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Update

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CONTENTS

[DÁIL ÉIREANN](#)

[SEANAD ÉIREANN](#)

[NEWS](#)

[COMMITTEE MEETINGS](#)

[DEPARTMENTS OF STATE](#)

[CONSULTATION PROCESSES](#)

DÁIL ÉIREANN

This week in the Dáil statements on the Committee Report on the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments in the Lisbon Reform Treaty will be heard. A motion on the Employment Equality Act 1998 will be also be heard and the Taoiseach, the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Health and Children will be taking questions.

Wednesday 4 June

2.30pm

Questions (Minister for Finance)

3.45pm

Leaders Questions

3.59pm

Questions (Taoiseach)

4.44pm

Order of Business

Motion re Risk Equalisation (Amendment) Scheme 2007 (Referral to committee without debate)
Department of Health and Children)

Motion re Employment Equality Act 1998 (Section 12) (Church of Ireland College of Education)
Order 2008 (Referral to Committee Without Debate) (Department of Education and Science)

Dublin Transport Authority Bill 2008 (Seanad) Second Stage Resumed (Department of Transport)

Statements re Committee Report on the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments in the Lisbon
Reform Treaty

Private Members Business (Fine Gael motion – to be announced)

Thursday 5 June

10.30am

Order of Business

Justice Motions (5) (Back from Committee) (Without Debate) (Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform)

Private Members Business (Fine Gael motion – to be announced) (to conclude in 90 minutes)

Motion re Thornton Prison (back from Committee) (to conclude at 3.30pm if not previously concluded) (Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform)

3.30pm

Questions (Minister for Health and Children)

SEANAD ÉIREANN

On Wednesday the Broadcasting Bill 2008 will be debated and statements on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union will be heard. On Thursday statements will be heard on the report of the Joint Committee on European Scrutiny entitled “Special Report on the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments in the Lisbon Treaty Reform”.

Wednesday 4 June

12.00pm

Order of Business

Justice Motions (4) Back from Committee (Without Debate) (Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform)

Motion re Employment Equality Act 1998 (Section 12) (Referral to Committee) (Without Debate) (Department of Education & Science)

Broadcasting Bill 2008 - Committee Stage (Department of Communication, Energy & Natural Resources)

5.30pm

Private Members (Fianna Fáil - Statements on Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union)

7.30 pm

Broadcasting Bill 2008 - Resumed

Thursday 5 June

10.30am

Order of Business

Statements on Report of Joint Committee on European Scrutiny entitled 'Special Report on the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments in the Lisbon Reform Treaty' (Department of Foreign Affairs)

Motion re Thornton Prison (back from Committee) (Without Debate) (Department of Justice equality and Law Reform)

Civil Law (Miscellaneous) Provisions Bill 2006 (Report and Final Stages) (Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform)

NEWS

Minister appoints UCD Consultants to research Establishment of Electoral Commission

The Minister of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government John Gormley TD announced in the Dáil this week that he has appointed consultants to carry out research into the Establishment of an Independent Electoral Commission. The appointed consultants are a group of UCD academics who have come together at UCD's Geary Institute for the purposes of this study. The Group is headed by Professor Richard Sinnott and has already commenced work.

The Minister made this announcement in response to a question from Deputy Phil Hogan, and went on to outline the responsibilities and tasks the new Electoral Commission will undertake: "[The] Electoral Commission will take responsibility for electoral administration and oversight, implement modern and efficient electoral practices, revise constituency boundaries, take charge of compiling a new national rolling electoral register, take over the functions of the Standards in Public Office Commission relating to electoral spending, and examine the issue of financing the political system"

Minister Gormley continued, "The reform project spans the entire electoral agenda and is clearly the most far-reaching and ambitious reform measure affecting electoral administration since the foundation of the State."

The Consultants will consider a number of other issues in relation to the establishment of the Commission including international best practice, the Commission's structure, functions and relationship with other Bodies and the legislation required to enable the Establishment of the Commission.

