



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

MEDIA RELEASE

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ODTR Conference looks to the Future “Regulation facilitates not dictates the future”- Telecoms Regulator

Almost 200 delegates attended a conference in Dublin today (26th October 2000) organised by the ODTR entitled “ New issues in the Telecoms Sector 2002 – 2010” specifically aimed at identifying and prioritising new issues facing the sector with a view to developing future regulatory plans. This highly interactive conference specifically looked at global trends and developments over the next decade and considered how Ireland can achieve the maximum overall economic prosperity arising from its communications sector.

The format for the day consisted of expert presentations on the critical commercial, technical and sectoral issues facing telecommunications companies supported by a series of focused and interactive workshops. Key national and international speakers addressed the conference.

- Issues that arise from changing market forces and how these will impact on the future regulatory environment (Kevin Power, Chairman of the Board of European Competitive Telecommunications Association (ECTA))

- How technological and infra-structural developments will influence the future growth of the telecoms sector (Allan Tumolillo, Senior Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, Probe Research Inc.)?
- How sectoral changes will interact with policy and regulatory frameworks (David Cleevely, Managing Director, Analysys Group)
- International and National forces shaping the development of the sector in Ireland (Aidan Hodson, Department of Public Enterprise)
- Nick Koumarios, entrepreneur and Irish Telecoms expert acted as Conference Moderator and gave the closing address.

Speaking at the conference, Eoin Doyle, Telecommunications Regulator said “Regulation facilitates not dictates the future. We need to understand potential opportunities and discontinuities for 2010 in order to plan for 2002. We need to recognise that it will be a combination of forces – technology, markets, and consumer demand – that will determine the future shape of our sector, and the way in which the regulatory framework needs to evolve.”

She continued “ looking ahead and planning for the future, especially in such a dynamic sector as this is necessary but also very challenging. The very fact that we are holding this conference today, inviting those who are shaping the future of the information, communications and technology sectors in Ireland to help us map out an ambitious, forward-looking agenda, is itself evidence that we are determined not to rest on our laurels. While much has been achieved in two years of liberalisation – much remains to be done.”

At today's conference convergence features prominently. As we look around the World, there are many examples of convergence such as broadcasting and telephony, fixed and mobile convergence and globalisation. For example, gathering and re-transmitting of programmes over the Internet is being tested. If successful such developments would clearly extend the utility of the Internet and compete with other types of broadcasting. In the US, a satellite service company is reported to be working with a software company and an electrical retailer, to provide always on, two-way, high-speed internet access via satellite. In the area of mobile communications new services will soon be launched which not only combine voice and data images but also provide consumers and service providers with information about the precise location of the handset, or whatever device the customer happens to be carrying.

ENDS

Issued By

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