

F 7/117/04 & F7/118/04

April 2005

Circular 11/05

Minute of the Minister for Finance in response to the First and Second Interim Reports of the Committee of Public Accounts on the Appropriation Accounts 2003 [Excess Votes incurred on the Votes of the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman]

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I am directed by the Minister for Finance to enclose for your information and guidance a copy of the Minute of the Minister for Finance in response to the First and Second Interim Reports of the Committee of Public Accounts on the Appropriation Accounts 2003, on the Excess Votes incurred on the Votes of the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman.

Your attention is drawn in particular to the Minister's urging of Departments and Offices to give particular attention to the vulnerability to error during transitions to new accounting packages when staff are stretched in coping with two systems at once.

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Tom Considine
Secretary General

To: All Accounting Officers

Minute of the Minister for Finance in response to the First and Second Interim Reports of the Committee of Public Accounts on the Annual Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General and Appropriation Accounts 2003 on the Excess Votes incurred on the Votes of the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman

The Minister notes the Interim Reports of the Committee on the two instances of excess expenditure and endorses the actions taken by the Accounting Officers in the two cases to redress the shortcomings that led to the excesses. He notes a common thread running through the two incidents, in that they occurred in the transition to a new electronic accounting package. There is a vulnerability to error during such a transition when staff are stretched in coping with two systems at once and in becoming familiar with new techniques and procedures. The Minister urges Departments and Offices to give particular attention to this vulnerability in managing the installation of new accounting packages and other significant changes.

Given under the Official Seal of
the Minister for Finance this
23rd day of February, 2005

L.S.

Thomas Considine
Secretary General
Department of Finance