



24 August 2015

CICRA disappointed with number of volunteers for broadband services study

The Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authorities (CICRA) has expressed its disappointment with the response to its call for volunteers for a study of broadband services in the Channel Islands.

The comprehensive study, announced in March, is designed to identify issues in the islands' broadband infrastructures to assess where improvements can be made. To ensure robust results at least 1,000 participants from across Guernsey and Jersey are required – a figure that CICRA says has not been achieved.

CICRA chief executive, Michael Byrne, said that the low participation numbers were surprising in light of how vocal the public has been about broadband experiences.

“We frequently come across feedback from members of the public, offering their perceptions on how broadband services could be improved or simply wanting to understand the issues involved. This study was commissioned as a response to this, offering a way to formally document this feedback and potentially lead to positive change.

“If a formal study highlights a justifiable set of issues, CICRA can influence change through setting standards or reaching out to policy makers and customers. We cannot do this based on anecdotal evidence alone.

“Without this properly researched feedback from broadband customers, it will be impossible for CICRA to explore ways to improve these services. To make this study

viable we need the support of at least 500 more participants than we currently have. We are appealing to anyone who thinks they can help to participate.

“It would be a shame to abandon the project altogether but if we look at this from another perspective, we could infer that the majority of islanders are completely satisfied with their broadband services and therefore have no need to report their feedback,” he said.

CICRA is also encouraging some of those who have volunteered for the questionnaire to complete the process by downloading the Actual Experience software, which monitors their broadband usage from their home computer over a two-month period.

The study is looking at the services of all fixed-network broadband providers in the Channel Islands: JT, Sure and Newtel/YTel/Homenet. Fixed-network broadband services are delivered to customers through copper, fibre optic and WiMax technologies.

The Actual Experience software does not monitor the volunteer’s activity; it uses the volunteer’s hardware to run its own diagnostics to assess speeds and quality of service. Data will be collected confidentially and not shared with the operators themselves. The final report will draw generalised, anonymised conclusions.

Volunteers in either island can register their interest through an online questionnaire on the CICRA web site (www.cicra.gg or www.cicra.je) where further details can also be found. Alternatively you can visit CICRA’s Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChannellIslandsCompetitionandRegulatoryAuthorities>

ENDS

Michael Byrne is available for interview on this subject. Please call Sarah Jehan at Orchard PR on (01481) 251251 to arrange.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

All enquiries should be directed in writing to CICRA chief executive, Michael Byrne, in Guernsey at the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority, Suites B1 & B2, Hirzel Court, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2NH or in Jersey at the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority, 2nd Floor, Salisbury House, 1 - 9 Union Street, St Helier, Jersey JE2 3RF. Alternatively email info@cicra.gg.

In line with CICRA's consultation policy, it intends to make responses to the consultation available on the CICRA website. Any material that is confidential should be put in a separate annex and clearly marked as such so that it may be kept confidential. CICRA regrets that it is not in a position to respond individually to the responses to this consultation.

About CICRA:

The Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authorities or 'CICRA' is the name given to the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (JCRA) and the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority (GCRA) (formerly the Office of Utility Regulation). The JCRA was established under the Competition Regulatory Authority (Jersey) Law, 2001, and the GCRA was established under The Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Ordinance, 2012. In Jersey, the telecoms and postal sectors are regulated by the JCRA, which is also responsible for administering and enforcing the Competition (Jersey) Law 2005. In Guernsey the telecoms, postal and electricity sectors are regulated by the GCRA, which is also responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Guernsey competition law since it came into force on 1 August 2012.

By working together and sharing resources and expertise between the islands, CICRA strives to ensure that consumers in all the Channel Islands receive best value, choice and access to high quality services.