



Commission for  
**Communications Regulation**

## Information Notice

### Status Update on Local Loop Unbundling - Issue 6

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## 1. Introduction

ComReg publishes status updates on Local Loop Unbundling ('LLU') to provide clarity and transparency on overall progress on LLU. In October 2006, ComReg published its fifth Local Loop Unbundling status update (Information Notice 06/56) which set out the then situation in relation to a number of key issues, namely

- Number Portability and LLU
- LLU Provisioning and Service Assurance Processes
- Migration/Wholesale Production Combinations

This latest report reflects well over 12 months of work in relation to LLU. It comes at a time when LLU can clearly be seen to be a key driver of broadband in other European markets such as France and the UK. While, as can be seen from the report, progress is being made on each of the key issues above, there nevertheless remain very significant issues to be resolved and the pace at which these are being addressed is clearly not acceptable in such a dynamic market situation.

The continued low level of fault repairs, significant problems in order provisioning and limitations on the ability to migrate from one service provision to another pose serious challenges for other operators and their ability to meet the needs of their customers. ComReg believes it has given more than sufficient time and support to enable outstanding matters to be resolved commercially and is considering what further interventions are necessary to move this critical process forward.

## 2. Summary of general LLU Developments

Three LLU operators are actively providing LLU based services to customers, namely, BT Ireland, Magnet Entertainment and Smart Telecom. 110 instances of collocation have been provided to these operators by eircom across approximately 65<sup>1</sup> exchange locations.

### 2.1. Number Portability and LLU (known as GLUMP)

GLUMP is the wholesale product provided by eircom to Access Seekers which combines LLU and Number Portability. It allows a consumer the ability to keep their telephone number when they move their service to an LLU operator. An interim GLUMP product was launched by eircom in August 2006 and allows for a current throughput of up to 60 orders per day. This throughput capability will increase further in light of operational experience.

Industry use of the product continues to be at relatively low levels but has increased over the last month. In January 2007, eircom will introduce enhancements to the interim GLUMP product which will allow operators to submit GLUMP orders via an electronic gateway which will make for a more efficient order management process. In order that LLU operators can avail of the enhanced service from its launch in January, work is already underway to make the necessary changes to the inter-operator process manual.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures are based on data supplied by Access Seekers. The number of cases of collocation is greater than the number of exchanges as more than one operator can be located at the same eircom exchange.

While these enhancements have been accepted by industry, it is recognised that the interim GLUMP solution, while improved, remains highly manual in nature. Industry discussions remain focussed on the development of a long-term more efficient, volume based GLUMP product. This automated solution/process will need to be supported by an effective service level agreement to ensure operators have the confidence to fully integrate the product into their mass market offerings.

As reported previously, eircom have presented a proposal for a fully automated volume based GLUMP solution and stated that a number of criteria must be fulfilled before development can commence. eircom maintain that, before committing development resources to this solution, there must be confidence that there is sufficient industry demand for the product. Neither ComReg nor LLU operators agreed with these pre-conditions prior to work on the fully automated process being commenced. In parallel, it was agreed at an industry meeting in October that a global industry forecast would be developed to inform all parties of demand levels. ComReg has requested this data and awaits responses from a number of operators.

## **2.2. Ongoing provisioning problems associated with the existing LLU product**

The delivery performance figures provided for October indicate that 97% of orders completed within SLA timeframes. This represents an increase of 9% on delivery performance for September. Over a six month period 84% of orders were delivered within SLA timeframes. eircom attributes this improvement to a change in the profile of order types submitted by operators in October.

ComReg is concerned that the delivery performance metrics provided under the SLA do not reflect the end to end experience of using LLU. eircom, have recently provided data on submitted orders for October which indicates a significant proportion of orders are being rejected or are undeliverable. This data is consistent with reports received from one operator who has experienced an order rejection rate of up to 30%, however at this point the reasons for rejection are not known. These metrics are not measured in the SLA data quoted above but have a detrimental impact on the performance of the product. ComReg will make a further request to eircom for more comprehensive metrics in a format which will allow full end to end product performance to be represented graphically.

Fault management for the period up to October continues to be a major concern with only 59% of faults cleared within two working days.

