



Commission for
Communications Regulation



Planning for the Digital Dividend

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presentation to
IBEC's Telecommunications and Internet Federation
16th October 2009



Outline of Presentation

1. Digital Dividend – European Union / EC

- Scope of the Radio Spectrum Policy Group's (RSPG) Opinion on the Digital Dividend
- Understanding the significant issues for Europe
- The RSPG Recommendations to the European Commission (EC)

2. Digital Dividend – focus on Ireland

- ComReg's Response to Consultation (09/15)
- Key issues for Ireland
- Key Findings in the Response to Consultation



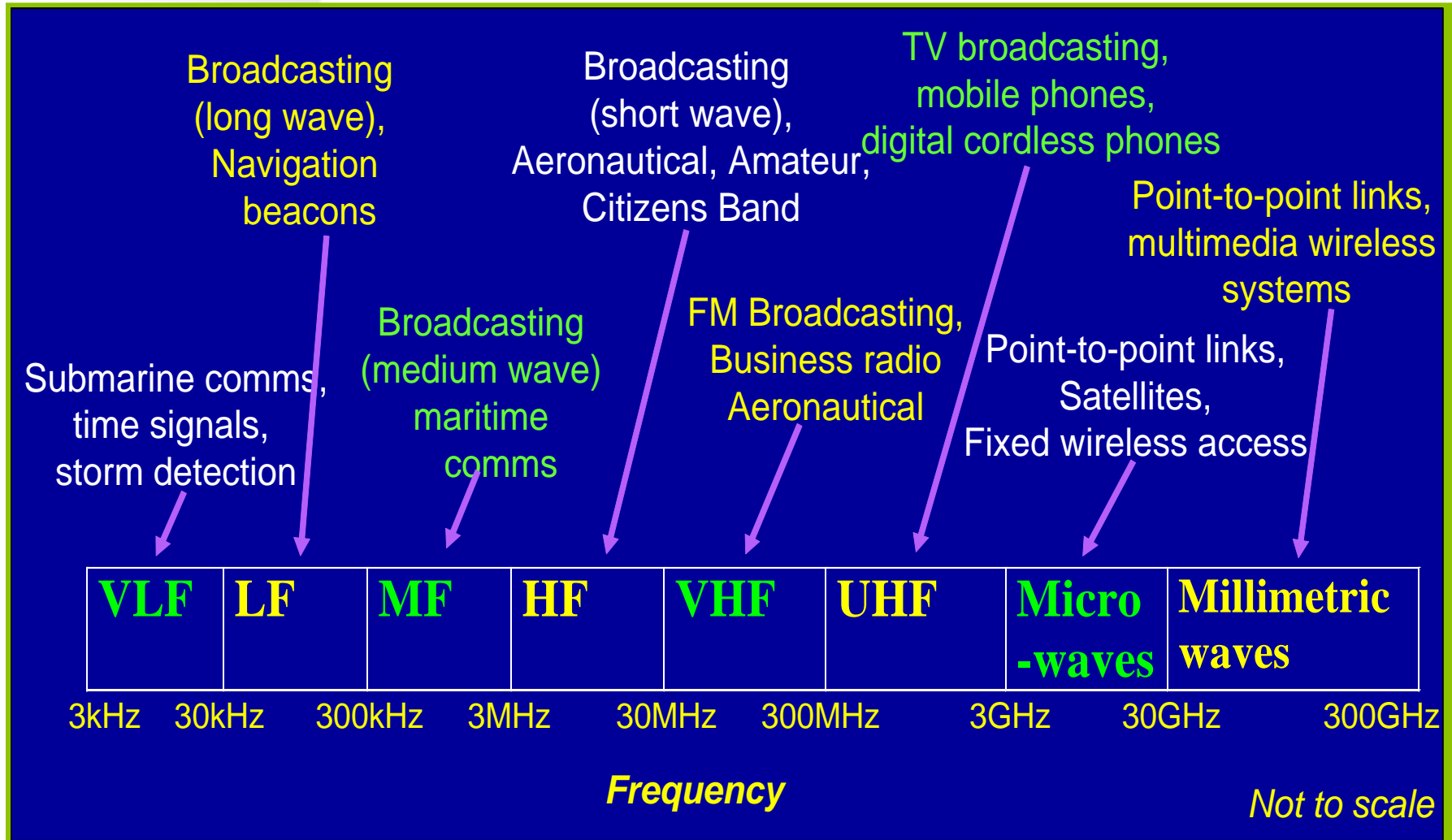
EU - Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG)

- The RSPG* is established under EC Decision 2002/622/EC and it adopts **opinions**, **position papers** and **reports** to advise the EC:
 - radio spectrum policy issues,
 - coordination of policy approaches and,
 - harmonised conditions for the availability and efficient use of radio spectrum necessary for the functioning of the internal market.
- The RSPG's current work-programme includes:
 - 1. Digital Dividend**
 2. Wireless broadband
 3. Increasing efficiency in Public Use of Spectrum
 4. Methods for more effective spectrum usage (costing, pricing, assignment)
 5. Cognitive Technologies

*See: <http://rspg.groups.eu.int/>



Typical uses of Radio Spectrum





Scope of the RSPG Opinion on the Digital Dividend

- The Opinion focused on ...
 - ... that part of the digital dividend which may also be used for ECN/S, other than broadcast transmission networks and services, i.e., **the sub-band 790-862 MHz** (referred to as the 800 MHz band)
- In bands below the 800 MHz band, (174-230 MHz and 470-790 MHz) the dividend ...
 - .. will be used mainly for the development of new enhanced broadcasting services
- However, at a national level MS **may also use** the digital dividend below the 800 MHz band for ECN/ECS, other than broadcast transmission networks and services.



