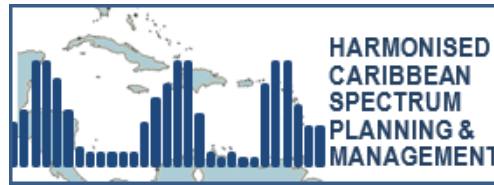


Caribbean Telecommunications Union



REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CARIBBEAN SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

**22nd and 24th February 2021; 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Videoconferencing**

Background

The Spectrum Management Task Force (SMTF) is the multi-stakeholder group convened by the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) to coordinate the technical work of harmonizing and enhancing the management of the radio-communication spectrum in the Caribbean. Membership of the SMTF includes Caribbean policy-makers, regulators, operators, academics, technology developers, end users and other stakeholders. The SMTF was first constituted in 2006 and the subject meeting was the first for 2021.

As guided by the **Caribbean Spectrum Management Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018** developed by the SMTF, its key goals remain as follows:

- Harmonization of national frequency allocations and band plans, including common frequencies and international protocols for disaster management and emergency telecommunications;
- Minimization of cross border interference;
- Establishment of common approaches to digital broadcasting switchover, white spaces regulation and spectrum pricing.

The SMTF also functions as the platform for developing harmonized Caribbean positions to promote and safeguard regional interests internationally, notably at World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs).

Implementation of the strategic goals are being undertaken progressively, coordinated regionally through the work of the SMTF and overseen by the Spectrum Management Steering Committee (SMSC), a team of 5 Caribbean policy-makers, both groups being supported by the CTU Secretariat.

Spectrum Management Task Force Meeting Objectives: 22nd and 24th February 2021

The main purpose of this February meeting, which was open to representatives of the Caribbean Spectrum Management Task Force, Steering Committee and support resources, was

to formulate the 2021 work plan to address current priorities and incorporate relevant priority areas for attention during the WRC-23 interim working cycle, 2021 – 2023. The meeting therefore sought to:

- Assess items coming forward from 2020 Action Plan
- Identify items for strategic attention over the 2021-2023 period
- Formulate the work plan for 2021

In this vein, the meeting was more of an internal planning workshop of the Task Force, and included firming up membership and objectives for the multiple working groups that were initiated at the November 2020 meeting to address specific topics in our action plan.

The meeting Agenda is provided below.

ON-LINE MEETING OF THE CARIBBEAN SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE AGENDA

DAY 1: 22 nd February 2021		
Indicative Time	Agenda Items	Lead
1:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Welcome Remarks	CTU Secretariat
1:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Status updates on the 2020 Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine items to bring forward into 2021 Identify new items for strategic consideration for the 2021- 2023 period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review 2016 -2018 SM Strategic Plan 	Chairman SMTF SMTF Chair / CTU Secretariat
3:00 – 3:15 p.m.	BREAK	
3:15 - 3:45 p.m.	Establish Working Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify Group Chair and Co-chair 	SMTF
3:45 – 4:15 pm	French Territories 5G harmonisation discussion	SMTF
4:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Wrap up	SMTF Chair
4:30 p.m.	CLOSE OF DAY	CTU

DAY 2: 24th February 2021		
Indicative Time	Agenda Items	Lead
1:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Welcome and recap of day one proceedings	CTU Secretariat Chairman SMTF
1:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Drafting 2021 Action Plan	CTU Secretariat/SMTF
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Any Other Business/ Wrap up	CTU
4:00 p.m.	CLOSE	CTU/SMTF Chair

Summary of Proceedings

The members of the SMTF for the 2020 – 2022 term and CTU support staff in attendance introduced themselves and their affiliations. Some 21 attendees from 12 member countries were recorded at the meeting. The full list is given at Appendix 1 hereto.

Mr. Nigel Cassimire of the CTU Secretariat welcomed participants and invited Mr. Alvin Augustin, Chairman of the SMTF, to assume responsibility of the proceedings. Mr. Augustin, also welcomed participants, particularly some new members, thanked Mr. Cassimire for chairing the November 2020 meeting in his absence and called the meeting to order.

Review and Acceptance of November 2020 Meeting Report

After agreeing the meeting agenda, the next matter up for consideration by the SMTF was the review and acceptance of the November 2020 meeting report, which had been circulated by the CTU Secretariat prior to the meeting. Mr. Cassimire, who was the interim Chair at that November gathering walked the meeting through the main items of the report. The report was then put to the floor and was accepted with no objections.

