
Tipperary	191	313	357	353	455	432	419
Waterford	84	155	226	265	299	345	337
Westmeath	93	161	206	230	258	236	282
Wexford	211	342	332	380	476	449	480
Wicklow	91	225	267	229	294	301	311
Total	3,744	6,961	8,035	8,528	10,028	10,809	10,692

*Question No. 583 answered with Question No. 579.*

*Question No. 584 withdrawn.*

*Questions Nos. 585 to 590, inclusive, answered with Question No. 579.*

### **Social Welfare Benefits Numbers**

591. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of partial capacity benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34870/13]

600. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of people in receipt of adaptive benefit in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county, the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34879/13]

605. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the standard bereavement grant in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34884/13]

613. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the rural social scheme payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34892/13]

615. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the fuel allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34898/13]

616. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the living alone increase in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34899/13]

617. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the household benefits package in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34900/13]

619. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the social welfare and living on an island option payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34902/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 591, 600, 605, 613, 615 to 617, inclusive, and 619 together.

The information requested by the Deputy in respect of 2010 and 2011 remains unchanged to that forwarded to him in reply to Questions Nos. 476, 485, 490, 497, 501, 502, 503 and 505 on 6 November 2012.

The number of recipients of Social Welfare at county level breakdown is not published by my Department for these schemes in the Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services report. A copy of the 2012 Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services, which my Department laid before the Dáil and published on the Department’s website, contains the requested statistics in relation to 2012 and has issued to the Deputy under separate cover. I enclose for the Deputy’s information, in tabular format, the total number of recipients in each of the schemes referred to at the end of May 2013 along with the estimated scheme expenditure for 2013.

Scheme	Number of Recipients as on 31/05/2013	REV 2013 - €000
Partial Capacity Benefit	N/A	8,500

Scheme	Number of Recipients as on 31/05/2013	REV 2013 - €000
Adoptive Benefit	10	420
Bereavement Grant	10,264	22,100
Rural Social Scheme	2,531	45,000
Fuel Allowance	Information regarding the allowance's recipients is not segregated from the statistics of the schemes under which it is paid.	211,100
Living Alone Allowance	177,197	The cost of the Allowance is not segregated from the scheme expenditure under which it is paid.
Household Benefit Recipients	416,306	283,670
Number of Household Benefits		
Electricity	292,269	
Cash Electricity	70,614	
Gas	44,884	
Telephone	395,339	
T.V. License	411,436	
Total	1,214,542	
Island Allowance	551	The cost of the Allowance is not segregated from the scheme expenditure under which it is paid.

*Questions Nos. 592 to 599, inclusive, answered with Question No. 579.*

*Question No. 600 answered with Question No. 591.*

*Questions Nos. 601 to 604, inclusive, answered with Question No. 579.*

*Question No. 605 answered with Question No. 591.*

*Questions Nos. 606 and 607 answered with Question No. 579.*

### **Supplementary Welfare Allowance Application Numbers**

608. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of people in receipt of the special funeral grant; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in

2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34887/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Under the supplementary welfare allowance (SWA) scheme, the Department may make a single exceptional needs payment (ENP) to help meet essential, once-off, exceptional and unforeseen expenditure which a person could not reasonably be expected to meet out of their weekly income. There is no automatic entitlement to such a payment. ENPs are payable at the discretion of the officers administering the scheme. In making decisions, these officers take taking into account the requirements of the legislation and all the relevant circumstances of the case in order to ensure that the payments target those most in need of assistance. The Government has provided over €47 million for the scheme in 2013.

Application can be made under the scheme for assistance with funeral and burial expenses. A table detailing the available statistics in relation to assistance for these expenses is included for the Deputy's information. Statistics are not collated on a county basis by the Department. Any person who consider that they have an entitlement to an ENP under the supplementary welfare allowance scheme should contact the local officials administering the scheme. With regard to my future plans for these payments, any changes to the scheme will be considered in a budgetary context.

**Expenditure and Payments on Funeral and Burial Expenses under Exceptional Needs Payment 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013**

Year	Number of Payments	€000	Number of Payments	€000	Number of Payments	€000
2010	N/A	4,790	N/A	560	N/A	5,350
2011	3,740	5,120	230	370	3,970	5,490
2012	3,530	4,840	230	330	3,760	5,170
2013*	1,720	2,230	90	140	1,810	2,380

\*As at 5 July 2013

*Questions Nos. 609 to 612, inclusive, answered with Question No. 579.*

*Question No. 613 answered with Question No. 591.*

*Question No. 614 answered with Question No. 579.*

*Questions Nos. 615 to 617, inclusive, answered with Question No. 591.*

**Supplementary Welfare Allowance Application Numbers**

618. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the smokeless fuel allowance in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34901/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Smokeless Fuel Allowance was an extra allowance paid by my Department to low-income households to help them meet the extra costs of using smokeless or low smoke fuels in certain parts of the country. This al-

lowance was abolished from 1 September 2011. Information regarding the recipients of this allowance or its cost was not segregated from the statistics of the schemes under which it was paid prior to its abolition.

*Question No. 619 answered with Question No. 591.*

*Questions Nos. 620 to 622, inclusive, answered with Question No. 579.*

### Supplementary Welfare Allowance Application Numbers

623. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the diet and heating supplements in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34906/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Under the supplementary welfare allowance scheme, miscellaneous supplements may be paid to assist people in certain circumstances. The main types of miscellaneous supplements are: diet supplement; heating supplement; travel supplement; and crèche supplement. The budget provision for miscellaneous supplements in 2013 is €11.4 million. The detailed information requested by the Deputy is not held by the Department. However, the number of recipients of miscellaneous supplementary welfare supplements, including diet and heating supplements, is collated annually for inclusion in the Department’s Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services report. A table detailing the available statistics is included for the Deputy’s information.

With regard to my future plans for these supplements, a review of the diet supplement scheme is currently underway and a report will be completed in the coming months.

#### Miscellaneous Supplementary Welfare Supplements (Including Diet and Heating Supplements)

Recipients by County	31st December 2010	31st December 2011	-	28th December 2012	5th July 2013
Carlow	188	170		162	146
Cavan	162	144		122	119
Clare	336	306		290	258
Cork	2,112	1,839		1,588	1,391
Donegal	145	139		144	139
Dublin	5,353	5,320		4,936	4,579
Galway	361	365		338	295
Kerry	399	310		230	226
Kildare	387	365		361	352
Kilkenny	189	167		166	152
Laois	255	232		226	217
Leitrim	28	28		29	24
Limerick	1,741	1,638		1,460	1,358
Longford	119	108		103	102
Louth	195	188		187	180
Mayo	284	267		242	183

Recipients by County	31st December 2010	31st December 2011	-	28th December 2012	5th July 2013
Meath	176	166		176	161
Monaghan	111	101		96	84
Offaly	256	235		229	226
Roscommon	231	207		174	156
Sligo	42	42		46	50
Tipperary	903	787		730	642
Waterford	368	326		219	176
Westmeath	150	140		142	151
Wexford	372	357		327	285
Wicklow	343	297		286	259
Totals	15,206	14,244		13,009	11,911
-	-	2010	2011	2012	2013
-	Expenditure €000	13,400	12,800	11,200	11,400*

\*Provisional

### Departmental Schemes

624. **Deputy Willie O’Dea** asked the Minister for Social Protection the total number of persons in receipt of the humanitarian assistance scheme payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the current number in receipt broken down by county; the total costs of the payment in 2010, 2011, 2012 and the estimated total costs in 2013; her plans for the future of the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34907/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is the lead Department for severe weather emergencies and the Office of Public Works has responsibility for capital flood relief activities. However, this Department has an important role to play in assisting households in the immediate aftermath of emergency events, such as the flooding of November 2009, October 2011 and June 2012.

A humanitarian aid scheme was approved by Government in response to these floods. The aid scheme, which is means tested, is available to people whose homes were damaged in the flooding and who are not in a position to meet costs for essential needs, household items and, in some instances, structural repair as a result of the flooding damage. Payments issued to householders affected by these floods are as follows:

- in 2010, approximately €1million was paid out to 2,100 householders mainly in Galway and Roscommon who suffered damage to their homes following the flooding in November 2009;

- in 2011, a total of €359,000 was paid out to householders mainly in Dublin and Monaghan who suffered damage to their homes following the flooding in autumn 2011;

- in 2012, a total of €714,000 was paid out to householders mainly in Dublin, Monaghan and Cork who suffered damage to their homes following the flooding in autumn 2011 and June 2012;

- the recipients of Humanitarian Aid in 2011 and 2012 were mainly based in Dublin (978 claims to the value of €916,000), Monaghan (46 claims to the value of €28,000) and Cork (119 claims to the value of €129,000); and

- to date in 2013, approximately €99,000 was paid under the scheme in respect of 109 claims, of which €44,000 was paid in Dublin and €45,000 in Galway.

The Government decided in December 2010 that this Department could hold a provision of up to €4 million to assist a number of households in Galway, Roscommon and Offaly who experienced severe flooding in November 2009 toward relocation costs. To date in 2013, payments totalling €762,500 has been paid to a small number of Galway based applicants who are eligible for relocation costs under the scheme and have fully complied with the conditions of the scheme.

With regard to my future plans for this scheme, the Department has received sanction, up to a maximum allocation of €10 million, to provide for the activation of the scheme in any future cases affected by severe flooding, thereby ensuring immediate supports.

*Question No. 625 withdrawn.*

### **Free Travel Scheme Applications**

626. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Social Protection the current delays in processing applications for travel passes on medical grounds; the total number of applications in hand; the corresponding figures for companion passes; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34953/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Department is committed to ensuring that claims are processed as expeditiously as possible. Cases are dealt with by the Medical Assessors on a clinical priority basis. The delay in processing applications for companion free travel passes on medical grounds is due to a number of factors such as the increase in volume of customer claims to the Disability and Illness related schemes and the time involved in assessing cases where there is lengthy medical evidence to be assessed. A recent campaign to reduce the number of claims and appeals awaiting assessment by the Medical Assessors has successfully reduced the backlog considerably. The present focus is on free travel and two Medical Assessors have been assigned to work full time on reducing the backlog of 1,714 free travel referrals awaiting medical assessment. It is expected that this figure will reduce considerably in the near future. Avenues are also being explored in conjunction with the scheme area to expedite decisions on these claims in the future.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Payments**

627. **Deputy Pat Breen** asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection when payment of a domiciliary allowance will issue to persons (details supplied) in County Clare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34970/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** An application for domiciliary care allowance was received from the person concerned on 11 March 2013. This application was referred to one of the Department's Medical Assessors who found that the child was not medically eligible for the allowance. A letter issued on the 20th May 2013 advising of the decision. The person concerned subsequently lodged an appeal against this decision and supplied

additional information on the child's condition. As part of the appeal process, the application along with the additional information provided was reviewed by a second Medical Assessor who found the child to be medically eligible for the allowance. The person concerned was notified of the decision on 4 July 2013. Payment of the allowance, along with arrears due will issue on 16 July 2013.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

628. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34988/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The information requested is currently being completed within the Department and will be made available to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Jobseeker's Allowance Payments**

629. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of former self-employed persons now receiving benefits or jobseeker's allowance. [35013/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The figures for the number of former self-employed persons now receiving benefits or jobseekers allowance are not available. However, a person who is currently self-employed may receive jobseekers allowance, subject to a means assessment, where the estimated income from self-employment is below the relevant jobseekers allowance threshold. At end of June 2013, there were over 11,500 persons classified as self-employed who were also in receipt of a weekly jobseekers allowance payment.

### **Domiciliary Care Allowance Applications**

630. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Social Protection the position on domiciliary care allowance and other benefits in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 3. [35015/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** An application for domiciliary care allowance was received in respect of the child concerned on 27 May 2013. This application was referred to one of the Department's Medical Assessors who found that the child was not medically eligible for the allowance. A letter issued on 11 July 2013 advising of the decision. In the case of an application which is refused on medical grounds, the applicant is notified that they may submit additional information and/or ask for the case to be reviewed by another medical assessor. Alternatively, they may also appeal the decision directly to the Social Welfare Appeals Office.

*Questions Nos. 631 to 634, inclusive, withdrawn.*

### **Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance Scheme Eligibility**

635. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for Social Protection the reason foster parents who foster children long term are not entitled to the back to school clothing and footwear allowance; if same will be reviewed; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35092/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The back to school clothing and footwear allowance scheme provides a once-off payment to eligible families to assist with the extra costs when children start school each autumn. The allowance is not intended to meet the full cost of school clothing and footwear but only to provide assistance towards these costs. The Government has provided €48.8 million for the scheme in 2013. The financial support available to foster parents from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs includes assistance with the cost of clothing and footwear for the foster child. Accordingly, the back to school clothing and footwear allowance is not payable in respect of foster children. Any change to the scheme which would incur additional expenditure would have to be considered in a budgetary context.

*Question No. 636 withdrawn.*

### **Carer's Allowance Applications**

637. **Deputy Frank Feighan** asked the Minister for Social Protection when a decision will issue on an application for carer's allowance in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Roscommon. [35113/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I confirm that the department received an application for carer's allowance from the person in question on 21 May 2013. The medical assessment has been completed. The application is currently with a social welfare investigative officer for assessment of means and confirmation that all the conditions for receipt of carer's allowance are satisfied. Once the investigative officer has completed and submitted the report, a deciding officer will make a decision. The application will be processed as quickly as possible and when a decision is made the person concerned will be notified directly of the outcome

*Questions Nos. 638 and 639 withdrawn.*

### **Social Welfare Benefits Waiting Times**

640. **Deputy Nicky McFadden** asked the Minister for Social Protection the actions taken by her Department to clear backlogs of social welfare claims processed in the Longford office; if there has been a subsequent improvement in processing times and responses as a result of these actions; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35151/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Following the completion of the Service Delivery Modernisation projects involving the developments of new information technology systems in Invalidity Pension, Carer's Allowance and Disability Allowance a rolling programme of business process improvement (BPI) commenced for all schemes managed in Longford HQ. The objective of these projects was to introduce significant processing efficiencies and a quicker and more responsive service to our customer in the face of increased claim loads.

I am very pleased to say that claims involved in these backlogs have now all been actioned

and in most cases cleared. The only area that is not yet fully cleared is Disability Allowance but major progress has been made and a plan is in place to action all backlogged applications by the end of July 2013. New claims in all the schemes are being actioned promptly upon receipt. The current average time to decide a new disability allowance application is now 7 weeks; invalidity pension is now 6 weeks; carer's allowance is now 8 weeks: FIS is less than 2 week for new claims and in advance for renewals.

Following such a high volume of claim clearance in the second half of 2012 and the first half of 2013 the resulting volume of appeals is similarly high. The time these appeals claims take to clear negatively affects the overall average time taken to award a claim, but processing times on these schemes will continue to improve as appeals are worked through the system and cleared.

In summary, the prompt processing of claims is the priority for all scheme managers. Each scheme area is continuously monitoring its processes, procedures and the organisation of work to ensure that processing capability is maximised.

### **Employment Support Services**

641. **Deputy Nicky McFadden** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of integrated employment and support service Intreo offices operating here; if further offices will open this year; where those offices will open; if she will report on the success of Intreo offices so far in providing income and employment supports for job seekers; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35172/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The delivery of the Intreo service comprises a number of elements. The main elements being:

- i. The integration of the various welfare decision making processes to speed up decision making and minimise recourse to supplementary welfare payments.
- ii. The introduction of a profiling process to capture the unique characteristics and service requirements of each jobseeker.
- iii. The implementation of a systematic group activation engagement and one to one process based on clients' profiles.
- iv. The delivery of a 'one-stop-shop' service from an integrated office location.

Elements (i) to (iii) are being rolled out, are already in place in many offices and will be in place in all offices by the end of the year.

The delivery of over 60 One-Stop-Shop Intreo Offices is a major logistical property project for the Department and the Office of Public Works which is responsible for the provision of the Department's property requirements, including refurbishment and fit out works. The Intreo Project requires the acquisition and development of some new properties and the remodelling and refurbishment of others. All of this also entails the reaccommodation of staff including the transfer and set-up of IT, furniture and other utilities across multiple locations.

Notwithstanding the complexity of such a large property programme, twelve offices are now providing the full Intreo service. Preparations are under way in other offices and it is expected that a total of 43 offices will be delivering the full Intreo service by the end of 2013. The plans for the remainder of 2013 are now being finalised and details of the office locations to which the new service will be rolled out will be published in due course.

The rollout of Intreo offices is key to delivering on the Pathways to Work strategy. There are five strands to the Pathways approach relating to:

1. Engagement with people who are unemployed.
2. The provision of activation places and opportunities.
3. Incentivising the take-up of opportunities.
4. Working with employers.
- 5 Reforming institutions.

### **Public Services Card**

642. **Deputy Nicky McFadden** asked the Minister for Social Protection the progress being made in issuing public services cards; the rationale for their issue; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35173/13]

649. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of public service cards that have been issued since their introduction on a county basis in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35345/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 642 and 649 together.

The Department of Social Protection (DSP) has developed, in conjunction with a number of other Government Departments, a rules based standard for establishing and authenticating an individual's identity for the purposes of access to public services. This programme of work, which is known as the Standard Authentication Framework Environment or SAFE for short, also provided for the introduction of a Public Services Card (PSC) to enable individuals to gain access to public services more efficiently and with a minimum of duplication of effort, while at the same time preserving their privacy to the maximum extent possible.

It is anticipated that the introduction of the PSC will result in a number of financial and other benefits including:

- Reduction in the rate of fraud and errors caused by incorrectly identified and authenticated individuals.
- Improvement in existing cards (e.g. Social Services Cards and Free Travel), through better security features, considerably reducing the potential for forgery and fraudulent use.
- Improvement in the efficiency of every service delivered by the State through the removal of the duplication caused by multiple agencies each solving the problem of identity and authentication themselves.

A PSC is currently issued following a registration process, which involves the capture/utilisation of an individual's photograph and signature and the verification of identity data already held by the Department. To date, the Department has deployed two registration methods – a "face to face" process involving personal attendance at a DSP Office and a centrally managed "reduced process" which does not require personal attendance but rather utilises data already held by other State agencies (in the first instance, the Passport Office).

The face to face registration process is now live in over 51 DSP Offices with 112 SAFE Sta-

tions in production. Some 565 staff have been trained. Over 270,000 PSCs have been issued to date. The majority of these cards have been issued to new claimants for Jobseekers Benefit-Allowance and applicants for a new PPS number in Local Offices that have been equipped to carry out SAFE registrations. The following table sets out the number of PSC cardholders in each county as at 8 July 2013, the latest date for which such a breakdown is available.

**No. of PSC cardholders by County 08/07/2013**

County	No. of Public Service Card cardholders
Antrim	216
Armagh	78
Carlow	3,408
Cavan	601
Clare	4,386
Cork	3,993
Derry	63
Donegal	16,270
Down	391
Dublin	121,659
Fermanagh	45
Galway	4,038
Kerry	9,950
Kildare	3,628
Kilkenny	6,130
Laois	1,093
Leitrim	3,262
Limerick	4,009
Longford	5,313
Louth	6,530
Mayo	9,190
Meath	5,309
Monaghan	426
Offaly	5,179
Roscommon	2,041
Sligo	9,151
Tipperary	7,544
Tyrone	48
Waterford	7,266
Westmeath	6,272
Wexford	7,805
Wicklow	8,188
Total	263,482

### **Rent Supplement Scheme Payments**

643. **Deputy Pat Breen** asked the Minister for Social Protection the reason a person (details supplied) has not been facilitated in County Clare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35183/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The person concerned applied for Rent Supplement under the Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA) Scheme.

The application was refused on the grounds that her income is in excess of the SWA guidelines and, consequently, she does not qualify for rent supplement. She was advised of her right to appeal this decision.

### **Disability Allowance Appeals**

644. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine a disability allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35189/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 5 June 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

In the meantime, if the means of the person concerned are insufficient to meet his needs, it is open to him to make an application for supplementary welfare allowance pending the outcome of his disability allowance appeal.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

645. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine the invalidity pension appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35197/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 28 June 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant Departmental papers and comments by the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought. When these have been received from the Department, the case in question will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral appeal hearing.

In the meantime, if the means of the person concerned are insufficient to meet his needs, it is open to him to make an application for supplementary welfare allowance pending the outcome

of his invalidity pension appeal.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Question No. 646 withdrawn.*

### **Invalidity Pension Waiting Times**

647. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Social Protection the average waiting time for the issuing of payment to applicants who have had invalidity pension appeals upheld; the number of upheld appeals awaiting processing; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35329/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** At week ending 5 July 2013 there were approximately 600 invalidity pension claims awaiting award on foot of a successful appeal. This is due to the high number of claims processed in the past 12 months and the resulting increase in the number of appeals. In the last 4 weeks alone approximately 550 successful appeal cases were received in invalidity pension section. These cases will be processed and paid.

Invalidity pension section has been involved in a business process improvement review and backlog elimination programme. This programme has led to a significant reduction in the number of invalidity pension claims awaiting decision, down from 7,007 claims at end May 2012 to 1973 claims at the end of June 2013. In addition, new claims are now processed on receipt with a decision being made based on information provided or, if this is not possible, further medical evidence or additional information is requested and a decision is made on receipt.

*The following information was provided under Standing Order 40A*

Invalidity pension section, following an intensive clearance of a significant backlog of new claims, is now receiving an average of more than 140 successful appeals back from the Social Welfare Appeals Office each week, compare to approximately 30-50 cases which would be expected based upon the normal weekly intake and clearance of new claims. Consequently, a delay has built up in putting these successful appeals into payment, which currently stands at approximately five weeks. This delay is very much regretted.

The processing of these successful appeals is being given priority and additional resources have been allocated in order to deal with this temporary increase in workload. It is expected that the waiting time for these cases to be put into payment will significantly decrease over the coming weeks.

### **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

648. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine an invalidity pension appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35330/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 30 May 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department

of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

*Question No. 649 answered with Question No. 642.*

### Social Welfare Rates

650. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will set out replacement rate values, in tabular form, comparing social welfare income, including fuel allowance and rent or mortgage interest supplement or both for single claimants, a couple, one earner; a couple, one earner and one child dependent; a couple, one earner and two child dependents; a couple, one earner and four child dependents; with net income at the national minimum wage, stating the monetary amount the new national minimum wage represents; with net income at two thirds of average weekly earnings, stating the monetary net two thirds of average weekly earnings represents and with net income at average weekly earnings, stating the monetary amount which represents average weekly earnings; her views on the instances where rates are in excess of 70%; her plans to tackle these rates; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35351/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The replacement rate for given income levels is a tool used to measure the degree to which out-of-work benefits when unemployed replace take home income from work. While there is no predetermined level of replacement rate, which would influence every individual's decision to work, higher replacement rates may indicate lower incentives to take up employment. In this regard a replacement rate in excess of 70% may be considered to be excessive.

The following table sets out replacement rates values for the requested household types, which compare social welfare income, assuming that fuel allowance and rent allowance is payable, with net income at National Minimum Wage (NMW), two thirds of the Average Weekly Earnings (67% AWE) and Average Weekly Earnings (AWE).

Relevant calculations use the current national minimum wage of €8.65 and an average weekly earnings figure of €687.84 - derived from the Central Statistics Office material in relation to the second quarter of 2012. Calculations in relation to rent supplement are based on rent allowance rates for Dublin effective in 2012 – and do not reflect new rent supplement rates introduced in June 2013. It may also be noted that rent supplement rates are higher in Dublin than in other counties.

Income Type	NMW	NMW with rent	67% AWE	67% AWE with rent	AWE	AWE with rent
Single	61%	86%	50%	70%	37%	52%
Couple: 1 earner	68%	95%	64%	89%	55%	77%

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Income Type	NMW	NMW with rent	67% AWE	67% AWE with rent	AWE	AWE with rent
Couple: 1 earner/1 Child Dependent	72%	103%	68%	97%	61%	87%
Couple: 1 earner/2 Child Dependents	75%	105%	71%	99%	66%	93%
Couple: 1 earner/4 Child Dependents	75%	100%	72%	95%	66%	87%

Almost three-quarters of the people on the Live Register are only claiming a personal rate for themselves. They are either single or may have a spouse or partner who is working. In addition, 53% of the people on the Live Register receive less than the maximum personal weekly rate. This means that the great majority of people on the Live Register have a strong financial incentive to work and significant numbers leave the Register each year.

High replacement rates are generally associated with a relatively high number of dependent children and/or receipt of rent or mortgage supplement. However, it is important to note that only some 9% of persons on the Live Register are in receipt of rent supplement, with a further 1.5% in receipt of mortgage interest supplement. The vast majority of jobseekers do not receive these additional supports.

It should be noted that significant moves have already been taken to address the impact of housing entitlements upon replacement rates. Arising out of commitments in the Programme for Government to review the operation of the Rent Supplement Scheme, proposals to integrate the systems for providing rent supplement and social housing support have been advanced. It is intended to transfer responsibility for the provision of rental assistance to persons with a long term housing need from my Department (currently provided through Rent Supplement) to housing authorities using a new Housing Assistance Payment.

The effect of this transfer and the introduction of a new form of Housing Assistance Payment will be to address one of the significant disincentives to accessing full-time employment that exists under the Rent Supplement scheme. Under the new Housing Assistance Payment, the contribution that the tenant makes towards the rent is based on a means test that links the level of contribution to the household income, rather than employment status. This will have a positive impact on replacement rates.

### Live Register Data

651. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide a yearly breakdown by local authority area of the average length of time a person is long-term unemployed, short-term unemployed or otherwise for the years 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35353/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The number of persons on the

live register at the end of 2011, 2012 and June 2013 are detailed by county and duration in the attached tabular statement. It should be noted that all casual registrants are in the “Under 3 month” duration category based on the Central Statistics Office’s definitions.

**Number of Persons on the Live Register by County and Duration, end of June 2013.**

County	less than 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	more than 3 yrs	Total
Carlow	2,583	596	815	919	667	1,743	7,323
Cavan	2,493	595	863	1,015	624	1,760	7,350
Clare	3,235	773	1,199	1,133	862	2,506	9,708
Cork	16,076	3,526	4,961	4,996	3,586	9,402	42,547
Donegal	8,264	1,321	2,177	2,405	1,849	5,362	21,378
Dublin	31,644	10,492	14,310	14,616	9,970	24,147	105,179
Galway	7,122	2,139	2,998	2,827	2,055	5,461	22,602
Kerry	6,266	1,165	1,564	1,583	1,079	3,262	14,919
Kildare	6,397	1,864	2,394	2,566	1,808	4,127	19,156
Kilkenny	2,670	530	783	913	670	1,868	7,434
Laois	3,133	749	1,060	1,199	952	2,116	9,209
Leitrim	1,197	303	470	388	275	795	3,428
Limerick	6,117	1,493	2,297	2,268	1,783	5,193	19,151
Longford	1,458	393	623	670	497	1,517	5,158
Louth	5,744	1,408	2,175	2,356	1,545	4,049	17,277
Mayo	4,742	954	1,577	1,601	1,110	3,102	13,086
Meath	3,736	991	1,269	1,364	1,141	2,242	10,743
Monaghan	2,541	557	792	849	558	1,533	6,830
Offaly	3,185	689	1,100	1,248	883	2,357	9,462
Roscommon	1,505	315	489	539	376	943	4,167
Sligo	1,933	443	676	659	511	1,311	5,533
Tipperary	6,322	1,394	2,078	2,128	1,526	3,690	17,138
Waterford	4,644	1,173	1,596	1,756	1,296	3,703	14,168
Westmeath	3,824	942	1,194	1,332	978	2,579	10,849
Wexford	6,811	1,179	1,879	2,152	1,731	5,118	18,870
Wicklow	4,231	1,095	1,558	1,641	1,162	3,005	12,692
Total	147,873	37,079	52,897	55,123	39,494	102,891	435,357

**Number of Persons on the Live Register by County and Duration end of December 2012.**

County	less than 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	more than 3 yrs	Total
Carlow	2,629	556	783	825	646	1,483	6,922
Cavan	2,332	575	943	880	670	1,594	6,994
Clare	3,484	914	1,144	1,156	955	2,312	9,965
Cork	15,371	3,904	4,996	4,931	4,036	8,449	41,687

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County	less than 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	more than 3 yrs	Total
Donegal	8,081	1,627	2,055	2,415	1,848	4,876	20,902
Dublin	30,585	10,440	13,847	13,816	10,443	21,193	100,324
Galway	7,304	2,369	2,783	2,727	2,039	4,859	22,081
Kerry	7,482	1,241	1,565	1,654	1,246	3,134	16,322
Kildare	6,131	1,733	2,475	2,360	1,884	3,435	18,018
Kilkenny	2,618	595	750	949	733	1,655	7,300
Laois	2,927	766	1,119	1,244	945	1,808	8,809
Leitrim	1,170	336	413	393	318	768	3,398
Limerick	6,186	1,754	2,156	2,346	2,213	4,573	19,228
Longford	1,527	453	577	655	521	1,339	5,072
Louth	5,733	1,495	1,985	2,262	1,591	3,740	16,806
Mayo	4,765	1,215	1,489	1,526	1,092	2,757	12,844
Meath	3,722	980	1,332	1,498	1,240	1,955	10,727
Monaghan	2413	536	763	799	610	1366	6,487
Offaly	3,008	817	1,136	1,231	946	2,070	9,208
Roscom- mon	1426	357	567	488	422	808	4,068
Sligo	1,826	455	567	623	500	1,137	5,108
Tipperary	6,186	1,369	1,888	2,058	1,726	3,241	16,468
Waterford	4,855	1,160	1,509	1,721	1,354	3,365	13,964
Westmeath	3,461	900	1,266	1,327	981	2,309	10,244
Wexford	6,837	1,307	1,920	2,212	1,872	4,557	18,705
Wicklow	3,942	1,144	1,562	1,547	1,193	2,694	12,082
Total	146,001	38,998	51,590	53,643	42,024	91,477	423,733

**Number of Persons on Live Register by County and Duration end of December, 2011.**

County	less than 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	more than 3 yrs	Total
Carlow	2,526	446	927	960	930	943	6,732
Cavan	2,370	585	1,125	1,043	977	1,127	7,227
Clare	3,654	716	1,460	1,493	1,409	1,636	10,368
Cork	16,386	3,513	6,475	6,369	5,269	5,639	43,651
Donegal	8,694	1,429	2,600	2,720	2,786	3,367	21,596
Dublin	30,708	9,575	18,451	16,142	12,537	14,856	102,269
Galway	7,431	1,978	3,601	3,235	2,823	3,517	22,585
Kerry	7,619	1,215	2,130	1,970	1,728	2,244	16,906
Kildare	6,123	1,423	3,111	2,735	2,299	1,992	17,683
Kilkenny	2,729	519	1,014	1,113	984	1,083	7,442
Laois	2,937	658	1,405	1,325	1,205	1,045	8,575
Leitrim	1186	294	488	495	507	507	3,477
Limerick	6,641	1,555	3,075	3,290	2,690	3,088	20,339
Longford	1,514	423	766	765	724	929	5,121

County	less than 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	more than 3 yrs	Total
Louth	6,068	1,412	2,705	2,522	2,195	2,624	17,526
Mayo	4,834	1,034	1,916	1,765	1,641	1,917	13,107
Meath	4,033	1,008	2,167	1,922	1,432	1,164	11,726
Monaghan	2,379	523	959	912	935	781	6,489
Offaly	3,255	707	1,499	1,357	1,181	1,331	9,330
Roscommon	1,409	290	640	609	538	494	3,980
Sligo	1,880	461	746	737	605	810	5,239
Tipperary	6,372	1,295	2,449	2,628	2,063	2,043	16,850
Waterford	5,168	1,012	2,044	1,952	1,679	2,625	14,480
Westmeath	3,543	780	1,641	1,465	1,323	1,488	10,240
Wexford	7,137	1,289	2,623	2,736	2,446	3,135	19,366
Wicklow	4,199	1,008	2,026	1,857	1,541	1,849	12,480
Total	150,795	35,148	68,043	64,117	54,447	62,234	434,784

### Social Welfare Appeals Status

652. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will examine the back-dating of a living alone allowance appeal in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35358/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was referred to an Appeals Officer on 19 June 2013, who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on the documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### Domiciliary Care Allowance Payments

653. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Social Protection in respect of recipients of domiciliary care allowance, what the process is when the child in respect of whom payment is made reaches sixteen years of age; if the recipient will automatically qualify for carer's allowance if an application is made; if the child will automatically qualify for disability allowance if an application is made; if there are circumstances under which a parent receiving domiciliary care allowance might fail to qualify for carer's allowance for the child in respect of whom payment is made; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35376/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) can be paid in respect of children under the age of 16 years. Children over 16 years can apply for Disability Allowance (DA) in their own right. However, different eligibility criteria apply and qualification for DCA does not confer an automatic entitlement to DA, each application is assessed on its individual merits.

DCA recipients are advised three months in advance of the child's 16th birthday that the

payment will stop the month they turn 16, but that the child may apply for and may be entitled to DA in their own right.

Qualification for DCA is deemed to satisfy the medical criteria for carers allowance. However the other qualifying conditions for the carers allowance must also be satisfied before eligibility for that payment is confirmed. As qualification for DA is based on the individual's ability to work, the medical criteria used to determine entitlement do not cover the care needs required to establish entitlement for carer's allowance.

Payment of carers allowance stops when eligibility to DCA ceases. For example, at age 16 years, but it can be applied-reapplied for at any time for children-adults over the age of 16 years.

### **Proposed Legislation**

654. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Social Protection the dates and purpose of amendments to the Civil Registration Act 2004; when the issue of sham marriages will be addressed; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35466/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2013 will provide for a wide range of issues relating to the registration of life events in the State. Representations and recommendations have been made by various groups and organisations since the enactment of the Civil Registration Act 2004 and this Bill seeks to address these issues. The General Register Office, which administers the Civil Registration Service, has identified areas where legislative amendments are required to streamline the service to the general public.

As previously stated, marriages of convenience, or "sham marriages" are defined as marriages which are entered into for the purpose of one of the parties gaining an automatic right of residency based on marriage to a person who already has a right of residency.

The matter is a complex one. EU citizens and their families have the right to move and reside freely within the territories of the Member States. These rights also apply to non-EU national spouses of EU nationals following the ruling of the European Court of Justice in the Metock case on 25 July 2008.

My Department has been considering this issue and has met with a number of stakeholders with a view to introducing measures to combat marriages of convenience. In this regard, I intend to introduce legislation shortly that will make such marriages far more difficult to contract in the future. The provisions will be part of legislation currently being drafted to amend the Civil Registration Act, 2004. I would hope to publish this legislation later this year.

It should also be noted there are, at present, guidelines for registrars for marriage notifications containing requirements concerning notification procedures, including the verification of identity and marital status which can assist in the prevention of marriages of convenience.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

655. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she has achieved the savings indicated in Budget 2013 of €5 million in the cost to her Department of medical certificates and reports on illness and disability related schemes for the year to date; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35491/13]

656. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the amount spent on medical certificates and reports in 2012; the amount of reduction achieved in 2011; the way the savings were achieved and the projected spend for 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35492/13]

657. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide a breakdown of the amount spent on medical certificates and reports in 2011 and 2012; the highest payment and the average payment made to a medical certifier; if she will provide a breakdown of the range of payments made by category as follows €0-€999; €1,000-€4,999; €5,000-€9,999; and in increases of €10,000 above that for 2011 and 2012; if she will list the names and addresses of the top ten recipients of payments to medical certifiers for each year; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35493/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 655 to 657, inclusive, together.

A target expenditure of €20.75 millin has been set for 2013 in respect of payments for medical certificates and reports for illness and disability related schemes. This represents a reduction of some €5 million on payments made in 2012. Payments to certifiers are made on a quarterly basis. Two quarterly payments have been made to date in 2013. Payment expenditure for Q1 2013 was €5,473,080 out of a profiled €5,500,000. Payment expenditure for Q2 was €5,305,650 out of a profiled €5,500,000. The Department is on target to achieve its budgeted expenditure in this area in 2013. Close monitoring of the expenditure will continue during the year.

The following table outlines the payments made to certifiers in respect of medical certificates and medical reports for 2012 and for 2011.

Table 1 – Payments to Certifiers 2011 and 2012

Year	Certs	Certs Value	Reports	Reports Value	Total Value
2012	2,521,300	€20,800,725	94,878	€4,216,378	€25,017,103
2011	3,420,597	€28,219,925	77,329	€3,436,501	€31,656,426

My Department is continually examining ways of reducing the number of certificates that are furnished under the illness benefit scheme, for example; submitting medical certificates for the sole purpose of obtaining credited contributions, also the frequency of certification for some conditions. The projected spend for 2013 is €20,750,000.

The breakdown of the amounts spent on medical certificates and medical reports in 2011 and 2012 is outlined in the following tables – it should be noted that, in some cases, certifier payments cover practices involving a number of doctors.

**PAYMENTS TO CERTIFIERS FOR 2011;**

The total amount paid to certifiers was €31,656,426.

Highest payment €100,940

Average payment €10,859

Table 2 - Breakdown of Payments to Certifiers in 2011 by range

Breakdown	No.
Greater than €100,000	1
Between €70,000 to €79,999	1
Between €60,000 to €69,999	10
Between €50,000 to €59,999	27
Between €40,000 to €49,999	41
Between €30,000 to €39,999	88
Between €20,000 to €29,999	321
Between €10,000 to €19,999	743
Between €5,000 to €9,999	580
Between €1,000 to €4,999	496
Less than €1,000	607

For data protection reasons I regret I am not in a position to supply the names of the top 10 certifiers.

**PAYMENTS TO CERTIFIERS FOR 2012;**

The total amount paid to certifiers was €25,017,103

Highest payment was €101,749.78. Average payment for was € 8,653.44

Table 4 - Breakdown of Payments to Certifiers in 2012 by range

Breakdown	No.
Greater than €80,000	1
Between €70,000 to €79,999	0
Between €60,000 to €69,999	0
Between €50,000 to €59,999	7
Between €40,000 to €49,999	20
Between €30,000 to €39,999	53
Between €20,000 to €29,999	217
Between €10,000 to €19,999	719
Between €5,000 to €9,999	668
Between €1,000 to €4,999	558
Less than €1,000	648

**Social Welfare Benefits Data**

658. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the amount saved in the year to date from additional fraud and control measures as indicated at Budget time; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35494/13]

659. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the amount recovered from overpayments to citizens in the year to date; if legislation has been implemented to date; if her Department is on schedule to meet projected savings; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35495/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos.

658 and 659 together.

The Department's control work is measured in terms of control savings and they are used as a performance indicator for year-on-year activities. Control savings are an estimate of the value of the various control activities across the schemes in payment and refer to future expenditure that would have been incurred but for this control work. Without this control work, social welfare expenditure would over time increase by this amount. Control savings do not include any cases of departmental or clerical error or any cases where the customer voluntarily told the Department of their altered means or circumstances, which resulted in a change to their rate of payment. These activities also have a deterrent or knock-on effect, which are not readily quantifiable in monetary terms.

Controls are exercised at both the initial claim stage and at subsequent stages during the claim life cycle. Claims are reviewed on a regular and targeted basis. Means-tested payments are reviewed at certain intervals or when there are indications that changes in circumstances have not been reported to the Department. Those in receipt of illness payments are called for a medical examination by the Department's medical assessors. Customers in receipt of unemployment payments are checked on a regular basis to verify continued compliance with such requirements as being available for and genuinely seeking employment.

Current measures to control fraud and abuse also include desk reviews of claim papers, home visits, the issue of mail-shots to selected customers, database checking and data matching with other organisations.

In addition, the Department's Special Investigation Unit focuses on planned and systematic control activity and projects. The concentration is on those schemes and sectors where the incidence of social welfare fraud is most pronounced. It works in conjunction with other agencies to tackle social welfare fraud and abuse.

Furthermore Intreo, the integrated employment and support service currently being rolled out across the Department's local office network, comprehensively seeks to activate and review customers, where up to now three separate agencies had this role. Arising from this, a more integrated approach to fraud control can now be realised.

The roll out of the Public Service Card is also well under way. From the Department's perspective, the PSC gives significant assurance as to the identity of the cardholder as it is a secure card and will considerably reduce the potential for forgery and identity fraud.

The Department recorded control savings of €669 million in 2012. The savings target for 2013 is €710 million, an increase of over €40 million on 2012. A total of just over €240 million was recorded in respect of control savings from January to end of May 2013. I expect that the Department will achieve the target set for this year.

The overall goal of the Department in relation to debt management is to actively pursue the recovery of debt to maximise recovery levels, with due regard to value for money. All debts currently owing to the Department, as a result of benefits received in excess of entitlement, are repayable in full. The Department does not apply interest or penalties on the amounts owing.

Customers who have received an overpayment from the Department have a liability to refund the overpayment. The Social Welfare Act, 2012 introduced a provision allowing the Department to make a recovery from an individual's social welfare payment measuring up to 15% of their weekly personal rate. The deduction of 15% applies to the person's personal rate only, and does not affect payment of any adult or child dependent allowances, or any other allowances that are in payment. It allows the person to retain 85% of their personal rate of payment.

In each case, the person is informed of the Department's intentions and given the opportunity to comment before a final decision is made on the level of deduction to be applied.

The volume of debtors to the Department repaying their debt has increased by approximately 20% in the first six months of 2013. As recoveries are reported on an annual basis only, a figure for the amount recovered in the first six months of this year is not available.

### **Social Welfare Code Issues**

660. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she has considered reducing the eligibility period for activation schemes such as community employment and JobBridge to nine months to bring it in line with the eligibility period for jobseeker's benefit to ensure citizens do not fall through the three-month gap; if she has any plan for resolving this issue for persons who are unemployed, have exhausted their nine months of jobseeker's benefit but are not eligible for other assistance payments such as jobseeker's assistance due to a partner's income, and who are left with a three-month gap before they are eligible for community employment or JobBridge, therefore being left with little or no supports; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35496/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** There are currently no plans to lower the standard qualifying period in receipt of CE-eligible payments from the current 12 month duration, as Community Employment is primarily aimed at long-term unemployed persons, which is generally defined as one year or more on the Live Register. Persons who claim Jobseekers Benefit from 3 April 2013 can only claim for a maximum duration of 9 months provided they have 260 or more contributions (or 6 months if less than 260 contributions). Persons who exhaust their entitlement to Jobseeker's Benefit can subsequently apply for Jobseeker's Allowance, provided they meet the conditions for receipt of that payment. For the purposes of eligibility for Community Employment, a person can combine time spent in receipt of Jobseeker's Benefit with time spent in receipt of another CE-eligible social welfare payment, such as Jobseeker's Allowance, providing it makes up a continuous 12-month qualifying period and that the person is still currently in receipt of a qualifying payment immediately prior to commencing CE. Persons not eligible for other assistance payments due to a partner's income may, however, be eligible for participation on other programmes, although they may not qualify for payment of an allowance e.g. FÁS training courses. Such persons are advised to contact their local Employment Services Office or Intreo office (where available) where an Employment Services Officer will be happy to discuss the employment and training options that are open to them.

In relation to JobBridge, the National Internship Scheme, jobseekers who have a live claim and have been in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance/Jobseeker's Benefit/One Parent Family Payment/Disability Allowance or signing for Social Insurance Contribution credits for at least 3 months (78 days) or more in the last 6 months are eligible to participate.

### **Departmental Schemes**

661. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the number of social employment scheme places filled to date; whether any trial schemes have been launched; if she will provide a breakdown by local authority of the number of allocated places and the number filled; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35497/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I presume that the Deputy is re-

ferring to the Gateway, a new initiative between my Department and local authorities which the Government announced as part of the Budget package for 2013. The package included a number of initiatives focused on providing work opportunities for jobseekers, including the provision of 10,000 additional work placements across a number of schemes. The additional placements on community employment, Tús and JobBridge have already been rolled-out and are in the process of being filled by the sponsoring organisations and implementing bodies.

Gateway is a new initiative with local authorities to provide part-time work opportunities. This is in line with the commitments set out in An Action Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work. The design of Gateway has been largely completed and local authorities have been engaged in a process of identifying the nature of work and range of opportunities that can be made available across their administrative and operational areas. Local authorities have been asked to complete consultations with staff representative bodies and other key stakeholders to enable the scheme to commence on a staged basis over the coming months.

Following referral of interested customers by the Department, each local authority will conduct their own recruitment process, involving skill profiling, job matching and vetting by An Garda Síochána before a person is assigned to a position. Already, 13 local authorities have identified some 800-1,000 places for immediate recruitment with the objective of beginning work in late September-early October 2013 (pending improvements in the timeframe for Garda Vetting). Selection of potential participants is due to commence in the coming week and therefore no places have as yet been filled.

In addition to the above local authorities fifteen county and city councils intend to begin selection in August and September with a view to adding 600-1,000 placements when fully operational. The remaining places will be filled in 2014 (pending completion of selection, recruitment and vetting processes).

### **Farm Assist Scheme Data**

662. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection the amount spent on farm assist in 2012 and to date in 2013; if she will provide a breakdown by county of where recipients are based; do recipients need to prove that they are seeking work or intending to improve their income from their farm; if a person may remain on the farm assist payment indefinitely and if each recipient's income is reviewed annually or how regularly to continue to receive the payment; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35498/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Farm assist is a means-tested social assistance payment which is made to low income farmers aged between 18 and 66 years. The scheme takes into account all income from farming and off-farm self-employment, including that of the farmer's spouse/partner, in which business-related expenses are disregarded. The purpose of this exercise is to estimate the normal level of net income from self-employment in which one-off exceptional circumstances are taken into account. All other factors, such as earnings from insurable employment and the estimated value of capital (including property other than the farm and the individual's principal private residence), are also included in the assessment. Payment is made for as long as the qualifying conditions continue to be met.

There is no obligation on the farmer to seek alternative employment. However a disallowance may be imposed if a person purposely deprives himself or herself of an income in order to qualify for a social welfare payment. Review forms are issued automatically to each farm assist recipient annually. These must be completed and returned by the farmer within a specified timeframe. There is also an obligation on the farmer to advise the Department immediately of

any relevant change in circumstances. In addition, a review of entitlement may be initiated at any time, either on request by the farmer, or by the Department. Farm assist expenditure for 2012 was €108,170,000 and €51,075,287 from January 2013 to end June 2013. These figures are provisional as they subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Numbers of farm assist claims by county at end June 2013 is as follows:

County	Number awarded
Carlow	77
Cavan	369
Clare	578
Cork	872
Donegal	1532
Dublin	34
Galway	1058
Kerry	781
Kildare	43
Kilkenny	137
Laois	145
Leitrim	384
Limerick	242
Longford	249
Louth	81
Mayo	1761
Meath	86
Monaghan	482
North-Tipperary	221
Offaly	118
Roscommon	419
Sligo	308
South-Tipperary	156
Waterford	87
Westmeath	178
Wexford	233
Wicklow	72

### Farm Assist Scheme Eligibility

663. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Social Protection for assessment under farm assist why are only some, rather than all payments under rural environment protection scheme, agri-environment scheme and special areas of conservation assessed, the reason the first €2,540 per year of payments under these schemes along with 50% of the balance is disregarded for income assessment when all expenses under the scheme can also be disregarded; and if she will provide a full list of the rules and regulations covering assessment of income for farm assist; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35499/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The farm assist scheme is based on jobseeker's allowance. It was introduced in 1999 to replace 'Smallholders Unemployment

Assistance' for low income farmers, without the requirement to be available for and genuinely seeking work.

In Budget 2013 two measures were announced, which were implemented in April 2013, which bring the farm assist scheme into closer alignment with the jobseeker's allowance scheme's treatment of self-employed persons by: Increasing the amount of means from self-employment, which is assessed against the claimant from 85% to 100%; and is continuing the means testing disregards for child dependents of claimants.

Payments received under the Rural Environment Protection, Agri-Environment Options and Special Area of Conservation schemes are assessed separately from other farm income. With regard to this income the first €2,540 is disregarded, then 50% of the balance and related expenses are disregarded - with the subsequent balance being assessed as means.

The purpose of the separate assessment of income from these schemes, including the treatment of expenses which relate to costs associated with qualifying for and maintaining compliance with the schemes such as preparing farm agri-environment plans, fencing, wall building and ongoing maintenance, is to encourage environmentally friendly farming practices.

Guidelines for the farm assist scheme and guidelines relating to the assessment of income from farming are published on the Department of Social Protection website: [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie).

*Question No. 664 withdrawn.*

### **Disability Support Services Issues**

665. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Social Protection if assistance will be provided for a person with a disability (details supplied) in County Dublin in securing appropriate training or education opportunities; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35530/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** Staff in the Department's local offices are available to provide information, advice and guidance in relation to education, training and employment opportunities to people with disabilities.

According to Departmental records, the person concerned has availed of a number of such opportunities in the past, and is currently engaged with the Department's supported employment services for people with disabilities (see below):

- A Tourist Development Course from 4th to 25th November 2002.
- A Community Employment Scheme working in Donabate-Portrane Community Club from September 2007 to September 2011.
- Referral by FÁS Employment Services to Clerical-Receptionist Skills (Evening) Course in July 2010.
- Commenced a Supported Employment Programme with EmployAbility, Dublin North on 1st October 2011 and last recorded activity on Job Search Phase was on 12th March 2013.
- Re-engaged with EmployAbility, Dublin North on 1st May 2013 and last recorded activity date was 26th June 2013 on the Work Experience Phase of the Programme.

**Departmental Records**

666. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for Social Protection if consideration is being given to making historical records available in digitised format to members of the public; if she intends to expand powers and functions in relation to original historical births, deaths and marriage records to the Department for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht along the lines of a similar provision in the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2013 with respect to indexes; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35537/13]

667. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for Social Protection the income derived from the searches made of historical records in the GRO research unit in Dublin for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 and to date in 2013; the cost of running the service in each year; if the income from a fully digitised system has been considered by her Department and, if so, what are the findings; if her attention has been drawn to the fact that such a digitised system is due to go live in Northern Ireland later in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35538/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 666 and 667 together.

Provision has been made in the recent Social Welfare and Pensions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2013 to allow the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to act as agents for the Registrar General to provide access to the indexes of births, deaths and marriages online. The Department has been considering the issue of making certain historic civil registration records available to the public through an on-line search facility in conjunction with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and has met with a number of stakeholders with a view to introducing measures to allow this. I hope to introduce legislation to enable this facility shortly.

At present the General Register Office operates a research room in the Irish Life Mall, Dublin where the public can search indexes and request copies of certificates from the registers.

The income derived from the operation of, and the costs associated with, the research room for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 (to date) are indicated in the following table:

Year	Income from Research Room	Cost of Service
2010	€327,408.00	€387,689.36
2011	€347,526.00	€372,353.71
2102	€329,480.00	€351,901.25
2013 (to date)	€161,816.00	€189,152.15

The matter of providing for fees to be paid for access to indexes and records online is being considered at present.

The Department is considering making records available in a digitised format but, as yet, no conclusions have been made in this regard.

I am aware the General Records Office of Northern Ireland plans to provide an online facility to search indexes and historic records.

## **Bullying in the Workplace**

668. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Social Protection if FÁS has a duty of care to those working on community employment schemes in relation to a responsibility to protect them from bullying and harassment; and the steps open to these workers to have that right protected. [35541/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** From 1 January 2011 policy and funding responsibility for FÁS functions in relation to employment and community employment services was transferred to this Department in accordance with the provisions of the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011. All Sponsors of Community Employment schemes must ensure compliance with all statutory and legal obligations including employment equality legislation and employment issues including harassment. Participants in Community Employment Schemes have protection under legislation in the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2004.

## **Invalidity Pension Appeals**

669. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an appeal for invalidity pension for a person (details supplied) in County Wexford will be approved. [35543/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 4 September 2012. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers were received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office on 3 July 2013 and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

## **Carer's Allowance Appeals**

670. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Social Protection when an application for carer's allowance will be approved for a person (details supplied) in County Wexford. [35544/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Social Welfare Appeals Office has advised me that an appeal by the person concerned was registered in that office on 25 March 2013. It is a statutory requirement of the appeals process that the relevant papers and comments by or on behalf of the Deciding Officer on the grounds of appeal be sought from the Department of Social Protection. These papers have been received in the Social Welfare Appeals Office and the case will be referred to an Appeals Officer who will make a summary decision on the appeal based on documentary evidence presented or, if required, hold an oral hearing.

The Social Welfare Appeals Office functions independently of the Minister for Social Protection and of the Department and is responsible for determining appeals against decisions in relation to social welfare entitlements.

### Exchequer Savings

671. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of her Department; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35804/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The three statutory bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection are the Social Welfare Tribunal, the Citizens Information Board and the Pensions Board. In addition, the Office of the Pensions Ombudsman comes under the remit of the Department but it does not have a Board.

#### Social Welfare Tribunal

No remuneration is paid to members of the Tribunal. The Tribunal meets only when and where required in order to deal with claims for Jobseeker's Allowance or Jobseeker's Benefit made in the context of an industrial dispute. Members can claim fees for attending hearings or meetings and are also entitled to claim for travel and subsistence expenses, where appropriate. There was no expenditure in 2012 and 2013 to date as no hearings or meetings were required and accordingly, no savings would have arisen if a reduction to fees had been implemented.

#### Citizens Information Board

Details of potential annual savings on fees for members of the Citizens Information Board are outlined in the following table.

Total projected fees 2013	25% saving	Total projected fees 2014	25% saving
€60,000	€15,000	€66,000	€16,500

The figure given for the projected annual fees for 2013 and 2014 includes potential fees in respect of current vacancies. Two existing board members have declined to accept fees and potential amounts are not included for these. Information in relation to membership of the Citizens Information Board is available on the Department's website at [http://www.welfare.ie/EN/AboutUs/Pages/CIB\\_Members.aspx](http://www.welfare.ie/EN/AboutUs/Pages/CIB_Members.aspx).

#### Pensions Board

The Pensions Board is a regulatory body operating under the aegis of the Department of Social Protection and the statutory role of the board is to monitor and supervise the operation of the Pensions Act 1990 (as amended). The operations of the Pensions Board, including payment of fees to the board members, are largely financed by annual fees payable to it by occupational pension schemes and by providers of Personal Retirement Savings Accounts and trust Retirement Annuity Contracts.

There would be no savings to the Exchequer if fees to these board members were reduced by 25%, given the source of their funding.

#### The Office of the Pensions Ombudsman

As the Office of the Pensions Ombudsman does not have a Board, the issue of board members' fees does not arise.

#### Public Service Reform Programme – Rationalisation of State Agencies

The Public Service Reform Programme provides for a critical review of the integration of the regulatory functions of the Pensions Board with the Financial Regulator and the merging of the Pensions Ombudsman with the Financial Services Ombudsman. The critical review group, established to carry out this review, has finalised its report, the recommendations of which have been accepted by Government.

#### Pensions Board

The key recommendation from the critical review in relation to the Pensions Board is that a merger with the Central Bank is not recommended at this time. However, the governance structure of the Pensions Board will be restructured with two distinct arms consisting of a three-person Pensions Authority including an independent chair to provide oversight of pensions regulation and a separate unpaid Pensions Council, with a majority of members representing consumer interests, which will advise the Minister on pensions policy.

The relevant legislative measures to implement the changes to the governance structure of the Pensions Board were provided for in the Social Welfare and Pension Act 2013 and arrangements are on-going in relation to the establishment of the new structures.

### Official Travel

672. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [36049/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** The Pensions Board, the Citizens Information Board and the Office of the Pensions Ombudsman operate under the remit of my Department. The Chief Executive Officers for each Agency and the Pensions Ombudsman in the case of the Office of the Pensions Ombudsman, each of whom is the respective Accounting Officer, are responsible for the approval of travel and the payment of travel and subsistence for official business in their respective offices.

Agencies must operate in accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform rules and regulations in relation to foreign travel. The Agencies under my aegis have confirmed that they only sanction travel where necessary, where business cases are submitted in advance and the objectives cannot be achieved through other means. On return staff report on the work carried out while away on agency business.

### Departmental Bodies

673. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Social Protection if she will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of her Department; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [36221/13]

**Minister for Social Protection (Deputy Joan Burton):** A list of the non-commercial State sponsored bodies under the aegis of my Department is set out in the following table.

Non-Commercial State Sponsored Bodies	
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The Citizens Information Board	The Citizens Information Board is the national agency responsible for supporting the provision of information, advice and advocacy on social services and for the provision of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).
The Pensions Board	The Pensions Board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Pensions Act 1990 (as amended), which provides for the regulation of occupational pensions and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts. The Board also advises the Minister in relation to pension policy.
The Office of the Pensions Ombudsman	The Office of the Pensions Ombudsman investigates complaints of financial losses due to maladministration and disputes of fact or law in relation to occupational pension schemes and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts. The Pensions Ombudsman is a statutory officer and exercises his functions independently.

### Architectural Heritage

674. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the steps he will take to ensure the protection of a protected structure (details supplied) in Dublin 5, in view of its local architectural and heritage importance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34224/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I understand that the property identified by the Deputy is on the Record of Protected Structures for Fingal County Council and is of significant historical and architectural merit. Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) provides for the protection of architectural heritage. The Act gives primary responsibility to planning authorities to identify and protect the architectural heritage by including them on the Record of Protected Structures.

Section 58 of the Act places a duty of care on the owners and occupiers of protected structures. Sections 59 and 60 of the Act give the planning authority, in this case Fingal County Council, powers of enforcement in relation to the endangerment of protected structures. I refer the Deputy to Fingal County Council as the appropriate enforcement authority in this case.

### Departmental Reports

675. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and the name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34397/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** It is not possible to collate the information requested in respect of my Department in the timeframe permitted for a Parliamentary Question but it will be sent directly to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### EU Directives

676. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if an Environmental Impact Assessment and-or a Natura Impact Assessment was carried out on the lakeshore of a marina (details provided) in County Westmeath as required by the EIA directive; if consent was obtained from Waterways Ireland for development; if an encroachment

licence was issued; if this site has a specific environmental designation; and if this continuous unauthorised development spanning decades is in contravention of the EU Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. [34458/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I have been informed by Waterways Ireland that the development of the marina referred to pre-dates the formation of Waterways Ireland. As the Deputy is aware, Waterways Ireland is a North South implementation body established under the British–Irish Agreement Act, 1999.

As part of the active property management on its navigations, Waterways Ireland is examining the ongoing identification and regularisation of possible encroachments including the subject of this Parliamentary Question. I understand that, in March 2013 Waterways Ireland met with the developer. To date, no encroachment licence has been granted, nor has any other agreement been entered into.

I am also informed that the site is designated a Proposed Natural Heritage Area, a Special Protection Area and a Special Area of Conservation and all of these designations and all relevant Directives will be addressed as part of the regularisation process.

### **Departmental Bodies Expenditure**

677. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34507/13]

694. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36469/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 677 and 694 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is included in the table below. As the Deputy will be aware, some members of boards are not entitled to claim fees due to the “one salary” rule. In addition some board members have waived their fee on a voluntary basis. Based on the figures contained in the table below, the annual saving to the exchequer if fees were to be reduced by 25% is approximately €64,455.

However, I have already reduced fees payable to the Irish Film Board by 100% and stated that fees for board membership will not be paid in respect of all board or advisory council positions at the National Gallery of Ireland, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Crawford Art Gallery, Chester Beatty Library, National Archives of Ireland, National Library of Ireland, National Museum of Ireland, Irish Manuscripts Commission and Culture Ireland.

Legislation is being prepared to the payment of these fees.

I am advised that all expenses are paid in line with guidelines from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Questions - Written Answers

Name of Board	Total number of currently serving Board members	Vacancies	Fees payable	Fees waived	Fees not applicable due to one salary rule
Arts Council	13 (12 + Chair)	0	Chair -€8,978 Member -€5,985	3	0
Heritage Council	16 (15 + Chair)	1*	Chair - €8,978 Member - €5,985	2	5
Irish Film Board	7 (6+Chair)	7	0	N/A	N/A
National Concert Hall	15 (14 + Chair)	0	Chair - €9,450 Members: 0	0	0
National Gallery of Ireland	17	2	Chair - €8,978 Member - €5,985	08	2
Crawford Art Gallery	16	8	0	N/A	N/A
Chester Beatty Library	12 (11 + Chair)	1	0	N/A	N/A
National Archives Advisory Council	12 (11 + Chair)	0	0	N/A	N/A
Irish Manuscripts Commission	20 (19+Chair) There are also 4 honorary members.	0	Chair: €10,500 Member: 0	Yes – Chair waives fee	N/A
Údarás na Gaeltachta	11 (10 + 1 chair)	1	Chair: €20,520 Board members: €11,970	0	Currently the Chair and 5 other members do not receive any fees.
National Museum of Ireland	15	1	Chair: €8,978 Board Member: €5,985	Fees waived	N/A
National Library of Ireland	13 (12 + Chair)	1	Chair: €8,978 Board Member: €5,985	1	3
Irish Museum of Modern Art	15 (14 + Chair)	7	Chair: €8,978 Board Member: 0	Yes – Chair waives fee	N/A

\*The Chair of the Heritage Council is currently vacant.

For the sake of completeness, I should add that appointments to the boards of Foras na Gaeilge (16 members) and the Ulster-Scots Agency (8 members), being agencies of the North South Implementation Body, An Foras Teanga, Body are made by the North South Ministerial Council, arising from nominations on a 50:50 basis from each jurisdiction. Relevant board details, including fees, are published on the websites [www.forasnagaeilge.ie](http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie) and [www.ulster-scotsagency.com](http://www.ulster-scotsagency.com).

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

678. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34523/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** The information in respect of the annual salary of the chief executives of non commercial bodies under the aegis of my Department is set out in the following table.

Body	Current Salary
Arts Council	€82,587
Irish Film Board	€97,981
Crawford Art Gallery	€71,876
National Library of Ireland	€91,798
Chester Beatty Library	€90,951
National Museum of Ireland	€96,148
Irish Museum of Modern Art	€85,720
National Concert Hall	€102,251
National Gallery of Ireland	€93,297
Heritage Council	€109,451
Údarás na Gaeltachta	€126,200
Foras Na Gaeilge	€113,429
Boord O Ulster Scotch	£45,751
Waterways Ireland	£93,562

### Departmental Expenditure

679. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34539/13]

681. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34571/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 679 and 681 together.

It is not possible to collate the information requested in respect of my Department in the timeframe permitted for a Parliamentary Question but it will be sent directly to the Deputy as soon as possible.

*Question No. 680 withdrawn.*

*Question No. 681 answered with Question No. 679.*

### Exchequer Savings

682. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34587/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** As the Deputy will be aware, details of my Department's administrative provisions are published in the Revised Estimates Volume which is available on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's website via the following link: <http://per.gov.ie/estpubexp2013/>

However, for the Deputy's convenience, an allocation of €1.414 million has been made available for Travel and Subsistence in 2013. The following table sets out the savings which would accrue based upon reductions of the order specified.

2013 Rev Allocation - €000	1%	7%	10%	12%	15%	17%	20%
1,414	14	99	141	170	212	240	283

### Exchequer Savings

683. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34603/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** I am basing the calculations of savings requested by the Deputy on the total expenditure on training and development in 2012. Some €223,286 was spent on training and development in 2012.

The following table shows the saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in the training and development expenditure of my Department for 2012.

% Reduction in 2012 Training and Development Expenditure	Saving to the Exchequer (€)
5%	11,164
7%	15,630
10%	22,329
12%	26,794
15%	33,493
17%	37,959
20%	44,657

### Exchequer Savings

684. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisors' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement paid to his special advisors. [34619/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** As I have previously advised the House, I appointed Mr. James Kenny and Mr. Damien Garvey as my special advisers with effect from 7 June 2011 and 2 April 2012, respectively.

Both were appointed at the first point of the Principal Officer standard scale, in accordance with the *Guidelines on the staffing of Ministers' Offices*. Mr. Kenny and Mr. Garvey are on the third and second points of that scale, respectively.

The annual saving to this Department if a pay cap were to be applied to their salaries is as set out in the following table.

Special Advisor	Current salary – post implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement	Salary - if pay capped at the first point of the principal officer standard scale	Annual saving to the Exchequer if pay cap applied to special advisors' pay
James Kenny*	€42,941	€36,912	€6,029
Damien Garvey	€78,670	€75,647	€3,023
Annual Saving			€9,052

\*As Mr. Kenny is in receipt of a public service pension of €38,735, his current salary, post-implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement, of €81,676 has been abated to €42,941 per annum.

### Grant Payments

685. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the number of successful applications made for funding under his Department's grants system for projects within County Kildare in each of the past four years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34672/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** As the Deputy will be aware, my Department was established in June 2011. The Department administers and delivers a wide range of programmes and measures, descriptions of which are available on its website at <http://www.ahg.gov.ie/>.

While expenditure under these programme areas takes place countrywide, it is not possible to give a town-by-town or county-by-county breakdown of that expenditure. For example, a number of my Department's programmes are delivered through agencies and other intermediary bodies that operate across county boundaries and in respect of which there is no detailed breakdown on a county basis held by my Department. In addition, groups and organisations that receive grants directly from my Department are not necessarily constituted on a single-county or a single-town basis.

In view of the wide range of my Department's schemes and programmes, and the large volumes of payments and grants made on an ongoing basis, it is not feasible to compile and collate the breakdown of expenditure sought by the Deputy. However, if the Deputy has specific queries relating to a particular programme or grant, I would be glad to seek to provide him with relevant information in that regard.

### Programme for Government Implementation

686. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the Programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34674/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** The commitments for my Department in the Programme for Government and the status of these commitments are contained in the following table and will be met over the lifetime of the Government.

Questions - Written Answers

-	Commitment	Current Status
1.	We will make strategic policy formulation the primary function of the Department, with line agencies and bodies responsible for policy implementation.	Completed and ongoing.
2.	We will encourage the Arts Council to continue to dedicate resources to touring in order to protect the State's investment in regional arts infrastructure around the country and to bring cultural tourism opportunities to towns and villages across the country.	Completed and ongoing.
3.	We will work with stakeholders in the arts community to develop new proposals aimed at building private support of the arts in Ireland exploring philanthropic, sponsorship or endowment fund opportunities.	Completed and ongoing.
4.	We will make the Culture Night Initiative a twice yearly event, and introduce a National Lottery Funding Anniversary Day, whereby all facilities which have received funding from the National Lottery will open their doors to the public free of charge.	In progress (*see note below)
5.	We will also review the opening times of our national cultural institutions.	In progress.
6.	We will develop a cultural plan for future commemorative events such as the Centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016.	In progress.
7.	We will promote genealogical tourism by updating the National Cultural Institutions Act in relation to the Genealogical Office to put it on a proper statutory footing, modernise its operations and to enable publication of the 1926 census to stimulate genealogy tourism.	In progress.
8.	We will also explore philanthropic opportunities for the development of a national archives and genealogy quarter, providing easy access to archives and tapping into an area of cultural tourism which is of huge interest to the vast Irish Diaspora.	In progress.
9.	We will encourage greater cooperation between local authorities to provide assistance where possible for local authorities currently lacking a local authority Arts Officer due to recruitment restrictions and to cooperate in developing cultural tourism opportunities.	Completed and ongoing.
10.	We will seek to capture some public good from NAMA by identifying buildings that have no commercial potential and which might be suitable as local facilities for art and culture.	In progress.

-	Commitment	Current Status
11.	Responsibility for policy-making will revert to the Department, while agencies will be accountable for implementing policy, assessing outcomes and value for money.	Completed and ongoing.
12.	We will support the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 and will deliver on the achievable goals and targets proposed.	In progress.
13.	Gaeltacht regions will benefit from the jobs action plan outlined in this document. Under our proposals, we will deliver new job creation prospects to Gaeltacht regions. We will invest in energy, broadband and water infrastructure, creating the modern infrastructure needed to attract and support new businesses and jobs. We will also strongly support the potential for jobs in tourism and marine activities. We will continue to support the Irish language broadcasting and arts sector.	In progress.
14.	We will review the Official Languages Act to ensure expenditure on the language is best targeted towards the development of the language and that obligations are imposed appropriately in response to demand from citizens.	In progress.
15.	We will review current investment and funding programmes that benefit Irish language organisations in order to achieve visible value for money for citizens and tangible outcomes on a transparent basis.	In progress.
16.	We will allow an exemption for domestic turf cutting on 75 natural heritage area sites subject to the introduction of an agreed national code of environmental practices.	In progress.
17.	We will establish an independent mediation between all relevant stakeholders with specific objective of facilitating resolution to 55 special area of conservation designated bogs.	Completed and ongoing.
18.	We will establish an independent mediation to resolve outstanding issues associated with turf cutting on blanket bogs.	Completed and ongoing.

\* Building on the success and popularity of Culture Night for 2012 and beyond, the Department is developing the week of St Patrick's Day as the International Week of Irish Culture, thereby building on solid foundations already in place.

### Departmental Expenditure

687. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consul-

tants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34690/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** The Deputy will appreciate that the engagement of external public relations, communications consultants and other organisations is a day to day operational responsibility of the bodies and agencies in question. The Deputy may wish to contact the relevant bodies and agencies directly for further information.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

688. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34976/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** It is not possible to collate the information requested in respect of my Department in the time frame permitted for a Parliamentary Question but it will be sent directly to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Special Areas of Conservation Designation**

689. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the reason compensation was not paid to farmers in the Twelve Bens/Maam Turk complex between November 2012 and May 2013 despite the fact that the National Parks and Wildlife Service had entered into an agreement with these farmers to compensate them for destocking sheep and cattle from the hills in this area; the legal basis for renegeing on this commitment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35451/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** Farmers in the Twelve Bens-Garraun and Maumturk Mountain Complex Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) have had to amend their farming practices since November 2008 to ensure that all these mountain areas recover from past overgrazing. This grazing restriction continues until November 2013. The affected farmers have received payments through agri-environment schemes (such as REPS, Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS), from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service farm plan scheme, operated by my Department) for loss of income arising from the prescribed restrictions. However, due to the breaks in the availability of REPS and AEOS schemes financial compensation has been a continuing issue since 2009.

To address this issue, in consultation with the farming organisations and local public representatives, my Department has offered eligible out-of-contract farmers compensation for continuing to honour their environmental commitments during those breaks.

In September 2011, I announced an interim compensation package for out-of-contract REPS farmers in these SACs whose plans were completed after the closing date for applications to AEOS 2 in May 2011. These payments of up to €4,000 per farmer ran until the 15 May 2012.

In November 2012, I announced an extension to the interim compensation package to cover

16 July 2013

the period from 16 May 2012 to 30 November 2012, the closing date for AEOS 3 applications. Payment was based on the number of months that each farmer was out of contract in this period, equating to a *pro-rata* percentage of the AEOS 2012 financial package to a maximum of €4,000.

I have no plans to introduce further measures for farmers who have applied to join AEOS 3. Any issue relating to the acceptance into the AEOS 3 scheme or delayed payments should be addressed to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

### **Stocking Densities**

690. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if there will be a new scheme of destocking in the Twelve Bens/Maam Turk complex to replace the current scheme once the current scheme ends at the end of this year; the assessment that has been carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the effectiveness of the current scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35452/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** Farmers in the Twelve Bens-Garraun and Maumturk Mountain Complex Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) have had to amend their farming practices since November 2008 to ensure that these mountain/commonage areas recover from past overgrazing. This grazing restriction continues until November 2013 and will assist farmers in ensuring that their lands are deemed to be in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC).

The affected farmers have received payments through agri-environment schemes such as REPS, Agri-Environment Options Scheme (AEOS), operated by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service farm plan scheme, operated by this Department, for loss of income arising from the prescribed restrictions.

As part of the compensation package that was agreed in 2008, an additional annual payment of €2,000 over five years was to be paid by this department to those farmers who were in existing REPS contracts for the additional grazing restriction.

I have no plans to introduce any further Scheme following the ending of the grazing restriction in November 2013.

It is proposed to have an assessment of the effectiveness of the Scheme undertaken in 2014.

