

Deutsche Telekom / T-Mobile Position on the Draft RSPG Opinion on the Digital Dividend

General Remarks

Deutsche Telekom/T-Mobile (DT/TMO) welcomes the opportunity to submit comments on the RSPG opinion on the Digital Dividend.

The allocation of a sub-band of the Digital Dividend to the mobile service will provide huge economical benefits to Europe. Studies show that the increased efficiency / productivity of the economy due to the mobile broadband service would create an additional value of billions of Euros and thousands of new jobs. This is of particular importance in order to help to overcome the current economical crisis.

However, the maximum economical benefit will only be achieved if the allocation is as harmonised as possible in Europe.

For multinational operators like DT/TMO it is of utmost importance that its customers are free to use their equipment in as many countries as possible without any restrictions. Harmonisation of the frequency band 790-862 MHz will reduce these restrictions and will facilitate cross-border co-ordination and ensure an efficient use of spectrum.

DT/TMO is therefore of the opinion that the band 790-862 MHz should be harmonised and should be allocated to the mobile service all over Europe as soon as possible, in order

- to bridge the digital divide in rural and remote areas
- to improve the quality of mobiles services (e.g. indoor coverage) in all areas.

Comments on the RSPG Recommendations (Section 7)

1. *The RSPG recommends that the EC should assess the advantages and disadvantages of options for a coordinated non-mandatory EU approach to the availability of the 800 MHz band for ECN and ECS, other than broadcast transmission networks and services, as this is essential in order to determine the appropriate level of coordination between Member States;*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO recognises that the majority of the EU Member States don't support a binding action by the EC. However, it is not clear whether the "non-mandatory approach" will really be successful. DT/TMO is of the opinion that the RSPG should consider a procedure where the EC could apply a mixed approach and develop a guideline for the release of the Digital Dividend which defines the objective (allocation of the band 790-862 MHz to the mobile service) as mandatory as possible but gives freedom to the Member States regarding the way (including the date) how to reach this objective.

2. *The RSPG recommends that the EC acts on the recommendations contained in this Opinion as quickly as possible and no later than [31 October 2009] in order to minimise EU level uncertainty in the ability of Member States to make available the 800 MHz band in order to promote growth, competition and innovation in the provision of ECN and ECS;*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO supports this recommendation. However, it should be taken into account that the economical benefits will be achieved best by allocation of the sub-band 790-862 MHz to the mobile service.

3. *The RSPG recommends that the EC encourages Member States who are making available the 800 MHz band for new and/or enhanced ECN and ECS to apply WAPECS principles, particularly of service and technology neutrality, recognising that Member States may maintain broadcasting use in all or a portion of the band;*

DT/TMO Comment:

In order to avoid interferences it is necessary to clearly separate the allocations to broadcasting and to mobile service.

Moreover, in order

- to facilitate cross border co-ordination and to avoid large exclusion zones at the borderlines and
- to enable the development of terminal equipment (both, mobile handsets and TV-sets) which can be used in the whole of Europe without causing interference

these allocations need to be as harmonised as possible.

A clear separation of the allocations to the broadcasting service and to the mobile service is only possible if a sub-band for the mobile service is harmonised all over Europe. This can be done on a technology neutral basis.

4. *The RSPG recommends that any EU harmonisation of technical elements such as channelling arrangements and common and minimal (least restrictive) technical conditions be based on the outcome of the CEPT work in response to relevant EC mandates;*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO supports this recommendation.

5. *The RSPG recommends that the EC encourages Member States to facilitate cross-border coordination agreements with the aim of enabling those administrations wishing to make available the 800 MHz band for ECN and ECS, other than broadcast transmission networks and services to do so, taking into account technical feasibility and the need for equitable access;*

DT/TMO Comment:

The best way to facilitate cross-border-coordination is to harmonise the allocations in Europe - guideline and support by the EC are of course helpful.

6. *The RSPG recommends that the EC supports Member States in renegotiating aspects of the GE06 Plan if necessary with countries outside the EU to allow them to realise and make available the 800 MHz band part of their digital dividend;*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO agrees with this recommendation but would like to mention that in the case of negotiation between EU Member States, the GE-06 plan should be dealt with in a flexible way.

Administrations should be encouraged to exploit the full potential of possibilities through bilateral negotiations. There are many cases where the allotments of the GE-06 Plan are not completely used in practise or intended to be used in a different way.

7. *The RSPG recommends that the EC gives further consideration through a review process to the merits of facilitating EU-wide long term availability of the 800 MHz band for mobile and fixed broadband applications;*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO thinks that the allocation arrangement of the Digital Dividend should be reviewed from time to time in the light of ongoing innovations, in particular with a view to technologies that make spectrum use more efficient.

8. *The RSPG recommends that Member States, acting on a bi/multilateral basis should identify whether there are geographic clusters arising from commonalities between transitional activities and possible access to the 800 MHz band for electronic communications networks and services, noting the need to consider the requirements of countries adjacent to the cluster which may be affected. Such commonalities could facilitate a coordinated approach to timing in releasing their digital dividends and provide more economic and social benefits as a whole.*

DT/TMO Comment:

DT/TMO is of the opinion that Member States should co-operate as much as possible to find common solutions. The major European effort should however be put on an overall European harmonisation. DT/TMO worries that the establishment of clusters would be counterproductive for a Europe wide harmonisation because it reduces the pressure for achieving that target.

Best Regards

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