



PSC Europe

PSC-EUROPE/040-2010

**Position paper of the Forum for Public Safety Communication Europe
(PSCE) on the proposal for a decision establishing the first radio spectrum
policy programme (COM(2010)471)**

PREPARED BY: PSCE Secretariat
VERSION: Final version
DATE: 15-11-2010
PSC Europe : Information

REF: PSC Europe/040-2010

PSC Europe: DOCUMENT PREPARATION

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PURPOSE	
Information	X
Reply requested	



November 2010

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“Spectrum saves lives: One Europe for Public Protection and Disaster Relief”

1. The Forum for Public Safety Communication Europe (PSCE) welcomes the proposal of the European Commission for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the first radio spectrum policy programme, and its recognition of the need for spectrum for Public Protection and Disaster Relief (PPDR). We especially support recital 18 recognising that studies have shown the need for additional harmonised spectrum below 1 GHz for PPDR purposes.
2. PSCE believes that the corresponding text in article 7.3 is a good starting point for protecting European citizens who depend on reliable public security and safety services. PSCE suggests that a single minor adjustment to that article, deleting the phrase “if necessary”, will make the text consistent and ensure sufficient radio spectrum for PPDR.
3. PSCE supports the obligation to establish and maintain a pan-European framework for spectrum resource available to all emergency response organisations in Europe. The objective of such a resource is to protect and save EU citizens’ lives, and secure individuals’ property, by offering cross-border PPDR services with the highest dependability and reliability possible. Facilitating cross-border operations will contribute to economies of scale and savings to PPDR users, which can further help spread the use of lifesaving services and develop the internal market.
4. PPDR services are developing with technological change, which means that communication services require increasing spectrum, e.g. for imaging and data exchange. As public broadband risks being disrupted in crisis conditions, a dedicated and harmonised allocation of spectrum for PPDR services is needed to ensure its uninterrupted full functioning.
5. Natural disasters do not respect EU Member States borders, as fully recognized by the European Council of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers in its June 2010 Recommendation 10141/09 on “Improving radio communication between operational units in border areas”. As a result, there is a need for emergency response organisations to communicate with each other efficiently and quickly.
6. We believe access to coordinated spectrum for PPDR would support the free movement of such services across Member States’ borders, to the benefit of all EU citizens and in compliance with the treaties. This approach is clearly within the remit of the Commission. In any event, the expertise and competence of the national authorities is preserved in the Radio Spectrum Policy Programme through its first recital, which notes that all action under the RSPP is without prejudice to the right of Member States to organise and use their spectrum for public order and public security.