

Digital Single Market

Going mobile with satellite services

Mobile satellite services can support areas from high-speed internet and mobile TV to disaster relief: reaching areas currently inaccessible by other means, and including cross-border and pan-European services. To make these services easier to implement, the EU has introduced harmonised use of radio spectrum in the 2 GHz band.

Deployment of technology

Mobile satellite services (MSS) are provided by satellite systems that connect to portable terrestrial terminals. The terminals could be mounted in a ship, aircraft or vehicle – or carried as a personal mobile device.

There has been recent renewed interest in MSS to provide an innovative, alternative platform for various types of national and pan-European telecommunications and broadcasting services, including high-speed internet access, mobile TV or public protection and disaster relief. In particular MSS could improve rural coverage within the EU.

To make it easier to deploy this technology platform, a Commission Decision on the harmonised use of radio spectrum in the 2 GHz frequency bands (specifically the 1980-2010 MHz and 2170-2200 MHz bands) for the implementation of systems providing mobile satellite services was developed in the Radio Spectrum Committee and adopted on 14 February 2007 by the Commission.

This Decision provides legal certainty on the availability of radio resources for mobile satellite systems. It also supports the use of complementary ground components (CGC). CGC are essentially terrestrial radio transmitters that are an integral part of the network and share the same frequencies as the satellite components use in their transmissions. CGC transmitters are mainly used to improve the availability and reliability of the services in places where satellite signals may be shadowed, for example, in 'urban canyons', where high buildings can reduce satellite signal reception and in similar situations with artificial or natural obstacles.

Selecting the providers

To complement the above Commission Decision which focuses on spectrum usage conditions, in August 2007, the Commission proposed a framework to select systems for mobile satellite services at European level, following discussions with national experts and a public consultation.

This Decision (626/2008/EC) was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 30 June

2008, providing a legal framework for a two-phase selection process. The resulting Commission Decision on the selection of operators (2009/449/EC) was adopted on 13 May 2009. The selected operators are Inmarsat Ventures Limited and Solaris Mobile Limited, and the subsequent step is to grant authorisations at national level in accordance with the EU authorisation rules, so that they can provide MSS services to the public.

More information

- [Decision No. 2007/98/EC](#) ^[1] of the Commission on the harmonised use of radio spectrum in the 2GHz frequency bands for the implementation of systems providing mobile satellite services
- [Decision No. 626/2008/EC](#) ^[2] of the European Parliament and the Council on the selection and authorisation of systems providing mobile satellite services (MSS)
- [Get involved](#) ^[3]

Team responsible

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