



Media Release - 17 August 2006

ComReg consults on markets for fixed narrowband access and payphones

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today published the preliminary conclusions of its review of the markets for retail fixed narrowband access. ComReg was obliged to carry out the market reviews under the EU telecommunications framework.

These markets have been notified and accepted by the European Commission. However, before issuing a final decision ComReg has decided that it is appropriate to review the market analysis. This will allow for consideration of any changes or developments in the markets from the time of the initial review.

The current review process concluded that there are two separate markets in Retail Fixed Narrowband Access. The first of these covers mainly access to copper exchange lines and basic rate ISDN services, and the second relates to higher level ISDN access.

ComReg also published a market review on payphone services, which is defined as a separate market to fixed access as it includes both access and calls.

ComReg's preliminary conclusions are that eircom is dominant in all three of these markets due to high market shares, significant barriers to entry and an absence of any countervailing buyer power.

The new regulatory framework obliges ComReg to impose obligations on the operator with Significant Market Power (SMP). The obligations proposed for eircom include:

- The requirement to provide carrier access, carrier select and carrier-pre selection; and a wholesale line rental product;
- Subject to further consultation, a form of a retail price cap on access; and
- Other retail obligations.

ComReg will shortly issue a 'Call for Input' on the Retail Fixed Calls Markets to assess whether the market warrants regulation. ComReg will issue a consultation shortly on a retail price cap as a potential remedy on fixed narrowband access markets, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

The papers are national consultations and seek input from interested parties on the preliminary findings. Comments must be submitted by Friday 29th of September 2006. Both supporting documents in relation to this matter ComReg 06/39 and ComReg 06/40 are available on the ComReg website www.comreg.ie.

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