



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

Media Release

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2nd November 2000

REGULATOR LAUNCHES NEW “WIRELESS IN THE LOCAL LOOP” COMPETITION – THREE ADDITIONAL LICENCES OFFERED

Etain Doyle, Telecommunications Regulator today (2nd November 2000) announced competition details for three new wireless licences to provide telecommunications services in Ireland. This includes two additional broadband licences and one narrowband licence. The licences will be awarded by tender, using a comparative selection process also known as a “beauty contest”. The terms of the licence will be 10 years and it is expected that the rankings of applicants will be concluded by end of March 2001. This will bring the total number of wireless licences awarded in Ireland to 10. The Regulator decided to proceed with this competition following a public consultation.

Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) sometimes referred to as “Wireless in the Local Loop”, offers a radio based alternative to copper or fibre optic cable in the local loop, which at present connects the majority of residential and business customers to their local exchange. Fixed Wireless Access will accommodate such services as high speed Internet access, multi media, bandwidth on demand and fast file transfer.

The licences on offer are two FWA licences to use spectrum at 28 GHz (currently referred to as broadband) and one FWA licence to use spectrum at 10.5 GHz (currently referred to narrowband).

According to the Regulator “ The issuing of additional FWA licences will facilitate increased competition and choice so that Irish consumers continue to benefit from lower prices and the availability of higher quality services. The strong performance of the Irish economy which exhibits one of the highest growth rates in Europe, is giving rise to an increasing demand for

the delivery of broadband interactive services for both the business and residential markets. An increased range of operators will enable more rapid and widespread response to this demand. By March 2001 Ireland will have awarded 10 such licences in total, ranking us among the top users of such innovative technology in Europe.”

In a previous competition eight FWA licences were offered. Broadband licences were awarded to *eircom plc*, Esat Telecommunications Ltd, Formus Communications Ireland Ltd and Chorus. In the narrowband competition licences were awarded to *eircom plc*, Chorus and Esat Telecommunications Ltd. There were no eligible applicants at the time for the 10.5 GHz licence. No operator will be permitted to hold more than one broadband or more than one narrowband licence, in line with the regulator's responsibility to promote and protect competition in the market for telecommunications in Ireland

Applicants will be evaluated on a similar series of dimensions as was used for the last FWA tender process, e.g. tariffs offered, services rendered, coverage, speed of roll out, quality of service and performance guarantees.

The closing date for receipt of applications will be December 15th 2000. The timetable for running the competition is as follows. However the Director reserves the right to alter the dates.

Event	Date
Launch of Competition	November 2 nd 2000
Question and Answer Phase	November 2 nd – December 1 st 2000
Deadline for submission of tenders	December 15 th 2000
Analysis of tenders	December 2000 – March 2001
Announcement of results	March 31 st 2001

The competition will be administered by the Director, who has established a Steering Group, which is responsible for the evaluation of applications and management of the selection process. Andersen Management International of Copenhagen has been appointed to assist in the competition.

An Information Memorandum (ODTR Document 00/82) is available from the Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation (ODTR) and full details of the licensing process are contained in the tender documentation, which is available from the ODTR on payment of a non-refundable fee of IR£5,000 (€[6.348]).

Further information can be obtained on the ODTR website: <http://www.odtr.ie>

ODTR 00/82 Information Memorandum: Competition for award of Licences to Provide Fixed Wireless Access (FWA)

ODTR 00/47 Extending Choice... Expanding the market for Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) Consultation Paper

ODTR 00/81 Extending Choice... Expanding the Choice for Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) – Response to the Consultation

ENDS

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