

**EASTERN CARIBBEAN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
(ECTEL)**

**POLICY ON THE ALLOCATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF FREQUENCIES
IN THE 700 MHZ BAND**

Approved at ECTEL's 47th Board of Directors Meeting in April 2009

Amended at ECTEL's 63rd Board of Directors Meeting in April 2013

POLICY ON THE ALLOCATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF FREQUENCIES IN THE 700 MHz BAND

(May 2013)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Internationally, the 700 MHz spectrum band which was previously used for analog television broadcasting is now being allocated for new broadband wireless applications. This transition is one of the last major evolutions in Television Broadcasting in North America.

In the ECTEL Regional Spectrum Management Plan, this band - Ultra High Frequency (UHF) television broadcasting channel 52 (698 MHz) to channel 69 (806) MHz - is allocated for Broadcasting. Presently there are no frequencies assigned in this band to any operator in the ECTEL Member States. The band is therefore available for assignment without restriction. A moratorium on the assignment of any frequencies in this band is presently in effect.

With the digitization of the UHF TV channels, this band is now available to be used to offer broadband services such as the WiMAX technology services. The ECTEL Member States have already received several applications for the use of this band and must now therefore consider a new band plan to facilitate the provision of new services and applications in the 700 MHz band. Appropriate amendments to the Spectrum Regulations and Spectrum Fees Regulations would be incorporated in the ongoing revision of both Regulations.

In developing the 7000 MHz band plan, ECTEL consulted with interested parties on the development of policy to guide the process.

1.2 CONSULTATION

During the period December 22nd 2008 to February 18th 2009, ECTEL conducted a Public Consultation **on a Policy for the allocation and award of frequencies in the 700 MHz band**. The consultation was conducted to examine the modalities of allocation and assignment of frequencies in the band consistent with internationally accepted approaches for the allocation, use and pricing of scarce natural resources. The Consultation document provided the necessary background and context for policy development.

This Policy for the allocation and assignment of frequencies in the 700 MHz band takes account of the comments received during the consultative process.

1.3 POLICY AMENDMENT

This May 2013 document is an amendment of the policy that was approved by the ECTEL Board of Directors in April 2009. The amendment was approved by the Board in April 2013. It revises the band-plan of the policy by changing the labels of the 740-746 MHz block and the 800-806 MHz block to “B” and “C” respectively. Other consequential changes are also made. The amendment is intended to prevent potential wastage of the 740-746 MHz block by more closely aligning the band plan with that of the FCC and with the 3GPP band 17 plan that was released for LTE 700 MHz Spectrum.

2.0 POLICY OUTLINE

2.1 POLICY GOALS

The need to make broadband more accessible has been among the primary recommendations of studies on universal access which also identify the expansion of broadband as a basis for expanded use of ICT in all aspects of economic activity. By designating the band for broadband wireless access, the 700 MHz Band provides the opportunity of achieving universal service in broadband access and internet connectivity thereby facilitating increased levels of Internet penetration. It must be noted though that provision of new broadband services in this band by itself cannot automatically lead to increased levels of penetration

given that the absence of affordable access devices was listed as a major deterrent to this increase. The 700 MHz technology provides the opportunity to the provider for a reduction in cost of provision and an increase in the speed of deployment. It is expected that efficiency gains will be passed on to the consumer through a reduction in the price of services.

This Policy seeks to support a regulatory framework for new broadband wireless services and has the following Goals:

- Reduction in prices for telecommunications services.
- Attainment of universal service in broadband access and internet connectivity.
- Increase in the deployment and investment in new technologies.
- Revenue generation to ensure effective regulation of the band.
- Conversion of telecommunications services to digital platforms.

2.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy document are to:

- Provide a framework for the award of frequencies in the 700 MHz Band;
- Specify how the band will be subdivided for the allocation and assignment of frequencies in the 700 MHz Band;
- Establish the number of providers that will be accommodated in the band;
- Set the limit on the amount of spectrum that may be assigned to providers.
- Establish the approach to be used in determining Spectrum fees for the 700 MHz band.
- Ensure that the principle of technology neutrality in spectrum management is applied.

