



Media Release- 14 December 2005

## **ComReg and Ofcom propose coordinated award of spectrum**

ComReg, together with Ofcom - the telecom regulator for the UK and Northern Ireland, today announced proposals to award licences to use spectrum in the band 1785-1805MHz. This marks the first time the two regulators have adopted a coordinated approach to awarding spectrum, to benefit businesses and consumers throughout the island of Ireland.

Spectrum in the band 1785-1805MHz could be used for innovative new services such as broadband wireless access. The licences are expected to be awarded by auction in 2006.

Radio waves can cross national borders which can present difficult challenges when assigning spectrum in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. For the first time, Ofcom and ComReg have come together to ensure that the key elements of each award, while legally separate in each jurisdiction, will be identical in so far as is practicable.

This will allow operators to use the spectrum more efficiently and to take advantage of economies of scale across a larger market. Consumers could have access to identical services that are provided seamlessly on both sides of the border. An integrated award process might also enable cost-effective provision of wireless services to remote border areas and encourage more balanced regional development.

The key elements of the award are:

- there will be a single licence awarded by ComReg in the Republic of Ireland and another soon after by Ofcom in Northern Ireland;
- both auctions will be decided by a single round of sealed bids and the winning bidder will pay the second highest price bid;
- the licences will be technology and application neutral;
- the licence in Ireland will have an initial minimum period of 15 years;
- the proposed reserve price for the Irish licence is €150,000.

Full details of the joint proposals are in Consultation Document 05/93 available on the ComReg web site at [www.comreg.ie](http://www.comreg.ie).

The deadline for responses to this consultation is 2 March 2006 and interested parties can respond to either ComReg or to Ofcom ([www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)). Responses will be shared between the two regulators and, in a change from ComReg's normal procedures, responses will be published on ComReg's website as they become available.

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