

Scheme 2017-2020

Under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act, 2003



RAU-ADW-0035/01

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1 Introduction.

This scheme has been prepared in accordance with Section 15 of the Official Languages Act, 2003 (“**the Act**”) by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formerly NRA). This is the second three-year scheme prepared and succeeds the first scheme, which commenced in 2014.

Section 11 provides for the preparation by each public body of a statutory scheme detailing the services it will provide:

- through the medium of Irish;
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English.

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

The scheme has been prepared having regard, *inter alia*, to the provisions of the *Official Languages Act, 2003 (Section 9) Regulations, 2008* (Statutory Instrument No. 391 of 2008). The Regulations concerned (“**the 2008 Regulations**”), provide, *inter alia*, for the use of the Irish language only, or the Irish and English languages together, on stationery, signage of public bodies and in recorded oral announcements.

1.1 Preparation of Scheme.

The scheme has been developed in accordance with Guidelines prepared under Section 12 of the Act by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. In developing a scheme, the Guidelines require that a public body shall have regard to the following matters:

- (a) The underlying level of demand for specific services in the Irish language in the context of positive provision.
- (b) The resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the public body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 13(1)(a) of the Act, TII published notice of its intention to prepare a draft scheme. The notice was published on Tuairisc.ie, as well as on TII’s website www.tii.ie. The bilingual notice invited submissions in relation to the preparation of the draft scheme from interested parties.

Fifteen submissions were received and considered in the preparation of the scheme. The submissions largely focussed on the use of Irish on road traffic signs. In this regard, the requirements in relation to the use of Irish on traffic signs are set out in the Traffic Signs Manual, published by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. TII’s commitment to comply with the requirements of the Manual are set out in Section 5.2 of this scheme.

1.2 Objective of Scheme.

The principal aim of this scheme is to consolidate and improve TII's policies and practices in relation to the delivery of our services in the Irish language. This reflects TII's commitment to the full implementation of the provisions of the Act in carrying out our roles and responsibilities.

1.3 Commencement Date of Scheme

This scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It commences with effect from 26 June 2017 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

2 Overview of Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

2.1 Establishment of TII.

Under the Roads Act 2015, the staff and functions of the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) were merged with the National Roads Authority (NRA) with effect from 1 August 2015. Established in 2001, the RPA was responsible for the development of light railway and metro infrastructure, while the NRA, which was established in 1994, has overall responsibility for the development and maintenance of the national road network. The name "Transport Infrastructure Ireland" (TII) was specified by the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport as the name by which the NRA may describe itself for operational purposes following the merger of the two organisations (Statutory Instrument No. 297/2015).

2.2 Mission and Mandate.

Our mission is to provide high quality transport infrastructure and services, delivering a better quality of life and supporting economic growth.

TII's primary function is to provide an integrated approach to the future development and operation of the national roads network and light rail infrastructure throughout Ireland.

2.3 Organisation Structure.

Board.

The Board of TII may comprise up to fourteen members – thirteen ordinary members and a chairperson – appointed by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. Members are appointed on the basis of their experience in relation to roads, transport, industrial, commercial, financial or environmental matters, local government, and the organisation of workers or administration.

Details of the current membership of the board are provided on our website, www.tii.ie.

Business Units.

TII is organised under six divisional teams, as follows:

- Commercial Operations
- Capital Programme Management
- Network Management
- Professional Services
- Corporate Services
- Business Services

Key Stakeholders.

TII interacts with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including:

- Government Departments and Offices, in particular the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, under whose aegis TII operates.
- Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Local authorities.
- The general public.
- Consultants, contractors, etc.
- The European Commission.
- Representative bodies such as the Construction Industry Federation, Engineers Ireland, Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Irish Farmers Association, etc.
- The media.

3 Communications with the Public.

3.1 Level of Service Already Available Through Irish.

TII's Customer Charter includes a commitment to make every effort to accommodate customers who wish to conduct their business with us through Irish. In accordance with the Charter, correspondence received in Irish is answered in Irish and TII publications are, as appropriate, produced in both Irish and English. A range of material is also provided in the Irish language on our website.

