

# CONSTRUCTION

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION

NOVEMBER 2017



# A NEW ERA FOR CONSTRUCTION

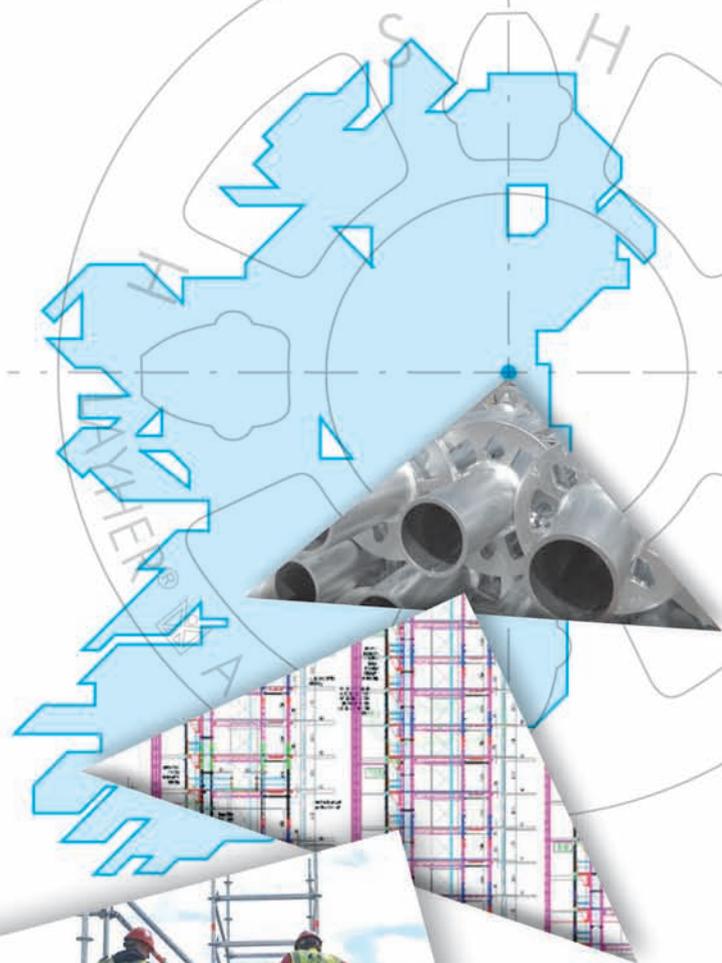


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# EDITORIAL



An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government Eoghan Murphy TD at the CIF Conference 2017.

**T**hroughout this year Construction has reported on what industry experts and those from further afield see as the essential elements required for the construction sector to meet the needs of the Irish economy in a sustainable way, and in doing so break the sector's boom-bust cycles of the past.

At this year's CIF Annual Conference, An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD endorsed the establishment of a Construction Sector Group which will bring together Government Departments, State Agencies and industry to plan for future development in the country. This is one of those vital elements.

Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe's first Budget in which he looked to address housing shortages and finance for builders, as well as set infrastructure development on a solid footing, is another essential element.

The much-anticipated publication of Ireland 2040 Our Plan the National Planning Framework in December should further galvanise the industry, but will certainly give a clearer picture of Government development plans in the years ahead.

While it is great to see all these elements coming together, there is an urgent need

for swift action to make these plans operational if the opportunity is to be seized.

In this issue of Construction, our cover story looks back at CIF Conference 2017, with its theme of 'Realising the Construction Industry's Potential to Build Ireland's Future' and asks how will the construction industry meet the needs of the country in the years ahead. Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform Paschal Donohoe TD speaks exclusively to Construction on what his first Budget will mean for the Construction Industry and the Irish economy. We also bring you in-depth Budget 2018 analysis from CIF experts.

Construction Safety Week 2017 has been the most successful to date, with a record number of contractors and workers participating. We bring you some of the highlights of the week. We also talk to Cleary Doyle MD Brian Byrne, who recently completed 11 years as Chair of the South East Branch.

Elsewhere in this issue, we bring you all the latest CIF News, Events and Industry Analysis as well as Industry News. **C**



Robbie Cousins  
Editor

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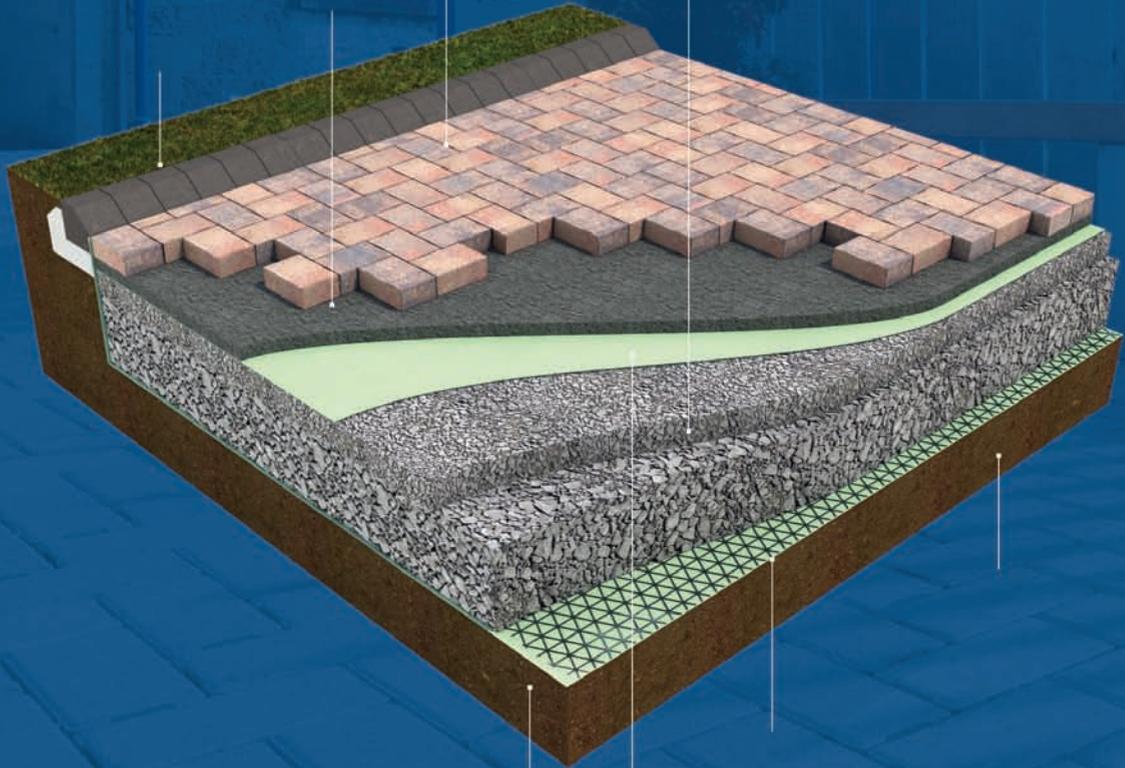
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# CIF NEWS

## SMART INVESTMENT NOW CAN BRING FORWARD A PIPELINE OF WORK FOR SECTOR

A message from CIF Director General, Tom Parlon

**A**s we enter the final weeks of 2017, the scale of what has been achieved by our industry this year is coming into focus. We'll have added 12,000 new employees into the industry, and the value of construction output generated in 2017 will reach €18bn (7.4% of GNP). This is a solid performance, but the headline figures mask underlying challenges that our industry faces in 2018.

Travel down the motorway out of Dublin, and you will pass thousands of construction employees going in the other direction to work. Outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), you won't see cranes holding up the skyline or sites being prepared for essential housing. In 2018, the CIF will continue to highlight that the gap inherent in our two-tier economy is widening.

As we predicted in 2016, the recovery will not occur outside Dublin by itself; the Government must intervene strongly and immediately. With an election likely next year, we will be pushing Government to deliver more activity outside the Dublin area by bringing forward investment for preparatory work in civil engineering projects, increasing the amount of finance available to construction companies outside the GDA and by ensuring public sector contracts are fairer.

This year saw the Government accept the Labour Court's recommendation for a sectoral employment order. Overnight, its introduction has seen a minimum of 10% increase in wages across the board with the introduction of new rates. The Government made the call, which these increases, (above and beyond those requested by the CIF) to introduce the SEO immediately for the sake of industrial peace. However, the CIF will in 2018 continue to work to ensure



CIF Director General  
Tom Parlon

minimal disruption on sites around Ireland while making the case for sensible and sustainable rates and conditions in the industry.

October was a very busy month for CIF with the Budget, the CIF Annual Conference and Construction Safety Week.

In the budget, the Government took some significant steps towards increasing investment in infrastructure and announced a 17% increase in public capital expenditure. The CIF is currently making the case that staving off this investment until 2019 is damaging. Smart investment now in preparatory work can bring forward delivery dates for major infrastructure projects and provide a pipeline of work for our Civil Engineering sector.

The CIF and RSM accountants recently identified a market failure in the availability of finance for construction companies, showing that 63% of construction companies reported

difficulty in accessing finance to fuel viable construction projects. We have consistently made the case that the housing and infrastructure gaps cannot be addressed if companies cannot secure finance. Our survey and ongoing engagement were instrumental in securing €750m in funding in the budget under the new agency Homebuilding Finance Ireland. I was also very pleased to see that Government listened to our industry's concerns and maintained the Help to Buy scheme.

All eyes were on the future of our industry at the CIF Annual Conference on 12 October in Croke Park, where we welcomed an Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Minister Eoghan Murphy TD amongst a number of very impressive international and national speakers and thought-leaders on the issue.

An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar's endorsement of a new Construction Sector Group involving industry and a number of key Government Departments in his address was a very welcome and important step, not only for our industry, but for our country.

Finally, I would like to say a very heartfelt thank you, congratulations and well done to every member company that took part in Construction Safety Week 2017, which ran from 23 – 27 October. This year companies of all sizes and sectors put in a huge effort to help us drive home the health and safety message.

Thank you, the member, for all your support throughout the year. I look forward to working with you throughout 2018. **C**

Tom Parlon



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# SMART INVESTMENT CAN BRING FORWARD DELIVERY DATES FOR MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE

**C**IF has welcomed the Budget 2018 announcement of increased investment in infrastructure at a critical time for the Irish economy saying that measures announced would address the systemic weaknesses in infrastructure investment.

“The Government has taken significant steps towards insulating the economy from external shocks with the announcement of a 17% increase of €790m in public capital,” commented Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF. “This measure will also support other housing measures announced in Budget 2018.

“Recent commitments to increase investment in infrastructure are to be welcomed. The Minister recognises that Ireland, currently last in terms of GDP invested in infrastructure at EU level, must invest. Translating these announcements into action on the ground is always challenging for Governments faced with balancing the budget. Recent increases are to be delayed until 2019, but staving off this sort of investment until 2019 will unnecessarily delay the economic and social benefits of infrastructure delivery. Smart investment now in preparatory work can bring forward delivery dates for major infrastructure projects.”

## BUDGET ANALYSIS

DKM Consultants’ estimates and CIF analysis of the amount of additional funding shows that what is available could be absorbed by just one critical strategic project. In addition, CIF analysis found an increasing proportion of the Public Capital Programme is spent on maintenance of significantly depreciated stock, and 40% of the capital is not being spent on productive or social infrastructure.



**Dominic Doheny,**  
President, CIF

is very welcome is the announcement of the €750m fund to assist housebuilding.

“We welcome the increased commitment to social housing, both from a social and an industry point of view,” says Dominic. “It’s important that Government looks at the procurement policy around these announcements. While the industry is doing well overall, activity outside the main urban centres is still too slow. We would like contractors in the regions to be able to tender for these projects. If they use PPPs or bundle the projects, that would exclude our smaller regional members.”

The CIF welcomed the Government’s amendment to the Seven-Year Capital Gains Tax Exemption, as it encouraged the retention of property with no incentive to develop

## HOUSING

Dominic Doheny, President, CIF, welcomed housing measures announced in the budget but has a number of concerns.

“Budget 2018 was a fairly significant endorsement of the Help to Buy scheme that it wasn’t discontinued. This was a big concern for our housebuilder members. The scheme is inextricably linked to activity. When we surveyed IHBA members, every one of them gave examples of how it increased activity.

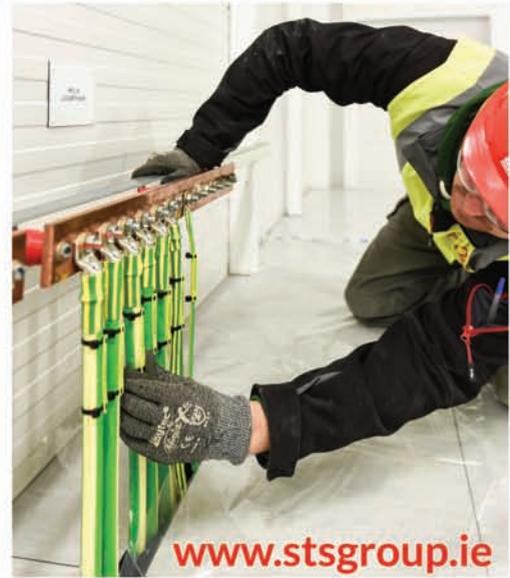
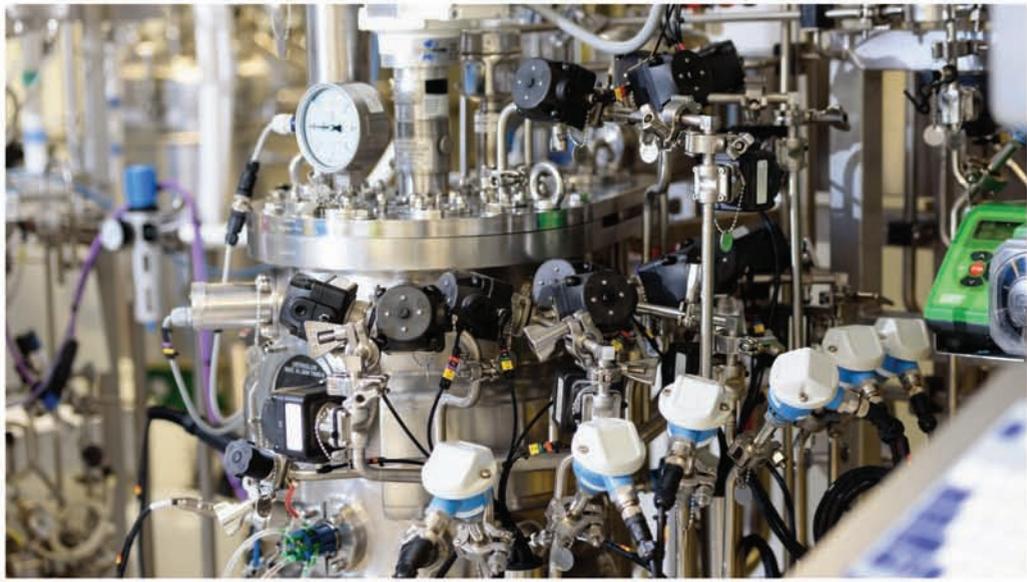
“We have major concerns about costs, and it was a disappointment that we weren’t successful in our efforts to persuade the Minister to reduce VAT on the industry. Construction costs where VAT can’t be reclaimed, eg, housing, are just too expensive for the consumer.”

“One area of positive action, which

land purchased during the relevant period. But it is concerned about the significant impact of stamp duty increases from 2% to 6% on the cost of commercial property. CIF believes this might have a dampening effect on investment in the coming years at a time when Ireland is competing for FDI and facing Brexit.

## EMPLOYMENT

CIF was disappointed at the Government’s refusal to reintroduce eligibility to partial rebate for statutory redundancy payments for construction employers. This measure would encourage employers to invest more in staff in what is a traditionally transient workforce. This is a critical measure in construction where the labour force is fragmented with labour agencies representing most of direct employment. **C**



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# TAOISEACH CONFIRMS M20 TO MOVE TO PLANNING AND DESIGN STAGE

**A**n Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has confirmed that funding will be provided for advanced planning and design of the M20 Cork/Limerick Motorway, Dunkettle Interchange and M22, Ballyvourney to Macroom Road.

The Taoiseach made the announcement at a breakfast briefing, which was hosted by Cork Chamber in Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Cork.

“Budget 2018 provided for major extra capital investment over the next four years, including €2.4bn for motorways and national road networks,” he stated.

The Taoiseach said that with the opening in October of the Gort-Tuam motorway, linking Galway Shannon and Limerick, “the next step is to build the next section of that corridor, the road from Limerick and Galway to Cork via the M20.”

“In terms of other projects, the additional money



Conor O'Connell, CIF Regional Director, Southern Region

[announced in Budget 2018] for roads allows us to power ahead with the Dunkettle Interchange proceeding to construction as soon as possible. And also, to bring forward the M22 and the Ballyvourney to Macroom Road, allowing it to go to tender next year, with construction the year after.”

The news was warmly greeted by all involved in the construction industry in the Munster Region.

“Last year, CIF contributed to a report by Cork and Limerick Chambers on the economic importance of M20 motorway to the region,” commented Conor O'Connell, CIF Regional Director, Southern Region. “The M20 motorway will be a vital link in the creation of an Atlantic Economic Corridor, which will enhance the growing complementary counterbalance to the Dublin Region between Cork and Limerick Cities.

The project itself will see many more opportunities for construction and development in the region.” **C**

# IVAN WEBB SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO THREE DIT CONSTRUCTION STUDIES STUDENTS

**T**he Ivan Webb Scholarship 2017 has been awarded to three students from the Dublin Institute of Technology, Bolton Street.

Sionainn McLaughlin, received the First Year Full Time Scholarship Award; David Quinn took home the Second Year Full Time Scholarship Award and Catherine Rogers was awarded the Back to Education Scholarship Award. The Scholarships were presented at the recent Annual Master Builders' & Contractors' Association (MBCA) Dinner.

The Ivan Webb Scholarship Foundation was established by the Master Builders' Association (MBA) and the CIF to commemorate the memory of the late Ivan Webb, one of the Irish businessmen killed in the Staines Air Disaster in 1972.

Ivan Webb was a Council member of both the funding organisations, was President of the MBA in 1953 and President of the CIF in 1956.

A number of years ago the MBA combined with other CIF building contractor associations to form the MBCA, and it continues to support the Ivan Webb Scholarship.

The Scholarship is awarded to students of the Construction Technology Diploma course and the Bachelor of Science in Construction Management course, who are nominated by the Dublin Institute of Technology, Bolton Street. The “Back to Education” award was also being presented for the third year. **C**



L to r: Dominic Doherty, President, CIF; Sionainn McLaughlin, First Year Full Time Scholarship Award winner; Catherine Rogers, Back to Education Scholarship Award winner and Seamus Duggan, President, MBCA.



David Quinn receives the Second Year Full Time Scholarship Award from Seamus Duggan, President, MBCA



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# RSM SURVEY REVEALS 63% OF BUILDERS REPORTED DIFFICULTY ACCESSING FINANCE IN THE PAST YEAR

A new survey shows the extent of difficulty that construction companies face in accessing funds to deliver viable housing and infrastructure projects.

A survey by accountancy firm RSM and CIF, completed by Accuracy Research, has found that construction companies continue to face significant difficulties in accessing funding to invest in their businesses and to deliver viable housing and infrastructure projects.

Of those surveyed, only 33% involved in house building obtained bank finance. Sixty-three per cent who sought to borrow from financial institutions in the past year reported difficulty in securing finance. The figure rose to nearly 70% amongst companies with a turnover of less than €9m.

This has led to an increasingly low level of engagement with financial institutions. Only 41% of those surveyed reporting as having requested finance from financial institutions in the past year. The majority of companies are resorting to funding investment via cash reserves to deliver viable construction projects, the survey reveals, which in turn is limiting companies with growth ambitions and stalling increased activity in the sector.

## REGIONAL DISPARITY

The survey also highlights a regional disparity, with respondents reporting that projects outside of Dublin are also being considered less favourably.

"This report should ring warning bells for Government because it clearly shows that construction SMEs across all sub-sectors in the industry are still reporting difficulties in securing funding for viable projects," says Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF. "The implications for Irish society are worrying as these companies need to be supported to be in a position to address Ireland's housing and infrastructure crises.

"The availability of finance now dictates what type of construction occurs. Where finance is available, in sectors such as commercial, student accommodation or in the Greater Dublin Area, construction is occurring. The private sector hasn't failed. Where it can access finance, it is delivering. But there is a market failure in the availability of finance for viable construction projects.

"The apparent aversion amongst financial institutions for investment outside Dublin is also of concern. This will disadvantage regional construction companies and their capacity to fulfil



**Paddy O'Connell, RSM  
Construction Director**

the vision of the upcoming National Planning Framework.

"This survey shows that Government, industry and financial institutions must work more closely together to ensure finance is available for sustainable construction projects."

