

Next week in the Oireachtas

In the Dáil next week, the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill 2011 will be discussed at Second Stage. In the Seanad the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill will be discussed at Second, Committee and Remaining Stages. On Tuesday the Committee on Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht will hear from representatives of the Irish Airline Pilots' Association (IALPA) regarding the modification of rules proposed by the European Aviation Safety Agency.



News & Appointments

Upcoming conference - A New Era for Data Protection in Ireland

Public Affairs Ireland is to host a special conference on Data Protection on Wednesday June 13, 2012. With special guest and keynote speaker Data Protection Commissioner, Mr Billy Hawkes, this conference will address the EU, legal, regulatory and technical issues concerning the operation and reform of Data Protection rules in Ireland.

Delegates will hear contributions from a wide range of industry experts who will impart their in-depth knowledge and understanding of the complex reforms. The panel of experts is as follows:

- **Paul Lavery**, head of McCann FitzGerald's Technology & Innovation Group

Mr Lavery, author of *Commercial Secrets: The Action for Breach of Confidence in Ireland*, advises on a wide range of information technology, intellectual property, data protection, confidentiality and freedom of information issues.

- **Dr Robert W. Griffin**, Chief Security Architect at RSA, the Security Division of EMC.

Dr Griffin has 30 years of experience in identity management, security strategy, corporate governance, business process transformation and software development.

- **Mark Farrell**, Director and Senior Projects Manager with Arcline.

Mr Farrell is in charge of overseeing the implementation of records management projects, archival management projects, design and delivery of training, and related issues and advises clients on various areas including Data Protection.

- **Billy Murphy**, chairman of Drury Communications.

Mr Murphy has extensive experience in developing communications strategies and campaigns or programmes relating to corporate activity and has advised the Boards and senior management teams of many of Ireland's leading companies as well as Government and Semi State companies.

- **Annette Hogan**, Partner, Technology and Innovation, McCann FitzGerald.

Ms Hogan advises a wide range of clients on information technology, outsourcing and intellectual property matters and specialises in data protection, freedom of information, access to information on the environment and confidentiality matters.

For more information or to book a place on the conference, [click here](#).

Appointments to board of State Examinations Commission (SEC) announced

The Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn TD, has announced the appointments to the board of the State Examinations Commission (SEC). The 5 newly-appointed members will serve a three-year term, ending on April 3, 2015.

Mr Richard Langford was re-appointed as Chairperson of the Commission. He is a former CEO of City of Cork VEC and former Chairperson of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

The role of Deputy Chairperson was awarded to Mr Joe Harrison, a Department of Education and Skills Post-Primary Inspector and two-time former

principal of St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point and Calasactius College, Oranmore.

Also appointed to the board were Mr Martin Carney, former teacher and principal of Scoil Muire agus Pádraig, Swinford; Mr Brian Fleming, former principal of Collinstown Community College and former member of County Dublin VEC; and Dr Caroline Hussey, former Registrar and Deputy President of UCD.

In a statement following the announcements, the Minister highlighted the importance of the Commission and their role in ensuring that the

'integrity' and 'openness' of the Irish examinations system is maintained in the challenging times ahead. He then welcomed the new commissioners and wished them well in their respective roles.

The SEC is a statutory body established in March 2003 and deals with the provision and quality of the Irish State Examinations. It works in partnership with school authorities and education providers in order to deliver a high quality examination and assessment system that is efficient, fair and accessible and to ensure that the system is operated in an environment of openness, transparency and accountability.



Public Affairs
Ireland
25 Mountjoy
Square East
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8198500
Fax: 01 8944733
E: info@publicaffairsireland.com
www.publicaffairsireland.com
twitter.com/publicaffairsir



Office of the Information Commissioner launches thirteenth Annual Report

Information Commissioner, Emily O'Reilly, has launched her Annual Report for 2011. The report focused on a number of key points: the FOI reform; FOI usage; and the 'Rotunda Case'.

