



Office of the Director of  
**Telecommunications  
Regulation**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*  
17<sup>th</sup> May, 1999

### **REGULATOR DESIGNATES TELECOM ÉIREANN AS THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROVIDER**

The Director of Telecommunications Regulation has designated Telecom Éireann as the universal service provider for a defined number of essential telecommunications services. As a result, Telecom Éireann will now be obliged to provide the designated services, on request, to all telephone users in the State at an affordable price and independent of their geographical location.

The services which come within the scope of the designation are: connections to the fixed public telecommunications network and access to telecommunications services; the provision of public payphones; and the provision of directories and directory enquiry services.

The requirements to designate a universal service provider, and the services covered by such designation, are set out in regulations<sup>1</sup> introduced by Mary O'Rourke, T.D., Minister for Public Enterprise, which came into operation on 15 April 1999. The designation replaces the existing obligations on Telecom Éireann which were introduced in 1983<sup>2</sup> and are revoked under the new Regulations.

**MORE**

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<sup>1</sup> European Communities (Voice Telephony and Universal Service), Regulations, 1999 (S.I. No. 71 of 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Section 14 of the Postal and Telecommunications Act, 1983.

On making the designation, the Regulator, said “as communications becomes of increasing importance in everyone’s life, the designation of Telecom Éireann as USO provider is a key step in giving effect to the policy enshrined in the new regulations.”

The document (**ODTR 99/31**) setting out the details of the designation is available on the ODTR’s website: [www.odtr.ie](http://www.odtr.ie).