



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

MEDIA RELEASE

28th January 2002

Regulator Gives Go-Ahead to SMS Codes

The ODTR today (28th January 2002) announced details of a new and enhanced SMS service which will allow for a range of new mobile services to be offered by both mobile operators and service providers. Ireland is likely to be the first country in Europe with a fully comprehensive framework developed for the provision of such services.

The ODTR has decided to open up dedicated 5 digit codes which will greatly improve the services mobile operators offer to their customers. These 5-digit codes will be available from mid February 2002. This framework will allocate an initial set of the new short codes to the Operators and Service Providers, allowing the operator to provide the service more rapidly. Initially 4,100 codes will be offered with another 4,900 being available for opening as soon as the first are fully consumed.

The new services could include

- Event-driven content - e.g. goal-by-goal football alert for a favourite team, personalised stock information, industry sector news alerts;
- Travel Information – e.g. localised real time traffic news, flight/ferry information;
- Business and commerce applications;
- Ringtone Downloads;

- Gaming;
- Competitions;
- Location Information

According to the Regulator, Etain Doyle “ These new services will initially be offered on existing SMS systems but are likely to advance into enhanced SMS services and then 2.5G and 3G systems. These new services will be accessible by dialing a short 5-digit code (e.g. 59999). The choice of what the operator is offering may be further refined by including a selected keyword at the start of the text message (e.g. World cup, the service offered by the operator could include match updates).”

In the interest of fairness to all codes will be allocated on a lottery basis as there is likely to be competition for easily remembered numbers. Because many of the services will be for premium rated services a special category is reserved for adult-type services. Regtel the regulator of Premium Rate Services will play an important role in the new system. Service Providers will be expected to sign up to Regtel’s code of practice for Premium Rate Services.

Today’s decision follows a consultation with the interested parties. 32 responses were received and these responses have helped shape the new framework.

The Response to consultation can be viewed on the ODTR website www.odtr.ie “ A Framework for Value-Added Text Messaging (SMS) Services” (ODTR 02/14)

ENDS

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