FOI Reform

To begin with, Ms O'Reilly welcomed the fact that the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is currently working on the arrangements necessary to fulfill the commitments made by in the Programme for Government 2011.

The first commitment made by Government was to legislate to restore the Freedom of Information Act to its pre-2003 state. This was a positive step in the eyes of the Information Commissioner who stated that many of the amendments made to the FOI Act in 2003 'represented a step back from the commitment to openness, transparency and accountability which was the key factor in the enactment of the 1997 FOI Act'.

The Programme for Government also pledged to extend the remit of the Act to other public bodies meaning that public bodies, such as the Garda Síochána, the Central Bank, the National

Treasury Management Agency, and the National Asset Management Agency, would no longer be outside the scope of the Act. This was an issue which Ms O'Reilly had drawn attention to in both of her previous Annual Reports.

FOI Usage

Ms O'Reilly spoke about the usage of the FOI Act in the last year and reported that figures show an increase in the number of requests made, up 8 percent on 2010 and 15 percent on 2009. 16,517 requests were made in total with the highest number (6,141) being made to the Health Service Executive. The second highest number (2,891) were made to voluntary hospitals and mental health services. The majority of requests, 66 percent, were made by members of the ordinary public and 58 percent of requests made were granted in full.

Rotunda Case

Ms O'Reilly commented on the Supreme Court judgment in the 'Rotunda Case' which deemed that information requested by an applicant regarding his mother was protected by the confidentiality

provisions in the FOI Act. According to Ms O'Reilly, this judgment shows that 'the principle of protecting the confidentiality of information given by a hospital patient takes precedence over the right of a person to information about the age of his or her own mother'.

Finally, Ms O'Reilly welcomed the fact that she had been given the opportunity to submit suggestions for change to the Act and hopes the suggestions made by her will 'increase the effectiveness of the FOI Act and further benefit the public's right of access to official information'.

Public Affairs Ireland, in association with Mason Hayes & Curran, recently published an updated version of the FOI Sourcebook - a comprehensive and user-friendly guide to the FOI legislation. The Sourcebook, which includes a foreword by the Information Commissioner Emily O'Reilly, is designed to be accessible and of benefit to a wide range of people including FOI Officers, legal practitioners, members of the media, and information and records management staff in the public sector. For more information or to purchase a copy, click here.

Education and Training

Click the title of a course for more information or call us on 01 819 8500

Courses

Certificate in Public Law
Wednesday June 28

Certificate in Social Media
Tuesday July 3

Certificate in Freedom of Information
Tuesday July 10

Seminars

Speed Reading
Thursday June 7

Lessons from the 7 Habits Model of Effectiveness
Thursday June 7

Plain English
Tuesday June 12

Achieving More With Less: Lean 6 Sigma for the Public Sector
Wednesday June 13

Managing Performance and Interim Reviews
Wednesday June 13

Producing Legal Reports
Thursday June 14

IR Negotiation Skills
Tuesday June 19

Time Management and Personal Effectiveness
Thursday June 21

Courtroom Skills Training
Thursday June 21

Fixed Term And Agency Work Contracts
Wednesday June 27

Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave and Parental Leave
Thursday June 28

Risk Management in the Public Sector
Tuesday July 3

Giving Excellent Customer Care
Tuesday July 3

Legislative Drafting
Wednesday July 4

Education and Training Events in Public Affairs Ireland

Public Affairs Ireland provides a range of training courses and CPD seminars on public affairs and regulatory matters. Both our training courses and CPD seminars are taught by leading experts in each relevant discipline, who bring a sharp practical focus to our events. Please click here for a list of upcoming events.

