

**Western Regional Fisheries Board
Customer Charter**

Western Regional Fisheries Board Customer Charter

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Western Regional Fisheries Board Customer Charter

1. Introduction

We are committed to providing a high standard of service to our customers, both internal and external. We are dedicated to ensuring that the principles of quality customer care are embedded in everything we do and that a commitment to quality customer service extends to staff throughout the organisation. Our approach to customer service standards is based on the document *Principles of Quality Customer Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service*. This customer service charter ensures a suitable framework exists within the Western Regional Fisheries Board ('RFB') for implementing the principles of customer service and as a basis for making further improvements.

This document is the Western Regional Fisheries Board's first customer service charter and is the result of the work of staff and management carrying out a review of the work of the organisation and a review of customer service standards. We are committed to providing you with the best possible service that we can. We want to listen to what you have to say about our service and make the necessary improvements. The Board is committed to working with all sectoral interests to enhance our service standards.

We commit ourselves to closely monitoring the extent to which we reach the standards, which we have set ourselves, and to a process of structured and regular consultation with our customers to ensure that we are meeting their needs. As we actively continue the review of our service to our customers, we anticipate changes to this charter within the next six to twelve months.

November 2004

2. Statement of Customer Commitment

The Western Regional Fisheries Board endeavours to make our services available to everybody in an open, fair and ethically responsible manner.

We value each customer equally and so we commit to you that for all your business with this organisation we will conduct our part in a professional, efficient and hospitable manner.

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3. Mission

WESTERN REGIONAL FISHERIES BOARD

The Western Regional Fisheries Board ('RFB') is the statutory body responsible for inland fisheries in Ireland. The Western Regional Fisheries Board is governed by a Board, which has 15 of its members elected by various elements of the sector and 7 appointed by the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and has responsibility for the overall direction of the organisation and its policies. Board members are appointed for a 5 year term of office and the Chairperson of the Board is appointed for either a five year or one year term of office. The Chairman of our Board is Lal Faherty.

In 2003, the Western Regional Fisheries Board published its Statement of Strategy 2000 – 2006. The Statement of Strategy set down the following Mission Statement for the Western Regional Fisheries Board, which is:

Mission Statement

The Western Regional Fisheries Board's mission is to ensure that the valuable natural resources of inland fisheries and sea angling are conserved, managed, developed and promoted in their own right and to support sustainable economic activity, job creation and recreational amenity.

To conserve the Fisheries resource of the region in its own right and to manage, restore, enhance and promote it in a sustainable manner for the benefit of our local communities and the national good.

Following from our mission, the Western Regional Fisheries Board's principal functions are to:

- Advise the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources on policy relating to the conservation, protection, management, development and improvement of inland fisheries;
- Protect the fisheries in the region and generally enforce the relevant Fisheries Acts;
- Prepare development plans for the fisheries under the Board's management;
- manage, protect, conserve, develop and improve the fisheries, hatcheries and fish farms under the care and management of the accordance with the relevant Fisheries Acts, the development plans and Ministerial direction;

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- promote and encourage the management, conservation, protection, development and improvement of fisheries which are not under the control of the Board;
- market, promote, develop and encourage the provision of facilities for game, coarse and sea angling;
- promote, co-ordinate and encourage the development of inland fisheries catchment management plans;
- co-operate and co-ordinate with the Central Fisheries Board and/or Regional Fisheries Boards to ensure the effective and efficient deployment of resources, performance of functions, drawing up of estimates and provision of services within and between the fishery regions;
- have regard to the need for sustainable development of the inland fisheries resource.

Services

The Western Regional Fisheries Board provides a wide range of services to both industry clients and the public. These include:

- Water Quality monitoring, detection and prosecution
- Fisheries legislation monitoring, detection and prosecution
- Angling Advice and information to domestic and tourist anglers
- Fisheries management and development

We work with the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards as appropriate in delivering a comprehensive service to the sector. Contact details for each Fisheries Board can be found in Appendix 1.

Regional Fisheries Board's Customers

The Western Regional Fisheries Board has responsibilities to the general public, Minister for Communication, Marine and Natural Resources, Angling groups, commercial fishermen and Angling tourist interests. The Western Regional Fisheries Board also provides services to public bodies to including; Local authorities, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, ESB, Office of Public Works and Inland Waterways.

4. Equality and Diversity

We are committed to delivering our services to everybody in an open, fair and ethically responsible manner. We acknowledge the diversity of our customer base and endeavour to ensure that the quality of service received by all customers is of an equal standard. We will make every effort to provide a service that is:

- Accessible to all
- Complies with all appropriate legislation
- Accommodates needs specific to particular groups of customers covered under the equality legislation.

