

Construction Employers Federation (CEF) response to the Utility Regulator's price control for Northern Ireland Water for the period 2013-15 (PC13)

12 November 2012

The Construction Employers Federation (CEF) is the certified representative body for the construction industry in Northern Ireland. The organisation has over 1200 member companies ranging from micro businesses employing a handful of people to the largest construction companies in Northern Ireland. In total, CEF member companies account for over 70% of construction output.

The construction industry is one of the largest industrial sectors in Northern Ireland. Its economic impact is far reaching as every £1 invested in construction generates £2.84 in the wider economy. It is therefore essential to have an effective busy organisation to be 'the voice of the construction industry'. CEF fulfils that role.

The Federation represents the industry's views across a wide range of issues including procurement, planning, infrastructure investment, housing, environment, training, health and safety, and employment.

CEF welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Regulator's PC13 proposals.

The Federation supports the Regulator's drive to reduce NI Water's operating costs, to improve value for money and improve customer service.

However, the Federation believes that due recognition must be given to the unique governance arrangements under which NI Water operates. These governance structures inhibit efficiency and therefore a comparison with mature private water companies in Great Britain should be qualified accordingly.

We believe the final determination should give greater weight to the barriers which NI Water must overcome in order to achieve efficiencies.

There is a distinct danger that an overly challenging determination could result in the under resourcing of investment in Northern Ireland's water infrastructure at a time when the importance of that investment is greater than ever.

If you would like to discuss this feedback further, please do not hesitate to contact the Federation.