

Tenth meeting of 4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board

Chair's report to Ministers and Ofcom

Meeting date: 15 January 2014

Attendees

David Hendon, Chair

Inge Hansen (EE)

Matthew Braovac (Vodafone)

Lawrence Wardle (O2) – via tele-conference

Phil Sheppard (Three)

Khalid Hayat (ITV)

Dave Darlington (BBC)

Kim Chua (Channel 4)

John Ballard (Arqiva)

Ben Roome (DMSL)

Roger Darlington (Non-Executive)

William Webb (Non-Executive)

Jane Humphreys (DCMS)

Philip Marnick (Ofcom)

Alberto Fernandes (Ofcom)

Robert Burles (DCMS)

Sue Ramroop (DCMS)

Michelle Brownrigg (DUK)

Andrew Dumbreck (Technical Advisor)

Apologies

Peter Couch (Arqiva)

Alix Pryde (BBC)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The position on interference remains lower than originally expected with 772 confirmed cases to date, excluding the 35 cases during the pilots.
- 1.2 at800 met all KPIs for October with the exception of a marginal miss of KPI3 in one TV area, Oxford. The Board agreed to recommend Ofcom forebear from imposing Operational Conditions within the agreed "de minimis" threshold as the breach related to a single case in which it was unlikely that DTT services were disrupted by 4G interference as no masts had been activated in the reporting region during the period for which Operational Conditions would have applied.
- 1.3 Ofcom is considering the Board proposals on the Key Performance Indicator, Service Level Agreement and Operational Condition regime; I expect to be in a position to update you of the outcome within January.
- 1.4 Robert Burles, Head of the Oversight Board Secretariat, is moving on to another department. I thanked Robert for his major contribution to the Board and Secretariat work.

2. Trial of changes to KPIs and OCs

- 2.1 Ofcom are considering the Board proposals for a medium touch engagement model with revised supporting KPIs, Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Operational Conditions as I outlined in my letter to them on 18 December 2013. They have indicated that they will formally respond with the outcome in the near future.
- 2.2 I have assured the members that when advising Ofcom of any Board recommendation to suspend Operational Conditions, I will include any material disagreements (and their reasons), ensuring transparency of decisions.
- 2.3 Ben Roome and I briefed you on the current position with the proposals when we meet on 21st January.

3. at800 update

Roll-out

- 3.1 There have been a total of 3058 installer appointments which includes 225 repeat visits; at800 installers have visited 2833 unique households to date.
- 3.2 There are 772 confirmed cases (post-audit) of 4G interference at 800MHz, excluding the 35 cases found within the pilots.
- 3.3 The number of confirmed cases of interference per mast increased significantly, rising from 0.45 in November to 1.45 in December. at800 explained that this figure is reached by using the number of masts activations (which were low in December) and the confirmed cases of interference within a 28 day reporting period; as support to consumers is provided beyond the post mast activation reporting period, the number of confirmed cases will lag and consequently distort the figures.
- 3.4 In recognition of this, the Board suggested to at800 that future reports span a 3 month period to allow for the lag in confirmed interference, providing a rolling representation of the position.

Audit Summary

- 3.5 As of the end of December, a total of 277 audits have been conducted; 100 at locations diagnosed as having 4G interference of which 55 (55%) were overturned on audit and at 177 locations diagnosed as not having 4G interference, 10 cases (6%) were overturned. Of the 10, 7 cases were resolved by the default installation of a filter with the remaining 3 receiving multiple visits from at800 installers until good

service was restored, even though the issues were not initially diagnosed with 4G interference.

- 3.6 From February, at800 will have 3 regional contractors with a smaller pool of installers and a clear “fix first time” policy. This will be supported by the appointment of one auditor per region, enabling focussed feedback loops and training with an expectation that the numbers of overturned cases will reduce, particularly where initial visits have falsely diagnosed 4G interference.

Data Operations

- 3.7 There were delays in the delivery of the LS Telcom software due to quality issues in Stage 3. These were rectified and the software delivered slightly later than planned. At800 expect to use the model for the April mast activations as scheduled.

