



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
6th May, 1999

SEVEN COMPANIES APPLY FOR WIRELESS IN THE LOCAL LOOP LICENCES

Seven companies, including established names from operators in Ireland and Europe have applied to the Telecoms Regulator for Fixed Wireless Point to Multipoint Access (FWPMA) Licences. The applications are in response to a competition launched by the Regulator in mid-February for Broadband and Narrowband “Wireless in the Local Loop” licences. The deadline for receipt of applications was 2pm today.

“Wireless in the Local Loop” offers an alternative means to provide the connection from the customer’s premises to the nearest network access point for the provision of telecommunications services. It offers a radio-based alternative to copper or optic fibre cable. FWPMA is not a telecommunications service per se, but makes available an important network element to be used in the provision of services.

Four licences are being offered for broadband services and another four for narrowband. Broadband will cater for the needs of medium to large users of telecommunications services, and will enable services such as PABX connection, broadband Internet access, multi-media, bandwidth on demand, and fast file transfer. Narrowband FWPMA is an alternative to copper in the local loop, which at present connects the majority of residential and business customers to their local exchange, and will offer mainly basic telephony, Internet and ISDN connections, in both urban and rural areas. The term of both licences will be ten years.

MORE

Applications for the Broadband licences were received from the following 6 companies:

(In alphabetical order)

- Broadnet Ireland Limited
- Esat Telecommunications Limited
- Formus Communications Ireland Limited
- Ocean (Communications Limited)
- Princes Holdings Limited
- Telecom Eireann

Applications for the Narrowband licences were received from the following 5 companies:

(In alphabetical order)

- Esat Telecommunications Limited
- Formus Communications Ireland Limited
- Princes Holdings Limited
- Telecom Eireann
- United Pan-Europe Communications Ireland

Delighted at the number and quality of the applicants the Director said “when these FWPMA licences are issued, Ireland will be at the forefront of European Union countries in enabling service providers to use wireless in the local loop. I believe that this will contribute to effective competition in the immediate future. These new licences will also facilitate the delivery of high quality telecommunications services to rural areas, particularly those where geography may have previously caused difficulties” she added.

The evaluation process has now begun. The competition will be administered by the Director, who has established a Steering Group which is responsible for the evaluation of applications and management of the selection process. Andersen Management International of Copenhagen has been appointed to assist in the competition. The rankings will be known in two months time.

MORE

An information memorandum (**ODTR 99/07**) about the licensing process, including its goals, a description of the licensing process itself, the proposed licensing framework, and fees and time-scales is available on the ODTR website: www.odtr.ie.

ENDS