

# annual report





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digital mapping  
online access

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND REGISTRAR OF DEEDS AND TITLES



## Overview

I am pleased to present the Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Land Registry & Registry of Deeds 2004.

In terms of both meeting ambitious targets and the completion of challenging projects 2004 proved to be a highly successful year for the Registries. Undaunted by a record intake of work, and through a combination of teamwork, initiative, and determination, Registry staff succeeded in boosting output to an unprecedented 206,000 cases, resulting in over 330,000 registrations, thereby meeting current customer demands in addition to reducing existing work in progress.

In tandem with this record output a major project, Document Imaging, which commenced in 2002, was completed on schedule and within budget in August 2004. This crucial project involved the accurate conversion of over 110 years of historical paper records into electronic format, thus providing a complete set of readily available information for customers. Apart from the business efficiencies which accrued, the benefits of the "disaster recovery" and "business continuity", elements of this project cannot be overstated.

The ongoing development of the Land Registry's Electronic Access Service has brought us to a position where almost 3,500 on-line business transactions are conducted per day through the EAS and an estimated 80% of the Land Registries customer base are now



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1. Residential/retail development, Mayor Street, Dublin  
Courtesy Anthony Reddy Associates.

2. Trinity College Dublin INS/ITEC Dublin 2.  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.

## OVERVIEW

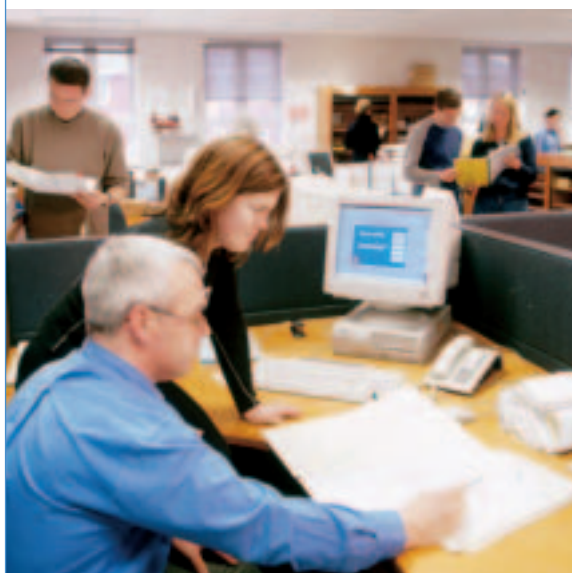
accessing some services through the EAS.

In 2004, of the 769,000 electronic services availed of by customers, 86% were provided instantly, in marked contrast to the level of service possible in the traditional manual system. At an award ceremony in Dublin Castle in July the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D. presented an award to the Land Registry/Registry of Deeds in recognition of our innovative Electronic Access Service and the excellence of its service to customers. The award was a fitting tribute to all staff who had contributed to the overall modernisation of our service and the improved levels of productivity.

By a happy coincidence I write this overview of the events of 2004 a short time after the Land Registry has been chosen as the winner of the *Public Sector Times eGovernment Award* in the Best Central eGovernment category and also in the overall Best eGovernment category. These prestigious awards hosted by the Public Sector Times and Elucidate are a further welcome recognition of the many years of planning and implementation which has transformed the Registries into an organisation which, in the words of the judging panel, has **"demonstrated outstanding commitment and innovation in its approach to implementing eGovernment services in Ireland"**. This success could not have been achieved without the involvement of a collaborative approach, which included our staff, our customers and other stakeholders and our technology partners, to all of whom I extend a very sincere "thank you".

I wish to record also my thanks to the members of the Registries' Board, under the chairmanship of Mr. Joe Moran, for their continuing support and guidance throughout this period of unprecedented change.

In the ever changing e-world it is also fitting to have accepted these awards in a year when it is planned to advance other major projects, including the addition of the Registry







## OVERVIEW



What's new in the  
online services

of Deeds to our Electronic Access Services and the introduction of a new Digital Mapping system. It is anticipated that both of these projects will have considerable and continuing benefits for our customers over the coming years and that the level of use of our electronic services and customer satisfaction with our services will continue to improve.

This progress coincides with further major advances that are now underway in the overall business context in which we operate. On November 25th last I addressed a conference organised by the Law Reform Commission on the subject of e-conveyancing. It is clear that it is no longer a question of "if" e-conveyancing will happen but simply when and how. The challenge now for all involved is to prepare diligently for these changes and it can be taken "as read" that the Land Registry will continue to do so.

Whilst moving rapidly and further into the computer age it is also timely to reflect on and appreciate the past. With this in mind plans are currently being drawn up for a celebration of the Registry of Deeds Tercentenary in 2007. We look forward with confidence to continuing the work of truly modernising the Registries services, in the knowledge that this will be the greatest tribute to those who have laid the foundations before us as we celebrate this 300th anniversary.

**Catherine Treacy**

Chief Executive and Registrar of Deeds and Titles





## Introduction

For comparative purposes we have retained a similar structure to much of this year's report as that of previous years. Where possible statistics from previous years are shown adjacent to those for 2004. However, in some instances accurate comparisons are difficult as it was only with the completion of the Document Imaging project and the creation of a full electronic names index database that we have been able to accurately record statistics in respect of some services.

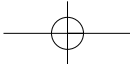
### Land Registry

	Year	Intake	Output	Cases on hand at 31/12/2004
<b>Applications+</b>	2004	202,540	205,815	178,750
	2003	189,808	177,247	184,125
	2002	158,783	157,915	169,089
<b>Certification*</b>	2004	348,850	352,029	8,110
	2003	302,849	314,899	12,337
	2002	248,774	249,327	21,611

+The figures for "Applications" include dealings, Section 49 applications, First Registrations and Irish Land Commission Schedules. A single application could result in one or several registrations.

\*The figures for certification combine applications for Certified Copy Folios and Filed Plans, Land Certificates, Certificates of Charge, Certified copy Instruments and the results of Official Map Searches, which were certified and issued.

