



3 August 2021

Circular RW 12 of 2021

Speed Limits Appeals Procedure

Dear Chief Executive/Director of Services/Senior Engineer,

I am directed by the Minister of Transport to enclose details of the introduction of a Speed Limit Appeals Procedure, which introduces a process whereby a member of the public can object to and appeal an existing speed limit contained within a Local Authority's current Special Speed Limit Byelaws.

This procedure is intended to facilitate a legitimate query that a member of the public or interested party may have regarding a particular speed limit. The procedure is also intended to expediate the process of reviewing speed limit queries raised between full Local Authority speed limit reviews, which can typically be up to five years.

The process consists of two parts, with an initial appeal to the relevant Local Authority, which will have established a speed limit **Local Authority Panel**, and the option to then escalate the appeal to a **Regional Panel**, for a specified fee (refundable if the appeal is upheld by the Regional Panel), should the appellant not accept the decision of the Local Authority Panel. Both panels shall review speed limits that are appealed to them in accordance with the ['Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland'](#).

The 'Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland' constitute a Direction of the Minister for Transport. This was issued as Circular RSD 01/2015 and as such, is the mandatory document to be used when setting Special Speed Limits on all Irish public roads.

Reasons for the Introduction of the Speed Limit Appeals Procedure

In 2015, the Department of Transport produced and issued the 'Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland' (the Speed Limit Guidelines).

The guidelines were developed following the establishment of a working group by the Department of Transport in 2012 to review the system of speed limits in operation in

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the State. The group consisted of representatives from TII, NTA, RSA, LGMA, CCMA, An Garda Síochána, AA Ireland, DoT, and Local Authorities.

A total of 18 Actions were identified. Action No. 3 concerned the development of a speed limits appeals process.

Action 3

Implement Appeals, Oversight and Co-ordination That an independent unit be established to: - manage appeals and queries, manage and update Speed Limit Guidelines as well as to monitor, audit and inspect Local Authorities and the NRA. DTTAS to consider options and make recommendations in advance (NRA is now TII, DTTAS is now DoT).

Consultation

The draft Speed Limit Appeals Procedure was sent for comment and consultation to the LGMA, LUTS committee, An Garda Síochána, AA Ireland, Donegal County Council, Wexford County Council, Louth County Council, Cork City Council, TII, RSA, and the NTA.

Speed Limit Appeals Procedure details

The attached document ‘**Speed Limit Appeals Procedures**’ sets out the details of the procedure that is activated and must be followed when a member of the public or interested party (the Appellant) raises an objection/appeal to a speed limit contained within a Local Authority’s current Special Speed Limit Byelaws.

The Procedure itself consists of four stages and operates as follows:

- 1. Initiation & Acknowledgement**
- 2. Decision by the Local Authority Panel**

The Local Authority Panel reviews the speed limit under appeal to determine if the speed limit has been set in accordance with the Speed Limit Guidelines.



3. Escalation

If the decision is that the existing Speed Limit is in accordance with the Speed Limit Guidelines, the Appellant has the option to escalate the appeal to the relevant Regional Panel for their review, subject to a fee.

4. Rectification of a Speed Limit, where necessary

This step only applies if the Speed Limit has not been set in accordance with the Guidelines, as determined by the Local Authority or Regional Panels. The Local Authority begins the process of rectifying the speed limit in accordance with the procedure set out in the Speed Limit Guidelines.

Programme for Implementation

As this is a new procedure for Local Authorities and the general public, it will require a phased implementation to allow the systems to be put in place to facilitate the process. The process is expected to be live in or before Q4 2021.

See [Implementation and Operation](#) section below for further information.

Reserved Function

The making of Speed Limit Byelaws is a Reserved Function of the members of each Local Authority. In this context:

- Any proposed revision to a speed limit by the Local Authority executive, either as part of the Local Authority speed limit review process or as part of this appeals process, shall be in accordance with the Speed Limit Guidelines.
- If the speed limit revision is not accepted or adopted by the members in whom the Reserved Function is vested, it shall enter the appeal process and be referred directly to the relevant Regional Panel. An appeal under these circumstances must be initiated by the relevant Director of Services whose remit extends to Roads, within 1 calendar month from the date of rejection by the members.

It is noted that this appeals process will not change the statutory powers of Elected Members to exercise the Reserved Function and the ultimate decision remains with



them. However, the speed limit appeals process will provide a strong recommendation from a technical, policy, and road safety perspective in accordance with the Speed Limit Guidelines.

Training

Training in the use of the current speed limit guidelines was provided previously, the details of which can be viewed on www.speedlimits.ie.

Information and Publicity

Details of the procedures for the Speed Limit Appeals Process are available on the website www.speedlimits.ie. This site is live and contains the 'Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland', as well as each Local Authority's Speed Limit Byelaws. The site will be populated with all relevant forms prior to the process going live.

Monitoring

This Appeals Procedure will be kept under review and improvements or amendments to the process may be implemented in due course. It is unknown at the outset the likely number of appeals that Local Authorities can be expected to receive or the number escalated to the Regional Panels. It is expected that there will be significant initial interest in the procedure.

To assist monitoring of the procedure, the Department requires all Panels to complete Progress Summary Sheets, as follows:

- At Local Authority level, a Progress Summary Sheet is required twice a year (at the end of Quarters 2 and 4).
- In relation to appeals referred to Regional Panels, a Progress Summary Sheet will need to be completed at the end of each Quarterly Assessment Meeting (four times a year).

These forms are available as an appendix to the attached '**Speed Limit Appeals Procedure**' document. Once completed they must be returned to appeals@speedlimits.ie so that the results to be collated and analysed.



Implementation and Operation

Each Local Authority is required to put processes in place to facilitate the Speed Limits Appeals Procedure.

The operation of the system is described in Section C of the attached 'Speed Limit Appeals Procedure' document, including details about appeal forms, logging, review and decision of Local Authority Panels, escalation to Regional Panel if necessary, and fees and rectification of speed limits, if required.

Each Local Authority (LA) is now requested to identify a list of suitable members for a Local Authority Panel (minimum 2 per LA) and a list of suitable nominees for the Regional Panel (minimum 2 per LA). Details of minimum requirements for the eligibility for members, including grade etc., are contained in Section D of the attached 'Speed Limit Appeals Procedure' document, but as a minimum must have experience in the setting and managing of speed limits.

Local Authorities should familiarise themselves with this process as well as the schedule of timeframes contained in Section E of the attached document.

Queries in relation to this Circular can be addressed to rlr@transport.gov.ie or to your Departmental Inspector.

All Nominations for Panels should be returned on the attached nominee form to rlr@transport.gov.ie no later than 20th August 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer McManus
Expenditure Review, Engineering Standards, and Inspectorate Section
Regional and Local Roads Division