



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
22nd April, 1999

NEW PROPOSALS TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF WEB ACCESS

New proposals which seek to facilitate the development of a thriving Irish Internet market were issued by the Director of Telecommunications Regulation, Etain Doyle, today. The Regulator aims to develop a regime which will help drive increasing use of Internet in Ireland and bring Ireland closer to the vision of being a centre of e-commerce excellence.

The Regulator is seeking to establish the extent to which regulatory action is required to set an interconnect regime for dial-up Internet access services. Based on a set of clear regulatory principles, a number of scenarios are proposed which are intended to facilitate the development of a variety of consumer oriented innovative access and payment methods for Internet services. The Regulator aims to put in place a regime that proves sufficiently flexible to allow competing service providers to differentiate their service offerings, ensuring true competition in this market to the benefit of all users.

“The Internet is redefining the way people communicate with each other, the way they carry out business transactions and the way they seek information. There is little question that the importance of the Net will increase in coming years.” said the Regulator. “This makes the Internet an increasingly important driver in our economy. Electronic commerce over the internet is not a pipe dream - it is a reality. In fact at the pace that the telecommunications sector moves, it is likely to become an accepted and expected part of business in a very short time.”

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The Regulator went on to say “Ireland must ensure that it is in a position to play its part in the new e-commerce world, so that the benefits of e-commerce are enjoyed by all Irish people. Most importantly, we must ensure that our economic success to date is not undermined by a hesitation or lack of ability to embrace new technologies and new ways of doing business. Dial-up access to the Internet is the method by which most residential users and small businesses first access the Internet, and I am anxious to ensure that the development of these services is encouraged and made possible by the right underlying regulatory regime.”

The consultation paper, "**Interconnect for calls destined for Internet services and number translation codes**" (ODTR 99/25) addresses the complex issues surrounding Internet access and other services such as premium rate and freephone calls through the use of non-geographic number codes. The document can be viewed on the ODTR web-site (<http://www.odtr.ie>). Comments on the measures proposed in this consultation by the Regulator are required by Friday 4th June 1999.

ENDS