A more detailed breakdown for all of these categories is shown at Appendix 1



## INTRODUCTION



What's new in the online services

### Other services

During 2004 the number of searches completed by our staff and the number of documents provided for inspection over the internet or at our public counters grew considerably. As the figures used in previous years were based on manual counts valid comparisons are not possible. The following were the relevant figures for 2004.

Services and Inspections	
Folio inspections	510,279
Names Index searches	155,013
Mapping searches	66,040 (inspections at public counter)
<b>Total</b>	<b>731,332</b>

### Registry of Deeds Output

	2004	2003	2002
Registration Service	83,464	76,496	64,028
Searching Service	295,790	261,095	231,779
Copying Service	5,081	4,754	4,147

We have also shown the relevant figures for 2002 and 2003. Each of these categories achieved new record figures during 2004 – the previous records having been set in 2003. The Registry of Deeds remains up to date and is still operating with what is now considered to be “work in progress”.



1. Monaghan Education Centre, Knockaconny, Monaghan.  
Courtesy McGarry Ni Eanaigh Architects.
2. RCSI Education & Research facility, York House, Dublin 2.  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.



## Customer Service



### National Showcases in Public Service Excellence

At an award ceremony in Dublin Castle on Thursday the 8th of July the Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern, TD presented awards to a number of areas within the Civil and Public Service in recognition of their innovative projects and the excellence of their service to customers. The Land Registry and the Registry of Deeds was the recipient of an award in respect of its Electronic Services.

The award was a timely recognition and a great compliment to all the staff of the Registries who have contributed to the overall modernisation of our services and the improved levels of productivity. This public recognition is very heartening for all who have been involved in the development, implementation and ongoing operation of the major project which has brought this about. The award was a significant boost to our efforts as we take further steps towards the overall development of our computerised systems and the ongoing improvement in the delivery of our services.







## Customer Charter



### Customer Survey and Customer Charter

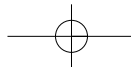
Under the Customer Charter initiative launched by the Taoiseach in December 2002 each Government Department/Office was asked to prepare and publish a Customer Charter during 2004. A Customer Charter describes the level of service a customer can expect from an organisation.

In preparation for the drafting of the Charter a Customer Survey was carried out in April 2004. 147 questionnaires issued to a geographically based sample of Solicitors, mostly nominated by their local Bar Councils. A further 17 questionnaires issued to the main financial institutions. A small survey of the principals of firms of Law Agents was also undertaken. Those surveyed were invited to give satisfaction ratings for our services and suggest any improvements they would like to see prioritised. We were delighted to receive a high response rate to the surveys and would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated.

Following the completion of the survey and after further internal consultation it was decided to prepare two Customer Charters – one for the Land Registry and a separate one for the Registry of Deeds. The commitments set out in the Charters are based on the 12 Quality Customer Service Principles and also reflect some of the priorities identified by customers in the survey. The Charters also contain specific delivery targets for the Registries in relation to particular services.

While it is not possible to meet all customer needs as identified in the surveys immediately, some of the issues identified will be prioritised in the development of strategy over the coming years. One of the main priorities identified by respondents to the survey is the need for improvement in the turnaround times for processing of





## CUSTOMER CHARTER



"transfers of part". We anticipate that the implementation of our Digital Mapping Project (further details of which are outlined at page 26 of this report) will result in a substantial improvement in turnaround times for such cases and other applications where mapping is required.

A complaints procedure for the Registries has also been put in place. The Charters and the complaints procedure which were published in December 2004 are now available in PDF format on our website and in booklet form at all our public offices.

### Monitoring and reporting

Figures for December 2004 show that the targeted turnaround times for the issue of copy folios and copy folio/filed plans applied for via the EAS are now being achieved. The December 2004 figures also indicate that all Registry of Deeds registrations and services have been delivered in line with the commitments made in the Customer Charter. Improvements made to the electronic Form 17 have made it more user-friendly and reference numbers for these types of applications are available online immediately. Electronic access hours was also identified as an issue in the survey and these have since been extended - the EAS is now available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. A project to revise the Land Registry Practice Directions on a phased basis is scheduled to commence in 2005.

We will monitor our performance in the coming year to ensure that the commitments we have made in the Charters are implemented. We will report on our progress against the targets set out in the Charters in the Annual Report each year.

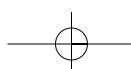
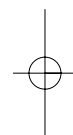
### Irish Language

The staff of the Registries are committed to providing a high quality customer service. This includes a commitment to facilitating those who wish to carry out their business with the Registries in the Irish language.

### Official Languages Act 2003

The Registries will undertake the preparation of a "draft scheme" as required by the Act when requested by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. In the meantime the following arrangements have been put in place.

**1. Correspondence:** All correspondence received by the Registries in Irish will be replied to in Irish.





## CUSTOMER CHARTER

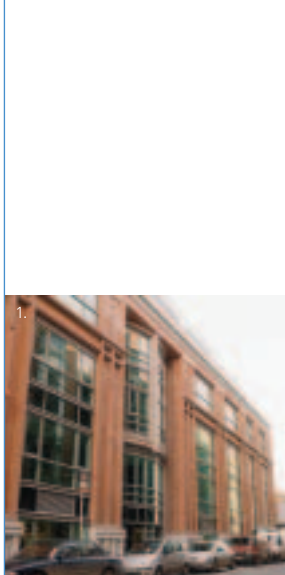
**2. Applications:** Applications for registration lodged in Irish are processed by our Irish language team.

**3. Website:** The translation of our website will form part of the draft scheme. In the meantime the following resources are available in Irish on our Irish language section on the website:

- > Application forms for Copy folio, Copy folio/filed plan, Scheme map, Form 17 and Land Certificate application forms
- > Information regarding the functions and services provided by the Registries
- > The Irish language version of the Registration of Title Act 1964 may be accessed via a link from our website to [www.aachtanna.ie](http://www.aachtanna.ie)
- > Bi-lingual versions of the Land Registry Customer Charter, Registry of Deeds Customer Charter and Land Registry Complaints Procedure.

