

**Question 1: How should Ofcom manage the process of taking advice from users, regulators and government on efficient apportionment of AIP fees in the maritime and aeronautical sectors? Are any new institutional arrangements needed?:**

Have any institutional agreements been sought? It seems that in aviation, at least, OfCom has managed to finally unite the CAA, NATS, GA and commercial organisations in their opposition to this proposal. This would suggest that advice from users is that the proposal should not be taken any further. I suggest you manage this advice by listening to it and acting on it.

**Question 2: If you consider that our proposals for pricing ground station users for any spectrum would be likely to have a detrimental impact on safety, please let us know. In order for us to understand your assessment fully, it would be helpful if you could outline the mechanisms whereby this might happen.?:**

Safety is paramount in aviation and at sea, and radio is of vital importance to ensuring this safety. This was noted by your own consultants. It seems that if such pricing were to be instigated, then many smaller airfields would be unable to afford one or more frequencies. This would result in them becoming unlicensed and/or operating with fewer frequencies. In the case of several small airfields that are nonetheless quite busy training fields, this would mean that a very busy circuit frequency, often with soloing students flying circuits, would have to share with what used to be an approach frequency. Result would be overcrowding on the frequency and almost certainly result in a crash and probable fatality of a student who was unclear with calls, etc. This happens from time to time today with current "inefficient" (non-charged for) allocations. Reduce the frequencies available by pricing smaller airfields out of the market and things will only get worse.

So far as the international flights are concerned, then airports would have to increase prices thus driving airlines away or closing them down.

**Question 3: Do you have any evidence which indicates that AIP charged to ground stations could have a material detrimental impact on UK competitiveness?:**

None other than anecdotal. I am not a professional accountant - just a pilot and maritime navigator.

**Question 4: Taking into account the information available in this document, including that set out in Annex 5, our initial views on VHF radiocommunications licence fees and on the reference rates for bands in other uses, and any information you have about the organisations to whom we are proposing to charge fees, please provide any evidence that you think is relevant to us in considering the financial impact of the fees we intend to propose for VHF radiocommunications, or for other uses:**

I have no hard evidence.

I know that it is hard enough for me to find money to fly at the moment. Higher fees charged to the airports will be passed on to the users... this will reduce the number of users which will mean that the remaining users will pay even more.

**Question 5: Do you agree that there is little to be gained, in terms of economic efficiency, from charging AIP to WT Act licences for aircraft:**

I agree completely - there is extremely little to be gained: These frequencies cannot be used for other than aviation purposes. this is an international agreement and it will not be lawful to give them out to other bodies when they are, inevitably, given up by some aerodromes d/t cost.

**Question 6: Do you consider that we should discount fees for any particular user or type of user? Specifically, do you consider that there should be a discount for charities whose object is the safety of human life in an emergency:**

Charities whose object is saving lives should be completely exempt from such charges - not just discounted.

having said that, I do not believe that charging fees for these frequencies can be justified as there can be no possible increase in efficiency since, as already noted several times, these frequency bands are allocated by international agreement and have no other purpose.

**Question 7: Do you agree that Ofcom should apply AIP to ground stations? use of maritime and aeronautical VHF radiocommunications channels, to help manage growing congestion in current use and to ensure that the cost of denying access to this spectrum by potential alternative applications is faced by current users?:**

No I do not.

There are no other users of these frequencies, and there can be no other users - they are allocated to marine or aviation use by international agreements.

Efficiencies of use have to come from ICAO or IMO indicating new technologies for better use of channel bandwidth and this has to be internationally agreed.

**Question 8: Do you agree with our initial view that it would be appropriate to apply a pricing system similar to that already existing for Business Radio licences to maritime and aeronautical VHF communications? If not, what are your reasons for proposing that we should develop a fee structure for maritime and aeronautical VHF channels which is distinct from that already established for Business Radio?:**

No, I do not agree. It is inappropriate to apply pricing to any internationally agreed frequencies that are used internationally for safety. In the case of business use, the frequencies are allocated by UK alone, so it is appropriate that these frequencies are split into suitable bandwidths and sold. It is then up to the user to further sub-divide these frequencies to make est possible use for themselves.

In the case of aviation and marine, the channel widths are preset and agreed internationally. The users cannot, and should not, try to further sub-divide them.

**Question 9: Are there any short term reasons specific to the sector(s) why it would be inappropriate to apply fees from April 2009?:**

It is inappropriate to apply pricing to any internationally agreed frequencies that are used internationally for safety. Ever.

**Question 10: Ofcom would welcome stakeholders? views on the factors which should be taken into account when apportioning fees between individual users of radars and racons:**

Radar is a particular safety issue - both at sea for collision avoidance and in the air for collision avoidance.

Smaller vessels would certainly remove radar if it was charged for - or change their port of registration such that they did not fall under this particular UK tax.

**Question 11: Do you agree with our initial view that a reference rate of £126k per 1 MHz of national spectrum for L band and S band radar spectrum would achieve an appropriate balance between providing incentives to ensure efficient use of spectrum while guarding against the risks of regulatory failure in setting the reference rate too high? If you consider a different rate would be more appropriate, please provide any evidence that you think we should take into account.:**

NO.

**Question 12:Do you agree with our initial view that a reference rate of £25k per single MHz of national spectrum would be appropriate for deriving fees for licences to use X band radar?:**

NO

**Question 13: Do you agree that, generally, spectrum used by aeronautical radionavigation aids is currently uncongested? Do you believe that this may change during the next few years and, if so, approximately when?:**

NO

**Question 14: Do you agree with the basis on which Ofcom has arrived at its initial view on reference rates for aeronautical radionavigation aids?:**

NO - they appear to have been arrived at with no references. The frequencies you are currently attempting to charge for have no other use than for aviation. There can be therefore no reason to charge for them.

**Comments:**

You are interested in charging in order to make the frequencies more efficient. Given that these frequencies are agreed internationally to be given over in entirety to the maritime and aviation communities/businesses, then there can be no increase in efficiency no matter how much revenue is raised for HMG. They simply can NOT be given out to any other user. This fact negates the whole intention of this proposal and shows that it is purely a revenue generating facility i.e. a tax.

Further, this apparent tax will be a tax on safety as airfields will lose frequencies for costs and so become unlicensed in addition to the reduction in stations on which to call for help, and those that are present will have increased traffic on them.