



BNE slams “premature” deadline on 700MHz

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Terrestrial broadcast trade organisation Broadcast Networks Europe (BNE), providing its input for the European common policy objectives for the forthcoming World Radio Conference (WRC), which will address the future of UHF, has said it remains “concerned by the possible displacement of DTT from the 700 MHz band” and called the setting of a deadline for the transition in 2020 or 2022 “premature”.

“BNE acknowledges the international momentum behind the potential future deployment of Wireless Mobile Broadband in 700MHz, 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,” it said.

“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 endorsed the RSPG position on the future of the 600MHz, which the latter said should be given over to broadcasting until 2030.

The BNE’s publication of its input comes as RSPG’s consultations on the common policy objectives for WRC-15 and the future of the UHF spectrum draw to a close. In its draft opinion, the RSPG endorsed the provision of wireless broadband services in the 700MHz band currently used for digital-terrestrial broadcasting and has called for binding legislation to set a deadline for the transition.

The RSPG called for the 700MHz band to be made available “as early as possible” with 2020 or 2022 both under consideration for the deadline.

While calling for the 600MHz band to remain available for broadcasting at least until 2030, the RSPG also said that member states should have the flexibility to use this spectrum for wireless broadband downlink provided that this is compatible with the broadcasting needs in the relevant country.

Following the conclusion of the RSPG consultations, the EC has launched a consultation on the Lamy report on the future of the UHF spectrum. The report, published last year, called for the reallocation of the 700MHz band for mobile broadband and the protection of the 600MHz band for DTT. It, together with the RSPG’s input, various Commission studies and responses to the consultation will feed into the EC’s long-term strategy for the future of the UHF band.