Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Mobile Phone & Broadband Taskforce

Implementation Review 2018

Prepared by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
and the Department of Rural and Community Development
gov.ie

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Foreword by Minister for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development

One of the positive aspects to emerge from the work of the Taskforce is the extent to which practical cooperation between the agencies involved has developed. This has been fundamental to achieving real results and actions on the ground that continue to deliver improvements in services for people, particularly in rural Ireland.

Access to high-speed broadband and good quality mobile phone coverage is an increasingly important pre-requisite for businesses and communities. The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce was established to remove barriers to improved telecommunications services through a collaborative approach to problem solving involving Government, the telecoms regulator, industry and local government.

2018 saw a huge amount of progress made by a wide range of organisations. The second Annual Review of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce sets out the actions that were progressed during the year. One of the positive aspects to emerge from the work of the Taskforce is the extent to which practical cooperation between the agencies involved has developed. This has been fundamental to achieving real results and actions on the ground that continue to deliver improvements in services for people, particularly in rural Ireland.

As in previous years, barriers to the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure fall into many different categories such as geographic, regulatory or administrative. As a consequence, the type of solutions that are required are varied and necessitate a flexible and collaborative approach to problem solving. A good example of what can be achieved is how ComReg has

introduced a licence exemption regime to promote the use of mobile phone repeaters. This is a hugely significant move by the regulator and one which will benefit families and businesses across the country.

This year will see a number of changes to how the Taskforce operates, including greater engagement with key stakeholders around issues of strategic importance. I am optimistic that this dialogue, which will take place at every quarterly meeting, will lead to additional actions emerging over the course of 2019.

I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Ministers Naughten and Kyne for driving the process to date and the involvement and cooperation of Group members. I also want to recognise the valued input of speakers and attendees at the Taskforce's Annual Forum, which was held in Balinasloe on 12 October 2018 – without your involvement and participation the work of the Taskforce would be much more challenging. I look forward to continuing to work closely with members and stakeholders in 2019 to tackle barriers to connectivity and overcome problems that are impacting the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure in Ireland.

Minister of State Seán Canney
Minister for Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development

About the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce

The Programme for a Partnership Government gave a commitment to establish a Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce to identify solutions to broadband/mobile phone coverage deficits and to investigate how better services could be provided to consumers prior to full build and rollout of the network planned under the National Broadband Plan (NBP) State Intervention. The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce was established in July 2016 arising from this commitment.

The Taskforce published its final report in December 2016.[1] The Taskforce report addresses, in a very comprehensive manner, a wide range of issues impacting on the provision of broadband and mobile services. The report contained 40 actions aimed at accelerating the delivery of telecoms infrastructure by commercial operators and also at facilitating the rollout of the State led Intervention under the NBP.

All of the actions that the Taskforce identified targeted specific issues that had been raised by stakeholders or identified through the work of the Taskforce. In addition, many addressed underlying issues that are of fundamental importance to the ability of the telecommunication operators to deliver improved services, particularly in rural areas.

Now in its third year of operation, the Taskforce continues to focus on issues that are negatively impacting upon the rollout of essential telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas. The Taskforce publishes quarterly reports on progress made and in February 2018 published its Implementation Review Report for 2017. All reports are available on: www.drcd.gov.ie or www.dccae.gov.ie.

[1] The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Report is available here: https://drcd.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/taskforce-report-final-pdf-1.pdf

Impact of Delivery of Actions

The Taskforce has continued to act as an example of what can be achieved when structures are put in place to facilitate open communication amongst a diverse range of stakeholders; encompassing industry, Government Departments and agencies, local authorities, Regulators and rural communities across Ireland.

In the last twelve months alone, significant advances have been made on foot of the work of the Taskforce, including:

PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- A Working Group has been established to explore the feasibility of developing a standardised policy for accessing and utilising State assets for the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure.

- The removal of development contributions for broadband infrastructure has resulted in cost reductions for industry and increased placement of telecoms infrastructure.

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has completed significant works along the road network, installing approximatively 1,000 km of ducting nationwide, which will enable operators to deploy infrastructure to expand their networks along the route. (See Figure 1)

- TII will also now require the installation of ducting on all new road schemes and plans are in place to geo-code all future ducts.

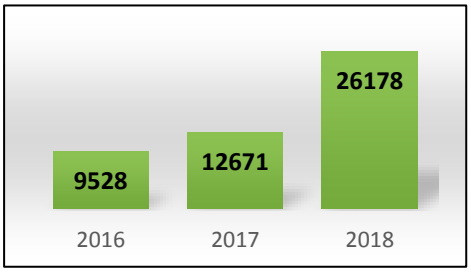
- TII has reduced costs associated with accessing its ducts, meaning operators will be better placed to deploy services more cost effectively.

Figure 1 Motorway/ Dual Carriageway
Communications Ducting

- The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) published revised Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (the Purple Book) in April 2017, and rolled out training to local authorities and utilities on how to apply the Guidelines in 2018.

- The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System (MRL) has been adopted by virtually all local authorities and operators as the single, centralised process for all road opening licences. (See Figures 2, 3 and 4)