## Practice Directions

A new project for 2005 is the revision of the Practice Directions on the website. The revised Practice Directions will be published on a phased basis on the website.



1. Bishop's Square, office development Redmond Hill, Dublin 2.  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.
2. Scarlet Row, apartment building, Temple Bar, Dublin 2.  
Courtesy McGarry Ni Eanaigh Architects.
3. N22 Ballincollig  
Courtesy NRA



## Reform and modernisation



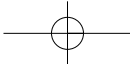
### Reform and Modernisation of Irish Land Law

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Michael McDowell, T.D. launched a Consultation Paper titled *Reform and Modernisation of Irish Land Law and Conveyancing Law* on Thursday 28th October 2004. Part of the process of consultation included a major conference hosted by the Minister and the Law Reform Commission which was held on Thursday 25th November 2004 at the O'Reilly Hall, University College Dublin. The keynote speaker Professor John Wylie, a leading author on Irish property law, expressed the view that much of Irish land legislation some of which dates back as far as to the 13th Century is becoming irrelevant and ineffective because some of it stems from a bygone era. Professor Wylie went on to say that "It is staggering that there remains in force so much legislation stemming from the feudal age and it is time that an independent State, which has been in existence for over eighty years, jettisoned this historical baggage. The purchase of a home is a transaction of supreme importance to most people and one which may be repeated several times over a lifetime. The day is surely rapidly approaching when members of the public will not understand why, in the age of the computer, a conveyancing transaction seems bedevilled with uncertainties, involves a huge paper chase and seems to take an extraordinary time to complete".

The Conference focused on the proposals outlined in the Law Reform Commission Consultation Paper which seeks to update the law to make it accord with changes in society, modernise the Land Registry, promote simplification of the law, its language and of the conveyancing process, and to ultimately pave the way for the introduction of an e-Conveyancing system.

A wide range of speakers addressed the conference and included Catherine Treacy, Chief Executive and Registrar of Deeds and Titles, and John O'Sullivan, Information Systems Manager, who outlined the progress that had been made in Ireland and gave a presentation on plans for the future. The Conference marked the beginning of the Law Reform Commission's consultative process following the publication of its provisional recommendations, and was open to all those with an interest in the reform of the Irish conveyancing system. It is intended that new draft legislation will be available in 2005 following the publication of a final Report by the Commission. In recent years officers of the Land Registry have been active participants in a number of sub committees contributing to the publication of the report. We now look forward to further developments in this area.





# Information Systems



## Continued growth of the Electronic Access Service

The development of the Land Registry's Electronic Access Service continued during 2004. For the fifth successive year the growth in the number of users and the volume of activity continued. The following table provides a snapshot of the level of activity over the past five years. During 2004 alone the number of transactions grew by an impressive 54%. These figures are only in respect of transactions which attract a fee. In addition tens of thousands of business enquiries were also conducted online for which no fee is charged.

Year end	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
No. of Subscribers	1,700	2,900	4,400	6,120	7,500
No. of business transactions	123,943	159,807	274,561	497,560	769,058
Annual Fees Intake from EAS	€621,897	€1,059,704	€2,259,327	€3,258,681	€4,091,384

We have now reached a position where:

- > An estimated 80% of the Land Registry's potential customer base are accessing some services through the EAS
- > Over 80% of applications for copy folios and filed plan maps are made on-line
- > Virtually all folio and filed plan inspections and names index searches are conducted on-line
- > Almost 3,500 on-line business transactions per day are being conducted through the EAS.
- > 86% of these services are conducted fully on a self service basis



1. Ballymun, Phase 1.  
Courtesy Levitt Bernstein

2. N11 Ashford  
Courtesy NRA

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### Electronic Lodgement e-Form 17

Significant growth was also recorded in the number of applications for registration lodged electronically [e-Form 17]. These grew by 130% from 13,753 in 2003 to 31,964 in 2004.

Experiences in other jurisdictions indicate that electronic access to Land Registry information increases the usefulness and value of such information. It is also apparent that new markets arise for the information, in addition to the property service providers and financial information companies, including estate agents, public utilities, planning authorities, financial institutions and credit agencies that are currently using the service.





## Document Imaging



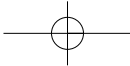
### Completion of Document Imaging Project

Following the early success of the Electronic Access Service (EAS) a crucial task to be achieved was the conversion of over 110 years of historical paper records into electronic format. Having undertaken a programme of analysis with the assistance of expert external advice, a number of options were considered some of which would have taken over 20 years to complete. The solution chosen, in addition to providing a mechanism to have all our folio records available at a much earlier date, also allowed for the provision of the filed plan map as well as the folio thereby providing a more extensive set of information for customers. This work commenced during 2002 and was completed on schedule and within budget in August 2004. Under this project, using the expertise of a specialist contractor 6.4 million pages of official records were systematically scanned and indexed. As a result a range of benefits have accrued to customers and staff of the Land Registry. These include:

### Improved customer service

Customer surveys indicated that over 80% of customers surveyed listed the ready availability of copies of official records as one of their top three priorities. Historically, in order to access all of the data and documents held, customers had to visit one or more offices. Since the completion of the document imaging project customers have online access in the office or at home to all Land Registry folio, filed plan and names index data. This constitutes a dramatic improvement in customer service.





## DOCUMENT IMAGING



data capture  
online access

### Increased e-activity

A significant increase in the number of Electronic Access Service subscribers and a proportionate increase in the use made of the service by each subscriber (as they request to view the details of an increasing number of properties) was expected, and, as can be seen from the statistics, has been delivered.