Minister Ahern says Freedom of Information Act will not be extended to An Garda Síochána

Responding to a question from Deputy Pat Rabbitte in the Dáil this week, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform Dermot Ahern TD said that although consideration had been given to extending the remit of the FOI Act 2007 to An Garda Síochána, it would not be extended at this time.

The Minister explained that a review conducted last year on the extension of the FOI Act to An Garda Síochána considered all factors relevant to the "governance, oversight and accountability of An Garda Síochána" and determined that in the present landscape the extension of the FOI

Act to the Gardaí would place “an excessive administrative burden on its resources as the Force continues to discharge its challenging core duties, in particular that of tackling crime.”

The Minister elaborated on the position saying “Since the passage of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, An Garda Síochána and the regulatory and administrative landscape in which it operates have been undergoing massive change. The Garda Ombudsman Commission was established. The Garda Inspectorate was established and it has produced three Reports with major implications for the structure and operation of the Force. In the past year the senior civilian management positions of Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Communications were created. More civilians are being recruited for key posts as Legal Adviser, Director of Information and Communications Technology and Director of Change Management. At the same time, the ranks of attested members and the numbers of civilian staff have been expanded.”

Pressed by Deputy Rabbitte on the matter in light of the Morris Tribunal and the Freedom of Information Commissioner’s comments recently that Ireland is behind other developed democracies in respect to this area of FOI legislation, the Minister declined to reconsider his position and concluded that there is “oodles of accountability” in the present structure of An Garda Síochána.

Chief Whip welcomes eight-week turnaround period for national parliament deliberation on EU legislation

Speaking to Public Affairs Ireland recently the Chief Whip and Minister for Active Citizenship Pat Carey TD addressed the merits of the Lisbon Treaty with regard to increasing the active role of national parliaments in the legislative process.

Discussing the matter of a democratic deficit created by the transposition of EU legislation as Statutory Instruments the Minister said. “Undoubtedly there was a very significant democratic deficit, and one of the aims of the Convention on the Future of Europe was to try to improve the level of democratic accountability. The Lisbon Reform Treaty tries to address that issue.” The Minister went on to explain that by the time EU legislation makes it to the Irish Committee Room “draft decisions are often advanced to a stage where it is impossible to do much about them”.

However, Minister Carey points out that the Lisbon Treaty will go some distance in addressing this issue. Reforms under the Treaty will introduce an enhanced role for National Parliaments in the EU legislative process whereby the European Commission will refer legislation not only to the European Parliament but also to national parliaments. National parliaments will have an eight-week turnaround period during which legislation will be considered and returned with Observations to Brussels.

Although Minister Carey welcomes heightened engagement with national parliaments on European legislative issues, he also commented “I don’t envy the members of this Dáil or future Dáileanna who have to wade through enormous amounts of legislation. It will not only place demands on the Members of the Dáil and the Committees involved, but will require, and I think the Irish people will have to realise this, significant additional resources, expertises and advisors etc. who can scrutinise and examine these particular Instruments as they come down the track.”

The Joint Committee on European Scrutiny also this week commended the increase in national parliamentary power enabled under the Treaty. The Committee’s recent publication a “Special Report on the Enhanced Role for National Parliaments in the Lisbon Reform Treaty” outlines the use of a yellow card/ orange card system. Under this system a yellow card is issued if within the 8 week turnaround period at least a third of the 18 Parliaments who can vote are against a legislative proposal. When a yellow card is issued the Institution making the proposal must review it. An orange card is issued if more than half the votes are against the proposal. In this the Commission must review the legislation and should the Commission decide to go ahead with the proposal, both the European Parliament (by a majority of votes cast) and the Council of Ministers

(by a majority of 55 per cent) have the power to strike it down. In the Report the Committee stated, "This so-called yellow and orange card system is a major development which will bring National Parliaments directly into the EU decision-making process. The use which is made of this mechanism will depend on the capacity of National Parliaments, individually and collectively, to prepare reasoned opinions within the timescale laid down."

