



COMPANY SECRETARIAL AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Mandatory e-filing at the CRO from 1 June 2017

by

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The Companies Registration Office (CRO) is introducing mandatory e-filing of certain submissions from 1 June 2017.

It will then be compulsory to electronically file the forms listed below.

- **B1 Form: Annual Return (including financial statements and electronic payment)**
- **B2 Form: Change of registered office**
- **B10 Form: Change of director and/or secretary, or in their particulars**
- **B73 Form: Nomination of a new annual return date**

As of 1 June 2017, the CRO will not accept these returns in paper format.

Will these changes affect my company?

The changes will directly affect all companies registered under Irish law.

So far in 2016 over 87% of all annual returns were filed online. Therefore 13% of companies will need to review how they file annual returns – we estimate that approximately 35,000 companies still file their annual returns manually in a paper format.

But the changes do not just apply to annual returns. Filings that are required to notify the CRO of changes to the officers of the company, the registered office of the company and the variation of the annual return date, must all be made electronically. Moreover, these filings are not usually made by the same people as the annual return. So companies should review how all of their CRO filings are made: the people involved and the processes and procedures.

Why are the changes being made?

The move to electronic filing should increase the speed, efficiency and accuracy of filings being made. It should also reduce the administrative burden placed on the CRO for the processing of paper returns and, with increased accuracy, it should reduce the likelihood of those returns being queried.

The benefit to the company of electronic filings is that they are less cumbersome and mean that companies are less likely to miss their submission deadlines. It also improves the accuracy of the return and reduces the need to deal with queries.

In addition there is a reduced cost of filing returns electronically with the cost of filing an annual return being

reduced to €20, while the other returns referred to can be made at no cost.

We anticipate that these changes will be part of a series of changes to filing procedures at the CRO, and we expect that most, if not all, filings will eventually have to be made electronically.

What do I need to do?

Given that all Irish companies are obliged to file at least some of the forms listed, it is imperative that all Irish companies make any necessary changes to ensure that they are prepared and have the capability to submit electronic filings from 1 June 2017.

What can we do to help you?

At LK Shields, we can assist you by processing your CRO filings by acting as e-filing agent for your company and filing the above statutory forms using specialist software. Our team of Chartered Secretaries can advise you on your options in relation to registration as an e-filing agent.

For further information, please contact our Company Secretarial and Compliance team at cosec@lkshields.ie.

About the Author