



Media Release- 12 January 2011

## **ComReg launches new consumer website [www.phonesmart.ie](http://www.phonesmart.ie)**

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today launched a new consumer website, [www.phonesmart.ie](http://www.phonesmart.ie), which provides advice on premium rate services (PRS) and their use.

Premium rate services (PRS) are goods and services that you can buy by charging the cost to your mobile phone or landline. [www.phonesmart.ie](http://www.phonesmart.ie) has been set up to explain the types of goods and services, and the costs involved in using them, so that if consumers decide to sign up for one of the services, they know what to expect. Premium rate services include ringtones, sports alerts, TV voting, weather forecasts and competitions.

Features of the new website include a number checker whereby consumers can check the origin of a five-digit shortcode, thus enabling them to contact the service provider directly with their query.

ComReg Commissioner, Mike Byrne, said: *“In July 2010, ComReg assumed responsibility for the regulation of the PRS industry. ComReg’s vision is that consumers of premium rate services (PRS) will be as confident and safe in using PRS as in engaging with best practice retail services. We are delighted to launch this new consumer-focused website that explains, in plain language, what premium rate services are, the costs involved in using them and, if a consumer decides to sign up, what to expect. ComReg considers that, with consumer confidence in place, industry and consumers will benefit as new and innovative services are developed and made available.*

*Protecting and informing consumers is one of the cornerstones of ComReg’s legislative mandate. We believe that [www.phonesmart.ie](http://www.phonesmart.ie) will complement and enhance the range of consumer information available through our other award winning consumer websites - [www.askcomreg.ie](http://www.askcomreg.ie) and [www.callcosts.ie](http://www.callcosts.ie)”.*

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## **Note to Editors**

In July 2010, the Government enacted legislation that provided for the transfer of the regulation of premium rate services (PRS) to ComReg. The total market value of the PRS sector in Ireland is an estimated €72 million.

Following a public consultation, ComReg published its decision, in July 2010, on the scope of PRS regulation and Regulations setting out these decisions and the conditions attaching to PRS licences.

During the period 12 July to 31 December 2010, 5,849 issues were received by ComReg in relation to PRS, of which approx. 87% related to mobile subscription services.

In October/November 2010, ComReg conducted a media campaign to increase public awareness of the risks inherent in certain mobile subscription services, how to stop such unwanted messages and of ComReg's new responsibilities in this area.

On 1 December 2010, ComReg commenced a public consultation on a new draft Code of Practice for the PRS industry.

**ENDS**