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IPAV Calls For Greater Urgency In Updating Rental Data

IPAV, the Institute of Professional Auctioneers & Valuers, has said until more detailed data is available on RTB rent levels, the Quarterly Rent Index, compiled by the ESRI for the RTB, should carry a warning in relation to the conclusions that can be drawn from the level of increases in rents.

The call comes in the wake of confirmation just received by IPAV from RTB's Interim Director, Pádraig McGoldrick, that at present the RTB is unable to provide exact breakdowns for rent increases in each of the categories:

- 1) New rental stock never let before;
- 2) New tenancies in existing rental stock and
- 3) New tenancies in stock that have not been let in the immediate two years prior to the new tenancy.

Pat Davitt, IPAV Chief Executive said in the Quarterly Rent Index all three are combined to make up the Index. The most recent publication issued a month ago found that rents grew by 7pc on an annual basis.

"However, of the three separate categories listed, two (1 and 3) are exempt from the RPZ (Rent Pressure Zone) rules, even though they may be within a designated RPZ.

"Landlords offering such properties are free to charge whatever rent they can achieve, they are not limited to the 4pc annual increase which earlier this year was changed to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP)," he said.

"The inference taken from the headline figure of 7pc growth in rents is that large numbers of landlords are defying the RPZ rules. And the truth of the matter is that, without more granular data, we simply do not know."

He said in publishing the most recent Index on 30th September, the RTB while acknowledging there may be legitimate reasons reflecting the rate of increase, nonetheless, went on to express concern stating "*it may also indicate an unacceptable level of non-compliance by landlords.*"

Pat Davitt said "such speculation is unhelpful and it's fomenting political and other public pressure on the back of insufficient data."

He said priority should be given to producing more detailed data.

"The RTB has previously indicated to me that they have plans in place to capture this data but the project needs to be treated as a priority, It is essential for the integrity of public information and policy formation," he said.

Ends