

Ericsson wins Latin America's first GPRS contract

Ericsson has been selected by Bolivian operator Entel Móvil, for delivery and deployment of Latin America's first-ever GPRS mobile network. The three-year frame agreement is for a full turnkey GSM/GPRS 1900Mhz system and has a total value of USD 36 million (SEK 360 million).

Entel Móvil, a partially owned subsidiary of Telecom Italia, is the leading supplier of digital cellular services in Bolivia. They were the first operator to offer digital technology, based on Ericsson's TDMA system; operations started in 1996. The introduction of GSM/GPRS makes Entel Móvil the first operator in Latin America to offer both TDMA and GSM technologies to its users.

This first GPRS agreement in Latin America is an important milestone in the continuing spread of GSM/GPRS coverage in the global arena. It also demonstrates Ericsson strengths in GSM/GPRS on a global basis as well as its commitment and capabilities in these technologies in Latin America.

The agreement is part of a major infrastructure expansion by Entel Móvil. In phase one, standard GSM services will be deployed in La Paz, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. The new GSM-based system will go into commercial operation by the end of December 2000.

The Ericsson GPRS enabled wireless network is scheduled for launch in Q2 2001 and will allow Entel Móvil to offer its customers wireless Internet and other IP-based services at speeds up to 115 kbps as well as significantly improved roaming capabilities. Phase two will also expand services to other major cities of Bolivia.

Ericsson supports early introduction of commercial GPRS services by operators with its end to end GPRS solution including ready-to-go mobile Internet applications as well as GPRS phones.

Supporting the introduction of GPRS Services, Ericsson recently unveiled the first GPRS phone with Bluetooth™, the tripleband R520. The R520 supports GSM 900/1800/1900 frequencies, allowing communication on one phone throughout 120 countries on five continents. The R520 is the first GPRS phone with Bluetooth™ and the first phone in the world supporting WAP 1.2.1. It also supports Chinese characters.

Ericsson is the leading communications supplier, combining innovation in mobility and Internet in creating the new era of mobile Internet. Ericsson provides total solutions covering everything from systems and applications to mobile phones and other communications tools. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for customers all over the world.

Read more at www.ericsson.com/pressroom

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About GSM/GPRS

GSM is the world's most widely deployed wireless communications standard. Ericsson is the global market leader in GSM, with 40 percent of the world's 383 million GSM subscribers connected by Ericsson systems. More than 146 operators in some 80 countries around the world rely on GSM systems from Ericsson.

Ericsson is the clear GPRS market leader, with 59 commercial agreements and has already delivered over 50 standard compatible GPRS solutions to leading operators in Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Americas. The Ericsson GPRS solution is future-proofed for third generation (3G) systems and is fully compatible with the GPRS specifications approved at SMG 31 (Special Mobile Group within ETSI standardization organization).

The Ericsson customers SmarTone, Hong-Kong, Vodafone, UK and Telstra, Australia have begun commercial services for a limited number of users earlier this year. Ericsson and Guangdong Mobile Communication (GMCC) have launched China's largest GPRS pre-commercial network offering high-speed wireless data communications services to customers in the cities of Guangzhou and Shenzhen.