## CASH RESERVES FUNDING BUSINESSES

Paddy O'Connell, RSM Construction Director, believes the survey shows that most companies are having to rely on cash reserves to fund their business on an ongoing basis.

"This is generally not considered a sustainable model for a growth industry," he says. "This over-reliance on reserves, combined with the lack of alternative funding sources and difficulty securing finance within the banking system highlights an industry that has yet to emerge fully from the recession."

## NEW HOUSE BUILDING FUND

As part of the Budget 2018 measures, up to €750m of the Ireland Strategic Investment

Fund (ISIF) will be made available for commercial investment in housing finance. This fund will be administered by the newly established House Building Finance Ireland (HBFI).

"At this point, while there are no specific details available as to how the monies from this fund will be released to construction companies," says Paddy O'Connell. "I would expect that the fund will provide development finance loan funding to meet the development costs of building homes for both sale or rent, as well as infrastructure funding for site preparation and the infrastructure needed to enable housing to progress and to prepare land for development.

"As matters stand contractors are struggling to secure adequate finance at competitive rates, which is negatively impacting on construction companies' abilities to expand, recruit new staff and undertake projects," Paddy continues. "The difficulties in securing finance are limiting much-needed capacity in the sector, which is required to address the supply issues.

"HBFI will have to demonstrate an efficiency in decision-making and processing of funding applications to ensure funds are deployed appropriately and quickly."

Paddy O'Connell adds that Government should be making resources, which are available in other industry sectors, accessible to contractors to help them upskill staff to achieve greater efficiencies.

"There are a number of Government grants available – not traditionally focused on the Construction sector – that could be redirected to encourage upskilling and promote innovation in building technologies. Such grants could be targeted at SME's and designed to encourage innovation, both in the kind of homes that are built and in the way that they are delivered." **C**

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L to r: Justin Molloy Regional Director, CIF Western/Midland Regions; Michelle Meehan, Business Development Executive, Dalata Hotel Group and Tom Parlon, Director General CIF.



## NEW MEMBERS

The Construction Industry Federation welcomes the following new members who, having met all the necessary criteria, have been approved for membership by the CIF Executive Body.

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# REALISING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY'S POTENTIAL TO BUILD IRELAND'S FUTURE

CAROL TALLON attended the CIF Conference in Croke Park in October. She heard a number of international and national speakers set out their views and gave some key insights into the future of the construction industry.



An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD addresses the CIF Annual Conference.

At the very outset of the CIF's National Conference, it was clear that both the industry and Government were looking at fresh approaches to addressing Ireland's economic and social challenges.

An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD signalled the establishment of a Construction Sector Group as part of a new 'whole of construction' strategy designed to bring the industry together with the various Government Departments in a more cohesive way than seen before.

In his address, CIF President Dominic

Doherty welcomed the Taoiseach's announcement of the Construction Sector Group saying "the construction sector will build a republic of opportunity and will work with Government to break the boom-bust cycle associated with the industry".

## CONSTRUCTION SECTOR GROUP: A NEW ERA FOR THE INDUSTRY

Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF stated that one of the key objectives of the Construction Sector Group is for Government and industry to work cooperatively and consistently towards

a long-term, strategic and shared vision of Ireland's future.

"By rationalising policy-making in this way, we can break the boom-bust cycle associated with the construction industry and put in place a series of measures to manage the volatility of the sector," explained the CIF Director General.

"If we can grow sustainable businesses that can scale and export where appropriate, or operate in a positive domestic economy, then we can stop the huge ups and downs, not only within the sector but across the wider economy to the property market and employment. When construction does well, the rest of the economy does well. We need to learn from the mistakes of past cycles so that we are not doomed to repeat them."

"It's our vision that the Construction Sector Group will be tasked with developing and implementing a whole of construction strategy. This will deliver on Ireland's housing and infrastructure needs, as well as grow output, employment and exports in construction, and ultimately, end the harmful volatility in our economic cycle in the past."

## THE WHOLE OF CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY: SMART, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

The global construction market is forecast to grow by 85% to almost €13.5tn by 2030. This represents a huge opportunity for the industry and Ireland inc if the right measures can be taken by Government and industry.

With average construction growth expected to exceed global GDP, strong performance will be driven by developed countries like Ireland, which are recovering from economic instability and a prolonged period of under-activity, and by emerging countries that are poised for growth.

For example; the number of mega-cities (population over 10 million) is to increase significantly up to 2050. These mega-cities will



Dominic Doheny President, CIF; An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF.



Dominic Doheny, CIF President addresses the CIF Annual Conference.



Minister for Housing Planning & Local Government Eoghan Murphy TD addresses the CIF Annual Conference.

be huge clusters of cities and urban centres linked by advanced infrastructure systems. Africa will have the 2nd fastest increase of new mega-cities globally up to 2050. The total number of individuals living in Africa's urban areas is expected to rise from 400 million in 2010 to 1.26 billion in 2050. This represents an enormous opportunity for Irish construction to grow exports and diversify their markets by bringing their globally recognised expertise to bear in the developing world. Establishing a brand such as 'Construction Ireland' to promote the industry overseas, similar to the approach in the food industry, could drive sustainable growth in the industry.

This was a concept suggested by CIF President Doheny in his keynote address at the conference. In his view, the Construction Ireland brand would allow large and small construction companies to collaborate to secure niches in this rapidly expanding global market. Closer to home, this approach could also drive exports of products and services to our closest partner, the UK, particularly in any post-Brexit scenario.

The innovative nature of Irish contractors and the early adoption of emerging technologies has certainly heightened the reputation and influence of Irish contractors globally.

"We need to build on this burgeoning global reputation," Dominic Doheny said

in his address. "We've developed a world-class M&E sector over the past decade in addition to our established reputation in civil engineering. Our exports increased 500%, from half a billion to €2.5bn, since the recession. It can be seen from our work on specialist projects, like data centres, that our construction expertise is now sought all over the world by multinational corporations such as Facebook, Google and others. In the past, we emigrated. Today and tomorrow, we will export."

Tom Parlon said that the Construction Sector Group is critical to the delivery of world-class infrastructure here in Ireland, "We have Europe's fastest growing population and its fastest growing economy for the past five years, yet we have the lowest level of GDP investment in infrastructure, and that follows a decade of under-investment.

"We're facing an infrastructure crisis every bit as bad as the housing crisis that we are now going through. We have been voicing members' concerns over this particular issue for the past number of years, and there are strong signs that Minister Donohoe and his department now understand the enormity of the challenge we are facing. He is releasing a 10-year capital plan in December. And, of course, we now have the National Planning Framework, so we know that our message is getting through, albeit very late

in the day, and that message is clear – you cannot solve the housing crisis without first tackling the infrastructure crisis."

## CONSTRUCTING IRELAND 2040: DELIVERING THE NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Delivering infrastructure efficiently and sustainably will be a critical challenge for industry in the coming years. The Government will release a National Planning Framework aligned with the public capital programme towards the end of 2017. The industry will be central in its delivery, and this will shape Irish society and its economy over the next 25 years.

In his address to the CIF Conference, Minister for Housing Planning & Local Government Eoghan Murphy TD outlined some of the finer details of the new National Planning Framework 'Ireland 2040: Our Plan', which is currently out for its final round of public consultation.

The Framework predicts that Ireland's population will grow by 1 million people by the year 2040. This presents a broad range of challenges in terms of infrastructure and housing provision, as well as ensuring that this is all achieved in a balanced regional plan that avoids further urban sprawl of Dublin and our main regional cities.

The Construction Sector Group was welcomed by the Minister as a vital element in ensuring this is achieved. He described it is an important initiative that should get started as quickly as possible, "because we have big challenges ahead – and we have to plan in a coordinated way for the future.

"If we continue to grow as we have been, if the status quo maintains – depleting our communities and our regions, sprawling away from our urban cores – then our cities will choke off, and the country will die."

He said Ireland 2040 would be different than anything that has gone before it because "it's going to be aligned across governmental departments, so there will be coherence between what the framework envisions and what others are planning, be it in relation to schools, hospitals or roads.

## IRISH CONSTRUCTION MUST 'MODERNISE OR DIE'

One of the most anticipated speakers at the CIF Conference was Mark Farmer, CEO of Cast Consultancy and author of the controversial review of the UK's construction labour model 'Modernise or Die'.

Mark Farmer set out the case for change and went so far as to describe where the industry is now as a "burning platform for change". He maintains that technology is the bridge that must be crossed in order to take the industry out of the past and into

the future. He talked about systemic issues that are seen in most construction markets in the world like workforce size and the ageing demographic.

“We operate in a highly dynamic but volatile environment, particularly in terms of economic cycles and we have shaped ourselves, as an industry, in response to these symptoms of failure. We have shaped ourselves to be flexible and to be able to ride the wave of boom-bust, which is unfortunately what the industry has historically suffered from, but I believe that this is going to be much more difficult going forward.

This makes where we are now a burning platform for change. In the past, the industry has resisted opportunities and potential for change by surviving each crisis and then reverting to type, but this is no longer an option for construction businesses. We are truly at the point where we must modernise or die. The industry itself will not die, we always need construction, but at an individual and corporate level, there is a lot to be done in terms of future-proofing our business models for the health and sustainability of individual businesses.”

Mark Farmer is pushing for a productivity-led change agenda that can help determine future needs, without reverting to type. He advised, “We need to move towards high-level manufactured value, which is the ratio of what we do on site and what we do off-site. It is not just about modular construction. Modular is simply one solution. It is about efficiency, productivity and the interface between what is manufactured, what is pre-manufactured and what is installed onsite.”

**SKILLS SHORTAGE AND LACK OF DIVERSITY**

One of the critical issues identified by the speakers and on the floor of the conference is the looming skills gap the industry is facing. The CIF Director General, for example, challenged the industry to up its game in terms of competing for and attracting talent. The current capacity of the industry to capitalise on global trends in the future and to even meet Ireland’s needs today is severely challenged by skills.

“Our members are competing for top talent particularly in the face of digitisation,” said Tom Parlon. “We need to up our game, not just on-site but in management and across the C-suite. We know that 110,000 additional workers are required over the next three to four years to deliver all the infrastructure and housing that Government has committed to.

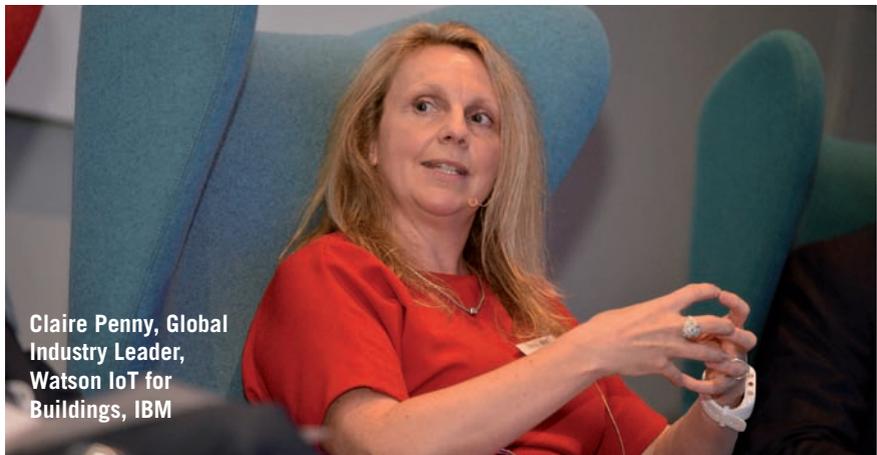


Mark Farmer, CEO, Cast Consultancy.



Panel discussion hosted by Ian Kehoe (Left), Editor, Sunday Business Post at CIF Annual Conference.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION  
 Panel Discussion with Audience Participation:  
 Constructing an Industry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
 Tom Costello, Head of Construction, IPUT and 2017 Winner of The Construction Industry Leader of the Year  
 Patrick Hogan, Director - Asset Services, Cushman & Wakefield  
 Tom Dunne, Head of School of Surveying and Construction Management, DIT  
 Ger Higgins, Director, Kingspan Group



Claire Penny, Global Industry Leader, Watson IoT for Buildings, IBM

“To meet this target, we need to promote the industry as an attractive career destination. Improving diversity and inclusion is a key challenge. For example, just 8% of the industry is female, and other industries are overtaking us in terms of female participation to the detriment of our productivity, performance and reputation. I’m delighted to Women in Construction: #BuildingEquality initiatives already underway, but we have a long journey ahead.”

Tom Parlon concluded by saying, “This is exactly the type of long-term challenge that the Construction Sector Group will enable us to work through over the

coming decade regardless of the political changes. To insulate the market from this and to achieve strategic permanence, we need the individual industry leaders to step up. We need to use this opportunity to put in place permanent structures that allow sustainable growth in the industry, for example, the food industry’s ‘Food Harvest 2020’ became ‘Food Wise 2025’. It’s the third five-year strategy for the food industry and has survived four Ministers at this stage and two changes of Government. We need a similar structure for construction Industry and Constructing Ireland 2030 is the basis of that. **C**



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# NPF WILL UNDERPIN FUTURE BALANCED REGIONAL GROWTH

Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform **PASCHAL DONOHOE TD** speaks to **ROBBIE COUSINS** about Budget 2018, and Government plans to bring about a total overhaul of Ireland's spatial plans.

In his first Budget on 10 October last, Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe TD acknowledged the central role that the construction sector has to play in the future development of the Irish economy. The Minister delivered a number of measures that the sector broadly welcomed. He also highlighted a number of priorities that the Government sees as needing to be addressed in the coming years.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Ireland has the fastest growing economy in Europe, yet spends the least amount on capital investment as a percentage of GDP amongst all EU countries. The Construction Industry would like if a proportion of funding due as part of the Capital Plan 2016-2021 was to be released in 2018 for the design and planning of future projects. This would give the industry a roadmap of future opportunities and facilitate getting projects to site quicker.

Minister Donohoe says that Government has allocated funding to start addressing the infrastructure deficit.

"This Government has allocated a significant, but more importantly a well-planned, increase in public capital investment amounting to €4.3bn over the remaining four years of the Capital Plan 2018-2021. This is in addition to the €2.2bn for housing outlined in the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness," the Minister explains.

"Between 2015 and 2021 capital expenditure will have doubled, reaching €7.8bn. Capital expenditure will reach 3.5% of GNI by 2021 and will account for over 11% of total voted expenditure.



Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform Paschal Donohoe TD



Significant additional investment in local and regional roads address congestion

This will see public investment in Ireland moving from relatively low levels to among the highest in the EU.”

In line with the assessment of the Mid-Term Review of the capital plan, Minister Donohoe says that the Government has identified a number of priorities for public capital investment.

The Minister outlines that an additional €1.3bn will be invested in the Transport sector. “This investment will deliver major public transport infrastructure, such as the new Bus Rapid Transit network for Dublin and the extension of the Dart to Balbriggan. There will also be significant additional investment in local and regional roads and projects to address congestion such as the M50 Variable Speed Limits project.

On the basis of the review of the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, Minister Donohoe says an additional €500m has been allocated for the direct building of over 3,000 additional social houses by 2021.

“This increases the overall *Rebuilding Ireland* ambition to be achieved through build, refurbishment, acquisition and leasing over the period 2016-2021 from 47,000 to 50,000 new homes. A further €75m in exchequer funds is being made available under a second tranche of Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (to be matched by €25m from Local Authority contributions) with the potential to further stimulate the supply of mixed-tenure homes on private and State-owned lands by at least 5,000-plus additional new homes in the coming years.”

Minister Donohoe points out that an additional €322m has been allocated to schools, which will deliver 350 planned large-scale projects. An additional €257m has been allocated for Higher Education, which will allow for the commencement

of a new programme of infrastructure renewal for the higher education sector, focused on large-scale refurbishment and/or infrastructure replacement projects which are essential to expand capacity, address health and safety issues, and/or improve quality in areas of key skills needs.

Under Health, the Minister explains that a further €471m he has allocated will assure the delivery of the National Children’s Hospital project and will allow the Government to address needs in other priority areas including Primary Care, Mental Health, Acute Services, Social Care.

“Communications will receive an additional €200m in order to expand energy efficiency programmes, continue to roll out the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme, increase uptake of electric vehicles and ensure the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan – following finalisation of the procurement process – to ensure all that citizens can access high speed services, regardless of where they live or work.” Minister Donohoe explains.

## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the big challenges facing the Government in the coming years is achieving more balanced regional development. Minister Donohoe says he is fully aware of the issue and that the Government is taking steps to address the disparity.

He says a huge amount of work has already been undertaken by the Government in this regard, and they now have a draft of the National Planning Framework (NPF) Ireland 2040.

“This plan represents a unique opportunity to set out an ambitious vision and 20-year strategy for what our country should and can look like in 2040, and balanced regional development is a key part of that vision,” he comments. “It is

also underpinned by a spatial vision based on values such as creating a fairer society, more sustainable choices and options, and providing a better quality of life for our citizens.”

The Minister explains that the national population is projected to increase by 1 million people by 2040, and it is projected that there will be 8 million people on the island as a whole by then. “This means that a ‘business as usual’ continuation of urban sprawl trends and uncoordinated development is not an option. The physical and spatial development of Ireland has to be much better,” he says.

“The finalisation of the Ireland 2040 framework alongside a new 10-year capital plan and the development of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) will bring about a total overhaul and vertical alignment of Ireland’s spatial plans – from the NPF, through the RSES and down to Local Authority City and County Development Plans.

Minister Donohoe says this will enable the delivery of balanced growth in which “regional cities can function as realistic alternatives to Dublin and act as growth drivers for their regions, while at the same time allowing us to unlock opportunities for strategic renewal and enhancement of run-down or under-utilised parts of Dublin as our capital city. Of course, any regional focus will also seek to boost the small towns and rural fabric of Ireland by supporting new economic opportunities and reversing population decline.”

## PROJECT BUNDLING

The bundling of local projects, such as schools and courthouses, has been seen by some as exacerbating the challenges local contractors face, as they are being precluded from tendering for work that they would have traditionally carried out.

Minister Donohoe sees project bundling as necessary, but he says local contractors can still tender for some projects.

“Bundling refers to the practice of tendering a number of individual projects as a single contract,” the Minister explains. “As a result, smaller firms who may be capable of undertaking an individual project are excluded from bidding on the basis that they lack the capacity to deliver the multiple projects. We are not aware of a systemic policy of bundling projects across the public capital programme. However, it may be undertaken for reasons of practicality and, where projects are located in close proximity, to ensure that Health and Safety matters are better co-ordinated.

“Many contracting authorities will bundle certain works to deliver economies of scale and to manage their own resources

as efficiently as possible” he continues. “A single contract governing a range of similar-scaled projects in reasonably close proximity makes sense from the perspective of efficient project delivery. However, there are natural limitations to this approach. An example of bundling that many contracting authorities adopt is emergency response maintenance. To provide this service a contractor needs to have a certain scale to react to multiple call outs for leaks, boiler failures, electrical outages, etc. Even though the individual ‘tasks’ are tiny, it is the capacity of the contractor to respond within the tight timeframes that is important.”

Minister Donohoe says that certain safeguards are built into the legislation governing procurement to ensure that SMEs are given opportunities to compete successfully for public contracts. Under the EU Directives, contracting authorities are encouraged to break larger projects into lots, so that SMEs are in a position to bid. Under national guidelines, the requirement to advertise contracts, which are in excess of €25,000 for goods and general services and €50,000 for works and works-related services, on eTenders, provides ample transparency to tendering opportunities. Below these thresholds contracting authorities may directly invite tenders from a minimum of five contractors.

## NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

While a number of regional infrastructure projects are coming on stream in the next 18 months, a long-term capital plan would give the construction sector confidence to put in place the required resources to deliver on such a plan. Minister Donohoe says that the Government has made significant strides in prioritising projects and that the National Planning Framework will help determine what gets built, and when it gets built in the next 10 years.

“This is an area where the Government has completed a significant amount of work in identifying priorities for the allocation of the substantial capital funding now available,” he explains. “Research has shown that all regions experienced significant increases in infrastructure expenditure over the period 1995-2009, with Dublin actually receiving less on a per capita basis. Hence, the issue is less about a lack of investment and more about how we manage investment to achieve meaningful regional development.”

The Minister sees the forthcoming NPF as having a critical role to play in influencing the pattern of future investment in public infrastructure, and he says it will underpin future growth on a balanced regional basis, with a particular



The issue is less about a lack of investment and more about how we manage investment to achieve meaningful regional development.”

focus on the development of Ireland’s regional cities.

“My Department is preparing a ten-year capital plan, which will support the NPF” Minister Donohoe explains. “This improved integration of capital investment and spatial planning under the NPF will allow us to deliver on our long-term, strategic objectives for Ireland’s development and will ensure that businesses and communities can plan ahead.

