

## 4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board Meeting

Chair's report to Ministers and Ofcom

Meeting date: 22 April 2015

### Attendees

David Hendon, Chair

Ian Dewhurst (DCMS)

Paul Rosbotham (Vodafone)

Sue Ramroop (DCMS)

Robin Vernon (O2)

Michelle Brownrigg (DUK)

Alan Boyle (BBC)

Andrew Dumbreck (Technical Advisor)

Alexandra McNair (ITV)

Philip Milton (Channel 4)

### Apologies

Peter Couch (Arqiva)

Inge Hansen (EE)

Roger Darlington (Non-Executive)

Phil Sheppard (Three)

Ben Roome (DMSL)

William Webb (Non-Executive)

Nick Munn (DCMS)

Mark Caines (Ofcom)

Alberto Fernandes (Ofcom)

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 There were 5,691 confirmed cases of 4G interference at 800MHz as of the end of March, excluding the 35 cases during the pilots. The position remains lower than expected.
- 1.2 All KPI targets were met in March. All 486 confirmed 4G interference cases were resolved within the 10 working day target.

## 2. at800 update

### Roll-out

- 2.1 As of the end of March, there were 5,691 confirmed cases of DTT interference caused by 4G at 800MHz, excluding the 35 cases found within the pilots.
- 2.2 In late March, at800 became aware of the activation of community-funded 4G on the Isle of Coll in the Hebrides. The activation had not been part of the regular notification and planning processes.
- 2.3 The at800 communications team immediately contacted the local community centre to explain the organisation's role and to establish if any television disruption had occurred. Fortunately, of the approximate 200 households on the island, which primarily use satellite services, there were no reports of interference and further to a specific risk modelling exercise, only three households were identified as at risk from

disruption. These households were sent a special mailing and posters were provided for the local shops and community centre. There have not been any reports of interference.

#### Mast Analysis

- 2.4 For the first time since the programme began, the number of total cumulative cases per mast has shown a slight decrease; in February, the total cases per mast were 1.04 and in March, 1.03. The rolling average of confirmed cases per activated mast across a 3-month period to March was 1.07; this is the lowest reported average since December 2013.
- 2.5 It is not possible to predict at this point in the rollout programme, based on these latest figures, whether this indicates that the level of interference will begin to plateau. There are a number of factors that influence real-life experience including the quality and set-up of household aerial installations and base station powers and signal strengths, which all vary and are difficult to accurately evaluate. However, at800 remains confident that the number of cases per mast will be within the current range of predicated interference and not exceed the 1.66 upper limit.

#### Installer Scheme and Audit Summary

- 2.6 To date, there have been 15,174 installer appointments, excluding repeat visits. In March, 1,292 visits were originally scheduled to take place; a 22% increase in the number of visits from February (1,040) as a result of a larger mailing exercise in late February/early March.
- 2.7 There were 64 audits completed in March for installer visits originally undertaken in January (11), February (42) and March (11). From these audits, only one case (non-4G to 4G) was overturned and was in part due to the spectrum analyser equipment used by the installer not being properly calibrated for accurate signal readings and measurements. Consequently, at800 has required all regional contractors to check their equipment accordingly to ensure that there are no repeat occurrences.

#### Reminder Mailing trial

- 2.8 at800 continues working on the reminder mailing trial. at800 is addressing the considerations and challenges in ensuring that the processes take account of the numerous sub-contractors and third party suppliers involved in the operational chain.
- 2.9 As previously agreed, the trial has been postponed until at800 is confident that the reminder mailing operation is robust at which point they will advise the Board

accordingly and the trial arrangements, including the commencement date and length, will be confirmed.

#### Communications

- 2.10 The results of the online market research to assess the timeliness and effectiveness of at800 communication activities will be available in early May. These will be initially shared with Digital UK before wider circulation to the Board.
- 2.11 at800's discussion paper on the effective use of social media is now available on their website.

#### Research update

- 2.12 The Reactive Filter research project, which will assist understanding of the impact the provision of reactive filters have had on the levels of reported interference, is underway. The first set of results are expected in early May. Upon conclusion of the project, a full evaluation of the research will be shared with the Board.

### 3. KPI Report

- 3.1 at800 reported passes against all KPIs with no exceptions. For the third consecutive month this included a 100% pass rate for KPIA for service restoration within 10 working days where a household is a primary DTT user; all 486 confirmed 4G interference cases in March were resolved within the target.
- 3.2 In addition to the KPI framework, at800 report on internal Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that provide the Oversight Board with an understanding of how at800's wider operation is performing. One category of the SLAs relates to complaints within which there is a target not to exceed 1% of complaints received from the total number of households interacted within the reporting month.
- 3.3 In March 48 complaints were received, 0.90% of the 5,331 households interacted with by at800, which is closer to the limit than previously. For comparison, in February, the figures were 31 (0.63% of 4,883 households) and in January there were 43 complaints (0.75%) from 5,757 households.
- 3.4 at800 reports that the March increase is due to the rise in complaints by viewers who have satellite and/or cable services as well as Freeview/DTT and are unhappy that, within the mitigation policy set by the Government, they are not entitled to an installer visit. However, at800 does provide a free filter, which is already beyond the scope of the assistance scheme, at its own cost.

- 3.5 It is my view that by including cases where viewers are dissatisfied by policies set by the Government or Ofcom and are outside of at800's operation and control, the figures are not a true reflection of complaints of the service at800 provides and whilst such complaints should be recorded, these should not be counted towards the total figures in the future.

#### 4. Coexistence Technical Working Group (CTWG)

- 4.1 A set of tests recently undertaken by members of the Coexistence Technical Working Group (CTWG) concludes the planned technical measurement work on the base station performance.
- 4.2 The re-test, of a previously tested amplifier now connected to a combiner, was considered worthwhile as the combiner can improve performance and reduce interference from the base station. Whilst the measurements did show a small reduction in interference, the CTWG do not recommend modifications to the predication model based on the results. However, this work has improved the overall understanding of the interference environment and analysis of the measurements is on-going.
- 4.3 The CTWG continues their work in investigating potential changes to modelling parameters to reflect a better understanding of real household TV aerials and some improvements to TV receiver interference rejection figures arising from testing work undertaken since the original Ofcom measurements.
- 4.4 The CTWG expect to provide recommendations for modifications to the prediction model for Board consideration in June (2015).

#### 5. AOB & Next Meeting

- 5.1 The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday 20 May 2015. I have agreed with the Board that we may cancel this meeting unless there is a need to meet and a decision will be made closer to the date. That would mean that the Board would next meet on 17 June 2015.

David Hendon  
Chair  
4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board