

4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board

Chair's report to Ministers and Ofcom: November 2014

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Board agreed not to meet as arranged on Thursday 20 November because of the absence of significant issues requiring discussion. This report reflects the updates provided via the regular Board papers. The Board will meet as scheduled on 16 December.
- 1.2 The position on interference remains lower than expected with 3,611 confirmed cases of 4G interference at 800MHz as of the end of October, excluding the 35 cases during the pilots.
- 1.3 All trial KPI targets were met. For KPIA, there was a 100% pass rate of service restoration where a household is a primary DTT user as all 390 4G interference cases confirmed in October were resolved within the 10 working day target.
- 1.4 The reminder mailing trial to test modified processes to narrow the time between a viewer receiving a postcard and a nearby mast activating has been postponed. Due to an administrative error, DMSL had to re-direct their resources to conduct a special mailing to households who had not received a postcard as they should have done for planned mast activations in November. DMSL will confirm the rearrangements for the reminder mailing trial at the December meeting.
- 1.5 The first Block A mast in a channel 60 area was activated in late October. DMSL identified 163 individual households (and 28 communal households) as at-risk of interference of which 67 were issued with proactive filters in July 2013 when the initial prediction modelling occurred. As of mid-November 2014 and following a specific mailing and a targeted social media awareness campaign, there were 7 reports of DTT issues of which 2 cases (including one satellite viewer) were confirmed as interference caused by 4G mobile signals within 800MHz. The remaining 5 households were provided with reactive filters. DMSL considers that a combination of low mast power and good DTT signal strength has led to the small number of reported interference. They will continue monitoring the situation with updates to the Board as and when.
- 1.6 Nick Munn replaces Jane Humphreys as Head of Spectrum Policy and as the DCMS representative on the Oversight Board. I welcome Nick to the Board membership.

2. at800 update

Roll-out

- 2.1 At the end of October, there were 3611 confirmed cases of DTT interference caused by 4G at 800MHz, excluding the 35 cases found within the pilots.

Mast Analysis

- 2.2 From October, DMSL mast analysis reports are now based on post-audit figures i.e. confirmed cases of interference instead of pre-audit. Therefore the trend figures have changed from those reported in and prior to September.
- 2.3 The rolling average of confirmed cases per activated mast across a 3-month period was 1.26 in the three months to October (from 1.19 in August) whilst there was a small increase in the total cumulative number of cases per mast from 0.87 (in September) to 0.92. There were 23% more confirmed cases of interference in October than September.

Installer Scheme and Audit Summary

- 2.4 In October, 881 installer visits took place and diagnosed 390 interference cases before audit. To date, there have been 12,124 installer appointments in total, including repeat visits, of which 1,027 have been subject to audit.
- 2.5 Whilst conducting investigations into reported cases of interference, DMSL have noted that in many instances where there is a below-specification DTT installation, resulting in poor DTT signal strength and quality, viewers testify that they received a better Freeview reception before mast activation even when readings indicate insignificant 4G signals have been detected. Consequently, DMSL are approaching the diagnosis of what constitutes 4G interference with more caution. This is supported by the further level of analysis between the auditor and installer to determine the root cause of differing diagnoses to ensure that the correct conclusion is reached as early as possible and appropriate assistance provided.

Viewer Experience Management (VEM)

- 2.6 The VEM team oversee the interaction and experience of viewers from the point they first make contact, whether via a telephone call to the a800 centre, the website or email or other means including referrals from the press or local MPs, until the case is closed. This includes monitoring any complaints or dissatisfaction expressed or where there has been a request for compensation.

- 2.7 In October, the VEM team reviewed 41 cases; the increase from the 18 cases in August and 29 in September is primarily due to the mast activations that took place in the Perthshire area (as reported in last month's Board Report). Of these overall cases, at800 have arranged for 25 reimbursements in total; two for missed installer appointments and the rest to compensate for work undertaken by independent installers as the assistance they provided should have been supplied by at800-accredited installers as the DTT service disruption was caused by 4G signals at 800MHz; 17 compensation payments are directly due to the Perthshire mast activations.
- 2.8 at800 also issued a "deadlock" letter to a viewer who wanted reimbursement for the general inconvenience of 4G rollout. The viewer has lodged their case with the organisation's arbitration service, CISAS (Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme) for an independent review of the complaint; CISAS will also be reviewing another case received in October from a viewer who believes that at800 should compensate them for a new television set despite installer confirmation that the reception issues are not due to 4G interference. at800 will provide updates on all the CISAS referrals as and when they are available.

