



An Coimisiún um
Rialáil Cumarsáide
Commission for
Communications Regulation

Severe Weather Events - ComReg's Measures

Electronic Communications Services

Information Notice

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Commission for Communications Regulation

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Electronic communications networks (“ECN”) and electronic communications services (“ECS”) play a vital role in Ireland’s economy and wider society. These services are woven into the fabric of all our lives helping us to communicate, socialise, stream media content, and do business. Our reliance on these networks continues to grow, now and into the future, as they increasingly support different aspects of our domestic and work lives¹.
- 1.2 The network infrastructure that carries our ECS by its nature can be vulnerable to certain types of weather. Network operators are building and improving the resilience of their networks, but severe weather events may still lead to outages. With the reliance of society and the economy on ECN and ECS, ComReg considers that the resilience of communication networks is a key concern for Irish businesses and end-users².
- 1.3 ComReg recognises that Storm Éowyn which impacted Ireland in January 2025 was an unprecedented weather event, and while recognising that such extreme events may become more of a norm in the future, we must learn from such events and put appropriate measures in place to minimise future impacts. In this Information Notice, we set out a set of key actions that ComReg has implemented, and is working on, to secure learnings from the event and hopefully mitigate the consequences for a future similar event.
- 1.4 ComReg’s actions are in the context of a wider Government Response, including the establishment of Telecommunications Resilience and Response Group (“T-RRG”). Lead by the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport (“DCCS”), the purpose of the T-RRG is to promote resilience and high availability of Ireland’s telecommunications infrastructure and to provide a coordinated sectoral emergency response capability. The T-RRG work programme covering these aspects is under development.
- 1.5 ComReg is also aware of other initiatives undertaken by OGCI³ that “will help emergency services including Gardaí, fire services, ambulance teams, and civil defence communicate and coordinate more effectively, even in the most remote

¹ ComReg commissioned DotEcon Ltd, along with Analysys Mason in 2023 to assess the economic and societal impacts arising from network incidents in Ireland. The Economic and Societal Impacts of Network Incidents, ComReg Document 23/59a: <https://www.comreg.ie/media/2023/07/ComReg-2359a.pdf>

² In 2022, ComReg commissioned a study by Frontier Economics to consider climate change and its effect on the resilience of telecoms networks and highlights areas for further improvement of the resilience of communication networks in light of climate change. Climate Change and its Effect on Network Resilience – A study by Frontier Economics can be found as ComReg Document 22/100a: <https://www.comreg.ie/media/2022/12/ComReg-22100a.pdf>

³ Office of the Government Chief Information Officer.

locations”⁴ and “ensure that public administrations maximise the benefit from 5G technologies.”⁵

- 1.6 ComReg has also been engaging with Government and industry stakeholders, network operators and retail service providers (RSPs) to develop storm resilience and recovery measures, to provide up to date and accurate information and to ensure consumers rights are upheld.

2 For Consumers

- 2.1 ComReg’s measures to assist consumers are set out below. In this Information Notice the term consumer is used for all end-users of ECS.

2.1.2 Information for Consumers on Preparing for Outages

- 2.2 ComReg is providing information to consumers to assist them in preparing for extreme weather events and outages, which is updated as required.
- 2.3 A webpage has been created [comreg.ie/severeweather](https://www.comreg.ie/severeweather) to inform consumers about how different types of severe weather can impact on communications services and what actions the public can take to prepare, and what they can do during any outages and disruptions to their service that may occur.
- 2.4 ComReg will disseminate this information through multiple communications channels to inform to the public⁶ as required.
- 2.5 ComReg will support the Government’s communications strategy on this topic as required.⁷

2.1.3 ComReg Consumer Support

- 2.6 ComReg Consumer Care is available to consumers who have service issues and have difficulties resolving them with their service providers. Consumer Care also has an exceptional escalation process that can be used during prolonged outages to help expedite service restoration for vulnerable consumers.
- 2.7 Additionally, Consumer Care collects data on common issues and complaints encountered by end-users following severe weather events that can be used to

⁴ [Ministers welcome new emergency communications system to boost rural safety and connectivity](#)

⁵ National Low Latency Platform – see: <https://www.ogcio.gov.ie/en/corporate-pages/services/infrastructure/>

⁶ Example of information provision <https://www.comreg.ie/be-prepared-for-severe-weather-this-winter/>

⁷ Public consultation on the [Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Communications Sector 2025](#)

inform future consumer information campaigns and policy interventions.