Minister Donohoe ultimately believes that despite the fiscal constraints that the Government must work under, “it is an absolutely worthwhile process of putting in place a long-term strategic planning framework. But, it will require a coordinated effort.

“This requires complementary sectoral vision across Government Departments, Agencies and Semi-States,” the Minister points out. “This has been very much reflected in the current draft of the NPF. We also need to ensure public bodies work together to develop key sites and ensure our cities towns and villages can grow in a sustainable way and get our housing market working effectively.”

The Minister says it is important to recognise that “we are not starting with a blank canvas – Ireland is an already developed country, with five main cities, a developed network of transport infrastructure, businesses based in particular locations and so on. All these pre-existing factors need to be taken into account.

“Then, we need to be mindful that our plans are fiscally sustainable, which is why it is so important that the 10-year National Investment Plan is being coordinated with the NPF. This will ensure that we have the appropriate budgetary and investment follow through around projects.”

“Our built environment reflects our

history and heritage, and we must protect those even as we look to develop for the future, while it is also essential that our plans reflect our ambitions around climate mitigation and support the National Mitigation Plan on Climate Change.”

## STAMP DUTY ON COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

One measure in the Budget that raised concerns was the increase of Stamp Duty on commercial property from 2% to 6%. The Minister is adamant that this is the right decision for the country at this time.

“Based on analysis of projects in the pipeline, CBRE and other commentators are projecting continued strong levels of completions in 2018 and 2019,” Minister Donohoe explains. “There is an estimated 400,000-sq m of office space under construction in Dublin alone. Once completed, this will add approximately 10% to the stock of office space. This suggests that the commercial real estate sector has significant supply already in the pipeline to meet demand from companies relocating from the UK.

The Minister says that the availability of commercial property and office space is one consideration companies have in deciding to locate to Ireland.

“Of equal concern in maintaining competitiveness and attracting firms post-Brexit, Minister Donohoe comments, “as well as more generally is the availability of housing. By helping to re-orient the construction industry towards more residential building, it is hoped this measure will help address this area of competitiveness.”

Asked whether he will revisit the measure, Minister Donohoe concludes by saying: “As is the case with all taxation measures, this area will be monitored and appropriate action taken, if necessary.” **C**



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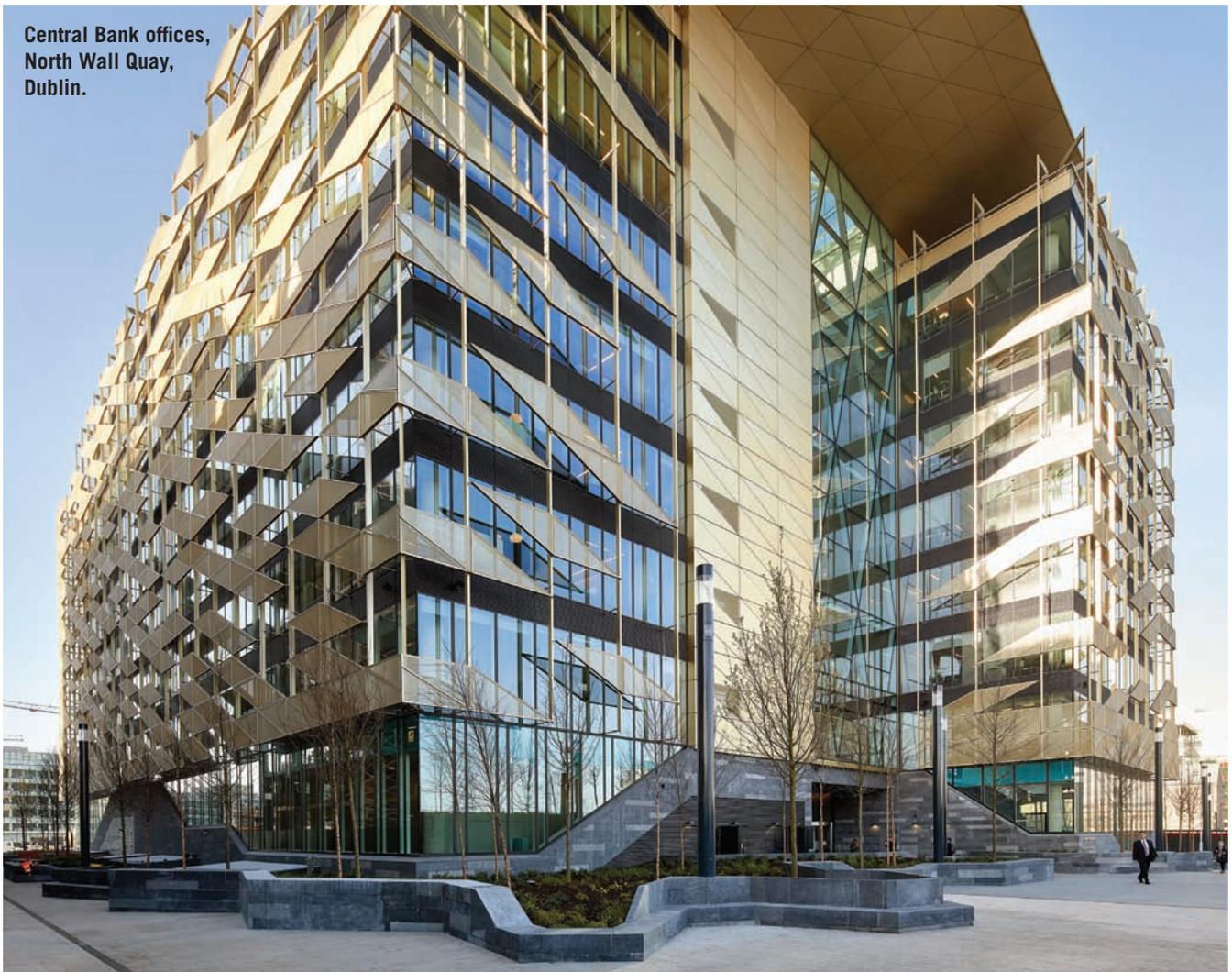
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# HIGH-SPEC M&E FIT OUT FOR NEW CENTRAL BANK

During 2107, Winthrop completed a high-spec low-energy mechanical and electrical fit-out of the new Central Bank premises on North Wall Quay, Dublin for main contractor Walls Construction, a project that presented a number of challenges.

Central Bank offices, North Wall Quay, Dublin.



**W**inthrop was engaged by Walls Construction to deliver the Mechanical and Electrical services on the new eight-storey 30,000-sq m Central Bank of Ireland offices on North Wall Quay, Dublin. Winthrop completed the mechanical and electrical services installation for the Central Bank project, which went from shell to walk-in ready in less than two years.

## CHALLENGES

One of the significant challenges with this project was to take the shell of the existing building and modify it to suit the bank's requirements, which was to deliver a building of the highest quality, energy rating and sustainability. The design criteria to achieve a BREEAM Excellent accreditation and a BER of A2 meant that the selection of top quality, efficient plant and materials was paramount.

Working closely and under the guidance of

the consultant engineers O'Connor Sutton Cronin (OCSC) and architects Henry J Lyons (HJL), Winthrop had input into the implementation of the systems controlling the building management system, façade management system, the CHP plant, basement smoke clearance system and the car park ventilation system.

Mechanically, a key design feature is an energy saving mixed-mode ventilation strategy, which, when external conditions

The majority of the Central Bank's electrical plant is located at roof level.



are acceptable, will allow the façade mounted louvres to open and let fresh air enter the space. This, coupled with the most highly efficient plant equipment and latest heat recovery systems, ensures real energy savings for the building.

### BUILDING ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The BEMS (Building Energy Management System) formed the principal part of the HVAC system's control and energy monitoring for the building. The energy monitoring features include:

- Monitoring utility consumption
- Monitoring overall energy usage against targets
- Energy reporting for Facilities Management, Bank Principals and Heads of Department
- Energy target exceedance and alarms
- Trend logging of environmental conditions
- Customisable dashboard for individual users

Unusually, the majority of electrical plant is located at roof level, with the distribution structure feeding down through the building. This helped to maximise the usable space from the two lower basement levels up to the seventh-floor offices with dramatic views of the city and bay.

Systems design by the Consultant Engineers OCSC and Architect HJL were driven by the most energy efficient principles with central control systems

installed for BMS, lighting and protective services. The entire building can be controlled from either fixed points by the facilities management team, or by remote connectivity for a 24/7 set up, which would be expected in a modern building of this stature.

The majority of lighting, totalling 10,000 LED light fittings within the building, is controlled by automatic sensors that not only control on and off functions, but also light levels depending on the sunlight, as it hits the building during the day. The system is programmed with pre-sets to drop light levels at night as the building is mainly vacated after a certain time.

Winthrop provided a complete structured cabling system for the end user, which includes a fibre optic backbone and Cat 6A network using the latest intelligent patch panels to put this building right at the forefront in data installations.

### PHASED HANDOVERS

Another major challenge on this project was the phased handovers of critical areas, as the client took possession of the building.

To facilitate the crucial IT requirements of the client, all communications rooms were completed, commissioned and handed over while major construction was still being carried out.

The BCAR requirement was also a crucial element of project delivery, with Dublin City Council taking a keen interest in the commissioning and certification of the building, given its extremely high-profile status.

The Central Bank moved staff into the new building over a number of weeks and Winthrop was on hand to assist all the way and ensure the move was as seamless as possible for each staff member.

A total of 1,500 staff were moved in, and the feedback from them is nothing but positive in their new base, and Winthrop is proud to have been a part of that positivity.

Speaking about the how the project fits with Winthrop's recent portfolio of work, Managing Director Anne Dooley first acknowledges the quality of the design of the project.

"The Central Bank project set a new benchmark for innovative design and efficiency, and massive compliments must go to the design engineers and architects who designed this unique project.

"The Central Bank is a great example of the type of project completed or currently on-site within the company at this time.

"We recently completed the 21,000-sq m Miesian Plaza Project on Baggot Street as well as Google's European HQ and Facebook's European HQ, also in Dublin. We have also been appointed as Electrical Contractor on the Dublin Landings project, adjacent to the Central Bank.

"Just across the river from the Central Bank, we are currently carrying out the electrical fit-out of the 12,300-sq m 8 Hanover Quay project – The Reflector building. These are the scale of project that Winthrop has become accustomed to completing in Dublin and further afield over the past number of years." **C**

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# WE NEED A CAPITAL PROGRAMME WITH CLEAR PROJECT TIMELINES

There is a pressing need for much greater certainty on project timelines in the next Capital Programme. **BARRY McCALL** reports.

In September 2015, the Government announced a new six-year €27bn capital spending programme. Among the projects to be included were Metro North and an extension of the DART to Balbriggan, Maynooth and Hazelhatch. Construction has yet to commence on the great majority of the roads included in the programme, while water wasn't mentioned at all.

What initial euphoria there was, quickly dissipated as it became apparent that a large number of the projects, which were included, were holdovers from earlier programmes. But no definitive start dates had been given for them, nor had there been any details of actual funding availability.

"The 2016-2021 Capital Investment Programme was a positive step forward in that it focused upon addressing the significant infrastructure gap in Ireland. However, it stopped short of prioritising projects based upon key economic indicators, and therefore, it did not provide an accurate pipeline of future activity," says Shane MacSweeney, EY Infrastructure Advisory Partner.

"This inherent vagueness isn't of any value to the Civil Engineering sector and other stakeholders, who have to plan ahead to ensure they have the resources in place to undertake major infrastructural projects."

Shane MacSweeney is hopeful that the new Capital Investment Programme scheduled for announcement in December will be different.

"What this capital plan needs to do is provide a robust pipeline of future infrastructure activity," he comments. "Within that programme, there will be the investments planned for the next five to 10 years. Projects like the M20 and New Metro North will feature, as will the new National Maternity Hospital together with



Shane MacSweeney, EY  
Infrastructure Advisory Partner

a significant capital programme for water up to 2030. While the Government has shared some high-level information, what needs to come out of the programme is a critical pipeline of activity such that the construction sector in Ireland and the UK can look at it and prepare for it by ramping up resources for the long term.

Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) President, Colin Cleary of John Paul Construction is quite optimistic about the upcoming programme. "The soundings are quite good from Government in terms of what's coming down the line," Colin Cleary says. "We would like a little more meat on the bones though. We need some idea of the timing of the projects to give some predictability."

He has some sympathy with the various bodies responsible for the delivery of infrastructure. "We have to give credit to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and OPW and other Government entities," Colin continues. "They have fantastic business management skills, and they know what needs to be done. But they have been strangled by lack of funding. They just can't bring projects to market. Irish Water, TII, and OPW are all working diligently



Colin Cleary, President, Civil  
Engineering Contractors  
Association (CECA) President

to advance plans. However, they can't go to market through lack of funding. We know from the Department that there is increased funding available and we hope to get some clarity around that."

Colin Cleary is not looking for firm and fixed start dates for every project.

"Start dates are never 100% accurate, but at least you know the quarter of the year, if not the month when they might start," Colin Cleary adds. "We need to know this as an industry. It is difficult to plan what resources you need in future without that information. If a contractor is working in both the UK and Ireland, they need to balance the turnover and activity between the two countries. However, that is very difficult as there is very little certainty around the Irish market at present."

He notes that there is much greater certainty in the UK market. "The entities responsible for infrastructure in the UK are closely monitored as to how they are performing against capital plans. Maybe we need to start doing more of that here."

Pat Lucey (Senior Vice President, CIF), John Sisk & Son Civil Engineering Managing Director is also worried about the near-term situation. "What's



**Pat Lucey (Senior Vice President, CIF), John Sisk & Son Civil Engineering Managing Director**

happening at the moment is of great concern to civil engineering contractors,” Pat Lucey explains. “We have known for quite some time, about the past year and a half, that 2018 had all the signs of being a very quiet year.”

He says that Civil Engineering depends to a very large extent on public spending.

“There is a small amount of civil works involved in housing, commercial and industrial developments but the vast majority is public works and contracts funded and driven by the State. When the Government published the capital plan a few years ago, it was clear that it was end-loaded to 2020 and 2021. A certain number of projects were already up and running, and others are coming to their end now and next year. The opportunities for new work are few and far between for 2017 and 2018.”

Pat Lucey’s message to Government is to release the relatively small amount of money available now to get major projects ready to go on site. “We need the money to get the projects shovel-ready. If you use the example of the M20, that project requires four years upfront work. It shouldn’t cost more than €15 million to do this. If you don’t do this first, you won’t have the €800m motorway project.”

Pushing ahead with early-stage expenditure will allow for the projects to progress in 2019 or 2020. “It is unlikely that much will go ahead in 2019 and next year is going to be lean,” he adds. “You have to get enough done to ensure that they can move ahead. That will give companies confidence that the work is there. It will also give staff confidence to stay here, and it will give confidence to companies to invest in machinery and resources.”

John Cradock of John Cradock Ltd agrees. “I recognise that the Government has been constrained in its ability to spend,” John Cradock says. “But there needs to be spend on our national infrastructure, as we are well behind other European countries at this stage, both in construction



**John Cradock, John Cradock Ltd.**

of new infrastructure and maintenance of the existing. Failure to properly maintain infrastructure built over the past 20 years will result in significant additional costs in replacing the same in the not too distant future.

“Currently, there are very few Government projects out for tender with the result that survival in the industry is becoming more difficult for contractors. This does not augur well for the future of the industry if not addressed in the immediate future.”

It is also John Cradock’s view that prequalification criteria should be more helpful to allowing indigenous contractors prequalify for medium and large contracts in the State, while at the same time complying with EU requirements/Directives. “The achievements by Irish Civil Engineering contractors prior to the downturn, both technically and in giving value for money, is well recognised and the expertise should not be lost going forward.

“Money well spent at this point on infrastructure would be to the benefit of the economy generally, for attracting FDI, for encouraging industry throughout the country, for creating a more even spread of employment around the country, for housing, for reduced transport costs and for increased employment. All of this is to the long term benefit of the country.”

Colin Cleary is concerned about activity in the short-term as well as the potential impact of uncertainty on future skills within the industry.

“It is hard to see much increase in funding in the short term,” Colin Cleary notes. “It looks like it will be 2021 before we are back at reasonable levels of activity. Many of our people left Ireland’s shores for the UK, Australia, and so on during the downturn and they are not going to come back because they don’t see opportunity here at the moment. We are in danger of losing out on that great civil engineering legacy we had in this country.

“We have a great history of producing

brilliant civil engineers and great tradespeople in this country,” Colin Cleary adds. “If that is not followed through, the numbers will fall dramatically, and that will affect the future. It’s not for want of ambition or desire that they are not returning. They need to see things happening. We need real certainty on projects up to 2021.”

That’s also an issue for Pat Lucey. “If staff don’t have confidence that the infrastructure work will be there, they will move to sectors where the work is like commercial and housing. It is very hard to replace people with 10 to 15 years’ experience. It’s wonderful to see the Government doing long-term planning, but we are looking for them to give multi-annual spending envelopes to the bodies that are responsible for the infrastructure. It’s difficult to plan ahead if you only have a year to year budget. Multi-annual budgeting would make it more efficient.

“Civil engineering contractors in this country are as good as you can get anywhere,” Pat Lucey continues. “In many ways they are superior, they offer a level of service and construction quality better than you can get elsewhere. If that pipeline of projects doesn’t happen, they are the people that feel it. If they don’t have work, it will be impossible for them to hold onto staff. It takes years to bring on new staff. Companies have to keep the people with the experience. We won’t have new students coming through either if the pipeline of work isn’t there.”

Shane MacSweeney believes the new plan will represent progress. “There needs to be a greater understanding of the linkages between the different infrastructure sectors. At the moment, Transport is looked at as Transport, Health as Health, and so on. What if they tackled them together? In Australia, the focus is now on developing cities and towns rather than individual infrastructure projects. They look at how to transform a city over a number of years. It really is quite powerful. It comes back to economic multipliers. You get a real synergy effect.

Shane MacSweeney believes this is the approach Ireland should be taking. “What do we want to look like in 2040? This would bring a much different dynamic. In Australia, they have centralised boards like Infrastructure New South Wales and Infrastructure Australia to give an overarching view in relation to infrastructural development. It’s quite a powerful tool.”

In the short term, Shane MacSweeney hopes that the new national plan will be real driver of development. “All the indications are that we are going in the right direction,” he concludes. **C**

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# A MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURAL BOOST FOR THE WEST

The completion of the M-18 Gort to Tuam motorway by the Direct-Route has reduced journey times in the Western Region considerably as well as made it a more attractive prospect for inward investment. **BARRY McCALL** reports.

September 27th last saw the opening of the €550m M17/M18 Gort to Tuam motorway scheme. Speaking at the opening, Minister for Transport Shane Ross TD said: “I am delighted that the M17/18 road scheme has been completed two months ahead of schedule and on budget. This new motorway is a huge boost for the western seaboard area. It will enhance employment opportunities, benefit tourism and help address traffic bottlenecks at Tuam, Claregalway, Oranmore, Clarinbridge, Kilcolgan and Gort. I look forward to using it.”

## THE PROJECT TEAM

The road is of motorway standard from Gort to the Kilmore junction, near Tuam (a distance of 53.2km). It is dual carriageway type 2 cross-section from the Kilmore roundabout to the Mountpotter roundabout, north of Tuam (a distance of 4.2km).

The road was delivered by a Public Private Partnership consortium known as DirectRoute, with Roadbridge, John Sisk & Son, and Lagan Construction being the main contractors involved.

## DELIVERY SUCCESS DOWN TO A STRONG TEAM ON-SITE

“Construction is full of challenges,” says Pat Lucey, Managing Director of Civils at John Sisk & Son. “Until you start, you don’t know what’s there for sure. You can run into very different ground conditions over a short distance. One of the principal challenges we faced was the flooding of the winter of 2015. This affected us greatly, but we still came in ahead of schedule.”

Pat attributes the success of the project to the quality of the people working on it.

Rathmorrissey Interchange, where the new motorway crosses the existing M6



“We had been working on the inter-urban roads network for a number of years, and then there was a gap during the recession,” Pat notes. “A lot of the team travelled to work on projects abroad, but we brought back the core team and supplemented them with excellent local staff. The project was delivered as if we had never stopped building motorways. The unfortunate thing is that, despite the gaps in the network and the benefit these projects bring to the economy, there is not another motorway to move that team onto until 2019.”

While the project was delivered successfully as a PPP, Pat Lucey warns that this structure doesn’t offer some magic bullet for the funding of future projects. “Given the need to get funding for projects to get on the ground in a few years’ time, PPPs are often raised as a solution to the problem. While they have a place, the downside is that they add two to three years to the lead time. When

you have funders and bankers involved, they require much greater certainty and need to minimise risk. Part of the price you pay for them is a much longer process. There is a place for them but not for urgent or priority projects. What you should do is put the ones at the end of the capital programme out for PPP. That would allow the teams to form and get the preparatory work done in advance and be fully organised when the projects come to market.”

