The Electricity Regulation Act, 1999 provided for the establishment of the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER), renamed to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU).

The Gas (Interim) (Regulation) Act, 2002 (the Act) provided for the necessary powers to licence and regulate the shipping and supply of gas in Ireland. One of the functions of the CRU is to grant licences to supply natural gas.

One of the functions of the CRU is to grant licences to ship and supply natural gas. Anyone wishing to supply natural gas to final customers must hold supplier licences under the Gas (Interim) (Regulation) Act, as amended.

Anyone wishing to supply natural gas to final customers must hold a Gas Shipping Licence, under Licence Condition 2 of the Natural Gas Supply Licence. Final customers also refers to Compressed Natural Gas customers. Entities intending on supplying Compressed Natural Gas for vehicular transport also require a Natural Gas Supply Licence. However, as per CER/16/154 such a supplier may apply for derogations from some of the licence conditions. Such an application may be made in the Natural Gas Supply Licence application form under Part I, Section 7.

These guidance notes are to help you apply for a Natural Gas Supply Licence to supply natural gas to final customers. You should only use these notes in conjunction with the “Application for Natural Gas Supply Licence” form. Full details of terms and conditions under which a licence is granted can be found within the Natural Gas Supply Licence.

These guidance notes are in four sections:

1. The Natural Gas Supply Licence;
2. How to apply for a Natural Gas Supply Licence;
3. Service and Standards; and

4. General Information.

A checklist to help you ensure that you have completed your application fully is attached to these notes as Appendix A.

If you need more information or advice after reading these guidance notes, please contact us on +353 (0)1 4000 800. We answer calls between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, you can email your questions to us at info@cru.ie.

We may amend these notes from time to time to include changes and to improve clarity. They are valid until the date printed at the top of each document. If you have a document that has a date that has recently passed, you may still be able to use it. Please contact us at the number given above for advice. These guidance notes and the Natural Gas Supply Licence application form are also available on our website at www.cru.ie.

Note:

All applicants are advised that in order to trade in the market, in addition to holding the necessary licences from the Commission, accession to the Code of Operations is required. Applications for market accession are to be made to Gas Networks Ireland once the relevant licence from the Commission has issued.

To facilitate timely accession to the market, applications should be made as early as possible. Please contact Gas Networks Ireland on 021 453 4000.

Disclaimer:

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this document, complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The Commission for Regulation of Utilities cannot accept any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned or claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full, as a consequence of any person acting, or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this document.
Eligibility to apply for a Gas Supply Licence

1. You can make a Natural Gas Supply Licence application if you wish to supply natural gas under Section 16 of the Gas (Interim) (Regulation) Act 2002, as amended.

2. If you supply natural gas prior to obtaining a Natural Gas Supply Licence from the CRU, you may be liable on conviction on indictment to a fine, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or to both.

3. Condition 2 of the Natural Gas Supply Licence obligates licence holders to hold a Gas Shipping Licence.¹

4. The Safety Case is a condition of the Gas Supply Licence. Applicants should have an accepted safety case before a Gas Supply Licence is granted. Applicants must engage with the Gas Safety Division regarding submitting a Safety Case.

General Criteria

5. We will only commence processing your application when we are satisfied that the application is complete (see Appendix A for Checklist) and that sufficient information has been provided.

6. We may consider a number of factors in evaluating your licence application. These may include, for example, the availability of sufficient appropriate financial, managerial or technical resources to ensure that you are able to comply with the terms and conditions that govern the Gas Supply Licence.

7. During our assessment of your application, you may be required to submit additional information in respect of the application if we feel it is necessary for support or clarification purposes. Please respond to these requests within the time period we specify.

8. If the CRU decides to grant you a licence, you will be advised in writing and the licence will be issued shortly afterwards.

9. If your application is refused, you will be notified in writing of the reasons for the refusal. Such a decision may be appealed. Please see paragraphs 46 to 47 for details.

