



Media Release- 10th January 2003

Irish Consumers to keep Mobile Number when moving Operator from July 2003

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has taken steps which will enable Irish mobile subscribers to retain their existing mobile number if they decide to change operator by July 2003 – what is known as Mobile Number Portability (MNP).

In an Information Notice issued today, ComReg set out the requirements on mobile operators to have implemented a full commercial launch of MNP *no later than 25th July 2003*. While ComReg was anxious to have the facility introduced earlier than this date, the mobile operators have informed us that despite a concerted effort on behalf of the industry, they cannot commit to a launch date for MNP before June 2003. The direction issued today obliges the operators to introduce MNP by 25th July 2003. ComReg will continue to monitor the progress of industry in relation to the stated deadline through the industry Mobile Number Portability Committee and will work with the industry in the development of the product for launch at the earliest possible date.

The Chairperson of the Commission, **Etain Doyle**, noted the technical work already completed by industry and the ongoing commitment of the mobile operators but expressed regret that this service would not be available to the Irish public until mid 2003. “The ability of Irish consumers to move mobile operator while keeping their existing number will have a huge impact on consumer behaviour in the mobile market. Customers will not have to incur extra costs or inconvenience while moving to the operator offering the lowest price while providing the highest quality of service. Mobile Number Portability is very important to competition in this market.”

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