

**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?:**

**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.?:**

I believe the whole concept of spectrum pricing will have a huge detrimental impact on flight safety. This is based on 15 years as a pilot and 11 as an air traffic controller. The ability to communicate by VHF is fundamental to the safety of aircraft, not only in the preventing of collisions on the ground and in the air, but also for the passing of information essential to the safe conduct of flight (weather hazards etc). By applying a charge to VHF users many will not be able to absorb the cost and so will simply opt out of providing a VHF service. This will result in large concentrations of aircraft around many aerodromes unable to communicate either with each other or with the ground station. This could lead to, for example aircraft approaching to land at the same airport on different runways and colliding at the intersection. This is not scare mongering THIS WILL HAPPEN if these proposals go ahead and I hope Ofcom is prepared to accept responsibility for the inevitable loss of life that will occur.

As an air traffic controller I further believe that the smaller regional airports would reduce the number of frequencies they have available to reduce overheads. This would mean that when an air traffic controller becomes overloaded he/she is able to pass traffic to another controller on another frequency, this would not be possible if spare frequencies were not available. Spare frequencies that cost money will not be kept by Air Traffic Service Providers. This will lead to more and more overloads and the added possibility of mid air collisions.

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

By applying this charge small aerodrome operators have 2 choices.

1) Pay the charge and continue as a licenced field (a requirement to offer flight training) and pass the cost on to the user which results in flying training becoming EVEN MORE expensive. The UK already loses out massively to just about every other country in Europe and the USA thanks to our spectacularly unenlightened government that continues to persecute general aviation. If it wasn't enough that the UK provides no tax relief on flight training, like just about every other western country, the UK has the only aviation authority that is required to turn a profit!! This leads to massive licencing costs that are totally disproportionate to the work they generate.

2) The aerodromes will discontinue providing a radio service. This will lead to them becoming unlicenced and stopping flight training activity. The customers will almost certainly go overseas, or to flying schools based at larger regional airports which do

not want flying schools at their facilities as they cause delays to passenger aircraft. The small airport without radio may continue to operate but will have to do so in light of my comments to question 2.

In short these proposals would probably be the death of flying training in the UK. The USA already undertakes huge amounts of UK flight training (thanks to their enlightened approach compared to the UK's 1930's approach) and this would only increase if these proposals were to come into force.

**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:**

**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 believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged

**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:**

I believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged.

**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?:**

I believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged

**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?:**

I believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged.

See answer to question 2.

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

**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:**

**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.:**

I believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged. This applies equally to VHF and radar frequencies

See answer to question 2.

**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?:**

I believe that ALL frequencies used in the aeronautical band are, by definition, in the interests of flight safety and therefore should NOT be charged. This applies equally to VHF and radar frequencies

See answer to question 2.

**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 I disagree. The aeronautical is already congested and flight safety is already becoming compromised by the narrowness of the band. Rather than further endangering flight safety by charging for frequency use, a far more enlightened, and safe approach would be to widen the aeronautical spectrum and continue to offer its use freely to those stations that need it.

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

Absolutely not. Ofcom could not be more wrong. If these proposals go ahead it WILL result in the loss of life

**Comments:**