Research update

- 2.9 The Outbound Call Questionnaire seeks feedback on the experience of viewers who have received an installer visit. In October, there were 339 (40% of install visits) outbound survey calls compared to 118 (14.8% of visits) in September. The overall satisfaction rate increased from 81% (September) to 87% with just 1% "not pleased at all pleased with the service".

3. Reminder Mailings

- 3.1 The trial to test changes to the reminder mailings operation to decrease the time between receipt of a postcard before actual mast activation and therefore minimise the risk that potentially affected viewers are not aware of the risk and whom to contact in case an issue arises, has been postponed.
- 3.2 Instead, DMSL resources were re-directed to conduct a special mailing exercise to rectify an error discovered at the weekend of 8/9 November by their internal quality assurance checks in which it was found that approx. 420,000 households that should have received postcards before the planned mast activations in November had not been mailed.

- 3.3 Upon discovery of the error, Ben Roome (DMSL/at800 CEO) notified me, outlining the special mailing operation plans already in action to remedy the situation, with assurances that if any affected viewer had contacted at800 since a relevant mast had been activated they would have been appropriately assisted through their Contact Centre triage procedures as the mast activation information used by the operators was correct and up to date.
- 3.4 DMSL will provide the Board with a full update and the rearrangements for the reminder mailing trial at the December meeting (16 December).

4. KPI Report

- 4.1 at800 reported passes against all KPIs with no exceptions. This included a 100% pass rate for KPIA for service restoration within 10 working days where a household is a primary DTT user; all 390 confirmed 4G interference cases in October were resolved within the target.
- 4.2 There was a failure on SLA B1 which requires identified addresses to be mailed at least once no more than 12 weeks ahead of scheduled mast activation; 97.19% of households received the requisite communication before mast go-live. The missing 2.81% relates to those households in receipt of the special mailings postcards (section 3) after a nearby mast had activated.
- 4.3 As a minor failure on a Service Level Agreement, which is not within the remit of the Oversight Board or licence obligations, there is no further action for the Board to take.

5. Block A/Channel 60 mast activation

- 5.1 A single mast operating within Block A/Channel 60 was activated in late October and DMSL provided a brief report on the position as of 19 November, including signal data analysis and interference cases.
- 5.2 This was the first Block A mast to be activated in a channel 60 area. Whilst reminders had been provided to the at-risk area over six months ago, DMSL decided to produce a specific mailing to the medium and high-risk properties which had been identified from the prediction modelling. The special mailing landed on the activation day and in conjunction with this, DMSL conducted a social media awareness

campaign, involving a Facebook ad targeting 46,000 profiles of local residents, and some local PR outreach.

- 5.3 In an area predicated to receive good terrestrial TV signals, 163 individual households (and 28 communal households) were identified as at-risk of interference; of the individual households, 67 had received a proactive filter in July 2013 (32 and 35 in high and medium risk areas respectively).
- 5.4 To date, there have been a total of 7 reports of DTT issues of which 2 cases were confirmed as interference caused by 4G mobile signals within 800MHz. Whilst one of these cases did not fall within the remit of at800 assistance as a satellite viewer, they were provided with support as an opportunity to investigate and learn more about the issue. The remaining 5 households were provided with reactive filters (at the viewer's request and as per the current operational model).
- 5.6 Therefore for the purposes of KPIA for service restoration within 10 working days where the household is a primary DTT user (excluding communal households and those where cable or satellite services are received), only 1 case has been recorded as confirmed 4G interference at 800MHz.
- 5.7 DMSL considers that a combination of low mast power and good DTT signal strength has led to the low levels of reported interference. They will continue to build their knowledge of the issue, including the influence of low power at 800MHz block masts, and monitor the position with updates to the Board as and when.

6. AOB & Next Meeting

- 6.1 Nick Munn has been appointed as the Head of DCMS Spectrum Policy, replacing Jane Humphreys. Nick will also represent the DCMS on the Oversight Board.
- 6.2 The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 16 December at Ofcom.

David Hendon

Chair

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