2021 Action Plan Preparation

A draft 2021 Action Plan had been prepared by the CTU Secretariat subsequent to the November sitting of the SMTF. This version was used as the baseline to develop a more comprehensive 2021 Plan. The draft Plan included several items brought forward from 2020 that were delayed due in part to the effects of pandemic-related restrictions. The Secretariat was asked to lead the meeting through the process of reviewing and finalizing the items in draft. The following were the key areas of consideration and some salient points of discussion:

- On the matter of an automated database of regional frequency allocation tables, which was brought forward from the 2020 Plan, SMA Jamaica suggested that additional information regarding structure and functionality should be provided in the technical requirements to inform the database design. It was proposed that this document be finalised in Q1 2021 before seeking to identify potential solutions. SMA once again confirmed their commitment to assist in preparing the technical specifications and in the database development.
- With respect to harmonisation of band planning for Emergency Communications, since work had not progressed as intended, several items were brought forward. A working group comprising ECTEL, TATT, UWI and SMA was established, to further the efforts.
- On the issue of 5G harmonisation and more so with respect to the roll out of 5G, SMA contended that decisions coming out of WRC-19 necessitated a legal framework be put in place for use of the 5G bands. SMA cited this as a current issue in Jamaica and identified Cayman Islands as also having to go through similar legislative changes. Mr. Cassimire indicated that it would be taken up in the action planning for 2021.
- Guyana queried whether other members had yet developed a national 5G plan as they were interested in seeking guidance in preparing a similar plan. Mr. Cassimire made a plea to those members who might be more advanced in this planning exercise (perhaps Jamaica, Cayman or BVI) to share theirs with the rest of the Task Force to assist in bringing everybody along. This he further stated would also assist in the harmonization process and in minimizing any interference issues that could be caused with neighboring territories.
- As regards harmonization of priority bands, IOT and innovation bands (e.g. WiFi 6, dynamic spectrum access) were added to the existing IMT 2020 and 5G bands. The working group comprising TATT, C&W and Belize was expanded to include ECTEL as an additional volunteer.
- The possibility of conducting a survey of marine communications in the Caribbean was raised by UWI. The research will consider issues such as infrastructure, channel use, regulatory provisions and compliance and operations and capacity within the different territories to get a tangible sense of emergency communications capability across the region. The meeting had no objections to the survey proposed by UWI. UWI committed to preparing the survey document for circulation. This survey was added as a new item on the 2021 work plan.
- TATT questioned whether the issue of Cross Border Interference should remain as a thematic area for the 2021 work period. It was felt that sufficient work was done in the study areas on formulating cross border agreements and identifying key focal points and it was suggested that the remaining work could be considered more operational and could be conducted outside the realm of the 2021 Plan. Mr. Cassimire however stressed that some of the actions identified on the 2020 Plan have not yet been quite completed, for example updating the CTU's website with certain information. He therefore recommended that the item be carried over to the 2021 work plan and remain until such time that we are satisfied and agree that the work we've committed to, has been completed.

- It was suggested that digital broadcasting switchover (DSO) be considered for inclusion in the 2021 work plan as a separate thematic area. TATT indicated that DSO is on its agenda for 2021 and would be happy to share its plans with the group. SMA also indicated that DSO is an ongoing discussion with a 2023 date set for switchover. The consensus was that DSO should be included and the focus should be on developing best practice guidelines which could have wider utility for the other territories. This was included as a new thematic area on the 2021 work plan.
- With respect to Spectrum Pricing, the call was once again made for members/regulators who were ahead to share information and new pricing approaches that others could consider within their own jurisdictions. SMA advised that they had several working documents which they could share. Mr. Cassimire indicated that a discussion forum would be established on the CTU's website to provide an avenue for such sharing, commenting and all round participation. This forum is expected to be in place by Q2 2021, once the new CTU website is fully commissioned.

The CTU will continue to explore expert training and guidance through agencies like the ITU; a formal request to ITU had previously been made and would be followed up.

Both TATT and SMA committed to their continued work in this area to support the SMTF members.

Priority Bands for Harmonisation

In furtherance of the work to accomplish harmonisation, and with specific regard to the ANFR proposal for coordination of the 3400-3800 MHz band for 5G, members were asked to indicate their ability and willingness to facilitate ANFR's request. Further, members who were reasonably advanced in their national planning for 5G, were also asked to provide any inputs before the task force, to help everybody move forward. A call was also made by members for a harmonisation exercise for 5G bands across the region to be conducted. A similar undertaking in collaboration with the ITU had been successfully completed for the UHF and VHF bands.

