



An Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta,  
Gnóthai Réigiúnacha, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Arts, Heritage,  
Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs



Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe  
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil  
Department of Communications,  
Climate Action & Environment

## Minutes of the **Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce**

### Meeting No. 1

**Date:** Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016

**Venue:** Conference Room, DAHRRGA, 23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2

**Time:** 10.00 – 12.00

**Attendees:** Minister Denis Naughten, T.D. (co-Chair), Minister Heather Humphreys, T.D. (co-Chair), Katherine Licken (D/CCA), William Parnell (D/AHRRGA), Patrick Neary (D/CCA), Dave Walsh (D/HPLG), Ray O'Leary (D/TTS), Pat Gallagher (CCMA), Pat Maher (TII), John Sydenham (OPW), John Dillon (NewERA), Seamus Boland (Irish Rural Link), Mary MacNamara (ICA), John Martin, Paul Madden (Ericsson), Ferghal Reidy (LGMA), , Linda Doyle (via dial in until 10.30)

**Observers:** Gerry Fahy (ComReg), Martin Bourke (OPW), Stjohn O'Connor (D/AHRRGA), Mairead McCabe (D/DCCA), Paucic McPhillips (D/DCCA), Ross Elwood (D/DCCA)

**Secretariat:** Ciara Bates, John Gorman (D/AHRRGA)

**Dept. Officials:** Neasa Lehane, Paul Lee (D/CCA)

**Apologies:** Cathal O'Donoghue (Teagasc), Tommy Ryan (CCMA)

---

## 1. Opening Remarks – Minister Denis Naughten, T.D. and Minister Heather Humphreys, T.D.

- The Ministers opened the meeting and thanked the members for their agreed participation recognising the wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience on the Taskforce with good cross-sector representation.
- Outlined that the objective of the Taskforce is to provide immediate solutions to the broadband/mobile phone coverage deficits. It aims to alleviate telecommunications service deficits, particularly in rural Ireland, prior to the full build and rollout of the network which is planned under the National Broadband Plan State intervention. The work of the Taskforce will be complementary to the NBP intervention.
- Roundtable of introductions.

## 2. Overview of Role of the Taskforce

- The Taskforce will identify practical measures that can be undertaken in the short term to:
  - alleviate the bottlenecks in the system;
  - improve services to consumers through practical and awareness raising measures, particularly in rural Ireland; and
  - pave the way for rollout of the NBP network once a contract(s) has been awarded.

### 3. Work Programme Planning

- D/CCAIE presented an overview of the NBP intervention which covered
  - The Intervention area.
  - Update on the Procurement Process.
  - Commercial rollout of telecommunications infrastructure.
  - Feedback from industry engagement in terms of their perceived barriers to investment.
  - Suggested focus areas for the Taskforce.
- The Taskforce discussed a number of issues arising from the presentation including:
  - Industry engagement to drill down into the issues.
  - Engagement with Local Authorities on implementation of planning guidelines to ensure consistency. It was suggested the Road Management Office (RMO) may have a role to play here.
  - Significant need for communication in terms of information sharing and awareness raising for consumers as well as industry engagement with local communities on planning issues.
  - General view that there was scope to progress a number of the areas highlighted.
- ComReg presented an overview of the sector which covered
  - Role of the regulator (ComReg).
  - Overview of the market.
  - Investment in the sector leading to better choice and faster speeds.
  - Growth in the use of data.
  - Protecting the interests of consumers.
  - ComReg is developing a strategic plan to explore and better understand how it can impact on the issues giving rise to a negative perception of the industry.
  - ComReg indicated their willingness to advise and input in the 4 workstreams to be progressed by the Taskforce.
- The Taskforce discussed a number of issues arising from the presentation including:
  - Allocation of spectrum.
  - Consumer information piece – operator and handset selection.
- D/AHRRGA proposed four subgroups to the Taskforce to progress the following workstreams:
  - Planning process
  - Access to Infrastructure
  - Consumer Issues
  - Regulation, Policy and Networks
- It was suggested that the representative organisations could contribute across a number of the sub-groups using different experts e.g. CCMA, Tourism on consumer issues, RMO on planning, etc.

### 4. Summary of Agreed Actions & AOB

The following Action Points were agreed:

- a) The Terms of Reference for the Taskforce were agreed subject to minor amendments. The amended Terms of Reference will be circulated to the Taskforce for final approval.
- b) Invite the representative telecom industry organisations to the next Taskforce meeting in September – ALTO, TIF, WISPs.
- c) The Taskforce agreed on the proposed 4 subgroups to deliver the work programme – Planning Process; Access to Infrastructure; Consumer Issues; and Regulation, Policy and Networks.
- d) The secretariat will circulate the template for the suggested membership of the subgroups based on the discussion. Members will indicate the sub-group in which they have an interest, or for which they see an active input/engagement from their representative organisation. This may include additional representatives from their respective organisations.
- e) It was agreed that the sub-groups should meet in the intervening period between the Taskforce meetings on one occasion (or more if deemed necessary). Each sub-group will be supported by either D/CCAIE or D/AHRRGA.
- f) A template for the action points from each sub-group will be circulated for approval.
- g) The next meeting of the TF will be Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> September with meetings to be held the first Friday of the month thereafter.

To be completed when all of the minutes are agreed.

<p><b>Minutes Prepared By:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Date:</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Minutes Approved By:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Date:</b> _____</p>
---	---

