

16 October 2012

Rt Hon Maria Miller MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
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ED RICHARDS
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Dear Maria,

I am writing to you today to update you on the progress that has been made regarding the key issues that were identified as potentially standing in the way of the provision of competitive 4G services using frequencies in the 800 MHz band from the late spring of next year.

All four of the major mobile network operators (MNOs) have now signed an agreed MitCo Shareholder Agreement¹. They propose to announce this tomorrow and would prefer this to remain confidential until then. The agreement contains important safeguards to preclude any individual 800 MHz licensee from frustrating the work of MitCo and thereby delaying the deployment of 4G services in the 800 MHz band.

I understand from officials in your department that the Mobile Operators Association (MOA) has had productive discussions, led by DCMS, with DCLG and DEFRA, on measures to streamline planning processes for 4G deployment (and more generally), working towards a package of measures to be consulted on as soon as it has received Ministerial clearance. I understand that this is a high priority for the Government on which further progress is expected in the coming weeks and months. From our perspective I would welcome your continued support in this area.

I can confirm that the broadcasters have now instructed Arqiva to bring forward the date of clearance of the Oxford, Waltham, Angus and Rosneath DTT transmitters and their associated relays.

I have been in contact with the CEO of each of the MNOs this week and they have all confirmed to me that they do not intend to bring a legal challenge to either our Auction decision or our 1800 MHz liberalisation decision.

¹ We understand that the agreement also allows for any of the existing signatories to exit the company if they fail to win an 800 MHz licence in the auction, and for any other party that wins an 800 MHz licence in the auction to join the company.

I am pleased with this outcome and can advise that we remain on track for bidding to start in the auction for the 800 MHz and 2.6 GHz spectrum in January of next year.

Yours sincerely

Ed Richards

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Ed Richards

cc: Olaf Swantee, Everything Everywhere
David Dyson, H3G
Ronan Dunne, Telefonica
Guy Laurence, Vodafone
Andrew Pinder, MitCo