



Office of the Director of  
**Telecommunications  
Regulation**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*  
7th March, 2001

### **New Licensing Structure for Satellite Services**

Etain Doyle, Telecoms Regulator today (7th March 2001) announced an important addition to the licensing structure for satellite services in Ireland. International telecommunications connectivity is facilitated by the new Teleport Facilities Regulations with innovative co-ordination measures to overcome complexities and delays often faced by operators.

Satellite has the capability to cater for a wide range of telecommunications users, from the individual domestic Internet user to the large-scale international telecommunications operator. Satellite communications are commonly used to operate private corporate networks.

According to the Regulator “ Satellite Communications, which have traditionally been used for long distance telephony and television relay or broadcasting purposes, have since adapted to accommodate modern multimedia and internet applications and offer a viable alternative for many applications to fixed, cable and other wireless technologies”

She continued “The satellite earth station licensing framework facilitates access to an ever-increasing range of satellite services that are becoming available, including broadband applications of the future. These new regulations, which were signed by the Director recently with the consent of the Minister for Public Enterprise, provide a flexible structure for the licensing of major teleport facilities with the capability of carrying and relaying huge volumes of voice and data traffic to a range of satellites and hence to other countries.

### **Satellite Regulations:**

The existing Fixed Satellite Earth Station Regulations<sup>1</sup> apply to satellite earth stations, operating from fixed points on the earth. This also includes transportable earth stations that are commonly used for Electronic News Gathering (ENG). The licensing scheme is straightforward and is designed to cater for small networks; examples of usage include satellite news gathering, betting, and product support for major car manufacturers.

Certain satellite earth stations are exempt from the requirement to hold a licence, these include domestic receive-only earth stations that are used for satellite TV reception and other types of small-scale installations. Mobile and many personal communications satellite terminals are also exempt from licensing under this structure.

### **Teleport Regulations:**

Under these regulations a Teleport is an international telecommunications facility which can provide connectivity between satellite networks and national terrestrial networks and consists of at least three satellite earth stations which are each capable of operating to more than one satellite. The Teleport Facilities Regulations<sup>2</sup> are designed to facilitate the co-ordinated and cohesive development of such medium to large-scale projects, which would be expected to be of great economic benefit to their surrounding regions.

These regulations offer potential operators an innovative structure providing flexible co-ordination process where the maximum number of satellites may be internationally co-ordinated at the one time for the site and brought into use at a later date. It makes the most of the flexibility offered by the earth stations on the teleport site and allows the operator to make full use of 'off peak' deals available from satellite operators.

A key feature of the Teleport Facility Regulations is the five-year duration of their licence compared to the usual one year renewable term for other licences issued under the Wireless Telegraphy Act. This extended licence term is in recognition of the significant investment likely to be incurred in establishing and maintaining a Teleport facility.

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<sup>1</sup> Wireless Telegraphy (Fixed Satellite Earth Stations) Regulations, 2000, (SI Number 261 of 2000)

<sup>2</sup> Wireless Telegraphy (Teleport Facility) Regulations, 2001 (SI number 18 of 2001)

Both the Satellite Regulations issued in September (2000) and Teleport Regulations issued in February 2001 can be viewed on the ODTR website in the Legislation section at [www.odtr.ie](http://www.odtr.ie).

**ENDS**

**Issued by:**

**Brigid Smyth,  
Public Affairs Manager,  
ODTR**

**Ph           01 8049639  
Mobile      086 8270905**