

## Next week in the Oireachtas

The Road Safety Authority (Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness) Bill 2012 will be discussed at second stage in the Dáil on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of next week. In the Seanad, the Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2012 will be discussed. Mr Fergus Finlay, Chief Executive, Barnardos; Ms Caroline O'Sullivan, Director of Services, ISPC; Ms Tanya Ward, Chief Executive, Children's Rights Alliance will attend the Committee on Health and Children to discuss the Draft Heads of Children First Bill 2012.



## News & Appointments

### Local Government Bill 2012 to be published

**The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2012 has been given the go ahead by Government to be published. This legislation will allow the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to finalise arrangements for the rationalisation of state agencies under control of the Department from 21 to 12.**

Changes to the agency structure include: the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland is the merge with the Environmental Protection Agency; the Local Government Audit Service is to merge with the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General; the Building Regulations Advisory Body will absorb into

the Department; Limerick Northside and Limerick Southside Regeneration Agency will be merged into Limerick Local Authorities; Comhar (Sustainable Development Council) is to be integrated into the National Economic & Social Council (NESC); the Dormant Accounts Board will be dismantled; Local Government Management Service Board and the Local Government Computer Services Board will merge into the Local Government Management Agency, which will provide the shared services in industrial relations, ICT, procurement and library services for all 34 local authorities; and the library Council will be subsumed into an existing public body.

#### Local Authorities

The Government has also approved the amendment of the Local Government Act 2001 to provide for the establishment of appropriate management arrangements for Limerick City and County Councils and North and South Tipperary County Councils prior to their respective mergers in 2014. The principal objective of the change will be to enable the same person to be manager for more than one city/county council. The amendments are to be brought forward at Committee Stage of the Bill.

### Appointments by Minister for Health

The Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD has appointed Mr Jim Brophy to the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

Mr Brophy graduated from Queens University Belfast with an Honours degree in Pure Mathematics. He qualified as a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries in 1985 and has worked as a consulting actuary in the Financial Services sector in London and Dublin for over 25 years. He is an Accredited Commercial Mediator and has also worked as a volunteer for the charity GOAL. He will serve on the board until June 2015.

Minister Reilly has this week invited expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced persons interested in being appointed to fill a vacancy which has arisen on the Board of Dublin Dental Hospital. He has also sought expressions of interest to the board of VHI to fill a vacancy following the recent resignation of one of its members.

### Minister for Justice and Minister for Children publish bills to strengthen child protection

**The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012 has been published by Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter TD. Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald TD has also published the Heads of the Children First Bill. Both of these form part of a suite of legislation to protect children.**

This Criminal Justice Bill 2012 makes it a criminal offence to withhold information in relation to serious specified offences committed against a child or vulnerable person including sexual offences and offences such as assault causing harm, abduction, manslaughter or murder.

The Bill updates the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act 1998 to include sexual offences. The offences are subject to a minimum penalty of five years imprisonment.

The Bill also outlines a number of potential defences where a person may rely on a defence of failing to disclose the relevant information in circumstances where the child or vulnerable person who was victim of the offence and who

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revealed the information requested that the information would not be further disclosed. Defences will also be in place for those such as a parent or guardian or medical professional who is acting in the interests of the health and well-being of the child or vulnerable person.

### Children First Bill

The Children First Bill will establish Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children on a statutory basis.

According to the Heads of the Bill the current Children First Guidance will be strengthened in three key areas. Firstly, organisations covered by the legislation will have to ensure that they are safe places for children, and that they work in co-operation with the statutory authorities. Organisations and named professionals will have statutory responsibility to report information about abuse or significant neglect

to the HSE, whether it occurs in the organisation or elsewhere. Additionally, the HSE will have obligations to support organisations and professionals but will also have the power to take action where they have reason to believe that the organisation is not operating in compliance with the legislation.

The Children First National Guidance has operated on the basis of voluntary compliance since it was first published by the Office of the Minister of Children in 1999. "The recently revised guidance and the legislation build on over a decade of practice experience. The intention is that this legislation will reinforce critical aspects of current policy to assure compliance and co-operation for the protection of children", the Minister stated.

