

Radio Spectrum Management

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REGULATORS ASSEMBLY SUB-REGIONAL
REGULATORY GUIDELINES VALIDATION WORKSHOP

6 September 2005, Accra, Ghana

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Common policy

- Establish a common radio spectrum management framework
- Coordination permits the development of an effective economic management regime of spectrum
- Complements the objective of promoting liberalized ICT markets



Common policy towards monitoring

- Establish a common methodology for documenting and monitoring spectrum
- Countries to share the costs of developing a software tool for monitoring
- Forum be established within WATRA to
 - Exchange information and experiences to foster harmonization of spectrum management rules
 - Prepare common positions for presentations to regional and global instances
 - Pool existing expertise

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Striking the right balance

- The countries in the ECOWAS/UEMOA region should seek to achieve the right balance between regulatory oversight, designed to minimize harmful interference, and a hands-off approach that would stimulate innovation and foster the development of the ICT sector

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Radio spectrum policy objectives

- Embrace economic and technical efficiency
- Consistent with wider public policy
- Promote flexibility while respecting the ITU international allocations

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Register and frequency tables

- Establish a common framework for developing a public register of technical and locational information about radio systems
- In the near future populate a common template for a national frequency table in each country

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Independent regulation

- The countries in the ECOWAS/UEMOA region should vest radio spectrum management powers in the new independent NRAs overseeing telecommunications
- Ideally NRAs should have remits to embrace electronic communications broadly defined to enable technological neutrality

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Coordinating policy across uses

- Countries in the ECOWAS/UEMOA region should merge separate regulatory authorities dealing with spectrum use in broadcasting and telecommunications
- This will facilitate more effective coordination and realise efficiencies that will help promote and sustain economic development

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Military-Civilian use

- Where military requirements for a particular frequency band are negligible or zero, then such spectrum could be permanently reallocated to civil uses
- Where the military authorities have no current or medium term use of particular bands, but a possible future requirement, spectrum should be returned to the state for civil licensing in the interim period
- Consider possibility of allowing shared use

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Inter-departmental committee

- Countries in the ECOWAS/UEMOA region that manage radio spectrum according to the *multi-jurisdictional model* should establish an inter-departmental committee to facilitate more effective coordination of spectrum
- Committees should operate transparently and be accountable

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User incentives and spectrum charges

- All classes of users should face incentives to economize on the spectrum they occupy
- For the majority of frequency bands, where demand exceeds supply, this will entail paying a positive price to obtain access to spectrum
- Where demand does not exceed supply, the price may be set equal to the costs associated with its administration or to a value consistent with government policy

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Minimise licensing restrictions

- Spectrum agencies in the ECOWAS region should aim to minimize the licence conditions to those necessary for efficient spectrum use
- Existing licences should be amended to remove restrictions which are not needed for reasons of international co-ordination or interference management, and new licences should be issued with the minimum number of restrictions possible

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Generic licensing

- Generic licensing of spectrum should be adopted for some frequency ranges in the ECOWAS/UEMOA states
- Moving to a generic spectrum licensing regime would permit more flexibility and benefit users, and therefore aid economic development

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Spectrum trading

- Spectrum trading could be considered in the ECOWAS/UEMOA states
- Trading would likely be limited in the first instance
- Any trading mechanism designed should minimize transactions costs and allow operators to change the use of traded spectrum within international allocations and the national interference management framework

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Auctions

- Auctions should be considered as a means of assigning major spectrum licences between competing users, to achieve an efficient market-driven outcome
- Using auctions enables the assignment process to be more transparent and objective and is less susceptible to corruptive influences

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Spectrum pricing

- Spectrum pricing should be adopted where demand exceeds available supply, and where auctions have not been used and where trading is not practiced
- To calculate the correct price for spectrum, based on its opportunity cost, can be resource demanding and challenging

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Broadband wireless access

- The countries in the ECOWAS/UEMOA region should establish a special committee to establish a common approach towards BWA radio systems
- The committee should examine spectrum assignments and allocations, and recommend policy for promoting BWA service provision across the region
- The committee should report its findings by the end of 2006

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Concluding remarks

- ▣ Achieve benefits of coordination
- ▣ Apply good regulatory principles
- ▣ Ensure policy is consistent

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