

Houses of the Oireachtas to be Televised on UPC

15th November 2011

UPC and The Oireachtas announce a first for Ireland. From today, UPC will broadcast on a pilot basis a dedicated parliamentary channel called Oireachtas TV on digital channel 801. To celebrate the channel launch, today's (Tuesday) Dáil proceedings will be broadcast live from 2pm. This service will be provided free of charge to all digital cable customers.

Oireachtas TV is a [public service broadcast](#) for the two houses of the [Oireachtas](#). For the first time, extended coverage of sittings in Dáil Éireann will be available to view on digital television. The channel will also broadcast coverage of sessions of Seanad Éireann and sittings of the Oireachtas Committees will be aired when the Dáil is not in session. The Houses of the Oireachtas is creating innovative partnerships to meet an increasingly diverse and media-savvy population.

Speaking today Ceann Comhairle, Seán Barrett, TD, said: "I am delighted to be able to announce the launch of this new Parliamentary TV Transmission. On my election as Ceann Comhairle, I identified the need for increased access for the public so that they can inform themselves of the work of Parliament and its members. This transmission on UPC 801 is the first step in delivering this to the public. From today 957,000 people in 328,000 homes in Ireland will have the choice to watch and listen to live and recorded footage from the Dáil, Seanad and Committees meeting in Leinster House.

I want to particularly record my thanks to Dana Strong, Chief Executive Officer of UPC and her team who were innovative in their approach and have proven their commitment to this project from the start. I am excited by the prospect and possibilities of this project and hope that the public will use this facility to follow the work of the Houses of the Oireachtas. In time I hope that this service can be rolled out by the other TV providers so that all the citizens of Ireland can have universal access to watch and listen to their National Parliament. As this is a pilot, the public will be invited to give their views and feedback. I am eager to hear from the public about their ideas on this initiative and invite them to e-mail TV@oireachtas.ie."

Dana Strong, CEO at UPC Ireland said, "I doubt there has ever been a time when a service such as this was more essential. From tomorrow the public can engage with their representatives and the issues in the Dáil in real time. Given the complexity of issues facing Ireland and the Irish people, this is of critical public benefit and we are delighted to work with the Parliament in this way.

The Oireachtas Channel is an important addition to our existing TV offering as it provides a unique public service. We believed from the outset that a dedicated Oireachtas channel would be of great interest and benefit to consumers and that is why we are focused on developing a channel that would provide a comprehensive insight into the inner workings of the Irish Parliament."

Transmission will commence at 2.00 pm today, (Tuesday), when it will air the sitting of Dáil Éireann live.

If you require a photograph of this Oireachtas Event please contact Mick Quinn Photography at +353 1 4604724 or shoot@mqphoto.com
Ends

Notes to the Editor

(1) Cost

This service is being delivered at no additional cost to the Houses of the Oireachtas or the taxpayer.

(2) Facts & Figures

The Oireachtas broadcast will be available through the UPC Channel 801 to approx. 957,842 people or in percentage terms it will reach 20.5% of the population in 328,100 homes.

(3) Schedule of programming

Attached is a sample schedule for this week's broadcast including both the live coverage from Dáil Éireann and the recorded loop from Seanad Éireann and Oireachtas Committees' to be broadcast from Friday evening to Tuesday morning (18 to 22 November).

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| Tuesday 2.00 pm - 9.30 pm | Dáil Éireann Live |
| Wednesday 10.30 am - 9.30 pm | Dáil Éireann Live |
| Thursday 10.30 am - 5.45 pm | Dáil Éireann Live |
| Friday, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm | Dáil Éireann Live |
| Friday, 12.31 pm - Tuesday 1.30 pm | Continuous recorded proceedings. Please see table below: |

