

1.4.6 Co-operate in the provision of a broadband ducting infrastructure in the main towns/cities and between the main towns in the South East.

Co-ordinating Partner

South-East Regional Authority (SERA)

Update March 2004:

Phase 1 of the Serpant Project is almost complete – this includes the completion of the broadband infrastructure in Clonmel.

Phase 2 of the Project involves rolling out broadband infrastructure in the towns of Carrick on Suir, Tipperary town, Cashel and Cahir. The Government has included all four towns in the next schedule of roll out but no details are as yet available in relation to time frame or size or type of project. The South East Regional Authority has been asked by the local authorities in South Tipperary to also co-ordinate Phase 2.

Update September 2003:

The South-East Regional Authority, in partnership with its constituent local authorities in Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford, is managing the country's largest public broadband installation Project. It is the largest and most complex single project in the National Broadband Programme that forms part of the overall National development Plan for 2000-2006.

The Project will cost an estimated €18 million and involves construction of almost 100 kms of underground fibre-optic cabling in the following 6 cities and towns in the Region:- Carlow, Clonmel, Dungarvan, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford. The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources is providing 90% of the cost with the remaining 10% being funded by the 6 City/County Councils in the Region.

The project will, when completed early next year, enhance the attractiveness and marketability of the South-East Region for inward industrial investment and for enterprise development.

The official launch of the 'SERPANT': South-East Broadband project by Mr. Dermot Ahearn, T.D., Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources was held in the Clonard Community Centre, Wexford on Wednesday 27th August 2003.

The Regional Authority has accepted tenders for the works and contracts are expected to be signed shortly with commencement in all six cities/towns by end of September.
(Further details from the SERA website: www.sera.ie)

Update January 2003:

The South East Regional Authority submitted a successful bid to secure funding for the implementation of Phase 1 (connectivity within the six main towns in the region).

Although the bid for Phase 1 was successful, implementation of the project has been delayed due to government budgetary constraints. Partial funding has been made available in 2003 but Phase 1 will not now be completed until 2004.

Action Status September 2002:

Project: ‘Serpant’: - Development of IC T Broadband in six cities/towns in the South-East Region. These are Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Clonmel, Wexford and Dungarvan. It involves provision of ‘metro rings’ of fibre-optic cabling with co-location centers and ancillary equipment in urban centers.

Tenders: Requests to participate in the tendering process for construction/installation of the ‘SERPANT’ network invited in OJEC and national press. A number of contractors have been shortlisted to be invited to tender. Tender documentation prepared and issued to shortlisted contractors. Closing date for receipt of tenders is 5th November. Contractor(s) will be appointed following tender evaluation and following receipt of approval and confirmation of funding from the Dept. of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources.

Future Funding: It is expected that a further call for proposals and funding offer will be made by the DPE in the Autumn. The Regional Authority will be formulating proposals for Phase II and will be submitting them to the DPE for funding.

Next step in Action: This phase of the programme is to be implemented over the next 6 – 18 months. If in future calls are issued for Phase 2 of the programme and SERA will co-ordinate the application.

Partners offering support if required:

Barrow Nore Suir Ltd.
County Enterprise Board
Cashel Town Council
Clonmel Borough Council
Enterprise Ireland
IDA
South Tipperary Co. Co.
Voluntary & Community Group – Platform