



Media Release- 28 May 2008

## **ComReg sets fixed-line quality standards for Eircom**

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today set minimum quality standards for the delivery of the telephone universal service. Eircom is currently the Universal Service Provider (USP) charged with ensuring that all citizens have access to a functional fixed-line telephone service. ComReg is setting binding quality targets for a number of different metrics which will require Eircom to provide consumers with a better and more consistent level of service.

Specifically, ComReg has set standards for:

1. installation times - to ensure that consumers obtain their phone lines in a reasonable time from ordering them;
2. the level of fault occurrence - ensuring that Eircom must reduce the number of faults that occur on the network;
3. the time required to repair faults - ensuring that Eircom must, on average, repair fault lines faster than they currently do.

ComReg has monitored performance in these areas over the last 2 years, and publishes this data on its website [www.comreg.ie](http://www.comreg.ie). The most recent data, covering the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in 2007, is being published today in a separate Information Notice.

Last year ComReg consulted on proposed performance targets for quality of service (Document 07/55). In the Decision Notice published today, ComReg analyses Eircom's performance and the responses received to the consultation, before setting out the improvements required in Eircom's quality of service. These improvements will be based on mandatory and legally enforceable standards:

In relation to installation times, ComReg's concerns include the welfare of customers who are having to wait more than 6 months - and in some cases over a year - for connection to the public telephone network; targets have therefore been set to require all installations to be made within 6 months, and 80% of all requests to be met within 24 hours or 2 weeks, according to the type of request.

With regard to fault occurrence, which can have the effect of leaving individuals or businesses without a functioning telephone service until a repair is made, ComReg is concerned that Eircom's performance has deteriorated over the last two years, that the high levels of faults experienced in 2006 and 2007 compare unfavourably with international experience, and that this poor performance has significant negative consequences for consumers. Specific and binding targets have been set for bringing fault rates down year-on-year, thereby improving users' experience of the telephone service.

For fault repairs, ComReg has moved to tighten up the speed at which repairs are made, so that 80% of repairs must be completed within 2 working days, and 95% repaired by the time agreed with the customer.

ComReg Commissioner Alex Chisholm said: "The targets published by ComReg today will ensure that consumers benefit from better quality fixed-line phone services. Eircom will need to provide telephone connections more quickly, to manage its network so that fewer faults occur, and to repair faults promptly when they do occur. This will be of considerable benefit to residential and business users of the public telephone network, and indeed to the telecoms sector as a whole."

**ENDS**

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