

PRESS RELEASE

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Commission publishes new Spectrum Management Framework for the Virgin Islands

29 March, 2018 – The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (the “Commission”) has today published a new Spectrum Management Framework (SMF) for the Virgin Islands, to reflect both global and local market developments since its first Framework publication in 2011.

Radio spectrum is an essential input to a range of communications services, including mobile voice and broadband services, broadcast services and private radio services. As the independent regulator for the communications sector, the Telecommunications Act, 2006 grants the Commission the powers to manage spectrum in the Virgin Islands, alongside promoting the development of telecommunications throughout the Virgin Islands. To this end, the Commission published its first Framework in 2011.

Given the continued growth in the demand for mobile data services, the emergence of 5G standards and the development of new and innovative services, the Commission believes it is important to revise its Framework, to ensure that its spectrum management policies remain fit for purpose and reflect anticipated developments in the sector over the next 5-10 years. In developing the new SMF, the Commission also had regard to its and the Government’s objectives to further develop the sector, to the benefit of consumers and businesses in the Islands. In particular, this includes promoting fair and sustainable competition in the sector as well as the development of new and innovative services and a high quality of service, throughout the Virgin Islands. The Commission has further taken into consideration the devastating impact of hurricanes Irma and Maria on the Territory; including the destruction of most communications network infrastructure resulting in the need to restore these networks and services as quickly as possible to consumers and businesses.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, Guy L. Malone stated that he is happy to know that the Commission is in a position to release spectrum at this crucial time. Coming off the heels of two category five hurricanes that devastated the Territory and its infrastructure, a relief will be coming to consumers very shortly. Also, as the framework covers a span of three (3) years, the Commission is ensuring that the Territory remains on the cutting edge of technology.

Following engagement with the industry and other stakeholders (including a series of meetings with key stakeholders and a public consultation on the new SMF), the Commission has now finalised and published the said document on its website.

The new SMF contains a set of actions for the Commission to take forward over the next three to five years in order to implement the key policies set out in the Framework. One of the first main actions will be the release of spectrum in 2018 to facilitate the restoration of fixed communications services, by means of fixed wireless broadband (LTE TDD) technology. The Commission has commenced its preparation for this release and will communicate next steps (including meetings with key stakeholders and a public consultation) in due course.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The Commission is the independent regulator with responsibility for regulating the telecommunications sector of the Virgin Islands, protecting interests of users of telecommunications services, ensuring fair competition among operators of telecommunications networks and providers of telecommunications services, promoting the development of telecommunications throughout the Virgin Islands and advising the Minister of Communications and Works on telecommunications policies.
2. The Commission's 2011 Spectrum Management Framework can be found [here](#).
3. The Commission's 2018 Spectrum Management Framework can be found [here](#).