- 2.8 In these circumstances, a Consumer Response team within ComReg monitors consumer issues and works with service providers to get information on actions they are taking to minimise the impact on consumers and to uphold consumers' rights.
- 2.9 ComReg Consumer Care is available Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm, and Saturday from 9am to 1pm. Consumers can call 01 8049668 or see other available channels in Annex 1 below.

2.1.4 Reporting Outages and Information on Outages

- 2.10 ComReg is considering service providers' current practices in relation to communication to its customers on service outages, including their provision of accurate information to their customers in accessible and appropriate mediums, channels available by providers giving customers ability to report outages and any improvements they commit to making based on learnings from Storm Éowyn. ComReg will consider this and other inputs and whether service providers' measures are adequate to ensure accurate and timely information and reporting channels or whether a regulatory intervention may be warranted. This would be in the area of minimum quality of service standards in relation to outage information provided by service providers to their customers.⁸
- 2.11 ComReg advises consumers to report ECS outages and to ensure that they note details of when their home/premises electricity service was out and when it was restored.

2.1.5 Alternative Connections

- 2.12 It is important to note that no form of communications technology is 100 per cent resilient. Accordingly, it is better to be prepared and understand that there may be a number of options available to consumers depending on the nature and impact of adverse weather events.
- 2.13 ComReg will engage with RSPs regarding their plans for;
- providing consumers with alternative connections such as mobile broadband modems where possible; and
 - setting up connection hubs in accessible public areas for their customers in the event that service restorations are legitimately delayed.
- 2.14 Service providers may be able to provide temporary communications services to their

⁸ Section 37(1)(c) of the 2023 Act.

customers depending on the underlying cause, nature and duration of the network outages.

- 2.15 Consumers' communications resilience may be increased during adverse weather events ensuring diversity in the supply of consumer's telecommunications services (e.g., having different service providers for fixed, mobile and/or satellite services).
- 2.16 Alternatively, where the mobile network is affected and there is a working Wi-Fi connection⁹, Wi-Fi calling may be an alternative method of communications to make and receive calls. Consumers can enable Wi-Fi calling from their phone's settings, if supported by their mobile provider.

2.1.6 Prolonged Outages and credits/refunds

- 2.17 ComReg has been working to ensure that customers who suffered prolonged outages during Storm Éowyn have refunds/credits applied to their account. Service providers have confirmed that over €1.08 million in refunds/credits has been returned to consumers to date. ComReg continues to investigate service providers in this respect.
- 2.18 ComReg expects that ECS providers will ensure that charges are not imposed on customers for an ECS or product that was requested but not supplied, including where those customers are affected by prolonged outages.¹⁰ ComReg similarly expects that customers that have already been affected by prolonged outages obtain appropriate refunds/credits.
- 2.19 ComReg expects ECS providers to have processes in place to address this issue for their affected customers in a timely manner so that if alternative connections are not provided, charges are not imposed, or refunds/credits are applied as soon as possible.
- 2.20 ComReg advises consumers to contact their service provider in the first instance to confirm the details of the specific approach taken by their service provider and if it applies to them. Following this, consumers that have received no response or are not satisfied with the response from their service provider should contact ComReg's Consumer Care using the contact details below.

⁹ This could be either private or public Wi-Fi.

¹⁰ Section 45 (4) of the Communications Regulation Act 2002 states as follows: "In this section— 'consumer' means a person to whom an electronic communications service or electronic communications product is supplied, otherwise than for the purpose of resupply

3 Network Operations Activities Post-Storm Éowyn

- 3.1 ComReg is focused on the resilience of ECN and ECS, and the analysis of the root causes of significant security incidents in respect of same.
- 3.2 Storm Éowyn stretched processes and resources for the organisations involved, either directly or indirectly, in the delivery and maintenance of ECN and ECS. ComReg was no exception to this and post-Storm Éowyn, ComReg undertook a review of its Incident Reporting processes, leading to the identification of a number of opportunities for improvement.
- 3.3 Several engagements between ComReg and the ECN/ECS providers affected by Storm Éowyn took place. These were in the form of group meetings accommodated by IBEC's Telecommunications Industry Ireland ("TII") forum, as well as subsequent bi-lateral meetings held with a number of providers. These engagements led to productive discussions on issues encountered, lessons learned and opportunities for improvement.
- 3.4 It was identified that the Incident Reporting Portal ("Portal"), used by providers to report the impacts of weather events and network or service incidents would benefit from greater robustness to best facilitate reporting. As a result, the reporting of such network or service incidents is being moved to ComReg's data platform ([ComReg Data](#)). ComReg has already put in place dedicated IT technical support during weather events and published its revised users guide for incident reporting.
- 3.5 During Storm Éowyn, the National Emergency Coordination Group ("NECG")¹¹ requested detailed county by county breakdown of faults experienced on the ECN, in order to better facilitate recovery actions across all involved organisations. This was a departure from previous weather events and was triggered by the unprecedented severity of the storm. Both providers of ECN/ECS and ComReg identified issues with such unrehearsed reporting, and this has resulted in ComReg proposing new draft reporting templates.
- 3.6 All elements of these draft reporting templates have been shared and discussed, in advance, with the providers, affected by Storm Éowyn and with ComReg's parent department, the DCCS, to ensure a common understanding of the information

