



## Telecommunications Newsletter Switzerland

# Swiss Federal Council Proposes Changes to the Universal Services Obligation

According to the press release of the Swiss Office for Communication dated February 22, 2006, the Swiss Federal Councils proposes several changes to the universal services obligation, in view of the forthcoming tender for the Universal Services Licence.

### **Broadband Access to Become Part of Universal Services**

The most prominent change is the proposal to include broadband access in the list of the universal services.

For the broadband access, the proposal will include a maximum price of CHF 69 (excluding VAT). This price would include broadband access, a voice channel, a telephone number and an entry in a public directory.

The definition of the broadband access will be technology neutral. In case of disproportionate investments, the bandwidth can be reduced in extraordinary circumstances. In such cases, the universal services obligation can be fulfilled via mobile access.

### **Lowering of Maximum Prices**

The price for connection on the national fixnet will be reduced to 7.5 Swiss cents per minute (excluding VAT), which will result in a reduction of 32% on the ordinary tariffs and 17% on the lower tariffs set out in the present ordinance.

### **Public Tender Planned For Fall 2006**

Presently Swisscom Fixnet AG is the holder of the universal services licence, which will expire on December 31, 2007. Once the universal services obligation has been determined, the Federal Communication Commission will commence the

public tender procedure in the second half of this year.

Interested parties are invited to comment on the draft by May 31, 2006.

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David Käzig

For further information, please contact:

David Käzig ([d.kaenzig@thouvenin.com](mailto:d.kaenzig@thouvenin.com))