## ON-SITE CHALLENGES

Roadbridge project manager for the Gort-Tuam road Paraic McCarthy believes the benefits of the new motorway will be significant. “It means a massive reduction in journey times from Limerick to Sligo. I live in Limerick and used to drive the old road every day. There were major bottlenecks in every town



and village along the route. The improved linkage between Galway and Limerick will make the Atlantic Corridor more attractive for investment and hopefully offer a real alternative to Dublin.”

Roadbridge was responsible for the northern section of the road, which comprises 10.4km of motorway and 4.2km of dual carriageway. Despite the relatively short distance covered, it presented unique challenges.

### GROUNDWORKS CHALLENGE

“There were four separate areas of peat to construct the road over,” says Paraic McCarthy. “The peat averaged 2m in depth, and it sat on 10m to 12m of soft clay and silt. This very soft ground presented a real challenge. We had to remove the peat, put down stone as a protective layer and verti-drain the soft ground.”

This involved placing what was in effect a series of needles through the soil to allow the water to drain out and give it strength over time. “We had to build up the rock layer slowly and we used a lot of specialist instrumentation to monitor the pressure underground. We also had to move, store and dispose of the peat and then to deal with the ground underneath. Despite this, we delivered the project two months ahead of schedule. We were able to do that because of our expertise in major infrastructural projects. We identified the challenges and ensured that they were overcome without impacting on the

overall project schedule.”

### SELECTIVE USE OF PPP'S

Paraic McCarthy believes when it comes to project types PPPs should be employed selectively.

“This project benefited from the PPP arrangement because it was let out at the height of the financial crisis. The advantage to the Government is that they repay the cost over 20 to 30 years and it keeps it off the balance sheet. The European Investment Bank was a lender. When you have international investors involved, they need to get a return on investment. PPPs are only really suitable for larger projects, as smaller ones don't offer that level of return.”

### A STRATEGIC NATIONAL LINK ACROSS THE COUNTRY

“M17/M18 Gort to Tuam motorway enhances connectivity along the Atlantic corridor and provides a strategic national link across the country through the M6 Rathmorrissy junction,” said Michael Nolan, CEO of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), at the opening of the new motorway.

According to Minister for Rural & Community Development Michael Ring TD, the opening of the new road will help create jobs and help attract Irish and international companies to the region.

“Locals and motorists who regularly used the old road will breathe a sigh of relief to see this motorway come to fruition,” he

said. “It will consign to the past the infamous bottlenecks at Tuam, Claregalway, Oranmore, Clarinbridge, Kilcolgan and Gort, thereby cutting journey times, reducing the traffic in these towns and in doing so make them safer and more pleasant places to live. The motorway will greatly reduce travel times from Sligo and east Mayo down to Galway and Limerick.

“This is a significant step forward in helping to realise the Atlantic Economic Corridor which my own department is helping to drive. The next logical step is for this motorway to be extended to Claremorris, and I will be extremely keen to see this happen.”

East Galway TD Seán Canney quantifies the gains. “The new motorway will enhance connectivity to Dublin and Shannon, reducing travel time to Shannon Airport by up to 20 minutes and over 30 minutes to Dublin Airport, and will make the route much more attractive for people in Mayo and Sligo, especially as the route is toll-free.

“The opening of the new motorway will result in enormous potential for investment in towns such as Tuam, Athenry, Loughrea and Gort,” Sean Canney continues. “It is important that these towns prepare for the opening of this major infrastructural project and the potential investment that this new route will bring. I will be pressing for IDA Ireland to engage with their clients to put forward a case for foreign direct investment along this major corridor route.” **C**



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# CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

Construction Safety Week 2017 saw a higher number of companies and workers than any previous year organise and engage in activities to promote a positive safety message.



Construction Industry Federation Executive Body mark the beginning of Construction Safety Week.

**D**ermot Carey, CIF Director, Safety and Training says Construction Safety Week 2017, which ran from 23 to 27 October, was an unprecedented success at promoting the positive safety message on-sites across the country.

“CIF is delighted with the level of engagement with this year’s Construction Safety Week campaign,” says Dermot. “Contractors and workers across the country embraced the programme in a positive and proactive way throughout the week, and used the platform to promote construction safety awareness.”

For this year’s campaign CIF put a number of supports in place to help companies plan and organise their safety activities. “Our plan for this as the industry’s week was that CIF would provide the platform, but members would take the initiative and make it a success. I’m glad to say that is what happened.”

Prior to Construction Safety Week, companies could register their activities and sign up as a Partner to the event on the CIF website and download support materials.

CIF was delighted to have Baz Ashmawy and his ‘Mammy’ Nancy on board for the week. They recorded an exclusive series of short, themed clips entitled ‘Five Ways to Save Your Mammy on Site’, which were based on their Emmy award-winning TV series ‘50 Ways to Kill Your Mammy’. These were designed to set the scene for each day and put some humour into the Health & Safety message.

On Monday, 23 October, the daily theme was ‘Working at Height’ to start the week, and a request was made to those participating to ‘Stand Down for Safety’ and give workers an opportunity to reflect on their own safety and



John Sisk & Son team Stand Down for Safety.



Mercury Engineering team take a safety test.



Ardmac team Stand Down for Safety.



Dermot Carey, CIF Director, Safety and Training talks to Leo Lynch Engineering Contractors staff.

# SPECIAL REPORT: CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK

health. A high number of workers responded and observed the request using the hashtag #standdownforsafety to post images of their observance on social media channels.

“Stand Down for Safety was a huge success,” Dermot explains. “It allowed workers to start the week off with a positive event, and take the opportunity to start a conversation about Health & Safety.”

On Wednesday 25 October, a live webinar on Occupational Exposure to Crystalline Silica Dust was watched by over 100 sites across the country.

The Daily themes of Construction Safety Week 2017 week were:

Monday 23 October – Safety at Height

Tuesday 24 October – Plant & Machinery

Wednesday 25 October – Occupational Health – Dust

Thursday 26 October – Mental Health

Friday 27 October – Driving for Work

Across the week companies engaged with each other and shared their activities on their social media platforms using the hashtag #CIFSafety17.

Activities organised included:

- Site poster campaigns
- Toolbox safety talks and presentations
- Safety audits
- On-site safety competitions and quizzes
- Worker health screenings
- Promotion of healthy eating and lifestyle activities

“The objective of the week was to re-energise people’s efforts in promoting site safety and to try and change the image of the subject to a positive one,” comments Dermot. “The scale of engagement resulted in people from other industry sectors and the general public also engaging with us, with many contacting us directly to acknowledge the positive site safety message we wanted to convey. A big thank you to all who participated in any way to make the week such a success.”

CIF would like to thank Construction Safety Week sponsors the Construction Workers Sick Pay Trust (CWSPT), ESB Networks, Collen Construction, Grafton Merchandising ROI, Brooks and the Irish Hardware Association for their invaluable support.

All videos relating to Construction Safety Week 2017 can be viewed at [cif.ie/safety-week/videos](http://cif.ie/safety-week/videos) 



Collen Construction executive team and staff Stand Down for Safety.



Walls Construction team Stand Down for Safety during Construction Safety Week.



mac team during Construction Safety Week.



Designer Group team Stand Down for Safety.



CIF Director Justin Molloy joins JJ Rhatigan team at NUI Galway.



Tritech Engineering team during Construction Safety Week toolbox talk.



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Kirby Group Engineering mark Construction Safety Week.



Winthrop Safety Talk during Construction Safety Week.



Clancy Construction team during Construction Safety Week toolbox talk.



Stewart Construction team Stand Down for Safety.



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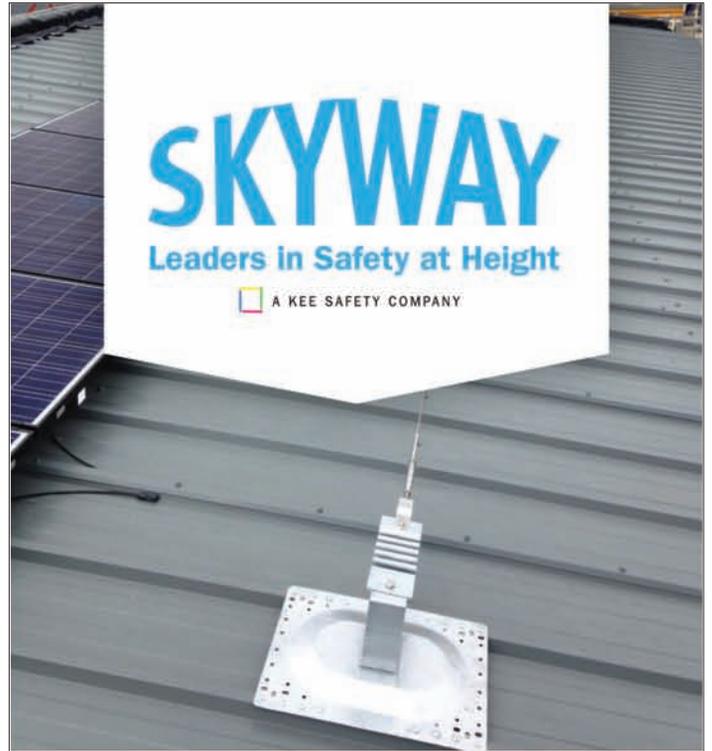


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# COMPULSORY PENSION SCHEME RETURNS AFTER FOUR YEAR BREAK

As a result of the SEO being signed into law, pensions, sick pay and death in service benefits are required for specified workers in the construction sector. CWPS Chairperson **ANDY O'GORMAN** outlines to **BARRY McCALL** what this will mean for the sector.



Andy O'Gorman, CWPS Chairperson

The construction industry has a compulsory pension scheme once again after a four-year break as a result of the Sectoral Employment Order (SEO) being signed into law by Minister for State Pat Breen TD. The SEO is in effect a replacement for the old Registered Employment Agreement (REA) for the industry, which was deemed to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 2013.

SEOs were established by the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015 as a means for interested parties to apply to the Labour Court to carry out an examination of rates of pay, pensions and sick pay in a sector with a view to making a recommendation to the Minister to set legally binding rates.

In 2016, CIF made an application to the Labour Court for an examination of rates, pensions and sick pay and was joined by ICTU, Unite and the Construction Workers Pensions Scheme in making individual submissions the following year.

"We made a submission because the Construction Workers Pension Scheme (CWPS) is an interested party," explains Andy O'Gorman, Chairperson, CWPS. "We have close to 300,000 members between 'actives' and 'deferreds', and we are currently the scheme of choice for anyone in the industry with employees."



The CWPS celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015, and it has been ahead of its time throughout its history. As a multi-employer scheme, it offers full transferability and portability of pensions to construction workers, as they move from employer to employer.

Furthermore, CWPS members bring their individualised pension pots with them throughout their career, as a result of changes made in 2006 following extensive discussions between employers and the construction group of unions.

"The first thing we did in our submission was to set out the background and size of the scheme. It had been the scheme that was exclusively used by the whole industry until the Supreme Court struck down the REA", says Andy O'Gorman. "Of course, we accept that no scheme has a natural right to be the only one deemed suitable for the industry."

The submission also included details of the death in service benefits and sick pay scheme. "We provide members with a death in service benefit of €100,000 regardless of the cause of death, without any medical underwriting," he points out. "Also, most employers in the industry don't have sick pay schemes of their own in place for employees."

Our scheme attempts to bring members up to average industry earnings when they are off work due to illness or injury. The pension contribution used to be 7% of average earnings. The Labour Court has now given us set contribution rates.

The SEO recommended by the Labour Court and accepted by the Minister has proposed CWPS as a scheme that meets all the requirements of the legal instrument.

"The Labour Court has been very clear that any other scheme would have to offer the same benefits and conditions as CWPS," he adds.

"It helped that both the employers and the group of unions were agreed that there should be a mandatory pension scheme for the industry and that the CWPS offered good value for money as such a scheme. The Labour Court accepted this view. The same procedure has now begun for the Mechanical Engineering and Building Services sectors and the Labour Court is deliberating on those at present."

## CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK 2017

The Construction Workers' Sick Pay Trust was a sponsor of Construction Safety Week. "We were delighted to be able to participate in Construction Safety Week this year", says Andy O'Gorman. "We support our members when they are absent from work because they are sick or injured. Construction Safety Week is very important, as it helps to highlight the need for safety awareness. Construction sites are dangerous environments, and people need to be aware of that and take steps to minimise the dangers. The overall aim is to reduce accidents on construction sites in Ireland – everybody will benefit from that." **C**

### WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED INDUSTRIES

	EMPLOYER	MEMBER	TOTAL
Pension Contribution	€26.63	€17.76*	€44.39
Death in Service Contribution	€1.11	€1.11*	€2.22
Sick Pay Contribution	€1.27	€0.63	€1.90
Standard Contribution Total	€29.01	€19.50	€48.51

\* Contributions for Pension and Death-in-Service Benefit are made before PAYE is calculated.

# COLLEN'S SAFETY LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Collen Construction's innovative approach to safety management has set a new standard for on-site safety. **SEAN MURPHY** talks to the team that has overseen the introduction of this approach.

In 2016, Collen Construction completed a major upgrade of its management systems and became accredited to the latest ISO standards. This was implemented despite already having an A Grade in the CIF Safe-T-Cert management system for the previous six consecutive years.

The Collen management team saw the newly introduced systems as part of a robust overall corporate culture, designed to deliver continual improvement in safety and maintain and develop its position as an industry leader.

## COLLEN SAFETY LEADERSHIP CHARTER

Collen management wanted to ensure that the new systems would be adopted and championed across their operations teams and supply chain.

Under the direction of Collen CEO, Tommy Drumm and Construction Director, David Lee, Collen engaged Ingenium Training and Consulting to develop a transformational leadership seminar for Collen's 120-strong operations team. This seminar took place in Croke Park in November 2016.

The dual objectives were:

- To engage all Collen staff to agree on a vision for how the company would operate into the future
- To develop the 'Collen Safety Leadership Charter'

The seminar established an agreed vision for the future, discussed and agreed a Charter to maximise the effectiveness of the team, and empower competent emerging leadership.

The resulting vision was for Collen 'To be recognised as a Leader in Safety and Project Execution in the markets in which Collen operates'.

The Charter advocates a continuous improvement of Health & Safety on Collen's projects and allows project leaders to showcase their commitment to this new set of behaviours and attitudes.

## SAFETY FOR ALL

In May 2017, Collen planned a supply chain engagement 'Safety for All' event to facilitate



the implementation of the Safety Leadership Charter for the sub-contractor supply chain, led by Donal Hennessy, Commercial Director. The event, in Croke Park, had over 100 sub-contractor managing directors/directors in attendance and focused on the safety leadership traits that Collen Construction expects from its sub-contractors. This resulted in sub-contractors co-developing a Sub-Contractor Supply Chain Safety Charter to support Collen's vision.

## A CULTURE OF SAFETY LEADERSHIP

"In holding these events for both staff and sub-contractors," Joe O'Dwyer, Collen Health & Safety Manager, explains, "our ultimate objective is to ensure a safer working environment for all."

The final element Collen management identified as needing to be put in place was the introduction of a culture of safety leadership. Collen's management's belief was that when this works, it gives everyone accountability for safety and results in employees and sub-contractors going beyond the call of duty to identify unsafe conditions and behaviours, and empowers them to intervene to correct them through clearly defined processes that promote disclosure and 'near-miss' reporting.

## 'LEADERSHIP AND BEHAVIOURAL SAFETY'

In September 2017, Collen Construction moved to the third phase of its Safety Culture programme. The third event in Croke Park brought all of Collen's operational team together. The focus of the event was on 'Leadership and Behavioural Safety'.

Collen engaged the services of Annette Tierney's Theatre at Work, whose innovative theatre-based learning methods provide high impact solutions in areas such as leadership, behavioural safety, culture change and commercial skills.

This theatrical event, which recreated a major construction site incident, was designed to give each operational team member an opportunity to consider their approach to workplace safety.

Tommy Drumm sums up: "Best in class safety requires trust. Trust with all parties involved in the cycle of planning and completing work. Those in the front line are most at risk, so their opinion is most valuable."

## CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK

In what was a good fit for its safety leadership journey, Collen Construction was a sponsor of Construction Safety Week 2017. **C**

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# REDUCING ELECTRICITY HAZARDS ON-SITE

Being 'electricity safe' is an essential element of any site safety plan. **ARTHUR BYRNE**, Public Safety Manager for ESB Networks, outlines steps that should be taken to reduce the risks when working around or nearby electricity.

**C**onstruction sites present many hazards that need to be controlled and managed so the risk of injury is made as low as possible. Some of the more obvious hazards include falling from heights, collapsing trenches and using machinery. Sometimes the hazards associated with working near the electricity network can be overlooked or considered to be less important.

Much more attention needs to be given to reducing the risk of accidental contact with electrical wires and cables.

A recent construction fatality with electricity involved a crane slinging shuttering, which touched overhead 10,000-volt electricity wires. The presence of the overhead wires had been identified, and crane operations had proceeded safely. But sometime later, shuttering was being re-located when the accident happened.

What is very concerning is the noticeable increase in the volume of incidents where there has been accidental contact with wires and cables by machinery.

## REAL INCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES INVOLVING ELECTRICITY

Here are some examples of real incidents and near misses that involved electricity.

A contractor drilled into a 20,000-volt cable on the assumption that it was a water pipe. This emphasises the importance of correct cable identification.

A tipper truck brought down overhead electricity wires across a busy road when unloading. There were serious risks to people near the lorry, including members of the general public.

A teleporter worked directly beneath 220,000-volt wires when constructing an extension to a large building. The Code of Practice for Overhead Electricity Wires

requires barriers, bunting and signage to be in place.

Scaffolding was erected close to 20,000-volt wires. ESB Networks were required to disconnect the electricity supply to customers so that the scaffolding could be removed safely.

A UK scaffolding company and its director were prosecuted after a worker received an electric shock when scaffolding being erected came in contact with overhead electricity wires. The worker suffered extremely severe injuries including multiple amputations.

## AWARENESS OF HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH ELECTRICITY

ESB Networks is committed to raising public awareness of the hazards associated with coming too close to electrical wires and cables with significant investment in educating the general public through TV and radio campaigns, along with targeted social media campaigns.

ESB's partnership with CIF during the recent Construction Safety Week in October is an example of how ESB Networks is working with industry stakeholders to provide information and increase the knowledge of what constitutes safe practice when carrying out any construction work near electricity networks. **C**

### IMPORTANT ESB NETWORK RESOURCES

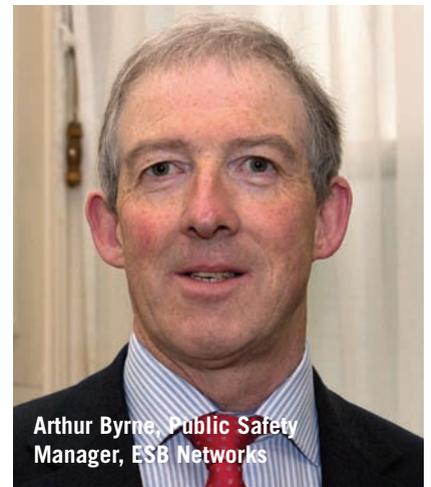
Contact ESB Networks for records of the electricity networks on your site:

Phone: 1850 928 960 or [dig@esb.ie](mailto:dig@esb.ie)

For safety information: [www.esbnetworks.ie/stayingsafe](http://www.esbnetworks.ie/stayingsafe)

or phone 1850 372757

For emergency situations: phone 1850 372 999



**Arthur Byrne, Public Safety Manager, ESB Networks**

## ADVICE FROM ESB NETWORKS WHEN WORKING AROUND ELECTRICITY:

### Watch out for overhead wires

Remember to implement the safety controls and comply fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Overhead Wires, including goalposts to restrict access for high machinery when passing beneath overhead wires. Know what the required 'hazard zone' is by contacting ESB Networks when planning work.

### Identify the location of underground cables

Remember to use competent staff for cable identification and use correctly calibrated equipment. Ensure full compliance with the HSA Code of Practice for Underground Services.

### Display safety stickers on all machinery

Remind everyone to be 'electricity safe'. Safety stickers are available from ESB Networks.

### Toolbox Talks

Include electricity awareness and consequences in Toolbox Talks before starting work.

**In an emergency, phone ESB Networks, immediately.**



# HEALTH SCREENING IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Construction Workers Health Trust (CWHT) has launched a new initiative to encourage contractors in the industry to register directly with them for the purpose of providing all of their workers with a bi-annual health check in the workplace.

