

Afternoon session Chaired by
Mr. Gerry Finn, Director,
Border, Midland and Western
Regional Assembly

2.15 – 2.45 P.M.

Promotion of Enterprise in the BMW Region

MR. ENDA KENNY, T.D., LEADER OF FINE GAEL

Mr. Enda Kenny, TD was first elected to the Dáil in 1975 in a by-election following the death of his father and has been a full-time public representative ever since. Enda was elected leader of the Fine Gael party in 2002. He has served in a wide variety of positions including Minister for Tourism & Trade from 1994 – 1997 and Minister of State at the Department of Education & Labour from 1986 – 1987.

2.45 – 3.15 P.M.

Pioneering Innovation Today, Generating Growth Tomorrow

PROFESSOR CIARÁN Ó CATHÁIN, DIRECTOR, ATHLONE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin joined Athlone Institute of Technology as Director in February 2000. He studied at DIT, Trinity College and the University of Ulster. He holds a BSc (mgmt), MSc, MA, H Dip Hotel & Catering (Mgmt), C Dip AF, and has just completed a Doctorate in Management at the University of Ulster.

3.15 – 3.45 P.M.

Driving Innovation at a Local Level

MS. ANN FLYNN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ROSCOMMON COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARD

Ms. Ann Flynn is a graduate of NUI Galway with a Masters in Rural Development. Following the closure of the coalmines in her home village Arigna, in North Roscommon in 1990, she worked for five years as an enterprise development worker. Prior to her current post, she managed two High Potential Start-up Enterprise Programmes for experienced graduates, at the Sligo and Galway-Mayo Institutes of Technology.

3.45 – 4.15 P.M.

Science, Technology and Innovation in Ireland

DR. BARRY MC SWEENEY, CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISER TO THE GOVERNMENT

On 1 September 2004 Dr. Barry Mc Sweeney took up his position as Chief Science Adviser to the Irish Government. He provides independent expert advice on any aspect of science, technology and innovation as requested by Government. Prior to taking up this assignment, he worked for the European Commission in Brussels and Ispra, Italy, as Director General of the Joint Research Centre. He was also responsible for the development of the European Commission's Marie Curie Research Mobility Scheme.

4.15 – 4.30 P.M.

Panel Discussion/Conference Closure

COUNCILLOR CONNIE HANIFFY, CATHAOIRLEACH, BMW REGIONAL ASSEMBLY



BOOKING FORM

(IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Name(s) _____

Tel _____

Fax _____

Title(s) _____

Email _____

No. of delegates _____

Company _____

Amount _____

Address _____

Special requirements _____

Regional Assembly Conference

2005

Thursday May 5th

INNOVATION: THE KEY TO FUTURE REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS



Border, Midland & Western
Regional Assembly
Shaping the Region



INTRODUCTION

Ireland is currently enjoying the benefits of a decade of sustained economic expansion. However, our past success, while providing a platform for future growth, does not guarantee that growth. Fundamental changes in the global business environment are emerging which present exciting new opportunities and some formidable competitive challenges. The ability to understand and respond swiftly to these changes will determine our future success. A national consensus around enterprise priorities can offer Ireland and its regions significant advantages in a global economy.

Supporting economic development is critical to creating competitive capacity and critical mass in the BMW Region enabling the region's enterprises to compete for national and international investment. One of the key investment priorities for the Region is to support improvements in economic infrastructure in order to attract jobs, stimulate investment and establish the Region as a prime and competitive location for job creation.

Innovation in private firms and among public and third level institutions is becoming critical to future growth and prosperity. The basis of the innovation concept is creating a positive culture and attitude towards entrepreneurship and innovation, providing enabling conditions and, finally, creating innovation stimulators. Educational institutions and R & D facilities are essential "Infrastructure" for promoting innovation in the Region. It is considered that by enhancing these enabling conditions and the innovation stimulators, the concept of innovation should flourish in the Region into the future.

One of the significant barriers to balanced regional development is the lack of facilities for Third Level graduates and Research Institutes to create appropriate employment opportunities in their own locality. State agencies play an important role in increasing the levels of innovation through promotion and information and also by providing finance in the form of grants, loans or equity and are major stimulants to company innovation. However, grants will only be required when the company recognises the need for innovation. Therefore State support for innovation is imperative.

An increased emphasis is needed on research and development initiatives that have the potential to be translated into commercially viable projects or have commercial application in the short to medium term, particularly those which respond to the needs of SMEs. The funding provided by County & City Enterprise Boards for micro enterprises coupled with the dedicated mentoring and advisory support services provided by the Enterprise Boards will enhance this enterprise culture.