### **Film Industry Promotion**

691. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht the efforts being made to promote Ireland as a location for feature film making; if he will provide an annual breakdown, in tabular format, of expenditure by overseas film-makers here since 2003; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35479/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** Primary responsibility for the support and promotion of film-making in Ireland in respect of both the indigenous sector and inward productions is a matter for the Irish Film Board (IFB). The IFB is the statutorily independent agency responsible for the promotion and development of the Irish film industry and I have no responsibility in relation to its day-to-day operational matters, including policies and the allocation of resources to different support programmes and schemes.

My Department's operational role in supporting the film sector relates to the administra-

tion of elements of Section 481 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 that provides tax relief for investments in qualifying films. This involves the administration of certain elements of the scheme regarding satisfying cultural criteria. The types of film eligible for certification are feature film, television drama, creative documentary and animation.

The data sought by the Deputy are not readily available. I am informed that the compilation of the information requested by the Deputy would involve a disproportionate amount of staff time and resources, especially those of the Irish Film Board which could not be justified in the circumstances. In the meantime, I refer the Deputy to the published Annual Reports of the Irish Film Board which provide the details sought.

### **Official Travel**

692. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36039/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** As the Deputy will be aware, it is the responsibility of each independent statutory agency to manage their day-to-day affairs, including expenditure incurred on travel and subsistence. In keeping with all Government Departments, it is incumbent on such bodies to comply with relevant Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines and procedures in this regard. My Department routinely provides each of the bodies funded from its Vote Group with copies of all relevant guidelines and procedures.

It should be noted that it is a requirement that the Chair of each such body annually confirms to my Department its compliance with these guidelines in its Annual Report. Additionally, it should also be noted that many of these bodies are subject to annual audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General and their accounts are placed before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

### **Departmental Bodies**

693. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36211/13]

**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Deputy Jimmy Deenihan):** A number of bodies and agencies are funded from within my Department's Vote Group. Details of these bodies can be found on the Department's website. I have set out below the relevant link for ease of reference.

*<http://www.ahg.gov.ie/en/AboutUs/AgenciesBodiesunderDepartmentsAegis/>*

*Question No. 694 answered with Question No. 677.*

**Inland Fisheries Data**

695. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the total number of successful applications made to his Department in each of the past four years for the restocking of rivers, canals and lakes of fish; the areas of such applications; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34668/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** The following table sets out the number of successful applications on a River Basin District basis relating to fish stockings from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2013.

2009 relates to the 6 month period from 1 July to 31 December 2009. Years 2010 to 2012 are based on calendar years, with 2013 based on applications for the 6 months up to 30 June 2013.

I am advised by IFI that they review all applications received with a view to ensuring that any proposed stocking is in line with best ecological practice and consistent with national and European legislation.

RBD	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013 (to date)	-
-	NO. APPLICA- TIONS	NO. APPLICA- TIONS	NO. APPLICA- TIONS	NO. APPLICA- TIONS	NO. APPLICA- TIONS	Total
South Eastern River Basin District	13	25	23	18	19	98
South Western River Basin District	1	2	1	4	1	9
Shannon River Basin District	7	29	30	21	19	106
Eastern River Basin District	19	52	40	40	38	189
Western (N) River Basin District	-	3	1	7	-	11
Western River Basin District	-	4	5	7	2	18
North Western River Basin District	-	9	9	7	8	33
Total	40	124	109	104	87	464

**Better Energy Homes Scheme Applications**

696. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the reasons dormer housing is not eligible for attic insulation under the Sustainable Energy Ireland free scheme [34736/13]

697. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the date the decision to exclude dormer housing from attic insulation was reached under the free scheme. [34737/13]

698. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the reason a private contractor would be in a position to conduct attic insulation and a contractor under the Sustainable Energy Ireland scheme is not in a position to do so under the policy change regarding dormer attic insulation. [34738/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 696 to 698, inclusive, together.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) administers the Better Energy Warmer Homes scheme which delivers a range of energy efficiency measures to households that are vulnerable to energy poverty. The scheme is delivered through a combination of SEAI appointed Community Based Organisations (CBOs), augmented by a panel of private contractors in order to ensure national coverage, and via an area based approach. Measures available include draught proofing, attic insulation, lagging jackets for hot water tanks, low energy light bulbs and cavity wall insulation and are free of charge to the eligible homeowners. To date the programme has addressed almost 100,000 fuel poor homes, 5,500 of those in 2013.

Dormer roofs present particular technical challenges meaning that traditional insulation, as used under the scheme, can only be installed in certain parts of the roof space resulting in only partial insulation coverage. A full insulation solution would only be possible with recourse to expensive internal dry-lining, not provided under the scheme due to budgetary constraints. Furthermore, the provision of adequate ventilation in an attic space to mitigate the risks of harmful condensation increases costs significantly. The practice of insulating dormer roofs through the scheme was reviewed in mid-2012, in the context of trying to address the maximum number of energy poor homes from within available resources. On balance it was decided that the significant additional costs are not generally justified relative to the marginal insulation gains. Therefore insulation of dormer roofs has not been implemented under the scheme since July 2012.

Queries in relation to individual applications are an operational matter for the SEAI and a dedicated hotline can be reached at 1800 250 204. In addition, the SEAI has established a specific email address for queries from Oireachtas members, which can be sent to [oireachtas@seai.ie](mailto:oireachtas@seai.ie) and will be dealt with promptly.

### **Research and Development Funding**

699. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide an update on the Government supported International Energy Research Centre and the involvement of University College Cork and the Cork Institute of Technology; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34188/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The International Energy Research Centre (IERC) is a joint initiative between industry, Government Departments and Agencies. Established in 2010-11, it is supported by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation working with a coordinated agency project team drawn from IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

It is hosted by the Tyndall National Institute, based in Cork and part of University College Cork. To date, six major industrial partners are formally signed up and actively engaged:

Alcatel-Lucent, Bord Gáis Éireann, GM, HSG Zander, IBM and United Technologies Research Centre (UTRC). The IERC strategy is to position Ireland as a leading edge location for developing integrated energy solutions where knowledge-intensive international and Irish companies along with leading research partners will develop innovative energy solutions for global markets. Its focus is thus on turning research ideas into businesses and jobs.

Within this initiative over €5 million of research activity is underway across a number of research establishments in Ireland's Higher Education Institutions – in NUI Galway, University College Cork, Cork Institute of Technology, University College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology. These activities include development of new technology solutions, such as wireless sensors for commercial buildings, home area networks and smart factories, and are linked to international research expertise in the USA, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

Apart from its host role through the Tyndall National Institute, University College Cork is part of the research team on two projects, investigating wireless sensor technology, energy diagnostic tools for buildings and thermal storage materials. Cork Institute of Technology is part of the research team on two projects, investigating wireless sensor technology and energy diagnostic tools for buildings.

*Question No. 700 answered with Question No. 723.*

### **Wind Energy Generation**

701. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide an update on discussions with the UK Government on the export of wind generated renewable energy and the associated proposed wind farm projects in the midlands; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34214/13]

719. **Deputy Seamus Healy** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will commit to an immediate full and independent cost/benefit analysis to the State of its current wind energy strategy taking into account energy supply to both the Irish grid and for export, in view of the scale of current and planned wind farm developments; if he will ensure that such a study will examine all aspects of wind farm development, including actual carbon saved, the carbon footprint of production/construction, fossil fuel saved, allowing for spinning reserve, increased grid capital costs, the number of energy jobs created, the number of energy jobs displaced, the effect on energy prices and the resulting impact on national competitiveness, net jobs displaced solely because of reduced competitiveness, environmental damage, tourism impact and social impact; if he will ensure that the study will be carried out by competent consultants who are completely independent of his Department, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, the wind companies and any other vested interest to ensure objectivity and credibility; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34968/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):**  
I propose to take Questions Nos. 701 and 719 together.

In 2012 I published the Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020. This strategy reiterates the Government's firm view that "the development of Ireland's abundant indigenous renewable energy resources, both onshore and offshore, clearly stands on its own merits in terms of contribution to the economy, to the jobs and growth agenda, to environmental sustainability and to diversity of energy supply". It is this position that informs Ireland's commitment to delivering on its binding EU obligations under the Renewable Energy Directive, which assigned 2020

renewable targets to each Member State in 2009.

On the basis of expert advice, the Strategy for Renewable Energy also identified Ireland has the capability to achieve our national targets for renewable electricity from onshore renewable generation alone. In addition, it also recognised that Ireland has an excellent and abundant renewable energy resource, which has the potential to produce amounts of renewable electricity significantly in excess of the amounts required to meet our 2020 target. It is in this context that the opportunity to harness this resource for the export market, and realise its potential for investment, job creation and economic growth has been identified.

To this end, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation with my UK counterpart, Mr. Edward Davey, on 24 January this year. This MoU clearly signals the joint interest of Ireland and the UK in developing the opportunity for trading in renewable energy to our mutual benefit.

Detailed consideration of how Ireland's onshore and offshore wind resources might be developed for export to the UK is now under way, with a view to determining if it is beneficial for both countries to enter into an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) under the EU Renewable Energy Directive.

There are very complex issues to be considered, such as, the actual scale of the export generation capacity required by the UK, the approach to be taken to grid development, the job creation potential and other economic benefits for Ireland, and the sharing of potential benefits between both States. The mechanism for remunerating any wind farms that may in the future export renewable energy to the UK has yet to be decided, but will not involve any subsidy costs being imposed on the Irish State. Any IGA would also have to ensure an adequate return to the Irish Exchequer.

Though it is ambitious, the target for completion of this work is early 2014, with a view to electricity being exported to the UK by 2020 in order to be counted towards the UK's national target under the Renewables Directive.

Should an IGA be entered into, the development of any new wind farms for the export market would be underpinned by a clear policy framework. Such developments would also be subject to a selection process and to the Planning and Development Acts, including their requirements for public consultation. Based on principles yet to be established in an IGA, the need for further analysis to identify in more detail, the upper levels of Ireland's capacity to develop generation and transmission infrastructure for large scale export of renewable energy, taking into account environmental and planning considerations, has been identified.

### **Broadband Services Provision**

702. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide details of the schools where high-speed broadband has been installed under the scheme funded by his Department since 1 January 2013, by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34390/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** All post-primary schools will have a 100Mbps broadband connection installed by the end of 2014, through a project jointly funded by my Department and the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

In March last, I announced that all post-primary schools in Counties Dublin, Kildare and

Meath will be provided with a 100Mbps broadband connection in 2013 under the phased national programme. The breakdown on a county basis is set out in the following table:

County	No. of Schools
Dublin	185
Kildare	24
Meath	20
Total	229

Additionally, all new schools scheduled to open during the year as well as those located in Counties completed under the national programme last year will also be connected in 2013. The breakdown of this category of schools on a county basis is set out in the following table:

County	No of Schools
Cavan	1
Galway	2
Leitrim	1

The procurement process to establish a framework agreement for service providers to connect the remaining schools in the programme is currently being undertaken. These schools are scheduled to have their connections installed by the end of 2013.

I will forward shortly to the Deputy a copy of the list of schools scheduled for connection in 2013.

### Offshore Exploration

703. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans to set up a forum, made up of third level institutions, oil and gas companies, trade unions, Government nominees and environmental and community representatives, and if ongoing contact can be pursued with other countries such as Norway and Portugal to exchange ideas on best practice regarding offshore oil and gas exploration; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34395/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The issues raised by the Deputy are two of the eleven recommendations made by the former Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications, Natural Resources and Agriculture in its report of May 2012 on Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration.

As the Deputy will be aware the debate on the Report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee concluded last week. In the context of the outcome of the debate I propose to reflect on the Report's recommendations.

In respect of the specific recommendation to establish a stakeholders forum, whilst I have no immediate plans to establish such a forum, both I and my Departmental officials meet with stakeholders and consider their views. In respect of the specific recommendation that my Department should pursue on-going contact with other countries, I should point out that officials from my Department, in the context of international petroleum exploration related fora, regularly meet with senior officials from other European administrations and exchange ideas on best

practice on various aspects of petroleum exploration and production.

### Departmental Reports

704. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34399/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I wish to advise the Deputy that details of the external reports commissioned by my Department are set out in tabular form as follows. The complex and diverse nature of my Department's brief requires use of outside consultants. The bulk of these studies referred to below are technical and specialist in nature and were necessary to enable the Department to discharge its policy and project responsibilities in the areas concerned.

Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Dr Michael Johnson	Silvermines Vegetation Study	5,848	August 2011	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase
Camp Dresser McKee CDM	Sampling of Gortmore and Silvermines Vegetation	13,890	July 2011	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase
Purvin & Gertz	Strategic Case for Oil Refining requirements	193,997	August 2011	July 2013
PA Consulting Group	National Digital Research Centre	29,040	July 2011	This report was not published. The report is commercially sensitive as it is a Strategic Review of the NDRC to inform decisions about the future of the NDRC after the Concession Agreement expires in 2013.
OHH Energy Ltd	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	41,120	July 2011	17/1/2012

Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Elimark	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	38,786	July 2011	17/1/2012
2B Energy	Independent Commission on Meath Tyrone Power Line	32,284	July 2011	17/1/2012
Indecon Economic Consultants	Economic/ Socio-Economic Analysis of options for rollout of next generation broadband	28,167	May 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive and may impact on Government procurement in Broadband provision.
SLR Consulting	Core Library Holdings Review	39,688	Sept 2011 – Dec 2011	Jan 2012
Jenny Deakin	Preparation for the Graigue Group Water Scheme Report	1,750	April 2011 – Sept 2011	Sept 2011

Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Analysys Mason	Analysis of options for potential State intervention in the rollout of next generation broadband	30,522	May 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive and may impact on Government procurement in Broadband provision.
CDM Smith Ireland Limited	Environmental Monitoring at former mining areas of Silvermines, Co. Tipperary and Avoca, Co. Wicklow	153,000	December 2012	On completion of scheduled reports

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Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Indecon International Economic Consultants	Assessment of Economic Contribution of Mineral Exploration and Mining in Ireland	53,690	October 2012	Q3 2013
Thornton's Chartered Surveyors	Provision of land valuation and negotiation services	3,690	July 2012	This Report will not be published until completion of land purchase

Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Neary Marketing & Communications	Review of Irish Geoscience Sector	€10,000	Dec 2011 – Feb 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive.
Neary Marketing & Communications	Review of Irish Geoscience Sector	€10,000	March 2013 – June 2013	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive.
Pricewaterhouse Coopers Ltd	Scheduled review of INFO-MAR Project	€59,505	Dec 2012 – May 2013	publication due in September 2013
AMEC Earth & Environmental (UK) Ltd	Expert Services to Monitor Mining Activities and Compliance with terms of State Mining Leases/Licences.	41,000	December 2012	This Report will not be published as it is commercially sensitive

Consultancy Name	Purpose of Consultancy	Cost - €	Date of commission	Date or expected date of publication
Indecon (Ireland)	Provision of a Macro-Economic Research Exercise under the National Digital Strategy to Determine the Value of Internet/Digital to the Irish Economy	€72,474	November 2012	July 2013
Environ UK Ltd	Corrib gasfield project – monitoring compliance with the Conditions of the Department's Letter of Consent dated 25 February 2011	€355,796	June 2011	End 2014
Norcontel (Ireland) Ltd	Market analysis of backhaul infrastructure in Mayo and Galway	€10,500	May 2013	June 2013

### Hydraulic Fracturing Policy

705. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding a ban on fracking; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34455/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** Three onshore licensing options were granted in February 2011, two over parts of the North West Carboniferous (Lough Allen) Basin and one over parts of County Clare. These licensing options conferred upon the holders the first right, to apply for an exploration licence over the areas concerned. I can confirm that two of the three companies, (Tamboran Resources and Enegi) have submitted applications for a follow-on exploration licence.

I have made it clear on a number of occasions that any application for an exploration licence that proposed the use of hydraulic fracturing as part of an unconventional gas exploration programme would be subject to an environmental impact assessment. I have also made clear that such an environmental impact assessment would be informed by the findings of further research to be commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and that no decision would be made on any proposal for the use of hydraulic fracturing in exploration drilling in Ireland until there has been time to consider the outcome of this further EPA research.

In relation to the two applications received, my Department will shortly commence its evaluation, focusing on the technical rationale underpinning the applications, along with the corporate information provided. Where the outcome of this stage of the evaluation is positive, further consideration of the application will then be put on hold until after the findings of the new EPA research have been published.

I would also like to confirm that I do not propose to consider applications for exploration authorisations in respect of other onshore areas until the EPA research has concluded.

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

706. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34509/13]

732. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35796/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 706 and 732 together.

The information which the Deputy requested is set out in tabular form. The Deputy will be aware that the One Person One Salary policy introduced by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform provides that serving public sector employees are not eligible to receive remuneration in relation to their membership of boards of State bodies. The Deputy will also be aware that non-public sector board members may choose to voluntarily waive their fees as a matter of personal choice in recognition of the current difficult economic circumstances. Both of these policy initiatives of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform have been brought to the attention of the bodies under the aegis of my Department. The payment of board members' expenses is an operational matter for each State body. In the case of Commercial State Bodies, any fees payable are not funded by the Exchequer.

In the case of public bodies established by Statute, the maximum, and sometimes minimum, number of persons that may be appointed to the Board is generally set out in the relevant legislation. I have set out in the table below the maximum number of persons that could be appointed to these bodies together with the fee level that may be paid in each case.

Body/Regulator	Number of Members	Board Fee Applicable	Fee if there was a 25% reduction
An Post	15	Category 1 Chair: €31,500 Director: €15,750	Category 1 Chair: €23,625 Director: €11,812.50
Bord Gáis Éireann	9	Category 1 Chair: €31,500 Director: €15,750	Category 1 Chair: €23,625 Director: €11,812.50
Bord na Móna	12	Category 2 Chair: €21,600 Director: €12,600	Category 2 Chair: €16,200 Director: €9,450

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland	9	Category 4 Chair: €8,978 Director: €5,985	Category 4 Chair: €6,733.50 Director: €4,488.75
Digital Hub Development Authority	**14	Category 3 Chair: €11,970 Director: €7,695	Category 3 Chair: €8,977.50 Director: €5,771.25
EirGrid	10	Category 2 Chair: €21,600 Director: €12,600	Category 2 Chair: €16,200 Director: €9,450
ESB	12	Category 1 Chair: €31,500 Director: €15,750	Category 1 Chair: €23,625 Director: €11,812.50

Body/Regulator	Number of Members	Board Fee Applicable	Fee if there was a 25% reduction
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency)	12	*Category 3 Chair: €11,970 Director: €7,695	Category 3 Chair: €8,977.50 Director: €5,771.25
Inland Fisheries Ireland	10	Category 3 Chair: €11,970 Director: €7,695	Category 3 Chair: €8,977.50 Director: €5,771.25
Irish National Petroleum Corporation Ltd	**5	Category 2 Chair: €21,600 Director: €12,600	Category 2 Chair: €16,200 Director: €9,450
Mining Board	3	Fees per day/sitting	Fees per day/sitting
National Oil Reserves Agency	**6	Category 4 Chair: €8,978 Director: €5,985	Category 4 Chair: €6,733.50 Director: €4,488.75
Ordnance Survey Ireland	10	Category 3 Chair: €11,970 Director: €7,695	Category 3 Chair: €8,977.50 Director: €5,771.25
RTÉ	12	Category 1 Chair: €31,500 Director: €15,750	Category 1 Chair: €23,625 Director: €11,812.50
TG4	12	Category 2 Chair: €21,600 Director: €12,600	Category 2 Chair: €16,200 Director: €9,450
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	**12	Category 3 Chair: €11,970 Director: €7,695	Category 3 Chair: €8,977.50 Director: €5,771.25

\*The Irish Exchequer pays half of the cost of Loughs Agency board fees

\*\* Staff in my Department are on the Board and no fee is applicable to them.

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

707. Deputy Mary Lou McDonald asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and

Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34525/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):**

I wish to advise the Deputy that the Department is compiling the information she has requested and I will write to her with the information sought as a matter of urgency. All directions issued by the Government in relation to remuneration of CEOs in non-commercial Semi State Companies, including reductions arising from the implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement, have been brought to the attention of the relevant State Companies.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

708. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34541/13]

710. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34573/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):**

I propose to take Questions Nos. 708 and 710 together.

The following table outlines details of fees paid for professional services as defined by the deduction of withholding tax by my Department between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013.

My Department administers a very diverse, complex and extremely technical brief. It has a total complement of around 250 full-time equivalent staff, of whom a limited number are technical personnel. This reality necessarily requires my Department to procure specialist external professional advice notably in legal, financial and technical areas to enable it to discharge its very wide brief. In procuring these specialised services, my Department always seeks to ensure value for money and that these professional services contribute to project delivery and informed, robust and evidence based policy making. Furthermore, in relation to the competitive tendering for contracts my Department adheres to the relevant EU Regulations and Department of Finance Guidelines on the procurement of goods and services. I would also point out that many of the consultancies relate to individual time limited projects where it is more sensible from a value for money perspective to engage consultants rather than permanent staff. In a number of cases, e.g. Tellus Border Project, the cost is either fully or partially funded by the EU.

Applying a unilateral 20% reduction in professional fees would reduce the amount paid by approximately €1 million. This figure is however a mathematical exercise, as the competitive tendering process ensures a market rate is obtained for the professional services being delivered.

### **Professional fees paid by the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resource**

Name	Description of Service	Amount (€)
Mason Communications (Irl) Ltd	Communications Consultancy on digital projects	65,812
David Fox Associates	Petroleum Engineering	124,675
Deloitte & Touche	Procurement advice on specialist communications projects	10,094
ESRI Ireland	Software licensing, maintenance and development	230,137
Mason Hayes + Curran	Assistance in implementation of National Postcode System	17,454
Natural Environment Research Council	TELLUS Border Project	986,404
Version 1 Software	Software licensing	8,344
Morgan Geophysics	Geophysical Consultancy	89,888
Dr. Robert Meehan	National Quaternary Mapping	22,001
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Financial Advisory Service	164,827
Bearingpoint Ireland Ltd	IT licensing & systems maintenance and development	23,231

Name	Description of Service	Amount (€)
Compass Informatics Ltd	ICT input into Marine and geophysics projects	111,646
Murphy Surveys Ltd	INFOMAR Project	7,545
Keane Offshore Integrity Ltd	Corrib Gas Consultancy	106,944
John Deasy	Marine Geoscience & Hydrographic Services	36,668
Maria Judge	Marine Geoscience Services	48,129
Niall Finn	Marine Geological Services	42,859
Ms. Mairead Glennon	Geological Project Management Consultancy, TELLUS Border Project, GSI	51,150
Indecon	National Broadband Plan, eInclusion & the contribution of mining sector on economy	114,227
Tobin Consulting Engineers	Geoscience Initiatives on groundwater	213,210
Grainne O'Shea	Geographic Information Systems Services	69,459
Mr. Phelim Lally	Specialist for National Aggregate potential Mapping	59,729
Client Solutions Limited	Software Maintenance	110,220
Aurum Exploration Ltd	Geoscience Initiatives on bedrock	43,267
Geo Marine Survey Systems BV	Offshore Data Acquisition,	3,046
CDM Smith Ireland Ltd T/A CDM	Mine safety and environmental monitoring of Avoca and Silvermines, EMD	43,558

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Name	Description of Service	Amount (€)
Ronan O'Toole	Marine Geoscience & Hydrographic Services, INFOMAR	56,938
W1 Design	Information Society and eInclusion	13,447
PA Consulting Group	Assistance in implementation of National Postcode System	209,133
Mouchel Parkman Ireland Ltd	Landslide Susceptibility Mapping	43,290
VBF Technologies	Information Society and eInclusion	31,396
Construction Consultancy Svs	Geoscience Initiatives	35,246
Jenny Deakin	Hydrogeological Services, Groundwater Source Protection	7,350
Janine Guinan	Marine Geoscience Services	52,181
Reidy Brophy Limited	Emergency Exercise for Oil Supply Disruption	5,680
Peter Conroy	Hydrogeological Services, Groundwater Source Protection Work	7,067
Tom Browne	Survey Vessel Master Services, INFOMAR	41,474
Shane Carey	Geographic Information Systems Services, TELLUS Border Project	59,089
Environ uk ltd	Monitoring consent conditions for Corrib Gas Consultancy	166,412
Dúlra Iorrais Teoranta	Marine Geoscience Services, INFOMAR	4,371
Eoin Mc Craith	Marine Geoscience Services, INFOMAR	41,349
Brian Smith	Survey vessel master services	23,856
Atlas Services Group	Hydrographic Data Processing- INFOMAR	116,512
Versata FZ - LLC	Software Licensing	72,180
Waterwise Environmental	Water Sample Analyses, TELLUS Border Project	68,156
Katherine Knights	Geochemical Consultancy, TELLUS Border Project	61,370
Beta Analytic Limited	INFOMAR Operations	2,041
Morrow Communications	Community and Landowner Outreach Consultancy, TELLUS Border Project	9,688
Gill Scott	Marine Geoscience Services, INFOMAR	22,289
Latinollo Limited	National Analogue Switch Off Campaign	767,472
OConnell Agri-Environmental Consultants (OCAE)	Geochemical Data Acquisition, TELLUS Border Project	68,588

Name	Description of Service	Amount (€)
Peter Cooney	Geographic Information Systems Services, National Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping	46,327
Ronan Tierney (Tierney & Associates )	Internal Audit Consultancy	66,819
OHH Energy	Consultancy –Meath Tyrone Power Lines	4,198
2B Energy	Consultancy –Meath Tyrone Power Lines	1,342
Elimark AB	Consultancy –Meath Tyrone Power Lines	2,849
Jim Duffy	Exemplar Networks	4,139
Neary Marketing + Communications	Data management and presentation	1,600
Cloda Ryan	Pensions Advisor	160
Irish Observer Network Ltd	Survey Vessel Master Services, INFOMAR	5,953
Mostop Ltd	Geoscience Initiatives	55,729
LHM Casey McGrath	Geoscience Initiatives	670
Capital Business Svs Ltd T/A Capita Consulting	Internal audit services	24,080
Seighin Lennon	Marine and Geophysics, INFO-MAR	1,920
Botanical Environmental Consultants (BEC)	Environmental Impacts Assessments	7,668
Communications Consultants Ireland	Public and stakeholder consultation meetings	1,505
		5,016,054

### Departmental Expenditure

709. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012/13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34557/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I assume that the Deputy is seeking information on courses of third level study, funded by my Department and pursued by staff outside of working hours. Each year my Department invites staff to make an application for funding within the terms of the Refund of Fees Programme (Post-Entry Education) under Department of Finance Circular 23/07. Applications are prioritised with reference to the relevance of the course to the applicant's role and to the work of their Division and the Department.

In the interests of value for money, the level of funding my Department provides for new applications is determined following assessment of the number of applications approved for the academic year. Funding for staff in the second or subsequent year of a relevant third level course is also provided.

Funding is provided on the basis that a portion is made available at the start of the academic year with the balance payable on successful completion of the academic year including any prescribed examinations, verified by the relevant college or institution.

The following table sets out details on courses supported under this scheme for the academic year 2012-13:

**Refund of Fees – Academic Year 2012-2013**

Course	Total Cost
Bachelor of Business Studies Accounting	€2,980.00
BSC (Hons) Computing IT & Mathematics	€1,137.21
MBA	€6,025
Doctorate in Governance	€10,000
Doctorate in Governance	€10,000
PHD in Physics	€3,800
MSc Forensic Computing & Cybercrime Investigation	€3,370
Bridging course for Economics Degree	€125
Environmental Science	€1,767.10
Total	€39,204.31

*Question No. 710 answered with Question No. 708.*

**Exchequer Savings**

711. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34589/13]

712. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34605/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):**  
I propose to take Questions Nos. 711 and 712 together.

The Revised Estimates Volume 2013 provides for an allocation of €135,000 to training and development for the staff of my Department and an allocation of €582,000 for travel and subsistence.

The following table applies the percentages to the estimated allocations. Such figures are a mathematical exercise and can provide no measure of the consequence of reduction in travel necessarily involved in fieldwork and other domestic travel, or the impact that would arise in terms of participation in and advocacy in European Union, International Energy Agency and other international bodies. I can assure the Deputy that the sums provided are the minimum necessary in light of work requirements and available resources.

% reduction	Training and Development (2013 allocation - €135,000)	Travel and Subsistence (2013 allocation - €582,000)
1%	-	€5,820
5%	€6,750	€29,100
7%	€9,450	€40,740
10%	€13,500	€58,200
12%	€16,200	€69,840
15%	€20,250	€87,300
17%	€22,950	€98,940
20%	€27,000	€116,400

### Exchequer Savings

713. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisors' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement paid to his special advisors. [34621/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The information requested by the Deputy is outlined in the following table.

Post	Salaries post Haddington Road Agreement	Salaries if capped at 1st point of Principal Officer (standard) scale at appointment	Annual Saving
Special Advisers (2)	€176,130	€163,352	€12,778

Post-implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement the salaries of my two Special Advisers have been revised with effect from 1 July to €84,706 and €91,424, respectively.

### Broadband Services Provision

714. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans for the type of broadband required for the Ballinhassig and Ballygarvan areas, County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34649/13]

715. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his plans for the type of broadband required for the Cooley area, County Louth; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34650/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 714 and 715 together.

Considerable progress has been made in recent years in both the coverage and speeds of national broadband infrastructure, with a multiplicity of commercial operators, providing services over a diverse range of technology platforms. Details of broadband services available in each County, including counties Cork and Louth, can be found on ComReg's website at [www.callcosts.ie](http://www.callcosts.ie).

The Government has also undertaken a number of initiatives to bring broadband to those parts of the country where commercial operators have been unable to offer services. The combination of private investment and State interventions such as the National Broadband Scheme (NBS) and the Rural Broadband Scheme means that Ireland has met the EU Commission's Digital Agenda for Europe target of having a basic broadband service available to all areas by 2013.

With basic broadband services widely available across Ireland, the focus is now on accelerating the roll out of high speed services. The Government's National Broadband Plan, which I published in August last, aims to radically change the broadband landscape in Ireland by ensuring that high speed broadband is available to all of our citizens and businesses, in advance of the EU's target date of 2020.

Since the publication of the Plan, investments by the commercial sector are underway in both fixed line and mobile high speed broadband services. In tandem with these commercial developments, intensive work is under way in my Department to progress a State-led investment to secure the countrywide introduction of next generation broadband access. The National Broadband Plan commits the Government to investing with the private sector to deliver high speed services to areas which are not commercially viable and will not be provided by the market alone.

In order to progress the State-led investment, a full procurement process must be designed and EU State Aids approval must be obtained. My officials have commenced a comprehensive mapping exercise of the current and anticipated investment by the commercial sector to identify where the market is expected to deliver high speed broadband services over the coming years.

The results of this mapping exercise will inform the level of Government intervention that may be required and the areas that need to be targeted in the State-led investment as envisaged in the National Broadband Plan.

Intensive technical, financial and legal preparations including stakeholder engagement will be ongoing throughout 2013 with a view to the launch of a procurement process in 2014.

Through the implementation of the National Broadband Plan, we are committed to increasing the availability of next generation speeds significantly, with a view to ensuring that all citizens and businesses can participate fully in a digitally enabled society.

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

716. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will outline, in tabular form, the commitments in the Programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34676/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** In March this year the second Annual Report setting out progress being made on the commitments in the Programme for Government, was published. I have outlined in tabular format the commitments in the Programme for Government which relate to my Department along with the current status on each. The timeline for delivery of the commitments is over the lifetime of the Government.

Commitments under the Programme for Government	Status
Secure additional resources for the national housing energy retrofitting plan, as part of plans to phase out subsidies in this area by 2014	In progress
We will double funding for home energy efficiency and renewable energy programmes until the end of 2013, after which time these schemes will be ended. After 2013, we will roll out a “pay as you save” scheme to continue home energy efficiency retrofitting work without recourse to public funding. We will explore the use of funding options such as an Energy Efficiency Obligation on energy suppliers	In progress
We will tender for a “pay as you save” contract to insulate all public buildings in the state, where the contractor provides the capital	In progress
We will facilitate the development of energy co-operatives to make it easier for small-scale renewable energy providers to contribute to our renewables target	In progress
A Next General Telecoms Network: NewERA will co-invest with the private sector and commercial semi state sector to provide next generation broadband to every home and business in the state. This will be achieved by delivering fibre to the home or kerb for 90% of homes and businesses in Ireland with the remaining 10% provided with high speed mobile or satellite broadband	The National Broadband Plan, published in August 2012, aims to bring high speed broadband to all parts of Ireland through a combination of public and private sector investment. Implementation of the plan is in progress.
A 21st century “Smart Grid”: Beginning with the hand-over of ESB’s transmission assets to Eirgrid, we will create a new “Smart Grid” company with ultimate full ownership and responsibility for the development of Ireland’s electricity and gas networks	Government has decided that ownership of transmission assets should remain with ESB and EirGrid will continue as transmission system operator. Progress being made in Smart Grid development.
Bio-Energy and Forestry: To accelerate the development of Ireland’s forestry and bio-energies, NewERA will merge together Bord na Móna and Coillte to create a new State company called BioEnergy Ireland to become a global leader in the commercialisation of next generation bio-energy technologies, including an annual 14,700 afforestation programme	Under review: Development of plans for a merger between Coillte and Bord na Móna are under consideration and will have regard to the outcome of the Bioenergy Strategy process.
Complete and publish a strategy to tackle fuel poverty	Completed
We will legislate to support the geothermal sector	In progress

Commitments under the Programme for Government	Status
We will ensure that future wind farms are built in locations where wind regime is best and that they are built in large numbers or in clusters to reduce cost of connection to grid under new “planned” Gate 4 process, as opposed to existing “developer led” system	In progress: Whilst taking full account of need to build out wind energy capacity in line with Ireland’s ambitious targets in this case
We will incentivise and promote off-shore drilling and streamline planning and regulatory process for bringing ashore these reserves and seek to maximise the return to the Irish people	In progress
We will review and reform the PSO levy to ensure that only most cost-effective projects are supported by ReFIT tariff and that consumer can benefit from claw-back when market prices exceed tariff or where appropriate, share of profits or royalty.	In progress: Revised ‘REFIT’ tariff commenced and REFIT for biomass also commenced
We will appoint an independent international expert commission to review and report, within six months, on a case for, and cost of, undergrounding (all or part of) Meath-Tyrone 400KV power lines.	Completed
We will provide ReFIT for micro-generators wishing to produce electricity for their own homes, farms and businesses and facilitate them to sell surplus electricity to the grid. The tariff will not be significantly above single energy market price for electricity.	In progress
We will mandate the regulator to require all broadband providers to publish average speeds for each package.	In progress
We will restrict misleading advertisements relating to monthly caps.	In progress
We will introduce a new government rating system so that home owners and tenants can assess broadband facilities easily.	In progress.
We will examine the role, and collection of, the TV licence fee in light of existing and projected convergence of broadcasting technologies, transform the TV licence into a household-based Public Broadcasting Charge applied to all households and applicable businesses, regardless of the device they use to access content and review new ways of TV licence collection, including the possibility of paying in instalments through another utility bill (electricity or telecom), collection by local authorities, Revenue or new contract with An Post.	In progress. Earliest timeline envisaged for implementation of any new charge is 2015, with 2014 as the transitional year.

Commitments under the Programme for Government	Status
We will review the funding of public and independent broadcasters to ensure a healthy broadcasting environment in Ireland.	In progress
We will maintain the current regime with regard to the Heineken Cup.	Completed
A universal postal service is an essential public service, in particular for rural communities and those disadvantaged communities affected by digital divide. A publicly owned, commercially viable, profitable and efficient An Post is critical to the long-term viability of the postal market. We will enact into law the Postal Services Bill which opens postal market to competition. Will protect universal service obligation by assigning it to An Post for at least 20 years, make provision for state subvention and require that any decision by ComReg to reassign or scrap USO is subject to ministerial approval.	Completed (universal service obligation has been assigned to An Post for 12 years)
We will ensure that the network of post offices around the country is maintained and that communities have access to adequate postal services in their locality.	In progress

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

717. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34692/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the information he has sought regarding the agencies under the aegis of my Department is an operational matter for each Agency. I have notified the agencies under the aegis of the Department, of the question, and have requested them to respond directly to the Deputy with their replies.

### Inland Fisheries Issues

718. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the person who owns the fishing rights on the River Barrow, Carlow side, from Borris to St. Mullins and the restrictions the owner may place on a person or angling club that wishes to fish there. [34927/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** I have been informed by Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) that the stretch of the River Barrow between Borris and St. Mullins is approximately 15 kms in length. Over a stretch of river this long it is likely there will be multiple owners including

private owners.

IFI does not have ready access to details of fishing rights held by the private owners on the stretch of river in question. Details of ownership and fishery rights would be set out in relevant title documents, including those held by the Property Registration Authority of Ireland. My Department has no role in the allocation of privately owned fishing rights, or in investigating fishery right title. A fishery owner can impose conditions, including charges for fishing, on their own private property.

*Question No. 719 answered with Question No. 701.*

### Departmental Legal Costs

720. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34978/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I wish to advise the Deputy that on eight occasions in total in 2011 and 2012 my Department sought legal services outside the Office of the Attorney General. The following table outlines details of the costs incurred. There has been no expenditure on legal services by my Department to date in 2013.

My Department administers a very diverse and complex brief. Its remit includes oversight of very complex policy areas and direct procurement of major services where protection of the State's interest must be paramount. This situation necessarily requires my Department to procure specialist external professional advice in legal areas to enable it to discharge its responsibility to deliver quality services and protect the interests of the State and the taxpayer.

In procuring specialised legal services, my Department always seeks to ensure value for money and the keeping of expenditure to the minimum necessary.

Year	Cost
2011	€335,335.74
2012	€102,222.88

### Enterprise Support Schemes

721. **Deputy Dara Calleary** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources his views on the operation to date of the Business Online voucher scheme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33584/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The National Digital Strategy commits to supporting 2,000 small businesses to trade online. A pilot in Dublin later this year end will target 50 companies with a view to a full scale national rollout in 2014. In developing the voucher scheme, my Department is working closely with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and a number of key industry partners.

Further details of the context and objective of the scheme have been published in the National Digital Strategy (NDS), which I launched last week. The strategy can be accessed online

at [www.dcenr.gov.ie/nds](http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/nds). Our NDS website also features a number of audio visual case studies focusing on the relevance and importance of businesses progressing to trade online. It is important to convey the message widely to business – in particular traditional businesses - that there are important opportunities available to them online, that developing an online presence need not be difficult and that there is assistance available.

### **Energy Schemes Issues**

722. **Deputy Micheál Martin** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if the all-island energy initiative is a priority for him; and if it will be discussed at the next North-South ministerial meeting. [30034/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The ongoing development of the All Island Energy Market is a major priority for my Department and for the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER). For some time now the administrations in Northern Ireland and Ireland have cooperated actively on energy policy. There is top level political commitment in both jurisdictions to the development of competition in the energy sectors in the interests of delivering improved services and economic benefits to all customers on the island.

Cooperation between Northern Ireland and Ireland on energy matters takes place under the auspices of a Joint Steering Group (JSG) established in July 2003. The group comprises senior officials from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) and the offices of the two Regulatory Authorities, the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) and the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR).

The all island electricity market or Single Electricity Market (SEM) has developed from the all island energy project. The aim of the project is to create a single market for natural gas and electricity on the island of Ireland. The project was started following a joint policy decision by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland and the then Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources to create the all-island energy market. The Development Framework for the All Island Energy Market was published jointly by the Departments and Regulators in November 2004.

The Governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Single Electricity Market (SEM) in December 2006. The document describes the arrangements in relation to the establishment and operation of a single wholesale electricity market in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Subsequent legislation in Northern Ireland and Ireland was put in place to underpin the SEM, including the establishment of the SEM Committee, a committee of CER, NIAUR and an Independent Member. This enables effective decision-making on single electricity market matters and makes provision for the objectives of Ministers and Regulators with regard to matters which affect, or are likely to affect the SEM. The SEM has operated successfully since it launched in November 2007.

My Department, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland, the CER and NIAUR are working together on the development of the All-Island Common Arrangements for Gas whereby all stakeholders can buy, sell, transport, operate, develop and plan the natural gas market north and south of the border effectively on an all-island basis. The CER and NIAUR signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2008, outlining the high level principles of

the CAG project. I note that the regulators have made considerable progress to date, and that the current state of play on CAG is that their work is continuing, in particular on the studies commissioned by the Regulators.

Energy matters are not one of the six areas of cooperation that fall within the remit of the North South Ministerial Council. These are agriculture, education, environment, health, tourism and transport. The Joint Secretariat of the North South Ministerial Council has, among other functions, the tasks of arranging the schedule of Council meetings and securing prior political agreement to agendas for meetings of the Council.

*Question No. 723 answered with Question No. 700.*

### **Broadband Services Provision**

724. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the position on the roll-out of high speed broadband in County Tipperary; the way it has improved since 2011; when it is envisioned landline broadband will be provided at two locations in County Tipperary. [35148/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** Considerable progress has been made in recent years in both the coverage and speeds of national broadband infrastructure, with a multiplicity of commercial operators, providing services over a diverse range of technology platforms. Details of broadband services available in each County, including County Tipperary, can be found on ComReg's website at [www.callcosts.ie](http://www.callcosts.ie).

The Government has also undertaken a number of initiatives to bring broadband to those parts of the country where commercial operators have been unable to offer services. The combination of private investment and State interventions such as the National Broadband Scheme (NBS) and the Rural Broadband Scheme means that Ireland has met the EU Commission's Digital Agenda for Europe target of having a basic broadband service available to all areas by 2013.

With basic broadband services widely available across Ireland, the focus is now on accelerating the roll out of high speed services. The Government's National Broadband Plan, which I published in August last, aims to radically change the broadband landscape in Ireland by ensuring that high speed broadband is available to all of our citizens and businesses, in advance of the EU's target date of 2020.

Since the publication of the Plan, investments by the commercial sector are under way in both fixed line and mobile high speed broadband services. In tandem with these commercial developments, intensive work is underway in my Department to progress a State-led investment to secure the countrywide introduction of next generation broadband access. The National Broadband Plan commits the Government to investing with the private sector to deliver high speed services to areas which are not commercially viable and will not be provided by the market alone.

In order to progress the State-led investment, a full procurement process must be designed and EU State Aids approval must be obtained. My officials have commenced a comprehensive mapping exercise of the current and anticipated investment by the commercial sector to identify where the market is expected to deliver high speed broadband services over the coming years.

The results of this mapping exercise will inform the level of Government intervention that may be required and the areas that need to be targeted in the State-led investment as envisaged in the National Broadband Plan.

Intensive technical, financial and legal preparations including stakeholder engagement will be ongoing throughout 2013 with a view to the launch of a procurement process in 2014.

Through the implementation of the National Broadband Plan, we are committed to increasing the availability of next generation speeds significantly, with a view to ensuring that all citizens and businesses can participate fully in a digitally enabled society.

### **Energy Schemes Issues**

725. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will arrange and provide a date for a meeting with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland official in west Cork with a business person who has developed a new type of energy turbine which may be beneficial to the State; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35301/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The head office of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is in Dublin. The statistics office of the SEAI is in Cork city. I am advised by the SEAI that there is no SEAI official based in west Cork. Any individual with a proposal for the development of new energy technologies, such as a new type of energy turbine, can contact SEAI directly (Address: Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2 / Tel. No. 01 8082100), submit the technical information relating to their device, and arrange to have a meeting.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

726. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if there has been an analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions from Ireland's three peat burning power stations and the way this contributes to our carbon emissions; what those emissions are on an annual basis from 2007 to date in 2013 per station; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35390/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions and their impact is a matter for the Environmental Protection Agency, a body under the aegis of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. My Department does not engage in such monitoring activities.

### **Public Service Obligation Levy Payments**

727. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the amount on an annual basis from 2007 to date in 2013 provided as a subsidy for Ireland's three peat burning power stations; if all of this subsidy came from the PSO levy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35391/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy has been in place since 2001 and is the overall support mechanism for peat generation, for certain conventional generation constructed for security of supply purposes, and for the development of renewable electricity. The levy is designed to compensate electricity suppliers for the additional costs they incur by purchasing electricity generated by these producers, including the three peat stations. Peat-fired electricity plants are supported by the PSO levy as they contribute to security of supply through the use of indig-

enous fuels. The levy is paid by electricity customers on their bills. It acts as a price support to peat, renewable and security of supply electricity generation and is therefore not a subsidy paid from public funds.

The particular PSO scheme for peat generation was approved by the European Commission in 2001 and was designed to enable the accelerated closing down by ESB of the then existing six old peat fired plants and the building of two new more environmentally friendly and efficient plants with a 15-year operational lifetime. The PSO also applied to the peat fired plant in Edenderry which is now owned by Bord na Móna. The peat PSO for Edenderry expires in 2015 and Bord na Móna is incrementally increasing the co-firing of biomass with peat. The PSO for the two ESB peat stations expires in 2019.

The specific information requested by the Deputy, including the various breakdowns and historical data, is publically available on the Commission for Energy Regulation's website at the following link:

*<http://www.cer.ie/en/renewables-decision-documents.aspx>*

### **Public Service Obligation Levy Payments**

728. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources the length of time for which the PSO levy to subsidise peat burning power stations will continue; his views on whether it is the most efficient use of public subsidies which could be allocated to renewable energy sources which would also contribute to reducing our carbon emissions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35392/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy has been in place since 2001 and is the overall support mechanism for peat generation, for certain conventional generation constructed for security of supply purposes, and for the development of renewable electricity. The levy is designed to compensate electricity suppliers for the additional costs they incur by purchasing electricity generated by these producers, including the three peat stations. Peat-fired electricity plants are supported as they contribute to security of supply through the use of indigenous fuels. The levy is paid by electricity customers on their bills. It acts as a price support to peat, renewable and security of supply electricity generation and is therefore not a subsidy paid from public funds.

The particular PSO scheme for peat generation was approved by the European Commission in 2001 and was designed to enable the accelerated closing down by ESB of the then existing six old peat fired plants and the building of two new more environmentally friendly and efficient plants with a 15-year operational lifetime. The PSO also applied to the peat fired plan in Edenderry, which is now owned by Bord na Móna. The PSO for Edenderry Power expires in 2015 and Bord na Móna is incrementally increasing the co-firing of biomass with peat. REFIT 3, which opened last year, aims to support co-firing of biomass at all three peat stations. The PSO for the two ESB peat stations expires in 2019.

The PSO levy also supports renewable energy technologies used to generate electricity under the Alternative Energy Requirement (AER) scheme, launched in 1995 and under the Renewable-Energy-Feed-in-Tariff (REFIT) scheme. The first phase of REFIT was launched in 2006 with subsequent schemes opening in 2012.

I have no plans to end the PSO for peat in advance of the dates for their expiry under the European Commission approvals.

## Public Service Obligation Levy Payments

729. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide an annual breakdown from 2007 to date in 2013 of the amount raised in the electricity PSO levy; the rate of levy for each of those years; the amount of the levy that came from commercial or residential/personal electricity consumption; if he will provide an annual breakdown of the amount of the levy distributed to power generators and specifically for power stations or wind farms; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35393/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** Responsibility for the regulation of the electricity and gas markets, including the operation of the Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy, is a matter for the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER), which is an independent statutory body.

The Public Service Obligation (PSO) levy is charged to all electricity customers. It is designed to support the national policy objectives of security of energy supply, the use of indigenous fuels (i.e. peat) and the use of renewable energy sources in electricity generation, as set out in legislation. The proceeds of the levy are used to recoup, *inter alia*, the additional costs incurred by electricity suppliers in sourcing, and ESB Power Generation producing, a proportion of their electricity from such generators.

Section 39 of the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 sets out the legal basis for the PSO levy in Ireland. Statutory Instrument No. 217 of 2002 made under Section 39 of the Electricity Regulation Act requires that the CER calculates and certifies the costs associated with the PSO and sets the associated levy for the required period. The PSO levy takes into account the estimated and actual costs incurred in undertaking generation activities which are covered in the relevant PSO legislation. Articles 8 and 9 of Statutory Instrument 217 of 2002 set out the methodology of the calculation of the components of the PSO levy and the estimation of the amount of the PSO levy by the CER.

The specific information requested by the Deputy (including the various breakdowns and historical data) is publicly available on the CER website at the following link:

<http://www.cer.ie/en/renewables-decision-documents.aspx>.

## National Postcode System Establishment

730. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if a new postcode system should be based on numbers and two letters representing Ireland, as is the norm in other bilingual countries; his views on whether the letters used should be IE, for example, Ireland/Éire, as this abbreviation is already in widespread use especially in the world of computing and marketing; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35509/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** The final tender for a National Postcode System issued recently. Subject to satisfactory conclusion of the procurement process it is intended to award a contract for a National Postcode System in the autumn of this year. The structure of the postcode will depend on the outcome of the procurement.

## Broadband Services Speeds

731. **Deputy Simon Harris** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources when the service in an area (details supplied) in County Wicklow will be upgraded to ensure that faster broadband may be availed of by residents. [35534/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** Ireland's telecommunications market has been fully liberalised since 1999 in accordance with the requirements of binding EU Directives. The market has since developed into a well regulated market, supporting a multiplicity of commercial operators, providing services over a diverse range of technology platforms. Details of broadband services available in each County, including County Wicklow, can be found on ComReg's website at [www.callcosts.ie](http://www.callcosts.ie).

The State can only intervene to ensure access to broadband services in areas where the competitive market has failed to deliver such services, as in the case of the National Broadband Scheme and the Rural Broadband Scheme. The combination of private investment and State interventions means that Ireland has met the EU Commission's Digital Agenda for Europe target of having a basic broadband service available to all areas by 2013.

With basic broadband services widely available across Ireland, the focus is now on accelerating the roll out of high speed services. The Government's National Broadband Plan, which I published in August last, aims to radically change the broadband landscape in Ireland by ensuring that high speed services of 30Mbps are available to all of our citizens and businesses, in advance of the EU's target date of 2020, and that significantly higher speeds are available to as many homes and businesses as possible.

Since the publication of the Plan, investments by the commercial sector are under way in both fixed line and mobile high speed broadband services, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas. There is evidence that industry is investing beyond the targets to which they committed in the Plan with investments of up to €1 billion under way.

In tandem with these commercial developments, intensive work is under way in my Department to progress a State-led investment to secure the countrywide introduction of next generation broadband access. The National Broadband Plan commits the Government to investing with the private sector to deliver high speed services to areas which are not commercially viable and will not be provided by the market alone.

In order to progress the State-led investment, a full procurement process must be designed and EU State Aids approval must be obtained. My officials have commenced a comprehensive mapping exercise of the current and anticipated investment by the commercial sector to identify where the market is expected to deliver high speed broadband services over the coming years.

The results of this mapping exercise will inform the level of Government intervention that may be required and the areas that need to be targeted in the State-led investment as envisaged in the National Broadband Plan.

Intensive technical, financial and legal preparations including stakeholder engagement will be ongoing throughout 2013 with a view to the launch of a procurement process in 2014.

The Government remains firmly committed to increasing the availability countrywide of quality next generation broadband services and to ensuring that citizens, businesses and all parts of society are motivated, empowered and have the requisite connectivity to interact effectively in a digital environment.

*Question No. 732 answered with Question No. 706.*

### Official Travel

733. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensures the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36041/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the information he has requested is an operational matter for the individual Bodies and Regulators concerned. All agencies have been kept up to date on public sector travel and subsistence policies and are aware of the need to minimise their operational expenses on an ongoing basis.

### Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration

734. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all commercial State company chief executive officers within the remit of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36090/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I wish to advise the Deputy that, following a Government decision, the salary rate for newly appointed CEOs of Commercial Semi State Companies under the aegis of my Department is as set out in the following table below with effect from 21 June 2011.

#### Salary Rate for newly appointed CEOs of Commercial State Companies

Name of Company	New Appointment Rate
An Post	€240,448
BGE	€191,014
Bord na Móna	€191,014
EirGrid	€158,459
ESB	€318,083
RTÉ	€219,871
TG4	€139,104

The Annual Reports of the companies contain details of incumbent CEOs' salaries.

The Annual Reports are available in the library of the House.

### Departmental Bodies

735. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-spon-

sored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36213/13]

**Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Deputy Pat Rabbitte):** I can inform the Deputy that there are eleven Non-Commercial Bodies, including Regulators, under the aegis of my Department and details of these are set out in tabular form as follows.

Non Commercial State Bodies
Inland Fisheries Ireland
Digital Hub Development Agency
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (Loughs Agency)
National Oil Reserves Agency
Irish National Petroleum Corporation
Mining Board
Ordnance Survey Ireland
Regulators
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
Commission for Energy Regulation
Commission for Communications Regulation

### Tribunals of Inquiry Recommendations

736. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide an update on the intention expressed last year to forward the Mahon Tribunal report to the Director of Public Prosecutions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34225/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I wrote to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) in March 2012 bringing to her attention the publication of the report. Decisions in relation to appropriate next steps are a matter for the DPP.

### Local Authority Charges Application

737. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if a child care facility (details supplied) in County Kildare is exempt from rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34503/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. With regard to the application of rates to childcare facilities, where childcare provision is within a community facility, operating in non-profit capacity, commercial rates do not generally apply. The levying and collection of rates are matters for each individual local authority. The annual rate on valuation (ARV), which is applied to the valuation of each property, determined by the Valuation Office, to obtain the amount payable in rates, is decided by the elected members of each local authority in the annual budget and its determination is a reserved function.

## Local Authority Charges Application

738. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he is considering introducing similar legislation to that of the Local Government (Dublin) Act 1930 and, in particular, section 71(1) that may act as an incentive for landlords to seek out new tenants at a faster pace; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35349/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Local Government Act 1946 provides that, where a property in a county council or urban area is unoccupied on the date of the making of the rate, the owner becomes liable for payment of rates. However, the owner is entitled to a 100% refund if the property is vacant for specified purposes. These are where the premises are unoccupied for the purpose of the execution of additions, alterations or repairs; where the owner is *bona fide* unable to obtain a suitable tenant at a reasonable rent; and where the premises are vacant pending redevelopment. A small number of urban local authorities have historically had separate legal provision enabling a refund of 50% of rates on vacant properties. While the same criteria for refunds apply, 50% of the rates paid is refundable to the owner of vacant premises in these cities. These legislative provisions are

- section 71 of the Local Government (Dublin) Act 1930;
- section 29 of the Limerick City Management Act 1934; and
- section 20 of the Cork City Management (Amendment) Act 1941.

The majority of local authorities are, however, subject to the provisions of the 1946 Act. Any proposal to alter the existing rebate system would require legislative amendment on a nationwide basis. I recognise that these are difficult economic times for many businesses, including landlords, and I am continuing to keep all matters relating to rates under regular review.

## Non-Principal Private Residence Charge Yield

739. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of revenue he expects to raise from the non-principal private residence charge from July to December this year; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35365/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Local Government (Charges) Act 2009, as amended, broadened the revenue base of local authorities by introducing a charge on non-principal private residences. The charge is set at €200 and liability for it falls, in the main, on owners of rental, holiday and vacant properties. At the end of 2012, €69.5m had been paid in respect of the 2012 liability for the Non-Principal Private Residence Charge. As of 30 June 2013, €47.4 million has been paid in respect of the 2013 liability for the Charge. Assuming that the level of payment in 2013 will be similar to that observed in 2012, some €22 million is anticipated to be raised between July and December 2013. It should be noted, however, that a considerable amount of revenue is raised in respect of a given liability date in the subsequent year. For instance, during 2013 to date, over €4.6 million has been collected in respect of the 2012 liability, which is in addition to the €69.5 million collected during 2012. I also anticipate that the operation of the Local Property Tax will have a positive impact on payment behaviour in respect of the 2013 Non-Principal Private Residence Charge.

## **Local Authority Charges Collection**

740. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if, in the interests of the economic difficulties small businesses across the country are experiencing, he will consider bringing forward legislation that would allow for local authorities to implement a differential rates system that would see businesses being billed according to their turnover and their ability to pay, to assist the recovery of the domestic economy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34134/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for commercial purposes in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. The Commissioner for Valuation has sole responsibility for all valuation matters, including the most appropriate method of valuation. The levying and collection of rates are matters for each individual local authority.

It is important to acknowledge that commercial rates, as a local tax, and the rating system generally are deeply embedded in the local government system. A large body of case law is well established and local authorities and ratepayers are, in the main, very familiar with, and generally accepting of, the operation and practice of the rating system. Rates are also a stable source of financing for local government which is not affected unduly by short-term changes in economic circumstances.

I am acutely aware of the pressures on small and medium-sized businesses at the present time. Local authorities have been asked by my Department to exercise restraint or, where possible, to reduce commercial rates and local charges for 2013 and have responded well to such requests in recent years. In 2013, 87 out of the 88 rating authorities either reduced their ARV or kept it the same as in 2012.

Local authorities have a leading role in creating a pro-enterprise supportive environment to generate new jobs and sustain existing ones. They are committed to local economic development, and are best placed to meet many of the needs of businesses, in terms of infrastructure, local promotion and other key enabling measures. Under An Action Plan for Jobs, the local government sector has developed a sectoral strategy, Supporting Economic Recovery and Jobs – Locally, to promote employment and support local enterprise, including measures in the area of business charges, local enterprise and business support arrangements, procurement support, local development and community-based initiatives, the Green Economy and participation in employment support schemes.

The implementation of the Action Programme for Effective Local Government - Putting People First provides an opportunity to achieve a more coherent approach to rates and charges on a county-wide basis, having regard to funding requirements and the need to support employment and business competitiveness. It is vital that progress is made in this area, given the importance of local enterprises to employment and to the economy generally.

While I have no immediate plans to amend the legislation governing commercial rates, I will continue to keep the approach to rates by local authorities under active review, and I am determined that every avenue will be pursued to optimise efficiency and contain costs in the local government sector.

## **Environmental Regulations**

741. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there are regulations controlling signage fronting the public roadway to advertise the availability of residential property for rent; and, if not, if he will consider implementing such regulations; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34191/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** Unless otherwise exempt, advertising in streets and public places is subject to the submission of a planning application in accordance with the provisions of Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

## **Local Authority Charges Yield**

742. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of revenue estimated to be received from the levy on landfill disposal; and where this money is spent. [34290/13]

780. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the reason the decision was reached to implement an increase in the landfill levy effective from 1 July. [34731/13]

781. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the provisions under which the decision regarding an increase in the landfill levy was made and executed. [34732/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 742, 780 and 781 together.

The Programme for Government commits to the development of a coherent national waste policy, adhering to the waste hierarchy, which will aim to minimise waste disposal in landfill and maximise recovery. In addition, Ireland must comply with strict limits under the Landfill Directive for the volumes of material which are landfilled.

I published A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland in July 2012 which clearly signalled my intention to raise the landfill levy in July 2013 in order to provide certainty, in the form of both policy and legislation, so that the necessary actions and investments are progressed to achieve the policy’s objectives.

The landfill levy is chargeable on waste presented for disposal at landfill facilities. The National Waste Report for 2011 noted that the increasing landfill levy and the economic downturn contributed in significant ways to Ireland’s achievement of the 2010 EU Landfill Directive diversion target for biodegradable waste through significant decreases in municipal waste generation and quantity of residual waste consigned to landfill.

Preliminary 2012 data indicate that the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste disposed at landfill in 2011 was 771,551 tonnes. This is 161,551 tonnes in excess of the July 2013 EU Landfill Directive limit and 344,551 tonnes in excess of the 2016 limit. This further underlines the importance of effective economic instruments, such as the landfill levy, which are key to encouraging more sustainable management of our waste.

Accordingly, I recently, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by sections 7, 18(3) and 73 of the Waste Management Act 1996 (No. 10 of 1996), increased the landfill levy by €10 to

€75 per tonne with effect from 1 July 2013 for each tonne of waste disposed of at authorised and unauthorised landfill facilities. This increase sends a further strong price signal to the producers, collectors and managers of waste, to deter against unsustainable behaviour and to encourage a shift away from landfill to waste management practices which are more closely aligned with the higher tiers of the waste hierarchy.

The estimated 2013 total revenue to be received into the Environment Fund from the landfill levy is €50.8 million. The proceeds of the Environment Fund, which was established under the Waste Management (Amendment) Act 2001, can only be used for activities that are of benefit to the environment. Section 74(9) of the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended), specifies the purposes for which payments may be made from the Environment Fund. These include assistance in a range of areas such as:

- schemes to prevent-reduce waste;
- waste recovery activities;
- research and development into waste management;
- production, distribution or sale of products deemed to be less harmful to the environment than other similar products;
- development of producer initiatives to prevent-reduce waste arising from their activities;
- implementation of waste management plans;
- enforcement of the provisions of any enactment relating to waste management, prevention of litter or protection of the environment;
- partnership projects, that involve local authorities, to improve the quality of the environment for particular local communities;
- promotion of awareness of the need to protect the environment, including national and regional campaigns;
- promotion-support of education and training to assist achievement of campaign objectives;
- resources (human or material) to enable education and training to be carried out;
- initiatives undertaken by community groups and others for protection of the environment;
- initiatives undertaken by international organisations and others for protection of the environment and/or sustainable development;
- such other purposes for protection of the environment as may be prescribed by the Minister in regulations.

The audited Environment Fund Accounts are available for download at <http://www.environment.ie/en/Publications/Environment/Waste/WasteManagement>.

### **Tax Yield**

743. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the revenue received, in tabular form, from the plastic bag levy since its inception.

[34292/13]

844. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular format, the levy rate and amounts generated by the plastic bag levy per annum since its introduction; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35484/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 743 and 844 together.

The plastic bag levy is first and foremost an economic instrument, which has as its objective the encouragement of more environmentally sustainable behaviour. In particular, the levy was introduced as an anti-litter measure designed to influence consumers by encouraging them to reduce their use of disposable plastic bags.

Section 72 of the Waste Management Act 1996, as inserted by section 9 of the Waste Management (Amendment) Act 2001, provided for the introduction of a plastic bag levy. The Waste Management (Environmental Levy) (Plastic Bag) Order 2007 and the Waste Management (Environmental Levy) (Plastic Bag) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 allowed for the levy to be increased from its previous level of 15 cent per bag to 22 cent per bag from 1 July 2007.

The introduction of the levy in March 2002 led to a dramatic reduction in the number of disposable plastic bags supplied to consumers, from an estimated 328 bags per person per year prior to the introduction of the levy, to 21 bags per person by the end of 2002 and a further reduction to an estimated 14 bags per person by the end of 2012.

The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System is used to measure the impact of the plastic bag levy on an ongoing basis and my Department also monitors the receipts from the plastic bag levy to monitor trends in the average per capita consumption of plastic bags. These data are used to ensure that the plastic bag levy is set at an appropriate level. The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Report 2012 reports that plastic bags constituted 0.30 % of litter arising in 2012. This compares with 5% prior to the levy's introduction.

Receipts from the plastic bag levy for each year are published in the Environment Fund Annual Accounts. Copies of the Annual Accounts up to and including 2011 are available on my Department's website ([www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie)). The 2012 Annual Accounts will be published on my Department's website in due course after they have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Details of the amounts received for each year since the levy's introduction in March 2002 and the rate of the levy for each year are set out in the following table.

Year	Levy Rate (€)	Plastic Bag levy (€m)
2002	0.15	10.4
2003	0.15	12.9
2004	0.15	15.3
2005	0.15	17.5
2006	0.15	19.9
2007	0.15/0.22 from 1 July	22.6
2008	0.22	26.7
2009	0.22	23.5
2010	0.22	17.5

Year	Levy Rate (€)	Plastic Bag levy (€m)
2011	0.22	15.7
2012 Estimate (Cash Basis)	0.22	14.2
2013 Estimate (to 30 June 2013)	0.22	7.2
Total		203.4

### Tax Yield

744. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the projected revenue obtained from an increase in the plastic bag levy to 25 cent and 30 cent, respectively. [34293/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The plastic bag levy is first and foremost an economic instrument, which has as its objective the encouragement of more environmentally sustainable behaviour. In particular, the levy was introduced as an anti-litter measure designed to influence consumers by encouraging them to reduce their use of disposable plastic bags. Therefore, the revenue to be obtained from the increases referred to in the question would be dependent on consumer behaviour in response to any such increase.

### Noise Pollution Issues

745. **Deputy Robert Dowds** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide clarity about the obligations of local authorities with regard to noise pollution emanating from road traffic which is impacting on the lives of those living in nearby areas. [34338/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Complaints about local traffic-related noise should be addressed to the relevant roads authority in the first instance. For national road schemes, potential noise emissions are addressed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process undertaken by, or on behalf of, the National Roads Authority.

In addition, the Environmental Noise Directive (END) 2002/49/EC sets out certain requirements for the assessment and management of environmental noise from transport sources, including the making of strategic noise maps and action plans. However the Directive does not set binding limit values, nor does it prescribe the measures to be included in the action plans, leaving those issues at the discretion of the national competent authorities.

The END was transposed into national law by the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006. The Regulations set out a two-stage process for addressing environmental noise. Firstly, noise must be assessed through the preparation of strategic noise maps for areas and infrastructure falling within defined criteria. Secondly, based on the results of the mapping process, the Regulations require the preparation of noise action plans for each area concerned. The fundamental objective of action plans is the prevention and reduction of environmental noise.

The Regulations designate noise mapping bodies and action planning authorities for the making of strategic noise maps and action plans. Primary responsibility for both noise mapping and action planning is assigned to local authorities. For the Dublin Agglomeration, distinct noise maps have been produced for all roads together with a related noise action plan for the

period July 2008 to November 2013.

The Regulations require noise mapping bodies periodically to review and revise noise maps. A new round of noise mapping was conducted during 2012. Individual maps, along with details on the revised population exposure statistics, can be viewed at the following link [www.dublincity.ie/WaterWasteEnvironment/NoiseMapsandActionPlans](http://www.dublincity.ie/WaterWasteEnvironment/NoiseMapsandActionPlans). Following the noise mapping, the four local authorities within the Dublin Agglomeration prepared a new draft Environmental Noise Action Plan for the period 2013 – 2018. The draft plan sets out an approach to the strategic management and control of environmental noise over the next five years. It also provides the basis for feedback and input from the statutory authorities and the public to help inform the final Noise Plan for the Dublin Agglomeration. The draft plan was recently made available for public consultation with submissions being invited before 20 June 2013. Submissions received under the consultation process are now being reviewed before the plan is finalised.

### **Rural Recreation Policy**

746. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if two walks in County Kerry will be linked (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34357/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department has no plans to link the walks referred to at this time. Such a proposal would require the development of at least an additional 20 km of trail to link with the trailhead for the Bolus Loop Walk. However, the Bolus Loop Walk is an excellent amenity and of great benefit to the local community and visitors to the area, offering leisure, health and economic opportunities. There are several B&B's, hostels, local businesses and shops which appreciate the support of landowners on the Bolus Loop Walk as it is well used and known in the locality.

### **Local Authority Staff Issues**

747. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the tenure of the current Sligo county manager will expire on 3 November 2013; if it has been brought to his attention that the county manager, on their retirement, will receive a severance payment of approximately €270,000 and an annual pension of approximately €68,000; if it has been brought to his attention that such an annual pension payment to a former county manager is more than twice the national industrial wage; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34365/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authority managers who held office prior to 26 July 2012, including the current Sligo County Manager, are entitled to be considered for superannuation benefits under Article 78(1) of the Local Government (Superannuation) (Consolidation) Scheme 1998 to 2012. The particular benefits for an individual county manager are, in the first instance, a matter for his or her employer.

### **Consultancy Contracts Issues**

748. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or

expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34402/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The information requested is set out in the following table:

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
Retrofitting Code of Practice	Building Research Establishment Ltd.	March 2011	Draft Code of Practice expected to be released for public consultation before end 2013.	(1) €21,191
Report of the Pyrite Panel - Independent report to provide options for the Minister to deal with the pyrite problem	Pyrite Panel	September 2011	July 2012	€21,470
Cost optimal study for non domestic buildings	AECOM	November 2012	March 2013	€53,517
Analysis on national climate policy	Secretariat to the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland	December 2011	Interim report released October 2012; final report released in February 2013.	Not applicable
Technical support on developing low carbon sector roadmaps for Ireland	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) & University College Cork (UCC)	June 2013	No formal document due for publication. The project relates to technical support.	€107,552
2011 Report of the Dormant Accounts Board	Mr. David Lovegrove	The report is a requirement under the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005	July 2012	€12,181

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
2012 Report of the Dormant Accounts Board	Mr. David Lovegrove	The report is a requirement under the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005	July 2013	€11,732
Bulky Waste Reuse Best Practice - Feasibility Study	Fehilly Timoney & Company	January 2012	July 2013	€55,289
All Island Used Tyre Survey	RPS Group	March 2012	March 2013	(2) €17,673
Review of the Producer Responsibility Model in Ireland	RPS Group	June 2012	September 2013	€281,944
Review of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000	DKM Economic Consultants	May 2012	Expected Publication July 2013	€39,690
Feasibility study on a Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme	Indecon	May 2012	November 2012	(3) €42,706
Evaluation of ICT Disaster Recovery configuration and capability	Version 1	February 2012	Not intended for publication.	€9,363
Design of a Local Property Tax – Report of the Inter-Departmental Group	Inter-Departmental Group	January 2012	December 2012	Nil

Questions - Written Answers

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
Analysis of Property Tax Options - a report to the Interdepartmental Expert Group on Property Tax	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	March 2012	December 2012	€60,280
Report on archaeological investigation/survey of Met Éireann site at Valentia	Munster Archaeology	April 2012	June 2013	€47,289
Report of Surveillance Audit on IS EN ISO 2012	National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI)	June 2012	July 2012	€2,706
Environment Management Plan	Glas Ecology	April 2012	August 2012	€4,920
Environmental Management Services re: review of CEMP at Valentia Site	Flynn Furney Consultants Ltd	November 2012	Not intended for publication.	€3,167
Study in respect of provision of fire detection and alarm systems in dwellings	ARUP Consulting Engineers	November 2011	Not intended for publication.	€29,935

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
Review of the management by the Department of an application by Wicklow County Council for loan approval in respect of the compulsory purchase of land at Charlesland, Co. Wicklow - Phase 1	Mr. Seamus Woulfe SC	January 2012	March 2012	€19,680
Review of the compulsory acquisition of land by Wicklow County Council at Charlesland, Co. Wicklow - Phase 2	Mr. Seamus Woulfe SC	June 2012	April 2013	€49,200
Independent Evaluation of the Planning Review Report 2012	Mr. Hendrik W van der Kamp	October 2012	January 2013	€12,096
Review of Dublin Region Homelessness Services and Funding 2011	Murtagh & Partners	July 2011	October 2011	€27,800
Review of the Homeless Strategy 2008-2013	Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin	September 2011	November 2012	€6,000

Questions - Written Answers

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
Provision of expertise concerning Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment techniques for the evaluation and revision of Regional Waste Management Plans	RPS	Consultants appointed December 2011	No formal document due for publication. The work is principally advice, guidance documents and technical expertise.	€45,223
National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2011 Report	Tobin Consulting Engineers	June 2011	April 2012	€61,077
National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2012 Report	Tobin Consulting Engineers	May 2012	April 2013	€58,271
National Litter Pollution Monitoring System - 2013 Report	Tobin Consulting Engineers	May 2013	April 2014	€52,014
Annual Dust Impact Assessment Report (2011) at the Former Irish Steelworks Site, Haulbowline, Cobh, Co. Cork	White Young Green	March 2011	March 2012	(4) see footnote
Regulatory Impact Analysis of proposed regulations for household food waste.	Indecon	May 2011	June 2012	€24,725

External Report Name	Consultant etc.	Date of Commission	Date or Expected Date of Publication	Total/Estimated Cost
Marine Strategy Framework Directive - Initial Assessment	Marine Institute	September 2011	The technical report was published on the Department's website in Q2 2013 and the summary report will be published in Q4 2013.	(5) €2m (estimated)
Consultancy services on establishment of National Water Utility	Price Waterhouse Coopers	June 2011	Irish Water - Phase 1 report and appendices published January 2012 (www.environ.ie). Implementation Strategy published December 2012 (www.environ.ie).	€179,584
Affordability aspects of the provision of water services in Ireland.	Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	January 2013	At this time the report is not intended for publication.	€51,798

(1) Contract in conjunction with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. The Department's contribution is €21,190 which represents approximately 23% of the total cost.