### Savings in office accommodation and storage

Within the past three years almost 1.75 million paper folios and 1.5 million paper filed plans have been removed from the Land Registry. This has resulted in significant space savings. In addition the project will obviate the necessity to acquire new storage facilities for the paper documents that would otherwise have continued to grow.

### Reduced keying requirements

A significant amount of data for each property was captured when the folio and filed plans were imaged. Critical data is now available and hence will not need to be keyed again. When a transaction occurs on a property for which only images exist, rather than a structured digital record, the data capture exercise required will be significantly reduced. In addition a selective recognition facility was provided so that staff tasked with keying data from the folio images are able to select and digitise printed or typed text and convert it to a structured folio "on the fly".

### Savings at local offices

Implementation of the project removed all dependencies on the 24 local offices which currently operate within Circuit Courthouses to maintain duplicate paper folios and names indices. The local offices have gained online access to all folios, names indices, and filed plans and will no longer need to maintain paper copies. Previously each local office only retained folios and names indices in respect of that county. This has resulted in significant office and staff savings at the local offices. A customer who now calls to any local office may avail of folios, filed plan and names index information in respect of any county.

1. M8 Cashel  
Courtesy NRA

2. Drogheda  
Institute for Further  
Education, Drogheda  
Courtesy McGarry  
Ni Eanaigh Architects







## DOCUMENT IMAGING



### Business continuity

With the advent of electronic folios and filed plans we now have backup and disaster recovery facilities without reliance on paper files held in the local offices. The electronic content is cost effectively held online and backed up at multiple sites. In effect, a viable disaster recovery strategy is in place through the mirroring of some key equipment and data at a second location.





## The Electronic Register



### Electronically available folios

At the end of 2003 a total of 1,224,306 current folios and their associated filed plan maps were available electronically. During 2004 this number grew substantially as a result of our Document Imaging Project, our ongoing data capture programme of historical folios and the creation of new folios. By December 1,647,679 folios were available, details of which are as follows.

	ITRIS (fully digitised)	Imaged	Total
Dublin	244,580	52	244,632
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>244,580</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>244,632</b>
Sligo	19,126	17,483	36,609
Mayo	45,164	39,793	84,957
Galway	65,850	48,939	114,789
Clare	35,557	25,948	61,505
Roscommon	25,184	25,088	50,272
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>190,881</b>	<b>157,251</b>	<b>348,132</b>
Louth	12,480	26,140	38,620
Cavan	9,368	28,001	37,369
Monaghan	6,779	23,859	30,638
Donegal	23,390	63,483	86,873
Longford	5,156	14,527	19,683
Leitrim	5,818	18,927	24,745
Meath	27,326	38,930	66,256
Westmeath	12,275	23,712	35,987
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>102,592</b>	<b>237,579</b>	<b>340,171</b>
Kildare	35,101	28,621	63,722
Wicklow	19,896	19,657	39,553
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>54,997</b>	<b>48,278</b>	<b>103,275</b>
Cork	69,124	103,831	172,955
Waterford	18,331	23,205	41,536
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>87,455</b>	<b>127,036</b>	<b>214,491</b>
Kerry	23,865	52,528	76,393
Limerick	24,442	48,478	72,920
Tipperary	23,172	46,836	70,008
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>71,479</b>	<b>147,842</b>	<b>219,321</b>
Laois	9,854	22,448	32,302
Offaly	9,325	21,909	31,234
Carlow	7,376	16,166	23,542
Kilkenny	10,805	25,785	36,590
Wexford	19,403	34,586	53,989
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>56,763</b>	<b>120,894</b>	<b>177,657</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>808,747 (49.1%)</b>	<b>838,932 (50.9%)</b>	<b>1,647,679</b>



## Titles Registered



### Titles registered in respect of major developments

The ongoing programme of first registration continued during 2004 when approximately 7,500 new titles were registered. This number is not indicative of the ultimate number of titles as subdivisions and leases in respect of many of these newly registered titles will lead to a multiple of this. Included among the first registrations were a number of applications in respect of very significant properties the titles to which were registered during the year or are in the process of registration. These included:

- > The Smithfield Village Development
- > The Dundrum Town Centre
- > The Office of Public Works/Eircom site on Infirmary Road
- > The Digital Hub
- > The Dublin Docklands Development at Grand Canal Quay
- > Beaux Lane House, Mercer Street, Dublin

With the progress now being made in the exploitation of new technologies and the subsequent increased capacity of the Land Registry the time is now approaching to consider how to extend registration in respect of the remaining unregistered titles.



1. Beaux Lane House, office development, Dublin 2.  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.



## Customer Service Units



### Establishment of centralised customer service units

The completion of the Document Imaging Project provided a timely opportunity for a review of many of the processes traditionally required to support the delivery of certain key customer services. The priority (as evidenced from the results of customer surveys undertaken in 2001 and 2004) was the ready availability of information and certified copy documents. Traditionally it was only possible to provide these services to a limited degree, ie, it was necessary to attend at a specific location to request a given paper document which, even at that location, could only be made available to one person at a time. The provision of this service has now been transformed with all folios and filed plans now available for inspection by customers, via the EAS from the convenience of their own offices should they choose to avail of this option. Additionally the service is now available from 8 am to 8 pm, Monday to Friday - which has doubled the traditional hours of availability. In the new environment a folio can no longer be mislaid, misfiled or unavailable due to a prior request and numerous customers can avail of the same service at the same time.

In recent years the Land Registry has made considerable investment in systems and equipment, which is now delivering a high calibre service to our customers.

With the development of system to system procedures a customer who now submits a request for a certified copy folio/filed plan online starts an automated checking and printing procedure. Over 80% of all applications are now processed in this way, subsequently checked, certified and issued within 24 hours of the request being made. A measure of the success of this system is that during 2004 some 219,000 certified copy folios and filed plans were issued and at the end of the year only 3,000 remained on hands giving an average turnaround times of 4 days. It should be noted that this small arrear (which is effectively a working arrear only) included cases under query and cases lodged by post or by hand where the full benefits of the automated system were not availed of by customers.

