**Media Release** 19th February 2021

**‘Smart Ring Buoys’ innovation challenge underway across Dublin’s 4 local authorities**

Four companies are piloting a range of innovative solutions to supplylow-cost, retro-fit, technology solutions to alert, monitor and report on when ring buoys go missing or are tampered with.

This is part of an innovationchallenge that was issued in 2020 to find smarter solutions to address the challenge of ‘missing’ ring buoys. The solutions aim to monitor in real time when life buoys are tampered with or taken. Apart from the potential to save lives, other benefits include reducing the number of ring buoys that go missing and decreasing the time taken to replace them.

In Dublin City Council alone, around 15 ring buoys go missing or are stolen every week. The need to replace nearly 600 ring buoys each year costs in excess of €20,000 and, more importantly, potentially endangers lives.

Owen Keegan, Chief Executive, Dublin City Council said, *“This is a great example of collaboration across the 4 Dublin Local authorities and Water Safety Ireland. It is also the first time we have used a procurement approach like this to pilot an innovative technology solution before we buy. I look forward to seeing the results and implementing solutions that will improve water safety across Dublin and Ireland’s local authorities.”*

Peter Keating, Water Safety Development Officer at Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) County Council, said “*Having real-time notification on lifesaving equipment will make a significant difference in the response times of DLR staff to missing life-saving equipment. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council have 52 ring buoys along our coast and every ring buoy has the potential to save a life but only if it is present. With the increased number of visitors to our beaches there is more emphasis on water safety and having lifesaving equipment in place. Traditionally a ring buoy inspection on all locations is carried out every two weeks and can take up most of the day, with this technology the inspection time is greatly reduced and can be spent on more beneficial tasks*.”

This ground-breaking pilot project is being managed through an innovative procurement two-phase multi-party framework agreement. It is the first time such a framework is being used in Ireland and has been supported through EAFIP, a European programme for innovation procurement. Procurement specialists in the Netherlands (Corvers) and A&L Goodbody have advised on the process.

Phase One is the 9-month trial phase (3 months prep, 6 months live), and it began in late 2020. All companies whose solutions are deemed successful at the end of Phase One will automatically proceed to Phase Two. There are 23 local authorities (including the 4 Dublin Regional ones) listed on the framework, and in Phase Two, they can draw down on the successful solutions through a mini-competition and buy them without going out to tender themselves. This way, the solutions can be scaled up and deployed nationally as individual local authorities see fit.

John Leech, CEO of Water Safety Ireland said “*this is one of the most innovative projects in terms of drowning prevention that Water Safety has ever been involved in. I am confident that it will help save lives when the successful systems are rolled out around the country. A Stolen Ringbuoy can mean a stolen life, when these innovative systems are functioning, they will have a positive impact on the interference and theft of this essential Public Rescue Equipment.*”

**ENDS**

**For further information please contact:**

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**Notes to the Editor:**

This ‘Smart Dublin’ project is supported by the Water Safety Development Teams in DCC, Fingal, DLR and South Dublin, and by Dublin City Council’s Smart City Team and Water Safety Ireland.

The project has been funded through the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform’s Public Service Innovation Fund 2019 and has been match-funded by Dublin City Council’s Smart City Section along with the Water Safety Development Sections of each of the four Dublin Region Local Authorities.  It’s supported by Water Safety Ireland and by the European Assistance for Innovation Procurement initiative *(eafip)* which supports public procurers across Europe  
in developing and implementing innovation procurement.

Profiles of the parties involved:

[**Civic Integrated Solutions Ltd.**](https://civic.ie/)

Civic Group provide full government standard project management services, from design and procurement to installation and maintenance, of high value smart city projects.  Their services include bespoke smart IoT solutions, customised traffic control products and traffic consultancy services.

[**mSEMICON Teoranta**](https://www.msemicon.com/)

mSEMICON are a Dublin-based company established in 2001.  They develop custom products and their own products for a wide range of applications.  IoT is their specialisation.  They are involved in European (H2020, ESA) and Irish (SBIR, DTIF) research programs.

[**RE:SURE Intelligence Ltd.**](https://resure.co/)

RE:SURE are an Irish-owned company established in 2008.  They are experts in monitoring and IoT able to provide simple solutions to difficult problems.  The core pillars of RE:SURE are best service, innovative solutions and value for money.  Currently there are over 1500 users of RE:SURE I/O with more than 300 Anywhere sensors in commercial use across Ireland and the UK.

[**ZiggyTec Ltd.**](https://www.ziggytec.com/)

ZiggyTec are a technology company using the latest IoT driven tehnology to extract and process utilities, air quality and health and safety equipment data from buildings and assets.  Their technology is ideal for monitoring safety equipment such as ring buoys and AEDs.

[**Department of Public Expenditure Public Service Innovation Fund**](https://www.ops2020.gov.ie/networks/funding/)

The Public Service Innovation Fund is a competitive fund that aims to support innovative ideas from across public service organisations and turn them into a reality with funding available from €25,000 up to €60,000. It is important that projects have a strong focus on outcomes and impact. There should also be a focus on scalability, transferability and learning within the Public Service. Collaboration between public service organisations is encouraged.

[**EAFIP**](https://eafip.eu/)

The European Assistance for Innovation Procurement initiative (EAFIP) initiative supports public procurers across Europe in developing and implementing innovation procurement. The aim of the eafip-initiative is to promote good practices and reinforce the evidence base on completed innovation procurements across Europe and to encourage other public procurers to start new PCP and PPI procurements.  The assistance was provided through [Corvers Commercial & Legal Affairs](https://www.corvers.com/), a leading legal consultancy firm in the Benelux area, specialized in European public procurement law, innovation and contracting, and through leading Irish law firm, [A&L Goodbody](https://www.algoodbody.com/).

[**Water Safety Ireland**](https://watersafety.ie/)

The focus of Water Safety Ireland is on public awareness and education. Tragically, an average of 120 people drown each year in Ireland.  WSI feel that this is simply unacceptable considering that most fatalities are avoidable.  WSI strive to reduce these fatalities by increasing water safety awareness and by changing attitudes and behaviours so that our aquatic environments can be enjoyed with confidence and safety.