| Item | Date | Subject |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1. Seanad | 15/11/2011 | Order of Business; All-party motion concerning the sentencing of Pastor Jousef Nadarkhani by the Iranian Government; Nurses and Midwives Bill 2010 – Second Stage [<i>Department of Health</i>]; Statements on the recent ECB Interest Rate Reduction [<i>Minister of State for Public Service Reform and the OPW</i>] |
| 2. The Joint Committee on Jobs, Social Protection and Education - | 15/11/2011 (CR 2) | (i) Proposals to reform the Junior Certificate examination syllabus with specific reference to enterprise education and subject choice to reflect the needs of industry [<i>National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)</i>]; and (ii) Reform of the Junior Cycle [<i>Members of Dáil na nÓg Council</i>] |
| 3. The Joint Committee on Environment, Transport, Culture and the Gaeltacht | 15/11/2011 (CR4) | Engagement with Mr. Gay Byrne, Chairman Designate, Road Safety Authority |
| 4. The Select Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality | 15/11/2011 (CR1) | Criminal Law (Defence and the Dwelling) Bill 2010 [<i>Minister for Justice and Equality</i>] |
| 5. Seanad | 16/11/2011 | Order of Business; Water Services (Amendment) Bill 2011 - Second Stage [<i>Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government</i>]; Statements and Q&A on Housing Policy [<i>Minister of State for Housing and Planning</i>]; Private Members Business |
| 6. The Joint Committee on Jobs, Social Protection and Education | 16/11/2011 | “20,000 into employment by 2020” strategy [<i>Fasttrack to Information Technology (FIT)</i>] |
| 7. The Joint Committee on Communications, Natural Resources and Agriculture | 16/11/2011 | Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals: (i) COM (2011) 479 ; COM (2011) 481 ; COM (2011) 524 and COM (2011) 525 . (ii) COM (2011) 425 re. the Common Fisheries Policy [<i>Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine</i>] |
| 8. Seanad | 17/11/2011 | Order of Business; Motion to amend the terms of reference contained in the Resolution passed by Dáil Éireann on 23 March 2005 and by Seanad Éireann on 24 March 2005 pursuant to the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Acts 1921 to 2004 [<i>Department of Justice & Equality – without debate</i>]; Statements and Q&A on Overseas Trade [<i>Minister of State for Trade</i>] |

and Development]; ‘Developments in Social Protection’ Statements and Q&A [*Minister for Social Protection*]

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| 9. The Public Accounts Committee | 17/11/2011 (CR1) | (i) Business of the Committee; and (ii) The Pensions Board – Annual Report and Accounts 2010 ; The Pensions Ombudsman – Annual Report and Accounts 2010 [<i>Mr. Paul Kenny, Pensions Ombudsman; and Mr. Brendan Kennedy, Chief Executive, Pensions Board</i>] |
| 10. The Joint Committee on Health and Children | 17/11/2011 (CR2) | Alcohol Marketing [<i>Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland; Alcohol Marketing Communications Monitoring Body; and RothCo; and Irish International</i>] |
| 11. The Joint Committee on European Union Affairs | 17/11/2011 (CR3) | EU-Serbia relations [<i>Mr. Božidar Djelic, Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Serbia</i>] |
| 12. The Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement | 17/11/2011 (CR4) | The work of the Parades Commission [<i>Mr. Peter Osborne, Chair; Commissioners Mr. Robin Percival; Dr. Catriona King; Mrs. Frances Nolan; Mrs. Delia Close; Rev. Brian Kennaway; and Dr. Michael Boyle (Director, Parades Commission Secretariat)</i>] |
| 13. The Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform | 17/11/2011 (CR4) | Review of the Fiscal Assessment Report October 2011 [<i>Representatives of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council</i>] |
| 14. The Joint Committee on Health and Children | 18/11/2011 (CR2) | Child Poverty [<i>Social Justice Ireland; and End Child Poverty Coalition</i>] |

(4) Extension of Service

The Houses of the Oireachtas Commission are in contact with the other service providers and hope that in time this service will be offered on those other channels.

(5) Parliamentary TV Channels

Some other Parliaments that transmit live are:

UK Parliament available at:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/bbc_parliament/newsid_3004000/3004787.stm

New Zealand Parliament available at:

<http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/AboutParl/SeeHear/PTV/>

Danish Parliament available at: Folketinget TV

<http://www.ft.dk/Folketinget.aspx>