Additionally, to further push forward on the regional harmonization agenda, it was agreed that a survey of SMTF members would be conducted by the CTU Secretariat (in collaboration with members) to gather information on current assignments and planned usage of the priority bands (5G, emergency communications, etc.). TATT suggested that the survey could take the format of a template table, similar to the approach adopted by CITELE, to collect information from its members on the use IMT bands. There was no objection to this suggestion made by TATT, and the item was included on the 2021 work plan.

WRC-23 Preparations

Two initiatives were included in the 2021 work plan: the identification of priority WRC-23 agenda items of Caribbean relevance and the formulation of harmonised Caribbean positions for proposal to WRC-23.

SMA raised the idea of using the services of Mr. Carmelo Rivera (now retired from the US State Department) to advise, guide and assist the region in its WRC-23 preparations. Mr. Cassimire indicated that Mr. Rivera had been collaborating with the CTU since 2006 and there is no doubt of the experience and knowledge he could bring to our efforts. There is an opportunity therefore to utilize his expertise to our benefit if he is available. The meeting had no objections to engaging Mr. Rivera.

Wrap Up

The CTU Secretariat undertook to collate all amendments to the draft 2021 Action Plan as agreed by the meeting and to circulate the revised plan, updated as at 2021-02-24, along with the report of this meeting for final review by Task Force members.

The meeting closed with thanks to all for their participation and inputs. The Task Force would next meet in early Q2 2021 on a date (or dates) to be fixed.

Conclusion

The revised 2021 Action Plan dated 2021-02-24, showing items brought forward, with marked up and highlighted revisions as agreed, and also including new initiatives identified at the meeting, is given in Appendix 2 hereto. SMTF members are asked to review the revised Action Plan and provide their feedback for the group's consideration. The Secretariat will collate any final points of feedback and finalise the SMTF's 2021 Action Plan document accordingly.

APPENDIX 1 – List of Attendees (SMTF Meeting of February 2021)

First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Job Title	Country/Region Name
Saeed	Hassan	saeed.hassan@telecoms.gov.gy	Telecommunications Agency	Engineer 1	Guyana
Maria	Myers-Hamilton	mmyers-hamilton@sma.gov.jm	Spectrum Management Authority	Managing Director	Jamaica
George	James	engineerdma@ectel.int	National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission	Engineer	Dominica
Kim	Mallalieu	kim.mallalieu@sta.uwi.edu	The University of the West Indies	Senior lecturer	Trinidad and Tobago
Abraham	Teck	ateck@puc.bz	Public Utilities Commission	Director - Telecommunications Sector	Belize
Julian	Wilkins	julian.wilkins@digicelgroup.com	Digicel	Director Government Relations and Public Affairs	Antigua and Barbuda
Gary	Kaloo	gary.kaloo@ctu.int	CTU	policy specialist	Trinidad and Tobago
Nadine	Hull	nhull@ntrc.vc	NTRC - St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Telecommunications and Information Manager	St Vincent & the Grenadines
Conrad	Toby	ctoby@tatt.org.tt	TATT	Manager Spectrum Planning Broadcasting	Trinidad and Tobago
Raquel	Zeegelaar	r.zeegelaar@tas.sr	Telecommunications Authority Suriname	Engineering Officer	Suriname
Timothy	Scott	tscott@ectel.int	NTRC	Telecommunications Engineer	Grenada

Paul	Payne	pablo.payne@gmail.com	Montserrat Info-Communication Authority	Chairman	Montserrat
Alvin	Augustin	aaugustin@ectel.int	Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority	Engineer/Spectrum Officer	Saint Lucia
Shanea	Lewis	Shanea.lewis@ctu.int	CTU	Computing specialist	Trinidad and Tobago
William	Samuels	wsamuels@puc.bz	Public Utilities Commission	Telecommunications Regulatory Officer	Belize
Richard	Feveck	richard.feveck@ctu.int	CTU	NSA	Trinidad and Tobago
Yoganand	Singh	yoganand.singh@telecoms.gov.gy	Telecommunications Agency	Senior Engineer	Guyana
Kirk	Sookram	ksookram@tatt.org.tt	TATT	Deputy CEO	Trinidad and Tobago
Nigel	Cassimire	nigel.cassimire@ctu.int	Caribbean Telecommunications Union	Telecommunications Specialist	Trinidad and Tobago
Trevor	Liburd	v44kai@gmail.com	NTRC St. Kitts/Nevis	Technician	St Kitts /Nevis