**A**sk any safety officer what they do in relation to health and you're immediately met with a thoughtful frown.

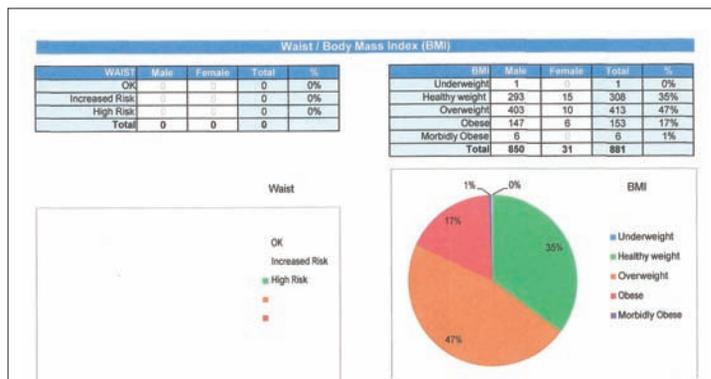
Most will agree that safety is straightforward enough, in so far as all the rules and regulations are there, and there's no shortage of guidance and directives, but health is a different kettle of fish.

If you consider the health of your workers to be as important as their safety, and you should, then the key to monitoring their health is to provide

them with a bi-annual health check.

After all, you are required to monitor the health of your car with a bi-annual test, so instead of the NCT, think of this as the NBT...the national body test.

Many contractors will be familiar with the health screenings carried out by CWHT on larger building sites throughout the country, but you will also be aware that this only covers the workers actually engaged on those sites.



## WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF YOUR WORKFORCE?

What about those engaged on other sites or smaller jobs. And how about the office staff?

The problem is simply that the Health Trust is small and under-funded, and the industry is big. They have no choice but to focus on



big high profile contracts, where large numbers of workers can be seen in one small place.

But now that may be about to change.

CWHT has launched a new facility on their website [www.cwht.ie](http://www.cwht.ie) whereby firms can register directly and pay the annual subscription for health screening without being members of the industry Pension scheme (CWPS). And the cost is a ridiculously low €75 per worker per year... yes per year.

Up to now the only way of providing on-site health screening for your workers was to pay the weekly subscription currently €1.50 per person per week, (deducted from the worker's wages incidentally), through the industry pension scheme. This meant registering your workers firstly in the pension scheme itself and then opting to

pay the Health Trust as an additional cost.

Well that's all about to change. Now you can simply log on to the CWHT website, [www.cwht.ie](http://www.cwht.ie), click the Employer Registration tab and complete a simple registration form.

You don't even have to supply worker's names and details. All the CWHT requires is an estimate of the approximate number of people your firm employs and they will invoice you for the annual subscription based on that number.

You will then be entitled to contact their office to arrange health screening for your staff.

Now before you ask the obvious question, here's a quick example;

Acme Building Ltd registers 35 workers with CWHT.

They are invoiced for €2625. That's 35

workers by €75, the annual charge.

Soon after, the safety officer arranges health screening at the company's office but only 31 workers take part. CWHT then adjusts the company's invoice for the following year to 31 by €75. Simple!

During the screening the attending nurse will gather worker's specific details, name address contact number etc and start a register for Acme Building Ltd.

All medicals are overseen by a qualified doctor and guaranteed confidential.

There is no better way to build Health into your Health & Safety program.

And it doesn't end there. Once your firm is registered, you can arrange other medical tests if required. For example older workers can benefit from tests such as PSA (prostate cancer) FOBT (bowel screen/colorectal cancer) full blood count and thyroid panel, and these can be organized in conjunction with the normal bi-annual health screen.

And remember, men don't go to doctors. That's a simple fact. The medical profession regularly highlights that male participation in preventative medicine is pitifully low, not just in Ireland but worldwide.

CWHT on the other hand can boast a participation rate of over 80%.

What's the secret? Provide the medical in the workplace, during normal working hours and keep it confidential. Simple as that !

You can contact the Construction Workers Health Trust at the number below or through their website, [www.cwht.ie](http://www.cwht.ie). **C**

*Construction Workers Health Trust  
130/132 Francis Street, Dublin 8  
Tel: +353-1-7093070  
Fax: +353-1-4544937  
Email: [info@cwht.ie](mailto:info@cwht.ie)*

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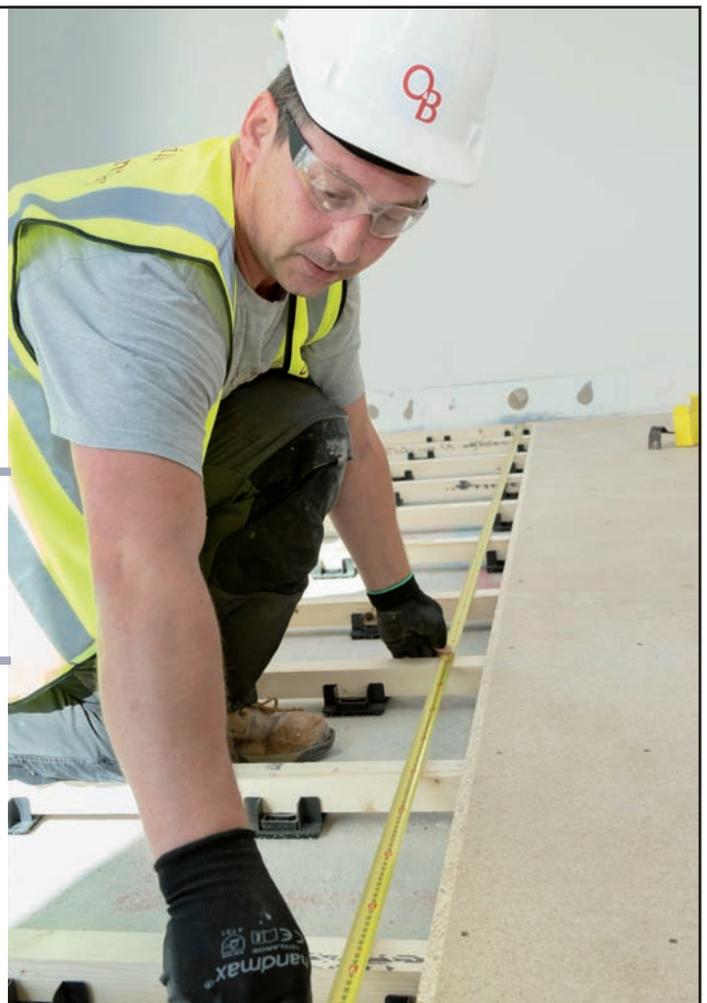
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# ONLY ONE THIRD OF PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS ARE SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

Is it time that we followed our European neighbours when it comes to private pension coverage? **SUSAN O'MARA** asks.

If you follow this regular advice column, you'll note that there is a heavy bias towards retirement planning. As a financial advisor for the Construction sector, I meet many members of the sector's two big schemes, Construction Executive Retirement Savings (CERS) and the Construction Workers Pension Scheme (CWPS).

My concern is that private pension coverage in Ireland is low, with only a third of private sector workers saving for retirement. This means that two-thirds of the population will be solely reliant on the State to provide for their income in retirement.

## LET'S DIG DOWN DEEPER

We pay PRSI contributions, and the State promises to pay us a pension, to replace our income when we are no longer working. From March 2018, the full contributory State pension will be €12,651.60 per annum. However, currently, the State doesn't set aside money to meet this promise. They pay it from the Exchequer (tax take) in the year it falls due.

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS?

Currently, there are about five people working and paying tax for every person in receipt of the State pension – but a shift in the demographic means that by 2050 that could be about two people working for every retired person. This puts significant pressure on the State's finances. Of course, we've known this for some time and an OECD report in 2012 highlighted this and recommended the implementation of a later State pension age and the establishment of a mandatory pension scheme for all workers.

The State pension age was indeed pushed out. The qualifying age is currently 66; it will increase to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028. It is widely discussed that a State pension age of 70 is likely to be introduced

at some point also.

However, while there has been a lot of noise about a mandatory pension scheme, nothing concrete has materialised so far. Many of our European neighbours are up and running with this and are seeing a significant increase in their private pension coverage.

## WHAT IS A MANDATORY PENSION SCHEME AND HOW COULD IT HELP?

A mandatory scheme would mean that all employers, big and small, would have to contribute a specific amount or percentage of salary for all workers. It could most likely be quasi- or soft- mandatory, meaning people would be automatically enrolled in a scheme but could opt out if they wished. This would have the effect of increasing private pension coverage in this country.

In 2012, the OECD reported that countries with mandatory or quasi-mandatory workplace pensions have 70%-plus coverage. That same year, the UK rolled out its auto-enrolment scheme. Although this scheme started with only the largest employers, it will be mandatory for employees in 2018. Early evidence sees only approximately 9% of people opting out. While this number may rise somewhat in 2018 – it still represents a huge increase in pension coverage.

The Sectoral Employment Order (SEO), recently signed into law, provides for mandatory pensions for construction workers. I commend the industry for this move – it ensures that an entire sector of workers is covered and that the construction industry is a couple of steps ahead of the State when it comes to a mandatory pension.

## ANY OTHER ISSUES?

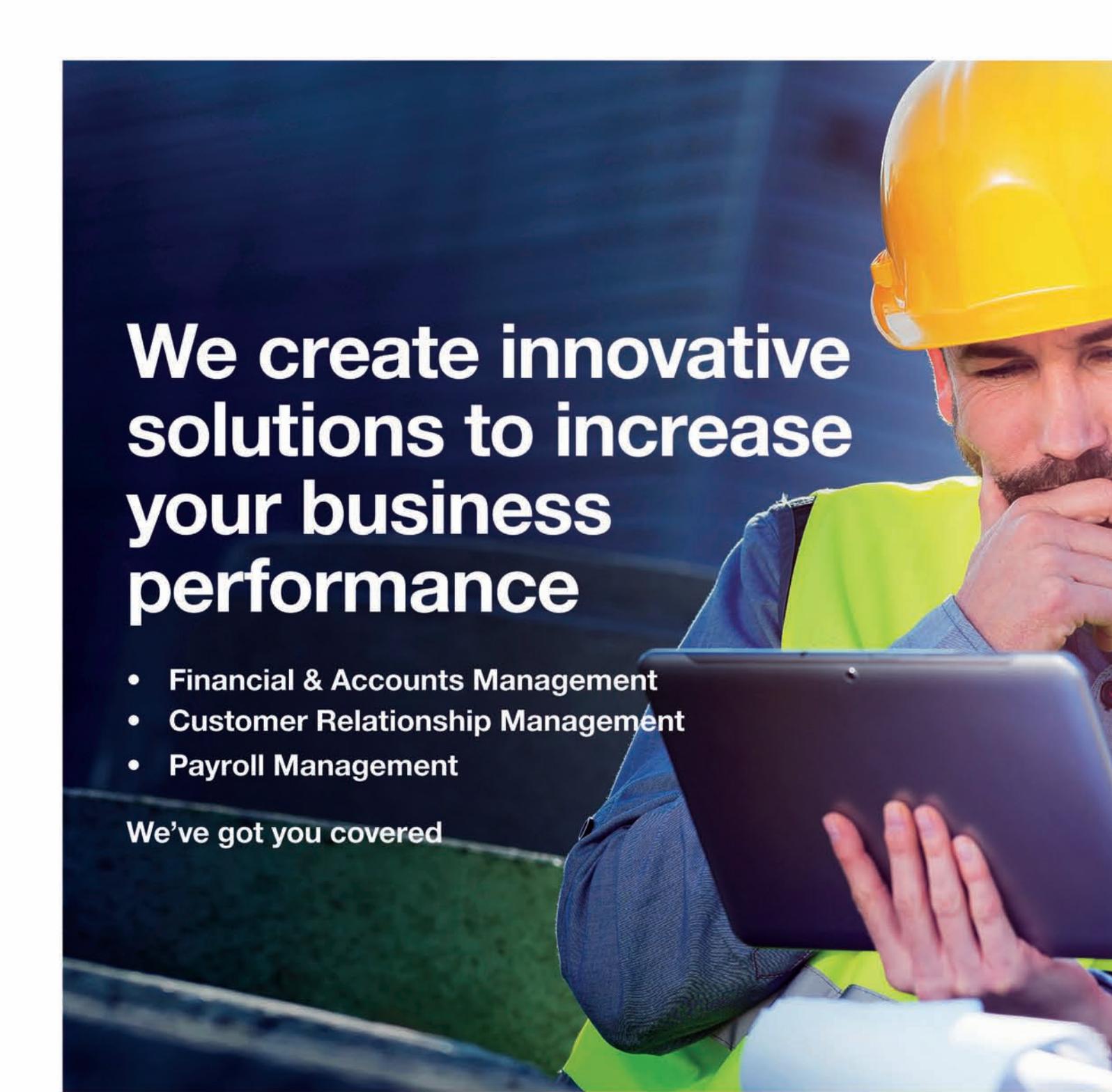
As we know well, there is a housing crisis in Ireland. More and more of the



“ A MANDATORY SCHEME WOULD MEAN THAT ALL EMPLOYERS, BIG AND SMALL, WOULD HAVE TO CONTRIBUTE A SPECIFIC AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE OF SALARY FOR ALL WORKERS. ”

population are in rental accommodation, paying high levels of rent and may never afford to buy homes. When this group of people reach State pension age, how will they pay rent? The State pension levels as they are, (and are likely to remain) will not cover the cost of rent. This will put further pressure on State finances in future years.

It is a matter of some urgency that these issues are addressed so that this ticking time bomb is defused. **C**



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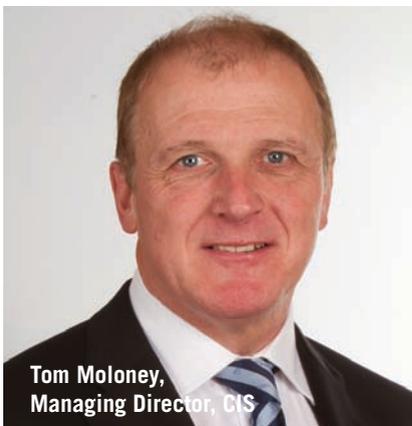
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# PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE FOR 2018

**TOM MOLONEY**, Managing Director Construction Information Services (CIS), provides an overview of some significant projects that will be in site in 2018.



**Tom Moloney,**  
Managing Director, CIS

## RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

The Residential sector continues to see strong development in 2017 with concentration in the Dublin area. Park Development Group is continuing work on the €51m residential development totalling 190 homes and 220 apartments, at Clay Farm, Ballyogan Road, Dublin 18. Works have commenced on a €19.7m 148-unit residential development at Taylor Hill in Balbriggan, County Dublin. Main contractor Bridgedale Homes Ltd will begin with 38 units as part of Phase 1. BAM Contractors has been awarded the main contract for a €6.7m apartment development on Gerald Griffin Street in Cork City. The works should commence in Q4, 2017.

## STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Student accommodation continues to grow exponentially, especially in the Dublin area. Enabling works have begun at Montpelier Hill in Dublin 7 for a €9.2m 329-bedroom development. Planning permission has been submitted for a €160m development at Belfield, Dublin 4, which will comprise over 3,000 residential bed-spaces with two retail service units. Planning amendments have been approved for a €19m student accommodation on

Carrigrohane Road in Co Cork, to increase the number of bed-spaces to 484.

## MEDICAL SECTOR

The Medical sector is headlined by the development of the €1bn new Children's Hospital at the St James's Hospital Campus, Dublin 8. The project is now underway with initial excavation works being carried out on-site. Duggan Brothers Ltd has started work on the development of a new €16m nursing facility and catering department on Peamount Road in Dublin, which is expected to be completed in early 2019.

A main contractor has been appointed for the development of a new €19m residential care centre at St Patrick's Hospital, Waterford. Works are expected to commence in November 2017.

## COMMERCIAL SECTOR

Commercial activity remains strong, with a concentration in the Dublin area. Work has commenced on the first two blocks of a €67m office development near Dublin Airport. Tenders have been returned from a select list of contractors and are currently being assessed for a €20m office development at Hainault House, Dublin 2. In Co Galway, plans have been granted for a €44m mixed-use development at the former Topaz Oil storage facility on the Dock Road.

## CIVIL SECTOR

Tenders are being sought from a select list of contractors for the main runway works package at Dublin Airport, which is worth €320m. The new runway will be constructed 1.6km north of the existing main runway at the airport. Construction is commencing on the €110m M7 Naas Newbridge Bypass upgrade, M7 Osberstown Interchange and R407 Sallins Bypass. Works have commenced on Phase 1 of the €45m Coonagh-Knockalisheen Distributor Road scheme in Co Limerick.

## EDUCATION SECTOR

An Bord Pleanála has upheld Westmeath County Council's decision to grant planning permission to Mean Scoil Clochair Kilbeggan for an €8m 8,000-sq m school development. Work is underway on a €14m 10,000-sq m school development in Athenry, Co Galway for Presentation College. In Dublin, plans have been lodged for a €3.5m energy and educational facility for the Grangegorman Development Agency in Dublin 7. Work is also underway on the construction of a new €14m school development in Kingswood, Dublin 24.

## HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Flynn Management & Contractors has commenced work on a €16m change of use to a hotel at Sackville House in Dublin 1. In Co Longford, construction has commenced of 470 lodges as part of the new €233m Center Parcs Holiday Village in Ballymahon. Plans have been granted for the €8m 35-bedroom extension and alterations to the Savoy Hotel in Limerick City.

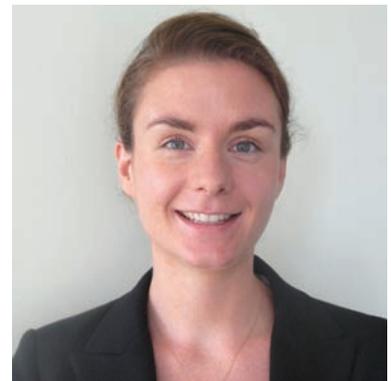
## SPORTS AND LEISURE SECTOR

Work has commenced on Phase 5 of the €65m Curragh Racecourse redevelopment in Co Kildare. Consultancy firm Grimshaw Architects has been appointed by TII to act as the concept architect to develop an architectural vision for new Metro North project in Dublin. \*Costings on these projects are indicative and are based on a price per sq m for shell and core only. **C** Construction Information Services (CIS) is Ireland's market leader in supplying real-time information on construction projects from early planning to on-site stages. This project information was accurate on 2 November 2017. For the latest information on these developments, call us on 01 2999 200, email sales@cisireland.com or visit www.cisireland.com



# BUDGET 2018 – KEY MEASURES

Budget 2018 contained a number of measures intended to generate economic growth and increase activity in the construction sector with a particular emphasis on Housing and Regional Development. By **JEANETTE MAIR**, Economic & Policy Research Executive



In Budget 2018, Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure & Reform Paschal Donohoe TD outlined a broad range of measures that will have an impact across all sectors of the Construction Industry.

Before announcing his budget, the Minister outlined the current economic position of the country.

To end Quarter 3, he said the Exchequer recorded a surplus of €2,344m, a year-on-year improvement of €2,369m, underpinned by proceeds of the AIB share disposal. Tax receipts in the first nine months of 2017 were broadly on-profile and up over €1.8bn year-on-year, underpinned by an improving economy. Gross voted expenditure was managed within expectations, and was up 4.6% in the year, reflecting the Government’s commitment to investing in public services and infrastructure.

The economy continued to grow strongly with real growth projected to be 4.3% in 2017 and 3.5% in 2018, with unemployment now at its lowest since 2008, at 6.1%, and it is forecast to

fall to 5.7% on average in 2018.

The projected deficit for 2017 is 0.3% of GDP, and taking account of the Budget 2018 package, the forecasted deficit for 2018 is 0.2% of GDP.

## RAINY DAY FUND

Budget 2018 will establish the ‘Rainy Day’ Fund in 2018, transferring at least €1.5bn to it from the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund. As set out in the *Summer Economic Statement*, the annual contributions of €500m will commence in 2019 after Ireland has achieved the Medium-Term Objective in 2018.

## TOTAL VOTED CAPITAL SPENDING

Total voted capital spending for 2018 will amount to over €5.3bn, an increase of €790m on the 2017 allocation. Budget 2018 announced an additional allocation of capital expenditure of €4.3bn over the next four years, up to the end of the

existing Capital Plan in 2021. This will result in capital expenditure doubling between 2015 and 2021 – from €3.7bn to €7.8bn Gross Voted Capital. This increased investment will deliver better public services, promote regional economic growth, and help address challenges such as Brexit and climate change.

## GENERAL EXPENDITURE PLANS

Budget 2018 increases gross voted current expenditure by over €1.8bn or 3.4% compared to the expected outturn for 2017 excluding the water charges refund.

