



01/05/2012

ComReg consults on the provision of telephony services under Universal Service Obligations (USO)

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has published a Consultation Paper entitled 'The Provision of Telephony Services under Universal Service Obligations' (ComReg 12/39).

Eircom is currently designated as the Universal Service Provider until 30 June 2012. As the end of the current designation is approaching, it is now appropriate to address the coming period.

The USO is focused on ensuring that everyone, irrespective of location or income can access basic telecommunications services. It can help those with low incomes who have difficulty in affording such services, consumers with disabilities who need particular services or facilities, and those in rural locations for whom the cost of gaining access to service might otherwise be prohibitive. In addition, ComReg will shortly commence a consultation process regarding proposed measures that would require authorised undertakings to facilitate equivalent access and choice for consumers with disabilities.

This consultation seeks views on how the requirement to ensure universal services should be implemented. It also discusses the potential for the inclusion of broadband in the scope of the USO and the use of alternative designation methods after 30 June 2012 and into the future.

ComReg is now consulting with all stakeholders including industry, the public and consumer representative bodies in order to inform its approach to these important matters. All interested parties should respond to this consultation by 5 June 2012.

The consultation paper (ComReg Document 12/39) is available to download on the ComReg website at www.comreg.ie

All responses to this consultation should be clearly marked, **Submissions to ComReg 12/39**, and should be sent by post, facsimile or e-mail to arrive on or before 5 June 2012, to:

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