### Customer Support Centres

A further innovation over the past year was the development of dedicated customer call centres in our Dublin and Waterford offices. With the roll out of ITRIS and the completion of the Document Imaging Project it is now possible for a dedicated and trained group of staff to provide more and better information for telephone callers than was possible in the past. In excess of 500 calls per day are now received by these units and over 80% of the calls are dealt to completion by the initial staff member. The units also facilitate the correct re-directing of callers who could not be dealt with by the first officer who received the call.





## CUSTOMER SERVICE UNITS

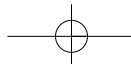


### Land Certificates

In September 2004 a change of practice regarding Land Certificates was introduced after discussion and consultation with customers and representative groups. With the advent of an electronic register, electronic registration and the Land Registry's Electronic Access Service the use of paper in the registration process and the format, purpose and existence of Land Certificates needed to be re-considered. In practical terms the safe storage of Land Certificates and the continuous handling and their processing has become something of an anachronism as we move towards electronic conveyancing. A cursory glance at the list of advertisements in each month's Law Society Gazette alone reveals the scale of the problems with lost Land Certificates. This is a considerable and expensive burden on the Land Registry, on solicitors and ultimately on the general public. The Land Registry had already introduced an option referred to as a "Virtual Land Certificate" whereby a paper document would not issue but a note as to whom the certificate is deemed to have issued would appear in electronic format on the folio.

After discussion and consultation the change of practice was published in the Law Society Gazette, notification was sent to all practitioners and commenced on September 1st. The new practice has resulted in considerable efficiencies and savings on scarce resources and has been widely welcomed by the stakeholders in the conveyancing process.





## European association



### European Land Registry Association (ELRA)

For a number of years the establishment of an association to provide a forum for the discussion and dissemination of ideas for Land Registration had been under consideration. Representatives of various Land Registration authorities across Europe had met at a variety of fora and exchanged ideas and discussed best practice under different umbrella bodies. At a meeting in Lisbon on October 14th 2004 the European Land Registry Association was established by the Land Registration organisations from Greece, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Scotland and Spain. The establishment of the new body was facilitated by the European Commission and membership will be open to all jurisdictions of the European Union.

The primary purpose of ELRA may be described as the development and understanding of the role of land, real property and capital markets in supporting:

- > Certainty and security of land titles and property transactions
- > Development of land markets
- > Appropriate legislation
- > Economic impact
- > Transparency

A further overriding principle is that the work of the ELRA should be focussed on the rights and interests of the citizen as a stakeholder in the property market.

It is intended that ELRA will develop clear policies to achieve these aims and objectives through the concrete actions of individual member organisations. Its principal objectives will be:

- > To develop a pan-European understanding on issues of common interest.
- > To engage effectively with the European Union (EU) and, where appropriate, influence both the policy making and policy implementation in respect of issues of interest and concern. This may involve proactive consideration of policy instruments, legislation and regulations at their earliest draft stage.
- > To engage with third parties (e.g. lending institutions and representative bodies) involved in European land market development.
- > To seek opportunities for appropriate training and education programmes.
- > To provide a receptive forum for the exchange of ideas, best practice, knowledge and experience. This should include a mechanism for determining issues of common concern, where convergence may be appropriate.



## EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION



### European Land Information Service (EULIS)

The initial aim of the EULIS project was to explore issues associated with providing access to property ownership information across borders, using the Internet as the delivery medium, thereby creating better conditions for borrowers and lenders in the European credit market. An important part of such a development is the creation of international access to land and property registers. At present there are, for example, no common principles for collecting, storing and accessing such information, and no common legal and regulatory framework. The agencies participating in Eulis have agreed to work together to overcome these difficulties.

During 2004, the EULIS project has created a demonstrator of a future European Land Information Service that will provide improved access to on-line information from eight national land registries. Although it is envisaged that EULIS will have little impact on existing technical systems, the development of a pilot solution means that any need for modifications among the participating organisations and their computer systems has been identified.

The current participants in EULIS are the national land registration bodies from Austria,



## EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION

England and Wales, Finland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland and Sweden together with the Department of Real Estate Science of the University of Lund in Sweden.

The main objectives of the EULIS project can be summarised, as follows:

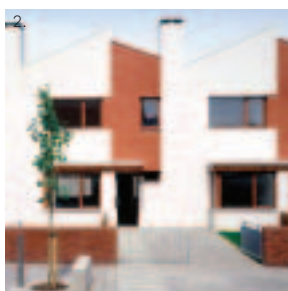
- > Investigation of current legislation relating to real property transactions, register systems, metadata systems, and definitions and terms as a basis for setting up standards and common definitions needed for establishing a pan-European land information service;
- > Development of a well functioning demonstrator including the core system, which will be the interface between the data providers and the users, the communication components between the core system and the national systems, and the interface towards the security system and the payment system;
- > Investigation of user needs as a basis for the development of the land information service and development of awareness and knowledge within the potential user community;
- > Development of security arrangements and methods for the handling of payment;
- > Investigation of how the real estate markets in Europe will be affected by an across-border land information service.

Having successfully completed the initial project, the EULIS participants have now agreed to proceed with the implementation of an operational service and the Irish Land Registry intends to join the EULIS project in the latter stages of 2005.

1. Trinity Student Residence.  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.

2. Shangan 2C, social housing, Ballymun, Dublin 9.  
Courtesy McGarry Ni Eanaigh Architects

3. Dublin Airport  
Courtesy Michael McNamara & Co.







## External Scrutiny

In common with all Government Departments and Offices the Registries are subject to examination by a number of external bodies and ultimately all decisions made are liable to the scrutiny of the Courts. During 2004:

- > 143 Parliamentary Questions were tabled by members of the Oireachtas and replied to
- > 236 letters/representations from TD's and Senators were received and dealt with
- > 12 letters from the Office of the Ombudsman on behalf of citizens in relation to 5 cases were dealt with

### Freedom of Information

Four FOI requests were carried forward from 2003. A further 26 requests were received in 2004. Of these 1 was granted, 1 was part granted, 1 was refused and 25 were withdrawn and dealt with outside of the FOI Acts. At the end of 2004, 1 case was still live.

