

16th August 2008

Digital Dividend Review: band manager award

T-Mobile welcomes the opportunity to respond to Ofcom's consultation, Digital Dividend Review: band manager award.

T-Mobile has already made a number of comments relating to the need to clear the 790 – 862 MHz band in previous consultations related to the digital dividend and in particular in our response to the consultation on the 550-630 MHz and 790-854 MHz award. We will not repeat all of our arguments but thought it would be useful to re-iterate our concerns with PMSE use of Channel 69 especially in light of International developments. Our comments are largely relevant to Questions 1, 2, 3, 7, 29 of the band manager award consultation.

T-Mobile continues to believe that Ofcom needs to clear the band 790 – 862 MHz including channel 69. As currently being discussed in the ECC, PMSE could use the duplex gap between the uplink and downlink channels for the band 790 – 862 MHz FDD band plan. This duplex gap is likely to be harmonised and hence could become a common band for PMSE across Europe. The duplex gap is likely to be 12 MHz in size as shown in Figure 1.

61		62		63		64		65		66		67		68		69	
790-798		798-806		806-814		814-822		822-830		830-838		838-846		846-854		854-862	
Downlink								Duplex gap		Uplink							
30 MHz (6 blocks of 5 MHz)								12 MHz		30 MHz (6 blocks of 5 MHz)							
1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	4	5	6				
790-795	795-800	800-805	805-810	810-815	815-820	820 – 832		832-837	837-842	842-847	847-852	852-857	857-862				

Figure 1: Likely ECC Band Plan for 790 – 862 MHz

The ECC has made very good progress on channelling arrangements for the 790 – 862 MHz band in response to the EC 2nd Mandate.¹ Although some details of the band plan are still being discussed, it is very likely that the FDD band plan will be 2 x 30 MHz with a duplex gap of 12 MHz as shown in Figure 1. Use of Channel 69

¹ European Commission, Second Mandate to CEPT on technical considerations regarding harmonisation options for the digital dividend in the European Union, 3 April 2008 (RSCOM08-06).

sterilises 2x10 MHz of spectrum (852 -862 MHz and the corresponding downlink channel 810 – 820 MHz).

We agree that the band manager's licence fee should be derived using estimates of the opportunity costs of the spectrum to be awarded. It could be argued that the licence fee for Channel 69 should attract an opportunity cost of 2 x 10 MHz at mobile AIP rates. Conversely since the center gap would be unsuitable for mobile use, it would attract a much lower opportunity cost and therefore lower AIP rate than Channel 69.

Other spectrum within this DDR award that could be used for PMSE includes Channel 38 which has a low power limit and hence of limited value to other services. There is also spectrum which could be available on a shared basis with the MoD or the 872-876/ 917-921 MHz band.

Ofcom have identified that channel 69 in isolation is of limited value to PMSE users because touring companies, who generally use channel 69, also require access to channels 67 and 68. If, after the appropriate notice period, Ofcom have planned to move PMSE users out of these channels, it should be possible that they can be moved out of channel 69 as well at the same time. T-Mobile feels that there is a clear benefit from moving PMSE users to other spectrum frequencies and including channel 69 as well in the cleared award.

In order to move PMSE users out of channel 69 a suitable transition period will be needed. We believe that the costs of re-locating PMSE is relatively small and a number of them could continue to be used on other frequencies. However given the fact that PMSE users currently use channels 67 and 68 as well, a number of these relocation costs will need to be borne anyway, even with the current Ofcom proposals. T-Mobile feels that the costs in moving PMSE from Channel 69 are outweighed by the large benefits that are potentially on offer. Details of the benefits of this spectrum for mobile use are provided in our response to the consultation on the 550-630 MHz and 790-854 MHz award.

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