

# Aer Lingus pressed to bid for Kerry to keep Healy-Rae on board



O'ROURKE: 'No contact'

**JEROME REILLY**  
AER Lingus came under severe pressure from the Government to put in a bid for the Kerry-Dublin route so they could rely on the continued support of Jackie Healy-Rae during the new Dáil term, the *Sunday Independent* has learned.

A spokesman for the Minister for Public Enterprise, Mary O'Rourke, flatly denied on Friday that she had made any representations to the national airline to ensure that it would bid for the new three-year public service order

which is due to start early next year.

The spokesman insisted Mrs O'Rourke had played no hand, act or part in any decision by the airline in relation to Farranfore.

A spokesman for Aer Lingus stated they had decided to bid for the route on the basis that the airline could make money on the route between Dublin and Farranfore. However, a senior and highly reliable source at Aer Lingus contradicted the official line. The source said a phone call had been made at

the highest level to ensure Aer Lingus would make a bid.

Last week Deputy Healy-Rae of South Kerry described the Aer Lingus decision as "a major change of heart".

During the past year, Aer Lingus has consistently claimed that domestic routes are losing money. They have sold two of the Fokker 50-seater aircraft and the rest of the Fokker turbo prop fleet is up for sale to be replaced by BAe 146, 100-seater jets.

It is now proposed that they will use these BAe 146s on the Kerry route if they win the bid

which will run from February 2001 to 2004.

As well as being the subject of contacts at the highest level of government, Aer Lingus came under pressure from local interest groups including Kerry Tourism.

Expressions of interest in the Farranfore route by Air Aran and Irish Air Transport were greeted coolly by Kerry County Tourism chairman Kathleen O'Regan-Shepherd, who rejected suggestions that the smaller airlines could replace the national carrier.

During the summer, all the independent deputies had meetings with the Government to discuss their concerns and demands and the progress of projects already agreed with the Coalition.

Top of the agenda for Deputy Healy-Rae was a decision by the Cabinet to prevent Aer Lingus from pulling out of the Kerry Regional Airport.

However, a spokesman for Aer Lingus insisted that the decision to bid on the Kerry route followed a detailed examination and the conclusion that money could be made on the route.



HEALY-RAE: Airport concern

Bank of Ireland's marketing campaign circulated 5,000 bank account numbers to strangers

## Account numbers exposed in bank security blunder

**SHANE HICKEY**  
Exclusive

FIVE thousand Bank of Ireland customers have had their account numbers circulated to strangers, following a massive blunder in the bank's central circulation office.

The error occurred during a nationwide campaign to give solicited loans of between 500 and 25,000.

The take-up of such offers from the main banks is contributing greatly to the current inflation crisis, according to many economists.

Last week, Bank of Ireland sent 16,000 letters, with applications, to customers throughout the country offering pre-approved loans.

It was at least the third time in three months that customers were pressed by the Bank of Ireland to take out loans that they do not require and did not seek.

But 5,000 of the application forms contained the names, addresses and account numbers of customers unknown to the recipients of the letters.

An embarrassed Bank of Ireland only became aware of the blunder after it was brought to its attention by the *Sunday Independent*.

One of our journalists received an application form containing the confidential banking details of a woman completely unknown to her.

After he drew the matter to the attention of his branch at Clontarf, Dublin, an internal investigation was initiated by Bank of Ireland headquarters.

This investigation highlighted the huge scale of a blunder which could have had serious implications for the bank.

The letter sent to a *Sunday Independent* journalist had been approved for a €5,000 loan. But the correspondence included an application form for a woman whose address and account number were provided, who had been pre-approved a loan for £1,500.

The accompanying letter, which goes with the application form, says: "All you have to do is complete and return the application form and post it back to us in the enclosed prepaid envelope."

Each of the 5,000 loan application forms sent out details the name and address of the account holder, their account number and the sorting code of a bank branch.

Declan Reid of Bank of Ireland headquarters said: "We seriously regret the incident taking place and apologise to all of those affected. We have the highest regard for account security. The account numbers are in the public domain but they are not the only security measure in place."

The bank is currently in the process of contacting all of the customers affected.

Mr Reid claimed that the amount of the information disclosed in the application forms

was "minimal" but he said the bank was doing its utmost to rectify the situation.

He said the error occurred when the pre-approved loans were being sent out from their distribution centres in place of the wrong application forms to the envelopes.

