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RADIO SPECTRUM POLICY GROUP

Work Programme for 2018 and beyond

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Work Programme for 2018-2019

This document describes the RSPG Work Programme which was adopted by the RSPG Plenary meeting (30-01-2018).

The RSPG approved its previous Work Programme “2016 and beyond” in February 2016 and the outputs and activities specified in that Work Programme were delivered by the end of 2017. Some of the work areas during 2016-17 are still on-going, and this new Work Programme defines new terms of reference for their next stage. Other new, strategic work areas are also set out.

This Work Programme seeks to guide the work of the RSPG against a background of some uncertainty, in the light of the ongoing negotiations for a new legislative framework. As a result, some deliverables are difficult to define at the time of writing. The RSPG therefore anticipates the need for a revision of this Work Programme during the period 2018-19, following the outcome of the legislative negotiations.

The original draft work programme was subject to public consultation between 27-11-2017 and 07-01-2018. Respondents were France, ETNO, EUTC, ECTA, IARU, intel, BNE, Microsoft, JRC, UKWISPA/INCA, Qualcomm, DigitalEurope and Sennheiser.

RSPG has therefore identified the following work items to be developed during the next years:

- European Electronic Communications Code (EECC)
- European Spectrum Strategy
- 5G Implementation Challenges
- RSPG Opinion on WRC-19
- Peer review and Member State cooperation on authorisations and awards
- “Good offices” to assist in bilateral negotiations between EU countries

During the work programme period the RPSG will also arrange a number of stakeholder events, following the model from the last two years. Timing, locations and agendas to be announced in due time before such events. The main focus for these events is to interact with stakeholders on regional and local level.

European Electronic Communications Code, EECC

Rationale

The European Commission proposed in 2016 an overhaul of the regulatory framework, to be called the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC). Among the proposals were new rules on spectrum co-ordination, authorisation regimes and assignments. New roles for the RSPG were also proposed.

Scope of RSPG activity

During the remaining negotiations the RSPG will be ready to advise as required, on matters within its areas of competence, including on its own future role.

When the negotiations have concluded and the requirements of the new EECC are clear, the RSPG will initiate work that anticipates the new framework and any new responsibilities, in order to scope and plan the following tasks. This will be an opportunity for RSPG to consider how it can most effectively operate and deliver appropriate advice on spectrum policy issues within the framework of the new EECC.

As the EECC moves into an implementation phase, the RSPG will

- Consider whether to develop new RSPG work items in response to the final outcome, in a revised Work Programme;
- Commence any new work designed to deliver any new, programmatic responsibilities of the RSPG;
- Assess any impact on the current RSPG due to the new regulatory framework for electronic communications and make relevant recommendations;
- Identify areas of joint interest/responsibilities with BEREC and initiate common actions as necessary;
- Review the current Rules of Procedure as well as the structure and working methods of the RSPG and adapt them accordingly, if necessary

Planned type of deliverable

The results of the working group shall be presented to the RSPG (in the form of reports and/or opinions) for consideration and possible adoption. The nature of this work item will depend on the outcome of the legislative negotiations, and specific deliverables will be proposed in response to developments in those negotiations.

Time schedule

Throughout the period of the work programme.

European Spectrum Strategy

Rationale

The rapid pace of change in wireless communications technologies and markets presents immediate challenges for spectrum management such as the introduction of 5G mobile services. However, there is also a cumulative effect of these developments and a need to look beyond the current policy initiatives, to the medium and longer term.

The RSPG should be leading European thinking on a longer term spectrum strategy that seeks to anticipate not just technologies currently in development but also the evolution of those technologies, and of the markets that they will be deployed in. Spectrum management has the potential either to facilitate or to impede that evolution.

At the same time, there is a risk that spectrum policy decisions are taken in isolation and with reference to the current policy imperatives, rather than as part of delivering a strategic vision. This is understandable for any given policy decision, but the more policy decisions can be taken with a strategic frame of the wider policy objectives, the greater the potential long term benefit. In this context the RSPG should take into account not only technical parameters but also economic, political, social, cultural and other strategic considerations impacting spectrum policy.

