



Office of the Director of  
**Telecommunications  
Regulation**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*  
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### **REGULATOR MOVES ON FIRST LICENSING SCHEME FOR SATELLITE SERVICES**

The Telecoms Regulator has completed the first phase in setting out a framework for Ireland's first licensing scheme for satellite services. The next phase, which is expected to be completed before the end of the year, will introduce the necessary regulations under which satellite earth stations will be regulated. The proposed new licensing structure is expected to encourage the development of satellite services in Ireland.

The framework is being developed as part of the overall ODTR strategy in opening up the telecommunications market in Ireland through the deployment of clear, simply stated rules. The Regulator believes that satellite networks can provide a valuable addition to the telecommunications infrastructure in Ireland. "Communications via satellite can be cost effective with short set up times providing global access to the remotest of regions with the minimum of infrastructure requirements", she said.

VSATs and major categories of transportable and receive-only earth stations will be licensed under the new scheme, while the programme of exemptions for small satellite terminals will be extended to include items such as GPS receivers. The new regime replaces a limited permit scheme for satellite links. It will position satellite use on a similar basis to other radio links used for telecommunications, with published guidelines and a complete licensing framework

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While the Regulator is in favour of the development of satellite based telecommunications services and will attempt to facilitate such development, she is also obliged to consider alternative and competing requests for spectrum. For this reason, the new regulatory framework for satellite services, set out in her paper, attempts to strike a reasonable balance between the need to introduce new satellite based services and the competing necessity to protect and expand terrestrial networks.

The paper “**Opening the Market for Satellite Services - Report on the Consultation**”, ODTR **99/49** can be viewed on the ODTR website at [www.odtr.ie](http://www.odtr.ie).

**ENDS**

#### **Notes for Editors**

Satellite earth stations, which are radio stations used for communicating to and from satellites, are already in widespread use. These include stations ranging in size from the large Telecom Eireann earth station in Elfordstown, Co Cork, through smaller the Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) as used by many commercial and industrial companies, satellite news gathering and outside broadcast vehicles, to small devices such as domestic satellite television receivers and hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers.

It is proposed that small satellite terminals, such as satellite receivers and GPS receivers will be exempted from licensing. The larger telecommunications stations, from VSAT size upwards, will be subject to the proposed new licensing structure which, by providing a formal basis for operation, will encourage the development of satellite service in Ireland.

The proposed fee structure has been modified from that outlined in the consultation paper **ODTR 99/09** to provide for significantly reduced fees in the bands which are not shared with terrestrial links and to provide for fees proportional to bandwidth and which reflect the competing demand for spectrum in those bands which are shared.