A full interview with Minister Carey will feature in the June issue of the Public Affairs Ireland Journal.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

This week committee meetings will take place on Wednesday and Thursday. The Joint Committee on Transport will meet with the Garda Síochána Carriage Office on Wednesday to discuss taxi licensing issues and the Joint Committee on the Environment, Heritage and Local Government will discuss the Green Paper on Local Government Reform on Thursday.

Wednesday 4 June

The **Select Committee on Arts, Sports, Tourism, Community and Rural Affairs** will meet at 4.15pm in CR4, Leinster House.

Agenda: *2008 Revised Estimates for Public Services – Vote 33 (National Gallery), Vote 35 (Arts, Sports, Tourism) and the 2008 Output Statement for the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism*

The **Joint Committee on Climate Change and Energy** will meet at 11.30am in CR2, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Private Meeting*

The **Joint Committee on the Constitution** will meet at 9.30am in CR1, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Private Meeting*

The **Joint Committee on the Constitutional Amendment on Children** will meet at 5.00pm in CR2, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Private Meeting*

The **Joint Committee on the Environment, Heritage and Local Government** will meet at 2.00pm in CR2, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Green Paper on Local Government Reform [Officials from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government]*

The **Joint Committee on European Affairs** will meet at 2.00pm in CR4, Leinster House.

Agenda: *The Lisbon Reform Treaty [Irish Farmers' Association]*

The **Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs** will meet at 1.30pm in CR3, Leinster House.

Agenda: (a) *Current situation in Somalia [Trócaire and Concern]*
(b) *Tamil Freedom Struggle (Sri Lanka) [Mr Eliahmy Logeswaran]*

The **Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Law Reform and Women's Rights** will meet at 1.00pm in CR1, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Motion re development of a prison in the District Electoral Division of Kilsallaghan in the County of Fingal [Presentation by interested parties]*

The **Select Committee on Justice, Equality, Law Reform and Women's Rights** will meet at 2.00pm in CR1, Leinster House.

Agenda: *2008 Estimates for Public Services – Vote 36 (Defence) and Vote 37 (Army Pensions) and 2008 Output Statement for the Department of Defence*

The **Select Committee on Justice, Equality, Law Reform and Women’s Rights** will meet at 3.45pm in CR3, Leinster House.

Agenda: (a) *2008 Revised Estimates for Public Services – Justice Group of Votes (Nos. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23) and 2008 Output Statement for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform;* (b) *Motion re establishing a Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics*

The **Joint Committee on Justice, Equality Law Reform and Women’s Rights** will meet at 6.15pm in CR3, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Motions re (a) Convictions in the Member States of the EU in the course of new criminal proceedings; (b) Cooperation between the special intervention units of the Members States of the EU in crisis situations; (c) Protection of personal data processed in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters; (d) Stepping up of cross-border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime; and (e) development of a prison in District Electoral Division of Kilsallaghan in the County of Fingal (resumed)*

The **Joint Committee on Transport** will meet at 3.45pm in CR1, Leinster House.

Agenda: (a) *Forthcoming European Transport Council Meeting [Minister for Transport]* (b) *Taxi licensing issues [Garda Síochána, Carriage Office]*

Thursday 5 June

The **Joint Committee on Communications, Energy and Natural Resources** will meet at 9.30am in CR1, Leinster House.

Agenda: *East/West Interconnector [Mr Dermot Byrne, CEO, EirGrid]*

The **Joint Committee on Education and Science** will meet at 9.30am in CR2, Leinster House.

