

## France Telecom reconfirms its commitment to a healthy and balanced fiber-optic deployment

Since its fiber-optic projects were launched, France Telecom has ensured that they are carried out in the best interests of consumers, notably enabling them, home by home, to choose their operator for access to fiber, and complying with competition rules.

As of last summer, in relation to the priority set out by third-party operators to have access to its civil engineering, and in line with the recommendations of the French telecommunications and postal regulator (ARCEP), France Telecom started developing a civil engineering offering, unveiled at the end of last year, with its operational deployment currently underway based on the principles and schedule announced.

To facilitate access to buildings, France Telecom has also proposed an offer to mutualize building cabling, as recommended by the ARCEP.

With this offering, the conditions for work in buildings with fiber connections by France Telecom have been defined in conjunction with the French estate agents association (FNAIM) for the Paris Region and the association of co-ownership managers (Association des Responsables de Copropriétés). In this way, under the agreements signed, owners authorize France Telecom and the other FTTH operators covered by the mutualization of the passive internal fiber-optic network, or their subcontractors, to access the building's communal areas, fit and operate the fiber optic network and connect up new customers, based on the same conditions as France Telecom. Similarly, France Telecom's connection work is also being carried out by subcontractors that third-party operators may call on, as France Telecom has reminded them.

The operational details of this mutualization must be tested out, and France Telecom is very keen to carry out such tests with third-party operators as quickly as possible. On several occasions, France Telecom has declared to the ARCEP and third-party operators that it was willing to connect up its fiber in buildings with fiber coverage from other operators, and to allow operators to connect up to the fiber that it has installed in buildings. However, to be effective, this process must be symmetrical, with a mutual and concrete commitment to carry out such operations.

Furthermore, the French economic modernization bill contains lengthy provisions on this issue of building cabling. This bill will be discussed by the French parliament over the coming weeks.

As announced in 2006, France Telecom is now well into the pre-deployment phase for fiber-optic in several districts in Paris, the Hauts de Seine region and 10 French cities (Lille, Metz, Lyon, Grenoble, Marseilles, Nice, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Poitiers and Nantes). By December 31, 2007, 7,268 customers had chosen France Telecom's fiber offering and 146,006 homes were able to be connected up. This two-year deployment program over 2007-2008 will cover up to 1 million connectable homes.

At a time when our country is able to commit to a major investment program enabling it to maintain its lead in the digital world and when the first fiber-optic users are praising its progress and advances in terms of services, it is unfortunate and detrimental, primarily for consumers, to see incorrect claims circulating – generating concerns among owners – and blocking progress on very high-speed broadband.

Press contacts: Louis-Michel Aymard - +33 1 44 44 93 93