Two feeders were working at the same time and dispensed wrong letters to each envelope resulting in the "collating error".

Mr Reid said Bank of Ireland had a security measure in place to ensure that the same incident does not occur again.

It could not be established whether anyone has so far attempted to draw down a loan in somebody else's name, but the bank says that those applying for pre-approved loans will be subject to security checks, as is standard practice. The pre-approved loan is a direct-marketing strategy used by the bank for a number of years. A help-desk has been set up by Bank of Ireland to deal with the situation.



LOOKING ONLINE: Model Jennifer Fitzgerald with her baby son. Models are now offered for hire at www.photobank.ie for the first time on photo album service. Photo: DAVID CONACHY

## Grounded Air Corps fleet gets green light for take-off

**GERALDINE NILAND**

THE Air Corps training fleet and Cessna helicopters grounded as a result of the joint FBI and CIA investigation into an international bogus aircraft spare-parts operation will be returned to flight from tomorrow. Fourteen planes were grounded last week in the joint police inquiry which was launched by Smith Aerospace Manufacturing Ltd based in Shannon.

The company was one of a number of international companies supported by Shannon Development to create 800 new jobs in the Shannon Free Zone over a three-year period. Investigations now centre on the two directors of the company, Joseph Patrick Smith, 63, and Marianne Anita Smith, 59, both registered as executive directors of the company and US nationals.

The Air Corps bought parts from another company based in Shannon but it was now transpiring that that company was supplied with parts by Smith Aerospace Manufacturing. The fact that the Air Corps fleet is a precautionary measure to allow checks to be carried out on the airworthiness certificates which accompany all spare parts purchases.

Last November the Air Corps spent over €400,000 with the company on the periphery of the inquiry. Investigators are also trying to establish what other suppliers were being serviced by Smith Aerospace.

The company had not been approved by the Irish Aviation Authority to supply spare parts in the aviation industry in Ireland.

The joint Garda-FBI inquiry at Shannon is expected to last several more weeks. FBI sources claim that the bogus operation could have generated some €30m for those involved and they have said that 180 bogus spare parts could have worldwide implications for the aviation industry.

The investigation began several months ago when bogus spare parts were discovered in some US air force aircraft.

## Francis Stuart admired Hitler' says new book

THE late controversial novelist Francis Stuart, admired Hitler and the German people, a new book out next week.

Sean Berrington, the writer who died earlier this year also opposed Ireland receiving refugees fleeing the Nazi regime, according to author Berrington in his new book *Warrior Broadcasts of Francis Stuart*.

Berrington has obtained for the first time the surviving manuscripts of Stuart's propaganda broadcasts from Germany during World War II.

Stuart went to Germany in 1940 where he accepted a uni-

versity lecturing position and restricted his use of the word. In total he made over 100 broadcasts on German Radio to Ireland.

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## Songbird Keegan hits the low notes

**EVAN FANNING**

THERE'S nothing like a demolition derby to see the last football match played at Wembley stadium before the bulldozers move in and the brand new arena is built on the site.

Never one to let an opportunity like this pass by, Sky Sport went into overtime last week. The new arena is the home of the new Premier League manager, Kevin Keegan, a man who is constantly thinking aloud.

Speaking before the match yesterday Keegan revealed that he had urged his players to block all the hype surrounding the stadium for their minds and to focus on the game itself.

"I've told the players not to

worry about the crowd singing *Jerusalem* or the national anthem," he revealed. "They're taking care of that themselves."

This no doubt reassured the less experienced members of his side who must have been fraught with nerves over whether or not there would be a fitting final rendition of the national anthem.

Home manager Keegan, the man that Keegan has more in common with than most, said that song is the lowest form of communication. Keegan, or Double K as he is known in the industry, must have missed this episode because in his mind the day was all about singing.

As the teams lined up on the pitch Keegan belted out *God Save The Queen*. He even sang along

with the German national anthem.

In the Sky studio his director of enthusiasm, Richard Keys, probed former England captain, Alan Shearer for some vital information.

As things prepared to come on to the pitch, a situation John Motson once called a moment of blinding noise, Richard asked Alan, "What's the first thing that hits you — air, noise?" Alan didn't answer. As the players progressed about three steps, Richard went for the kill. "What are you thinking now — game, parents, wife?"

Again no answer.

