Disaster Preparedness and Response

Role of Regulators on Disaster Risk Management

In this Session :

- The importance of planning and coordination
- Disaster response planning
- Business continuity management
- Early warning systems
- Cell broadcast for early warning
- Guidelines for the use of messaging services during natural disasters (SMS and USSD)
- Role of National Meteorological Offices and other alerting authorities (i.e. ministry of environment, disaster management offices, etc)
- Case studies: Sri Lanka – DEWN, Maldives – Water crisis

How and Why disasters are challenging to regulators and network service operators?

Key: Invoke Crisis and Incident Management Plan

- Most mobile networks were not designed to provide mission critical communications during disasters.

- However, they are now depended on in the most acute situations to reconnect loved ones, call for help and access information.

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The need for establishment of support and flexible response channels during disasters
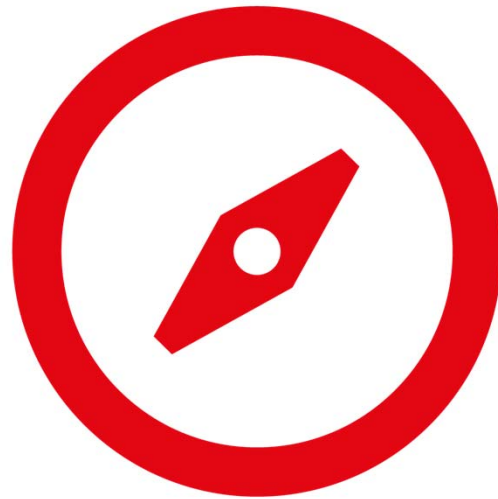
- Regulators should be flexible and allow operators to adjust to unforeseen circumstances rather than insisting that rules designed for non-emergency situations apply no matter what the circumstance.

Disaster Response Regulation

Overview

Industry Position: Emergency Mobile Telecommunications, Regulatory Best Practice

- Why?
    - The GSMA consolidates its portfolio of best practice industry positions in the Public Policy Handbook, a physical and digital resource that is available to operators and telecom regulators

- How?
    - GSMA policy positions are governed by the Chief Policy and Regulatory Officers Group who approve positions before they are adopted

Disaster Response Regulation

Background

- **Access to communications services is critical to emergency response and recovery.** Facilities based communications service providers ("operators") and equipment makers are central to disaster response efforts.

- **Emergency situations pose unique challenges** that vary greatly based on geography, pre-disaster telecommunications infrastructure, government institutions, and regulatory design.

- The ability for operators to quickly establish, or re-establish, communications services after a disaster **depends on how quickly technical and relief staff and equipment can be brought to and set up in the impacted areas**.

- Depending on the circumstance, operators may need to repair or replace damaged infrastructure, establish emergency transmission and backhaul systems, adjust power levels and cell contours, among other activities, **within the shortest possible timeframe.**

- To ensure emergency communications services are established without unnecessary delay, **regulatory frameworks or clear operational guidelines should be established before a disaster strikes and provide for operational flexibility and innovation**, albeit on a temporary basis.

Disaster Response Regulation

The GSMA Industry Position:

- Governments, along with relevant multilateral agencies, and operators should agree a set of regulatory guidelines that can be adopted to best respond to and recover from an emergency.

- The guidelines should set out unambiguous rules and clearly defined lines of communication between governments and operators in emergency situations. E.g. Chain of approval for temporary permission requests

- The guidelines should provide operators with flexibility to adjust to unforeseen circumstances rather than insisting that rules designed for non-emergency situations apply, no matter the circumstance. E.g. Balancing of reporting requirements, ability to use assigned spectrum with flexibility

Disaster Response Regulation

The GSMA Industry Position:

- The guidelines should help improve communication and coordination among various government entities involved in responding to an emergency and facilitate a timely and efficient response. In particular:

    - Regulators and emergency management agencies should establish clear lines of communication and determine how telecommunications fits into a larger national response effort before an emergency occurs;

    - Regulators and customs and immigration agencies should build an emergency response plan that allow fast-track approvals for equipment importation and entry of personnel;

    - National-level agencies should establish clear lines of communication with regional and local agencies on telecommunications matters to prevent working at cross purposes or sending mixed or conflicting messages to operators; and

    - Government should encourage operators to cooperate with one another to use available resources intelligently and efficiently.

