



ÚDARÁS RÉIGIÚNACH AN MHEAN IARTHAIR MID-WEST REGIONAL AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT 2009





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CATHAOIRLEACH'S STATEMENT

It was a great honour for me to be elected as Cathaoirleach of the Mid-West Regional Authority following the Local Elections in 2009 and I would like to record my appreciation of my predecessor, Cllr. Bernard Hanrahan.

Local Elections were held in 2009 and I would like to congratulate Members who were elected and commiserate with those who failed to be elected, particularly those who had provided many years of dedicated service as elected representatives.

Shannon Airport continues to play an important part in the Economic Development of the Mid-West Region and the West of Ireland in general. Mr Martin Moroney, Director Shannon Airport Authority addressed the December 2009 monthly meeting and outlined the challenges facing Shannon Airport. The Authority continues to campaign with Clare County Council for the establishment of a rail link to Shannon Airport. It is vitally important that Aer Lingus continues to use Shannon Airport to ensure the



viability and vitality of business and tourism interests in the Mid West region. The establishment of the US Custom and Border protection facility at Shannon Airport will be of great benefit to the Airport and the availability of this facility to Cargo pre-clearance is a priority for the Airport and the region. Essentially, US bound passengers using the pre-clearance facility leave Ireland as domestic US passengers.

The Mid-West Regional Authority commenced the review of its Regional Planning Guidelines/Regional Economic Strategy in 2009. The Director presented his Report on submissions received on the Draft Issues Paper at the May 2009 monthly meeting. The process for the review of the Regional Planning Guidelines/Regional Economic Strategy continues and



Mid-West Regional Authority

the new Regional Planning Guidelines/Regional Economic Strategy are expected to be adopted in 2010. I welcome the evidence-based approach to the Guidelines' preparation and commend my colleagues for their active engagement in this statutory process.

The principal activities of the Regional Authority are outlined in the main body of the Annual Report. On behalf of the members of the Regional Authority and on my own behalf, I wish to acknowledge the work and dedication of the Director and staff of the Regional Authority. Also, I would like also to thank Mr. Tom Mackey, Designated Manager for his help and co-operation.

Cllr. Leo Walsh
Cathairleach.



Mid-West Regional Authority

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2009 Annual Report on the activities and financial statements of the Mid-West Regional Authority. This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Article 30 of the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993. It details briefly the powers, functions, duties, policies, programmes and objectives of the Authority and it reviews its principal activities during 2009.

Established in 1994, the remit of the Mid-West Regional Authority is to work in partnership with our constituent local authorities – Clare County Council., Limerick City Council, Limerick County



Council and North Tipperary County Council - to achieve the coordinated delivery of high quality public services across the Mid-West Region. During 2009, the Regional Authority continued to fulfil this role in supporting regional enterprise and innovation in the face of the current challenging economic climate.

Throughout 2009 the Authority, in partnership with our constituent local authorities, has continued to address the region's development priorities by preparing and implementing a range of initiatives and strategies, many of which are reviewed in this report. During the year the Authority has worked to promote regional development in the Mid West region. The partnership of the Authority, Forfás and the region's development agencies resulted in the production of the Mid-West Regional Competitiveness Agenda. This publication has provided part of the the evidence base for the statutory Regional Planning Guidelines preparation process while also providing the region with an effective tool to promote the attractiveness of the region as a place to do business.

In 2009, the Regional Authority commenced a review of the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) and commenced the preparation of a new Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the region for



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the period 2010-2022. Incorporating extensive public consultation at local, regional and national levels, the review process will continue in the coming year and it is expected that the RPGs/RES will be adopted by the Authority in 2010.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Cathaoirleach and members of the Authority, to the Designated Manager, to the members of the Operational and RPGs Implementation Committees and of the various Working Groups for their assistance and co-operation during 2009. Furthermore, I would like to thank the constituent local authorities, government departments, local and public authorities in the region and the many other organisations and individuals who worked with and assisted the Regional Authority throughout the year. I also wish to acknowledge and praise the continued commitment and hard work of the Authority's staff.

**Liam Conneally,
Director.**



Mid-West Regional Authority

MID-WEST REGIONAL AUTHORITY

Headquarters: Friar Court, Abbey Street, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

Tel. No: 067 / 33197

Fax. No: 067 /34401

E-mail: info@mwra.ie

Web address: www.mwra.ie

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

The Mid-West Regional Authority was established with effect from 1st January 1994 under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993. This Establishment Order was made by the Minister for the Environment with the consent of the Minister for Finance under Sections 3 and 43 of the Local Government Act, 1991.

POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Regional Authorities have been given a general competence to do all things necessary and expedient for the effective performance of their functions, including wide consultation with local, regional and other public authorities, engagement of consultants and advisers, participating in or promoting research, borrowing, purchase and leasing of land and property, requesting information and attendance at a meeting of representatives from any local or public authority.

The principal functions include:

- Preparation of Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines/Regional Economic Strategy (Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended)
- Promotion of co-ordination in the provision of public services in the region
- Promotion of co-operation, joint action etc. between local authorities, public authorities and/or others



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- Reviewing the overall development needs of the region and the making of statements on them as appropriate, and keeping under review the provision of public services in the region
- Reviewing the Development Plans of local authorities in the region and in adjoining regions
- Provision of proposals, advice, recommendations or information to Government in relation to applications for E.U. assistance
- Reviewing and monitoring the implementation of measures for which E.U. assistance is made available
- Preparation of Programme of Work, Estimate of Expenditure and Receipts, Statement of Accounts and Annual Report
- Preparation of Regional Economic Strategy (Establishment Order)

REGIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Mid-West Region of Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary is one of eight statutory regions comprising of about 10% of the national land area and population of the country. The Region faces the Atlantic Sea Board with considerable maritime influences; the Shannon passes through the Mid-West forming a distinctive corridor and unifying force in the character of the area. Much of the rural areas are grown in pasturelands with uplands particularly around the fringes of the Region. The whole of the region is covered for economic and tourism development purposes by Shannon Development whose remit also covers South Offaly and North-Kerry. Figure 1 illustrates the location and geographical area of the Mid-West region.



Figure 1: Mid-West Region, Ireland



BRIEF PROFILE OF THE REGION

Cities:	Limerick
Counties:	Clare, Limerick and North Tipperary Counties
Area:	8,248.64 Sq. Km.
Population:	371,900 (2008)
Population Density:	45.09 persons per Sq. Km.
Principal Population Centres:	Limerick City, Ennis, Shannon, Ennistymon, Kilrush, Kilkee, Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Adare, Nenagh, Roscrea, Thurles, Templemore.
Principal Economic Sectors:	Agriculture, Tourism, Professional Services & Manufacturing
Physical Geography:	The Region is one of considerable geographic diversity, comprising coastal and central plains, mountains, bog land, and drained by the river Shannon, Lough Derg and the Shannon Estuary. The western half of County Clare is dominated by the Atlantic coastline and includes the distinctive karst landscape of the Burren in North Clare. Much of Limerick county as well as part of North Tipperary is characterised by the rolling hills and dairy land of Ireland's 'Golden Vale'.

MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

There are 27 Members of the Authority representing the area of administrative counties of Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary and Limerick City Council. Authority meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month (except August) at 1.30 p.m. and the venue is rotated between the four constituent Local Authorities.



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The Membership of the Authority at the beginning of 2009 was:

<u>Clare County Council</u> Cllr. Michael Kelly Cllr. Peter Considine Cllr. Martin Lafferty Cllr. Bernard Hanrahan Cllr. Pat McMahon Cllr. Madeline Taylor-Quinn Cllr. John Crowe Cllr. Cathal Crowe (C.O.R.)	<u>North Tipperary County Council</u> Cllr. Jim Ryan Cllr. Tom Berkery Cllr. Willie Kennedy Cllr. John Sheehy Cllr. Mattie Ryan Cllr. Michael Smith
<u>Limerick City Council</u> Cllr. Maria Byrne Cllr. Ger Fahy Cllr. Pat Kennedy Cllr. James Houlihan Cllr. Lilly Wallace (Cathaoirleach) Cllr. John Cronin	<u>Limerick County Council</u> Cllr. Leo Walsh Cllr. Rose Brennan Cllr. James Houlihan Cllr. Eddie Wade Cllr. Leonard Enright Cllr. Eddie Creighton Cllr. Cormac Hurley

Following the Local Elections in 2009 the following is the membership of the Mid-West Regional Authority.

