

Oireachtas Update



In Dáil Éireann this week, the Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 will reach the report stage, which will be discussed Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Bill aims to provide for the establishment of the Legal Services Regulatory Authority and the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.

This week in the Seanad, the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act will reach the Second Stage on Tuesday, while the Roads Bill 2014 will enter the Committee Stage on Thursday afternoon.

This week's committee meetings will include the a meeting of the joint committee on Education and Social Protection which will discuss future funding for Higher Education and the proposal for the reform of the student grant system for third level education, taking place on Wednesday. There will also be Pre-legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 on Thursday.

IEDR findings show 60% of SME's with websites have no online sales capabilities

IEDR, a body established to monitor '.ie' domains, has recently published a survey in which the examined over 500 SME's online presence.

The survey found that 91% of those with websites could not process sales directly through their websites. 60% of those had absolutely no capability to take sales orders through their websites.

Further, over half of the websites had no way of connecting with the customer at all, through social media or chat functions.

The IEDR administers a grant every year. This year's OPTIMISE grant is worth €150,000 and is intended to help SMEs develop a new website for the company.

Ryanair to reduce Aer Lingus stake to "no more than 5%"

In February 2015, UK competition watchdog The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) ordered Ryanair to reduce their stake in competitor Aer Lingus to no more than 5%. One of the issues regarding competition stated that Ryanair's large stake in the business may deter other airlines from trying to buy Air Lingus.

Ryanair contested the ruling under the premise that IAG have expressed interest in the purchase of the smaller airline, and they should therefore not be forced to reduce their stake. They therefore requested the CMA consider a material change of circumstances.

A CMA statement on Friday 17 April stated that their provisional view is that no material change exists, and therefore the ruling should stand.

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Homelessness crisis highlighted

Last week (Monday 13 April) a proposal was made to refurbish the O'Devaney Gardens housing project in order to house 64 homeless families. Those in favour said it would provide a temporary solution to the crisis unprecedented numbers living on the streets, particularly whole families left without accommodation. Those against the proposal urged a more thoroughly outlined plan.

The proposal was denied on Wednesday 15 April until it could be discussed in greater detail by the relevant bodies. It has, however, brought focus to the homelessness crisis, especially in the capital.

Discussion of the crisis reached Dáil Éireann on Thursday 16 April.

The question was raised regarding the fact that "rents have risen up to 15% or 20% in urban areas", and the reduction in aid for those who are at risk of homelessness. The Tánaiste's response urged people to seek out the aid of community welfare officers, and stressed that emergency accommodation is "not a permanent solution".

Taoiseach advises against bus workers' industrial action

Ahead of the planned industrial action of Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann staff on 1 May, 2015, the Taoiseach Enda Kenny has stated that the position of the Government is one which prioritises the highest level of service to consumers. He also commented on the need of the NTA to balance direct award and tendered public service obligation services. Bus Éireann and Dublin Bus are entitled to tender for the 10% for which privatisation is proposed.

The NBRU announced the planned industrial action on Monday 13 April.

PAI BLOG

Working Group on Seanad Reform's 2015 Report, examined

By PAI

<http://tinyurl.com/ln446wk>

Transatlantic Trade Talks:

What the new EU/USA Agreement might mean for Ireland?

By Tom Ferris

<http://tinyurl.com/lwtar2l>

DAIL

Tuesday 21 April

2.00 p.m.

Questions (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade)

3.15 p.m.

Leaders Questions

3.36 p.m.

Questions (Taoiseach)

4.36 p.m.

Order of Business

5.06 p.m.

Topical Issues

Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 - Report Stage (Resumed)
(Department of Justice and Equality)**7.30 p.m.**

Private Members Business Motion re Self-Employed and SME Sectors (Fianna Fáil)

9.00 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

Wednesday 22 April

9.30 a.m.

Questions (Minister for Education and Skills)

10.45 a.m.Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 - Report Stage (Resumed)
(Department of Justice and Equality)**12 noon**

Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.

Order of Business

12.51 p.m.

SOS

1.51 p.m.

Topical Issues

2.39 p.m.Health (General Practitioner Service) Bill 2015 - Second Stage (Resumed)
(Department of Health)Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 - Report Stage (Resumed)
(Department of Justice and Equality)**7.30 p.m.**

Private Members Business Motion re Self-Employed and SME Sectors (Fianna Fáil)

9.00 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

Thursday 23 April

9.30 a.m.

Questions (Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government)

10.45 a.m.Legal Services Regulation Bill 2011 - Report Stage (Resumed)
(Department of Justice and Equality)Statute Law Revision Bill 2015 - Order for Second Stage and Second Stage
(Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)**12 noon**

Leaders Questions

12.21 p.m.

Order of Business

Morning Business Continued

4.42 p.m.

Topical Issues

5.30 p.m.

Dáil Adjourns

Friday 24 April

10.00 a.m.

Industrial Relations (Members of the Garda Síochána and the Defence Forces) Bill 2015

12 noon

"Report on Land Use – maximising its potential" Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

2.00 p.m.

Dail Adjourns

SEANAD

Tuesday 21 April

2.30 p.m.

Commencement Matters

3.30 p.m.

