Seventh meeting of 4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board Chair's report to Ministers and Ofcom	
	Meeting date: 9 October 2013

Attendees

David Hendon, Chair	Robert Burles (DCMS)
Inge Hansen (EE)	Sue Ramroop (DCMS)
Matthew Braovac (Vodafone)	Andrew Pinder (DMSL)
Lawrence Wardle (O2)	Ben Roome (DMSL)
Mark Falcon (Three)	Neil Marley (DMSL)
Kim Chua (Channel 4)	Robert Houldsworth (DMSL)
Alix Pryde (BBC)	Michelle Brownrigg (DUK)
Khalid Hayat (ITV)	
John Ballard (Arqiva)	**Apologies**
Simon Beresford-Wylie (DMSL)	Kip Meek (EE)
Jane Humphreys (DCMS)	Peter Couch (Arqiva)
Alberto Fernandes (Ofcom)	Phil Sheppard (Three)
William Webb (Non-Executive)	Mark Caines (Ofcom)
Roger Darlington (Non-Executive)	

1. DMSL update

Interference Model

1.1 at800 have placed a final order with LS Telecom for a new Interference Model. This was approved by Ofcom in advance as required by the licence. The LS Telecom model will be operational in November and will be run alongside the existing PUNCH model. The final LS Telecom model will be delivered in December.

Roll-out

1.2 The number of booked installer visits to date totals 1113. There have been 133 confirmed cases of 4G interference. Quality audits have already reduced this number from 139. It is expected that once quality audits are completed on a proportion of the roughly 50 confirmed cases in London, the 133 figure will decrease further.

1.3   Post-installer quality audits are continuing with an overall score of 95%.

Contact Centre

1.4   Since June, when calls peaked at 15,500 in the busiest week, there has been a steady decline in call volume with 3,500 calls in the week of 30 September. A 20% spike in calls during the week of 23 September was due to atmospheric conditions, not 4G interference related issues.

1.5   Further to the reduction in the staff at the contact centre, at800 are deliberating the merits of relaxing the target of zero call waiting time for callers to increase productivity of the fewer agents; one consideration is whether it is acceptable for callers to wait for up to 2 minutes before their call is answered.

1.6   at800 provided assurance that despite the staffing profile reduction in dedicated agents, there would not be any issues in coping with spikes in calls should they arise. The at800 agents are part of a large contact centre that can draw in a wider pool of staffing resources if call increases occur.

2. KPI Report

2.1   All KPIs were passed in August.

2.2   Discussions on the revision of the current KPIs and their operational conditions took place as part of the Policy Sub-Group report; details follow at 4.1 onwards.

3. Technical sub-group

3.1   William Webb presented on possible reasons why the numbers predicted by the original modelling process differ from the actual reported interference levels.

3.2   There were two assumptions offered by the sub-group for consideration within a revised modelling approach: (1) that households have aerials which are just good enough, especially in areas of strong TV signal and therefore are less vulnerable to interference, and (2) that burst interference (idle mode transmissions) is not as significant in practice as it appeared from testing carried out by DTG for Ofcom prior to the policy being decided.

3.3   The sub-group also acknowledged that human behavioural factors may reduce the levels of reported interference, such as not all people who experience interference reporting it and/or households in weak signal areas having already opted for other platforms.

3.4   The sub-group report outlined three recommendations for short, medium and long term modelling approaches covering a period of time from 1 to 3 months, 3-12 months and 1 year plus respectively.

3.5   As the long term activity would not produce results within the timescales of this rollout, the sub-group focussed on the short and medium term modelling recommendations. The short term approach applies the assumptions outlined above and recommends that DMSL use a single TV protection ratio corresponding to the -70dBm point with the continuous interference case used by Ofcom in the original modelling When applying this method to the pilots, the prediction results are more aligned to the actual experience of interference reported.

3.6   The medium term activity recommends further engineering field trials at base stations at varying locations, operated by different vendors, to measure actual idle mode signals and characteristics, thereby obtaining real world data.

3.7   It was agreed by the Board that DMSL would liaise with the mobile network operators in identifying suitable base stations on which the sub-group will conduct their trials. The sub-group will report to the Board in January for review and consideration of next steps. The sub-group would not meet in the meantime, unless DMSL alert William Webb to a spike in interference, in which case William will reconvene the sub-group.

4. Policy Sub-Group

4.1   In recognition of the lower levels of actual 4G interference experienced than those forecast, the sub-group proposed adapting the existing mitigation model to one that is more targeted towards high risk households in potentially affected geographical areas.

4.2   The group outlined three options for heavy, medium or light touch mitigation engagement models within a more targeted programme.

4.3   The sub-group recommended that the Board adopt the medium touch option, with further development of the operational principles and a revision of the current KPIs and operational conditions to reflect the targeted proportionate response approach required by the new mitigation model. It was suggested that the revised model would be fully operational by February 2014

4.4   With the agreement of the Board, I asked the Policy Sub-Group to continue their work to review the current KPIs and operational conditions, ensuring that these are relevant and proportionate to the scale of the interference problem.

4.5   Their proposals will be considered at the November meeting. Ofcom agreed to set out exactly what would need to be done to give effect to the new KPIs in the licences or associated documents.

4.6   The Policy Sub-Group will be complemented by the addition of a representative of the Mobile Network Operators. The representative will be determined at the next DMSL Board meeting.

5. Reminder Mailings

5.1   I reported last month (September) that the Oversight Board had agreed to extend the maximum period for sending a postcard before a base station is activated to 24 weeks for London but only 20 weeks for places outside London, and to consider this again at the next meeting (October).

5.2   The Board agreed to extend the maximum period to 24 weeks for the whole country, noting that the overall mailing approach is being reviewed as part of the new targeted model (proposed by the Policy sub-group) due for consideration at the next meeting.

6. AOB & Next Meetings

6.1 The quorum will not be met at the next scheduled meeting on 6 November, as neither of our non-executive members is able to attend and it has not been possible to find an alternative date. So, the meeting will take place as planned, but as a meeting of Board Members rather than a formal Board Meeting. If any decisions are required, I will arrange for them be taken after the meeting by correspondence.

6.2 The next meetings in 2013 are scheduled for 6 November and 10 December, with meetings in 2014 arranged up to July (all at Ofcom).

David Hendon

Chair

4G/TV Co-existence Oversight Board