Figure 2: MRL Applications by Local Authorities



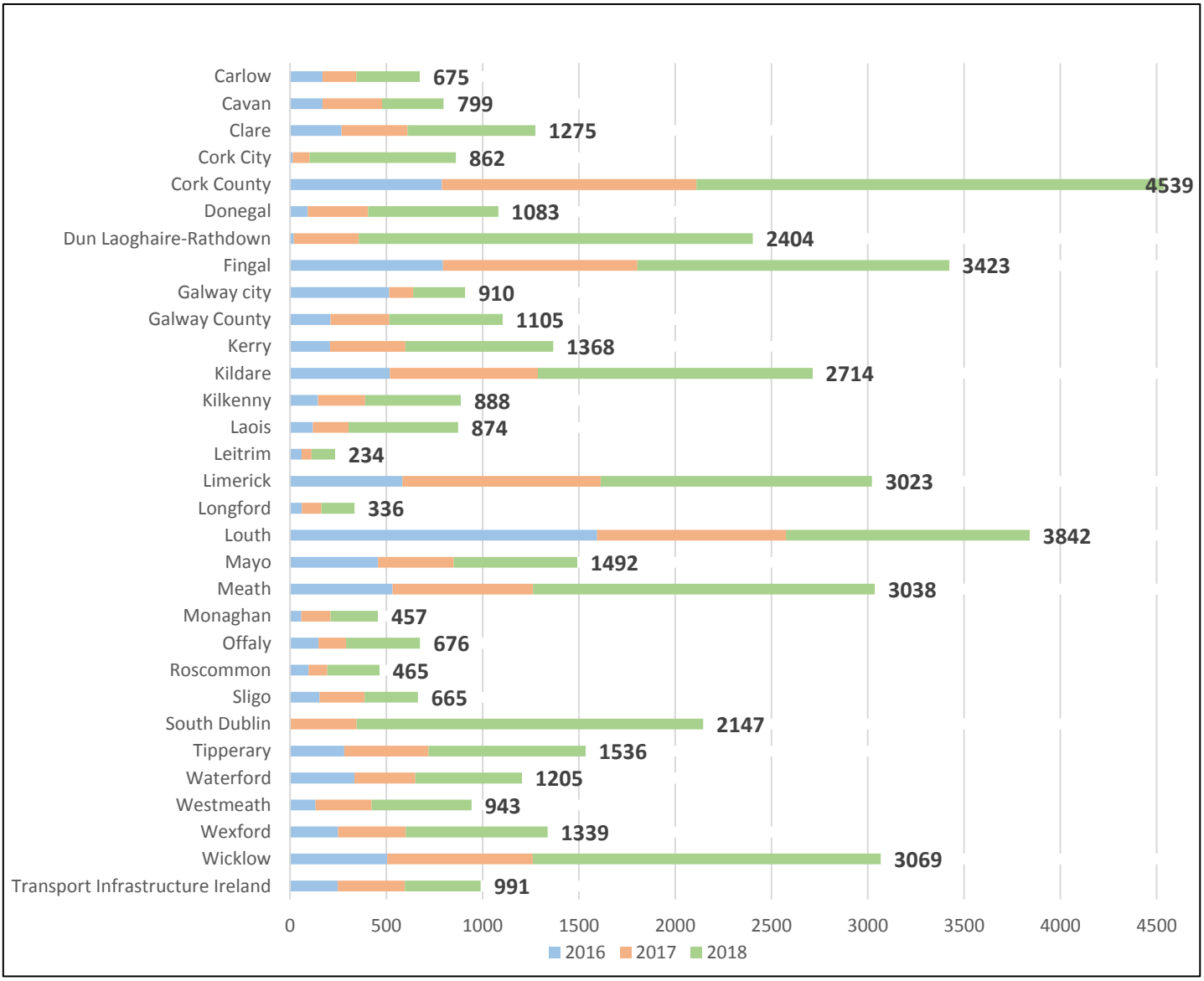


Figure 3: MRL Applications by Local Authorities per Annum

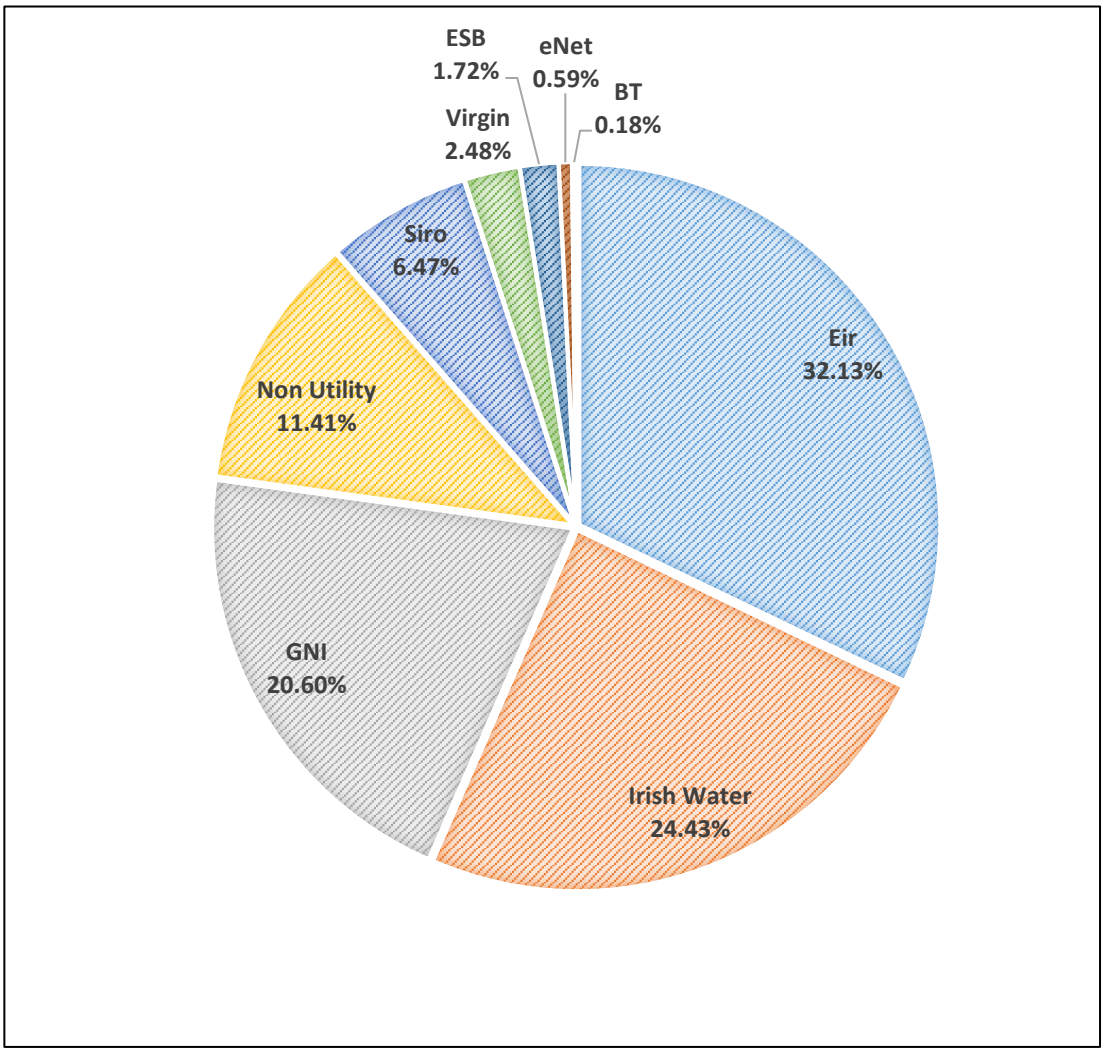


Figure 4: 2018 Applications Breakdown by Utilities

INFORMING CONSUMERS

- ComReg has published the results of tests carried out on mobile/smartphone handsets currently available in Ireland. Certain aspects tested included:
    - Antenna sensitivity performance; and
    - The effect of building materials on indoor mobile performance.

  The results are expected to enable consumers to make informed decisions in choosing the handset best suited to accommodating their needs.

- ComReg has substantially advanced work on a national coverage map for 2G, 3G and 4G coverage in Ireland. The Map is expected to be published in Q1 2019. (See Figure 5)

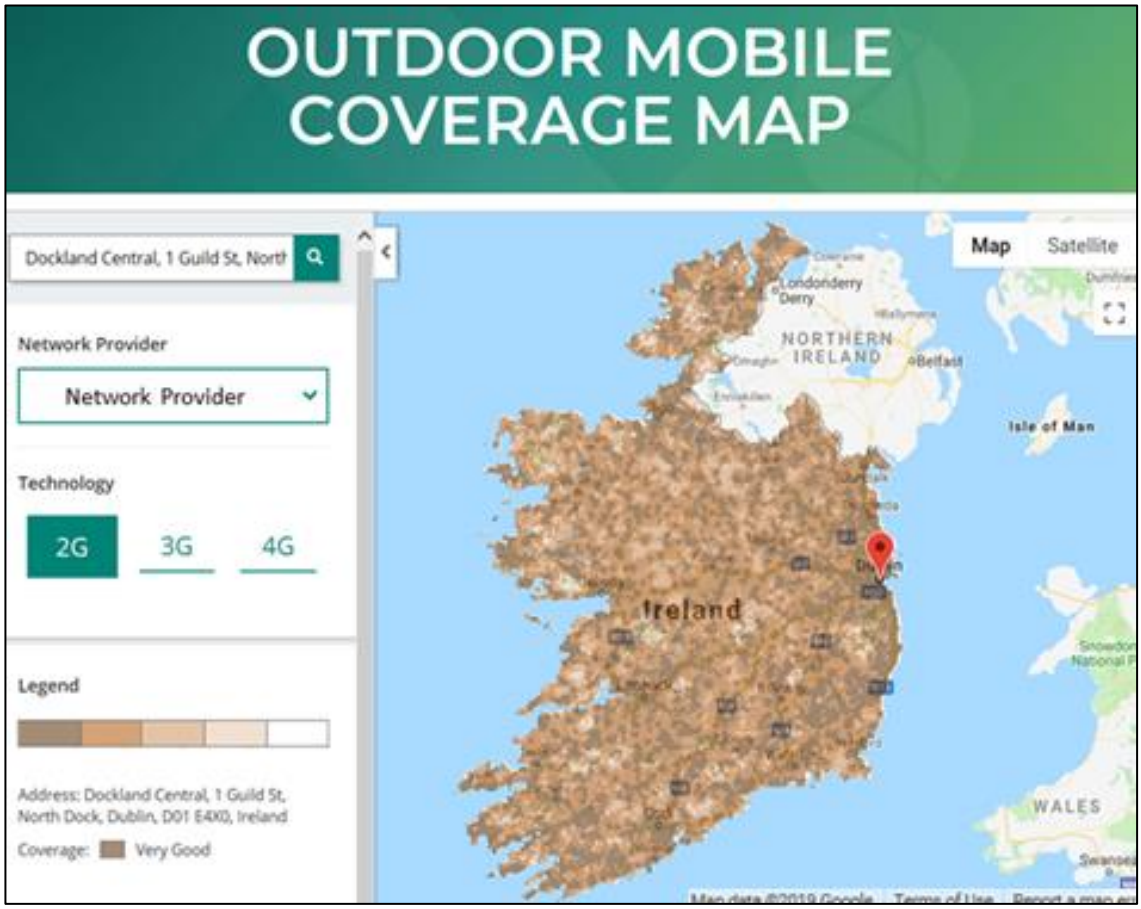


Figure 5: Outdoor Mobile Coverage Map

- Consumers can now avail of ComReg's new price comparison tool. Packages can be viewed by total cost, average monthly cost or handset cost. There is a mobile phone application (App) to calculate usage, further assisting consumers to make more informed decisions.

COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Following on from the success of the inaugural National Stakeholder Forum, held in October 2017, the second annual Stakeholder Forum occurred on 12 October 2018, and facilitated reflection and discussion of the implementation of the Taskforce actions and recommendations and wider issues impacting on the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure.

