

7-POINT RESPONSE TO DCMS REQUEST FOR INDUSTRY ADVICE ON THE HIGH-LEVEL PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED TO THE RELEASE OF 5G PIONEER BAND AT 26 GHz

1. Ofcom should release 1 GHz from 26.5-27.5 GHz as soon as practically possible in 2020 in a way that is consistent with the binding EU Decision and after the already planned 700/3600 MHz auction.
2. A mixed spectrum release model should be adopted that provides for five 200 MHz channels on an exclusive basis (see note 1) within high population density areas and five 200 MHz channels open for anyone to use on a shared basis outside of high population density areas and on a first come first served basis. Ofcom should have an enforceable mechanism to claw back “first come first served” assignments that have not been implemented within a reasonable time.
3. " High population density areas" should be defined relative to population density and set somewhere between 3 and 10% of the country by geographic area. These numbers are indicative boundaries and it should be left to Ofcom to consult on the precise boundary between exclusive and shared use frameworks (including inclusion of any exceptionally high traffic area locations outside of high population areas).
4. In both cases a “club spectrum” flexibility should be enabled whereby anyone finding themselves the sole user at a location can use the entire 1 GHz of spectrum on a non-interfering basis but being required to release the additional spectrum when other users of the band co-locate (see note 2)
5. The club spectrum rules should be based upon fair division of unassigned or unused spectrum where more than one licenced user is collocated. A fast data base registration process will be needed to support this.
6. Backhaul link(s) of any 26 GHz Integrated Access and Backhaul solution be treated as fixed links with regards above horizon transmission, in alignment with current point to point links operating in this band.
7. The priority is the release of the 1 GHz from 26.5-27.5 GHz. However, in parallel, a process for the release of the rest of this 5G pioneer band should be got underway. New use by existing systems should be at the user’s own risk of a later demand for the band to be cleared.

Note 1 – The term “exclusive” has a common use meaning and a legal Ofcom meaning. To avoid confusion the way the term is used here is defined in the report at note 3.

Note 2 - Ofcom should create a fair and non-discriminatory sharing framework particularly for locations where channels are assigned other than by auction. Some of the detailed issues are touched upon in the report mentioned in note 3.

Note 3 - These 7 principles are drawn from: REPORT ON THE PRINCIPLES FOR THE RELEASE OF THE 3rd 5G ‘PIONEER’ BAND AT 26 GHz AND SHARED SPECTRUM ACCESS WITHIN THE BAND (and potential model for release of subsequent mobile bands above 26 GHz).