The Bill will be sent to the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children for consultation with key stakeholders to take place

before the Bill is finalised. The Minister added, "I am eager that the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children will hear as many detailed views as possible from key stakeholders, because this legislation must be effective if it is to protect children. Legislation to protect the well-being of children is as important as it can get."

Both Ministers have been working closely on these matters and will continue to do so over the coming months.

In the December/January edition of the PAI monthly Journal, Diane Duggan, barrister, reviews the law surrounding child protection in Ireland and the issues surrounding mandatory reporting of child abuse. To view this article, [click here](#).

## Ombudsman announces appointment of new Director General to her Office

The Ombudsman and Information Commissioner Emily O'Reilly has announced that Ms Bernadette McNally has been appointed as Director General to the Office of the Ombudsman, Information Commissioner and the Secretariat to the Standards in Public

Office Commission (SIPOC).

Ms Mc Nally worked as a Senior Investigator with the Ombudsman for three years. From 2004 to 2008 she held the position of Chief Therapist Advisor in the then Department of Health and Children. She has a BSc and MSc

from Trinity College Dublin and previously worked as a front line health professional and was later a Director of Therapy and Social Work services in St James's Hospital, Dublin.

# A New Era for Data Protection in Ireland

## Public Affairs Ireland Conference

**Wednesday 13th June 2012**  
**9am - 1pm**  
**Westin Hotel, Dublin City Centre**

On 13th June 2012, Public Affairs Ireland is holding a special conference focusing on current and emerging issues in data protection in Ireland. There are a range of recent developments in data protection, making this conference both timely and relevant. Topics that will be discussed include:

- Data Protection and the delivery of public services – the issues arising on data sharing across public sector agencies.
- Ireland as a global centre for Internet Search Engines, data storage facilities and social media companies – how national regulation of data protection in Ireland has global impacts.
- Pending EU reforms on data protection and the impact for organisations and individuals in Ireland, and
- Dealing with the consequences of a breach in data security – managing the reputational and legal risks involved.

The conference will feature a range of leading speakers who will address the Irish and EU dimension including lawyers, ICT professionals and policymakers. The conference will be practically focused and be of interest to all organisations involved in the processing and storage of personal data. In particular it will be of interest to public sector bodies involved in the collection, management and processing of personal data of citizens.

[Click here to register online](#)

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Dáil

Seanad

May 1	May 2	May 3
<p><b>2pm</b> Questions (Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)</p> <p><b>3.15pm</b> Leaders Questions</p> <p><b>3.36pm</b> Questions (Taoiseach)</p> <p><b>4.36pm</b> Order of Business</p> <p><b>5.06pm</b> Topical Issues</p> <p>Motion re Sustainable Energy Act 2002 (Section 8(2)) (Conferral of Additional Functions - Renewable Energy) Order 2012 (referral to committee without debate) Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources</p> <p>Road Safety Authority (Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness) Bill 2012 (Seanad) Second Stage (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport)</p> <p><b>7.30pm</b> Private Members Business</p>	<p><b>10.30am</b> Leaders Questions</p> <p><b>10.51am</b> Order of Business</p> <p>Motion re Revised Estimates (referral to committee without debate) Department of Social Protection</p> <p>Education (Amendment) Bill 2012 (Seanad) Order for Report, Report and Final Stages</p> <p>Road Safety Authority (Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness) Bill 2012 (Seanad) Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport)</p> <p><b>1.30pm</b> SOS</p> <p><b>2.30pm</b> Questions (Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources)</p> <p><b>3.45pm</b> Topical Issues</p> <p><b>4.33pm</b> Morning Business Continued</p> <p><b>7.30pm</b> Private Members Business</p>	<p><b>10.30am</b> Leaders Questions</p> <p><b>10.51am</b> Order of Business</p> <p>Construction Contracts Bill 2010 (Seanad) Second Stage to adjourn at 1.30pm if not previously concluded) (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)</p> <p>Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Bill 2011 (Seanad) Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of the Environment Community and Local Government)</p> <p>Road Safety Authority (Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness) Bill 2012 (Seanad) Second Stage (Resumed) (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport)</p> <p><b>3.42pm</b> Topical Issues</p> <p><b>4.30pm</b> Questions (Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government)</p>

