



---

**MARY COUGHLAN ANNOUNCES EXTENSION OF ISLAND ALLOWANCE**

Mary Coughlan, T.D., Minister for Social and Family Affairs today announced further extension of Island Allowance.

Since Budget 2001, Island Allowance has been paid to Social Welfare recipients over 66 whose permanent place of residence is on an offshore island. Budget 2003 provided for an extension of the Allowance, which is an additional €12.70 per week, to include all islanders in receipt of any long-term disability payment.

“This extension of the Island Allowance will help offset the higher living cost incurred by island dwellers suffering long-term disability”, Minister Coughlan said today while visiting Inisfree Island, Co Donegal.

“Island life is one of the unique and vital elements that make up the Irish experience. From my own county I know that life on the Islands can be a rewarding, and sometimes-difficult lifestyle, particularly for people experiencing long-term disability. By extending the allowance I want to both recognise this uniqueness and help with the difficulties,” added Minister Coughlan.

**ENDS**

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2003**