

Ofcom Consultation

British Entertainment Industry Radio Group (BEIRG)

More Radio Spectrum for the Internet of Things

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Allocation of spectrum for devices operating as part of the Internet of Things

It is encouraging to see Ofcom considering the 55-68 MHz, 70.5-71.5 MHz and 80.0-81.5 MHz bands, which are comparatively underutilised and already include M2M applications.

BEIRG believes that the scale of additional spectrum for use by devices operating as part of the Internet of Things is generally overstated. Developers of M2M devices for the IoT should be required to make optimum use of those bands already available to these applications. However, BEIRG welcomes Ofcom's efforts to make the existing BR licences more attractive for IoT applications, on condition that these licences continue to protect PMSE users in the surrounding bands. These bands are utilised at some of the highest profile events, in particular sporting events and ceremonies, and are of vital importance to the PMSE sector and the industry it serves.

British Entertainment Industry Radio Group

The British Entertainment Industry Radio Group (BEIRG) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that works for the benefit of all those who produce, distribute and ultimately consume content made using radio spectrum in the UK. Entities that depend on radio spectrum include TV, film, sport, theatre, churches, schools, live music, newsgathering, political and corporate events, and many others. BEIRG campaigns for the maintenance of 'Programme Making and Special Events' (PMSE) access to sufficient quantity of interference-free spectrum for use by wireless production tools such as wireless microphones and wireless in-ear monitor (IEM) systems.

As well as being vital in producing live content, wireless PMSE technologies play a key role in helping to improve security and safety levels within the entertainment industry and other sectors. Their benefits include improving the management of electrical safety, the reduction of noise levels, the development of safety in communications and reducing trip hazards. Wireless equipment and the spectrum it operates in are now crucial to the British entertainment industry.

BEIRG is a member of the Association of Professional Wireless Production Technologies (APWPT), which promotes on an international level the efficient and demand-driven provision and use of production frequencies for professional event productions, as well as safeguarding such production frequencies for the users on the long run.

The Programme Making and Special Events (PMSE) industry is a prolific sharer of spectrum; PMSE has successfully shared with Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) for many years. BEIRG recognises that spectrum is a valuable and finite resource and supports innovation to make its use more efficient, but maintains that the rights of existing users must be the primary focus when considering potential for spectrum sharing. BEIRG also believes that bands where spectrum sharing is already taking place should not be considered the prime candidates for further sharing. Instead, Ofcom should first look at bands where there is no sharing.

PMSE is a crucial component of the creative industries, which is worth £8.8 million an hour¹ to the UK economy. The continued success of these industries is dependent upon sufficient access to high-quality, interference free spectrum. It is absolutely imperative that PMSE access to interference free spectrum is not jeopardised by additional spectrum sharing.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/creative-industries-now-worth-88-million-an-hour-to-uk-economy>