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Name and title under which you would like this response to appear:

Police Information Technology Organisation

Representing:

Organisation

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What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Question 1: This executive summary sets out Ofcom's proposals for the release of the digital dividend. Do you agree with these proposals?..:

PITO welcomes the recognition of Public Safety services as one of the main users of the release of spectrum resulting from the DDR. We are pleased that Ofcom have recognised the importance of spectrum for Public Safety. However, we believe that Ofcom has not recognised the unique and demanding nature of the Public Safety requirements. We would welcome further discussions to clarify our requirements and specialist needs.

Public safety services bring value to society by creating a stable and secure environment. This can only be done by building robust, secure and reliable, modern Public Safety mobile communications networks. To fulfil this requirement, it is essential for Public Safety services to have access to appropriate spectrum.

Building these modern essential services requires a long project lead time, for example, Airwave (the national digital radio system for emergency services) part of the Government Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), took 11 years planning before the first force went live. The current Airwave contract for this first force will expire in 9 years time.

Securing the necessary funding to replace Airwave requires certainty of access to appropriate spectrum. Therefore, reserving appropriate spectrum for public safety services is essential. Airwave replacement systems will require delivery of speech, data and video from command and control to officers on the street and vice versa.

The required bandwidth to provide this delivery platform is expected to be of the order of 2 x 10MHz at around 700MHz.

Question 2: Do you have any comments on our analysis of the essential constraints that will apply to the available UHF spectrum?..:

PITO recognises the importance of international and national constraints on access to the DDR spectrum. However application of such restrictions may hinder and delay the introduction of innovative RF delivery platforms if they are applied to protect existing systems without time limit. PITO proposes that Ofcom create a time table to relax such restrictions.

The delivery of a replacement system is expected to have a lead time similar to the introduction of Airwave, which was 11 years. PITO have already started planning the replacement system now to ensure continuity of radio communications. If the Airwave replacement system is to be in the 700MHz band and the constraints are not to be relaxed then there will be a significant financial impact on this replacement system.

Question 3: Do you agree with the more detailed analysis and proposals regarding these technical constraints as set out in Annex 10?..:

PITO acknowledges the technical constraints for accessing the DDR spectrum and we strongly recommend a timetable for withdrawing these constraints.

Question 4: Do you have any comments on Ofcom's assessment of the potential uses of this spectrum? Are there any potential uses which should be considered that are not mentioned in this document?:

PITO welcomes the inclusion of video application as a potential use of the spectrum for public safety. Mobile information and video applications are actively being developed and trialed in a number of forces. These applications will become mission critical alongside voice services.

PITO would also like to draw Ofcom's attention to other types of potential services, which PITO would like Ofcom to consider.

1. There is a requirement for the following future mission critical mobile information applications

? Mobile and fixed Automatic Facial Recognition System linked to central databases to assist policing and combat terrorism threats.

? Mobile and fixed Iris pattern and Fingerprint scans to verify information stored in central databases. The incoming ID card and future passport are likely to include these ?biometric identifier?. These application need to be in real time and therefore require a high bandwidth delivery platform.

? Real-time video streaming from mobile data terminals to Command and Control Centres and vice versa, e.g., for major incidents like 7/7, G8.

2. Harmonisation and economies of scale

? PITO acknowledges the need to develop Public safety systems in spectrum that is harmonised to minimise interference and to maximise the economies of scale of equipment and terminals. Currently, public safety in the United States have access to dedicated spectrum in the 700MHz band for ?multi-media? delivery platforms. It is our view that Public Safety services in UK and Europe should have similar dedicated reserved spectrum for ?multi-media? applications in the 700MHz band.

Harmonisation of spectrum particularly in Europe and also in the United States would significantly increase the market base for terminal suppliers. This would provide the driver to further enhance terminal functionalities of applications and ultimately the competitive pricing of terminals. PITO recommend that Ofcom should seek harmonised spectrum for Public Safety services, particularly for Europe.

3. Need for dedicated spectrum

? Public Safety services must have dedicated spectrum to meet their specific requirements. Commercial networks, for example, do not provide the necessary levels of security, resilience, availability and coverage.