10. Please also note that in granting a licence, the CRU is in no way endorsing the plans of a holder. The licence cannot be relied upon as an indication of the likely commercial success or otherwise of its holder.

Terms and Conditions of licence

11. A Natural Gas Supply Licence will be valid for 15 years, subject to the licence holder complying with the conditions under which the licence is issued.

12. Unless revoked in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 1, the Natural Gas Supply Licence shall continue in full force and effect until determined but not less than 10 years' notice in writing given by the Commission to the Licensee; such notice

¹ Applicants intending on supplying Compressed Natural Gas for vehicular transport may apply for a derogation from

Condition 2 as per CER/16/154.
not to be served earlier than the 15th anniversary of the date on which the Licence comes into force.

13. One of the conditions under which a Natural Gas Supply Licence is issued is compliance with the Code of Operations in all applicable areas.

14. While your application is processed by the CRU, you may engage with the following organisations in order to gain further understanding of the requirements pertaining to the market entry process:
   - Gas Networks Ireland – who own, operate, build and maintain the natural gas network in Ireland and connect all customers to the network. Gas Networks Ireland are also responsible for main aspects of the gas market design and co-ordination of market assurance processes
   - Gas Point Registration Operator – unit within Gas Network Ireland who manage the register of all gas points in the country and is responsible for the Change of Supply process

15. Details of other terms and conditions under which a Natural Gas Supply Licence is issued can be found in the licence.

16. These licence conditions are subject to modification or amendment according to their terms or with Sections 14(3), 14(6) (a) or 19 of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999.

17. However, the CRU may at any time revoke a Natural Gas Supply Licence that has been granted to you if you fail to comply with the terms and conditions of the licence. Your attention is drawn to the revocation terms that are detailed in Schedule 1 of the licence.

18. Please note that there would be significant dialogue between the CRU and the Licensee before such a serious provision was invoked.
**Which form do I use to apply?**

19. All applications for a Natural Gas Supply Licence to supply natural gas should be made using the “Application for Natural Gas Supply Licence” form.

20. You can obtain the printed application forms and guidance notes from our office or download them from our website. Please see paragraphs 50 to 54 in the “General Information” section for details.

**When should I apply?**

21. Once you have compiled the information requested and supporting documents for your application, you can apply whenever you wish to.

**How long will it take to consider my application?**

22. We will acknowledge all applications within 7 working days of receiving them. The acknowledgement will include a phone number and a named contact for your enquiries.

23. We will process all applications as rapidly as possible and keep you advised of progress.

**What do I send with the application form?**

24. A checklist of all documents you should enclose with your completed application form is attached to these notes as Appendix A. The Natural Gas Supply Licence Application form also details these documents.

25. Additionally, an application fee must be included with your submission.

**What are the fees associated with submitting my application form?**

26. The fee for a Natural Gas Supply Licence application is €5,000. This may be reviewed from time to time. Please note that this amount includes the assessment of a Natural Gas Shipping Licence. Condition 2 of the Natural Gas Supply Licence requires Licensees to hold a Natural Gas Shipping Licence.

**Will information in my application be kept confidential?**

27. Information provided in your application form and supporting documents will be covered by Section 13 (Prohibition on unauthorised disclosure of information) of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999. Your attention is also drawn to Section 46 (Amendment of Freedom of Information Act, 1997) of the Act.

28. We may publish a notice of your application in a newspaper (or newspapers) circulating in the area you wish to supply and/or a newspaper circulating in the State.

29. Commercially sensitive information from business plans will be kept confidential. You may mark other information as confidential. The Commission will discuss disclosure of this information with you should requests arise as provided for under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997.

