

Professor William Webb
Ofcom
Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA.
william.webb@ofcom.org.uk

31 October 2008

Re: Ofcom Consultation on Low Power Licence Exemption Limits Above 10 GHz

SES, the satellite operator which wholly owns three market-leading satellite operators, SES ASTRA in Europe, SES AMERICOM in North America and SES NEW SKIES and provides global coverage and connectivity, is please to participate to the Ofcom consultation on “Low power licence-exemption limits above 10GHz “.

In its consultation document, the main proposal of Ofcom is to change e.i.r.p. spectral density limits from the EC Decision 2007/131/EC so they would be able to relax conditions for licence-exempted operations of UWB above 10 GHz.

This proposal raises serious concerns. Our answers to the consultation questions are therefore as follows:

Q1: Do you agree with this assessment of the services that do not require further analysis?

The EC decision has been based on the ECC Decision (06)04. This ECC Decision deals with operations of UWB at frequencies up to 10.6 GHz and not above. In the absence of further studies, only limits at 10.6 GHz could be considered at frequencies higher than 10 GHz.

It is to be reminded that the preparation of ECC Decision (06)04 was based on extensive band-by-band deliberations within the range given by the EC mandate to the ECC. No concept of extrapolation of emission limits to other bands was ever considered at that time.

The extrapolation concept now proposed by Ofcom cannot be valid unless a number of conditions are fulfilled. The fundamental condition for the extrapolation is that the frequency is a single variable parameter and other parameters such as technical characteristics of the UWB device or pattern of its deployment do not change with the frequency. Determination of these conditions is not a trivial issue and would require comprehensive studies. It seems obvious that UWB devices in different bands will have different purpose; therefore an extrapolation is not realistic without evidence based on further rigorous analysis.

Q2: Is this analysis of risk of interference to broadcasting satellite correct?

We are not aware of any relevant analysis made on this regard.

Q3: Is this analysis to the risk of interference to radio-navigation & location correct?

No comment.

Q4: Is this approach to meteorological aids appropriate?

No comment.

Q5: Do you agree with the proposed Licence-exemption limits set out above?

We do not agree with these limits.

In addition, SES believes that any UK legislation along these lines would contradict the 2007 EC Decision despite the binding effect of this Decision upon EU Member States.

Further, SES feels that the language of the document is ambiguous enough to, either suggest qualification of any device (not only UWB) for the license-exemption (e.g. Section 2.5), or very specific aggregation of the interference from only four UWB devices working simultaneously (e.g. Section 5.10). One may therefore wonder whether this consultation is tailored to specific applications rather than reflecting generic needs of UWB.