¹¹ The NECG is the primary government body that coordinates national efforts during severe weather events, such as storms, to restore essential services like power, water, and telecommunications. It brings together government departments and agencies to manage responses and communicate with the public.

required to be submitted under section 11 of the Act of 2023¹². The output from these discussions with providers and other stakeholders, will help shape the forthcoming consultation on the possible improvements in the reporting process and the subsequent revision of the Decision D08/24¹³ (“the Decision”). ComReg intends to consult on the proposed enhancements, new draft templates and the revision of the Decision in the coming weeks.

- 3.7 Arising from the industry engagement, and on foot of a Ministerial request, Mobile Network Operators (“MNO”) provisionally identified a number of top priority (“P1”) sites that lie outside the five cities¹⁴ and, if kept on air or recovered as a priority, would ensure a base level of mobile voice coverage to a large proportion of the population. This list of P1 sites is currently under revision with a view to issuing a formal list to the DCCS-led T-RRG. It has also been discussed with other relevant agencies, in an attempt to secure service continuity from these sites. This would involve better protecting the mobile network elements, hardening power and transmission feeds and ensuring site access is kept open, where possible during weather events. ComReg has shared insights from this site list with the DCCS and will further analyse any revised site list as input to T-RRG as necessary.
- 3.8 As noted above, ComReg’s actions are in the context of a wider Government Response, including the establishment by DCCS of the T-RRG to promote resilience and high availability of telecommunications infrastructure and to provide a coordinated sectoral emergency response capability. While the T-RRG work programme covering these aspects is under development, it is anticipated that it may include aspects such as network and power resilience improvements, site access security, and cross agency cooperation and operational contact networks.
- 3.9 Finally, in recent years as winter has approached, ComReg has engaged in a confidential process with ECN/ECS providers to inform them of the latest EirGrid Winter Outlook published report and to request if this and any subsequent risk of power outages, has been fed into their resilience plans for their networks and services. This process is known as the Winter Check-In. At the start of October 2025, ComReg issued an expanded scope Winter Check-In, covering some of the main aspects from Storm Éowyn and looks forward to the full cooperation of ECN/ECS providers in this important exercise.

¹² [Communications Regulation and Digital Hub Development Agency \(Amendment\) Act 2023, No. 4 of 2023](#)

¹³ <https://www.comreg.ie/media/2024/04/ComReg-2423-D0824.pdf>

¹⁴ Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford.

Annex 1: Consumer Care Contact Details

Our Consumer Care team is available to assist you with your query and complaint from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm on Saturday (excluding public holidays).

Contact us if you have a query or complaint about phone, broadband, postal or premium rate services.

Live Web Chat

www.comreg.ie/advice-information/consumer-care/contact-our-consumer-care-team/

Complaint Form

www.comreg.ie/help-complaints/online-complaint/

Telephone

01 8049668 for consumer queries.

Email our Consumer Care team

consumerline@comreg.ie for consumer queries.

Text

Send a text with the word COMREG to 51500 (standard SMS rates apply) and we will call you back.

Send a text with the word ASKCOMREG to 51500 (standard SMS rates apply), with a brief outline of the issue you need help with, and we will text you back.

IMPORTANT – Please use the keyword ASKCOMREG in all follow up text messages about your issue, including replies.

How to act on behalf of another person (Third Party Authorisation)

If you wish to be authorised to act on behalf of another person, [contact us through our online form](#) to be authorised as a third party.

To read about how ComReg processes your personal information, please see our [Privacy Notice](#).

Irish Sign Language

Irish Sign Language facility is available on request.

Text Relay

You can contact ComReg Consumer Care via text relay. For more information, please visit [ITRS – Irish Text Relay Service](#).

Access Officer

Email: access@comreg.ie

By Post: Access Officer, Commission for Communications Regulation, One Dockland Central, Guild Street, Dublin, D01 E4X0

Telephone: 018049639