

Strategic Review of Spectrum Management in the United Kingdom

According to its schedule of August 2004, Ofcom published its strategy for securing optimal use of the civilian radio spectrum. In order to enable radio spectrum licence holders to make more efficient use of their spectrum allocation and to encourage innovation and investment in wireless communications services across the UK, Ofcom specifies four key recommendations:

1. Allow the market to decide the best use for new spectrum allocations.
2. Allow licence holders to trade spectrum in an open market and change the use they make of spectrum rights to develop new technologies and offer different services to customers (also known as liberalisation).
3. Clearly define the rights of spectrum users, giving them the confidence to plan for the future.
4. Increase the amount of licence-exempt spectrum which allows businesses to develop and bring to market new technologies and services without the need for a licence.

It is expected that over 70% of the radio spectrum (currently 0%) will be market-oriented in the future. Ofcom will continue to monitor and to act against interference between spectrum users as well as to maintain control over spectrum licences where: (a) signals cross international boundaries, (b) international mobility is critical, or (c) the UK has agreed to harmonise spectrum use in line with important multi-national accords.

Ofcom will accept responses until 15 February 2005.

Caroline Simard, GREX Advisor

Adapted from: Office of Communications (Ofcom)

(Source: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media_office/latest_news/nr20041123 and <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/current/sfr/>) (23 November 2004)