



PRESS RELEASE

URCA publishes documents on the Opening of New Radio Spectrum Bands

Today the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) published the Guidelines for the Opening of New Radio Spectrum Bands (ECS 11/2011) and the Statement of Results on the Consultation on Opening New Spectrum Bands (ECS 10/2011).

Part V of the Communications Act, 2009 gives URCA the exclusive right to manage, allocate and assign all frequencies in the radio spectrum in The Bahamas, except for those frequencies that have been designated as being within a “premium” spectrum band (the method of allocation of which are within the purview of the Minister with responsibility for the electronic communications sector). The Guidelines on the Opening of New Spectrum Bands set out the processes that would be undertaken by URCA in relation to the opening of those standard radio spectrum bands which are currently without assignments, while the Statement of Results gives URCA’s responses to the matters raised by stakeholders in the Consultation on Opening New Spectrum Bands. URCA also advises that it has commenced work on a Spectrum Opening Plan which will provide a roadmap for new radio spectrum bands to be opened by URCA over the short to medium term, a Spectrum Fee Methodology which will govern the calculation of spectrum licence fees by URCA, and a new Spectrum Fee Schedule. The public will be advised of the progress on these documents as they develop.

Interested persons are reminded that together with the Consultation on the Guidelines, URCA issued a Request for Expressions of Interest in relation to the following spectrum bands:

- 700 MHz
- 11 GHz
- 12 GHz
- 40 GHz

URCA’s full response to the Expressions of Interest received and decisions in relation to opening the relevant bands will be issued as a separate document, however, interested persons are advised that based on the responses received, URCA will be taking steps to open the 11GHz and 40 GHz bands forthwith. The bands will be opened in accordance with the process set out in the

Guidelines (URCA will shortly consult on a draft initial policy for each band as required by step 3 of the process).

URCA also proposes to open the 700 MHz band, in respect of which considerable interest has been received, however, through the expressions of interest process URCA has identified several preliminary matters which must be addressed prior to opening that band. The public will be advised and consulted with further when URCA has addressed these matters. In the interim, interested persons are advised that no applications or further expressions of interest in that band will be accepted by URCA.

No interest was expressed in the 12 GHz band, and therefore that band will remain closed. In accordance with the Guidelines, URCA will not consider Expressions of Interest in that band within 12 months of this publication.

Interested parties may download copies of both documents from the publication section of URCA's website at www.urcabahamas.bs. Please contact Mrs. Kathleen Riviere-Smith, Director of Policy and Regulation should you have any questions.

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