Dáil

June 6	June 7	June 8
<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business</p> <p>Motion re Proposal for a Directive on the freezing and confiscating of proceeds of crime in the European Union (Department of Justice and Equality) (without debate)</p> <p>Motion re Aarhus Convention Referral to Committee without Debate (Department of the Environment Community and Local Government)</p> <p>Motion re: PQ Rota Change (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) (without debate)</p> <p>Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill 2011 (Seanad) Second Stage Resumed (Department of the Environment Community and Local Government)</p> <p>12.05pm European Council Statements (to conclude after 85 minutes if not previously concluded) (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)</p>	<p>European Communities (Amendment) Bill 2012 Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)</p> <p>1.30pm SOS</p> <p>2.30pm Questions (Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)</p> <p>3.45pm Topical issues</p> <p>4.33pm Morning business continued</p> <p>7.30pm Private Members Business</p> <p>9.00pm Business continued</p>	<p>10.30am Leaders Questions</p> <p>10.51am Order of Business</p> <p>11.11am Private Members Business (to conclude within 90 minutes)</p> <p>SOS (30 min)</p> <p>European Stability Mechanism Bill 2012 Order for Second Stage and Second Stage (Department of Finance)</p> <p>5.30pm Topical Issues</p> <p>6.18pm Questions (Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)</p>

Seanad

June 6	June 7
<p>2.30pm Order of Business</p> <p>Motions regarding (i) Restructuring of Sectoral Committees and transfer of papers to new Committees and (ii) Joint Administration Committee (without debate)</p> <p>Motion regarding the establishment of a Joint Committee on Standing Orders (Private Business) (without debate)</p> <p>3.45pm - 5.45pm Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2012 – Second Stage [Minister for Housing and Planning]</p> <p>5.45pm - 7.45pm Private Members Business NAMA and Irish Bank Resolution Corporation Transparency Bill 2011 – Second Stage [Fianna Fáil Senators]</p>	<p>10.30am Order of Business</p> <p>11.45am - 1.45pm Statements on 'A Decade of Commemorations' [Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht]</p> <p>1.45pm Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2012 – Committee and Remaining Stages</p> <p>Motion for the Early Signature of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2012 [Minister for Housing and Planning](without debate)</p>

Committee Meetings

June 5	June 6	June 7
<p>2 pm Committee Room 2, Leinster House Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform AGENDA: (i) 2 p.m. – Private Session; and (ii) 3.30 p.m. - Draft Heads of the General Scheme of Protected Disclosures in the Public Interest Bill 2012 (resumed)</p> <p>2.15 pm Committee Room 4, Leinster House Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht AGENDA: Modified rules to combat possible risks posed with fatigued pilots, as proposed by the European Aviation Safety Agency [Representatives of the Irish Airline Pilots' Association (IALPA)]</p>	<p>9.30 am Committee Room 3, Leinster House Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Sub-Committee) AGENDA: Credit Guarantee Bill 2012 [Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation] 10 am</p> <p>Committee Room 1, Leinster House Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (Sub-Committee) AGENDA: 2012 Revised Estimates for Public Services - Vote 29 (Communications, Energy and Natural Resources) [Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources]</p> <p>10.30 am Committee Room 4, Leinster House Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht AGENDA: Forthcoming European Environment Council Meeting [Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government]</p> <p>12.30 pm Committee Room 1, Leinster House Communications, Natural Resources and Agriculture AGENDA: Private Meeting</p> <p>2 pm Committee Room 4, Leinster House European Scrutiny - Finance and Public Expenditure</p>	<p>(Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform) AGENDA: Private Meeting</p> <p>3.30 pm Committee Room 4, Leinster House Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform AGENDA: Draft Heads of the General Scheme of Protected Disclosures in the Public Interest Bill 2012 (resumed)</p> <p>3.30 pm Committee Room 2, Leinster House Justice, Defence and Equality AGENDA: Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: COM(2011)516 ; COM(2011)735; COM(2011)880; COM(2012)10; COM(2012)11; and COM(2012)35.</p> <p>5.30 pm Committee Room 1, Leinster House Public Accounts AGENDA: Private Meeting</p>