

06

ANNUAL REPORT



1707
Registry of Deeds
established

1832
Office moved
to its present
location in
Henrietta Street

1892
Land Registry
Established

1981
Computerisation
of Land Registry
records begins

1999
Land
Registry's
online service
launched

2004
All Land
Registry
records
available
electronically

2006
Property
Registration
Authority is
established
PRA joins
European
Land
Information
Service

From Quill to electronic age

The Property Registration Authority



Land Registry
Registry of Deeds

Our Mission

Safeguarding the legal,
social and economic
fabric of property
ownership

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Foreword by the Chairperson of the Property Registration Authority

2006 was a year of significant change for the Registry of Deeds and the Land Registry (the Registries). The Property Registration Authority was established on 4th November 2006 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Michael McDowell, T.D. In accordance with the provisions of the Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006, the Authority was given responsibility for the management and control of both Registries.



A key statutory mandate for the Property Registration Authority is to promote and extend the registration of ownership of land. At present, approximately 85% of titles are registered in the Land Registry. The challenge facing the Authority will be to extend the registration of ownership to the remaining 15% of titles as quickly as possible.

The ever increasing demands arising from the dynamic growth in the economy have been addressed through the successful implementation of a far-reaching modernisation programme. The Registries modernisation programme has delivered noteworthy productivity improvements exemplified by the fact that the number of legal transactions completed in 2006 was 125% higher than 1999. A recognition of the success of the Registries modernisation programme was the award of best overall in its category at the Irish eGovernment Awards in 2005.

Further success was to follow and I was delighted to be present at the Irish eGovernment awards earlier this year when the Property Registration Authority won the best "State Category" for the successful implementation of the first phase of its Digital Mapping System (DmapS). Phase 2 of the Digital Mapping System, which is an ambitious programme, involves the digitisation of the boundaries of all registered land parcels in Ireland over the next 4 years.

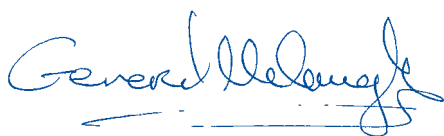
Despite the impressive achievements of the modernisation programme, the phenomenal growth in activity continued to outstrip the significant productivity gains achieved. The growing gap between applications lodged and processing capacity is both a major challenge and an increasing risk to the Property Registration Authority.

At a European level, the Property Registration Authority was among a group of national land registration bodies from participant countries across Europe that joined, in November 2006,

Foreword by the Chairperson of the Property Registration Authority

the European Union's eContent programme, "European Land Information Service" (EULIS). This service which is expected to go live in mid 2007 involves the creation of international online access to land and property registers in the participating countries. This will provide a valuable service for practitioners acting for clients who wish to buy and sell property in these jurisdictions.

This Annual Report, which is the first since the establishment of the Property Registration Authority in November 2006, sets out the key achievements of the Registries and the Authority during 2006. I would like to complement Ms. Catherine Treacy, the Chief Executive, the Management and Staff of the Property Registration Authority for their commitment and hard work in delivering a modern and efficient service to its customers and I am delighted to be involved with such a forward looking organisation. I am confident that the Property Registration Authority can build on the success achieved to-date and will advance registration of title and improved service delivery channels to match the needs of our customers and the economy.



Gerard McCaughey

Chairperson, Property Registration Authority

Overview of Chief Executive Officer

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Property Registration Authority (PRA) which details the volume and range of activities undertaken by this organisation during 2006. The report reflects the change of status of the organisation to the PRA which was established on November 4th 2006. Whilst the historic nature of this change of status was, in itself, a major event, other significant developments which affected the organisation included:



- Continued buoyancy in business:
 - Intake of dealings up 14% on 2005 in the Land Registry
 - Registrations up 3% in the Registry of Deeds
- The completion of Phase 1 and the commencement of Phase 2 of our Digital Mapping project
- The enactment of the Registration of Deeds and Title Act, 2006 which has brought about a number of important changes to the operations of the organisation
- Re-branding of our award winning Electronic Access Service (EAS) as landdirect.ie
- The establishment of an advance group in Roscommon in preparation for the decentralisation of 230 staff
- Extending compulsory registration to three additional counties. This was the first such extension since 1970
- Increasing the threshold for acceptance of certificates by solicitors for first registration to €1m
- The introduction of applications for "Qualified" Title
- The advent of the European Land Information Service (EULIS)
- Publication of the Law Reform Commission/Bearing Point report on eConveyancing
- Publication of the Land and Conveyancing Law Reform Bill

Overview of Chief Executive

- The launch of the Tercentenary celebrations of the Registry of Deeds
- The award for Innovation and Best Practice received from the Association of Geographic Information Award in London for the Digital Mapping Project

All of the above are outlined in greater detail in this report.

