

22 June 2006

Circular Number: WSP3/06

To Each Sanitary Authority

RE. WATER SERVICES NON-DOMESTIC METERING PROGRAMME

A Chara,

I refer to the Government's Water Pricing Policy Framework, and the requirement for the universal metering of the non-domestic sector by December 2006.

2006 Deadline

The implementation of non-domestic metering programmes has become increasingly time critical. As only 6 months now remain for delivery on this strategic Government requirement, you are asked to ensure that all measures to fast-track the non-domestic metering programme are implemented immediately and that the Government's objective to secure maximum delivery of the non-domestic metering programme by the end of December 2006 is met.

Response to December 2005 Questionnaire

Considerable and encouraging progress has been achieved on the programme to date which is reflected in the December 2005 Questionnaire returns (see Annex 1). The meter installation schedule is, on the basis of the data supplied, substantially achievable. Some slippage has, however, occurred in the meter installation numbers predicted in earlier returns. Overall, the latest returns record a 78% achievement of the metering target for the end of 2005 and a 35% achievement rate of the national target.

While the Department continues to urge sanitary authorities to achieve the 2006 deadline, we acknowledge that the substantial completion of metering within this timeframe is achievable. As any further slippage or delays that occur will have a negative effect on overall compliance, every effort must be made to deliver on the Government's deadline. The Department is available to provide assistance and advice to sanitary authorities in cases of anticipated delays or setbacks and should be consulted as soon as difficulties with the programme are encountered.

Charging All Non-Domestic Customers

The end-2005 returns show that full identification of all non-domestic customers had not been completed and some reporting of estimated customer figures continued. Positive identification of the non-domestic customer base is vital, and, if not already achieved, must be addressed immediately; it is hoped that the mid-2006 returns will demonstrate progress in this area.

The overall number of non-domestic customers reported totals 218,793 at the end-2005 period. The number of “potential” customers still not charged for their water services provision remains high at 63,366. The Department would again remind sanitary authorities that this situation conflicts with the principles of water services pricing policy and the requirement that all non-domestic users be directly charged for their water services. In order to avail of potential additional revenue from this source, these customers should be identified and immediately charged for water services, either at a flat rate or by a metered volumetric charge.

Information Update Request at 30th June 2006

The enclosed questionnaire, (see Annex 2) designed for easy completion and return should be returned to the Department as soon as possible after the end of June 2006. Please ensure that your authority provides all of the requested information by the due date. Any further explanation or comment considered necessary can also be included with the returns.

The questionnaire should be returned to the Department by Monday 17th July 2006. An electronic version of the return may be forwarded to Ms. Margaret McHugh, e-mail: margaret_mchugh@environ.ie (☎ 01 8882166).

A summary of the end-2005 return is attached for your information.

Is mise, le meas,

Liam Gleeson
Water Services Policy Section,
Water and Natural Heritage Division.

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

ANNEX 1

Summary December 2005 Metering Questionnaire returns

1. General

- ❑ Most authorities considered the status of the information they submitted as being of a high standard of accuracy.

2. Meter Installation

- ❑ Most authorities are engaged in reviewing their non-domestic customer base.
- ❑ Meter installation has commenced in 16 authorities.
- ❑ Twenty-six authorities have indicated that their metering programme will be substantially completed within the Government's 2006 deadline.

3. Number of Non-Domestic Customers

- ❑ Authorities have identified 218,793 non-domestic customers and it is likely that this figure will increase further as the metering programme is implemented nationally.
- ❑ Almost all authorities will have a consolidated charge in place for all non-domestic water services users by the end of 2006.

4. Implementation (Contract) Information

- ❑ 6 authorities are at contract stage (end December '05)
- ❑ 11 authorities are at tender stage (end December '05)
- ❑ 16 authorities are at installation stage (end December '05)

5. Metering Programme

- ❑ A total of 78,185 meters have already been installed nationally.
- ❑ Local authorities now estimate that over 191,929 meters will have been installed at the end of 2006.
- ❑ A residual 26,864 meters are to be installed early in 2007.

**UNIVERSAL NON-DOMESTIC METERING QUESTIONNAIRE
REPORT ON PROGRESS TO 30 June 2006**

You are asked to complete all of the following questions 1 to 9 and to forward your response to the Department by Monday 17 July 2006:

Question 1: Is your non-domestic metering programme :
(a) at meter installation stage; (b) completed or (c) other (describe)

Reply 1: _____

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Question 2: When was metering installation (give month/year) commenced by your authority?

Reply 2: _____

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Question 3: When will meter installation (give month/year) be concluded?

Reply 3: _____

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Question 4: How many non-domestic customers are there in your administrative area as of end June 2006?

Reply 4: _____

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Question 5: How many of these non-domestic customers are charged for their water services provision?

Reply 5: _____

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Question 6: How many non-domestic customers are now metered (at end June 2006)?

Reply 6: _____

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Question 7: How many non-domestic customers will be metered at the end of 2006?

Reply 7: _____

Question 8: State the volume (in cubic meters) and percentage of non-domestic water supply metered (at end June 2006)?

Reply 8: Volume: _____ Percentage: _____

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Question 9: Will the Government's non-domestic metering deadline be achieved in your administrative area? (Answer Yes or No).

Reply 9: _____

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To be signed by Director of Services, Water Services: _____

Sanitary Authority _____