Question 5: Do you have any comments on our analysis of the choice between a market-led and an interventionist approach to the release of this spectrum? Do you agree with the analysis of different mechanisms for intervening to remedy potential market failures?:

PITO accepts having to pay for access to spectrum but we do have reservations on the applicability of this market mechanism to the Public Safety services. Public Safety services add value to society by providing a safe and secure environment. For example the Police service has the task of establishing and maintaining law and order.

Forcing Public Safety into the same auction arena with commercial enterprises would only inflate the bid prices artificially and if we were to win the net result would be to reduce the funding for development of more efficient and modern communication systems for public safety services.

It is important to consider that for the Public Safety services there is no comparable alternative route to provide the necessary standard of communications other than that of a dedicated network. Standard commercial networks do not provide the levels of guaranteed service demanded by the emergency services. It is inconceivable to leave the Public Safety Services in a position where their mobile communications cannot be relied on in all circumstances.

To build a suitable future proof mobile communications network for the Public Safety services, even in collaboration with commercial operators, it is vital that first the necessary radio spectrum is made available and reserved.

What would happen if Public Safety services fail to win any bids or to agree a price for access to someone's spectrum? What is the spectrum price of law and order?

Question 6: Do you agree with our proposals to continue making available channel 69 for use by low power PMSE devices? Do you agree with our proposal to make some or all of the spectrum available for use on a licence-exempt basis?:

Question 7: Do you agree that there should be transitional protection for professional PMSE users to ensure that they can continue to access interleaved capacity until at least the end of 2012? Do you have any views on the mechanism for providing future access to this spectrum?:

Question 8: Do you consider that additional spectrum from the digital dividend should be reserved for low power applications? If so, please provide as much evidence as possible about the nature of the application and its potential value to society.:

Question 9: Do you consider that it would be desirable to hold back some spectrum from award with a view to its potential use for future innovation? If so, please provide comments on how much spectrum should be held back, and for how long.:

Question 10: Do you agree with our proposal that we should package the interleaved spectrum in a way that would be suitable for use by local television services, but not reserve spectrum solely for this use?:

Question 11: Do you agree with our proposal to package the spectrum in a way which does not preclude mobile broadband use, but to take no further action in relation to this use?::

PITO acknowledges the constraints for mobile broadband, namely the protection of DTT receivers from the uplink path. However, as we have stated above, Public Safety services have long project lead times and we strongly recommend the withdrawal of these constraints after a certain timeframe. In order for Public Safety services to plan the use of the 700MHz band we must have the necessary technical parameters fully defined.

Question 12: Do you agree with our proposal that we should not intervene in the award of this spectrum to reserve spectrum for DTT? Do you agree that we should package the spectrum in a way which is suitable for DTT use?::

Question 13: Do you consider that we have included in our analysis the most material risks in relation to market failure?::

Question 14: Do you agree with our proposal to auction licences for the use of the available UHF spectrum?::

PITO has great reservations about the use of the market mechanism for access to the available UHF spectrum. Unlike commercial organisations, Public Safety bodies do not have a revenue stream and are entirely funded by Central and Local Government.

Even if the Public Safety services were given extra resources to bid at open market auction for access to spectrum, there is no guarantee that they would be successful. Failure to win at the 'auction' would put an essential part of the government Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) at risk. Also, there is no guarantee that successful bidders will 'resell' or 'let' their spectrum for Public Safety services.

The alternative, to be sure of winning, would be for Public Safety services to bid at artificially exaggerated levels, which would then reduce the available funding for development of future mobile communications systems. Public safety services require dedicated spectrum for guaranteed access and availability. Failure to provide this will be a failure to deliver value to society.

The enforced use of the market mechanism creates uncertainty for Public Safety services because there is no guarantee of access to spectrum. Unless spectrum is reserved or funded centrally by Government, then the ability to maintain law and order and public safety will be compromised.

Question 15: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposals as to the timing of any auction? If not, what alternative proposal would you make and why, and what evidence and analysis can you provide in support of your alternative proposal?::

Question 16:Do you have any views on which of the packaging options identified for the cleared spectrum would be most suitable?..

Question 17:Do you have any views on which of the packaging options identified for the interleaved spectrum would be most suitable?..

Question 18:Do you have any views on which of the auction design options would be most suitable?..

Question 19:Do you agree with Ofcom?s proposals for the non-technical terms of the licences to be awarded for use of the UHF spectrum?..

Question 20:Do you agree with the analysis of the options as set out in this Impact Assessment?..

Additional comments: