



An Coimisiún um  
**Rialáil Cumarsáide**  
Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

# Implementation of Decision D15/18 on Non-Geographic Numbers (NGNs)

Implementation and Communications Plan

## Information Notice

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**An Coimisiún um Rialáil Cumarsáide**  
**Commission for Communications Regulation**

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## Additional Information

Review of Non-Geographic Numbers Consultation Document	ComReg Document 17/70
Report from DotEcon on Non-Geographic Numbers in Ireland	ComReg Document 17/70a
Non-Geographic Numbers: Consumer Study (B&A and The Research Perspective)	ComReg Document 17/70b
Non-Geographic Numbers: Organisation Study (B&A and The Research Perspective)	ComReg Document 17/70c
Non-Geographic Numbers: Cost Study (B&A and The Research Perspective)	ComReg Document 17/70d
Response to Consultation 17/70	ComReg Document 18/65
DotEcon Response to Consultation 17/70	ComReg Document 18/65a
Submissions to Consultation 17/70	ComReg Document 18/65s
Response to Consultation 18/65 and Decision	ComReg Document 18/106
Submissions to Consultation 18/65	ComReg Document 18/106s
Implementing the New NGN Platform	ComReg Document 19/01

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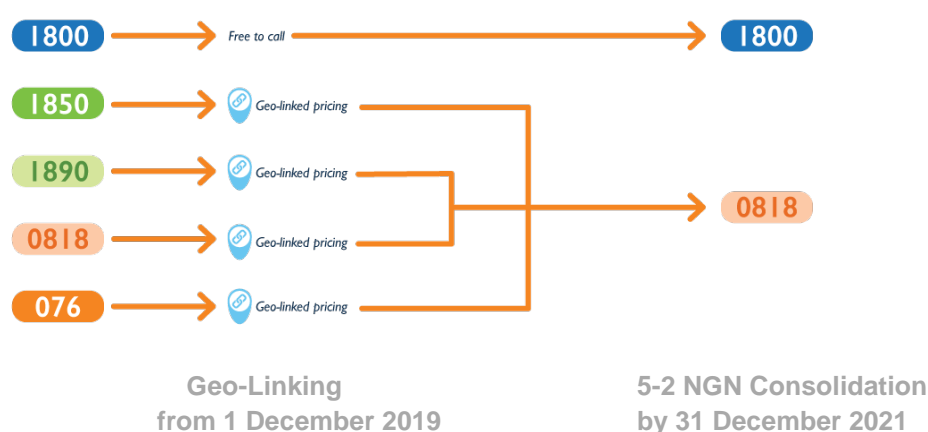
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## 1 Background

1. Telephone numbers are managed by ComReg with the core objective of promoting and protecting the interests of consumers in Ireland. In December 2018 ComReg published Document 18/106 which is a Response to Consultation 18/65 and Decision on Non-Geographic Numbers (“NGNs”).<sup>1</sup>
2. NGNs are telephone numbers used by organisations (‘Service Providers’) to provide services to the public such as helplines and banking. The NGN Decision followed an extensive review of the NGN platform over more than two years, including two rounds of public consultation. Five NGNs ranges were covered in the review - 1800, 1850, 1890, 0818 and 076.
3. The NGN Decision (ComReg D15/18) introduced two measures as shown in Figure 1:
  - **Geo-linking Condition:** this measure is intended to address the retail cost of using NGNs. From 1 December 2019, a call to an 1850, 1890, 0818 or 076 NGN will cost no more than the cost of calling a landline number. This means that if landline calls are included in your “bundle of call minutes” then NGN calls will also be “in bundle”. No separate charge will apply for any NGN call (unless you have used up your bundle of call minutes).
  - **NGN Consolidation:** this measure is intended to address widespread confusion among consumers about differences between the five NGN ranges. From January 1 2022, the five NGN ranges will be reduced to two. The 1850, 1890, 076 ranges will be withdrawn and the 1800 (Freephone) and 0818 range will remain. The 3 year period was set down to allow organisations that use NGNs time to prepare.



**Figure 1: Geo-linking Condition & NGN Consolidation**

<sup>1</sup> [ComReg Document 18/106: Review of Non-Geographic Numbers - Response to Consultation 18/65 and Decision](#)

4. In January 2019 ComReg published Document 19/01, an Information Notice<sup>2</sup> containing an outline plan and next steps for implementing the NGN Decision. In that document ComReg indicated its intention to engage Project Management and Communications Consultants to assist with that next phase of work.
5. ComReg has since appointed Analysys Mason Ltd. as the Project Management Consultant and Pender & Associates (trading as PR360) as the Communications Consultant. Both companies are actively involved in the NGN Implementation work.

## 1.1 NGN Working Group

6. ComReg also stated in Document 19/01 that it would establish a NGN Working Group (NGN WG) to develop and agree a detailed Implementation and Communications Plan and to oversee implementation of the Geo-linking Condition and NGN Consolidation.
7. The NGN WG has since been established. It is comprised of fixed and mobile network operators, ComReg staff, Analysys Mason and PR360. Meetings are chaired by Analysys Mason and are normally hosted in ComReg.
8. A vision for NGN Implementation has been agreed - to successfully deliver the new NGN platform, through positive engagement and collaboration with industry and organisations that use NGNs, and to promote enhanced consumer understanding and usage of 1800 and 0818 numbers.
9. The NGN WG has agreed Terms of Reference, operates on a cooperative and collaborative basis and, where possible, its decisions are made by consensus. To date, seven meetings of the NGN WG have been held. There has been very good attendance and progress has been positive in terms of identifying the tasks and timelines for implementing the NGN Decision.
10. ComReg is most appreciative of the active participation in the NGN WG to date. We acknowledge the complex work involved, the strong level of engagement, and the very useful contributions received. ComReg expects and hopes that this positive cooperation at the NGN WG will continue into the future.
11. The NGN WG has been working through the issues and approaches towards implementing the NGN Decision. Below we set out the current Implementation and Communications Plan<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [ComReg Document 19/01: Implementing the New NGN Platform](#)

