



LAW REFORM
COMMISSION/COIMISIÚN UM
ATHCHÓIRIÚ AN DLI

PRESS RELEASE

THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION LAUNCHES PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON STATUTE LAW REVISION PROGRAMME

8th March 2022: The Law Reform Commission, through the Statute Law Revision Programme (SLRP), has today launched its **public consultation on statutory and prerogative instruments made between 1821 and 1860**. The SLRP is the national programme to identify and remove obsolete and spent primary and secondary legislation from Ireland's legislative stock. Since its establishment in 2005, the Statute Law Revision Programme has produced six Statute Law Revision Acts.

Following the research carried out by the SLRP, the Law Reform Commission is recommending the removal of over 3,000 statutory and prerogative instruments which have ceased to have effect or have become unnecessary. Just two instruments from this period need to be kept on the statute book*. As well as contributing to legislative clarity in Ireland, the instruments will be a useful resource for historians, including armchair ones! The period of review spans the Tithe War, Catholic Emancipation and the Great Famine.

The SLRP has concluded its consultation with Government Departments and other key stakeholders and now invites the public and interested parties for any views they may have on the proposals. The public consultation is open from today 8th March to 5th April 2022.

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath TD, who will sponsor this Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas, said: "I welcome the next phase in the Statute Law Revision Programme which will ensure a modern and accessible statute book in Ireland. Since it began its work in 2005, the Programme has repealed the vast majority of primary legislation made before the foundation of the State. I encourage all interested stakeholders to engage in this public consultation process which is a key element in developing the latest Statute Law Revision Bill which will repeal instruments made between 1821 and 1860. This is also an invaluable resource for historians and contributes to our knowledge of our own history and development."

Instruments recommended for revocation include:

- a proclamation prohibiting Daniel O'Connell's monster meeting in Clontarf,

- orders for prayers and fasts for the abatement of cholera, relief from crop failure and to give thanks for abundant harvests;
- orders promoting piety and virtue;
- orders imposing quarantine on cholera-afflicted ships;
- regulations establishing a Board of Health;
- proclamations giving currency to new coinage;
- warrants appointing certain places of confinement for transportation;
- warrants regulating postage duties; and
- orders amending county boundaries.

Of particular interest to local and family historians will be the 2,503 proclamations offering rewards for apprehending suspected criminals around the island of Ireland. To optimise local research, the SLRP has categorised these by county. The county with by far the most recorded proclamations is Tipperary, with 426. The county with the fewest is Kerry, with 15. This Press Release is for Dublin. The county of Dublin had 71 proclamations.

The proclamations relate to all forms of criminal activity such as:

- waylaying, robbing, attacking, wounding, and murder;
- severe, inhumane and unmerciful beatings;
- causing death by throwing stones or with blows to the head with a pitchfork;
- setting fire to houses, out-houses, cow-houses, hayricks, barns, and oat-mills;
- breaking eggs, posting threatening notices regarding land, voting and potatoes; and
- beatings with sticks and stones and nettles.

The results of the public consultation process will be considered before the final version of a new Statute Law Revision Bill is published. It is planned that the Bill will be enacted this year, the centenary of the foundation of the State. Further work will be required to complete the review of statutory instruments from 1861 to 1922.

Fiona Carroll, Project Manager of the SLRP at the Law Reform Commission, said: “This has been a large undertaking and follows three years of intensive research completed by talented and dedicated full-time researchers. We are very pleased to bring this project to the public consultation stage. Following completion of the consultation, we look forward to the progress of the Statute Law Revision Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas”.

SLRP and Public Consultation Information

- Details are available [here](#):
- To view the instruments arranged by category, click [here](#):
- To send your views or make a query, email: slrpstaff@lawreform.ie
- To make contact by post, write to: Statute Law Revision Programme, Law Reform Commission, Styne House, Upper Hatch Street, Dublin 2, D02 DY27

Note - The offices of the Law Reform Commission currently remain closed.

* The two instruments to be kept on the statute book relate to the limits of the River Shannon and continue to be valid for regulatory purposes.

Issued on behalf of the Law Reform Commission Statute Law Revision Programme by Heneghan

Inquiries

Nigel Heneghan – nigel@heneghan.ie - + 353 86 258 7206

Larry Donald – larry@heneghan.ie - + 353 87 258 1787

Notes to Editors

Statute Law Revision Programme: Since its establishment in 2005, the SLRP has produced six Statute Law Revision Acts. These Acts have repealed the vast majority of primary legislation made before the foundation of the State in 1922. The Statute Law Revision Act 2015 revoked nearly all statutory and prerogative instruments made prior to 1821. This work has significantly improved legislative and regulatory clarity in Ireland.

The SLRP now operates under the aegis of the Law Reform Commission with the support of the Office of the Attorney General.

The Law Reform Commission: The Law Reform Commission is an independent statutory body whose role is to keep the law under review, to make proposals for reform and to make current law accessible for all. To date, the Commission has published over 210 documents containing reform proposals. The majority of these proposals have influenced the drafting and content of reforming legislation.