

BNE: UHF strategy should have DTT at its core

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Following the release of draft opinions by the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) on the future of the UHF band in the EU and on the Common Policy Objectives for WRC (World Radio Conference), Broadcast Network Europe (BNE) – trade organisation for Terrestrial Broadcast Network Operators for Radio and TV in Europe – is continuing its active involvement in the policy debate on the future of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and is formally responding to the respective consultations.

In view of the pending WRC 2015, BNE endorses that any process to develop the long term strategy of the UHF band should have DTT at its core.

In particular, responding to the Draft RSPG Opinion on a long-term strategy on the future use of the UHF band BNE's response emphasises that:

- BNE supports the RSPG position 'no mobile allocation on the 470-694 MHz' and welcomes the position adopted with regard to the long term sustainability of DTT, specifically the recommendation that the frequency band 470-694 MHz shall remain available for DTT in the foreseeable future, i.e. 2030 and beyond.
- BNE's members remain concerned by the possible displacement of DTT from the 700 MHz band. BNE acknowledges the international momentum behind the potential future deployment of Wireless Mobile Broadband in 700 MHz, but emphasise the complexity and challenges associated with reorganising the DTT networks across Europe to accommodate today's services in less spectrum than is currently utilised. To this end, BNE believes it is premature to consider setting 2020 or 2022 as deadlines for the Europe wide completion of the 700 MHz clearance process as the planning / co-ordination process has barely started and there is still much uncertainty at this stage.
- BNE strongly endorses the establishment of a transition roadmap in line with the recommendations of the Lamy report and implementation of measures limiting the negative impact on consumers and current DTT spectrum users, who should be protected from any future displacement of DTT.

Providing its input on the European Common policy objectives for the World Radio Conference:

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- BNE welcomes the recommendation to support no mobile allocation in the 470-694 MHz band. This is very much substantiated by the conclusion of the Lamy report and in the conclusions of the recent release Aetha study showing that this policy would provide the best benefits for Europe.
- BNE considers it essential that the harmonised technical conditions of the 700MHz band and the rules of the cross border coordination shall ensure the protection of the terrestrial broadcasting services below 694MHz.
- BNE endorses support from Member States to a revision of WRC-Resolution 646 providing relevant information on regional PPDR (Public Protection and Disaster Relief) frequency ranges and welcomes the RSPG position that harmonised and dedicated spectrum is not required in Europe for PPDR purposes.