Budget 2018 increases voted capital expenditure by €790m from €4.54bn this

year to just over €5.3bn in 2018. This is an increase of over 17%.

## HOUSING

Budget 2018 is making up to €750m of the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund available for commercial investment in housing finance. The funds announced will be made available to a new vehicle to be known as Home Building Finance Ireland or HBFI.

Over and above that already committed to in 'Rebuilding Ireland', Budget 2018 is providing an extra €500m for the direct building programme. This should see an additional 3,000 new-build social houses by 2021, increasing the existing Rebuilding Ireland target of social housing homes to 50,000, of which 33,500 will be delivered through construction.

Budget 2018 provides additional Exchequer funding of €75m for a second phase of the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), which will also support the Local Authority delivery of affordable housing. When combined with the Local Authority matching contribution, this fund has the potential to provide approximately 5,000 homes at more affordable levels by 2021.

The Help to Buy Scheme has been retained.

## STAMP DUTY ON COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Budget 2018 increased the level of stamp duty on commercial property transactions from 2% to 6%. However, in relation to commercial land purchased for the development of housing, a stamp duty refund scheme will be introduced because of the housing supply challenge. The refund is subject to certain conditions, including a requirement that developers will have to commence the relevant development within 30 months of the land purchase.

## VACANT SITE LEVY INCREASE

Any owner of a vacant site on the register who does not develop their land in 2018 will pay a 3% levy in 2019 and then become liable to the increased rate of 7% from 1 January 2019. If landowners continue to hoard land in 2019, they will pay 7% in 2020, resulting in an effective vacant site levy of 10% over the two years.

## CAPITAL GAINS TAX RELIEF

Budget 2018 has reduced the seven-year period owners must retain qualifying assets to enjoy full relief from Capital Gains Tax to four years. This reduces any impact it may have on limiting the supply of development land available for sale.

## MORTGAGE INTEREST RELIEF (TAPERED REMOVAL)

The extension of Mortgage Interest Relief

for homeowners who bought between 2004-2012 will begin to taper off. This will take the form of the continuation of 75% of the existing relief into 2018, 50% in 2019 and 25% in 2020.

## UPGRADING VACANT RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR RENTAL

To encourage owners of vacant residential property to bring their property into the rental market for a minimum of four years, Budget 2018 introduced a new, time-limited deduction for pre-letting expenses.

## HEALTH (CAPITAL EXPENDITURE)

An additional €471m has been made available to cover the period 2018-2021 for capital expenditure in health. This represents, on average, an additional €120m each year. This funding will allow for investment in critical infrastructure including the delivery of the National Children's Hospital project and a range of other investments in primary and community care schemes.

## EDUCATION (CAPITAL EXPENDITURE)

On foot of the midterm capital review, Budget 2018 is investing an additional €310m out to 2021 to address the infrastructure needs of the higher and further education sectors.

The Minister for Education also announced an additional €200m PPP investment in the sector to support regional development.

## TRANSPORT (CAPITAL EXPENDITURE)

There will be an increase of €9.6m in transport funding that will support increased public transport services and improvements to our road network, and this will see total current funding in this area rise to €414m. The capital allocation for the Department will total €7.5bn over the four-year period to 2021 and will allow continued progress on a number of projects, such as:

- (1) Phase 2 of the National Indoor Arena;
- (2) The Sallins Bypass;
- (3) The Oberstown interchange project
- (4) A number of other roadbuilding projects will begin construction, assisting commuters, and enhancing balanced regional development.

## HERITAGE (CAPITAL EXPENDITURE)

Additional funding to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht of €4m in capital will allow for key measures to be progressed in 2018.

Budget 2018 increased the National Training Fund levy in 2018 from 0.7% to 0.8% to provide €47.5m of additional investment in the Higher and Further Education Sectors next year. The Minister also announced that the levy will rise to 0.9% in 2019 and to 1.0% in 2020.

## SMES PRE- AND POST- BREXIT

Budget 2018 made a loan scheme of up to

**“ THE ECONOMY CONTINUED TO GROW STRONGLY WITH REAL GROWTH PROJECTED TO BE 4.3% IN 2017 AND 3.5% IN 2018, WITH UNEMPLOYMENT NOW AT ITS LOWEST SINCE 2008 ”**

€300m available at a competitive rate to SMEs, given their unique exposure to the UK market, to help them with their short-term working capital needs, supported by the European Investment Bank Group, the European Commission and the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Budget 2018 allocated €36m to facilitate the expansion of the energy efficiency programmes across the public commercial and residential sectors.

## CORPORATION TAX

The 12.5% tax rate remains. In order to ensure some smoothing of corporation tax revenues over time, the limitation on the quantum of relevant income against which capital allowances for intangible assets and any related interest expense may be deducted in a tax year has been reduced to 80%.

## NEXT STEPS

Increasing infrastructure investment was a central element of Budget 2018 with the Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform stating that increased investment will deliver better public services, promote regional economic growth, and help address challenges such as Brexit and climate change.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform will shortly hold a consultative forum to contribute to the framing of the new 10-year National Investment Plan (NIP) due to be unveiled in December. The consultation will include deliberation on how the NIP will support the new National Planning Framework. CIF will continue to play an active role throughout this critical consultative period. **C**

# CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP SOLVE IRELAND'S HOUSING CRISIS?

According to a recent report from Housing Agency for Ireland, we need to build a minimum of 81,118 new homes in the next three years to meet current demand.

**H**ousing completions in general are continuing to rise, however experts have recently questioned the accuracy of how this is measured. Some even claim that completions could be exaggerated by up to 50 per cent<sup>1</sup> casting doubt on whether the true number of houses needed could be even higher than that outlined by the Housing Agency's report. Put simply, completions are not happening quickly enough to keep up with Ireland's growing population - particularly in urban areas where the popularity of city living and lack of affordable homes is a particular issue.

Ireland's construction industry needs new, faster and more cost effective ways to build homes. Understandably, however, there's always been a reluctance to move away from the tried and tested traditional methods of building to embrace new approaches to construction.

Over recent years we have seen a number of governments across Europe pushing initiatives to encourage this transition from old to new construction methods, for example with the introduction of building information modelling (BIM) mandates. The idea being that these new technologies can help create a more holistic approach to the construction process.

Yet much of the conversation has centred around the benefits for the main contractor or the stakeholders. What's not always apparent is how new approaches like BIM can benefit every stage of construction and everyone involved in the process from designers and architects, to engineers and machine operators.



Cloud-based software for example, ensures everyone is accessing the same up-to-date information no matter what location they're based in. Without this remote connection between field and office, the smallest changes to a design can cause issues for everyone involved, potentially leading to material

waste, time delays and additional cost for both main and sub-contractors. Using integrated hardware and software to connect the field to the office means that everyone receives real-time and 'as-built' updates which, ultimately, helps lead to better communication, a reduction in mistakes and an increased speed of delivery.

We're working with a number of housebuilders to integrate new technology into their workflows and help streamline their construction processes. ECL Civil Engineering, a premier groundworks company, is using Topcon's web-based communications systems - Sitelink3D - to this effect. The system allows designers to alert ECL's machine operatives to any issues with earthworks levels or any alterations in the layout of the work. This means any problems can be resolved quickly and efficiently, without impacting on the timely delivery of the project. It also provides ECL's site managers with remote views on all their project crews, their exact positions, activities and files in use. Employees managing multiple housing sites can use the software programme to remotely track the progress of construction at every location

and give support to drivers even if they're not on site.

If Ireland is to meet the ambitious housing targets set out in the Housing Agency's report, finding new and quicker ways to build must be a priority. Cutting-edge technology can play a key part in this, helping to close the gap between site and office activity and make housebuilding more efficient for everyone in the supply chain. **C**



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# GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADDRESS THE REGIONAL JOB ISSUE ONCE AND FOR ALL

**BRIAN BYRNE**, MD of Cleary Doyle, recently completed an 11-year term as Chairperson of the CIF's South East Branch. He speaks to **ROBBIE COUSINS** about the importance of the Branch network

**B**rian Byrne is proud of the achievements of the South East Branch over the past few years. In 2015, the Branch proposed setting up a Regional Development sub-committee with the goal of helping regional SME's get back to work. This proposal was brought to the Executive Body of the CIF, where it was unanimously ratified.

"With Dominic Doheny as Chair and myself as Vice-Chair, members of the sub-committee, comprising branch members from across the country, met with MEP's, Ministers, Government Departments, Local Authorities and other Government Bodies to identify infrastructure works that needed to be carried out in local areas. Through this process, we were able to advise Government on the most beneficial use of capital funds.

Some of the ideas that came out of this process have since been incorporated into the National Framework document. I am very proud that this originated in an idea that was raised at a South East Branch meeting."

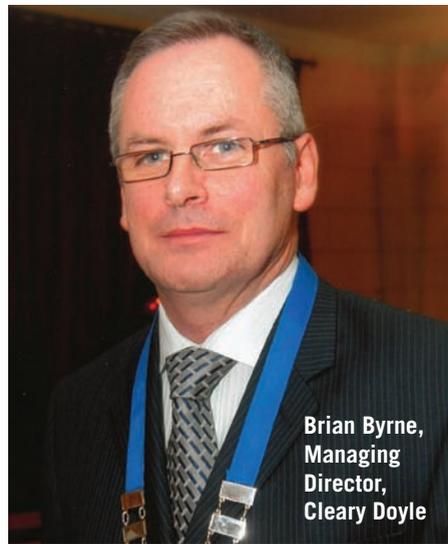
## SHARED APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Another innovative idea that originated in the South East was the Shared Apprenticeship Scheme.

"The apprenticeship sharing initiative proposed that young wet-trade apprentices move between a number of contractors in the South East as work arose to gain experience on different sites with different teams," he says. "When they completed their time, the apprentices had picked up a broader range of skills and work practices than they would have if they had trained with one company. As contractors, we were getting confident young tradespeople who could adapt quickly to the set up on any site, having trained with a mix of top contractors."

## REGIONAL BALANCE

Speaking of the current market situation, Brian Byrne explains that although his company Cleary Doyle is doing well, he regrets that none of their



**Brian Byrne,  
Managing  
Director,  
Cleary Doyle**

projects are anywhere near their base in Wexford.

"Unfortunately, most of our sites are in Dublin, and the surrounding counties, which means we have most of our 140 site workers making a 130km-plus trip on the N11 from Wexford to Dublin or to further afield on a daily basis. I would like to see Government address regional job creation once and for all. Communities across the country continue to suffer, and this need not necessarily be the case.

"There are solutions. For instance, within the proposed new 10-year capital plan, which is aligned with the National Planning Framework, it is critical that SME contractors across the regions are not precluded from tendering on these projects. If we don't place sustainable regional development as a central part of any upturn, there will be no serious requirement to build houses in the regions in the years ahead. If something isn't done soon, I fear that the big regional centres will continue to grow and smaller communities won't survive."

## BRANCH NETWORK

Brian Byrne is a strong advocate for the Branch system promoting not just the needs of the local construction sector, but also supporting local SME's in addressing the challenges they face and contributing to the local communities in which members operate.

He took over the Chair at a time when the Irish construction industry was in its most successful phase and held the position during the downturn.

"Through good times and bad, the Branch has always been a place where members can come together to get advice and support as well air their views when they felt things needed to be said," he says. "The past 10 years have been a challenge like no other. But the outlook for the industry is now positive. However, that positivity brings challenges with regard to labour, plant and material resourcing. There are also challenges that we cannot address, namely how utilities providers, Government Agencies and financial houses address the challenges they face.

He believes that the branch network across the country has an essential role to play in helping members develop opportunities for their businesses and their communities.

Asked if he has any advice for his successor as Chairman of the South East Branch, John O'Shaughnessy, MD of Clancy Construction, the former Chairman says, "John will be a great Chairperson. He heads up a hugely successful business and brings vast experience to the position. He has also been Vice Chair for a number of years and knows the members. I am delighted that we have someone of his calibre taking over. I look forward to working with him." **C**

# FEXCO FUND PROVIDING €70M IN FINANCE FOR CIF SME MEMBERS

FEXCO Asset Finance, an on-lender for the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland, is aiming to help Irish SME's fund plant and equipment acquisitions.

**F**EXCO Asset Finance (FEXCO) is a specialist leasing and hire-purchase provider. With three decades of experience, FEXCO offers a wide range of tailored and flexible asset finance options. FEXCO's solutions provide access for small to medium-sized enterprises (SME's) to the finance necessary to grow their business.

The company's product offering covers 68 different asset types including; plant and construction equipment, finance for haulage, plant and crane hire operators, as well as leasing of more traditional vehicles. As an asset finance provider, FEXCO provides three main types of finance options, Hire Purchase, Leasing and Rental agreements.

## FUNDING FOR IRISH SME'S

In 2016, FEXCO became an on-lender for the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) and has a fund of €70m to lend to the Irish SME sector.

Leveraging the facility, FEXCO lends to its core business customers, including the construction and green energy sector, where it is partnering with the Construction Industry Federation to provide additional support for its members' financing needs.

## CATERING FOR MORE BUSINESS TYPES

Mike O'Halloran, CEO of FEXCO Asset Finance, says that in addition to the SBCI funding, FEXCO, as a private enterprise, can leverage its company fund to lend to business.

"One of the big advantages we bring to the market is that we can cater for more varied types of business," explains Mike. "Not every sector or industry qualifies for SBCI finance, but through FEXCO's



Mike O'Halloran,  
CEO of FEXCO  
Asset Finance

funding book we can consider more niche industry types seeking access to finance.

## AIM TO APPROVE DEALS WITHIN 24 HOURS

"Another huge advantage FEXCO can offer our customers is our fast turn-around service. We try to get all deals approved within two to 24 hours."

The three main criteria FEXCO uses for assessing loan applications are; the strength of the financials provided by the customer, the type of asset, and the deposit that the customer is putting into the deal.

FEXCO's exposure in the asset finance market is spread across all 26 counties, with main offices in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Kerry and Kilkenny. FEXCO's dedicated sales team is available to deal

“ ANOTHER  
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SERVICE. WE  
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WITHIN TWO TO  
24 HOURS. ”

with finance queries from customers within any of the 26 counties.

"Our goal is to provide asset finance funding to CIF members throughout Ireland," says Mike, "and with locations established in Dublin, Limerick, the North West, South East and South West, our customers are guaranteed a quick response on an application, personal service and transparent finance options." **C**

To find out more about FEXCO Asset Finance call 1890 800 404 or visit [www.fexcoassetfinance.com](http://www.fexcoassetfinance.com)

# RMIG'S CITY EMOTION PERFORATED METAL BRINGS NEW DIMENSION TO BUILDING FACADES

Ridgeway has just introduced a new concept in metal fabrication aimed at helping designers realise more creative building finishes.

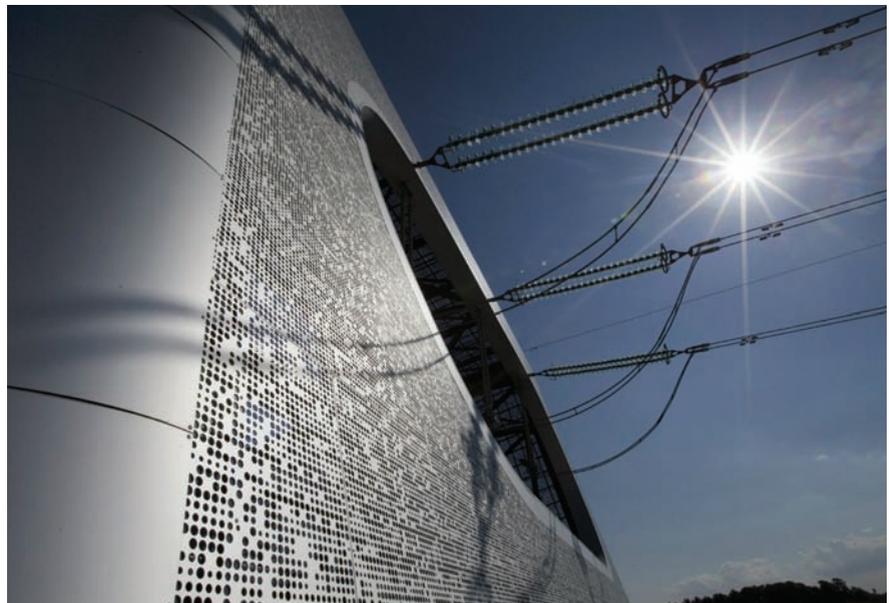
**R**MIG's City Emotion Perforated Metal captures the passion for creative urban designs by offering innovative technologies and materials, helping designers realise the most ambitious architectural projects. Ridgeway's expertise and experience in using perforated metal in creative urban design can help designers bring ideas from first conception to visualisation, sampling and manufacturing of the final product.

The City Emotion range presents a design solution for the most complex of facades, sunscreens, balustrades, ceilings or any other project which utilise perforation.

The City Emotion range was most recently used on the White Star House office building in Belfast. The four-storey building provides flexible workspace for ICT, life science, engineering and biotech services. Perforated aluminium was used to give an engineered and technologically influenced exterior to reflect the building's function as a centre for innovation.

Ridgeway's experienced technical staff can take drawings in CAD, 2D and 3D format and thereby reduce the development and production time of prototypes. The system can be used on Perforated sheets, embossed sheets, tailor-made patterns, all kinds of shapes, sizes and surfaces.

Ridgeway also offers a broad range of site products from fencing, access platforms, walkways, hand railing, stair treads, metalwork and steelwork in Mild Steel, Stainless Steel,



Aluminium and GRP to suit existing or new requirements.

"We are delighted to bring our wide portfolio of products for construction and engineering sectors into the ROI market

operating from our new depot just 10 minutes from the M50," says Stephen Kane, Managing Director of Ridgeway. "Our experience and track record in metal mesh for industrial and architectural

applications is world class accredited by our global manufacturing partners, who are in full support of our ambitions to add real value within the Irish Construction market." 

Nationwide is delivery available. For more information on the full range of Metal products stocked by Ridgeway call their Ashbourne office on: +353 (01) 802 7173 or Belfast office on: +44 (0) 2890 454599 or email them on [info@ridgeway-online.com](mailto:info@ridgeway-online.com) or visit [www.ridgeway-online.com](http://www.ridgeway-online.com)





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# HEALTH & SAFETY: A SUB-CONTRACTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

BRFS Roofing & Cladding's encourages its workers to take proactive roles in addressing safety concerns on all their sites. Sean Murphy learns how this approach benefits clients.

**B**RFS Ltd specialises in the design, supply and installation of external envelope solutions to private and public sector, industrial and commercial buildings. The company has a large and prestigious portfolio of successful contracts completed in Ireland and the UK.

Dualta Conway, BRFS Construction Manager, says having comprehensive Health & Safety procedures in place before going on-site is central to the way the company operates.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

"BRFS recognises the risks inherent in its operations, which by the nature of our service, often involves working at heights," says Dualta. "All risks are addressed at the planning stage of any project through careful consultation with clients, which leads to practical and comprehensive 'Safe Plans of Action' being put in place. The company's workforce is briefed on every aspect of the safety plans and our zero-tolerance message prior to the commencement of any on-site works."

While collaboration is central to the success of safety plans, all sites on which the company is engaged are monitored and supervised by BRFS Health & Safety management to reinforce safety protocols throughout the execution of works.

## WORKING WITH CLIENTS

BRFS is most effective when engaged early on projects at the pre-tender stage, so their expertise can be called upon by Main Contractors and Clients to help plan projects. Early engagement also enables BRFS to get its safety plans in place early. This collaborative approach continues at all stages during the construction, ensuring that the external envelope of the project building can be delivered safely and in accordance with Building Regulations.



## PROGRAMME DELIVERY

"Key to the safe delivery of BRFS projects is the reinforcement of our existing 'Safe-T-Cert' Health & Safety management system," says Dualta. "This ensures the continuous development and improvement of BRFS's positive safety culture."

"Due to the nature of work in the construction sector being diverse and constantly changing, and workers being exposed to many different hazards throughout the day, a construction crew that feels comfortable about talking about safety issues is more willing to share information about their experiences. This enables learning to take place both individually and at a group level. Creating a space where workers are confident to discuss safety issues and concerns openly is a challenge to any management team."

## OVERCOMING SAFETY CHALLENGES

Dualta explains that BRFS management recognises the challenges of maintaining

high levels of safety on site.

"We firmly believe that the key to a good safety culture developing in the company is good communication. There are many different ways to communicate the Health & Safety message to the workforce. But engagement must be a two-way top-down and bottom-up communication process. Due to the dynamic nature of the construction sector, the methodologies and means employed need to be tailored to the size and scope of the building project."

"We find that by leading from the top in Health & Safety, our workers see this and feel more relaxed to discuss safety with management."