2.3 BAND USAGE

The band shall be used for broadband wireless service with a portion being designated for Public Health and Safety Services. Applying the principle of technology neutrality, providers can deliver any broadband service on the band using any technology of their choosing after they have obtained a licence for the service and obtained the requisite frequency authorizations.

Both Frequency Division Duplex (FDD) and Time Division Duplex (TDD) modes of operation shall be permitted in the band.

Frequency Authorization shall include standards and conditions designed to deliver reliable high quality service to subscribers and to avoid harmful interference to other users in the Band.

Frequency Authorizations shall specify maximum time frames within which assigned frequencies in the 700MHz band must be utilized to avoid revocation of authorizations.

2.4 BAND SUBDIVISION PLAN

The subdivision of the 108 MHz space in the 700 MHz band into eighteen channels of 6 MHz each shall be maintained. Details of the subdivision are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

The subdivision of the band shall be allocated as follows:

- The six paired blocks A, A', B, C', D & D', with a bandwidth of 12 MHz each (6 MHz up-link and 6 MHz down-link with guard band included) are assignable to service providers.
- The paired block PS, with a total bandwidth of 12 MHz (6 MHz up-link and 6 MHz down-link with guard band included) is for Public and Private Safety Network (emergency, police etc).
- The paired block C, with a total bandwidth of 12 MHz (6 MHz up-link and 6 MHz down-link with guard band included) is reserved for future use.
- The unpaired blocks B' & E, with a total bandwidth of 12 MHz, are reserved for future use.

Table 1:

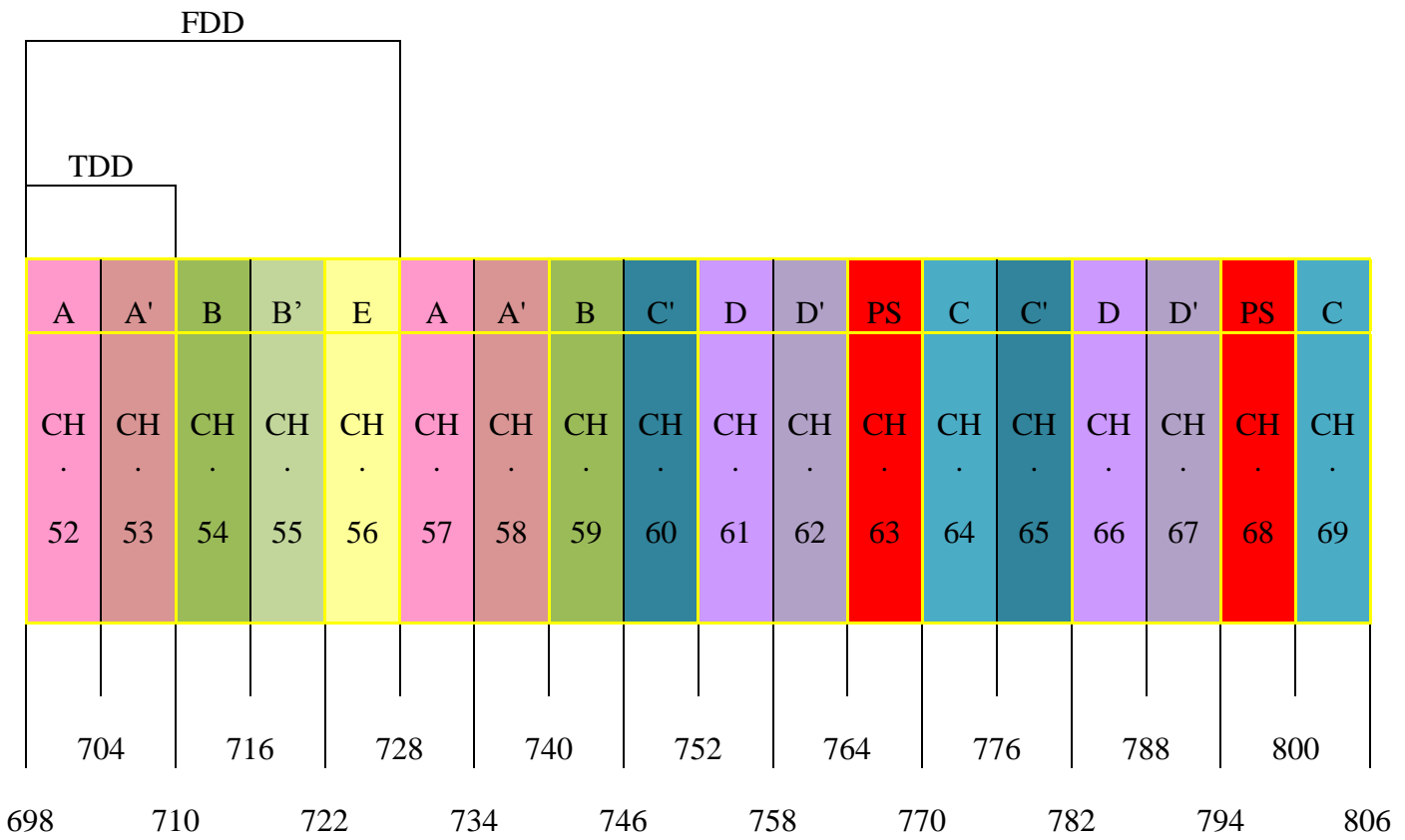
BLOCK	BANDWIDTH	FREQUENCY AND PAIRING	TOTAL BANDWIDTH
A	12 MHz	(698-704 MHz and 728-734 MHz)	12 MHz
A'	12 MHz	(704-710 MHz and 734-740 MHz)	12 MHz
B	12 MHz	(710-716 MHz and 740-746 MHz)	12 MHz
*B'	6MHz	(716-722 MHz)	6 MHz
*E	6MHz	(722-728 MHz)	6 MHz
*C	12 MHz	(770-776 MHz and 800-806)	12 MHz
C'	12 MHz	(746-752 MHz and 776-782 MHz)	12 MHz
D	12 MHz	(752-758 MHz and 782-788 MHz)	12 MHz
D'	12 MHz	(758-764 MHz and 788-794 MHz)	12 MHz
**PS	12MHz	(764-770 MHz and 794-800 MHz)	12 MHz