(2) Survey jointly commissioned and funded by Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland and my Department. My Department's contribution is €17,673.

(3) This report was co-funded by my Department and the Private Residential Tenancies Board. The cost to my Department of €42,706 represents 50% of the total cost.

(4) My Department previously provided funding to Cork County Council to support the production of an annual Dust Impact Assessment Report at the former Irish Steel site at Haulbowline Island. Following a Government Decision in June, 2011 the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine assumed the lead role in relation to the remedial works necessary to be undertaken on the site. Accordingly, funding provided to Cork County Council for the annual Dust Impact Assessment Report 2011 and subsequent years is a matter for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

(5) This report arises from Ireland's obligation to implement the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The work primarily consists of a determination of the status of Ireland's marine waters and the measures necessary to achieve, or maintain, the required status by 2020.

### Motor Tax Collection

749. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if road tax funds still go into the local government fund; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34417/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Ho-**

**gan):** The principal source of revenue for the Local Government Fund in 2013 is the proceeds of motor tax which are being redistributed on an equalised basis to local authorities within the context of the annual allocations of General Purpose Grants. The Motor Vehicle (Duties and Licences) Act 2013 provides for the transfer of up to €150 million from the Local Government Fund to the Exchequer during 2013. The Act provides that, in determining the payment, regard must be had to the balance in the Fund when all commitments have been met. The transfer is in respect of 2013 only.

### **Property Taxation Administration**

750. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans to introduce regulations or guidelines with respect to the setting of the local adjustment factor as per the Finance (Local Property Tax) Bill 2012; the timeframe for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34418/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Under section 20 of the Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012, a local authority may as a reserved function resolve to vary the rate of the Local Property Tax within its functional area by a maximum of +/- 15%. This power will be available to local authorities effective from 2015, as the relevant sections of the Act will come into operation on 1 July 2014.

Section 20 of the Act requires that, in varying the rate, a local authority must take account of its financial position, its income and expenditure and of the financial effect of the varied rate on the economy of its functional area, including on those persons who will be liable to pay the Local Property Tax. Section 20 also provides that the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government may make regulations, including in respect of public consultation requirements prior to the variation of the rate of the tax. I will give consideration to the making of such regulations in advance of the coming into operation of section 20 of the 2012 Act.

### **Planning Issues**

751. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the procedure for the changing of the name of a private housing estate; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34419/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** Under Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, planning authorities may attach conditions to planning permissions in relation to appropriate naming and numbering of, and the provision of appropriate signage for, proposed developments.

The law currently in force in relation to the changing of the name of a street or locality is set out in the Local Government Act 1946. Sections 78 and 79 of the 1946 Act, as amended, provide that a local authority may, with the consent of the majority of qualified electors, change the name of a street or locality.

### **Commemorative Events**

752. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown of the total cost to his Department of its

involvement in the recent JFK50 commemoration events; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34437/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department has not incurred any costs in relation to the JFK50 commemoration events.

### **Irish Water Establishment**

753. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if Irish Water will take on liability for the pensions of local authority water services staff through local service agreements with staff; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34439/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** A fundamental underpinning of the water reform programme is to ensure that the skills and experience built up over many years in local authorities are put to best use for the long-term benefit of the customer and that there is no negative impact on service to customers during the transition. It is intended, therefore, that the legislation to transfer statutory responsibility for water services to Irish Water will provide for local authorities to act as agents for Irish Water with this relationship being expressed through Service Level Agreements. The majority of the existing staff will remain employees of local authorities working under such arrangements.

A specific structure, the Irish Water Consultative Group, chaired by Mr Kevin Foley of the Labour Relations Commission, was established in 2012 to facilitate engagement between unions and management on the water sector reform programme. Under the auspices of this group, discussions have been held on the human resources aspects of the service level agreements. Agreement has been reached on a framework which provides, *inter alia*, for the duration of such agreements to be twelve years, with reviews after years two and seven. If a service level agreement is terminated or is not renewed, then the staff concerned will move to Irish Water with their terms, conditions and superannuation arrangements protected.

Work being progressed at present on developing template service level agreements, and associated funding arrangements including an examination of the necessary processes for the transfer of assets and financial liabilities associated with these assets taking into account, *inter alia*, the impacts on local government finances and the funding model for Irish Water.

### **Water Services Funding**

754. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a county by county breakdown of funding under the rural water programme from 2010 to 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34438/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Responsibility for the administration of the Rural Water Programme, which includes group water schemes, group sewerage schemes and small public water and sewerage schemes, has been devolved to local authorities since 1997. The selection and approval of individual schemes for advancement and funding under the programme, within the overall priorities set by my Department and subject to the block grant allocations provided, is therefore a matter for

local authorities.

Group water schemes may also qualify for a subsidy towards the operational costs of supplying domestic water in respect of each house connected to the scheme. A total of €25.5 million has been provided this year to cover the costs of this subsidy scheme and towards the salary costs of Rural Water Liaison Officers. This subsidy scheme is also administered by the local authorities. Payments under this scheme are recouped to local authorities by my Department out of the Local Government Fund as demand arises rather than on the basis of block grant allocations.

The information requested is set out in the following table:

-	-	2010	-	2011	-	2012	2013
Local Authority	Capital Rural Water Programme	Local Government Fund	Capital Rural Water Programme	Local Government Fund	Capital Rural Water Programme	Local Government Fund	Capital Rural Water Programme Allocations
-	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Carlow	2,382,398	194,780	1,460,961	188,592	864,209	315,412	646,803.00
Cavan	2,772,089	1,662,699	2,199,574	4,442,757	1,332,571	2,823,222	582,500.00
Clare	4,557,076	1,045,893	3,259,365	888,648	883,341	1,684,291	756,250.00
Cork	4,581,171	203,757	4,508,669	85,111	1,832,490	125,195	926,134.00
Donegal	3,606,286	185,114	3,136,397	158,034	1,606,316	199,750	1,000,000.00
Dun Laoire / Rathdown	5,221	-	4,500	-	21,166	-	-
Galway	13,531,294	2,605,770	19,065,735	2,733,513	4,607,080	3,900,528	5,402,102.00
Kerry	3,724,863	346,598	2,662,102	319,030	4,948,056	309,748	1,736,901.00
Kildare	886,987	141,352	1,060,213	155,851	415,983	205,992	891,889.00
Kilkenny	1,219,090	274,933	1,054,613	349,303	1,164,459	238,680	666,250.00
Laois	1,274,618	324,353	1,728,608	321,627	1,016,637	522,576	819,301.00
Leitrim	4,186,561	598,998	3,317,224	313,532	2,036,732	379,119	2,116,779.00
Limerick	2,841,854	876,638	3,228,567	961,976	1,298,614	1,530,294	1,098,630.00
Longford	717,901	59,791	1,254,336	82,566	951,129	55,787	1,071,994.00
Louth	984,019	160,615	1,060,950	248,015	785,568	159,430	343,331.00
Mayo	12,967,809	3,301,262	11,267,319	4,243,293	4,928,994	4,043,657	3,167,530.00
Meath	1,293,665	194,646	1,233,712	79,655	847,867	166,812	374,250.00
Monaghan	2,110,841	1,501,258	1,920,559	3,946,445	304,390	3,296,766	168,750.00
North Tipperary	2,211,882	334,445	2,155,704	463,109	1,145,492	417,904	643,000.00
Offaly	1,649,612	750,597	1,681,569	392,561	741,917	1,079,791	1,277,040.00
Roscommon	11,154,830	602,299	2,394,025	866,377	1,104,591	720,782	1,856,250.00
Sligo	816,108	1,071,647	1,664,480	807,399	883,921	1,625,847	1,051,515.00
South Dublin	4,616	-	2,032	-	20,483	-	-
South Tipperary	667,364	40,162	690,928	36,714	486,364	39,640	1,154,250.00
Waterford	1,143,692	21,648	1,282,039	17,805	1,116,266	22,394	683,450.00
Westmeath	1,115,863	73,078	1,333,162	102,318	979,439	67,688	809,750.00
Wexford	2,078,670	318,854	2,309,874	630,894	1,796,040	600,712	919,663.00
Wicklow	3,002,354	108,814	1,544,812	164,874	1,135,562	110,983	599,475.00

### Local Authority Staff Numbers

755. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the current number of county managers in the local authority structure; the current number of vacancies; the number of vacancies that have arisen since 2010; the number that have been filled by external appointments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34440/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** There are 33 County-City Managers positions, of which 8 are vacant. All vacant manager positions are filled by temporary managers, pending the appointment of permanent replacements.

The number of vacancies that have occurred in the County-City Managers positions, county by county since 2010, including city councils, is shown in tabular format.

County Council	Date of Manager Vacancy
Donegal	07/07/2010
Leitrim	06/06/2013
Limerick	08/04/2012
Louth	15/08/2012
Meath	03/09/2012
Monaghan	30/11/2010
South Dublin	03/04/2012
Tipperary North	30/04/2010
Tipperary South	29/04/2011
Waterford	19/09/2011
Westmeath	03/06/2013
Wexford	30/11/2012

City Councils	Date of Manager Vacancy
Cork City	31/08/2010
Dublin City	28/04/2013
Galway City	16/08/2010
Limerick City	28/02/2012

The selection and appointment of a County or City Manager is governed by primary legislation, including the Local Government Act 2001. Managers are selected following open competition conducted by the Public Appointments Service. I understand that no manager position has been filled by external appointment in the period since 2010.

### Local Authority Expenditure

756. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the shortfall in the cost of planning for the years 2006 to 2012, inclusive, and the fees recouped in those years. [34449/13]

826. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and

Local Government the shortfall in the cost of planning for the years 2006 to 2012, inclusive, and the fees recouped in those years. [35293/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 756 and 826 together.

Information in relation to local authority expenditure and income in respect of forward planning, development management and planning enforcement for the years 2006 to 2011 is available in the Local Authority Annual Financial Statement Outturns. These are available on my Department’s website at *www.environ.ie*. The year 2011 is the latest for which audited information is available.

### **Commercial Rates Issues**

757. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the estimated revenue received from removing the exemption from commercial rates for State owned buildings. [34450/13]

827. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the estimated revenue received from removing the exemption from commercial rates for State owned buildings. [35294/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 757 and 827 together.

Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for commercial purposes, in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. That Act determines properties that can, and cannot, be considered for rating purposes. The Commissioner for Valuation has sole responsibility for all valuation matters, including determination under the Act of relevant property for the purposes of rates.

Section 15(3) of the Valuation Act 2001 provides that relevant property, being a building or part of a building, land or a waterway or a harbour directly occupied by the State (including any land or building occupied by any Department or Office of State, the Defence Forces or the Garda Síochána or used as a prison or place of detention), is not rateable.

The Valuation Act 2001 comes under the remit of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. The levying and collection of rates are matters for each individual local authority. The annual rate on valuation (ARV), which is applied to the valuation for each property, determined by the Valuation Office, to obtain the amount payable in rates, is decided by the elected members of each local authority in the annual budget and its determination is a reserved function. The Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group (July 2010) estimated, at €50 million, the potential commercial rates liability of State properties.

### **Planning Issues**

758. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if substitute consent in relation to unauthorised development at a location (details provided) in County Westmeath will circumvent the purpose of the environmental impact assessment directive and-or the habitats directive; if the ability to carry out an assessment has been substantially impaired; if substitute consent would circumvent the County Westmeath

development plan 2008-14; if the continuation of the development will significantly and adversely affect the integrity of a European Natura 2000 site; if the conservation value of the site, its habitats, environment and species has been adversely affected and if unauthorised developments pose real and substantial risk for the Shannon River Basin management plan; the reason the local authority issued an exact replica of the original enforcement notice to the proprietors of the marina. [34457/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** As Minister, I am precluded, under section 30 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, from involvement in relation to any individual planning application or appeal with which a planning authority or An Bord Pleanála is or may be concerned.

### Local Authority Staff Remuneration

759. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the current salaries paid to all city and county managers of local authorities. [34483/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Salaries of City and County Managers are set out in the City and County Managers (Remuneration) Order 2013. The salaries for City and County Managers (from 1 July 2013) are set out in the table.

Local Authority Manager	Salary
Dublin City Council	€175,721
Cork County Council Fingal County Council South Dublin County Council	€150,977
Cork City Council Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Kildare County Council Meath County Council Limerick City and County Council	€142,966
Clare County Council Donegal County Council Galway County Council Kerry County Council Kilkenny County Council Louth County Council Mayo County Council South Tipperary County Council Westmeath County Council Wexford County Council Wicklow County Council	€133,072

Local Authority Manager	Salary
Galway City Council	€ 123,910
Waterford City Council	
Carlow County Council	
Cavan County Council	
Laois County Council	
Leitrim County Council	
Longford County Council	
Monaghan County Council	
Offaly County Council	
Roscommon County Council	
Sligo County Council	
North Tipperary County Council	
Waterford County Council	

### Exchequer Savings

760. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the annual saving to the Exchequer if salaries across all local authorities were capped at €100,000. [34484/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** As of 31 March 2013, there were 224.70 (whole-time equivalent) local authority staff on salary scales, the maximum points of which are in excess of €100,000. The grades concerned are City and County Managers, Assistant Managers and Directors of Service. Information regarding potential cost savings which could arise if these salaries were reduced is not available in my Department.

### Local Authority Staff Remuneration

761. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of local authority public sector workers in receipt of salaries within the following bands (details supplied). [34485/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The number of persons employed in local authorities (as at 31 December 2012) on a whole time equivalent basis (WTE), and the available salary range, are set out in the table.

Salary Range	€0-€30,000	€30,001-€40,000	€40,001-€50,000	€50,001-€60,000	€60,001-€70,000	€70,001-€80,000	€80,001-€90,000	€90,001-€100,000	€100,001-€125,000	€125,001-€150,000	€150,001-Upwards
No. of WTE's	7,209.81	9,380.81	6,097.99	2,863.75	1,209.86	831.37	469	31	167.65	31	6

### Water Charges Introduction

762. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the exemptions he plans to introduce to alleviate hardship in certain sectors of society when water charges are introduced (details supplied). [34488/13]

798. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and

Local Government the exemptions to paying the water charge; the criteria to determine same; and if an allowance will be granted to residents in hard water areas (details supplied) in County Cork in view of the considerable costs incurred by such households in the repair and replacement of household appliances. [35117/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 762 and 798 together.

The Programme for Government and the Memorandum of Understanding with the EU, the IMF and the ECB provide for the introduction of domestic water charges. The Government considers that charging based on usage is the fairest way to charge for water and it has, therefore, decided that water meters should be installed in households connected to public water supplies. The Government has also decided to assign responsibility for the economic regulation of the water sector, including the setting of charges, to the Commission for Energy Regulation. The primary role of the Regulator will be to protect the interests of customers and to ensure a consistent and appropriate level of service is provided to them. An appropriate approach to charging customers will be put in place and a public consultation will take place as part of the regulatory process.

Affordability issues will be addressed by my Department and the Department of Social Protection, in consultation with the Regulator, Irish Water and other stakeholders, in the context of developing a water pricing framework. The agreed approach to affordability issues will then be reflected in the charging structure established by the Regulator. No decision has yet been taken on the level of, or the approach to, the free allowance.

Under the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations, 2007, all suppliers of drinking water are required to ensure that the water supplied is wholesome and clean. Water suppliers are required to comply with the chemical and microbiological parameters set out in the Regulations. Hard water is not included as a parameter in the quality standards specified in the Regulations, as it does not pose as a threat to human health, nor indeed are the substances associated with hard water such as lime, calcium and magnesium.

### **Water Services Funding**

763. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will report on the aggregate known cost, or estimated cost, to public funds of providing the public water supply in each of the years 2012, 2013 and 2014; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34494/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Annual Finance Statement of each local authority provides an analysis of their current and capital expenditure, including all water services provided by them, in addition to expenditure on the group water sector, private installations and public conveniences. As part of the programme to establish Irish Water, a detailed fact finding exercise is under way which will determine the public water services operational cost base to transfer to Irish Water from 2014.

Based on local authority budgets for 2012 and 2013, the estimated overall operational cost of public water services is some €680 million per annum.

In relation to capital expenditure, overall water services capital expenditure in 2012 is estimated at €394 million, covering public water services, public waste water services and non-public water services such the group water sector. The Exchequer allocation for 2013 is €326 million, with a further €82 million expected to be invested by local authorities from their own

resources.

The level of public funds to be provided to Irish Water for public water supply in 2014 will be determined as part of the budgetary process.

### Irish Water Expenditure

764. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the estimated revenue of Irish Water in 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34495/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Fergus O'Dowd):** Irish Water's operational and capital costs in 2015 will be funded through revenue from the domestic and non-domestic sector, an Exchequer subvention and funding from the National Pensions Reserve Fund. It has been decided, following the previous review of the Memorandum of Understanding by the European Commission, the IMF and the ECB, that water charges will commence with effect from Quarter 4 2014. It is expected, therefore, that Irish Water will issue the first bills to customers in Quarter 1 2015.

Work is under way in developing the cost and funding profile for Irish Water. A key input to this is a fact-finding exercise under way in local authorities to provide data on the current cost base. The level of Exchequer subvention support will be determined as part of the budgetary process.

It will be a matter for the Commission for Energy Regulation in due course to satisfy itself in relation to the appropriateness of costs to be incurred by Irish Water in discharging its functions as part of the process of setting the tariffs for the domestic and non-domestic sector. It is envisaged that the Commission will engage in public consultation as part of this process. Pending the outcome of this process it is not possible to provide information on the estimated revenue of Irish Water in 2015.

### Planning Issues

765. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there is a register of planning permissions granted and completed since 1963; his views on whether there would be value in compiling such a register; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34496/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** While no central or national planning register exists, under Section 7 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, planning authorities are required to keep a register in respect of all land within their functional areas affected by that Act.

This register includes, *inter alia*,

- particulars of any application made to the planning authority for permission for development, for retention of development or for outline permission for development (including the name and address of the applicant, the date of receipt of the application and brief particulars of the development or retention forming the subject of the application) and;

- the complete decision of the planning authority in respect of any such application, including any conditions imposed, and the date of the decision.

I have no plans at this stage to compile a national register of planning permissions since 1963.

### Departmental Agencies Board Remuneration

766. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34512/13]

851. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35799/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 766 and 851 together.

The fees applicable with respect to each Board under the aegis of my Department are set out in the table:

Agency/Body	Post	Number of board members	Remuneration
Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB)	Chairperson	1	€8,978
-	Member	24	Nil
Dublin Docklands Development Authority	Chairperson	1	€20,520
-	Member	7	€11,970
Housing Finance Agency	Chairperson	1	€11,970
-	Member	10	€7,695
Irish Water Safety	Chairperson	1	€8,978
-	Member	12	Nil
Housing & Sustainable Communities Agency	Chairperson	1	€11,970
-	Member	5	€7,695
Local Government Management Agency	Chairperson	1	Nil
-	Member	10	Nil
National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee	Chairperson	1	€8,978
-	Member	11	Nil
Private Residential Tenancies Board / Rent Tribunal	Chairperson	1	*
-	Member	9	*
Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII)	Chairperson	1	€11,970
-	Member	10	€7,695
Western Development Commission	Chairperson	1	8,978

Questions - Written Answers

Agency/Body	Post	Number of board members	Remuneration
-	Member	10	5,985
Pobal	Chair	1	Nil
-	Members	15	-
An Bord Pleanála	Chairperson	1	PPC Rate: €175,877 - Non PCC Rate: €167,300
-	Deputy Chair	1	PPC Rate: €124,716
-	-	-	Non PCC Rate: €118,581
-	Member	8	PPC Rate: €109,580
-	-	-	Non PCC Rate: €104,317
Environmental Protection Agency	Director General	1	PPC Rate: €153,162
-			Non PPC: €145,679
-	Deputy Director General	1	PPC Rate: €130,881- Non PPC Rate: €125,011
-	Directors	3	PPC Rate: €119,381 Non- PPC Rate: €113,511

\* Those PRTB-Rent Tribunal members of the Board who are entitled to Board fees are paid such fees on an attendance basis only. Details regarding the scale of fees and the amounts paid are published in the annual reports of the PRTB.

The Boards of An Bord Pleanála and the Environmental Protection Agency are executive in nature, and Board members are full-time, salaried positions.

Reference to remuneration for chairs and members of Boards is to the level of fee to which they are entitled. Where public servants are appointed to Boards, no fees are payable.

From 1 May 2009, fees were reduced by 10% in line with the Government decision to revise the fees for non-executive Chairpersons and members of Boards of State Bodies. From 1 January 2010, fees were further reduced in line with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (No. 2) Act 2009.

In 2012, my Department contacted State Agencies under its aegis, requesting that Board members be offered the option to waive fees on a discretionary basis.

Details in relation to the expenses of Board members are also available within the respec-

tive annual reports. Information regarding potential cost savings which could arise, if the fees to which Board members are entitled were reduced by 25%, is not available in my Department.

### Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration

767. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34528/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The table details the salary (from 1 July 2013) for CEOs and equivalents in agencies under the aegis of my Department.

Agency	-	PPC	Non PPC
An Bord Pleanála	Chair	€175,877	€167,300
Dublin Docklands Development Authority	Chief Executive	*see below	
An Bord Pleanála	Chair	€175,877	€167,300
Dublin Docklands Development Authority	Chief Executive	*see below	
Environmental Protection Agency	Director General	€153,162	€145,679
Housing Finance Agency	Chief Executive	€108,352	€103,034
Irish Water Safety	Chief Executive	€67,434 to 83,510	€64,178 to €79,552
Housing Sustainable Communities Agency	Chief Executive	€117,603	€111,822
Local Government Management Agency	Chief Executive	€143,535	€136,496
Private Residential Tenancies Board	Director	€79,401 to €97,194	€75,647 to €92,550
Radiological Protection Institute Ireland	Chief Executive	€136,276	€129,563
Western Development Commission	Chief Executive	€79,401	N/A

\* The operations of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) will be wound up by the end of 2013. In the interim, the Chief Executive position is filled by a secondment arrangement with Dublin City Council at no extra cost to the State.

### Departmental Expenditure

768. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accounting; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34544/13]

770. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community

and Local Government if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accounting; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34576/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 768 and 770 together.

The information requested is being compiled and will be provided to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### Departmental Expenditure

769. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34560/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department's expenditure on third level courses, training programmes and courses for the period 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 is as follows:

Costs	2012/2013 - €
Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (excluding Met Éireann)	213,629
Met Éireann	64,811

A total of 44 applications were approved under the Payment and Refund of Fees Scheme in my Department from 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 at a cost of €133,704. The range of courses and their associated cost is outlined in the following tables:

No	Payment and Refund of Fees Scheme – DECLG excluding Met Éireann 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013	€
1	MSc in Project and Programme Mgt.	6,500
1	Diploma in Computer Studies	2,995
1	BSc Information Technology	1,695
2	MSc in Computer Science (NL) Cloud Computer Stream	3,000
1	Masters Diploma Desktop Publishing	1,495
1	Master of Science in Mgt. for Sustainable Development	5,655
1	Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Environmental Economics	1,042
1	MSc in Economic Policy Studies	9,669
1	Msc in Policy Analysis	5,000
1	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Law	2,000
1	Barrister at Law Degree	5,075
1	Administrative Law	520
3	PhD in Governance	30,489
1	Professional certificate in Governance	1,900
1	MA in Public Management	5,000
3	BA in Public Management	7,120

No	Payment and Refund of Fees Scheme – DECLG excluding Met Éireann1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013	€
1	Diploma in Civil Service and State Agencies	990
3	Cert. in Civil Service & State Agencies	2707
1	Diploma in Financial Management	2,750
1	Cert. in Tax policy making	865
1	Chartered Tax Consultant	1,695
1	ACCA (Professional Accountant)	656
1	Masters of Business	3,325
1	Bachelor of Business (hons)	1,940
1	Business Management Higher Diploma	2,500
1	Master of Arts Leadership & Strategy	5,000
1	General Language Course (German)	1,000
1	Pre-Degree Computing Programme Fetac	1,695
1	MSc Applied Social Research	5,880
1	BA in Community Involvement	1,200
1	BA Personal & Professional Development	1,750
1	BA Degree (Hons) in Humanities	1,650
1	Diploma sa Ghaeilge Fheidhmeach	1,030
1	Cert in Professional Irish	745
	Total	126,534

No	Payment and Refund of Fees Scheme – Met Éireann1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013	€
1	Diploma in Human Resource Practice	800
1	MSc Meteorology	3,370
1	B Eng Engineering	3,000
	Total	7,170

Training courses arranged from 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013 and their associated cost are outlined in the tables below:

Course Detail – DECLG excluding Met Éireann	€
HR Line Management (APO & Equivalentents)	17,513
Language Courses	10,007
Public Procurement	2,027
Technology Courses includes Excel, Word and Outlook Microsoft.	7,465
FOI/Ombudsman Course	900
Financial Management	1,913
Staff Development*	39,758
Health & Safety	1,375
IT Training Specialist	6,137
Total	87,095

\*Staff development includes training in leadership, governance and change management.

Course Detail – Met Éireann	€
Financial Management	3,330
Project Management	1,870
Language Course	1,320
Health and Safety Training	3,424
Staff Development*	24,918
Public Procurement/Tendering	2,700
IT Training	5,567
Met Eireann Specialist Training	14,512
Total	57,641

\*Staff development includes training in leadership, governance and change management.

*Question No. 770 answered with Question No. 768.*

### Exchequer Savings

771. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34592/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department's travel and subsistence allocation for 2013, including Met Éireann, is €1,525,000. The saving that would be associated with a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in the travel and subsistence allocation is set out in the table.

Reductions	Amounts
1%	€15,250
5%	€76,250
7%	€106,750
10%	€152,500
12%	€183,000
15%	€228,750
17%	€259,250
20%	€305,000

Because of exceptional costs associated with Ireland's role in hosting the EU Presidency, an additional travel and subsistence allocation of €830,000 was set aside specifically for this particular purpose in 2013. This allocation is not included in the calculations set out in the table.

### Exchequer Savings

772. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34608/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department's learning and development allocation for 2013 is €316,000 and the allocation for learning and development in Met Éireann for 2013 is €70,000. This is in respect of 779 WTE staff at 1 January 2013. The savings that would be associated with a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in the learning and development allocations are set out in the table:

Department	Met Éireann	Department	Met Éireann
Reductions	Amounts	Reductions	Amounts
5%	€15,800	5%	€3,500
7%	€22,120	7%	€4,900
10%	€31,600	10%	€7,000
12%	€37,920	12%	€8,400
15%	€47,400	15%	€10,500
17%	€53,720	17%	€11,900
20%	€63,200	20%	€14,000

### Departmental Staff Remuneration

773. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34624/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The salaries of Special Advisers appointed in my Department, following application of pay adjustments in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measure in the Public Interest Act, 2013 and the Haddington Road Agreement, are set out as follows.

Minister	Special Adviser	Salary
Minister Hogan	Sean McKeown	87,258
-	Claire Langton	81,676
Minister of State O'Sullivan	Aidan Culhane	81,676
-	Paul Daly	78,670

If salaries of all Special Advisers were capped at the first point of the Principal Officer scale, the gross annual savings would amount to €26,692 per annum.

### Local Authority Housing Issues

774. **Deputy Ciara Conway** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide details, broken down by electoral area, of the number of empty local authority housing units in Waterford county and Waterford city; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34663/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** My Department collates and publishes a wide range of

housing and planning statistics that inform the preparation and evaluation of policy and those data are available on my Department's website [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

Data on the number of vacant local authority housing units are not included in this range; they are however published in the Local Authority Service Indicator Reports which can be found online at [www.lgcsb.ie](http://www.lgcsb.ie).

### **Nuclear Waste**

775. **Deputy Luke 'Ming' Flanagan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to EU Directive 2011/70/EURATOM (Nuclear Waste), if his attention has been drawn to the fact that this legislation will allow for the importation of nuclear waste into the Republic of Ireland by private operators, the role of government being diminished to that of independent licensing authority; his views on whether the RPII, whose responsibility it is to advise Government on the Directive, is impartial, in view of its links to a person (details supplied), the Irish representative to the Scientific and Technical Committee of Euratom, the Committee responsible for the Directive, and an ex-CEO of the RPII, who is a self-professed member of the the pro-nuclear lobby group BENE; if his attention has been drawn to the fact that past expert advice from within the nuclear industry has shown that nuclear waste cannot be isolated in the geological environment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34667/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Council Directive 2011/70/EURATOM of 19 July 2011, establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, requires Member States to bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive before 23 August 2013.

My Department is currently developing the necessary Regulations to ensure that Ireland meets its obligations to transpose this Directive.

The Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland is required to ensure that Irish people and the environment are adequately protected from the harmful effects of ionising radiation. Insofar as the issue of the storage of radioactive substances is concerned, the Institute is explicitly required under section 7(d) of the Radiological Protection Act 1991 to advise the Government on radiological safety matters "including in relation to the transport, use, and storage of radioactive substances, wheresoever located". I have every confidence that the Institute will continue to provide Government with appropriate expert advice in that regard.

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

776. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will outline, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34679/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** In accordance with the Public Service Management Act 1997, my Department has published a Statement of Strategy 2011-2014, which is available on the Department's website – [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

A full list of Programme for Government commitments for which my Department has lead responsibility is included as an Appendix to the Statement of Strategy. The Strategy is fully aligned with the Government for National Recovery Programme 2011 - 2016 and the commitments contained in the EU-IMF Programme of Financial Support. By its nature, the Statement is a high level document setting out how the Department plans, during the three year period to 2014, to implement the Government's high level policy objectives and Programme for Government commitments, and progress its longer term policy goals, as set out in the relevant National Strategies. The Department reported on progress in implementing its Strategy, including Programme for Government commitments, in its 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports (also available on [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie)).

In addition, an integrated annual progress report, under the Public Sector (Croke Park) Agreement 2010-2014 for my Department and its agencies, is available on my Department's website for both 2011 and 2012 and they report progress on certain Programme for Government commitments. My Department also contributes to central reporting on specific Programme for Government commitments, as reflected in the Programme for Government: Annual Report 2012, Year 1: Stability and Programme for Government: Annual Report 2013, Year 2: Rebuilding, which are both available on the website of the Department of the Taoiseach.

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

777. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34695/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Day-to-day operations in agencies under the aegis of my Department are a matter for management in each agency. Accordingly, the information requested is not available in my Department. A detailed breakdown of expenditure by each agency is contained in their respective annual reports, the latest versions of which are available in the Library of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

### Planning Issues

778. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the up-to-date position on the report on bonds, insurances and other methods of collateral used by the construction industry in relation to estates that have not been taken in charge by the local authority; if legislation will be necessary to ensure that local authorities will be able to draw down such funding; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34707/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** Conditions attached to planning permissions for residential development must require the giving of sufficient security prior to commencement of development. The form of the bond, the amount and the terms attached are matters for the planning authority concerned and the arrangement entered into must enable the planning authority, without cost to itself, to complete the necessary services (including roads, footpaths, water mains, sewers, lighting and open space) to a satisfactory standard in the event of default by the developer.

My Department recently provided updated guidance to local authorities in relation to bonds.

This included, *inter alia*, guidance on:

- purpose of securities;
- types of securities;
- requirements for securities;
- default events;
- securities in phased developments;
- assessment of security mechanisms;
- computation of bonds; and,
- release of bonds.

This guidance is available on my Department's website at [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

Information on bonds held by local authorities may be obtained from the authority concerned.

### **Housing Adaptation Grants Funding**

779. **Deputy Dominic Hannigan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if his attention has been drawn to an application from Meath County Council for increased funding for its housing adaptation grants scheme; when it will receive a response to its application; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34720/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** An application for additional funding in respect of the suite of Grants for Older People and People with a Disability has been received from Meath County Council. I am keeping the funding of the housing adaptation schemes under active review and expect to contact all local authorities in regard to their allocation by the end of this month.

*Questions Nos. 780 and 781 answered with Question No. 742.*

### **Illegal Dumping**

782. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of illegal dumping in the State in 2012. [34840/13]

816. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of illegal dumping here in 2012. [35275/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 782 and 816 together.

Enforcement action in relation to illegal dumping is a matter for the relevant local authority concerned and also the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Enforcement (OEE), which supervises the environmental protection activities of local authorities. The cost of illegal dumping for 2012 is not collated by my Department as it includes local authority

enforcement, disposal and legal costs and also involves costs for other State agencies such as An Garda Síochána.

My Department, however, provides funding to support waste enforcement activity. In 2012, provision of €10,360,278 was made to support the work of a network of local authority enforcement officers, while €2,100,000 was provided to support the work of the OEE.

### **Waste Management Issues**

783. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his views on a system where income from the collection of recyclables can be raised for local government as there is a similar system in the North of Ireland and if a similar system was implemented, the estimated revenue that could be earned from it. [34841/13]

817. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has looked at a system where income from the collection of recyclables can be raised for local government as there is a similar system in the North of Ireland; and, if a similar system was implemented, the estimated revenue that would be earned from same. [35276/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 783 and 817 together.

The regulation and enforcement of waste collection are the responsibility of the relevant local authority under sections 33, 34 and 35 of the Waste Management Act 1996. Under section 60(3) of the Act I am precluded from exercising any power or control in relation to the performance by a local authority, in particular circumstances, of a statutory function vested in it. The vast majority of local authorities have exited the waste collection market. A Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) published by my Department in July 2012 considered the introduction of franchise bidding by local authorities for household waste collection. This approach has been adopted in other EU Member States, whereby a local authority or group of authorities invite tenders from private operators to bid for the exclusive right to collect waste or certain streams of waste within their functional area. The RIA identified a number of risks associated with such an approach and ultimately made the recommendations to preserve the current market structure of side by side competition and to strengthen the regulation of household waste collection.

I published A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland in July 2012. The publication of the policy, which is available on my Department's website, confirmed the retention of side by side competition in the household waste collection market and also brought much needed policy certainty to the waste sector, particularly in terms of facilitating planning and investment decisions.

### **Dormant Accounts Fund Administration**

784. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total amount of funds in dormant accounts; the amount being transferred in the past three years; the amount expected to be transferred in 2013; and the way this money will be used. [34843/13]

808. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government when he intends to resume disbursement of funds from the dormant ac-

counts fund, DAF; if he will provide an update on the current status of money in the account, including the current balance; the amount that was disbursed in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the amount added to the DAF in each of those years to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35169/13]

818. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total amount sitting in the dormant accounts fund; the amount that has been transferred in the past three years; the amount expected to be transferred in 2013; and the way this money will be used. [35278/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 784, 808 and 818 together.

Under the Dormant Accounts legislation, balances on dormant accounts with banks, building societies and An Post and the net encashment value of certain life assurance policies are paid into the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF), which is managed by the National Treasury Management Agency. The primary purpose of the legislation is to reunite the original account holders with their moneys, including all interest due. In addition, the legislation also provides that disbursements from the fund may be made for charitable purposes or for purposes of community benefit.

The gross inflows into the Dormant Accounts Fund for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and to end May in 2013 were €39.8 million, €44.2 million, €45.4 million and €43.7 million, respectively. Amounts reclaimed by account holders in the same years are €20.3 million, €24.3 million, €22 million and to end May 2013, €8 million. The amount of funding disbursed from the Dormant Accounts Fund by the National Treasury Management Agency for existing projects was €8.4 million in 2011, €4.16 million in 2012, and to end May in 2013, €37,556. The Net Value of the Dormant Accounts Fund (uncommitted funds) at the end of May 2013 was €128 million. Further details of all inflows, outflows and liabilities on the Fund can be found in tabular form at <http://www.environ.ie/en/Community/DormantAccounts/PublicationsDocuments/FileDownload,26542,en.doc>.

I have allocated €6.385 million for Dormant Accounts Measures in 2013, which includes €2.835 million to cover once off costs such as health and safety training, personal protective clothing, and necessary equipment and materials that will be incurred by local authorities providing placements in the Department of Social Protection's (DSP's) Local Authority Employment Initiative, with the remainder to be used to meet existing contractual commitments.

The Disbursement Plan of 2009, put in place by the Dormant Accounts Board, will be replaced later this year by a new disbursement scheme in accordance with the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2012. My Department is consulting with relevant Government Departments and other stakeholders as appropriate in relation to drafting the disbursement scheme. The new scheme will be submitted to Government for approval and, in accordance with the 2012 Act, laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas. The 2012 Amendment also provides for the preparation of an action plan. The plan, which will also be subject to consultation, must indicate the programmes or types of projects that may apply for disbursement and the maximum funds available. Different amounts may be specified in the plan in relation to a particular class or classes of programme or project. Once the plan is adopted, a copy must also be laid before each House of the Oireachtas.

## Local Government Reform

785. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of implementing a gender quota of 40% on the new social economic committees. [34845/13]

819. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of implementing a gender quota of 40% on the new socioeconomic committees. [35280/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 785 and 819 together.

The operating guidelines for “front-runner” Socioeconomic Committees reflect the Government’s commitment on gender equality and require Socioeconomic Committees to aim for a minimum membership of 40 % men and 40% women. I foresee no specific cost in implementing the gender quota.

### Local Authority Charges Yield

786. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total revenue obtained from commercial water rates from 2010-2012. [34848/13]

787. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total cost of uncollected commercial water rates from 2010-2012. [34849/13]

820. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total revenue obtained from Commercial water rates from 2010 to 2012. [35283/13]

821. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total cost of uncollected commercial water rates from 2010 and 2012. [35284/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 786, 787, 820 and 821 together.

The year 2011 is the latest for which audited local authority Annual Financial Statement data are available. The information requested, sourced from Appendix 7 of the audited Annual Financial Statements, is set out in the following table.

Year	Accrued Income	Write Offs/Waivers
2010	€201,302,446	€16,346,048
2011	€195,560,330	€21,444,381

### Property Valuations

788. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the value of brownfield sites in the State; and if he will provide details of same. [34850/13]

822. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the value of brownfield sites; and if he will give details of same. [35285/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 788 and 822 together.

The information sought is not held by my Department.

### Local Government Reform

789. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of devolving planning powers back to councillors. [34852/13]

823. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the cost of devolving planning powers back to councillors. [35287/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 789 and 823 together.

Elected members have significant powers already available to them under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, particularly in relation to the forward planning function. Related costs fall to be met by the relevant planning authorities in the normal way. There are currently no legislative proposals which would alter these arrangements.

### Local Authority Funding

790. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown of local Government funding for each of the years 2008 to 2012 inclusive. [34854/13]

824. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown of local government funding for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. [35289/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 790 and 824 together.

The year 2011 is the latest for which audited local authority Annual Financial Statement data are available. The information requested, sourced from audited Annual Financial Statements, is set out in the following table.

-	2008 - €	2009 - €	2010 - €	2011 - €
Commercial Rates	1,358,374,584	1,408,720,936	1,430,177,414	1,449,665,579
Goods & Services	1,444,510,425	1,344,687,140	1,261,251,121	1,233,121,178
General Purpose Grant	1,000,329,864	836,579,777	760,816,780	704,934,748
Grants & Subsidies	4,916,500,494	4,088,983,845	3,281,721,175	2,706,229,226
Pension Related Deduction	0	72,722,668	86,114,618	84,011,819
Non-mortgage loans	606,154,614	496,602,532	308,772,443	577,927,101

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-	2008 - €	2009 - €	2010 - €	2011 - €
Other income	1,503,107,529	699,938,711	523,081,414	406,754,540
Total Income	10,828,977,510	8,948,235,609	7,651,934,964	7,162,644,191

### Local Authority Expenditure

791. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government to provide a breakdown of local government spending for each of the years from 2008 to 2012, inclusive. [34855/13]

825. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide a breakdown of local government spending for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 [35290/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 791 and 825 together.

The year 2011 is the latest for which audited local authority Annual Financial Statement data are available. The information requested, sourced from audited Annual Financial Statements, is set out in the following table.

-	2008 - €	2009 - €	2010 - €	2011 - €
Housing & Building	3,227,294,861	2,248,671,518	1,677,453,663	1,459,251,041
Road Transportation & Safety	3,007,414,665	2,368,108,378	2,014,299,911	1,574,850,033
Water Services	1,672,257,900	1,384,305,320	1,235,213,431	1,181,785,682
Development Management	801,170,946	525,698,887	495,140,005	456,060,839
Environmental Services	1,043,231,789	887,672,367	849,546,981	841,400,193
Recreation & Amenity	729,292,130	560,814,177	491,446,396	464,827,317
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	352,301,352	409,255,853	447,407,274	381,226,063
Miscellaneous Services	538,394,531	499,696,773	615,892,197	629,573,981
TOTAL	11,371,358,174	8,884,223,271	7,826,399,857	6,988,975,150

### Motor Tax Yield

792. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount of funding collected in each county through motor tax in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the amount redistributed to each county for road improvement works; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34922/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Income from motor tax in each county and through motor tax online is set out in the fol-

lowing table for the period from 2008 to 30 June 2013. Some 34% of the income from motor tax is allocated to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. The distribution of that income to each county for road improvements is a matter for my colleague, the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

### Gross Motor Tax Receipts by Licensing Authority 2008 – 30 June 2013

Licensing Authority	2008 - €	2009 - €	2010 - €	2011 - €	2012 - €	2013 (to 30 June) - €
Carlow	11,466,519	10,934,896	10,083,670	9,584,134	9,321,370	4,990,935
Cavan	12,211,054	11,645,970	10,649,902	10,170,516	9,786,016	5,033,418
Clare	20,940,921	19,848,442	18,669,347	16,948,293	15,976,442	8,202,650
Cork	77,016,232	70,580,674	66,768,693	61,434,453	58,902,357	30,807,855
Donegal	27,392,402	27,349,899	25,979,094	25,373,331	24,643,832	12,797,444
Galway	39,100,195	37,495,688	34,801,297	32,489,805	31,565,215	16,440,234
Kerry	24,003,652	22,545,569	20,222,833	18,160,310	17,492,776	9,127,160
Kildare	26,736,199	23,741,876	22,133,820	20,555,909	19,682,964	10,439,773
Kilkenny	16,236,157	15,203,721	14,192,540	13,289,838	13,084,078	6,981,014
Laois	12,785,390	12,072,177	11,352,302	10,877,515	10,772,229	5,635,580
Leitrim	5,673,433	5,476,294	5,203,306	4,859,321	4,707,170	2,368,374
Limerick County	22,920,947	21,463,391	20,421,126	19,573,382	19,674,471	10,526,482
Longford	7,046,160	7,067,227	6,472,094	6,286,391	6,194,931	3,172,858
Louth	17,544,242	17,075,182	15,678,609	14,776,746	14,419,506	7,344,978
Mayo	22,398,214	21,741,503	20,297,084	19,385,573	18,847,505	9,823,865
Meath	27,797,372	23,962,053	21,766,051	19,952,795	18,861,339	9,647,295
Monaghan	12,081,119	11,891,539	11,224,305	11,070,078	10,781,180	5,644,325
Offaly	12,609,361	11,705,768	10,827,842	10,279,514	10,264,885	5,334,925
Roscommon	10,745,562	11,543,618	10,788,815	10,177,855	10,016,423	5,330,767
Sligo	11,353,315	11,098,369	10,463,763	9,957,281	9,662,563	4,951,830
N.Tipperary	13,535,808	12,590,822	11,443,086	10,315,150	9,622,944	4,892,577
S.Tipperary	17,301,248	16,364,564	15,431,227	14,622,522	13,854,111	7,212,399
Westmeath	15,389,595	14,896,166	13,922,139	13,182,014	13,080,914	6,756,060
Wexford	26,413,451	23,953,921	22,317,211	21,671,290	20,624,094	11,589,758
Wicklow	20,360,629	19,611,844	18,197,952	16,559,758	14,928,307	7,576,280
Dublin City	132,532,166	120,656,664	112,129,772	101,627,430	94,588,061	49,180,764
Limerick City	7,915,230	7,798,425	7,061,233	6,561,285	6,093,939	3,238,466
Waterford City	7,566,163	6,950,649	6,147,867	5,537,332	5,543,859	2,974,742
On-line	387,568,684	428,982,755	438,165,831	466,168,984	533,330,921	303,949,509
Total	1,058,605,132	1,057,822,734	1,023,823,935	1,010,419,164	1,054,701,750	576,212,344

### Leader Programmes Funding

793. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the total amount of money drawn down in tabular form by each LEADER Company on a yearly basis since the scheme commenced. [34925/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The following table details the amount of Rural Development Programme funding claimed by each Local Development Company (LDCs) since 2009. The figures for May and June 2013 are subject to reconciliation as part of the quarterly claim to the European Commission and will not be available until late July.

LAG	Total spend 2009	Total spend 2010	Total spend 2011	Total spend 2012	Total spend to April 2013	Total Spend 2009 to 2013
Avonduh/ Blackwater Partnership Limited	€588,828	€1,319,474	€1,452,701	€1,212,830	€204,892	€4,778,725
Ballyhoura Development Limited	€742,929	€1,846,565	€2,130,312	€2,397,676	€733,942	€7,851,425
Carlow County Development Partnership Limited	€468,972	€1,236,529	€1,337,408	€904,679	€195,865	€4,143,453
Cavan/ Monaghan Area Partner- ship Ltd.	€260,089	€1,160,714	€1,395,631	€1,641,645	€366,728	€4,824,807
Clare Local De- velopment Company Limited	€723,484	€1,614,083	€2,119,277	€2,411,543	€745,854	€7,614,241
Comhar na nOileán Teoranta	€264,707	€677,847	€518,677	€1,105,149	€218,557	€2,784,937
Donegal Local De- velopment Company Limited	€617,719	€1,172,022	€1,796,013	€2,463,354	€210,706	€6,259,814
Fingal LEADER Partnership	€240,673	€524,900	€447,811	€412,008	€121,731	€1,747,124
FORUM Connemara	€234,588	€788,024	€513,962	€1,233,017	€306,102	€3,075,692
Galway Rural De- velopment Company Limited	€802,139	€1,614,501	€1,659,797	€2,057,692	€365,043	€6,499,173
Inishowen Development Partnership	€513,148	€851,918	€1,151,797	€1,586,557	€460,250	€4,563,670
I.R.D. Duhallow	€711,209	€1,521,751	€1,158,308	€2,069,346	€286,328	€5,746,942
Cill Dara ar Aghaidh Teoranta	€311,612	€580,700	€1,369,674	€1,277,935	€490,659	€4,030,580
Co Kilkenny LEADER Partnership Co Ltd	€573,070	€1,390,350	€1,693,199	€1,841,995	€466,989	€5,965,603

Questions - Written Answers

LAG	Total spend 2009	Total spend 2010	Total spend 2011	Total spend 2012	Total spend to April 2013	Total Spend 2009 to 2013
Laois Community & Enterprise Development Co Ltd	€361,114	€1,110,495	€1,146,117	€1,217,298	€311,407	€4,146,430
Leitrim Integrated Development Company	€561,255	€1,126,125	€1,051,690	€1,559,626	€606,590	€4,905,286
Longford Community Resources Limited	€551,684	€825,566	€999,436	€992,794	€296,927	€3,666,407
Louth LEADER Partnership	€405,594	€1,083,339	€984,538	€799,034	€227,349	€3,499,855
Mayo North East LEADER Partnership Co Teo	€810,361	€1,407,725	€748,616	€995,506	€192,305	€4,154,514
Meath Community Rural & Social Development Ltd	€855,557	€1,170,248	€1,405,591	€1,248,705	€702,011	€5,382,113
M.F.G. (Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta Teoranta)	€672,702	€1,568,791	€1,215,939	€0	€0	€3,457,433
North & East Kerry LEADER Partnership Teoranta	€519,853	€1,211,941	€1,028,322	€1,210,065	€491,399	€4,461,579
North Tipperary LEADER Partnership Company	€206,447	€1,355,480	€1,763,802	€2,158,895	€638,322	€6,122,945
Offaly Integrated Local Development Company	€591,069	€1,477,773	€1,340,573	€1,620,240	€525,091	€5,554,746
Roscommon Integrated Development Company	€726,597	€1,171,404	€1,625,844	€1,491,173	€250,275	€5,265,293
Sligo LEADER Partnership Co	€684,669	€2,029,730	€1,525,708	€1,401,569	€294,146	€5,935,822
South & East Cork Area Development Limited	€511,863	€1,109,984	€1,713,705	€1,365,379	€302,901	€5,003,832

LAG	Total spend 2009	Total spend 2010	Total spend 2011	Total spend 2012	Total spend to April 2013	Total Spend 2009 to 2013
South Kerry Development Partnership Limited	€695,783	€903,654	€1,167,358	€1,226,912	€604,305	€4,598,012
South Tipperary Local Development Company Limited	€427,001	€1,290,697	€1,441,884	€2,295,621	€729,961	€6,185,163
South West Mayo Development Company Limited	€734,501	€1,912,480	€1,570,841	€1,359,056	€353,414	€5,930,293
Waterford LEADER Partnership Limited	€458,389	€877,511	€1,936,376	€1,797,104	€734,592	€5,803,972
West Cork Development Partnership Ltd	€564,250	€1,759,581	€1,742,280	€2,030,581	€506,616	€6,603,307
West Limerick Resources Ltd	€487,510	€986,600	€900,345	€1,606,005	€503,152	€4,483,613
Westmeath Community Development Ltd	€386,169	€983,967	€766,212	€1,452,864	€129,699	€3,718,910
Wexford Local Development	€854,925	€1,602,255	€1,543,582	€1,454,707	€829,216	€6,284,685
Co Wicklow Community Partnership	€545,506	€991,118	€1,098,431	€1,118,600	€202,970	€3,956,624
Total	€19,665,964	€44,255,843	€47,461,759	€53,017,160	€14,606,294	€179,007,020

### Mortgage Arrears Proposals

794. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has prepared for an increase in demand in services from his Department as a result of upcoming developments such as the Central Bank's updated code of conduct on mortgage arrears and the Land and Conveyancing Bill; the targets that have been set for the banks regarding sustainable solutions, or other developments; the steps that have been taken to deal with any surge in demand; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34971/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** The Government is acutely conscious of the difficulties many households are facing in terms of mortgage arrears. Where any borrower, either from a local authority or from a private financial institution, is facing difficulties in meeting mortgage repayments, they should engage proactively and constructively with the lender to seek to achieve an agreed solution. The services of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service are also available to such borrowers and support is available through the Supplementary Welfare Al-

lowance Scheme. As part of the Government's implementation of the recommendations in the Keane Report my Department has developed a mortgage to rent scheme for households with commercial mortgages that:

- have had their mortgage position deemed unsustainable under a Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP), as provided for under the Central Bank's Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears;
- agree to the voluntary surrender of their home;
- do not have significant positive equity, and;
- are eligible for social housing.

Under the scheme, which was launched nationally in June 2012, a household with mortgage arrears goes from being a homeowner to becoming a social housing tenant of an approved housing body. The household voluntarily surrender their property to their lender who in turn sells the property to a voluntary housing body. The housing body becomes the landlord and the household remain in the family home.

Local authorities have long been the lenders of last resort servicing the housing loans needs of less affluent members of society. Section 34 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 provides local authorities with powers to deal flexibly with distressed borrowers, and they have demonstrated sensitivity over the years in this regard. My Department has issued guidelines to local authorities, based on the Central Bank's Code of Conduct, which continue the tradition of handling arrears in a manner sympathetic to the needs of the particular household, while also protecting the position of the local authority concerned. The Government's housing policy statement, published in June 2011, clearly identifies that the priority for Government will be to meet the most acute needs of households applying for social housing support. I am determined to ensure that the social housing programme optimises the delivery of social housing and the return for the resources invested.

The financial parameters within which we will be operating for the coming years rule out a return to large capital funded construction programmes. The Government is committed to responding more quickly and on a larger scale to social housing support needs through a variety of mechanisms, including through increased provision of social housing.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

795. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34981/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The information requested in respect of legal advice to my Department from outside the Office of the Attorney General in the period 2011 to date in 2013 is set out in the following table. This does not include matters associated with the Planning Tribunal.

Year	Name of Firm or Solicitor/ Barrister	Subject Matter/Nature of Work	Cost of Legal Advice - €
2011	Margaret Gray BL	The drafting of Regulations to comply with Articles 3(6) and 4(3) of EU Directive 2003/35/EC relating to Public Participation	7,622
2011	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Corrib gas pipeline/Foreshore licence drafting	77,822.82
2011	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Oriel Windfarm/Foreshore lease drafting	4,098.44
2011	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Emerald Bridge subsea telecommunications cable/Foreshore licence drafting	6,481.15
2011	Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Market Development Programme for Waste Resources - review of terms and conditions for a competition	312.00
2011	A & L Goodbody	Legal advice on tender and contract documentation relating to the provision of a Premium Rate Weather Service	10,374
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Emerald Bridge subsea telecommunications cable/Foreshore licence drafting	18,077.14
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Providence exploration surveys/Foreshore licence drafting	20,970.29
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Dublin Array Windfarm/Foreshore lease application	1,659.68
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Codling Windfarm/Foreshore lease	1,546.17
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Gaelectric Windfarm/Foreshore Licence application	3,365.36
2012	Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Market Development Programme for Waste Resources - review of terms and conditions for a competition	317.00
2012	McDowell Purcell Solicitors	Legal advice on Dublin Docklands Development Authority issues	6,654
2012	Eamon Galligan SC	Legal advice on new provisions under section 261a of the Planning and Development Act 2000	1,353
2012	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Provision of legal advice to the Pyrite Panel	6,127

Year	Name of Firm or Solicitor/ Barrister	Subject Matter/Nature of Work	Cost of Legal Advice - €
2013	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Emerald Bridge subsea tele- communications cable/Fore- shore licence	40,809.36
2013	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Providence exploration sur- veys/Foreshore licence	9,561.17
2013	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Illegal Structures on Foreshore	4,554.84
2013	Arthur Cox Solicitors	Arklow Windfarm/Foreshore lease	10,841.15

In addition to the payments listed, other contractual arrangements for services contained elements relating to ancillary legal advice, the cost of which is not separately identifiable.

### Local Authority Charges Application

796. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the amount outstanding in development levies to local authorities, on an authority-by-authority basis; if he will compare these with the outstanding levies that were payable six months ago and if there has been an improvement in collection; the local authorities that are charging interest on late payments and those that are not; the years to which these development levies relate; the advice he will give to local authorities in collecting such outstanding levies; the local authorities that are not meeting their statutory obligations to publish the amounts collected or owed in levies in their annual reports or give details of the way any levies were spent; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34991/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department provides the necessary statutory and policy framework within which individual development contribution schemes are adopted by each local authority. However, the adoption of development contribution schemes is a reserved function of the locally elected members of each planning authority. It is a matter for the members to determine the level of contribution and the types of development to which they will apply. Each planning authority is also required to include details of contributions received and contributions owing to it, together with information on how the contributions have been expended, in the statutory annual report of the authority.

As with all local charges, the invoicing and collection of any outstanding development contributions is a matter for the local authority concerned to manage, in the light of prevailing local circumstances and in accordance with normal financial procedures. Where any payments required in respect of development contributions are not settled, such payments may be pursued by the planning authority through the courts as a contract debt and, until such time as amounts outstanding are discharged in full, the conditions of the relevant planning permission have not been met and the development is unauthorised. With regard to charging interest on late payments, the enforcement of conditions attached to a planning permission, including conditions relating to the payment of development contributions, is a matter for individual planning authorities.

Information on amounts due is available on an annual basis with 2011 being the latest year for which audited information is available. Current debtors are amounts due within twelve months of the balance sheet date. Long-term debtors are amounts receivable more than twelve

months after the balance sheet date. The information requested on currently due development levies, sourced from Note 5 of the Annual Financial Statements, is set out in the following table. A breakdown in respect of long-term debtors is not available in my Department.

Authority Name	Year	Year
-	2010	2011
-	€	€
County Councils	-	-
Carlow	1,194,269	1,615,331
Cavan	2,130,464	1,765,836
Clare	6,123,354	7,837,202
Cork	8,102,098	7,340,102
Donegal	1,766,400	835,666
Fingal	129,602,378	115,144,987
Dún Laoghaire Rathdown	39,158,302	45,513,232
Galway	2,582,669	1,582,895
Kerry	1,214,667	1,414,918
Kildare	6,517,215	4,846,046
Kilkenny	4,562,682	4,828,476
Laois	1,572,496	826,046
Leitrim	1,721,346	1,638,305
Limerick	38,511,229	37,921,656
Longford	1,637,448	2,063,647
Louth	3,362,437	3,491,644
Mayo	10,332,760	10,759,094
Meath	13,336,842	13,249,426
Monaghan	959,163	446,778
North Tipperary	1,731,918	1,494,729
Offaly	3,139,423	3,162,351
Roscommon	14,243,971	14,666,283
Sligo	1,405,489	209,425
South Dublin	32,102,856	30,664,521
South Tipperary	1,917,858	1,112,729
Waterford	2,236,748	2,420,817
Westmeath	2,254,668	3,447,033
Wexford	12,540,881	11,149,819
Wicklow	4,441,807	4,382,246
City Councils	-	-
Cork	3,608,445	9,226,919
Dublin	33,522,893	38,470,033
Galway	4,770,533	4,213,201
Limerick	1,601,538	1,082,733
Waterford	924,236	1,202,889
Town & Borough Councils	-	-
Clonmel	433,969	176,517
Drogheda	4,446,077	4,103,062

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Authority Name	Year	Year
-	2010	2011
-	€	€
County Councils	-	-
Kilkenny	2,692,546	2,075,776
Sligo	1,424,463	154,530
Wexford	2,843,585	2,614,625
Arklow	2,202,522	836,467
Athlone	4,691,573	3,354,606
Athy	57,399	63,849
Ballina	511,035	431,106
Ballinasloe	744,170	717,417
Birr	950,892	278,708
Bray	682,843	1,062,104
Buncrana	178,661	203,245
Bundoran	155,757	155,757
Carlow	1,556,547	1,820,456
Carrick on Suir	172,337	162,483
Carrickmacross	19,700	11,351
Cashel	91,051	116,212
Castlebar	906,391	861,450
Castleblayney	366,865	357,221
Cavan	150,000	150,000
Clonakilty	728,493	685,982
Clones	30,955	44,625
Cobh	164,756	160,115
Dundalk	1,542,054	1,159,720
Dungarvan	244,327	241,785
Ennis	1,067,343	1,221,345
Enniscorthy	160,805	176,245
Fermoy	114,426	373,702
Kells	118,396	118,396
Killarney	346,138	220,515
Kilrush	8,830	4,719
Kinsale	291,157	296,178
Letterkenny	833,471	720,219
Listowel	124,015	180,816
Longford	2,311,823	2,224,181
Macroom	578,513	33,174
Mallow	668,802	420,820
Midleton	256,358	279,907
Monaghan	1,160,102	997,561
Naas	1,245,745	131,503
Navan	692,343	570,321
Nenagh	778,951	710,245

Authority Name	Year	Year
-	2010	2011
-	€	€
County Councils	-	-
New Ross	538,059	526,726
Skibbereen	207,114	186,579
Templemore	0	0
Thurles	1,317,328	843,581
Tipperary	490,577	12,902
Tralee	707,133	613,476
Trim	330,063	292,633
Tullamore	105,219	129,613
Westport	611,781	613,129
Wicklow	733,069	970,678
Youghal	391,265	348,713

### Leader Programmes Administration

797. **Deputy Michelle Mulherin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the position on an application to Mayo North East Leader Partnership by an organisation (details supplied) in County Mayo; when a decision may be expected; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35094/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** There are 35 Local Action Groups contracted, on my Department's behalf, to deliver the LEADER elements of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (RDP) throughout the country and these groups are the principal decision-makers in relation to the allocation of project funding. Mayo North East Leader Partnership (MNELP) is the Local Action Group contracted by my Department to deliver the Programme to the North East Mayo area including the area of Swinford. I have informed the Company of my decision in principle to allow a limited resumption of its activities under the Programme once contracts and administrative procedures have been agreed with my Department and put in place. My Department has issued a revised contract to MNELP and it is expected that the formalities will be completed very shortly. I understand that MNELP has yet to complete the project evaluation process in relation to this project. However, once the revised administrative procedures are fully operational the project will be fully evaluated. As the grant amount requested for this particular project is over €150,000, the project will then have to be submitted to my Department for final approval if it is successful in the evaluation stage.

*Question No. 798 answered with Question No. 762.*

### Water Services Provision

799. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if funding will be provided for Cork County Council to connect homes in an area (details supplied) in County Cork to the water mains supply in Riverstick; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35118/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Ho-**

**gan):** The Riverstick Water Supply Scheme was included for funding under the Serviced Land Initiative measure of my Department's Water Services Investment Programme 2007- 2009. In April 2009, my Department, following a review of the Serviced Land Initiative in light of developments in the economy at large, and in the housing market in particular during 2008, and having regard to the oversupply of housing in some areas, informed all local authorities that all existing approvals under the Initiative, for which contracts had not been signed or letters of intent had issued, were being withdrawn. However, authorities were also advised that where a water services authority was of the opinion that the continuation of an approved scheme for which contracts had not been signed was necessary for the proper development of the area, it was open to the authority to make a case to the Department by the end of May 2009 for the scheme to progress. No such case was made by Cork County Council in relation to the Riverstick Water Supply Scheme.

### Fire Service Issues

800. **Deputy John O'Mahony** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of hoax calls received by the fire brigade in each county in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012; the cost incurred as result of these calls in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35136/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The number of false alarm incidents attended by Fire Brigades within their area, broken down by malicious and good intent, for the years from 2007 to 2011, is set out in the following table. These data are based on fire statistics returns from each individual Local Authority Fire and Rescue Service. The statistical information for the year 2012 will not be available until later this year. The cost incurred as a result of these calls is a matter for the local authority concerned, and is not collected by my Department.

-	2007	2007	2007	2008	2008	2008	2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2011	2011	2011
-	Mali- cious	Good Intent	Total												
Ath- lone Town Coun- cil	20	88	108	15	88	103	6	71	77	18	109	127	21	63	84
Car- low County Coun- cil	17	84	101	16	55	71	15	80	95	19	59	78	41	55	96
Cav- an County Coun- cil	9	62	71	12	50	62	11	78	89	9	59	68	3	33	36
Clare County Coun- cil	65	117	182	59	101	160	31	118	149	35	132	167	24	75	99
Cork County Coun- cil	44	269	313	25	318	343	14	282	296	13	255	268	40	254	294

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-	2007	2007	2007	2008	2008	2008	2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2011	2011	2011
-	Mali- cious	Good Intent	Total												
Cork City Coun- cil	261	891	1152	228	752	980	212	665	877	298	621	919	214	498	712
Done- gal Coun- ty Coun- cil	14	39	53	15	78	93	12	59	71	18	87	105	26	102	128
Drog- heda Bor- ough Coun- cil	30	78	108	31	78	109	24	79	103	14	85	99	12	72	84
Dublin City Coun- cil	452	595	1047	824	869	1693	823	984	1807	876	1117	1993	847	453	1300
Dun- dalk Town Coun- cil	24	47	71	32	61	93	13	47	60	16	54	70	22	59	81
Gal- way Coun- ty Coun- cil	32	377	409	32	383	415	32	315	347	48	347	395	41	241	282
Kerry Coun- ty Coun- cil	50	26	76	29	28	57	38	37	75	41	24	65	35	24	59
Kild- are Coun- ty Coun- cil	28	174	202	15	192	207	13	188	201	8	134	142	19	131	150
Kil- ken- ny Coun- ty Coun- cil	53	112	165	35	111	146	31	111	142	20	129	149	17	111	128
Laois Coun- ty Coun- cil	10	108	118	13	111	124	3	119	122	3	104	107	7	97	104
Lei- trim Coun- ty Coun- cil	1	20	21	5	27	32	6	28	34	11	28	39	7	35	42
Limer- ick City Coun- cil	155	245	400	134	205	339	127	224	351	111	186	297	108	199	307

Questions - Written Answers

-	2007	2007	2007	2008	2008	2008	2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2011	2011	2011
-	Mali- cious	Good Intent	Total												
Limerick County Council	17	63	80	25	36	61	44	40	84	47	51	98	41	46	87
Longford County Council	5	27	32	10	56	66	3	67	70	5	61	66	20	43	63
Louth County Council	3	28	31	2	30	32	4	24	28	5	22	27	2	26	28
Mayo County Council	68	118	186	51	135	186	63	114	177	36	129	165	33	94	127
Meath County Council	29	266	295	29	266	295	31	208	239	33	219	252	20	241	261
Monaghan County Council	17	40	57	10	48	58	2	38	40	23	38	61	12	47	59
Offaly County Council	2	26	28	1	15	16	4	8	12	2	14	16	3	14	17
Roscommon County Council	25	81	106	4	35	39	4	63	67	8	45	53	2	62	64
Sligo County Council	19	98	117	25	141	166	12	116	128	21	109	130	23	75	98
North Tipp- erary County Council	29	60	89	18	46	64	28	40	68	36	42	78	35	45	80
South Tip- perary County Council	56	145	201	38	135	173	32	105	137	39	78	117	36	98	134

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-	2007	2007	2007	2008	2008	2008	2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010	2011	2011	2011
-	Mali- cious	Good Intent	Total												
Water- ford City Coun- cil	53	132	185	51	103	154	36	119	155	44	86	130	66	80	146
Water- ford County Coun- cil	25	133	158	39	130	169	25	113	138	10	89	99	23	58	81
West- meath County Coun- cil	13	104	117	13	75	88	10	91	101	12	139	151	76	47	123
Wex- ford County Coun- cil	22	128	150	18	136	154	28	149	177	14	222	236	12	206	218
Wick- low County Coun- cil	16	52	68	41	180	201	36	166	202	23	131	154	14	102	116

### Regeneration Projects Status

801. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the position on Ballymun shopping centre, Dublin; and the future plans in place in view of the fact that it is in the National Assets Management Agency's control. [35159/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** Ballymun Regeneration Limited (BRL) and Dublin City Council are continuing to explore all options to further the economic objectives of the Ballymun Masterplan including the redevelopment of the privately owned Ballymun Shopping Centre and the adjoining lands owned by the Council. Planning permission for the redevelopment of the centre and the adjoining lands was granted in September 2009. The proposed redevelopment did not proceed at the time due to the prevailing economic conditions. However, the provision of commercial, retail and other services in Ballymun, and at this prominent site in particular, remains very important within the context of the overall regeneration programme. Dublin City Council continues to liaise with the parties who hold an interest in this site with the objective of progressing the proposed redevelopment.

### Regeneration Projects Status

802. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government his plans for empty retail units in Ballymun. [35160/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** My Department has provided over €700 million to support

the Ballymun regeneration programme to date. This has facilitated the demolition of all but one of the towers and nearly all the flat blocks as well as the construction of over 2,900 social, voluntary, private and affordable residential units, new local parks and playgrounds, neighbourhood centres and a new traditional style main street. The programme has also provided state of the art community facilities, such as the Axis theatre, the Leisure Centre and Civic Centre. This project has now moved into its completion phase and my Department's priority is to ensure that the remaining housing need is met while the investment to date is fully protected. My Department understands that Ballymun Regeneration Ltd (BRL) currently has three empty retail units available in Coultrey. BRL has engaged an estate agent to let or lease these properties to interested parties with the objective of supporting and sustaining commercial and retail activity in Ballymun. The remainder of the empty retail units in Ballymun are not owned by BRL.

### **Departmental Staff Numbers**

803. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the increase in revenue that would be received from having one additional staff member employed in credit control in his Department. [35161/13]

804. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the number of persons in his Department who work on credit control issues. [35162/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 803 and 804 together.

My Department is a public body responsible for a wide range of programmes, including in the areas of housing, water services, environmental protection, local government services, and community and rural development. As my Department is not a commercial enterprise involved in the sale of goods and services as part of its normal business activities, it does not routinely create debtors or generate bad debts. Accordingly, my Department does not have a business requirement for a formal credit control function.

Each year, my Department's estimate, as set out in the Revised Estimates for Public Services published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, contains details of Appropriations-in-Aid which are receipts retained by my Department to offset gross expenditure; significant receipts also arise in respect of the Local Government and Environment Funds. These receipts are primarily receivable from other public bodies (for example, receipts in respect of EU co-financed programmes, payments by the Irish Aviation Authority in respect of services provided by Met Éireann and motor tax income from local authorities). No issues have arisen in relation to the timeliness of the relevant payments, in line with normal public sector accounting procedures; the work involved is part of the general financial management services provided in my Department.

### **Local Authority Charges Application**

805. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the revenue earned from charging commercial rates to permanent offshore structures. [35163/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for

commercial purposes, in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. That Act determines properties that can, and cannot, be considered for rating purposes. The Commissioner for Valuation has sole responsibility for all valuation matters, including determination under the Act of relevant property for the purposes of rates. The Valuation Act 2001 comes under the remit of my colleague, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. No estimate of potential rates revenue for offshore structures is available in my Department.

### **Local Authority Housing Rents**

806. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the revenue earned from removing the maximum rent level from local authority housing. [35164/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** The year 2011 is the latest for which audited local authority Annual Financial Statement data are available. The amount of income collected from housing rents by local authorities in 2011 was €315,205,241. Housing rents are set in accordance with a rent scheme adopted by each local authority. The making and amending of rent schemes is the responsibility of housing authorities as an integral part of their housing management functions. In this regard I have not issued any direction to local authorities in relation to maximum rents.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

807. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the action he will take following the publication of the EPA report in April 2013 on greenhouse gas emissions which stated that, even in a best case scenario, Ireland was at significant risk of not meeting its EU 2020 targets; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35167/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** As I indicated at a meeting with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht on 10 July 2013, while, under EU law, Ireland faces a challenging greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for 2020, one of the priorities in initiating the policy development process in which we are now engaged was to identify and adopt the additional measures necessary to ensure 2020 compliance, and to progress our own agenda on effective transition to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050. I look forward to receiving the Committee’s report in due course and I will consider it fully in finalising future climate policy.

*Question No. 808 answered with Question No. 784.*

### **Dormant Accounts Fund Administration**

809. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there has been any analysis of how much the dormant accounts fund would benefit in the event of the relevant legislation being extended to credit unions and the

reason this sector remains outside that legislation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35170/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department has not carried out an analysis of the benefit of adding dormant Credit Union accounts to the Dormant Accounts Fund. In practical terms, increasing the amount available in the Fund does not necessarily allow for the introduction of new dormant accounts measures or programmes. While applying the provisions of the dormant accounts legislation to credit union accounts could increase the size of the Fund, Government Departments and agencies must source monies for dormant accounts programmes and measures from their Exchequer allocation in the same way as with any other funding programme. When the moneys expended on dormant accounts measures and programmes are reimbursed from the Dormant Accounts Fund, the refund is to the Exchequer rather than to the spending Department. For this reason, dormant accounts expenditure is subject to the same constraints within Departments as any other spending programme. In addition, expenditure on new dormant accounts measures or programmes would serve to increase Government debt levels as money disbursed from the Dormant Accounts Fund belongs to the account holder, who can reclaim it at any time, and not to the State. Consequently, every euro spent from the Fund is regarded in accounting terms as a potential Government liability.

### **Water and Sewerage Schemes Funding**

810. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide funding for Kerry County Council for group sewerage schemes in County Kerry in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35190/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I refer to the reply to Question No. 428 of 14 May 2013 which outlines the position in relation to group sewerage schemes in Kerry.

### **Wastewater Treatment Issues**

811. **Deputy Michael McNamara** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the statutory basis on which a local authority can decline to take in charge an on-site wastewater treatment plant when requested to do so by the majority of owners of the houses involved in accordance with section 180(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000. [35192/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 applies to estates which have been granted planning permission and includes the construction of two or more houses (which as defined in the Act includes apartments) and the provision of new roads, open spaces, car parks, sewers, water mains or drains. In relation to estates which have been completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority in accordance with the permission, section 180 provides that the planning authority must, if requested to do so by the developer or by the majority of the qualified electors who are owners of the houses involved, initiate the procedures in section 11 of the Roads Act 1993 for declaring the road(s) to be public roads, for whose maintenance the local authority will then be responsible. Section 11 of the Roads Act empowers a local authority, by order, to declare any road over which a public right of way exists to be a public road. Before making an order the local authority must be satisfied the road

is of general public utility, consider the financial implications of taking the road in charge and consult with the public/consider any objections received. The consideration of the objections and the making of the order declaring the road to be a public road is a reserved function, so that the decision whether to take the road in charge is ultimately one for the discretion of the elected members.

