



Commission for
Communications Regulation

Update on the Multi-Band Spectrum Award Process

Information Notice

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Additional Information

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1 Transition Project Plan

- 1.1 On 15 November 2012, ComReg published the auction results of its Multi-Band Spectrum Award (MBSA) process in Document 12/123¹ and identified the Winning Bidders as being:
- Vodafone Ireland Ltd (Vodafone);
 - Telefónica Ireland Ltd (Telefónica);
 - Meteor Mobile Communications Ltd (Meteor); and
 - Hutchison 3G Ireland Ltd (H3GI).
- 1.2 We have witnessed a number of important recent developments in mobile technology, including the advent of advanced mobile services using technologies such as Long Term Evolution (LTE) and the promise of faster broadband speeds for consumers. The Auction saw the release of 140 MHz of paired spectrum in the important 800 MHz, 900 MHz and 1800 MHz frequency bands, more than doubling the 64.8 MHz of paired spectrum previously assigned in these bands, and thereby greatly facilitating the early introduction of advanced mobile services.
- 1.3 On 5 December 2012, and following the outcome of the Negotiation Phase of the MBSA process, ComReg set out, in Document 12/131², the final frequency assignments for the Winning Bidders. At this point, the Auction stage of the MBSA process had ended, in accordance with the provisions of ComReg's Information Memorandum for the MBSA process (Document 12/52, as amended) (the "Information Memorandum").
- 1.4 At that point, the remaining stages of the MBSA process to be completed included:
- the notification and grant of Preparatory Licences and Liberalised Use Licences to the Winning Bidders and the amendment of the Existing GSM Licences in accordance with the outcome of the MBSA process; and
 - the completion of the Transition activities required by the Existing GSM Licensees to alter their respective networks to operate using the new frequency assignments determined by the MBSA process.

¹ ComReg Document 12/123 - Results of the Multi-Band Spectrum Auction - published 15 November 2012

² ComReg Document 12/131 - Frequency Arrangements and Results of the Multi-Band Spectrum Award Process - published 5 December 2012

- 1.5 On 31 January 2013, ComReg issued a Liberalised Use Licence to each of the four Winning Bidders, all of which had a commencement date of 1 February 2013. Within each Licence, the commencement date of the Spectrum Blocks was set in line with the outcome of the MBSA process³, noting that the availability of certain Spectrum Blocks was dependent upon the prior completion of the relevant Transition activities.
- 1.6 On 25 February 2013, following the careful consideration of all Transition information provided to it, ComReg published the finalised Transition Project Plan (TPP) for Time Slice 1 of the MBSA process⁴. All Winning Bidders and Existing GSM Licensees are required to abide by the TPP, and the TPP envisages that:
- Meteor will complete its 900 MHz band Transition activities by 2 April 2013;
 - Telefónica will complete its 900 MHz band Transition activities four weeks after Meteor's 900 MHz Transition activities (i.e. 30 April 2013 assuming Meteor completes its 900 MHz Transition activities on 2 April 2013); and
 - Telefónica will complete its 1800 MHz band Transition activities three weeks after Telefónica's 900 MHz Transition activities (i.e. 21 May 2013 assuming Telefónica completes its 900 MHz Transition activities on 30 April 2013).
- 1.7 All three spectrum bands encompassed by the Auction (800 MHz, 900 MHz and 1800 MHz) are highly suitable for high quality mobile services by virtue of their propagation properties which enable wide area coverage and effective in-building penetration. The issue of a Liberalised Use Licence to each of the four Winning Bidders and the publication of the Transition Project Plan represent significant steps in the culmination of this important process and ComReg looks forward to the timely completion of the remaining Transition activities.
- 1.8 Winning Bidders now have the early opportunity to develop and launch advanced mobile services in Ireland including fast, high capacity mobile broadband.

³ See ComReg Document 12/131 - Frequency Arrangements and Results of the Multi-Band Spectrum Award Process - published 5 December 2012

⁴ ComReg 13/19, "ComReg's Transition Project Plan for Time Slice 1 of the Multi-Band Spectrum Award (MBSA) process" published 25 February 2013