<u>Clare County Council</u> Cllr. Gerry Flynn Cllr. Oliver Garry Cllr. Pat Keane Cllr. P. J. Kelly Cllr. Brian Meaney Cllr. Pat McMahon Cllr. Sonny Scanlon	<u>North Tipperary County Council</u> Cllr. Phyll Bugler Cllr. Ger Darcy Cllr. Seamus Hanafin Cllr. Micheál Lowry Cllr. Virginia O' Dowd Cllr. Mattie Ryan
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<u>Limerick City Council</u>	<u>Limerick County Council</u>
Cllr. Ger Fahy	Cllr. Richard Butler
Cllr. Michael Hourigan	Cllr. Mike Donegan
Cllr. Joe Leddin	Cllr. John Egan (Leas-Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. Kathleen Leddin	Cllr. Noel Gleeson
Cllr. Denis McCarthy	Cllr. Stephen Keary
Cllr. Diarmuid Scully	Cllr. William O'Donnell
	Cllr. Leo Walsh (Cathaoirleach)

Staff

Director	- Mr. Liam Conneally
Project Manager	- Ms. Marie Collins
Staff Officer	- Mr. Seamus Treacy
Clerical Officer	- Ms. Majella O'Brien

Designated County Manager

Better Local Government - A Programme for Change provided for the designation of a City/County Manager in each region to be responsible for local authority relations with the Regional Authority and to improve co-ordination and linkage with the Local Authorities.

Mr. Tom Mackey, Limerick City Manager is the designated Manager for 2009/2010.

Operational Committee:

The Operational Committee's function is to assist and advise the Authority in the discharge of its functions. Membership is drawn from senior management from Local Authorities, Public Service agencies in the region and is chaired by the Authority's Cathaoirleach.

Representation on Monitoring Committees:

The Cathaoirleach and the Director are Members of the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) Monitoring Committee and the National Development Plan Central Monitoring Committee.



Mid-West Regional Authority

Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly

The Authority is entitled to be represented on the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly by six members. The Authority representation on the Assembly at 31st December 2009 was as follows:

Cllr. B. Meaney	Cllr. P. J. Kelly
Cllr. M. Lowry,	Cllr. D. McCarthy
Cllr. L. Walsh	Cllr. S. Keary

Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly Operational Committee:

The Mid-West Regional Authority is represented at official level on the Operational Committee, Economic and Social Infrastructure Sub-Committee and Monitoring Committee of the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly.

The Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions (COR) represents local and regional government in the EU policy formation and decision-making processes. The Committee is an advisory body established in 1994 to ensure that the public authorities closest to the citizen, in Ireland, the local and regional authorities, are consulted on European Union policies of direct interest to them.

Members of the COR provide the EU with the views and experiences of the local and regional levels, as these authorities are often the implementing bodies for EU legislation. Similarly, COR members are in a better position to inform their authorities and constituents about EU developments and the 'European process'.

The Committee is composed of 344 members representing the local and regional tiers of government of the 27 Member States. These full members are backed by an equal number of alternates (substitutes). Ireland has 9 full members and 9 alternate members.



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The Committee of the Regions normally makes its views known in the form of written opinions or resolutions. The COR receives requests for its opinion from the Commission, Council and the European Parliament on communications and proposals for legislation.

The policy areas of mandatory consultation of the COR are Economic and Social Cohesion, Environment, Trans-European Networks Social Policy, Public Health, Employment Education, Culture and Youth, Transport, Energy and Training.

Within Brussels, the COR maintains linkages with the other EU institutions – the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Economic & Social Committee as well as the Council and Presidency of the European Council. Commissioners, Presidency Ministers and MEP's regularly attend COR meetings and there is a cross-fertilisation of influence between the institutions on policy issues.

Cllr. Brian Meaney is the Mid-West Regional Authority's representative on the Committee of the Regions.

Irish Regions Office, Brussels

The Irish Regions Office (IRO) was established in 2000 as a Brussels-based resource for sub-national government in Ireland. The operation of the office involves a partnership between the Association of Irish Regions (AIR), the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the County and City Managers Association (CCMA).

The IRO works with and on behalf of the sub-national authorities in Ireland. The office maintains direct contact with the Directors of the Regional Authorities and Regional Assemblies and is routinely engaged in coordinating the production and promotion of policy and position papers on behalf of AIR and the Irish Delegation to the COR. It also assists local and regional authorities in developing EU projects (including identifying and accessing EU funds and finding transnational partners) and responds to general requests for information on and from sub-national authorities in Ireland.



