

4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board Meeting: Wednesday 21 June 2017
Chair's report to Ministers and Ofcom

Attendees (in person)

David Hendon, Chair
Roger Darlington (Non-Executive)
William Webb (Non-Executive)
John Ballard (Arqiva)
Ben Roome (DMSL)
Graham Plumb (Ofcom)
Andrew Dumbreck (Technical Advisor)
Lorraine Curtin (DUK)
Ian Dewhurst (DCMS)
Sue Ramroop (DCMS)

(via teleconference)

Paul Rosbotham (Vodafone)
Robin Vernon (O2)
Greg Thompson (Three)
Alan Boyle (BBC)
Apologies
Inge Hansen (EE)
Alexandra McNair (ITV)
Philip Milton (Channel 4)
Nick Munn (DCMS)
Michelle Brownrigg (DUK)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 There were 20,958 confirmed cases of 4G interference at 800MHz as of the end of May 2017. The levels of interference remain within the revised estimates, based on actual experience, made by at800 in 2014.
- 1.2 All KPI targets were met. All 339 4G interference cases confirmed in May were resolved within the ten working day target, achieving a 100% pass rate for KPI A, Service Restoration.
- 1.3 The Board agreed the DMSL and Digital UK proposal to suspend both initial and reminder mailing communications around potential 4G mast activations for four weeks before to four weeks after the date of each 700 MHz clearance event in the STV region. Support for viewers reporting potential 4G interference issues in applicable locations will be provided as usual.
- 1.4 DMSL will announce their new Chair by the end of June 2017, succeeding Andrew Pinder CBE who passed away in April 2017.

[Subsequently DMSL has announced that David Meyer has joined their board as a non-executive director and Chair.]
- 1.5 The Oversight Board Chair, DMSL Chair and CEO and representatives from DCMS and Ofcom will meet to discuss and agree the process for determining the 4G-coexistence mitigation programme end date. Confirmation of the agreement(s) will be provided at the December 2017 Board meeting.

2. at800 update

Roll-out

- 2.1 As of the end of May, there were 20,958 confirmed cases of DTT interference caused by 4G at 800MHz, which includes the 35 cases found during the pilots conducted in 2013.

Mast Analysis

- 2.2 The numbers of cumulative cases reported within 28 days of mast activation for 900m and 1.5km are 0.27 and 0.36 respectively. The number of monthly cases reported within 28 days for 900m decreased marginally with 0.12 in April, from 0.13 in March, and for 1.5km was at 0.15 in April, the same as March.
- 2.3 The average number of cumulative cases per active mast was 1.00 in May, a level that was last recorded in December 2014, and the rolling average of confirmed cases per activated mast across a three-month period to May decreased from 0.64 in April to 0.54.

Installer Scheme and Audit Summary

- 2.4 There have been 61,817 engineer visits with 55,905 to unique addresses, of which 3,578 have been subject to audit, with 284 overturns in total (215 4G to non-4G and 69 non-4G to 4G) and 183 form completion errors (129 4G to non-4G and 54 non-4G to 4G.)
- 2.5 There were 1,652 visits originally scheduled to take place in May; the majority, 1,540 were undertaken and closed as arranged; 3 visits were rearranged by at800 with 109 cancelled by viewers. Nearly 98% of the completed appointments took place within the three working day target.
- 2.6 A total of 98 audits were completed in May for engineer visits originally undertaken in March (34), April (53) and May (11) on the work of 35 different engineers, who had not been surveyed recently, from across all three regional teams.
- 2.7 There were 2 overturns both from 4G to non-4G. One overturn found that after removal of the attenuator and filter, which had been fitted by the engineer, there was no interference and the issues reported by the viewer were primarily due to the capacity limits of their digital TV recorder. In the second overturn, the engineer had not completed the scope of work to replace a poor aerial. Between the engineer and audit visits, the viewer had replaced the aerial and removed the amplifier (that had been installed by the engineer) and audit filter and meter tests did not detect interference.