The FOI Officer continued to represent the office at the FOI Civil Service Users Network and the FOI Inter-Departmental Working Group.

### Data Protection Act

The Data Protection [Amendment] Act 2003 came into force on 1 July 2003 and a Data Protection audit which was commenced in late 2003 is nearing completion. The objective of the audit is to establish the current level of records management and to identify issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure compliance with the 2003 Act. An updated Data Protection policy for the Registries will be produced in 2005.



1. Cherrywood, office building and park centre, Cherrywood, Dublin 18.

Courtesy McGarry  
Ni Eanaigh Architects.



2. Galway Private Medical Clinic, Galway.

Courtesy Michael  
McNamara & Co.



## EXTERNAL SCRUTINY



### Audit Controls

Audits of our accounting procedures are undertaken by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform maintains internal audit controls in line with the recommendations of the Mullarkey Report.

### Performance Verification Group

Two progress reports on the Registries Action Plan under *Sustaining Progress* were submitted to an external Performance Verification Group during 2004. The PVG scrutinised the reports and verified satisfactory progress on the Registries modernisation programme. The Action Plan was reviewed and updated in December 2004 in line with commitments under the mid-term review of *Sustaining Progress*.

### Customer Focus Group

Since this group was established early in 2000 it has provided an invaluable forum to meet with customer representative groups to brief them and to afford them an opportunity to contribute to developments from the earliest possible stage. This process continued during 2004 when the group met on four occasions. There was also regular contact with the constituent members throughout the year to address particular issues of relevance to them.





## Digital Mapping



### Digital Mapping Project commences

Since the preparation of our first strategic plan in 1990 the concept of providing a complete “integrated” system to support the entire process of registration of title in the Land Registry has been fundamental. With the success of the Integrated Title Registration Information System (ITRIS), Electronic Access Service (EAS) and Document Imaging projects the logical final piece of the jigsaw is the provision of a digital map. During 2003 and 2004 considerable efforts were made, with the assistance of expert consultative support, to prepare and present the business case and subsequently to obtain the funding to commence this project. After protracted discussions the business case was approved and the Department of Finance provided the necessary sanction during 2004, budetary provision was made for the multi-year investment and the project has now commenced.

The current phase of the project which commenced in September 2004 involves competitions run under EU procurement rules for the purchase of the appropriate hardware, software and related services and for the conversion of data from paper to digital format. The overall objective is to provide a system that will seamlessly integrate with the existing operational system and provide a direct link between the textual information (the folios) and the graphical information (the map). The prospective date for the award of the contract is June 2005. When developed, the system will be available to staff via ITRIS and to customers via the EAS and will enable users to undertake mapping searches and conduct additional services online.





## Registry of Deeds



### Registry of Deeds – Electronic Service Delivery Strategy

In 2003, the Registries commenced the preparation of a new strategy for the delivery of our services in the Registry of Deeds and engaged expert advisors to prepare a realistic and achievable e-service delivery strategy for the organisation.

The key findings from the report were:

- > In order to streamline support, provide a consistent platform for business continuity strategies, enable better integration with existing business applications in the Registries, and improve cost-effectiveness, the technology underpinning the existing service should be replaced with technology which closely matched the technical architecture already underpinning the business-critical applications in the Land Registry.
- > Customers of the Registry of Deeds should be provided with on-line access to the organisation's database of records. The report concluded that this would be achieved most effectively by providing access through the Land Registry's existing on-line Electronic Access Service (EAS).
- > The indexing of Registry of Deeds information should be extended and simplified through the implementation of more content-type searching mechanisms, such as deployed in modern Web-type searching engines and browser applications.

A procurement exercise is currently underway to select a contractor to provide the services and technology to realise the project.





## Financial Report



### Income

Fees received for the Registries by way of cash, cheques, revenue stamps etc. amounted to €64.1m in 2004 as against €56.7m in 2003. This was an increase of €7.4m or 13% over 2003 revenues.

### Expenditure

Actual expenditure from the Land Registry and the Registry of Deeds Vote for 2004 amounted to €33.3m (as against €31.4m for 2003 – an increase of 6%) leaving an excess of income over expenditure of €30.8m (as against €25.3m for 2003).

Of the total sum of €33.3m, expenditure on Salaries and overtime amounted to €25.6m; this represented 77% of expenditure (as against 72% during 2003). Expenditure on salaries during 2004 increased by €2.7m, or 12.7% over 2003.

Total Current Expenditure for 2004 amounted to €31.2m as against €27.7m for 2003 (an increase of €3.5m)

Capital Expenditure for 2004 amounted to €2.1m as against €3.7m for 2003 (a decrease of €1.6m)

When the following costs are included:

- > €2.2m under Vote 7 - Superannuation and Retired Allowances
- > €3.6m under Vote 10 - Office of Public Works  
(current €2.9m and capital €698k)
- > €3.9m notional rents on State-owned properties

the total expenditure in 2004 increases to €42.9m and leaves a notional excess of income over expenditure of €21.2m for 2004 (as against €15.4m for 2003).

This total represents an increase of €1.6m or 3.9% on 2003.

### Surplus/Deficit based on Accrual accounting

As outlined, the Registries cash intake was €64.1m in 2004 and cash expenditure was €33.3m – a surplus of €30.8m in terms of cash flow. However this is not a true reflection of the Registries profitability as it excludes a number of crucial commercial costs:

- > Notional costs for superannuation payments to retired employees, accommodation costs for six buildings and costs associated with services provided by other government departments – when these are taken into account the surplus of €30.8m drops to €21.2m.