5. Physical Access

The Headquarters of the Western Regional Fisheries Board are at Weir Lodge, Earl's Island, Galway. We will provide clean, accessible public offices, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs if possible. Please let us know how we can accommodate your specific needs. If you wish to visit our offices we will:

- Be available to meet with you, by appointment, during normal office hours (9.30am – 1.00 p.m. and 2.00pm – 5.30pm, Monday to Friday). We will try to be flexible if you need an appointment outside these times. Do our best to accommodate you as effortlessly as possible whether by appointment or not
- Undertake to maintain all access and reception areas to a high standard of cleanliness and comfort
- Ensure that all signage is clear, concise and informative
- Continue in consultation with relevant bodies to improve access to the Western Regional Fisheries Board's buildings for people with impaired mobility/disability

If visiting the WRFB by appointment we will:

- Provide you with directions and advise of car parking facilities
- People in reception will be notified in advance of your appointment
- You will be met punctually

All Central Fisheries Board offices and Regional offices are non- smoking

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6. Information

We aim to provide information that is clear, concise and easily accessible in both electronic and printed form. We will provide clear simplified information on all our services. We will ensure that all Western Regional Fisheries Board information is updated regularly and is available on request.

We will:

- Provide up to date information on the Western Regional Fisheries Board's website
- Display information/brochures on the Western Regional Fisheries Board's products and services
- Hold regular workshops, conferences and seminars to disseminate relevant information based on our research and developed experience
- Actively inform our customers of Western Regional Fisheries Board services through the media
- Drive for simplification of forms and information brochures
- Publish an Annual Report

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act came into effect for the Western Regional Fisheries Board on November 25th 2002. The purpose of the Act is to allow members of the public gain access to information held by public bodies. It grants members of the public the legal right to:

- Access information held by public bodies both official and personal
- Have personal information corrected, where the information relating to him/herself is incomplete, incorrect or misleading
- Access the reasons for certain decisions taken by public bodies affecting oneself.

The Act requires the Western Regional Fisheries Board to furnish information about the Western Regional Fisheries Board's structure, functions and services. It also requires us to provide information on the rules, procedures and guidelines used for decision-making. Information on the Freedom of Information is available from the Freedom of Information Officer, Western Regional Fisheries Board, Weir Lodge, Earl's Island, Galway. Phone 091 563118 or may be downloaded from our website at www.wrfb.ie

7. Timeliness and Courtesy

Telephones

We will be available to answer your calls during normal office hours 091 563118 – with an answering machine available outside office hours which is monitored regularly.

- Our target is to respond to 80% of calls within **20 seconds**. You can expect people working in the Western Regional Fisheries Board to be courteous, helpful and provide you with clear and accurate information. They will identify themselves and their area of work when answering the telephone
- Where it is necessary to transfer your call to another person, we will tell you the name of the person to whom you are being transferred
- When the person you wish to speak to is unavailable at the time of your call and other members of the section are unable to help you, a message will be taken and your call returned within an agreed timeframe

Letters, E-mails, Faxes and Licence Applications

- Correspondence both paper and electronic issued by us will include name and contact details of the person dealing with the matter.
- We will respond substantively to your correspondence within 5 working days of receipt. If your correspondence is non-routine in nature and requires further consideration you will have a response from us explaining this and you will be told when you can expect to receive a full reply. Where it is not possible to issue a full reply within this timeframe we will send you an interim reply explaining the position
- Ensure that our replies are clear and easy to understand
- We will have regard to the commitment to equality of treatment detailed elsewhere in this charter

8. Complaints

The Western Regional Fisheries Board will:

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

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While we make every effort to deliver our services in a manner that renders complaints unnecessary, we accept that promised standards of service may not always be met and that mistakes can be made. All types of customer feedback, including complaints, are very useful to us in helping to improve the quality of our services.

Please tell us if you feel that you have not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner. We will treat all complaints, fairly and impartially.

If we make a mistake we will thank you for bringing the matter to our attention, apologise, explain what happened, seek to prevent a recurrence and rectify the error wherever possible.

If you believe that your comments, suggestions or complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner please contact in writing:

Name Gregory Forde
The Western Regional Fisheries Board
Weir Lodge
Earl's Island
Galway

Telephone: 091 563118
Fax: 091 566335
Email: gforde@wrfb.ie

If you have any special needs that may affect your ability to pursue a complaint please let us know and we will make every effort to help you.

All complaints received will be:

- Acknowledged within 3 working days.
- Responded to within 20 working days (if this is not possible an interim reply will be issued within the 20 working days explaining the up-to-date position).
- Dealt with in a fair and independent way.
- Unless a complainant wishes otherwise, treated in confidence, subject to obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997.