The discussions could include the future use of certain bands, but also the relationship between decisions taken about particular bands; they could look into spectrum management principles such as sharing and authorisation that cut across different bands; they should also look to the objectives of spectrum management and its impact on other digital policy fields and should almost certainly seek to challenge established thinking about spectrum management.

There will be different views on the questions to ask and answer in developing longer term strategic spectrum objectives. It will be important to seek input from external experts and stakeholders as well as from RSPG members. It will be an iterative process that builds on open dialogue.

Scope of RSPG activity

The RSPG will initiate discussions on a longer term European spectrum strategy that looks beyond the other specific Work Programme topics to the medium and longer term of spectrum management (e.g. a 10-30 year horizon).

Planned type of deliverable

RSPG Report containing a list of concrete items that RSPG will address as a follow-up. This work will be facilitated through a series of RSPG-led high level workshops. These could be held adjacent to plenary meetings to ensure broad participation of RSPG members.

Depending on the results of the workshops, further deliverables may be appropriate and advice on these would be sought from the Plenary.

Time schedule

To be developed by working group and proposed to RSPG plenary.

5G Implementation Challenges

Rationale

The European Commission presented in September 2016 an Action Plan for 5G in Europe¹ to show that Europe has the ambition to lead on the deployment of 5G and move to a gigabit society and make sure all Europeans, whether in the countryside or in cities, can get access to a quality internet connection.

RSPG addressed initial spectrum strategy milestones on 5G in its Opinion of November 2016² and send a clear signal towards the global development of harmonised frequency bands above 24 GHz in its interim Opinion on WRC-19³. Overall it is noted that the spectrum policy challenge on 5G is very closely related to the on-going development of 5G technology.

In consequence, RSPG will continue its efforts and contribute actively to the development of Europe's spectrum policy strategy regarding 5G, including bands being studied at WRC, and other spectrum needed to deliver the services to all European citizens including for IoT/M2M and other applications such as ITS.

Scope of RSPG activity

The RSPG has developed a strategic roadmap towards 5G for Europe and [adopted a second opinion on 5G in February 2018 (supplementary opinion on strategic issues related to spectrum regulation of 5G networks).]

On the basis of these, RSPG plans to present an analysis with a view on how to defragment the 3.4-3.8 GHz band in EU.

RSPG will assess the impact of the future use of 5G technology in other areas than mobile broadband (internet of things, intelligent transportation and other verticals) and initiate further work where necessary.

RSPG will engage to enable information and experience sharing in support of a successful roll-out of 5G in EU.

Planned type of deliverable

RSPG Opinion(s) or Report(s) as appropriate. High-level workshops could also be envisaged and used to facilitate these deliverables.

Time schedule

- Draft Opinion in November 2017/Final Opinion in February 2018
- Follow up draft Report/Opinion November 2018/Final Report/Opinion in April 2019

¹ [COM\(2016\) 588 final](#)

² http://rspg-spectrum.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/RSPG16-032-Opinion_5G.pdf

³ https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/0cd3a364-073b-4978-8bb4-f59b44d5d9da/RSPG17-010_Final_Interim_Opinion_WRC-19.pdf

RSPG Opinion on WRC-19

Rationale

The RSPG should advise on items which are of particular importance for the Union, as early as possible in the process of preparation of WRC-19. This will include recommendations for EU position(s), where necessary or desirable.

Moreover, taking account of past and current developments in the Union and at the ITU it needs to be assessed how the preparation of ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences could be improved in order to update, if needed, the recommendations provided in RSPG Opinion on “The preparation of ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences”⁴.

Scope of RSPG activity

The RSPG plans to:

1. Assist the European Commission in proposing a Union position based on the Interim Opinion on WRC-19⁵;
2. Identify actions recommended to the European Commission in order to provide political support to promote the objectives of common policy approaches in regular meetings between EC and non-EU countries.
3. Assess the preparation of ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences in order to update, if needed, the recommendations provided in the RSPG Opinion on “The preparation of ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences” in particular with a view on the coordination of the MS during a WRC. This shall be done by a supplementing Opinion on the coordination of the EU at WRC.

