

## **Mid-West Region Prepares Policy Response To Dell Jobs Announcement**

**Monday, 12 January 2009** - The recent devastating job cuts announced by Dell in Limerick will be brought into sharp focus in a comprehensive Economic Strategy document currently being prepared in the Mid-West region.

The Mid-West Regional Authority (MWRA), in conjunction with Shannon Development, Forfas, other regional agencies, the wider business community and Local Government, is preparing the Regional Economic Strategy for the Mid West.

According to Mr. Liam Conneally, Director of the MWRA, "The Strategy document will provide a policy platform for the region's economic development over the next decade and how it can position itself higher up the economic value chain. It is designed to inform and guide other agencies in jobs creation initiatives in the Limerick/Shannon gateway and wider Mid-West region."

He noted that the Regional Authority is willing and anxious to participate in a multi-agency response to the loss of employment at Dell directly and in downstream support services.

Mr. Conneally explained, "The loss of 1900 jobs at the Limerick Plant is extremely bad news for Limerick City but also for the Mid-West region and beyond, including businesses in Tipperary, Clare, north Cork and Kerry. In this regard, any Government response to the loss of jobs at Dell must take a regional approach."

He emphasised the urgent need to refocus the Mid-West region's economy towards the higher-value areas.

"The MWRA supports Government policy in the National Spatial Strategy to develop a critical mass of population, infrastructure, connectivity and competitiveness in the Limerick/Shannon gateway which will be capable of attracting international investment into the future. The Authority will continue to assist the regional task force in any way it can, in particular in providing regional data and information," stated Mr. Conneally.

Cllr. Bernard Hanrahan, MWRA Cathaoirleach said that the Regional Authority is cogently aware of the gravity of the recent announcement for the Limerick and Mid-West areas.

He added, "The MWRA calls on Government to provide the necessary supports to ensure the workers being laid off are sufficiently skilled to avail of new job opportunities. Furthermore, we are calling on Government to work with agencies in the Midwest in order to protect and nurture the competitiveness of the region as an attractive location for inward investment."

The Regional Economic Strategy for the Mid West is being prepared as part of the Regional Planning Guidelines. It is scheduled for completion in Autumn 2009.

The main functions of the Mid-West Regional Authority are to promote the co-ordination of public service provision, and to monitor the delivery of the National Development Plan and EU Structural Fund assistance in the Mid-West region. The Authority coordinates between the four local authority areas of Counties Clare and Limerick, as well as North Tipperary and Limerick City.

**-ENDS-**

### **Notes To Editor:**

1. Mr. Liam Conneally is available for interview and further comment. Please contact Mark Dunphy of Dunphy Public Relations on 086-8534900 or [media@dunphypr.com](mailto:media@dunphypr.com)
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