While the rapid growth and expansion in the Irish economy has been well recorded and documented, one sector - the property market - has outshone all others. The statistics for the level of activity across the organisation outlined in this report bear this out. The strategic application of modern technologies and the completion of significant projects in recent years have meant that, in many areas of activity, delays have either been greatly reduced or, in some cases, eliminated entirely. Even with another strong year of outputs the Authority was unable to meet the demand for its registration services during 2006. Whilst disappointing, this must be viewed in context. Since 2002, with no increase in staffing levels, productivity gains of 45% have been delivered. In that same period, however, there has been an increase in intake of work of 58%. Viewed over a longer period - since 1999, the year in which we commenced the roll-out of our ITRIS system output has increased by 125%. While productivity gains will be achieved from the Digital Mapping Project and other ongoing initiatives, they will not be sufficient to match intake and deal with existing casework, and this will be a major challenge for the Authority.

During 2006, the Property Registration Authority's income amounted to €78.7 million. Actual expenditure for 2006 amounted to €38.2m leaving an excess of income over expenditure of €40.5m. When notional costs for superannuation payments to retired employees, accommodation and costs associated with services provided by other Government Departments are taken into account, the surplus amounts to €29.5m.

By a coincidence of history the establishment of the PRA occurs almost 300 years after the establishment of the Registry of Deeds in 1707, the Tercentenary of which is being celebrated this year. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Chairman and the members of the Property Registration Authority every success in their new role. I look forward to working with the Authority as Chief Executive, with the continued support of the organisation's committed, talented and skilled staff, as we combine our energies to provide an efficient, reliable and cost-effective property registration service, essential to our economy.



Catherine Treacy

Chief Executive Officer

Year in Review - 2006

VOLUME OF TRANSACTIONS

2006 saw a further 14.8% increase in intake of applications lodged for registration during the year as against intake for 2005.

In this section the volume of activity in various categories of work is outlined and the relevant comparative information for recent years has been provided.

LAND REGISTRY

Title	Year	Intake	Output
Applications+	2006	247,024	225,230
	2005	215,613	226,668
	2004	202,540	205,815
Certification*	2006	333,522	337,424
	2005	352,820	360,487
	2004	348,850	352,029

+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.

As a result of Section 73 of the Registration of Deeds and Title Act, 2006 and associated consultation programme, the number of applications for Land Certificates and Certificates of Charge has been diminishing.

Due to the introduction of the Digital Mapping system, an emerging trend of a reduction in requests for Certified Copy Filed Plans has been identified. This was anticipated as a consequence of the availability of the online map information through DmapS.

Year in Review- 2006

OTHER LAND REGISTRY SERVICES

During 2006 the number of searches completed by staff and the number of documents provided for inspection over the internet and at public counters grew considerably.

Title	2006	2005	2004
Folio Inspections	743,536	712,652	510,279
Names Index Searches	228,919	207,689	155,013
Mapping Searches	61,471	71,138	66,040
Total	1,033,926	991,479	731,332

THE GROWTH OF THE LAND REGISTER

The total number of folios continued to grow during 2006 as the following figures indicate:

- 1,770,233 at 31st December 2006
- 1,716,662 at 31st December 2005
- 1,647,679 at 31st December 2004
- 1,598,742 at 31st December 2003



Year in Review- 2006

REGISTRY OF DEEDS

Despite record levels of demand the Registry of Deeds remains up to date and is still operating with “work in progress”. For comparison purposes the relevant figures for 2004 and 2005 have also been shown.

Title	2006	2005	2004
Registrations	95,684	92,859	83,464
Searches	348,342	329,281	295,790
Official Copies	5,042	5,148	5,081

GROUND RENTS

The Property Registration Authority operates the Ground Rents Purchase Scheme under the Landlord and Tenant (Ground Rents) (No. 2) Act 1978. Under this scheme owners of leasehold property can purchase their Ground Rent either through a consent or arbitration procedure. Since 1978, a total of 78,367 applicants have purchased their ground rents and acquired the fee simple to their dwelling houses under the vesting certificate scheme. The following table shows activity in 2006 and comparative figures for 2005.