- ComReg has published a five year forecast report on mobile data volumes / speeds and fixed broadband connections / speeds. That data will be reviewed at regular intervals and will contribute to better network planning by operators and ensure they keep pace with consumer demand for services.

- Broadband Officers in each local authority are engaging with telecommunications operators and a variety of State agencies to remove obstacles to infrastructure rollout.

- Telecommunication Action Group meetings are held regularly and provide a forum in which issues of concern to local authorities can be discussed, deliberated and solutions identified.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

- ComReg has developed a licensing exemption regime affording households and businesses the opportunity to use indoor mobile phone repeaters to boost signals within their premises and bring immediate improvements in mobile coverage.

- At least two operators will have introduced WiFi calling by the end of Q1 2019, with all operators likely to introduce the feature over the next 12 months. This and other network feature enhancements will improve the user experience.

- A focus group was established to provide guidance with respect to categories of location where high-quality, reliable mobile coverage should be made available as a priority. The report of the focus group was published 31 August 2018. It is anticipated that the output of the focus group will influence the actions of mobile network operators in their work to reduce mobile phone blackspots. The report will also inform future policy with regard to priorities for mobile phone services.

A FRESH APPROACH FOR 2019

In 2019, the work of the Taskforce will continue with a new suite of actions, designed to propel the communications revolution and facilitate greater access to vital telecoms networks.

It is essential that the Taskforce remains dynamic and responsive to new sectoral developments. In 2019, the Taskforce will be refreshed and revamped, with a wider array of stakeholders invited to participate in quarterly thematic sessions, where emerging trends in the digital sphere will be presented and debated.

This 'new look' Taskforce will afford a greater range of stakeholders the opportunity to feed into the decision-making process, ensuring that telecommunications policy remains fair, proactive and future-focused.

The energy and spirit of collaboration established over the previous two years of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce will be broadened to harness new ideas and fresh voices. In this way the Taskforce will continue to operate as a driving force in the elimination of telecommunications barriers to a fully connected Ireland.

National Stakeholder Forum

Action 1 of the first Taskforce Report committed to holding “an annual forum for all stakeholders to discuss issues impacting on the rollout of telecoms infrastructure”. The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) were jointly tasked with organising the event. The first Stakeholder Forum (the Forum) took place on 6 October 2017 in Athlone.

The positive effect of the first Forum has been invaluable, going above and beyond what was originally anticipated. In that regard, although only originally meant as a once-off event, the Forum is now part of a set of ongoing measures established to facilitate continuing dialogue between key stakeholders.

Consequently, the second National Stakeholder Forum took place on 12 October 2018 in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. The event was chaired by former Minister of State Seán Kyne T.D. The Forum aimed to bring together key stakeholders to engage in open dialogue, to discuss issues impacting on broadband and mobile phone coverage, and to identify solutions to those challenges in order to enhance and improve services.

This year’s Forum saw a varied range of stakeholders in attendance; from telecommunications industry representatives and industry representative bodies, rural internet service providers, several Government Departments, ComReg, local authorities, and consumer interest bodies.

A panel of speakers were invited to present on specific issues relating to broadband and mobile phone coverage, from a number of different perspectives. The panelists included: Brian Donnellan, Vice-President and Dean of International Affairs, Maynooth University; Robert Finegan, CEO Three; Carolan Lennon, CEO Eir; Conor Pope, Journalist and Broadcaster and Anthony Whelan, Director Electronic Communications Networks and Services, DG CONNECT.

The discussions held on the day formed the basis of the 2019 Work Programme, which is set out at the end of this report.

Progress on 2018 Actions

Legislative Issues/Processes

In a sector as fast-moving as telecommunications, where new technologies are constantly emerging, it is imperative that legislation remains up to date in anticipating and responding to new developments.

Over the last 12 months, Government Departments and agencies have worked collaboratively under the aegis of the Taskforce to address matters impacting, amongst others, the Roads Act, the Building Control Act and the Electronic Communications Act, as well as reviewing processes in the Green Book (Overground Telecommunications Infrastructure on Public Roads), Purple Book (Guidelines for Opening Public Roads) and the Section 254 licence application process.

Action 1

Revise the Guidance on the Potential Location of Overground Telecommunications Infrastructure on Public Roads (Green Book).

Responsible bodies

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport supported by Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the County and City Management Association.

Action status

Not delivered

Progress Made in 2018

This action was carried forward (Action 10) from 2017. TII has worked closely with telecommunication operators over the past two years to identify sites that may be suitable for siting overground telecommunications infrastructure, as new overground infrastructure improves mobile phone connectivity.

From a long list of fourteen potential sites identified by industry, two were selected as pathfinder projects. TII has continued to engage with telecommunication operators on these two priority sites on the motorway network, one at Kilmacanogue on the N11 and the second at Ballinasloe on the M6.

While the technical assessments at both of these sites have now been completed, the telecommunication operators have expressed a wish to pause further development pending clarity around site leasing costs for state land. As a consequence, the Green Book will not be updated until such time as these sites are progressed further and the need for alternations are identified.

Action 2

Review the Section 254 licence application process and associated guidance. Identify need for additional guidance and/or legislative changes.

Responsible bodies

County and City Management Association

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

A subgroup comprised of officials from DRCD, DCCAE, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG), the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and the Roads Management Office (RMO) was established under the County and City Management Association (CCMA) LUTS (Land Use and Transportation) Committee and met on 5 occasions in 2018. The objective of the group was to review the section 254 licence (Planning and Development Acts) application process and any associated guidance, to identify any need for additional guidance and any legislative changes and make recommendations to the LUTS Committee.

A draft paper was presented to the LUTS Committee in October, with feedback integrated into a final report that is currently awaiting approval of the new iteration of the LUTS Committee.

Action 3

Revise the guidelines for Development Contribution Schemes to ensure any waivers apply to both mobile phone and broadband.

Responsible bodies

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

Revising the exemption waivers to incorporate mobile phone infrastructure as well as broadband will bring consistency to Development Contribution Schemes.

DHPLG prepared an update to the 2013 Development Contribution Guidelines to extend the current exemptions for broadband infrastructure to incorporate mobile phone infrastructure by way of a Circular letter issued to planning authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Planning authorities must have regard to guidelines issued under Section 28 in the performance of their functions generally under the Planning Acts. The Circular letter issued

on 3 July 2018 and the Department intends to continue to engage with planning authorities in relation to its implementation.

Action 4

Undertake a review of planning applications for the renewal of temporary permissions for mobile phone masts.

Responsible bodies

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Action status

Not delivered – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

Due to other work priorities DHPLG was unable to progress this action in 2018 and as a result it will be carried forward into 2019.

The Department will engage with local authorities, through representative bodies, DCCAE, and Telecommunications Industry Ireland (Ibec)[2] to gather information and get an understanding of issues arising to inform the review.

Action 5

Agree a protocol for periodic engagement on general planning matters, including exempted development provisions, between the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and the industry, in conjunction with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

Responsible bodies

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

The final protocol was circulated on 19 July 2018 and will provide for a more structured approach to engagement on planning matters between the Department and the telecommunication companies. The Department will arrange a formal meeting with the industry in early 2019, in tandem with progression of Action 4 and 32.

[2] Telecommunications Industry Ireland is the Ibec representative body for leading industry and associated interest groups in the field of electronic communications. It represents companies involved in fixed, mobile, wireless, fixed wireless, satellite and cable based service provisions, outsourcing and internet service provision. **For ease of identification, Telecommunications Industry Ireland will be referred to as 'Ibec' throughout this report.**

Action 6

Install ducting on new national primary/secondary roads and engage in consultation with industry on where additional ducting is required to improve coverage.

Responsible bodies

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Action status

Completed – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

The availability of ducting (for the installation of fibre) is a vital element of backbone infrastructure for a digitally connected Ireland. Installation of ducting was completed on gap sections of the motorway network in 2018. Ducting is accordingly available along the M4/M6 Corridor from Kilcock to Galway, on the M7 from Newbridge to Limerick and on the M8 from Portlaoise to Glanmire.

Further ducting works are planned for 2019, with the intention to commence installation of approximately 40km of ducting on the M18 from Shannon to Limerick and on the Limerick Southern Ring Phase 1, both of which are sections of the network which predated the practice of duct installation. This will result in ducting being available on the full M17/M18 corridor from Tuam to Limerick. As part of the widening of the M7 Naas By-pass to three lanes, new ducting is being installed on the motorway from Naas to Newbridge. This will be completed in Q2 2019.

