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RADIO SPECTRUM POLICY GROUP

5th Progress Report of the RSPG Working Group on Spectrum aspects of the Digital Single Market

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RSPG at its Meeting #43 (Brussels, 6 June 2017) approved the 4th Progress Report of the RSPG Working Group (RSPG17-027 FINAL). This described the ongoing development of the Peer Review platform and also considered areas of joint work and common interest between RSPG and BEREC.

I. RSPG WORK ON PEER REVIEW

The aim of the RSPG work on Peer Review is to better enable RSPG members to exchange experiences and views on spectrum awards and national assignment procedures relating to spectrum harmonised for ECS¹. Key initiatives over the past few months have included:

- A workshop hosted by the Czech Telecommunications Office in Prague at which colleagues from the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic presented on their recent awards of 3.5 GHz spectrum;
- A series of presentations from Member States on experience of awarding, or plans to award, 700 MHz spectrum, held on 20 November;
- Further development of the RSPG Peer Review platform.

Further details in respect of each of these areas is given below.

Workshop on spectrum awards in Czech Republic and Slovak Republic

On 26 September the Czech Telecommunication Office hosted a workshop in Prague to discuss the recent awards of spectrum in the 3.4-3.8 GHz band in the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic respectively. This was the first such Workshop, held under the auspices of the RSPG work on Peer Review as part of an initiative to encourage more sharing of experience and best practice between Member States on the subject of spectrum awards.

The Workshop was attended by around 20 representatives from 11 different Member States and the European Commission. It was deliberately closed to stakeholders to encourage honest and frank exchange between administrations. This worked very well and attendees engaged in two lively sessions – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – at which there was a detailed discussion of recent awards in the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic as well as of the approaches followed in other Member States.

It was clear that we have many issues in common but also many issues that need to be handled differently due to particular national characteristics. As well as having some

¹ Spectrum subject to technical harmonisation under Spectrum Decision (700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1452-1492 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2,1 GHz, 2,6 GHz and 3,4-3,8 GHz)

interesting insights into the development of spectrum awards in the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, attendees were able to discuss implications for spectrum awards more generally. Discussion included lessons learned from the Czech award (of 800, 1800 and 2600 MHz) in 2012 and how the Slovak Republic addressed the issue of local licensing in the 3.6-3.8 GHz band.

This was the first workshop of this type, explicitly aimed at sharing experience, expertise and learnings between Member States. Given the profile and strategic importance of spectrum awards, combined with their complexity and the different options available to Member States, the RSPG sees such workshops as a valuable tool to help continue to raise the standard of spectrum awards in countries across Europe.

Brussels workshop on award of 700 MHz band

The next workshop on spectrum awards is focused on the 700 MHz band and is to be held on 20 November, the day before Plenary. Presentations will be given by France and Germany on their experiences of awarding 700 MHz and from Sweden and Norway on their future plans for awarding the spectrum. A brief overview of the workshop will be given to the RSPG Plenary on 21 November.

Peer Review Platform

As described in previous Progress Reports, the Peer Review Platform that has been established by RSPG consists of three main sections:

- the **Library** section
- the **Peer assistance** section
- the **Contact point** section

The basic structure of the RSPG Peer Review platform was agreed at the RSPG Plenary on 9 November 2016. The aim of the platform is to enable RSPG members to learn from each other's experiences and to seek support, as appropriate, from peers on issues of spectrum management, focusing on spectrum harmonised for ECS. The RSPG Peer Review platform is based on voluntary principles and is not intended to impose additional obligations for the members.

There are now more than 50 representatives from Member States and the Commission that have access to the platform. Information about upcoming and past spectrum awards in Member States continues to be uploaded onto the platform. In some cases Member States have completed specific templates providing high level details about upcoming awards. Member States are encouraged to continue to upload further information about spectrum awards in their countries as more information becomes available.

II. RSPG AND BEREC WORK ON MOBILE COVERAGE

The RSPG and BEREC have been working closely to develop a joint Report addressing mobile coverage policy. BEREC has also developed a position on the measurement of coverage.

The joint report - entitled *Facilitating Mobile Connectivity in "Challenge Areas"* - was approved for public consultation by RSPG following a written procedure launched on 10 October and the consultation was published on 31 October: see <http://rspg-spectrum.eu/public-consultations/>. The public consultation will run until 28 November and the joint working group comprised of BEREC and RSPG members will consider the responses.

The BEREC preliminary report in view of a common position on monitoring mobile coverage was published for consultation on 11 October – the consultation closes on 8 November. A number of RSPG colleagues were involved (as BEREC members) in the drafting of this report and all RSPG members had the opportunity to feed in comments prior to the document being published for consultation.

We anticipate that these two reports on coverage related issues will be formally adopted over the coming months. In the case of the joint BEREC/RSPG report, we would welcome any comments from the Plenary but one option would be to use a written procedure a second time to agree the final report following the public consultation. Another option would be for RSPG to agree at the November meeting to the adoption of the Report, provided that any amendments subsequent to the public consultation are limited to describing the consultation responses. Either of these approaches would enable the document to be published soon after its formal adoption by BEREC at the final BEREC plenary of 2017 on 7-8 December (or failing that at the first Plenary of 2018).

While this will represent the end of these particular pieces of work, the RSPG's joint working with BEREC is expected to continue and can be discussed under the agenda item addressing the RSPG's future work programme.

III. PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION

1. RSPG members to continue to update relevant information relating to spectrum awards to the Peer Review Platform and, where appropriate, complete country templates.
2. RSPG members encouraged to continue to actively participate in Member State programme of workshops discussing plans for, or experience of, European spectrum awards.
3. RSPG members to consider options for obtaining RSPG agreement to the joint RSPG/BEREC report on coverage – in particular, if the substance of the report does not change and there is only the addition of a section acknowledging the consultation responses, whether a second written procedure is necessary.

Rapporteurs:
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