Title	Year	Intake	Output
Arbitration Cases	2006	749	866
	2005	666	479
Consent Cases	2006	826	718
	2005	878	734
Total	2006	1,575	1,584
	2005	1,544	1,213

GROWTH IN ACTIVITY

The ongoing programme of change and innovation in the Property Registration Authority has continued to result in considerable improvement in the quality of service offered by the organisation. In some areas of activity, delays have been completely eliminated e.g. inspections of folios and filed plans and the provision of a names index service. In others, there has been a dramatic improvement in delivery of service.

Year in Review- 2006

In tandem with the increased usage of online services, the overall number of dealings completed - the main area of work for the Land Registry and on which over 80% of staff are employed - has also grown substantially.

Since the launch of new systems in 1999 and as a result of substantial process change, the total number of dealings completed annually has grown by 125%.

In spite of this excellent increase in productivity the ever increasing demand for services meant that it was not possible, with the resources available, to match intake and output in 2006.

Year	Intake	Output	Registrations*
2004	197,922	201,655	330,239
2005	211,167	221,815	366,005
2006	242,476	220,072	360,084


*A single application could result in one or several registrations.

ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS

As can be seen from the table below, continued growth in both the level of activity and the number of subscribers to online services was recorded in 2006.

Title	2004	2005	2006
No. of Subscribers	7,500	9,200	10,926
No. of online transactions	769,058	1,044,073	1,074,617

The growth in both the volume of records and the additional services is fuelling considerably increased usage and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. By the end of 2006 we had reached a position where:

- Over 85% of the Land Registry's traditional customer base (solicitors, financial institutions, law searchers, public and local authorities etc.) are accessing many of the available services online
- The Land Registry's direct customer base is widening to include estate agents, surveyors, architects and engineers
- Over 90% of applications for some services are made on-line 
- More than 4,000 business transactions per day are being conducted through landdirect.ie.

Year in Review- 2006

WEBSITE (www.prai.ie)

The website was used to publish information for customers relating to ongoing changes and developments within the PRA. In particular during 2006 information relating to the Digital Mapping Project was published and updated on a regular basis.

The homepage received over 1,750,000 visits during 2006, which is a 31% increase on 2005.

The landdirect homepage was accessed almost one million times.

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Section of the site was accessed over 27,000 times.

The Comment/Feedback facility, which keeps a permanent record of customer comments and staff responses, provided useful feedback from customers in relation to delivery of services.

During 2006 we continued to add Irish Language content to the website and more than 5,300 hits were received on the Gaeilge homepage.



Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPERTY REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

The Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006 [the Act of 2006] was enacted on the 7th May 2006. One of the main aims of the legislation was to restructure and modernise land registration structures in the State, through the establishment of the Property Registration Authority. Under the provisions of the Act of 2006, the Property Registration Authority (the Authority) was established as and from 4th November 2006.

The Authority is now the “registering authority”. S. 4(2) of the Act of 2006, substituted references to the Authority for references to the Registrar in the Act of 1964. Part 2 of the Act of 2006 contains the provisions relating to the establishment of the Authority including its membership, functions and staffing.

The Authority is a statutory body with a representative board. It is a body corporate with perpetual succession and may sue and be sued in its corporate name. It is independent in the exercise of its functions and has an official seal. Section 10 of the Act of 2006 is a key section which sets out the principal functions of the Authority as follows:

- Manage and control the Registry of Deeds and the Land Registry
- Promote and extend the registration of ownership of title to land
- Deal with applications under Part III of the Landlord and Tenant (Ground Rents) (No.2) Act 1978
- Undertake or commission, or collaborate or assist in, research projects and activities relating to the registration of ownership of land, including the compilation of statistical data needed for the proper planning, development and provision of services relating to such registration
- Perform any additional functions conferred on it by the Minister
- Keep the Minister informed of progress in relation to the registration of ownership of land and to assist him or her in the development of policy in relation to such registration.



Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006

The membership of the Authority is as follows:

Chairperson

Gerard McCaughey

Members:

John Shaw (nominated by the Law Society)

Máire R. Whelan, S.C. (nominated by the Bar Council)

Michael Edwards (Staff Representative elected by staff of the Authority)

Seamus Carroll (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

Michael Kelly

Michael Cahill

Brid Carter

Emer Daly

Sean McClafferty

Una Woods

Chief Executive

Catherine Treacy, former Registrar of Deeds and Titles, is the first Chief Executive of the Authority.

COMPLETION OF THE LAND REGISTER

During 2006, a number of measures were implemented with a view to accelerating the extension of title registration.

The threshold for certification in Form 3 cases was raised to 1 million euro.

Compulsory First Registration (CFR) was extended to Counties Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath.

The Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006 [commenced on the 4th of November] introduced a number of changes affecting compulsory first registration:

- It enables the Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform by Order to provide for CFR in a specified area, specified land or specified land in such an area. This could mean for example multi-unit apartment buildings either generally or in a specified area
- It enables the Minister to extend by order the type of dispositions to which compulsory registration will apply
- It provides for applications for first registration with qualified title. In effect, an applicant will be free to apply for registration of a title subject to certain reservations that will appear on the register.

Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006

It provides that a lease of registered land does not operate to lease the land until the lessee is registered as owner on the leasehold register, i.e. the lease is compulsorily registerable.

First registration and conversion of title portals were made available on the Authority website www.prai.ie providing ready access to comprehensive explanatory material in relation to first registration (in particular certification of title) and conversion of title. Explanatory material and forms as regards certification of title were issued from the Registry of Deeds on completion of relevant registrations. Senior legal staff in the PRA provided comprehensive presentations in relation to first registration (in particular certification of title) and conversion of title for the benefit of legal training providers including the Law Society and Bar Associations.

The Authority is actively considering the strategies and options available to implement its statutory mandate to extend title registration for inclusion in its first Strategic Plan. Measures under consideration include:



- an ongoing programme of extension of CFR
- extension of CFR to new multi-unit and housing developments
- updating legislation to provide for compulsory certification of prescribed first registration applications
- Registration of Deeds rules to facilitate the early closure of the Registry of Deeds
- review of internal Land Registry first registration practices and procedures and
- review of Land Registry and Registry of Deeds Fees Order to incentivise first registration by way of certification.

Digital Mapping Project

DIGITAL MAPPING PROJECT

In the report of activities for 2005, we referred to the award of a series of significant contracts to implement Digital Mapping technology as part of the organisation's Integrated Title Registration Information System (ITRIS). These contracts, awarded in June 2005, included the development and implementation of new technology and the conversion of existing paper maps into electronic format over a five year period.

Prior to this project, the boundaries of the 2.5 million or so land parcels registered in the Land Registry, together with the extent of various rights such as rights of way and pipelines, have been retained and displayed on approximately 32,000 paper Map Sheets (mostly A0 in size) maintained by the organisation. The digitisation of these maps will now enable the Authority to meet several important objectives, including:

- Delivery of improved service to customers
- Provision of enhanced business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities
- Delivery of enhanced searching and application tracking facilities and more extensive management information
- Enabling the organisation to deliver its mandate under the 'Information Society Action Plan'/'Electronic Government' programme
- Assist the organisation to fulfil a key role in national initiatives such as the Irish Spatial Data Initiative (ISDI) and the Electronic Conveyancing project
- Enable the Authority to participate fully in international initiatives such as the European Land Information Service (EULIS).

Co-inciding with the implementation of the Digital Mapping project, the Electronic Access Service was rebranded during 2006 under the new banner of landdirect.ie. This portal now acts as the central point for the entire range of online services offered by the organisation.

Prior to the advent of the digital mapping programme, customers wishing to locate folio and ownership details from Land Registry maps had to visit the Land Registry offices in person. Now, however, customers using landdirect.ie are able to conduct map searches over the internet.

The first phase of the new online maps service went live in April 2006. As a result, customers are now able to conduct on-line searches of the Land Registry map across all counties in the country. The customer selects the geographical locators ('seed-points') visible through their web browser and the system then retrieves the folio associated with that point. The seed-points

Digital Mapping Project

have been overlaid on the current Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) vector map series and OSi orthophotographs and have also been linked to the GeoDirectory database jointly produced by An Post and OSi. The GeoDirectory data is used to support a gazetteer function for locating property through postal addresses.

The digitisation of the registered boundaries of land parcels in each county also commenced in 2006 and the digitised parcels for County Longford went live in December. The remaining 25 counties will be digitised over the next five years and when complete will result in an estimated 15 million digitised boundaries.



Above: PRA Digital map overlaid with orthophoto

Left: PRA Digital map showing registered boundaries and seedpoints

Reform and Modernisation

E-CONVEYANCING - LRC REPORT

The Law Reform Commission, following consideration of a report commissioned by it and produced by Bearing Point, published its report "eConveyancing:Modelling of the Irish Conveyancing System" in April 2006, in which it accepted the analysis and recommendations made by Bearing Point. The Bearing Point report is published as an Appendix to the Commissions Report.

One of the key recommendations in the Bearing Point report is the establishment of a Project Board drawn from the key public sector and private sector stakeholders with specific terms of reference to coordinate the next phase in the development of an eConveyancing system for Ireland. The primary task of the proposed Project Board would be to make a detailed assessment of the most appropriate model for eConveyancing in Ireland.