Action 7

Establish structures to enable greater coordination amongst telcos on:

- **Engaging with Broadband Officers at the preplanning stage of new planning applications; and**
- **Sharing of telecoms Infrastructure.**

Responsible bodies

Ibec

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018:

Throughout the year, operators have actively engaged, both formally and informally, with Broadband Officers in local authorities. The Broadband Officers are becoming key facilitators for operators to engage early at all stages of the planning application process. Mast infrastructure sharing has been developed by mobile operators and tower companies through bilateral commercial negotiations and is operating effectively. The telecoms companies feel that no further structures are needed at this juncture.

The publication by local authorities of telecoms infrastructure assets and terms of rental/leasing would greatly enhance the early feasibility studies of telecoms deployment especially if the Broadband Officers had this information available.

Companies will continue their engagements with Broadband Officers to deepen their understanding of the sector's needs and its desire to access local authority owned infrastructure at appropriate rates to assist deployment decisions.

Action 8

Monitor progress on
(i) the implementation of the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book) and
(ii) the general efficiencies of Monitoring Committee and Stakeholder (User) Forum.

Responsible bodies

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

The Purple Book provides the framework for utilities opening public roads. The revised Purple Book was published in 2017 by DTTAS following a lengthy period of public consultation and engagement with industry.

Throughout 2018, the Department has continued to monitor the implementation of the Purple Book, with the Monitoring Committee meeting as required. In addition, the Joint Utilities Local Authority Users Forum (JULA) met 6 times in 2018 and will continue under joint chairs selected by the Forum members.

The Joint Chairs of the Users Forum will attend the next meeting of the Monitoring Committee to provide an update on progress achieved to date together with an outline of issues to be considered/addressed in 2019.

Action 9

Monitor progress on the implementation of the nationally agreed pricing framework for road opening licences.

Responsible bodies

County and City Management Association

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

Following an engagement with the telecommunications industry, the CCMA agreed to introduce a standardised pricing framework. This will provide clarity and certainty and, when combined with the new National Deposit Scheme, should serve to reduce the cost to telecommunication companies (and other utilities) of opening roads and pavements.

Standardised application fees were introduced nationally from September alongside standardised Long-Term Impact (LTI) charges. General agreement has also been reached between the sector and the telecommunications companies on the structure of a National Deposit Scheme, which it is hoped to implement in Q1 2019. The next steps will see a move to median rates for long-term impact changes in early 2019.

Action 10

Working with stakeholders, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport will lead the development of a roadmap over the course of 2018, setting out the key issues to be considered in response to the ongoing developments in relation to Connected and Automated Vehicles, taking account of emerging and evolving EU and international policies and approaches to the sector.

Responsible bodies

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

Action status

In progress for delivery

Progress Made in 2018

Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAVs) are increasingly seen as the future of mobility, with the potential for seismic change for not just the transport industry, but also the telecommunications sector as well as society. Increasing automation and connectivity will allow vehicles to 'talk' to each other, traffic management systems as well as other road users.

The Department's main priority in 2018, continuing into 2019, is to finalise Guidelines for testing CAVs on public roads in Ireland. These Guidelines are at draft stage and will be circulated to stakeholders shortly. Following finalisation of the testing Guidelines, work will

commence on a CAV Roadmap and Plan. The CAV Roadmap and Plan will be subjected to Public Consultation as well as stakeholder consultation.

Action 11

Consider the need to develop guidance on alternative methods to trenching such as micro-trenching for application across all local authority areas.

Responsible bodies

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport supported by Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the County and City Management Association

Action status

In progress for delivery – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

Micro-trenching is a form of trenching that is less invasive than other approaches to road opening. Micro-trenching has been used internationally for many years and its introduction into Ireland promises a number of potential benefits including: reduced costs, quicker delivery and less long terms impacts on roads and footpaths.

2018 saw the commencement of four micro-trenching trials in towns across Ireland, with other alternative methods also being explored by telecommunication companies. Following the conclusion of the trials, recommendations will be made regarding the implementation of national procedure.

It is intended to carry forward this action into 2019 in order to close out the existing trials and identify whether a method statement is required in order to guide future works of a similar type.

Action 12

Expand the mobile coverage blackspots pilot project to encompass all 31 local authority areas.

Responsible bodies

Department of Rural and Community Development

Action status

Not delivered

Progress Made in 2018

A revised data collection exercise was completed in Q2 by 17 local authorities to map local blackspots and identify infrastructure that could potentially be used to improve telecommunications services. This activity was followed by multiple engagements with mobile telecommunication companies over the course of the summer.

As a consequence of renewed mobile infrastructure and technology upgrade activity by infrastructure providers and telecoms operators, the Department started considering alternative approaches to redressing blackspots. As a first step, the Department is co-funding a pilot blackspot project in MalinBeg with Vodafone and Donegal County Council. It is hoped that the learnings from this project will directly contribute to a revised approach to addressing mobile phone blackspots in rural Ireland in 2019.

In parallel, a number of local authorities are working with telecoms operators to identify solutions to blackspots. The publication of ComReg's national coverage map will give a more accurate reflection of mobile phone coverage throughout the country (see action 31).

Action 13

Geo-code all new ducting and make information on the ducting accessible to local authorities – where practicable, feasible and there are no security issues.

Responsible bodies

County and City Management Association

Action status

Not delivered – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

Geo-coding all new ducting will provide a more complete picture of utility infrastructure under the road, which will allow telecommunication companies and local authorities to have a greater insight into what infrastructure is potentially available to share. In addition, knowledge of underground infrastructure should allow utilities to avoid others' infrastructure.

The Maproad Roadworks Licensing system records location of road openings but not the detail of ducting. Location drawings are available – as a requirement of Purple Book. As a pilot exercise, an application for funding under the Digital Innovation Programme 2018 (DIP) was approved for Mayo County Council in November.

It is intended to carry forward this action into 2019 in order to close out the learnings from the pilot exercise and develop a new GIS module.

Action 14

All mobile operators to introduce WiFi calling to enable mobile users to make phone calls indoor over fixed broadband services.

Responsible bodies

Ibec

Action status

In progress for delivery

Progress Made in 2018

WiFi calling allows users to use their native WiFi network to make and receive calls when the mobile phone coverage signal is poor. This is particularly useful for people living in rural areas who may not have good mobile phone coverage or where building materials negatively impact the mobile phone signal being received.

Operators are progressing the introduction of WiFi calling. Eir introduced WiFi calling in Q1 2017 and has seen very strong usage by its customer to enhance their mobile experience. Vodafone has indicate that it intends to introduce WiFi calling prior to the end of Q1 2019. Three is continuing to evaluate the potential introduction of WiFi calling.

Action 15

Establish a focus group to provide guidance with respect to categories of location where high quality reliable mobile coverage should be made available as a priority taking account of consumer expectations.

Responsible bodies

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

A focus group was established in 2018 to provide guidance with respect to categories of location where high quality reliable mobile coverage should be made available as a priority. The focus group held four meetings between January and May 2018. Having completed its work, the report of the focus group was published on DCCAE's websites on 31 August 2018. The report of the focus group:

- Sets out ranked list of categories of location where high quality mobile coverage should be available.
- Recommends the level (quality and reliability) of coverage for these locations with respect to mobile voice and data services.

It is anticipated that the output of the focus group should influence the actions of the mobile network operators in their work to reduce mobile phone blackspots. It will also inform future policy in both Departments with regards to priorities for mobile phone services.

Action 16

Ensure that broadband and mobile phone infrastructure providers have access to new on-line facilities for planning applications as part of the new e-planning arrangements.

Responsible bodies

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Action status

In progress for delivery

Progress Made in 2018

The new e-Planning system will facilitate online applications in relation to broadband and mobile phone infrastructure as part of the nationwide rollout of e-planning and online access to planning services. The Planning and Development Amendment Act 2018, passed by the Oireachtas in July 2018, will provide the underpinning legislation for e-planning, which will see the introduction of online planning applications, appeals and associated payment of fees.

Significant development work for the e-planning system was undertaken during 2018. Further focused work was undertaken with the local authority sector to scope the technical implications for rollout and the implications for adjusting current systems to deal with the processing of planning applications files.

User interface testing is continuing into Q1 2019, with a view to commencing pilots in Q2 2019.

Policy

The structures of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce have evolved to provide a greater number of stakeholders the opportunity to contribute to the policy-making process. Through the Stakeholder Forum and ongoing bilateral engagement, the Taskforce gains an invaluable snapshot into some of the challenges experienced by telecommunications stakeholders.

From these insights, the Taskforce has worked with action holders to develop policies which aim to balance the interests of Government, State and Public Bodies, Regulators, industry and the citizen. In 2018 the Taskforce primarily focussed actions that would ultimately enable and improve access to suitable infrastructure for the siting of telecommunication equipment.

