



Oifig an tAire | *Office of the Minister*

Ms. Anne Maria Walsh
Kilkenny County Council
John Street Lower
Collegepark
Kilkenny

21st August 2020

Ref: TTAS-MO-03949-2020

Dear Ms. Walsh,

Thank you for your correspondence.

On Monday 29 June, driving tests resumed on a gradual basis for trucks, buses and motorcycles (except for trucks in C1 and buses in D1 categories). Driving tests for cars, vans, and minibuses resumed from 16 July with essential workers and those who had appointments cancelled due to Covid 19 being prioritised, in the first instance. This approach for prioritising customers will be kept under review as the RSA moves through the service resumption.

The phased resumption plan being put in place is to protect both the public and staff and will also enable the RSA to review practices and adapt any mitigating measures.

As you can appreciate Covid 19 has had a profound effect on the delivery of services. The Driver Test service has seen its capacity reduced to comply with occupational and public health requirements. This will mean that customers will experience longer waiting times than was the case before the service was suspended and the public's patience and understanding in this regard is requested.

The RSA is managing the situation by prioritizing those who had a test booked before the closure of the service which was cancelled due to the pandemic, and those in essential services. One option which may be considered is the employment of additional testers, something which has been done in the past to address backlogs. However it would be premature to make a decision on staffing at this stage, as many of the issues to be addressed deal with the



throughput of centres themselves in light of the restrictions, rather than on the availability of staff.

My Department is remaining in close contact with the RSA, which is exploring how further to manage backlogs while prioritizing public health, and this process is being informed by lessons learned as centres operate under the new health restrictions.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance at this time, and in this, as in all aspects of the Covid-19 crisis, my Department will be guided by NPHE and national experts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Ryan', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Eamon Ryan
Minister for Transport Tourism and Sport

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