



Office of the Director of
**Telecommunications
Regulation**

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Thursday 29th June 2000

Telecoms Regulator Issues Third Mobile Licence to Meteor

Etain Doyle, Telecoms Regulator today (29th June 2000) issued the third mobile licence to Meteor almost two years to the day since announcing it had come first in the competition for the licence.

Speaking at the official presentation the Regulator said “ The entry of a third player in the mobile market means that the Irish consumer will now reap the benefits of real competition in the mobile market. International experience shows that the entry of a third player in the mobile market will drive down prices and makes real and tangible difference to the quality and type of services on offer to the consumer. The mobile penetration rate in Ireland is currently estimated (March 2000) at approximately 45% with approximately 1.65 million subscribers. It is a vibrant and growing market and I am confident that Meteor will make their mark, stimulating further competition and leading to more choice for the consumer. The unanimous decision of the Supreme Court last month has released this license into the market after almost two years of legal proceedings.”

“Under the terms of the license, we have nine months in which to launch but we are concentrating our efforts on delivering a high quality service in time for the Christmas market, said Mr. Peter Quinn, Meteor’s Chief Operations Officer.

“However”, he continued, “ we always felt that consumers would benefit before we launch, as we expected the existing operators to reduce their tariffs well ahead of our

entry into the market, and as we have seen in the last couple of weeks, this has already started to happen”.

Mr. Quinn went on to point out that throughout the lengthy legal process Meteor continued where possible with the development of its network and infrastructure and has made considerable progress on site acquisition.

Meteor currently employs over 50 people and this number is expected to rise to 200 by the launch date.

Mr Sean Finlay, Director of Meteor and Chairman of Irish shareholder, RF Communications said that “the country needs a third operator to provide real competition both in terms of lower tariffs and better service. We are very confident about our ability to reflect the international experience and gain significant market share”.

“While the number of people using mobile phones in Ireland is continually growing, there is more room for growth and it should be noted that Ireland is still well behind other countries in terms of both prices and the range of services on offer”, he continued, “but that is something that Meteor will change radically, for the benefit of current and new mobile phone users”.

According to the Regulator, Etain Doyle “ Going forward, I have recently initiated a consultation on the issue of new players entering the market by gaining access to the networks of mobile network operators including resale of mobile airtime, independent service provision, indirect access and mobile virtual network operators. I am currently considering the benefits these players can bring to the market and the appropriate regulatory framework within which they could operate.”

ENDS

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