EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Electronic Communications Policy
Radio Spectrum Policy Group
RSPG Secretariat

Brussels, 16 June 2011
DG INFSO/B4/RSPG Secretariat

RSPG10-346 Final Rev2

RSPG WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011

Introduction

One of the most significant developments in the European spectrum policy area during 2010 was the adoption in September by the European Commission (EC) of a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision to establish a multi-annual Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP). Earlier in the year the EC had requested an Opinion on the issue of a multi-annual RSPP from the RSPG. This Opinion was delivered by the RSPG with document RSPG Opinion RSPG10-330 Final which, in addition to a public consultation[1], had also been debated extensively during a two-day Spectrum Summit involving key stakeholders including the European Parliament. In response to the 'EU2020' strategic vision, the RSPG Opinion RSPG10-330 focused on the creation of a competitive, connected and greener European economy, especially through fostering the upgrade and interconnection of infrastructures and the acceleration of innovation. It is the intention of the RSPG to monitor developments on these issues during 2011 and to amend or add further items as necessary, taking utmost account of the ongoing discussions on the RSPP in Council and European Parliament.

Therefore, in recognition of the key role to be played by the RSPP upon its adoption in driving European spectrum management initiatives during the next 5 years, the RSPG work programme for 2011 focuses particularly on activities which directly support the RSPP and as provided for in RSPG10-330.

Other activities include advising on competition aspects of the liberalisation of spectrum use through the joint BEREC-RSPG work programme.

While the 2011 work programme will build on the foundations laid down in previous years, it also looks further ahead to 2012, identifying a number of areas for consideration as potential work items on which the RSPG may advise the EC and other appropriate European Institutions. The work items are i) the use of spectrum to save energy, ii) policies for interference management, and iii) digital radio broadcasting. It is the intention of the RSPG to review these proposed items during 2011 and amend or add further items as necessary.

[1] For results of the public consultation on the RSPG Opinion please see
http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecomm/radio_spectrum/eu_policy/rspp/rspp_pc_rep/index_en.htm

1) Review of Spectrum use

RSPG Opinion RSPG10-330 proposed that an essential part of the RSPP should be to "identify developing and potential future significant uses of spectrum taking into account demand and technology trends". As stated in the Opinion the RSPG believes that, with a view to releasing more "new" spectrum, the EC should take into account an analysis of demand and technology trends to identify developing and potential future significant uses of spectrum.

Work outline:
In this context the RSPG will investigate the best process for analysing spectrum demand and the impact of technology trends on such demand.

Type of Delivery: Opinion

Public Consultation: Yes

Expected by: November 2011

2) Collective Use and other spectrum sharing techniques

Collective use of spectrum is an underexplored approach to promote efficient use of spectrum in appropriate circumstances. RSPG Opinion RSPG10-330 proposed that the RSPP should consider how to "make more spectrum available under a collective use model in order to facilitate rapid access to spectrum, promote innovation and competition". Furthermore, the RSPG Opinion RSPG08-244 Final on the Collective Use of Spectrum stated:

> "*Given the potential of the CUS model to promote innovation, the RSPG considers that further work should be undertaken to assess how this objective can best be achieved. This should include investigation of the different approaches to making spectrum available for CUS. In particular, the RSPG believes there may be opportunities to exploit the relatively low opportunity cost of high frequency spectrum as well as sharing opportunities across the entire frequency range for very low power devices. The RSPG believes this could help to stimulate demand for new services but notes that any such initiatives will be dependent upon carrying out the Impact Assessments and, at least in relation to a threshold for very low power devices, the necessary compatibility studies.*"

In its Opinion on Cognitive Technologies RSPG10-348 Final the RSPG also considers that "*promising new systems and services fostering growth and innovation are seeking access to spectrum*". Given the development of these new technologies, and the emergence of different regulatory models for ensuring the most efficient use of spectrum, the CUS model appears to be a subset of spectrum sharing in a broader sense. In addition to collective use, therefore, the RSPG will also analyse and identify the way forward for future work on shared access to spectrum, and will start by examining innovative sharing arrangements including those utilising cognitive technologies.

Consequently, the RSPG has revised the scope of this work item so that the forthcoming report will also explore the potential regulatory impact of novel strategies to facilitate spectrum sharing between licensed users and/or between commercial uses and public uses.

