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## ITALY

### **Teleunit signs licence agreement to provide WLL services throughout Tuscany**

Teleunit SpA, a provider of fixed-line telephony, wireless broadband, international calling cards, and premium access number phone products throughout Italy, has signed an agreement with Wirlink Srl to provide wireless local loop (WLL) services throughout Tuscany under its licence. The company entered into discussions with Wirlink following delays in the auction for new licences by the Italian Telecommunications Ministry. Wirlink originally acquired the licence from the Ministry in 2002 but has not exploited it to date.

This agreement will enable Teleunit to utilise over half of the available WLL frequency for the provision of broadband services in areas of the Tuscany region for the next 18 years until the expiry of the licence. This will provide enough capacity for Teleunit to fulfil its business plan in Tuscany. Under the agreement, Teleunit will pay Wirlink a total of €425,000 in three tranches during the first half of 2005. This significantly reduces the cost associated with the WLL roll-out compared to the originally estimated €800,000 cost of acquiring the Tuscany licence through the government auction, a saving of €375,000.

Gianfranco Cimica, Chief Executive Officer of Teleunit, commented: "This agreement with Wirlink will allow Teleunit to start rolling-out wireless local loop throughout the Tuscan region. We already have the infrastructure in place along with existing demand for WLL from SMEs in Tuscany. This is an important agreement for Teleunit and fulfils our promise to develop WLL further in Italy, allowing the small to medium sized businesses in the area more effective Internet access for better value."

SR Telecom recently announced that it is to supply its airstar product the the expansion of Teleunit's broadband fixed-wireless access deploying in the Tuscany region. The total value of the current phase of this project, which marks the first extension of Teleunit's initial roll-out of airstar systems, is approximately Can\$1.2 million. Further expansions of the WLL infrastructure in the Tuscany and Marche regions in Central Italy are expected to take place throughout 2005.

Since 2002, Teleunit has been deploying airstar to offer its business users toll-quality voice and high-speed data services. The systems are supplied to Teleunit by IBM Global Services, the system integrator, which is also providing maintenance services for the WLL infrastructure. Additionally, Teleunit is working within the IBM PartnerWorld network to address the small and medium enterprise (SME) market in central Italy.