Understanding the Significant Issues

1. Range of services

- Issue: **the range of services** able to use the digital dividend in the 800 MHz band: (WAPECS principles of technology and service neutrality to be applied).

2. Availability of dividend spectrum in the 800 MHz band on a coordinated basis

- Issue: making available the digital dividend spectrum in the 800 MHz band **on a coordinated basis**: (the more countries making it available and the larger the market, the better).

3. Timeframes for making available the DD in the 800 MHz band

- Issue: **the timeframes** (which differ from country to country) for switchover to DTT and the making available of the digital dividend in the 800 MHz band.

4. International frequency coordination

- Issue: the resultant **international frequency coordination requirements** which may impose certain constraints on the spectral plans of a MS NRA



The RSPG recommends that...

- 1. EC** should assess the **advantages and disadvantages of options for a coordinated non-mandatory EU approach** to the availability of the 800 MHz band for ECN and ECS, other than broadcast transmission networks and services;
- 2. EC** should **act as quickly as possible to minimise uncertainty** on availability of the 800 MHz band;
- 3. EC** should encourage **application of the WAPECS principles of service and technology neutrality**, recognising that MS may maintain broadcasting use in all or a portion of the band;
- 4. Technical elements**, e.g. channeling arrangements and common and minimal (least restrictive) technical conditions should be **addressed through the CEPT work programme** in response to relevant EC mandates;



The RSPG recommends that...

5. **EC** should encourage MS **to facilitate cross-border coordination** agreements taking into account technical feasibility and the need for equitable access;
6. **EC** should support MS **in renegotiating aspects of the GE06 Plan**, if necessary, with countries outside the EU to allow them to make available the 800 MHz band part of their digital dividend;
7. **EC** should **review the merits** of facilitating EU-wide long term availability of the 800 MHz band for mobile and fixed broadband applications;
8. **Member States**, acting on a bi/multilateral basis should identify **whether geographic clusters arise from commonalities between transitional activities** and access to the 800 MHz band for ECN/S



Digital Dividend in Ireland

- In Ireland (as throughout Europe), the digital dividend offers the potential for a **new approach to spectrum** use in the UHF band, a band highly valued given its propagation characteristics.
- The Digital Dividend has the **potential to lead to significant economic and societal benefits** for Ireland
- ComReg will **publish** “Digital Dividend in Ireland” next week its Response to Consultation (Response to 09/15) - this paper will be important step in the development of Ireland’s **roadmap to digital dividend**
- 14 Responses to the Consultation



Consultation sought views on Six high-level issues

- 1. Value and use of spectrum for non-broadcasting services;**
- 2. Reservation of spectrum for experimental purposes;**
- 3. A “mixed approach” to spectrum allocation in the UHF band;**
- 4. Frequency harmonisation issues;**
- 5. Accelerating access to a sub-band; and**
- 6. Other issues including service and technology neutrality;**



Related activities since Publication of the Consultation

1. The **Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG)**, which advises the European Commission (EC), published a Draft Opinion on the digital dividend;
2. Preparation by the **EC of proposals** in relation to the digital dividend http://www.analysismason.com/EC_digital_dividend_study;
3. On-going developments in **individual European countries**, particularly with regard to the 800 MHz band; and
4. On-going **technical preparatory work by the CEPT** in relation to the co-existence of broadcasting or high power transmission networks and bi-directional or low to medium power transmission networks in the UHF band.



Key Findings in the Response to Consultation

1/2

1. Appears to be strong evidence that Ireland's digital dividend spectrum will provide **high levels of value** for Ireland, from both a social and economic viewpoint
2. High support for ComReg's *Test & Trial Ireland* - thus it would be unnecessary to create a reserve of specific Spectrum for experimental purposes
3. The issue of the "mixed approach" of spectrum allocation in the UHF band, whereby spectrum in the UHF band would be assigned for **both broadcasting and non-broadcasting services**, rather than for one use only, was one of the most widely responded to consultation issues. In the main, the mixed approach received considerable support and was supported by a variety of well reasoned arguments



Key Findings in the Response to Consultation

2/2

4. The **concept of a sub-band (the 800 MHz band) was well supported** – respondents stressed advantages to Ireland of adopting an approach **harmonised** with other larger markets in Europe; benefits from **economies of scale** of radio equipment manufacture and from service roaming
5. However, **contrasting views** in relation to the issue of **additional** digital dividend spectrum **sub-band(s) at this time**
6. The issue of **accelerating access** to a sub-band of digital dividend spectrum also received contrasting views.
7. Respondents were also **generally positive** towards the concept of **service and technology neutrality** in relation to the future potential award process for Ireland's digital dividend spectrum.



Next Steps

1. Publication of RSPG Opinion on the Digital Dividend – following RSPG Plenary on 5 November 2009
2. ComReg’s publication of “Digital Dividend in Ireland – A new Approach to Spectrum use in the UHF Band” w/c 19 October 2009
3. ComReg will further develop its position on Ireland’s Digital Dividend in 2010 in consultation with Stakeholders having regard to ongoing developments nationally and internationally.



Thank You!

Questions

Further Information

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