1992 No. 72

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Public Use of the Records (Management and Fees) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1992

Made . . . . . *28th February 1992*

Coming into operation . . *1st April 1992*

The Department of the Environment, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 9 of the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923(**a**) and paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 1 to the Northern Ireland Act 1974(**b**) and now vested in it(**c**) and of every other power enabling it in that behalf, hereby makes the following Rules:—

Citation and commencement

1. These Rules may be cited as the Public Use of the Records (Management and Fees) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1992 and shall come into operation on 1st April 1992.

Interpretation

2. In these Rules—

"Deputy Keeper" means the Deputy Keeper of the Records of Northern Ireland;

"Exhibition Area" means that part of the Office specifically provided as an area where members of the public may see exhibited material and where Office staff may lecture groups of readers or other users;

"Issue Desk" means that part of the Office where records are issued to members of the public, and where members of the public return records to the Office;

"Office" means the Public Record Office;

"Reading Room" means that part of the Office where the records are inspected;

"Reception Area" means that part of the Office where a member of the public is required to sign his name in the book provided, be issued with a reader's ticket on his first visit, and to leave articles;

"Search Room" means that part of the Office where indexes, catalogues, calendars and such other searching aids as are provided for consultation are kept;

(**a**) 1923 c. 20 (N.I.)
(**b**) 1974 c. 28
(**c**) *See* S.I. 1982/338 (N.I. 6) Art. 5

"Waiting Area" means that part of the Office where a member of the public waits until such time as he has completed the entrance formalities.

Days and hours of admission

3. The Office shall be open to the public on every day except Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and such other public or privilege holidays as may be observed in the Civil Service of Northern Ireland or periods of annual stocktaking.

4. The opening hours of the Office shall be from 9.15 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. and the hours for the production of records shall be from 9.15 a.m. to 4.15 p.m.

Payment of fees

5. The fees, as numbered in the first column of the Schedule, payable for the items or use of the records which are prescribed in the second column thereof, shall be the amounts in the third column of the Schedule.

6. Payment of fees for the inspection of any records may be dispensed with in cases where the Deputy Keeper, or where he is unavailable his deputy, is satisfied that the inspection is desired by a person who is undertaking study or research otherwise than for reward or on the course of his business.

Rules governing admission

7. Every memeber of the public seeking admission to the Search Room or Reading Room, on the first occasion of making such a request in any year, shall be required to produce evidence of identity and then to register, giving such details as shall be specified and, on registering, shall receive a numbered reader's ticket valid for the length of time specified therein.

8. Every member of the public visiting the Exhibition Area shall have his name and full permanent address placed in the attendance book provided and shall sign that book or have it signed on his behalf.

9. Every member of the public visiting the Waiting Area or Search Room or Reading Room shall have his name and permanent address and reader's ticket number placed in the attendance book provided and shall sign that book or have it signed on his behalf.

10. Every member of the public seeking admission to the Search Room or Reading Room on the first occasion, shall view any visual aids supplied for the information of readers and may consult such printed aids as are provided for the like purpose.

11. No overcoats, umbrellas, bags, parcels, files, folders, boxes, cameras, bulky or awkward objects, newspapers or other publications shall be taken by a member of the public into the Exhibition Area, Waiting Area, Search Room or the Reading Room, without the prior permission of the officer in charge of those areas, but shall be left in the lockers provided.

12. No tape-recorder, computer or any other electrically- or battery-operated device, with the exception of a hearing-aid, shall be used by a member of the public in the Reception Area, Exhibition Area, Waiting Area or the Search Room and such items only be used in the Reading Room after inspection by Office staff and only in areas set aside for their use.

13. Every member of the public seeking to enter the Search Room or the Reading Room shall be required to produce for checking his reader's ticket and to submit for inspection items being brought into those rooms; such checking and inspection to be undertaken by a member of staff.

14. No member of the public shall consume any food, or smoke or drink in the Office.

15. All members of the public inspecting records in the Reading Room shall avoid the making of unnecessary noise or the engaging in any manner of behaviour likely to distract other persons in the Reading Room.

16. The relevant dockets, one for each record or item required, must be completed by or on behalf of every member of the public wishing to inspect or consult any record in the Reading Room and those dockets must be submitted to the Issue Desk in the Reading Room.

17. No member of the public shall have more than three records out at a time, save by special permission of the officer in charge of the Issue Desk.

18. Records not described in the indexes, catalogues, calendars or such other searching aids as may be provided for public use shall only be produced at the discretion of the Deputy Keeper.

19. The Deputy Keeper may issue specific directions as to the handling of records for the purpose of ensuring the preservation of their condition.

20. No member of the public shall make any mark on, fold or lean upon any record or index, catalogue, calendar or other searching aid he is inspecting or consulting, and shall make use of any supports or any other protective device provided for that purpose.

21. Members of the public must only use pencil in the Reading Room.

22. Tracings of records shall not be made by any member of the public without the specific permission from the officer in charge of the Reading Room and only with such protective sheeting as may be provided.

23. Members of the public inspecting records are responsible for those records and, if those persons leave the Reading Room at any time, they shall return the records to the officer in charge of the Issue Desk or such other appropriate officer for the period of time that they are absent from the Reading Room.

24. Any member of the public in the Reading Room who proposes to leave it for a period of one hour or more shall remove from it all personal property.

25. Every member of the public to whom records have been produced shall be responsible for the records as long as they remain in possession of them.

26. On completion of a search or inspection, the records must be returned to the officer in charge of the Issue Desk or such other appropriate officer in exchange for the relevant dockets.

27. Every member of the public consulting the indexes, catalogues, calendars or other searching aids must replace them on the shelves or such other place as they are normally located when the said person has finished with those aids.

28. Member of the public may be excluded from the Office for any of the following reasons:—

(*a*) breach of the Rules;

(*b*) damage to any record, index, catalogue, calendar or other searching aid or other article or property belonging to the Office; or

(*c*) conduct or language offensive to persons on the premises of the Office.

Revocation

29. The Public Record Office (Public Use of the Records) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1953(**a**).

The Public Record Office (Public Use of the Records) (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1966(**b**).

The Public Use of Records (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1988(**c**); and

The Public Use of Records (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1989(**d**) are hereby revoked.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of the Environment on 28th February 1992.

(L.S.) *J. A. G. Whitlaw*
Under Secretary

(**a**) S.R. & O. (N.I.) 1953 No. 71 (p. 32)
(**b**) S.R. & O. (N.I.) 1966 No. 285
(**c**) S.R. 1988 No. 180
(**d**) S.R. 1989 No. 57