



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

PRESS RELEASE

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COST CUTS TO TELECOMMS COMPANIES **ENABLE CUSTOMER BENEFITS**

The Office of the Director of Telecommunications – the ODTR – today announced measures that are designed to stimulate variety in price and choice of services for consumers, particularly in accessing the Internet. The measures are also designed to ensure a level playing field for Internet Service Providers and other operators in the telecoms market in Ireland.

The core of today's decision is that the Regulator has set out the principles governing what costs *eircom* can recover from other operators and what costs it cannot, for services using non-geographic numbers – that is numbers not associated with a particular geographic area, for example LoCall and Freefone. *eircom* has calculated charges in accordance with these principles resulting in significant savings for operators. The Regulator today welcomed these reductions which are in the region of one third to one half for some of the rates. With ISPs and other service providers competing in a free market, these savings should benefit the consumer.

The Regulator said:- "I am very pleased to see these new rates. They should ensure that *eircom* and the other operators will compete fairly and vigorously in the best interests of Internet users. Ultimately, it is competition that gives power to the consumer and drives prices down.

"I wish to thank the members of the Industry Forum - telecommunications providers including *eircom* and Internet Service Providers - for the very considerable work they have put into this topic."

MORE

The Regulator has noted the debate on the issue of *eircom's* 1891 service, and the suggestions on the part of some OLOs that this service be withdrawn or modified. The Regulator notes that the grounds for these objections related to a number of issues including allegations of below cost-selling. She indicates that she has not found evidence of this to date, but will be reviewing the matter given changes in interconnection rates generally. A key consideration underlying the Regulator's decision is the benefit to consumers arising from the ability of players to provide a variety of access services to consumers.

ENDS

ODTR 00/17 - "Interconnection for calls destined for Internet Services and Number Translation Codes – Decision Notice D4/00" can be viewed on the ODTR web-site (<http://www.odtr.ie>).