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The IRO also maintains close contact with the various EU institutions. The work of the IRO benefits from the quality of its links, both formal and informal, with the main institutions, and more specifically with key policy and decision makers. Formal engagement with the Institutions is facilitated through representation on the COR and through membership of European Commission consultative forums. At an informal level, the IRO has a close working relationship with individual departments of the European Commission, as well as with MEPs, the Irish Permanent Representation, other Irish representations, regional representation offices and various other Brussels-based organisations.

Association of Irish Regions

The Association of Irish Regions (AIR) is the national representative organisation of the eight Regional Authorities and two Regional Assemblies in Ireland. Its objectives are to express the collective view of its membership on matters concerning their constitution and the functions for which they have statutory responsibilities, and to offer advice to Government on matters pertaining to economic and social development, including matters relating to balanced regional development.

AIR also aims to facilitate the exchange of information and experience between its members, including arranging meetings, conferences, seminars, and producing publications which further the objective of improving the quality of service which members can give to their authorities and to the public.

The Association is composed of the Cathaoirigh and Directors of the Regional Authorities and Regional Assemblies.

The Mid West Regional Authority also provides the Secretariat to:

- The Minister for Transport appointed *Shannon Airport Marketing Consultative Committee*.
- Lough Derg Marketing Strategy Group
- Mid West Senior Planners Group



Mid-West Regional Authority

Mid-West Regional Authority - Number of Meetings held in 2009:

A total of 16 meetings of the Authority and its sub committees were held in 2009. In addition several meetings have been held with the various bodies throughout the Mid-West Region, such as Shannon Development, University of Limerick, LIT, S & E Regional Assembly and Chambers of Commerce. Consultations were held with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of Finance, Assembly of Chairpersons/Secretaries, the Minister for Transport Mr Noel Dempsey, T.D. and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Meetings of the Regional Authority are usually held in the headquarters of the constituent local authorities. On occasions the Meetings were addressed by representatives of Public and Local Authorities, the Shannon Airport Authority and the Shannon River Basin District Project.

No. of Monthly Meetings: 13

Venues	Date	Average Attendance Rate
Limerick City Council	06-01-09	89%
North Tipperary Co. Co.	03-02-09	89%
Clare Co. Co.	03-03-09	81%
Limerick Co. Co.	07-04-09	89%
Limerick City Council	05-05-09	67 %
North Tipperary Co. Co.	02-06-09	52%
Limerick Co. Co.	21-07-09	96%
Clare Co. Co	02-09-09	96%
Limerick City Council	07-10-09	89%
Limerick City Council	14-10-09	67%
North Tipperary Co. Co.	04-11-09	78%
Limerick Co. Co (special)	02-12-09	59%
Limerick Co. Co.	02-12-09	81%

No. of Sub-Committee Meetings: 3

Same Venues as Monthly Meeting



The Authority was represented at the following conferences and seminars in 2009:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Members Attended</u>
16/18-01-09	Kadenza Consultancies, Day's Hotel, Waterford	1
23/25-01-09	Superior Training, Granville Hotel, Waterford	1
24-02-09	Combat Poverty Agency	1
27/28-02-09	Kadenza Consultancies, Green Isle Hotel, Dublin	1
19/20-02-09	MWRA Conference, Woodlands hotel, Adare	11
4/8-03-09	Rattoo Heritage Society, Golf Hotel, Ballybunion	1
16/17-04-09	LAMA, Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise	2
3/5-04-09	Kadenza Consultancies, Silver Tassie Hotel, Letterkenny	1
6/8-02-09	Esperanza Enterprises, Glendalough, Wicklow	1
08-05-09	Rural Development, Blackwater Learning Centre, Emyvale	2
1/3-05-09	Trevor Bowen literary week-end, Mitchelstown	1
27-04-09	Transition from Dependency to Resilience, Tipperary Ins.	1
08-09-09	The Facts about the Lisbon Treaty, EU Treaty House, Dublin	5
02-10-09	S & E Regional Assembly conference, Trim, Co. Meath	1
06-11-09	Shannon Development conference, Thomond Park stadium	1
13/15-11-09	Esperanza Enterprises conference, Sligo Park hotel.	1
16-10-09	Nuclear Free Local Authorities Forum, Bray, Co. Wicklow	1
4/6-12-09	"Constituents on the Net" conference, Dublin	1



REVIEW OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES IN 2009

Regional Economic Strategy/Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022

In 2009 in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) and Planning and Development (Regional Authorities) Regulations 2009, the Regional Authority commenced it's review of the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) and preparation of a new Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the region for the period 2010-2022. The Government's National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is being implemented through the statutory RPGs.

