

The Office of Environmental Sustainability Application Prioritisation Scoring System

for Dumping at Sea Permit Applications





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1. Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for granting and enforcing permits for dumping at sea activities under the scope of the Dumping at Sea Act 1996 as amended. The Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) is responsible for assessing dumping at sea permit (DaS) applications and recommending decisions to the Board of the EPA.

The OES work programme is linked to the EPA's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026. The OES will be active in supporting the Plan and priority to:

“have an agile, effective and responsive regulatory system, delivering timely decisions to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development.”

As part of this priority, this document outlines the **Dynamic Prioritisation Scoring System** which is used to determine how the OES prioritises DaS permit applications for progression to Board review.

2. Background

Dumping at Sea permit applications are assigned to an inspector for assessment generally in the order of the application having been submitted. However, other factors are taken into consideration by OES in determining the work programme application assessment list for the year.

All applications are assessed against specified criteria and given a prioritisation score. This determines the work programme, in relation to the sequence in which applications will be progressed to decision. These prioritisation criteria allow all stakeholders (including applicants and the public) to clearly see the aspects of an activity which are considered during OES's work programme planning stage. This provides for greater transparency to applicants.

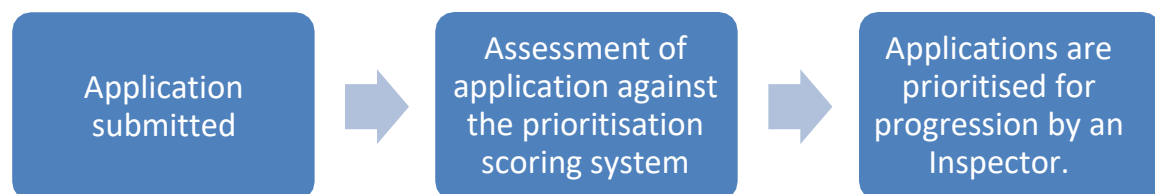


Figure 1: Summary of the application assignment process

3. Application Prioritisation Scoring System

All applications will be assigned a designated score and held centrally until an inspector resource is available to complete the assessment. Assignment of a score will be done on receipt of a permit application. Specific scoring and their associated ranges for each criterion are laid out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria and applicable scoring range.

Criteria	Description	Prioritisation Score Range
Age of application	Each application assessed in the order of submission date	0 to 30
National Priority	Activities identified as significant in resolving national priority or required by Government policy	0 or 40
Economic Impact	Activities contributing to a sustainable society and economy e.g.; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ports of National Significance (Tier 1 & Tier 2 ports)¹ • Port of Regional Significance¹ • DAFM Fishery Harbour Centres² 	10 to 30
Current Assessment Stage	Applications that have the required information available and assessment processes close to finalisation.	0 to 30

- 1 - The 2013 National Ports Policy lists Tier 1 ports of national significance as Dublin, Cork and Shannon Foynes. Tier 2 ports are Port of Waterford and Rosslare Europort. There are 14 ports of Regional Significance.
- 2 - There are six DAFM Fishery Harbour Centres – Killybegs, Howth, Rossaveal, An Daingean, Castletownbere & Dunmore East.

4. Conclusion

The above criteria will allow DaS permit applications received by OES to be appropriately prioritised. This will contribute to an efficient process flow, whilst taking account of criteria which will provide for national priorities.



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