



Commission for
Communications Regulation

Information Notice

ComReg Interactive Tariff Guide

**Information Notice on plans to develop an online
consumer tariff guide**

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1 Introduction

At our recent consumer conference ‘Serving the e-consumer’, ComReg announced plans to develop an interactive tariff guide that will enable consumers to compare the cost of the range of communications services on offer in the market. ComReg is undertaking this initiative as part of its role to promote the interests of consumers, promote the provision of clear information and in particular, transparency of tariff information.

Through ComReg’s own market research and from direct contact with consumers, it is evident that consumers place a heavy emphasis on the price of services when choosing a communications provider. As competition has intensified, the range of tariff options being presented to consumers has become increasingly diversified. Consumers can benefit from this increased choice provided they can obtain, understand and compare the range of tariff options available to them in light of their communications needs.

Having examined successful tariff sites in use across a number of European countries, in particular, those sites which are operated by National Regulatory Authorities, ComReg has identified an approach for the introduction of the guide, and has issued a tender for its development. The interactive tariff guide is primarily aimed at residential and non-business consumers and will feature the range of fixed, mobile and internet tariffs available. It will be accessible online and will provide an independent comparison tool which can be used by consumers as a guide for evaluating different tariff options based on the information they provide regarding their usage.

ComReg has written to and met with a number of authorised operators to brief them on our approach. ComReg welcomes the strong commitment expressed and looks forward to working with industry to ensure the successful implementation of this initiative. ComReg also intends to meet with a number of consumer organisations to seek their input on the introduction of the guide.

This purpose of this information notice is to advise consumers, their representative groups and the broader telecommunications industry on the planned approach. More detailed information is available through the tender document which is also available on our website.

2 Description of the Interactive Tariff Guide

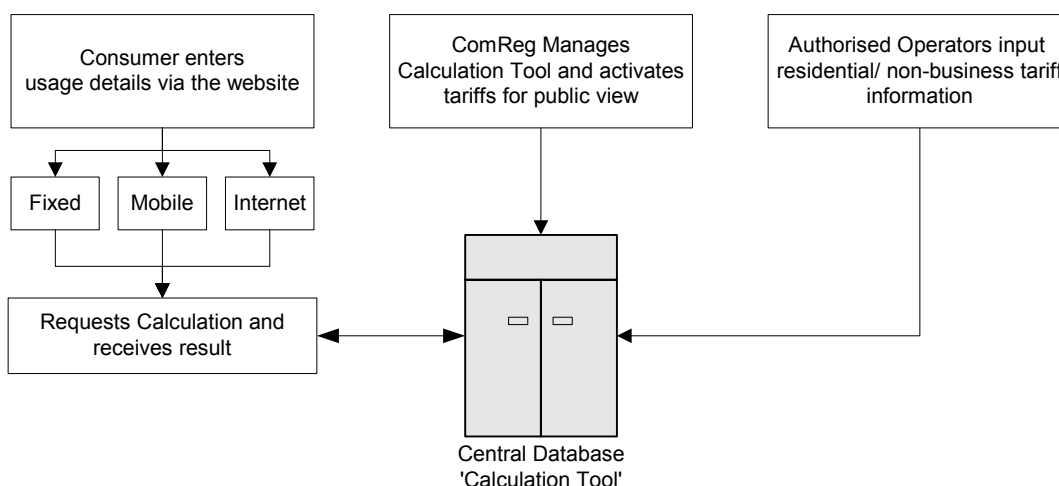
2.1 Site Structure

The proposed structure for the guide is set out in Figure 1 below. Consumers will access a website and will enter usage details such as the typical number of minutes, the number of calls they make according to call types and other information on their calling pattern. Once this information has been entered they can then request a price comparison based on their usage details and they will be presented with a range of tariff options that suit their usage requirements.

A key feature of this site will be to ensure that, from an operators perspective it is easy to maintain. In this regard, operators will be able to easily enter their tariff data via their own private secure extranet facility. In addition, operators will be able to use their private site to assess how ‘test tariffs’ would rate against live tariffs featured on the site.

ComReg will check and publish operator tariff submissions and periodically check that tariffs are up to date and accurate.

Figure 1: Site structure



2.2 Services Featured

A broad range of services will be featured on the Interactive Tariff Guide including Home Phone, Mobile and Internet Services. The guide will facilitate the provision of interactive usage based tariff comparisons for the following services:

- Fixed Telephony: Line rental, local/ national/ fixed to mobile calls and calls to a selection of international destinations
- Mobile Telephony: Access and national calls, SMS, MMS and GPRS
- Internet: Pay as you go, subscription, flat rate options and broadband

2.3 Input Required from Operators

While ComReg has the legal powers to require participation by operators, a co-operative approach is being adopted towards implementation. ComReg has already briefed a number of operators who provide telecommunications services to residential and non-business consumers about the interactive tariff guide and has received a commitment to provide information that will assist in this initiative.

In the coming weeks, ComReg will be requesting operators to provide information on customer usage patterns which will be used as an input to the pricing model. Operators will also be required to input and maintain details of their tariff options once the site has been developed.

While many operators have been informed that the interactive tariff guide is under development, others who may not be aware, may wish to contact ComReg to seek further information. More detailed information is also available in the tender document which is available on the ComReg website www.comreg.ie

2.4 Operators that will feature on the guide

Operators offering fixed, mobile and internet services to residential/ non business consumers will be able to upload their tariff information onto the website. In due course, ComReg will provide each participating operator with a briefing on the processes and procedures for the interactive tariff guide including criteria for inclusion, information requirements and details on system operation.

3 Next Steps

ComReg has today published, on its website an invitation to tender for the development of the Interactive tariff guide. The tendering period will close on 23rd of December 2004 after which ComReg intends to select the winning tender.