Caribbean Telecommunications Union

APPENDIX 2



Spectrum Management Task Force (SMTF)

Draft Action Plan 2021

24th February 2021

Spectrum Management Task Force Action Plan 2021

(To be endorsed by the Spectrum Management Steering Committee)

Plan for work of the SMTF with focus on the following thematic areas:

1. RFAT (Harmonisation of Priority Bands: IMT, Emergency Communications, IOT/Innovation bands e.g. Wi-Fi, DSA etc.)
2. Cross-Border Interference
3. Emergency Communications
4. Spectrum Pricing
5. WRC-23 Preparations
6. Planning Digital Broadcasting Switchover

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
1.0 Regional Frequency Allocation Table (RFAT)	1.1 Collation of National FATs in requested format at central location (CTU).	National FAT updates are in train to also incorporate changes required following WRC-19. Jurisdictions to ensure that their current NFATs are communicated to the CTU Secretariat.	Ongoing	SMTF Members
		Advise CTU Secretariat on timeframe for updating NFATs in accordance with WRC 19 outcomes	Q1 2021	SMTF Members

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
	1.2 Population of a software database with NFAT data from each jurisdiction	<p>Establish a technical statement of need for the automated database. Statement to describe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field structure • File structure • Functionality <p>Research and recommend database software appropriate to this application</p> <p>Plan and undertake database population work based on software recommendation and data availability</p>	<p>Q1 2021</p> <p>Q2 2021</p> <p>Q3 2021</p>	<p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>SMA Jamaica / CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p>
	1.3 Harmonisation of priority bands. <u>Working Group</u> (addressing IMT and IOT/innovation bands): TATT (Lead), C&W, Belize, ECTEL	<p>Priority bands identified as those for IMT, emergency comms and IOT/innovation</p> <p>Development and consideration of harmonisation proposals</p> <p>Review ANFR Proposal for harmonization in TTD 3400 – 3800 MHz for 5G:</p> <p>Indicate ability/willingness to accommodate ANFR request/proposal</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2021</p>	<p>Working Group</p> <p>SMTF Members</p>

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
		Approach ITU for providing assistance in regional 5G Band harmonization	Q2 2021	CTU Secretariat
		Survey of SMTF members to collect info on current assignments and plans for identified priority bands (Consider CITELE template)	Q2 – Q3 2021	CTU Secretariat & SMTF Members
		Assessment of regional bands for regional authorisation (e.g. Auction)	Ongoing	
2.0 Cross-Border Interference	2.1 Focal Contact Points	Identify annually and as required, contact info for functional/technical and higher level (Ministerial) coordinators/ key contacts	Ongoing	SMTF Members
		Compile list of the contacts received and those outstanding for general reference; post on a special SMTF partition on the CTU web site [CTU website currently being upgraded to facilitate SMTF Data]	Q1 2021	CTU Secretariat
		Obtain focal points for Cuba, Haiti & Dominican Republic	Q1 2021	CTU Secretariat

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
	2.2 Frequency Registration	Seize opportunities for capacity building and practice on frequency reporting.	Ongoing	SMTF Members
	2.3 Coordination Agreements	Circulate sample agreements (TATT advised of new coordination agreement with ANFR for French territories. Agreement to be placed on TATT's website and TATT members to advise SMTF when available ECTEL also in coordination agreement discussions with ANFR)	ongoing	SMTF Members
3.0 Emergency Communications	3.1 Focal contact points for emergency communications	Reach out to CTU member states beyond Task Force/ Steering Committee members for contacts Post contact list on a new SMTF partition on CTU web site	Ongoing Q1 2021	CTU Secretariat

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
	3.2 Accession to the Tampere Convention	<p>Undertake awareness campaign to encourage universal sign on to Tampere Convention. (Concerns of potential signatories to be addressed)</p> <p>Identify and highlight implementation considerations re the Convention</p> <p>Issue to be raised at the CTU's GC for coordination with Foreign Affairs Ministers</p> <p>Raise the need for coordination amongst CTU, CDEMA and CANTO at Ministerial meetings.</p> <p>Advocate for Caribbean countries to accede to Tampere Convention</p> <p>Foster coordination among CDEMA and stakeholders like CANTO.</p> <p>SMTF members to work with local Disaster Management offices to promote initiative</p>	<p>Q2 – Q3 2021</p> <p>Q2 – Q3 2021</p> <p>Q3 2021</p> <p>Q3 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat / SMTF Members</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>SMTF Members</p>

