



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Opportunities for Broadband Roll Out on the Way

In order to stimulate broadband roll-out, the Telecoms Regulator Etain Doyle is introducing new licencing regimes for fixed wireless access (FWA). One of these will provide a simplified system for local and regional licensing on a first come first served basis for FWA in the 10.5GHz band, for which competitively priced equipment is available.

A second initiative will involve additional spectrum being made available for licence-exempt W-LANs (wireless local area networks) in the 5.8GHz band. Users will now be able to establish networks with significantly higher power levels than in the existing W-LAN bands at 5GHz and 2.4GHz thus facilitating greater coverage and further enhancing the choice of options available for WLANs.

Both of these initiatives are aimed at enabling fast and flexible roll-out of wireless access to encourage increased availability of broadband services. Telecom operators will now be able to offer tailored localised services competitively.

The Telecoms Regulator also announced today, Friday 31st May 2002, that she would be rationalising the existing licensed broadband FWA spectrum in the 26 GHz band to provide them with greater flexibility in frequency planning. She is also considering designating part of the 26GHz band review spectrum for point to multipoint or multipoint to multipoint (mesh) applications, for FWA or other services. The licensing regime for such systems will be developed shortly.

The new licencing initiatives introduced today are a response by Etain Doyle to the recent consultation paper on *Expanding Opportunities for the Development of Broadband Services using Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) Technologies*. According to the Regulator, "The consultation confirmed our belief that there is continued interest in the use of radio to deliver broadband telecommunications services, in spite of the recent downturn in the market. These latest initiatives complement the existing national licensing framework and provide new

opportunities for local roll-out of wireless broadband networks, using both licensed and licence-exempt radio spectrum.”

Full details of the new FWA initiatives can be found in the response document ODTR 02/43 which can be found on the ODTR web site at www.odtr.ie.

ENDS

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Note to Editors

- The ODTR is now planning to permit licence-exempt WLANs to operate in the 5.725 – 5.875 GHz band, with a power limit of up to 2 watts (eirp), providing extended coverage and capacity and further expanding the options for licence-exempt wireless access services.
- Commercial and private telecoms services can be provided in licence exempt spectrum in the 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz frequency bands, subject to compliance with relevant European standards and regulations. Licence-exempt spectrum is shared with other users such as private wireless local area networks (WLANs), short range devices and industrial, scientific and medical equipment. Unlike licensed FWA services, no protection from interference can be claimed for licence-exempt radio services.
- For a broad visual overview of spectrum use go to www.odtr.ie – Documents 2002, 02/43 - click on Appendix D.