LAND AND CONVEYANCING LAW REFORM BILL

The Land and Conveyancing Law Reform Bill 2006, which has passed all stages in the Seanad, provides for a comprehensive reform and modernisation of land and conveyancing law. It will repeal over 150 pre-1922 statutes and replace them with provisions more suited to modern conditions. It also contains amendments to the Registration of Title Act 1964 which will assist the Authority in its operations, e.g. in relation to judgment mortgages, 'limited' ownership.

By updating and streamlining this area of law, the Bill will simplify the process of conveyancing land and its registration. It will also facilitate the introduction of eRegistration and eConveyancing. For these reasons, the Authority looks forward to its enactment and implementation.

TOWARDS 2016 (T16)

Towards 2016 (T16), the successor to Sustaining Progress, requires the implementation of an ambitious Public Service Modernisation Programme which aims to improve delivery of services by the Public Service to all citizens. The T16 Action Plan for the Property Registration Authority was developed and agreed by the Registries' Partnership Committee in October 2006. The commitments in this Action Plan focus on continuing to harness the opportunities provided by technology and on building on staff and organisational capability to further increase productivity and improve access to the Authority's services.

Registry of Deeds Tercentenary

REGISTRY OF DEEDS TERCENTENARY

The Registry of Deeds was the first office created to deal with the registration of transactions affecting the land of Ireland. Established by an Act of the Irish Parliament in 1707, it is now about to enter its Tercentenary year. It is highly appropriate that this occasion be properly celebrated. The formal celebrations were launched by former Supreme Court Judge Catherine McGuinness on 20th November 2006 and as part of the celebrations a number of initiatives were undertaken or are planned.

The first of these was the production of a film titled "From the Quill to the Electronic Age" which tells the story of Land Registration in Ireland and was the end result of a collaborative approach involving Registry staff and professional film production specialists. The DVD was distributed to all serving and retired staff and to a range of appropriate interested parties. It was also made available for viewing online through the Authority's website.



A second item was a two year commemorative calendar. As the Act was passed in 1707 and the Registry of Deeds commenced business in 1708 it was appropriate to incorporate both years into this calendar thereby adding value to the publication as well as truly and appropriately celebrating the Tercentenary.

The third initiative was undertaken in conjunction with An Post - Ireland's national postal service - who will produce a commemorative stamp, to be launched during 2007 and which will be an excellent way to mark this moment in the history of the organisation.

The centrepiece of the Tercentenary celebrations will be an international conference to be hosted at Dublin Castle in September 2007. The conference will attract delegates from around the world from Land Registries and related organisations. Given the wide ranging and varied programmes of change underway in these organisations and jurisdictions this conference is timely and will provide a unique opportunity to exchange information and ideas with representatives of Registries from overseas.

European Associations

EUROPEAN LAND INFORMATION SERVICE (EULIS)

The overall aim of the EULIS project is 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 operating within the European credit market. An important part of such a development is the creation of international online access to land and property registers.

The vision for the future is that customers will have ready access to information about individual properties registered by Land Registration organisations throughout Europe and also have ready access to all necessary reference information on the land and property registration services provided, and the associated legal environment, in each participating European country.

The Property Registration Authority formally joined EULIS on 21st November 2006. The technical work required to make the Authority's online services available to other EULIS member countries will commence in early 2007. The Authority expects to be in a position to offer live services through the EULIS portal www.eulis.org in the first half of 2007.



PRA formally joins EULIS

Customer Charter

CUSTOMER CHARTER

SERVICE DELIVERY TARGETS – LAND REGISTRY

The service delivery targets for copy folios applied for via the Electronic Access Service (EAS) were achieved throughout 2006 and at times were exceeded.

The target for the issue of copy folio/filed plans via the EAS is set at 80% to be issued within 1 working day. Although the output was 11% below target for 2006 as a whole, the delays in turnaround time were not particularly significant.

Figures for completion of mapping searches were also below target during 2006. However, with the ongoing rollout of the Digital Mapping System, it is anticipated that significant progress will be made in this area during 2007.

The target for the availability of reference numbers for dealings lodged by post or at public counters was exceeded throughout 2006. Dealing reference numbers were available through landdirect within 1.4 days.

SERVICE DELIVERY TARGETS – REGISTRY OF DEEDS

All of the service delivery targets set out in the Registry of Deeds Customer Charter were achieved throughout 2006.

ACCESS TO FACILITIES

The Authority's website complies with Level A Conformance to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the W3C.

