ComReg 2017 Conference

Telecommunications
Society and Sector in Transition

Foreword

A chairde,

Welcome to Dublin Castle, and to ComReg's National Conference.
Our theme today: 'Telecommunications Society and Sector in Transition' gives us an opportunity for reflection on the changes which have occurred and are yet to arise in Ireland's telecommunications sector. The environment in which ComReg now regulates would have been unrecognisable even twenty years ago. High speed broadband has arrived, and has morphed from an urban luxury to a nationwide necessity. Professional and social lives are increasingly conducted online, while the internet becomes the dominant medium of mass entertainment. As the benefits of new technologies become increasingly evident, many challenges remain in ensuring that all members of society can avail of the opportunities they provide.

Innovations and investment in new technologies have increased the demand for high-speed internet access. Recent years have seen strong investment in physical infrastructure and services. Today, smartphones, tablets, video streaming, virtual services and the arrival of the Internet of Things have again increased the need for high speed broadband access across the country.

We have an excellent panel of speakers, and look forward to an interesting and informative morning. I hope that you enjoy the conference, and thank you for your attendance.

Gerry Fahy

Welcome to the Commission for Communications Regulation's National Conference

Today's conference will explore the opportunities and challenges for Ireland in achieving an always-on, digital society. Against a backdrop of next generation network rollouts, what will Ireland's digital future look like? What challenges need to be tackled in serving remote areas and protecting consumers?

With an emphasis on investment and innovation, today's sessions will deal with issues relating to network rollout, the role of regulation and growing consumer demand and expectations.

Session 1: "A Time of Transition – the Telecoms landscape"

Theme:
Telecoms in Ireland, and around the world, is evolving. Innovation and investment are continually changing the contribution of telecoms networks to the way we communicate, work and are entertained. However, not everyone has benefited to the same extent. The economics of network deployment means that consumers and businesses in rural areas may not receive the benefits of fast internet access. Industry, regulation and state intervention all have a role to play.

Minister of State for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development Seán Kyne TD will open the conference.

Speakers:
- Erzsébet Fitori, Director FTTH Council
- Sébastien Soriano, Director ARCEP and BEREC
- Torlach Denihan, TIF

The session will conclude with a Q&A session with conference attendees.

Topics
- The current state of networks in Ireland
- Geographical/Spatial issues in network rollout
- The role of regulation/state intervention

Session 2: "A Connected Future"

Theme:
The only constant in the telecoms industry is change. Telecoms is no longer just about telephone and internet access. Technology and consumer demand are pushing the boundaries of how we communicate. How will telecoms change in the next five years to meet the challenges presented by an always-on, digital world? Crucial aspects such as spectrum, consumer privacy, the Internet of Things (IoT), competition and regulation have to be considered when it comes to achieving a Connected Future.

Speakers:
- William Webb, CEO Weightless SIG
- Martin Cave, Regulatory Economist
- Karlin Lillington, Irish Times Journalist and Columnist
- David Minton, Director of Northern & Western Regional Assembly

The session will conclude with a Q&A session with conference attendees.

Topics:
- How will future services be delivered?
- Wireless, 5G, IoT and Spectrum matters
- Consumer protection, online security and cyber crime

Exhibiting at Conference

Test and Trial

Wireless technologies, in the form of new products and services, are evolving to meet new communication trends. Developments in consumers' desire for ubiquitous connectivity, the crunch on available spectrum resources, future new efficient wireless systems and radio access technologies, and perhaps the so called 'Internet of Things' and Industries are driving innovation in radio spectrum use.

Through its Test and Trial Ireland service, ComReg enables entrepreneurs, researchers and developers to test or trial wireless technologies quickly and at a low cost in a wide variety of frequency bands in Ireland. ComReg is offering real world wireless testing licences in a number of mmWave radio spectrum bands, which could be suitable for new 5G or FWA tests and trials. Visit www.testandtrial.ie or drop by our stand for more information.
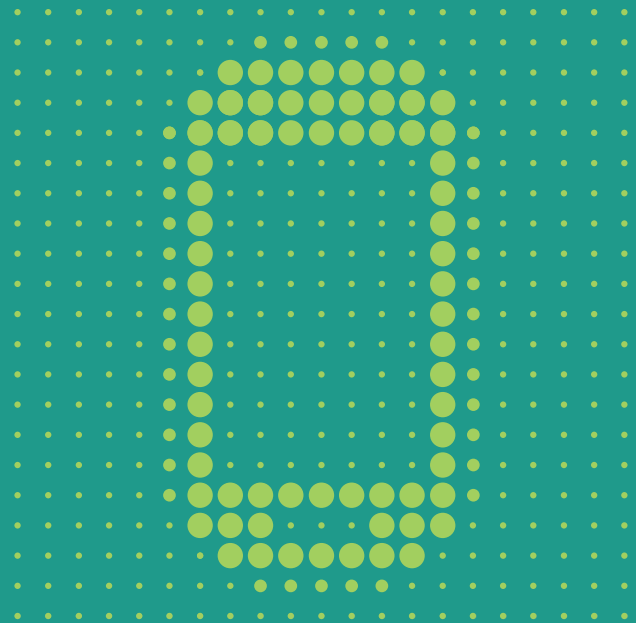
Consumer Engagement

