



**An Roinn Airgeadais
Department of Finance**

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E159/20/09

19th March, 2009

Circular 6/09: Arrangements for eGovernment

A Dhuine Uasail,

I am directed by the Minister for Finance to advise of new arrangements for enhancing and monitoring progress with eGovernment in keeping with Government Decision S290/05/25/0015D of 15 July 2008 and with the Report of the Task Force on the Public Service, “Transforming Public Services” published in November 2008. The arrangements are applicable to all civil service Departments and Offices and all non-commercial public bodies, agencies and authorities. Each Department and Office is required to bring this Circular to the attention of all bodies and sectors under its aegis and ensure appropriate steps are taken to implement it.

1. Relevant References

The Department of Finance has established a website on eGovernment matters at <http://www.ict.gov.ie/egov>. Amongst other things, the website contains –

- a synopsis of Government Decision S290/05/25/0015D;
- a definition of eGovernment (this definition is subject to change over time as priorities and opportunities develop);
- details on a number of central eGovernment services and operations that the Department of Finance has implemented and is in the process of developing (these details will be updated as progress is made); and
- the Department of Finance’s initial report to Government on progress with eGovernment priorities.

The Task Force on the Public Service endorsed the measures in the Government Decision and set out a range of further eGovernment recommendations at Chapter 5 of its report “Transforming Public Services” (see www.bettergov.ie/attached_files/upload/publications/PDF/TPSv2.pdf).

2. Arrangements

The arrangements require all Departments, Offices, Agencies, and all non-commercial public bodies and authorities to –

- (i) appoint a member of staff (who is an officer of rank equivalent to or higher than the rank of Assistant Principal Officer in the civil service) as the primary liaison with the Department of Finance for **all** eGovernment matters, hereinafter referred to as the eGovernment Liaison, and to forward these details to the contact at Section 5 by end April 2009;
- (ii) consider the use of the central operations detailed at www.ict.gov.ie/egov where they would enhance the provision of information and services to citizens and businesses;
- (iii) develop a list of all ongoing, planned and potential eGovernment projects, and for each of these, develop a plan that includes the details set out in the eGovernment Plan Advisory Note available at www.ict.gov.ie/egov. This should include organisation-specific projects and projects of a sectoral or cross-organisational nature;
- (iv) to get these plans approved by the organisation's senior management and submitted by the Accounting Officer to the Department of Finance by end June 2009 for evaluation;
- (v) provide detailed reports on progress on these plans to the Department of Finance **on request** - the reports must be submitted by the designated eGovernment liaison;
- (vi) ensure that all eGovernment proposals and projects comply with the terms and conditions of ICT approval as set out in Department of Finance Circular 2/09;
- (vii) provide the Department of Finance with the URL details of online services for inclusion in the Online Services area of the Government website www.gov.ie; and
- (viii) provide the Department of Finance with a short, simple to understand narrative of each online service that is already in operation, under development, or planned. The narrative should describe the service, how it benefits the public body, and how it benefits the customer.

3. Reports to Government

The Government considered the Department of Finance's initial progress report on eGovernment on 3rd March 2009 – a copy is available on www.ict.gov.ie/egov. The Department is now required to submit eGovernment progress reports to Government every six months, beginning mid-October 2009. These reports will provide a comprehensive update on the evaluated plans and projects of individual Departments, Offices, Agencies, non-commercial public bodies and authorities. In this regard, the timely submission of detailed plans as per Section 2 (iv) and reports on progress as per Section 2 (v) will be vital to properly informing the Government of developments. Reports to Government will also detail engagements to date with various international benchmarking processes as they occur. The Government may, at its discretion, choose to publish all or part of any progress report submitted to it by the Department of Finance.

4. Cabinet Committee on Transforming the Public Service

The Department of Finance will also be providing regular briefings to the Cabinet Committee on Transforming the Public Service. Informal updates may be sought from civil and public service bodies from time to time to facilitate this. In this regard, the provision of the narratives as per Section 2 (viii) is an important first step. The Cabinet Committee may, at its discretion, ask for such narratives to be published.

5. Enquiries

Enquiries concerning this Circular should be made to the eGovernment Policy Unit, Department of Finance (7th Floor, Lansdowne House, Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4), telephone 01 6767571 ext 5132, DDI (01) 604 5132, or e-mail egov@finance.gov.ie.

Mise, le meas,

Jim Duffy

Assistant Secretary