

## Report form Ofcom BRIG 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (Rev 1)

Attending on Behalf of the LPRA: LPRA Vice Chair Brian M Back

### **FM 54 Report: New Working Group Announced:**

Of significant importance to the LPRA members who are looking for additional spectrum for RFID and IoT was the announcement at the FM54 meeting held 08 / 09 May at European Communications Office, Copenhagen that FM54 is to be split up into two working groups with the removal of matters relating to railways and their associated radio spectrum into a new working group called FM56.

Report from meeting <http://www.cept.org/ecc/groups/ecc/wg-fm/fm-54/news/results-of-the-fm5415-meeting-on-8-9-may2017-in-copenhagen/>

The meeting focused on further developing the draft ECC Report on 400 MHz PMR/PAMR. FM54 proposes to delete the reference to the 400 MHz frequency ranges in the CEPT Roadmap for 5G to the WGFM/ECC. Hence FM54 will now fall in line with the ITU definition of 5G starting at frequencies above 1 GHz.

FM54 also conducted a detailed investigation about the frequency range 47-68 MHz (this band will not be included in the new ECC Decision for land mobile systems). The band is to be considered for innovative solutions.

Next meeting of FM54 will be held between 12 / 13 September in Bonn, and thereafter 24 / 25 January 2018 in Copenhagen.

If you wish to attend please register at:

<http://www.cept.org/ecc/groups/ecc/wg-fm/fm-54/client/meeting-calendar/eventregistration/?meetingid=1946>

### **First FM56 Report**

The first meeting was held 27 - 28 March at European Union Agency for Railway, Lille France

The meeting agreed on a work plan in FM56 with regards to the successor to GSM-R as a two-step approach: First assess the spectrum requirements in a first ECC Report; Then evaluate the candidate bands for the implementation of the successor to GSMR in a second ECC Report

The work in FM56 is triggered by the ETSI system reference document TR 103 333

FM56 had a first discussion based on a contribution from UIC (International Union of Railways) on the rationale and justification for the requirement to run two parallel networks for the safe operation of trains when GSM-R migrates (transition period) to a successor technology.

### **IMPORTANT: UHF Spectrum Review & 458MHz SRD Applications**

Ofcom reported to the relief of the LPRA that the licence free allocation at 458MHz would not now be withdrawn.

Further, the second good news for both the SRD and PMR radio community is that the proposed realignment of UHF2 with Europe will not now take place.

The official statement to this effect was published on 25 May 2017

[https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/102185/Statement-on-strategic-review-ofUHF-Band-1-and-Band-2.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/102185/Statement-on-strategic-review-ofUHF-Band-1-and-Band-2.pdf)

However, the news is not all good and as the reported interference problem seems to grow a sentiment reinforced by the representative from Anglian Water telemetry who was present at the meeting.

During the previous meeting I had postulated alteration of IR2030 the UK's radio spectrum interface requirements to possibility of introducing 10% duty cycle limit on the band. Although this would be contrary to the European Commission's policy of technology neutrality it was felt that something had to be done to protect the existing users, some of which have been using the band since the mid 80's before it was licence free, for utility telemetry links. The question was raised again and no objections were received during the meeting.

New users; if you look closely into the statement you will clearly see that economic pressures have prevailed and Ofcom will shortly allow other applications to share the SRD part of the band. For example, six channels are released from Emergency Services allocation at 451 MHz paired with six channels from the 458.5 MHz to 459.5 MHz band (right in the middle of the SRD band) a 7 MHz duplex split!

Further, under the title Simple UK, four x 12.5 kHz channels between 458.5 MHz and 458.95 MHz, maximum effective radiated power is 2 watts, we think this is for PMR446 type applications – portable to portable,

Ofcom believes that risk of interference between licensed and licence exempt use is low, we disagree. They believe the majority of Short Range Device are expected to migrate to harmonised bands such in the 800MHz region again the LPRA disagree and stressed that the installed base is large and the replacement cycle is decades.

## **R-ED**

There was the usual debate on R-ED with some emphasis about its legal status or not in the UK. Members ought to be aware that due to the political turmoil caused by the recent general election R-ED did not get passed into law in the UK and further it is very unlikely to do so this year. Therefore, technically for the moment within the UK it may be business as usual however outside and with the exception of Grease who have also failed to ratify, R-ED it is in force throughout the EU and other participating countries.

## **The ! Mark**

There is still the on-going issue of the replacement of the "!" mark on non-harmonised products. Mandatory marking schemes with country codes is most likely however it is

unlikely the R-ED will be updated to include this most critical amendment before the winter of 2017.