ComReg Consumer Line deals with consumers' queries and complaints via phone, email, online form, webchat and SMS service. In addition to a wide range of information for consumers ComReg offers a value comparison tool www.comreg.ie/compare that enables consumers to make informed choices when deciding to purchase a new service, switch service providers or change their package with the same service provider. This new tool offers increased functionality to consumers including the facility to compare communications service providers' market offerings by average monthly cost, total cost including handset costs, allowances and speed based on the information you enter. There are many additional features including the ability to select a preferred handset type when comparing available packages and to upload your bill to input your usage, download an application on your Android phone that calculates your usage, or choose predetermined usage levels for ease of use.

ComReg also offers an online facility to check the customer care details and other details for all premium rate services called Service Checker. Consumers can input the name or the number of the service that has been charged for and the details are returned with details of the customer service helpline number and email. Visit our stand for a full demonstration and more information.

Strategy and Public Affairs

ComReg's vision for Irish electronic communications is of a sector where consumers and businesses have affordable, high-quality and widespread access to communications services and applications that support their social and economic needs. ComReg's 2017-2019 Strategy Statement sets out who we are as an organisation and presents five Strategic Intents under pinned by 29 Strategic Goals. Whilst our focus is on the next two years, the document identifies and examines key trends which are likely to shape the electronic communications sector and impact our activities up until 2021. Further details of ComReg's activities are available on our website www.comreg.ie.

Copies of the Strategy Statement in both English and Irish, a digital tour of www.comreg.ie and more are available at the Strategy and Public Affairs Stand.

Speaker's Biographies

Seán Kyne TD
Minister for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development and Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. He represents the constituency of Galway West and Mayo South.

Martin Cave
Martin is a regulatory economist specialising in competition law and the network industries. He has published in this field, and has held professorial positions at the Law Department at the London School of Economics, at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, UK, and the Department of Economics, Brunel University, UK. He is currently an inquiry chair at the UK Competition & Markets Authority. He has provided expert advice to governments, competition authorities, regulators and firms around the world, focussing particularly upon the communications industries.

Torlach Denihan
Torlach is Director of TIF the Telecommunications and Internet Federation at IBEC. TIF is the representative body for leading industry and associated interest groups in the field of electronic communications.

Erzsébet Fitori
Erzsébet is Director General FTTH Council Europe. She was Director at the European Competitive Telecommunications Association (ECTA), a trade association representing over 100 pro-competitive operators across Europe. Prior to joining ECTA as Regulatory Affairs Manager in February 2008 Erzsébet was Head of Regulatory Affairs at Telenor Hungary in Budapest.

Speakers Biographies

Karlin Lillington

Karlin is a journalist and columnist with the Irish Times focusing on technology, with a special interest in the political, social, business and cultural aspects of information and communication technologies. She has been a contributor to a wide range of Irish and international publications, including The Guardian, New Scientist, Wired.com, Salon.com, Red Herring, The Scientist and The Sunday Times. She holds a PhD from Trinity College.

David Minton

David is Director at Northern & Western Regional Assembly and has worked extensively in local/regional development nationally and internationally.

Sébastien Soriano

Sébastien is Chairman of Arcep, the French national regulatory authority for telecoms and posts (Autorité de régulation des communications électroniques et des postes). He is also Chairman of BEREC 2017 and was Vice-Chairman in 2016. He has spent most of his career in digital policies, competition and telecoms regulation areas. Prior to his appointment as Chairman of Arcep, he was Special Advisor to the French Minister for Culture and Communication.

William Webb

William is CEO of Weightless SIG, the standards body developing a new global M2M technology. He is a Director at Webb Search, an independent consultancy, President of the IET and a former Director at Ofcom.