Agenda: *Standardised pay and conditions of employment for IMPACT members employed as school secretaries and caretakers [IMPACT]*

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

The Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources Eamon Ryan TD has launched the Charles Parsons Research Initiative (CPI) in the University of Limerick. The Charles Parsons Energy Research grant enabled the establishment of the CPI and 4th level energy research at Irish Universities. Under the CPI, research awards will fund 20 researchers, 34 PhD studentships and 154 undergraduate posts in sustainable energy. Minister Ryan said, “The Awards Scheme compliments Science Foundation Ireland’s recent announcement that they will take on energy as a third pillar, as envisaged in the Programme for Government.” Details of funding awarded under the CPI are available on the Departmental website www.dcmnr.gov.ie

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Mary Coughlan TD has signed into Irish law the European Communities (Cross-Border Mergers) Regulations 2008. The

Regulations transpose into Irish legislation Directive 2005/56/EC on Cross-Border Mergers and have immediate effect. The Directive enables limited liability companies in the EEA, which are entitled to merge within their own borders, to merge across EEA borders. The Tánaiste said, "This Directive forms part of a package of measures in the EU Financial Services Action Plan designed to facilitate corporate restructuring. It, along with measures such as the Takeovers Directive and European Company Statute, offers a broad range of mechanisms, and provides flexibility regarding the ways by which European companies may choose to restructure".

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government John Gormley TD has mandated the Dublin Regional Authority to establish a Special Taskforce to advise on the Future of Dublin Bay. The Taskforce will report to the Minister quarterly on a variety of issues affecting Dublin Bay in the short, medium and long term. These issues will include climate change, flooding, amenity areas and the future of Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ports. Minister Gormley said, "The work of the Dublin Bay Task Force will be immensely important for the future of the Bay. It will have members from all of the relevant interested bodies, including local Elected Representatives, Environmental Groups, the Port Authorities and Dublin Development Authorities."

Minister Gormley also commented this week on the publication of a Report commissioned by Friends of the Earth on the reprocessing operations at Sellafield saying that he would "ask Officials of my Department and the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland to consider carefully the content and implications of this Report and to advise [him] in due course". The Minister went on to discuss the current Programme for Government commitment to the safe decommissioning of Sellafield and highlighted the improvements that have been made in co-operation with the UK authorities in relation to "monitoring, access for the Gardaí and the RPII to Sellafield, and information exchanges." He also commented on progress at EU level saying, "We are supporting efforts by the European Commission to develop an increased safety role across the nuclear industry. The adoption of recent European Council conclusions on the establishment of the EU High Level Regulators Group is a significant development in the area of nuclear safety. We have made our position clear that the transboundary risks of nuclear installations need to be fully reflected in the instruments and structures of the EU".

Department of Finance

The Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan TD has clarified that the recent announcement of a voluntary disclosure initiative by the Revenue Commissioners is targeted at large undisclosed funds held in Irish Bank and Building Society Accounts. The Revenue Commissioners have confirmed that the initiative only applies where taxable funds of over €100,000 were not declared for tax purposes.

Department of Foreign Affairs

The Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin TD has registered Ireland's concerns, at his first EU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Brussels, about the latest proposals tabled at the WTO Negotiations. The Minister said "the risk of serious damage to European agriculture from an unsatisfactory WTO Deal must be of grave concern to everyone in Europe, producers and consumers alike. This is particularly the case at a time when food security is looming as potentially a major issue for the future. We are concerned that new market realities and emerging food security issues are being ignored in the rush towards an early Deal." The Minister went on to

say, "We want a WTO Agreement as much as any other Member State, but it must be fair and balanced in respect of what the EU is being asked to concede and what it is receiving in return. We are determined to continue working with other Member States so as to ensure that any outcome to these negotiations will not result in our key interests being sacrificed."

Department of Health and Children

The Minister for Equality, Disability Issues and Mental Health John Moloney TD has welcomed the publication of the 2007 Mental Health Commission Annual Report and the Report of the Inspector of Mental Health Services. Since the Mental Health Act 2001 there have been significant changes in mental health services. However, while the Report emphasises good practice in the mental health area and the use of resources in an imaginative and innovative way, it also identifies a number of areas of concern. Specific areas where more progress is considered necessary include child and adolescent mental health services and mental health services for people who have an intellectual disability. Minister Moloney said, "This Government is committed to ensuring that services are developed in line with the recommendations in this Report".