**Where do I send the application form?**
30. The completed application, together with all the support documents should be delivered or sent to us at:
Commission for Regulation of Utilities
The Exchange,
Belgard Square North,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.
The application fee can be paid via bank transfer to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

Where will the CRU send the licence and any other letters?
31. We will assume the lead signatory on your application form to be your nominated point of contact should we need to contact you, or when we respond to your queries, unless notified otherwise.
32. All correspondence with you will be sent to the address provided in your application form, or in the case of a body corporate, the registered or principal office.
33. If you are an overseas applicant, we will send all letters to the address you have provided in your application form.

How do I get advice on submitting a Supply Licence application?
34. If you want advice about completing an application form or clarification of these guidance notes, contact us at +353 (0)1 4000 800 between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. You can also e-mail your questions to us at info@cru.ie.
What you can expect from us

35. We will provide understandable, accessible information and guidance. A **checklist** to help you complete your application is attached to these notes as **Appendix A**.

36. We will acknowledge all applications within 7 working days of receiving them. The acknowledgement will include a phone number and a named contact for your enquiries.

37. All letters from us will give the name and telephone number of a member of staff dealing with your application.

38. We will process all applications as rapidly as possible and keep you advised of progress.

39. We will, if appropriate, include information on how to appeal against a decision in the letter informing you about our decision.

40. We will reply promptly to all enquiries and letters.

41. We will continually review our standards of service.

What we need from you

42. Please make sure that you use the correct application form and answer all the relevant questions fully.

43. Please send in any documents or information we ask for with your application form. If you do not, this may delay the decision.

44. If you receive a letter asking for more information, please respond quickly and cover all the points raised. Replying by fax or e-mail may save time.

General rules about appeals

45. If it is appropriate and you want to appeal against our decision to refuse a supply licence application, the letter telling you about our decision will explain how to do this. Any appeal must be lodged with the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment within 28 days of our decision.

46. The appeal procedures are set out in Part IV, Sections 29 to 32 of the 1999 Act. If you need more advice on how to appeal, please take this up with our contact named on the letter.

How do you make a complaint?

47. If you are unhappy with the standard of service you have received, please take this up with the contact you have been dealing with. If you are not sure who to contact, please phone our general enquiry line for advice on +353 (0)1 4000 800.

48. If you wish to make a complaint please write to [info@cru.ie](mailto:info@cru.ie) or to: Commission for Regulation of Utilities, The Exchange, Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Fax: +353 (0)1 4000 850 Email: info@cru.ie
Where can I get a Natural Gas Supply Licence application form?

49. You can download the application form and guidance notes that we have published at our website www.cru.ie for your own use, at no cost.

50. Alternatively, you can get the application form and guidance notes by phoning us at +353 (0)1 4000 800 between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

51. You may make photocopies of the application forms for your own use. However, we will only accept copies/versions you produce if they are of good quality, clearly legible, A4 size and the design and content are the same as the printed version supplied by us.

52. Please note that applications must be submitted with original signatures.

53. The SSA entry process, information requirements and application form as documented in the SSA’s Agreed Procedure no. 9 can also be found at the CRU’s website.

What if I need more general information about Natural Gas Supply Licences?

54. Please contact our general enquiry service:
   Email: info@cru.ie
   Phone: +353 (0)1 4000 800
   Fax: +353 (0)1 4000 850
   Write to us at:
   Commission for Regulation of Utilities
   The Exchange,
   Belgard Square North,
   Tallaght,
   Dublin 24.

What if I need more information about the Irish gas market?

55. We have an Internet website at www.cru.ie that is regularly updated to provide you with information about developments in the Irish gas market. You can find press releases published by the CRU at the website referred to above.

56. Information about the functions of the CRU is also included at the website, as is a copy of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999 under which the CRU is established. This Act provides the regulatory framework for the introduction of competition in the shipping and supply of gas in Ireland.

57. Copies of documents that have been published for consultation are available for downloading from our website. You can also download application forms and guidance notes for Authorisation, Generation and Supply licences.

58. Details of applications accepted and/or approved by the CRU can also be found at our website.

59. Alternatively, you may contact our general enquire