In relation to estates which have not been completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority and enforcement proceedings have not been commenced within the relevant period section 180 also provides that the planning authority must, if requested to do so by the majority of the owners, initiate the procedures in section 11 of the Roads Act. However, in this case the section provides that the provision in section 11 of the Roads Act requiring the authority to consider the financial implications of taking the road in charge is to be disregarded. Section 180 also provides that where a planning authority, in complying with section 180, makes an order under section 11 of the Roads Act, it must also take in charge any open spaces, car parks, sewers, water mains, or drains within the attendant grounds of the development.

Section 180 was amended in the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 to provide that a planning authority may take in charge an unfinished estate, at the request of the owners of the housing units, at any time after the expiration of the planning permission, in situations where enforcement actions have commenced or where the planning authority consider that enforcement action will not result in the satisfactory completion of the estate by the developer. Planning authorities have also been empowered to take in charge part of an estate or some, but not all, of the facilities in an estate.

### **Wastewater Treatment Issues**

812. **Deputy Michael McNamara** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if local authorities are exposed to a liability if they did not carry out prescribed reviews of discharge to waters authorisations for private wastewater treatment plants which were subsequently found to be dysfunctional and-or non-compliant.. [35193/13]

813. **Deputy Michael McNamara** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if all local authorities had carried out reviews of all section 4 discharge to waters licences by 22 December 2012; if the EPA had carried out reviews of all municipal wastewater treatment plants by 22 December 2012; if there is any obligation to carry out such reviews; if the European Commission has requested information from Ireland on these issues; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35194/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 812 and 813 together.

The Environmental Protection Agency is the statutory body responsible for the supervision of wastewater discharges from local authority wastewater treatment plants. The Agency is also the statutory body for investigating complaints of pollution and for the enforcement of environmental legislation in Ireland. Details of all prosecutions taken by the Agency for pollution incidents and details of its enforcement activities are published on the Agency's website. Regulation 11 of the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 requires that not later than 22 December 2012, the terms of every authorisation, including licences issued under Section 4 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977, be examined and a determination made as to whether the authorisation-licence requires to be reviewed. In accordance with Regulation 13, it is an offence not to comply with a requirement of the regulations.

All local authorities have completed their examination of Section 4 licences and have determined whether a review is required. While the majority of these reviews were completed by 22 December 2012, I understand that a number are still ongoing. In this regard, the Local Government (Water Pollution) Regulations 1978 and 1992 set down a procedure for reviewing Section 4 licences which provides for a requirement for statutory notices, time periods to respond to such notices and an appeals mechanism to An Bord Pleanála. The European Commission does not ordinarily request information regarding these issues but may make enquiries in relation to specific cases.

### **Departmental Funding**

814. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will increase, as a matter of urgency, Kerry County Council's 2013 housing grants allocation that was reduced by 56% on the 2012 allocation; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35195/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** An application for additional funding in respect of the suite of Grants for Older People and People with a Disability has been received from Kerry County Council. I am keeping the funding of the housing adaptation schemes under active review and expect to contact all local authorities in regard to their allocation by the end of this month.

### **Litter Pollution Issues**

815. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if county councils have the power to compel the owners of shopping centres to ensure the shopping centre environs are kept free of litter and rubbish bins therein are regularly emptied; if he will outline the relevant sections of legislation regarding same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35196/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Section 16 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 empowers local authorities to require the taking of special measures to prevent or limit the creation of litter by certain operations, including shopping centres. In addition, section 57 of the Protection of the Environment Act 2003, which amended section 21 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997, conferred powers on local authorities to make bye-laws for the purposes of preventing the creation of, and controlling, litter within their functional areas. These bye-laws can require the occupiers of specified premises or classes of premises to take such measures as are deemed necessary by the local authority to prevent or limit the creation of litter at or in the vicinity of such premises and provide for its removal. The role of my Department is to provide the legislative framework within which to combat litter pollution and in that regard, following a review of legislation, my Department is currently preparing legislative proposals that would provide for the introduction of an on-the-spot fine for incidents of fly-tipping or small-scale illegal dumping.

*Question No. 816 answered with Question No. 782.*

*Question No. 817 answered with Question No. 783.*

*Question No. 818 answered with Question No. 784.*

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*Question No. 819 answered with Question No. 785.*

*Questions Nos. 820 and 821 answered with Question No. 786.*

*Question No. 822 answered with Question No. 788.*

*Question No. 823 answered with Question No. 789.*

*Question No. 824 answered with Question No. 790.*

*Question No. 825 answered with Question No. 791.*

*Question No. 826 answered with Question No. 756.*

*Question No. 827 answered with Question No. 757.*

### **Property Valuations**

828. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the value of land purchased by individual local authorities for the purposes of social housing and other developments that have been transferred to the land aggregation scheme from 2008 to 2012. [35295/13]

829. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the value of land purchased by individual local authorities for the purposes of social housing and other developments that will be transferred to the land aggregation scheme in 2013. [35296/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O’Sullivan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 828 and 829 together.

The Land Aggregation Scheme was introduced in 2010 as part of revised arrangements for the funding of land for social housing purposes.

From the introduction of the Scheme up to the end of 2012 lands with an estimated total loan value of €147.1 million have been approved into the Scheme in respect of 68 sites in nineteen local authority areas. The figure of €147.1m includes €111 million in respect of loans which have been fully redeemed by local authorities and the funding recouped from my Department, under the original terms of the Scheme. The remaining €36.1 million is in the form of annuity loans with the Housing Finance Agency (HFA), for which local authorities are making repayments to the HFA, and recouping these payments from my Department.

To date in 2013, four sites with an estimated annuity loan value of €13.4 million have been approved into the Scheme.

### **Local Authorities Management**

830. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the local authorities that use the Agresso accounting system; if cost savings could be made by transferring to a system with international accounting standards. [35297/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Agresso financial management system is currently in use in all local authorities except for Cork and Wexford County Councils and the town councils within these counties, and Dublin and Cork City Councils.

I am satisfied that the financial management systems in use in the local government sector allow financial management and accountancy functions to be undertaken and operated in a cost-effective manner and in line with best practice in financial management and modern accounting standards.

The Local Authority Accounting in Ireland Code of Practice, issued under Section 107 of the Local Government Act 2001, is available on my Department's website at [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

### Local Authority Banking Issues

831. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide details of bank overdrafts and the interest paid on these for individual local authorities for the years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. [35298/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authority borrowing is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001; borrowing is a reserved function under Section 106 and requires the sanction of the appropriate Minister. Borrowing proposals, including overdrafts, must be submitted to the relevant Minister together with a resolution of the local authority members approving the proposed borrowing. The extent to which recourse to overdraft is used by local authorities for normal operational purposes is dependent on the relative timing of income receipts from their various revenue sources and expenditure in respect of their current and capital programmes. The year 2011 is the latest for which audited information is available. Information requested in respect of overdrafts, sourced from audited Annual Financial Statements, is set out in the following table.

Information in relation to the amount of overdraft interest paid by each local authority is not available in my Department.

-	2008	2009	2010	2011
-	€	€	€	€
Carlow County Council	1,136,620	4,164,593	2,538,060	0
Cavan County Council	3,685,516	1,688,788	2,048,699	0
Donegal County Council	33,440,470	23,773,495	16,589,309	8,025,491
Fingal County Council	2,840,169	0	0	63,356
Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	0	2,496,063	0	0
Galway County Council	12,542,390	19,364,968	17,338,634	2,978,883
Kerry County Council	2,195,576	593,445	0	4,254,788

-	2008	2009	2010	2011
-	€	€	€	€
Kildare County Council	157,142	0	1,009,493	5,528,463
Kilkenny County Council	1,082,161	0	0	0
Laois County Council	4,421,467	11,228,681	5,377,506	0
Leitrim County Council	201,687	0	1,985,209	1,063,085
Limerick County Council	0	0	1,151	0
Longford County Council	2,294,044	0	1,375,574	3,221,987
Louth County Council	0	1,045,475	0	1,780,594
Mayo County Council	28,486,445	26,748,385	12,949,306	14,496,911
Monaghan County Council	4,035,035	592,905	969,868	170,540
North Tipperary County Council	644,770	22,474	1,700,978	202,253
Offaly County Council	0	0	87,992	1,395,496
Roscommon County Council	1,816,823	2,653,182	3,711,432	1,750,046
Sligo County Council	9,561,660	8,824,004	929,736	5,868,304
South Tipperary County Council	0	0	101,412	0
Waterford County Council	3,109,390	0	0	0
Wexford County Council	1,092,347	7,564,132	6,362,228	10,250,971
Wicklow County Council	0	4,738,291	15,403,388	11,029,208
Cork City Council	816,944	4,428,913	2,941,504	0
Dublin City Council	41,636,443	28,534,987	0	0
Galway City Council	0	0	464,085	0
Limerick City Council	0	0	1,279,876	0
Waterford City Council	725,871	0	848,998	5,489,653
Drogheda Borough Council	51,906	0	0	0

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-	2008	2009	2010	2011
-	€	€	€	€
Arklow Town Council	0	159,697	1,314,249	552,955
Athlone Town Council	0	0	520,065	0
Ballinasloe Town Council	0	186,688	0	0
Bray Town Council	2,281,548	0	4,788,900	3,489,841
Carlow Town Council	251,078	0	286,066	0
Clones Town Council	745,502	386,683	0	0
Cobh Town Council	0	204,859	285,152	0
Dundalk Town Council	646,223	1,852,583	0	1,814,549
Dungarvan Town Council	3,993,324	4,777,558	4,016,224	4,668,111
Ennis Town Council	19,577	0	0	0
Kells Town Council	0	0	7,171	58,929
Killarney Town Council	91,973	274,216	0	0
Letterkenny Town Council	5,810,279	6,008,965	1,777,587	2,377,418
Monaghan Town Council	0	0	0	216,372
Navan Town Council	0	159,968	0	0
Templemore Town Council	22,861	9,230	0	0
Tralee Town Council	0	66,670	1,828,016	0
Trim Town Council	0	0	0	108,482

\* The table shows only those Councils with overdraft balances in their Annual Financial Statements during the period specified in the question.

### Local Authorities Management

832. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the savings that can be made through shared services with other local authorities. [35299/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Ho-**

**gan):** Local authorities have identified total savings of €839 million since 2008. In the period since the preparation of the Local Government Efficiency Report, from 2010 to end 2012, the savings achieved and projected are reported at €561 million. The majority of the efficiency savings identified relate to staffing reductions and procurement.

Shared services have been identified in the Local Government Efficiency Review and the Public Service Reform Plan as an important opportunity to make further savings in administrative costs, while streamlining and improving service delivery without impacting on front-line services.

To drive the reform agenda, and in particular shared service initiatives, in the local government sector, a dedicated Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established which reports to a high-level Oversight Group.

Overall, 31 operational areas are being examined for potential as a shared service or other collaborative approach that may provide efficiencies. The PMO has adopted a comprehensive methodology for the development and evaluation of projects including, gathering and analysing baseline data, business case preparation and peer review of business cases.

Treasury Management, Payroll, Transactional HR and Procurement have been prioritised in the shared services programme in the short to medium term. It is estimated that annual savings of the order of €6.4 million could be achieved (excluding procurement) from these projects. The figures will be subjected to third-party validation as part of the project processes.

In relation to procurement, the project is being led and co-ordinated by Kerry County Council as the lead authority in the Local Authority National Procurement Office. Since 2010, local authorities have reported procurement savings of approximately €109 million. Kerry County Council is working with the new Chief Procurement Officer in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and further savings of between €16.25 million and €19.5 million have been targeted for the sector in 2013.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

833. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the savings achieved when acting up arrangements are ceased within his Department. [35300/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** To ensure the efficient discharge of the business needs of my Department, four officials are in receipt of acting up allowances for the performance of higher duties. I am satisfied no significant savings would be achieved by the cessation of the very limited acting up arrangements currently in place.

### **Fire Stations Provision**

834. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government further to Parliamentary Question No. 837 of 16 April 2013, if this project is still envisaged to start in quarter 3 of 2013; the total amount of funding that is in place in order for

this project to be completed; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35344/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Proposals for a new fire station for Waterford City were approved in principle under the 2006 fire service capital programme and my Department approved Waterford City Council to progress the project to final design stage in 2010. I understand that the tender process for the fire station is at evaluation stage by Waterford City Council and the construction work is on target to commence during quarter three of 2013. Funding of €2 million has been allocated from the Fire Services 2013 capital budget significantly to progress the building of this resource. Further funding will be required from my Department's fire capital budget in the coming years to complete the construction of Waterford City's new fire station.

*Question No. 835 answered with Question No. 58.*

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

836. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if there has been an analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions from Ireland's three peat burning power stations and how this contributes to carbon emissions; what those emissions are on an annual basis from 2007 to date per station; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35389/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I have no function in regard to the operation of the energy facilities in question. Overall responsibility for the energy sector rests with my colleague, the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, while the Environmental Protection Agency compiles Ireland's annual greenhouse gas emissions inventories and projections.

### **Public Procurement Contracts Tenders**

837. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government further to Parliamentary Question No. 318 of 9 July 2013, if the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' pounds have been tendered in line with public procurement procedure or if a framework agreement is in place, in view of the fact that pounds run by the ISPCA cost over €1.1 million to operate each year. [35405/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Control of Dogs Acts, 1986 and 1992, place statutory responsibility for dog control on local authorities. The tendering process referred to is a matter for each local authority.

### **Local Authority Funding**

838. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide by local authority the expected annual increase and-or decrease in revenue when local authorities replace the local government fund contribution with the new local property tax; if he will include the amount of revenue for both the LGF and the LPT; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35444/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The local government funding model will change considerably in 2014. Under the Fi-

nance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012, commencing in 2014 the Minister for Finance will pay into the Local Government Fund an amount equivalent to the Local Property Tax paid into the Central Fund during that year; this revenue will be allocated to local authorities from the Fund. In addition, the establishment of Irish Water and its financial relationship with the local government sector will have a considerable impact on local authority financing.

The Government has indicated an intention to move, from 2014, to 80% retention of all Local Property Tax receipts within the local authority area where the tax is raised. The remaining 20% of the tax collected nationally will be redistributed on an equalised basis to local authorities within the context of the annual allocations of General Purpose Grants. The approach used to allocate the 20% of Local Property Tax revenue available for equalisation will depend on factors such as overall yield and yields at individual local authority level. The priority will be to support those local authorities with weaker funding bases.

The details concerning Local Property Tax and Local Government Fund revenue for local authorities will be decided in the context of Budget 2014.

I expect the Local Property Tax to have multiple benefits, including a more sustainable and resilient system of funding for local authorities and therefore a sounder financial footing for the provision of essential local services; greater local scope for financial decision-making concerning service provision in particular, the inclusion of the local variation mechanism from 2015 will further increase the autonomy of local authorities; and a strengthening of democracy at local level with a more active relationship between local authorities and local electorates. A stronger democratic relationship and clearer lines of accountability can only have a beneficial impact on service provision from the perspective of the service user.

An important purpose of the changes to the funding of the local authorities is to place the local government sector on a more sustainable financial footing. The concept of financial sustainability should not solely be considered in terms of national recovery from our current economic circumstances over the short to medium term; longer-term viability and the connection with the citizen are also important elements. I am satisfied that the changes which are currently under way will deliver a model of funding which is sustainable in the broadest sense.

### **Public Private Partnerships Data**

839. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of public private partnership projects that have proceeded under traditional procurement methods and the cost of each project. [35454/13]

840. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of public private partnership water infrastructure project private investors and the project in which they invested. [35455/13]

841. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide the experience to date of the design, build and operate model advantages of public private partnerships referred to on page 85 of the report on the value for money review of the water services investment programme 2007 to 2009. [35458/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 839 to 841, inclusive, together.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is a well established procurement option in the water ser-

vices sector but is only considered where it is clearly established that it provides best value for money. Local authorities are required to examine all potential options in an even-handed manner before determining an appropriate procurement option.

The overriding consideration is that all projects must deliver value for money and to this end each potential project is subjected to a Public Sector Benchmark (PSB) report. This report consists of a comprehensive risk adjusted costing of the project elements over the whole life of the project on the basis of conventional procurement and enables a comparison to be made on a like for like basis between traditional and PPP procurement to ensure that the best value for money procurement option is chosen.

A project is not categorised as a PPP project until the PSB report is completed and a decision is made on the procurement route. Therefore there are no Public Private Partnership projects which have proceeded under traditional procurement methods.

The following table lists all the water services PPP projects with a value in excess of €20 million and includes details of the PSB findings and the contractor engaged to carry out the project. The PSB exercise shows on average a 10% to 20% reduction in capital cost and a 5% to 10% reduction in O&M cost as compared to pre-tender estimated costs for a traditional procurement exercise.

Contractors are engaged to design, build and operate the plants and are not considered to be financial investors.

Local Authority	Scheme name	Description	Cost comparison/PSB report	Contractor
Fingal	Balbriggan / Skerries Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involved the construction, operation and maintenance of a sewage treatment plant with an initial capacity to serve a population of 30,000. There is potential to expand the capacity of the plant to serve a population of up to 100,000, if required. The plant became operational in September 2006.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender cost comparison with pre-tender estimate: - DBO capital cost 12% less than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO Whole Life Cost (WLC) is not available.	Earthtech Ireland Ltd
Kildare	Barrow Abstraction – Srowland Water Treatment Plant	This project involves the design and building of a water treatment plant followed by a 20 year operation and maintenance period. The contract commenced construction stage in 2011. The plant is intended to provide 31 million litres of drinking water per day.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 20.4% less than traditional procurement. - DBO WLC is 21.3% less than PSB WLC.	Veolia Water Ireland
Mayo	Castlebar Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a treatment plant with a capacity to serve a population of 35,000. The plant is now fully operational.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed.- DBO capital cost is 22% less than traditional procurement. - DBO WLC is 23% less than PSB WLC.	Veolia Water Ireland

Local Authority	Scheme name	Description	Cost comparison/PSB report	Contractor
Limerick City	Clareville Water Treatment Plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a water treatment plant to cater for the needs of Limerick city and its environs. The plant, which was officially opened in June 2010, has the capacity to treat around 100,000 cubic metres of water a day.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 13% less than traditional procurement. - DBO WLC is 12% less than PSB WLC.	Veolia Water/Ascon Consortium
Cork City	Cork Wastewater Treatment plant (Cork MD -Carrigrennan)	Construction of the treatment plant, with the capacity to serve a population of 413,000, was completed in September 2004. The plant is now in operation.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 - PSB. DBO WLC was virtually equal to pre-tender estimated WLC without retained risks being costed in the latter	Degermont Consortium
Donegal	Donegal (Group A) Wastewater Treatment plants	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of three sewage treatment plants (in Donegal Town, Ballyshannon and Rossnowlagh). The combined capacity of the plants is designed to serve the needs of a population totalling 22,000. The plants became operational in June 2008.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate: - DBO capital cost is 10.6% less than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available	Veolia led consortium
Dublin City	Dublin Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant (Ringsend)	Construction of the treatment plant, designed to serve a population of 1.64 million, was completed in June 2003. While the plant became operational, there were persistent odour problems which ABA, the private sector partner, had to address. Because of a conflict between the odour standards prescribed in the Environmental Impact Statement and the contract documents for the plant, the responsibility for solving the issue did not rest solely with the ABA consortium and the cost of rectifying the problem was borne by both the contractor and Dublin City Council. Odour control equipment now installed has eliminated odour nuisance in the locality.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 - PSB. Tender cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 15% less than traditional procurement.- DBO WLC 18.8% less than the pre-tender estimate.	ABA consortium

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Local Authority	Scheme name	Description	Cost comparison/PSB report	Contractor
Waterford County	Dungarvan treatment plant	Construction of the treatment plant, with the capacity to serve a population of 35,000, was completed in July 2007. The plant is now in operation.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 4.7% less than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available.	ABV consortium
Donegal	Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the design and building of a wastewater treatment plant followed by a 20 year operation and maintenance period. The contract commenced construction stage in 2011 and became operational in 2012. The plant is intended to cater for a population equivalent of 40,000 and a sludge treatment centre to treat up to 2,500 tonnes dry solids per annum.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 6.5% higher than the PSB. - DBO WLC is 3.5% less than PSB WLC.	Response Engineering/ Severn
Meath	Meath Villages Wastewater Treatment plant group	This project involves the provision, operation and maintenance of treatment plants for seven villages in County Meath. The combined capacity of the plants will serve the needs of a population of 5,000. All eight plants are now operational.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 6% more than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available.	EPS consortium
Westmeath	Mullingar Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a treatment plant with an initial capacity to serve a population of 30,000, increasing within three years to a capacity sufficient for a population of 55,000. The plant became operational in 2011.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 1.5% less than traditional procurement. - DBO WLC is 2.3% less than PSB WLC.	Veolia Water Ireland
Laois	Portlaoise Wastewater Treatment Plant	Construction of the treatment plant, which has the capacity to serve a population of 39,000, was completed in March 2009. The plant is now in operation.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 3% less than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available.	Earthtech/ Bowen Construction consortium

Local Authority	Scheme name	Description	Cost comparison/PSB report	Contractor
Fingal	Portrane/ Donabate/ Rush/Lusk Wastewater Treatment plant group	A design, build and operate PPP is being used to provide an updated and expanded main drainage system in North County Dublin, including a single waste water treatment plant at Portrane. It will cater for a population equivalent of 65,000 and have a two-year construction phase followed by a 20 year operation and maintenance period. The plant commenced construction in March 2010. The plant became fully operational in May 2012.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 17% less than traditional procurement.- DBO WLC is 46.7% less than PSB WLC.	Aecom Design Build Ireland (formerly Earthtech Irl.) and Siac Construction Ltd
Dún Laoghaire	Shanganagh Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance a of a treatment plant with a capacity to serve a population of 103,000. The plant became operational in 2012.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO Capital cost is 7.7% higher than the PSB. - DBO WLC is 13.3% less than PSB.	Consortium involving Sisk, Dragados and Drace
Sligo	Sligo treatment plant	Construction of the treatment plant, with the capacity to serve a population of 47,000, was completed in October 2008. The plant is now in operation	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 20% less than traditional procurement. - A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available.	Anglian Water International
South Tipp	South Tipperary treatment plant group	This project involved the upgrading of seven existing sewage treatment plants and the construction of five new ones. The combined capacity of the plants serves the needs of a population of up to 123,100. The plants became operational in 2007.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate: - DBO capital cost is 25% less than traditional procurement.- DBO WLC is 9.4% less than the pre-tender estimate.	Earthtech Ireland Ltd
Offaly	Tullamore Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the design and building of a waste water treatment plant over a two-year construction period followed by a 20 year operation and maintenance period. The plant is intended to cater for a population equivalent of 45,000. The plant became operational in May 2012.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 8.7% higher than the PSB.- DBO WLC is 8.1% less than PSB WLC.	EPS/Siac Construction Ltd

Local Authority	Scheme name	Description	Cost comparison/PSB report	Contractor
Waterford City	Waterford City MD Wastewater Treatment plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a treatment plant with the capacity to serve a population of 100,000. This plant is now fully operational.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 – PSB. Tender Cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 9.7% less than traditional procurement. - DBO WLC is 19.3% less than the pre-tender estimated WLC.	Anglian Water International
Wexford	Wexford Wastewater Treatment plant	Construction of the treatment plant, which has the capacity to serve a population of 30,000, was completed in September 2004. The plant is now in operation.	Pre-dates Departmental Circular L5/06 - PSB. Tender cost comparison with pre-tender estimate:- DBO capital cost is 6% more than the pre-tender estimate but the latter does not include for risk transferred to the DBO contractor.- A pre-tender estimate for the DBO WLC is not available.	Brent Consortium
Wicklow	Wicklow treatment plant	This project involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a treatment plant with a capacity to serve a population of 34,000. The plant is now operational.	PSB in accordance with Departmental Circular L5/06 completed. - DBO capital cost is 37% less than PSB.- DBO WLC is 30% less than PSB WLC.	Veolia Water Ireland Ltd

### Commercial Rates Valuation Process

842. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he is considering reviewing the way local authorities levy commercial rates on small and medium-sized enterprises; if he will be open to proposals on a fairer way of doing this; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35473/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Local authorities are under a statutory obligation to levy rates on any property used for commercial purposes in accordance with the details entered in the valuation lists prepared by the independent Commissioner of Valuation under the Valuation Act 2001. The Commissioner for Valuation has sole responsibility for all valuation matters, including the most appropriate method of valuation. The levying and collection of rates are matters for each individual local authority.

It is important to acknowledge that commercial rates, as a local tax, and the rating system generally are deeply embedded in the local government system. A large body of case law is well established and local authorities and ratepayers are, in the main, very familiar with, and generally accepting of, the operation and practice of the rating system. Rates are also a stable source of financing for local government which is not affected unduly by short-term changes in economic circumstances.

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I am acutely aware of the pressures on small and medium-sized businesses at the present time. Local authorities have been asked by my Department to exercise restraint or, where possible, to reduce commercial rates and local charges for 2013. Local authorities have responded well to such requests in recent years and in 2013, 87 out of the 88 rating authorities have either reduced their ARV or kept it the same as in 2012.

I have no immediate plans to amend the legislation governing commercial rates. I am, however, keeping the approach to rates by local authorities under active review, and am determined that every avenue will be pursued to optimise efficiency and contain costs in the local government sector.

### **Commercial Rates Issues**

843. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he envisages difficulties for businesses when local town councils are abolished in 2014 and where the application of the new local authority rate would result in an increase in their commercial rates bill; his proposals on how to avoid such a scenario; if so, if he will move to remove any uncertainty for businesses that are already struggling; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35474/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Government's Action Programme for Effective Local Government - Putting People First indicates that, in the context of reorganisation of local governance structures, the proposed new municipal districts will provide an opportunity to achieve a more coherent approach to rates and charges on a countywide basis, having regard to funding requirements and the need to support employment and business competitiveness.

The Action Programme proposes rates harmonisation to cater for differences between Annual Rates on Valuation (ARVs) of towns and counties. My approach will seek to ensure that rates harmonisation does not lead to significant net loss of revenue in individual counties with consequential implications for services and that any change in rates does not impact negatively on businesses and employment. It is important that local government reform drives down costs to business in order to protect existing jobs and sustain our economic competitiveness.

Definitive details, arrangements and procedures in relation to the funding of district level functions, and financial relationships between district and county levels, will be developed in the context of the new local government funding arrangements generally, implementation of the new sub-county system and preparation of the legislation in relation to the reform programme.

*Question No. 844 answered with Question No. 743.*

### **Illegal Dumping**

845. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he is concerned about the amount of used nappies that are being illegally dumped around the country, largely due to the weight of nappies after use and the subsequent cost that they add to household waste disposal bills; if he will engage with local authorities and the industry to try to find ways of preventing this; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35485/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Ho-**

**gan):** I am aware of the problems caused by illegal dumping, irrespective of the nature of the material being dumped. Illegal dumping is first and foremost a matter of individual responsibility and compliance with the law, rather than of product design. While enforcement action in this area is a matter in the first instance for local authorities, my Department has taken a number of actions to address the issue.

In 2012, I introduced a once-off Litter Enforcement Grants Scheme, targeted specifically at the issue of fly tipping and small-scale illegal dumping, encouraging local authorities to enhance their existing enforcement activities, through measures such as the purchase of CCTV equipment to allow for the effective monitoring of known litter black spots. I also launched, again in 2012, a national campaign in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, local authorities and the Environmental Protection Agency and supported by the print media, to highlight the economic value of our environment and encouraging the public to report all incidences of illegal dumping to the Agency's National Environmental Complaints hotline at 1850 365 121.

Existing penalties available under the Litter Pollution Acts for litter offences range from an on-the-spot fine of €150, to a maximum fine of €3,000 on summary conviction, and a maximum fine of €130,000 on conviction on indictment. The maximum fines for continuing offences are €600 per day for summary offences and €10,000 per day for indictable offences. A person convicted of a litter offence may also be required by the court to pay the local authority's costs and expenses in investigating the offence and bringing the prosecution.

Penalties for more serious dumping offences provided for under the Waste Management Acts are also substantial. Persons who are found to be responsible for, or involved in, the unauthorised disposal of waste are liable to a maximum fine of €3,000 on summary conviction and/or imprisonment for up to 12 months, and to a maximum fine of €15 million on conviction on indictment and-or imprisonment for up to 10 years.

Following a review of legislation in this area and notwithstanding the significant penalties currently in place, my Department is preparing legislative proposals that would provide for the introduction of a specific on-the-spot fine for incidences of fly-tipping or small-scale illegal dumping. I expect to be in a position to submit proposed Heads of a Bill in this regard to Government for approval shortly.

Enforcement action in relation to illegal dumping is a matter for the relevant local authority concerned and also the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Enforcement (OEE), which supervises the environmental protection activities of local authorities. My Department provides funding to support the activities of a network of local authority environmental enforcement officers and the OEE. Each local authority sets out an annual programme of action, detailing its planned enforcement action in relation to activities such as illegal dumping, towards which this funding will be utilised.

### **Non-Principal Private Residence Charge Collection**

846. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the reason a person (details supplied) in County Cork has to pay the non-principal private residence charge when they only have one house in their name; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35519/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The Local Government (Charges) Act 2009, as amended, broadened the revenue base of local authorities by introducing a charge on non-principal private residences. The charge is set

at €200 and liability for it falls, in the main, on owners of rental, holiday and vacant properties.

A residential property not in use by an owner as his or her sole or main residence is liable for the charge.

Under the Act, it is a function of a local authority to collect the Non-Principal Private Residence Charge and late payment fees due to it, and all charges and late payment fees imposed and payable to a local authority are under the care and management of the local authority concerned. In this regard, application of the legislation in particular circumstances is a matter for the relevant local authority. Guidelines have issued to local authorities in relation to the operation of the provisions of the 2009 Act; local authorities are expected to implement these guidelines appropriately.

### **Rental Accommodation Scheme Administration**

847. **Deputy Seán Ó Feargháil** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in view of the Government's reliance in part on the rental accommodation scheme and long term leasing arrangements to meet existing social housing demand, if he has investigated the long term implications for housing authorities and approved bodies where leases end and tenants must be rehoused if his Department is satisfied that at current rent levels sufficient funding may be generated to ensure that all properties leased may be bought up to standard on completion of the lease; if actuarial expertise has been used by his Department as part of the assessment process for these schemes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35535/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Jan O'Sullivan):** My priority is to maximise delivery of social housing to cater for the greatest level of need at good value. It is simply not possible to purchase or build anything like the same number of units as can be provided for through the Rental Accommodation Scheme and the Social the Leasing Initiative. Leasing offers an effective and efficient response, taking account not just of the availability of resources but also current market conditions and the need for a broader range of more flexible delivery mechanisms than the traditional methods of social housing provision.

Approved housing bodies and local authorities retain the tenant's rent contribution to cover the cost of their management and maintenance responsibilities in respect of leased dwellings. In addition my Department has agreed to fund up to 50% of the cost of reinstatement under a lease agreement in returning a property in the same condition as at the commencement of the lease, less fair wear and tear. I am satisfied that this level of funding is sufficient and reasonable to cover these risks.

My Department commissioned the Housing Agency to undertake a financial appraisal of the long-term costs of leasing in comparison with other social housing delivery options. A copy of this report, entitled Comparative Financial Appraisal of the Projected Long-Term Costs of Social Housing Delivery Mechanisms is available on the Housing Agency's website at [www.housing.ie](http://www.housing.ie).

### **Local Authorities Management**

848. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the arrangements currently in place for the storage, access and maintenance

of extensive local government records; the arrangements to be put in place for those town councils which are due to be abolished in respect of same; the overall annual cost for such storage specifically for this sector; if an evaluation has been made of such costs and if a regional-national storage system might reduce such costs; if there are implications for data security; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35536/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** My Department recognises the valuable local resource that archives represent and the importance of their proper management. Under section 80 of the Local Government Act 2001, it is a matter for local authorities, in the first instance, to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place for the proper management, custody, care and conservation of local records and archives.

### **Local Authority Banking Issues**

849. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government the arrangements to be put in place for Town Councils who have funds in a bank account such as Leixlip Town Council; if such funds can be spent prior to their abolition; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35539/13]

850. **Deputy Catherine Murphy** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if an assessment has been made of the bank balances of town councils due to be abolished; if so, which ones will have positive balances and what those amounts are in respect of each local authority area; the town councils that are in deficit; what those amounts are; the way it is intended to wind up their accounts; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35540/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 849 and 850 together.

As you are aware, the Action Programme for Effective Local Government - Putting People First sets out Government decisions for a range of local government reform measures, including the decision to replace town councils with a new comprehensive model of municipal governance to strengthen local government within counties and address weaknesses and anomalies in the current system.

While an assessment on the bank balances of town councils has not been undertaken, the level of balance on hand for normal operational purposes is dependent on the relative timing of income receipts from their various revenue sources and expenditure in respect of their current and capital programmes. Definitive details, arrangements and procedures in relation to the financial relationships between district and county levels will be developed in the context of the new local government funding arrangements generally, the implementation of the new sub-county system and the preparation of the legislation in relation to the reform programme.

In February 2009, my Department set out details of the financial requirements for local authorities relating to their overall management of capital and current accounts. These requirements flow directly from the requirement for Government finances as a whole to be managed in accordance with the Stability and Growth Pact, established under the Maastricht Treaty, and the associated limitation on budget deficits. The local government sector must not impact negatively on the General Government Balance (GGB) in any one year. The downturn in the economy and substantial pressures on Government funding generally require a sharp focus in all sectors, including local government, to ensure effective control and management of the

public finances. In order to stay within the overall GGB limit, it is necessary for local authorities to maintain both their current and capital accounts broadly in balance. The only restriction on local authorities is that, in aggregate, capital income equals capital expenditure in the year. Balance is only required at an overall level and this allows considerable scope for authorities to draw on their existing capital reserves as an element of their overall investment programme. The precise manner in which capital and current accounts are managed in order to achieve the overall balance necessary is a matter for individual local authorities.

It is a matter for every local authority, including town councils, to determine its own spending priorities in the context of the annual budgetary process, having regard to both locally identified needs and available resources within the GGB limits as set out.

*Question No. 851 answered with Question No. 766.*

### **Official Travel**

852. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36044/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** Agencies under my Department's aegis have been made aware of the ongoing requirement to adhere to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines concerning travel, subsistence and any associated expenses.

The day-to-day operations of State agencies are, in the first instance, a matter for the management and board of each agency. The Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies, which my Department has issued to all agencies under its aegis, provides that responsibility for ensuring that management operates effective and efficient internal controls rests with the board of directors or a committee of similar status. The code requires each State body to produce, as part of its annual reporting and accounts, a statement on the internal financial control which operates within the body. The statement is signed by the Chairperson and subject to audit review.

A detailed breakdown of expenditure by each agency is contained in their respective annual reports, the latest versions of which are available in the Library of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

### **Departmental Bodies**

853. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36216/13]

**Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (Deputy Phil Hogan):** The State agencies under the aegis of my Department are An Bord Pleanála; the Dublin Docklands Development Authority; the Environmental Protection Agency; the Housing Finance Agency; Irish Water Safety; the Housing Sustainable Communities Agency; the Local Government Management Agency; the Private Residential Tenancies Board; the Radiological

Protection Institute Ireland; and the Western Development Commission. Pobal, which is a not-for-profit company with charitable status, manages programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and the European Union. Under the Department's agency rationalisation programme, some 21 agencies have been reduced to ten through a series of measures. This will be further reduced to eight agencies, following the Government decision to wind up the operations of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority by the end of 2013 and to merge the Environmental Protection Agency and the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland by mid-2014.

### **Auctioneering Licences**

854. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if a company (details supplied) holds a current auctioneering licence in accordance with the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011. [34256/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** In accordance with the provisions of the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011, the Property Services Regulatory Authority is responsible for the regulation and licensing of property service providers - auctioneers/estate agents, letting agents and property management agents. I am advised by the Authority that the company referred to by the Deputy does hold a current licence.

### **Personal Insolvency Practitioners**

855. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of personal insolvency practitioners who have been appointed to date. [34761/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** No Personal Insolvency Practitioners have yet been authorised by the Insolvency Service of Ireland (ISI). The ISI has received over 90 applications from potential practitioners since the Personal Insolvency Act 2012 (Authorisation and Supervision of Personal Insolvency Practitioners) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No. 209 of 2013) were published in late June. These applications are being assessed and will be processed, as appropriate, by the ISI. The ISI expects to begin issuing authorisations for persons to act as Personal Insolvency Practitioners by the end of this month. The names of practitioners will be published as soon as they are authorised on the relevant register on the ISI's website, [www.isi.gov.ie](http://www.isi.gov.ie).

### **Garda Recruitment**

856. **Deputy Paschal Donohoe** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if the current existing panel of Garda applicants will be used for recruitment; if recruitment to the Garda will commence; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34220/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Following a review of the training for recruit gardaí, a revised training programme has been introduced in the Garda College. In light of this and in view of the fact that the existing Garda recruitment panel is now approximately five years old, it is unlikely that the existing panel will be used in any future recruitment. I believe it is important for an organisation such as An Garda Síochána to have some regular intakes of new recruits, even if on a modest scale. In this context, I am pleased to have received sanction from my colleague, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to hold a recruitment competition for An Garda Síochána. I will make arrangements with the Public

Appointments Service so that they can do the necessary preparatory work to deal with what is expected to be a very large number of applications later this year.

### **Referendum on Marriage Equality**

857. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the position on a referendum to provide for marriage equality in the Constitution (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34286/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I refer the Deputy to my response to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 421, 422 and 430 on 9 July 2013 in which I indicated as follows:

I am aware that the Convention on the Constitution published its third report, on its recommendation in relation to amending the Constitution to provide for same-sex marriage, on 2 July 2013. Following receipt of the Convention's reports by the Oireachtas, the Government has four months in which to respond to any recommendations in them, including saying whether it intends to hold a referendum on the matter, and, if so, giving a timeframe for the referendum. The referendum and its timing will be considered as part of the overall consideration by the Government of the third report. The position is unchanged.

### **Crime Prevention Officers**

858. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if the position of Garda crime prevention officer in the Tipperary Garda division has been filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34289/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have been informed by the Garda Commissioner that the Crime Prevention Officer position in the Tipperary Division has been vacant since 2010. I have been informed by the Commissioner that, notwithstanding this, the crime prevention function of An Garda Síochána has not been adversely affected as crime prevention and personal security advice is being provided by appropriate Divisional resources. Where more indepth specialist advices are required, the services of the Divisional Crime Prevention Officer from the neighbouring Waterford Garda Division are utilised.

### **Immigration Status**

859. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the requirements for the update of stamp 4 in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34313/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) that the person concerned has been instructed by his local registration officer, An Garda Síochána to make a written application to the General Immigration Division, INIS regarding his request for further permission to remain in the State. In the meantime, and to give the person time in which to make this application, he was given permission to remain until 3 October 2013. To date no application has been received from the person by INIS and I would strongly advise that he apply to INIS without delay. Queries on the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up to

date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### Passport Applications

860. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the procedure to be followed in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Dublin who has applied for a passport on behalf of their child, aged one and a half years, in view of the fact that the person became an Irish citizen from 11 March 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34314/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Where sections 6A and 6B of the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956, as amended, are applicable, a child born in the island of Ireland on or after 1 January 2005 has an entitlement to Irish citizenship if, at the time of the birth of the child, one of his or her parents had, during the period of four years immediately preceding the person's birth, been resident in the island of Ireland for a period of not less than three years or periods the aggregate of which is not less than three years. Periods of unlawful residence, periods of residence which were for the sole purpose of having an application for refugee status determined or periods of residence where permission was granted for the purposes of study are excluded from the determination of periods of reckonable residence. Entitlement of a child to Irish citizenship is determined by the Passport Office following receipt of an application for a passport on the child's behalf. If a child born in the State did not at birth have an entitlement to Irish citizenship, the parent or guardian or person who is *in loco parentis* to the child may lodge an application for naturalisation on behalf of the child if and when the conditions for naturalisation are satisfied. Queries on the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up to date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### Naturalisation Applications

861. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the current or expected position on residency entitlement for consideration for naturalisation in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare whose spouse is an Irish citizen; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34315/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The person concerned was granted temporary permission to remain in the State on 4 February 2005 for a two-year period, under the revised arrangements applicable to the non-EEA national parents of Irish parents of Irish-born children born in the State before 1 January 2005, more commonly known as the IBC/05 Scheme. This permission was renewed on a regular basis and is currently valid until 31 January 2015. A valid application for a certificate of naturalisation was received from the person referred to by the Deputy in May 2012. The application is being processed with a view to establishing whether the applicant meets the statutory conditions for the granting of naturalisation, such as good character and lawful residence, and will be submitted to me for decision as expeditiously as possible. As well as being a significant event in the life of its recipient, the granting of Irish citizenship through naturalisation as provided for in law is also a major step for

the State which confers certain rights and entitlements in the State and at European Union level. It is important that appropriate procedures are in place to preserve the integrity of the process. Queries on the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up-to-date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### **Naturalisation Applications**

862. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the procedure to be followed to regularise residency-eligibility for consideration for naturalisation in the case of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 15; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34316/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The person concerned, and her two dependent children, were granted permission to remain in August 2007 for an initial three-year period, valid to 14 August 2010. This permission was renewed for a further three-year period in August 2010, valid to 14 August 2013 in each case. In the decision letters issued to the persons concerned, dated 4 August 2010, they were advised of the conditions attaching to their permission to remain and of the requirement that they attend at their local Immigration Registration Office to have the registration process completed. At the point of such registration, a valid passport, or equivalent document, must be produced as evidence of identity and nationality. It would appear that the daughter of the person concerned was not in a position to produce a valid passport and, as a result, she was not registered. She was, I understand, requested to return to the Registration Officer with a valid passport. Given that she has not yet completed the registration process, it is recommended that the daughter of the person concerned should attend at her local Immigration Registration Office as soon as possible, with a valid in-date passport, so that the registration process can be completed. I am advised that a valid application for a Certificate of Naturalisation was received from the person concerned in November 2012. This application is at an advanced stage of processing and the person concerned will be informed of the decision made in her case in due course. There is no record of an application for a Certificate of Naturalisation having been received from the daughter of the person concerned. Queries on the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to the INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up-to-date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from the INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### **Naturalisation Applications**

863. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality further to Parliamentary Question No. 225 of 30 May 2013, if he will clarify if further application for naturalisation has been made on their behalf; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34318/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Further to Parliamentary Question No. 225 of 30 May 2013, I am advised by the Citizenship Division of the Irish Naturalisa-

tion and Immigration Service (INIS) that no new application for a certificate of naturalisation has been received from the person referred to by the Deputy. It is open to any individual to lodge an application for citizenship if and when they are in a position to meet the statutory requirements as prescribed in the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956 as amended. Queries on the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up-to-date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### **Sentencing Policy**

864. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the steps open to a person who has concerns based on an examination of judgments that a member of the Judiciary is consistently awarding lenient sentences in sexual assault cases; and if he will explain the way that judge can be called to account for their actions. [34374/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** As the Deputy may be aware, the courts are independent in the matter of sentencing as in other matters regarding the exercise of their judicial functions. A presiding judge is responsible for the administration of his or her court. The decision reached in any case and the factors taken into account in determining a case are matters for the presiding judge who is subject only to the Constitution and the law. The court is required to impose a sentence which is proportionate not only to the crime but to the individual offender, in that process identifying where on the sentencing range the particular case should lie and then applying any mitigating factors which may be present. An important safeguard lies in the power of the Director of Public Prosecutions to apply to the Court of Criminal Appeal to review a sentence she regards as unduly lenient. The Superior Courts have developed a substantial body of case law setting out general principles of sentencing. Sentencing practice is also being developed by a steering committee of the judiciary which developed the Irish Sentencing Information System (ISIS) website, a pilot initiative designed to gather information about the range of sentences and other penalties that have been imposed for particular types of offences across court jurisdictions. ISIS is being developed as a valuable tool not only for members of the Judiciary but also for lawyers, researchers and those concerned with the needs of victims and their families. The Judiciary, through the Judicial Research Office, is undertaking the detailed work of gathering and providing information via the website. This includes an analysis of sentencing in rape cases published in January last. The Deputy may also be aware that I have established a Penal Policy Review Group to carry out a review of all aspects of penal policy which I expect to report to me in the autumn. In addition, the Law Reform Commission has recently published a report on Mandatory Sentencing. The recommendations contained in the report will be fully considered in my Department together with the report of the Penal Policy Review Group when it has been finalised.

### **Garda Resources**

865. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34375/13]

866. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will

provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34376/13]

867. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34377/13]

868. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34378/13]

869. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34379/13]

870. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34380/13]

871. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34381/13]

872. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34382/13]

873. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a report on the Garda resources for an area (details supplied) in north Dublin; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34383/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 865 to 873, inclusive, together.

The Deputy will be aware that the Garda Commissioner is responsible for the detailed allocation of resources, including personnel, throughout the organisation. I have no direct function in the matter. This allocation of resources is constantly monitored in the context of demographics, crime trends, policing needs and other operational strategies in place on a District, Divisional and Regional level to ensure optimum use is made of Garda resources and the best possible Garda service is provided for the public. I have been informed by the Garda Commissioner that the areas referred to by the Deputy are policed from Raheny, Howth and Clontarf Garda Stations, all of which are in the Raheny Garda District. The personnel strength of each of these Garda Stations, broken down by rank on 31 May 2013, the latest date for which figures are readily available, is set out in the following table:

Rank	Raheny	Howth	Clontarf
Superintendent	1	0	0
Inspector	2	1	1
Sergeant	9	5	6
Garda	52	34	64
Reserve Garda	5	4	2
Civilian staff	6	1	1

Divisional resources are further augmented, where necessary, by a number of Garda National Units such as the Garda National Drugs Unit, the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Criminal Assets Bureau and other specialised units. Local Garda Management closely monitors the deployment of resources, patrols and operational strategies in place for the areas concerned, in conjunction with crime trends and policing needs of the communities to ensure optimum use is made of Garda resources and the best possible Garda service is provided to the public. The situation is kept under review and paramount consideration is given to the needs of residents. Garda Management is satisfied that a full and comprehensive policing service is being delivered to these communities and that the structures in place meet the requirements of the delivery of an effective and efficient policing service.

### Garda Vetting Applications

874. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if and when Garda vetting will be complete in respect of applications received from overseas visitors intending to visit Ireland to take part in the Leixlip Town Twinning Special Games 2013, which will take place from 23 to 26 August 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34386/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The function of the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) is to conduct Garda vetting checks in respect of Garda vetting applications submitted by registered organisations and to issue Garda vetting disclosures to such organisations.

I am informed by the Garda authorities that the organisation referred to is not registered with the Unit for Garda vetting.

Furthermore, in the context of the applications referred to in the Deputy's question, I am informed by the Garda authorities that it is not possible to check the status of these applications in the absence of details such as the names of the participants and their dates of birth. If the Deputy will provide the additional information, I will have further enquiries made in the matter.

### Departmental Reports

875. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34407/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the information sought is detailed in the following table.

Report Title	Description	Cost (€)	Date of Commission	Date of Publication	Name of Consultant
Review of the Implementation of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence 2010-2014	A mid-term review of progress in the implementation of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence 2010-2014	24,539	February 2012	December 2012	The Institute of Public Administration

Report Title	Description	Cost (€)	Date of Commission	Date of Publication	Name of Consultant
Research on Drugs and Alcohol Misuse among Adult Offenders on Probation Supervision in Ireland	Research project by the Probation Service	9,958 (Not paid from Probation Service subhead)	September 2011	May 2012	Michelle Martyn
Evaluation of Stable and Acute 2007 Risk Assessment and supervision Model in Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland	Research project commissioned jointly by the Probation Service and the Probation Board of Northern Ireland	6,170 (to-date)	February 2012	End of 2013	Professor Tim Trimble, TCD
Prisoner Release	Enquiry into the circumstances surrounding the release of (a prisoner) from the Dóchas Centre	15,000	April 2011	Not for Publication	Mr. John O'Sullivan (retired Prison Governor)
Department of Justice & Equality Safety Statement, May 2012, 51 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2	The preparation of a Safety Statement and Risk Assessment Investigation	984	January 2012	Not for Publication	Dermot Foley, Safecon Training & Consultancy
Report on the Workshop of National Traveller Committees	Report on workshop of committees	2,450	June 2012	November 2012	Mr. Owen McCarthy
Report on 'Ethnicity and Travellers Exploration' conference proceedings	Report on NTMAC conference	2,200	September 2012	December 2012	Mr. Owen McCarthy
Strategy Development	An audit on the Financial Shared Service Payroll and Financial Management Systems - these are specialist audits to ensure that these key systems have effective controls in place	12,677	May 2012	Not for Publication	Mazars

### Garda Transport Provision

876. **Deputy Barry Cowen** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, the total number of Garda vehicles permanently located for normal police duties, excluding any vehicle that may be in the vounty as part of a specific policing operation, on a county by county basis at 30 June 2013 and that were permanently assigned to each county on 30 June 2011 and 30 June 2012; the number of new vehicles due to be assigned to each county for 2013 and the number actually delivered up to 30 June 2013; the reason there has been a delay in locating the assigned number of vehicles in each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34441/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Decisions in relation to the provision and allocation of Garda vehicles are a matter for the Garda Commissioner in the light of his identified operational demands and available resources.

In that context, I am advised by the Garda authorities that the number of Garda vehicles assigned to each county on the dates referred to by the Deputy was as outlined in the following table:

COUNTY	Fleet Strength on 30/06/2013	Fleet Strength on 30/06/2012	Fleet Strength on 30/06/2011	Vehicles assigned in 2013 to 30/6/13
CARLOW	14	12	13	3
CAVAN	24	23	25	10
CLARE	41	35	40	9
CORK	190	202	219	17
DONEGAL	55	65	73	15
DUBLIN	576	597	636	23
GALWAY	80	81	98	10
KERRY	40	42	45	7
KILDARE	43	46	53	7
KILKENNY	38	30	33	7
LAOIS	29	24	31	5
LEITRIM	16	14	16	2
LIMERICK	76	81	96	10
LONGFORD	10	15	15	3
LOUTH	45	48	50	6
MAYO	54	54	59	7
MEATH	56	56	58	9
MONAGHAN	23	21	31	5
OFFALY	19	22	26	1
ROSCOMMON	30	25	26	3
SLIGO	30	32	35	4
TIPPERARY	107	116	128	10
WATERFORD	47	46	48	4
WESTMEATH	42	39	49	6
WEXFORD	42	38	52	6
WICKLOW	52	50	51	6
NATIONAL UNITS	694	712	671	9
TOTAL:	2,473	2,526	2,677	204

The allocation of new Garda vehicles is undertaken on a regional basis, as determined by the Commissioner in line with requirements, and I understand that currently vehicles are due to be allocated to Garda regions on the following basis:

Region	Allocation of vehicles
D.M.R.	16

Region	Allocation of vehicles
EASTERN REGION	17
NORTHERN REGION	18
SOUTH EASTERN REGION	22
SOUTHERN REGION	17
WESTERN REGION	18

Overall, the Deputy will be aware that an additional €3 million was made available towards the end of last year which enabled the Force to procure 171 vehicles. This brought total investment in the Garda fleet in 2012 to €4 million and resulted in a total of 213 new vehicles being procured during the year. Furthermore, a specific allocation of €5 million has been provided for the purchase and fit-out of Garda transport in the current year. I am informed by the Garda authorities that to date this investment has resulted in 133 new vehicles being procured.

This represents a very considerable financial investment in Garda transport, particularly at a time when the level of funding available across the public sector is severely limited. It is a clear indication of my commitment to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, An Garda Síochána are provided with sufficient resources to enable them to deliver an effective and efficient policing service. In keeping with this approach, I will continue to seek to identify the potential for additional funding for the Garda fleet. This will, of course, be contingent on expenditure in other areas across and outside the Justice Sector.

### **Domestic Violence Policy**

877. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his plans to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. [34443/13]

880. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the progress made regarding the particular difficulty to be addressed in Ireland's consideration of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence relating to reconciling property rights under the Irish constitution with the requirement under Article 52 of the convention, the availability of emergency barring orders. [34446/13]

900. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will confirm when Ireland will ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34830/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 877, 880 and 900 together.

Ireland supports, in principle, the aims and terms of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The provisions of the Convention and the legislative and administrative arrangements that would be necessary to allow signature and ratification of the Convention by Ireland are being examined in my Department in conjunction with the government commitment to introduce consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation to address all aspects of domestic vio-

lence, threatened violence and intimidation, in a way that provides protection to victims.

The development of the consolidated and reformed legislation, including consideration of the Convention provisions, will be progressed as soon as possible having regard to the need for consultations and other legislative priorities in my Department. Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, is undertaking the preliminary work in developing proposals for consideration. Cosc has met with relevant groups from the NGO sector and received some proposals for consideration. Further material is also awaited from the sector. In addition, any potential impediments to ratification of the convention relating to constitutional provisions continue to be examined.

The convention has not yet entered into force as this requires at least ten ratifications, including 8 Council of Europe member states.

### **Domestic Violence Policy**

878. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he has held discussions with his counterparts across Europe during Ireland's Presidency of the EU in support for the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. [34444/13]

879. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the progress made during Ireland's Presidency of the EU in securing ratification by EU member states of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. [34445/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 878 and 879 together.

Ireland, as President of the European Union in the first half of this year, indicated the support of the EU for the comprehensive approach of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. As is normal, discussions took place between the EU member states and the European Commission with regard to agreeing an EU position in this matter. However, the issue of ratification of the convention is solely a matter for each state to consider for itself.

*Question No. 880 answered with Question No. 877.*

### **Domestic Violence Policy**

881. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he is considering the inclusion of a provision requiring permanent or temporary interference with property rights for the common good in the consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation his Department is to progress when other legislative priorities in his Department have been disposed of. [34447/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I refer the Deputy to my response to the Topical Issues Debate on Domestic Violence on Wednesday, 12 June last. The topic was raised by the Deputy, along with Deputy Mary Mitchell O'Connor.

I indicated during my concluding comments in that debate that I intended to further explore the issue of barring a perpetrator of domestic violence from the home when consolidating the

legislation in this area. That remains my intention.

### Departmental Agencies Board Remuneration

882. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34517/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the information sought regarding fees, expenses and the number of members on State boards under the aegis of my Department are detailed in the following tables.

The Deputy should note that I have interpreted the Deputy's question as embracing all bodies called Boards, irrespective of their functions, as well as other bodies with a governance remit whose title does not include the term "Board". In addition, I have provided details of the fees-payable to each board member, irrespective of whether the board member has waived their entitlement or is a civil-public servant. The fees categories referred to are as follows.

Fee Category	Chairperson Euro Per Annum	Member Euro Per Annum
1	29,888	14,963
2	20,520	11,970
3	11,970	7,695
4	8,978	5,985

Board	Chair	Members	Fee Category or Other (€)
Property Services Regulatory Authority	1	10	4
Property Registration Authority	1	10	2
Mental Health (Criminal Law Review Board)	1	3	Chair - €75,000 Member - €250 per case
Parole Board	1	10	Category 3 plus €149.75 per diem for each prison visit
Equality Authority/ Human Rights Commission	1 post not currently filled. Will be remunerated at 1st point of Assistant/Secretary scale (€125,761)	14	3
Private Security Appeal Board	1	3	Chair - €371.36 per sitting Member - €169.91 per sitting
Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime	1	2	4
Courts Service Board	1	16	Chair - n/a Category 2

Board	Chair	Members	Fee Category or Other (€)
Audit Committee of the Courts Service Board	0	1	€2,565
Judicial Appointments Advisory Board	1	9	n/a
National Disability Authority	1	11	4
Private Security Authority	1	10	3
Legal Aid Board	1	12	3
Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission	1	2	n/a
Garda Síochána Complaints Board	1	8	Chair - €12,600 Member - €8,100
Garda Síochána Complaints Appeal Board	1	2	n/a
Garda Arbitration Board	1	2	Chair - €552 (only payable if board meets) Member - €392 (only payable if board meets)
Garda Síochána Audit Committee	1	4	Chair - €8,550 Member - €5,130
Garda Síochána Disciplinary Appeals Board*	-	-	-
Classification of Films Appeal Board	1	8	n/a

\*It is not possible to obtain the information sought in the time frame provided. It will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is received.

Finally, the Deputy should note that any expenses incurred would be in the normal course of business relating to the duties of board members and may be payable to board members in addition to fees listed above.

### Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration

883. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34533/13]

934. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36220/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 883 and 934 together.

I wish to advise the Deputy that the information sought in relation to each non-commercial State sponsored body under the aegis of my Department and the salary scale of their Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer, or equivalent, is as set out in the following table. The list below is extracted from the list of non-commercial State-Sponsored Bodies audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, as per their website, and which have a Chief Executive Officer. In addition, I have included the recently established Property Services Regulatory Authority and the Insolvency Service of Ireland.

Name of Body	CEO/Equivalent	Salary Scale (€)
Office of the Data Protection Commissioner	Commissioner	119,572-136,496
Equality Authority	CEO	119,572-136,496
Garda Síochána Complaints Board	CEO *	119,572-136,496
Human Rights Commission	CEO **	119,572-136,496
Insolvency Service of Ireland	Director	119,572-136,496
Legal Aid Board	CEO	119,572-136,496
Property Services Regulatory Authority	CEO	81,080-98,995
Private Security Authority	CEO	92,100 - 107,168

\*This role is discharged by a senior member of staff of An Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission.

\*\*The position of CEO of the Human Rights Commission became vacant on 30 January 2012

### Departmental Expenditure

884. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34549/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to refer the Deputy to my reply to Parliamentary Question No. 610 of 19 July 2012, which covered the period to the end of June 2012, wherein I advised that the only manner in which my Department can identify professional services is by reference to the automatic deduction of Professional Withholding Tax. This tax covers a range of professional activities not limited to the examples supplied by the Deputy. The listing sought by the Deputy amounts to over 520,000 individual transactions over the 12 month period to the end of May 2013. As previously advised, the sheer volume and scale of information sought would make the provision of a full listing unsuitable for transmission via the PQ System.

In the period from the 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013 a total of 2,530 individual suppliers submitted invoices totalling *circa* €61.3 million, from which Withholding Tax was deducted. Of this total over 92% is accounted for by payments to legal professionals under the system of Criminal Legal Aid.

### Departmental Expenditure

885. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34565/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Given her reference to academic year, it is presumed that the Deputy is seeking information on courses of study, funded by my Department and pursued by staff outside of work. Training programmes and courses organised by the Department's Training Units do not run on an academic year basis.

Each year my Department invites staff to make an application for funding under the Post-Entry Education scheme. Applications are considered with reference to the overall cost, relevance and significance of the course to the applicant's role and to the work of their Division-the Department. The funding that my Department provides would vary from 50% up to 100%.

The following table sets out details on courses supported under this scheme for the academic year 2012-13.

Course	College	No. of participants	Total cost or projected cost to the Department for 2012/2013 - €
Accounting Technician	Accounting Technicians Ireland	1	1,797
Advanced Diploma in Corporate, White Collar & Regulatory Crime	King's Inns	1	1,800
Advanced Diploma in Legislative Drafting	King's Inns	1	4,500
BA (Hons) Business Management	Dublin Business School	1	2,800
BA (Hons) in International Studies	Open University	1	2,000
BA (Hons) Law	IT Carlow	1	1,040
BA (Ord) in Law	DIT Aungier Street	11	15,943
BA in Administration of Justice	IPA	1	2,820
BA in Business Studies - HR Management	IPA	2	3,830
BA in Law & the Administration of Justice	IPA	2	4,512
BA in Public Management	IPA	15	36,236
BA Law & Administration of Justice	IPA	1	2,820
Bachelor of Law	University of Limerick	1	3,883
BBS (Hons) Accounting	IPA	2	5,960
BBS Information Systems	IPA	1	2,980
BSc (Hons) in Computing	National College of Ireland	1	3,024
Certificate in Project Management	IPA	1	1,700
Certificate in Public Procurement	IPA	1	4,500

Course	College	No. of participants	Total cost or projected cost to the Department for 2012/2013 - €
Chartered Public Accountant	Griffith College Cork	1	2,408
Diploma in Computer studies	IPA	1	1,195
Diploma in Law	IPA	1	2,200
Diploma in Legal Studies	King's Inns	2	7,960
Diploma in Payroll Management	Irish Payroll Association	1	1,590
Diploma in Public Management	IPA	1	1,410
Diploma in HR Management	IPA	1	2,750
Doctorate in Governance	Queen's University/IPA	2	6,295
Forensic Computing & Cybercrime Investigation	UCD	1	3,370
Graduate Certificate in Applied Intelligence	Mercyhurst College	1	4,900
International Diploma in Money Laundering	La Touche Training	2	4,400
LLB Bachelor of Law	DIT Aungier Street	2	3,448
LLB Bachelor of Law	Dublin Business School	2	7,840
LLB Honours in Irish Law	Independent Colleges	3	14,860
MA in Public Management	IPA	5	16,700
Master of Social Science	UCD	20	299,364
BA in Social Science	Open University	1	1,653
Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis	IPA	3	17,900
MSc in Business & Management	IPA	1	2,500
MSc in Governance	Queen's University/IPA	1	5,000
Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management	IPA	1	2,500
Professional Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation	IPA	3	4,350
-	-	-	516,738

### Exchequer Savings

886. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34581/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to refer the Deputy to my reply to Parliamentary Question No. 884 of 16 July 2013 which covered the period from 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013 and identified a total of *circa* €61.3 million, inclusive of VAT, in professional Fees paid over this period.

The annual savings of a 20% reduction in Professional Fees at this rate would be in the region of €12.3 million, inclusive of VAT.

### Exchequer Savings

887. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34597/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The estimated annual savings which would apply to the Justice and Equality Vote (Vote 24) from reductions in travel and subsistence expenses based on the percentages outlined by the Deputy are as follows:

Percentage	Amount
1%	€20,000
5%	€100,000
7%	€140,000
10%	€200,000
12%	€240,000
15%	€300,000
17%	€340,000
20%	€400,000

### Exchequer Savings

888. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34613/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The total spend for my Department on training and development for 2012 was approximately €1,105,238. This would have included expenditure such as training courses provided internally and externally, refunds of educational fees, attendance at seminars and conferences and membership of professional bodies' fees.

The following table sets out the effect that the various percentage decreases would have on expenditure on training and development, using the 2012 figure as a base. It should be noted, however, that the spend for 2012 was a reduction of 24% on the previous year. A small amount of that reduction may be attributed to the changes in the structure of my Department during the years in question, however, budgetary constraints have resulted in a reduction in expenditure in this area over a number of years. Every effort has been made, however, to ensure that this reduction was achieved with the minimal effect to the delivery of a comprehensive schedule of courses and development programmes for staff.

Training and Development	€
Total expenditure on training and Development in 2012	€1,105,238
A reduction in spend of 5%	€1,049,977
7%	€1,027,871
10%	€994,714
12%	€972,609
15%	€939,452
17%	€917,348
20%	€884,190

### Exchequer Savings

889. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisors' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisors. [34629/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** At the outset I wish to remind the Deputy that public service pay policy is a matter for my colleague the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

In my capacity as Minister for Justice and Equality I have appointed Ms Jane Lehane and Mr. Thomas Cooney as my Special Advisors. They are both paid at the Principal Officer standard scale. At the time of their appointment the salary scale was €80,051-€98,424 and the only increases to their salaries have been by way of normal incremental progression.

Both have progressed to the 3rd point of the scale which would be approximately €6,000 above the 1st point; however, taking account of tax and pension related reductions the net savings to the Exchequer in capping their salaries at the 1st point would be considerably less than that figure.

The application of pay adjustments in accordance with the Financial Emergency Measure in the Public Interest Act has reduced their salary scale to €75,647-€92,550. Restrictions on the payments of increments under the Haddington Road agreement will apply in both cases.

### Human Rights Issues

890. **Deputy Joe Higgins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if his attention has been drawn to the allegations of forced human organ harvesting from prisoners in China; his views on whether there is a requirement to bring forward legislation to prevent such organs being used here in any way. [34636/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The issues raised by the Deputy are outside the remit of my Department.

I would refer the Deputy to Questions Nos. 62, 65 and 66 of 10 July 2013 answered by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade. A copy of the Tánaiste's reply is appended

for ease of reference.

In addition, I understand from my colleague, the Minister for Health that the removal of human organs without consent or for payment is an offence under the European Union (Quality and Safety of Human Organs Intended for Transplantation) Regulations 2012 - S.I. No. 325 of 2012 - which give effect to an EU directive. Under the regulations, made by the Minister for Health, it is an offence to traffic, harbour, import or export organs contrary to the regulations and the directive. The regulations set out a framework encompassing the establishment of competent authorities, the authorisation of transplantation centres and the establishment of conditions of procurement and systems of traceability. I am also informed that the Department of Health is preparing legislative proposals for a Human Tissue Bill which will set out a detailed consent framework for the removal, donation and use of organs from deceased and living persons for the purpose of transplantation.

*Questions Nos. 62, 65 and 66 of 10 July 2013*

*Question No. 62 (Ref No: 33719/13 Proof: 70)*

*To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the position in relation to illegal organ harvesting and trading; the measures taken to ensure that no Irish company, organisation or individual is involved in such practices; the steps taken to outline concerns in this matter to the Chinese authorities, particularly in relation to the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

*Question No. 65 (Ref No: 33808/13 Proof: 74)*

*To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views on the position of Falun Gong practitioners in Chinese society.*

*Question No. 66 (Ref No: 33846/13 Proof: 75)*

*To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views of an a matter regarding forced organ harvesting (details supplied); his plans to bring forward laws that will stop all Irish companies, organisations, persons, physicians and the health services from being accomplices in the heinous crime of organ trafficking; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

*Reply:*

*I propose to take Questions Nos. 62, 65 and 66 together and to make a statement on the matter.*

*The Government follows closely reports of human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners, including reported cases of organ harvesting, and is concerned about the situation. Human rights issues, including the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners, are issues discussed regularly with the Chinese authorities during both bilateral and multilateral meetings.*

*Through the formal framework of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which was established in 1995, the EU continues to share with China its experience in the field of human rights protection and promotion, and to urge China to take clear steps to improve the human rights situation. The latest session of this dialogue took place on 25 June 2013 and provided the EU with the opportunity to express its concerns about a wide range of human rights issues in China, including the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities, deprivation of liberty, and criminal and administrative punishment.*

16 July 2013

*At this meeting, the EU also enquired about measures taken so far by China to ratify the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, signed in 1998 in view of China's undertaking made during the 2009 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to ratify the Covenant at an early date.*

*In February 2013, officials from my Department met with representatives of the Irish Falun Dafa Association. During this meeting the Irish Falun Dafa Association discussed the issue of organ harvesting and ways in which human rights issues are raised with Chinese authorities by both Ireland and the EU.*

*Officials in my Department are meeting again this week with the Falun Dafa Association regarding the issue of organ harvesting.*

*In relation to measures taken to ensure no Irish company, organisation or individual becomes involved in the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, a Common Position adopted by the European Council in 2008 outlines that Member States shall deny an export licence if there is a clear risk that military technology or equipment to be exported might be used for internal repression.*

*Ireland, together with our EU partners, will continue to address human rights issues with China, including those related to the Falun Gong, in frequent and regular dialogue, through our contacts in both Dublin and Beijing and through the relevant multilateral channels, including at the next United Nations Universal Periodic Review of human rights in China, scheduled for October 2013.*

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

891. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if there is any action under current laws that can be taken by residents in apartment blocks who have to put up with excessive noise, abuse, and anti-social activity and if they call the Garda, they are intimidated. [34639/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** As the Deputy will appreciate, legislation on noise nuisance comes within the remit of my colleague the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government. I am advised that a person experiencing noise nuisance may contact their local authority and that a public information leaflet, *A Guide to the Noise Regulations*, outlining the legal avenues available to persons experiencing noise nuisance, is available on the website of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, eg. [www.environ.ie](http://www.environ.ie).

The Deputy will also be aware that the leases for apartment dwellings often contain conditions or covenants which are designed to regulate aspects of the building's use for the benefit of residents. These covenants form part of the contractual arrangements entered into by residents themselves and are essentially a matter for the parties concerned.

In relation to situations where residents may be subject to harassment and anti-social behaviour, I am informed by the Garda authorities that it is the policy of An Garda Síochána to deploy personnel to establish a highly visible and accessible service to communities to tackle crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

However, in the absence of specific details as to the nature or location of the incidents, or of the intimidation referred to, it is not possible to provide a specific response from the Garda authorities on this matter. However, if a person feels that a crime has been committed they

should contact their local Garda station. All crimes that are reported to the Garda are fully and thoroughly investigated and offenders brought to justice wherever possible. As well as contacting the Garda directly, information can be provided to An Garda Síochána by way of the Garda confidential line, 1800 666 111, which is a monitored freephone line that allows members of the public to contact An Garda Síochána with information of a confidential nature.

### Naturalisation Applications

892. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the reason for the delay in making a determination on the naturalisation application of a person (details supplied); and when a decision will issue. [34651/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am advised by the Citizenship Division of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) that a valid application for a certificate of naturalisation was received from the person referred to by the Deputy in August 2012.

The application is currently being processed with a view to establishing whether the applicant meets the statutory conditions for the granting of naturalisation and will be submitted to me for decision as expeditiously as possible. While good progress continues to be made in reducing the large volume of cases in hand, the nature of the naturalisation process is such that for a broad range of reasons some cases will take longer than others to process. It is a statutory requirement that, *inter alia*, applicants for naturalisation be of good character. In some instances that can be established relatively quickly and in other cases completing the necessary checks can take a considerable period of time. I can, however, inform the Deputy that enormous progress has been made in dealing with the backlog and steps are being taken to process all outstanding applications as quickly as possible.

The granting of Irish citizenship through naturalisation is a privilege and an honour which confers certain rights and entitlements not only within the State but also at European Union level and it is important that appropriate procedures are in place to preserve the integrity of the process.

Queries in relation to the status of individual immigration cases may be made directly to INIS by e-mail using the Oireachtas Mail facility which has been specifically established for this purpose. This service enables up to date information on such cases to be obtained without the need to seek information by way of the Parliamentary Questions process. The Deputy may consider using the e-mail service except in cases where the response from INIS is, in the Deputy's view, inadequate or too long awaited.

### Departmental Funding

893. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of successful applications made for funding under his Department's grants system for projects within County Kildare in each of the past four years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34671/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that there were twenty-three successful applications for funding under my Department's grant system within County Kildare during the period in question, details of which are as follows.

**2009**

- Athy Alternative Project
- Cuan Mhuire, Athy
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Bridge Youth
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Curragh Newbridge
- Kildare Coalition of Supported Employment
- Kildare County Council - To promote integration of immigrants

**2010**

- Athy Alternative Project
- Cuan Mhuire, Athy
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Bridge Youth
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Curragh Newbridge
- Kildare County Council - To promote integration of immigrants
- Park House Nursing Home
- TLC Nursing

**2011**

- Athy Alternative Project
- Cuan Mhuire, Athy
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Bridge Youth
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Curragh Newbridge

**2012**

- Athy Alternative Project
- Breaking Through (Leixlip)
- Cuan Mhuire, Athy
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Bridge Youth
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects - Kildare Youth Service - Curragh Newbridge
- Kildare Leader Partnership - To implement a scheduled programme to support the resettlement of refugees

**Programme for Government Implementation**

894. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide,

in tabular form, the commitments in the Programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34684/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Last March the Government published the second Annual Report 2013 of the Programme for Government setting out progress to that date. The current status of commitments pertaining to my Department is outlined in the following tabular statement. The timeline for delivery of the commitments is over the lifetime of the Government.

