



# JRC News



An information bulletin from the Joint Radio Company

**August 2002 – Number 16**

Tel: 020 7963 5885

[news@jrc.co.uk](mailto:news@jrc.co.uk)

Published by the Joint Radio Company Limited

JRC Newsletter and its contents are © 2002 The Joint Radio Company Ltd.

All Rights Reserved

Fax: 020 7963 5995

[www.jrc.co.uk](http://www.jrc.co.uk)

Would you like to receive JRC News by e-mail? Simply send a blank e-mail with the words "SUBSCRIBE JRCnews" in the subject to [listserv@jrc.co.uk](mailto:listserv@jrc.co.uk)  
A printable Acrobat version of this newsletter is on the JRC web site. Note: You will continue to receive the printed version unless you ask us not to send it.

In this issue you will find:

- The New Communications Bill
- Implementing Spectrum Trading
- Recognised Spectrum Access
- OFCOM
- Joining in with the RA
- New RA Chief Executive
- 2002 RA Spectrum Strategy
- July Fees Order
- UHF Band Re-alignment
- JRC visit to RA Baldock site
- Access to the O2 Airwave Network

This Newsletter is dominated by Regulatory issues, which is perhaps unsurprising in the light of the prospect of substantial Parliamentary focus on communications, and the establishment of a new regulatory framework. JRC's Strategy Advisory Group is co-ordinating the JRC response to the various consultations referred to below.

Reports on other key issues are being held over until the next Newsletter, including an assessment of UCC2002.

## **The New Communications Bill**

The New Bill is working itself through Parliamentary procedures. Media coverage has focused almost exclusively on the impact the Bill is likely to have on media ownership, in particular the loosening of ownership requirements on commercial TV, and cross holdings between Newspapers, Radio & TV Broadcasting. However, the Bill will also change substantially the regulation of telecommunications and radio through the consolidation of five existing regulators into the new 'super-regulator' OFCOM (see below).

Details of the Bill and commentaries on it are available from the link below, but are not for the faint-hearted: the documentation runs to over 400 pages. JRC is monitoring developments to assess the potential impact on utilities.

[www.communicationsbill.gov.uk](http://www.communicationsbill.gov.uk)

## **Implementing Spectrum Trading**

The major impact on JRC and the utilities from the Bill is likely to be the intention to progressively introduce spectrum trading, and the use of auctions as the preferred method of allocating spectrum.

The document envisages trading being introduced by the end of 2004. Several modes of trading are postulated, and four are listed in the paper. Private Business systems (i.e. PMR) and Terrestrial Microwave Fixed Links are envisaged as being included in the 'first wave' of spectrum trading. The document is detailed and well-reasoned, running to 75 pages including annexes. The closing date for comments is 7 October 2002.

<http://www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-strat/consult/implementingspectrumtrading.pdf>

## **Recognised Spectrum Access**

Following on from the Review of Radio Spectrum Management by Professor Martin Cave (to which JRC made a substantial contribution), the Communications Bill makes reference to a new concept termed "Recognised Spectrum Access" (RSA). RSA would complement spectrum licensing. It would have many of the characteristics of a Wireless Telegraphy Act licence, and would be subject to spectrum pricing and interchangeable through trading. The main focus of RSAs would be satellite services that cannot be licensed conventionally because the transmitter is outside UK jurisdiction.

The consultation document available through the link below is relatively straightforward and poses eight specific questions. JRC is developing a response on behalf of the industry for submission before the closing date of 7 October 2002.

[http://www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-strat/consult/recognised\\_spectrum\\_access.pdf](http://www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-strat/consult/recognised_spectrum_access.pdf)

## **OFCOM**

As part of the new communications infrastructure, a unified Office of Communications (OFCOM) is being created. This will merge the responsibilities previously exercised by the Office of Telecommunications (OFTEL); the Independent Television Commission (ITC), the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC), the Radio Authority (RAu), and the Radiocommunications Agency (RA). The existing bodies are very different in size and culture. Between them they employ over 1000 staff, which it is envisaged will be pruned to about 800. It should be noted that in personnel terms, RA currently employs more than the other four bodies put together. OFCOM will be a public body outside of the Civil Service.

On 25 July, it was announced that Lord (David) Currie of Marylebone had been appointed as Chairman of OFCOM for a period of 5 years. David Currie is currently Dean of City University Business School and Professor of Business Economics. Other current positions include Chairman of Coredeal/MTS; Non-Executive Director of Abbey National plc; Director of the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (Investments) Ltd; and a Member of Terra Consilia. He was a member of the Management Board of Ofgem from February 1999, and a founder member of the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority.