Action 17 **The Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to consider Transport Infrastructure Ireland request for revised duct access charge on receipt of views from the Ministers for Finance, and Communications, Climate Action and Environment.**
Responsible bodies Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Action status Completed
Progress Made in 2018 Ministerial approval for a reduction in its duct access rental charge was conveyed to TII in July 2018 by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport following receipt of views from the Ministers for Finance, and Communications, Climate Action and Environment. Reducing the duct access rental charge should serve to encourage prompt development of telecommunications infrastructure by telecommunication operators.

Action 18 **Develop and publish a policy for all local authorities around access to and use of infrastructure. To be supported by maps of available infrastructure across the country and guidelines on where infrastructure can and cannot be located.**
Responsible bodies County and City Management Association
Action status Not delivered – carried forward to 2019
Progress Made in 2018 This action has been integrated into Action 19 and will be carried forward into 2019 as part of a coordinated effort to agree a standardised access policy to state and publicly-owned

infrastructure for use by telecommunications companies to improve mobile phone coverage and access to high-speed broadband.

Action 19

Establish a working group to explore the feasibility of developing a standardised policy for accessing and utilising State assets for the deployment of telecoms infrastructure.

Responsible bodies

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

A working group was established in 2018 with the remit of investigating the feasibility of developing standardised policy for accessing and utilising State and publicly-owned assets for the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure. The working group met on four occasions between July and November 2018, and agreed Terms of Reference and a Work Programme. The working group is currently developing a draft Government Policy Statement, with a view to submitting the Policy Statement for Cabinet approval in Q1 2019.

Action 20

Explore the feasibility of developing a database for sharing of telecoms operator information and local authority infrastructure information.

Responsible bodies

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Action status

Ongoing – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

This action will be considered under the work programme of the Working Group on State and Publicly Owned Assets in 2019.

Action 21

Review the role of Broadband Officers in order to clearly define and standardise the scope of the role across all local authorities. In addition put in place structures to provide a greater level of support to Broadband Officers.

Responsible bodies

County and City Management Association supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development

Action status

Delayed

Progress Made in 2018

A proposal to establish a Digital Development Office in local authorities is being drafted. This reflects the sector's commitment to a vital infrastructure project (NBP) and an essential service in the form of Digital Engagement with citizens and communities. The CCMA will consider the role of the Broadband Officer/Support Unit in local authorities and determine what expertise and knowledge is necessary to complement the existing skillset of the Broadband Officers and the resources required. A proposal document is to be reviewed by the CCMA in Q1 2019.

Communications

Improving the level and quality of information that is disseminated to Broadband Officers and the public is a key objective of the Taskforce. Throughout 2018 both Departments worked closely with industry and Taskforce members to increase the amount of timely and useful information that was provided to Broadband Officers in order to aid their interactions with members of the public.

Action 22 **Commence the production of a National Digital Strategy, to set out a vision for Ireland to reap the full rewards of a digitally enabled society.**
Responsible bodies Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Action status Completed
Progress Made in 2018 The development of a new National Digital Strategy (NDS) is being led as a shared effort by the Department of the Taoiseach; DCCAE; Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER). A Digital Strategy Interdepartmental Group including representatives from all Departments is supporting its development ensuring a comprehensive whole-of-Government approach. As committed to in the Action Plan for Jobs, a Framework for Developing a new NDS has been completed, which went to Government in July 2018, and reflected preliminary stakeholder consultations with civic society, enterprise representatives, industry, education providers and academia. The Department of the Taoiseach ran a public consultation on the proposed new NDS between 22nd of October and the 23rd of November 2018. This public consultation will ensure that the public's concerns, needs and ambitions are at the heart of the Strategy.

Action 23

Improved dissemination of information on developments in high-speed broadband, and awareness raising of its benefits:

- **Broadband Officers to engage with PPNs to increase community awareness around high-speed broadband; and**
- **Communications at local level to address concerns arising from proposed siting of masts.**

Responsible bodies

County and City Management Association

Action status

Ongoing

Progress Made in 2018

Regular meetings of the Telecommunications Action Group (formerly the Regional Action Groups) provide an opportunity to disseminate information on telecommunication infrastructure deployment and developments in new technologies. Throughout 2018 regular agenda items covered issues such as 5G deployment, network development plans and the operation of the national charging framework. Engagement with local community groups is underway across a number of local authorities as part of efforts to develop local digital strategies. Additional actions will be undertaken in 2019 following the rollout of high-speed broadband in the intervention area.

Action 24

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASAI) to develop guidelines for telecommunications operators on advertising of telecommunications services

Responsible bodies

Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland

Action status

Delayed – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

As part of an engagement process the Authority held bilateral meetings with nine telecommunications companies. The ASAI undertook research on how advertising of telecommunication services are advertised in other markets, most notably the UK. As many of the companies in Ireland also operate in the UK, the focus of this research was on newly developed guidance in relation to telecoms advertising as well as decisions of the ASA UK. Analysis was carried out on ASAI decisions and on the trends in complaints related to telecom advertising.

An initial draft guidance note has been prepared and is being reviewed internally. A short consultation process will be undertaken prior to the Note being finalised; the ambition is now to deliver by end Q1 2019.

Ongoing Actions from 2017

The following actions were carried forward from 2017:

Action 25 **Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government will complete the necessary legislation to ensure that all new-builds are broadband enabled, including mandating that ducting is in place to facilitate connection to high-speed networks.**
Responsible bodies Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment supported by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
Action status Delayed – carried forward to 2019
Progress Made in 2018[3] Directive 2014/61/EU has been transposed in its entirety, with the exception of Article 8, which obliges member states to ensure that all newly constructed and renovated buildings which are subject to a building permit must be equipped with in-building physical infrastructure, from the access point to the network termination point. It had initially been considered that a possible legislative vehicle for transposing Article 8 was via an amendment to the Building Regulations under the Building Control Act 1990. However, legal advice received in Q3 2018 indicated that a revised, or an alternative, transposition approach would have to be considered. DCCAE continues to explore alternative legislative vehicles in an effort to identify the optimal solution to ensuring appropriate and effective transposition of Article 8.

Action 26 **The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System will be utilised by practically all local authorities and road opening licensing applicants as the single national centralised road opening licensing system.**
Responsible bodies Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport supported by the local authorities and the telecommunications operators
Action status Completed – carried forward to 2019

[3] This action is still under discussion between the two Department and subject to amendments.

Progress Made in 2018

The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System is an online application system that processes applications from utilities to open roads and footpaths. It is now in use in 30 of the 31 local authorities, with a significant increase in the number of licence applications being processed through the system.

Necessary upgrades being progressed to enable Dublin City Council's entry onto the system and it is currently projected that all local authorities will be using the MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System by the beginning of 2020.

Action 27

Formulate legislative proposals that may be required to deal with issues arising from the review of legislation governing TII's and the road authorities' statutory roles and functions in so far as they relate to telecommunications operators accessing the assets under their control or TII fully exploiting such assets: -the Communication Regulation (Premium Rate Services and Electronic Communications Infrastructure) Act 2010; and -the Road Acts.

Responsible bodies

Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment supported by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

Action status

Delayed – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

TII has repeatedly raised concerns regarding the inadvertent layer of bureaucracy created by the Communications Regulation (Premium Rate Services and Electronic Communications Infrastructure) Act 2010. Inter alia, the provisions of the Act require that TII must consult with the local authority (for up to 21 days) before granting a licence.

One possible option identified to address this matter is to amend the Act of 2010 Act.
The question is raised as to whether this also requires corresponding amendments to the Roads Act, with all parties cognisant of the need to avoid any further unintended consequences. To this end, DCCAE has impressed the need for DTTAS to provide guidance as to which aspects of the Roads Act may be affected, with DTTAS in agreement that they would do so.

DTTAS has received an options paper from TII, in which TII indicate their own preferences. DTTAS will revert to DCCAE on foot of same.

Action 28

ComReg will engage a suitable third party to produce a publication that sets out a five year forecast of data traffic that is reviewed, updated at regular intervals and made available on ComReg's website. Examples of forecast items include:

1. Mobile data volumes/ speeds

2. Fixed broadband connections/speeds.

Responsible bodies

Commission for Communications Regulation supported by telecommunications operators

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

ComReg has undertaken a five-year forecast of mobile data traffic in Ireland. This forecast will help enable better network planning by operators and assist stakeholders to keep pace with consumer demand for services.