Commitment	Status (Completed/In Progress/Under Review)
We will fast-track the substantial reforms needed for our bankruptcy legislation to bring us into line with best international standards, focusing on a flexible personal bankruptcy system that reduces discharge time for honest bankrupts.	Completed
We will legislate to end upward only rent reviews for existing leases.	It has not proved possible to develop a targeted scheme to tackle this issue.
We will explore the possibility of a new agreement on visitor visas with the UK, offering tourists the opportunity to visit the UK and Ireland with one visa, at a reasonable cost to tap into the tourism market for significant events.	Completed
We will permit postgraduate students to be allowed work here for up to a year after they complete their studies. High-value research students will be permitted to bring families if they are staying more than two years.	Completed
A referendum to amend the Constitution to allow the State to cut the salaries of judges in restricted circumstances as part of a general cut across the public sector	Completed
We will amend the Official Secrets Act, retaining a criminal sanction only for breaches which involve a serious threat to the vital interests of the state.	Under Review
We will halve the cost of the existing provision of ministerial transport. We will provide for the efficient use of transport including the release of Garda drivers to normal policing duties. We will end the automatic right to state cars for former office holders and other state officials.	Completed
Improve co-ordination and integration to delivery of services to the Traveller community across all Government departments, using available resources more effectively to deliver on principles of social inclusion, particularly in area of Traveller education through the DEIS programme	In Progress
Fast-tracking personal bankruptcy reform needed to bring us into line with best international standards, such as introducing a flexible discharge period for “honest bankrupts”, defined as one that has materially complied with the Tax, NAMA and Companies Acts among others.	Completed
We will improve the quality of information available on the Irish housing market by requiring that the selling price of all dwellings is recorded in a publically available, national housing price database	Completed

Commitment	Status (Completed/In Progress/Under Review)
Enact legislation to strengthen the rights of victims of crime and their families, to ensure that victims and their needs are at the heart of the justice process and that rights to information, advice and other appropriate assistance are met effectively and efficiently.	In Progress
Ensure that rogue bankers and all those that misappropriate or embezzle funds are properly pursued for their crimes and that the full rigours of the law will apply to them	In Progress
Enact a new consolidated and reformed anti-corruption law to punish white collar crime and end the impunity from consequences for corporate behaviour that threatens the economy.	In Progress
Strengthen measures to ensure that convicted white collar criminals cannot transfer assets to spouses or other family members and we will empower the Criminal Assets Bureau to pursue such convicted white collar criminals for any legal aid costs awarded to them.	Under Review
Enact legislation to strengthen the powers of the Criminal Assets Bureau in relation to forfeiting the proceeds of crime.	In Progress
Establish a DNA Database to assist the Gardai in the investigation of serious crime, such as homicides and sexual offences. The database will also be utilised to enhance cooperation with the EU in the area of asylum and immigration. There will be appropriate safeguards in relation to inclusion on and access to the DNA database.	In Progress
Provide statutory guidelines for the witness protection programme.	In Progress
Introduce x-ray scanners to all prisons to screen people and goods entering prisons to stop the flow of drugs and mobile telephones into prisons.	Completed
Ensure that administrative duties are carried out by civilian staff in order to free up highly trained Gardaí for preventing and detecting crime.	In Progress
Reform the prosecution and judicial case management systems so as to reduce the number of Gardaí unnecessarily detained in the courts.	In Progress
Fully implement the Fines Act 2010 and extend the use of Community Service Orders. Where a member of the judiciary is considering the imposition of a prison sentence of one year or less, he/she will be required by legislation to first consider the appropriateness of Community Service Orders as an alternative to imprisonment.	In progress (Work on amending the Fines Act 2010) Completed (Extension of Community Service Orders)
End the practice of imprisoning people who cannot pay fines and debts and introduce a system which takes a small amount of money from wages or social welfare by “attachment order” to pay off a fine or debt over time, as an alternative to imprisonment for people who refuse to pay.	In progress

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Commitment	Status (Completed/In Progress/Under Review)
Introduce legislation to ensure that aggravating factors are considered in sentencing and to allow for the criminal prosecution service to make a submission on sentence, which draws to the court's attention aggravating factors which relate to the crime.	Under Review
Introduce a series of post-imprisonment restraint orders for violent and sexual offenders to include electronic tagging and other restrictions, which may be imposed at the time of sentencing.	In Progress
Violent and sexual offenders may only earn remission based on good behaviour, participation in education and training, and completion of addiction treatment programmes and, where appropriate, sex offender programmes. We will review the workings of the Prison Act 2007 in relation to incentivising engagement with rehabilitative services in prison.	In Progress
Strengthen the Inspector of Prisons, by putting the office on a statutory footing and removing restrictions on publication by the Inspector of Prisons of his/her reports.	In Progress- The Inspector of Prisons is on a statutory footing. There are no restrictions on the publication of his reports.
Prison visiting committees will furnish their reports to the Inspector of Prisons who will be under an obligation to publish them. The Inspector of Prisons will make an annual report to the Minister for Justice and the Oireachtas Justice Committee, and will be empowered to appear before that committee on such other occasions as may be appropriate.	In Progress - as above
Ensure better coordination between the Irish Prison Service and the Probation Service to create an integrated offender management programme	In Progress
Review will be conducted of the working of mandatory sentencing laws in the context of an overall review of drugs policy.	In Progress
Review the proposal to build a new prison at Thornton Hall and consider alternatives, if any, to avoid the costs yet to be incurred by the state in building such a new prison. We are conscious of the need to provide in-cell sanitation to all prisons and, in so far as resources permit, to upgrade prison facilities.	Under Review
Tackle anti-social behaviour and the plague of low level crime that is so destructive of community life.	In Progress
Build on the existing community policing partnerships and forums to enhance trust between local communities and their Gardai.	In Progress
Give special emphasis to alternative programmes for juvenile offenders through extensions to the Juvenile Liaison Officer Scheme and the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme, and the extended use of Restorative Justice where appropriate.	In Progress
Examine outcomes-based contracts with community organisations to help reduce re-offending by young people, based on the social impact bond model in the U.K.	In progress - in conjunction with DCYA
Strengthen the supply reduction effort and criminal assets seizures, particularly at local level.	In Progress
Reduce the flow of drugs to prisons.	In Progress

Commitment	Status (Completed/In Progress/Under Review)
Carry out a full review of the Drug Treatment Court Programme to evaluate its success and potential in dealing with young offenders identified as having serious problem with drugs.	In Progress
Legislate to establish a Judicial Council, with lay representation, to provide an effective mechanism for dealing with complaints against judges.	In Progress
Introduce a constitutional amendment to allow Government to reduce the pay of the judiciary as a whole in line with other public sector reductions. We will also provide a modern and reformed framework for judicial expenses.	Completed
Introduce a constitutional amendment to allow for the establishment of a distinct and separate system of family courts to streamline family law court processes and make them more efficient and less costly. We will take the necessary steps to create a permanent Civil Court of Appeal.	In Progress
Encourage and facilitate use of mediation to resolve commercial, civil and family disputes in order to speed up resolution of disputes, reduce legal costs and ameliorate the stress of contested court proceedings.	In Progress
Provide for a Commercial Court to facilitate speedy resolution of disputes at Circuit Court level, where monies in dispute do not warrant High Court jurisdiction.	Under Review
Introduce legislation to facilitate courts making provision for structured settlements in circumstances where lump sums are currently awarded as a consequence of individuals suffering catastrophic injury because of the negligence of another.	In Progress
Create an enforcement mechanism for District Court maintenance orders in family cases.	Completed
We will modernise and reform outdated elements of family law.	In Progress
Introduce consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation to address all aspects of domestic violence, threatened violence and intimidation in a manner that provides protection to victims.	In Progress
Establish independent regulation of the legal professions to improve access and competition, make legal costs more transparent and ensure adequate procedures for addressing consumer complaints.	In Progress- Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 currently in Committee Stage with a view to enactment by end of 2013.
Introduce comprehensive reforms of the immigration, residency and asylum systems, which will include a statutory appeals system and set out rights and obligations in a transparent way.	In Progress- Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2011 awaiting Committee Stage but may be republished.
Provide for the efficient processing and determination of citizenship applications within a reasonable time.	Completed
Ensure that all State boards have at least 40% of each gender.	In Progress

*Questions - Written Answers*

Commitment	Status (Completed/In Progress/Under Review)
Promote greater co-ordination and integration of delivery of services to the Traveller community across Government, using available resources more effectively to deliver on principles of social inclusion, particularly in the area of Traveller education.	In Progress
People of non-faith or minority religious backgrounds and publicly identified LGBT people should not be deterred from training or taking up employment as teachers in the State.	In Progress
Require all public bodies to take due note of equality and human rights in carrying out their functions.	In Progress
Promote policies which integrate minority ethnic groups in Ireland, and which promote social inclusion, equality, diversity and the participation of immigrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities.	In Progress
Publish, following wide consultation, a realistic implementation plan for the National Disability Strategy, including sectoral plans with achievable timescales and targets within available resources. Ensuring whole-of-government involvement and monitoring of the Strategy, in partnership with the disability sector.	In Progress
Examine different mechanisms to promote the recognition of Irish Sign Language.	In Progress
Reform the law on mental capacity to ensure the greatest degree of autonomy for people with intellectual disabilities or suffering with mental illnesses in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.	In Progress
We will enact legislation to amend tax and social welfare law in respect of civil partnerships. We will amend the Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabiting Couples Act 2010 to address any anomalies or omissions, including those relating to children.	In Progress- The first part of this commitment is completed. Legislation is being developed, with a target for publication of a General Scheme in Q4 2013
We will enhance the Irish role in EU judicial and home affairs cooperation	In Progress

### **Departmental Expenditure**

895. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will detail in tabular form the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34700/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that the information sought is set out in the following table in respect of my Department and bodies under the aegis of my Department for which I have responsibility.

Name of public relations/ communications consultant	Details of service	Body	Expenditure (€)
Carr Communications	Strategy plan for a Public Information Campaign for the Insolvency Service of Ireland Media Skills	Insolvency Service of Ireland	14,760,950
Total	-	-	15,710

The Deputy may wish to note that I have no responsibility to the Dáil in respect of agencies which are statutorily independent. While the Insolvency Service of Ireland is such an agency I have, however, included the above details of their expenditure as the contract commenced prior to their establishment as a separate legal entity.

### Magdalen Laundries Issues

896. **Deputy Anne Ferris** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his views on the inclusion of the Sisters of Mercy laundry, also called House of Mercy, on Baggot Street to the redress scheme for the Magdalens in view of the fact that the House of Mercy in Wexford was recently added; if he will detail and explain the reason one House of Mercy was added while the other on Baggot Street was not; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34747/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The McAleese report and the *ex gratia* scheme recommended by Mr. Justice Quirke relate to the 10 Magdalen laundries that operated within the State. As an exceptional measure, the Government decided that the women from two other institutions who had, from an early stage, participated in the representative groups and met with Ministers and others on this matter should also be included. No other institutions are being included within the scheme.

### Courts Service Issues

897. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if the Irish Courts Service will update its website with accurate information, with full costings for CDs, DVDs and VCR; the reason the recordings in CD format are not available and if CDs are available to a party directly involved in a case, that is, the plaintiff or the defendant as in other jurisdictions and EU States. [34768/13]

898. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if a party can request a CD at any time; and if recordings kept for an indefinite period of time. [34772/13]

899. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the person in the courts responsible for ensuring digital audio recordings is administered properly; if there is a code of procedure or conduct published to help to ensure public scrutiny of the functioning of the justice system. [34773/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 897 to 899, inclusive, together.

As the Deputy will be aware the courts are, subject only to the Constitution and the law, independent in the exercise of their judicial functions, and the conduct of any case is a matter

entirely for the presiding judge.

As I previously informed the Deputy in response to Parliamentary Questions No. 444 and 445 of 25 June 2013, the relevant Rules of the District Court, Circuit Court and Superior Courts (S.I. Numbers 99/2013, 100/2013 and 101/2013) came into effect on 8 April 2013. The instruments regulate the procedures whereby parties or other persons wishing to have access to records of court proceedings, including audio recordings, may apply to the court concerned for access to such records. The instruments also set out the terms on which such access may be granted. There is nothing to prevent a party to a case applying to the court to access the recording. However, the granting of access and the terms under which such access is granted is a matter for the court. In common with all court rules these instruments are available on the Courts Service website. There are no prescribed fees in respect of CDs of court proceedings and, as indicated above, it is entirely a matter for the court to allow access to records of court proceedings or to determine whether access may be granted by CD or transcript.

I am informed that Digital Audio Recordings have been made in the Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeal since 2005, in the High Court and in Circuit Courts since 2009 and in the District Court since 2011. All recordings made to date are being retained. The relevant court officers together with the contracted external service provider have responsibility for operating and administering the digital audio recording system.

*Question No. 900 answered with Question No. 877.*

### **Garda Stations Opening Hours**

901. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the Garda stations in the Dublin region that will have an open day between now and year end; the dates and times of each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34918/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have been informed by the Garda Commissioner that the following Garda Stations in the Dublin Metropolitan Region will be having open days within the next six months

Garda Station	Date of Open Day
Ballymun	End of October, 2013. Date yet to be confirmed
Tallaght	05/09/2013 between 2pm – 5pm
Finglas	25/09/2013
Blanchardstown	28/09/2013
Lucan	Provisional date: 29/09/2013 at 2pm
Store Street	September, 2013. Date yet to be confirmed
Mountjoy	No date scheduled yet but proposed to be held following the summer months
Bridewell	04/10/2013 at 12.30pm
Blackrock	Exact date to be confirmed but it is envisaged to hold it on either the 14th or 21st September, 2013

### **Stardust Fire Issues**

902. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will be recommending the establishment of a parliamentary inquiry under the Houses of the Oireachtas

(Inquiries, Privileges and Procedures) Bill 2013 if and when that legislation becomes law, or an independent form of inquiry into the Stardust tragedy of 1981 owing to the continued dissatisfaction of the families that the matter has not been fully investigated heretofore in view of new information that has come to their attention in the recent past. [34923/13]

903. **Deputy Thomas P. Broughan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his views on whether all of the recommendations contained in the report of Paul Coffey, SC, on the Stardust tragedy 1981 have been fulfilled, particularly in the field of counselling and medical needs of the families of the victims of the tragedy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34924/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 902 and 903 together.

Insofar as the question of establishing a parliamentary or other inquiry into the Stardust tragedy is concerned, the position is the independent examination carried out of the Victims Committee's case for a new inquiry concluded that the Committee had not identified any new or other evidence capable of establishing the cause of the fire and that to establish a new inquiry for that purpose, in the absence of any identified evidence, would not be in the public interest. No new information has been put forward which would warrant a departure from this conclusion.

In order to identify the level of demand for access to ongoing counselling and medical services and so as not to interfere in the privacy of any of the survivors or bereaved, a public information notice was placed in newspapers in October 2009 asking those who wished to access such services through this channel to register their interest. Arrangements to provide these services were put in place in February 2010, based on the response received. This facility remains in place for those who wish to avail of it.

### Legal Aid Service Expenditure

904. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the total cost of the free legal aid service that the State provides on annual basis for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34940/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I can inform the Deputy that the provision of legal aid falls within two separate categories, i.e. criminal legal aid and civil legal aid. Details in respect of each category are as follows:

#### Civil Legal Aid

The Legal Aid Board (LAB) is the statutory body which provides legal aid and advice in civil law matters to persons on lower incomes. All Board services are governed by the Civil Legal Aid Act 1995 and the Civil Legal Aid Regulations. I wish to clarify for the Deputy that the Legal Aid Board provides "legal aid" and not "free legal aid". The vast majority of persons receiving services from the Board pay a small financial contribution.

In respect of civil legal aid, Exchequer funding is provided by way of grant-in-aid to the Legal Aid Board. The relevant amounts allocated are set out hereunder.

Year	Total Amount of Expenditure (€ million)
2010	32.192

Year	Total Amount of Expenditure (€ million)
2011	30.370
2012	32.922
2013 - to date	19.384

It should be noted that the figures for 2012 onwards include funding in respect of the Family Mediation Service, for which the Board assumed responsibility in late 2011. The full year allocation for 2013, as set out in the Revised Estimates Volume, is €32,659,000.

### Criminal Legal Aid

The Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act 1962 provides that free legal aid may be granted, in certain circumstances, for the defence of persons of insufficient means. Under the Act, the grant of legal aid entitles the applicant to the services of a solicitor and, in certain circumstances, up to two counsel, in the preparation and conduct of their defence or appeal. The assignment of lawyers or the granting of aid are matters for the Court and, as such, are handled by the Judiciary.

Total expenditure on criminal legal aid for the years referred to by the Deputy is detailed below.

Year	Total Amount of Expenditure (€ million)
2010	56.5
2011	56.1
2012	50.5
2013 - to date	25.6

The Deputy will note that total expenditure for 2012 represented a reduction of 10% over 2011. This reduction in the annual expenditure is the largest ever recorded and represents a fall of approximately €10 million, or 16%, over the peak recorded in 2009. This follows savings measures introduced since I came into office including cuts to fees in the course of 2011.

### Legal Aid Service Issues

905. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the total amount of money that has been recouped by the free legal aid service on an annual basis for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34941/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** As the Deputy may be aware the provision of legal aid falls within two separate categories, i.e. criminal legal aid and civil legal aid. Details in respect of each category are as follows:

#### Civil Legal Aid

The Legal Aid Board (LAB) is the statutory body which provides legal aid and advice in civil law matters to persons on lower incomes. All Board services are governed by the Civil Legal Aid Act 1995 and the Civil Legal Aid Regulations. I wish to clarify for the Deputy that the Legal Aid Board provides “legal aid” and not “free legal aid”. The vast majority of persons receiving services from the Board pay a small financial contribution.

The Legal Aid Board recoups money from its clients in two ways. Contributions are received from clients towards the cost of the service with the amount of the contribution dependent on the client's disposable income and disposable capital, if any. In addition, the Board may recover its costs in certain cases where an award or settlement has been received by the client. The relevant amounts received by the Board are set out hereunder for the years in question.

Year	Contributions (€)	Costs (€)
2010	844,201	921,717
2011	809,967	974,331
2012	832,292	685,873
2013 (to date)	421,948	429,473

### Criminal Legal Aid

The Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act 1962 provides that free legal aid may be granted, in certain circumstances, for the defence of persons of insufficient means. Under the Act, the grant of legal aid entitles the applicant to the services of a solicitor and, in certain circumstances, up to two counsel, in the preparation and conduct of their defence or appeal. The assignment of lawyers or the granting of aid are matters for the Court and, as such, are handled by the Judiciary.

The Deputy should note that there is no recoupment of money from defendants under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme.

### Refugee Appeals Tribunal

906. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the serving members of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal and the dates on which their terms expire. [34947/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The details requested by the Deputy are as follows:

Serving Tribunal Member	Expiry Date of Term of Office
Michelle O’Gorman, B.L.	16 July, 2013
David Andrews, S.C.	3 August, 2013
Ben Garvey, B.L.	25 September, 2013
Paul Christopher, B.L.	27 November, 2013
Fergus O’Connor, B.L.	27 November, 2013
Paul Gormley, B.L.	27 November, 2013

Due to the fall in asylum applications and the consequential fall in appeals lodged with the Tribunal in recent years, there has not been a requirement to appoint Tribunal Members since I took office. However, in light of the low number of members now serving, I decided that a selection process involving the Public Appointments Service be conducted to draw up a panel of suitably qualified persons from which appointments to the Tribunal could be made. This process is in its final stages and I expect to be in a position shortly to appoint new Tribunal Members as the need arises.

## **Electronic Tagging**

907. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the total cost to date of the electronic tagging programme; the number of persons on remand and conditional release respectively with an electronic tag; the number of persons on the sex offenders register with an electronic tag; the total number of electronic tags available and in use within the justice system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34948/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Part 10 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 provides for the introduction of electronic monitoring in this jurisdiction. The relevant order commencing the provisions in the context of a restriction of movement condition applying to the granting of temporary release was made in 2010.

The Irish Prison Service signed a contract on 15 February 2013 for the provision of electronically monitored temporary release by Chubb Ireland. This is used mainly for the monitoring of hospital in-patients who have been granted temporary release from prison. I can advise the Deputy that the contract is for a duration of two years effective from 1 March 2013 and allows for a significant reduction in staffing costs for hospital escorts. There are currently two offenders on conditional release with an electronic tag. The cost to date since 1 March 2013 is €6,500 approximately (excluding VAT) which accounts for 11 live units and monitoring.

The Deputy may wish to note that legislative proposals being considered in the context of development of a General Scheme of a Sexual Offences Bill include measures for the electronic monitoring of sex offenders in specific circumstances.

In addition, electronic monitoring is being examined by the Group conducting an all encompassing strategic review of penal policy. I expect the Group to report later this year and it is the intention to publish their report.

## **Direct Provision System**

908. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of persons in the direct provision system for less than six months; between six and 12 months; in excess of one, two, three, four, five, six or seven years; the total cost to the Exchequer of the current system; the specific steps being taken to address the delays in processing immigration applications involving persons in the direct provision system; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34949/13]

909. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the total cost of asylum accommodation for the year 2012; the cost to date in 2013; and the corresponding figures for the number of persons accommodated within the direct provision system [34950/13]

911. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of persons residing here who are awaiting a decision on asylum status; the cost of accommodating those persons here; the breakdown of the nationality of those persons in State provided accommodation and those outside the direct provision system, respectively; the corresponding figures for leave to remain applications; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34952/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 908, 909 and 911 together.

The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) of my Department is responsible for the accommodation of asylum seekers in accordance with the Government policy of direct provision

and dispersal.

It is important to note that RIA itself has no function in determining whether someone should stay or not in its accommodation. Its function is to provide accommodation and related services to those who have sought international protection and who otherwise have no means of supporting themselves. In essence, RIA accommodates all those who make a claim for international protection and who seek accommodation until such time as they:

(i) leave voluntarily;

(ii) are removed - either by way of deportation or Dublin II transfer;

(iii) are granted refugee status or subsidiary protection; or

(iv) are granted leave to remain, either through the process set out in the Immigration Act, 1999 or are granted permission to remain in the State on some other basis

The following are the details of expenditure by RIA and occupancy:

Year	Expenditure outturn	Occupancy at year end
2010	€79.1 million	6,107
2011	€69.5 million	5,423
2012	€62.3 million	4,841
2013 to date	€25.75 million - end June (Full year estimate is €57.5 million)	4,616 (at 7 July)

In relation to steps being taken to address delays in processing, work on the details of the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2010 is ongoing at my Department pursuant to current Government policy which is committed, under the Programme for National Recovery, to introduce comprehensive reforms of the immigration, residency and asylum systems, which will include a statutory appeals system and set out rights and obligations in a transparent way.

As I have outlined previously to the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality and Defence, several hundred amendments to the Bill are anticipated, the majority of a technical nature. I also expressed the considered view that instead of engaging in an extremely cumbersome process of tabling hundreds of amendments to the 2010 Bill, it would be much more efficient to publish a new and enhanced text. Such an approach can incorporate the many anticipated amendments while addressing key outstanding issues, several of which have been of concern to Members. This proposition was broadly welcomed by the Joint Committee and work on the Bill continues, therefore, on that basis while also taking account of any intervening matters of relevance such as decisions by the Courts.

It remains my objective under this new approach, and subject to having to deal with the competing legislative demands of our EU-IMF-ECB Programme commitments, to be in a position to bring a revised Bill to Government for approval and publication before the end of the year.

Pending the enactment and commencement of the new legislation and with a view to improving processing in the area of international protection, I am proposing to introduce new arrangements for the processing of subsidiary protection applications in light of recent judgments in the Superior Courts. My Department, in consultation with the Attorney General's Office, is developing a new legislative and administrative framework for the processing of current and future subsidiary protection applications. This work is being given high priority and applicants

will be advised of the new arrangements as soon as possible.

Below are two tables of statistics. The first table provides a breakdown of RIA residents giving details of the numbers of persons from the date of their initial asylum application. It is important to note that protection applicants are not required to live in RIA accommodation and in many cases may move in and out of the direct provision system as their circumstances change. Therefore, while the statistics below will show the length of time that has elapsed since those persons who are currently availing of RIA accommodation made their initial application, this does not necessarily mean that they have been residing in RIA accommodation for all of that time. The second table provides a nationality breakdown for those residents.

In relation to such detail for persons outside RIA accommodation in the asylum and leave to remain processes, this is a more complex undertaking and the information cannot be provided in the time available. Material not already provided in this answer is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy directly.

Persons in RIA accommodation:

Number of years from initial application	Total
0-6 months	277
6-12 months	289
1-2 years	431
2-3 years	490
3-4 years	589
4-5 years	701
5-6 years	707
6-7 years	532
7 + years	600
Total	4,616

In relation to the nationalities of those in Direct Provision accommodation, the breakdown is as follows:

INIS Reporting & Analysis Unit	-
Report run date: 11-Jul-2013	-
-	-
-	Total
Nigeria	1,211
Congo, The Democratic Republic Of The	415
Pakistan	309
Zimbabwe	255
South Africa	154
Ghana	153
Cameroon	151
Afghanistan	142
Somalia	135
Sudan	95
Albania	85

INIS Reporting & Analysis Unit	-
Report run date: 11-Jul-2013	-
-	-
-	Total
Algeria	84
Malawi	76
Uganda	71
Iraq	70
Kenya	68
Georgia	60
Bangladesh	57
Angola	54
Liberia	54
Iran (Islamic Republic Of)	53
Sierra Leone	49
Kosovo / UNSCR 1244	44
Eritrea	41
Cote D'Ivoire	34
Burundi	33
Congo, The Republic Of The	32
Moldova, Republic Of	31
Ethiopia	29
Rwanda	29
Guinea	28
Mauritius	27
Togo	26
Israel	25
Russian Federation	23
Armenia	22
Benin	21
Bhutan	21
Morocco	21
Ukraine	20
Niger	19
Nepal	14
Palestinian Territory, Occupied	14
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	12
Bolivia	11
Egypt	11
Mali	11
India	10
Malaysia	10
Serbia	10
China (Including Hong Kong)	9
Syrian Arab Republic	9

Questions - Written Answers

INIS Reporting & Analysis Unit	-
Report run date: 11-Jul-2013	-
-	-
-	Total
Turkey	9
Belarus	8
Sri Lanka	8
Chad	7
Myanmar	7
Botswana	6
Tanzania, United Republic Of	6
Azerbaijan	5
Jamaica	5
Lebanon	5
Lesotho	5
Stateless	5
Swaziland	5
Yemen	5
Cape Verde	4
Guyana	4
Venezuela	4
Brazil	3
Chile	3
Ireland (Children with Irish citizenship)	3
Kazakhstan	3
Kuwait	3
Zambia	3
Burkina Faso	2
Central African Republic	2
Gambia	2
Guinea-Bissau	2
Kyrgyzstan	2
Namibia	2
Philippines	2
Viet Nam	2
Belize	1
Canada	1
Cuba	1
Equatorial Guinea	1
Former Yugoslavia	1
Gabon	1
Germany	1
Korea, Republic Of (South Korea)	1
Senegal	1
The Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia	1

INIS Reporting & Analysis Unit	-
Report run date: 11-Jul-2013	-
-	-
-	Total
Tunisia	1
United States Of America	1
Other (unclassified)	24
Total	4,616

### Refugee Numbers

910. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of new applicants who sought protection from the State to date in 2013; the breakdown of the nationality of those persons; the corresponding figure for 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34951/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The number of new applications for refugee status in 2013 (to end June) was 465. The corresponding figure to end June 2012 was 449.

The nationality breakdown in respect of those applications is as follows:

Nationality	Applications Received 2012 (to end June)	Applications Received 2013 (to end June)
Afghanistan	13	23
Albania	16	24
Algeria	15	16
Bangladesh	13	15
Cameroon	less than 10	11
China	less than 10	12
DR Congo	18	34
Georgia	less than 10	10
Iraq	less than 10	10
Malawi	16	13
Mauritius	11	13
Moldova	13	less than 10
Nepal	11	less than 10
Nigeria	80	63
Pakistan	60	58
South Africa	24	15
Syria	less than 10	26
Zimbabwe	16	24
Others (all countries with less than 10 applications)	143	98

A detailed breakdown in respect of countries of origin involving less than 10 applications has not been provided for the years in question owing to the confidentiality provisions of the

Refugee Act. Under those provisions, I am obliged to take all practicable steps to ensure that the identity of applicants is kept confidential. Accordingly, where such small numbers are involved, I do not wish to provide details that could potentially lead to the identification of individual persons.

*Question No. 911 answered with Question No. 908.*

### **International Agreements**

912. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the current extradition agreements with Brazil; if recent discussions or negotiations have taken place on this matter within his Department or with the Brazilian authorities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34974/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** There is currently no bilateral extradition treaty in place between Ireland and Brazil.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

913. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34986/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I wish to advise the Deputy that it has not been possible to collate the information requested in the time available. I will forward a response to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Garda Vetting Applications**

914. **Deputy John Deasy** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if his attention has been drawn to the average four to seven month delay in processing Garda clearance applications for unemployed persons interviewed by community employment supervisors for placement on schemes involving working with persons with disabilities; the steps he will take to relieve this impasse; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35091/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Garda authorities that the current average processing time for applications is approximately 14 weeks from date of receipt. However, seasonal fluctuations and the necessity to seek additional information on particular applications can result in this processing time being exceeded on occasion. All organisations registered for Garda Vetting are aware of the processing time-frames for the receipt of Garda vetting and have been advised to factor this into their recruitment and selection process.

I remain in ongoing contact with the Garda Commissioner as to how best the service can continue to be delivered and improved upon, while at all times protecting the integrity of the process. Clearly, the protection of children and vulnerable adults is the primary objective of the Garda Central Vetting Unit and this must remain the case.

The possibility of introducing an e-vetting system has been assessed and the Garda authori-

ties are now in the process of developing a system which will enable vetting applications to be submitted electronically through a secure web service. In addition, the system will facilitate the checking and monitoring of applications. The relevant work is being pursued on a priority basis and it will be completed as quickly as possible.

With further assignments of staff this month, staffing at the Unit will be of the order of 140 (whole-time equivalent) staff, which represents an increase in staff assigned to the Unit of almost 50% since March this year. As staff become fully trained on the vetting process I expect there will be a positive effect on vetting times. My Department is also examining the scope for the redeployment of additional personnel from within the public service to the Unit.

### **Personal Debt**

915. **Deputy Liam Twomey** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if his Department has made representations to, or has any contact with, UK authorities or agencies in connection with Irish citizens availing of the UK insolvency regime; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35095/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I would refer the Deputy to my response to Questions No. 486 and 487 of 26 February 2013, which was as follows:

I take it that the Deputy is referring to the provisions of the EU Regulation on insolvency proceedings of 2000, which came into effect in 2002. That Regulation is a mutual recognition instrument and does not seek to harmonise EU insolvency laws. In determining an application for the opening of an insolvency proceeding, for which it would have exclusive power as the primary proceedings, of a company or of a natural person, the Regulation requires that a court should determine the centre of main interest (COMI) of the applicant in the context of assuming jurisdiction.

It is a matter for the court to satisfy itself that the provisions in its national law in this regard have been observed. For example, The UK Courts can and have refused or revoked insolvency proceedings where an abuse has been detected. Indeed, this has occurred with certain individuals, who were subsequently subject to insolvency proceedings in this jurisdiction.

A company or natural person is entitled to change a COMI and could do so for the purposes, *inter alia* of taking advantage of more favourable insolvency legislation. This entitlement arises under the broad rubric of freedom of movement in the Internal Market and such freedom has been enforced by decisions of the European Court of Justice. The country in which the debts are incurred is not necessarily material, but the relocation must not be artificial. The question of COMI is determined at the date the application for the insolvency proceeding is made and not at the time the debts were incurred. Orders made in insolvency proceedings in another EU jurisdiction, including an order discharging a person from bankruptcy, are enforceable against creditors elsewhere in the EU.

In response to the economic downturn across Europe, the EU has published a proposal to modernise cross-border insolvency law which seeks to make cross-border insolvency proceedings more efficient, benefiting both debtors and creditors throughout the EU. One of the primary aims of the new Regulation will be to give potentially viable companies and entrepreneurs a second chance before being declared insolvent. The proposal also addresses a range of other insolvency issues.

I arranged that the initial discussion on the proposed Regulation took place at the informal Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting of EU Justice Ministers held in Dublin Castle on

the 17 and 18 of January last. The Ministers, including my British colleague, engaged in a very detailed and constructive discussion on the proposals contained in the Regulation. I emphasised the importance of a more uniform approach across the EU in regard to the establishment of the centre of main interest so as to combat potential abuses in this regard which have given rise to allegations of “bankruptcy tourism”.

Detailed consideration of the provisions contained in the new draft Regulation has now commenced in a Working Group chaired by the Irish Presidency.

I have nothing further to add to that response other than to say that a first examination of the draft Regulation was concluded by the Council Working Group during the Irish Presidency.

*The following information was provided under Standing Order 40A*

I can inform you that my Department has made no such representation, nor has it had any such contact with any UK authorities or agency in connection with Irish citizens availing of the UK insolvency regime as is requested in the Deputy’s question. It would not be proper for my Department to seek to intervene in civil law proceedings of this nature in another jurisdiction to which it was not a party.

The issue of bankruptcy tourism has featured as part of the discussion between EU Justice Ministers in the context of considering the EU Commissioner’s proposed new measure on insolvency, and I emphasised the importance of insuring that rules relating to the jurisdictional competence of EU member states’ courts are properly complied with where bankruptcy proceedings are initiated.

As already explained to the Deputy, a company or natural person is entitled to change their centre of main interest, COMI, and could do so for the purposes, *inter alia*, of taking advantage of more favourable insolvency legislation. This entitlement arises under the broad rubric of freedom of movement in the Internal Market and such freedom has been enforced by decisions of the European Court of Justice. The EU regulation on Insolvency Proceedings of 2000, which came into effect in 2002, requires that, in determining an application for the opening of an insolvency proceeding, for which it would have exclusive power as the primary proceedings, that a court should determine the centre of main interest, COMI, of the applicant in the context of assuming jurisdiction. Orders made in insolvency proceedings in another EU jurisdiction, including an order adjudicating or discharging a person from bankruptcy, are enforceable against creditors elsewhere in the EU.

### **Departmental Programmes**

916. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of applications under the immigrant investor programme and the start-up entrepreneur programme since the programmes were opened to applications; the number of pending applications; the number of successful applications; and the value of investments made under each programme. [35097/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Eleven applications have been received under the Immigrant Investor Programme, nine of those applications have been approved and two are under consideration. Twenty nine applications have been received under the Start-up Entrepreneur Programme, thirteen of those applications have been granted and seven are under consideration. Over €10 million has been committed under the programmes.

## **Garda Vetting Applications**

917. **Deputy Ciara Conway** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide, in tabular form, on a county basis the timeline for processing applications for Garda clearance from the date of initial application to the date of final decision; the measures being taken to reduce the waiting times for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35114/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Garda authorities that applications for Garda vetting received from registered organisations are recorded by name and date of birth of the person for whom a vetting request is being made and not by reference to geographical origin. Accordingly, it is not possible to provide the information sought by the Deputy.

I am informed by the Garda authorities that the current average processing time for applications is approximately 14 weeks from date of receipt. However, seasonal fluctuations and the necessity to seek additional information on particular applications can result in this processing time being exceeded on occasion. All organisations registered for Garda Vetting are aware of the processing time-frames for the receipt of Garda vetting and have been advised to factor this into their recruitment and selection process.

I remain in ongoing contact with the Garda Commissioner as to how best the service can continue to be delivered and improved upon, while at all times protecting the integrity of the process. Clearly, the protection of children and vulnerable adults is the primary objective of the Garda Central Vetting Unit and this must remain the case.

The possibility of introducing an e-vetting system has been assessed and the Garda authorities are now in the process of developing a system which will enable vetting applications to be submitted electronically through a secure web service. In addition, the system will facilitate the checking and monitoring of applications. The relevant work is being pursued on a priority basis and it will be completed as quickly as possible.

With further assignments of staff this month, staffing at the Unit will be of the order of 140 (whole-time equivalent) staff, which represents an increase in staff assigned to the Unit of almost 50% since March this year. As staff become fully trained on the vetting process I expect there will be a positive effect on vetting times. My Department is also examining the scope for the redeployment of additional personnel from within the public service to the Unit.

## **Road Traffic Accidents Data**

918. **Deputy Colm Keaveney** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of drivers involved in fatal and non-fatal collisions who were unaccompanied drivers on learner's permit in each of the years 2010, 2011 and 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35125/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have requested a report from the Garda authorities in relation to the matter referred to by the Deputy. I will contact the Deputy directly as soon as the report is to hand.

## **Hoax Calls**

919. **Deputy John O'Mahony** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of

hoax calls received by An Garda Síochána in each county in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2012; the cost incurred as result of these calls in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35138/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have requested a report from the Garda authorities in relation to the matter referred to by the Deputy. I will contact the Deputy directly as soon as the report is to hand.

### **Garda Recruitment**

920. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the position on the recommencement of Garda recruitment; the timeframe for same; if proposals have gone to the Cabinet and the feedback on same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35145/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I do believe that it is important for an organisation such as An Garda Síochána to have some regular intakes of new recruits, even if on a modest scale. In this context, I am very pleased to have received sanction from my colleague, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, to hold a recruitment competition for An Garda Síochána. I will now make arrangements with the Public Appointments Service so that they can do the necessary preparatory work to deal with what is expected to be a very large number of applications later this year.

### **Garda Investigations**

921. **Deputy Michael P. Kitt** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he has any information on the theft of six valuable oil paintings from a church (details supplied) in County Galway; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35177/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Garda authorities that this matter remains under investigation by An Garda Síochána and that a number of lines of enquiry are being followed. In these circumstances I am sure the Deputy will appreciate that it would not be appropriate for me to make any further comment on the matter.

### **Direct Provision System**

922. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a yearly breakdown, from 2003 to date in 2013, of the number of persons who have committed suicide while resident in a direct provision centre here; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35362/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) is responsible for the accommodation of asylum seekers under the Government policy of direct provision and dispersal.

The collation of statistics on deaths of asylum seekers living in direct provision commenced in 2002. During the period 2003 to 2013, there have been 53 deaths of asylum seekers who were residing in direct provision accommodation prior to their deaths.

While RIA may have general knowledge of the cause of death - perhaps by way of information arising from the specified medical needs of the resident concerned prior to his or her death

- it does not, indeed cannot, hold or have access to death certificates. In most cases, the deaths would have occurred outside the asylum centres themselves e.g. in hospitals. If the HSE or a Coroner were to raise an issue relating to the accommodation in which a deceased person lived prior to their death - this has never happened - then RIA would respond accordingly. Where information is provided to centre managers by relatives or friends of the deceased, this is recorded by RIA and indicates that the causes of death ranged from cancers, heart conditions to traffic accidents and, in the case of deaths of children under the age of five, it is believed that a number were suspected cot deaths and still births. It needs to be emphasised that these records are based on informal information and are not official records of death.

Given previous misinterpretations of statistics provided in this respect, it is important to say that only one of these deaths can with certainty be said to be a suicide and that involved a newly arrived asylum seeker taking his own life in 2008 while in hospital.

The number of asylum seekers who died between 2003 and 2013 while being provided with accommodation by RIA in direct provision centres is set out in the following table.

Year	Number of Deaths
2003	8
2004	3
2005	6
2006	4
2007	8
2008	8
2009	2
2010	6
2011	1
2012	6
2013 to date	1
Total	53

While all of these deaths are, of course, tragic, they need to be viewed proportionately and against the background that RIA has provided accommodation for over 51,000 persons over the course of the twelve years the direct provision policy has been in place.

The above relates only to asylum seekers living in the Direct Provision system. Some asylum seekers choose not to avail of the Direct Provision system and stay with friends or relatives. It is possible that, during the period in question, there could have been deaths among this cohort but such data is not available to RIA.

### **Direct Provision System**

923. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will provide a yearly breakdown, from 2003 to date in 2013, of the number of persons who have been sexually assaulted while resident in a direct provision centre here; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35363/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Deputy will appreciate that allegations of sexual assault, or any criminal offence, committed anywhere in the State, in-

cluding in a direct provision centre would be a matter for investigation by An Garda Síochána. I am advised that Garda records are not maintained in such a fashion as to facilitate the provision of the specific information sought by the Deputy without the application of a disproportionate amount of resources.

### **Garda Vetting of Personnel**

924. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he will consider a more innovative approach to current Garda vetting procedures that would involve a licence for up to three years post-issuance of a Garda clearance certificate as opposed to the current system requiring separate and new applications for every employment, noting particularly the burden on the system and applicants involved in multiple part-time positions; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35406/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** A vetting disclosure is made in response to a written request and with the permission of the person who is the subject of that request. Garda vetting disclosures are issued to specified organisations registered with the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) for that purpose in respect of a particular post or employment. The Unit processed approximately 328,000 vetting applications on behalf of these organisations in 2012.

The disclosure is made to the requesting, registered organisation of the position at the time when it is issued.

Each time a new vetting application is received, a full vetting check is conducted to ensure that the most recent data available is taken into account. The non-transferability and contemporaneous nature of the certificate protects against the risk of fraud or forgery and is a guarantee of the integrity of the vetting service. It also affords the registered organisation the facility to assess suitability based on the most up to date information available on the applicant.

I remain in ongoing contact with the Garda Commissioner as to how best the service can continue to be delivered and improved upon, while at all times protecting the integrity of the process. Clearly, the protection of children and vulnerable adults is the primary objective of the GCVU and this must remain the case.

The possibility of introducing an e-vetting system has been assessed and the Garda authorities are now in the process of developing a system which will enable vetting applications to be submitted electronically through a secure web service. In addition, the system will facilitate the checking and monitoring of applications. The relevant work is being pursued on a priority basis and it will be completed as quickly as possible.

### **Residency Permits**

925. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number of residency applications in each of the past three years and to date in 2013 from non-EU nationals as spouses of EU citizens; the number of applications involving a national from each member state; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35467/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) that the number of applications for residency from non-EU nationals as a spouse of an EU citizen for the years in question is as follows:

Year	Number
2010	1,906
2011	1,573
2012	1,944
2013 year to date	907

Figures are provisional and liable to change.

The further detailed breakdown of information requested by the Deputy as is available is currently being compiled and will be forwarded directly to the Deputy in the near future.

A persistent problem with the operation EU Treaty Rights under Statutory Instrument No. 656 of 2006 (as amended) is the suspicion that some marriages (so-called marriages of convenience) are entered into for the purpose of the non-EEA national obtaining permission to remain in the State. This is a complex issue with no single remedy, either legislative or administrative, and the constitutional protection afforded to the institution of marriage makes the possibility of effective criminal sanctions highly problematic. However, the Immigration Residence and Protection Bill, which I hope to republish later this year, contains a number of provisions that would make it more difficult for persons engaging in a marriage of convenience to benefit from it in immigration terms. My colleague, the Minister for Social Protection, is likewise in the process of looking at possible changes to the Civil Registration Act in order to make such marriages more difficult to contract. These legislative steps should contribute to reducing the incentive to seek to engage in such marriages.

### Prison Accommodation

926. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the number and capacity of each low security accommodation unit within the Irish Prison Service; if such persons are maintained by the Irish Prison Service or if they avail of health and social assistance supports; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35468/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** There are two open centre facilities within the Irish Prison Service, Shelton Abbey and Loughan House. In addition there are is a low security accommodation unit at Harristown House (Castlerea). The numbers in custody and the capacity of each are outlined in the following table.

Institution/Unit	In custody on 15 July 2013	Bed Capacity
Shelton Abbey Open Centre	96	115
Loughan House Open Centre	123	140
Harristown House	5	15

All prisoners housed in these areas are in the custody of the Irish Prison Service. In these locations they can access a similar level of health care services to that available in a closed prison. The Irish Prison Service is providing general health care services for the assessment, treatment and care of prisoners comparable to that available to those entitled to General Medical Services in the community and which are appropriate in a prison setting.

They also have access to therapeutic services such as Probation Service, Education & Addiction Services and receive gratuity rates of €2.20 per day up to a maximum of €18.90 per week, the same as those on enhanced regime in a closed prison.

Prisoners being considered for a transfer to an open centre or a low security unit are identified by a number of different means but primarily on the recommendation of the Prison Governor or the therapeutic services in the prisons. The prisoner, their family or their legal representative can also apply for consideration of such a concession. Recommendations are also made to me in relation to long term sentence prisoners by the Parole Board. It is important to note that it does not necessarily follow that a prisoner will receive a transfer to an Open Centre or temporary release even if the recommendation is to that effect.

Prisoners serving short sentences, i.e. under 12 months, can be moved to an open centre shortly after committal. Other longer term prisoners being prepared for the transition back into the community can be considered for moves with about 2 years left in their sentence. Exceptional prisoners who are engaging strongly with the therapeutic services can sometimes be considered for a transfer with up to 4 years left to serve in their sentence.

It is worth mentioning that Open Centres and lower level security settings are vital tools in the re-integration and rehabilitation of prisoners. They encourage an ethos of independent living and offer a transition between custody and community-family life.

### **Dissident Republican Activity**

927. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he is concerned by the threat posed by criminal elements known commonly as dissident republicans; what is being done to protect citizens of the State and neighbouring states from such activity; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35480/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I can assure the House that countering the paramilitary threat has always been a priority for the Garda Síochána and nothing has changed in that regard. The Garda will continue in their ongoing efforts to counteract these groups and their criminal activities.

The recent seizure by the Garda in Dublin of a significant cache of arms and explosives is testament to their ongoing efforts to disrupt the activities and the lethal intentions of these terrorists.

The Deputy will know, of course, that these so-called “dissident republicans” are none other than criminal terrorists who use lethal violence in pursuit of their own, often personal, ends. Let us be clear also that they are deeply and inextricably involved in serious crime in order to fund their activities and their own comfortable lifestyles.

The threat from terrorism is a matter of strong, shared concern North and South. There is also a shared, strong resolve to take all necessary actions within the law to bear down on the groups involved to ensure that they can be disrupted and brought to book.

The Garda co-operate seamlessly with their counterparts in Northern Ireland in actively bearing down on these groups. Operational policing co-operation is the responsibility of the Garda Commissioner and the Chief Constable of the PSNI and both have repeatedly emphasised that the close and high quality co-operation between their forces has been instrumental in preventing attacks, combating criminality and, indeed, in saving lives.

I meet frequently and have ongoing discussions with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Theresa Villiers, and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice, David Ford, with regard to the security situation and the ongoing efforts to combat the threat from these gangs of criminal terrorists. There is also a close and ongoing working relationship between our officials. By

working together on these matters of mutual concern and interest we can improve community safety for all the people on this island and vindicate their democratically expressed desire for a peaceful future.

The Government remains committed, in co-operation with the authorities in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, to spare no effort to ensure that those criminal terrorists who seek to subvert the democratic will of the people of these islands will face the full rigours of the law.

### **Criminal Law Review**

928. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he considers the act of deliberately ramming a Garda vehicle to be serious enough to warrant its own legislative response; if he is concerned with the figures pertaining to such instances; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35481/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I can assure the Deputy that I consider the deliberate ramming of a Garda vehicle to be a very serious matter and am satisfied that there is a range of robust road safety and other legislative enforcement provisions available to the Garda authorities in such circumstances. The Road Traffic Act 1961 (as amended) provides for the offence of driving without reasonable consideration, careless driving and dangerous driving. Section 13 of the Non-Fatal Offences Against the person Act, 1997 also provides for the offence of intentional or reckless conduct which creates a substantial risk of death or serious harm, while section 2 of the Criminal Damage Act, 1991 provides for the offence of damage to the property of another person. Furthermore, section 19 of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act, 1994 (as amended) provides for the offence of assault or obstruction of a member of An Garda Síochána.

### **Sentencing Policy**

929. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality his views on whether the mandatory life sentence for murder should be increased in duration; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35482/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The mandatory penalty for murder is life imprisonment. A sentence of life imprisonment means that the prisoner is subject to that sentence for the rest of his or her life. Such prisoners have no right to be released early at any stage. If granted temporary release, the prisoner remains subject to the life sentence and can be recalled to prison at any stage. Accordingly, it is not possible to increase the duration of a life sentence.

### **Drugs Crime**

930. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality if he has been in contact with his counterparts in Europe, particularly the Netherlands, on the use of a number of websites which provide graphic details on ecstasy in view of the recent deaths from use of ecstasy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35486/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** While this issue has not arisen specifically in my personal contacts with other EU Ministers I can advise the Deputy that the following comprehensive measures are in place for addressing such issues.

At European level the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) monitors and reports on the nature and extent of drug use and related issues in Europe. There are also a number of fora for discussion through which drugs issues of concern may be raised by the EU Member States on an ongoing basis including, for example, the Horizontal Drugs Group. In addition, the Member States recently agreed a EU Action Plan on Drugs for the period 2013-2016 which includes actions to raise awareness of the risks and consequences associated with the use of illicit drugs and other psychoactive substances.

Furthermore, through the mechanism of the National Advisory Committee on Drugs and Alcohol, in place under our National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016, any concern with regard to the emergence of new trends or early warnings regarding drug use can be fed into the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction through the Irish focal point which resides in the Health Research Board. In addition, a HSE led early warning alert system to notify front-line health and drugs related services and the general public of drug use emergencies is in place. There are also state supported websites such as *Drugs.ie* which provide appropriate drugs information.

Regarding the Internet the Deputy may be aware that any suspected illegal content online may be reported by members of the public to the Hotline service at *www.hotline.ie*. Where there is any concern that there is illegal activity being facilitated by a particular website this is a matter which should be reported to the Hotline service and-or to An Garda Síochána. The hotline is operated by the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI) and it is overseen by the Office for Internet Safety, an Executive Office in my Department. The hotline provides a central point of contact for members of the public who become aware of child pornography or any other illegal content on the Internet in Ireland. The hotline accepts reports about such material and attempts to identify the source. If the material is hosted in Ireland, it will request the relevant internet service provider to remove it, in accordance with the ISPAI Code of Practice and Ethics. The hotline liaises with the Garda, as appropriate.

To provide a fast response to illegal material that is hosted outside the Irish jurisdiction, the Hotline is a member of INHOPE, the international organisation of Internet Hotlines. Not all countries have an Internet hotline service and in cases where potentially illegal material is identified by the Hotline as located in such countries, it will forward the report to a specific contact point in An Garda Síochána for transmission and action through international law enforcement channels.

### **Garda Disciplinary Proceedings**

931. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the circumstances in which a young undercover garda was disciplined and returned to uniformed duties in spite of the fact their work had led to the discovery of a significant drugs haul; if he acknowledges this action has undermined morale among drugs squad and community gardaí in the city and if he is committed to the work of the drugs squad. [35487/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have requested the information sought by the Deputy from the Garda Commissioner and as soon as it is to hand I will pass it on to the Deputy.

### **Garda Vetting Applications**

932. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the reason for

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the delay in processing a Garda vetting application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35511/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I am informed by the Garda authorities that a vetting application on behalf of the individual referred to was received by the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU).

The application was processed and returned to the registered organisation concerned but I am informed that the applicant raised certain issues which are the subject of inquiries at present, after which an appropriate response will be issued.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

933. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Justice and Equality the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees under the aegis of his Department were reduced by 25%; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35803/13]

**Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter):** In the time available to answer the question, it was not possible to furnish the information requested. I will write to the Deputy in due course.

*Question No. 934 answered with Question No. 883.*

### **Departmental Reports**

935. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, the name of the external consultant involved and the costs, date of commission and date or expected date of publication of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34400/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** My Department has commissioned one external report since March 2011. On 19 April 2011, I commissioned Mr Frank Callanan, SC, to carry out an independent review into matters relevant to the deaths of Corporal Fintan Heneghan, Private Mannix Armstrong and Private Thomas Walsh on 21 March 1989 while serving with the 64th Infantry Battalion, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). This report was published on 19 September 2011.

The cost of the report was €51,660, including VAT.

### **Legislative Programme**

936. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Defence the position of the proposals made as a result of his Department's withdrawal of the Curragh of Kildare Bill; if he has reviewed the withdrawal of the Bill; the plans he has to republish the Bill; if he is satisfied with the actions and proposals to address the problems regarding the Curragh as determined in the original Bill; if any of the proposed actions or proposals has been addressed and, if so, the cost of each proposal or action; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34431/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Curragh of Kildare Bill was withdrawn because of a number of technical issues arose which caused difficulty in progressing the Bill.

In addition the establishment of the Authority as a separate agency under the aegis of the Department of Defence (as proposed in the Bill) would involve additional costs in terms of staff, accommodation, expenses and payments to members of the Authority which would be significantly greater than the costs incurred by my Department in administering the Curragh Lands. This Government has targeted the rationalisation of State agencies as a key cost saving measure and in that context it would be inappropriate to establish a separate agency to manage work currently being done by my Department. The establishment of the Authority was the major proposal contained in the Bill. Consequently I have no plans to review or republish the Bill.

### Departmental Expenditure

937. **Deputy Stephen S. Donnelly** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide a breakdown of the total cost to his Department of its involvement in the recent JFK 50 commemoration events; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34436/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** As all relevant costs have not yet been processed in the short time since the event in question, it is not possible at present to provide the information sought by the Deputy. My Department and the Defence Forces are currently working to compile this information and, when finalised, it will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### Ministerial Travel

938. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, details of the usage of the Government jet from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012, to include the Minister, the country visited, the event attended and the cost to the State of each journey. [34487/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Ministerial Air Transport Service (MATS) is primarily provided by the Gulfstream IV and Learjet 45 aircraft, which were specifically acquired for that purpose. The details sought by the Deputy are as set out in the following tabular statement. The purpose of each trip is a matter for the individual Department and is not included in the details held by my Department.

#### Learjet 2012

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
11/01/2012	12/01/2012	300	Baldonnell - Vienna - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 5
18/01/2012	18/01/2012	250	Baldonnell - Berlin - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 6
23/01/2012	24/01/2012	250	Baldonnell - Brussels - Frankfurt - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 6

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
26/01/2012	29/01/2012	725	Baldonnell - Naples - Tel Aviv - Naples - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 6
09/02/2012	09/02/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 3
20/02/2012	21/02/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	MOS Finance	MOS plus 4
24/02/2012	24/02/2012	385	Baldonnell - Tunis - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 3
08/03/2012	09/03/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Environment, Community & Local Government	Minister plus 5
12/03/2012	13/03/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 3
29/03/2012	30/03/2012	240	Baldonnell - Copenhagen - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 6
23/04/2012	23/04/2012	200	Baldonnell - Luxembourg - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 4
01/05/2012	02/05/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 4
06/05/2012	07/05/2012	330	Baldonnell - Warsaw - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 4
14/05/2012	15/05/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 5
21/06/2012	22/06/2012	200	Baldonnell - Luxembourg - Baldonnell	Finance/Health	Minister x 2 plus 5
06/09/2012	08/09/2012	650	Baldonnell - Northolt - Naples - Paphos - Naples - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 5
01/10/2012	01/10/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Environment, Community & Local Government	Minister plus 3
08/10/2012	09/10/2012	200	Baldonnell - Luxembourg - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 3
14/10/2012	15/10/2012	200	Baldonnell - Luxembourg - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs) / MOS European Affairs	Tánaiste, MOS plus 4

Questions - Written Answers

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
25/10/2012	26/10/2012	200	Baldonnell - Luxembourg - Baldonnell	Justice, Equality & Law Reform	Minister plus 6
05/11/2012	07/11/2012	700	Baldonnell - Naples - Larnaca - Naples - Baldonnell	Public Expenditure & Reform	Minister plus 4
12/11/2012	13/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 3
18/11/2012	19/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Defence	Minister plus 4
20/11/2012	21/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 3
26/11/2012	27/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 4
03/12/2012	04/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 5
06/12/2012	07/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Justice & Equality / Enterprise, Jobs & Innovation / Health	Minister x 3 plus 6
10/12/2012	11/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs)	Tánaiste plus 5
12/12/2012	13/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Finance	Minister plus 4

Gulfstream IV 2012

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
12/01/2012	12/01/2012	120	Baldonnell - Northolt - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 8
25/01/2012	27/01/2012	240	Baldonnell - Zurich - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 8
30/01/2012	30/01/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / MOS Taoiseach	Taoiseach, MOS plus 11
08/02/2012	09/02/2012	790	Baldonnell - Teteboro - Whiteplains - Teteboro - Dublin	An Taoiseach / Enterprise / Trade & Innovation	Taoiseach, Minister plus 11

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
15/02/2012	17/02/2012	835	Baldonnel - Teteboro - White Plains - Teteboro - Boston - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 9
23/02/2012	24/02/2012	385	Baldonnel - Berlin - Rome - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 7
29/02/2012	02/03/2012	180	Baldonnel - Brussels - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach / Finance / MOS Taoiseach	Taoiseach, Minister, MOS plus 9
15/03/2012	21/03/2012	1050	Baldonnel - Chicago - Southbend - Whiteplains - Washington - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 14
12/03/2012	12/03/2012	120	Baldonnel - Northolt - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 8
26/04/2012	27/04/2012	200	Baldonnel - Luxembourg - Baldonnel	Agriculture, Marine & Food / Justice & Equality	Minister x 2 plus 12
23/05/2012	24/05/2012	180	Baldonnel - Brussels - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach / Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)	Taoiseach, Tánaiste plus 10
11/06/2012	14/06/2012	840	Baldonnel - Yerevan - Tbilisi - Batumi - Baku - Baldonnel	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)	Tánaiste plus 13
22/06/2012	22/06/2012	185	Baldonnel - Edinburgh - Cork - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach / Communications, Energy & Natural Resources	Taoiseach, Minister plus 10
25/06/2012	25/06/2012	200	Baldonnel - Luxembourg - Baldonnel	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)	Tánaiste plus 6
28/06/2012	29/06/2012	180	Baldonnel - Brussels - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach / Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade) / MOS Taoiseach	Taoiseach, Tánaiste, MOS plus 11
09/07/2012	11/07/2012	680	Baldonnel - Brussels - Larnaca - Baldonnel	Finance/Health	Minister x 2 plus 7

Questions - Written Answers

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
17/07/2012	17/07/2012	210	Baldonnel - Frankfurt - Baldonnel	Finance	Minister plus 6
23/07/2012	24/07/2012	495	Baldonnel - Berlin - Rome - Budapest - Baldonnel	Agriculture, Marine & Food	Minister plus 6
27/07/2012	28/07/2012	120	Baldonnel - Northolt - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 5
11/09/2012	15/09/2012	775	Baldonnel - Paris - Berlin - Rome - Larnaca - Baldonnel	Finance	Minister plus 10
21/09/2012	22/09/2012	340	Baldonnel - Rome - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 6
03/10/2012	03/10/2012	180	Baldonnel - Brussels - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach/ Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)/ Finance/Public Expenditure & Reform/ Enterprise, Jobs & Innovation / Social Protection / Communications, Energy & Natural Resources / Environment, Community & Local Government / Agriculture, Food & Marine / Transport, Tourism & Sport / MOS European Affairs	Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister x 7, MOS plus 9
09/10/2012	09/10/2012	190	Baldonnel - Paris - Baldonnel	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)	Tánaiste plus 5
11/10/2012	14/10/2012	905	Baldonnel - Philadelphia - Cleveland - Knock - Baldonnel	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 8

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
18/10/2012	19/10/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / Tánaiste / MOS European Affairs	Taoiseach, Tánaiste, MOS plus 12
22/10/2012	22/10/2012	190	Baldonnell - Paris - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / MOS Food, Horticulture & Food Safety	Taoiseach, MOS plus 8
25/10/2012	26/10/2012	250	Baldonnell - Berlin - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade)	Tánaiste plus 8
01/11/2012	01/11/2012	250	Baldonnell - Berlin - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 8
07/11/2012	08/11/2012	395	Baldonnell - Budapest - Vienna - Berlin - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 7
19/11/2012	20/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade) / MOS European Affairs	Tánaiste, MOS plus 10
22/11/2012	23/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade) / Agriculture, Food & Marine / MOS European Affairs	Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister, MOS plus 12
26/11/2012	26/11/2012	100	Baldonnell - Cardiff - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / Children & Youth Affairs	Taoiseach, Minister plus 8
28/11/2012	29/11/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Agriculture, Food & Marine / Enterprise, Jobs & Innovation	Minister x2 plus 9
10/12/2012	10/12/2012	260	Baldonnell - Oslo - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach	Taoiseach plus 6
13/12/2012	14/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	An Taoiseach / MOS European Affairs	Taoiseach, MOS plus 10

Date	Return Date	Min. Time on Board	Route	Department	Passengers
16/12/2012	17/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Baldonnell	Tánaiste (Foreign Affairs & Trade) / MOS European Affairs	Tánaiste, MOS plus 6
20/12/2012	20/12/2012	180	Baldonnell - Brussels - Dublin	Communications, Energy & Natural Resources	Minister plus 9

In relation to costs, my Department follows the normal practice in the aviation business of costing aircraft by reference to the average cost per flying hour under each of two headings as set out in the following table.

The direct cost, which includes costs which are additional to those associated with having the aircraft and which only arise when the aircraft is flown, including maintenance, fuel and support services; and

The total cost, which is the direct cost plus the costs associated with having the aircraft, including depreciation and personnel costs.

For clarity, an additional column has been included in the table showing the cost associated with having the aircraft regardless of whether it is flown.

-	Average Associated Cost of having the aircraft per Hour - €	Average Direct Cost Per Hour - €	Average Total Cost Per Hour - €
Gulfstream	520	3,270	3,790
Learjet	2,260	1,940	4,200

These costs are currently being reviewed by my Department and revised figures will be published shortly.

The Programme for Government contained a commitment to introducing a new code of practice for the use of the Ministerial Air Transport Service (MATs), ensuring transparent and cost effective travel. In line with this commitment, information relating to the MATs is now published on my Department's website and this information is updated on a monthly basis.

### Departmental Bodies

939. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34510/13]

940. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of the chief executive officers of all the non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department. [34526/13]

957. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees under the aegis of his Department were reduced by 25%; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35797/13]

959. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36214/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 939, 940, 957 and 959 together.

The only body under the aegis of my Department is the Army Pensions Board.

The Army Pensions Board is an independent statutory body established under the Army Pensions Act, 1927. The Act specifies that the Board shall consist of a chairman and two ordinary members. It does not have a Chief Executive Officer. The two ordinary members must be qualified medical practitioners of whom one must be an officer of the Army Medical Corps. The chairman and the non military ordinary member are appointed by the Minister for Defence with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. The Army Medical Corps ordinary member is appointed by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces. The chairperson and the civilian doctor are entitled to annual fees of €7,618 and €5,079, respectively.

If a 25% reduction was applied to the above fees this would give a total potential annual saving of €3,174.

The only expenses payable to the members of the above Board are travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines.

### **Departmental Expenditure**

941. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34542/13]

943. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34574/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 941 and 943 together.

Professional fees paid by my Department for the period 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013 amounted to €1,061,054. The amount invoiced by the companies or persons who provided these services to my Department during this period are set out in the tabular statement attached. These include professional services such as ICT, engineering, architecture, accounting and legal services.

In addition to the professional services referred to above, my Department also engages the services of civilian medical practitioners to provide primary care for the Permanent Defence Force when medical officers are not available or where specialist medical expertise is required.

Questions - Written Answers

In the period 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013, my Department has paid €3.6 million to some 486 civilian medical service providers. A 20% reduction would give rise to annual savings of €212,210 on non medical professional services and €723,300 on medical professional services.

Company Name	Invoice Total
Baynes & Co. Solrs.	€29,565.51
Bianconi Research Ltd T/A Rits	€41,438.70
Brian Coonan	€851.25
Brophy Farrell	€184.50
Cathal Crimmins Architect	€18,118.70
City Analysts Ltd	€6,034.38
Clarke & Assoc Consulting Eng. Ltd	€1,697.40
Coll & Co Chartered Accountants	€366.54
Conor Feeney	€3,505.50
Cork Marriage Counselling Centre	€650.00
Crean Salley Architects	€16,804.03
Crowleys DFK	€19,564.38
D L Martin Partners	€9,348.00
Davis Langdon PKS	€18,081.00
Deasy Walley Partnership	€8,179.50
Diarmuid Collins, B.L.	€1,107.00
Donnachadh O'Brien & Associates	€25,406.88
Energy Services Ltd	€81,930.30
Enovation Solutions	€8,856.00
Equivet - Marcus Swail	€2,390.24
Frances Heery BA Msc	€770.00
Frank Callanan	€51,660.00
Fujitsu (Ireland) Ltd	€344,634.99
Geraldine Biggs Bl	€3,690.00
Hardy Partnership	€2,767.50
Heavey Architects Ltd	€7,435.35
Heavey Kenny & Associates	€5,504.25
HGL O'connor & Company	€1,400.16
In2 Eng. Design Partnership	€8,670.76
J B Barry & Partners Ltd	€19,803.00
J V Tierney & Co Consulting Engineers	€13,776.00
Lisadell Equine Hospital	€123,185.91
M.J. Turley & Associates	€8,009.76
Mackin Consultancy Ltd	€1,975.00
Malachy Walsh & Partners	€11,142.26
McArdle McSweeney Associates	€3,198.00
O'Herlihy Access Consultancy	€1,190.00
Paul O'Grady	€150.00
Ray Keane & Associates	€1,931.10
Ray Motherway Bl	€2,675.25

Company Name	Invoice Total
Real Estate Alliance Ltd (Dublin)	€307.50
Roderick Maguire B.L.	€553.50
Rogerson Reddan	€10,966.33
RPS Consulting Engineers Ltd	€21,418.76
Ryan Hanley Ltd	€16,974.31
Sandra McDonald	€4,000.00
Synergy Engineering Ltd	€1,869.60
Taylor Architects	€20,756.25
Tricia Sheehy Skeffington Bl	€2,214.00
Troytown Greyabbey Equine Veterinary Services	€12,721.66
V M R A Consulting Engineers	€19,680.00
Wilson Architects Ltd.	€41,512.50
WYG Environmental & Plan Ire Ltd (In Liquidation)	€430.50

### Departmental Staff Training

942. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34558/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The following table outlines the information requested by the Deputy.

2012	Costs
Third Level Courses	€32,525.40
Training Programmes and Courses	€49,670.87

The Third Level Courses figure relates to Refund of Fees. Refund of Fees are approved under the terms of the Department of Finance circular whereby Officers undertake courses of study in their own time at recognised third level institutions. Courses are currently funded by my Department in the areas of Business Studies, Technology, Payroll, Public Management, Strategic Procurement, European Union Studies and Change Management.

Training Programmes and Courses in my Department include Language Training, Risk Based Planning, Health and Safety in the workplace, Soft Skills training and Financial Management. My Department is committed to Training and Development and is at all times conscious of maximising value for money.

*Question No. 943 answered with Question No. 941.*

### Departmental Travel

944. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34590/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The details requested in respect of the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for my Department are outlined in the following table. These figures are based on Travel and Subsistence paid to Civil Servants in my Department in 2012.

Annual T&S for 2012	Reduction	Saving
€177,326.13	1%	€1,773.26
€177,326.13	5%	€8,866.31
€177,326.13	7%	€12,412.83
€177,326.13	10%	€17,732.61
€177,326.13	12%	€21,279.14
€177,326.13	15%	€26,598.92
€177,326.13	17%	€30,145.44
€177,326.13	20%	€35,465.23

### Departmental Staff Training

945. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34606/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The following table outlines the information requested by the Deputy:

Training & Development Budget 2013*	5% Savings	7% Savings	10% Savings	12% Savings	15% Savings	17% Savings	20% Savings
€145,000	€7,250	€10,150	€14,500	€17,400	€21,750	€24,650	€29,000

\*This figure does not include Departmental Staff training costs. My Department is committed to Training and Development and is at all times conscious of maximising value for money.

### Ministerial Advisers Remuneration

946. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Defence if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34622/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I have not appointed any special advisers in my role as Minister for Defence. I have engaged the services of a personal assistant who assists me in constituency matters. The annual salary attached to this post is €56,060.

### Programme for Government Implementation

947. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Defence if he will outline, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34677/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The commitments in the Programme for Government relating to Defence and the progress that has been made are set out in the following table:

Commitment	Status
The implementation of the Defence Forces Medical Services Review as resources allow.	In line with the recommendations of the Defence Forces Medical Service Review, the Central Medical Unit was formally established in 2012. Options for outsourcing Defence Forces medical services to a civilian medical services provider have been reviewed and consideration is now being given to outsourcing options on a per service basis e.g. annual medicals, sick parades etc. I expect that decisions will be made in this regard in the coming months.
The initiation of a detailed legal review of the basis, structures and governance of the Irish Red Cross to improve its functioning in the light of changing circumstances.	The Department has commenced work on the review and has had discussions with the Secretary General of the Irish Red Cross on legislative proposals, which in the main relate to codification of the various legal instruments in effect since 1939. I anticipate, subject to Government approval, that a Red Cross (Amendment) Bill will be published during the lifetime of this Government.

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

948. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Defence if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34693/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** My Department has not incurred any expenditure on external public relations or communications consultants since I took office in March 2011. In this period, the Defence Forces engaged the services of one external communications company, The Communications Clinic, to provide training. The cost of the training was €1,900.

### Defence Forces Recruitment

949. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Defence his plans to engage in further recruitment campaigns for Army personnel. [34786/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** Following on from the last General Service Recruitment campaign in 2012 a total of 539 General Service Recruits were enlisted in the Permanent Defence Force, of which 418 were enlisted in the Army and 121 in the Naval Service. I am advised by the Military Authorities that the strength of the Permanent Defence Force, at 30 June 2013, the latest date for which details are available, was 9,093, comprising 7,306 Army, 779 Air Corps and 1,008 Naval Service personnel. These figures do not include 70 members of the PDF who are currently on Career Breaks or Leave of Absence. This is against the stabilised

strength for the Permanent Defence Force of 9,500. In the context of the current strength being below the agreed stabilised strength, it is my intention that targeted recruitment will take place, within the resource envelope allocated to Defence, from the existing 2012 General Service Recruitment panels in the autumn. No decisions have yet been made with regard to General Service recruitment in 2014.

A competition for the intake of Cadets was recently advertised, the closing date for which was 26 May 2013. It is planned to take in 33 Cadets from this Cadetship competition in 2013. In addition it is proposed to advertise competitions for the recruitment of Apprentices for the Air Corps and Engine Room Artificers for the Naval Service in the near future. Details of these competitions will be available on *www.military.ie*. With the support of the Chief of Staff and within the resources available, I intend to retain the capacity of the Defence Forces to operate effectively across all roles and to undertake the tasks laid down by Government both at home and overseas.

### Departmental Legal Costs

950. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Defence if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34979/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The Chief State Solicitor's Office, Attorney General's Office and the State Claims Agency deal with all legal matters on behalf of the Department. As such it would seldom arise that the Department procures the services of external solicitors and barristers directly. The following table only includes costs incurred by the Department in obtaining legal advices directly and does not include legal costs in relation to litigation cases which are mainly managed by the State Claims Agency and the Chief State Solicitor's Office.

Year	Name of Solicitors	Subject Matter of Advice Sought	Fee Paid
2011	AL Goodbody Solicitors	Legal advice in relation to a conciliation hearing between my Department and a building contractor.	€21,168.75, including VAT, was paid in 2011.
2012	Nil	Nil	Nil
2013 to date	Nil	Nil	Nil

While it possibly falls outside the terms of the question, for completeness, I would like to advise the Deputy that the independent selection committee for the Military Judge appointment sought legal advice arising from the 2010 Competition for the Military Judge. While the Committee is completely independent in its functions, the payment to senior counsel in respect of that advice in the amount of €9,075, including VAT, was paid in 2011 out of my Department's Vote.

### Air Ambulance Service Provision

951. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Defence his plans to expand the role of the Air Corps air ambulance service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35082/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** There are no plans to expand the role of the Air Corps in the provision of Air Ambulance services. In 2005, the Department of Defence and the Department of Health completed a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which formalised arrangements for the provision of an inter hospital air ambulance service by the Air Corps. This SLA was renewed in October, 2011.