April 30	May 1	May 2	May 3
<p><b>12am</b> Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2012 – Committee and Remaining Stages Motion for the Early Signature of the Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2012 – (Without debate) [Minister for Social Protection]</p>	<p><b>2.30pm</b> Order of Business Motion regarding SI 148 of 2011 - Referral to Joint committee – (Without debate) [Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]</p> <p><b>3.45pm</b> Statements on the Report of the Advisory Group to the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector [Minister for Education]</p>	<p><b>10.30am</b> Order of Business</p> <p><b>11.45am</b> Civil Registration (Amendment) Bill 2012 – Committee and Remaining Stages [Minister for Social Protection]</p> <p><b>4pm</b> Private Members Business [FiannaFáil Senators] Employment Equality (Amendment) Bill 2012</p>	<p><b>10.30am</b> Order of Business</p> <p><b>11.45am</b> Animal Health and Welfare Bill 2012 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage [Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine]</p>

Committee Meetings

May 1	May 2	May 3
<p><b>2pm</b> <b>Communications, Natural Resources and Agriculture</b> Committee Room 3, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> (i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: COM(2012)89; COM(2012)90; COM(2012)98; and (ii) Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy [Officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and Irish Members of the European Parliament]</p> <p><b>2.15pm</b> <b>Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht</b> Committee Room 4, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> (i) 6 monthly Report (July to December 2011); EU Scrutiny Act 2002 [Secretary General, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government]; and (ii) 6 monthly Report (July to December 2011); EU Scrutiny Act 2002 [Secretary General, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport]</p> <p><b>2.30pm</b> <b>Health and Children</b> Committee Room 1, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> Draft Heads of Children First Bill 2012 [Mr Fergus Finlay, Chief Executive, Barnardos; Ms Caroline O'Sullivan, Director of Services, ISPC; Ms Tanya Ward, Chief Executive, Children's Rights Alliance]</p>	<p><b>9.30am</b> <b>Jobs, Social Protection and Education</b> Committee Room 3, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> (i) The forthcoming EU Council of Ministers meeting [Minister for Education and Skills]; and (ii) Concerns raised by the Ombudsman for Children regarding public administration in Ireland [Officials from the Department of Education and Skills; and the Teaching Council]</p> <p><b>2pm</b> <b>Public Expenditure and Reform (Sub-Committee)</b> Committee Room 3, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> 2012 Revised Estimates for Public Services - (i) Vote 13 (Office of Public Works) [Minister of State at the Departments of Finance and of Public Expenditure and Reform]; and (ii) Vote 11 (Public Expenditure and Reform); Vote 12 (Superannuation and Retired Allowances); Vote 14 (State Laboratory); Vote 15 (Secret Service); Vote 16 (Valuation Office); Vote 17 (Public Appointments Service); Vote 18 (Office of the Commission for Public Service Appointments); Vote 19 (Office of the Ombudsman). [Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform]</p> <p><b>5.30pm</b> <b>Procedure and Privileges (Dáil Éireann)</b> Committee Room 2, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> Private Meeting</p>	<p><b>9.30am</b> <b>Communications, Natural Resources and Agriculture</b> Committee Room 3, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> (i) Motion on Sustainable Energy Act 2002 (Section 8(2)) (Conferral of Additional Functions – Renewable Energy) Order 2012 [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources] (ii) Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy [Representatives from the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA)]</p> <p><b>10am</b> <b>Public Accounts</b> Committee Room 1, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> (i) Business of the Committee; (ii) 2010 Annual Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General: Chapter 19: Data Management System; 2010 Appropriation Accounts: Vote 4: Central Statistics Office. [Mr Gerry O'Hanlon, Director General, Central Statistics Office]; and (iii) 2010 Appropriation Accounts: Vote 2: Department of the Taoiseach [Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach]</p> <p><b>11.30am</b> <b>Health and Children</b> Committee Room 2, Leinster House <b>AGENDA:</b> PIP silicone breast implants and the use of non-medical grade silicone [Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health]</p>

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