A number of demand and supply side factors affect mobile data traffic. Demand side factors include: population growth; the use of different mobile applications by consumers and businesses, such as video streaming and audio, web browsing, social networking and gaming; and the growth in M2M (Machine to Machine) traffic. Supply side factors include the evolution of mobile devices used by consumers, the degree of WiFi offload and the impact of iterative developments of mobile technology (from 3G to 4G, and in the longer term to 5G).

The final report projects that the demand for mobile data in Ireland is to forecast to grow at an average of 32% per year up to 2022, though the rate of growth will slow during the forecast period. Total annual mobile data traffic will increase from 268 million GB/year in 2017 to 1,059 million GB/year in 2022,

The final report is available on ComReg's website.[4]

[4] https://www.comreg.ie/publication/mobile-data-traffic-forecast-in-ireland/

Action 29

ComReg will introduce a scheme allowing the use of accredited mobile phone repeaters to help address the issue of indoor coverage, particularly in rural areas.

Responsible bodies

Commission for Communications Regulation

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

The issue of indoor coverage is one that has taken on a new importance in recent years due to the use of more energy efficient building materials and the changing habits and usage patterns of consumers. ComReg undertook to introduce a new scheme to allow the use of repeaters in order to improve indoor coverage. Following a consultation, a final decision was published by ComReg on 27 June[5] and which exempts certain types of repeaters. A list of suppliers is available on ComReg's website.[6]

Action 30

ComReg to finalise testing to determine the sensitivity of mobile phone handsets on the market, and make data publicly available.

Responsible bodies

Commission for Communications Regulation

Action status

Completed

Progress Made in 2018

ComReg identified in its current Radio Spectrum Management Strategy Statement (ComReg 16/50) that poor antenna performance in handsets is likely one of the issues that has a significant effect on users' experience. ComReg took the decision to test the performance of handsets currently on the market to better inform consumers of the effect handset performance can have on their experience. In total this phase of testing took c. 2,000 hours to complete and resulted in the publication of the Mobile Handset Performance (Voice) report (ComReg 18/05), which is available online.[7]

[5] https://www.comreg.ie/publication/mobile-phone-repeaters-response-to-consultation-and-final-decision/
[6] https://www.comreg.ie/media/2018/11/Supplier_Installer_List2018.pdf
[7] https://www.comreg.ie/publication-download/mobile-handset-performance-voice

Action 31

ComReg to publish on its consumer website a composite national coverage map, outlining telecoms operator coverage information.

Responsible bodies

Commission for Communications Regulation

Action status

In progress for delivery

Progress Made in 2018

The availability of a composite national mobile coverage map is a significant milestone for the Taskforce. For the first time, mobile users can access coverage data from all operators in a single place. This will allow consumers to make more informed purchasing decisions and further supports the handset testing work completed by ComReg in 2018.

ComReg appointed an IT consultancy company following a tender process to deliver the mobile coverage map. Updated data was provided by Mobile Network Operators in late October and early November 2018. A test version of the Map was released to mobile operators with 4G data in December 2018.

In Q4 2018, ComReg released a coverage map with all 2G, 3G and 4G data to mobile operators and comments were provided in January 2019. ComReg is now working to go live with the map before the end of February 2019.

Action 32

Initiate a focused review of the statutory Planning Guidelines (1996 and 2012 update), and amend as required, to reflect changes in telecommunications sector.

Responsible bodies

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

Action status

Not delivered – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

The telecommunications sector is constantly evolving, with new technologies emerging. This impacts the planning sector as new technologies have the potential to impact the environment in which they are located in different ways to previous generations of technologies. DHPLG will engage with DCCAE, as well as other stakeholders to initiate a focused review of the existing planning guidelines in early 2019 to ensure that any changes that are necessary are considered and brought forward, as appropriate.

While this action is delayed and will now be delivered in 2019, DHPLG had agreed with Telecommunications Industry Ireland, via DCCAE, that they would prepare a document outlining their observations and suggested amendments on the current guidelines.

Consultants were engaged by Telecommunications Industry Ireland to carry out this exercise, with the final report currently being prepared. It is expected that the final report will be communicated to DHPLG in Q1 2019.

Action 33

Each telco to produce a quarterly report to the Taskforce Implementation Group on network enhancements, new services and future plans and the benefits to consumers of their products and services.

Responsible bodies

Ibec

Action status

In progress for delivery – carried forward to 2019

Progress Made in 2018

Telecommunication companies provide a quarterly update to the Taskforce on new services and network enhancements. Discussions are ongoing with industry to provide a greater level of detail on a county by county basis in 2019.

Action 34

Each local authority should have a Local Digital Strategy, encompassing a digital readiness assessment, in place to support the evolving needs of the digital society and to ensure that the full benefits of the enhanced telecoms infrastructure delivered by the NBP rollout are felt by businesses and communities across the country.

Responsible bodies

Department of Rural and Community Development supported by the County and City Management Association.

Action status

In Progress for delivery

Progress Made in 2018

Digital Readiness Assessments issued to each local authority in Q1, which were followed up with a series of workshops in June around the themes contained the local digital strategy framework. A guidance document was subsequently produced and circulated for local authorities. The Department has also identified and circulated substantial reference material to local authorities. The Department will continue to work with local authorities as they finalise and publish local digital strategies over the coming months.

2019 Work Programme

The agreed list of actions included in the 2019 work programme for the Taskforce incorporates a small number of items carried over from 2018 for completion and a range of new measures. The new actions included are a direct result of discussions held throughout the year with action holders and other key stakeholders. In addition to feedback received from attendees at the National Stakeholder Forum held in October 2018.

2019 Actions

INFORMATION

No	Action	Lead	Impact	Performance Indicator	Delivery Date
1.	Local Authorities (LAs) to share list of all scheduled Road Improvement and Restoration Programmes with all Telecom's operators to assist in scheduling of network improvements.	CCMA (supported by JULA/ DTTAS)	Telecommunication companies' awareness of LAs programmes and timelines will improve scheduling of any network improvement prior to road improvement works.	Number of local authorities actively sharing details of road improvement programmes.	Quarterly Reporting from Q3
2.	Complete and evaluate the micro-trenching pilot programmes and develop a Method Statement, if appropriate, in line with industry best practice. **(Carried forward, with amendments, from 2018 - Action 11)**	DTTAS (supported by CCMA)	Completing the pilot and developing a Method Statement will allow for faster rollout of high-speed broadband.	Pilot programme completed and Method statement agreed.	Q2
3.	Develop the GIS module of the MRL to incorporate more geo-spatial data in respect of road openings and underground infrastructure.	CCMA	Capturing GIS data on underground infrastructure will allow for more orderly planning of road openings.	Module developed and implemented.	Quarterly Reporting

	(Carried forward, with amendments, from 2018 - Action 13)				
4.	The RMO to publish a regular (quarterly) report on the MapRoad Licensing System.	CCMA	Improved data on MapRoad licensing system will allow for improved engagement between local authorities and telecommunication companies.	Reports issued on a quarterly basis.	Quarterly Reporting
5.	Telecommunications operators to collaborate with the ASAI and ComReg to ensure the use of plain language in information displayed on their websites for consumers on consumer rights and factors that impact mobile phone reception. ComReg will consider if appropriate further information could be provided by industry and will encourage telecommunications operators (following discussion with ComReg and	Ibec (supported by Telcos/ ASAI/ ComReg)	Consumers will have a clear understanding of information that might have previously been published in technical language not accessible to all.	Programme of improvements agreed. Relevant, easily understandable information provided by Telecommunication Operators on their websites.	Q4

	ASAI), to make such information available on their websites.				
6.	Each telco to produce a quarterly report to the Taskforce Implementation Group on network enhancements, new services and future plans and the benefits to consumers of their products and services. **(Carried forward form 2018 - Action 33)**	Ibec (supported by Telcos)	Customer experience improved by optimising innovative technology.	Quarterly report published.	Quarterly Reporting
7.	Commercial and non-commercial state and public bodies to increase the number of records listed on the Intra-State Property Register.[8] **(Carried forward, with amendments, from 2018 - Actions 18,19 and 20)**	OPW (supported by DRCD, DCCAE, CCMA and the LDA[9])	Facilitates sharing of knowledge across State bodies of State and publicly owned property assets in urban and rural areas.	Increased use of the Intra-State Property Register by State and publicly owned bodies.	Q4
8.	DRCD and DCCAE will work together to improve public	DRCD/ DCCAE	Increasing awareness of the Taskforce will improve visibility of	Increased media engagements throughout 2019.	Quarterly Reporting