A refurbishment project to improve access to the Chancery Street office was undertaken in 2006. As part of this work, access facilities to the public areas inside the office and wheelchair accessible toilet facilities have been installed.

SERVICE THROUGH THE IRISH LANGUAGE

Under the terms of the Official Languages Act 2003, a draft Irish language scheme was prepared based on guidelines prepared by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. A number of legal issues in relation to the provision of the Register in Irish were identified. The advice of the Department of the Gaeltacht and the Office of the Attorney General were sought and incorporated into the final draft. The scheme sets out the level of service currently provided by the Property Registration Authority in English and Irish and the measures which will be undertaken to improve the services available in the Irish language over the period of duration of the scheme. It is anticipated that the final draft scheme will be published early in 2007.

Customer Charter

PROVISION OF INFORMATION PRACTICE DIRECTIONS

The programme to revise and update the existing Practice Directions (PDs) which commenced in 2005 continued into 2006. Three existing PDs were revised and published in 2006 and four new Practice Directions were also published. The revision of a further eight PDs is well underway and these will be published during 2007. The updated Practice Directions will form part of the revised publication under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 & 2003 which will be published in electronic format only as permitted under the FOI Acts. Legal office notices issued during 2006, involving changes in office practice were posted on the Authority's website under Practice Direction 47.



External Scrutiny

PERFORMANCE VERIFICATION GROUP

During 2006 the Registries submitted two reports to the external Performance Verification Group detailing the progress made on the Registries' Action Plan under Sustaining Progress. The PVG scrutinised the reports and verified satisfactory progress on the Registries' modernisation programme. The specific achievements of the Registries during 2006 are detailed elsewhere in this annual report.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

In order to assist with the more timely provision of information for members of the Dail and Seanad and to reduce the need for Parliamentary Questions regarding the current status of pending applications, a new service was introduced in May 2006 for all T.D.s and Senators. A dedicated e-mail address was established to which all such enquiries could be directed. This new service provides a speedier and more cost effective service to members of the Oireachtas.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

Three Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were carried forward from 2005. A further 32 requests were received in 2006 of which 2 were granted, 6 were part granted, 7 were refused and 16 were withdrawn and dealt with outside of the FOI Acts. At the end of 2006, 4 cases were still live.

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

EXTENSION OF FOI ACTS

On 31st May 2006 the Registration of Titles Rules Committee was brought within the ambit of the FOI Acts. No FOI requests in relation to the Rules Committee were received in 2006.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Six complaints were received and dealt with under the Authority's complaints procedure in 2006.

CUSTOMER FOCUS GROUP

This forum met on several occasions during 2006. These meetings provided a continuing opportunity for consultation on a range of issues and the dissemination of information on any changes planned or being introduced.

Seminars

SEMINARS

A growing area of activity in recent years has been the involvement of staff of the Property Registration Authority in seminars/conferences/training courses for various groups. PRA officials participated in and made presentations on a variety of topics at a number of seminars and training courses for solicitors and other customers during 2006. These included:

Registration of Deeds and Title Act 2006 – Law Society of Ireland, Tipperary Bar Association, Kerry Law Society, Land Law and Conveyancing Law Reform Conference (UCD)

Aspects of first registration – Law Society Conveyancing Elective, Law Societies and Bar Associations in Athlone, Kerry, Roscommon and Tipperary

Digital Mapping/landdirect.ie – Law Schools (Dublin and Cork), Society of Chartered Surveyors, International Surveyors Conference (FIG) in Munich, Survey Ireland Conference, IRLOGI, Teagasc, Customer Focus Group, Law Searching Agencies, Estate agencies in Limerick and Cork, Law Societies and Bar Associations in Athlone, Kerry, Roscommon and Tipperary

Recent developments in the Registries – Law Societies and Bar Associations in Athlone, Kerry and Tipperary

eRegistration and eConveyancing – Four Registries eConveyancing and eRegistration Sub-group, Australasian Conference, World Bank, EULIS (European Land Information Service) AGM

Land Registry Skills – CLT(Ireland) course for Legal Secretaries.

VISITORS TO THE REGISTRIES

A range of visits to both Registries were hosted during 2006. The PRA continued to be represented at a number of European fora on land registration matters. In recent years with the growing use of the internet valuable contact and communications have become possible on a wide variety of topics of interest to the Registries.

Staff Resources

STAFF RESOURCES

At the 31st December 2006 there were:

- 714 people, filling 656.6 legal, administrative and technical posts in the Property Registration Authority
- 162 staff (23% of the workforce) were availing of work-sharing options
- 66 staff left the Property Registration Authority in 2006 through resignations, retirements, transfers and career breaks
- Recruitment of permanent and temporary staff was organised using the services of the Public Appointments Service. Staff also transferred into the Authority on foot of the Government's decentralisation programme.

