

National Roads Authority

CUSTOMER ACTION PLAN

2007 – 2010



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"Improve quality of life and national economic competitiveness by developing, maintaining and operating the national road network in a safe, cost effective and sustainable manner."

Our Purpose

Foreword by Mr Fred Barry, Chief Executive

The provision of quality customer service has always been central to the National Roads Authority's activities and we are continually striving to improve our business practices in order to provide the highest standards in our dealings with our customers. We are committed to ensuring that the principles of Quality Customer Service are embraced by all staff throughout our organisation.

During 2007 the Authority published our Customer Charter which sets out the levels of service our customers can expect in their dealings with us (copies of our Charter may be obtained by contacting our Publications Unit or by visiting our website www.nra.ie). This Customer Action Plan sets out how the commitments we make in our Customer Charter will be achieved and how our progress will be measured and evaluated over the period 2007 to 2010.



**Fred Barry,
Chief Executive.**

Part 1

Introduction.

1.1 About the National Roads Authority.

The National Roads Authority was established as an independent public body in 1994 and our primary function is to secure the provision of a safe and efficient network of national roads (*section 17 of the Roads Act, 1993*).

There is a general requirement in the 1993 Act for the Authority to have road design, construction and maintenance works undertaken, as far as possible, on its behalf by the relevant local authority. The Authority may, however, perform these functions where it considers that it would be more advantageous to do so for convenience, expediency, effectiveness or cost reasons. In practice, the services of local authorities are generally availed of and the Authority has, accordingly, developed strong working relationships with them in the delivery of the national roads improvement programme.

1.2 Our Strategic Objectives.

The Authority's *Statement of Strategy* for the period 2007 to 2010 identifies the following key strategic objectives:

- Develop the national road network.
- Improve quality of life and national economic competitiveness.
- Contribute to sustainable development.
- Be a dynamic, flexible and quality-driven organisation committed to achieving excellence in our work.

1.3 Our Customers.

In most cases the planning, design, acquisition of lands/properties and implementation of national road projects are functions that are normally carried out by local authorities. The Authority has, accordingly, relatively limited direct contact

with the general public, relating mainly to queries concerning the national road improvement programme and the Authority's operations generally. The Authority, nevertheless, interacts with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including:

- The Department of Transport, under whose aegis the Authority operates.
- Various other Government Departments and Agencies/Offices, in particular the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Finance.
- Local authorities.
- Various committees established by the Oireachtas, including the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee on Transport, as well as public representatives at national and local level.
- 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.

Part 2

Measuring and Evaluating Performance

The Authority has put mechanisms in place to measure and evaluate our performance against the commitments made in our Customer Charter which will be kept under review in order to continuously improve our service.

The following paragraphs detail the various indicators we use to measure our performance.

2.1 National Roads Development Programme.

We will aim to ensure that our programme for the development and maintenance of the network of national roads is implemented efficiently and cost-effectively. Progress will be reported against the strategic objectives set out in our Strategy Statement.

2.2 Contacting the Authority.

Our correspondence, publications and website will provide details of the various ways in which we may be contacted.

Information on the role/staff of the various Units of the Authority will be provided in our Freedom Of Information Guide (*Section 15 Manual*) and on our website.

2.3 Responding to You.

The contact name, telephone number and email address of the person dealing with the matter will be included in all written and email correspondence.

Written Correspondence.

- All correspondence will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
- Full response will issue to all correspondence within 20 working days of receipt or, where this is not possible, an interim reply will issue explaining the position and advising when a substantive response will issue.

- **Telephone.**
 - 90% of calls to our main switchboard will be answered within 5 rings.
 - We will direct callers to the correct member of staff/section.
 - Staff will identify themselves to callers when answering telephone calls.
 - Voicemail messages will be updated as appropriate to indicate staff availability.
 - Wherever possible voicemail messages will be responded to within 1 working day.

- **E-mail.**
 - Automated e-mail responses will be activated by all staff when out of the office.
 - E-mails requiring a response will normally be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.
 - Full response to e-mails will normally issue within 20 working days of receipt or, where this is not possible, an interim reply will issue explaining the position and advising when a substantive response will issue.

2.4 Visitors to our Offices.

- We will provide comfortable reception areas for visitors to our offices.
- Appropriate facilities will be provided for persons with disabilities.
- We will ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations.

2.5 Irish Language.

- We will make every effort to accommodate customers who wish to conduct their business with us through the medium of the Irish language.
- We will reply in Irish to all correspondence received in Irish.
- Our publications will, as appropriate, be produced in both Irish and English.
- We will continue to provide as much material as possible in Irish on our website.

2.6 Equality and Diversity.

- We will ensure that no one is discriminated against in their dealings with the Authority by virtue of their gender, family

status, marital status, religion, age, race, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation or disability, as laid down in the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and Equal Status Act, 2000.

2.7 Websites and Publications.

- We will provide and maintain a website that is easily accessible, up-to-date and informative.
- Publications will be made available on our website simultaneous to other media.

2.8 Suppliers.

- All procurements will be carried out using clear tendering procedures in accordance with Department of Finance and EU requirements.
- Late payments (proportionate to overall number of payments made) will be minimized.

2.9 How We Will Measure Our Performance.

We are committed to using a range of measurement/evaluation tools, both qualitative and quantitative, to measure our performance, such as:

- Feedback and suggestions through customer surveys.
- Using internal management information systems (e.g. Electronic Data Management System).
- Using techniques such as "mystery shopping".

2.10 Customer Complaints Procedure.

- The Authority is committed to providing a quality service to all our customers.

As part of this commitment, the Authority operates a complaints procedure that may be availed of by customers who feel that they may not have been treated adequately, courteously or fairly in their dealings with the staff of the Authority.

Complaints may be made in writing to:

**The Regulatory Manager ,
National Roads Authority,
St. Martin's House,
Waterloo Road,
Dublin 4.**

All complaints will be dealt with fairly, efficiently and confidentially and will be responded to following full and careful consideration of the nature and extent of the complaint.

Complaints received by the Regulatory Manager will be:

- Acknowledged in writing within 5 working days. The acknowledgement letter will indicate the name and telephone number of the person dealing with the matter.
- Responded to within 20 working days (if this is not possible an interim reply will be issued within the 20 working days explaining the up-to-date position).
- Responded to using plain language.