



Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

# **Proposed revision of the Register of Users on the Managed Digital Radio Services Network**

**Consultation**

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# 1 Introduction

1. In August 2008, the Commission for Communications Regulation ('ComReg') issued a licence to Tetra Ireland Ltd for the provision of a Managed Digital Radio Services (MDRS) network. The MDRS network is for the exclusive provision of digital radio communications services to State security and emergency services and to non-commercial bodies engaged in the provision of services to State agencies or related ancillary services.
2. Following the award of this licence to Tetra Ireland ComReg published Information Notice 08/68 (subsequently revised and published as 08/68R1<sup>1</sup>) listing the organisations and agencies permitted to use the MDRS network. This document is known as the "Register of Users" and any additions to this list, and consequently to the MDRS Network, can only be made with the prior approval of ComReg.
3. In November 2012 Tetra Ireland submitted a request to ComReg seeking to add a number of users to the Register of Users. This Information Notice lists the proposed additions to the Register of Users, details the maximum number of handsets to be operated by each user and the circumstances in which these handsets will be used.

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<sup>1</sup> ComReg document 06/68R1 Revised register of Users on the Managed Digital Radio Service Network

## 2 Discussion

4. In August 2008, the Commission for Communications Regulation ('ComReg') issued a licence to Tetra Ireland Ltd for the provision of a Managed Digital Radio Services (MDRS) network. This licence was issued under the Wireless Telegraphy (Use of the band 380 - 400 MHz by Emergency Services) Regulations 2008 Statutory Instrument 324 of 2008 ("The Regulations"). The Regulations Define the MDRS network as meaning "*...the network that will be used exclusively to provide digital radio communications services to State security and emergency services and to non-commercial bodies engaged in the provision of services to State agencies. The MDRS Network may also be used by any electricity or gas utility undertaking that is making essential and urgent repairs to its network, in an emergency situation only.*"
5. The Regulations define "Emergency Service " as meaning "*An Garda Siochána, the fire brigade services, the ambulance services, the boat and coastal rescue services (including the rescue services provided by the Air Corps), and the mountain and cave rescue services.*"
6. In November 2012 Tetra Ireland contacted ComReg seeking permission to add a further 14 Agencies with a total of almost 500 users on to the MDRS Network. While ComReg is currently in discussions with Tetra Ireland regarding a number of the Agencies proposed to be added to the Tetra Network it is satisfied with the proposed addition of the Coast Guard, Mountain Rescue, ESB and Bord Gais on the following terms.
7. Regarding the request from Tetra Ireland to add both the Coast Guard and Mountain rescue to the MDRS Network, ComReg notes that both of these services are specifically mentioned in the definition of "Emergency Services" within The Regulations. As such ComReg is of the view that it is appropriate that both of these agencies be added to the MDRS Network.
8. Tetra Ireland has also requested that both ESB and Bord Gais be added to the MDRS network with a number of handsets allocated to each utility. ComReg again notes that the definition of the MDRS network in The Regulations makes provision for electricity and gas utilities to use the network in emergency situations only and as such ComReg considers it appropriate that they be permitted access to the MDRS network. However ComReg would emphasise that the use of these handsets is strictly for emergency use such as "black start" operations and must not be used for day-to-day operational communications. To clarify, such utility undertakings cannot use the MDRS Network when carrying out regular repair and maintenance work

9. ComReg is therefore proposing to add Coast Guard, Mountain Rescue, ESB and Bord Gais to the Register of Users on the MDRS network in categories as set out in Table 1 below.

<b>Type of service</b>	<b>Department/Agency</b>	<b>Operational Agency/Division</b>	<b>Maximum Number of users/units</b>
<b>Emergency services</b>	<b>Department of Transport</b>	<b>Coast Guard</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Emergency services</b>		<b>Mountain Rescue</b>	<b>30 - 40</b>
<b>Emergency services</b>	<b>Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources</b>	<b>ESB</b>	<b>100 - 150</b>
<b>Emergency services</b>	<b>Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources</b>	<b>Bord Gais</b>	<b>120</b>

**Table 1: Proposed additions to the MDRS network.**

Q.1. Do you agree with ComReg's proposal to add Coast Guard, Mountain Rescue, ESB and Bord Gais to the Register of Users on the MDRS network?

## 3 Submitting Comments

10. The consultation period will run for period of 4 weeks commencing **6 June 2013** and closing **4 July 2013**.
11. Responses must be submitted in written form. If responses are submitted electronically, they must also be unprotected so as to facilitate online publication. In submitting any response, please also set out your reasoning and all supporting information for any views expressed.
12. Finally, it is sometimes necessary for respondents to provide confidential information in their submissions. Confidential information must be clearly identified as such. ComReg will publish all of the responses it receives to this consultation, subject to its guidelines on the treatment of confidential information<sup>2</sup>.
13. All responses to this consultation should be clearly marked:- “Submission re ComReg 13/54” and sent by post or e-mail to arrive on or before 5pm on **4 July 2013** to:

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 05/24 at <http://www.comreg.ie/fileupload/publications/ComReg0524.pdf>