This scheme builds on the commitments we make in our Customer Charter by detailing the specific measures and procedures we employ in the conduct of our business in order to meet the requirements of the Official Languages Act, 2003 and the 2008 Regulations.

TII communicates with the public in a variety of ways, including letters, emails, information leaflets, statutory/informational notices, etc. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the 2008 Regulations and

TII's commitment to promote and extend the use of Irish in the course of its business, our communications with the public during the period of this scheme will be made in accordance with the following paragraphs.

3.2 Written Communications.

3.2.1 Stationery

All TII stationery will be in both the Irish and English languages.

The 2008 Regulations introduced a number of specific requirements relating to the use of Irish on the following types of stationery used by public bodies:

- Notepaper.
- Compliment slips.
- Fax cover sheets.
- File/folder covers.
- Labels.
- Envelopes.

Under the Regulations, all such stationery must be available in either Irish only or in both Irish and English.

Bilingual stationery, in conformity with the Regulations, is used in all written communications issued by TII.

3.2.2 Responding to Correspondence.

All correspondence received in Irish will be responded to by TII in Irish.

In accordance with the provisions of the Act, where a person writes to us in Irish (whether by letter, fax or email), the communication is responded to in Irish.

TII is committed to ensuring that the level of service provided in Irish is not of a lower standard than that provided in the English language and has retained the services of an approved Irish/English – English/Irish translation company to assist, as required, staff in providing accurate and efficient responses to correspondence received in Irish.

3.2.3 Mailshots.

TII mailshots will be issued in both the Irish and English languages.

In accordance with Section 9(3) of the Act, unsolicited written communications (e.g. mailshots) issued by TII for the purpose of furnishing information to the public are published in both Irish and English.

3.3 By Phone.

Receptionists are the first points of contact with the public. The policy of TII is to ensure that standard Quality Customer Service (QCS) practice applies in this area, so that:

- Reception staff will give the name of the organisation in Irish and English.
- They are at least familiar with the basic greetings in Irish.
- Suitable arrangements are in place so that they can put members of the public in touch, without undue delay, with the office or officer responsible for offering the service required through Irish, where available.

3.4 Recorded Oral Announcements.

Recorded oral announcements made by TII or on our behalf will be in Irish and English.

Under the 2008 Regulations, public bodies are required to ensure that recorded oral announcements made by them or on their behalf are in Irish or in English and Irish by 1 July, 2013. The Regulations relate to recorded oral announcements by telephone, public address system and computerised answering/messaging system.

Recorded messages on our main switchboard are made in both Irish and English.

3.5 Callers in Person.

Every effort will be made to facilitate callers in person who wish to conduct their business with us through Irish.

As stated earlier, receptionists are the first points of contact with the public. The policy of TII is to ensure that standard Quality Customer Service (QCS) practice applies in this area, so that:

- Reception staff will be capable of greeting members of the public in Irish and will be encouraged to greet members of the public in Irish where appropriate.
- Suitable arrangements are in place so that they can put members of the public in touch, without undue delay, with the office or officer responsible for offering the service required through Irish, where available.

3.6 Website.

We will continue to provide and maintain an Irish language section on our website.

Information regarding the roles and activities of TII is provided in the Irish language section of our website. Over the period of the scheme, we will ensure that key static content on our website is available bilingually.

We will also continue to ensure that all publications, including information leaflets and brochures, that are produced bilingually, will continue to be made available on the Irish version of the website at the same time as the English version.

4 Press Releases and Media Advertisements.

A minimum of 60% of our press releases will be issued bilingually and simultaneously each year over the lifetime of the scheme.

Advertisements in the written media will be in the Irish language and, as may be deemed appropriate, also in the English language.

5 Signage.

The 2008 Regulations place a duty on public bodies to ensure that signs placed by them or on their behalf at any site (including office premises) after 1 March, 2009 (subject to certain exemptions) are in Irish or in English and Irish. The Regulations also impose specific requirements in relation to the text used, e.g. the text in Irish must appear first, must not be smaller than the English text and be as prominent, visible and legible as the text in English.

TII's policy in relation to signage is set out in the following paragraphs.