The Director presented his Report on public consultation submissions received on the Draft Issues Paper at the May 2009 monthly meeting. The process for the review of the RPGs/RES continues and the new RPGs/RES is expected to be adopted in 2010.

In 2009, the Mid-West Regional Authority continued to implement its current RPGs through three Sub-Groups:

Sub Group 1 - Coordinated development of Zone One area

This Sub Group consists of representatives from the Mid-West Regional Authority, Local Authorities, IDA, Shannon Development, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Transport. The Group agreed the need for a more focused and structured approach to the development of Limerick/Ennis/Shannon Gateway.

The work of Sub Group 1 is being implemented through the preparation of the following regional strategies:

- Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (M.W.A.S.P.)
- Atlantic Gateway Corridor Framework
- Mid-West Retail Strategy
- Joint Housing Strategy
- Gateway Innovation Fund applications(G.I.F.)
- Atlantic Way Pillar Projects



Mid-West Regional Authority

The Mid-West region's land use and transportation strategy (**M.W.A.S.P.**) preparation includes the entire area of the region. Consultants Mott McDonald were engaged by the lead authority, Limerick City Council to prepare the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan. Work on the MWASP commenced in 2009 and will continue into 2010. The purpose of the MWASP is to provide a strategic framework for the integration of the region's land use and transport infrastructure provision into the future. The MWASP Steering and Working Committees consist of senior managers/planners/engineers from the four local authorities, the MWRA Director and the Departments of Transport and Environment and is expected to be finalised by the end of 2010.

The National Spatial Strategy(NSS) envisaged the strengthening of the Atlantic Gateway cities and intervening urban and rural Corridors(1.2m population by 2020). The preparation of the **Atlantic Gateway Corridor Frameworks** as non-statutory strategic development frameworks for each of the four corridors linking the Atlantic Gateway Cities presents opportunities to absorb strategic and long term planning policy thinking into regional and local policy making. During 2009 work on the individual Atlantic Corridor Frameworks(Limerick/Shannon – Galway, Limerick/Shannon – Cork, Limerick/Shannon – Waterford and Cork – Waterford) has continued. The Mid-West Regional Authority with the assistance of the South East and South West Regional Authorities and the local authorities will conclude the process in 2010. The individual Gateway Corridor Framework working groups consist of local authority senior planners and Directors of the three regional authorities.

Limerick City Council, Limerick County Council and Clare County Council in conjunction with the Mid -West Regional Authority are preparing to review and update the Mid West Retail Strategy. Limerick City Council as lead Authority has commissioned Colliers CRE to conduct the review. The **Regional Retail Strategy** is at draft preparation stage and will be considered by local authorities in the preparation of their draft Limerick City, Clare and Limerick County Development Plans. Separately, North Tipperary County Council is due to update its county retail strategy.



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Limerick County Council, Limerick City Council and Clare County Council, in association with the Mid-West Regional Authority are currently preparing a **Joint Housing Strategy**. The Strategy preparation is being led by Limerick County Council and will take into account the existing and likely future needs for housing, the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income and the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

The **Gateway Innovation Fund** concept provides a strong mechanism for enhancing regional development and is dependent on the availability of central exchequer funding.

The Regional Authority and Local Authorities are actively involved in the **Atlantic Way Initiative**. The Mid-West Regional Authority Director is the region's nominee to the Atlantic Way and facilitator to the Infrastructure and Connectivity Pillar of the Atlantic Way Initiative.

Sub Group 2 - Develop a common approach to Renewable Energy.

This group consists of representatives from the Regional Authority, Local Authorities, Shannon Development, Tipperary Energy Agency, Limerick/Clare Energy Agency and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Four work areas have been identified that support the development of Renewable Energy in the region:

- 1) The preparation of a Regional Energy and Emissions Strategy(**MWRA 2008**);
- 2) Wood Energy Development in Public Buildings(**MW Bioenergy Plan 2009**);
- 3) Planning Guidelines for small scale Renewable Energy Projects; and
- 4) Biofuels for Public Service Vehicles.