Contact Centre

- 3.8 Around 3 million reminder mailing postcards will be sent during January; at800 will be closely monitoring the call volumes to assess the impact on its contact centre.

Research Grid

- 3.9 There are now 32 devices collecting 4G and DTT signal readings from households in particular locations throughout the UK with specific TV/aerial characteristics. The number of participating households is likely to increase by another 28 further to the positive effects of the social media strategy. The first batch of data cards are being validated and analysed; the results will be reported in the future.
- 3.10 The audits conducted on the London area cluster of 80 cases originally confirmed as 4G interference by an installer were completed in December with the outcome provided in the next update.

4. KPI report

- 4.1 All KPIs were passed in November with the exception of a single breach in KPI3 (Filter Provision) in the Oxford TV region, which achieved an 83.3% rate of filter provision within the 3 working day target instead of 86%. This was due to one case, out of 6 recorded, in which a booked installer visit occurred on the 4th working day. (Subsequent to the Board meeting, at800 confirmed that this was because the householder was only available on a Sunday or Monday, thus delaying the appointment).

- 4.2 at800 commented that the KPI concerned delivery of filters but they had voluntarily expanded their offer to include an installer visit to fit the filter if the householder preferred, so arguably this case was out of scope of the intent of the original KPI. This particular case took place in a reporting region in which there were no mast activations in November or December.
- 4.3 The Board considered the breach and agreed to recommend Ofcom forebear the Operational Conditions, given that it was extremely unlikely any disruption to DTT services was caused by 4G interference as no mast activations had taken place in either the reporting period in question or one after. (Subsequent to the Board meeting, Ofcom agreed this forbearance.)
- 4.4 I note that this is the third consecutive month in which the Board has agreed recommendations not to impose Operational Conditions as to do so would have been disproportionate response to limited breaches of the current KPIs; in my view this underlines the need to revise the existing regime.
- 4.5 In the event that the proposals are approved by Ofcom, at800 will provide parallel reporting on both sets of KPIs during the trial period unless they advise the Board of logistical difficulties in doing so.

5. at800 Performance

- 5.1 at800 presented the results of their performance stock take, which is based on the analysis of pre and post activation viewer surveys undertaken by 1203 households in locations where local rollout has taken place and DTT is the primary service without cable or satellite on any set.
- 5.2 The results showed that the majority of Freeview viewers (90%+) are satisfied with their service and there was no change in the perception of Freeview post 4G roll-out. However the results confirmed suspicions that when experiencing reception problems with their DTT service, a significant number of viewers do not take any action to resolve them. This may be because of the intermittent nature of the problem or they don't know who to call. Whilst the absence of major issues is reassuring, on balance the Board did not consider that the report provided any new insight into the interference issue.

- 5.3 at800 confirmed that they will be undertaking surveys in the future and extended an open invitation for suggestions on target areas and questions for the questionnaires from the Board.

6. Technical Sub-Group

- 6.1 On behalf of the Technical Sub-Group, William Webb outlined the considerations of the potential interference issues of Block A deployments that had not been previously foreseen or adequately included in prior modelling which may inform the future rollout operation.
- 6.2 In summary, the group were unable to reach any conclusions and therefore make any recommendations for adaptations to the operational approach in view of the limitations to the predictions that can be made in the absence of live roll out data.
- 6.3 I have asked the MNO and Broadcaster Board representatives to consult their European counterparts for their 4G rollout experiences, particularly in Block A, and share their findings at our next meeting.

7. AOB & Next Meeting

- 7.1 Robert Burles, Head of the Oversight Board Secretariat, is leaving DCMS to join another government department. I thanked Robert for his major contribution to the Oversight Board with a fantastic job in providing a strong Secretariat presence and significant input into the most difficult policy developments. On behalf of the Board, I wish him every success in his new role. This thanks was echoed by DMSL due to the support and guidance Robert provided during its set-up and initial operational phase.
- 7.2 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 18 February (at Ofcom).

David Hendon

Chair

4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board