



Media Release- 26 September 2006

ComReg consults on Bulk Mail Access for Postal Services

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has today published its consultation paper on access points for Bulk Mail services.

This consultation paper specifically concerns bulk mail access to the postal network. The current position is that users of bulk mail services are restricted in relation to the number of access points. Furthermore the prices on offer locally are not as favourable as those available at the main mail centres.

ComReg believes that there may be tangible benefits for the postal market and its users arising from an expansion of the number of access points that offer full bulk mail services which is more reflective of business needs and concentration – a view that is generally shared by postal consumers in their interaction with ComReg. Such benefits could include a lessening of customer discrimination, volume growth opportunities for An Post, improvements in quality of service and enhanced customer relations. This consultation also seeks to clarify if there is a demand by postal users to have a choice of access points (i.e. multiple access points) at which their bulk mail is accepted.

In order to focus the debate, this consultation paper outlines a list of indicative locations for full bulk mail access based on all major towns and cities, including those listed in the National Spatial Strategy.

An important input to this consultation will be the views of postal users in relation to their requirements for full bulk mail access at these or other locations. A further consideration will be An Post's assessment, as the Universal Service Provider, of the impact on its operations such an expansion would have.

ComReg's consultation will run for five weeks, after which ComReg will make its final decision on the matter. ComReg welcomes the views of all interested parties on the issues raised. The closing date for responses to this consultation is Tuesday 31 October 2006.

The full paper on Bulk Mail Access – ComReg 06/53 – is available on the ComReg website www.comreg.ie

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Note for Editors

“Bulk Mail” means a substantial number of similar postal items which are deposited with An Post, or any other service provider, at the same place and time, to be conveyed and delivered to the addressees indicated on the items.

“Access Points” are defined in the Regulations as physical facilities, including letter boxes provided for the public either on the public highway or at the premises of the universal service provider, where postal items may be deposited with the public postal network by customers. Users are defined as any natural or legal person benefiting from universal service provision as a sender or an addressee.