## OPERATIVE FEEDBACK AND ENGAGEMENT

BRFS has found that the safety awareness of its workforce has been greatly heightened when it looks for operative feedback and engagement while delivering site-specific structured Tool Box talks, relating to site-specific risks. **C**

# IHBA WORKSHOPS ADDRESS HOUSING SECTOR CONCERNS

The 2017 IHBA regional workshop series covered a broad range of issues including latest Building Regulations, implications of Budget 2018 and implementation of the SEO. **SEAN MURPHY** reports.



James Benson, Executive, Eastern Region and Lorraine Hosty, Executive, Housing Services.



Anthony Neville, IHBA Chairman and Hubert Fitzpatrick, Director, Housing, Planning & Development

The Irish House Builders Association (IHBA) hosted its 2017 regional workshop series across October and into November, commencing at CIF Head Office and concluding in Tullamore. Workshops, which were available free to CIF members and non-members, were held in Dublin, Limerick, Kilkenny, Cork, Sligo, Galway and Tullamore.

The overwhelmingly well-received presentations covered a full array of current industry topics, ranging from the newly introduced planning acts and strategies affecting house builders through to current housing activity levels and industry

demands.

The series also addressed the implications and effects that will be seen as a result of Budget 2018, including the positive retention of the Help to Buy scheme, among others.

Presentations were made by Hubert FitzPatrick, CIF Director, Housing, Planning & Development; Lorraine Hosty, Executive, Housing Services and James Benson, Executive, Eastern Region.

Anthony Neville, Chairman, IHBA was delighted with the response and level of engagement at the workshops.

“I want to extend thanks to the team for organising an extremely comprehensive series of presentations and providing the opportunity

## “ PRESENTATIONS INCLUDED THE LATEST UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW SEO AND WASTE MANAGEMENT ISSUES. ”

to the floors for collaborative and insightful discussions,” he said.

During the presentations, working updates and the status of numerous ongoing consultations through the association were detailed to inform members of engaged activities with the utility providers, and the status of industrial relations talks.

The presentations also included the latest updates on the statutory implementation of the new Sectoral Employment Order (SEO), waste management concerns within the

field and acknowledgement of skills issues being experienced on the ground.

The open floor approach of the workshops facilitated collaborative discussions between attendees and presenting panels, allowing individuals the opportunity to highlight their specific areas of note and receive advice, information and further services available through CIF.

*Presentations are available to IHBA members on the CIF website [www.cif.ie](http://www.cif.ie)* **C**

# CECA PRESIDENT RENEWS CALL FOR LONG TERM INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The 11th CECA Annual Dinner took place at the Clayton Hotel Burlington Road, Dublin on 22 September.



L – R Pat Spillane, GAA Sports Broadcaster; Shay Byrne, Master of Ceremonies; Colin Cleary, CECA President and Tom Parlon, CIF Director General.

The 11th annual Civil Engineering Contractors Dinner (CECA) Dinner was attended by 300 members and industry suppliers as well as a number of distinguished guests. These guests included representatives from the Government Construction Contracts Committee, the Office of Public Works, Transport for Ireland and Engineers Ireland.

The evening, hosted by RTE radio presenter Shay Byrne, was dedicated to the memory of respected CECA

Executive Committee member John McCarthy, Managing Director of Priority Construction, who passed away in July.

Sports broadcaster, journalist and former Kerry footballing great Pat Spillane, who won eight All-Ireland medals, provided a very entertaining after-dinner speech.

## CECA EXCELLENCE AWARDS

CECA President Colin Cleary confirmed that the CECA Excellence Awards would take place once again in 2018, and he called on all members to contribute by

nominating their civil engineering projects to highlight the passion there is for civil engineering in Ireland.

## CECA LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION AWARD

During the evening, John Cradock, MD of John Cradock Ltd, and John Pentony, MD of Jons Civil Engineering, were recognised for their contributions and dedication to the civil engineering sector when they were presented with the CECA Lifetime Contribution Award. **C**



Wills Bros Limited and Guests attending the CECA Dinner L-R Standing L-R Ian McHugh, Gerry Mockler, John Cunningham, Donal Kearney and Jan Kelly  
L-R Sitting (left to right): James Kelly, Trevor Wills, Charles Wills and Peter Quigley.



L - R John Pentony, Jons Engineering Company Ltd; Martin Lang, CIF Main Contracting Director and John Cradock, John Cradock Ltd.



L-R David O'Brien, Senior Advisor at OGP and Chairman of Government Contracts Committee for Construction, Martin Lang, CIF Main Contracting Director and Colin Cleary, President CECA.



L-R Dominic Doheny, CIF President, Mr. David Henry, CEF Northern Ireland, President and Colin Cleary, CECA President.



L-R Des Mulcair, CECA Vice President, Colin Cleary, CECA President and Martin Lang, CIF Main Contracting Director.



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# TEAM IRELAND WIN SEVEN MEDALLIONS FOR EXCELLENCE AT THE WORLDSKILLS COMPETITION IN ABU DHABI

The Irish WorldSkills team won seven Medallions for Excellence at the 44th WorldSkills Competition in Abu Dhabi. The result was achieved by the team of 14 young apprentices, trainees and students who represented Ireland at the competition.

The Medallions for Excellence were awarded for the following skills; Welding, Plumbing and Heating, Construction Metal Work, Cabinet Making, Aircraft Maintenance, Beauty Therapy and Restaurant Service.

SOLAS CEO, Paul O'Toole said: "I am delighted for the Irish team of apprentices, trainees and students. Representing

your country internationally is a huge achievement in its own right. To bring home seven Medallions of Excellence is a great achievement. The team should be very proud of themselves."

The Irish young people, all under 25 years, proved expertise in their chosen field before they left Ireland by competing against their peers to secure their places on the Irish team. The Worldskills event had competitors from 60 countries.

Irish competitors came from Cavan, Kerry, Waterford, Meath, Westmeath, Tipperary, Louth, Sligo, Wicklow and Kilkenny.

The WorldSkills Competition, which is

held every two years, is the world's largest professional education event. Approximately 1,200 competitors from 68 countries and regions competed in almost 51 different skills and disciplines.

Medallion winners were Eoin Shortall, Kilkenny – Welding; David Donegan, Wicklow – Plumbing & Heating; Aaron Ronan, Westmeath – Construction Metal Work; Sean Hogan, Waterford – Cabinetmaking; Ciara Daly, Kerry – Beauty Therapy; Kathlyn Leahy, Kilkenny – Restaurant Service (also Best of Nation) and Colum Farrelly, Cavan – Aircraft Maintenance. **C**



Aaron Ronan, Construction Metal Work



Eoin Shortall, Welding



David Donegan, Plumbing & Heating



Irish Worldskills team, front row l to r: Sean Hogan, Kathlyn Leahy, Ciara Daly, Eoin Shortall, Stephen Murray, Back l to r: Gary Horgan, Gavin Lyne, Micheál Flynn, Colum Farrelly, Aaron Ronan, Kevin Hough, David Donegan, Brendan Muldowney, James McSwiney.

# WORK NEARS COMPLETION ON NEW GALWAY GARDA REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

New Garda Station graphic.



L to r: Fran Havelin, Irish Cement; Pat O'Malley, JJ Rhatigan; and Tara Flynn, Paul Flynn Construction.

Members of The CIF Galway Branch were guests of JJ Rhatigan Building Contractors for a recent site visit to the new Garda Regional and Divisional Headquarters in Galway, which is set to be completed before the end of the year.

The new Garda Regional and Divisional Headquarters building, comprises approximately 11,200 sq m, with basement. The development consists of a five-storey building with flat roofs along to the front, stepping down to a single storey, over a lower ground floor, at the rear of the site.

The accommodation includes offices, conference facilities, vehicular testing, garage/workshops, stores, public reception, prisoner processing

areas, plant, firing range and associated ancillary spaces.

The scheme was designed by the Office of Public Works to incorporate sustainable green design principles. It will achieve an A energy rating, has green roofs and solar panels for water heating. It will be partly clad in stone to acknowledge its civic status and will be fully-accessible for people with disability.

"The Branch was delighted to get the opportunity to tour the new building and see the energy systems that it will be using," says Justin Molloy, CIF Regional Director, who joined the Branch on the visit. "The Galway Branch would like to thank JJ Rhatigan Building Contractors, and in particular contracts manager Pat O'Malley, for facilitating the site visit." **C**

# INAUGURAL JOINT M&ECA AND ACEI CONFERENCE HELD IN KILLARNEY

The inaugural joint M&ECA and ACEI Conference was held in Killarney Plaza Hotel, County Kerry on Thursday 19 October.

The inaugural joint M&ECA and ACEI Conference brought together over 100 senior management from leading Mechanical and Electrical Contractors and Consulting Engineers to address key issues affecting the sector. Dominic Doheny, President, CIF and Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF, were both in attendance.

Presentations ranged from developments in building and energy performance and the process of design and innovation, to how Irish contractors and clients can work closer together to improve the efficiency of project delivery.

Conference organisers were delighted to have Jim O'Sullivan, Assistant Chief Engineer for M&E with the Office of Public Works and Denis Browne, EU Regional Data Center Lead with Google, whose presentations looked at the relationship between client and contractor, and they suggested ways in which that relationship could be further enhanced.

In his presentation, Jim O'Sullivan said that M&E contractors had shown great resilience in coming through difficult times and upskilling to develop their service offering for clients.

"The Irish M&E sector has superb people in terms of engineering skills and ability to deliver projects, and their adoption of new technologies and processes has been excellent."

He said as new projects enter the pipeline in the coming years he would like to see the value element of the delivery process addressed.

"I would like to see a more partnership approach being taken by contractors. At present, I think the client is not yet getting the value from projects that they should be. Consultants need to be more centrally involved in cost management, and contractors need to engage in the value engineering process to the benefit of the project."

Denis Browne from Google said, "Data centre quality is critical to Google because we want to provide cloud services to billions of users worldwide



L to r: Ciara Ahern, DIT; Jim O'Sullivan, OPW; Denis Browne, Google; Sean McElligott, Lynskey Engineering (MEBSCA President); Darragh Canning, Arup; Michael Kennedy, Suir Engineering (ECA President); Greg Hayden, Ethos Engineering (ACEI) and Ray Curran, McElroy Associates (ACEI).



L to r: Sean McElligott, Lynskey Engineering (MEBSCA President); Tony Horan, O'Connor Sutton Cronin, (ACEI President); Michael Kennedy, Suir Engineering (ECA President); Dominic Doheny, John Flanagan Developments Ltd (CIF President); Bobby Kerr, Insomnia Coffee Company (Guest Speaker); Tom Parlon, CIF President and Sean Downey, (M&ECA Secretary).

every day, with every interaction with our products.

"Mechanical and Electrical Engineers and Trades are critical to delivering data centres at facility ready with zero snags. To do so, both a "Right First Time" and a "Continuous Learning" focus is necessary to encourage everyone to do their best work each and every time. And when there are mistakes – and we recognise that there will always be some – we treat these as opportunities to learn and improve our training, procedures, and tools. This circle of quality practice and learning needs to be modelled and supported by senior

management, to first-line supervisors and to every worker, and not be just a slogan!"

In his closing speech, M&ECA Chairman Michael Kennedy said that the inaugural annual joint conference showed the potential that industry has to work together to find solutions for the challenges it faces in the coming years.

"The rate of change in the past two years in the industry has been phenomenal and Mechanical and Electrical Engineers have been at the heart of driving change and modernisation in the Irish construction industry." He called on the M&ECA and ACEI to continue to work together to



Sean McElligott  
(MEBSCA  
President).



L to r: Sean McElligott, Lynskey Engineering (MEBSCA President); Tony Horan, O'Connor Sutton Cronin, (ACEI President); Dr Sarah Ingle (ACEI Secretary General); Michael Kennedy, Suir Engineering (ECA President); Greg Hayden, Ethos Engineering (ACEI) and Jim Curley, Jones Engineering Group.



L to r: Sean Downey, M&ECA Secretary; Dr Sarah Ingle, ACEI Secretary General; Michelle Perry, TROX UK Ltd; Jim Curley, Jones Engineering Group; Susan Cormican, Ethos Engineering (ACEI); Chris Hughes, SEAL.



Jim O'Sullivan, Assistant Chief  
Engineer for M&E, OPW.



Denis Browne,  
EU Regional  
Data Center  
Lead, Google.

find solutions that will work for the clients as well as themselves.

The conference was followed by a Gala Dinner in the Killarney Plaza Hotel, where the guest speaker was entrepreneur and broadcaster, Bobby Kerr. **C**

**PRESENTATIONS AT  
JOINT M&ECA AND ACEI  
CONFERENCE**

**Meeting Clients' Expectations  
– A Public Sector Client's  
Perspective.**

Speaker: Jim O'Sullivan,  
Assistant Chief Engineer for  
M&E, OPW

**Changing Dynamics and the  
Private Sector Delivery Process.**

Speaker: Denis Browne, EU  
Regional Data Center Lead,  
Google

**The BIM Challenge**

Speaker: Darragh Canning, MEP  
Commercial Director, Arup  
**BC(A)R - Achieving Compliance  
under the New Regime.**

Speaker: Brian Kavanagh,  
Director, Garland

**Preparing for NZEB – The Energy  
Debate.**

Speaker: Chris Hughes, Business  
Process and IT Systems  
Development Programme  
Manager, SEAI

**Advancements in Energy Storage  
Technology**

Speaker: Neil Primrose, EMEA  
Sales Manager, Eaton

# JONES ENGINEERING GROUP WINS ALL IRELAND SUPREME SAFETY AWARD 2017



Longford County Council winner of the Silver Award. L to r: John Thompson, Vice Chair, Northern Ireland Safety Group; Seán Kyne T.D., Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Resources; Mary Gouldsbury, Health and Safety Officer, Longford County Council and Harry Galvin, President, National Irish Safety Organisation.



Caption: PM Group winner of the Gold Award. L to r: John Thompson, Vice Chair, Northern Ireland Safety Group; Seán Kyne TD, Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Resources; Aidan Heavin, Group Construction Health & Safety Manager, PM Group and Harry Galvin, President, National Irish Safety Organisation.



Jones Engineering Group was presented with the Supreme Safety Award. L to r: John Thompson, Vice Chair, Northern Ireland Safety Group; Seán Kyne TD, Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Resources; Declan Grady, EHS Manager, Jones Engineering Group and Harry Galvin, President, National Irish Safety Organisation.

The 26th Annual National Irish Safety Organisation/Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISO/NISG) Safety Awards took place on 13 October in Galway at which the Supreme Safety Award winner for 2017 was Jones Engineering Group.

The Supreme Safety Award is presented to the organisation that has shown consistently good or continuously improving Health & Safety performance over a number of years and an outstanding contribution to occupational safety, health and welfare during the previous year.

“The best resource we have as a group is our staff and specialist subcontractors,” said Jim Curley, Group Chief Executive, Jones Engineering. “Their support and commitment to our ethos of ‘Nobody Gets Hurt’ is vital to achieving success with our management systems. Our reputation for operating to the highest safety standards has helped us win prestigious global contracts. Almost 50% of our turnover now comes from overseas locations, and we apply the same best practices across all our operations whether in Ireland, Europe or the Middle East. We are delighted and honoured that our commitment to continual improvement in Health & Safety best practice has been recognised by the NISO.”

Other awards presented on the night include the Safety Representative of the Year Award 2017, which was awarded to Darren Carroll, Ecolab Ireland.

The Anderco Superior Performance Award was won by Sensata Technologies. The Superior Performance Award is awarded to the organisation that best demonstrates evidence that they have introduced proactive measures over and above the legal requirement to provide a superior, safe working environment for all.

The Driving for Work Award was won by Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd. This newly introduced award requires entrants to demonstrate evidence of policy, planning, practice, measuring performance and reviewing

performance in relation to driving for work.

The Occupational Health Award was won by Henkel Ireland Operations and Research Ltd.

The awards, which demonstrate the positive and proactive culture of safety management in organisations, were supported by ALD Merrion, Anderco, Health & Safety Authority, Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland and Irving Oil Whitegate Refinery.

Harry Galvin, NISO President, along with John Thompson, incoming NISG Chair, and Seán Kyne TD, Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Resources, presented awards to over 100 organisations from all around the island of Ireland.

The Gold Award was won by PM Group, the Silver Award by Longford County Council and the Bronze Award by Designer Group.

A number of high achiever awards were presented to organisations that consistently achieved a high standard of safety for more than five years, representing their continuous commitment to Health & Safety in their organisation. Recipients of this award include AbbVie Ireland NL BV, Acacia Facilities Management Ltd, Actavo (Ireland) Ltd, Alkermes Pharma Ireland Ltd, Allergan Pharmaceuticals Ireland, Central Bank of Ireland, Cold Chon Galway Ltd (CHEMORAN), Cork City Council, Designer Group, EMR Integrated Solutions, Fingal County Council, GMC Utilities Group Ltd, John Paul Construction, John Sisk & Son, Jones Engineering Group, K Leisure, Kirby Group Engineering, Leo Lynch, Mainline Group Ltd, Merit Medical Ireland Ltd, Montupet UK Ltd, O’Connor Sutton Cronin, Obelisk Group, PM Group, Road Maintenance Services, Roadbridge Ltd, Sky Handling Partner Ltd, Tipperary Fire & Rescue Service, TLI Group, W&H Alexander Ltd, Walsh Mechanical Engineering, Winthrop Engineering Ltd and Xerox Technology. **C**

# HONING IN ON THE 'MINECRAFT GENERATION'

Industry briefing provides valuable insights on construction opportunities in the years ahead.



Don Ward (Right) speaking at the Initiafy Breakfast Briefing.

Irish construction is ideally positioned to benefit from our digitally savvy next generation, a number of leading industry figures heard at breakfast briefing event by Initiafy on 7 November at Ely Brasserie.

The event was a networking opportunity and provided valuable information for attendees about construction industry trends, innovations and opportunities.

Don Ward, Chief Executive, Construction Excellence, gave the attendees an insight into what the hard-hat industry may look like in the years ahead. There was also a major focus on solving current labour issues and what technology can do for businesses.

"Would you recommend this industry to your kids?" Don Ward asked the audience, while delving into the image currently associated with construction and whether 'Generation Y's' would be choosing it as a career path.

Don Ward also referenced today's

Julie Currid (Initiafy) chairing a panel discussion with Padraig Dootey and Liam Mannion of ESB.



young people as being the 'Minecraft generation', who are interested in digital design, as well as being socially and environmentally conscious. "The Construction Industry is ideally placed to capitalise on these interests, as construction has more potential than any other industry to impact on quality of life," he said.

The event, hosted by software company Initiafy, also included a panel discussion with representatives from Initiafy customer ESB; Safety Manager, Liam Mannion and

Project Manager, Padraig Dooley.

Liam Mannion explained that ESB has an older workforce, so, "getting everyone engaged and on the same page" was the biggest challenge. However, the benefits of engagement are already apparent.

"General work is now done on an online platform, while work that is local to a plant is done in person. What used to be an hour induction is now 15 minutes," Liam explained.

Managing and onboarding the large contingent workforce necessary for construction projects is a major logistical challenge for many construction firms. Initiafy online platform modernises the practice of contractor approval and induction.

A Dublin based company, founded in 2012, Initiafy's core business is providing contractor management for hard-hat companies in the construction, mining, oil and gas and renewable energy industries. **C**

## GREAT WESTERN MOTORWAY CYCLE MARKS OPENING OF M17/M18 TUAM TO GORT MOTORWAY



Castle Ceilings & Partitions team members Pat McDonagh, Justin Molloy (CIF), Seamus Brady, Kevin Whirskey, Shane Fahey and Colin Lynch.

The Great Western Motorway Cycle took place on Sunday 10 September on the new M17/M18 Tuam to Gort motorway, which opened to the public on 27 September last.

Over 2,000 cyclists participated in the event, which raised much needed funds for the local Lions Clubs in Tuam and Gort. CIF member firm Castle Ceilings & Partitions Ltd entered a team in the company colours, which included Justin Molloy, CIF Regional Director as well

as Seamus Brady, MD, Castle Ceilings & Partitions Ltd.

Cyclists could choose from two routes. Route One was a 100km loop from Tuam to Gort and back, while Route 2 was a 50km loop from Tuam to Rathmorrissy Interchange and back.

"The turn-out for the cycle was very impressive," say Justin Molloy. "It was great to have this unique opportunity to cycle this

important piece of infrastructure before it begins to facilitate regional development in the West."

The motorway project was constructed by DirectRoute (Tuam) Ltd who also sponsored the Cycle. DirectRoute is a consortium comprising Marguerite Fund, InfraRed Capital Partners, John Sisk & Son (Holdings) Ltd, Lagan Construction Group, Roadbridge and Strabag SE. **C**

## CONSTRUCTION FIRMS EXPERIENCING PAYMENT ISSUES FOR WORKS COMPLETED



Denis O'Driscoll

Solicitor, Denis O'Driscoll presented a breakfast briefing to a packed house at CIF Cork on the perennial problem of "Getting Paid".

