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Radio Spectrum Policy Group

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**Public consultation on the Draft RSPG Opinion on a long-term strategy on
the future use of the UHF band (470-790 MHz) in the European Union -
RSPG14-585(rev1)**

c/o Landesmedienanstalt
für Kommunikation Baden-Württemberg
Reinsburgstraße 27
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The German media authorities welcome that the long-term use of the UHF band (470-790 MHz) is being discussed widely in the European Union and that the RSPG has launched a consultation on this issue. In general, the media authorities also welcome and support the broadband expansion, which however must not conflict with the legal and planning certainty of the development of digital terrestrial transmission.

Regarding the issues raised by the RSPG we express the following opinion:

1. In Germany, in the beginning of December 2014, the Chancellor and the heads of government of the German Länder, have decided to carry-out the allocation of the 700 MHz spectrum frequencies in the first half of 2015. In so far, the measures regarding the treatment of the 700 MHz band proposed by the RSPG have already been introduced in Germany. The negotiations with neighbouring countries are ongoing. Hence, a statement regarding the measures the RSPG has proposed for the treatment of the 700 MHz band is no longer necessary.

2. From mid-2016 on, DVB-T2 shall be introduced in Germany with the implementation of HEVC. For this reason the media authorities support the RSPG's recommendation that the European Commission in cooperation with the Member States shall take measures to facilitate the transition from DVB-T to DVB-T2. This also should include the provision that the newest technologies like DVB-T2 and HEVC have to be installed in TV receivers as soon as possible.

Gesellschafter:

Landesanstalt für Kommunikation Baden-Württemberg (LFK) • Bayerische Landeszentrale für neue Medien (BLM) • Medienanstalt Berlin-Brandenburg (mabb) • Bremische Landesmedienanstalt (brema) • Medienanstalt Hamburg / Schleswig-Holstein (MA HSH) • Hessische Landesanstalt für privaten Rundfunk und neue Medien (LPR Hessen) • Medienanstalt Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (MMV) • Niedersächsische Landesmedienanstalt (NLM) • Landesanstalt für Medien Nordrhein-Westfalen (LfM) • Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation Rheinland-Pfalz (LMK) • Landesmedienanstalt Saarland (LMS) • Sächsische Landesanstalt für privaten Rundfunk und neue Medien (SLM) • Medienanstalt Sachsen-Anhalt (MSA) • Thüringer Landesmedienanstalt (TLM)



3. The RSPG has outlined that the terrestrial distribution of audio-visual content will continue to be of crucial importance in the future in the European Union. Therefore, the media authorities support the RSPG's recommendation that the UHF band 470-694 MHz shall remain available for the distribution of audio-visual content also beyond 2030. Equally, the media authorities support the proposal that the UHF band 470-694 MHz shall remain available for DTT until 2030. In this context, the media authorities demand planning reliability for broadcasting services for the period up to 2030.

4. The RSPG recommends that Member States should have the flexibility to use the 470-694 MHz band for the WBB downlink, provided that such use is compatible with the broadcasting needs in the relevant Member State. The RSPG recommends that, when considering any options for the future usage of the frequency band 470-694 MHz, aspects such as the requirements, technological development, consumer behaviour, the importance of delivering free-to-air television and the various political, social, cultural and economic general interest objectives when this is achieved through the DTT platform, should be taken into account. In its report, the RSPG initially emphasizes the social and cultural importance of DTT. The media authorities support this view. However, we would like to point out that hereby the social and cultural contribution of DTT is put before the pure economic value, which a commercial enterprise possibly could benefit from by using the band for commercial services.

5. The release of the 700 MHz band is not done voluntarily. The band is released by broadcasting services, because mobile communication companies want to offer WBB-services in this frequency band. For the media authorities it goes without saying that those who benefit from the switchover bear the costs. If necessary, the provisions for appropriate compensation need to be adjusted at EU level and possibly also on the national level. We consider it to be insufficient that the Commission merely provides early guidance. The crucial point is to propose and possibly create impeccable legal arrangements, so that the costs for clearing of the 700 MHz band are entirely borne by the users of the clearing.

6. The RSPG recognises that the implementation of broadband PPDR networks is a national issue. The media authorities certainly do not want to influence the implementation or arrangement of PPDR networks; neither do they want to deprive the national administrative bodies of their competence. However, the media authorities would like to bring into consideration that a PPDR network in the same way as any other radio network has effects on radio networks being operated in spatial and/ or technical proximity. For this reason, a state's decision for the implementation of a PPDR network in a specific frequency range may indeed have effects on the frequency related



technical leeway of neighbouring countries. Hence, a Europe-wide harmonisation of spectrum planning is also necessary for PPDR.

It can be assumed that future broadband PPDR networks are technically very similar to LTE. Especially the radio interface will be comparable to LTE, which means that the number of tests that have already been conducted regarding the compatibility of DTT und LTE can be transferred to PPDR. In chapter 7.2.1 of its opinion, the RSPG quotes another RSPG-report, according to which “the interference from broadcasting stations into the base stations of the mobile service can reach few hundreds of kilometres and the interference from base station to broadcasting reception at the border can also be significant”. The interfering effect between broadcasting and broadband PPDR networks will be a similar one. Hence, the media authorities consider it indispensable that PPDR is fully taken into account in the RSPG’s long-term strategy on the future use of the UHF band. The freedom of the individual states to actually apply PPDR in the frequency ranges that still need to be identified by the RSPG remains unaffected. Unless enough spectrum is planned from the outset for PPDR, it is to be feared that subsequent planning of PPDR is at the expense of other spectrum users. This is precisely what the RSPG wants to prevent with its long-term strategy. The media authorities expect the RSPG to make proposals for the use of frequencies by PPDR, so that the use of frequencies the RSPG has planned -in particular the one of broadcasting- can actually be used permanently and is not interfered by subsequent planning.