## FINANCIAL REPORT

- > Provision for additional costs associated with full pension funding for existing staff for 2004, based on a contribution rate of 22.1%, is estimated at €3.1m.

Industry reports would indicate that this figure should be revised. However, this would require a full actuarial review.

- > During 2004 the arrears of dealings were reduced and, accordingly, the prepayments are a credit figure under accruals. The fees paid in respect of the reduction in arrears of applications is assessed at €1m. It should be noted that there is no cash element for this sum accruing to the Registries as all fees are paid over to the Exchequer.

Taking these items into account, there is a surplus of €21.3m for 2004 as against €9.6m for 2003.

### Finance Unit

During 2004 some 15,000 excess fee refunds to the value of €1.6m were issued to customers who overpaid fees. The processing of such a large number of refunds was a considerable drain on the resources of the Finance Unit.

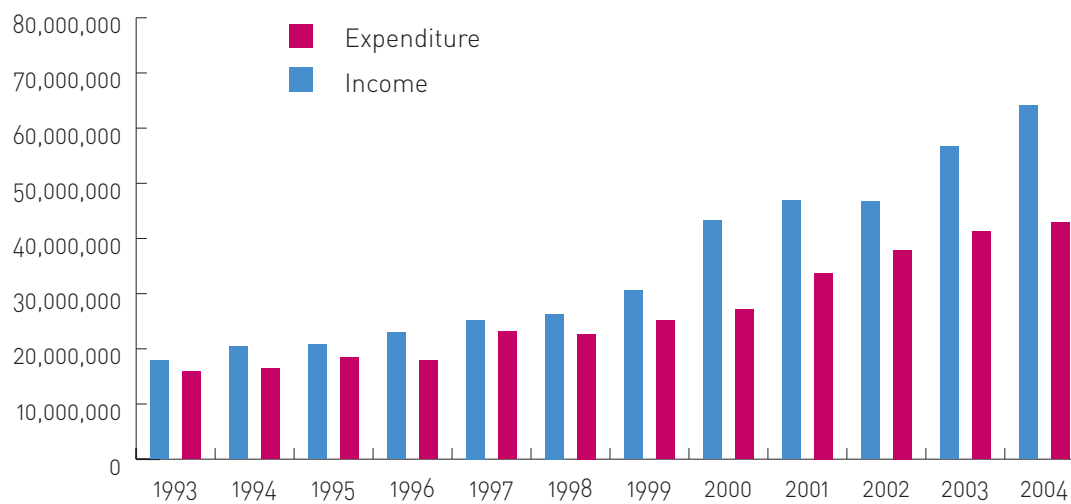
The financial estimates were prepared and agreed. The Finance Unit contributed to the three-year multi-annual budget process and also provided financial information to the Interim Board on a regular basis during 2004.



## SUMMARY

## Financial Summary 1993 to 2004

Year	Income	Expenditure	Operation Surplus (Deficit)
1993	17,827,745	15,945,370	1,882,374
1994	20,423,893	16,435,128	3,988,765
1995	20,828,992	18,408,683	2,420,309
1996	22,928,402	17,914,884	5,013,518
1997	25,223,579	23,139,419	2,084,161
1998	26,318,600	22,715,105	3,603,495
1999	30,520,749	25,112,953	5,407,795
2000	43,241,436	27,101,290	16,140,146
2001	46,940,178	33,748,457	13,191,721
2002	46,756,661	37,926,803	8,829,858
2003	56,722,653	41,287,974	15,434,679
2004	64,069,840	42,903,579	21,166,261





## Appendix 1



### Land Registry Workflow – All Categories

For comparison purposes this table shows the figures for 2004, 2003 and 2002 at December 31st.

Application Type	Year	Intake	Output	Cases under query	Work in progress
Dealings	2004	197,534	201,308	41,233	122,445
	2003	184,585	171,601	36,308	133,334
	2002	152,898	151,717	34,905	119,516
Examiners and Section 49 Cases	2004	4,491	3,980	4,100	5,042
	2003	4,571	3,676	4,012	4,524
	2002	5,640	4,099	3,107	5,184
Ground Rent Applications	2004	1,629	1,440	748	615
	2003	1,233	1,256	724	387
	2002	1,261	1,462	766	368
Land Commission Cases	2004	515	527	784	5,146
	2003	672	1,970	621	5,326
	2002	245	2,099	524	6,721
Land Certificates	2004	44,729	45,615	*	1,740
	2003	28,321	28,879		2,331
	2002	34,087	34,594		2,472
Filed Plans & Copy Folios	2004	216,260	219,070	*	3,620
	2003	205,121	216,066		6,522
	2002	182,175	182,234		17,801
Scheme Map Approval	2004	1,859	2,120	*	606
	2003	1,569	2,314		881
	2002	N/A	N/A		
Copy Instruments	2004	10,568	10,043	*	1,797
	2003	8,181	7,934		1,259
	2002	8,144	8,007		1,012
Map Searches	2004	5,310	5,248	*	167
	2003	3,882	3,899		105
	2002	4,848	4,838		122
Certificates of Charge	2004	68,495	68,493	*	180
	2003	54,542	54,551		195
	2002	19,520	19,654		204

Note: Due to the introduction of new workflow accounting systems and a re-categorisation of applications during 2002 and 2003, some minor anomalies arose in balancing overall figures.

\*The number of cases under query is not significant in these categories



## Appendix 2



that's how you  
online services

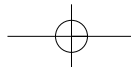
### Land Registry and Registry of Deeds Personnel

At the 31st December 2004 there were:

- > 700 people, filling 651.6 legal, administrative and technical posts in the Registries
- > 141 staff were availing of work-sharing options
- > 52 staff left the Registries in 2004 through resignations, retirements, transfers and career breaks
- > 40 full time officers, 21 temporary Clerical Officers and 7 temporary Mapping Draughtspersons were recruited through the Civil Service Commission (now the Public Appointments Service)

The Registries continued to offer a range of work/life balance working arrangements to staff, including flexitime, work-sharing and term time leave.