[8] The State Property Register may migrate to the register of lands/properties to be developed by the Land Development Agency (LDA)
[9] See footnote 8

	awareness of the work and impact of the Taskforce.		the actions and improvements already delivered.		
9.	ComReg to continue to provide and promote information for consumers through ComReg's Consumer Engagement programme, including via ComReg's consumer website pages and using ComReg's outreach programme.	ComReg (supported by Ibec/ ASAI)	Clear information, easily understandable by all, will improve consumers' knowledge of their rights and the technical specificities expected of the product they are purchasing.	Consumer Information provided on ComReg's website and directly to consumers by ComReg consumer engagement activities.	Quarterly Reporting
10.	ComReg will develop and implement a programme of enhancement of the National Coverage Map.	ComReg	Increased map functionality may help consumers make more informed decisions on products and services.	Programme enhancement developed and implemented.	Quarterly Reporting

COLLABORATION

No	Action	Lead	Impact	Performance Indicator	Delivery Date
11.	Increase the number of local authorities providing reasonable access to their facilities to telecommunication companies for the installation of essential infrastructure.	CCMA	Facilitates easier access to state assets by telecommunication operators, which will result in easier and faster infrastructure rollout.	Number of local authorities that have made their facilities available.	Q4
12.	CCMA to review the implementation of the national charging framework and deposit scheme.	CCMA	Ensuring that the national charging framework and national deposit scheme are fair and equitable.	Review completed and published.	Q4
13.	The LUTs committee, with the engagement of the Irish Public Bodies (IPB), to explore the feasibility of agreeing a prescribed indemnity clause for the use of local authority land and assets by telecoms companies.	CCMA	The introduction of a prescribed indemnity clause would simplify negotiations between local authorities and telecommunication companies, thereby reducing the time spent before an asset can be put into use for the provision of telecommunication services.	Feasibility review completed.	Q4
14.	Telecommunication operators to appoint a senior person to take responsibility for engagement with local	Ibec (supported by Telcos)	Streamlined engagement between telecommunication companies and local authorities to reduce the number of problematic	Appointment of senior person to role by each telco operator.	Q1

	authorities as a designated first point of contact for problematic applications.		applications under the MapRoad Licensing System.		
15.	In the context of existing statutory obligations, telecommunication operators to agree on a voluntary Code of Practice for granting/sharing access to mobile telecommunication infrastructure.	Ibec (supported by Telcos)	Improved cooperation by telecommunication companies will lead to improved coverage in rural Ireland.	Code of Practice agreed amongst telecommunication companies.	Q3
16.	Telecommunication sector to work with local authorities to agree a standardised procedure for seeking planning permission for new mast sites –including: taking account of County Development Plan, pre-planning meetings and standardised Application Pack.	Ibec (supported by Telcos / CCMA)	Improved process for Planning Applications and objections to new Mast Sites facilitating faster and cheaper development.	Standardised procedure agreed and implemented.	Q2
17.	Telecommunication operators to agree a national standardised process for T5s from application to signoff in	Ibec (supported by Telcos)	Improved efficiency in the Road opening Licensing Systems and increased confidence in the telecommunication operators to	Standardised procedure agreed and implemented.	Q2

	discussion with LGMA/CCMA including completion of relevant sections on MRL-Works Programme Schedule and Maps and relevant documentation/photographs to improve the timeliness of the application life cycle from open to close.		carry out works to the required standard.		
18.	In the context of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive, where appropriate, telecommunications providers in response to a request will participate in a limited number of shared telecommunications infrastructure pilots (such pilots to sit within the existing regulatory framework and regulatory requirements).	Ibec (supported by Telcos)	Use of shared telecommunications infrastructure will reduce the need for road openings and future proof towns and villages for future digital connectivity demands.	Participation by telcos in identified pilots.	Quarterly Reporting from Q3
19.	ComReg's market surveillance team proactively monitors the release of unlicenced equipment into the State through preventive	ComReg	Engagement with stakeholders to further a collaborative approach through discussing and identifying trends and issues and sharing key learnings and information.	Improved collaboration and information sharing.	Q2

	means and with the cooperation of various stakeholders including online selling platforms. Additionally, ComReg will now establish a quarterly forum with key licenced stakeholders including for example: • Tetra/Gardaí • Broadcasters • MNOs • Link Operators • Business radio dealers • Wireless Broadband Providers				
20.	Liaise with local authorities to consider the issues governing the use of public lighting infrastructure for siting small cell technologies.	ESB Networks (supported by CCMA/ DRCD/ DCCAE)	Agreement on the use of street lighting for the purposes of siting small cell technologies would greatly improve the speed of 5G rollout.	Agreement of a policy document for local authorities.	Q4
21.	Formulate legislative proposals that may be required to deal with issues	DCCAE (supported by DTTAS)	This will allow for greater clarity in the processes, timelines and charging regimes in so far as they	Legislative proposal agreed.	Q2

	arising from the review of legislation governing TII's and the road authorities' statutory roles and functions in so far as they relate to telecommunications operators accessing the assets under their control or TII fully exploiting such assets: -the Communication Regulation (Premium Rate Services and Electronic Communications Infrastructure) Act 2010; and -the Road Acts. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 27)**		relate to consents for telecoms operators accessing the assets under TII and local authority control.		
22.	TII and DTTAS to evaluate the feasibility of changes required to TII's statutory mandate in order to allow TII to actively promote the use of its ducts.	DTTAS (supported by TII)	This action would allow TII to more fully exploit the use of its ducts.	Clarity over what changes are required to TTI's legislation.	Quarterly Reporting
23.	The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System will be utilised by all local authorities	CCMA (supported by DTTAS)	A more efficient and standardised application process will be in	MRL system used by all local authorities.	Q4

	and road opening licensing applicants as the single national centralised road opening licensing system. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 26)**		place across local authorities in relation to road openings.		
24.	Utilising the model of the JULA group to look at and propose options for a similar group to address over ground road infrastructure.	DRCD and DCCAE (supported by DTTAS/ DHPLG/ CCMA)	More aligned consultation of key stakeholders to facilitate the streamlining of permitting processes and procedures.	Delivery of recommended options.	Q2

CONNECTIVITY

No	Action	Lead	Impact	Performance Indicator	Delivery Date
25.	Initiate a focused review of the statutory Planning Guidelines (1996 and 2012 update), and amend as required, to reflect changes in telecommunications sector. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 32)**	DHPLG	Consistency in interpretation and implementation of guidelines by local authorities; Guidelines will keep pace with newer forms of technology.	Guidelines published.	Q4 –Dependent on receipt of the Ibec Report, consideration of the report and the extent of the review required, also noting an 8 week public consultation is required for such Guidelines.
26.	Undertake a review of planning applications for the renewal of temporary permissions for mobile phone masts. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 4)**	DHPLG	Will provide consistency of application and clarity on conditions for the renewal of temporary permissions for mobile phone masts.	Review completed.	Q3
27.	Increase access to publicly available WiFi through EU, Government and private sector initiatives.	DRCD (supported by Telcos/LAs)	Increased access to publicly available WiFi will result in improved connectivity.	Number of WiFi points installed.	Quarterly Reporting
28.	DCCAE will continue to explore legislative solutions	DCCAE	Considerable cost and time saving potential to be realised in	Appropriate legislative solution identified and agreed.	Q2/Q3

	to ensure that all new-builds are broadband enabled, including mandating that ducting is in place to facilitate connection to high-speed networks. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 25)**		equipping new builds with in-building physical infrastructure capable of connecting end-users with high speed networks.		
29.	Install ducting on new national primary/secondary roads and engage in consultation with industry on where additional ducting is required to improve coverage. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 6)**	TII	A wider network of ducting will result in telecoms operators being able to deploy end-to-end infrastructure.	Ducting installed where required.	Quarterly Reporting
30.	DCCAE and DRCD, in consultation with the CSSO, to draft template contracts for use by commercial and non-commercial bodies in respect of siting telecommunications infrastructure on their properties and assets.	DCCAE (supported by DRCD)	Template contracts will remove barriers to the use of state properties for the provision of telecommunications infrastructure.	Template contracts drafted and issued to commercial and non-commercial state bodies.	Q4

CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

No	Action	Lead	Impact	Performance Indicator	Delivery Date
31.	ComReg to continue to deepen its understanding of the mobile consumer experience through further surveys.	ComReg	Deeper and improved understanding by ComReg (and other stakeholders) of the mobile consumer experience.	ComReg to re-run its consumer mobile experience survey in 2019[10]; Conduct quarterly mobile consumer confidence survey beginning Q2 2019. Continued engagement with stakeholders.	Quarterly Reporting
32.	ASAI to develop guidelines for telecommunications operators on advertising of telecommunications services. ComReg to support ASAI in the context of ComReg's role in area of open internet access. **(Carried forward from 2018 - Action 24)**	ASAI (supported by ComReg)	Consumer awareness will be increased on the technical aspects of services provided by telecoms operators.	Guidelines published.	Q1
33.	ASAI to monitor telecommunication operators' compliance with the	ASAI	Compliance with guidelines will improve consumer comprehension of	Lack of breaches with new guidelines.	Quarterly Reporting

