



Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

# **ComReg commences multi-band spectrum award process**

## **Information Notice**

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# 1 Overview

1. The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has today published its response to consultation and information memorandum on an auction to award licences for advanced high speed fourth generation (4G) mobile services.
2. This auction is offering spectrum rights of use across these three critical bands - 800 MHz, 900 MHz and 1800 MHz for the period 2013 to 2030. The spectrum rights of use being auctioned, in particular the rights of use in the 800 MHz and 900 MHz bands, are highly suitable for advanced mobile services, due to their excellent propagation properties which allow for high quality services and wide area coverage plus improved in-building reception.
3. In total, 280 MHz of sub-2 GHz spectrum (i.e. 140 MHz of paired spectrum) will be made available, more than doubling the currently licensed assignments in these particular bands. Hence this award process is a vital step in allowing for the next generation of advanced mobile services to be made available for Irish consumers and businesses from next year.
4. The publication of the information memorandum begins the award process. The award process provides for time during which interested parties may submit questions on the award process. . There will also be a workshop for interested parties. ComReg will assess all interested parties who apply to participate in the award process, in order to ensure there is no inappropriate interconnection between any such prospective bidders. ComReg will also hold practice auctions for each of the qualified bidders.
5. The deadline date for the submission of completed Application Forms and the submission of deposits is Friday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012.
6. To ensure the optimal use of these important spectrum bands, spectrum rights of use in these bands shall be subject to a minimum price of €20M per lot of 5 MHz of paired sub-1 GHz spectrum, and €10M per lot of 5 MHz of paired 1800 MHz spectrum for a 15 year licence.

## 2 Features of award process

7. The main features of the award process are as follows:

- To accommodate the expiry dates of current GSM licence assignments, spectrum rights of use will be auctioned across two time periods, applicable to each of the three bands being auctioned. It is intended that the first period will run from 1 February 2013 to 12 July 2015 and the second period will run from 13 July 2015 to 12 July 2030.
  - If ComReg receives bids for the exact quantity of spectrum that is available (or bids for less than the quantity of spectrum available), these bidders will acquire spectrum at the minimum price.
  - If there is excess demand, and an auction is therefore required, it will be a combinatorial clock auction, meaning that it allows bidders to make packaged bids over multiple rounds of bidding within a prescribed timeframe;
  - The winners of spectrum will be those who make the highest bids (consistent with the rules of the auction);
  - The first phase of the auction will determine the quantity of spectrum that a winning bidder is awarded and the second phase will determine the exact frequencies within the spectrum bands;
  - The second stage of the auction will be a single round of bidding during which winning bidders in the first stage may submit one or more bids, in order to be assigned specific frequencies within the bands in which they have won generic lots.
8. To safeguard competition, there will be limits on the maximum amount of spectrum rights of use that any one bidder can acquire, either as a single entity or in combination with other bidders.
9. The minimum prices for the spectrum rights of use are based on a conservative lower bound of an internationally benchmarked level. Winning bidders will be required to pay a portion of this amount up-front, with the remainder paid annually over the duration of the licence.