

Service level Agreement between Waterways Ireland and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

1. Introduction

Waterways Ireland is the largest of six North South Implementation Bodies, established under the British/Irish Agreement Act 1999 and the North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999. It is funded and sponsored jointly by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (the Sponsor Departments) and operates under the policy direction of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and the two Governments, and is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development, restoration and promotion of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes.

It has responsibility for approximately 1,000km of navigable waterways, comprising:

- the Barrow Navigation;
- the Erne System;
- the Grand Canal;
- the Lower Bann Navigation;
- the Royal Canal;
- the Shannon-Erne Waterway; and
- the Shannon Navigation.

Waterways Ireland's remit was extended by the North South Ministerial Council in July 2007 to include responsibility for the reconstruction of the Ulster Canal from Upper Lough Erne to Clones and following restoration, for its management, maintenance and development, principally for recreational purposes.

This Performance/Service Level Agreement (SLA) is a performance contract in which an agreed level of service is formalised between both Sponsor Departments and Waterways Ireland. This is to ensure that resources are used in an efficient and cost effective manner to deliver quality services to the public. The SLA sets out Waterway's Irelands targets for 2015 and defines the output and outcome indicators on which performance will be measured.

2. Corporate Governance

Waterways Ireland agrees to the requirements set out in the Financial Memorandum governing the organisation, including:

- Accountability arrangements;
- Timely provision of Annual Reports and Accounts;
- Preparation and submission of Business Plans to Sponsor Departments in a timely manner;
- Compliance with all relevant statutory provisions, including Data Protection, Child Protection and the Freedom of Information Code of Practice, North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Ltd;
- Provision of information within timeframes determined by Sponsor Departments in relation to Parliamentary Questions, Ministerial Representation and other information requests;
- Provision of data and information requested by Sponsor Departments, in preparation for and at regular Monitoring Meetings;
- Provision of data and information requested by Sponsor Departments arising from NSMC meetings;
- Maintenance of robust audit and risk arrangements; and
- Implementation of actions to ensure compliance with public administrative and financial procedures and related practices;

3. Objectives of the Agreement

The key objectives of this agreement are:

- to define Sponsor Departments expectations of the organisation for the year;
- to define the inputs, outputs and expected outcome of the organisation's activities;
- to measure performance of those activities through monitoring of agreed targets, output and outcome indicators; and
- to define the responsibilities of the Sponsor Departments to Waterways Ireland.

4. Mutual Commitments

- Both parties commit to proactive and timely communications, cooperation and information sharing on service delivery;
- Both parties support the effective achievement of agreed targets as well as the promotion of partnership, responsiveness and mutual cooperation in their ongoing interactions;
- Both parties support prompt and timely responses to correspondence, information requests and related matters; and
- Both parties commit to keep each other fully apprised and updated on all key issues.

Sponsor Departments will provide the following supports to Waterways Ireland to enable it to fulfil its mandate:

- Provide timely sanction for expenditure and staffing in line with Public Financial Procedures;
- Provide updates on Public Financial Procedures and Civil Service HR Policy Guidelines;
- Provide guidance on Civil Service HR Policy, public expenditure, remuneration and industrial relations, procurement and contracts, Cross Border Body Accounting and Governance;
- Provide guidance on new legislative requirements;
- Liaise and provide advice and guidance on Public Service Reform initiatives; and
- Work with Waterways Ireland in an efficient and effective way, including processing requests in a timely manner.

5. Inputs

Waterways Ireland	2015 Total €'000	DCAL Contribution €'000	DCAL Contribution £'000	DAHG Contribution €'000
Capital	3,663	295	239	3,368 ¹
Current – Pay	16,254	2,159	1,749	14,095
Current - Non-pay	7,369	1,406	1,139	5,963
Staff Numbers Target	331			

Exchange Rate €1:£0.81

¹ Includes additional sum of €161,645 from DAHG in respect of Ulster Canal project.