5.1 Office Signs.

All signs in our offices will comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations.

5.2 Road Traffic Signs.

TII will continue to implement the Irish language requirements for traffic signs, as set out in the Traffic Signs Manual published by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

For the purposes of this scheme, road traffic signs include the following categories of signs:

- a) **Directional signage.**
- b) **Traffic Information** signs, including road works, safety/warning and tolling.

5.3 Scheme Information Signs.

TII will ensure that scheme information signs comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations.

6 Publications.

6.1 Corporate Documents.

TII will publish simultaneously in both Irish and English the following corporate documents:

- Annual Reports.
- Audited Accounts/Financial Statements.
- Corporate Statement of Strategy.
- Customer Action Plan.
- Customer Charter.
- Freedom of Information Manual.

6.2 Information Leaflets, Brochures and Publications.

TII will publish the following information leaflets, brochures and publications simultaneously in both Irish and English:

- TII Information Leaflets.
- Seanda (TII archaeology magazine).
- Toll information leaflets.

TII may from time to time publish various information leaflets and brochures with the aim of informing the general public of our functions and activities in relation to light rail and the national roads development programme and associated matters, including road tolling, the environment and archaeology. Any leaflets, brochures or publications that are distributed by mailshot will be issued in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.2.3 of this scheme.

6.3 Scheme Documentation.

There is a wide variety of scheme documentation published by or on behalf of TII in connection with our national road and light rail schemes. Such documentation may include Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), statutory notices, public consultation documents/questionnaires, technical documents relating to design and construction standards, guidelines relating to environmental and archaeological assessment etc. Our policy in relation to the use of Irish in such documentation is as follows:

Standards/Guidelines.

This category includes technical documents such as the Project Management Guidelines and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, as well as environmental and archaeological guidelines and documentation.

TII technical documents, including engineering, environmental and archaeological standards, guidelines etc., will be published in English only.

Scheme-Specific Documentation.

This category includes scheme information leaflets/brochures, public consultation documentation, including questionnaires, as well as statutory documentation such as Environmental Impact Statements, Compulsory Purchase Orders, Toll Schemes, Bye-Laws, etc.

The following scheme documents will be published in Irish and in English:

- Scheme information leaflets/brochures.
- Public consultation documentation, including questionnaires.
- The Non-Technical Summary volume of Environmental Impact Statements, where the schemes concerned lie either within or in close proximity to a Gaeltacht area.

All other scheme documents will be published in English only.

7 Training and Development.

TII is committed to providing appropriate training and development for our staff to meet our business needs, including the needs of our customers.

We will:

- make available to all our staff appropriate Irish language training opportunities, including within normal working hours;
- promote the refund of fees scheme as a mechanism for encouraging Irish language training;
- provide advice to staff on the range of relevant Irish language classes available outside office hours (e.g., third-level diploma in Irish, Gaelchultúr, Gael-Linn, etc.);
- include language awareness as part of both induction and customer service training courses so as to ensure that staff understand the context and background to TII's Irish language policy and how the policy will affect their work;
- assess all Irish language courses undertaken by staff to ascertain how effectively the courses meet TII's goals, and
- seek to ensure, as Irish language capability within TII develops, that personnel are available to provide Irish language services across the various organisational units of the organisation.

8 Monitoring and Review of Scheme.

The operation of the scheme generally will be monitored and reviewed, as appropriate.

9 Publicising the Scheme.

The scheme will be communicated to our stakeholders and the general public via our website.

A copy of this scheme has also been forwarded to Oifig Choimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.

The English language version of this scheme is the original version.

10 Help and Advice.

This scheme has been prepared to outline TII's policies regarding the use of the Irish language in the context of the Official Languages Act, 2003 and Regulations made under the Act by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Comments and/or requests for further information on the scheme are welcome and should be addressed to our Regulatory & Administration Unit by email at info@tii.ie

A comprehensive range of documentation and information regarding the provisions of the 2003 Act and associated Regulations is available on the following websites;

The Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, <http://www.ahg.gov.ie>

An Coimisinéir Teanga, <http://www.coimisineir.ie>





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