[10] (to include question on awareness of repeaters by consumers who may benefit from their use, in context of action 35).

	implementation of the new ASAI guidelines.		telecommunication services and products.		
34.	DCCAE's Digital Skills team to liaise with the Broadband Officers to raise local awareness of the Digital Skills Scheme.	DCCAE	Local communities will be better informed of opportunities for training locally to improve digital skills, with an anticipated increase in uptake of training.	Percentage increase in number taking up the digital skills programme.	Quarterly Reporting
35.	Telcos to support the promotion of compliant mobile repeaters to improve mobile phone coverage in energy efficient buildings and those in areas of poor mobile phone coverage.	Ibec (supported by Telcos and ComReg)	Greater take-up of compliant repeaters in rural areas will greatly improve the quality mobile experience.	Benchmark and tracking of awareness of repeaters by consumers who may benefit from their use via ComReg's consumer mobile experience survey.	Quarterly Reporting from Q2

In addition, the Members will be reporting on additional actions that are ongoing but were not deemed necessary to be included in the 2019 Work programme. These actions have been substantially progressed already and will be reported on as part of the quarterly reporting process.

Action 1 Revise the Guidance on the Potential Location of Overground Telecommunications Infrastructure on Public Roads (Green Book).
Action 9 Monitor progress on the implementation of the nationally agreed pricing framework for road opening licences.
Action 10 Working with stakeholders, DTTAS will lead the development of a roadmap over the course of 2018, setting out the key issues to be considered in response to the ongoing developments in relation to Connected and Automated Vehicles, taking account of emerging and evolving EU and international policies and approaches to the sector.
Action 16 Ensure that broadband and mobile phone infrastructure providers have access to new on-line facilities for planning applications as part of the new e-planning arrangements.
Action 34 Each local authority should have a Local Digital Strategy, encompassing a digital readiness assessment, in place to support the evolving needs of the digital society and to ensure that the full benefits of the enhanced telecoms infrastructure delivered by the NBP rollout are felt by businesses and communities across the country.

Membership of the Taskforce

The Taskforce is currently composed of key stakeholders responsible for delivering the 2018 actions. The stakeholders include Government Departments, State Agencies and the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg).

The members of the Taskforce are as follow:

Chair: **Minister of State for Natural Resources, Community Affairs and Digital Development**
Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
Department of Rural and Community Development
Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Local Government Management Agency
County and City Management Association
Commission for Communications Regulation
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland

The following two organisations have agreed to join the Taskforce for 2019:

ESB Networks
Office of Public Works

The work of the Taskforce is supported by ongoing engagement with Ibec on behalf of the Telecommunications Industry.

The Taskforce is supported by senior officials from DRCD and DCCAE.

Acknowledgements

DRCD and DCCAE wish to thank all members of the Taskforce, past and present, that have participated to the work of the group. Their engagement, expertise and commitment are the driving force behind the Taskforce's achievements to date.

In particular, we would like to thank the former and current Chairpersons, who have encouraged the Taskforce's members to maintain their focus on delivering on their respective actions, regardless of their organisation, and to keep in mind that by doing so, they are improving much needed telecommunications services for consumers across the State.

Furthermore, both Departments would like to acknowledge the work of their colleagues in each of the participating Departments and agencies. Their diligence and dedication is recognised and much appreciated.

Lastly, we would like to sincerely thank all who participated in the National Stakeholder Forum 2018; panel members, keynote speakers, the moderator and all in attendance who contributed and made this event a success.

Glossary

ASAI	**Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland** The independent self-regulatory body set up and financed by the advertising industry and committed, in the public interest, to promoting the highest standards of marketing communications, that is, advertising, promotional marketing and direct marketing. www.asai.ie
CAV	**Connected and Automated Vehicles**
CCMA	**County and City Management Association** The "representative voice" of the local government management network. Its members are Chief Executives of the County and City Councils and the Assistant Chief Executives of Dublin City Council. www.lgma.ie/en/CCMA
ComReg	**Commission for Communications Regulation** The statutory body responsible for the regulation of the electronic communications sector (telecommunications, radio communications, broadcasting transmission and premium rate services) and the postal sector. www.comreg.ie
DBEI	**Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation** www.dbei.gov.ie
DCCAE	**Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment** www.dccae.gov.ie
DHPLG	**Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government** www.housing.gov.ie
DIP	**Digital Innovation Programme** The Digital Innovation Programme was launched in 2018 by the Department of Rural and Community Development with the aim of supporting digital development in Local Authority areas for the benefit of communities.
DPER	**Department of Public Expenditure and Reform** www.per.gov.ie
DRCD	**Department of Rural and Community Development** www.drcd.gov.ie
DTTAS	**Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport** www.dttas.ie
ESB Networks	**Electricity Supply Board**

	www.esbnetworks.ie
GIS	**Geographic Information System** System designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage, and present spatial or geographic data.
Green Book	**Guidance on the Potential Location of Overground Telecommunications Infrastructure on Public Roads** is designed to address the engineering appropriateness of siting telecommunications equipment on the roads network. The Green Book can be found on the DTTAS website at: www.dttas.ie
Ibec	**Ibec** is Ireland's largest lobby group representing Irish business both domestically and internationally. Ibec and its trade associations lobby government, policy makers and other key stakeholders nationally and internationally to shape business conditions and drive economic growth. www.ibec.ie
IPB	**Irish Public Bodies**
JULA	**Joint Utilities Local Authority Users Forum**
LAs	**Local Authorities**
LDA	**Land Development Agency**
LGMA	**Local Government Management Agency** A state agency of DHPLG established to provide a range of services to the Local Government Sector in support of co-ordinated and cost effective delivery of Local Government services and policy www.lgma.ie
LTI	**Long Term Impact**
LUTS Committee	**Land Use and Transportation Committee**
M2M	**Machine to Machine** Refers to direct communication between devices using any communications channel, including wired and wireless.
MRL	**MapRoad Roadworks Licensing** is the new national system for the management and processing of roadworks licence applications.
NBP	**National Broadband Plan** A Government-wide initiative to deliver high-speed broadband services to all businesses and households in Ireland. The NBP defines high-speed broadband as a minimum speed of 30Mbps download and 6Mbps upload. This is being achieved through a combination of commercial investment by the telecommunications sector and a State Intervention in those areas where commercial providers acting alone will not provide this essential service. For more information, visit www.broadband.gov.ie

NDS	**National Digital Strategy** A Government policy setting out a vision and a number of practical actions and steps to encourage and assist more citizens and small businesses to get on line. More information is available on the DCCAE website at www.dccae.gov.ie
OPW	**Office of Public Works** www.opw.ie
Purple Book	**The Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads** set out a summary of the legal framework relating to powers of road authorities, various statutory bodies and private individuals in opening or forming openings in public roads in Ireland. The document prescribes standards in respect of the work of forming openings, backfilling and the reinstatement of road surfaces and the associated materials to be used on all roads other than National Roads. Furthermore the document prescribes procedures and requirements in relation to the use of MRL and its use for all road openings in public roads other than those carried out by a road authority. The Purple Book can be found on the DTTAS website at: www.dttas.ie
RMO	**Road Management Office** A local authority shared service to develop and provide supports to roads authorities in the development of best practice and supporting ICT tools for road pavement management and road licensing. www.rmo.ie
TAG	**Telecommunication Action Group** Monthly meetings organised by DRCD attended by all Broadband Officers providing an opportunity for networking and the dissemination of information.
Telcos	**Telecommunications Operators**
TII	**Transport Infrastructure Ireland** TII's primary function is to provide an integrated approach to the future development and operation of the national roads network and light rail infrastructure throughout Ireland. www.tii.ie
TII (Ibec)	**Telecommunications Industry Ireland** The Ibec representative body for leading industry and associated interest groups in the field of electronic communications. TII (Ibec) represents companies involved in fixed, mobile, wireless, fixed wireless, satellite and cable based service provisions, outsourcing and internet service provision. www.ibectii.ie

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THE MOBILE PHONE AND BROADBAND TASKFORCE IS A GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS THAT ADDRESS BROADBAND AND MOBILE COVERAGE DEFICITS AND TO IDENTIFY ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF BROADBAND AND MOBILE PHONE SERVICES, PRIOR TO THE ROLLOUT OF THE NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN.

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