In addition to the inter-hospital agreement, a twelve-month pilot Emergency Aeromedical Support (EAS) service was established last year by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Defence and the Department of Health. The service commenced on 4 June 2012 and it is operated by the Air Corps out of Custume Barracks, Athlone. A full evaluation of the EAS service has been undertaken by an inter-service Audit and Evaluation Group and they have recently submitted a Report to my colleague, the Minister for Health. In order to give the Minister for Health an opportunity to consider the report and options for future delivery of a service, I have agreed to extend the Air Corps' participation in the pilot for a period of up to three months.

### **Air Ambulance Service Provision**

952. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Defence the number of aeromedical call-outs by the air ambulance based in Athlone since its inception; the number of patients transported for each category of emergency, including STMI patients; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35083/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** From the commencement of the pilot Emergency Aeromedical Support (EAS) service on 4 June 2012 there were 299 EAS missions completed by the Air Corps up to 30 June 2013. These included cases of segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), trauma, medical, paediatric and other time-critical cases, as tasked by the HSE's National Aero-Medical Coordination Centre. To date, STEMI and suspected STEMI related missions are estimated to have accounted for some 30% of completed EAS missions. A full evaluation of the pilot EAS service has been undertaken by an inter-service Audit and Evaluation Group and they have recently submitted a report to my colleague, the Minister for Health. I have agreed to extend the Air Corps' participation in the initial twelve-month pilot for a further period of up to three months, in order to provide the Minister for Health with an opportunity to consider the report.

### **Naval Service Vessels**

953. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Defence in view of the decommissioning of LE Emer in September 2013 and the LE Aoife in September 2014, if he will provide further details of the two replacement ships that are currently being built to replace them that are scheduled for delivery in early 2014 and early 2015, respectively; the persons building the new vessels and where they are being constructed; the length of time it will take for the crews to be fully trained in on the new vessels on delivery to Ireland; if the delivery of the two vessels is still on schedule to ensure the Irish Naval Service is not left for an extended period of time without use of replacement ships; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35098/13]

954. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Defence further to Parliamentary Question No. 216 of 22 May 2013, if he will outline in tabular form the qualified persons who will

be assisting his Department and the Irish Naval Service in the sale of the LE Emer and LE Aoife vessels, including the methodology for the sale process, when the vessels are decommissioned in both September 2013 and September 2014 respectively; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35103/13]

955. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Defence further to Parliamentary Question No. 439 of 9 July 2013, if he will provide the names of persons and their rank or position that assisted both his Department and the Irish Naval Service in the naming of the two replacement vessels to be commissioned in early 2014 and 2015, the LE Samuel Beckett and LE James Joyce; the reasons for a policy shift in the naming of Irish vessels; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35104/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 953 to 955, inclusive, together.

A contract was signed in October 2010, with Babcock Marine, part of the Babcock International Group, in the United Kingdom for the provision of two new offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) for the Naval Service. The cost of the two new ships is €108 million, exclusive of VAT. In addition, the cost of providing a weapons system for the ships, similar to the systems on *LE Roisin* and *LE Niamh*, is €7.8 million, exclusive of VAT. The two new ships are being built by Babcock Marine in Appledore, Devon in the United Kingdom, the same shipyard where both *LE Roisin* and *LE Niamh* were built. The build programme for the first ship is on schedule. The cutting of steel for the second ship has already commenced. The two new ships will be larger vessels than *LE Roisin* and *LE Niamh* with a length of 89.5 m. The ships will have a top speed of 23 knots and will have a crew of 44, plus the capacity to take 10 trainees.

The Naval Service will have a significant presence of experienced personnel in the Appledore Shipyard in the build up to the Harbour Acceptance Trials and the Sea Acceptance Trials on the ship scheduled to take place before the end of the year. This will allow the required time for personnel to build up familiarity with the workings of the new ship. As is the case with all new ships, the training process will continue when the ship arrives in the Naval Base in Cork and ongoing crew training will be part and parcel of normal patrolling.

On the issue of the decommissioning of Naval Service ships, the process for the selection of a qualified person-company to assist the Department and the Naval Service with the sale-disposal of *LE Emer* and *LE Aoife* is still ongoing and I am not in a position to give further details on the matter at this stage.

With regard to the change in naming policy for these new ships, I considered that the policy for naming Naval Service ships should be examined and I came to the view that the naming of the ships after world renowned Irish literary figures will facilitate greater recognition for our Naval Services when they are operating in the international maritime domain, particularly when they visit foreign ports. I am also of the view that the time is right for a change in our traditional approach of naming ships after Irish female mythological figures to an approach which reflects a more modern and inclusive Ireland.

### Defence Forces Properties

956. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Defence his plans regarding development in the Curragh Camp, County Kildare; the position on unoccupied housing, housing stock, general buildings, barracks, and so on, in relation to repair, replacement or upgrade; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35304/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** My Department is engaged on an ongoing building programme designed to modernise and enhance the training, operational and accommodation facilities available to members of the Defence Forces. Under the building programme there has been considerable capital investment at the Curragh Camp in recent years. Between 2008 and 2012 my Department has spent in excess of €10.7 million on major building projects at the Camp with individual building projects costing in excess of €1 million as follows: New Armoured Vehicle Garaging; Refurbishment and Alterations to No. 4 Block, Plunkett Barracks; Refurbishment of Catering Centre, McDonagh Barracks; Refurbishment of Block 7, Connolly Barracks; Refurbishment of the Infantry School Building; Re-roofing of Military Medical Facility.

The Defence capital works provision has reduced over the last 5 years, from €25.6 million in 2008 to €6.24 million in 2013. The reduction in funding of 75.6% has significantly impacted on the number and scale of construction projects which it is now possible to undertake in any given year. Notwithstanding the constraints on the capital budget as outlined above, plans are presently being progressed for the provision of substantial additional facilities at the Camp as follows: the refurbishment of the ammunition depot so as to bring the complex into line with modern standards for such facilities. The conversion to natural gas consumption of the major energy consuming facilities in the camp. This is expected to generate significant savings when completed.

Expenditure on minor works, such as the resurfacing of roads and squares and refurbishment works, including the painting of buildings, is treated as current expenditure under the Building programme. Given the overall size of the Camp and the distribution and variety of buildings located within it, a significant portion of the budget for these works is expended on buildings located at the Camp. As with the building capital budget, the provision for such works has also been in decline in recent years, down from €14.95 million in 2008 to €7.460 million for 2013.

In relation to the married quarters housing stock, my Department has discontinued the practice of providing such accommodation as it has been found that over time the properties require a significant and disproportionate investment in order to ensure compliance with regulations regarding rental properties. Consequently in recent years there has been a sharp decline in the number of such properties in use with only 27 serving personnel currently occupying married quarters in the Curragh. Where such properties are located outside barracks, they are made available for purchase. Properties located within barracks are not for sale and are removed from the stock of available housing when they become vacant. There are no residential properties (former married quarters) vacant in the Curragh Camp which are currently habitable. From time to time the overall stock of housing within the barracks is reviewed and vacant uninhabitable properties are demolished where it is found to be necessary due to health and safety concerns, to make way for other facilities or in order to improve the layout of the camp generally.

*Question No. 957 answered with Question No. 939.*

### **Official Travel**

958. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Defence if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36042/13]

**Minister for Defence (Deputy Alan Shatter):** The only body under the aegis of my Department is the Army Pensions Board. No overseas travel was undertaken by staff of this agency.

*Question No. 959 answered with Question No. 939.*

### **Commonage Framework Plans**

960. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the outcome of the review of the Commonage Framework Plan that was carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34178/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Commonage lands form an important part of the farming enterprises of many farmers, particularly along the west coast. They also form an important part of the local environment from the point of view of biodiversity, wildlife, amenities and economic returns e.g. tourism. However, there is a substantial risk of land abandonment as under-grazing becomes more of a problem.

Under-grazing leads to an increase in ineligible land under Direct Aid and Agri-Environment Schemes and leads to risk of financial corrections being imposed by EU Commission. It is vital, therefore, to maintain the commonages in GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition), or where there is under-grazing, to return the habitat to GAEC. It is my stated aim that this will be achieved by working with the farmers directly managing the lands, relevant State agencies, the farming organisations and all other interested stakeholders.

I readily acknowledge that it will not be an easy task, but it is achievable if all stakeholders work in a co-operative basis. If action is not taken now, the areas will continue to deteriorate and will lead to more land abandonment. If this is allowed to happen, Ireland will lose a valuable resource from the point of view of farming, rural economy, biodiversity and wildlife. While grazing is the only method of managing these lands, the task facing us is how to ensure that these grazing levels are appropriate to the individual commonages.

In order to ensure that the achievement of this objective, as already stated, we need the input of individual shareholders. Grazing plans, at the level of each commonage, will allow for greater flexibility for shareholders and will enable the active farmers to increase their stock to cater for dormant and inactive persons. It will be matter for agreement between the shareholders – as was always the case – to decide how best to reach the stocking levels. Professional assistance will be required, in particular where the commonage has been damaged by under-grazing.

The Grazing Plan will have to cater the traditional farming methods for the area, with provision made for sheep and other animals, such as cattle, providing that they are appropriate to the habitat. An appropriate time-scale will have to be put in place but the Plan should include the incremental steps to achieve GAEC. The whole concept will be output driven, in that the assessment of the Plans will be based on whether the commonage is in GAEC or not or whether the appropriate progress has been achieved. Apart from ensuring that the Grazing Plan is valid, there are a number of other complications, including: dormant shareholders – in the majority of cases, these persons are no longer farming; current claimants on the commonages, who do not farm or manage the lands. The issue of whether the latter claimants will continue to be eligible for payment will have to be examined. There are other issues that will need to be considered. These include the fact that many commonage habitats have been significantly damaged by under-grazing, with resulting problems that must be addressed including land abandonment, spread of scrub and invasive species. While it is generally accepted that this is a very complex

matter and requires a very detailed action plan to cover the various issues, I intend to set out proposals on how these matters will be progressed in the near future.

### **Disadvantaged Areas Scheme Payments**

961. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will expedite a disadvantaged areas scheme payment in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34226/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The processing of the 2012 Disadvantaged Areas Scheme application for the person named has recently been finalised by my Department and payment has issued directly to the nominated bank account of the applicant.

### **Trade Agreements**

962. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if his attention has been drawn to the fact that Norway recently imposed huge import duties on particular agricultural products; the measures he intends to take in liaising with the Norwegian authorities on this issue of protectionism; his views that this move is contrary to single market aims to which many European nations aspire, despite Norway not being in the EU; his views that Irish exports to Norway will be impacted on by this recent move; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34339/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Trade in agricultural products is excluded from the scope of the European Economic Area (EAA) Agreement which makes Norway a part of the EU's internal market. However, Article 19 of the Agreement obliges signatories to "undertake to continue their efforts with a view to achieving progressive liberalization of agricultural trade". A bilateral agreement was drawn up in 2012, which established additional trade preferences in agricultural products.

However, from January 2013, Norway changed its tariff structure, from specific tariffs to ad valorem tariffs, on certain types of cheese, lamb and beef, which has led to significant increases in tariffs for these products being exported from the EU to Norway. While Norway can legally do this under its WTO obligations, nevertheless, the measures are regarded as contrary to Article 19 of the EEA Agreement, which foresees progressive trade liberalisation in agriculture.

Officials from my Department met with Norwegian officials on 10 December, 2012 and raised concerns at the decision by Norway to introduce these higher tariffs and specifically the impact these higher tariffs could have on potential exports of Irish beef to Norway, which was being explored by the beef industry. My officials also highlighted the fact that no prior notice had been given to the Commission of the proposed changes to the tariff structure.

The Commission has taken all available measures to counter the tariff increases. Letters were sent by the Director-General of DG AGRI and Commissioner Ciolos to oppose the new tariffs. Consultations with Norway took place at political and technical level. The issue was raised at the EAA Joint Committee. Nevertheless, Norway was not willing to reconsider the measures taken. The Commission recognises that this action is allowed within Norway's WTO commitments but it is considering what can be done bilaterally and has indicated that it will also take this into account in other areas of its relations with Norway. Last week, a resolution was adopted by MEPs demanding that Norway withdraw what it regards as protectionist measures,

and warned that the EU will consider “further action” if Norway does not comply.

In terms of trade with Norway, Ireland’s exports of food and beverages have increased from €13.13 million in 2010, to €16.644 million in 2011 and to €17.557 million in 2012. We will have to await the full year figures for 2013 to see if this measure has impacted on Ireland’s exports of beef and cheese. Exports of beverages, at roughly €10 million over the past three years have remained almost constant in these years. Exports of dairy products have varied from €1.08 million in 2010, to €3.4 million in 2011 and €2.9 million in 2012. Ireland has very limited cheese exports to Norway which were valued at €85,000 in 2011 and €32,000 in 2012. Exports of casein increased slightly from €1.08 million in 2011 to €1.15m in 2012 while exports of butter decreased from €2.2 million to €1.65 million. Exports of cereals have grown from €55,000 in 2010 to €1.54 million in 2012, while pigmeat exports increased from €99,000 in 2011 to €211,000 in 2012. Exports of beef also grew from a zero base in 2011 to €200,000 in 2012.

For the first four months of this year, there is a decrease in Irish exports from €5.88 million to €4.08 million, with reductions recorded in relation to cereals exports from €1.23 million to €19,000 and also decreases in exports of dairy products from €918,000 to €303,000. No exports of beef are recorded in the first four months of 2012 and none are recorded in the first four months of 2013. My Department will continue to monitor this situation and will support the Commission in its actions to address the measures taken by Norway.

### **Departmental Properties**

963. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the position on the lease on a premises (details supplied) in County Limerick which was until recently the offices of the DVO section of his Department in County Limerick. [34371/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The lease on these premises, Houston Hall, Raheen Business Park, Raheen, Limerick, is a matter for the Office of Public Works (OPW). Following the recent transfer of administrative staff to the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, we are working with the OPW with a view to consolidating all our remaining business units, including the Regional District Veterinary Office, on to one floor.

### **Departmental Reports**

964. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34396/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The information request by the Deputy is listed in the following table.

CONSULTANT	TITLE OF REPORT	DATE OF COMMISSION	DATE OR EXPECTED DATE OF PUBLICATION	PAYMENTS IN 2011 (March to December) - €
University College Dublin	Evaluation of the EU School Fruit Scheme/ Food Dude Programme in Ireland 2011 - Commission Regulation 288 of 2009	February 2011	10 January 2012	4,500
University College Dublin	EU School Fruit Scheme/Food Dude Programme in Ireland – A review of evaluations completed to date - Commission Regulation 288 of 2009	September 2011	6 February 2012	6,388
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2010 Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2010 Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2010	March 2011	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire - completed May 2011, Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2011, published in 2010 Woodflow January 2012 UNECE report completed Sept 2011	12,792
Fitzpatrick's	Interim Evaluation of the Seafood Development OP 2007-2013	23 March 2011	7 June 2011	39,325
Rockwell Automation	Hazard and Operability Study	November 2011	13 December 2011	3,740
Brendan Riordan, Research Economist	The Net Contribution of the Agri-Food Sector to the Inflow of Funds into Ireland: a New Estimate	3 March 2011	23 July 2012	6,000
Accenture	An analysis of an internal review of procurement.	23 May 2011	20 September 2011	Work done on a pro-bono basis

Questions - Written Answers

CONSULTANT	TITLE OF REPORT	DATE OF COMMISSION	DATE OR EXPECTED DATE OF PUBLICATION	PAYMENTS IN 2011 (March to December) - €
Accenture	An examination of the opportunities and capacity for further shared services between the Department and its non-commercial state agencies.	23 May 2011	20 September 2011	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Accenture	A review of the Department's role in regulating meat plants	23 May 2011	20 September 2011	Work done on a pro-bono basis
KPMG	An examination of the administration of the Single Payment Scheme.	4 July 2011	13 October 2011	Work done on a pro-bono basis
Fitzmaurice Tingle Ltd.	Refrigeration Consultancy on 6 Fishery Harbour Centre Sites	14 October 2011	8 November 2011	3,505
Brian Scott	Port Security Assessment- Castleownbere Fishery Harbour Centre	29 September 2011	November 2011	4,680
University College Dublin	EU School Fruit Scheme/Food Dude Programme in Ireland- A review of evaluations completed to date- requirement of EU Commission Regulation 288 Of 2009	September 2011	6 February 2012	6,388
Deloitte	To examine recommendations of the Report of the Review Group on State Assets and Liabilities as applicable to be this Department to value the assets referred to and to make a series of recommendations	Commissioned centrally end June/July 2011	Not applicable(For Internal Departmental information)	Work done on a pro-bono basis

16 July 2013

CONSULTANT	TITLE OF REPORT	DATE OF COMMISSION	DATE OR EXPECTED DATE OF PUBLICATION	PAYMENTS IN 2012 (January-December) - €
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2011Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2011Market Report for Ireland for the Timber Committee 2011)	March 2012	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire - completed May 2012, Joint Wood Energy Enquiry report published in 3 July 2012UNECE report completed Sept 2012	12,792
Indecon	Review of certain aspects of the Irish Horse Racing Industry	1 March 2012	20 July 2012	59,225
CMG Crime Management Ltd	ISPS Port Security Plan-Castleownbere Fishery Harbour Centre	25 May	June 2012	3,198
Philip Farrelly & Co. Ltd. Unit 5A Fingal Business Park Balbriggan Co. Dublin	Analysis of scenarios Related to Implementation of Recommendations in Food Harvest 2020.	12 April 2012	October 2013	229,610
Team BDS	Lean Review of the Meat Inspection Service	10 October 2012	Third quarter of 2013	Total cost of €98,597 expected to be fully paid

CONSULTANT	TITLE OF REPORT	DATE OF COMMISSION	DATE OR EXPECTED DATE OF PUBLICATION	PAYMENTS IN 2013 (January-June) - €
Norfolk Marine	Survey works report to Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre	13 March	April 2013	10,828
Drima Marketing Ltd	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JSFO) 2012Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) 2012Market Report for Ireland for the UNECE Timber Committee 2011)	13 February 2013	Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire - completed May 2013, Joint Wood Energy Enquiry report & will be published in 2012 Woodflow (July 2013) UNECE report expected in October 2013	11,218
Ms Judith Annette	Deer Management Policy Vision	13 June 2013	End October 2013	2,500

### Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration

965. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34506/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The details of the fees paid to Board members of the 12 State Bodies operating under the aegis of my Department for 2012 are outlined in the following table. The issues of expenses paid to members of State Boards is an operational matter for the body itself.

Body/Agency	No of Board Members	Term of Office	Board Fees per Annum
Aquaculture Licensing Appeals Board	7	2 – 5 years	Chair: €8,978 Board member: €5,985
An Bord Bia	15*	3 years	Chair: €20,520 Board member: €11,970
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	6	3 years	Chair €11,970 Board Member €7,695
Bord na gCon	7	3 years	Chair: €21,600 Board member: €12,600
Coillte	9	5 years As long as he shall remain CEO of Coillte or 5 years whichever is the shorter	Chair: €21,600 Board member: €12,600
Horse Racing Ireland	14	4 years	Chair: €21,600 Board member: €12,600
Irish National Stud	7	Not a fixed term appointment	Chair: €12,600 Ordinary member: €8,100
Marine Institute	9	5 years	Chair: €11,970 Board Member: €7,695
National Milk Agency	14 including Chair	3 years for elected members	Chair: €8,978 No remuneration is paid to Board members, only expenses.
Sea Fisheries Protection Authority	3	5 years	Authority is comprised of 3 staff. No additional remuneration paid to Authority members.
Teagasc	11*	5 years	Chair: €20,520 Board member: €11,970
Veterinary Council	19	4 years	No remuneration is paid to Board members

\* Board members of State Bodies who are officials of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine do not receive board fees.

### Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration

966. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34522/13]

1007. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all commercial State company chief executive officers within the remit of his Department; and if he will make a statement on

the matter. [36089/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 966 and 1007 together.

The details of the salaries of the Chief Executive Officers of the eight Non Commercial State Bodies and the four Commercial State Bodies operating under the aegis of my Department are outlined in the following table. In relation to two Commercial State Bodies – Coillte and the Irish National Stud – the salaries of the Chief Executive Officers are paid from the companies own resources as they do not receive funding from my Department.

Body/Agency	Salary
	Non-Commercial
Aquaculture Licensing Appeals Board	€8,978.00 annual remuneration for ALAB's Chairman who is engaged on a part- time basis
An Bord Bia	€149,175.00
Bord Iascaigh Mhara	€121,151.04
Marine Institute	€136,496.00
National Milk Agency	€80,977.00
Sea Fisheries Protection Agency	Chairperson position is based on the Salary of Principal Officer (Higher ) scale
Teagasc	€149,175.00
Veterinary Council of Ireland	€109,174.80
	Commercial
Bord na gCon	€160,531.00
Coillte	€265,252.00
Horse Racing Ireland	€190,773.00
Irish National Stud	€133,419.00

### Departmental Expenditure

967. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34538/13]

969. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34570/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 967 and 969 together.

The following table details the companies who were paid in excess of €20,000 for professional services during the period 1 June 2012 to 31 May 2013. In line with the Programme for Government, the Department is putting on its website details of payments for goods and services valued at more that €20,000. This threshold has been used in the answer to this Parliamentary Question to be consistent with the Programme for Government commitment.

Questions - Written Answers

Company Name	Total invoiced amount - €	Reason for payment(s) and details of Contract(s) to which payment relates
ACCENTURE	1,490,506	IT Related Services
BAKER TILLY RYAN GLENNON	36,708	Human Resources Policy.
BEARINGPOINT IRELAND LTD	22,898	Management fee for the Department's HR Management System (HRMS) which is a civil service shared services scenario managed centrally by CMOD in DPER.
BIZMAPS Ltd	22,898	IT Related Services
CLIENT SOLUTIONS LIMITED	135,600	IT Related Services
CORE INTERNATIONAL	96,016	IT Related Services
CPL SOLUTIONS LTD	93,591	IT Related Services
CTRL	115,331	IT Related Services
DELOITTE AND TOUCHE	863,426	IT Related Services (Part) Certifying Body, providing independent certification of the Department's EAGF/ EAFRD annual accounts and compliance with EU accreditation criteria, as required under EU Council Regulation 1290/05.
DIGITAL IMAGING SERVICES	28,375	Scanning services.
E SPATIAL SOLUTIONS	283,577	SPS database clean up and rectification of ortho-photography.
ENFER LABS	20,953	Laboratory Services
EOIN O'DRISCOLL	22,974	Collation, analysis and communication of national wood harvest and trade data on behalf of DAFM, and transmission of data to Eurostat, FAO, the international Energy Agency and other bodies
FITZPATRICK ASSOCIATES	48,401	Conduct of Interim Evaluation of the Seafood Development Operational Programme 2007-2013. Evaluation mandated by Regulation 1198/2006 (European Fisheries Fund).
FOOD & ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH	32,395	Specialised residue testing; Contract commenced Dec 08
FOREST ENV. RES. & SERV. LTD	93,707	Forestry Grant (CoFoRD) - project partner.
IBM IRELAND LTD	105,447	IT Related Services
IDENTIGEN LTD	350,090	DNA Testing
INDECON	59,225	Evaluation services
IT ALLIANCE OUTSOURCING LTD	976,796	IT Related Services

Company Name	Total invoiced amount - €	Reason for payment(s) and details of Contract(s) to which payment relates
IT FORCE LTD	310,521	IT Related Services
JANIX LIMITED	471,204	IT Related Services
LISNEY	21,218	Property Advice
MALACHY WALSH & PARTNERS	29,013	Consulting Engineer Services in relation Castletownbere Fishery Harbour Centre
MAZARS CONSULTING	34,591	Provision of IT audit expertise to the Internal Audit Unit
O'MALLEY & CO C HARTERED ACCS	20,922	Payment for work in relation to a high court case.
OVE ARUP & PARTNERS IRELAND	66,322	IT Related Services
PHILIP FARRELLY & CO LTD	114,805	Agriculture Consultancy- Scenario Analysis, Food Harvest 2020
PURSER TARLETON RUSSELL LTD	39,870	Forestry grant (CoFoRD) for the provision of technical assistance to project partner, UCD.
REMCO LTD	103,167	Design, fabrication works for infrastructure at Castletownbere and Dunmore East Fishery Harbour Centres
RIKILT	92,284	Specialised Residue Testing.
RPS CONSULTING ENGINEERS	22,832	Consulting Engineer Services in relation to environmental land remediation and effluent treatment at Howth, Dunmore East, Castletownbere and Killybegs Fishery harbour Centres.
SABEO TECHNOLOGIES LTD	201,265	IT Related Services
SMDT LTD	219,133	IT Related Services
SMX CONSULTING LTD	436,398	IT Related Services
SOGETI IRELAND LTD	186,845	IT Related Services
SYSTEM DYNAMICS LTD	1,261,093	IT Related Services
THE ICON GROUP	784,121	Carrying out the Control Inspections with Remote Sensing for the Department on SPS and DAS schemes.IT Related Services (Part)
VANTAGE RESOURCES LTD	1,228,554	IT Related Services
VERSION 1	2,294,219	IT Related Services
VISION TECHNOLOGY IRELAND	43,173	IT Related Services

### Departmental Staff Training

968. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training pro-

grammes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012/13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34554/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Details outlined in the following tables of Training Programmes and third level courses and costs for employees of Department for academic year 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013. In addition, my Department incurred expenditure in this period in Health and Safety training to the sum of €22,440.56. A further sum of €17,424.40 was spent in the provision of Internal Audit Training courses. Some €68,476.74 was spent on IT training costs.

**Costings for courses completed between 1 September 2012 and 30 June 2013**

Course Type	Course Title	No. of Instances	Costs
Training Courses	Advanced QPCR training (3DAYS)	1	€10,100.00
-	Antibiotic Analysis Workshop	1	€2,120.00
-	Computer Access One Day	2	€700.00
-	COMPUTER EXCEL INTERMEDIATE	2	€700.00
-	COMPUTER EXCEL INTRO	4	€1,400.00
-	COMPUTER WORD INTRO	4	€1,400.00
-	CVRL Scientific Seminar	2	€567.50
-	Effective Meetings	2	€1,100.00
-	EFFECTIVE WRITING	1	€1,100.00
-	FARMED&WILD GAME SEMINAR	1	€240.00
-	Freedom of Information - IPA	6	€9,000.00
-	Fresenius Workshop	1	€975.00
-	Global food safety conference	1	€1,595.00
-	Internal Auditing Laboratories	2	€5,600.00
-	Interviewer Skills	1	€1,050.00
-	ISTA sampling workshop	1	€950.00
-	JAWS Computer Training		€190.00
-	Legal Services Short Courses	4	€1,190.00
-	Level 1 Management Training	8	€16,000.00

Course Type	Course Title	No. of Instances	Costs
-	Level 2 Management	8	€18,304.00
-	Minute Taking	2	€550.00
-	Misc. Conference/ Seminar	57	€30,945.45
-	MOLECULAR BIOLOGY	2	€1,600.00
-	Negotiation Skills	4	€12,000.00
-	PG CERT IN VET- ERINARY HEALTH	1	€3,074.52
-	Project Management Course	1	€1,916.70
-	Reg assessment of HACCP in hort	3	€15,000.00
-	REPORT WRITING	2	€1,900.00
-	Retirement Planning Course	1	€1,321.37
-	Sustainable dairy sector works	1	€1,375.00
-	TIME MANAGEMENT	3	€2,705.00
-	Tree Health Seminar	1	€200.00
-	VPHIS SEMINAR	8	€2,460.00
-	Women & Progress to Senior Manage- ment	1	€2,160.00
Third Level	-	-	-
Certificate	Introduction to Health Science	1	€3,170.00
-	Public Management	1	€2,820.00
-	Certified Public Accountant	1	€740.00
-	Law	1	€880.00
-	FEI Preparatory course	1	€1,662.00
-	-	-	-
Diploma	Public Management	5	€14,460.00
-	HR Management	2	€1,500.00
-	Business Studies	1	€2,217.00
-	Law	3	€8,135.00
-	-	-	-
Degree	Arts in Humanities	2	€8,800.00
-	Social Science	1	€2,980.00
-	English and French	1	€2,500.00
-	Public Management	12	€ 38,676.00
-	Public Administration	1	€4,975.00

Questions - Written Answers

Course Type	Course Title	No. of Instances	Costs
-	Business Studies	4	€9,665.00
-	Business Information Systems	1	€1,565.00
-	Spatial Information Management	1	€2,535.00
-	Information Technology and Computing	1	€2,820.00
-	Law	6	€19,163.00
-	Degree	1	€2,101.00
-	Natural Sciences	1	€2,820.00
-	Science (Rural Development)	1	€5,000.00
-	-	-	-
Masters	Communication	1	€2,820.00
-	Information & Library Studies	1	€3,440.00
-	Understanding Development	1	€2,820.00
-	Coaching Practitioner	1	€1,120.00
-	Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis	1	€4,465.00
-	Public Management	1	€2,820.00
-	Business Management	1	€4,890.00
-	Business Administration	1	€5,000.00
-	Financial Management	2	€5,640.00
-	Agricultural Economics	3	€7,770.00
-	Food Regulatory Affairs	1	€3,523.00
-	Meat Science	1	€2,100.00
-	Food Safety Management	1	€3,600.00
-	Science	1	€2,250.00
-	Agricultural Science	1	€2,820.00
-	Rural Environmental Conservation Management ( RECM )	3	€7,000.00
-	Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development	1	€2,500.00

Course Type	Course Title	No. of Instances	Costs
-	Veterinary Epidemiology & Public Health	2	€7,836.00
-	Veterinary Medicine	1	€7,600.00
-	-	-	-
Doctorate	Veterinary Surveillance	1	€2,980.00
-	Governance	3	€30,000.00
-	Science	1	€1,135.00
-	Technology Adoption in Farming	1	4,900.00
-	Agricultural Economics	2	€8,080.00
-	-	-	-
Accompanying Costs	Facility Hire/Teas & Coffees		€29,142.00
-	-	-	-
-	Travel & Subsistence		€198,540.00
-	-	-	-
-	Total Expenditure	-	€645,464.54

*Question No. 969 answered with Question No. 967.*

### Exchequer Savings

970. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34586/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Using my Department's 2012 outturn of €8,614,233 for Travel and Subsistence expenses as a base, the following table sets out the projected savings if the various percentage reductions were applied:

% Reduction	Annual Saving - €
1%	86,142
5%	430,712
7%	602,996
10%	861,423
12%	1,033,708
15%	1,292,135
17%	1,464,420
20%	1,722,847

In the period 2008 to 2012 my Department made total savings in its travel and subsistence expenditure of €9,691,827 (53%). These considerable savings have been driven by deploying

technology, improving business processes and rationalising inspections. However it must be borne in mind that much of the Department's business takes place on farms and other premises, which are in remote geographic locations.

### Exchequer Savings

971. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34602/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Total Savings for Training and Development in 2012 if they were reduced by the percentage indicated by the Deputy are as follows: 5% = €38,541; 7% = €53,958; 10% = €76,893; 12% = €92,499; 15% = €115,624; 17% = €131,040; 20% = €154,166.

### Exchequer Savings

972. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34618/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The information requested by the Deputy, following implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement, is set out in the following table:

Special Adviser	Annual Salary on 01/07/2013 - €	Annual saving if capped at 1st point of P.O. Scale - €
Ross Mac Mathúna	103,200	27,553
Áine Kilroy	81,676	6,029
-	Total annual saving	33,582

### Rural Environment Protection Scheme Payments

973. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when an application for a REP scheme payment will be approved in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Laois; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34634/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** REPS4 is a measure under the current 2007-13 Rural Development Programme and is subject to EU Regulations which require detailed administrative checks on all applications to be completed before any payments can issue. The person named has made an appeal to the Agriculture Appeals Office in relation to his Single Farm Payment and Departmental officials are currently awaiting the outcome of that appeal before proceeding further with his REPS application.

### Rural Environment Protection Scheme Payments

974. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when

a rural environment protection scheme payment for 2012 will issue to a person (details supplied) in County Carlow; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34654/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The person named received 75% of his REPS4 2012 payment on 27 June 2013 and he received the balancing payment of 25% on 2 July 2013.

### Programme for Government Implementation

975. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34673/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I have provided, in the following schedule, details of the implementation status of the commitments in the 2011-2016 Programme for Government for which my Department has primary responsibility. The timeline for delivery of these commitments is the lifetime of this Government but the Deputy will be aware that the nature of these commitments is such that ongoing development and progress is the norm. Fuller information is available in the 2013 Programme for Government Annual Report published last March.

#### Schedule

#### DAFM Primary Commitments under the 2011-2016 Programme for Government

Commitment	Status
CAP reform will be vital for the future development of the agri-food sector. Our primary aim is to secure a fair overall funding envelope for agriculture under the CAP and a fair share of this budget for Irish agriculture.	Completed and ongoing
We will prioritise a Single Farm Payment system which best benefits active Irish farmers and the Irish grass based system of production.	Completed and ongoing
Further expansion and innovation in our dairy and meat sectors will be a key priority under a reformed CAP and we will work with industry to achieve more intensive levels of production.	In progress
We will facilitate cooperation in the sector to move towards market-based pricing in order to reflect improved products and innovation in the meat and dairy sectors and the development of more integrated supply chains.	In progress
We will promote greater land mobility and involvement of young farmers by investigating new farm models and farm partnerships between farmers, while retaining our family farm structure.	In progress
We will work at an EU level to ensure that programmes targeting the involvement of young farmers in agriculture will be a key policy of the CAP.	Completed and ongoing

Commitment	Status
New food businesses will be developed through a series of coordinated efforts across the food sector and state agencies, such as building pilot plant kitchens to allow food producers develop and manufacture products on small scale and development by Enterprise Ireland of scaleable manufacturing solutions for food businesses that have the capacity to expand	In progress
We will develop a single brand for the Irish agri-food sector globally. Bord Bia will also work in cooperation with producers and small businesses to develop value-added Irish food brands, such as an eco brand, and local brands	In progress
We will put in place an Irish seafood strategy to develop Ireland as a European hub for seafood processing, and to grow market profile and demand for Irish seafood products. Bord Iascaigh Mhara will be tasked with assisting Irish companies in adding value to products through innovation	In progress
We will take advantage of our links at an EU level to engage in bi-lateral exchanges with other countries to ensure that any changes in EU policy or in WTO negotiations do not place the Irish agri-food sector at a competitive disadvantage.	Completed and ongoing
We will move responsibility for agri-payments to a new one-stop-shop as well as developing a new innovation unit in the Department to drive new policy initiatives in the agri-food industry	Completed and ongoing
Further expansion and innovation in our dairy and meat sectors will be a key priority under a reformed CAP and we will work with industry to achieve more intensive levels of production	In progress
We support the recommendations of Harvest Food 2020 Report	In progress
Building on the existing Food Safety Authority, we will create a single food safety monitoring agency responsible for food safety inspection from farm to fork.	In progress
We will create a single food safety monitoring agency, building on the existing Food Safety Authority, responsible for food safety inspection from farm to fork. This will enhance the food traceability system and reduce the burden of red tape on business.	In progress
We recognise the contribution that farm gate schemes make to farm incomes. We particularly value agri-environment schemes as an income support and in protecting the environment. As funds permit, we will investigate the possibility of expanding the Agri-Environment Options Scheme to farmers locked out of the scheme following the conclusion of their REPS 3 contracts	Completed and ongoing

Commitment	Status
We will invest in a 14,700ha per annum afforestation programme	In progress (6,653ha plantings achieved in 2012)
We will amend and strengthen legislation on animal cruelty and animal welfare.	Completed and ongoing
We will negotiate the best possible deal for fishermen in the review of the Common Fisheries Policy	Completed and ongoing
We will support the development of sustainable aquaculture and fish farms by streamlining the licensing process and reducing associated bureaucracy	Completed and ongoing
Marine responsibilities will be merged under one Department, for better co-ordination in policy delivery. We will develop an integrated marine and coastal planning process in order to maximise the potential of Ireland's coastline in fishing, aquaculture, ocean energy and tourism	In progress
A Sea Fisheries Sustainability Impact Assessment, based on consultation with all major stakeholders, will be brought before the Dáil annually before EU fisheries negotiations commence	Completed and ongoing
We will replace criminal sanctions system for minor fisheries offences with administrative sanction system to bring Ireland into line with other European jurisdictions.	In progress

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

976. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34689/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** My Department does not employ external public relations communications consultants or organisations. Public relations advice, where required is provided by my Department's Press Office. It is not possible to provide costs for this service, as the work is carried out as part of the standard duties of the staff involved.

### Sugar Industry

977. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the number of meetings he has had or his officials have had with interested groups in relation to the reconstruction of the beet industry; the results of such meetings and if others are planned or if initiatives are being developed as a result of such meetings; the up-to-date position on the sugar quota within the EU; if he or his Department or others acting on his behalf had any meeting within the EU or with other Ministers within the EU in regard to Ireland's position; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34706/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I wish to confirm to the Deputy that in 2011 I met with two separate groups who had conducted feasibil-

ity studies, into the possibility of establishing a new sugar/bioethanol facility in the country. I clearly stated at both meetings and on many occasions since both in the Dáil and elsewhere, that any venture to develop a combined sugar-bioethanol production facility would have to be a viable commercial proposition, and supported by a business case which is sufficiently robust to attract the funding from investors for the very substantial capital investment required. I confirmed with both interested parties that it is my job to seek the earliest possible date that would allow for the growing of beet again for the production of sugar in Ireland.

I understand from figures published by the interested groups who are investigating the possibility of building a new facility, that the overall capital cost costs involved could range from €250 million to €400 million, depending on what type of facility will be constructed.

Also my Departmental officials have met with both feasibility study groups on a number of occasions since then to brief them on the progress of the CAP reform negotiations in Brussels, which included measures for a revised sugar regime and meetings with both interested groups are ongoing.

I am now pleased to confirm to the Deputy that at our final Council of Agriculture Ministers in June, which I chaired under Ireland's EU Presidency, and following very comprehensive and extensive discussions which I had with my ministerial colleagues from all the Member States on this issue, I secured agreement as part of the overall CAP reform package to abolish all EU sugar quotas by 30 September 2017. This agreement removes, with effect from 1 October 2017, the sugar quota barrier for operators in Ireland or other Member States, wishing to recommence sugar processing.

This agreement has been welcomed by those who are interested in seeking to re-establish a sugar industry here.

### **Decentralisation Programme Staff Transfers**

978. **Deputy Paul J. Connaughton** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the number of his departmental staff in County Galway who have transferred to Government Departments in counties Mayo and Sligo; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34783/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** In answer to the Deputy's question, I can confirm that no staff from my Department's office in County Galway transferred to Government Departments in counties Mayo and Sligo since March 2011.

### **Horse Breeding Industry**

979. **Deputy Jim Daly** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he is satisfied with the management and regulation of the horse breeding industry with Horse Sport Ireland (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34912/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) was established in 2007 following extensive consultation with the main sectoral interests in the sport horse industry.

The establishment of HSI brought together the breeding and sport sides of the Irish Sport Horse Sector.

HSI, a 32 county body, is a limited company run by a board of directors representative of various affiliate bodies. My Department transferred responsibility for maintaining the Irish Horse Register (Irish Sport Horse and Irish Draught studbooks) to HSI in July 2008. My Department is required to ensure that HSI is operating as required under EU and national legislation for registered equidae in regard to maintaining these studbooks. HSI conducts a comprehensive breed improvement programme for the Irish Sport Horse and Irish Draught breeds.

The HSI Breeding Sub Board Committee has the responsibility for formulating breeding policies for the Irish Draught studbook. Members of this Sub Board Committee are nominated and elected by breeders from five electoral regions.

In 2008, HSI initiated a strategic review in order to make improvements to the breeding programmes of the Irish Draught Horse. As part of this overall strategy, HSI developed a revised breeding programme for the Irish Draught Horse with the assistance of an Irish Draught Task Force. The Task Force included representatives of Irish Draught breeders which were chosen by HSI for their knowledge of Irish Draught breeding, rather than for their affiliation to any organisation. The review included lengthy consultation with all involved in the industry and the Irish Draught Breeding Policy was published in 2010.

In the current year HSI is initiating a review of this Irish Draught Breeding Policy in order to determine the effectiveness of the policy and make any amendments to the policy which would be in the best interest of the breed. To assist this process, an Irish Draught Breeding Policy Review Taskforce is being established. As part of the review process submissions will be sought from groups or individual breeders regarding the current breeding policy for the Irish Draught with key areas of interest to include the breeding objective for the Studbook, the classification system, inspection system and suggestions for studbook initiatives to improve the quality and marketing of the breed.

### **Common Agricultural Policy Reform**

980. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine following the recent Common Agricultural Policy agreement, the process that will inform all stakeholders of the proposed changes that will take place as a result of the agreed redistribution of Ireland's and when the process will begin. [34926/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I have already posted on the website of the Department preliminary details of the CAP reform package on which political agreement was reached between the three EU institutions last month. Over the coming days I will be adding to that information. One of the main features of this agreement on the CAP is the amount of flexibility it gives to Member States to implement the common policy in a way that addresses the particular needs and specificities of individual Member States.

Specifically in regard to the redistribution of direct payments within Member States, the agreement provides options for Member States to converge fully or partially to uniform rates of payment per hectare by 2019. The partial convergence option is based largely on a model originally proposed by Ireland whereby farmers with payments below 90% of the national or regional average would have their payments raised by at least one third of the difference between their current payment and 90% of the national or regional average. This would be financed by reductions to payments above the national average payment per hectare and would be subject to a minimum payment of 60% of the national or regional payment per hectare. There is an optional provision to limit losses from convergence to a maximum of 30% and Member States have flexibility to decide how payment reductions are applied to those above the average.

Member States also have the option to apply the greening payment at a rate of 30% of a farmer's individual payment rather than a flat rate. As an add-on to either the flat rate or partial convergence models, there is provision for an optional redistributive payment on up to 30 hectares or the national average farm size, if higher.

In Ireland's case, I have made no secret of the fact that we should go the partial convergence route in a way that continues to support productive farmers while bringing more equity and fairness into the distribution of direct payment funds. Nevertheless, there are many open questions remaining about the extent to which payments should converge, whether we should adopt a regional approach, how we should finance the convergence and whether we should avail of the add-on redistributive payment.

I will be launching a consultation process shortly to obtain the views of all stakeholders regarding the many options open to Ireland for implementation of the new regime.

### **Beef Technology Adoption Programme Payments**

981. **Deputy Pat Deering** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when a person (details supplied) in County Carlow will receive a BTAB discussion group payment which has been cleared for payment for a number of months. [34928/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I can confirm that the payment due under the 2012 Beef Technology Adoption Programme issued by my Department to the person named on 8 July 2013.

### **Food Safety Authority Investigations**

982. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 178, 179, and 180 of 31 January 2013, if he will provide an update on the issues raised; the current status of investigations here and in other member States; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34956/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The report on the "Equine DNA and Mislabelling of Processed Beef Investigation", which I published on 14 March, provides extensive details on the investigation and the actions taken by my Department. Operations in a total of four plants were suspended (in some cases on a voluntary basis) for varying periods arising from the investigation.

My Department is considering legal proceedings where appropriate, as indicated in the report. It is important to note in that context that while some of the failures referred to in the report risked reputational damage to the Irish food sector, they did not breach EU or national law.

Actions taken in relation to this issue at both national and EU level include a programme of DNA testing of beef products and testing of horse meat for the presence of phenylbutazone. Controls relating to horse identification are being strengthened and my Department has taken responsibility for the supervision of all horse abattoirs in Ireland. Meat traders/agents will also be required to register as food business operators.

The EU Commission is pursuing an action plan over the remainder of 2013 and into 2014 which includes specific actions and measures on the following basic elements: fighting food fraud, testing programmes, horse passports, official controls and origin labelling. It is important that controls in this area are strengthened on a pan European basis, not just at national level,

and as stated in the report some of the measures envisaged will require legislative change at EU level.

The Irish authorities were the first to discover and disclose this problem of adulteration of beef products, which turned out to be a pan European problem. Information in relation to activities by traders and other intermediaries in the supply chain outside of the jurisdiction has been passed to Europol and other Member States to facilitate continuing investigations in other countries. Exposure of this malpractice will result in improved consumer protection not just in Ireland, but across the EU.

### **Fodder Crisis**

983. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the steps he is taking to prevent a re-emergence of a fodder shortage later this year; his views on whether there is an adequate supply of fodder imported and available in storage, if required; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34957/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** It is important that we do as much as we can over the next few months to ensure that Irish farmers are not faced with the same issues and difficulties next Winter as experienced earlier this year in sourcing adequate fodder for their animals. Accordingly, Teagasc's Interagency Fodder Committee is currently monitoring the fodder situation while also examining and co-ordinating the next steps required to ensure that there is a strategic approach to fodder production and conservation to ensure continuity of supply.

I have asked the Interagency Fodder Committee to report to the High Level Implementation Committee of Food Harvest 2020 which I chair, on the outlook for the rest of this year and also to detail the actions being taken to ensure adequate fodder is available for next winter.

It is also important that farmers are maximising grass production and fodder conservation in the coming period and I have asked Teagasc to prioritise this policy in their advisory campaigns over the summer months. In this context, adjustments to the Nitrates regulations recently agreed with the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government will provide support to farmers to maximise grass growth and conservation into next autumn.

In addition, I recently announced the lifting of the restriction of 15 July cutting date for this year for participants in AEOS 2 and AEOS 3 who selected the Traditional Hay Meadow action.

### **Fodder Crisis**

984. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the steps being taken to address the issue of credit for farmers and agricultural merchants on foot of the fodder crisis; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34958/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** During the fodder situation, concerns regarding access to credit and flexibility around loan repayments were significant issues for many farmers. My Department has been in contact with the banks, co-ops and feed merchants to urge flexibility and co-operation. Both banks and co-ops have asked farmers to contact them to discuss the terms that are available and have indicated that they will show flexibility on the basis that the longer term outlook for farming is positive and prices are strong across most areas.

## **Disadvantaged Areas Scheme Payments**

985. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the total savings in 2012 disadvantaged area scheme payments solely due to the changes in the stocking rates; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34959/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Processing of the 2012 Disadvantaged Areas Scheme is largely finalised, with a small number of residual cases continuing to be processed as further supporting documentation and information is submitted by applicants. To date, payments worth in excess of €210 million have issued to 95,590 beneficiaries compared to €223 million paid under the 2011 Scheme. The level of savings achieved as a result of the changes to the minimum stocking density requirements is almost €10 million.

## **Live Exports**

986. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine further to Parliamentary Question No. 202 of 29 May 2013, the current status of each application; if further applications have been received; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34960/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Of the five applications for approval of ships outstanding at 29 May, four of the ships involved have now undergone inspections by an independent marine surveyor and a Department Veterinary Inspector. All four were deemed not to meet the standards laid out in the legislation in their current state. Detailed reports have issued to the ship owners on foot of these inspections. The approval process of the fifth application is ongoing.

My Department has received one further application for approval since 29 May. This application is currently being examined.

To date two shipments containing cattle and one shipment containing both sheep and cattle have gone to Libya. A further shipment is planned in the coming weeks.

## **Horse Slaughter Statistics**

987. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the steps he is taking to provide an outlet for horses surplus to the horse industry; if consideration has been given to introducing a testing regime similar to that employed for imported horsemeat from the US bound for human consumption; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34961/13]

990. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the steps he is taking to provide an outlet for horses surplus to the horse industry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35084/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 987 and 990 together.

Horses can be slaughtered for human consumption subject to a number of conditions, including that they have been registered within six months of birth or by 31 December of the year of birth whichever is the later, have not have been treated with any prohibited veterinary medi-

cines and are accompanied to the slaughterhouse by the horse passport. This latter requirement is an essential part of the food-chain information under EU food law.

With regard to horses that can no longer fulfil the purpose for which they were bred, my Department supports the option of humane disposal where an owner can no longer adequately provide for the animal as such action will help prevent the emergence of long-term animal welfare problems. As a further support for dealing with potential surplus horses, my officials have sought the EU Commission opinion on the possible use of horsemeat in petfood. Such an initiative could help to provide an outlet for horses which are not eligible for the food chain, thereby encouraging owners to dispose of unwanted horses. In addition, my Department provides funding to Local Authorities under the Control of Horses Act, 1996, to enable these bodies implement their wide ranging powers relating to the control and welfare of stray or abandoned horses. The Local authorities are humanely disposing of a considerable number of these horses under these arrangements on an ongoing basis.

On the question of implementing a testing regime similar to that employed for imported horsemeat from the US bound for human consumption, the position is that there is no direct importation of horsemeat into the EU from the USA. The slaughter of horses for human consumption within the US ceased in 2006. I understand, however, that live horses are exported from the US for slaughter in both Canada and Mexico. Some of this meat is then exported to the EU. The regulations relating to the import of meat from third countries are set at EU rather than at domestic level and are outlined in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004. The third country of dispatch, together with the individual establishment from which the product is dispatched, must be on an approved list and these lists are published on the EU Commission's website. There is also a requirement that imports of meat are only allowed from countries with an approved residue monitoring plan.

Equine carcasses are regularly sampled as part of the National Residue Control Plan and testing is carried out for a wide range of substances including veterinary medicines. Additional tests were carried out this spring under an EU Commission sponsored testing programme for phenylbutazone (commonly known as "bute"). These found 16 positives from 3,115 tests carried out across the EU. In Ireland, of the 840 tests carried out by my Department under this programme, just one was positive. Testing for "bute" and other substances continues at horse abattoirs in Ireland. The frequency of testing is determined using a risk-based approach.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

988. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34975/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Legal advice was sought outside of the Office of the Attorney General three times in 2011, none in 2012 and three times to date in 2013. The total costs for this service was €10,820.50 in 2011 and €19,907 in 2013.

### **Single Payment Scheme Eligibility**

989. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the penalty being imposed on a person (details supplied) in County Galway under the single pay-

ment scheme; the reason for this penalty; the number of scheme years for which this penalty will be imposed; the amount of money being recouped in total as a result of the penalty; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35009/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The above named was selected for a 2011 eligibility inspection, which was carried out by way of Remote Sensing. In order to complete the inspection process, it was necessary to carry out an on-the-spot inspection of the holding of the applicant. The final conclusion of the inspection process was that 89% of the applicant's declared land was deemed ineligible because of scrub.

Under the provisions of Commission Regulation (EC) No 11222/2009, as the percentage over-declaration was greater than 50% no SPS payment was due to the applicant for the year in question. In addition, a Multi-Annual Sanction, as also provided for in the above mentioned Regulation, totalling €490.89 was established. This was recouped from the applicant's 2012 SPS payment.

*Question No. 990 answered with Question No. 987.*

*Question No. 991 withdrawn.*

### **International Bodies Membership**

992. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will outline Ireland's contributions to the biennial 38th meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in Rome, Italy that took place from 15 to 22 June 2013 and was attended by the Minister of State at his Department; the outcome of the conference, in view of the importance of the event as Ireland held the Presidency of the Council of EU member states and responsibility for the co-ordination of EU positions and consensus seeking at the conference; the agreements he sought on the theme of the conference, sustainable food systems for food security and nutrition; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35086/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The FAO Conference is a bi-annual event that brings together representatives from virtually every country in the world. In addition to the formal agenda there are also a number of 'side events; organised by various groups and Member Countries covering various themes related to Food and Agriculture.

As President of the EU, Ireland had the task of coordinating the views of all EU Member States. The EU position was negotiated over several months prior to the conference and my officials prepared statements outlining our policies and our suggestions for improvements in the FAO's work. These were read at the conference and incorporated into the report of the Conference. All of the documents being debated at the conference are available on the FAO website at <http://www.fao.org/bodies/en/>.

Minister of State Tom Hayes, TD, attended the opening phase of the conference, where he met with officials and delivered an address outlining Ireland's commitment to smallholders and improved nutrition in developing countries. His address, together with those of other lead contributors, is available at <http://www.fao.org/bodies/conf/c2013/addresses-and-statements/en/>.

The Irish Ambassador to the FAO also attended and played a very active role in leading the EU's response to various issues, in particular in relation to the budget and the need for reorganisation of the FAO's work.

A report outlining the key agreements at the conference has been prepared by the FAO and will be available on the FAO website over the coming weeks.

### **Farm Inspections**

993. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the number of farm inspections carried out in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the figures for County Kerry in comparison to each of the other counties; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35265/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Due to the volume of the information requested by the Deputy, it was not possible to provide it in the required time. I will forward it to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

### **Agri-Environment Options Scheme Payments**

994. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will expedite an agri-environment options scheme 2 payment that is overdue in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35273/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The person named was approved for participation in the 2011 Agri-Environment Options Scheme with effect from 1 September 2011 and has received full payment totalling €1,319.00 in respect of 2011.

The person named was selected for a ground inspection which took place on 15 November 2012. Non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the scheme was found in relation to the Natura option which resulted in a reduction in payment entitlement. The 2012 payment application has now been processed and payment issued in the amount of €3,885.35. In accordance to the regulations payment issued in two stages, 75% of the amount due issued on 7 June and the balancing 25% issued on 13 June 2013.

### **Harbours and Piers Funding**

995. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the amount of capital funding his Department has allocated to the piers in Helvick Head, Ballinacourty and Dungarvan Harbour in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35335/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Helvick Pier, Ballinacourty and Dungarvan Harbour are in the ownership of Waterford County Council and responsibility for their repair and upkeep rests with that Local Authority in the first instance.

Under the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme my Department has provided funding for the development and repair of Local Authority owned piers and slipways subject to the availability of Exchequer funding.

In relation to the piers mentioned by the Deputy there has been no capital funding provided by my Department from 2008 to 2012 inclusive. However I am pleased to inform the Deputy

that in 2013 funding in the order of €380,000 has been allocated as follows to these piers from my Department's Programme.

Piers	€
Ballinacourty	€112,500
Helvick Slipway	€78,750
Helvick Pier	€112,500
Dungarvan Harbour	€75,000

### Harbours and Piers Funding

996. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, the total amount of capital investment his Department has allocated to Dunmore East Harbour, Passage East Harbour and Cheekpoint Harbour for each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35336/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** My Department administers the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Capital Development Programme on an annual basis. Dunmore East Fishery Harbour Centre is one of the six designated Fishery Harbour Centres which are owned, managed and maintained by my Department and as such it receives funding annually on foot of the Programme. The following table shows the allocation of funding under the programme for 2008 to 2012, inclusive, for Dunmore East.

Dunmore East	Allocated Funding
2008	€808,000
2009	€669,000
2010	€951,000
2011	€940,000
2012	€563,500

Passage East Harbour and Cheekpoint Harbour are in the ownership of Waterford County Council and responsibility for their repair and upkeep rests with that Local Authority in the first instance.

Under the Fishery Harbour Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme my Department has provided funding for the development and repair of Local Authority owned piers and slipways subject to the availability of exchequer funding. The following table shows the allocation of funding under the programme for 2008 to 2012, inclusive, for Passage East and Cheekpoint Harbour.

Year	Passage East Harbour	Cheekpoint Harbour
2008	N/A – no application	N/A – no application
2009	N/A – no Programme	N/A – no Programme
2010	N/A – no application	N/A – no application
2011	€0	€175,773
2012	€52,500	N/A – no application

## Harbours and Piers Funding

997. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the total amount of money allocated by his Department for the upgrade of the slip in Dunmore East Harbour in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35337/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The harbour at Dunmore East is one of the six designated Fishery Harbour Centres which are owned, managed and maintained by my Department. Funding is made available on an annual basis by my Department to the Fishery Harbour Centres, including Dunmore East, via the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Capital Development Programme.

I am happy to confirm to the Deputy that funding in the amount of €450,000 has been allocated to widen the slipway on the West Wharf at Dunmore East Fishery Harbour Centre under the 2013 Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme.

## Live Exports

998. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine his views on the possibility of the recommencement of export of livestock to the UK; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35343/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** My Department has in recent weeks received an enquiry from one shipping company in the UK regarding the approval procedure for ships engaging in the carriage of livestock on Roll on–Roll off vessels. However, no application has been received to date.

## Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme Payments

999. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if payment has issued for a fencing grant to a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35373/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The person concerned is an applicant for grant-aid under the TAMS Sheep Fencing-Handling Scheme and has received approval to proceed with the investment works concerned. To date, my Department has no record of having received a payment claim in relation to the application concerned.

## Tax Reliefs Availability

1000. **Deputy Simon Harris** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine his views on the continuance of tax relief available to help farmers to pass their farms to relatives and maintain a working farm within the family unit; if he will support the maintenance of such relief; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35380/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Capital Gains Tax Relief (CGT) is available to farmers over 55 years who dispose of certain qualifying assets. This relief, which is more commonly known as “retirement relief”, continues to be available having been in place for many years. Qualifying assets relevant to farming include:

- The chargeable business asset of the individual which he/she has owned for at least ten years up to the disposal date and which have been his/her chargeable business assets throughout the 10 years.

- Land leased under the Scheme of Early Retirement from Farming, where for a period of not less than 10 years prior to the land being leased it was owned by the person claiming relief and was farmed by him throughout that period.

- Land which was let at any time in the 15 years before disposal but, prior to its first letting, was farmed for 10 years by the owner and the disposal is to a child.

There are two separate elements to this type of CGT relief:

a) Disposal of a business or a farm to one's child:

Irrespective of the amount of consideration for the disposal, full relief may be claimed by a person on the disposal to his child. If the child disposes of the asset within 6 years clawback applies. To incentivise earlier lifetime transfer of holdings it was announced in Budget 2012 that, from January 2014, the amount of full relief in the case of transfers to children will be reduced from an unlimited amount to €3 million for those aged over 66 years of age, but will be retained at the unlimited level for those aged 55-66 years. A two year lead in period for these changes was put in place to allow for an orderly transition.

b) Disposal of a business or farm to a person other than one's child:

Where the consideration is less than €750,000 there is full relief for those aged over 55 years. Where the consideration is over €750,000 marginal relief is available which reduces the CGT payable to an amount equal to half the excess over €750,000. Budget 2012 introduced from January 2014 onwards a lowering of the amount of full relief in these cases from €750,000 to €500,000 for those aged over 66 years of age. The level will be retained at the 750,000 level for those aged 55-66 years.

Budget 2012 also introduced new lower stamp duty rates for land transfers with a 1% rate now applicable to transfers to close relations until the end of 2014. The 1% rate is half the rate applicable to non-family transfers. In addition Budget 2013 extended the longstanding 100% relief on stamp duty for land transfers to certain young trained farmers for a further period of three years until end of 2015.

The range of tax measures applicable to the agricultural sector announced in recent Budgets reflect the Government's commitment to supporting younger farmers through encouraging earlier inter-generational transfer of farm holdings and minimising the costs associated with transfer of farm holdings. These measures have created a positive environment for structural change to occur and will help facilitate meeting the ambitious expansion targets planned in the Food Harvest 2020 strategy.

The issue of further changes to these reliefs in the future is a matter in the first instance for the Minister for Finance and I will continue to liaise closely with Minister Noonan in relation to possible taxation measures linked to policy priorities in my Department.

### **Rural Development Policy**

1001. **Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine when it is proposed to commence the strategic environmental analysis for the fisheries operational programme under the new Common Fisheries Policy and the Rural Development Programme 2014-19; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35453/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Preparatory work for the next rural development programme has already commenced. This includes the appointment of independent ex ante evaluators in January 2013, following a public tendering process, to undertake an Ex Ante Evaluation, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive for the new rural development programme. Work on these three reports is ongoing at present.

In respect of the Seafood Development Programme 2014-2020 a request for tenders was issued for an independent external consultant to carry out tasks on this programme, which includes the SEA, with a closing date of 4 July 2013. The evaluation of the tenders received is currently under way and on completion of the evaluation process it is expected that the successful consultant will be in place by the end of August 2013.

### **Exports Controls**

1002. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine his views on the recent decision by the Gulf Cooperation Council to lift its ban on the importation of Irish beef and lamb; the opportunities that arise for Ireland as a result of this decision; if he intends to visit the Gulf region in the near future to agree veterinary health certificates with all the specified GCC nations to ensure exports commence as soon as possible; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35462/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The Deputy will be aware that last week I welcomed the milestone decision by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Food Safety Committee to formally lift longstanding bans on exports of Irish beef and sheepmeat from Ireland to the GCC region. These bans had been in place for well over a decade because of legacy concerns related to scrapie and BSE. This is a clear signal from the Gulf States of their confidence in Ireland's rigorous controls and excellent standards of food safety. While Saudi Arabia had previously lifted a ban on the importation of Irish beef and the UAE had lifted the ban on Irish beef, sheepmeat and poultry, the formal lifting of the GCC-wide ban means that Ireland is free to complete the formalities necessary to export Irish beef and lamb within the GCC as a whole.

This region has a combined population of almost 43.5 million with high levels of disposable income, a significant food deficit and a taste for beef and lamb, and presents an important opportunity for the Irish beef and lamb sectors, in particular at the premium food service and retail end of the market. This is exactly the kind of market opportunity that can add value to the Irish meat sector and help to build the reputation of the Irish food sector for high standards of quality and safety. My Department has already commenced the process needed to agree beef and sheepmeat certs with Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain and a sheepmeat cert with Saudi Arabia.

I also announced last week that I will be leading a trade mission to the Gulf region from 27 October to 1 November this year, to draw attention to Ireland and what it can offer to the very discerning customers in this region and to explore future opportunities. I look forward to this mission and to highlighting the unique qualities of Irish food production and products. During this visit I will of course thank the GCC for their decision and raise the subject of meat access to this region, among other issues.

### **Fisheries Protection**

1003. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he is supportive of reopening spurdog fishing in Irish waters; if his attention has been drawn to the considerable employment potential that such a move would bring; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35475/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The EU Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for spurdog is set at 0 and the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) has advised that the stock is depleted. Spurdog spawning biomass is currently at the lowest observed level, although stable in recent years. Spurdog is a long-lived, slow growing, and late maturing species and therefore is particularly vulnerable to fishing mortality. ICES advice is that there should be no target fishery and that by catch in mixed fisheries should be reduced to the lowest possible level. It recommends that a rebuilding plan should be developed for this stock. The Marine Institute supports ICES advice and further notes that spatial avoidance measures should be put in place to avoid large catches of accidental by-catch. On the basis of the scientific advice, there does not appear to be a case for the re-opening of a commercial fishery for spurdog at this time.

### **Public Sector Pensions Issues**

1004. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide information on pension benefits paid in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Cork who worked in his Department between 1979 and 1986; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35521/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** There are no employment records in my Department in respect of the person mentioned.

### **Exchequer Savings**

1005. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35794/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The annual saving to the Exchequer if the fees for State agencies were reduced by the percentage indicated by the Deputy is €154,900.75.

### **Official Travel**

1006. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensures the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36038/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** Overseas

travel undertaken by staff in State agencies under the aegis of my Department is an operational matter for the bodies themselves.

*Question No. 1007 answered with Question No. 966.*

### **Departmental Bodies**

1008. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36210/13]

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Deputy Simon Coveney):** The following eight non-commercial bodies come within the aegis of my Department.

Bord Bia

Bord Iascaigh Mhara

Sea Fisheries Protection Authority

Teagasc

The Aquaculture Licensing Appeals Board

The Marine Institute

The National Milk Agency

Veterinary Council of Ireland

### **Foster Care Expenditure**

1009. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if the benefits associated with foster care can be awarded in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34312/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The Deputy will be aware that the Minister for Social Protection has responsibility for social assistance and income supports, including the Guardian's Payment Scheme.

A child requires to be taken into the care of the State, where they cannot live with their parents either on a short or long-term basis. The HSE will, in the first instance, seek a suitable relative or person known to the child to provide relative care. Relative carers go through an assessment and approval, in a similar way to general foster carers.

In placing a child in foster care, the HSE regards the welfare the child as paramount, having regard to the rights and duties of his or her parents. Each child in foster care has a social worker who visits the child in the foster carers' home and, where appropriate, maintains contact with the child's birth family.

Every foster carer is also supported in their care of the child. Foster carers are required to be reviewed by the Foster Care Committee at regular periods.

## Inter-Country Adoptions

1010. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the procedure to be followed by a person (details supplied) in County Kildare to facilitate inter-country adoptions in respect of two children who are family relatives whose country of origin is Ghana; if such adoption can be effected through the UK; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34317/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The responsibility for the registration of intercountry adoptions is a matter for the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI), an independent quasi-judicial entity established under the Adoption Act 2010. It is a matter for the AAI to ensure that all adoptions are made in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption Act 2010. Accordingly, as Minister, it is not open to me to intervene in individual cases.

The Authority has advised me the United Kingdom ratified the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption on 27 February 2003 with effect from 1 June 2003.

Ireland ratified the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption on 28 July 2010 with effect from 1 November 2010.

Article 2 of the Hague Convention states that the Convention shall apply where a child habitually resident in one Contracting State (e.g. the United Kingdom) has been, is being, or is to be moved to another Contracting State (e.g. Ireland) either after his or her adoption in the State of origin by spouses or a person habitually resident in the receiving State, or for the purposes of such an adoption in the receiving State or in the State of origin. The Convention covers only adoptions which create a permanent parent-child relationship.

The United Kingdom has four National Central Authorities, i.e. one each for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The designated Central Authority to which any communication may be addressed for transmission to the appropriate Central Authority is

Intercountry Adoption Casework Team, Ground Floor Area D, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington Co. Durham DL3 9BG - Telephone: 0370 000 2288 Email: [ica.darlington@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ica.darlington@education.gsi.gov.uk).

Department for Education, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

## Youth Services Funding

1011. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will address the issue of funding cuts to a youth service (details supplied) in County Kerry; if she will provide additional funding for the service; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35153/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The overall budget for the youth sector in 2013 is €53.498 million. Within this total funding, €1.75 million has been provided for a new capital funding programme. This funding supports the delivery of a range of youth work programmes and services for all young people, including those from disadvantaged communities, by the voluntary youth work sector.

The Youth Service referred to by the Deputy administers a number of youth projects under

the Special Projects for Youth Scheme and one Youth Information Service and the allocation provided by my Department for these projects is €511,465 in 2013.

Having regard to the savings requirements identified in the Comprehensive Review of Expenditure which amount to €5.393 million in 2013, my Department has tried to ensure that in the determination process for the allocations, the front line youth services, particularly those for the most vulnerable young people, are protected as far as is possible from the impact of any necessary reductions in funding.

There is no doubt that the current budgetary situation is challenging for many organisations. In considering how best to manage within the allocations available, organisations are being asked to consider the scope for reducing administration costs and other overheads and to work closely with their local VEC that administers the funding on behalf of my Department, in order to maintain the front line services for young people particularly for those young people who may be disadvantaged.

My Department is developing a new youth policy framework for publication later this year. The new youth policy framework will aim to enhance the provision of youth services and activities and it will, *inter alia*, promote co-ordination between Government Departments and youth sector organisations with a view to maximising the effectiveness of the State funding available to support services for young people in future years.

### **Foreign Adoptions**

1012. **Deputy John Lyons** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will ensure that the adoption waiting lists for countries like the Philippines are regularly updated to ensure withdrawals are removed from the list; so as not to hold up places that could otherwise be filled; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34325/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The responsibility for the registration of intercountry adoptions is a matter for the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI), an independent quasi-judicial entity established under the Adoption Act 2010. It is a matter for the AAI to ensure that all adoptions are made in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption Act 2010. Accordingly, as Minister, it is not open to me to intervene in individual cases.

The Authority has advised that this year it has received four referrals this year from the Philippines. In three cases these referrals have been refused. One on the basis that the age of the child referred to Ireland was outside the age range for which the prospective adoptive parents had been assessed. Two further adoptions were not continued with by the prospective adoptive parents due to changed domestic or financial circumstances.

The AAI would encourage all prospective adoptive parents who wish to withdraw from the adoption process to inform the AAI and-or their Accredited Body immediately.

### **Foreign Adoptions**

1013. **Deputy John Lyons** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs when she intends to address through legislation the issue of adoptive parents having to get a guardian's order for adoptions from certain countries after 12 months; if this consent issue can be addressed at an earlier stage without this cost; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34326/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The responsibility for the registration of intercountry adoptions is a matter for the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI), an independent quasi-judicial entity established under the Adoption Act 2010. It is a matter for the AAI to ensure that all adoptions are made in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption Act 2010. Accordingly, as Minister, it is not open to me to intervene in individual cases.

The Authority have advised me that the Deputy query concerns inter country adoption with the Republic of the Philippines. The Philippines does not grant intercountry adoption to prospective adoptive parents residing in Ireland. Prospective adoptive parents who chose the Philippines as their country of origin are advised to seek independent legal advice prior to deciding to do so. There are a number of complex legal and constitutional issues to be considered. Prospective adoptive parents have in the past applied for and been granted Guardianship Orders in respect of children that they then bring to Ireland for the purposes of adoption in Ireland under Irish legislation.

Issues which then arise are:

1. The placement of the child may be contrary to Irish legislation (i.e. it may be considered a 'private' placement).
2. The Adoption Authority of Ireland is obliged to notify and consult with the natural father, details of whom are routinely not available to prospective adoptive parents.
3. Prospective adoptive parents can rarely, if ever, secure the statutory consents required for under Irish legislation.

In consideration of the above, applications for domestic Adoption Order for child born brought in from the Philippines invariably end up in the High Court at considerable cost to the Health Service Executive.

Correspondence from the Health Service Executive, on 1 July 2013 states

In relation to placements of children from the Philippines, it is unreasonable and unsustainable that the Health Service Executive should have to fund High Court applications for the dispensing of parental consents. It is our intention from now on to make it clear at information meetings that there is no guarantee that the Health Service Executive will meet this cost in the future. The Health Service Executive will meet the cost of any current application that commenced prior to the making of this decision.

Prospective adoptive parents proposing to adopt from the Philippines should contact their local Health Service Executive Regional Adoption Service to discuss this important issue. Those already in the process of adopting from the Philippines should direct their enquires to the HSE.

### **Rights of the Child**

1014. **Deputy Aodhán Ó Ríordáin** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide an update on the progress of the State ratifying optional protocols 2 and 3 to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34394/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** Ireland has signed but not yet ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the rights of

the child on the sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. It is my intention to progress to ratification in due course, once I am satisfied that the State will be able to meet all its obligations therein. I discussed the issue of ratification of this Protocol in a meeting with the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children, which took place on 11 June 2012, during the Special Representative's official visit to Ireland. We agreed that the matter would be prioritised in due course following completion of my Department's work on the Children's Referendum, the submission of the State's next report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the setting up of the new Child and Family Agency.

The criminal law elements of the Optional Protocol have largely been implemented by the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008. Legislative proposals to further protect children against sexual exploitation are at an advanced stage of preparation. The Minister for Justice and Equality expects to bring these legislative proposals to Government shortly. It is also proposed to put in place the necessary administrative procedures and arrangements to allow for accession and, subject to the advice of the Attorney General's Office, it is proposed to ratify the Optional Protocol as soon as is practicable.

I have previously stated that it was my intention to sign the Third Optional Protocol on behalf of Ireland as soon as possible. My Department now has finalised and submitted to Government for approval the State's combined 3rd and 4th Reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Subject to Government approval, the report will be submitted to the UN Committee. I expect to consult with other Government Departments shortly and seek the approval of the Government to the signing of the Third Optional Protocol on behalf of Ireland. Ratification would generally take place some time after that, once the State is satisfied that the necessary legislative and administrative procedures are in place to enable full compliance. This matter will be assessed by my Department in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General and other Government Departments.

### **Departmental Reports**

1015. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by her Department since March 2011. [34398/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The information requested is being collated by my Department and will be forwarded directly to the Deputy as soon as it is finalised.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

1016. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of her Department. [34508/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). With effect from 1 January 2012, I have taken responsibility for the

Children Detention Schools as provided in Part 10 of the Children Act 2001.

There are currently 13 serving Board members for the NEWB, 11 for the Children Detention Schools, 12 for the FSA and 6 for the AAI. The Ombudsman for Children's Office does not have a Board of Management.

I have set out in tabular format a breakdown of the annual fees currently paid to members of the Boards of Management under the aegis of my Department. It should be noted that all current members of the Board of Management for the Children Detention Schools waived their fees when they were appointed in March 2012.

Also included are details of expenses claimed to date for 2012 by members of the Boards. The Deputy should also note that some members of the Boards have not yet submitted claims for expenses incurred in 2012. The Adoption Authority of Ireland have confirmed that they will write directly to the Deputy in relation to expenses for 2012.

