



Office of the Director of  
**Telecommunications  
Regulation**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*  
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### **LIBERALISATION NOW A FACT, NOT AN ASPIRATION – CONSUMER CHOICE A KEY DRIVER OF NEW TELECOMS FRAMEWORK**

Liberalisation is now a fact, not an aspiration, the Telecommunications Regulator said today. The movement into a competitive environment is evidenced by the number of new players entering the market, the choice of services they offer, and in the prices for those services. Speaking at the Irish Telecommunications Summit, in Jury's Hotel & Towers, Ballsbridge, she said that she wants to see the aggressive competition manifest in some parts of the market (most notably the corporate sector), expand into all segments of the market.

The key elements of liberalisation are now in place and the Regulator's office is filling out the framework to ensure that it is effective, moving Ireland to the leading edge in terms of telecoms regulation. A key concern in the completion of this framework is to enable choice. "The key to good regulation is to concentrate on ensuring that the market can deliver what consumers need, now and in the future," said the Regulator. "This means taking a strong pro-competition stance and providing for as much choice as possible".

The Regulator is an essential enabler of market development, empowering choices to be made by the market and the consumer. Easy entrance to the market and the facilitation of this through simple, clear and comprehensive licensing regimes has been a feature of the Office's approach. This is already apparent in the licensing standards for liberalised telecommunications licensing, for radio links, for licensing for testing equipment and for cable/MMDS television transmission. Work is in progress on the licensing of satellite links and digital terrestrial television, together with new mobile technology - DCS 1800 and UMTS and wireless local loop licensing.

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The Regulator plans to provide as many market access mechanisms as possible so that market players can choose the mechanisms they consider most appropriate to meet their existing and prospective customers' needs. "As different vehicles provide opportunities that will suit ever-larger numbers of players, consumers will have ever-increasing choice of supplier and range of services" she said.

The effective handling of market operations issues, such as arrangement of low interconnect and other charges for services from Telecom Eireann, having regard to cost orientation requirements, is central to this, ultimately encouraging greater opportunities for user choice in quality of service and range of suppliers.

The Regulator's speech "**Telecoms Competition - Developing a level Playing Field**" ODTR 99/20 can be viewed on the ODTR web-site (<http://www.odtr.ie>).

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