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform Dermot Ahern TD has launched the "Access to Employment" Strand of the 2008 – 2013 Equality for Women Measure which makes €61m available under the National Development Plan to support positive actions for women. The new Equality for Women Measure follows the success of the 2007-2007 measure which directly benefited 41,000 women. The new measure has four strands; these will be launched sequentially and will address labour market activation, entrepreneurship for women, initiatives to support the advancement of women already in the labour market and increasing the number of women in decision-making positions. A further development under the new Equality for Women Measure allows Groups to apply for funding for periods of up to three years. Minister Ahern commented, "This is a very positive development which will give projects the capacity to build upon their achievements and to offer their developmental programmes to many different groups of women over the life of the initiative." Details of funding application processes and application forms are available online at www.pobal.ie. More information on the "Access to Employment" strand of the measure is available from the Departmental website www.justice.ie

Minister of for Integration Conor Lenihan TD has welcomed the publication of an Immigration Council of Ireland Report on the Integration of Migrants. The Minister will appoint a Task Force on integration shortly and anticipates that the Report will be "a valuable contribution to [their] work."

Department of Social and Family Affairs

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs Mary Hanafin TD anticipates that the Government will announce a new Framework for the Future of Pensions Policy by the end of 2008. Speaking at the end of a public consultation process on the Government's Green Paper on Pensions, Minister Hanafin said, "At present we have almost 6 workers for every person of pension age. By 2060, we will have fewer than two. This huge shift has already started and will put increasing pressure on the State's pension system." The Green Paper contains measures to cope with this scenario including improved tax incentives for private pensions and compulsory pensions. It also draws on the experience of a variety of other States in respect to pension planning.

Department of Transport

The Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey TD has welcomed news that Ireland has been admitted to the prestigious "White List" of top performing Shipping States in the World. Meeting in Greece last week the Executive Committee of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (the Paris MoU) decided to place Ireland on the list in recognition of the improvements in recent times of safety standards aboard Irish registered ships. Obtaining this status is testament to Ireland's operating a high quality Shipping Register. For Irish ships this improved status will mean a reduction in the number of inspections which in turn will have monetary and efficiency benefits for shipping operators. It will also facilitate operators raising international finance and competing for business with other international operators.

CONSULTATION PROCESSES

National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016 – Public Consultation Meetings

The Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy, Pat Carey TD, and the Steering Group established to develop proposals for a new Strategy, invite members of the public to an ongoing series of public consultation meetings on the National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016.

The final meeting will take place from 7.00pm to 9.30pm on **Tuesday 3 June** in Croke Park, Dublin 3.

Submissions and views on the development of the new National Drugs Strategy can also be sent in writing or by email to:

Ms Linda O'Rourke
Drugs Strategy Unit
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Dún Aímhígin
43-49 Mespil Road
Dublin 4

Email: nationaldrugsstrategy@pobail.ie

Public Consultation on Increasing Affordable Housing Supply Report

The Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas has published a Report of a Study commissioned by the Affordable Homes Partnership (AHP) on Increasing Affordable Housing Supply.

The Report contains recommendations relating to six main areas:

- the strategic planning and management of delivery
- improving delivery through existing mechanisms
- the provision of a standard affordable housing product (shared equity)
- removal of the time-limit on the clawback mechanism
- management of the stock of affordable housing
- involvement of the private financial institutions.

A number of the recommendations, particularly those relating to improving project management, are already being implemented, but the Report also recommends several new initiatives which the Minister considers should be subject to wider consultation. He has therefore launched a general consultation and will also be discussing the report with the Social Partners and with housing practitioners. The Report is available online at www.chr.ie

Written submissions should be sent to

Mary Bruton
Centre for Housing Research
57 – 61 Lansdowne Road
Dublin 4

The deadline for submissions is **30 May 2008**.

