

Award of the 600 MHz spectrum band

The Digital TV Group (DTG) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the above consultation regarding the award of the 600 MHz spectrum band.

The DTG acknowledges Ofcom's commitment to allocating the 600 MHz band for Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) in the interim period up to c.2018 and its intention to launch these services as soon as possible and welcomes the opportunity to work with the wider industry and Ofcom to ensure the efficient use of this capacity for the benefit of all consumers.

Coexistence of services in the extremely valuable sub 1-Ghz band is going to be increasingly important and the DTG is well placed both through its wider industry membership and test centre expertise to work to ensure that all spectrum is used as efficiently as possible. The DTG is therefore acutely aware of the need to balance the competing requirements of existing DTT usage and the newer more innovative ways of managing spectrum through database access which could put the UK in the global lead as the market moves to newer more spectrally efficient technologies.

The DTG requests that Ofcom requires those new entrants to the 600 MHz space (550-606 MHz) to adhere to the D-Book specification.

As per paragraph 6.59 of the Consultation document (page 39) which says "Ofcom will consider other DVB-T2 modes if the licence applicant can demonstrate (for example, through commissioning their own DTG receiver testing) that the proposed alternative mode works well with existing receivers and that it would achieve satisfactory coverage", the DTG are well placed to provide receiver testing.

The DTG is also well placed to support a transition to more efficient broadcast and compression technologies on existing multiplexes which may in time reduce the need for releasing new spectrum for digital terrestrial television.

It is generally considered that additional HD simulcasts of SD services alone will not adequately drive DVB-T2 small screen iDTV and set top box receiver sales. Ofcom is therefore urged to introduce a framework which encourages unique content and content specifically targeted at second and third televisions to encourage greater take up of DVB-T2 to these devices. In the interests of the citizen and future of public service broadcasting Ofcom may also wish to consider encouraging genres that assist with the Government's health and education policies.

In order to ensure the future competitiveness of the UK broadcast environment we recommend a review of HEVC and its implications for the horizontal market.

About the Digital TV Group (DTG)

The Digital TV Group (DTG) is the focal point of the UK's digital TV industry. The Group, a not-for-profit membership organisation, brings the industry together to enable the successful delivery and evolution of digital TV and associated technologies.

The DTG publishes and maintains the technical specification for the UK's Freeview and Freeview HD platforms and Connected TV (the D-Book) and runs the digital television industry's test centre: DTG Testing.

To encourage international harmonisation, the DTG is engaged with DECE (Ultraviolet), ETSI, HbbTV and the Open IPTV Forum. The DTG allows Digital Europe to use areas of its copyright under licence.

DTG Testing tests digital TV products applying for the Freeview, Freeview+ and Freeview HD logos against the D-Book standard.

DTG Testing also manages the Engineering Channel for continuous maintenance of the UK's Freeview and Freesat platforms, and maintains a receiver collection for testing new transmission modes and software downloads.

The DTG and DTG Testing supports the development and deployment of next generation technologies such as LTE (4G), TV white spaces, second screen and home networking.

- www.dtg.org.uk
- www.dtgtesting.com