ComReg understands that penalties have been paid by eircom for late delivery. Notwithstanding the receipt of these penalty payments, both ComReg and service providers are primarily concerned with the need to ensure an efficient LLU provisioning experience to enable the offer of a high quality service to consumers.

In general, progress in this area has been too slow. ComReg's experience of industry meetings is that there is limited evidence of a genuine commitment by eircom to resolve the problems in a constructive manner. In ComReg's view the statistics for order rejection and fault clearance speak for themselves and raise legitimate questions about eircom's fulfilment of its obligations. ComReg will be exploring this aspect further in the coming weeks.

### 2.3. Migrations and Wholesale Product Combinations

LLU Access Seekers require the ability to offer consumers seamless migration to LLU based retail services from existing retail services that are underpinned by a different wholesale product such as Wholesale Line Rental (WLR) and/or Bitstream. The availability of a such migration processes is key to enabling consumer choice.

In September, LLU operators formally submitted individual requests for migration products to eircom. As indicated in previous updates, ComReg considers that LLU operator requests to eircom in respect of migrations would preferably be resolved by commercial negotiation pursuant to eircom's existing obligations in respect of LLU which are set out in [Decision Notice D8/04](#).

To this end, ComReg undertook to monitor commercial discussions between eircom and LLU operators. In October ComReg wrote to all parties requesting updates on discussions, if any, on this issue of migrations and copies of all relevant correspondence. ComReg also requested that LLU operators provide details of volume forecasts, timing requirements along with any technical considerations that may be relevant.

ComReg has sought to reach a pragmatic solution on this issue that would be acceptable to all parties and has allowed a period of time within which commercial negotiations can take place. Having reviewed the updates from both eircom and Access Seekers, it appears to ComReg that the negotiations regarding the requests for access have not progressed to any significant degree. ComReg has written to eircom and has clearly and unambiguously set out that Access Seeker requests should be dealt with in the context of eircom's existing regulatory obligations as prescribed in Decision Notice D8/04. ComReg has also engaged in discussions with eircom regarding its LLU regulatory obligations and has recently received further correspondence from eircom which outlines to ComReg their proposals to progress migrations. In general, these proposals suggest that eircom is willing to meet some elements of the Access Seeker requests, subject to a number of conditions. ComReg's initial view is that these proposals do not go far enough towards meeting Access Seeker requirements and consumer needs and further discussions may take place.

Overall, ComReg is now considering these proposals and eircom's handling of Access Seekers requests in accordance with its regulatory obligations. As part of this consideration, ComReg will allow a further and final period up to the end of November for discussions to take place. At this time ComReg will review the position and, if appropriate, will instigate a formal compliance investigation into eircom's treatment of Access Seekers' requests in light of its regulatory obligations.