<sup>3</sup> [This Implementation and Communications Plan is a working document and may be subject to change if additional tasks, owners and/or timelines are identified at the NGN WG.](#)

## 2 Indicative Implementation and Communications Plan

### 2.1 Purpose

12. The accompanying document, ComReg 19/65a, contains the current NGN Implementation and Communications Plan ('the Plan'). The Plan identifies the tasks that must be carried out in order to implement the NGN Decision, the parties who must carry out each task, and the timeline for completing each task.
13. The Plan sets out tasks for ComReg and for operators. ComReg intends to take forward those tasks into its work planning for the coming years.
14. ComReg is publishing this Plan now so that all fixed and mobile network operators, and in particular those who do not participate in the NGN WG, are fully informed of the various tasks and timelines for their implementation.
15. The goal is to ensure that industry and ComReg work together towards successful and timely implementation of the NGN Decision. The Plan was co-developed by, and has been agreed between ComReg and industry at the NGN WG. This demonstrates the level of cooperation and collaboration to date, in trying to ensure that the NGN Decision is implemented effectively and efficiently.
16. The Plan is a working document and so may be subject to change in future e.g. if additional tasks, owners and/or timelines are identified at the NGN WG. If any timelines are not met the NGN WG will consider and identify, as a group, possible contingencies.

## 2.2 Tasks and Clarifications on the Plan

17. Below we elaborate on the progress on some important elements of the Plan that are already underway. We also highlight particular issues of interest from the NGN WG.

### *Individual Number Assignment System for 1800 and 0818 NGNs*

18. In Document 19/01, ComReg highlighted its intention to develop an Individual Number Assignment (INA) system to allow for individual assignment of 1800 and 0818 NGNs. The INA system would facilitate migration by organisations (or 'Service Providers') which use NGNs in any of the three ranges to be withdrawn (1850, 1890 and 076) to new 1800 or 0818 NGNs.
19. Agreement has now been reached in principle, at the NGN WG, on the design of the INA system. In order to collate the data required to populate the 1800 and 0818 database on the INA system, ComReg is currently progressing an audit of NGNs in order to identify the activity status (e.g. "free", "in use") of all NGNs in the 1800 and 0818 ranges. Data retrieval for the audit is expected by end June 2019.
20. As part of the audit, all 1800 and 0818 NGNs not currently in use will be recovered by ComReg, to allow for their future assignment.
21. In addition and, for the avoidance of doubt, future assignments of 1800 and 0818 NGNs will be on a first come, first served basis as this is deemed most equitable. Operators are reminded, however, that the INA system will make available a wide range of 1800 and 0818 NGNs for future assignment.
22. ComReg and industry plan to continue to work on the INA system and delivery of the INA system is expected during 2019.
23. In the meantime, all operators should note that 1800 and 0818 NGNs are now being assigned by ComReg on an individual number basis. This individual assignment replaces the block assignment process that was previously in place for these ranges. This is a significant change and operators should ensure that their network provisioning processes and systems can cater for it.

### *Numbering Conditions*

24. ComReg plans to publish a revised version of its Numbering Conditions<sup>4</sup> later in 2019, amended to the extent necessary to reflect the NGN Decision.

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<sup>4</sup> [ComReg 15/136R1: Numbering Conditions of Use and Application Process](#)

*Regulation 14(4) of the Universal Service Regulations*

25. As regards implementation of the Geo-Linking measure, some operators sought clarification, at the NGN WG, on the application of Regulation 14(4) of the Universal Service Regulations.<sup>5</sup> ComReg remains of the position that if operators do only what is necessary to give effect to the Geo-Linking Condition, and nothing more, then the customer right of exit under Regulation 14(4) would not apply.

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<sup>5</sup> S.I. No. 337/2011 - European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Universal Service and Users' Rights) Regulations 2011.



### 3 Wholesale Consultation

26. On 22 May 2019, ComReg published its Response to Consultation, Further Consultation and Draft Decision<sup>6</sup> (ComReg 19/46) to address the high wholesale origination rates for certain classes of Non-Geographic Numbers ('NGNs').
27. The Consultation sets out ComReg's preliminary views on the wholesale rates for calls to NGNs and proposes a price control and transparency obligations for the wholesale origination rates for calls to 1800 and 0818 NGNs. Interested parties are invited to respond to the Wholesale Consultation and as per the instructions in ComReg 19/46, by 2 July 2019.

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<sup>6</sup> [ComReg 19/46: Response to Consultation, Further Consultation and Draft Decision: Access to Non-Geographic Numbers: Imposition of price control and transparency obligations](#)

## 4 Next Steps

28. ComReg will continue to engage with industry on implementation of the NGN Decision, through the NGN WG. Fixed and mobile operators, in particular those who offer NGNs to Service Providers, are encouraged to participate.
29. For operators who do not attend the NGN WG or do not offer NGNs, ComReg intends to hold a special briefing event (e.g. information day) to inform them regarding implementation of the NGN Decision. This event is likely to take place in September or October 2019. All fixed and mobile network operators will be informed of further event details in due course.
30. Please direct any comments or queries to [karen.dunne@comreg.ie](mailto:karen.dunne@comreg.ie).