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ComReg sets out details for authorisation of Postal Service providers

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today set out the new procedures for the authorisation of Postal Service providers from 1 January 2004.

As a result of new regulations postal service providers, from January 1st, must be authorised by the ComReg. Under these rules a postal operator with a turnover of more than €500,000 must apply to ComReg for an authorisation. ComReg will grant an authorisation if it is satisfied that the operator can provide a postal service and when the operator has given ComReg a written declaration that it will not infringe within An Post's reserved area.

The regulations will apply to all courier and parcel delivery services with a turnover in excess of €500,000. As a result of the new rules, all postal service providers who have been authorised will be required to draw up procedures to deal with certain matters such as complaints and ensuring the security and confidentiality of the post.

ComReg is requesting all postal operators to whom the new regulation will apply to ensure that they are in compliance with the regulations. Failure to comply with the authorisation procedures is an offence under the new regulations. The penalty for non-compliance is €3,000.

Authorised postal service providers will also pay a levy to fund ComReg's postal activities. An Post will pay 0.25% of its turnover within the universal service area and 0.075% on other postal services. Other postal service providers will pay 0.075% of turnover from postal services. A minimum charge of €1,000 will apply. This will mean a small decline in An Post's contribution while another operator with a turnover of, for example, €10m will pay €7,500. ComReg estimates that this levy will yield about €1.25m next year.

The Chairperson of ComReg, John Doherty, said: "Our objective is to provide a very simple and user-friendly authorisation process which would cause the least disruption while at the same time defining minimum standards within the postal sector".

The full Response to Consultation (ComReg 03/139) is available on the ComReg website.

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