6. Service Levels and Performance Measurement

Key outputs

Public Service Activity	2014 outputs targets	2014 outputs	2015 outputs targets
Manage and maintain the 1,000 km of navigation in our care to provide safe, open and accessible public recreational space.	Keep 95% of our navigation, open from April to October.	The maintenance programme for 2014 was completed. 99.08% of waterways remained open from April to October 2014.	Keep 95% of our navigation, open from April to October.
	Consult and submit Canal Bye-Laws amendments to the appropriate Sponsor Department for approval by June 2014.	Revised draft Canal Bye-Laws were prepared and submitted to the appropriate Sponsor Department for approval.	Complete public consultation and submit for implementation amendments to the Erne Bye-Laws by year end. Progress amendments to Canals Act 1986 (Bye-laws 1988), as appropriate.
Inspire more people to discover and enjoy recreational activities on the inland waterways, and to explore these rich environment and heritage attractions.	Support 90 events along the waterways through sponsorship and practical and technical assistance by year end.	During 2014 sponsorship support was offered to 105 events with 94 taking place. Highlights included the Enniskillen Canoe Polo Competition on the Erne System and Waterways Ireland Shannon-Erne Mid-Summer Festival in Leitrim Village.	Support 100 events along the waterways through sponsorship and practical and technical assistance by year end.
	Deliver Education Programme to an additional 50 schools by year end.	This target was achieved and the Education Programme was expanded with the development of a schools' walking tour exploring the history of the Grand Canal Dock.	Expand delivery of the Education Programme to an additional 50 schools by year end. Complete a canal oral heritage programme by year end

Public Service Activity	2014 outputs targets	2014 outputs	2015 outputs targets
	Develop 2 new partnerships to care for a section of waterway or associated facility by year end.	3 new community partnerships to care for the waterways were developed. Mountjoy Prison and Dublin Institute of Technology provided support for care of the canals in Dublin and the community organisation 'Row the Erne' in Enniskillen provided similar support for the Erne waterway system.	Develop 2 new partnerships to care for a section of waterway by year end.
	Develop a programme to use e-technology to support effective information management and promotion to include the introduction of Voice Over Internet Protocol by year end.	The "Lakeland Treasures" app which is available free has created a guide to the top heritage attractions adjacent to the navigations. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) was implemented to replace the existing telephony system.	Deliver a programme of industry workshops, provision of marketing collateral and further development of Lakeland Treasures Heritage App in collaboration with the Lakeland and Inland Waterways Partnership by year end. Increased use of Digital Communication Tools to generate awareness and interest in the organisation in general and the waterways archive in particular.
Focus future development on unlocking opportunities to achieve recreational growth, and economic and social development.	Complete delivery of a Houseboat facility at Sallins on the Grand Canal by year end.	New facilities were developed at Sallins, Co Kildare to provide 255 m of moorings; 210 m long term extended moorings and 45 m short term moorings.	Secure Departmental and NSMC consent to proceed with Dublin Dockland Strategic Development Plan by year end.

Public Service Activity	2014 outputs targets	2014 outputs	2015 outputs targets
	2 new Canoe Trails completed by year end.	Development works on the Shannon Blueway continuing from Drumshanbo to Carrick-on-Shannon. 63 km of canoe trail on the Shannon-Erne Waterway completed by year end and 10km trail on the Camlin River Loop. Liaison ongoing with key stakeholders and all Blueways being developed in partnership with Canoeing Ireland, National Trails Office, and Local Authorities.	2 new trails completed by year end.
	Support the development of 2 new businesses along the waterways by year end.	Waterways Ireland supported the development of 3 new businesses along the waterways in 2014. These comprised new cruise hire business and new hire service for kayaks and other non-motorised vessels operating on the Shannon-Erne Waterway and a lunchtime food market on the banks of the Grand Canal at Charlemont Place in Dublin.	Support the development of two new businesses along the waterways by year end.

