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# Opening of 8 GHz for Civil Users

## Guidance for Applicants

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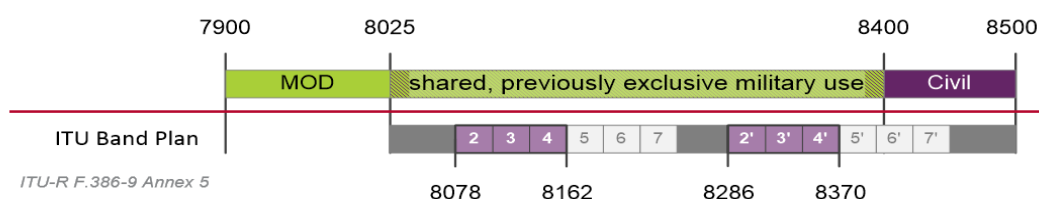
Working with the MOD on the Public Sector Spectrum Release Programme, we have together identified 168 MHz of spectrum between 7.9 GHz and 8.4 GHz which is not being used for Defence purposes in a variety of locations. This spectrum could be attractive to meet demand for fixed wireless services, including backhaul for fixed and mobile networks, broadcast infrastructure and low latency infrastructure for specialist applications.

In this note we set out how we have made the band available for civil uses, through sharing arrangements which take account of the ongoing military uses in other locations.

Three 2 x 28 MHz channels of spectrum are available within the range 8078–8162 MHz paired with 8286–8370 MHz. Applications should be made using Ofcom’s point to point fixed link licence application form (OfW85).<sup>1</sup> These will be considered and will follow Ofcom’s standard fixed link assignment approach on a first come, first served basis with availability in a geographic location determined through our existing licensing tools which have been updated to include details of military use in the 8GHz band. This information will then be used to assess co-existence based on the parameters set out in the Technical Frequency Assignment Criteria for Point to Point Radio Services with Digital Modulation OfW446.

Initially applications will only be accepted for links in a defined area of the south-east of the UK. Assignments will be available according to the ITU-R Channel Plan ITU-R F.386-9 Annex 5, as set out in Figure 1 below.<sup>2</sup> Available channel sizes will be standard 28 MHz, 14 MHz and 7 MHz. Further details of the technical assignment criteria and channel arrangements are available in documents OFW 48 & OFW 446.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1: overview of sharing arrangements in place and civil channel plan**



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/120950/OfW85-Point-to-Point-Fixed-Link-Licence-Application.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/120950/OfW85-Point-to-Point-Fixed-Link-Licence-Application.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.itu.int/dms\\_pubrec/itu-r/rec/f/R-REC-F.386-9-201302-1!!PDF-E.pdf](https://www.itu.int/dms_pubrec/itu-r/rec/f/R-REC-F.386-9-201302-1!!PDF-E.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/92204/ofw446.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/92204/ofw446.pdf)  
[https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/92203/OfW48.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/92203/OfW48.pdf)

The area in which spectrum is being made available is set out in Figure 2 below:

**Figure 2: Indicative boundary (inside blue line) of the geography in which spectrum is being initially made available**



Within this area, assignments will be co-ordinated with other civil assignments, and with a limited amount of ongoing military use.

We continue to work with the MOD to extend the area in which spectrum is being made available in accordance with the above approach. We expect that ultimately spectrum will be made available in the area south of a line broadly transecting the Severn and Blackwater Estuaries. We also expect to be able to consider applications in other parts of the UK in the future, co-ordinating with MOD uses on a case by case basis. In due course we will issue an update of this guidance to confirm further availability and the processes applicable.

The area we are making available includes the potential for links around the coastal waters of the UK and across the channel. As with all Ofcom licences, we cannot guarantee that the licensee will be able to operate free of interference at all times. We have determined our approach, and will assign licences, based on information provided to us by the MOD about their uses.

Stakeholders may particularly wish to note that whilst co-ordination extends to UK military use there may be some occasions when both UK and non-UK naval vessels may continue to operate military systems, and stakeholders applying for cross border links that cross the channel or are near to the UK coast should consider the extent to which they are able to tolerate potential passing interference. Such assignments may be most suitable for stakeholders whose requirements are not continuous and/or have alternative resilience arrangements.