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

DECENTRALISATION

The ongoing implementation of the Government's programme of decentralisation was a key project for the Authority during the course of 2006. A major step forward in the plan to decentralise 230 staff to Roscommon town was taken with the acquisition of temporary accommodation in Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon. This enabled the Authority to locate a fully functioning unit with 33 staff in Roscommon. OPW has made a commitment to provide some additional temporary accommodation which will come on stream in 2007.

A site for the permanent decentralised offices for the Property Registration Authority's Roscommon office has been identified and the OPW expect to have the new building fully commissioned by 2010.

In tandem with the progress on accommodation, 2006 also saw the transfer of staff in and out of the Authority for the decentralisation project and the decentralisation projects of other Departments and Offices. Such movement results in a significant loss of expertise for the organisation and necessitates considerable allocation of resources to training.

Financial Report

FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME

Fees received by the Property Registration Authority by way of cash, cheques, revenue stamps etc. amounted to €78.7m in 2006 as against €69.1m in 2005. This was an increase of €9.6m or 14% over 2005 revenues.

EXPENDITURE

Actual expenditure from the Property Registration Authority Vote for 2006 amounted to €38.2m (as against €36.6m for 2005 – an increase of 4%) leaving an excess of income over expenditure of €40.5m (as against €32.5m for 2005).

Of the total sum expended of €38.2m, expenditure on salaries and overtime amounted to €28m; this represented 73% of all expenditure, as against 72% during 2005. During 2006 expenditure on salaries and overtime increased by €1.8m, or 7% over 2005.

Total Current Expenditure for 2006 amounted to €35.1m as against €32.4m for 2005 (an increase of €2.7m).

Capital Expenditure for 2006 amounted to €3.1m as against €4.2m for 2005 (a decrease of €1.1m).

When the following costs are included:

- €2.7m under Vote 7 - Superannuation and Retired Allowances
- €4.3m under Vote 10 - Office of Public Works
- (Current €1.9m and Capital €2.4m)
- €4m notional rents on State-owned properties

the total expenditure in 2006 increases to €49.2m leaving a notional excess of income over expenditure of €29.5m for 2006 (as against €23.6m for 2005).

This total represents an increase of €5.9m or 25% on 2005.

SURPLUS BASED ON ACCRUAL ACCOUNTING:

As outlined, the Property Registration Authority's cash intake was €78.7m in 2006 and cash expenditure was €38.2m – a surplus of €40.5m in terms of cash flow. This operating base, however, excludes a number of costs related to allied services:

Financial Report

1. Notional costs for superannuation payments to retired employees, accommodation costs for seven buildings and costs associated with services provided by other government departments – when these are taken into account the surplus of €40.5m falls to €29.5m.
2. Fees charged by the Property Registration Authority are fixed by reference to the cost of providing all services. The figure of €78.7m cash intake includes about €6.1m for work that was not completed during 2006. This work will be completed in 2007 but it cannot be considered income in 2006 under accrual accounting. This cash intake of about €6.1m represents a prepayment by the customer and as such must be excluded from the surplus of €29.5m shown above.

Taking this into account, there is a notional accrued surplus of €23.4m for 2006 as against €26m for 2005.

PROMPT PAYMENTS OF ACCOUNTS ACT 1997

It is the policy of the Property Registration Authority to fully comply with the terms of the Prompt Payments of Accounts Act 1997. The PRA has procedures in place to ensure that all invoices are paid within the statutory time limit. While the procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with the Act, they only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the Act.