* Reserved for future use

** Public and Private Safety Network (emergency, police etc)

The Band Plan is shown in Figure 1

ECTEL's 700 MHz BAND PLAN



- Reserved B'
- Reserved C
- Reserved E
- Public Safety PS

Figure 1 ECTEL 700 MHz BAND PLAN

2.5 ASSIGNMENT OF SPECTRUM TO PROVIDERS

The 12 MHz Blocks A, A', B, C', D & D' shall be allocated for assignment to service providers. As a general rule each block will be assigned as a 2 x 6 MHz paired block, but the Commission shall reserve the right to make slight practical adjustments to this rule based on the adequately justified actual needs of providers expressed in their applications.

A provider shall not be assigned more than two such blocks. A maximum of 6 providers may be assigned those blocks. The assignment process shall aim to ensure, to the greatest extent reasonably practicable, that any provider assigned two of those blocks is assigned adjacent blocks.

Every effort shall be made to ensure, to the extent reasonably practicable, that any appropriately expressed desire by any operator with networks in multiple ECTEL States to be assigned the same blocks in each State will be accommodated.

2.6 ALLOCATION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Block PS (totaling 12 MHz) of the 700 MHz spectrum shall be allocated for Public Safety services. This block shall be assigned to a provider to build a nationwide network that will provide safety services and also commercial services on a limited and secondary basis.

Consideration will be given to the deployment of this system as an OECS-wide network which will be facilitated by using the same blocks of frequencies in all Member States.

2.7 EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

All Broadband Wireless Access equipment operating in the 700 MHz band must adhere to or surpass the following minimum technical standards.

1. Maximum Effective Radiated Power (e.r.p)
 - (a) Base Station - 30 dBW
 - (b) Fixed and Mobile - 14.8 dBW
 - (c) Portable (Hand held) Station - 4.8 dBW

2. Modulation Scheme - Digital

3. Accepted Standards FCC, Industry Canada, ETSI

Amended or additional technical operating conditions shall be provided as required for any specific Radiocommunications system that may be deployed.

2.8 METHODS FOR AWARD OF FREQUENCY AUTHORIZATIONS

An administrative pricing methodology shall be employed to develop and establish new spectrum fees for the 700 MHz Band.

Frequency Authorizations shall be awarded using the applications process currently employed for frequency authorizations in ECTEL States.

***** **END** *****