

EUROPEAN RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

ERC Decision
of 7 March 1996
on the harmonised frequency band
to be designated for the introduction of the
Digital Land Mobile System
for the Emergency Services
(ERC/DEC/(96)01)



EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. INTRODUCTION

Within the next few years, the security services of a number of European countries will renew their mobile radio networks. A decision by the emergency services community to select a single harmonised standard would provide the users and manufacturers with many advantages including interoperability and interworking between networks, which would certainly ease international co-operation between security services.

The European Radiocommunications Office (ERO) of the European Radiocommunications Committee (ERC) has drawn up a report on the findings regarding spectrum requirements for TETRA (Emergency Services) as a Work Requirement for the European Commission (EC) in accordance with EC-ERO Framework Contract No. 48238 of 17 August 1994. The report was prepared between September 1994 and May 1995 and has been of great value in the development of this decision.

2. BACKGROUND

Emergency services in the CEPT countries are characterised by the fact that they have their own radio infrastructure, often optimised to meet the needs of police and customs services, fire-brigades, ambulance, coast guard, border security and other emergency services.

The development of the internal common market in Europe has given rise to the need for cross-border co-operation in the field of radiocommunications.

In 1991, the "Telecom" working party of the Signatories to the Schengen Treaty¹ contacted the ERC, requesting that the CEPT identify some harmonised spectrum for exclusive use by the police and security services across Europe.

This request has resulted in Recommendation T/R 02-02 E (Bonn 1993) which was adopted by the ERC in 1993. Following discussion with the CEPT, NATO agreed that initially 2 x 3 MHz with an additional 2 x 2 MHz, if required, based on a 10 MHz duplex separation, would be made available for emergency services under certain conditions.

The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has developed standards for mobile trunked radio systems called TETRA (Trans European Trunked Radio networks) Voice and Data (ETS 300 392) and TETRA Packet Data Optimised (PDO) (ETS 300 393).

Schengen established a communication specification which was agreed unanimously. A question was then addressed to ETSI asking if a standard was available which would comply with this specification, including systems which fulfil the conditions of the ETSI Public Available Specification (PAS) procedures and can be transformed into a European standard.

ETSI stated that TETRA can fulfil the Schengen specification. Schengen will conduct trials to verify that the tactical and operational requirements can be met.

Other systems may be tested on the same basis if they become a European standard. Until then no firm decision will be taken.

¹ The Schengen Treaty has been concluded by the EU Member States, with the exception of Denmark, Ireland and United Kingdom and the three new members Austria, Finland and Sweden.

When the Police Co-operation Council² was founded it was agreed that it would continue the work based on the requirements agreed by Schengen.

The Police Co-operation Council will take the decision on which ETSI standard must be implemented in the frequency bands indicated for the Emergency Services by this ERC Decision.

3. REQUIREMENT FOR AN ERC DECISION

The allocation or designation of a frequency band for use by a service or system under specified conditions in CEPT member countries is laid down by laws, regulations or administrative acts. The ERC recognises that, for a digital land mobile standard for emergency services to be introduced successfully throughout Europe, manufacturers and operators must be given the confidence to make the necessary investment in a new pan-European radiocommunication standard. The ERC therefore believes that it is necessary to designate a frequency band to be used by a single harmonised digital land mobile standard for emergency services under specified conditions. A commitment by CEPT member countries to implement an ERC Decision will provide a clear indication that the required frequency band will be made available on time and on a European basis.

² The Police Co-operation Council has been set up under the provisions of Title VI of the Treaty on European Union on co-operation in the fields of justice and home affairs and is tasked, inter alia, to give opinions for the attention of the Council. All EU Member States are represented in the Police Co-operation Council.

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The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations,

considering:

- a) that there is a need for interoperability between emergency services, both nationally and for cross-border operations;
- b) that emergency services are intended to cover a range of services which may include police, security, customs, fire and ambulance;
- c) that, in the interests of efficient spectrum usage, harmonised frequency bands are desirable;
- d) that harmonised European frequency bands would ease the introduction of a single European digital land mobile standard leading to economies of scale in equipment manufacture;
- e) that a total requirement in the region of 2 x 3 MHz to 2 x 5 MHz has been identified as meeting the requirements of most countries for this purpose;
- f) that a frequency band above 800 MHz would be neither technically nor economically suitable for the type of operation envisaged;
- g) that in many countries different emergency services currently operate independently in different frequency bands;
- h) that the frequency band 225 - 400 MHz is regarded as a band which is in general military use in most European countries;
- i) that in NATO countries there is an agreement between the military and the civil authorities to accommodate the emergency services in military frequency bands subject to certain conditions such as sharing.

DECIDES

1. to designate the bands 380 - 385 MHz and 390 - 395 MHz as frequency bands within which the requirements of the Digital Land Mobile System be met;
2. that for the purpose of this Decision a single harmonised digital land mobile standard for emergency services, adopted by ETSI, shall be used in the designated frequency bands;
3. to designate the frequency bands 380-383 MHz and 390-393 MHz for use by a single harmonised digital land mobile system for emergency services as from 1 January 1998;
4. to designate the whole or appropriate parts of the frequency bands 383-385 MHz and 393-395 MHz, if required, for use by a single harmonised digital land mobile system for emergency services as from 1 January 1998;
5. that this Decision shall enter into force by 1 July 1996;
6. that CEPT Member Administrations shall communicate the national measures implementing this Decision to the ERC Chairman and the ERO when the Decision is nationally implemented.

Note:

Please check the ERO web site (www.ero.dk) under "Documentation / Implementation" for the up to date position on the implementation of this and other ERC Decisions.