From: ███████████████████

Sent: 01 December 2020 11:22

To: ████████

Subject: DECC consultation on international connectivity

Attachments: DECC Consultation Questions.docx

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Good to talk to you just now. As discussed, please see response below from Microsoft re the DECC consultation on international connectivity. This response was sent directly to IDA last week.

Thanks.

Kind regards

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From: ████████████████████

Sent: Monday 23 November 2020 12:00

To: █████████████████

Cc: █████████████████

Subject: RE: DECC consultation on international connectivity

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Please see below our response to the questions documented within the attached consultation.

Question 1 "Is there sufficient capacity and diversity of routes available to meet current and future demand over the next 5 years (or over a longer timeframe if that information is available)?" Please provide current capacity of international links (in absolute terms and percentage of fibre cable used/free at present) and plans for future capacity over the next 5 years (or over a longer timeframe if available).

MS: Yes there is enough capacity on the transatlantic side for the next 5 years, For the Irish sea we would like to see some new cables as a lot of the existing cables are aging and limited in capacity. It's also worth noting that improvements to
the optical technology means we can get more out of our existing cables.

Question 2 "What are the key challenges and commercial barriers that exist in the development of international connectivity in Ireland?"

MS: The main issue is the limited backhaul options from Cork or Galway back to Dublin we would like to see more diversity and openness to the use or motorway ducting as there are motorway ducts completely unused due to the issues surrounding commercialisation of such routes.

Question 3 "What measures are required, including actions by the State, to alleviate the key challenges and commercial barriers in the development of international connectivity in Ireland?"
MS: Look to create open and fair access policy in accessing public duct infrastructures across public infrastructure, ensuring cables can land without difficult or long lead time to permit.

Question 4 "Given that the most recently deployed and planned submarine cables on transatlantic routes have landed on the west coast of Ireland, are there likely to be any issues with onward connectivity from the landing station to service provider hubs and data centres?"
MS: Limited routes back to the major hubs mean that additional diversity isn't there for new cables to be diverse from existing infrastructure.

Question 5 "How do you think Ireland is positioned when compared to other countries with best practice international connectivity?"
MS: Ireland has done well with the current set of cables, however it would be beneficial to build new ducts across the country that could also tie into the national broadband scheme and allow for further submarine cables to land with the required diversity.

Question 6 "How can Ireland position itself as the preferred location to land submarine fibre optic cables in Europe?"
MS: Ensuring openness and development of open public duct infrastructure and reduce the complexities of permitting.

Question 7 "How can Ireland make it attractive for companies to build new submarine fibre routes from other European countries to Ireland?
MS: Ensuring a diverse national infrastructure to support multiple diverse backhaul and providing a open and streamlined process for permitting and provide financial support to smaller entities wishing to lay new cables this could be achieved at a European level

I look forward to the published results and overall conclusions.

Kind Regards

Microsoft