Prior to his appointment as Dean at the City University Business School, Currie was Deputy Dean at London Business School, Director of its Centre for Economic Forecasting and its Regulation Initiative. He was a founding member of the Treasury's Panel of Independent Forecasters (the so-called "Wise Men"), and in that role advised two Conservative Chancellors.

## **"Joining in" with the RA**

RA has announced a new series of Roadshows running through the autumn. Starting at Newport on 10 October, then Dunblane (15/10), Durham (17/10), Reading (22/10), Bradford (24/10), Warrington (29/10), Coventry (31/10), London (5/11), Southampton (7/11), ending in Belfast on 12 November.

With the regulatory changes outlined above, a new EU framework for electronic communications and a World Radiocommunications Conference in 2003, there will be ample to listen to and express views on.

Attendance is free but delegates must register by calling 020 7720 4411/fax 020 7720 7719 or online.

[www.joiningin.org.uk](http://www.joiningin.org.uk)

## **New RA Chief Executive**



The new RA Chief Executive, Rolande Anderson will be hosting the RA "joining in" Roadshows. Ms Anderson was previously Director of Competition Policy at the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) and previously held directorships at the Insolvency Service and in DTI

dealing with Regional Funds. Her predecessor, David Hendon has returned to DTI to head up the Communications and Information Industries Directorate (CII).

[www.radio.gov.uk](http://www.radio.gov.uk)

## **New RA Spectrum Strategy**

RA's Strategy for the future use of the radio spectrum in the UK was published in April 2002. It's available through the RA website, on CD and in paperback (about 450 pages). It is more strategic than previous versions, and contains a wealth of detailed reference data in the annexes. Comments and feedback are welcome by RA.

<http://www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-strat/future/strat02/spectrum-strategy2002.doc>

## **July Fees Order**

We understand that the new Fees Regulations came into force on 26 July 2002, but as yet there are no copies available electronically as far as we are aware. The Fees Order implemented the changes outlined in the consultation document published earlier in the year is still available at the time of writing on the link below.

[www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-price/condocjan02/specpricngcondoc.doc](http://www.radio.gov.uk/topics/spectrum-price/condocjan02/specpricngcondoc.doc)

## **UHF Band re-alignment**

At the Utilities Communications Conference in Coventry in June, Paul Jarvis, Head of Private Business Systems at RA presented the latest band plan for re-aligning UK use of the band 450-470 MHz with the European Band Plan. RA anticipates issuing a consultation document on the proposal to re-align UK users with those on mainland Europe in September. A Seminar is planned in Guernsey in November 2002 to discuss the Channel Islands making an early move since their problems are more pronounced than mainstream UK and it would be a useful indicator of the problems which might be encountered elsewhere. In spite of slippage in the Airwave rollout – the precursor to UHF re-alignment, RA is still aiming to start the changeover in 2005 assuming ministerial approval.

## **JRC visit to RA Baldock site**

Because of all the changes within the regulatory regime and RA itself, the JRC Operations Advisory Group accepted an

invitation from RA to visit their monitoring station at Baldock in Hertfordshire. At this location a number of sensitive listening and direction finding systems operate 24 hours per day, and the staff have access to remote receivers at a number of sites throughout the UK. Baldock is also the home of the RA's mobile monitoring units, and JRC visitors were fortunate to be able to look at several different mobile laboratories which were at base between assignments. The visitors found it extremely helpful to see the resources available to investigate interference complaints when they arise.



Rick Benson of RA's monitoring staff briefing Transco's Trevor McKay in one of RA's mobile monitoring laboratories.

## **Access to the Airwave Network**

In May, DTI announced the outcome of their consultation on requests for further groups of workers to be added to the "Sharers List" for the O2 Airwave network. Although Transco and the nuclear industry were accepted as additional sharers, DTI did not feel the case for the electricity industry was sufficiently convincing for their emergency field force to be added at this stage.

Intensive further negotiations have continued with DTI's Telecoms Division, also involving the DTI Energy Directorate. During this process, it has become clear that we need to collect more data on the interaction between the electricity industry and Police and Fire Services. This process is now in hand and it is hoped that the case for including the electricity generation, transmission and distribution sectors can be re-submitted in the autumn.

[www.dti.gov.uk/cii/regulatory/telecomms/airwave.shtml](http://www.dti.gov.uk/cii/regulatory/telecomms/airwave.shtml)



As a precursor to the Utilities Communications Conference in June, delegates visited the Airwave Reference Site to be briefed on the roll-out to date.