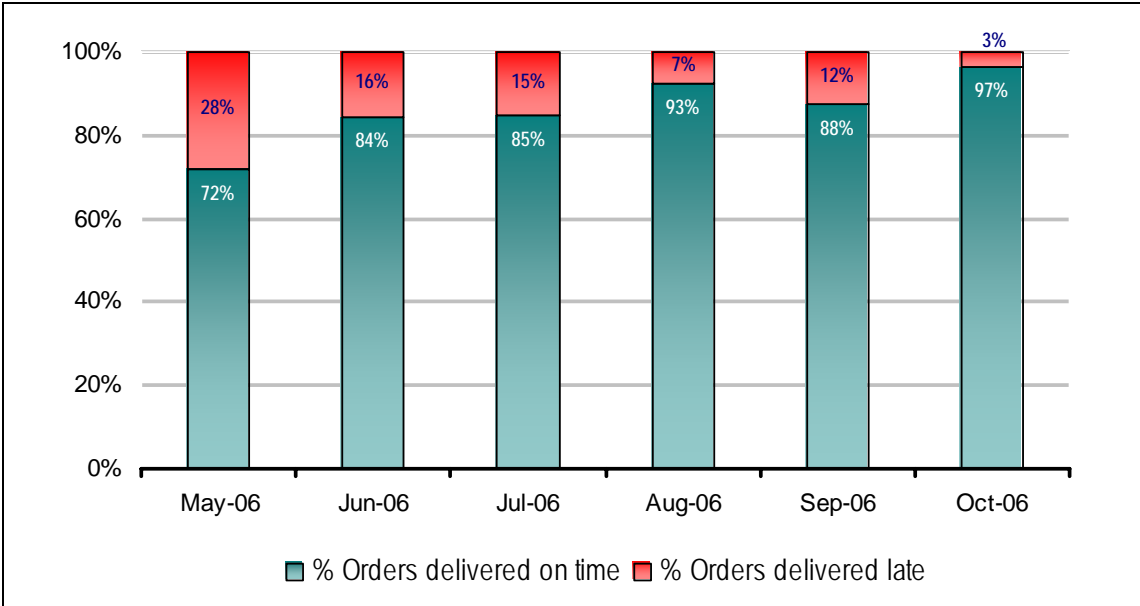
### 3. Other Issues and Next Steps

ComReg will continue to liaise with industry on each of the workstreams above. The next status update is planned for December 19.

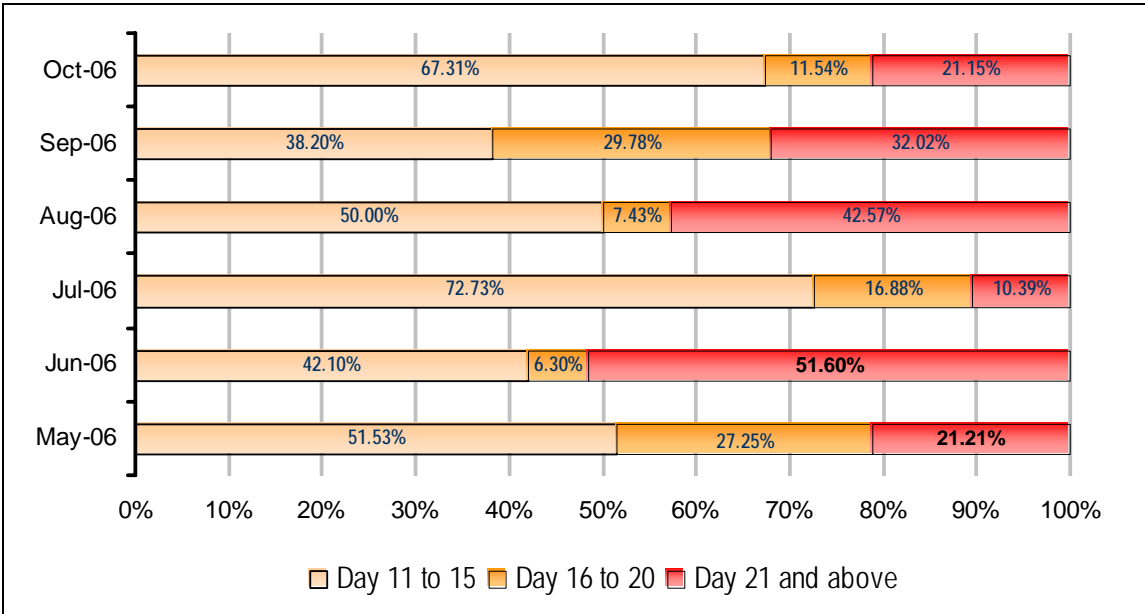
### Appendix 1: LLU Service Performance Statistics

Tables 1 and 2 set out service delivery performance for LLU orders and table 3 sets out LLU fault repair performance. These figures have been provided by eircom to ComReg.