Commissioners

Gerry Fahy

Gerry Fahy was appointed as a Commissioner in September 2013. Prior to joining ComReg he held a number of positions including playing a key role in the sale of Eircell to Vodafone in 2001 by the eircom Group. He has been a Director and member of the Vodafone Ireland Board and a member of the Executive Team. During this period he also had stints as acting CEO, Marketing Director and periods of international deployment. He was previously Chair of the Telecommunications and Internet Federation within IBEC. He was appointed Chairperson on 01 March 2017.

Jeremy Godfrey

Jeremy Godfrey was appointed Commissioner in September 2013 and was Chairperson from February 2015 to February 2017. Prior to joining ComReg, he was Government Chief Information Officer in Hong Kong and previously worked in the UK's Department of Trade and Industry, the Cable & Wireless Group and was Director of Strategy and Director of Marketing for Hong Kong Telecom. He also worked for PA Consulting Group where he was a partner in the Hong Kong office. He was based in Hong Kong for twenty years before coming to Ireland to join ComReg.

Kevin O'Brien

Kevin O'Brien was appointed Commissioner in October 2011, and was Chairperson from November 2013 to February 2015. He was Vice-Chair of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) in 2015. Prior to joining ComReg, he held a number of positions within the Civil Service, in particular in the areas of energy, broadcasting and communications policies. He also spent time working in the Ministry of Economic Development in New Zealand.
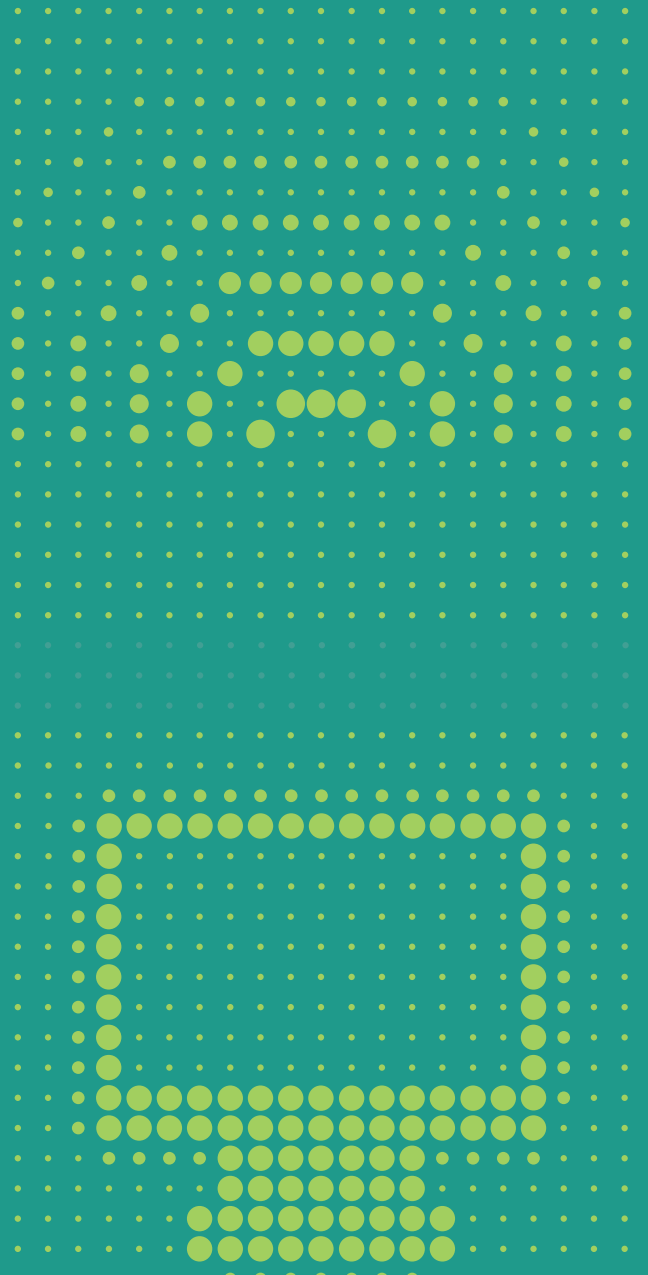
MC

Richard Curran

Richard Curran is a journalist, broadcaster and author. He is the presenter of The Business radio show on RTÉ Radio One and also Dragons Den on RTÉ Television. Richard has been a business journalist for 24 years and is a columnist with the Irish Independent and Sunday Independent.

He has co-written two books, one on Irish entrepreneurs and the other on the collapse of Irish Nationwide Building Society. He has also made several television documentaries for RTÉ including: 'Future Shock: Property Crash' in 2007 and the 'Battle for Rural Ireland in 2015.'

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