[IE] Deflector Licences Issued

IRIS 2000-5:1/25

Marie McGonagle
School of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway

In April 2000, in response to the long-running problem of unlicensed deflector systems operating in Ireland (see IRIS 1997-7: 9), the Director of Telecommunications Regulation issued a number of short-term licences (1).

The move, which sees the introduction of the first ever licensing scheme for deflectors, is intended to facilitate consumers availing of the deflectors' multi-channel television services, at a time when preparations for Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) are being completed.

From the beginning, the Director had cast doubts on the long-term viability of deflector systems in a digital age (2). However, she had to take account of the fact that it will be some time before DTT becomes operational and that in certain rural areas a significant number of households depend on deflector services for access to U.K. television services. The new licences will terminate on the introduction of DTT, as the spectrum used by the deflectors will be required by DTT.

The issue of the short-term licences results from a consultation process carried out in 1999 (3). A total of nineteen licences were offered in February 2000 in situations where there was a broadcasting frequency available and the use of the spectrum applied for would not cause interference to other authorised services. Two other applications were not dealt with because of ongoing litigation. The closing-date for the final round of applications was 4 May 2000.

The Future of Television Transmission in Ireland: The Way Forward, ODTR 98/20, 1998. Television Deflector Licensing Report on the Consultation, ODTR 99/55, 1999.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026