Denis spoke about practical steps that can be taken regarding pre- and post-contract financial risk management on private and public works contracts. He also addressed debt collection procedures; insolvency issues; collateral

warranties; the impact of the Construction Contracts Act 2013, specifically in relation to payment; right to suspend works and pursuing payment disputes through a fast-track adjudication process. Given the large early-morning turnout and the lively Q&A session that followed it was evident that the topics discussed were relevant and well received.

"Despite the introduction

of the Construction Contracts Act, I am finding a lot of my construction clients still experiencing issues in relation to payment for works completed," Denis said. "This morning's briefing was an excellent opportunity to let CIF members know some of the options they have, and the practical steps that can be taken regarding pre- and post-contract financial risk management." **C**

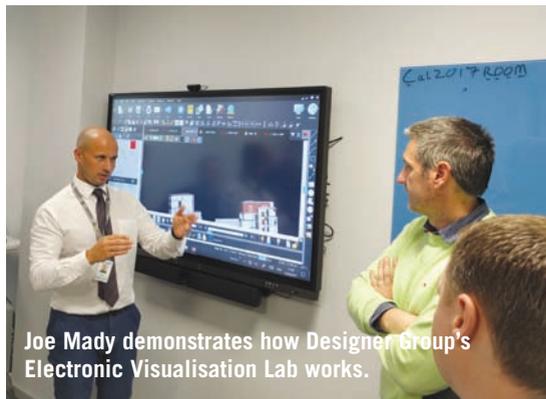
# INDUSTRY NEWS

## DESIGNER GROUP UNVEILS ITS NEW ELECTRONIC VISUALISATION LAB

Designer Group recently launched its new Electronic Visualisation Lab (EVL), which Joe Mady, Designer Group's Virtual Design & Construction Manager says, will become standardised across the industry as contractors "engage more and more with collaborative digital construction technology and move away from "the traditional fragmented delivery".

Before choosing what best suited their needs, Joe and Niall Stone, Designer Group's Director of Engineering, visited a number of facilities to see how they use VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality) technologies.

"Niall and I visited several research and development departments throughout Ireland. One such department, the R&D Department at Waterford IT, was looking at a range of different virtual and mixed realities utilising the HoloLens, Oculus Rift and a number of different hardware technologies. Having seen these facilities, we chose a technology that was most applicable to our needs, provided maximum usability



Joe Mady demonstrates how Designer Group's Electronic Visualisation Lab works.

and was not just for show."

The EVL consists of a bespoke constructed curved wall, high-end projection system, VR station and touch-screen TV.

"The area has become the first stop when we have external consultants or clients at our offices. This is due to it being an open, spacious, collaborative and user-friendly area", explains Joe. "When working on a project with external consultants, we

can have the model open on the large curved wall. We can easily review the drawings and mark-up alterations, if needed, on the touchscreen TV. This ensures that we are gaining maximum usage of the area.

"The VR headset and software enables our staff, external consultants and clients to step inside the design. Experiencing the design at a much earlier stage ensures quicker sign-off, validation and aligns all stakeholders' expectations. We see this area reducing rework, improving safety, resolving issues faster and increasing quality.

"We are finding that enabling clients to step inside the virtual building with the VR headset to move objects, change building fabric, actively navigate the construction sequence is very powerful.

"At present, there are still people sceptical of BIM. But when we demonstrate how we are utilising the technology within this collaborative area, it is hard to deny the benefits attained through utilising the technology, he concludes. **C**

## KILSARAN LAUNCHES NEW INDUSTRY ESSENTIAL LEARNING SERIES

The Essential Learning Series from Kilsaran International is a suite of training and professional development modules devised to enhance the core skills and knowledge of industry professionals. The modules will be held at Kilsaran's premises in Dunboyne, Co Meath, with one module per month between November and March.

Designed to bridge the gap between the interpretation of industry standards and their implementation, this suite of seminars will provide a comprehensive overview of the evolving trends and commonplace issues currently affecting the construction industry. Training is intended to balance theory and practicality and to meet the day-to-day needs of the construction professional.



"The Essential Learning Series is for construction industry professionals who would like to gain a better understanding of the most up-to-date industry standards,"

explains Judy Fusco-Linnane, Kilsaran Marketing Manager. "There are five seminars in the series – one for each of the following topics: Bituminous Materials, Masonry Products, Aggregates, Masonry Rendering & Plastering Mortars and Ready-Mix Concrete. Attendees will learn about the evolving trends and common issues currently affecting the construction industry, and they will be offered practical tips and information for standard adherence and implementation." **C**

For more information on seminar dates and to register your interest, please visit: [www.kilsaran.ie/learningseries](http://www.kilsaran.ie/learningseries) or email [learningseries@kilsaran.ie](mailto:learningseries@kilsaran.ie)

# ARDMAC CELEBRATES 40 YEARS IN BUSINESS WITH REBRANDING INITIATIVE

**C**IF member firm Ardmac recently celebrated its 40th anniversary in business by announcing the completion of a rebranding initiative focused on elevating the company's vision and mission across all the organisation.

The rebranding initiative gives Ardmac, which has a broad portfolio of clients in the Cleanroom, Data Centre, Fit-Out and Refurbishment & Construction sectors, a new logo and refreshed identity while unifying the company image to reflect how the business has evolved.

"This is an exciting time for Ardmac as we continue to evolve as a company," says Ardmac CEO Ronan Quinn. "It is important that Ardmac retains its established values, but at the same time develops a new and modern identity that shows who we are today. The new rebranding reinforces the value we deliver through our comprehensive service offerings in our four sectors of Fit-Out, Cleanroom, Data Centre and Refurbishment & Construction.

"Ardmac's vision is to be the contractor of choice for clients and the employer of choice for great people. We have worked closely with our staff, as well as focusing on our clients, to develop a brand identity that represents what Ardmac is about. The rebrand evolution represents our integral values and shows how the firm has grown into a respected multifaceted international specialist construction company." **C**



Brent Pope, Tom Kelly of EI, Richard Joyce, Linesight and Ronan Quinn, Ardmac.

# JOHN KEAVNEY APPOINTED TO BOARD OF JOHN PAUL CONSTRUCTION

**J**ohn Paul Construction has announced the appointment of John Keavney to its Board as Construction Director.

John Keavney has over 24 years of experience in the industry. He has served at Director level with John Paul Construction for the past 10 years, and he has a strong track record of success in senior leadership roles and in delivering major construction projects across all sectors.

Commenting on the appointment, Eamon Booth, Managing Director stated: "We are delighted with John's appointment which further strengthens our existing senior team enabling us to continue with our growth strategy while ensuring we continue to provide a market leading service to our clients." **C**



John Keavney (Construction Director) and Eamon Booth (Managing Director), John Paul Construction.

# KIRBY GROUP WINS 'BACK-TO-BACK' NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS

Kirby Group had a successful night at the recent National Q Mark Awards 2017 when it won the 'Recognised for Excellence' category for its Quality Management System for a second consecutive year.

"To receive a second consecutive Quality award is testament to the collective efforts of the entire Kirby project teams who continually strive to deliver operational excellence and value for our clients," said Martin Searson, Kirby Group Quality Manager.

The National Q Mark Awards recognise and celebrate businesses who continuously strive for excellence and best practice standards. All potential entrant companies are audited before being shortlisted for the awards. This year's awards were held at the Clayton Hotel Burlington Road, Dublin. **C**



Irene Collins, Managing Director of Excellence Ireland Quality Association, presents the Kirby Group team with their award.

# INTEREST GROWS IN ROADSTONE SUDS SYSTEMS AS DEVELOPERS LOOK FOR SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Across the country water drainage and sewage systems handle the water run-off from large scale developments. As the scale of development increases in the coming years, the problem of surface water management will be greatly exacerbated.

"An undeveloped site has a surface water run-off of 10%, while a high density development can experience a run-off of up to 55%," says Michael Vaughan, Roadstone National Sales Manager Architectural Products.

The challenge of managing surface water run-off is being met by an increased use of SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) or permeable paving systems. One of the key principles of SuDS is reducing water quantity thus dealing with surface water at the source reduces the effects of urbanisation and the impact of localised flooding.

"Roadstone has been receiving an increased number of enquiries from across the country in recent times about our Aquaflow (SuDS) range of paving," says Michael Vaughan. "The Aquaflow system allows rain to infiltrate through a permeable block paved surface into a unique sub-base before being released in a controlled manner into the ground or into main sewers or water courses. The system is capable of handling rainfall of 4500mm per sq



Aras Chill Dara

m per hour."

The water leaving the Aquaflow system is cleaned by filtration and microbial action and can also be stored in an integrated tanking system for secondary non-potable uses such as flushing toilets, watering soft landscapes and firefighting. A further advantage of Roadstone's Aquaflow system is that roof water can be drained through an aquaflow distribution tank directly into the sub-base.

Roadstone can provide all the materials necessary to facilitate the design and construction of the Aquaflow permeable

paving system. "The Roadstone team like to get involved in a project as early as possible," explains Michael Vaughan, so the project team can avail of their design and technical expertise.

In 2005, Roadstone designed the Formpave Aquaflow system to facilitate a 21,000-sq m car parking space at Aras Chill Dara, the then new Kildare County Council offices. Over the years, Aras Chill Dara reported no standing water on the car-park, even after major rain events, ensuring cleaner surfaces. Twelve years on the Aquaflow Paving is still performing its water management function. **C**

# MANTIS CRANES SUPPLIES FIRST CRANE OPERATOR ELEVATOR IN IRELAND

The National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas, Co Offaly has recently taken delivery of the first crane operator elevator to be installed on a tower crane in Ireland.

Donegal-based, Mantis Cranes supplied the Saez TL50 Tower Crane with crane operator elevator to the Centre.

The tower crane and elevator will be used for training crane operators on pedestrian remote control and cab-driven tower cranes. The requirements for the tower crane include a number of bespoke modifications. A two-man elevator was also requested to make accessing the cab easier.

The crane was supplied with a modified cat head that can fit a 1.7m x 1.7m tower, rather than the normal 1.2m x 1.2m. The larger 1.7m tower sections were chosen by Mantis to give easier access to the crane and elevator. Saez, the crane manufacturer, redesigned the bottom tower section of the crane to be modified, allowing for safe and easy access to both the crane and the elevator by the crane operators and trainers.

Mantis chose a Geda 2PK Tower Crane Elevator to be attached to the tower of the Saez TL50. The elevator was enabled to come to ground level and is enclosed in secure surroundings so as to prevent any personnel from entering the descent area when it is in operation.

“We were very happy with Mantis Cranes from start to finish of the project,” said John Kelly, Centre Manager at the National Construction Training Centre (Laois/Offaly Education Training Board). They were hands-on in making sure that



New Saez TL50 tower crane with operator elevator on-site at Mount Lucas.

our requirements were met. The jumbo cab is the perfect solution for our training purposes, as it can hold the instructor and candidate. The modifications that Mantis made to the equipment work brilliantly and allow easy access without compromising on the security of the machinery”.

Mantis offer customers the choice of a range of self-erecting tower cranes with jib lengths ranging from 12.7m to 45m and maximum lifting capacity up to 6,000Kg. Their tower cranes have jib lengths ranging from 20m to 75m and lifting capacities up to 12,000kg. **C**

## GYPROC IRELAND ANNOUNCES THE CREATION OF 14 NEW JOBS AT ITS KINGSCOURT FACTORY



Brian Dolan, Managing Director, Saint Gobain Construction Products Ireland.

Plaster and plasterboard manufacturer Gyproc, part of the Saint-Gobain group, has announced the creation of 14 new jobs at its manufacturing facility in Kingscourt, Co Cavan. The announcement of the new jobs in the Border Midland and Western (BMW) Region comes as Gyproc moves to a new four shift operation,

meaning the company now has the capability to manufacture on a 24/7 basis.

Recruitment for the 14 positions, which represents a 10% increase on the overall number of employees at Kingscourt, was completed in October and with the additional shift coming into effect on Monday, 06 November.

“We are delighted to announce details of these 14 new

positions,” said Brian Dolan, Managing Director of Saint-Gobain Construction Products in Ireland, “which marks a key step in the continued growth and development of Gyproc in Ireland. The decision to move to a four-shift pattern and recruit these additional employees will help us meet increasing demand from the construction sector as it continues to gather pace.” **C**

# FOR YOUR DIARY

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**Tuesday 28th November 2017, 11am  
EXECUTIVE BODY MEETING (FOLLOWED  
BY CIF AGM AT 12.45PM)**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Gillian Heffernan 01 406 6016

**Tuesday 28th November 2017, 3.00pm  
MPDI AGM**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Orla Brady 01 406 6048

**Wednesday 29th November 2017, 2:30pm  
NASAC AGM**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Orla Brady 01 406 6048

**Thursday 30th November 2017, 2.30pm  
CONSTRUCTION 4.0 COMMITTEE  
MEETING**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Orla Brady 01 406 6048

**Thursday 30th November 2017, 8:00pm  
NORTH WEST BRANCH MEETING**

Location: Sligo Park Hotel, Pearse Road, Sligo  
Contact: Justin Molloy 091 502680

**Tuesday 5th December 2017, 11:00am  
IHBA NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Cathy Gurry 01 4066008

**Wednesday 6th December 2017, 01:00pm  
PROCUREMENT TENDERING &  
CONTRACTUAL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Denise Tuffy 01 4066066

**Friday 8th December 2017, 5:00pm  
CORK BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEETING  
2017**

Location: Please contact CIF Cork Office for details  
Contact: CIF Cork Office 021 4351410

**Monday 11th December 2017,  
6pm – 8pm**

**CIF NETWORKING EVENT  
WITH GUEST SPEAKER NIAV  
O'HIGGINS, ARTHUR COX**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Gillian Ross 01 406 6016

**Monday 8th January 2018, 4:00pm  
CECA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Location: CIF Head Office, Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin  
Contact: Denise Tuffy 01 4066066 



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# CIF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

## CIF training and education programmes for November/December 2017

Course Title/Venue	Course	Start Date	End Date	Course times
Project Supervisor Construction Stage Radisson Hotel, Athlone	PSCS 3091	20th November Monday	4th December Monday	09.00am – 17.00pm
CIF Site Supervisor Safety Programme CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	SSSP 3010	21st November Tuesday	22nd November Wednesday	09.00am - 17.00pm
PWC Sub-Contractors CIF Construction House, Little Island, Cork	PWCSC 3087	22nd November Half day	22nd November	09.00am - 12.00pm
Radon Prevention Measures Radisson Blu, East Gate, Cork	RPM 3096	Wednesday 22nd November	Wednesday 22nd November	04.00pm-6.15pm
IOSH Project Supervisor Design Process CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	PSDP 3011	23rd November Thursday	24th November Friday	09.00am – 17.00pm
CIF Core Safety Management Programme Renewal/CPD CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	CSMP 3012	24th November Friday	24th November Friday	9.00am-13.00pm
Claims Manmanagement Maldron Hotel Oranmore, Oranmore Road, Galway	CM 3088	28th November Half day	28th November	09.00am - 12.00pm
Behavioral Safety Workshop CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	BSW 3108	29th November	29th November	10.00am-12.00pm
Radon Prevention Measures Radisson Blu, Galway	RPM 3100	30th November Thursday	30th November Thursday	04.00pm-6.15pm
Private Sector Contracts CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	PSC 3089	30th November Half day	30th November	09.00am - 12.00pm
CIF IOSH Managing Safety in Construction FAST TRACK CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	MSIC 3013	30th Nov 1st, 7th & 8th Dec Thurs & Friday	11th December Monday	09.30am – 16.30pm
Airtightness One-day programme Ballyfermot Training Centre, Ballyfermot, Dublin	AT 3067	1st December Friday	1st December Friday	09.00am -17.00pm
Project Supervisor Construction Stage North County Hotel, Co Dublin	PSCS 3109	5th December Tuesday	19th December Tuesday	09.00am – 17.00pm
PWC Sub-Contractors Maldron Hotel Oranmore, Oranmore Road, Galway	PWCSC 3090	7th December Half day	7th December	09.00am - 12.00pm
CIF Management & Inspection of Scaffold CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	SI 3014	8th December Friday	8th December Friday	09.00am – 17.00pm
Temporary Work One day Programme CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	TW 3105	11th December Monday	11th December Monday	09.00am-17.00pm
CIF Site Supervisor Safety Programme CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	SSSP 3015	12th & 13th December	13th December	09.00am - 17.00pm
IOSH Project Supervisor Design Process CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	PSDP 3016	13th & 14th Dec Wed & Thurs	14th December Thursday	09.00am – 17.00pm
CIF Core Safety Management Programme Renewal/CPD CIF Construction House, Canal Road, Dublin 6	CSMP 3017	15th December Friday	15th December Friday	9.00am-13.00pm

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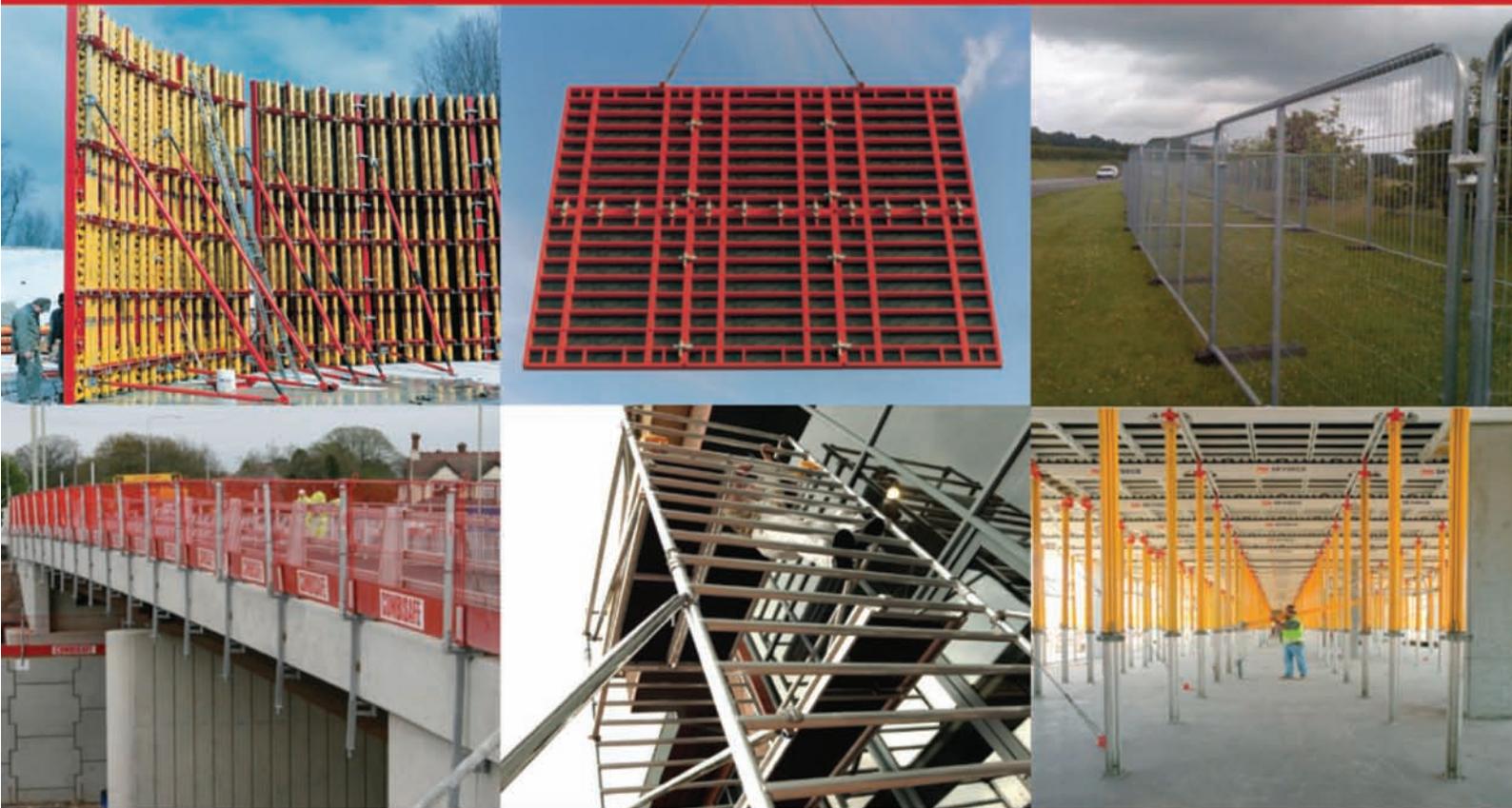
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