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€30m cable link with U.S.

IRELAND is to have its first direct telecommunications link to the US providing faster and cheaper broadband, it has been confirmed. A €30m contract to lay an undersea cable has been awarded to Hibernia Atlantic Limited. The company is committed to completing construction no later than March next year and to operate it until December 2018. Access to the new link will be available on both sides of the border, delivering direct links with the US and improved connections to Europe.

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Support:
Eamon
Ryan

Faster broadband expected in 2010

IRELAND is to have its first direct telecommunications link to North America providing faster and cheaper broadband by 2010. A €30million contract to lay an undersea cable has been awarded to Hibernia Atlantic Limited. 'Project Kelvin' is a cross-border venture and Hibernia said it expects construction to be completed no later than March next year. Communications Minister Eamon Ryan said it would mean communications between Ireland and North America being directly routed without having to resort to external networks, for example, through London. Benefits would include faster response times at lower cost for high capacity broadband. Mr Ryan said: 'Our economic fortunes will depend on our ability to connect and to compete internationally.'

Box

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Ireland to have direct telecoms link to US

By Ian Graham

IRELAND is to have its first direct telecommunications link to North America, providing faster and cheaper broadband.

A €30m contract to lay an undersea cable has been awarded to Hibernia Atlantic.

The project is a partnership between the Northern Ireland Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the Irish Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources.

Hibernia Atlantic is committed to completing construction no later than March next year and to operate it until December 2018.

Access to the new telecommunications link will be available on both sides of the border, delivering direct links with the US and improved communication connections to Europe.

A new cable will come ashore in the Portrush area and then on to a location where it can interconnect with the province's existing telecoms infrastructure at several locations in the north.

In the south it will ensure Letterkenny, Monaghan,

Castleblaney, Drogheda and Dundalk have direct international connectivity.

Communications Minister Eamon Ryan said it would mean communications between Ireland and North America would be directly routed without having to resort to external networks, such as through London.

"With international connectivity, Letterkenny, Monaghan and their surrounding areas will be attractive bases for businesses," said Mr Ryan.



BOOST: Eamon Ryan

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Atlantic cable link to speed up broadband

€30m project should slash prices by March next year

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Northern Ireland Media Marketing Services

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Irish Daily Mail Reporter

IRELAND is to lay millions of euro worth of cable at the bottom of the Atlantic to boost broadband links with the United States.

The €30million project will allow companies here to ignore external networks such as London and bring in faster and cheaper connections by March next year.

It will be the country's first direct telecommunications link to North America.

Project Kelvin is a cross-border venture and access will also be available in the North.

Hibernia Atlantic must complete the submarine cable in the next 15 months and operate it until December 2018.

It will connect to the existing Hibernia North Transatlantic system 22 miles off the north coast, then come ashore in the Portrush area. From there it will

connect with existing telecoms infrastructures at locations including Letterkenny, Monaghan, Castleblaney, Drogheda and Dundalk - as well as Armagh, Ballymena, Belfast, Coleraine, Derry, Omagh, Portadown and Strabane in the North.

The project is being financed under the EU's INTERREG IVA in partnership with the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources and the North's Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Minister Eamon Ryan said it would mean communications between Ireland and North America being directly routed without having to resort to external networks, eg, through London.

Benefits would include faster response times at lower cost for high capacity broadband.

Minister Ryan said: 'Our economic fortunes will depend on our ability to connect and to compete internationally.'

'Project Kelvin will provide faster broadband at lower costs. This alone will assist us in attracting foreign investment.'

This project will complement our outward connections already in place, making our international telecoms infrastructure more resilient.

'Information will be swiftly, cheaply and reliably transferred.' For the areas directly involved, he said, the benefits would be manifold.

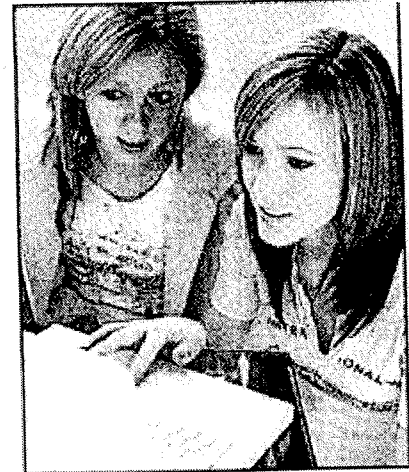
He added: 'With international connectivity, Letterkenny, Monaghan and their surrounding areas will be attractive bases for businesses. Companies can set up in this region confident that they can operate successfully in the global market.'

'Prices for connection will be benchmarked against other international telecoms hubs, such as Amsterdam and London. Project Kelvin will make Ireland, and particularly the North-West and Monaghan areas, a cost-effective base for international business.'

Invest Northern Ireland's chief executive Leslie Morrison welcomed the announcement.

He said: 'While this is particularly beneficial to businesses in sectors such as IT, financial services and multi-media, any company which needs to exchange large amounts of data in a fast and secure manner will benefit.'

reporter@daily mail.ie



Net gain: Quicker searches

Hibernia Atlantic wins €32m contract

GERRY MORIARTY

THE COMMUNICATIONS minister Eamon Ryan and the North's Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster have announced the awarding of a £30 million (€32 million) contract to construct a new direct telecommunications link to North America that will benefit Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The two departments have awarded the contract to Hibernia Atlantic Limited, the transatlantic submarine transport cable provider who say work will be completed no later than March next year.

Called "Project Kelvin" it will involve connecting a new submarine cable to the Hibernia North Transatlantic cable located 22

miles off the north coast of Ireland. The new cable will come ashore on the north coast in Co Derry.

Further links will ensure cities and towns such as Belfast, Derry, Coleraine, Armagh, Letterkenny, Monaghan, Castleblayney, Drogheda and Dundalk have direct international telecoms connectivity, according to the departments. Communications between Ireland and North America will be routed directly without having to use external networks, eg through London. Amongst the benefits will be faster response times at lower cost for high capacity broadband. It will also ensure more secure transmission of data, according to Hibernia Atlantic.

"Project Kelvin will provide

faster broadband at lower costs. This alone will assist Ireland and Northern Ireland in attracting foreign investment," said Mr Ryan.