Response to JCRA T-105 Spectrum Strategy Call for Information

These are the JE responses to the consultation questions posed by the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (JCRA) in the 'T-105 Spectrum Strategy Call for Information'.

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the Authority's plans to develop a local spectrum strategy and proposed approach?
Response: We support the Authority's plans to develop a local spectrum strategy and proposed approach. A comprehensive spectrum strategy is essential to ensure the efficient allocation and use of spectrum resources. This could enable utilities to deploy advanced technologies such as smart grids, IoT, and private 5G networks, which could be important for the resilience and efficiency of Jersey's infrastructure.

Question 2: Do you have any comments on the Authority's updated spectrum objectives?
Response: We agree with the Authority's updated spectrum objectives, which aim to create value for islanders and organisations and ensure the optimal use of spectrum. These objectives align with our goals of enhancing operational efficiency, safety, and automation through the use of advanced wireless technologies.

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the Authority's approach to retaining a close alignment between spectrum decisions in the UK and Jersey?
Response: We support the Authority's approach to retaining a close alignment between spectrum decisions in the UK and Jersey. This alignment will ensure consistency in spectrum management and facilitate the deployment of standardised technologies and services. It will also enable us to leverage the expertise and resources of Ofcom for sound technical decision-making.

Question 4: Do you have any comments on Government of Jersey policies or expectations relating to the future licensing and management of local spectrum?
Response: We believe that the Government of Jersey's policies and expectations should prioritise the needs of critical infrastructure providers, such as power utilities, in the future licensing and management of local spectrum. This includes ensuring that spectrum allocations support the deployment of smart grid applications, remote monitoring, and control systems, which are essential for the reliable provision of electricity services.

Question 5: Do you have any views or comments on future demand for local spectrum and steps that should be taken to ensure these are met?
Response: We anticipate a growing demand for local spectrum to support the deployment of smart grid technologies, IoT devices, and private 5G networks. To meet this demand, the Authority should consider allocating spectrum specifically for utility applications and facilitating shared access licensing models that enable efficient use of spectrum resources for island-wide deployments and industrial IoT.

Question 6: Do you have any views or comments on the optimum local approach to opening up the 3.8-4.2 GHz band in Jersey?
Response: We recommend adopting a shared access licensing model for the 3.8-4.2 GHz band, similar to the approach used in the UK. This model will enable power utilities to deploy private 5G networks for enhanced operational efficiency, improved safety, and increased automation at power plants, substations, and control centres. It will also support industrial IoT applications and remote monitoring systems.

Question 7: Do you have any views or comments on the local approach to designating the mmWave band in Jersey and on the appropriate timing for an allocation and licensing process?
Response: While the immediate need for mmWave spectrum may be limited, we support the designation of the mmWave band for future high-capacity, low-latency applications. This includes real-time grid control and other advanced use cases that may emerge as technology evolves. The timing for allocation and licensing should consider long-term strategic needs and potential future demand.

Question 8: Do you have any specific interest in the historically unallocated and unlicensed local spectrum allocations in 2G/3G/4G bands between 800 MHz and 2600 MHz, or views or comments on the ideal future regulatory approach towards them?
Response: We are interested in the historically unallocated and unlicensed local spectrum allocations in the 2G/3G/4G bands between 800 MHz and 2600 MHz. These allocations could be used to support the deployment of advanced wireless technologies for smart grid and IoT applications. The regulatory approach should prioritise the needs of critical infrastructure providers and facilitate efficient spectrum use.

Question 9: Do you have any specific interest in the currently unallocated and unlicensed local 5G Full Service or Limited Service spectrum packages, or views or comments on future regulatory approach towards them?
Response: We have a specific interest in the currently unallocated and unlicensed local 5G Full Service and Limited Service spectrum packages. These packages can support the deployment of private 5G networks, enhancing operational efficiency, safety, and automation. The regulatory approach should facilitate access to these spectrum packages for critical infrastructure providers and support shared access models.

Question 10: Do you have any specific interest in the current spectrum allocations licensed to Airtel that will become available for reallocation in the future, or views or comments on future regulatory approach towards them?
Response: We are not interested in the current spectrum allocations licensed to Airtel that will become available for reallocation in the future. We are interested in how that spectrum can be used for critical infrastructure of utilities.

Question 11: Do you have any views or comments on the other spectrum matters listed in Section 6 of this Call for Information or any others that should form part of the Authority's spectrum strategy?
Response: We support the extension of Ofcom's high-power drone licensing regime to Jersey, as drones are increasingly used for infrastructure inspection. Dedicated spectrum for utilities should also be considered to support the efficient and reliable provision of electricity services. Additionally, we support the development of satellite-based communications services and the regulatory framework for direct satellite-to-mobile handset connectivity, as these technologies could enhance our remote monitoring and control capabilities.