- 2.8 All overturns, and the 3 form completion errors (1 from 4G to non-4G and 2 from non-4G to 4G), have been reviewed with the regional contractors and steps taken with the relevant engineers who it is noted usually apply good practices.
- 2.9 From 1 July, engineer capacity will be reduced by two teams to reflect the lower level of activity expected in the third quarter. at800 is also initiating a new process to reinforce the regulation of the follow-ups and continuous improvement and provide a more rigorous audit outcome trail per case.
- 2.10 For any follow-up activity with engineers or administrators, a form that captures the issue(s) and their agreed steps will be issued to the Regional Contractor management. A database will document how individual engineers'/administrators' performances develop and instances in which particular issues or processes continue to cause overturns or form errors. The database will inform future training needs, auditors' approaches to accompanied visits with the same engineers or ultimately, if the same engineers do not progress, the potential for their removal from the project.

3. Activities related to the 700 MHz clearance programme

- 3.1 At the last Board meeting in March, a discussion on the suppression of reminder mailings during the 700 MHz viewer support Selkirk trial prompted consideration of the potential impact on DMSL's SLAs once the 700 MHz clearance programme escalates and the wider implication of overlap between the 800 MHz mitigation scheme and any permanent 700 MHz viewer support.
- 3.2 Consequently, it was agreed that (i) DMSL and Digital UK (DUK) would agree the thresholds where decisions required because of the 700 MHz viewer support programme affect any of the 800 MHz mitigation scheme SLAs; (ii) in my capacity as Oversight Board Chair, I would liaise with the Chair of the 700 MHz Clearance Programme Board to seek clarification and agreement on how the two programmes will interact regarding any adverse operational and/or financial impacts of the 700 MHz viewer support upon the 800 MHz mitigation scheme; and (iii) DCMS would confirm the scope, composition and official commencement date of the 700 MHz viewer support scheme once known.
- 3.3 At the Board meeting, the following updates were provided:
- (i) DMSL and DUK confirmed that they have provisionally agreed a proposal with DCMS for viewer support for 700 MHz clearance events in the STV region between July and November 2017. The proposal includes a requirement that the support

provided must not expose DMSL to any unrecoverable costs or additional costs and liabilities to its shareholders.

(ii) I met with Andrew Field, the new Programme Director for 700 MHz Clearance, in mid-June to outline the overlap issues between the two programmes and the requirement to ensure DMSL shareholder costs are protected/ring-fenced from liabilities, which he has agreed to take into consideration as he settles into his role. DCMS will update the Board as and when.

(iii) DCMS confirmed that the approach used for viewer support during the Selkirk trial has been extended for upcoming 700 MHz clearance events until February 2018. The subsequent analysis of support during this period will help shape the future Viewer Support Scheme; DCMS will confirm the details once the final decision has been made.

- 3.4 To reduce the risk of confusion of viewers between the two programmes and available support, DMSL and DUK proposed to the Board that for properties in locations predicted to be impacted by 700 MHz clearance events, at800 should suspend both initial and reminder mailing communications around potential 4G mast activations for four weeks before to four weeks after the date of each 700 MHz clearance retune event.
- 3.5 Further to assurances that viewers in the area reporting interference issues that may be 4G related would be supported as usual, DMSL also confirmed that, as with the Selkirk trial, numbers of withheld mailings will be reported and an analysis of the 700 MHz support and communications during the STV clearance event will take place with the intention to review and refine the approach for the future, including how the communications of both programmes might harmonise. The Board agreed the proposal.

4. KPI Report

- 4.1 at800 reported passes against all KPI and SLA targets in May 2017.
- 4.2 For KPI A Service Restoration where a household is a primary DTT user, all 339 confirmed 4G interference cases were resolved within the ten working day target, achieving a 100% pass rate.

5. AOB & Next Meeting

5.1 DMSL expects an announcement on the appointment of their new Chair by the end of June 2017. The appointee will succeed Andrew Pinder CBE who passed away in April 2017.

[On Wednesday 28 June, DMSL announced the appointment of David Meyer as a non-executive director and Chair of their Board].

5.2 DMSL sought clarification of the date the mitigation programme will be expected to continue until once licence coverage obligations have been met.

5.3 Clearly this is a key business and operational consideration and as such, I have recommended that myself, the DMSL CEO, new DMSL Board Chair and representatives from DCMS and Ofcom meet to agree the confirmation process of the 4G coexistence mitigation programme end date and report back at the December 2017 Board meeting.

5.4 The Board discussed the frequency of meetings for 2018 and agreed to keep to the current quarterly timetable with ad-hoc discussions in the intervening months should the need arise.

5.5 The next formal Board discussion will take place on Wednesday 27 September 2017.

David Hendon

Chair

4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board