NICHOLAS RIDLEY ANNOUNCES LICENCE APPLICATIONS FOR PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS OF THE 1990s

Mobile telecommunications reached another milestone today when Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, announced the response to the Government's call for applications to run personal communications networks.

He announced that a proposal has been received from Cable & Wireless plc in conjunction with Motorola Ltd, and seven applications have been received for the licences that will be issued to run the personal communication networks of the 1990s.

Mr Ridley said:

"The number of applications and the quality of the companies making them shows that industry has responded enthusiastically to the Government's initiative on personal communications networks.

"This excellent response to our call for licence applications will ensure that the UK continues to lead in mobile communications as we move into the 1990s."

Copies of the applications have been passed for detailed assessment to the Director General of Telecommunications. He will advise the Secretary of State on whether the proposal from Cable & Wireless is acceptable, and on which of the other applicants should also be licensed.

Personal Communications Networks (PCNs) are mobile communications networks operating within the frequency range 1.7 to 2.3 GHz. They are likely to enter service from 1992, and will compete with the services provided by the UK's two existing cellular radio operators, Cellnet and Racal Vodafone, who in turn will be able to develop further their own networks in the 900 MHz area of the spectrum.
NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The names of the companies which have applied are attached.

2. The call for applications for PCN licences was made on 22 June 1989 (Press Notice 89/466), and stated that, following the advice of Professor Sir Bryan Carsberg, the Director General of Telecommunications, the Department intends to issue a licence to operate a PCN to a consortium headed by Cable & Wireless, subject to the receipt of an acceptable application. One or possibly two further operators will also be licensed. The applications will now be assessed by the Director General who has a statutory obligation to advise the Secretary of State on licensing matters. He will also advise on the number of operators and the technology to be used. The ways in which he will make his assessment, and the time he will take, are matters for the Director General.

ENDS

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Public Enquiries: 01-215 5000
LIST OF APPLICANTS FOR PCN LICENCES

British Aerospace (Space Communications) Limited with Matra Communication, Millicom UK, Pacific Telesis UK (3) Limited

Telephone: Stevenage (0438) 313456
Contact: Mr L J Haynes
Mr P J Conchie

Intouch Ltd
Gooding Investments Ltd, Murray International Holdings Ltd/ Noble Grossart, Welsh Water plc, Technophone Ltd, J Hambro & Partners, Eurocell, Contel Cellular Inc, MTel

Telephone: Cardiff (0222) 390191
Contact: Mr A J Gooding
Mr R G Maling

Telephone: Aylesbury (0296) 623670

Mercury Personal Communications Networks Ltd
Cable & Wireless, Motorola, Telefonica

Telephone: 01-528 2555
Contact: Mr John Taylor

PCN One Ltd
GEC, Bell South, Kingston Communications, Philips

Telephone: 01-355 1448
Contact: Mr Brian Meade

Personal Communications Networks Ltd
Ferranti, GTE, Hanson, Hutchison, Jonathan Clark & Associates

Telephone: 01-245 1245
Contact: Mr Alan Hagdrup

21st Century Networks

Telephone: St Ives (0480) 67933
Contact: Mr Barry Laine

Unite1 Ltd
STC, Thorn EMI, US West

Telephone: 01-945 3114
Contact: Mr Andrew Sukawaty
Mr Graham Matthews