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
	3.3 Adoption of IARP (Advocated by the IARU for mobilising and expediting telecom relief efforts in disaster response)	Foster universal acceptance and adoption of IARP via an awareness campaign. Call on Caribbean countries to accede to amended IARP Convention, which is open for signing at the OAS. Accession to the amendment to the IARP Convention to be raised at CTU Ministerial meetings	Q2 – Q3 2021 Ongoing Q3 2021	IARU and CTU Secretariat IARU, CTU Secretariat, SMTF Members CTU Secretariat
	3.4 Harmonisation of Band Plans for Emergency Communications <u>Working Group:</u> ECTEL (Lead), TATT, SMA, UWI and Grenada	Establish list of bands used in each jurisdiction (To be used to inform international /regional agencies); Examine bands available and make harmonisation recommendations accordingly.	Q1 – Q2 2021 Q2 – Q3 2021	<u>ECTEL</u> , TATT Working Group

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
	3.5 Network Resilience	<p>Establish best practice policy recommendations for network resilience for regulators to develop country policies.</p> <p>Circulate recommendations of the CCCR to SMTF for consideration</p> <p>CTU to place CCCR report on its website for easy access.</p> <p>SMTF members to review and provide any feedback on policy recommendations</p>	<p>Q2 – Q3 2021</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Q1 2021</p> <p>Q2 2021</p>	<p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>CTU Secretariat</p> <p>SMTF Members</p>
	3.6 Baseline data gathering on emergency communications in the maritime bands	<p>Conduct a survey of marine communications to include infrastructure and national Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) arrangements, as well as relevant national policy and regulatory provisions, channel use, operations and associated capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Survey instrument • Data gathering • Analysis & presentation 	<p>Q1 – Q4 2021:</p> <p>Q2 2021</p> <p>Q3 2021</p> <p>Q4 2021</p>	<p>UWI / CTU Secretariat</p> <p>UWI</p> <p>SMTF Members /CTU Secretariat</p> <p>UWI / CTU Secretariat</p>

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
		Smart Seas Project being initiated with the ITU in T&T with possible future benefit to the wider Caribbean.		
4.0 Spectrum Pricing	4.1 Reassessment of spectrum pricing actions proposed in Strategic Plan 2016-2018	Review pricing thrusts from Strategic Plan 2016 - 2018 Agree revised strategic thrusts and determine specific actions to be taken in 2021 Approach ITU for further expert training and guidance on pricing methodologies.	Q1 - Q2 2021 Q2 2021 Q2 2021	SMTF Members SMTF Chair CTU Secretariat
	4.2 Fostering common pricing guidance for advice to regional regulators <u>Working Group:</u> SMA Jamaica (Lead), TATT and Digicel	Regulators to share current pricing methodologies Consider appropriate interim pricing arrangements for emerging broadband mobile and satellite applications, e.g. 5G, HAPS & LEO services. Capacity building seminar(s) and activities.	Q1 – Q4 2021 Q2 – Q4 2021 Q2 – Q4 2020	SMTF Members Working Group CTU Secretariat

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
5.0 WRC-23 Preparations	5.1 Identifying priority WRC-23 agenda items of Caribbean relevance	Group discussions and proposals on agenda items for priority focus Agree primary items for Caribbean attention	Q1 – Q2 2021 Q2 2021	CTU Secretariat / SMTF Chairman / SMTF Members
	5.2 Formulating harmonised Caribbean positions for proposal to WRC-23	Identify item coordinators and vice-coordinators for relevant priority WRC-23 agenda items Collaborate with Task Force members and engage with key stakeholder groups to inform the formulation of harmonised Caribbean positions Liaise with CITEL and ITU as appropriate to inform and advance harmonised Caribbean positions	Q2 – Q3 2021 Q1 – Q4 2021 Q1 – Q4 2021	SMTF Chair / SMTF Members SMTF Members / CTU Secretariat SMTF Members / CTU Secretariat
6.0 Planning Digital Broadcasting Switchover	6.1 Develop and promote harmonised approaches to digital transition	Establish best practice guidelines to assist countries in DSO strategy planning Collaborate with broadcast sector to undertake regional awareness campaign and facilitate harmonised approaches	Q2 – Q3 2021 Q2 2021 & ongoing	SMTF Members CTU Secretariat

Thematic Area	Initiative	Comments/Actions	Time Frame	Lead
		Members to assist and collaborate on preparing National DSO migration plans	Q4 2021	SMTF Members