#### National Educational Welfare Board

Board Member	Annual remuneration	Expenses 2012
Nuala Doherty (Chair)	Does not receive fee	Nil
Cathal Flynn (former Chair – not on current Board)	€5,000	€2,844
Brendan Broderick	Does not receive fee	Nil
Catherine Connery	Does not receive fee	Nil
Marian Jennings	Does not receive fee	Nil
Eamonn Flynn	Does not receive fee	Nil
Bob Dowling	Does not receive fee	Nil
Ruairi Gogan	Does not receive fee	Nil
Deirdre Matthews	Does not receive fee	Nil
Anne McDonnell	Does not receive fee	€1,305
Marie-Claire McAleer	Does not receive fee	€Nil
Don Myers	Does not receive fee	€3,838
Pat McSitric (interim CEO)	Does not receive fee	Nil

#### Children Detention Schools

Board Member	Annual remuneration	Expenses 2012
Joe Horan (Chair)	Does not receive fee	Nil
Gerard McKiernan	Does not receive fee	Nil
Ursula Kilkelly	Does not receive fee	€1,790.44
Diego Gallagher	Does not receive fee	Nil
Sylda Langford	Does not receive fee	Nil
Pat Rooney	Does not receive fee	Nil
Elizabeth Howard	Does not receive fee	Nil
Colin Fetherston	Does not receive fee	Nil
Barry Rooney	Does not receive fee	Nil
Deirdre Keyes	Does not receive fee	Nil
Dan Kelleher	Does not receive fee	Nil

**Family Support Agency**

Board Member	Annual remuneration	Expenses 2012
Sharon Foley (Chair)	€8,978	Nil
Caroline Murphy	€5,985	Nil
Dick Hickey	€5,985	€8,954
Dr. John Griffin	€5,985	Nil
Marie Fenlon	€5,985	€4,167
Liz Chaloner	€5,985	€200
Nuala Ryan	€5,985	Nil
Catherine Downey Murphy	€5,985	€1,104
Marie Dullea	Does not receive fee	Nil
Imelda Martin	Does not receive fee	Nil
Lorraine Mulligan	Does not receive fee	Nil
Dr. Nollaig Byrne	Does not receive fee	Nil

**Adoption Authority of Ireland**

Board Member	Annual Remuneration	Expenses 2012
Dr. Geoffrey Shannon (Chair)	€63,120	To be confirmed
Siobhan Keogh	€7,965	To be confirmed
Anne McWilliams	€7,965	Nil
Corina Carrick	€7,965	To be confirmed
Helen Collins	€7,965	To be confirmed
Dr. Imelda Ryan	Does not receive fee	To be confirmed

**Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration**

1017. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of her Department. [34524/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). With effect from 1 January 2012, I have taken responsibility for the Children Detention Schools as provided in Part 10 of the Children Act 2001.

I have set out in tabular format the current annual salaries payable to the Chief Executive Officers of non-commercial State sponsored bodies under the aegis of my Department.

Agency	Current Remuneration
National Educational Welfare Board	€52,335
Family Support Agency	Acting CEO €80,700
Adoption Authority of Ireland	€116,250
Ombudsman for Children's Office	No CEO
Children Detention Schools	No CEO

### Departmental Expenditure

1018. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34540/13]

1020. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34572/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1018 and 1020 together.

The information requested is currently being collated and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

### Departmental Staff Training

1019. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012/13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of her Department. [34556/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** To-date, a total of €45,957 has been spent on third level courses, training programmes and courses for the period 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013. The following table sets out relevant details:

3rd Level Course	Number of staff	Total Cost
Doctorate/PhD	3	€12,941
Post Graduate	1	€3,320

Training Programme / Course	Number of staff	Total Cost
Risk Management	1	€225
HR Training & Seminars	8	€2,152
Management Training	5	€7,255
EU Presidency Training	3	€675
IT Skills	4	€1,494
Report writing	4	€900
Irish language training	1	€745
Developing Policy	1	€450
Leadership Programme	3	€15,800

A number of other commitments have been given to staff under the Refund of Fees Scheme for the 2012-13 academic year totalling approximately €23,000. However, no payments have been made to date pending successful completion of exams and submission of supporting documentation.

*Question No. 1020 answered with Question No. 1018.*

**Exchequer Savings**

1021. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for her Department. [34588/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** A total of €134,000 was spent in my Department on travel and subsistence of staff during 2012. The following table details the annual savings that would occur if the reduction percentages identified by the Deputy were applied to the 2012 amount.

Reduction %	Saving
1%	€1,340
5%	€6,700
7%	€9,380
10%	€13,400
12%	€16,080
15%	€20,100
17%	€22,780
20%	€26,800

**Exchequer Savings**

1022. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for her Department. [34604/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** A total of €58,000 was spent in my Department on training and development of staff during 2012. The following table details the annual savings that would occur if the reduction percentages identified by the Deputy were applied to the 2012 amount.

Total	Reduction %	Saving
€55,100	5%	€2,900
€53,940	7%	€4,060
€52,200	10%	€5,800
€51,040	12%	€6,960
€49,300	15%	€8,700
€48,140	17%	€9,860
€46,400	20%	€11,600

**Exchequer Savings**

1023. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all her special advisors' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if she will provide a list of all salaries, post-implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement paid to her special advisors. [34620/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I currently have

two special advisors appointed to me, one of which works full time and the other works a 50% pattern. Both advisors were originally appointed on the first point of the Principal Officer standard scale. The Principal Officer standard scale provides for annual increments, subject to satisfactory performance and attendance and each advisor has now progressed to the third point on this scale. In accordance with the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013, and the provisions of the Haddington Road Agreement, the relevant adjustments to pay have been made to the Principal Officer standard scale. A total amount of €4,535 would be saved during 2013 if both were capped at the first point of the scale.

Applicable Salary Scale	WTE (Whole-time Equivalent)	Current Salary	1st point of Principal Officer Scale	Savings if capped from 01/07/2013
Principal Officer standard scale	1.0	€81,676	€75,647	€3,014
Principal Officer standard scale	0.5	€40,838	€37,824	€1,507

### Departmental Funding

1024. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the number of successful applications made for funding under her Department's grants system for projects within County Kildare for each of the past four years; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34669/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** My Department operates a number of grant schemes of both a capital and current nature. Grant assistance is available under a number of sources, including funding for youth organisations and services, National Lottery funding, as well as child care programmes. The matters funded under the various categories include funding for youth projects and facilities, playgrounds, equipment and general childcare facilities among others.

In relation to funding for projects in County Kildare, the following table below details the number of projects funded in each of the last three years. I would note that my Department was only established in June 2011 and therefore information in relation to 2010 is not provided in the table of figures.

Year	Number of Projects
2011	9
2012	16
2013	27

### Programme for Government Implementation

1025. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the Programme for Government within her remit; if the commitment has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34675/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** The time line for delivery of the commitments in the Programme for Government is over the lifetime of the Government.

The following is a list of my Department's commitments in the Programme for Government and their current implementation status.

Programme for Government Commitment	Status
A referendum to amend the Constitution to ensure that children's rights are strengthened, along the lines recommended by the All-Party Oireachtas committee.	Completed
We will maintain the free pre-school year in Early Childhood Care and Education to promote the best outcomes for children and families. We will improve the quality of the pre-school year by implementing standards and reviewing training options.	Ongoing €9.5m additional funding provided in 2012 to maintain universality and meet increased demand due to increased birth rate.
As resources allow, this Government will invest in a targeted early childhood education programme for disadvantaged children, building on existing targeted pre-school supports for families most in need of assistance such as the youngballymun project.	In Progress
We will end the practice of sending children to St. Patrick's Institution.	In Progress. Practice of detaining 16 year olds in St Patrick's has ceased. €50m in capital funding secured for development of national child detention facilities at Oberstown.
We will fundamentally reform the delivery of child protection services by removing child welfare and protection from the HSE and creating a dedicated Child Welfare and Protection Agency, reforming the model of service delivery and improving accountability to the Dáil.	In Progress. Child and Family Agency Bill published on 12 July 2013.
We are committed to implementing the recommendations of the Ryan Report including putting the Children First Guidelines on a statutory footing and legislating for the use of "soft information".	In Progress
We will enact legislation to consolidate and reform the law on adoption.	In Progress
A new approach is needed to break the cycle of child poverty where it is most deeply entrenched. We will adopt a new area based approach to child poverty, which draws on best international practice and existing services to tackle every aspect of child poverty. Initially, this model will be rolled out to up to ten of Ireland's most disadvantaged communities, in cooperation with philanthropic partners to co-fund and manage the project.	€14.85m in Exchequer funding, and 50% co-funding from a Philanthropic partner, have been sourced to support a new Area-Based Approach to Child Poverty Programme. Work is at an advanced stage to transition 3 existing sites into the new programme, and a number of new areas are expected to enter the programme before the end of the year

### Consultancy Contracts Issues

1026. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of her Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34691/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). With effect from 1 January 2012, I have taken responsibility for the Children Detention Schools as provided in Part 10 of the Children Act 2001.

I can confirm that during the period in question, the FSA, AAI and the Children Detention Schools did not use external public relations or communications services. The Ombudsman for Children has confirmed that she will respond directly to the Deputy on the matter.

In relation to the NEWB, I have set out in tabular format the information as requested by the Deputy.

#### **National Educational Welfare Board**

-	Company name	Date	Services Supplied	Expenditure
External Public Relations	Avanti PR: Ms Deirdre Walsh	19/08/2011	Copywriting/editing and media issue management	€2,858.62
External Public Relations	Brendan Bracken Public Relations: Mr. Brendan Bracken	30/09/2011	Media issue management	€484.00
External Public Relations	Brendan Bracken Public Relations: Mr. Brendan Bracken	21/03/2013	Media issue management	€799.50
Communications Consultants	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

#### **Departmental Legal Costs**

1027. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [34977/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** My Department was established on 2 June 2011. No such advice has been sought or received since then.

#### **Audit Report on Neglect Cases**

1028. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs when it

is expected that audits of all serious neglect cases will commence; the estimated number of files to be reviewed and the timeline for completion; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35080/13]

1029. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the discussions she has had with other Departments on foot of the publication of the audit report on neglect cases; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35081/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1028 and 1029 together.

An audit of neglect cases in Roscommon, Waterford and Dublin South-East has been completed by the HSE. The HSE published a composite report of the 3 pilots on 20 June 2013. A decision was taken within the HSE to produce this composite report as the best means of disseminating the learning from the three projects. The decision to publish a composite report, along with the time taken by the HSE to ensure that all of the recommendations are being actioned, were factors in determining the publication date of the report.

From the outset, it was the intention of the HSE that the neglect audit would comprise a number of phases and that the initial pilot phase would inform a more significant National Audit of Neglect Cases. Therefore the audit published in June last was not simply a once off exercise but constitutes one element of a wider process to improve practice in relation to such cases across the country. Phase 1 of this process was the initial audits undertaken by Ms Lynne Peyton, Consultant in Children's Services and Social Care. Phase 2 will comprise a series of workshops for social work staff and managers nationwide. There will be a minimum of two workshops in each region presented by Ms Peyton in conjunction with Ms Helen Buckley, who will be covering the learning emerging from the child death review process. These workshops are scheduled to begin in autumn 2013 and will be followed by the phase 3 national audit of all neglect files which will be informed by the findings of phase 1 and the outcomes of the phase 2 workshops. A definitive timeline for completion of phases 2 and 3 is dependent on completion of phase 2 at regional level and thereafter individual local audits. It follows that different regions will complete their audits at different times. My Department will be liaising with the HSE over the coming months to monitor progress.

As regards consultations, these have been exclusively with officials in the HSE around progressing to the next phases of the audit process. Any issue emerging as the audit process proceeds will be raised through the interdepartmental Children First Implementation Group.

### **Child Care Reports**

1030. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the action her Department has taken since the broadcast in May of the "Prime Time" undercover exposé of issues of serious concern in the child care sector; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35478/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** As Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, driving the early childhood care and education quality agenda is one of my key objectives. I recently announced a number of measures as part of my response to the distressing events highlighted in the "Prime Time" programme.

It is my intention to introduce new qualification requirements for the sector starting in September 2014. This will be an important new development as, at present, staff working in child care services, other than under the ECCE programme, are not subject to any requirement in

respect of qualifications.

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme introduced the first-ever requirement for minimum qualifications for staff working in the child care sector. The current requirement under the programme is that the pre-school leader delivering the pre-school provision must hold a qualification in childcare-early education at a minimum of Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications of Ireland (NFQ), or an equivalent nationally recognised qualification or a higher award in the child care-early education field.

I have indicated my intention to increase the qualification requirements for all staff working in pre-school services. The minimum requirement of Level 5 for pre-school leaders delivering the pre-school year will be increased to Level 6. In addition, all pre-school assistants, and all other staff caring for children in a pre-school service, will be subject to a minimum requirement of Level 5. This requirement will be effective from September 2014 for new services, and from September 2015 for existing services.

Pre-school services are governed by the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) Regulations 2006 as provided in the Child Care Act 1991. Under the Regulations the Health Service Executive has responsibility for the inspection of services and the enforcement of the regulations. Inspection is carried out to monitor compliance with the regulations, thereby ensuring the health, safety and welfare of children and the promotion of their development.

As I have outlined in recent weeks, a number of steps are being taken to improve the current inspection system. These include the introduction of National Quality Standards for pre-school services later this year as part of the inspection process. In addition, my Department is working with the Pre-School Inspectorate to develop new protocols on regulatory compliance so that there is greater clarity and consistency of approach as to how inspection reports deal with findings of serious non-compliance *vis-a-vis* minor breaches and full compliance. My Department is also undertaking a review of the penalties currently in place for breach of the Child Care (Pre-school) Regulations, as provided for under the Child Care Act 1991. The review will look at increasing the range and severity of the existing penalties, including the actions which can be taken by Inspectors without recourse to court prosecution, as is currently the case.

In relation to the publication of pre-school service inspection reports, the HSE Pre-School Inspectorate is working to put these online. I gave a commitment to have new reports, once completed, put online from 1 July 2013 and to have all reports available online as soon as possible. My Department is supporting the HSE and Pobal in this work, and I understand that the first of these reports has recently been placed online.

A new registration system will be introduced in September this year and new services wishing to open will be required to register with the HSE. The HSE will determine whether the child care service is compliant in terms suitability and service design before the service will be permitted to operate. Following commencement of the service, actual care and welfare practices will be inspected.

My Department is currently developing a new Children and Young People's Policy Framework which will set out high level goals for both my own and other Departments for the next five years. The Policy Framework is expected to be published later this year and will build on Our Children - Their Lives, Ireland's first children's strategy which was published in 2000. This is relevant to the Early Years Strategy as the strategy is one of three, more detailed strategies which will be developed under the framework.

The Early Years Strategy, which will be Ireland's first ever national strategy for early years, is under development. It is expected that it will cover a range of issues affecting children in

their first years of life such as child health and well-being, parenting and family support, learning and development, play and recreation and early childhood care and education.

### **Exchequer Savings**

1031. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State Agency board fees were reduced by 25% under the aegis of her Department; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [35795/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). With effect from 1 January 2012, I have taken responsibility for the Children Detention Schools as provided for in Part 10 of the Children Act 2001.

I am responsible for all Board of Management appointments. It should be noted that all current members of the Board of Management for the Children Detention Schools waived their fees when they were appointed in March 2012.

The Ombudsman for Children's Office does not have a Board of Management.

Based on current remuneration for Board membership, I can confirm that the annual saving to the Exchequer if all Board members fees were cut by 25% is €29,171.

### **Official Travel**

1032. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, the staff have to submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [36040/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). The OCO does not have a Board.

I can assure the Deputy that these four agencies are aware of their responsibilities with regard to all travel, including foreign travel, in respect of each official trip undertaken in accordance with Part 17 and Appendix VI of the Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2009 and that they ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to monitor, report and enforce the relevant rules and requirements regarding overseas travel.

### **Departmental Bodies**

1033. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs if she will provide, in tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the

aegis of her Department; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [36212/13]

**Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (Deputy Frances Fitzgerald):** I would like to inform the Deputy there are four agencies which are funded by the Exchequer through my Department's Vote. These are the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI); the Family Support Agency (FSA); the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) and the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO). With effect from 1 January 2012, I have taken responsibility for the Children Detention Schools as provided for in Part 10 of the Children Act 2001.

I have set out in tabular format the non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the remit of my Department.

Non – commercial State sponsored bodies - Department of Children and Youth Affairs
National Educational Welfare Board
Family Support Agency
Adoption Authority of Ireland
Ombudsman for Children's Office
Children Detention Schools

### HSE Staffing

1034. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the position on working hours in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 9. [34505/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### Mental Health Services Provision

1035. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health his views on the adequacy of mental health support services for direct provision residents; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35360/13]

1036. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide a yearly breakdown, from 2003 to date in 2013, of the number the persons in direct provision centres who have availed of mental health services and/or support; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35361/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1035 and 1036 together.

As this is a service matter which relates to co-operation at local level between the centres in question and the HSE, the Deputy's questions have been referred to the Executive for direct reply in relation to the operational matters raised.

### Proposed Legislation

1037. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Health the action he plans to take to prohibit the trafficking of human organs from non-consenting persons; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35379/13]

1141. **Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan** asked the Minister for Health if on his visit to China he discussed the issue of forced organ harvesting practised against practitioners of Falun Gong in China; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35461/13]

1149. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Health in view of the allegations of forced organ harvesting in China, if he will consider the need for legislation, at national and European Union level, to prohibit the trafficking and use of such organs in the State; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35524/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1037, 1141 and 1149 together.

Human trafficking for the purpose of the removal of organs is criminalised under the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008.

In addition, the removal of human organs without consent or for payment is an offence under the European Union (Quality and Safety of Human Organs Intended for Transplantation) Regulations 2012 - S.I. No. 325 of 2012. These Regulations give effect to Directive 2010/53/EU. Under the Regulations, it is an offence to traffic, harbour, import or export organs contrary to the Regulations and the Directive. The Regulations set out a framework encompassing the establishment of competent authorities, the authorisation of transplantation centres and the establishment of conditions of procurement and systems of traceability.

My Department is also preparing legislative proposals for a Human Tissue Bill which will set out a detailed consent framework for the removal, donation and use of organs from deceased and living persons for the purpose of transplantation.

I wish to advise the Deputy that the issue of forced organ harvesting practised against practitioners of Falun Gong in China was not discussed during my visit in August 2012.

### **Medicinal Products Availability**

1038. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Health his plans to make Selincro-nalmefene available here; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34183/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013 was commenced on the 24 June 2013. The HSE is required to assess all new medicines in accordance with the Act and in line with the procedures and timescales agreed last year by the Department of Health and the HSE with the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (IPHA).

The market authorisation holder for Nalmefeme (Selincro) made an application for pricing and reimbursement in June 2013. The HSE has commenced the process of assessment of that application. The HSE has 180 days (with stop clocks) to complete that assessment. A health technology assessment by the National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics will form one of the important inputs into decision making.

It would not be appropriate to comment any further on an ongoing assessment.

### **Medical Disclosure Code**

1039. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Health if he will furnish details on

national and European initiative to develop a disclosure code regarding incentives paid to doctors by pharmaceutical companies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34193/13]

1040. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Health if there is any research available that links incentives paid to doctors by pharmaceutical companies to prescribing patterns; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34194/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1039 and 1040 together.

The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) has created a “disclosure code of transfers of value to healthcare professionals and organisations”, which means that, from 2016, EU drug manufacturers are required to disclose payments to doctors. The code of practice was developed to improve transparency in the industry. Every member company will have to disclose or document the names of the health care professionals or associations who have received payments or something else of value on their websites. The disclosed information will also include the payment amount, as well as the type of financial relationship which will affect consultancy and congress fees and travel payments. EFPIA members must adhere to this code in order to remain in this trade body.

Section 59.8 of the Medical Council’s Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners advises Medical Practitioners that “You must keep up to date with developments in medication safety. You should not rely solely or excessively on promotional literature distributed by pharmaceutical companies for information about particular drugs. You should seek independent evidence-based sources of information on the benefits and risks associated with medicines before prescribing”.

The HSE has been working with GPs over many years to encourage better quality prescribing of drugs in Ireland. In 2012, the HSE’s Medicines Management Programme was established and one of its key tasks is to communicate with prescribers regarding best practice.

The Programme has identified “preferred drugs” for prescribers when prescribing Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) or statin medication for patients. This is the first time that the State has introduced a preferred drug initiative. PPIs are prescribed for patients with peptic ulcer disease and-or reflux and statin medication is for high cholesterol. The preferred PPI is Lansoprazole and the preferred statin is Simvastatin. The HSE is asking doctors to prescribe these preferred drugs in order to save money, both for patients who pay for their medication and to deliver savings of an estimated €15 million for the taxpayer.

A further initiative under way to assist with GP prescribing is the launch of the HSE’s Prescribing Guidance System (PGS). This system supports prescribers with integrated “point of prescribing” information making it easier for GPs to make decisions in line with MMP prescribing guidance. In turn, the system also gives assurance regarding the effectiveness of prescribing guidance interventions.

It is anticipated that this prescribing guidance system will be a critical assistance to the GP community and significantly important to the wider health system.

Furthermore, the ESRI report, *Pharmaceutical Prices, Prescribing Practices and Usage of Generics in a Comparative Context*, which was published on 27 June recommended that “... financial incentives to reduce pharmaceutical expenditure should not be introduced for medical practitioners in Ireland”. The Department of Health and the HSE agree with this recommendation and no such incentives are in place.

1041. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Health whether dental treatments are covered by a medical card and, in particular, if dental surgery can be provided free of charge for persons with medical cards; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34216/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Dental Treatment Services Scheme (DTSS) provides access to dental treatment for adult medical card holders. The service is provided by contracted dentists. The HSE prioritises for treatment patients with special needs, high risk patients and those who have greater clinical needs. A free oral examination every calendar year and free emergency dental treatment with a focus on relief of pain and sepsis are available to all eligible patients, regardless of their medical condition. This includes 2 fillings, all extractions, including surgical extractions, and a number of complex treatments.

### Medical Card Eligibility

1042. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Health if persons who have medical cards are entitled to have Department of Social Protection forms, such as those for adult dietary supplement and exceptional heating needs supplement, completed by their general practitioners without charge; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34218/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** Under the General Medical Services (GMS) contract, a general practitioner (GP) is expected to provide his or her patients who hold medical cards or GP visit cards with all proper and necessary treatment of a kind generally undertaken by a GP.

The contract between the HSE and GPs under the GMS Scheme stipulates that fees are not paid to GPs by the HSE in respect of certain medical certificates which may be required, for example, “under the Social Welfare Acts or for the purposes of insurance or assurance policies or for the issue of driving licences”.

Consultation fees charged by general practitioners to private patients and to GMS patients outside the terms of the GMS contract are a matter of private contract between the clinicians and the patients. While I have no role in relation to such fees, I would expect clinicians to have regard to the overall economic situation in setting their fees. I should add that General Practitioners who hold GMS contracts with the HSE must not seek or accept money from medical card or GP visit card holders in respect of routine treatment.

### Health Care Abroad

1043. **Deputy Michael McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the arrangements in place between Ireland and the United Kingdom to ensure that Irish citizens living in the UK receive healthcare there and that UK citizens living here receive healthcare services here; the amount paid in 2011 and 2012 by each jurisdiction to the other in respect of these services; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34228/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Ireland operates a bilateral healthcare reimbursement agreement with the United Kingdom, in respect of health services provided under EU Regulations, covering such persons as temporary visitors between the two countries, pensioners of one country and their dependants residing in the other country, and the dependent families of persons employed in the other country. Under the terms of the agreement net liability between the two countries is calculated on a lump sum basis rather than an individual basis. The amount payable is the net difference between the costs to the Irish health services of providing care to those with only UK entitlements and the cost to the UK health services of

providing services to those with only Irish entitlements. The payment made in any one year is based on an estimate of the number of persons falling within categories eligible for reimbursement and for whom each country is liable and an estimate of the average cost of providing health care treatment. The amount payable is agreed following compilation of the necessary data and discussions between the two administrations. Payments are made in advance and are subject to final settlement once all necessary statistical and financial information is complete. Total payments in any one year can relate to both final settlements in respect of previous years' liabilities and advance payments in respect of the current year.

By far the largest part of the net payment received from the UK authorities on an annual basis relates to the provision of health care to UK pensioners and their dependants residing in Ireland. The estimated number of pensioners for whom each country is liable was based on a survey by both administrations undertaken every three years, the most recent of which was completed in 2008. Recently both administrations agreed in principle to work towards a form of pensioner registration which will form the basis for calculating pensioner reimbursement costs in the future and agreed interim arrangements, based on previous survey results trends, for determining pensioner liability pending the implementation of same.

The amounts are received by the Health Service Executive as Appropriations-in-Aid and are offset against the gross funding requirements of the Executive at national level thus reducing the net liability to the Exchequer.

The amounts received by Ireland from the UK in respect of reimbursement of healthcare costs provided under Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, for the years in question are

2011 - €270,000,000.

2012 - €220,000,000.

### **Primary Care Strategy**

1044. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 344 of 8 November and 239 of 25 October 2012, if he will provide the figures for the period September to December and the 2012 outturn at PCCC level along with the service plan target for 2012; if he has finalised a national definition for the role; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34277/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Home Help Service Provision**

1045. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the cost of increasing home help hours to the 2011 provision; and the additional hours this would entail. [34309/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Hospital Charges**

1046. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health the cost of reducing accident and emergency attendance by €10. [34310/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The cost to the Health Service Executive of a 10% reduction in accident and emergency charges in acute statutory hospitals based on charges raised would be approximately €950,000 per annum.

### **European Health Insurance Card Issues**

1047. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Health if and when an updated EU health insurance card can be effected in the case of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34311/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Services for People with Disabilities**

1048. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the current waiting time for therapeutic input in the Wellmount Health Centre is over a year and that the Health Service Executive area manager of Dublin north east estimates that waiting times will grow due to the increasing demands and constraints on the services, and that the waiting times are more than a year for each subsequent block of therapy sessions needed; the measures he will implement to combat the long-term damage for young children arising from his inability to tackle excessively long waiting times for fundamental therapeutic input such as speech and language, if he has discussed the matter with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs; if he has discussed the matter with the Department of Education and Skills as this failure by his Department clearly impacts on the increased need for special needs assistants to assist children as they progress in their education. [34344/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The Government is fully committed to protecting front-line services, including services for children with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible, notwithstanding the financial constraints within which the health sector must operate. Significant resources have been invested by the health sector in recent years in services for children with disabilities. In particular, there is now an increased awareness of the importance of early intervention for these children in terms of ensuring they get the best start in life and are supported as much as possible to reach their full potential.

My Department co-operates on a regular basis with the both Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Education and Skills on issues of mutual interest and concern pertaining to children with disabilities, including autism. This cross-cutting engagement on children with disabilities issues is being facilitated by a dedicated Unit that has been established in the Department of Health.

As the Deputy will be aware, the Health Service Executive has operational responsibility for the provision of health and personal social services, including disability services for children. Within this context, it has a responsibility to ensure that the health-related needs of children with special needs are addressed and that these children are appropriately supported in pre-school and school settings. This is done in a number of ways such as by providing grant-aid to support pre-school provision in community pre-schools and by funding special pre-schools that cater specifically for children with disabilities. It also facilitates children with special needs to attend mainstream pre-school by providing the necessary assistant supports. The HSE's role in supporting children with special needs involves it working in close co-operation with the disability service providers that it funds, with the education sector and with the parents and

families of the children in question.

With regard to the HSE's Speech and Language Therapy Service, I understand that each individual that presents to the Service has an initial assessment to determine their individual need for therapy. The therapist, in conjunction with the parent(s) or carer, will determine the severity of the individual's difficulties and prioritise for therapy accordingly. The level of intervention is in line with clinic policy, age and severity of the diagnosis. The waiting period for intervention is dependent on the nature and severity of the disorder following assessment.

The HSE aims to ensure that the resources available are used to best effect, in order to provide assessment and ongoing therapy to children and adults in line with their prioritised needs. Along with the significant investment in area of speech and language therapists employed in recent years, a range of new approaches have been developed and used in many Speech and Language Therapy services across the country. These include providing structures, training and support to parents-carers so that they can work to help improve the individual's speech and language. In addition, therapy is delivered in group settings where appropriate. The HSE has stated that it is committed to working in partnership with other service providers to achieve maximum benefits for children and adults with speech and language therapy requirements, and aims to ensure that, the speech and language therapy resources available are used in the most effective manner possible.

My Department has asked the HSE to look at the specific operational service issue of waiting times for therapeutic input at the Wellmount Healthcare facility and to respond directly to the Deputy on the matter.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

1049. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health the number of children aged between three and 12 years who are on a waiting list for speech and language therapy. [34348/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The particular issue raised by the Deputy is a service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Hospital Waiting Lists**

1050. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health the number of children aged between three and 12 years who are on a waiting list for behavioural therapy. [34349/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The particular issue raised by the Deputy is a service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Health Services Issues**

1051. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will address the waiting lists and delays in waiting times for audiology services in County Kerry as the current waiting

time for initial assessment for those on the routine waiting list is three years and three months; if he will provide additional resources to address this matter; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34350/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The HSE National Audiology Review Group (NARG) report, published in April 2011, identified some inconsistencies and shortcomings in audiology services around the country, including unacceptable waiting times, and made recommendations to address these issues. An Audiology Clinical Care Programme has been put in place under the Clinical Strategy and Programmes Directorate. An additional €3.7 million was made available in 2011 to begin the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Group and a further €1.9 million was made available in 2013. The HSE has been asked to examine the specific query raised by the Deputy concerning services in County Kerry and to reply to him as soon as possible.

### Health Services Staff Issues

1052. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Health if a replacement is being sought for the staff member who carries out assessments at the early intervention centre in Springfield, Mullingar, County Westmeath; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34351/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The particular issue raised by the Deputy is a service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### Hospital Staff Issues

1053. **Deputy Robert Troy** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, by grade the number of hospital staff assigned to the Midland Regional Hospital, Mullingar, County Westmeath who are currently on leaves of absence; and if they are in receipt of a salary. [34361/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### Patient Transport Provision

1054. **Deputy Seán Ó Fearghaíl** asked the Minister for Health if he will instruct the Health Service Executive to restore the minibus transport service for patients in County Kildare who need to avail of this facility in order to attend outpatient clinic appointments; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34370/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

### Departmental Reports

1055. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Department since March 2011. [34405/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Information for the period from March 2011 to October 2012 is set out in the following table. Information for the period from November 2012 to date is being collated and will be forwarded to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

Title/subject matter of report	Persons drafting report	Costs to date	Has the report been completed?
National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) Annual Report 2010	Translator: Ariel Killick, Translation of NACD 2010 Annual report	813	Report completed. Published 05/2011
An Overview of New Psychoactive Substances and the Outlets Supplying Them (Headshop report)	Editor: Brenda O'Hanlon (published June 2011) First Impression/Clever Cat Design (design and layout)	1,313 4,812	Report completed. Published 06/2011
Parental Substance Misuse – Literature Review. Main report	Author: Dr. Justine Horgan, Senior Researcher, NACD Editor: Mr. David Quinn, Swiftrite Ovo (report design and layout)	880 1,694	Report completed. Published 10/2011
Parental Substance Misuse - Key Messages and Recommendations	Author: Dr. Justine Horgan, Senior Researcher, NACD. Ovo (design, layout and printing)	1,192	Report completed. Published 10/2011
Responding to Challenges of Substance Use Among Young People	Author: Ms. Peigin Doyle, Writer/Editor/Publicist	1,512	Report completed. Published 11/2011
The Potency of THC in Cannabis Products (Working Paper Series, No. 1)	Author: Ms Colette Arnold, Forensic Science Laboratory Ovo (Working paper series design, layout, printing)	841	Report completed. Published 11/2011
Research into methods and datasources for the estimation of prevalence of problematic opiate and cocaine use in Ireland (Working Paper Series, No. 2)	Commissioned by NACD. Work carried out by Gannon, Hay and McKell. Paid for prior to February 2011 Clever Cat Design (report design, layout, printing)	1,065	Report completed. Published 12/2011

Title/subject matter of report	Persons drafting report	Costs to date	Has the report been completed?
Protocol for National Substance Misuse Rehabilitation Cohort Study (Working Paper Series, No. 3)	Commissioned by NACD. Work carried out by Gannon, Hay and McKeganey. Paid for prior to February 2011 Clever Cat Design (report design, layout, printing)	830	Report completed Published 12/2011
A Family Affair – Supporting Children Living with Parental Substance Misuse. A Report of the Conference	Author: Ms. Peigin Doyle, Writer/Editor/Publicist Ovo (report design and layout)	2,602 553	Report completed Published 01/2012
General Population Survey on Drug Prevalence 2010/11 Technical report	Work carried out by IPSOS MORI. Paid for prior February 2011 Publisher: CleverCat (design and layout)	423	Reported completed- Published 02/2012
Study on the prevalence of drug use, including intravenous drug use and blood borne viruses among the Irish prisoner population	Authors: Dr. A. Drummond, Dr. M. Codd, Ms N. Donnelly, Mr. D. McCausland, Dr. J. Mehegan, L. Daly and Professor C. Kelleher	115,859	Report completed, not yet published.
Illicit Drug Markets in Ireland	Author: Mr. Johnny Connolly, Research Officer, Health Research Board Editor: Ms. Winifred Power	10,000 4,930	Report not yet completed. Currently at copy-editing stage.
Health Behaviour in School Children Report (HBSC)	External (Health Promotion Research Centre-NUI Galway)	100,641	Yes
School Survey Project on Alcohol and Drugs (ESPAD)	External (Mark Morgan, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin)	22,687	Yes
National Narcolepsy Study Steering Committee Report – Study of increase incidence of narcolepsy in young people following receipt of H1N1 (Swine Flu) vaccination	HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre – Dr Darina O'Flanagan (Chair of Steering Committee)	Nil	Yes. Report was published on Department's website in April 2012
Positive ageing: indicators of well-being in older people	Health Research Board	Nil	Report not yet completed.

Questions - Written Answers

Title/subject matter of report	Persons drafting report	Costs to date	Has the report been completed?
Towards a Restraint Free Environment in Nursing Homes – a Policy Document	Geraldine Fitzpatrick PO (Chair), Michael Smith, AP, Sheila O'Malley, Chief Nursing Advisor, Marita Kinsella, Chief Pharmacist, Noreen Quinn, Pharmacist, Dr Colette Bonner, DCMO, (all DoH); Dr Shaun O'Keeffe, Geriatrician, University College Hospital Galway; Ann Ryan, Inspector Manager, and Vicky Blomfield, Regional Operations Manager, both HIQA; Suzanne Cahill, Director of Dementia Services Information and Development Centre's research programme at Trinity College Dublin; Ann Coyle, Planning Specialist for Older People, HSE; Sinéad Fitzpatrick, Practice Development Facilitator and Vena Doyle, Practice Development Facilitator, Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI)	Department paid for printing and translation costs - 2,075	Yes and published 4 October 2011
High Level Issues Analysis of the Nursing Homes Support Scheme	Accenture	No costs incurred	Yes
Strategic Framework for Role Expansion of Nurses and Midwives: Promoting Quality Patient Care	Sheila O'Malley (Chief Nursing Officer in this Dept. who retired February 2012) and Steering Group with members from various outside agencies.	8,567 (printing costs)	Yes

Title/subject matter of report	Persons drafting report	Costs to date	Has the report been completed?
National Policy and Strategy for the Provision of Neuro-Rehabilitation Services in Ireland 2011 - 2015	Drafted by Department Staff – James O’Grady – now retired Editing and Proofing by Ms. Carole Devaney Formatting, Design & Printing by Brunswick Press	Cost for editing and proofing 2,890 Cost for formatting, design and printing of 200 copies 6,738	Yes - Published Dec 2011
Commissioned to undertake a review of the Irish private health insurance market in relation to the options which may exist for rebalancing.	Goodbody Stockbrokers and Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	300,080	Yes
Further Analysis of Options in relation to the restructuring of the Private Health Insurance Market	Goodbody Stockbrokers and Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors	Not available as yet	Draft report under consideration
Review of Parliamentary and Legislative Processes by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	Report drafted by Mr Owen Jacob, Principal Officer, Business Consulting Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform – Assistance was provided by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC)	18,020(PWC)	Yes
All Ireland Traveller Health Study (AITHS)	UCD, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Population Science	139,000 paid in 2011	Yes
Evaluation of the Sub-oxone Feasibility Study	Create Consultancy Ltd. External Consultants	A total of 10,863 was spent in 2011.	Yes
Financial Report on the HSE	Mark Ogden	€15,851	Yes
Development of a Model of Demand and Supply of GP and Practice Nurse Services in the Republic of Ireland	Trinity College Dublin	30,552	Yes
Financial Management in the HSE	PA Consulting	182,980	Yes
-	TOTAL	€990,263	

### Mental Health Services Provision

1056. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the position on mental health reform (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34422/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** Budgetary pressures within the HSE delayed the full utilisation of the €35 million allocated in Budget 2012 for the development of community mental health services, but this sum is available again this year together with a further additional €35 million which was provided in Budget 2013 for the continued development of mental health services across a range of headings, including the further development of forensic services and community mental health teams for adults, children, older persons and mental health intellectual disability, and to the recruitment of 477 additional staff to implement these measures.

Each of the four HSE regions were asked to submit a business case against each of the identified objectives detailing how the funding is to be spent and the type and number of WTE to be recruited. Approval has issued all four HSE Regions to enable recruitment to commence. As at end June 2013, 117 of the 477 posts approved in 2013 had been accepted by candidates and are awaiting clearance with a further 34 posts offered to candidates.

The HSE's National Recruitment Service (NRS) creates national panels in anticipation of vacancies. On occasion however, it is difficult to fill some posts for various reasons, including geographical location, international shortage of some grades, most notably clinical Psychologists etc. The NRS is currently working to ensure that the remaining posts will be filled as soon as possible, from existing panels or through competition in the absence of panels, at the earliest opportunity. I have been assured by the HSE that the recruitment process for the new posts being funded in 2013, and any outstanding post from the 414 approved in 2012, is being given priority within the HSE.

The €35 million allocation for mental health this year also includes €400,000 to support a national project to prepare a business case for a national mental health ICT system and to seek the necessary resources to identify and implement such a system. The HSE is currently carrying out the necessary preparatory work in this regard.

With regard to the level of funding for mental health next year, this is being considered as part of the Estimates and budgetary process for 2014.

### **Mental Health Services Report**

1057. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the position on the mental health report, *A Vision for Change*; the steps he has taken to implement the holistic service propounded in this report in 2012/13; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34423/13]

1060. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the position on the report of the Inspector of Mental Health Services who has found that mental health services were stagnant and perhaps had slipped backwards in 2012; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34426/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1057 and 1060 together.

The Government has prioritised the reform of the mental health service in line with *A Vision for Change*. This commitment was clearly shown in the Programme for Government which provides for the ring-fencing of €35 million from within the overall health budget to develop community mental health services and to ensure early access to more appropriate services for

adults and children.

Additional funding totalling €70 million and almost 900 new posts have been provided as part of the last two budgets primarily to strengthen Community Mental Health Teams for both adults and children and to enhance specialist community mental health services for older people with a mental illness, those with an intellectual disability and mental illness and forensic mental health services in line with *A Vision for Change*.

The annual report from the Mental Health Commission which included the report of the Inspector for Mental Health Service 2012 acknowledged the continued progress towards ending the use of outdated and unsuitable buildings to provide inpatient services and the continued development of child and adolescent units which has contributed to a decline in the number of admissions of children to adult units.

However, it is disappointing that the pace of change towards a modern, patient-centred, recovery orientated mental health service has been somewhat slower than expected. It is also a concern that the Inspector found that overall compliance with regulation, rules and codes of practice in 2012 can only be regarded as fair with no significant improvement on previous years. High standards in facilities and in inpatient care must be the norm without exception. The aim is to further develop mental health services that are recovery oriented and that put service users, their families and carers at the centre. In this regard, I welcome the commitment in the HSE National Service Plan to improve the quality of mental health services in line with the requirements of the Mental Health Commission.

The recruitment of the additional 900 WTEs for mental health and the appointment by the HSE of a new Director for Mental Health will pave the way for a significant change in the management and delivery of our mental health services and will be a key step towards remedying many of the problems identified by the Inspector for Mental Health Services.

### **Mental Health Services Provision**

1058. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the position regarding emergency beds for children and teenagers who need emergency inpatient treatment in psychiatric hospitals; the number of beds available in County Wicklow and the east Carlow area; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34424/13]

1059. **Deputy Billy Timmins** asked the Minister for Health the position on waiting times for children and teenagers who need emergency psychiatric assessment in County Wicklow and the east Carlow area; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34425/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1058 and 1059 together.

As this is a service matter the Deputy's questions have been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

*Question No. 1060 answered with Question No. 1057.*

### **Primary Care Services Provision**

1061. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the reason a person (details supplied) in County Cork who needs oxygen daily will not be covered under a medical card while

in a nursing home. [34432/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The HSE is responsible for the administration of the primary care schemes. Therefore, the matter has been referred to the HSE for attention and direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Symphysiotomy Report**

1062. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the meetings that took place between the Health Service Executive with regards to symphysiotomy; the details of the meetings; the number of meetings; the agenda of such meetings; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34459/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** My Department received the independent report on symphysiotomy in Ireland at the end of May and it was submitted to me shortly after that. My Department's officials and I have been studying its conclusions.

The report is the result of considerable work by the author and includes both academic research and consultation on this research involving patient groups, health professionals and in particular, women who had undergone symphysiotomy. I am anxious to ensure appropriate treatment for these women. The finalised report will inform the Government's overall consideration of this matter, including any actions that may be required in response to its recommendations, or any legal implications.

I will brief Government on the report shortly, so that it may decide on the next steps, with the aim of bringing closure to the issue for the women involved.

I have also made a commitment to meet representatives of the symphysiotomy support groups once the Government has made a decision on the matter and prior to the publication of the report. Contrary to media reports, the Department has not been in discussion with one particular group about the issue.

The information requested by the Deputy regarding any meetings that the Health Service Executive may have had in relation to symphysiotomy is a matter for the Executive.

Accordingly, I have forwarded this request to the executive for direct response.

### **Haddington Road Agreement Issues**

1063. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual net and gross saving to the Exchequer, following implementation of the Haddington Road Agreement, if hospital consultant pay was capped at €150,000 per annum. [34478/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter, I have asked the Health Service Executive to reply directly to the Deputy with the information sought.

### **Exchequer Savings**

1064. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health the annual saving to the Exchequer if the full economic costs for the use of beds in public and voluntary hospitals for the

purposes of private medical practice were paid for by private insurance operators. [34479/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information sought by the Deputy is not readily available. However, I have asked the Health Service Executive to supply this information to me and I will forward it to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **HSE Staff Remuneration**

1065. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health the number of Health Service Executive public sector workers in receipt of salaries within the following bands (details supplied). [34480/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Hospital Appointment Delays**

1066. **Deputy Seán Ó Fearghaíl** asked the Minister for Health if he will expedite a medical appointment in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kildare who urgently requires medical treatment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34499/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Improving access to outpatient services is a key priority for the Government. Collaborating with individual hospitals, the SDU, together with the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) and the HSE, has developed the outpatient waiting list minimum dataset. This allows data to be submitted to the NTPF from hospitals on a weekly basis and, for the first time, outpatient data are available on *www.ntpf.ie*. For 2013, a maximum waiting time target has been set of 12 months for a first time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE service plan. The SDU and the NTPF will work closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time. Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved.

In relation to the specific hospital appointment query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### **Medical Card Applications**

1067. **Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin** asked the Minister for Health if he will review a decision to refuse a medical card application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Tipperary. [34502/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

## **Medical Card Applications**

1068. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will examine the application for a medical card in respect of persons (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34504/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

## **Departmental Agencies Board Remuneration**

1069. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board,s to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34515/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested by the Deputy in relation to fees and expenses paid to members of boards of organisations or agencies under my aegis is not readily available, but I will forward a detailed reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

## **Departmental Staff Remuneration**

1070. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies' chief executive officers under the aegis of his Department. [34531/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested is currently being collated and will be forwarded directly to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

## **Departmental Expenditure**

1071. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34547/13]

1073. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT-related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34579/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1071 and 1073 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is currently being collated and will be forwarded to her as soon as it is available.

### Departmental Staff Training

1072. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34563/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Some €74,035.57 was spent on third level courses, training programmes and courses for the 2012-2013 academic year, 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, for staff in my Department. The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following table.

Training Courses/programmes	Total cost
Oxford Programme on Negotiation	31683.91
Code of Ethics and Practice Training Session	70.00
Dealing with Difficult Customers	1215.00
Certificate in Freedom of Information	2675.00
Training Module (Interviewee Training)	300.00
FOI Mediation Skills Refresher Day	225.00
Young Ireland Programme 2012, Scotland	1650.75
Certificate in Public Law	680.00
PSWT – Professional Service Withholding Tax	275.00
Administrative Law	1620.00
Managing Performance Training	3992.00
Professional Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation	1450.00
Project Management – FETAC Level 6	690.00
IDEA Foundation Training Course	748.91
PAI Proof reading seminar	225.00
IPA Freedom of Information for Decision Makers	450.00
Total cost of Training Courses/Programmes	47950.57

Refund of Fees	Total Cost
Msc Public Health (Health Services Management)	3290.00
Sponsored Fees for Masters in Policy Analysis Autumn Semester 2012	15000.00
Diploma in Legal Studies	4975.00
Bachelor of Arts	2820.00
TOTAL Refund of Fees	26085.00

*Question No. 1073 answered with Question No. 1071.*

### Exchequer Savings

1074. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and

20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department [34595/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Reductions of 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% in travel and subsistence expenditure for my Department, based on the 2013 budget level, are set out in the following table.

-	€
-	654,000
1%	6,540
5%	32,700
7%	45,780
10%	65,400
12%	78,480
15%	98,100
17%	111,180
20%	130,800

### Exchequer Savings

1075. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34611/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for my Department, based on expenditure in 2012, is set out in the following table.

Expenditure on Training and Development in 2012	5% Reduction	7% Reduction	10% Reduction	12% Reduction	15% Reduction	17% Reduction	20% Reduction
€156,000	€7,800	€10,920	€15,600	€18,720	€23,400	€26,520	€31,200

### Exchequer Savings

1076. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; if he will provide a list of all salaries post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement paid to his special advisers. [34627/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the following tabular statements:

-	Special Advisors Salaries	-	-
Minister Reilly:	-	Pre Haddington Road Agreement	Post Haddington Road Agreement

-	Special Advisors Salaries	-	-
Maureen Windle	Special Advisor - 67% work sharer	€61,784.42	€58,174.91
Mark Costigan	Press Advisor	€92,672	€87,258
Minister White:	-	-	-
Madeline Mulrennan	Special Advisor	€61,966	€61,966

Savings to the Exchequer if Special Advisors capped at 1st point on Principal Officer Scale

Savings if Capped at 1st Point	-	-	-	-
Minister Reilly:	-	Post Haddington Road Agreement	1st point PO Modified Scale	Savings
Maureen Windle	Special Advisor - 67% work sharer	€58,174.91	€50,433.85	€7,741.06
Mark Costigan	Press Advisor	€87,258	€75,647	€11,611
Minister White:	-	-	1st point AP Modified Scale	-
Madeline Mulrennan	Special Advisor	€61,966	€61,966	€0

### Hospital Consultants Recruitment

1077. **Deputy Dan Neville** asked the Minister for Health if he will address the difficulties being faced by parents of children with diabetes who normally attend the consultant paediatrician specialising in diabetes in the Mid West Regional Hospital, as there is no specialist available, since the existing consultant went on leave (details supplied) [34637/13]

1118. **Deputy Noel Coonan** asked the Minister for Health the position regarding the provision of a full-time paediatric diabetic consultant post in Limerick Regional Hospital (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35147/13]

1147. **Deputy Patrick O'Donovan** asked the Minister for Health the date on which the Health Service Executive will fill the paediatric diabetes consultant post in Limerick Regional Hospital, in view of the fact that since May a consultant paediatrician specialising in diabetes has been off sick and is not expected to return until October 2014. [35514/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1077, 1118 and 1147 together.

As this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in the matter.

### Programme for Government Implementation

1078. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the Programme for Government within his remit; if the commitment

has been met or is in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34682/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested by the Deputy is currently being collated and will be forwarded to him as soon as it is available.

### **Consultancy Contracts Issues**

1079. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations, communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34698/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The use of public relations and consultancy services by agencies or organisations under my Department's aegis is an operational matter for those bodies and my Department does not routinely gather this information.

### **Medical Card Applications**

1080. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will issue full medical cards in respect of persons (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34711/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

### **Care of the Elderly**

1081. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he has considered establishing a forum on long-term residential care, to include all relevant stakeholders involved in the provision of such care for older persons; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34713/13]

1083. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he will ensure that the fair deal scheme is adequately resourced and future-proofed to accommodate the increasing numbers of persons who will need nursing home care in the near future and to prevent older persons in need of care having to wait to avail of the specialist care of nursing homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34730/13]

1084. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health the support his Department currently provides for private and voluntary nursing homes to meet the growth in demand for nursing home care; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34734/13]

1085. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he will consider establishing an independent appeals mechanism in order that persons can address the failure to agree

fees for nursing home care with the National Treatment Purchase Fund; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34739/13]

1087. **Deputy Terence Flanagan** asked the Minister for Health if he will consider establishing an independent appeals process to provide nursing homes with the opportunity to address judgments made by the Health Information and Quality Authority; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34743/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1081, 1083 to 1085, inclusive, and 1087 together.

I refer the Deputy to my replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 674, 676 and 677 of 28 May 2013 and 240 of 20 June. In addition, I would like to advise the Deputy that the Nursing Homes Support Scheme is currently under review. The review is centred on sustainability. Work will continue on the review in the coming months with a view to completion by end 2013-early 2014. As the Scheme is statutory based, the implementation of any recommendations arising from the review may require amendments to the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act, 2009.

### **Primary Care Services Provision**

1082. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Health his plans to set national criteria for access to primary care services in view of the geographic discrimination that applies when accessing health care, for example, physiotherapy and mental health services. [34725/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** This Government is committed to reforming our model of delivering health care so we can reduce the cost of achieving the best health outcomes for our citizens.

The implementation of the Primary Care Strategy continues to be a priority for this Government. The objective is to develop services in the community which will give people direct access to integrated multi-disciplinary teams of general practitioners (GPs), nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and others. At the end of May 2013, there were 418 Primary Care Teams operating, i.e. holding clinical team meetings, involving GPs and HSE staff. The HSE's 2013 National Service Plan commits to having 484 operational teams in place by the end of this year.

In 2012, the HSE completed a detailed analysis of the numbers and distribution of public health nurses, registered general nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists. The analysis revealed considerable variation across the HSE's 17 Integrated Service Areas in ratios of health care professionals to population and to population numbers in areas of high deprivation.

Based on this exercise, in 2013, Primary Care funding of €20 million, nationally, will be invested to support the recruitment of prioritised front-line primary care team posts and enhance the capacity of the primary care sector.

I issued approval to the HSE on 27 March 2013 to commence recruitment to Primary Care Teams with immediate effect of the following additional 251 Primary Care posts:

- 70 Public Health Nurses;
- 37 Registered General Nurses;
- 51 Occupational Therapists;

- 46 Physiotherapists; and
- 47 Speech and Language Therapists.

The allocation and distribution of the above posts is based on bringing each Integrated Service Area, where staffing is below the national average, towards the national average.

This Government recognised the pivotal role that Primary Care has in addressing the mental health needs of the population and committed in the Programme for Government to the provision of counselling services in primary care, specifically for people with mental health problems. Budget 2012 provided a special allocation of €35 million for mental health from which €5m was made available for the provision of psychological and counselling services in primary care, specifically for people with mental health problems who are eligible under the General Medical Services. A further €2.5 million was made available from this year's special allocation for mental health. Ten Counsellor Co-ordinators, who will be responsible for the set-up, roll-out, management and monitoring of the service, have now been appointed.

Last week, I was delighted to join my colleague, the Minister with responsibility for Mental Health, Kathleen Lynch, T.D, at the launch of the Counselling in Primary Care Initiative. This initiative will be working to improve access to counselling to people with mild to moderate psychological difficulties who are medical card holders under the General Medical Services Scheme.

It is expected that the start date for the service will vary according to when the Counsellor Co-ordinator takes up the post but the first services will begin to roll-out this month.

*Questions Nos. 1083 to 1085, inclusive, answered with Question No. 1081.*

### **Health Services Issues**

1086. **Deputy Peadar Tóibín** asked the Minister for Health if he will direct the Health Service Executive to change the way it processes medical treatment for children on medical cards who also have school insurance in order that costs of treatment can be covered at source rather than claimed back by the patient. [34742/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The A&E charge which is currently €100 is provided for by the Health (Out-Patient Charges) Regulations 2013.

The public inpatient charge (€75 per day subject to a maximum of €750 in any period of 12 consecutive months) is provided for by the Health (In-Patient Charges) Regulations 1987 (as amended), made under Section 53 of the Health Act 1970 (as amended).

Under the regulations, medical card holders are exempted from each of these charges.

*Question No. 1087 answered with Question No. 1081.*

### **Patient Transport Provision**

1088. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Health if patient transport will be provided for a person (details supplied) in Dublin 15 who cannot get transport to their service, either by private or scheduled public transport; if direct contact will be made with the family to

assist them; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34788/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As the Deputy's question relates to service matters, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Nursing Education**

1089. **Deputy Arthur Spring** asked the Minister for Health if a person (details supplied) in County Kerry who sat the written assessment for application to pre-registration nursing and midwifery degree programme commencing in September 2013 may be considered for a waiting list for the programme in view of the the applicant's examination average over all subjects. [34838/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Unfortunately, my Department has no role in this matter. I have contacted the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and the information requested by the Deputy can be obtained in the booklet "Nursing and Midwifery a Career for You" on pages 19 and 20, which can be obtained on the NMBI website. This booklet sets out how people are considered for the waiting list, as there are different criteria, depending on whether the person is a mature code applicant or a standard code applicant.

### **Ambulance Service Staff**

1090. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Health his plans to issue anti-stab vests to all Health Service Executive ambulance staff; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34917/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

### **Programme for Government Implementation**

1091. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the work of the Programme Management Office in his Department; its functions, membership and the date of its establishment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34932/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** My Department has been working on proposals for ensuring that health reforms are implemented in a timely and effective way, including the establishment of a Programme Management Office, as promised in Future Health. In February this year I approved the governance arrangements for the Programme of Health Reform. The new structures include a Programme Management Office and a Health Reform Programme Board in the Department of Health and a Systems Reform Group in the HSE. The Programme Board will drive and oversee implementation of the health service reform programme, the actions in Future Health and the Integrated Reform Programme, in line with the overall public service reform agenda. The Board comprises senior officials of my Department and the HSE, as well as an independent expert in programme management. The Programme Management Office will focus on timing, sequencing and milestones for each project. It will prioritise, monitor and report on the health reform programme as a whole, identifying inter-dependencies between actions and highlighting areas for corrective action.

A senior official with extensive experience in this area has been assigned to undertake work

on the PMO by the Secretary General. Two other staff with relevant expertise have also been assigned to the Programme Management Office.

### **Prescriptions Data**

1092. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an update on the work of the national task force on prescribing and dispensing practice in the first half of 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34933/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The HSE has been working with GPs over many years to encourage better quality prescribing of drugs in Ireland. In 2012, the HSE's Medicines Management Programme was established and one of its key tasks is to communicate with prescribers regarding best practice.

The Programme has identified "preferred drugs" for prescribers when prescribing Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) or statin medication for patients. This is the first time that the State has introduced a preferred drug initiative. PPIs are prescribed for patients with peptic ulcer disease and/or reflux and statin medication is for high cholesterol. The preferred PPI is Lansoprazole and the preferred statin is Simvastatin. The HSE is asking doctors to prescribe these preferred drugs in order to save money, both for patients who pay for their medication and to deliver savings of an estimated €15 million for the taxpayer.

A further initiative under way to assist with GP prescribing is the launch of the HSE's Prescribing Guidance System (PGS). This system supports prescribers with integrated "point of prescribing" information making it easier for GPs to make decisions in line with MMP prescribing guidance. In turn, the system also gives assurance regarding the effectiveness of prescribing guidance interventions.

It is anticipated that this prescribing guidance system will be a critical assistance to the GP community and significantly important to the wider health system.

### **Health Services Reports**

1093. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if a review of integrated service areas has been completed. [34934/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** A review of Integrated Service Areas, which is being undertaken by the HSE, has not yet been completed.

### **Health Services Provision**

1094. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the number of sectoral plans for shared services and external service delivery developed by his Department and the Health Service Executive in 2012; the numbers developed in 2013 to date; the numbers planned for development in total; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34935/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The Health Sector Shared Services Delivery Plan was approved in October 2012 and the Health Sector External Service Delivery Plan was approved in July this year.

Both plans aim to optimise service delivery in the health system and implementation of the recommendations in them will enable greater efficiency and better cost effectiveness to deal

with future challenges.

I do not have specific details of the number of projects developed to date or in planning. However, this Department must report on progress annually to the Department of Expenditure and Reform's Reform and Delivery Office and this report will be made available to the Deputy when produced.

### **Care of the Elderly**

1095. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health when the single assessment tool for older persons services will be rolled out; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34936/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** One of the key priorities identified in the HSE's National Operational Plan 2013 is to progress a Single Assessment Tool for older people. This standardised framework will allow resources to be targeted towards those with the greatest needs and enable supports and services to be designed in the most appropriate way possible.

The HSE has selected the interRAI suite of tools as the most fit-for-purpose single assessment tool for older people. The HSE has established a Project Board to provide strategic direction and manage the project. The HSE is currently carrying out a procurement process for the technology required to support the implementation of the tool.

Next steps include acceptance testing, deployment to early adopters, further testing and deployment to the remainder of users on a phased basis. It is expected that the tool will be fully rolled out by end-2016.

### **Departmental Strategies**

1096. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if his Department and the Health Service Executive has published an e-Health Strategy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34937/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** My Department, in conjunction with the HSE, is developing an eHealth Strategy which is currently being finalised and is awaiting feedback from stakeholders. It is anticipated that this process will be completed over the next few weeks after which the Strategy will be submitted to me for approval.

### **Health Services Reform**

1097. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if his Department and the Health Service Executive have established an information and ICT strategy unit with a chief information officer; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34938/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I presume the Deputy is referring to an action in Future Health - A Strategic Framework for Reform of the Health Service 2012 – 2015. My Department is currently in discussions with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Health Services Executive in agreeing the requirements, functions and staffing for an Information and ICT Strategy Unit in the overall context of health sector reform. The role and responsibilities for the proposed Chief Information Officer is also under consideration in the context of these discussions.

## **Ambulance Service Staff**

1098. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health if he will confirm if the National Ambulance Service has a policy of not replacing a crew member calling in sick or going out sick on a day shift; the number of times this has happened in the last available monthly period; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34955/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

## **Health Services Staff Recruitment**

1099. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the number of consultant posts advertised under the new consultant contract; the number filled to date and if any of these posts was at a higher remuneration rate; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34962/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter, I have asked the Health Service Executive to reply directly to the Deputy with the information sought.

## **Health Services Staff Data**

1100. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the number of whole-time equivalent consultant posts in acute stroke medicine in each acute hospital; the number of posts which are vacant in each hospital; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34963/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** As this is a service matter, I have asked the Health Service Executive to reply directly to the Deputy with the information sought.

## **Health Services Staff Remuneration**

1101. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the current payment structure for a consultation on call by a consultant; the annual cost to the Exchequer; the corresponding payment structure and annual cost for a remote consultation via the use of telemedicine; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34964/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Consultants working in the public health service receive a flat annual payment (B Factor Payment) if they are working on a roster that requires them to perform on-call duties. They also receive a payment per call out (C Factor Payment). The table, which is extracted from the Consolidated Salary Scales for July 2013, provides a breakdown of these payments.

### **B and C Factor Payments**

### **On Call/Call-Out Payments**

-	No. of Call-Outs	Consultants Appointed prior to 01/01/2011	Consultants appointed from 01/01/2011 to end-September 2012	1/10/2012*
Rota		€	€	€
Flat Annual Payment		3,857	3,472	2,430
In addition to the Flat Annual Payment further payments will be made to Consultants on more onerous rotas as follows...				
1 in 3		2,234	2,010	1,407
1 in 2				
	1-80 call-outs	5,577	5,019	3,513
	81-120 call-outs	6,445	5,800	4,060
	121+ call-outs	7,058	6,352	4,446
1 in 1				
	1-80 call-outs	6,693	6,024	4,217
	81-120 call-outs	8,470	7,623	5,336
	121+ call-outs	10,460	9,414	6,590

### Emergency Call-Out Payments

	Consultants Appointed prior to 01/01/2011	Consultants appointed from 01/01/2011 to end-September 2012	1/10/2012*
	€	€	€
Per call-out			
First 30 call-outs	78.59	70.73	49.51
31-120 call-outs	118.21	106.39	74.47
121 call-outs or more	156.15	140.54	98.37
If the call-out occurs after midnight			
First 30 call-outs	104.76	94.29	66.00
31-120 call-outs	158.40	142.56	99.79
121 call-outs or more	209.65	188.69	132.08
	For each hour or part hour in excess of the first hour		
First 30 call-outs	52.31	47.08	32.95
31-120 call-outs	78.06	70.25	49.18

	Consultants Appointed prior to 01/01/2011	Consultants appointed from 01/01/2011 to end- September 2012	1/10/2012*
	€	€	€
Per call-out			
121 call-outs or more	104.84	94.36	66.05
Annual Limit	22,303	20,073	14,051

\* Interviews held on or after 1 October 2012 and excluding Academic Consultant appointments where the successful candidates are entitled to retain their previous salary scales.

I have asked the HSE to reply directly to the Deputy in relation to the other issues he has raised.

### Health Services Expenditure

1102. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the total cost of purchasing remote presence solution robots for the telemedicine rapid access for stroke and neurological assessment programme; the number of robots purchased; the number presently in use; the current storage costs for the remaining robots; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34965/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The HSE National Clinical Care Programmes provide a national, strategic and co-ordinated approach to a wide range of clinical services. In relation to the Stroke Clinical Programme, the aim of the programme is to save lives, reduce average length of stay (AvLOS) in hospitals and reduce admission of stroke patients to nursing homes. One of their objectives is the development of a national telemedicine network using the remote technology to provide expert support.

In relation to the particular query regarding the purchase, and use of, remote presence solution robots raised by the Deputy, I have asked the HSE to respond directly in this regard.

### Health Services Provision

1103. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the current thrombolysis rate for each acute hospital; the number of patients presenting with stroke in each acute unit in the last available 12 month period; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34966/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The HSE's National Clinical Care Programmes provide a national, strategic and co-ordinated approach to a wide range of clinical services. The programmes have three main objectives – to improve the quality of care, to improve access and to improve cost-value, effectiveness. The Clinical Care Stroke Programme aims to save 1 death or disability per day, reduce Average Length of Stay by 2 days over 3 years and reduce admission of stroke patients to nursing homes by 1.5% nationally.

In relation to the detail of the Deputy's question, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to him.

### Mental Health Services Provision

1104. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health the progress to date in relocat-

ing long-term psychiatric patients from acute units in Roscommon and Ballinasloe; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34967/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The Deputy will appreciate that the Health Service Executive has statutory responsibility for the planning and delivery of services at local level and I have therefore asked that it reply directly to him to update him in detail on this matter.

From my own point of view, I have been closely monitoring developments on the issue raised and I met with officials from the Executive as recently as 10 July last to review the evolving situation. The Deputy can rest assured that I will continue to liaise with the Executive, with a view to ensuring the best outcomes for the future of the mental health services across Galway and Roscommon.

### **Services for People with Disabilities**

1105. **Deputy Seamus Healy** asked the Minister for Health if he will instruct the Health Service Executive to carry out a disability impact assessment of public toilets leased by local authorities and if he will provide the cost of leasing contracts for superloo toilets to each local authority; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34969/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I would like to advise the Deputy that I have no function in relation to the matter raised. Matters such as public toilets and such ancillary issues are under the control of Local Authorities which come under the auspices of the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

1106. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Health if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34984/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested by the Deputy is currently being collated and will be forwarded to him as soon as it is available.

### **Medical Card Applications**

1107. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the position on a medical card in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 3. [35016/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas members.

### **Health Services Issues**

1108. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the position on the safety of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 5. [35018/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As the Deputy's question relates to service matters, I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

### **Nursing Home Services**

1109. **Deputy Sean Fleming** asked the Minister for Health the cost of care for public nursing homes for 2012 for each of the nursing homes in the country; the average weekly cost per patient in each of these nursing homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35093/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors Working Conditions**

1110. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Health his views on correspondence (details supplied) regarding the working conditions of non-consultant hospital doctors; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35102/13]

1114. **Deputy Clare Daly** asked the Minister for Health if he will ensure that no doctor is allowed to work more than a 24 hour shift. [35133/13]

1122. **Deputy Michael Creed** asked the Minister for Health the current regulations regarding hours worked by non-consultant hospital doctors; if Irish hospitals are compliant with labour law in this area; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35175/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1110, 1114 and 1122 together.

S.I. No. 494 of 2004 European Communities (Organisation of Working Time) (Activities of Doctors in Training) Regulations 2004, which transposed the EU Working Time Directive, provides for:

- a maximum 48 hour average working week;
- a 30 minute rest break every 6 hours during period on-site on-call;
- 11 hours rest every 24 hours or equivalent compensatory rest before return to work;
- 35 hours continuous rest per week or twice a fortnight or 59 hours continuous rest per fortnight.

The Government is committed to achieving compliance with the European Working Time Directive in respect of non-consultant hospital doctors (NCHDs) by 2014. I have emphasised to the HSE the high priority the Government and I attach to this issue and also the need to address NCHDs working conditions more generally.

The Health Service Executive's Service Plan for 2013 specifically recognises the need to address EWTD compliance in the short-term. Key objectives in 2013 are a reduction of average weekly hours worked and a reduction in the duration of shifts undertaken.

The HSE has established a national group to bring a clear and urgent focus to: implementation of the Directive, assessment of performance and site-by-site accountability for change. The objective is to achieve compliance by the end of 2014. The Group has engaged with man-

agement in each hospital regarding implementation plans and accountability. The immediate focus is to ensure that no doctor works more than 68 hours per week and that none work shifts (including on-call) of longer than 24 hours at a time.

The HSE is also conscious of the need to implement other measures to improve the working conditions of NCHDs, including protection of training time, the implementation of formal bleep policies and the transfer of tasks often inappropriately undertaken by NCHDs to more appropriate staff.

I am keeping this matter under ongoing review so as to ensure that the HSE, to the maximum extent possible, reduces the average working hours of NCHDs and implements other measures to improve their working conditions. Progressing compliance is a key priority which will in turn facilitate the provision of improved and safer delivery of services to patients.

### **Hospital Waiting Lists**

1111. **Deputy Gerry Adams** asked the Minister for Health if a person (details supplied) in County Cork is on the waiting list for treatment at the respiratory outpatient clinic in Cork University Hospital; the length of time they will be expected to wait for an appointment; the standard waiting times for the respiratory outpatient clinic in 2011, 2012 and 2013; the action he is taking to address the issue of long waiting lists; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35122/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Improving access to outpatient services is a key priority for the Government. Collaborating with individual hospitals, the SDU, together with the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) and the HSE, has developed the outpatient waiting list minimum dataset. This allows data to be submitted to the NTPF from hospitals on a weekly basis and, for the first time, outpatient data are available on *www.ntpf.ie*. For 2013, a maximum waiting time target has been set of 12 months for a first time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE service plan. The SDU and the NTPF will work closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time.

Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved. In relation to the specific waiting list queries raised by the Deputy, as these are service matters they have been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### **General Practitioner Services**

1112. **Deputy Thomas Pringle** asked the Minister for Health the progress that has been made towards free general practitioner care for all; the reason for delays; and the way he plans to proceed with the efficient running of primary care teams without the support of general practitioners [35123/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Government is committed to introducing, on a phased basis, a universal GP service without fees within its first term of office, as set out in the Programme for Government and the Future Health strategy framework. This policy constitutes a fundamental element in the Government's health reform programme. The current Government is the first in the history of the State to have committed itself to implementing a universal GP service for the entire population.

It has become clear that the legal and administrative framework required to provide a robust basis for eligibility for a GP service based on having a particular medical condition is likely to

be overly complex and bureaucratic. Relatively complex primary legislation would be required in order to provide a GP service to a person on the basis of their having a particular illness. The assessment system for such an approach would have to be robust, objective and auditable in order to have the confidence of this House, as well as the general public. This legislation would have to address how a person could be certified as having such an illness, and who could do this, and how to select the diagnostic basis for medical conditions. As well as primary legislation, there would be a need for secondary legislation to give full effect to this approach for each condition. While it would not be impossible to achieve this, it would take several months more to finalise the primary legislation, followed then by the preparation of statutory instruments. In my view, this would entail putting in place a cumbersome legal and administrative infrastructure to deal with what is only a temporary first phase on the way to universal GP service to the entire population.

However, the Government is firmly committed to introducing a universal service within this term. The Cabinet Committee on Health has discussed the issues relating to the roll-out of the universal GP service. In doing so, it has considered the delay in the initial step and the importance of weighing the balance between, on the one hand, resolving the legal issues but with a further delay and, on the other, with the need to bring forward an important Programme for Government commitment with the minimum of further delay.

It has been agreed that a number of alternative options should be set out with regard to the phased implementation of a universal GP service without fees. Minister Reilly and I have updated the Taoiseach on this matter and we expect to report back to the Cabinet Committee in the near future. As part of this work, consideration is being given to the approaches, timing and financial implications of the phased implementation of this universal health service.

The Government has already made clear its commitment to delivering on the implementation of a GP service for the entire population by providing additional financial resources in the two most recent Budgets. The HSE Vote now contains funding of €30 million for this year for an initial phase of the provision of GP services as part of this Programme for Government commitment.

To conclude, this Government is determined to expedite the implementation of a national GP service for the entire population, something to which no previous Government has ever aspired.

### **Hospital Appointment Status**

1113. **Deputy Sandra McLellan** asked the Minister for Health if he will expedite an appointment for a hip operation for a person (details supplied) in County Cork [35128/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The management of inpatient and daycase waiting lists for patients awaiting public health care is based on the principle that after urgent and cancer patients are treated, then clinically assessed routine patients should be seen in chronological order (i.e. longest waiter first).

Should the patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved.

In relation to the specific query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter, it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

*Question No. 1114 answered with Question No. 1110.*

## **Tobacco Control Measures**

1115. **Deputy Damien English** asked the Minister for Health his plans to hold a public consultation on the introduction of plain packaging for cigarettes; when this consultation will begin; if the drafting of the legislation will commence after the consultation has been completed and submissions assessed by his officials; if these submissions will be published online; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35134/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In line with the Regulatory Impact Assessment Guidelines (RIA) published by the Department of the Taoiseach, my Department will be undertaking a regulatory impact analysis on the proposed legislation for the introduction of standardised packaging for tobacco products. Consultation with all relevant stakeholders is an integral part of the RIA process, which will also consider the costs, benefits and impacts of this proposal.

My Department is currently establishing a high level implementation group to oversee the implementation of a project plan in relation to the introduction of standardised packaging for tobacco products.

## **Hoax Calls**

1116. **Deputy John O'Mahony** asked the Minister for Health the number of hoax calls received by the National Ambulance Service in each Health Service Executive region in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012; the cost incurred as result of these calls in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35137/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In relation to the particular query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service issue, I have asked the Health Service Executive to respond directly to the Deputy in this matter.

## **Mental Health Services Provision**

1117. **Deputy Pearse Doherty** asked the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question Nos. 250 and 251 of the 16th of May 2013 if final approval has been issued to the two remaining Health Service Executive regions; if he will provide a county breakdown detailing the posts provided under the €35million funding provided; if he is satisfied that the funding has been utilised; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35140/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** An additional €35 million which was provided in Budget 2013 for the continued development of mental health services across a range of headings, including the further development of forensic services and community mental health teams for adults, children, older persons and mental health intellectual disability and to the recruitment of 477 additional staff to implement these measures.