Work outline:
There will be four elements to this task:

i) a review of innovative sharing arrangements applicable to the frequency spectrum in general
ii) the identification of higher frequency bands (i.e., in the millimetric wavelength range) to which the CUS approach could potentially be applied, noting the need to provide appropriate protection to radiocommunication services such as the passive services (radioastronomy, Earth exploration-satellite (passive), etc.);
iii) an analysis of sharing techniques to facilitate exploitation of white space spectrum (generic approach), including review of progress on white spaces implementation in the broadcasting bands
iv) in light of the above, an analysis of the requirements for further work by the RSPG on shared access to spectrum

Type of Delivery: Report

Public Consultation: No

Expected by: November 2011

3) Improving broadband coverage

This item follows up on the Position Paper on Wireless Broadband (RSPG09-284 Final). It addresses the spectrum implications and capabilities to meet the ”call” under the Digital Agenda for all EU citizens to have access to high-speed broadband in which wireless networks will play an essential part. In this context one of the policy objectives identified in the RSPG10-330 Opinion on the RSPP is to ensure that sufficient spectrum for coverage and capacity purposes is allocated within the EU so that all citizens could have access to ubiquitous high-speed broadband.

Work outline:
This task will examine the spectrum implications of meeting the stated objective of ubiquitous high-speed broadband access, noting the key role to be played by wireless networks in supporting this objective. The task will include:

i) analysis of the impact of coverage obligations on competition in the wireless broadband market
ii) analysis of conflict between demand for more spectrum for broadband applications at the European level and the under-utilisation of current bands in some Member States as a result of extensive broadband penetration by other platforms.

It may be appropriate to liaise with BEREC on this work item

Type of Delivery: Opinion

Public Consultation: Yes

Expected by: November 2011

4) Economic and social value of spectrum and joint RSPG-BEREC work programme

This is a continuation and expansion of the current cooperation between RSPG and BEREC on the competition aspects of the liberalisation of spectrum use in the EU.

Work outline:
The group should continue its current activities and will also explore the way in which the economic and social value of spectrum is determined. The Joint BEREC-RSPG Working Group, benefiting from the respective expertise in the parent groups, could analyse assignment processes in Member States with the emphasis on liberalisation of spectrum, assessing how spectrum value, coverage obligations or the conditions for infrastructure sharing are established - all with the aim of identifying best practices.

Note: *should be done as a joint BEREC/RSPG working group activity; and should also involve EC Competition Directorate*

Type of delivery: Report

Public consultation: No

Expected by: November 2011

5) International coordination of spectrum

This work item would comprise the following activities:

i) A strategy to strengthen the promotion of EU interests in international negotiations within existing structures

ii) The issue of spectrum coordination in bilateral negotiations with third countries and between EU countries

Type of delivery:

For item i) Report
For item ii) Opinion

Public consultation:

For item i) No
For item ii) Yes

Expected by: November 2011

Subjects for review and development over the period 2011-2012*

a) Using spectrum to save energy
The RSPG Opinion10-330 states that efficient and effective use of spectrum technologies could also stimulate carbon reduction in other sectors. The sector can also reduce its own greenhouse emissions with the help of greener ICT. In this regard RSPG could develop an advisory Opinion on the impact of wireless technologies with a potential for improving energy saving, including, but not limited to, smart energy grids and smart metering systems.

b) Interference management
The RSPG Opinion10-330 states that avoidance of harmful interference is of primary importance in spectrum management. Decisions and measures on spectrum use have to maintain a balanced approach to avoid interference. Harmonised standards are also a key element in spectrum regulation and one aspect worth considering may be the need to include sharing conditions defined by regulators. Attention should also be paid to harmonised standards for electric and electronic equipments and networks so as to ensure that they will not interfere with spectrum use. In this regard RSPG could develop a Report on policies for interference management. One particular area of concern is the role of receiver standards in ensuring that receivers are designed and manufactured to sufficiently good standards to have adequate immunity to interference. Also the role of standards for non-radio electric and electronic equipment and networks in reducing interference to/from spectrum users.

c) Digital Radio Broadcasting: develop an Opinion or Report on actions which would be necessary to foster the development of digital radio broadcasting.

* For consideration at RSPG#25