These initiatives will become the cornerstone of regional innovation policy and will play a key role in supporting the overall research and development infrastructure at Regional level and will also support the further business and commercial development of innovative companies emerging from third-

level institutions and other high potential start-ups at Regional level.

This conference provides a unique opportunity for the key policy makers and delivery agencies to present their current strategies and programmes to meet the emerging challenges facing Ireland and the BMW Region in particular.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The conference will be of particular interest to the following:

- Business Organisations
- Small and Medium Enterprises
- County Development Boards
- Third Level Institutions
- Chambers of Commerce
- Local Development Bodies and LEADER Companies
- Local Authorities
- Public Bodies and Development Agencies
- Policy makers
- Regional Authorities
- Regional Tourism Organisations
- County Enterprise Board

PROGRAMME

9:00 – 9:30 A.M. REGISTRATION AND TEA/COFFEE

Morning Session Chaired by Mr. Niall Sweeney, County Manager, Offaly County Council

9:30 – 9.45 A.M.

Welcome

COUNCILLOR CONSTANCE HANNIFFY
CATHAOIRLEACH, BMW REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Councillor Constance Hanniffy is the first woman Cathaoirleach of the BMW Regional Assembly, elected in July 2004. Councillor Hanniffy is a member of Offaly County Council since 1974 and the Midlands Regional Authority. She is also a member of the EU Committee of the Regions since 1998.

9.45 – 10.15 A.M.

Enterprise Strategy Group Report

MR. EOIN O'DRISCOLL, CHAIRMAN,
ENTERPRISE STRATEGY GROUP

Mr. Eoin O'Driscoll is Managing Director of Aderra, a company he founded in 2002 to provide consulting in Strategy, Technology and Change Management. Prior to 2002, Eoin held senior positions with a number of US high technology companies. Eoin is Chairman of Forfás and chaired the Enterprise Strategy Group which reported in July 2004.

10.15 – 10.45 A.M.

Transforming Irish Industry

MR. FRANK RYAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
ENTERPRISE IRELAND

Mr. Frank Ryan is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin with an M.Sc. in Strategic Management and of the Advanced Management Programme at Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. Prior to his appointment as CEO of Enterprise Ireland, he held the position of Executive Director, IDA Ireland where he was responsible for the investment divisions. Frank Ryan was appointed Chief Executive Officer, Enterprise Ireland in November 2003.

10.45 – 11.15 A.M.

Winning Investment & Innovation in the BMW Region

MS. MARY BUCKLEY, MANAGER OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT & PROPERTY DIVISION, IDA

Ms. Mary Buckley is Manager of the Regional Development and Property Division, based in Athlone with responsibility for driving IDA's strategic focus of ensuring that foreign direct investment into Ireland is spread across all regions. Mary joined IDA in 1982 and has worked in a number of roles within the organisation.

11:15 – 11:30 A.M. TEA/COFFEE BREAK

11:30 – 12:00

Keynote Address

MR. MICHEÁL MARTIN, T.D.,
MINISTER FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., was appointed Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in September 2004. Minister Martin served as Minister for Health from January 2000 to September 2004 and prior to this was Minister for Education and Science from June 1997 to January 2000. Minister Martin has been a member of Dail Eireann since 1989. He was Lord Mayor of Cork 1992-1993.

12.00 – 12.30 P.M.

Building Ireland's Knowledge Economy

MS. HELENA ACHESON, HEAD OF DIVISION – SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION POLICY AND STI AWARENESS
PROGRAMMES, FORFAS

Ms. Helena Acheson is a Division Manager with Forfás with responsibility for Science, Technology and Innovation Policy and Science Awareness Programmes since March 2005. Prior to this, she was Head of Division with responsibility for Competitiveness and Innovation and was also Head of the International Research Policy and Programmes Department.

12:30 – 12:45 P.M. PANEL DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

12:45 – 2:15 P.M. LUNCH



BOOKING FORM

LOCATION AND DATE

The conference will be held in the Tullamore Court Hotel,
Tullamore, Co. Offaly on
Thursday 5th May, 2005.

CONFERENCE FEE

The fee for attending the conference will be €150. This will include participation in the Conference, lunch, tea/coffee and documentation.

BOOKINGS

Bookings should be sent to:

BMW REGION CONFERENCE 2005
BMW REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
THE SQUARE
BALLAGHADERREEN
CO. ROSCOMMON

Cheques made payable to Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly. Bookings should reach the above no later than Friday 29th April, 2005.

ENQUIRIES

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