Planned type of deliverable

Two RSPG Opinions

Time schedule

1. Opinion on WRC-19

- Draft Opinion, June 2018
- Final Opinion, October 2018

2. Supplementing Opinion RSPG09-294 on the EU coordination at the EU coordination at ITU-R Worldradiocommunication Conferences

- Draft Opinion, October 2018
- Final Opinion, March 2019

⁴ RSPG09-294 ; http://rspg-spectrum.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/rspg09_294_preparation_itu_wrc.pdf

⁵ RSPG17-010 ; https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/0cd3a364-073b-4978-8bb4-f59b44d5d9da/RSPG17-010_Final_Interim_Opinion_WRC-19.pdf

Peer review and Member State cooperation on authorisations and awards

Rationale

The RSPG has built on its Report on Spectrum Awards to develop a programmatic strand of work on Peer Review. It believes considerable benefits can be derived from the continued, and increased, sharing of best practices across the Member States. The goal is to deliver a level of consistency of approach, and generally to improve the quality of awards, without unnecessarily fettering the discretion of Member States to adapt to national circumstances or diminishing the potential for innovation.

The RSPG has already launched a voluntary “Peer Review” platform allowing Member States to share documents and experiences and to seek advice from their Peers during the award design process. More recently it has held multiple workshops to examine specific awards.

Scope of RSPG activity

The Peer Review work will continue to:

- Develop and make use of the Peer Review Platform where relevant information on past, ongoing and future awards are available to Member State experts
- Hold workshops, to be conducted by the spectrum management authority responsible for the award, at relevant stages of an award in order to share experience and thinking with other Member States
- Build knowledge and expertise in Member States across Europe by facilitating contact and sharing of ideas between experts.

Building on its work on Spectrum Awards and the Peer Review platform, the RSPG plans to foster exchange of best practices and peer learning between Member States.

Planned type of deliverable

RSPG Report on the continued development of the Peer Review platform for use by experts in Member States.

Oral presentation and short description of workshops and other relevant activities at RSPG plenary meetings.

Arrange workshops on upcoming and past awards in order to share thinking and any lessons learnt in order to build expertise in Europe. This will generally be aimed at a Member State audience but we will also consider options and opportunities for engaging with relevant stakeholders.

Time schedule

Throughout the work program period.

“Good offices” to assist in bilateral negotiations between EU Member States

Rationale

The RSPG’s Good Offices function was established in 2012 to assist in bilateral spectrum management negotiations between its members.

When Member States have difficulties in cross-border coordination or from harmful interference with another member, they may request the RSPG Chairman to put the matter on the agenda of an RSPG meeting. They would report their difficulties during the meeting and ask for RSPG to bring its good offices to bear on the issue. RSPG may decide to respond positively to this request and set up relevant actions.

The Good Offices working group has assisted with cases of broadcasting interference, both UHF and FM. It has also evolved recently to take a more proactive role in relation to the repurposing of the 700 MHz band from broadcasting to mobile use: the group has sought to monitor progress by members in their frequency re-planning for broadcast TV services and in their bilateral co-ordination for this.

Scope of RSPG activity

The Good Offices working group will investigate any co-ordination issues, including harmful interference issues, brought to its attention; and propose appropriate solutions. (There are no provisions for “enforcement” and this work relies on the goodwill of RSPG members.) It will continue to monitor the delivery of the 700 MHz band for mobile use and the migration of the TV broadcasting below 694 MHz and address the situations where cross-border coordination agreement has not been reached as well as the issues of transition where timeline for migration is significantly different among neighbouring countries.

Planned type of deliverable

RSPG report on lessons learned regarding the applications of the good offices for the 700 MHz band.

Time schedule

Throughout the period of the work programme.