



Office of Utility Regulation

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Move to Boost Mobile Competition

Guernsey mobile operators should be in a position to use their mobile licences to provide any type of mobile service, including 2G and 3G services, in 2009. The OUR has today published a draft decision in which it proposes removing certain restrictions with regard to what services can be offered by the existing mobile operators. The exact timing of the change is to be finalised as certain technical details need to be resolved with C&W Guernsey.

“There is general support for the OUR’s proposals to ease restrictions on how spectrum can be used which is very welcome. We remain of the view that a move to technology neutral mobile licences is a positive step in the development of the mobile market”, said John Curran, Director General of the OUR. “However a key issue remains, namely the amount of existing 2G spectrum held by C&WG, and the implications this may have for long term competition in the mobile market, which needs to be resolved and the timing of this will dictate the timetable for the next steps. We are asking C&WG to examine this issue in more detail and present proposals to us which we can consider early in the New Year.”

The surrender of some of C&WG’s 900MHz spectrum is seen as important in terms of the development of competition in the market and was one of the key areas of concern for other operators in the OUR’s original proposal. In addition to this change the OUR has set a deadline of 30th January 2009 for operators to agree revised site sharing fees. If no agreement is reached the OUR intends to launch a more detailed investigation.

“Radio spectrum has the potential to play a very important role in developing a truly competitive telecoms market in Guernsey. It can offer opportunities to bridge the divide between fixed and mobile services, resulting in greater choice and value for money for all consumers,” said John Curran. “Clearly there is a need to minimise the impact of any development on the environment. Ensuring the commercial arrangements for site sharing are appropriate should aid that by making it more commercially attractive to share infrastructure. Therefore we are looking to the operators to review these commercial arrangements to ensure they adequately promote site sharing”.

Full details on the draft decision are set out in the OUR Draft Decision paper OUR 08/18 published today, which is available on the OUR website – www.regutil.gg.

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Notes for Editors:

About the OUR

The Office of Utility Regulation was established in 2001 to regulate the three utilities of post, telecommunications and electricity in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. The Office is headed up by Director General, John Curran and has six staff.

The role of the OUR is to protect the interests of Guernsey consumers and the economy. It does this by ensuring that customers receive the best in price, choice and quality services in the three regulated sectors, while at the same time ensuring that those sectors are vibrant and robust so that they can positively contribute to and underpin a successful Guernsey economy.

The OUR licenses and regulates telecommunications operators, Guernsey Electricity Ltd and Guernsey Post Ltd. Wherever possible, the OUR promotes the introduction of competition by ensuring that there is fair play and a level playing field between the operators. Where competition is not yet effective or where it is not feasible, the OUR regulates prices and quality of services to end customers. More information is available from the OUR website www.regutil.gg, or by contacting the Office of Utility Regulation on 01481 711120.