Case Studies: Examples of Policies and Regulations in support of saving and improving lives

| Japanese Ministry of Communications in response to the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami	• Temporary increase in power levels of certain sites to increase range
AFAD Turkey after the Van earthquake	• Relaxing privacy laws upon request to allow Turkcell to help locate missing persons trapped under rubble
Philippines Financial Regulator	• Relaxing Know Your Customer (KYC) requirements to enable access to mobile Government-to-Person (G2P) payments after Typhoon Haiyan

Frequency regulation
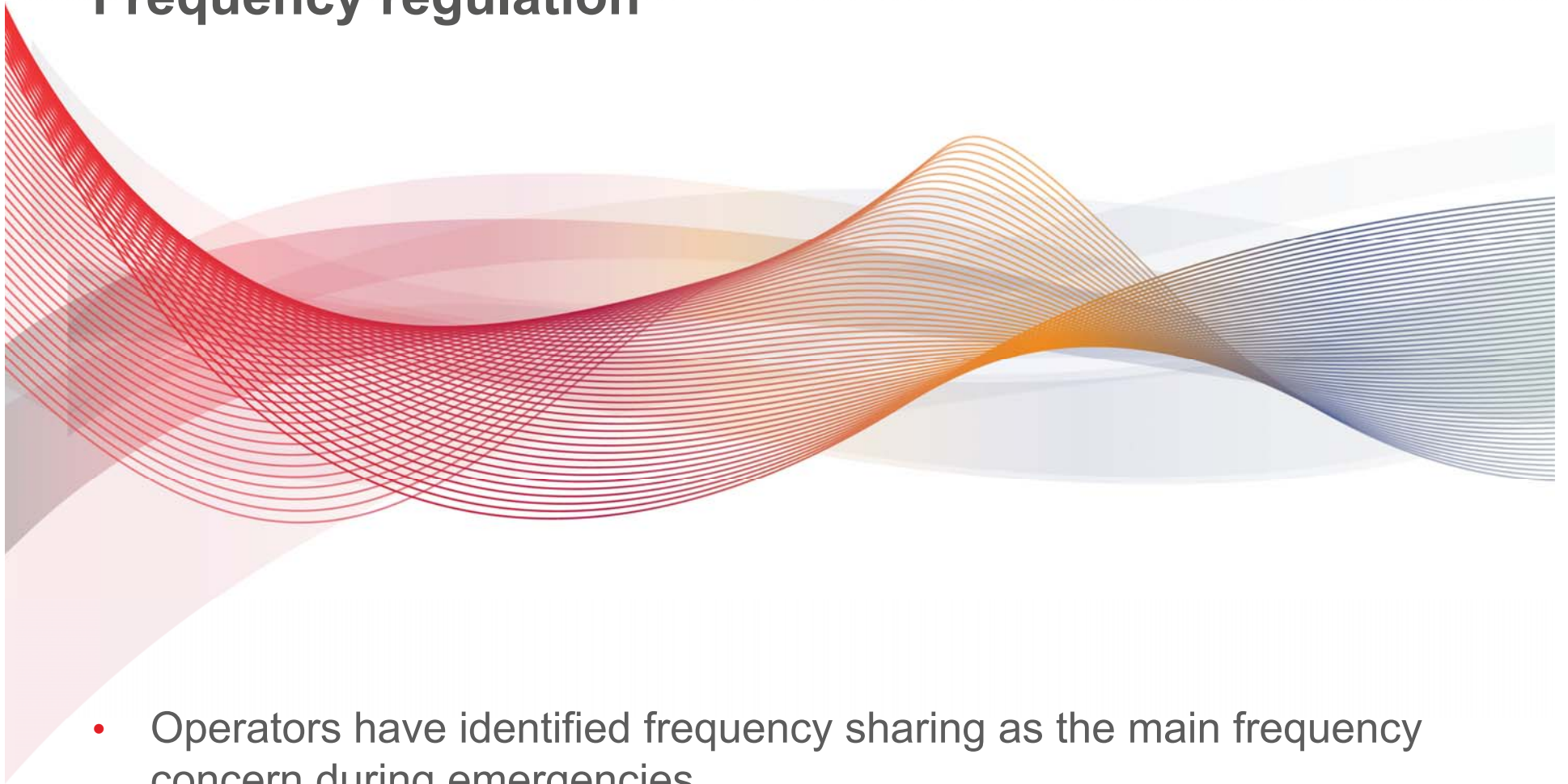
- Operators have identified frequency sharing as the main frequency concern during emergencies.

Regulation of maximum power and back up power

- Power levels and back up power often need to be altered during an emergency. Governments should have clear guidance for operators on rules governing:

The increase of the maximum power of a cell in order to enlarge its coverage area

Use of directional antennas and other power-related changes

How back-up power can be used at cell sites

How back-up power can be used for other facilities, such as interconnection or switching centres

Group discussion

In your group discuss:

- Are there any policy or regulatory frameworks that impact mobile/ICT communications in your country?

- Is there a forum where regulators and the mobile industry and adjacent sectors come together ahead of emergencies?

- In your view, what are important considerations from a regulatory perspective to build into emergency response planning?

Role of Regulators on Disaster Risk Management : Summary

| 1 | Disasters are challenging for operators and they often struggle to recover afterwards. |

| 2 | Regulators need to be flexible and allow operators to adjust to unforeseen circumstances. |

| 3 | Frequency regulation, as well as regulation of maximum power and back up power, may need to be relaxed during emergencies. |

Day 1 – Questions
&
Comments