The regional Climate Change Strategy(2008) and regional Bioenergy Plan(2009) were completed and adopted by the Authority. Both Strategies highlight that the region is very suited to biomass and other renewable energy generation and also highlights the job creation capacity that a 'Mid West Renewable Energy Hub' has for the region.

- **Regional Bio-energy Plan**

As part of the RPGs Implementation, a Regional Biomass working group was established.

The purpose of the Group is to develop an indigenous heat energy market for the Mid-

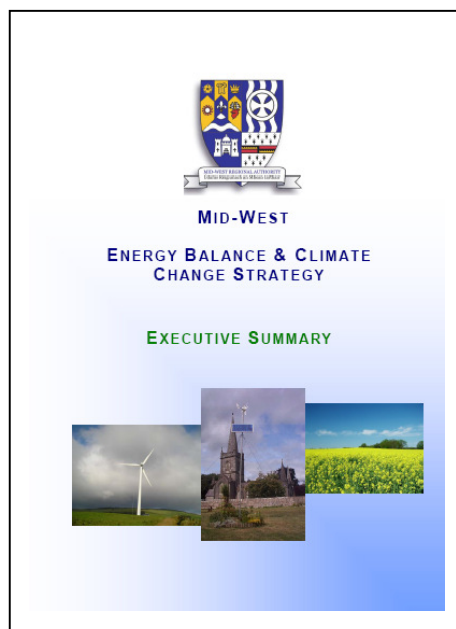


Mid-West Regional Authority

West Region utilising local resources. A Regional Bioenergy Plan was prepared and was presented to the Members of the Regional Authority at the September 2009 monthly meeting. Funding to implement the Strategy's recommendations through the deployment of a public building 'revolving loan fund' is being pursued by the Authority.

- **Climate Change Strategy**

The Mid-West Regional Authority in association with the Tipperary and Limerick/Clare Energy Agencies and with financial support from Tipperary Leader Group prepared a Mid-West Energy and Emissions Balance and Climate Change Strategy.



This Action Plan was short listed for an award in the Chamber's Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards in 2009 in the Environmental Awards category.

Sub Group 3- The identification of a Strategic Development Zone or the criteria through which a zone should be developed.

This group consists of representatives from the Regional Authority, Local Authorities, Shannon Development, Shannon Airport Authority, IDA, IBEC and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The Group concluded that the Strategic Development Zone mechanism was unsuitable for the delivery of specific employment creation initiatives in the



Mid-West Regional Authority

Mid West. The Group has proceeded to examine the potential for an Iconic Project such as a Mid West Regional Convention Centre.

Shannon Airport Marketing Consultative Committee

The Regional Authority provides the Secretariat to this Government appointed Committee which is comprised of members from the Public and Local Authorities, together with the regional tourism interests such as hoteliers, travel agents etc. The Committee provides a coordination and advisory forum for the marketing of Shannon Airport. The Committee also provides research and expert advice on a range of areas critical to the Airport marketing and strategic planning, i.e. transport and access, route development, tourism product development, product marketing and communications with regional stakeholders etc. The Committee informs the preparation of the various tourism and transportation policies in the Mid West Region. Post Open Skies, the Committee works with the Shannon Airport Authority to promote the Airport to airlines and the travelling public.

The promotion of the Airport's US Customs and Border Protection facility is a primary focus of the Committee.

The members of the Committee are:

Frank Prendergast	Cathaoirleach, S.A.M.C.C.
Liam Conneally	Director, Mid-West Regional Authority
Prof. Jim Deegan	University of Limerick
David Hogan	Shannon Development
Tadhg Kearney	Limerick Chamber of Commerce
Cllr. Gerry Flynn	Clare County Council
Tony Carroll	S.I.P.T.U.
Peter Considine	Clare County Council
Michael Vaughan	Irish Hotels Federation
Tony Brazil	Irish Travel Agents Association



Lough Derg Marketing Strategy

The focus of the Lough Derg Marketing Strategy Group is to market the Lake's tourism potential in a coordinated and focused manner. The Mid-West Regional Authority, Limerick, Clare, North Tipperary and Galway County Councils, Limerick City Council, Shannon Development and Waterways Ireland commissioned a marketing strategy for Lough Derg. The objectives of the Strategy are to bring a coherent marketing focus to the Lough Derg catchment area, to parallel the proposed capital investment programme with an integrated marketing strategy and to establish the '**Lough Derg Brand**' nationally and internationally. Consultants were engaged to prepare the marketing strategy. A number of consultation fora were held during the preparation of the Strategy.

