

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

30th November, 1998

TWENTY-NINE NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENCES AWARDED ON COUNTDOWN TO LIBERALISATION

Twenty-nine new telecommunications licences for the newly liberalised telecommunications market were awarded by the Director of Telecommunications Regulation, Etain Doyle, at a ceremony in Dublin today. (November 30th, 1998)

Two types of licence were awarded at the ceremony in the Berkeley Court Hotel – 21 General Telecommunications Licences and 8 Basic Telecommunications Licences. The licences will enable the recipients to compete in telecommunications services in the fully liberalised marketplace, which opens tomorrow, December 1st, 1998

A General Telecommunications Licence permits the licensee to provide telecommunications networks and services, including voice telephony, to the general public. Holders of such licences can apply to the ODTR for telephone numbers from the national numbering scheme for allocation to their customers. General licences are valid for 15 years.

A Basic Telecommunications Licence does not cover voice telephony and services involving numbers, and so is tailored to the needs of specialised companies, providing for example, data, Internet and cable-based services. Holders of basic licences will be able to apply for a general telecommunications licence if at any stage in the future they wish to expand the range of services that they provide. Basic licences will be valid for 5 years.

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“This is a very important development in the future of the Irish telecommunications market, coming on the eve of liberalisation” the Regulator said. “My office now has the key elements in place to facilitate the opening of the market. Following a comprehensive series of consultations, many licence applications have been processed, telephone numbers have been allocated and Telecom Éireann has announced key interconnection rates, which are welcomed by my office.

“The timetable set for liberalisation by the Minister Mrs Mary O’ Rourke TD, was both courageous and challenging and I am very pleased that my Office has achieved the ambitious targets set for it. This is due in large part to marvellous teamwork on the part of the whole liberalisation team of the ODTR who showed great commitment despite the major pressures of the foreshortened timetable, and whose expertise is evident in the regime created.

“The co-operation and input from the industry and others over the past year has helped to ensure that this new licensing regime is now in place. I am grateful for the considerable effort put into responses to our consultation papers. This has helped greatly in creating an appropriate framework for this new era.”

Referring to the type of licensing that has been put in place by her office the Regulator said, *“I believe that the type of regulation that has been developed will allow competition to work and will help encourage market entry. It will also herald a fast transition to an era where consumers are offered the best possible telecoms services at an affordable price”.*

The licences themselves are designed to ensure that the rights and needs of consumers are protected whilst ensuring that services are provided in a manner consistent with Irish and EU law. The Regulator has inserted in all new licences conditions governing quality of service and codes of practice to ensure that all customers are aware of their rights and entitlements. The Director has published [a list of those who have been awarded licences](#) and a contact within each company licensed on the ODTR website (www.odtr.ie) to make it easier for consumers to have issues of concern addressed by the company in the first instance.

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The Regulator considered applications received by her office between the 27th October and 3rd November for award by the liberalisation date. The office also endeavoured to process applications received after this date in time for 1st December. The licensing process is a continuous one and the ODTR will continue to accept licence applications and award licences on an ongoing basis. The Director looks forward to many new entrants to the market in the future.

ENDS

GENERAL LICENCES

Licence No	Name
1	Interoute Ireland Ltd
2	Ocean Communications Ltd
3	Mastercall International Ltd
4	Cable & Wireless Services Ltd
5	National Transcommunications Ltd
6	Worldcom Telecommunications (Ireland) Ltd
7	Cable Management (Ireland) Ltd
8	Vianvi Ltd
9	Tele2 Telecommunications Services Ltd
10	Viatel (I) Ltd
11	Transaction Network Services Ltd
12	Stentor Communications Ltd
13	Teleglobe Ireland Ltd
14	Telecom Eireann
15	Cablelink Ltd
16	International Telecommunications Ltd
17	SM Communications Ltd
18	RSL Communications (Ireland) Ltd
19	Esat Telecommunications Ltd
20	Eircell Ltd
21	LCN Inc.

BASIC LICENCES

ALord Holdings Ltd (T/A SwitchCom Ltd)
Casey CableVision Ltd
HiberNet Ltd
Iridium Communications Germany GmbH
Next Telecom
Reuters Connect Services
Telecommunications & Computer Services Ireland Ltd

Torc Telecom Ltd