

# DTI PRESS NOTICE

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## **PAN-EUROPEAN CELLULAR RADIO OPERATORS**

John Butcher, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Industry, confirmed today (14 August) that the two existing UK cellular radio operators, Te1ecom Securicor Cellular Radio Ltd (Ce11net) and Raca1 Vodafone Ltd, will provide the UK part of the pan- European digital cellular radio service due to come into operation in 1991.

The two companies are shortly to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with other European operators committing the signatories to a detailed timetable for the procurement and establishment of the new networks to allow the service to take place.

In order to enable the two operators to enter into this important commitment with confidence, the Government *is* making clear at this stage that it *is* these two operators who, as from 1991, will be allocated on an equal basis the 400 channels in the 900 MHz band currently held in reserve for the introduction of the pan-European system.

Commenting on the decision Mr Butcher said "The pan-European digital cellular system is an important and exciting development which will add a new international dimension to the facilities for mobile communications which the UK's two current analogue cellular systems are already offering nationwide. The pan-European system also offers a major opportunity to UK manufacturing industry to supply into a genuinely European wide market and I welcome the positive steps which British companies are already taking to prepare for that opportunity.

"The development of the pan-European digital system, which will help to satisfy the UK's mobile communications requirements through the 1990s and into the next century, will need to be carefully phased in with the ongoing development of the UK's two analogue systems, which are themselves still growing rapidly.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1. Bands I and III - In 1985 the Government announced that Band I (41-68 MHz) and Band III (174-225 MHz) of the radio spectrum which had previously been used for 405 line black and white television services would be used in future primarily for land mobile radio services. The first tranche of spectrum will be allocated in the middle sub band, for use by two nationwide, 5 regional and 5 London based private mobile radio network operators who are due to commence services within the next 12 months.

2. Cellular Radio Operators - Both Telecom Securicor Cellular Radio Ltd (a BT/ Securicor joint venture company) and Racal Vodafone Ltd (a wholly owned Racal subsidiary) have been licensed under the Telecommunications Act 1984 to run competing national cellular radio telecommunication systems. Since commencing operations in January 1985 both companies had made rapid progress in establishing their networks which already cover 90% of the population and have a combined customer base of some 200,000 subscribers.

3. Pan-European Digital Cellular Radio - The European Conference of Posts and Telecommunications (CEPT) has been drawing up the technical and operational characteristics of a second generation cellular mobile radio system which will be adopted as a common standard for future digital cellular systems in CEPT member states. The Department has reserved 400 channels in the block of spectrum the CEPT has assigned in the 900 MHz band for the Pan-European system. Both Cellnet and Racal Vodafone have been actively involved in the CEPT in defining the standard.

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