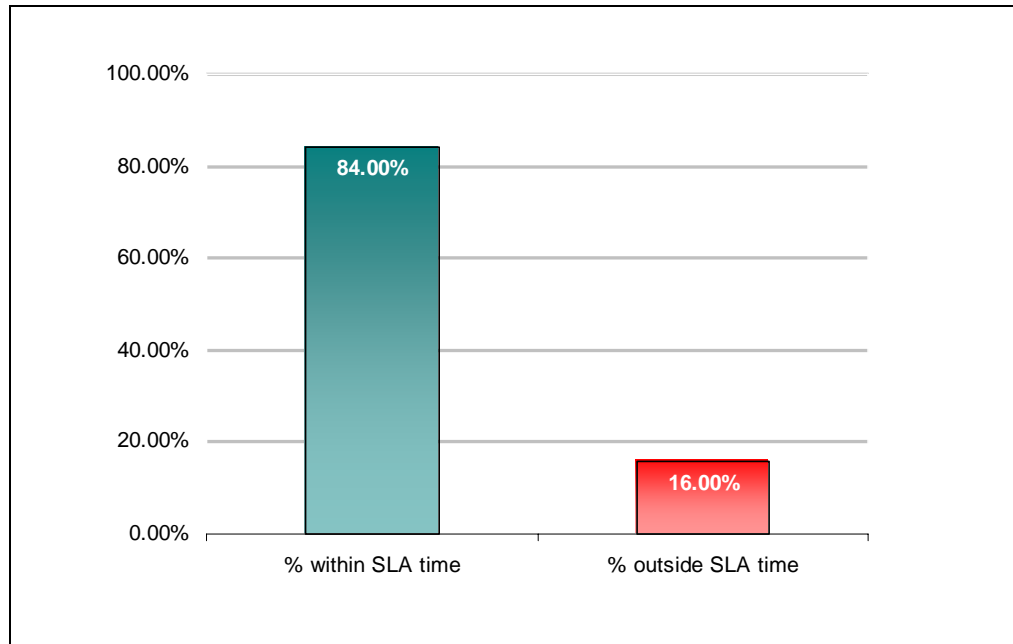
**Table 1: Percentage of accepted LLU orders delivered within SLA Timeframe**



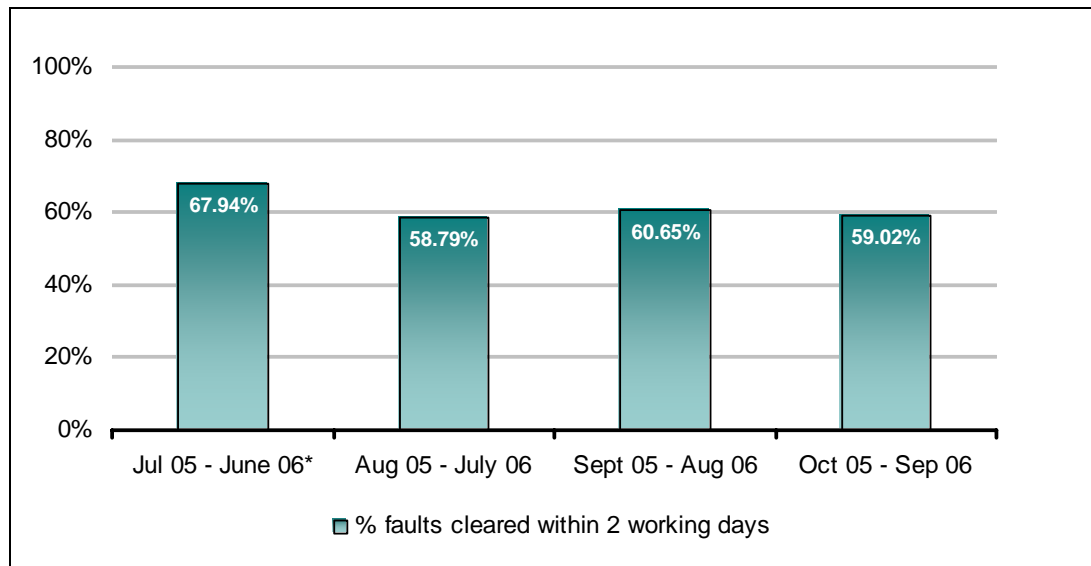
**Table 2: Of accepted LLU orders delivered outside SLA (per Table 1 equates to beyond 10 days), percentage delivered > day 11-15 day 16 to 20, day 21 and above**



**Table 3: % of Total LLU accepted orders delivered within SLA for period May – October 2006**



**Table 4: Monthly % of LLU faults repaired within 2 working days (averaged over 12 Months)**



\* Fault management performance figures up to the period June 2006 previously showed that only 64.7% of LLU faults were cleared within two working days. eircom notified ComReg in September that it had discovered errors in the data underlying this figure and, as a consequence it has been revised to 67.94%