Order of Business

4.45 p.m.Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2015 - Committee Stage
(Department of Social Protection)

Seanad Adjourns

Wednesday 22 April

10.30 a.m.

Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.

Order of Business

12.45 p.m.Statements on NCSE Inclusion Support Services
(Department of Education)**2.30 p.m.**Sport Ireland Bill 2014 – Second Stage
(Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)**5.00 p.m.**

Private Members Business (Fianna Fáil Senators)

7.00 p.m.

Seanad Adjourns

Thursday 23 April

10.30 a.m.

Commencement Matters

11.30 a.m.

Order of Business

12.45 p.m.Roads Bill 2014 - Committee Stage
(Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)

Seanad Adjourns

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday 21 April

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 11.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: The North South Interconnector [Mr. Fintan Slye, CEO, Eirgrid]

Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 1.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Scrutiny of EU legislative proposals: Schedule B: COM(2015)20; COM(2015)21; COM(2015)30; COM(2015)33; COM(2015)48; COM(2015)49; and
(ii) The potential for job creation, innovation and balanced economic development in the creative economy
Session A: 1.45 p.m.
[Representatives from NUI Galway; Teagasc; and Western Development Commission]; and
Session B: 3 p.m.
[Representatives from Design and Crafts Council of Ireland and TG4]

Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Challenges in the indigenous fruit and vegetables sector in Ireland [Representatives of Irish Farmers' Association Vegetable Committee]

Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2.15 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 3.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Fisheries (Joint sub) CR3, LH 2000 4.15 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Wednesday 22 April

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
Session A: 9.30 a.m.
[Mr. Frank Daly, Chairman and Mr. Brendan McDonagh, CEO, National Asset Management Agency (NAMA)]; and
Session B: 2.30 p.m. [Mr. Frank Daly, Chairman and Mr. Brendan McDonagh, CEO, National Asset Management Agency (NAMA)]

Transport and Communications (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Road Traffic Bill 2014 (resumed) [Mr. Conor Faughnan, AA Ireland; and Ms. Moya Murdock, CEO, Road Safety Authority]

Foreign Affairs and Trade (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Bi-lateral relations between Ireland and Kenya and the current situation in Kenya, with particular reference to the activities of Al-Shabaab [H.E. Mr. Richard A. Opembe, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya to Ireland];
(ii) Motion re. the case of Mr. Ibrahim Halawa [Senator Mark Daly]; and
(iii) Motion re. the impact of the Armenian Genocide on the Armenian people [Senator Mark Daly]

Education and Social Protection (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 1 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Future funding for Higher Education [Mr. Peter Cassells, Chairman, Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education]; and
(ii) Proposal for the reform of the student grant system for third level education [Union of Students in Ireland (USI)]

Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: Overview of the Banking Sector in Ireland [Mr. David Duffy, Chief Executive Officer, Allied Irish Bank]

Justice, Defence and Equality (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2.30 p.m.
AGENDA: Private Meeting

Public Service, Oversight and Petitions (Joint) CR3, LH 2000 (a) 4 p.m. (P)
(b) 4.30 p.m. (T)
AGENDA:
(a) Private; and
(b) Public Petitions received

Thursday 23 April

Health and Children (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Session A: 9.30 a.m.
Pre-Legislative Scrutiny on the General Scheme of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 (resumed) [Minister for Health and Dr. Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health]; and
Session B: 11.15 a.m.
"Alcohol consumption: Does the apple fall far from the tree?" - BT Young Scientist Winners, 2015 [Mr. Ian O'Sullivan and Ms. Eimear Murphy, transition year students from Coláiste Treasa, Kanturk, County Cork]

Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (Joint) CR1, LH 2000 9.30 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: Witnesses before the Banking Inquiry
Session A: 9.30 a.m.
[Mr. Dermot Gleeson, former Chairman, Allied Irish Bank]; and
Session B: 2.30 p.m.
[Mr. Donal Forde, former Managing Director, AIB Bank (ROI)]

Public Accounts CR3, LH 2000 10 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: (i) Business of the Committee; and
(ii) Comptroller and Auditor General Appropriation Accounts 2013
a. Vote 39: Health Service Executive
b. Chapter 14: Procurement by the Health Service Executive [Officials from the Health Service Executive and from the Department of Health]

Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement (Joint) CR4, LH 2000 10.15 a.m. (T)
AGENDA: North/South Cooperation in Food Safety and Initiatives to promote healthy eating and combat obesity [SafeFood Ireland]

European Union Affairs (Joint) CR2, LH 2000 2 p.m. (T)
AGENDA: European Semester: Engagement on the National Reform Programme
Session A
[Minister of State for European Affairs]; and
Session B
[Representatives from the Committee of the Regions - Councillor Mary Freehill, Head of Delegation, Dublin City Council; Councillor Neale Richmond, DLR Co. Council; Councillor Maria Byrne, Limerick City and Co. Council; Councillor Enda Stenson, Leitrim Co. Council and Councillor Rose Conway Walsh, Mayo Co. Council]



Public Affairs Ireland

Industrial Relations Conference 2015

*Innovations in Workplace Dispute Resolution
In Ireland*

Wednesday, 6th May 2015

The Westin Hotel

Dublin 2

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#disputeres15