



OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM
OIFIG AN AIRE DLÍ AGUS CIRT, COMHIONANNAIS AGUS ATHCHÓIRITHE DLÍ

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Mr. Brian O' Raghallaigh
Principal
Department of Social,
Community & Family Affairs
Áras Mhic Dhiarmada
Store Street
Dublin 1

1 February, 2001

Dear Mr. O' Raghallaigh,

I am pleased to appoint you as a member of the Interim Advisory Board of the Reception and Integration Agency.

I appreciate your willingness to serve on the Board and you will be contacted shortly about arrangements for the first meeting. A background note outlining the principal functions of the Interim Advisory Board is enclosed.

I would like to wish you well in your work as a member of the Board.

Yours sincerely,

John O' Donoghue, T.D.,
MINISTER FOR JUSTICE,
EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM

Background Note for Members

Interim Advisory Board Reception and Integration Agency

Background and Membership

1. The Interim Advisory Board of the Reception and Integration Agency is being formed following Government approval and will have 15 members made up of 8 members of the wider community and one representative each of the Departments of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Foreign Affairs, Social, Community and Family Affairs, Health and Children, Environment and Local Government and Finance. The Director of the Reception and Integration Agency will be an ex-officio member of the Board.
2. The Interim Advisory Board will be chaired by Mr. Raymond J. Rooney.
3. The Reception and Integration Agency will replace the Directorate for Asylum Support Services of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and incorporate the Refugee Agency which comes under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The work of the Reception and Integration Agency can be broadly divided into two functional areas
 - (1) implementing Government policy on the reception of asylum seekers through the system of direct provision and nationwide dispersal to accommodation centres and
 - (2) co-ordinating and implementing integration policy for refugees and those granted leave to remain in the State.
4. The Minister's intention is to put the Reception and Integration Agency on a statutory footing at an early date having regard to his other legislative priorities. Pending the enactment of legislation, it will operate on a non-statutory basis with the Interim Board acting in an advisory capacity.

Functions and Responsibilities

5. The Reception and Integration Agency will have the following functions:
 - planning and co-ordinating the provision of services to both asylum seekers and refugees;
 - co-ordinating and implementing integration policy for all refugees and persons who, though not refugees, are granted leave to remain in the State; and
 - responding to crisis situations which result in relatively large numbers of refugees arriving in the State within a short period of time.
6. The Interim Advisory Board will advise the Director of the Reception and Integration Agency in relation to:

- the discharge of its functions in relation to meeting the reception needs of asylum seekers through direct provision and dispersal
- the discharge of its functions in relation to the co-ordination and implementation of integration policy for refugees and those granted leave to remain in the State and
- the preparation of draft legislation to establish the agency on a statutory basis.