

The chair of the Charities Regulator told a director her position was "wholly unacceptable"

The Currency Tom Lyons March 10th 2025

<https://thecurrency.news/.../the-chair-of-the-charities.../>

A new email from the chair of the Charities Regulatory Authority reveals it "repeatedly raised" concerns from June 2023 on about Lorraine Lally sitting on the authority and the board of Scouting Ireland.

The chair of the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) sent an email to a director stating that her position on both the authority and an organisation it was investigating was "wholly unacceptable".

Gerry Kearney, the chair of the CRA, wrote to Lorraine Lally, a member of the authority and a trustee of Scouting Ireland, outlining how it had "repeatedly raised" concerns with her about her dual role with the CRA and Scouting Ireland from June 2023 on.

His email, released under Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation, is dated January 14, 2025, and marked "Urgent / Confidential".

It outlines the CRA's repeated engagement with Lally, a barrister, in relation to her dual positions.

"Concerns have been repeatedly raised with you regarding the appropriateness of your remaining on the board of the CRA in the context of the CRA engagement with Scouting Ireland since June 2023," Kearney's email states.

"You will recall meeting with Darren Lehane (acting on behalf of board colleagues) in December 2023 and, subsequently, meeting with myself and Nicola Keogh [a solicitor and member of the CRA] in May 2024, on this matter."

Kearney told Lally that Madelaine Delaney, the chief executive of the CRA, had informed him the regulator had now begun a "formal investigation" into Scouting Ireland under section 64 of the Charities Act. "This is a grave development which places the CRA into open inquisitorial mode into an organisation of which you are a trustee," he said.

"Given my responsibilities as chair of the CRA it is incumbent on me to inform you that I find your diverse roles in the current situation wholly unacceptable," he added. "I am of the firm view that your continued membership of the board of the Regulator is untenable."

Kearney requested an urgent Zoom call with Lally to discuss the situation. The contents of what was said on the call or whether it even took place are not documented in what was released under FOI. Lally resigned from the board of the CRA on January 22 shortly after the then Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys sent her a letter telling her to do so.

"I have offered my resignation as requested by the minister," Ms Lally told The Irish Times who first published news of her resignation after its reporting. "I cannot say I have read anything you have written but I have got messages and emails all day."

Lally did not respond to a request for comment from The Currency in relation to why she did not resign from the CRA sooner. On January 15, when The Currency previously asked her about her dual role on the boards of the CRA and Scouting Ireland, she said: "No comment Mr Lyons."