



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

Consultative Document
on
The Licensing Process for Point-to-Point Radio Links above
1 GHz in Ireland

Document No. ODTR 98/02

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1. Introduction

The Director of Telecommunications Regulation intends to review the guidelines and application process for licensing radio links above 1 GHz. The current procedures were introduced in July 1997, to take account of the liberalisation of telecommunications infrastructure on 1 July 1997. These procedures are outlined in 'Guidelines for Applicants for Point to Point Radio Link Licences in Spectrum Above 1 GHz' (ODTR Document No. 97/02).

On the introduction of the current procedures, the Director announced that a consultation with industry would take place in early 1998. In order to assist in enhancing and refining the present licensing process for radio links in the light of experience, the Director now invites comments from interested parties. Comments received will be treated as confidential. It should be noted that this consultation does not form part of the licensing process and views expressed will not be assessed as part of the application for any licence.

2. Extent of this Consultation

The focus of this consultation is on the guidelines and associated application forms (copies attached) for point to point radio links above 1 GHz. Also attached (Appendix 1) is additional documentation that provides clarification on radio availability matters outlined in the guidelines.

This consultation is not intended to address the following topics:

- spectrum fees,
- radio links below 1 GHz,
- wireless in the local loop,
- point to multipoint radio links,

as these will be addressed separately at a later date.

3. Spectrum Management and Licensing Process

In recognising that radio link spectrum is a scarce national resource, the Director is obliged to manage its use in an orderly and efficient manner. Following liberalisation of telecommunications infrastructure in July 1997 and taking account of increasing competition, the Director recognised that demand for radio links would increase. The provisions in the current guidelines were designed to respond to this increase in demand by inter alia improving spectrum utilisation. It is expected that the new framework, while imposing technical requirements, will benefit the industry generally.

The guidelines outline a defined procedure for processing applications in accordance with the principles of due process. Furthermore evaluation criteria and material for accepting or refusing applications are identified. These criteria, being applicable to all radio link licence applicants, facilitate the reaching of informed decisions by the Director in an open and transparent manner. The current guidelines were devised to clearly set out the parameters of evaluation which can be applied simply and directly, having regard to the needs of the industry.

The Director recognises that the industry in general, is compliant with the new procedures.

The following table gives details of the status of applications received by the Director during the period, July 1997 to January 1998.

Application Stage	No. of Links	Status
Stage 1 Applications	882	Total Applied for
	0	On hold (awaiting information from applicant)
	120	Being Processed
	94	Not compliant with guidelines / spectrum unavailable
	668	Approved
Stage 2 Applications	292	Total Applied for
	63	On hold (awaiting information from applicant)
	76	Being Processed
	1	Not compliant with guidelines / spectrum unavailable
	152	Approved

It should be noted that out of the 668 links approved under stage 1, 292 links have been applied for under stage 2. Measures are planned to further speed up the throughput of links.

4. Submission of Comments

The Director invites you to provide your comments before 13 March 1998. Submissions in writing should be marked "Radio Link Consultation", for the attention of Ms. Margaret O'Sullivan and addressed to the Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation, Abbey Court, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

This is not a legal document and does not constitute legal advice, and the Director is not bound by it. The contents of this document are without prejudice to the legal position of the Director or her rights and duties under the relevant legislation.