



Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

## Notice of Intention

### Reservation of Spectrum for the National Broadband Scheme

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All comments and responses to this publication should be clearly marked:- “Reference: Submission re ComReg 07/24” and sent by post or e-mail, to arrive on or before 5pm on the 25 May 2007, to:

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Please note ComReg will publish all respondents submissions with the Response to this Consultation, subject to the provisions of ComReg’s guidelines on the treatment of confidential information – ComReg 05/24

**Contents**

1 Introduction ..... 2

2 The National Broadband Scheme (NBS) ..... 3

3 Reservation of Spectrum ..... 4

    3.1 PROPOSED RULES OF THE RESERVATION..... 4

4 Submitting Comments..... 6

## 1 Introduction

In order to consult with all interested parties on the reservation of spectrum for use under the National Broadband Scheme (NBS), ComReg is publishing a notice of its intention to produce a Decision on this matter.

This publication is in line with the EC Framework Directive<sup>1</sup> and gives all interested parties the opportunity to submit written comments and for ComReg to take all comments received into account before making a final decision.

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<sup>1</sup> European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services)(Framework) Regulations 2003 S.I. 307 of 2003. This S.I. transposes Directive 2002/21/EC.

## **2 The National Broadband Scheme (NBS)**

The Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources has established a Steering Committee charged with establishing a National Broadband Scheme (NBS). The NBS will seek applications from interested parties to provide broadband services to most of the areas in Ireland where broadband is not available.

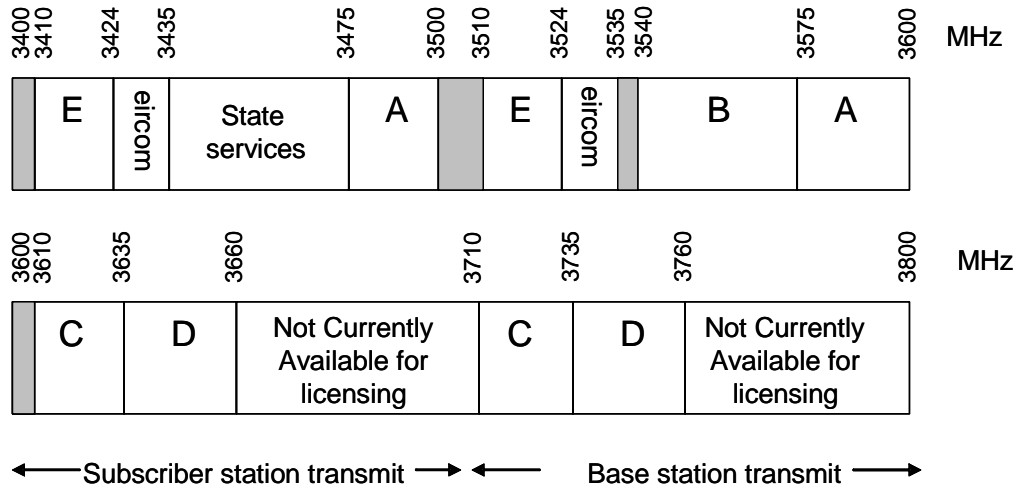
The intention is that the award process will be both technology and platform neutral as far as possible. It is plausible that suppliers of services under the NBS could make use of wired, terrestrial wireless and satellite delivery platforms in order to reach unserved areas.

As members of the Steering Committee and with responsibility for the management of the radio spectrum resource in Ireland, the Commission for Communications Regulation intends to reserve spectrum in the 3.5 GHz band specifically for use in locations not currently served by broadband for the winner(s) of the NBS tender, if required.

### 3 Reservation of Spectrum

The Commission for Communications Regulation intends to reserve two channels in the band 3400 – 3800 MHz (“the 3.5 GHz band”) for the winner(s) of the NBS tender, if required. The 3.5 GHz band has been selected because it has become the band of choice for a large number of wireless broadband licensees across Ireland in the last three years. As a result of this, extensive economies of scale have been achieved, vast experience has been gained by service suppliers and equipment is readily available.

In order to facilitate the two different types of technology currently available, it is proposed to reserve channel B, a TDD channel and one FDD channel (either A, C or D) for the use of the successful tender(s), if required, as shown in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: Channel Plan for the 3.5 GHz Band**

By definition, in all the unserved areas identified by the NBS, the 3.5 GHz band is not currently utilised. By reserving only two channels, there remain two, freely available, unserved channels for expansion and future competing FWA services.

#### 3.1 Proposed Rules of the Reservation

The following rules will apply to the reserved spectrum:

- The reservation will only apply to areas identified in the NBS process as unserved areas;
- The winner(s) of the tender process, wishing to utilise this spectrum as part of their proposal, will have to apply to use this spectrum under the Fixed Wireless Access Local Area (FWALA) licensing<sup>2</sup> scheme;

<sup>2</sup> FWALA licences are issued under S.I. 79 of 2003.

- All the terms and conditions of the Fixed Wireless FWALA legislation and guidelines will apply;
- If not taken up by the winner(s) of the NBS tender process the reserved status of these two channels will lapse.

#### 4 Submitting Comments

All comments are welcome and will be taken into account in developing the Decision.

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After analysis and consideration of the comments, ComReg intends to publish a Decision which will, inter alia, summarise the comments received. Please note ComReg will publish all respondents’ submissions with the Decision, subject to the provisions of ComReg’s guidelines on the treatment of confidential information – ComReg 05/24. We request that electronic submissions be submitted in an- unprotected format so that they can be appended into the ComReg submissions document for publishing electronically.