



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

PRESS RELEASE

NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENSING REGIME NOW IN PLACE

Applications for licences to cover the newly liberalised telecommunications market are now being accepted, the Director of Telecommunications Regulation, Ms. Etain Doyle, has announced.

‘This is a very important development in the future of the Irish telecommunications market and will now enable me to licence by 1st December companies submitting valid applications’ the Regulator said. *‘The co-operation and input from the industry and others over the past 5 months has helped to ensure that the final piece of the jigsaw for the new licensing regime is now in place. I am grateful for the considerable effort given to the consultation process at a time when all players are busy preparing their own commercial plans for the new era’.*

The Minister for Public Enterprise, Mrs Mary O’Rourke T.D., announced the ending of the derogation in May. Adds Ms. Doyle - *‘The timetable set for liberalisation by the Minister was very challenging but I am very pleased that my Office has achieved the ambitious targets set for it’.* The Regulator expressed her appreciation of the major efforts of her team who have worked very hard to complete the process and to users and those in the industry who had responded to the consultative process. Operators can now look forward to having licences issued to them for 1st December.

Referring to the type of licensing that has been put in place by her office the Regulator said *‘I believe that the type of regulation that has been developed will allow competition to work*

and will help encourage market entry. It will also herald a fast transition to an era where consumers are offered the best possible telecoms services at an affordable price'

The licences themselves are designed to ensure that the rights and needs of consumers are protected whilst ensuring that services are provided in a manner consistent with Irish and EU law. The Regulator has inserted in all new licences conditions governing quality of service and codes of practice to ensure that all customers are aware of their rights and entitlements. The Director intends to publish a list of those who have been awarded licences and a contact within each company licensed to make it easier for consumers to have issues of concern addressed by the company in the first instance.

The Regulator will consider applications received by her office between the 27th October and 3rd November for award by the liberalisation date. Her office will also endeavour to process applications received after this date in time for 1st December. Revised guidance notes to accompany the application forms have also been published and the Regulator has asked that these be consulted carefully before submitting any application, and that applications be submitted on the correct (and revised) application form. These documents, plus a report on the consultation on the text of the licences, along with the final licence texts, are available on the ODTR website (www.odtr.ie).

ENDS

28th October, 1998