PRESS NOTICE

WITHDRAWAL OF 888-889 MHz LOW POWER SERVICE

The Radiocommunications Agency announced today that the 888-889 MHz low power service for anti-theft devices type approved to specification MPT 1353 is to be withdrawn. These devices include the tags used by some retailers as anti-shoplifting security measures.

From 31 December 1998 no approvals will be given for new equipment or variants to existing equipment already type approved to MPT 1353 and the service will be withdrawn completely on 31 December 2003. From 1 January 2004 use of anti-theft devices on 888-889 MHz will not be permitted in the UK.

This change is part of a plan to make more spectrums available for digital GSM telephones. The Agency recognises the very real concerns of the low power radio community and we are currently participating in work within Europe to identify alternative European harmonised frequencies, which will be in place by 2003.

Notes for Editors

1. Following a recommendation in the Detailed Spectrum Investigation Phase, IT report issued by the European Radio Committee (ERC) the Agency indicated its intention to allocate the 888-889 MHz band to GSM in the longer term. This was included in the consultation document "Mobile Phone Spectrum over the next Decade".

2. Anti-theft devices operating in the band 888-889 MHz were made exempt from licensing from 26 July 1993. Equipment is allowed to be manufactured, sold and used on the condition that the equipment has been tested and type approval to Performance Specification 11FT 1353. It must not cause interference to other services and will be unprotected from interference.

Further technical enquiries can be made on 0171-211-0155

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ENDS