Green Paper on Pensions

The Department of Social and Family Affairs is holding a consultation process regarding the recently published Green Paper on Pensions.

The consultation process is open until **31 May 2008**.

Submissions can be sent by post to the Department at:

The Department of Social and Family Affairs
Áras Mhic Dhiarmada,
Store Street,
Dublin 1

Or by email:

pensionsgreenpaper@welfare.ie

Or online via a special website set up by the department:

www.pensionsgreenpaper.ie

Public Consultation on Legislation to Control the Use of Sun Beds

The Minister for Health and Children Mary Harney TD wishes to consult the public in relation to the introduction of legislation to control the use of sun beds. Members of the public and interested parties are invited to submit their views on the following matters:

- Prohibiting the use of sun beds by persons below the age of 18 years
- Controls on the sale and/or rental of tanning machines
- Supervision/lack of supervision in places where tanning services are offered
- Warning labels on sun beds and in relevant premises
- Exemptions for medical use
- Inspections to ensure compliance
- Registration with competent authority

Submission should be made to the Department of Health and Children by 5.30 pm on **Friday 13 June 2008**.

Public Consultation on Combined Text and Photo Warnings on Tobacco Products

The Minister for Health and Children Mary Harney TD is to introduce legislation, following a consultation process, to enable the introduction of combined text and photo warnings on tobacco products in accordance with the 2001 European Commission Directive on the Manufacture, Presentation and Sale of Tobacco Products. 14 warnings to be used on the Irish market have been identified and these can be viewed online at www.dohc.ie

Submissions should be forwarded by post to:

Public Consultation
Tobacco Control Unit
Department of Health & Children
Hawkins House, Dublin 2

Or by e-mail to: tobaccoconsultation@health.irlgov.ie.

Closing date for receipt of submissions is 5.30pm on **Friday 20 June 2008**.

Sale of raw (unpasteurised) sheep and goat's milk: call for submissions

In the interest of public health protection and as provided for in Article 10(8) of EU Regulation No. 853 of 2004 (laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin) as amended, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food intends to introduce national measures restricting the placing on the market of raw milk from all species intended for direct human consumption. The restrictions will include the complete ban on the sale of cows' raw milk for direct human consumption.

Before making a decision on prohibiting the sale of goats and sheep raw milk for direct human consumption, the Minister has initiated a public consultation process to examine this aspect of the proposal.

Submissions should be made to:
Mairéad Broderick
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Milk Policy Division
Grattan House
Grattan Business Park
Portlaoise
Co. Laois

Email: mairead.broderick@agriculture.gov.ie.

The closing date for submissions is **20 June 2008**.

Consultation Process on the Liberalisation of the Postal Sector

A public consultation process in relation to the recent European Directive which sets out the Final Steps for Liberalising the Postal Sector EU-wide from 1st January 2011, has been announced. The liberalisation of the postal market began in 2000 with the transposition of two previous European Directives. This third Directive sets out requirements for Member States on the provision of a high quality postal service, liberalisation within their postal networks and on the maintenance of a Universal Service Obligation. The Universal Service Obligation places a statutory obligation on every Member State to provide a certain standard of postal service. An Post is the designated universal service provider in Ireland.

The closing date for contributions is **25 June 2008**.

Contributions can be made via an online forum:

www.dcenr.gov.ie/communications/postal

Or submitted by email, post or fax to:

Postal Consultation
Communications (Postal) Division
Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 2.

Email: postalconsultation@dcenr.ie

Phone: 01-6782954

Lo-Call: 1890 449 900

Fax: 01-6782919

Public Consultation on Transport Access for All - the Transport Sectoral Plan under the Disability Act 2005

Transport Access for All was published in 2006 as the Transport Sectoral Plan for improving the accessibility of public transport in Ireland. It sets out a series of policy objectives and targets for accessible transport across all modes of transport.

The Department is currently reviewing Transport Access for All in line with the commitment in the present Plan.

The Plan is available for viewing in both Irish and English via a link on the Department of Transport website www.transport.ie

Submissions are invited on matters which should be given consideration in a Review of the present Plan.

A Guidance Note has been prepared to assist with making a submission. In addition, people with disabilities are being invited to respond to a brief survey about their current experience of public transport. Links to both of these facilities are also available on the Department's website.

Submissions should be sent to:

Sectoral Plan Review

Public Transport Access Division

Department of Transport

44 Kildare St

Dublin 2

Tel: 01 - 6041644

Submissions can also be made by fax to: 01 - 6041688 or by e-mail to:
PTAccessibility@transport.ie

The submission deadline is **Friday 27 June 2008**.

Public Consultation on vessel registration

The Department of Transport is reviewing Ireland's policy on the registration of vessels on the Irish flag. The new proposals will have implications for many vessel owners, in particular those who were not previously required to register their vessels.

The objective is to develop a modern and comprehensive Central Register which will not only provide a record of vessels on the Irish flag, but will also facilitate the increasing emphasis on safety, security and environmental issues in meeting our Flag State obligations.

The Department is seeking feedback on the issues surrounding vessel registration to aid in the preparation of new legislation that will govern vessel registration into the future.

The deadline for submission is **30 June 2008**

Email: vesselregister@transport.ie

Post: Vessel Registration Consultation
Irish Coast Guard & Maritime Administration
Floor 4
Lesson Lane
Dublin 2

Submissions can also be made online at www.vesselregister.ie

Voluntary Consumer Protection Code for Credit Unions – Consultation Procedure

The Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority is inviting submissions in relation to the Voluntary Consumer Protection Code for Credit Unions. The closing date for submissions is **30 June 2008**.

All submissions will be made available on the website of the Financial Regulator after the deadline has passed. Submissions should be marked 'Credit Union Code' and sent to:

Consumer Protection Codes Department

Financial Regulator

PO Box 9138

College Green

Dublin 2

Email: creditunioncode@financialregulator.ie

Fax: 01-4104969

The full text of the Consultation Paper can be found at: www.financialregulator.ie

Consultation Paper on new draft Animal and Welfare Bill

The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Brendan Smith TD has published a Consultation Paper on a new draft Animal Health & Welfare Bill.

The Consultation Process offers stakeholders and other interested parties an opportunity to contribute to the preparation of a modern and comprehensive Bill suitable for use in the 21st century. Minister Smith describes the Consultation Paper as a significant step in the delivery of commitments in the Programme for Government to introduce a new Animal Health Bill, to consolidate and amend previous legislation to reflect the changed disease status of Irish animals, as well as a comprehensive Animal Welfare Bill, updating existing legislation, to ensure that the welfare of animals is properly protected and that the penalties for offenders are increased significantly.

Submissions should be made to:

Mr Peter Fallon

Animal Health & Welfare Bill Section

4th Floor

Agriculture House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

Telephone: 01-6072000 Ext: 3123

E-mail: AHWBill@agriculture.gov.ie

The deadline for submissions is **Friday 11 July 2008**.

Consultation Process- proposed Directive on Industrial Emissions

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government invites comments from interested parties on the proposed Directive on Industrial Emissions (COM(2007) 844 final).

The proposed Directive revises and consolidates seven separate existing Directives related to industrial emissions into a single Directive. The Directive proposes to amend and simplify existing legislation related to industrial emissions which applies minimum standards for the prevention and control of industrial emissions across the whole Community.

Further information is available from the Department website at:

www.environ.ie/en/Environment/IndustrialEmissionsDirectiveConsultationProcess

Submissions should be made by email or by post to the addresses below:

environmentpolicy@environ.ie

Environment Policy Section

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Room 2.45

Custom House

Dublin 1

Comments received may be made available publicly on the Department's website.

The closing date for submissions is **25 July 2008**.