



Brussels, 16 November 2011

RSPG PUBLISHES TWO DRAFT OPINIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON *THE REVIEW OF SPECTRUM USE* AND *EU ASSISTANCE IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS* AND ELECTS A NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2012

In its last Plenary of 2011 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mike Byrne, Commissioner, ComReg (Ireland), RSPG today (16 November 2011) adopted a number of key policy items including two Reports respectively on *Collective Use of Spectrum and other Sharing Approaches* and *Improving Broadband Coverage*. In addition, RSPG also issued for public consultation two Draft Opinions respectively on the *Review of Spectrum Use* and *EU Assistance in Bilateral Negotiations*.

A summary of the key policy items adopted are as follows:

1. Report on Collective Use of Spectrum and other Sharing Approaches

The main conclusions and recommendations of the report are:

- A large part of the radio spectrum is already shared between different applications, but need to foster more efficient use through appropriate regulatory measures.
- However, there is a need to progress the development of appropriate regulatory mechanisms for sharing spectrum and to foster more efficient use of spectrum. The Report also recommends that a new concept of Licensed Shared Access (LSA) could provide more sharing opportunities on a European scale.

Recommendations to the European Commission include:

- strengthening cooperation between CEPT and ETSI in the CUS domain, and facilitating the development of cognitive radio, sensing and geo-localisation techniques;
- an in-depth exploration of the LSA concept to explore the viability of this approach;

2. Report on Improving Broadband Coverage

This Report sets out some of the key issues facing EU Member States in the challenges they face in providing high speed broadband services to all citizens and consumers. The scope of this Report covers the wider context of both wired and wireless approaches to meeting public policy coverage goals before focussing on the role of wireless solutions. It looked at the various different methods that Member States have employed with wireless platforms and summarises the success that these approaches have achieved. Finally, it considers two discrete issues of concern relating to competition in the wireless broadband market and the potential for under-

utilisation of spectrum bands that are harmonised at a European level. The Report also looked at the role of coverage obligations in provision of mobile broadband services.

3. Draft Opinion on Review of Spectrum Use

This draft Opinion provides advice to the EC on implementing the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP). Importantly it identifies three key phases in a spectrum review as follows:

- assessing the demand (surveys, forecasts, etc)
- quantifying the supply of spectrum (EFIS, other tools)
- reviewing respective efficiencies (e.g., technical, functional, economic, and social value) of proposed uses of spectrum

The Opinion identifies some of the challenges to be faced in assessing the suitability of frequency bands for new services and applications, including dealing with sensitive information (at security and commercial levels). It also addresses the importance of identifying the appropriate stakeholders for whichever bands are under examination and involving them in the review process. There are seven detailed recommendations to the EC in the draft Opinion.

4. Draft Opinion on EU Assistance in Bilateral Negotiations

This draft Opinion focused on the development of strategies for EU support in bilateral negotiations on spectrum coordination with third countries and between EU countries. Two processes are proposed in the draft Opinion:

- i) where EU assistance in bilateral negotiations with third countries is concerned:
 - The EC may act at the political level with the third country to provide assistance in case of persistent difficulties or where there is a strong EU policy interest;
 - The technical basis for such negotiations should be as established by the ITU, CEPT or the Member State(s) involved;
 - This process should be similar to what has successfully taken place in the Digital Dividend band between Russia and other countries operating aeronautical radionavigation systems in this band and Member States
- ii) The use of the “Good offices” of the RSPG in bilateral negotiations between EU countries :
 - In case of reported difficulty, a group of Member States would be set up to propose a balanced approach or solution to the concerned countries;
 - This would rely on the good will of the Member States without any enforcement role.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2012/13

On behalf of all the members of RSPG, Mr Byrne warmly welcomed the elections of Mr. Roberto Viola, Secretary General AGCOM Italy as Chair and Mr. Gilles Bregant, Director General ANFR, France as Vice-Chair of RSPG for 2012/13.

Commenting on the outcome of the Plenary, Mike Byrne, RSPG Chairman 2011, said *“With the completion of its final Plenary for 2011, RSPG should be proud that it has substantially delivered on the busy and challenging work programme it set for 2011. The Opinions and reports presented by RSPG on the key areas of the **Review of Spectrum Use, Improving Broadband Coverage, Collective Use of Spectrum and EU Assistance in Bilateral Negotiations** are strategic items necessary for development of spectrum policy in the EU. In delivering on its work programme for 2011 RSPG looks forward to further advising the Commission and other EU institutions on Spectrum Policy. In*

particular, with the adoption of Europe's first Radio Spectrum Policy Programme early next year, RSPG will continue to advise key stakeholders on how best to optimise the use of Spectrum so as to stimulate economic growth, support social inclusion and promote the internal market for the benefit of all EU Citizens".

All public documents will be made available on the RSGP's website:

http://rspg.ec.europa.eu/ref_doc/index_en.htm

Note to the editor:

***The Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG)** was created by a European Commission Decision in 2002, amended in December 2009. Comprising the national spectrum authorities of the 27 EU Member States, the RSPG provides the Commission and other EU institutions with advice on high level policy matters in relation to spectrum. Representatives of the EEA countries, the European Parliament and the regional and international bodies may attend as observers. Before being transmitted to the Commission, the RSPG's expert opinions are normally submitted to public consultations of all spectrum users, both commercial and non-commercial, as well as of any other interested stakeholders. The RSPG also publishes Report on key issues in spectrum matters. The RSPG therefore constitutes a unique platform for Member States, the Commission and all relevant stakeholders to discuss and co-ordinate regulation of radio spectrum.*