



Commission for
Communications Regulation

Provision of Access to a Text Relay Service

1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016

Information Notice

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An Coimisiún um Rialáil Cumarsáide

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Text Relay Service

1. On 8 July 2015, the Commission for Communications Regulation (“ComReg”) issued a decision D04/15 to designate Eir, in accordance with Regulation 6, 7 and 8 of the Universal Service Regulations¹ to continue to provide the existing Text Relay Service (“TRS”) and Text Rebate Scheme until 30 June 2016.
2. Eir currently provides the following services to end-users who are hearing and/or speech impaired:
 - A Text Relay Service providing facilities for the receipt and translation of voice messages into text and the conveyance of that text to the textphone of customers of any operator, and vice versa².
 - A rebate scheme whereby, as a result of the time taken to make a text telephone call, equality of payment for deaf text telephone users can be assured.³
3. On 30 December 2015, ComReg issued decision D09/15 which applies to all service providers with more than 100,000 subscribers, i.e. 90% of landline providers and more than 95% of mobile providers, to provide access to an enhanced TRS. This Decision brings increased accessibility with text relay services now being available on a range of electronic devices including minicom, fixed-line, mobile, personal computer and tablet. All service providers are obliged to comply with the Decision by 1 January 2017.
4. In addition, those service providers are also obliged to provide a rebate scheme to their consumers who on 30 December 2015 were availing of, and registered with, the National Association for the Deaf Programme and using a minicom device.
5. On 22 June 2016, Eir agreed to voluntarily continue the current TRS and Text Rebate Scheme up to 31 December 2016, absent any obligations. This covers the interim period between the expiration of Eir’s current obligations and the obligations on all relevant service providers to be complied with by 1 January 2017.
6. ComReg welcomes Eir’s agreement as it provides continuity of this important service for end-users who are hearing and speech impaired.

¹ S.I. No. 337/2011, *European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Universal Service and Users’ Rights), Regulations 2011 Regulation*

² Vice versa means providing facilities for the receipt and translation of text from textphones into voice messages and the conveyance of those voice messages to customers of any operator.

³ Decision D09/14 contained in ComReg document 14/70: *Universal Service Obligation: Measures for Disabled End-users*.