Implementation of the Lough Derg Marketing Strategy is ongoing and the key elements implemented to date include website development, www.discoverloughderg.ie, promotional maps and brochures (also translated into French and German), preparation of a regional submission on the Mid Shannon Corridor Tourism Infrastructure Investment Scheme and the provision of Road Signage at key access locations around Lough Derg.

Atlantic Gateways Initiative

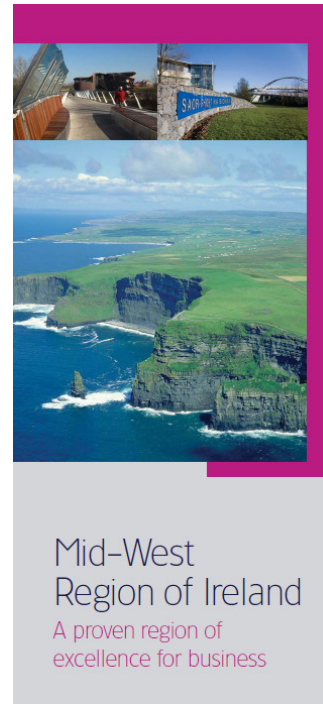
The Atlantic Gateways initiative envisages the active collaboration of the city-regions of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, together with the Corridors which link them while forming an economic unit which has the scale and critical mass to act as an economic counterbalance to the eastern Dublin-Belfast Corridor. The Group promoting the initiative includes the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government, Shannon Development, the Regional Assemblies, and the Mid-West, West, South-East and South-West Regional Authorities. The Atlantic Gateway Corridor Development Frameworks as part of this work are described above



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Mid-West Region Factfile

A Mid-West Region Fact File was prepared by the Mid West Regional Authority in conjunction with the region's four Local Authorities, Shannon Development, Forfás, Enterprise Ireland and the wider business community. This Mid West Economic Fact File builds on the work that Forfás has done for the Mid West Regional Authority in the review of the Regional Planning Guidelines and outlines the considerable progress that has been made in the Mid West in attracting investment to the region. The Fact File outlines to prospective investors the key reasons to establish their operations in the Mid West and outlines the key infrastructure and enterprise supports in place in the region.





Liam Conneally (Director), Mr Tony Killeen, T.D. Minister for Defence and Cllr. Leo Walsh (Cathaoirleach) at the launch of the Mid-West Region Factfile.

Limerick Regeneration

The Government has endorsed the overall vision for a transformation of the Limerick Regeneration areas as set out in the Limerick Regeneration Programme (Masterplans) which was unveiled on the 28th October 2009.

The Director of the Mid-West Regional Authority is a member of the Regeneration’s Programme Development Group(PDG) along with representatives of the Regeneration Agency, various Government Departments, Limerick City Council, Limerick County Council, An Garda Síochána and Mr. Brendan Kenny as Chief Executive. The Group will have responsibility for the delivery of priority regeneration projects outlined in the Limerick Regeneration Programme Masterplans.

Conferences

The Mid-West Regional Authority Annual Conference was held on the 19th and 20th February 2009 in the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick. The theme of the Conference was “Ireland’s Water – What is the real cost?”



European Projects

The Regional Authority continues to participate in European Research and Development Projects. In 2009, the following is a list and brief description of the EU projects the Mid-West Regional Authority is a partner in.



NEA 2 – Nautisme Espace Atlantique/Watersports in the Atlantic Area. This is a follow-on initiative co-funded under the INTERREG IVB Atlantic Area Programme. The MWRA are one of 23 European Partner regions working together in implementing actions that will assist in promoting and developing the watersports sector in the Atlantic Area of Europe. The MWRA are also working closely with the Irish Canoe Union and Ards Borough Council in this project.



FRESH – Forwarding Regional Environmental Sustainable Hierarchies is a three year programme co-funded under INTERREG IVC Programme. The Project will examine Sustainable Value Creation concepts and Europe’s Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP). The Mid-West pilot project will focus on Sustainable Urban Living in terms of land-use planning and eco-design.