As things went against England on the pitch, they were winning where it really mattered. Stand

Up If You Won The War, the crowd sang.

Keegan was already standing due to an earlier version of the song that said something about hating Man United.

Those of us clever enough to put a tanner on Germany knew who the real winners were. Our thoughts turned to how to spend our winnings. There is an auction of Wembley memorabilia later this month and I think I'll bid for the podium from which the anthems are sung.

I'd imagine that Kevin Keegan will be my serious rival for this item. Like me, he will now have plenty of time on his hands for such trivial pursuits.

The auction will, of course, be covered live by Sky.

**TONY QUINN'S SUCCESSFUL LIVING 6 WEEK COURSE**

IT HAS BEEN DISCOVERED THAT MANY PEOPLE THINK IN A DIVIDED WAY AS FOLLOWS:

I want to be successful, there's no way I'll succeed!  
I want to give up smoking but I've tried so many times before!  
I'd like to get into shape but I haven't got the time!

As long as your mind is divided in this way you will never succeed to any great degree because there are too many opposing negative thoughts — you must learn to think in one direction!

You own one of the most powerful, natural resources on our planet, your whole mind. It is unlikely that you have ever experienced the truly awesome power that it can yield. What would happen if you were to focus, not just some, but all of your mind, on a goal?

**THE COURSE WILL COVER**

- Relaxation: Relax away negative thoughts.
- Super Concentration: How to improve concentration.
- Personal Power: How to increase your potential in any area instantly.
- Conscious v Unconscious Mind: How to structure your thoughts properly for success.

Venue: SHELBOURNE HOTEL, Dublin 2. Tues, Oct 10th, 6.15-7.45 p.m. Tues, Oct 24th, 8.00-9.30 p.m. Cost: €100

Venue: VUE HOTEL, Dublin 2. Thurs, Oct 12th, 8.00-9.30 p.m. Cost: €100

Venue: RADISSON HOTEL, Sligo/Agan Rd. Wed, Oct 18th, 8.00-9.30 p.m. Cost: €100

For Credit Card Booking Contact: Tony Quinn Health Centre Tel: 01-478 5404 / 01-497 4234 Or Yvonne at 087-2298678 or Dave at 086-8300575

**TODAY'S WEATHER**

BRIGHT and breezy today. There will be scattered showers throughout the day, most of them will be over the Western half of the country. It will be quite breezy with fresh westerly winds. And also with the highest temperatures range between 11° and 14°C.

Most of the showers will die out in the evening time and the first half of the night should be dry. But heavy rain will spread across the country later in the night.

**THE WEEK AHEAD**

UNSETTLED cold and often windy. A windy and wet start tomorrow with some heavy rain in most places. More showery weather will extend countrywide by afternoon. Top temps just 11-14°C and winds strong and gusty Southerly at first, but will quickly become West or Northwesterly and will gust 45-55 mph at times. Tuesday: A cold windy day with strong and blustery West-Northwesterly winds. Dry bright periods at times. Winds moderate to fresh Northeast or variable. Top temps just 10-14°C at best. Cold at night with risk of some frost and fog under any lengthy clear spells. Showery weather to persist, some of the showers heavy but some bright too. Sunny spells at times too. Cold nights with frost and fog possible. Top temps in low teens.

**DRYING CONDITIONS**

DRYING conditions today will be mostly good.

**WATERFALL**

Waterfall, 100m high, near Carrigrohane, Co. Wick. Open daily 10am-6pm. Admission: Adults €5, Children €3.50. Tel: 046 907 2222

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**AA roadwatch**

DUBLIN: QRC work, involving traffic on Thomas Street will reduce to one lane in each direction from 10.30am to 12.30pm on Monday 10th. Restrictions will be in place until 11.00am on Tuesday 11th. Motor disruption expected on Dublin Street North Quay and other roads. Restrictions continue on Loughlinstown Drive Park and Malinbeg Road. Traffic will be diverted to the Dublin Road. Restrictions will be in place on Kall Lane, Dublin 20 for 10.30am until 12.30pm on Monday 10th. Restrictions will be in place on Kall Lane, Dublin 20 for 10.30am until 12.30pm on Monday 10th. Restrictions will be in place on Kall Lane, Dublin 20 for 10.30am until 12.30pm on Monday 10th.

**AA Roadwatch**

For the latest AA traffic report call 0800 131 280 or visit our website at www.aa.ie