

30th May 2003

Circular L10/03 (WSP)

To each local authority

**Re. Water Services Pricing Policy Implementation
Non-Domestic Metering - Progress Report**

A Chara,

I refer to the Governments Water Pricing Policy Framework and the requirement for the universal metering of non-domestic water services customers by 2006.

1. Sligo Pilot Metering Project

The Department is continuing its support for the metering demonstration project in Sligo. A key deliverable of the project is the development of guidance and information notes to assist local authority non-domestic metering implementation. Two sets of guidance have issued to date (in July 2002 and February 2003) with further guidance planned over the project period.

The Sligo Pilot is at tender stage and is expected to conclude the procurement of a private service provider by October 2003. Authorities are again reminded that in order to achieve the 2006 universal metering deadline that your non-domestic metering programme should not await the advancement or conclusions of the Sligo pilot.

2. Use of Guidance Notes

In implementing national metering policy authorities should, given the guidance already provided and the availability of other information including a project brief template, preliminary report and the contract documents, consider the need to engage consulting engineers and the extent of a consultants involvement. In all instances authorities should ensure that they maximise the use of the "Metering Notes for Guidance" and the other ancillary information.

3. Implementation of Metering Programmes

As outlined in previous circulars and guidance local authorities should develop and instigate a comprehensive countywide strategy (to include Town Councils) for the implementation of water services pricing policy and universal non-domestic metering. We are aware that significant progress has been achieved by a number of authorities in respect of non-domestic metering in some or all of the following areas -

- ❑ Development of a systematic approach to the identification of all non-domestic customers.
- ❑ The review and assessment of existing metering stock.
- ❑ The grouping of metering programmes with adjacent authorities.
- ❑ The preparation of Briefs and the appointment of Clients Representatives.
- ❑ The fast tracking of planning and rapid movement towards engaging contractors/operators.

We are pleased that authorities have responded to the metering requirement so positively and are committed to the implementation of this area of Government policy. This level of progress must however be advanced and replicated by all authorities if universal metering is to be achieved within the 2006 deadline.

4. Metering Programme Progress Report 2003

The 2003 questionnaire will assist the assessment of local authority progress on the implementation of this critical area of water services pricing policy. The questionnaire which is attached, should be relatively easy to complete. It holds twenty questions, under four headings - the non-domestic customer base, the charging of non-domestic customers, contract information and metering installation - all of the questions should be answered. You are invited, where you consider it necessary or helpful, to include a commentary along with the completed questionnaire outlining further relevant information and/or clarifications regarding your non-domestic metering programme. An electronic copy of the return is available from Mr. Emmet Fahy ☎ 01 8882165, e-mail: emmet_fahy@environ.irlgov.ie

You are asked to make your return to the undersigned as soon as possible and by Monday 30th June 2003 at the latest.

Is mise le meas,

Liam Gleeson
Water Services Policy Unit.
Environment Infrastructure and Services Division

To - Each City and County Manager, Director of Services (Water Services).
Copy to - Each Town Clerk, GCCC, AMAI, Ombudsman's Office and Regional Authorities.