BioMob – This project is financed by the European Programme, FP7 and is focusing on the Mobilisation of the Bio-Mass sector in four EU regions. BioMob will look at the challenges for biomass R&D, develop a Joint Action Plan and hold a series of information workshops. Shannon Development are lead partner in this 24-month initiative.



STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Statement of Accounts for the Financial Year Ended 31-12-2009

<u>Expenditure:</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
	€	€
Salary/Wages/PRSI	292,096.01	309,805.81
Office Expenses	14,223.83	11,497.60
Postal & Telephone Charges	8,522.40	12,512.24
Rent/Rates/Insurances	28,949.90	23,691.85
Annual Allowance Article 34(1)	40,671.52	49,663.17
Travel & Subsistence Article 34(2)(a)	8,883.25	16,885.69
Travel & Subsistence Article 34(2)(b)	Nil	Nil
Seminar/Courses (Fees only)	2,631.65	7,485.64
Cathaoirleach's Allowance	4,379.84	16,616.61
Annual Conference	5,368.80	8,958.82
Shannon Airport Marketing Consultative Comm.	3,333.95	3,153.79
Travel/Subsistence Regional Authority Staff	9,927.79	16,225.47
Study Visits/ Conferences Abroad	3,377.93	25,210.09
<i>EU Projects</i>	<i>238,629.60</i>	<i>617,680.28</i>
<i>S&E Regional Assembly</i>	<i>2,958.04</i>	<i>5,226.33</i>
<i>Regional Economic Strategy/ Regional Planning Guidelines</i>	<i>31,596.45</i>	<i>nil</i>
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	<i>8,272.83</i>	<i>8,731.35</i>
<i>COR/AIR</i>	<i>9,700.23</i>	<i>nil</i>
<i>Lough Derg Marketing Group</i>	<i>nil</i>	<i>31,190.88</i>
<i>Regional Bioenergy Strategy</i>	<i>34,431.28</i>	<i>nil</i>
TOTAL	€747,955.30	€1,164,535.62
<u>Receipts:</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
	€	€



Mid-West Regional Authority

Local Authority Contributions	445,931.00	451,331.00
Recoupments from S & E Regional Assembly	19,410.25	nil
<i>Annual Conference</i>	<i>20,340.00</i>	<i>26,865.37</i>
Public Bodies Contributions	12,839.96	13,994.57
W.S.N.T.G.	nil	35,995.76
Shannon Airport Marketing Consultative Comm.	10,234.52	12,997.56
EU Projects	323,963.98	754,992.94
Miscellaneous	4,146.55	11,857.32
Lough Derg Marketing	10,000.00	60,000.00
Reg. Economic Strategy/Reg. Planning Guidelines	61,000.00	2,685.24
Dept. Social, Community and Family Affairs	nil	5,460.00
Regional Bioenergy Strategy	30,436.36	nil
TOTAL	€938,302.62	€1,376,179.76
Surplus (Deficit) for year	190,347.32	211,643.74
Opening Balance	263,699.63	52,055.89
Closing Balance at end of year	454,046.95	263,699.63

Notes to Accounts year ending 31st. December, 2009

1. Recoupments outstanding as at 31st. December, 2009.

	€
(A) SAMCC	9,937.31
(B) EU Projects -	
NEA 2	3,500
Fresh	48,500.00
(D) Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly	45,000.00
Total =	€103,437.31

2. Contributions received towards Lough Derg Marketing Strategy-Balance of €89,000 unspent as at 31-12-2009.



Mid-West Regional Authority

Freedom of Information Act 1997

From 1st. October, 2001 the Regional Authority became subject to the provisions of FOI Act 1997 [FOI Act 1997(Prescribed Bodies) (4) Regulations 2001, SI 475 of 2001]. The Act was introduced to allow public access to records not already available under existing legislation. Any queries in relation to the Act may be directed to the Regional Authority office (info@mwra.ie).

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997:

The Authority has complied in full with the provisions of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997. All payments were made well within the “prescribed payment date”.

Insurance:

The Authority insurances are dealt with by the Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance.

Legal Advisor:

The Legal Advisor for the Authority is - Brian D. Casey and Associates, Solicitors, Thomond House, High Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.