

## GSR 13 Consultation

Contribution from the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC),

The Kingdom of Thailand

The digital world has been playing a major role in people's daily life. It facilitates everything faster both news' receiving through radio and television and the communication through telephone and the internet which are highly effective technologies. The people's way of living has been changed according to the technological development. Thus, in order to keep pace with the broadcasting and telecommunication regulation in the world of technology changing, it is important to efficiently implement infrastructure development of the country to cope with the changing in technology, people demand. In addition, it can be served for the benefit of the country in term of economic value, education, political aspect and society.

The increasing "digitization" of information and communications and the resulting convergence of technology have resulted in the "blurring" of the boundaries between traditional service definitions along which regulators allocated spectrum. Where traditionally different telecommunication services were regarded as separate, involving different spectrum allocations, a single platform can now be used to deliver a wide variety of services to customers. With increasing pressures from an unpredictable markets and rapid technological change, a growing number of countries have started or are considering deregulating their spectrum management regimes; replacing the traditional centralized command and control regulatory approach with more market-based approaches. Thus, in the same way as a wave of liberalization, deregulation and privatization has tackled the telecommunications sector, the regulatory approach to spectrum management is addressed to adapt.

Next generation spectrum management regime would bring about both technical spectrum efficiency; to achieve the most intensive use of available spectrum with acceptable interference constraints, and economic spectrum efficiency; to ensure the highest economic value from the allocated or assigned spectrum. However, both technological and economic efficiency should be flexible and responsive to adapt to changes in market, technologies, and demands.

Formerly, the Thai telecommunications and broadcasting systems were separately regulated by two independent regulators; the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). However, the implementation of an independent communication system has remained unfulfilled and only NTC was established. In the era of growth, converge, and dramatic

changes in communication technology, the Constitutional of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2550 (2007) intends to initiate reformation of the regulatory bodies in the telecommunications and broadcasting industries by establishing a single independent regulatory agency to regulate the whole communication system named National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission or NBTC.

As those technological advancements bridging all the boundaries among services, one of the NBTC's next generation regulatory regimes is to use "Converged License" or so called "Unified License". A unified license is enabling to provide any or all telecommunication services by acquiring single license. All public networks, switched networks, irrespective of media and technology, capable of offering voice and/or non-voice (data services), including Internet telephony, would be covered. This includes fixed copper, cable TV and wireless networks, including cellular mobile and wireless local loop (mobility) networks. A unified license implies that a customer can get all types of telecom services from a unified license operator, technology permitting. These services would include telephony, Internet, broadband, cable TV, direct to home (DTH) and radio broadcasting. This regulatory regime might unite the current separation in regulating authority of NBTC between telecommunications sector and broadcasting sector within organization as a whole.

All in all, national regulation on spectrum management is constrained by international obligations primarily for purpose of spectrum harmonization. It is required for the cross-border movement of certain wireless services such as radio communications on ships and aircraft as well as global roaming on mobile phones. The spectrum harmonization allows wireless equipment manufacturers in achieving larger economics of scales and operators in achieving a more rapid rollout of new services. The three important factors to pursuit of harmonization are; the harmonization should nevertheless not set more limits than necessary such as it should be aimed at broad categories, such as entire family of IMT-2000 standards. Secondly, competing services and technologies should be allowed to access the spectrum. Finally, the standards for harmonized bands should be left open and led by industry in order to facilitate market based competition between manufacturers and operators. Above all, it benefits consumers as a whole.

To conclude, all policies and regulations that Thailand considers to establish are all focused on light handed regulations, to promote level playing field and to raise consumer's awareness in order to leverage the country's competitiveness at international level.