



Commission for
Communications Regulation

Strategic Review of Non-Geographic Numbers

Project Update

Information Notice

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1: Project Update

- 1: ComReg has the statutory responsibility for the management of the national numbering resource in Ireland¹. To this end, ComReg is obliged to ensure that numbers are used in a manner which protects consumers and promotes competition. In 2014, ComReg stated that it had concerns regarding the use of non-geographic numbers at the retail level and that it would carry out a review of the functioning of different classes of non-geographic numbers².
- 2: In line with its current Action Plan and in accordance with its statutory remit, ComReg recently commenced a project entitled 'Strategic Review of Non-Geographic Numbers' to explore the use of the following five classes of non-geographic-numbers in Ireland: 1800, 1850, 1890, 0818 and 076 ("the project").
- 3: The purpose of the project is to gather and analyse information that will allow ComReg to substantiate, or otherwise, its concerns regarding the use of non-geographic numbers at the retail level. The project will also take into account the requirement to ensure that these classes of numbers are used in a manner which promotes competition and protects consumers.
- 4: ComReg has contracted DotEcon Ltd and Behaviour & Attitudes Ltd ("the Consultants") to assist ComReg in conducting market research, data gathering and modelling for the project. During Q1 and Q2 2016 ComReg will conduct market research with consumers and businesses in Ireland in order to ascertain, *inter alia*, their levels of understanding and use of the above five classes of non-geographic numbers.
- 5: In addition, ComReg is planning to also issue a data request to fixed and mobile operators in order to gather information on the use of these non-geographic numbers. ComReg plans to issue this data request to operators, followed soon after by a workshop on Tuesday 23 February 2016, at which operators may seek clarification on ComReg's data request.
- 6: Following the market research, data gathering and modelling, ComReg intends to publish a Call for Input document in Q3, 2016. This will set out the findings from the market research and data gathering stages and, where regulatory issues have been

¹ ComReg's functions, objectives and powers in relation to managing the national numbering resource are set out in the Communications Regulation Acts 2002 – 2011 and in the Common Regulatory Framework, including the Framework Regulations 2011 and Authorisation Regulations 2011.

² ComReg Document 14/130 - Update on Treatment of Non-Geographic Numbers – published 05 December 2014

identified, may include a preliminary range of regulatory options designed to improve the functioning of non-geographic numbers for consumers. All interested parties will be invited to respond to the Call for Input document, in accordance with ComReg's consultation guidelines³. ComReg will consider all inputs before deciding on the next steps for the project.

³ Information Notice on ComReg Consultation Procedures – ComReg Document 11/34.