Each of the four HSE regions were asked to submit a business case against each of the identified objectives detailing how the funding is to be spent and the type and number of WTE to be recruited. Approval has issued to all four HSE Regions to enable recruitment to commence. As at end June 2013, 117 of the 477 posts approved in 2013 had been accepted by candidates and are awaiting clearance with a further 34 posts offered to candidates.

The HSE's National Recruitment Service (NRS) creates national panels in anticipation of vacancies. On occasion however, it is difficult to fill some posts for various reasons, including geographical location, international shortage of some grades, most notably clinical Psycholo-

gists etc. The NRS is currently working to ensure that the remaining posts will be filled as soon as possible, from existing panels or through competition in the absence of panels, at the earliest opportunity. I have been assured by the HSE that the recruitment process for the new posts being funded in 2013, and any outstanding posts from the 414 approved in 2012, is being given priority within the HSE.

In relation to the breakdown of the additional posts on a county basis, as this is a service matter, it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

*Question No. 1118 answered with Question No. 1077.*

*Question No. 1119 withdrawn.*

### **Medical Card Applications**

1120. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health if he will expedite and award medical cards in respect of persons (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35171/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible. The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

### **Mental Health Services Report**

1121. **Deputy James Bannon** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an account of all programmes dedicated to the treatment for research on mental illness; the amount each programme receives annually; the amount dedicated to the treatment of serious mental illness; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35174/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The information requested by the Deputy in relation to the funding allocated to mental health research, by publicly funded bodies in the health sector, is being collated and I will provide it to the Deputy as soon as it becomes available.

Funding for mental health services increased this year from €711 million in 2012 to €733 million. This allocation includes an additional €35 million provided in Budget 2013 for the continued development of mental health services across a range of headings, including the further development of forensic services and community mental health teams for adults, children, older persons and mental health intellectual disability, and to the recruitment of 477 additional staff to implement these measures. About 1 in 4 people will experience some mental health problems in their lifetime. Approximately 90% of mental health problems are dealt with in primary care and some 30% of people who attend primary care have a mental health problem. Expenditure on these services is not captured in these figures.

*Question No. 1122 answered with Question No. 1110.*

### **Medical Card Applications**

1123. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health the position on a medical card

application in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35184/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

### **Budget Submissions**

1124. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health his views on the Disability Federation of Ireland pre-budget submission for 2014. [35214/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The level of funding available for the health budget and the extent of the savings required in the health sector are being considered as part of the Estimates and budgetary process for 2014 which is currently under way. Deliberations by the Government on the expenditure allocations for next year are likely to continue up until Budget time and it would not be appropriate for me to comment further at this stage pending the outcome of those deliberations. The very difficult financial position facing the Exchequer will obviously require very careful management across all areas of expenditure.

### **Hospital Appointments Administration**

1125. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Health the position on a referral to Cork University Hospital in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35231/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The management of inpatient and daycase waiting lists for patients awaiting public health care is based on the principle that after urgent and cancer patients are treated, then clinically assessed routine patients should be seen in chronological order (i.e. longest waiter first).

Should the patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved.

In relation to the specific query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### **National Cancer Strategy Implementation**

1126. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the 55 recommendations of the strategy for cancer control; and the action taken regarding each recommendation [35248/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The Strategy for Cancer Control 2006 contains 55 recommendations and is available on the Department of Health website at <http://www>.

[dohc.ie/publications/cancer\\_control\\_2006tm.hl](http://dohc.ie/publications/cancer_control_2006tm.hl). The Strategy addressed the rapidly rising burden of cancer in the Irish population and includes recommendations in relation to the reorganisation of cancer services, promoting health and preventing cancer.

Significant progress has been made in many areas of cancer control, particularly screening, cancer care in the acute setting and primary care since the launch of the Strategy. The National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) introduced a programmatic approach to cancer services in 2007, as laid out in the Strategy. Its aim is to improve cancer prevention, detection, treatment, increase survival rates and improve quality of life. This is currently being achieved through the development of a comprehensive national service, based on evidence and best practice. Cancer services are now centralised around 8 Designated Cancer Centres established in four managed cancer networks. Multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) are in place for the more common site specific cancer, with linkages between designated cancer centres and hospitals for MDT discussion. Work continues to ensure that, for all cancer, initial diagnosis and surgery will be provided at the cancer centres by multidisciplinary teams.

The NCCP's Community Oncology programme has made considerable progress in working with GPs to enhance their role. The NCCP has developed national GP referral guidelines and standard referral forms for breast, lung, and prostate cancers, making the referral process more seamless, safer and more efficient. It has also developed electronic cancer referral for breast, prostate and lung cancer, in collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders. This ensures rapid referral of patients with suspected cancer in a secure manner.

BreastCheck, the National Breast Screening Programme and CervicalCheck, the National Cervical Screening Programme are available nationwide to eligible women. There is a commitment in the Programme for Government to extend BreastCheck to the 65-69 age group. BowelScreen, the National Colorectal Screening Programme, has been introduced on a phased basis.

New radiation oncology facilities at St. James's Hospital and Beaumont Hospital were completed and opened under Phase 1 of the National Plan for Radiation Oncology (NPRO) in 2011. The new centres reflect the latest advances, equipment and expertise available internationally and deliver a 50% increase in the number of linear accelerators in the Greater Dublin area. Phase 2 of the NPRO will address future needs and will provide additional capacity in Cork, Galway and the Greater Dublin area. New facilities will come on stream in Cork in Quarter 4 2016 and in Galway in Quarter 2 2017.

The Health Information and Quality Authority's (HIQA) Health Technology Assessment (HTA) function assesses the clinical and cost effectiveness of the medicines, devices, diagnostics, and health interventions in the health system. A number of HTAs have been conducted by HIQA on aspects of cancer services.

In relation to promoting health, major advances have been made in progressing work on a number of initiatives including a new national framework for action to improve health and wellbeing 'Healthy Ireland', Tobacco Control, Substance Abuse and Obesity.

"Healthy Ireland" is a response to the many risks that threaten Ireland's future health and wellbeing. It was launched in April 2013 with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of our country over the coming generation. "Healthy Ireland" will support a whole-of-government approach to address the determinants and predictors of health and wellbeing.

A range of measures have been introduced to reduce the prevalence of smoking in Ireland: regulations to introduce combined text and photo warnings on tobacco products came into force in February 2013; work is progressing on the development of legislation on plain packaging,

the objective is to make all tobacco packs look less attractive to consumers and to make health warnings more prominent. The report of the Tobacco Policy Review Group is at an advanced stage of preparation. The Group is considering a number of issues, including the feasibility and possibility of extending the smoking ban to other areas, e.g., playgrounds, parks, beaches, etc.

I supported a Private Members' Bill in the Seanad in May 2012 relating to prohibiting smoking in cars with children present. My Department is working with the Senators in consultation with the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Justice in progressing this legislation. In December 2012, the European Commission published a proposal for a new EU Tobacco Products Directive, the ultimate purpose of which is to reduce the numbers of people smoking. The proposal is being discussed in the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers and the Commission hope to have it adopted in 2014. I am fully supportive of the measures outlined in the proposal.

Real and tangible proposals are currently being finalised on foot of the recommendations in the National Substance Misuse Strategy report 2012. These proposals cover all of the areas mentioned in the report, including legislation on minimum unit pricing; the advertising of alcohol; sponsorship; labelling of alcohol products; and prevention and intervention activities on alcohol.

The Special Action Group on Obesity has been established. I meet regularly with the Group to progress the obesity prevention agenda. The Special Action Group on Obesity comprises key stakeholders and is chaired by the Department of Health. It is recognised that alone no single initiative will reverse this growing trend, but a combination of measures should make a difference.

I am satisfied that significant progress has been made in implementing the recommendations in the 2006 Strategy. The quality of services has improved hugely in recent years, mainly due to the concerted efforts of the NCCP. My Department will continue to work with the HSE, clinicians and others, such as voluntary organisations, to ensure that outcomes for cancer are improved.

### **Health Services Staff Issues**

1127. **Deputy Michael McNamara** asked the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the anomaly whereby nurses who will undergo training to become public health nurses next year will be guaranteed employment in advance of commencing their courses whereas those who recently completed the same course had no such guarantee and are experiencing difficulty in obtaining employment as public health nurses; if he proposes to address this anomaly; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35271/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The 2012 sponsored Student Public Health Nurse Graduate-Postgraduate Diploma recruitment campaign, which was advertised by the HSE with a closing date of 1 June 2012, advised candidates that, on successful completion of the training programme, they would be required to accept an initial assignment as a full-time public health nurse, for a period of not less than two years, in the sponsoring Local Health Office-Integrated Service Area.

Candidates were subsequently advised that the terms and conditions of the Sponsorship Programme had changed and this change meant that there would be no guarantee of immediate PHN positions for candidates on successful completion of the programme. The programme commenced on 8 October 2012.

Discussions involving HSE management and the INMO on the change to the terms and conditions have recently been held in the Labour Relations Commission. Following a recommendation by the Commission on 5 July 2013, all those applicants who successfully passed the Programme will be offered all existing vacancies in order of merit.

### **Primary Care Centres Provision**

1128. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide an update in respect of the promised primary care centres in Waterford city and Dungarvan, County Waterford; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35341/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The delivery of primary care infrastructure is a dynamic process and must take account of changing circumstances including the feasibility of implementing the delivery of the centres by means of lease, direct-build or PPP. GP engagement and agreement to deliver services from primary care centres is central to the delivery of the necessary infrastructure. Waterford city and Dungarvan are two of the 35 potential locations for primary care centres for development by way of PPP as announced in the July 2012 Infrastructure Stimulus Package. The HSE is currently finalising sites and assessing GP engagement at each location to determine their interest in participating in the primary care centre development. While it is not possible, at this time, to give start and completion dates for any of the individual 20 potential locations, the best estimate is that these primary care centres will be completed by late 2016.

### **Hospital Waiting Lists**

1129. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide a detailed yearly breakdown in tabular form of the average waiting times for outpatient services for the Galway Roscommon Hospital Group, University Hospital Galway and Merlin Park Hospital for the years 2010 to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35354/13]

1130. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide a detailed yearly breakdown, in tabular form, of the average waiting times for surgery for the Galway Roscommon Hospital Group, University Hospital Galway and Merlin Park Hospital for the years 2010 to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35355/13]

1131. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide a detailed yearly breakdown, in tabular form, of the average waiting times for the emergency department for the Galway Roscommon Hospital Group, University Hospital Group and Merlin Park Hospital for the years 2010 to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35356/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1129 to 1131, inclusive, together.

Improving access to outpatient services is a key priority for the Government. Collaborating with individual hospitals, the SDU, together with the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) and the HSE, has developed the outpatient waiting list minimum dataset. This allows data to be submitted to the NTPF from hospitals on a weekly basis and, for the first time, outpatient data are available on *www.ntpf.ie*. For 2013, a maximum waiting time target has been set of 12 months for a first-time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE service plan. The SDU and the NTPF will work closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time.

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The National Waiting List Management Policy, *A standardised approach to managing scheduled care treatment for in-patient, day case and planned procedures, January 2013*, has been developed to ensure that all administrative, managerial and clinical staff follow an agreed national minimum standard for the management and administration of waiting lists for scheduled care. This policy, which has been adopted by the HSE, sets out the processes that hospitals are to implement to manage waiting lists.

In relation to the specific hospital queries raised by the Deputy, as these are service matters, they have been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### **Nursing Home Services**

1132. **Deputy Maureen O’Sullivan** asked the Minister for Health if he will consider implementing a more transparent framework for negotiations under the Fair Deal which acknowledges the costs of providing high-quality care and the need to support investment to meet the significant increase in demand for long-term residential care; if he will address the disconnect between the Health Information Quality Authority and the National Treatment Purchase Fund in order that the NTPF will take into consideration the private and voluntary nursing homes’ statutory responsibility under the national quality standards; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35368/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I refer the Deputy to my replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 674, 676 and 677 of 28 May 2013 and 240 of 20 June.

In addition, I would like to advise the Deputy that the Nursing Homes Support Scheme is currently under review. The review is centred on sustainability. Work will continue on the review in the coming months with a view to completion by end 2013-early 2014.

As the Scheme is statutory based, the implementation of any recommendations arising from the review may require amendments to the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act, 2009.

### **Nursing Home Services**

1133. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Health his plans to establish a forum on long-term residential care that will bring together all the relevant stakeholders, including the Health Service Executive, the National Treatment Purchase Fund and the Health Information and Quality Authority. [35371/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** I refer the Deputy to my reply to Parliamentary Question No. 674 of 28 May 2013.

### **Medical Card Eligibility**

1134. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Health the position on the proposed self-assessment review forms for medical card holders. [35374/13]

1135. **Deputy Brendan Ryan** asked the Minister for Health when the proposed self-assessment review forms will be issued to medical card holders as standard practice; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35375/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1134 and 1135 together.

Self-assessment forms are currently issued by the HSE, Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) to Medical Card/G.P. Visit Card holders for both the 0-69 and over 70s age groups.

### **Generic Drugs Substitution**

1136. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Health the amount that has been saved by using generic drugs in 2013; his plans to ensure further savings are made; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35398/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** Following intensive negotiations involving the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (IPHA), the HSE and the Department of Health, a major new deal on the cost of drugs in the State was concluded in October last. It will deliver a number of important benefits, including

- significant reductions for patients in the cost of drugs,
- a lowering of the drugs bill to the State,
- timely access for patients to new cutting-edge drugs for certain conditions, and
- reducing the cost base of the health system into the future.

The IPHA agreement provides that prices are referenced to the currency adjusted average price to wholesaler in the nominated EU member states in which the medicine is then available. The prices of a range of medicines were reduced on 1 November and further price reductions were implemented on 1 January 2013 in accordance with the agreement.

The gross savings arising from this deal will be in excess of €400 million over 3 years. Some €210 million from the gross savings will make available new drugs to patients over 3 years. Thus, the deal will result in a net reduction in the HSE expenditure on drugs of about €190 million.

The Department of Health and the HSE also successfully finalised discussions with the Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers in Ireland (APMI), which represents the generic industry, on a new agreement to deliver further savings in the cost of generic drugs. Under this Agreement, since 1 November 2012, the HSE only reimburses generic products which have been priced at 50% or less of the initial price of an originator medicine. In the event that an originator medicine is priced at less than 50% of its initial price the HSE requires a generic medicine to be priced below the originator price. This represents a significant structural change in generic drug pricing and should lead to an increase in the generic prescribing rate.

It is estimated that the combined gross savings from the IPHA and APMI deals will be in excess of €120 million in 2013. The Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013, which came into operation on 24 June, will introduce a system of generic substitution and reference pricing. Under the Act, the Irish Medicines Board (IMB) is responsible for the assessment for interchangeability of medicines. The IMB will review an initial 20 active substances, which equates to approximately 1,500 individual medicines. They include statins, proton pump inhibitors, angiotensin-converting-enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers.

It is expected that the first List of Interchangeable Medicines, containing groups of atorvastatin products, will be published in mid-August at which time generic prices will fall by 20%.

The IMB will publish subsequent lists for other groups of medicines on an ongoing basis.

The Act also provides that the HSE may set a reference price for each group of interchangeable products published on the List of Interchangeable Products. Reference pricing involves the setting of a common reimbursement price, or reference price, for a group of interchangeable medicines. It means that one reference price is set for each group or list of interchangeable medicines and this is the price that the HSE will reimburse to pharmacies for all medicines in the group, regardless of the individual medicine's prices. The first reference price is expected to be implemented by November.

### **Graduate Nursing Scheme Application Numbers**

1137. **Deputy Kevin Humphreys** asked the Minister for Health the number of positions that have been filled under the nursing and midwifery graduate initiative to date in 2013; the way this level of recruitment affects the projected savings from the scheme; his plans to offer nurses on the scheme permanent places after the end of the two year placement to encourage recruitment; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35399/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** A major objective of this scheme was to put in place more cost-effective service delivery arrangements, having regard to the high rates of expenditure on agency staffing and overtime. The scheme will enable the health services to offer 1,000 graduate nurses positions for two years. It will support the retention of recently qualified graduate nurses and midwives within the Irish health system and enable them to gain valuable work experience and development opportunities post-graduation, at a time when job opportunities in the public service are very limited.

The nursing unions were strongly opposed to the scheme and, as a result, the number of staff appointed to date has been limited. At this stage 18 applicants have been assigned to work locations and have taken up their posts. A further 48 applicants have accepted offers but have yet to take up duty. Under the Haddington Road Agreement it has been agreed that higher salary rates will be payable to participants in this scheme and in this context the relevant unions have withdrawn their opposition to its implementation.

The HSE will shortly be proceeding to invite further applications and to facilitate qualified applicants with offers of appointment to posts in the part of the country for which they have expressed a preference. Recruitment will continue during 2013, with a particular focus on nurses who will be graduating next autumn. A savings target of €10 million was factored into the HSE's budget for 2013. It is too early at this point to assess whether this level of saving will be achieved.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform approved the Graduate Nurse Placement Initiative on the basis that participants would not be counted in health service staff numbers and that it would contribute to savings on unsustainable levels of agency and overtime expenditure. Appointments under the scheme will, accordingly, be made strictly for a two year period. It will be open to participants to compete in the normal way for appointment to a permanent post in the health service, in the event of recruitment to such positions taking place.

### **Home Help Service Provision**

1138. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for Health the number of home help hours currently being delivered in Cork South West; if he will undertake a review of hours in

areas (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35404/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

### **Vaccination Programme**

1139. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Health the supports he plans to put in place for persons suffering from narcolepsy and other medical complications following vaccination with Pandemrix; if he has met the support group, SOUND, or has plans to meet it; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35436/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** I am pleased to inform the Deputy that there are a number of supports in place for persons diagnosed with narcolepsy following pandemic vaccination. My priority is to ensure that those affected by narcolepsy, with symptom onset post pandemic vaccination are provided with a range of services and supports to meet their health needs. Both officials from my Department, the Health Service Executive and the Department of Education and Skills and I have met with the relevant advocacy group on a number of occasions to address their concerns and to outline the services available.

The Health Service Executive has responsibility for health service delivery and at my request, the HSE developed a range of appropriate services and supports to address the needs of this group. Together, the HSE and the Department of Education and Skills provide a very comprehensive range of services and supports to those affected.

These supports and services include access to rapid diagnosis, clear treatment pathways, temporary medical cards and reimbursement of expenses incurred. This includes expenses for counselling services for individuals and also for families of children affected by narcolepsy following pandemic vaccination, in cases where such services are not already available through the HSE. Multi-disciplinary assessments which allow for appropriate individualised health and educational supports to be put in place are ongoing. The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) is also engaging with the HSE and with the individual schools and parents of children concerned to identify and provide educational supports for the children and adolescents affected.

The HSE's advocacy unit is in regular contact with the support group SOUND and last met representatives of the group on 17 May 2013. Through regional co-ordinators the HSE also has frequent contact with individual members of SOUND to assist them in service access and reimbursement of expenses. The HSE recently held an information day for staff, also attended by SOUND, to ensure awareness of all the relevant services available. My Department is considering all possible supports which may need to be put in place for those affected by narcolepsy following pandemic vaccination. I would like to assure the Deputy that this matter continues to be a priority for my Department.

### **Health Services Issues**

1140. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Health the reason a child (details supplied) in County Kildare has been informed that their support services will cease in August this year; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35445/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The particular issue raised by the Deputy is a

service matter for the Health Service Executive. Accordingly I have arranged for the question to be referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply to the Deputy.

*Question No. 1141 answered with Question No. 1037.*

### **Mental Health Services Provision**

1142. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health if he will report on the meeting with Roscommon-Galway primary, community and continuing care services on 4 July regarding mental health services in the area and the provision of an psychiatric intensive care rehabilitation unit; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35464/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** The Deputy will appreciate that the Health Service Executive has statutory responsibility for the planning and delivery of services at local level. This includes management of this particular facility as part of a single mental health service across Galway and Roscommon, which also encompasses similar acute units at Ballinasloe and Galway. In circumstances where one of these units reaches maximum operational capacity, for whatever reason, then incoming patients receive treatment in one of the other units. This is normal practice in acute mental health provision nationally.

It should be emphasised that addressing relevant issues at this facility can only be viewed in the context of wider changes in the health service, including in the mental health area, and the need to provide in the future the most appropriate and best possible service at this Unit, in line with agreed mental health policy and service norms applicable elsewhere. This process is currently being undertaken by the HSE and will obviously have to take account of all relevant options, including the type of unit proposed in the Deputy's question.

I have been closely monitoring developments on the issue raised and I met with officials from the Executive on 10 July last to review the evolving situation. The Deputy can rest assured that I will continue to liaise with the Executive, with a view to ensuring the best outcomes for the future of the mental health services across Galway and Roscommon.

### **General Medical Services Scheme Administration**

1143. **Deputy Denis Naughten** asked the Minister for Health if he will include new medical stoma appliances in the list of reimbursable items under the GMS scheme; when the list of reimbursable items was last revised to include a new stoma product; if his attention has been drawn to the hardship both medical and financial caused to persons by delays in approving such products; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35465/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** A range of stoma products is on the List of Reimbursable Items under the GMS Scheme. Furthermore, where a product that is not on the list is required, application can be made by a medical card holder for the product to be made available through discretionary hardship arrangements.

The HSE is reviewing on a sequential basis, all non drug items on the list. Clinical nutritional products have been completed, significant work on dressings has been conducted and the HSE hopes to proceed to the Ostomy-Colostomy area later this year, as resources allow.

### **Services for People with Disabilities**

1144. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Health the position on qualification for disability benefit in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 3. [35501/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The HSE has been asked to examine the specific query raised by the Deputy and to reply to him as soon as possible.

### **Medical Card Eligibility**

1145. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health if he will disclose further details of his recent statements on the granting of medical cards to non-terminal cancer patients, whereby he stated that they were no longer guaranteed a medical card; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35505/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** In accordance with the 1970 Health Act, the assessment for a medical card is determined primarily by reference to the overall financial situation of the applicant and his or her partner and dependants. In line with the legislation, there is no automatic entitlement to a medical card for persons with cancer, or any other specific illness. There has been no change in entitlement in this regard.

The processing of medical cards at a national level ensures that all people are treated in a similar, fair manner. While people with specific illnesses such as cancer are not automatically entitled to medical cards, the legislation provides for discretion by the HSE to grant a medical card where a person's income exceeds the income guidelines. The HSE takes a person's social and medical issues into account when determining whether there is "undue hardship" for a person in providing a health service for himself or herself or his or her dependants.

At the request of the Minister for Health, the HSE set up a clinical panel to assist in the processing of applications for such discretionary medical cards, where there are difficult personal circumstances. This procedure ensures that the specific situation of a person with a particular diagnosis, such as one of the many forms of cancer, can be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The HSE also has a separate procedure in place for the provision of emergency medical cards for patients who are seriously ill and in urgent need of medical care that they cannot afford. Emergency medical cards are issued by the HSE within twenty-four hours of receipt of the required patient details and the letter of confirmation of the condition from a doctor or a medical consultant. With the exception of terminally ill patients, the HSE issues all emergency cards on the basis that the patient is eligible for a medical card on the basis of means or undue hardship, and that the applicant will follow up with a full application within a number of weeks of receiving the emergency card. As a result, emergency medical cards are issued to a named individual, with a limited eligibility period of six months.

The arrangement differs for persons with a terminal illness. Once the terminal illness is verified, patients are given an emergency medical card for six months. Given the nature and urgency of the issue, the HSE has appropriate escalation routes to ensure that the person gets the card as quickly as possible.

The HSE ensures that the system responds to the variety of circumstances and complexities faced by individuals in these circumstances.

### **Medical Card Applications**

1146. **Deputy Michael Healy-Rae** asked the Minister for Health the position on a medical card in respect of a person (details supplied) in County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35512/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Health Service Executive has been asked to examine this matter and to reply to the Deputy as soon as possible. The Health Service Executive operates the General Medical Services Scheme, which includes medical cards and GP visit cards, under the Health Act 1970, as amended. It has established a dedicated contact service for Members of the Oireachtas specifically for queries relating to medical cards and GP visit cards, which the Deputy may wish to use for an earlier response. Contact information has issued to Oireachtas Members.

*Question No. 1147 answered with Question No. 1077.*

### **Home Help Service Provision**

1148. **Deputy Róisín Shortall** asked the Minister for Health the number of home help hours allocated to Health Service Executive Areas 6 and 7; the corresponding allocation for home care packages; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35520/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Kathleen Lynch):** As this is a service matter it has been referred to the Health Service Executive for direct reply.

*Question No. 1149 answered with Question No. 1037.*

### **Medical Card Eligibility**

1150. **Deputy Patrick Nulty** asked the Minister for Health if he will review as a matter of urgency recent changes to the rules for medical card eligibility, namely, the exclusion of home improvement loan payments and travel-to-work expenses; if his attention has been drawn to the difficulties this is causing persons in serious need of a medical card; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35528/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** Changes were made earlier this year to the medical card means test and to the income thresholds for over 70s medical cards. These changes were made on foot of Budget 2013 which identified a wide range of savings that were required across the health services. The General Medical Service (GMS) Scheme was one of a number of areas identified in which savings were required.

A number of measures are being taken to reduce the cost of the GMS, which costs about €2 billion per year. At the end of 2012, there were about 1,986,000 qualifying people under the GMS. Medical cards make up the majority of this number, amounting to about 93% of the total. As part of Budget 2013, the Government has made provision for an additional 200,000 persons to be covered by the GMS. Nonetheless, it is important that we prioritise the use of scarce financial resources in the current budgetary position.

Among the Budget 2013 savings measures announced was a reduction in the income limits for over-70s Medical Cards. It should be noted that the overwhelming majority of medical cardholders aged over 70 years are unaffected by that change. For the wealthiest 5 per cent that are affected, those cardholders under the old income limits will continue to be provided with a free GP service. The Health (Alteration of Criteria for Eligibility) Act 2013 was enacted on 28 March 2013 to give effect to the revised eligibility arrangements.

At that time also, it was also announced that the rules on a person's expenses that are taken into account in calculating their net income for medical card purposes would be tightened. The changes introduced by the Health Service Executive mean that payments on a home improvement loan and a €50 per week allowance for a car are excluded from the standard means test assessment. These changes took effect from April onwards.

For clarity, the exclusion from travel to work costs relates to removing the weekly amount of €50 allowed to cover standing charges, such as depreciation or other running costs, used when considering travel to work costs as an outgoing where public transport is not available or suitable and a car is required. This means that the HSE will continue to consider the standard mileage costs or public transport costs when assessing eligibility.

There are a broad range of allowable expenses under the means test assessment for medical cards that have not been affected by these changes and the need to reduce the income limits for medical cards has been avoided, by these measures.

### **Hospital Appointment Status**

1151. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Health when a person (details supplied) in County Wexford will be given an urgent appointment at Waterford Regional Hospital owing to a serious illness. [35545/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Improving access to outpatient services is a key priority for the Government. Collaborating with individual hospitals, the SDU, together with the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) and the HSE, has developed the outpatient waiting list minimum dataset. This allows data to be submitted to the NTPF from hospitals on a weekly basis and, for the first time, outpatient data are available on *www.ntpf.ie*. For 2013, a maximum waiting time target has been set of 12 months for a first-time consultant-led outpatient appointment and this is reflected in the HSE service plan. The SDU and the NTPF will work closely with hospitals towards achievement of the maximum waiting time.

Should a patient's general practitioner consider that the patient's condition warrants an earlier appointment, he or she would be in the best position to take the matter up with the consultant and hospital involved. In relation to the specific hospital appointment query raised by the Deputy, as this is a service matter it has been referred to the HSE for direct reply.

### **Hospital Procedures**

1152. **Deputy John Browne** asked the Minister for Health if he will arrange to have dialysis provided by the Health Service Executive for an Irish-born person (details supplied) in County Wexford who is returning here from Australia. [35546/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Health (Deputy Alex White):** The Reciprocal Agreement on Treatment for Medical Care for Temporary Visitors between Australia and Ireland provides that where a resident of Australia is temporarily in Ireland, and needs immediate necessary medical treatment while in Ireland, they shall be provided with such medical treatment as is clinically necessary for the diagnosis, alleviation or care of the condition requiring attention, as a public patient within the public health care system on terms no less favourable than would apply to a resident of Ireland.

In relation to Australia, "resident" means a person who is an Australian resident for the

purposes of the Health Insurance Act 1973 and holds either a current Australian passport or any other current passport endorsed to the effect that the holder is entitled to reside indefinitely in Australia.

The individual concerned should contact the Health Service Executive to arrange appropriate access to services in Ireland on a temporary basis. Contact details are available on the HSE website at *www.hse.ie*.

### **Exchequer Savings**

1153. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health the annual saving to the Exchequer if all State agency board fees under the aegis of his Department were reduced by 25%; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35801/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The information requested by the Deputy in relation to board fees and savings on boards under my aegis is not readily available but I will forward a detailed reply to the Deputy as soon as possible.

### **Official Travel**

1154. **Deputy Derek Nolan** asked the Minister for Health if he is confident that all overseas travel undertaken by staff in State agencies is necessary; if the agencies ensure a robust business case is submitted before travel is sanctioned; if the agencies ensure the objective of the travel cannot be achieved through other means; if, on their return, staff must submit a report on the work carried out while they were on agency business overseas; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36047/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** Operational responsibility for each agency lies with the respective CEO-Registrar. The CEOs and their management teams are acutely aware of the necessity to achieve maximum value for money in all areas of expenditure, including overseas travel. Appropriate reporting by officials following overseas travel would be part of the normal business processes. Officials from my Department liaise regularly with the agencies to ensure that the business objectives of the agencies are delivered within their respective budgets each year.

### **Departmental Agencies Staff Remuneration**

1155. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of all commercial State-companies' chief executive officers within the remit of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36091/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** VHI is the only commercial State company under the aegis of my Department. The information sought is currently being obtained and will be forwarded directly to the Deputy as soon as it is available.

### **Departmental Bodies**

1156. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Health if he will provide, in

tabular form, a list of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [36218/13]

**Minister for Health (Deputy James Reilly):** The following table sets out the non-commercial State agencies currently under the remit of my Department.

Agency
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
Dental Council
Food Safety Authority of Ireland
Food Safety Promotions Board - Safefood
Health and Social Care Professional Council
Health Information Quality Authority
Health Insurance Authority
Health Research Board
Irish Blood Transfusion Service
Irish Medicines Board
Medical Council
Mental Health Commission
National Cancer Registry Board
National Paediatric Hospital Development Board
National Treatment Purchase Fund
Opticians Board
Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council

### Road Maintenance

1157. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide details of regional and local road repair projects that have been announced since 1 January 2013, broken down by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34388/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Details of the 2013 regional and local road grant allocations are outlined in the 2013 grant allocations booklet for regional and local roads which is available in the Dáil Library.

### Public Transport Subsidies

1158. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the cost of public transport to the State for the period from 2008 to 2012; and if he will provide details of same. [34853/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The cost of public transport to the State for the period in terms of Public Service Obligation payments and capital funding is set out in the following table. This does not include funding such as the Free Travel Pass scheme which is provided by another Department, in this case the Department of Social Protection.

Year	PSO Payment(€'000)	Capital Spend(€'000)
2008	308,627	890,288
2009	303,188	633,236
2010	275,858	614,343
2011	265,141	377,210
2012	278,060*	254,232

\*The 2012 total reflects the additional €36 million approved by Government.

### Cycling Facilities

1159. **Deputy Dessie Ellis** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the revenue and costs incurred in respect of the Dublin Bikes rental scheme since its inception. [34856/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** Responsibility for the roll-out, maintenance and commercial elements of the Dublin City Bikes Scheme is an operational matter for the National Transport Authority, working closely with Dublin City Council.

Noting the above position, I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

### Cross-Border Projects

1160. **Deputy Brendan Smith** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his plans to advance to construction stage the Narrow Water Bridge project; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34913/13]

1203. **Deputy Seamus Kirk** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the steps he has taken to ensure the Narrow Water Bridge project goes ahead; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35292/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1160 and 1203 together.

The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads is the statutory responsibility of each local authority, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Roads Act 1993. Works on those roads are funded from local authorities own resources supplemented by State road grants. The initial selection and prioritisation of works to be funded is also a matter for each local authority.

My Department has been in regular contact with the parties involved in the project referred to by the Deputy and I have been kept informed of developments.

Unfortunately, on the basis of the tender prices received, the cost of the project is well beyond that projected. Louth County Council would be required to fund the shortfall and as it is beyond their capacity to do so, a decision to put the project on hold has had to be made.

Due to budget cut backs my Department has had to curtail its own investment on major new-improvement projects in recent times to focus available funds on necessary maintenance and repair work and therefore is not in a position to make up the shortfall identified. While my Department would be willing to consider helping to make up some of the shortfall, Louth County

Council and the Department of Regional Development would also have to do so.

There does not appear to be strong support for doing this given the need to prioritise road maintenance and restoration over new projects and the fact that there are many other new bridge and new road projects that have a much higher benefit to cost ratio than Narrow Water. I am very disappointed that it has not been possible to find a contractor willing to build the bridge for the estimated cost.

### Public Transport Subsidies

1161. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the cost of public transport here in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012; and if he will provide details of same. [35288/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The amount of Exchequer, including both Public Service Obligation (PSO) and capital funding, for public transport in the years 2008 to 2012 is set out in the following table:

Year	PSO Payment(€'000)	Capital Spend(€'000)
2008	308,627	890,288
2009	303,188	633,236
2010	275,858	614,343
2011	265,141	377,210
2012	278,060*	254,232

\*The 2012 total reflects the additional €36 million approved by Government.

### Cycling Facilities

1162. **Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the revenue and costs incurred by the Dublin Bikes rental scheme since its inception. [35291/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** Responsibility for the roll-out, maintenance and commercial elements of the Dublin City Bikes Scheme is an operational matter for the National Transport Authority working closely with Dublin City Council.

Noting the above position, I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

### Tourism Industry Issues

1163. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if an economic impact assessment has been carried out of the impact of cruise liners; if he will provide specific details of the number of cruises using the Port of Cork and the economic impact of these cruises in the region; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34201/13]

1164. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the efforts being made to increase the number of cruise liners visiting Ireland through the Port of Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34202/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1163 and 1164 together.

The Port of Cork is a member of Cruise Ireland, a marketing co-operative formed in 1994 to promote the island of Ireland as a premier cruise destination. Fáilte Ireland works closely with Cruise Ireland and has provided funding to them to promote the sector. The Port of Cork has enjoyed a steady increase in the number of cruise vessels calling at its facilities in recent years with 2012 being a record year for the port as 57 vessels called bringing 87,193 passengers and crew to the region. This year the port expects further growth and is on course to welcome 61 vessels and 135,386 passengers and crew.

It is important to recognise that the cruise industry is not a lucrative source of revenue for port companies themselves and that it can be difficult for investments in this area to remunerate themselves from the charges of ports levies. However, such visits do provide considerable benefit for the local and wider regional economy. All cruise infrastructure developments must be funded by the ports from their own resources on a commercial basis or through collaboration with those beneficiaries of cruise tourism, be they regional interests or the cruise operators themselves.

More generally, the development of cruise tourism is an operational matter for Fáilte Ireland. I have referred the Deputy's questions to the agency for further information and direct reply. Please contact my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

### **Tourism Projects Funding**

1165. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if his Department has details of the economic benefits of convention centres and concert venues for local economies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34203/13]

1166. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his position on the development of convention centres and concert venues outside Dublin; if he will support measures by the Government to financially assist the development of such amenities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34204/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1165 and 1166 together.

My Department's role in relation to tourism relates primarily to the area of national policy. The Department does not routinely collect information on the economic benefits of convention centres and concert venues.

The National Conference Centre, known as Convention Centre Dublin, was developed under a public private partnership (PPP) arrangement to address a deficit in conference facilities of that scale in Ireland and it is important to note that Convention Centre Dublin will revert to public ownership at the end of the PPP.

The Government has no plans to support the development of further convention centres or concert venues. It would not be possible for the Government to grant aid a privately-owned conference centre as this would constitute state aid and would be unfair to other conference and convention centres it would compete with. However, a similar model to the Dublin Convention Centre or a loan or equity investment from the Strategic Infrastructure Fund could be explored. It is my view that Cork could benefit from a conference centre and that it would boost business tourism.

With regard to the economic benefits of business tourism, I am referring the Deputy's question to Fáilte Ireland for direct reply. Please contact my private office if a reply is not received within ten working days.

### **Sports Facilities Expenditure**

1167. **Deputy Jerry Buttimer** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the funding provided by his Department for sport facilities and organisations in County Cork; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34205/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Michael Ring):** I presume that the Deputy is referring to the Sports Capital Programme, which is the Government's main vehicle for supporting the development of sports facilities and the purchase of non-personal sports equipment. Details of all allocations under the programme since 1999 are available on my Department's website.

### **Semi-State Bodies Dividends**

1168. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his views on the possible Irish Aviation Authority bid for the 42% stake in the British air traffic agency; if he foresees the IAA being in a position to pay a dividend to the State in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34282/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** While the Irish Aviation Authority has expressed an interest in this share sale process, no specific purchase proposal has been developed and presented to my Department. In the event that such a proposal emerges, it will be carefully examined and evaluated and a decision taken as soon as possible.

In relation to dividends, the company declared and paid a dividend of just over €5 million earlier this year in respect of 2012. This was the first dividend paid by the IAA since 2004 and is a very welcome development for the Exchequer. The IAA is a successful State company and there is a shareholder expectation of dividend payments from the company on a sustainable and consistent basis into the future, including for 2013.

### **State Airports**

1169. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will ensure that Cork Airport retains its 24 hour continuous air traffic control coverage; if his attention has been drawn to the Irish Aviation Authority's proposals to examine reducing the air traffic control coverage at Cork Airport; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34283/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Under the provisions of the Irish Aviation Authority Act 1993, one of the IAA's principal objects empowers it to decide, as it sees fit, the extent to which it should operate and manage terminal navigation services at any of the three State airports, including Cork Airport. Accordingly I have no statutory function in relation to this matter. I have been informed by the IAA of the operational circumstances, in particular the low night-time traffic levels, that are giving rise to the current consideration of introducing certain limited night-time service restrictions. It is my understanding that the IAA has decided to postpone for a six-month period a decision on the implemen-

tation of a modified air traffic control service at Cork Airport during which time traffic levels during the night will be monitored.

The Deputy will also wish to note that the IAA intends to arrange a consultation meeting in Cork next month, which will be attended by the operators of Cork Airport, as well as local business representatives and where all the factors involved in this issue can be explored and discussed in detail.

### **State Airports**

1170. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he is satisfied with the performance of the Shannon Airport Authority since the airport became independent of the Dublin Airport Authority, DAA; if he will reaffirm his commitment that the terms and conditions of the previously employed DAA employees working in Shannon Airport will not be diminished in any way when they become staff of the Shannon Airport Authority; if there will be any loss of employment or change in employees' terms and conditions, including pensions, as a result of the change over to Shannon Airport Authority; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34284/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As the Deputy will be aware, the assets, business and employees of Shannon Airport transferred from the Dublin Airport Authority to the Shannon Airport Authority (SAA) on 31 December last following approval by both Houses of the Oireachtas of the "Shannon appointed day" Order (S.I No. 571 of 2012). The State Airports Act 2004 provided the statutory basis for the separation of Shannon airport from the DAA. That Act also contains provisions in relation to the terms and conditions of service, including pension matters, of the employees who transferred to the SAA last December and those provisions remain unchanged. I am satisfied with progress to date by the now independent Shannon Airport Authority.

It will be recalled that a major consideration for the Government in its decision on Shannon of last November was the serious decline of passenger traffic at the airport over recent years. Passenger numbers plummeted by over 60% from a peak in 2007 of 3.62 million to 1.39 million in 2012. It was recognised that a consistent decline on this scale would be challenging to reverse and would not happen overnight. Indeed, passenger numbers continued to decline in the first five months of this year. The immediate priority for the reconstituted board and new CEO of SAA is to halt this decline and then reverse it.

I was very pleased to see that last month, June, recorded the first monthly growth in passengers at Shannon in over five years - an 8% increase compared to June 2012. With a focus on developing new routes and on driving additional traffic on existing capacity, 2013 is currently forecast to see a modest overall increase of approximately 1.5% in passenger traffic at Shannon for the first time in seven years. If this reversal in the slide over the past five years is confirmed as the year progresses, it will prove a major achievement for Shannon in its first full year as an independent airport.

### **Aviation Issues**

1171. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the implications the European Commission's proposed single European sky has for airports here, the Irish Aviation Authority and Irish aerospace; if there will be any loss of employment or change in employees' terms and conditions as a result of these proposals; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34285/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The EU Single European Sky initiative was initially launched in 2004 and updated in 2009 with the overall aim of improving the efficiency of the way in which airspace across Europe is organised and managed. The latest Commission proposals are designed to improve the implementation of the existing legislation from 2004 and 2009 through certain reforms in institutional arrangements and the provision of air navigation services.

My Department has recently commenced a detailed consultation process of stakeholders in Irish aviation with an invitation to provide comments by 6 September 2013. Comments received will be carefully considered as part of the process of finalising an overall national position to be adopted in the negotiations to take place on these proposals from autumn onwards. The precise implications of the proposals will of course depend on the final outcome. I would however draw the Deputy's attention to the fact that Ireland has one of the lowest en route air navigation charges in Europe, which reflects the strong emphasis that the Irish Aviation Authority places on competitiveness and productivity that will equip the IAA well in relation to the further development of the Single European Sky.

### **Driver Licence Issues**

1172. **Deputy Michelle Mulherin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if an Irish driving licence is recognised by the authorities in each Canadian province and territory; the status of negotiations for reciprocal recognition between the authorities in each Canadian jurisdiction and this jurisdiction in view of the high insurance cost to Irish licence holders where their licences are not so recognised; if such negotiations will be expedited; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34358/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Ireland has driver licence exchange relationships with a number of jurisdictions outside the EU. The basis for any such agreement is a detailed comparison of the two licensing regimes to ensure that they are compatible. This work is undertaken, on the Irish side, by the Road Safety Authority (RSA).

Ideally, we prefer to conclude such agreements at a national level so that there is a consistent approach across the whole country. However, Canada issues licences at provincial level. The Irish Embassy in Ottawa therefore engaged with the provincial authorities in Canada, and several provinces were identified where progress might be made. It was decided to prioritise Ontario as it is now home to a large community of Irish people.

I gather from the RSA that a considerable amount of work has now been done both by them and by the authorities in Ontario, although they have yet to conclude what is a very detailed project of study and comparison of the two licensing systems. In the meantime, the RSA has also engaged, with the help of the Irish Embassy, in a similar process with the provinces of Alberta, Newfoundland, Manitoba and Labrador. Although engagement has only relatively recently started with Alberta, the authorities there have allowed a concession by accepting Irish licences and granting holders an exemption against waiting time within their own graduated driving licence (GDL) system.

### **Traffic Calming Measures**

1173. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if traffic calming measures will be put in place at a location (details supplied) in County Kerry to slow through traffic; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34364/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** While my Depart-

ment is responsible for the general legislation in regard to traffic matters, I do not have a direct role in relation to local traffic management, including the provision of traffic calming measures. The decision whether or not to provide such measures is a matter for the relevant local authorities concerned and in this instance, in consultation with the National Roads Authority.

### Cycling Facilities

1174. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide details of sustainable transport projects announced since 1 January 2013, broken down by county; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34391/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** I launched the National Cycle Network Seed Funding Scheme in March 2013 to provide seed funding to local authorities for the development of proposals for high quality, off-road, greenway cycle routes.

The following 12 applications were selected for funding from a total of 35 applications. The total funding is €420,000.

More details on these projects can be found at [www.smartertravel.ie](http://www.smartertravel.ie).

Local Authority Proposal	Funding approved
Clare County Council West Clare Railway Greenway	50,000
Cork County Council West Cork Abandoned Rail Lines Greenway -Cork to Kinsale Section	30,000
Cork County Council West Cork Abandoned Rail Lines Greenway -Ballinascarthy to Courtmacsherry Section	30,000
Galway County Council Connemara Greenway - Clifden to Oughterard (site survey)	25,000
Kerry Co Council Ring of Kerry Trail - Glenbeigh to Renard, Cahersiveen	50,000
Leitrim County Council North Leitrim Greenway - along the track of the former Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway (SLNCR)	30,000
Mayo County Council Monasteries of the Moy	40,000
Roscommon County Council North Roscommon Greenway	15,000
Sligo Borough Council Sligo section of SLNCR Greenway (see Leitrim for details)	50,000
South Dublin County Council Dodder Greenway	25,000
South Tipperary County Council Clonmel to Carrick-on-Suir Greenway	45,000
Westmeath County Council Mullingar Greenway	30,000

### Departmental Expenditure

1175. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the name, costs, date of commission, date or expected date of publication and name of the external consultant of all external reports commissioned by his Depart-

ment since March 2011. [34411/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The information requested by the Deputy is available on my Department's website.

### **EU Regulations**

1176. **Deputy Brian Walsh** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he is satisfied that adequate measures have been taken to ensure compliance with EU transparency regulations regarding Bus Éireann; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34429/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I am satisfied that adequate measures have been taken to ensure compliance with EU transparency regulations regarding Bus Éireann and the company has confirmed that it is committed to adhering to EU transparency regulations that are applicable to the services it provides.

### **Cycling Facilities**

1177. **Deputy Jack Wall** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he or any of the agencies under the aegis of his Department has investigated the further development of canal banks or lands within the control of Waterways Ireland as cycle or pedestrian facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34461/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** My Department is fully supportive of the development of cycle ways and walking routes along canal paths and recognises the benefits of these initiatives. In general, it is a matter for relevant local authorities to progress and submit proposals for the development of such routes to the Department or to a relevant agency.

The agencies which come under the remit of the my Department and which have a role in the development of walking and cycling ways are the National Transport Authority and the National Trails Office. I have forwarded your question to those agencies for direct reply. If you have not received a reply within ten days please advise my private office.

With regard to projects being developed by local authorities along routes controlled by Waterways Ireland with direct funding by my Department, €451,000 has been granted to Westmeath County Council under the National Cycle Network Programme for the development a cycle route along the Royal Canal in Westmeath. This cycle way will form part of the proposed Dublin-Galway Greenway.

### **Departmental Bodies Board Remuneration**

1178. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of the fees and expenses paid to each member of each State board, to include the chair and board members, and the number of members on each State board under the aegis of his Department. [34521/13]

1179. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual salary of the chief executive officers of all non-commercial State-sponsored bodies under the aegis of his Department. [34537/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1178 and 1179 together.

The information requested by the Deputy is set out in the annual reports and accounts of the individual agencies. Full details of State board membership and approved fee scales are set out

on my Department's website.

### Departmental Expenditure

1180. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, a list of all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34553/13]

1182. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 20% reduction in all professional fees, including but not limited to legal, consultancy, IT related, advisory, advertising and accountancy; the company name and the amount invoiced between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013. [34585/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1180 and 1182 together.

Details of consultancy and other external expenditure by my Department are published on its website.

Reduction of costs across all activities continues to be a major focus of my Department. The measures in place to ensure that purchases of goods and services are made on the most economically advantageous terms include the competitive tendering process, availing as appropriate of Public Service Framework Agreements and availing of the Services of the National Procurement Service. I have no plans for, nor am I currently examining the effect of, introducing a 20% reduction in the fees referred to by the Deputy.

### Departmental Staff Training

1181. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, a breakdown of all third level courses, training programmes and courses and accompanying cost for the 2012-13 academic year, from 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2013, provided for employees of his Department. [34569/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The information requested by the Deputy is currently being compiled and will be forwarded to the Deputy within 10 working days.

*Question No. 1182 answered with Question No. 1180.*

### Exchequer Savings

1183. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 1%, 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in travel and expenses for his Department. [34601/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The 2012 outturn for my Department under the Travel and Subsistence subhead X02 was €1.069 million. Applying the percentages prescribed by the Deputy would reduce this amount as follows:

-	Amount saved
1%	€10,690

-	Amount saved
5%	€53,450
7%	€74,830
10%	€106,900
12%	€128,280
15%	€160,350
17%	€181,730
20%	€213,800

### Exchequer Savings

1184. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer of a 5%, 7%, 10%, 12%, 15%, 17% and 20% reduction in training and development for his Department. [34617/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The allocation for 2013 for training and development in my Department is €150,000. The impact of applying the percentages to this figure is set out in the following table:

Budget 2013	% Reduction	Saving
€150,000	5	7,500
	7	10,500
	10	15,000
	12	18,000
	15	22,500
	17	25,500
	20	30,000

### Exchequer Savings

1185. **Deputy Mary Lou McDonald** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the annual saving to the Exchequer if all his special advisers' pay was capped at the first point of the principal officer grade; and if he will provide a list of all salaries paid to his special advisers, post-implementation of the Haddington Road agreement. [34633/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The information requested by the Deputy is being compiled and will be forwarded as soon as possible.

### Programme for Government Implementation

1186. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide, in tabular form, the commitments in the programme for Government within his remit; if the commitments have been met or are in the process of being met; the estimated time for same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34688/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** My Department's Statement of Strategy 2011- 2014 contains in Appendix 3 a table of the commitments in the Programme for Government which fall under remit of the Department of Transport, Tourism

and Sport. The Government reports annually on progress with the Programme for Government. The 2013 report was published in March 2013 and is available on the Department of the Taoiseach's website.

Progress continues to be made in delivering on the commitments. My Department is collating the up-to-date position on each commitment under my remit and I will publish the current status on the Department's website when completed.

### **Consultancy Contracts Issues**

1187. **Deputy Billy Kelleher** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will detail, in tabular form, the names of all external public relations and communications consultants and organisations used by organisations or agencies within the remit of his Department since 9 March 2011; the details of the services supplied by each; the expenditure on each; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34704/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The information requested by the Deputy is a matter for the agencies themselves. I have forwarded the query to the agencies for direct reply. If you do not receive a reply within 10 working days please contact my private office.

### **Sports Capital Programme Eligibility**

1188. **Deputy Bernard J. Durkan** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to detail the funding options available for North Kildare Cricket Club which wishes to construct a bowling green in the near future for both membership and tourism purposes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34709/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Michael Ring):** The Sports Capital Programme is the Government's primary vehicle for supporting the development of sports facilities and the purchase of non-personal sports equipment. All funding available under the 2012 Sports Capital Programme has been allocated and no decision has been made on the timing of the next round of the Programme. No application was received from the organisation referred to by the Deputy.

It may be possible for the club to raise funds via the Tax Relief for Donations to Certain Sports Bodies' Scheme (section 847A of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997). This is a Revenue operated scheme which offers tax benefits to individuals or companies who make donations to the club. Further details on this scheme and how it operates can be found on the Revenue Commissioners' website.

I am informed by Fáilte Ireland that the Tourism Capital Investment Programme is currently closed and new applications are not being accepted at this time.

### **Road Traffic Offences**

1189. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to set out the minimum and maximum fine or reprimand for a driver caught driving without insurance. [34721/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The use of a mechanically propelled vehicle without motor insurance is an offence under Section 56 of the Road Traffic Act, 1961, as amended. The maximum fine on summary conviction is €5,000, with the actual amount being at discretion of the judge hearing the case. In addition to the fine, where the judge intends applying a consequential disqualification following conviction, penalty points are not applied. The minimum disqualification is for a period of 1 year. Otherwise, 5 penalty points will be endorsed on the person's licence record following conviction.

### **Parking Provision**

1190. **Deputy Eoghan Murphy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to Parliamentary Question No. 547 of 10th July 2012, if he will consider introducing a pilot scheme for partial footpath parking in a particular location as a trial. [34723/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As I explained to the Deputy in my response to the question referred to, there are sound arguments against allowing partial parking on pavements. The key concerns are: that footpaths are provided for the safety of pedestrians and to segregate vulnerable road users from passing or parking traffic on the roadway; that footpaths are not constructed to the same specifications as roads and are not built to bear the weight of vehicles; and that pavement parking, if allowed in some areas, could become a matter of habit for many people and difficult to restrict to the areas where it is legally permitted. As all of these concerns would still apply, whether or not a pilot scheme was carried out, I do not have plans to carry out such a scheme in the foreseeable future.

### **Tourism Industry Issues**

1191. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will request Tourism Ireland to have a major advertisement campaign on billboards in major ferry ports, airports, train stations and bus stations in the US; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34915/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Tourism Ireland is responsible for the overseas promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination and decisions on the type of advertising used are entirely operational matters for the agency itself. I have no role in such day-to-day decisions as they are best made by the staff on the ground having regard to the overall priorities set out in Tourism Ireland's Business Plan. Accordingly, I have referred the Deputy's question to the agency for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

### **Departmental Legal Costs**

1192. **Deputy Niall Collins** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he has sought and received legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General; the number of times advice was sought per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; the costs of outside legal advice per year in 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [34990/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** My Department has obtained legal advice outside the Office of the Attorney General 9 times in 2011 at a cost of €19,862; 17 times in 2012 at a cost of €19,088; and 8 times to date in 2013 at the cost of €39,391.

## **Rural Transport Programme Issues**

1193. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to outline the number of meetings held with rural transport companies and the other consultations that were held prior to the announcement of changes to the rural transport programme; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35010/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** Since my appointment as Minister of State for Public and Commuter Transport, I have personally met and visited a large number of Rural Transport Programme (RTP) groups. I have also met with the Rural Transport Network (RTN).

In addition the National Transport Authority (NTA) who took over national responsibility for the RTP on 1 April 2012 and were responsible for preparing the options for restructuring have engaged in a consultation process with the RTN. They attended the AGM of the RTN in Portlaoise on 4 October 2012. Following on from this they met with the RTN on 25 October and provided the Network with a presentation on the foundation for the drafting of a restructuring plan for the RTP.

Subsequently, as part of the ongoing consultative process, the NTA met with the Network five times during 2013, on 28 January, 28 February, 15 April, 7 May and 18 June. At the meeting of 15 April 2013, the NTA and RTN mutually agreed to establish three Working Groups as part of the restructuring process with a further Working Group agreed on by both parties at the meeting of 7 May - I attended part of this meeting. The Groups are due to commence work relating to the implementation of the restructuring over the summer.

The Department and the NTA have also met and consulted with the County and City Managers Association and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

## **Bus Éireann Staff**

1194. **Deputy Timmy Dooley** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will direct persons in Bus Éireann if they have suspicion of corruption in Bus Éireann to inform the Garda of such and publish the organisation's guidelines in respect of same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35101/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Employees and directors of Bus Éireann are required to comply with relevant provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001 and a copy of the Code of Business Ethics for Employees and Directors is available on the company's website. If the Deputy is aware of specific details of possible corruption he should make these known to the company and-or the Garda. I have also referred the Deputy's question to the company for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

## **Regional Road Network**

1195. **Deputy Damien English** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the measures he has taken to date in 2013 to protect the regional road network nationally; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35105/13]

1196. **Deputy Damien English** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the measures he has taken to date in 2013 to protect the local road network nationally; and if he will

make a statement on the matter. [35106/13]

1198. **Deputy Damien English** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to outline his plans for the protection of the regional and local road networks nationally; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35108/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1195, 1196 and 1198 together.

The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads is the statutory responsibility of each local authority, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Roads Act 1993. Works on those roads are funded from local authorities own resources supplemented by State road grants. The initial selection and prioritisation of works to be funded is also a matter for each local authority.

Earlier this year I announced that just over €350 million was being allocated to local authorities under the regional and local road grants investment programme. More recently I announced an additional €50 million for works on regional and local roads under the Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan, bringing the total funding available for regional and local roads this year to just over €400 million.

My Department and local authorities are working closely to develop new more efficient ways of delivering the best outputs possible with the funding available to them. Given the likely continued squeeze on Exchequer funding this concentration on efficiency is essential to achieve the best outturns for the limited money available. In this regard, I have provided local authorities additional flexibility this year by allowing councils to transfer resources into their discretionary grant. In addition my Department has been working with local authorities to implement a pavement management system to link pavement distress to treatment options. I have been encouraging local authorities, as the bodies responsible for the maintenance and repair of roads, to utilise this system to its full capabilities.

My Department also commenced a pilot community involvement scheme whereby the local community can contribute to works in money or in kind. This scheme is available to give local communities the opportunity to have these works completed where they would not normally be considered for funding. It is also important to reiterate that the role of Exchequer grants for regional and local roads is to supplement local authorities in their spending in this area.

### **Road Improvement Schemes**

1197. **Deputy Damien English** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to his announcement of the 5 June 2013 whereby an additional €50,000,000 for the repair and restoration of regional and local roads was issued, if he is confident that each local authority will prioritise works over the summer and autumn months to repair and restore the roads most in need of repair work in the first instance; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35107/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The improvement and maintenance of regional and local roads is the statutory responsibility of each local authority, in accordance with the provisions of Section 13 of the Roads Act 1993. Works on those roads are funded from local authorities own resources supplemented by State road grants. The initial selection and prioritisation of works to be funded is also a matter for each local authority.

Local authorities have been provided an additional €50 million in funding under the Res-

toration Improvement Scheme for County Councils and Block Grant for City Councils. Each county council has set out a 4 year multi-annual plan of prioritised works for completion. These plans have been set by the local engineers and approved by the elected members. The additional funding being provided will enable some works which were scheduled to take place in 2014 to be brought forward and completed this year. It is also open to local authorities to include roads which are now in urgent need of repair but were not on the original programme. While this additional allocation is to be directed primarily to surface restoration works, if the council considers that there are particular safety schemes that need to be progressed urgently some of the additional funding may be allocated to such schemes.

Insofar as is practical and prudent, I am happy to give local authorities discretion on their roads budget and that was what I sought to do in this instance. Local authority members are best placed to assess and prioritise where funding should be directed in their area.

*Question No. 1198 answered with Question No. 1195.*

### **Airport Security**

1199. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport further to Parliamentary Question No. 562 of 9th July 2013 the number of notifications given to his Department when civilian aircraft on non-EU commercial, civilian flights applied for authorisation traffic rights when carrying Heads of State or Heads of Government from other nations in the past five years; the number that have been approved and rejected; if he will provide in tabular form, the nations involved and the date of each landing here; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35143/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As mentioned in my response to Question No. 562 on 9 July 2013, non-EU civilian aircraft engaged in fuel-technical stops in Ireland or over flying Ireland are not required to notify or seek any authorisation from my Department. Technical notifications to the Irish Aviation Authority are of course required for air traffic control purposes.

If such an aircraft is landing in Ireland for the purposes of loading or unloading people or cargo it does require authorisation from my Department. While in some instances the airline may inform my Department if a Head of State is one of the passengers on such a flight, the identity of passengers is not required for such authorisations. On this basis the Department does not have the information sought in the Deputy's question.

### **Dublin Bus Services**

1200. **Deputy Seán Kenny** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport when Dublin Bus is due to receive 80 additional buses; the extra routes that will be added when the buses come into service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35150/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, I have responsibility for policy and overall funding in relation to public transport. Following the establishment of the National Transport Authority (NTA) on 1 December 2009, the provision of public transport infrastructure and services in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), such as the purchase of new buses, comes under the remit of the NTA. In the light of this I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

**Bus Éireann Services**

1201. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will replace a Bus Éireann shelter in Rathmore, County Kerry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35187/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The issue of bus stop improvement is a matter for the National Transport Authority (NTA) in conjunction with the relevant transport provider and I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

**Tourism Industry Issues**

1202. **Deputy Tom Fleming** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport following on from the decision to reduce the VAT rate from 13 % to 9% and the significance of this reduction to the tourism sector here and the very positive implications it has had on the industry in creating and maintaining jobs, giving value for money (details supplied), if he will support the calls to keep the VAT rate at 9% and ensure that Ireland has a strong and competitive tourism industry; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35188/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, I am very conscious that the tourism and hospitality industry would like to see the 9% rate continued through 2014 and beyond. I am supportive of retaining a reduced rate, but that can only be justified on the basis of clear evidence of the impact of the reduction.

As the Deputy is aware, taxation policy is the responsibility of my colleague, the Minister for Finance and any proposals to maintain the 9% rate into 2014 will have to be considered in the context of Budget 2014.

*Question No. 1203 answered with Question No. 1160.*

**Overseas Visitors Data**

1204. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the total number of non-domestic visitors to Waterford in the years 2011 and 2012 and for the first half of 2013; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35346/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The collection of statistics is primarily a matter for the Central Statistics Office (CSO). I understand that the CSO does not provide a regional breakdown of statistics in their monthly "Overseas Travel" publication. I am aware, however, that Fáilte Ireland, provides an estimated regional breakdown of overseas visits on an annual basis, based on research of its own, as well as available CSO statistics. The most recent full year figures are for 2011. The data are available, on a regional and county basis, in the research section of the Fáilte Ireland website [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie) under Regional Facts and Figures.

In regard to 2012 figures, I have asked Fáilte Ireland to provide the Deputy with whatever information it may have in regard to the number of tourists who visited County Waterford in 2012 and to date in 2013. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

## **Regional Road Network**

1205. **Deputy Paudie Coffey** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will clarify the instructions that he gave to local authorities in respect of making available funding for local funds from different allocations from within local authority funding; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35350/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** My Department has no direct input into how local authorities allocate their own funding.

Grant assistance for the upkeep of the regional and local road network is provided by my Department. These funds are intended to supplement a council's own financial input. Use of this grant aid is governed by a memorandum (which is updated from time to time) to ensure that the funding provided, under various grant categories, is expended in line with national and EU procurement regulations and delivers the best value for money.

I have of course exhorted local authorities to maximise their own resources contributions which are applied to the maintenance and rehabilitation of regional and local roads. In this context the allocation of the additional amount of €50 million in June this year took account of the commitment of local authorities in terms of own resource expenditure in respect of roads.

## **Air Services Provision**

1206. **Deputy Michael McCarthy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if his attention has been drawn to a proposal by the Irish Aviation Authority to end the existing guaranteed 24 hour air traffic control coverage at an airport (details supplied) at the end of summer 2013; the impact this will have for operators, customers and the overall competitiveness of this regional airport; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35397/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I have been made aware by the IAA that it is considering the introduction of limited restrictions in its air traffic control services at Cork Airport as a result, in particular, of low night-time traffic levels at the airport. In this context, however, it is necessary to bear in mind that under the provisions of the Irish Aviation Authority Act 1993, one of the IAA's principal objects empowers the company to decide, as it sees fit, the extent to which it should operate and manage terminal navigation services at any of the three State airports, including Cork Airport. Accordingly, I have no statutory function in relation to this matter.

I understand that the IAA has decided to postpone for a six-month period its decision on the implementation of a modified air traffic control service at Cork Airport during which time traffic levels during the night-time will be monitored. This monitoring of the operational and commercial environment at the airport is designed to ensure the provision of an air traffic control service appropriate to the level of traffic at Cork Airport, including a continuous 24 hour operation if the traffic demand requires.

I believe that the IAA has arranged a consultation meeting in Cork in August that will also be attended by the operators of Cork Airport, as well as local business representatives. This initiative will provide an excellent forum for the interested parties involved to present their concerns and interests and I am confident that a satisfactory outcome can be achieved.

## **Cycling Facilities**

1207. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will

provide an update on the National Transport Authority's work in the design of a cycle route in an area (details supplied) in County Wicklow; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35438/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** The National Transport Authority (NTA) is responsible for the provision of public transport and sustainable transport infrastructure in the Greater Dublin Area and the regional cities. Wicklow comes under the remit of the NTA as the county is part of the Greater Dublin Area. The NTA provides funding to local authorities for a range of schemes to benefit cyclists, including cycle lanes and junctions improvements, under the Sustainable Transport Management Grants Programme. I have forwarded your request to the NTA and I have asked it to forward the information to you directly.

### **Road Improvement Schemes**

1208. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide an update on the National Transport Authority's work in the design of a footpath (details supplied), land transfer and all associated activities; if he will provide a detailed map of where the new footpath will run; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35439/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** The National Transport Authority (NTA) is responsible for the provision of public transport and sustainable transport infrastructure in the Greater Dublin Area and the regional cities. Wicklow comes under the remit of the NTA as the county is part of the Greater Dublin Area. The NTA provides funding to local authorities for a range of schemes to benefit pedestrians, including footpath and junctions improvements, under the Sustainable Transport Management Grants Programme. I have forwarded your request to the NTA and I have asked it to forward the information to you directly.

### **Public Transport Initiatives**

1209. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide an update on the National Transport Authority's work in the design, tender and construction of an interchange scheme (details supplied); if he will provide detailed drawings of the final interchange when complete; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35440/13]

1210. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will provide an update on the National Transport Authority's work on a pedestrian crossing and footpath scheme in an area (details supplied) in County Wicklow; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35441/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** I propose to take Questions Nos. 1209 and 1210 together.

As Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, I have responsibility for policy and overall funding in relation to public transport. Following the establishment of the National Transport Authority (NTA) in December 2009, the implementation and development of infrastructure projects in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), such as the Sustainable Transport Measures Grants Scheme under which the project in question is funded, comes under the remit of the NTA. The Scheme facilitates investment in the various QBCs, cycling-walking, safety and traffic management projects throughout the seven local authorities in the GDA region.

Noting this, I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise

my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

### **Air Accident Investigations**

1211. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the persons who are perceived to be interested parties by the air accident investigation unit of his Department when a draft final report is issued; the way a person or organisation may become an interested party in an investigation to be able to comment before final consideration is given to the final report; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35443/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** International Conventions, (EU) Regulations and national legislation provide detailed provisions and obligations with regard to the conduct of investigations and reporting. In particular, states conducting the investigation shall send a copy of the final draft report to the following parties inviting their significant and substantiated comments on the report as soon as possible:

- a) the state that instituted the investigation;
- b) the state of registry;
- c) the state of the operator;
- d) the state of design;
- e) the state of manufacture;
- f) any state that suffered fatalities or serious injuries to its citizens;
- g) any state that provided information, facilities or experts to the state;
- h) the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) maximum mass over 2,250 kg;
- i) the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); and
- j) the Air Safety Unit of the European Commission.

Specific to Irish legislation S.I. 460 of 2009 also provides under 12 (1) that: no final report under Regulation 13 may be made to the Minister or made public until the investigator in charge has—

(a) where it appears to him or her practicable to do so, served a draft final report on any undertaking or person, including the Minister, who is, in the inspector's opinion, likely to be adversely reflected on by findings in the draft final report or, where such person is deceased, on the person who appears to the investigator in charge to best represent the interests of the deceased person.

As previously stated, as the AAIU is independent in the conduct of its Investigations, I do not propose to become involved in individual investigations.

### **Road Traffic Offences**

1212. **Deputy Andrew Doyle** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will outline the different blood alcohol levels and concentrations for drinking under the influence of alcohol here that are provided in the Road Traffic Acts, that is, policed by An Garda

Síochána, as a measure to reduce fatalities and improve safety on the roads; the differences for public service vehicle drivers and normal drivers of vehicles; the measurements and limits that are in place when a person driving a private vehicle who is stopped at an authorised mandatory alcohol testing checkpoint and does not have a driving licence on his person; if he will detail in these circumstances if they are tested as a public service vehicle driver or a normal driver during a mandatory alcohol test; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35447/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Sections 4 and 5 of the Road Traffic Act 2010 set out the different blood-alcohol levels for drivers, along with the equivalent levels in breath and urine. Learner permit holders and drivers holding their first driving licence within 2 years of the date of its issue, along with drivers of public service vehicles, while such vehicles are being used in the course of business and those drivers who cannot produce their driving licence to gardaí at the roadside, are all classed as “specified drivers” and are tested at the lower 20 milligrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood level.

### **Bus Éireann Services**

1213. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to detail his long-term plans for the public service obligation routes; if he is considering alternative models of PSO contract provision; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35470/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The objective of the Government is to ensure a system of public transport throughout the country that is as efficient and as widespread as possible. In relation to the award of Public Service Obligation (PSO) contracts for the bus market, this falls under the remit of the National Transport Authority (NTA). The NTA is currently considering how best publicly subvented bus services will be provided in the future. The direct award (monopoly) contracts for the provision of PSO bus market services held by Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann expire late next year. The awarding of the licenses for the services thereafter is a matter for the NTA, and not for the Government, but the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport has kept the Cabinet updated on the process.

Where the NTA proposes to enter into a further direct award contract or contracts for bus services it is obliged to carry out a statutory consultation under section 52 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008. Under the legislation, if the NTA proposes to enter into direct award contracts, the relevant section states that “it may only do so where it is satisfied that the continued adequacy of the public bus passenger services to which the contracts relate can only be guaranteed in the general economic interest by entering into such direct award contracts”. If it is not so satisfied, it must provide for some level of competitive tendering. As explained, this is not a decision for the Government or for me.

The NTA is conducting its work in accordance with the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008. It will be conducting statutory consultations in relation to the matter later in the year with a view to announcing its decision on how it intends to proceed before the end of the year.

### **Regional Road Network**

1214. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to set out the amount of funding, in tabular format, that has been allocated to or spent in County Kerry on local, regional and national roads and other road projects in Kerry since 2007; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35472/13]

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**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** Details of the regional and local road grant payments made by my Department to county councils over the last number of years are outlined in the regional and local road grant payment booklets which are available in the Dáil Library.

With regard to national roads, details of the allocations to each local authority are also available in the Dáil Library. However, details of the actual drawdown of funding for these roads is a matter for the National Roads Authority.

Noting the above position, I have referred the Deputy's question to the NRA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

### **Sports Capital Programme Expenditure**

1215. **Deputy Brendan Griffin** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his plans to provide funding for another round of sports capital grants; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35477/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Michael Ring):** No decision has been taken on the timing of the next round of the Sports Capital Programme. Any such decision will of course have to be taken in the context of the likely capital provision for the subhead in future years.

### **Air Services Provision**

1216. **Deputy John Deasy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport the details of the submission the Government will be making to the European Commission review of state aid rules on the public financing of airports and start-up aid to airlines prior to the adoption of revised guidelines in early 2014. [35503/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The European Commission is inviting comments on its review of EU state aid rules on the public financing of airports and start-up aid to airlines. It has indicated that the market environment of the aviation industry has changed considerably during the last ten years and the Commission proposal takes account of this evolution and provides guidance on how member states can support airports and airlines in line with EU state aid rules. In the light of submissions received, the Commission will adopt revised guidelines in the beginning of 2014.

My Department is currently studying the draft guidelines and their likely implications for Ireland. It is intended that a submission will be made by the deadline of 25 September 2013.

### **Bus Éireann Services**

1217. **Deputy Willie Penrose** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will review and revise the recently announced changes to route 115, which includes the bus transport service from Mullingar to Dublin (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35506/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The scheduling and timetabling of services are matters for Bus Éireann, in conjunction with the National Trans-

port Authority, and I have forwarded the Deputy's question to the company for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

### **Taxi Licences Renewals**

1218. **Deputy Finian McGrath** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport if he will review a case regarding a taxi licence in respect of a person (details supplied) in Dublin 5. [35508/13]

**Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Alan Kelly):** The regulation of the taxi industry, including issues relating to the renewal of SPSV vehicle licences, is a matter for the National Transport Authority (NTA) under the provisions of the Public Transport Regulation Act, 2009. I have forwarded your question to the NTA for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not get a response within 10 working days.

### **Rail Services**

1219. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport when the position of caretaker at a train station (details supplied) in County Sligo will be filled; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35532/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** The issue raised is a matter for Iarnród Éireann and I have forwarded the Deputy's question to the company for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

### **Rail Services**

1220. **Deputy Michael Colreavy** asked the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport when a ticket machine will be put in place at a train station (details supplied) in County Sligo; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [35533/13]

**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (Deputy Leo Varadkar):** As Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, I have responsibility for policy and overall funding in relation to public transport. Matters relating to train stations, including the installation of ticketing machines, are day-to-day operational issues for Iarnród Eireann in the first instance and I have no function in such matters.

Noting this, I have referred the Deputy's question to the Chief Executive of Iarnród Eireann for direct reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.