Public Service Activity	2014 outputs targets	2014 outputs	2015 outputs targets
	Develop partnerships with stakeholders to promote the refurbishment and reuse of Carlow Lock House and the 27 th Lock House on the Barrow Navigation by year end.	<p>2 navigation properties developed with stakeholders:</p> <p>Carlow Lock house: Lease has been executed.</p> <p>Collector's House, Longwood, Co Meath: Lease has been executed.</p> <p>27th Lock house, Athy, Co Kildare: work progressing with Kildare County Council to lease this property as a water recreation base.</p>	Complete the refurbishment and reuse of two navigation properties in partnership with relevant stakeholders by year end.
Progress the development of the Ulster Canal	N/A	N/A	Commence delivery of the restoration of 2.5km of the Ulster Canal from Upper Lough Erne to Castle Saunderson
Re-organise and optimise the use of our resources to deliver a high quality public service, and achieve budget efficiencies.	Ensure services are delivered within the allocated budget.	Services delivered within allocated budget	<p>Review operating costs and implement programme to achieve a 4% reduction by year end.</p> <p>Review Fleet and Plant requirements and implement a programme to achieve an overhead reduction of 4% by year end.</p>
Explore and develop opportunities to earn income to fund future investment in the inland waterways.	Prepare a report on navigational charges on the canals for houseboats and boat permits, following implementation of the revised Canal Bye-laws for Departmental consideration by year end.	A report on navigational charges on the canals for houseboats and boat permits was submitted to the Sponsor Departments as part of the draft revised Canal Bye-Laws.	<p>Implement the 2015 Energy Management Plan by year end.</p> <p>Complete environmental study and submit planning application for Hydro-electric generation at Carnroe on the Lower Bann Navigation by year end.</p>

Public Service Activity	2014 outputs targets	2014 outputs	2015 outputs targets
Continue to develop Waterways Ireland as the respected and valued custodian of the inland waterways.	Comply with the Financial Memorandum, throughout the year.	Waterways Ireland complied with the Financial Memorandum throughout the year.	<p>Develop 2016 Business Plan by July 2015.</p> <p>Agree 2015 Service Level Agreement by end May 2015</p> <p>Produce bi-monthly reports on risk management</p> <p>Submit quarterly reports to Sponsor Departments on audit report recommendations and financial performance.</p> <p>Submit quarterly assurance statements to sponsor Departments.</p>

Context and Impact Indicators

Context & Impact Indicator	2014	2015
Number of vessels registered on Waterways	15,271	15,400
% of Waterways open during April to October	95%	95%

Potential Risk Factors

- Weather is a major influence on the work of Waterways Ireland and can significantly affect the ability to carry out works, the cost of completing works and the amount of work that is needed to maintain the navigations in an operable state.
- Much of the infrastructure of the Inland Waterways is old, this coupled with restrictions on the funding available for maintenance increases the risk of an infrastructure failure, with significant consequential effects.
- Changes to the 2011 Planning Act are causing delays for Waterways Ireland in carrying out routine maintenance works by requiring planning approval to be obtained and this is impacting on the delivery of work programmes.
- The increasing level of pension payments to be met by Waterways Ireland is placing an additional and increasing financial strain on the organisation's ability to deliver management and maintenance of the navigations, in addition to achieving the required efficiency savings on our funding allocation.
- Exchange rate fluctuations can lead to additional budgetary pressures.

7. Financial Allocation

Sponsor Departments will formally write to Waterways Ireland setting out:

- Current and capital allocations for the year 2015;
- Manner in which payment will be made i.e. monthly with a commitment to ensure that Waterways Ireland has a timely provision of funds to ensure it can meet its immediate financial obligations i.e. for payroll and the prompt payment of invoices.

Waterways Ireland will provide:

- Cash flow statements with each request for draw-down funds;
- Details of the balance in each and every account held by Waterways Ireland with each request for a draw-down of funds (DCAL only);
- Draw-down requests, where required (DAHG only), broken down into their component parts of;
 - Capital
 - Non-pay Current
 - Pay
 - Pension(ongoing cost)
 - Pension Lump Sums
 - Overtime
 - Allowances
 - Employers PRSI

Payment of the full draw-down amount is dependent on compliance with the procedures above and with any further requirements outlined in this document.

In addition, Waterways Ireland agrees to provide:

- Annual profiles of expected draw-down;
- Reconciliations between draw-down and actual expenditure as and when required;
- All information in relation to financial and performance monitoring requests within time-frame determined by Sponsor Departments.

8. Flexibility and Amendment of Targets

Where amendments become necessary, Waterways Ireland will engage with Sponsor Departments to agree on amended targets.

Sponsor Departments will require a progress report on all key deliverables and corporate governance procedures to be provided at each Monitoring Committee Meeting on a quarterly basis.

This SLA will be published on Sponsor Departments' websites and on Waterways Ireland's website.

Máire Killoran

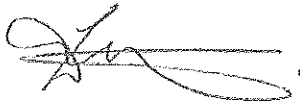
On behalf of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Date: 3 June 2015



On behalf of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Date: 2 June 2015



On behalf of Waterways Ireland

Date: 2 June 2015