## Glossary of Terms



### **Certified Copy Folio and Filed Plans**

Each registered title is recorded on a particular folio. Collectively the folios make up "The Register". A folio sets out details of the property, the ownership of the property and details of any burdens, rights and charges which may affect the property. A Filed Plan is a plan or map of the property which may be attached to and associated with the folio.

### **Certified Copy Folio**

A copy of a folio on its own without a copy of the filed plan.

### **Certified Copy Instrument**

An Instrument is made up of all the title documents retained by the Land Registry following a particular registration. A certified copy can be issued to the parties involved in the registration or to a solicitor acting on their behalf.

### **Certificate of Charge**

A Certificate of charge is a document which certifies the ownership of a charge registered on Part 3 of a folio.

### **Dealing**

Dealing is a generic term for the many categories of application for registration made to the Land Registry. A dealing can be one or several applications for registration made at the same time and traditionally have been numbered and counted as one.

### **Electronic Access Service (EAS)**

The EAS is the public interface to ITRIS (The Land Registry's Database of Ownership Records and Related Information) through which customers can locate, view and print folios and filed plan maps, obtain details of the applications pending in respect of folios and lodge applications for various services. These services are offered over the Internet through the web site [www.landregistry.ie](http://www.landregistry.ie)

### **Examiners and Section 49 Applications**

Applications to register a title in the Land Registry for the first time involving examination of title are dealt with by professional legal staff (Examiners of Title). Section 49 applications - to acquire title based on "adverse possession" - are dealt with by senior experienced staff and by Examiners of Title. Such applications are usually complex cases requiring detailed and time consuming investigation of title.

### **Ground Rents**

The Land Registry process applications from leaseholders who wish to "buy out their ground rent" under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1978. When purchased the applicants can register or merge their interest in either the Registry of Deeds or the Land Registry as appropriate. While this area has been reducing in recent years over 75,000 such applications have been processed since 1978.

### **Integrated Title Registration Information System (ITRIS)**

ITRIS is the background electronic system which Land Registry staff use internally to process applications and to store folios and related casework information.





## GLOSSARY OF TERMS



### Land Certificates

A Land Certificate is a document issued by the Land Registry on request which certifies the ownership of a particular property and can be pledged as security. It is commonly - though perhaps somewhat inaccurately - referred to as the "title deed" which is a description more correctly reserved for the documents held where the title to the property is not registered in the Land Registry.

### Land Commission cases

Applications by the Land Commission to register Purchase Agreements and Vesting Orders are known as Land Commission cases or ILC Schedules.

### RAMIS

This is the acronym given to the Registry of Deeds Abstract Management Information System. It is the internal computerised system used to enter and store information following registrations in the Registry which then provides the results of searches.

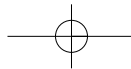
### Searches

In the business of conveyancing the term "searching" can have a number of meanings. It can include the Land Registry and the Registry of Deeds and a number of other areas where searches can be undertaken by or on behalf of purchasers or mortgagors/mortgagees or other interested parties. Under this heading we are referring to searching in the Land Registry where a variety of "search" types can be availed of:

- Names Index search. Where only the name of a registered owner is known and it is necessary to identify the folio or folios on which the ownership is registered.
- Folio inspection. This can follow on from a names index search or if the folio number is already known the folio can be inspected immediately.
- Map inspection. Where neither the name of the registered owner, the folio number or the plan number are known but the property can be identified on our map from which a plan number and subsequently a folio number can be provided.
- Townland index search. This can be availed of where neither the name of the owner nor the folio number of the property is known but the plan reference is known - perhaps from inspecting our map or a map of an adjoining property. A townland index search will identify the folio number, which can then be inspected.
- An official map search. If a person can identify and mark an area on a suitable map and send it to the Land Registry an official map search can be undertaken to identify the folio number and owner of the property and the results can be certified to the applicant.

### Vacate

A vacate is a registration made in the Registry of Deeds where a lender acknowledges that the money due on a mortgage has been repaid.



## Contacts



### Land Registry

The central office of the Land Registry comprises four constituent offices:

#### 1: Chancery Street, Dublin 7

Phone: (01) 670 7500 or LoCall 1890 333 001

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm

- Geographic Work Groups for Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Longford, Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Westmeath.

#### 2: Block 1, Floor 1, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1

Phone: (01) 670 7500 or LoCall 1890 333 001

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm

- Geographic Work Groups for Counties Kildare, Wicklow
- Ground Rents for all counties.

#### 3: Nassau Building, Setanta Centre, Nassau Street, Dublin 2

Phone: (01) 670 7500 or LoCall 1890 333 001

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm

- Geographic Work Groups for Counties Clare, Dublin, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo.

#### 4: Cork Road, Waterford

Phone: (051) 303 000 or LoCall 1890 333 002

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm

- Geographic Work Groups for Counties Carlow, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Offaly, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford.

### Registry of Deeds

Deals with all counties

Address: Henrietta Street, Dublin 1

Phone: (01) 670 7500 or LoCall 1890 333 001

Public Office Open: 10.00am-4.30pm.

### Ground Rents

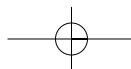
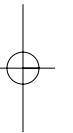
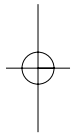
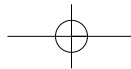
Deals with all counties

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Phone: (01) 670 7500 or LoCall 1890 333 001

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm.

**[www.landregistry.ie](http://www.landregistry.ie)**







## Our Mission

Safeguarding the  
legal, social and  
economic fabric of  
property ownership

Lec Arron Fort Sligo (courtesy of Dept. of the Environment)

Design Daniel O'Brien T 041 988 4154