9. Appeals

You have the right to appeal to the Western Regional Fisheries Board if you believe that you have not been dealt with properly, fairly and impartially by us.

Freedom of Information Act

Appeals in relation to the Freedom of Information Act should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Officer
Western Regional Fisheries Board
Weir Lodge
Earl's Island
Galway

10. Consultation and Evaluation

We will consult our customers regularly about the services we provide and report on the results. We will take reasonable steps to seek the views of all those affected by major policy decisions. This may be done either directly or indirectly through research and consultation with representative groups.

All consultation documents will be concise, clearly laid out and written in simple language, avoiding jargon.

The results of consultation exercises will be carefully analysed and, where circumstances permit, we will produce and make available a summary of views and information collected from the consultation exercise. Where respondents requested confidentiality for their comments, their wishes will be respected in accordance with the existing code of practice on access to information.

We welcome comments from our customers. These may be submitted in person, via mail, telephone, fax or the Internet. Ideas and suggestions will be sensitively reflected in our policies and efforts

Specifically:

- Conduct a Customer Survey once every two years. The first in Spring 2005.
- Liase on a regular basis with representative groups on a regional and national basis and hold formal meeting with these groups at least once a year.
- Provide a customer feedback mechanism for customers availing of Western Regional Fisheries Board services. The feedback from these programmes will be incorporated in future design and delivery of programmes.
- The Western Regional Fisheries Board regularly reviews and evaluates its portfolio of services.

11. Choice

We will provide choice where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. We will also use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

12. Official Languages

Our official languages are English and Irish.

We are committed to improving the level of administrative services we provide through Irish by:

- Providing at the Western Regional Fisheries Board reception a list of staff who will deal with customers through Irish. Answering your correspondence in the language in which you have written
- Providing training to staff to increase both the level of proficiency and the number of staff capable of providing a service through Irish.

13. Continuous Improvement

The Western Regional Fisheries Board is committed to fostering a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

We will:

- Adopt a consultative/stakeholder approach to working with industry representative associations
- Work and network with public bodies and government departments

14. Internal Customer

The Western Regional Fisheries Board ensures staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

To provide an efficient service to our customers it is vital that the service to the Western Regional Fisheries Board's internal customers is efficient and effective.

- Western Regional Fisheries Board staff are continuously involved in on-going improvements to customer service.
- The Western Regional Fisheries Board's approach around customer care is facilitated by the Western Regional Fisheries Board's commitment to on-going customer service training. Provision of opportunities for staff development and training
- The Western Regional Fisheries Board recognises that effective training in customer care is essential in our goal of delivering a quality service to our customers. We will continuously review the necessary skills and training of our staff to ensure that they can deliver a quality customer service to you.

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Appendix 1

THE FISHERIES BOARDS HEAD OFFICES

<p>Central Fisheries Board Unit 4, Swords Business Campus Balheary Road Swords Co. Dublin Tel: (01) 884 2600 Fax: (01) 836 0060 Email: info@cfb.ie Web: www.cfb.ie</p>	<p>Western Regional Fisheries Board Anglesea Street Clonmel Co. Tipperary Tel: (052) 80055 Fax: (052) 23971 Email: enquiries@srfb.ie Web: www.srfb.ie</p>
<p>Eastern Regional Fisheries Board 15A Main Street Blackrock Co. Dublin Tel: (01) 278 7022 Fax: (01) 278 7025 Email: info@erfb.ie Web: www.fishingireland.net</p>	<p>Shannon Regional Fisheries Board Ashbourne Business Park Dock Road Limerick Tel: (061) 300 238 Fax: (061) 300 308 Email: info@shannon-fishery-board.ie Web: www.shannon-fishery-board.ie</p>
<p>South Western Regional Fisheries 1 Neville's Terrace Masseytown Macroom Co.Cork Tel: (026) 41221 Fax: (026) 41223 Email: swrfb@swrfb.ie Web: www.swrfb.com</p>	<p>North Western Regional Fisheries Board Ardnaree House Abbey Street Ballina Co. Mayo Tel: (096) 22788 Fax: (096) 70543 Email: info@nwrfb.com Web: northwesternfisheries.ie</p>
<p>Western Regional Fisheries Board The Weir Lodge Earls Island Galway Tel: (091) 563118/9/0 Fax: (091) 566335 Email: info@wrfb.ie Web: www.wrfb.ie</p>	<p>Northern Regional Fisheries Board Station Road Ballyshannon Co. Donegal Tel: (072) 51435 Fax: (072) 51816 Email: info@nrfb.ie</p>