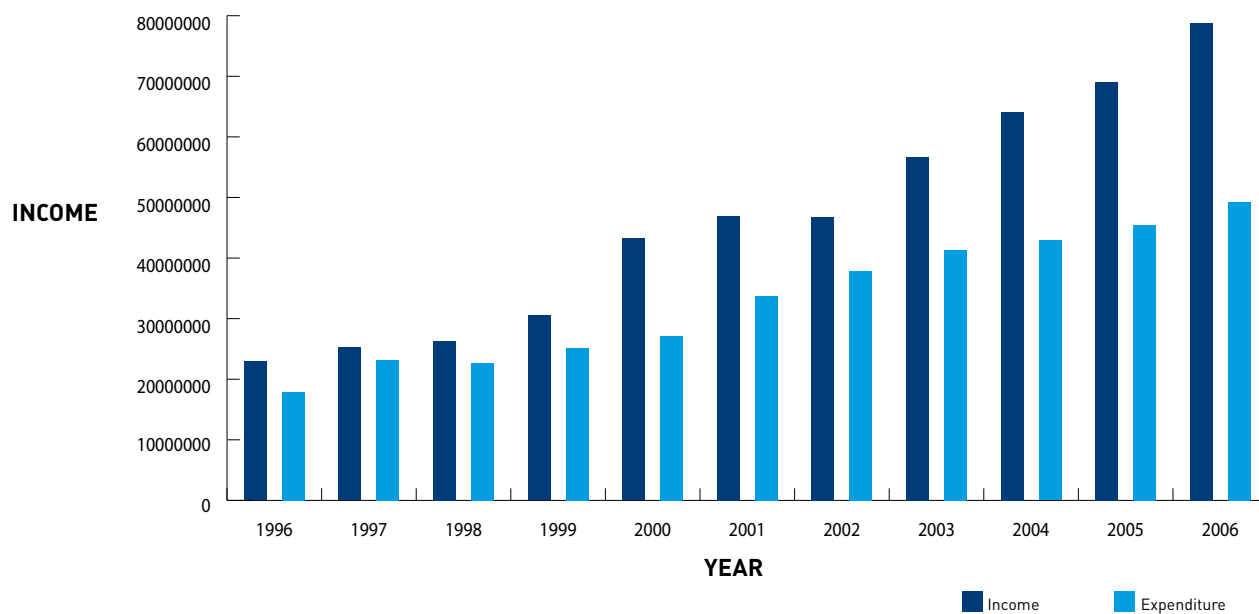
In 2006 a total of 12 invoices incurred late payment penalties. The value of all invoices that were paid late amounted to €87,101. This represents 0.9% of the total payments falling within the terms of the Regulations. The total interest paid during 2006 resulting from late payments amounted to €203.04.

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FINANCIAL SUMMARY 1996 TO 2006

Year	Income €	Expenditure €	Surplus €
1996	22,928,402	17,914,884	5,013,518
1997	25,223,579	23,139,419	2,084,160
1998	26,318,600	22,715,105	3,603,495
1999	30,520,749	25,112,953	5,407,796
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
2005	69,057,542	45,493,585	23,563,957
2006	78,756,868	49,276,688	29,480,180

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 1996 TO 2006



Appendix 1

Land Registry Workflow – All Categories

For comparison purposes this table shows the figures for 2006, 2005 and 2004 at 31st December.

Application Type	Year	Intake	Output	Cases under query	Work in progress
Dealings	2006	242,476	220,072	35,617	139,029
	2005	211,167	221,815	37,282	115,493
	2004	197,534	210,308	41,233	122,445
Examiners and Section 49 Cases	2006	4,205	4,035	4,347	5,703
	2005	4,286	4,651	4,745	4,703
	2004	4,491	3,980	4,100	5,042
Ground Rent Applications	2006	1,576	1,585	965	441
	2005	1,543	1,213	966	727
	2004	1,629	1,440	748	368
Land Commission Cases	2006	464	1,385	878	3,812
	2005	263	676	853	4,733
	2004	515	527	784	5,146
Land Certificates	2006	28,171	28,431	*	1,344
	2005	41,979	42,115		1,604
	2004	44,729	45,615		1,740
Filed Plans & Copy Folios	2006	219,477	217,126	*	4,894
	2005	221,333	222,410		2,543
	2004	216,260	219,070		3,620
Scheme Map Approval	2006	2,082	1,520	*	1,385
	2005	2,036	1,257		823
	2004	1,859	2,120		606
Copy Instruments	2006	12,331	11,943	*	2,477
	2005	12,034	11,742		2,089
	2004	10,568	10,043		1,797
Map Searches	2006	5,417	5,451	*	96
	2005	6,294	6,331		130
	2004	5,310	5,248		167
Certificates of Charge	2006	66,918	66,972	*	49
	2005	72,115	72,192		103
	2004	68,495	68,493		180

*The number of cases under query is not significant in these categories and no further land certificates or certificates of charge will be issued after 1st January 2007.

Contacts

THE PROPERTY REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

The Property Registration Authority was established on 4 November 2006 to manage and control the Land Registry and Registry of Deeds.

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

1: Chancery Street, Dublin 7, DX 228

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, DX 232

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, DX 227

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, DX 44090

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, DX 199

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

Public Office Open: 10.00am-4.30pm.

Ground Rents

Deals with all counties

Address: Block 1, Floor 1, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, DX 232

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

Public Office Open: 10.30am-4.30pm.

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