



Brussels, 6 June 2012

**RSPG DISCUSSED THE PRELIMINARY ISSUES AROUND THE FUTURE OF THE 700 MHz BAND
AND STARTED NEW WORKING GROUPS
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORK PROGRAMME OF 2012 AND BEYOND**

In its Plenary meeting today under the Chairmanship of Mr. Roberto Viola, Agcom (Italy), RSPG discussed the preliminary issues which Member States are confronted with, related to the future of the 700 MHz band and its implications for the EU policy after the recent decision of the WRC-12 to co-allocate it to mobile broadband alongside broadcasting, and an initial common way ahead. The Group also discussed the project specifications for the new working items of the “RSPG 2012 and beyond Work Programme” that are soon due to start.

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

1. Discussion on the preliminary issues for a possible way ahead for the 700 MHz band

The RSPG had a thorough *tour de table* among Member States, which allowed them to express their initial views on the future of the 700 MHz band following the WRC-12 decision and to explain their strategies for increasing the efficient use of spectrum. Following this discussion, the RSPG decided to devote more effort into devising a common roadmap for the possible new use of the 700 MHz band. To this end the Group decided to place a greater focus on this matter in the ongoing work programme. The Working Group on the strategies for Wireless Broadband, which started work soon after the last Plenary in February, has the task of assessing the possible solutions and options for meeting the future demand for wireless broadband services, including specific consideration of the 700 MHz band amongst a list of potential bands, of indicating to which extent shared spectrum access could contribute to meet the demand for spectrum for wireless broadband, and of giving guidance for a common roadmap ahead. The Working Group should also consider the implications of the new ITU resolution on the way the spectrum, including the broadcasting bands, is used, and whether technological advances, including trends towards the possible convergence of networks, can make its use more efficient.

2. Kick off of new Working Groups

According to the priorities set during last Plenary meeting in February, the RSPG decided today to start the activities for 4 more working areas within the “2012 and beyond Work Programme”, in addition to the above on Wireless Broadband. To this aim the Group discussed the project specifications for the new deliverables. The 4 areas are: EU assistance in bilateral coordination,

Review of strategic sectoral demand, Preparation of WRC-15, Interference Management. These activities have been defined in line with the policy requirements and implementing tasks set by the recently approved EU Radio Spectrum Policy Programme.

2.a. EU assistance in bilateral coordination

Following the landmark Opinion approved in February on the issue of cross border coordination, that foresees the tool of the RSPG “*good offices*” as an aid to Member States for solving potential problems, the group should now help setting up the framework to carry out the recommendations put forward in the Opinion, and expand its activity on a number of policy issues. In particular the group should, inter alia, monitor the re-planning and release of spectrum bands already harmonised, in order to assist on any implementation difficulty relating to cross-border coordination (intra-EU or with countries outside EU), suggest the most appropriate organisational framework to handle these cases, and analyse how the new ITU resolution on 700 MHz band could affect the cross-border spectrum co-ordination process.

2.b. Review of strategic sectoral demand

In line with the provisions in the Radio Spectrum Policy Program, RSPG intends to examine the likely development of a number of sectoral categories of service in order to identify emerging spectrum needs and demand, and at the same time to explore the possibility to foster generic spectrum allocation, including for broadband services, in order to avoid standalone sector specific solutions. The working group should then in particular identify the demand for the various types of applications and services deemed as relevant, attempt to scope the future evolution of the various demands, possibly by developing the most likely scenarios, with a time horizon up to 2020, assess spectrum requirements and sharing possibilities, propose where appropriate ways of satisfying the need and demand for spectrum or capacity for each type of functional application, including the need for further regulatory measures.

2.c. Preparation of WRC-15

According to the same framework successfully implemented for the recent WRC-12, the RSPG should start an early work for the preparation of the next ITU World Radio Conference, to date scheduled for 2015. This work would be key in assisting the Commission in proposing EU Common Policy Objectives to the EU Parliament and Council, offering guidance to Member States in developing the European Common Proposals during the next years, and in identifying actions in order to provide political support to promote common policy objectives in regular meetings between EC and non-EU countries. To this end the group should identify the common policy objectives for the WRC-15 agenda items where there is a relevant EU policy. There are a number of key sectors to be addressed, such as, but not exclusively, Electronic Communications services, where the key issue is the availability of new spectrum for wireless broadband, Transport, where aviation, maritime and road safety need to secure developments, Scientific use of spectrum, where the RSPG itself has recognised important environmental and safety implications, and Space, where many regulatory procedures associated with satellite operation and items addressing satellite allocation issues need to be safeguarded.

2.d. Interference Management

Efficient interference management is one of the key issues of the Administrations in order to ensure that the available radio spectrum with its limited resources can be used and exploited as extensively and efficiently as possible. Along these principles the work of the group should identify ways for the promotion of improved receiver standards within the current EU institutional set up; analyse, through the examination of best practices, what potential role EU

spectrum policy and specifically the review of the R&TTE directive may play in promoting improved receiver standards; identify basic principles and approaches of an efficient Interference Management as well as Member States best practices in managing interference, taking into account increasingly flexible conditions of use in spectrum rights.

For another area of activity, the shared use of spectrum and licensed shared access, the Group discussed today what should be the key elements of the further work. In this context it was clear that the focus should be on Licensed Shared Access (LSA). The Commission informed about a planned Communication on the shared use of spectrum (scheduled for July), which will, inter alia, address LSA and related access rights. Start of the work on this topic has been delayed in order to take on board further comments of the Member States in the formulation of the request for opinion and to synchronise it with the publication of the Commission Communication.

In commenting on the outcome of the Plenary, the Chairman Mr Roberto Viola declared: *“The recent WRC-12 resolution on the 700 MHz band is fundamental in stimulating discussion amongst stakeholders regarding the future of the band, but the more so it is a great stimulus in introducing ever more efficient and technologically advanced ways of using spectrum. With that resolution and the Radio Spectrum Policy Program in place, Member States are now called to face formidable challenges lying ahead. In this context RSPG wishes to continue to play its strategic role at the highest level and to this end we have kicked off today a number of new work projects which I am sure will give the expected timely and professional advice to the Commission and Member States, contributing to shape the EU spectrum policy”.*

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.*