



Brussels, 29 February 2012

**RSPG COMPLETED THE 2011 WORK PROGRAMME
WITH THE ADOPTION OF A REPORT AND TWO OPINIONS
AND APPROVED
THE KEY LINES OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE WORK PROGRAMME OF 2012 AND BEYOND**

In its first Plenary of 2012 under the second Chairmanship of Mr. Roberto Viola, Secretary General, Agcom (Italy), RSPG today adopted following public consultation a number of deliverables in key policy areas, concluding the 2011 work programme: a Report on economic & social value of spectrum and two Opinions, respectively on the Review of Spectrum Use and on EU assistance in bilateral negotiations with third countries and between EU countries. The RSPG today also approved the key lines of activities for its new work programme for the current year and beyond. Finally RSPG discussed the outcome of the recent World Radio Spectrum Conference 2012, and the implications on EU spectrum policy.

Hereafter is a summary of the key policy items in the today's agenda:

1. Report on economic & social value of spectrum

The Joint BEREC/RSPG Working Group on competition and spectrum issues was tasked to explore the way in which the economic and social value of radio spectrum used for electronic communications services is determined in relation to authorisation and frequency assignment. The report highlights experiences and views on how to determine the social and economic value of the use of radio spectrum for electronic communications services (ECS), specifically with respect to the process of authorization and frequency assignments. The report focuses on the so-called WAPECS bands (mainly wireless), since these bands are under the highest interest from the market and policy makers and also subject to significant amounts of long term investments. The report examines recent assignments of radio spectrum for ECS and depicts general considerations on how the economic and social (public) value is considered and determined.

2. Opinion on the Review of spectrum use

This Opinion provides advice to the Commission on implementing the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP) in relation to the spectrum inventory. It identifies three key phases in a spectrum review as follows:

- Assessing the demand (surveys, forecasts, etc)
- Quantifying the supply of spectrum (through EFIS and other tools)

- Reviewing respective efficiencies (e.g., technical, functional, economic efficiency, 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.

3. Opinion on EU Assistance in Bilateral Negotiations with third countries and between EU countries

This Opinion focuses 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 800 MHz band between countries operating aeronautical radionavigation systems outside EU and mobile.

ii) Where the use of the “good offices” of the RSPG in bilateral negotiations between EU countries is called:

- In case of reported difficulty, a group of Member States would be set up to analyze the case and where possible propose a balanced approach or solution to the concerned countries;
- This would rely on the good will of the Member States without any formal enforcement role. The RSPG will report on the outcome to the Commission in its advisory capacity.

4. RSPG Work Programme for 2012 and beyond

Following public consultation, the RSPG approved its Work Programme 2012 and beyond. The Programme aims to structure the activities and build a bridge with the challenges expected to arise in a fast developing spectrum policy, especially in view of the agreed first Radio Spectrum Policy Programme. The Work Programme lists some key policy areas and links those to the strategic challenges of the RSPP, without setting in detail the timing and the expected deliverable. This would allow for the needed flexibility in conducting the work, being easier to change the scope or priority of some activities. In the today’s meeting the RSPG decided to start working on the strategic assessment of future demand for spectrum for Wireless Broadband services, and on the assistance in cross-border coordination, and, accordingly, the related Working Groups will soon be created.

5. Outcome of the World Radio Conference 2012

The RSPG discussed the outcome of the recent World Radio Conference 2012 (WRC-12) held in Geneva from 20 January to 17 February and the implications on the EU spectrum policy. In particular RSPG examined the new Resolution which triggers the compatibility studies for introducing the wireless service into the 700 MHz band, which should be formally defined from the next WRC in

2015 onwards. The RSPG decided to table a dedicated agenda item for further discussion in the next Plenary in June.

In commenting on the outcome of the Plenary, Mr Roberto Viola, the new Chairman, declared: *“In 2011 the RSPG fulfilled its new role with increased responsibilities in the European institutional set up, including by adopting the revised Rules of Procedure. In a few weeks, we will also have a first Radio Spectrum Policy Programme entering into force following the final signature by the Council and Parliament, following a huge effort by all parties during almost 2 years. RSPG proudly contributed to this significant achievement in EU spectrum policy through the development of its Opinion of June 2010 during my previous Chairmanship. The RSPG is going to be one of the cornerstones of the new Digital Agenda for Europe and should shape the EU spectrum policy for the coming years. In implementing its Work Programme 2012 the RSPG wishes to continue to play its strategic role by advising the Commission timely and adequately as well as Member States in the formidable challenges lying ahead. This proactive spirit is hopefully reflected in the new RSPG Work Programme approved today. The Programme should provide sufficient flexibility to deliver on the issues that are needed when they are needed. Together with my colleague Gilles Bregant, the vice Chairman, I am proud to lead the RSPG in this challenging times, and to contribute developing new ways to use spectrum more efficiently, and thereby generating tangible benefits for the EU economy and 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.