

Oifig an Aire
Office of the Minister



20m
February, 2008.

Received

2008 -02- 25

Mr. C.J. Walsh,
Sustainable Design International,
51 Auburn Hill,
Aughrim Street,
Dublin 7.

RE: REP06/JG/08

Dear Mr. Walsh,

I am directed by Mr John Gormley, TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government to refer further to your recent letter in connection with his meeting with the Institute of European Affairs (IEA) in December 2007.

In relation to the two points you raised directly with the Minister at the meeting, he has asked me to respond as follows;-

In relation to the first point, there is significantly greater emphasis on construction quality in the new TGD to Part L supporting the revised requirements of this Part of the Regulations, when compared to the current TGD. However, the reasons for differences in performance between theoretical calculations and actual outcomes are complex and are not solely a function of construction quality. They are unlikely to be eliminated by the use of one particular technology. Nevertheless, your points regarding appropriate control mechanisms, levels/methods of post-construction monitoring, and the use of appropriate technologies to assist in this regard, will be given consideration in the context of the general issue of enforcement of Building Regulations generally.

In relation to the second point, the National Climate Change Strategy sets out the range of climate change research being undertaken in Ireland. Further information on this research is available in the first instance from the Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research.

AN ROINN COMHSHAOIL,

OIÐHREACHTA AGUS

RIALTAIS ÁITIÚIL

DEPARTMENT OF THE

ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

TEACH AN CHUSTAIM

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH I

CUSTOM HOUSE, DUBLIN I

Tel No: +353 1 888 2000

LoCall No: 1890 20 20 21

Fax No: +353 1 878 8640

You subsequently raise a number of issues in relation to Post-Bali leadership from Ireland and Ireland's National Climate Change Strategy. In relation to the former, the Minister has asked me to advise you that the post-2012 international climate change regime is currently the subject of discussions at national, EU and UN levels. In this context, your views in connection with post-Bali leadership have been noted.

Regarding Ireland's Climate Change Strategy, the Minister has asked me to respond to each of the seven points raised as follows:-

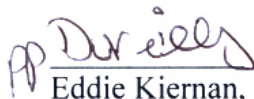
1. The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 illustrates how Ireland will meet its 2008-2012 climate change target under the Kyoto Protocol. A copy of the Strategy is enclosed for your information.
2. The measures set out in the Strategy represent a significant effort across all the sectors and reflect a whole of Government approach that embeds climate change considerations in the development of all relevant sectoral policies. There are close synergies between this Strategy and other key policy statements such as the Energy White Paper, the National Spatial Strategy and the forthcoming Sustainable Travel and Transport Action Plan.
3. Improvement in Building Regulations represents just one element of a wide range of measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment.
4. The Climate Change Communications and Public Awareness Campaign, which is to run for five years, will seek to:
 - raise general public awareness of climate change, its causes, impacts and implications for Ireland;
 - promote behaviour change to lower and avoid emissions of greenhouse gases and encourage their sequestration from the atmosphere;
 - engage with specific stakeholders and work in partnership with them to develop programmes and initiatives tailored to achieve emission reductions in their sectors;
 - explain and facilitate the timely implementation of the proposed actions set out in the National Climate Change Strategy 2007 – 2012 and the Agreed Programme for Government;
 - generate awareness among the public of the need for further actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and empower individuals and groups to play their part in tackling climate change

The campaign will be multi-dimensional and will include a significant stakeholder engagement element, through which we hope to recruit individuals and groups from the various sectors to drive the necessary changes in their areas. This campaign is designed to both raise awareness of the salient issues and mobilise action by individuals and groups through

giving them the necessary information and tools they need to act. Further information is available at www.changenow.ie

5. The current amendment to Part L of the Building Regulations implements the commitment in the programme for Government to improve the energy performance of new dwellings by 40%. Indeed it goes beyond this and introduces specific requirements for renewable energy systems and for high efficiency replacement boilers. It is not however the final word - it is rather a step in a continuum. The Minister has already committed to introducing an energy/CO2 requirement for non-domestic buildings in this year and to reviewing the Regulations in 2010 to further improve performance with the aim of achieving zero carbon performance at the earliest date practicable.
6. The Government is committed to developing a national adaptation strategy in 2009.
7. The National Climate Change Strategy includes a commitment to establish a Climate Change Commission to monitor and assess Ireland's progress in addressing climate change and to increase awareness in all sectors of the opportunities and challenges presented by the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Yours sincerely,


Eddie Kiernan,
Private Secretary