



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

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14 June, 1982

Dear Colin,

I have shown the Prime Minister your letter of 10 June about the independent review of the radio frequency spectrum between 30 and 960 MHz, and she is content for the Home Secretary to proceed as he proposes.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E Committee and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours now,

Anne Whitmore.

C J Walters, Esq  
Home Office

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HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

10 June 1982

*(Prime Minister)*

*Dear Clive*

*Comms for the Home Secretary to present as he proposes: full in*

Thank you for your letter of 18 May conveying the Prime Minister's agreement to our sounding Dr Merriman about his taking on the chairmanship of the independent review. *of the radio frequency spectrum between 30 and 960 Mhz.*

Dr Merriman has now been approached and is willing to accept this assignment. The Home Secretary therefore proposes to announce the review through the attached arranged Parliamentary Question and Answer. The Answer would be given on Tuesday, 15 June to coincide with the publication of the Mobile Radio Committee's report.

We shall need to press on urgently with the appointment of the other members of the review team. The Home Secretary would propose to approach Major-General Sir John Anderson, one-time Director General of NATO Integrated Communications Systems Management Agency. He would provide the necessary expertise in defence communications. As a second assessor, the Home Secretary would propose to appoint Mr Douglas Janes, who carried out a recent Rayner review of Radio Regulatory Department.

The Home Secretary also proposes to take this opportunity to announce the provisional allocation of frequencies for radiotelephone services, so as to pave the way for a statement by the Industry Secretary as to his plans for liberalising these services. There is some uneasiness among those working in the field of land mobile radio lest the allocation of the very sizeable amount of spectrum required for radiotelephone services should prejudice the interests of land mobile services generally, and the Home Secretary thinks it important that an announcement about frequencies for radiotelephones should be set in the wider context. A final decision about the allocation of frequencies to radiotelephone services is better taken when the Government has decided on the future use of bands I and III in the light of the interim report of the independent review, since much depends on whether or not these bands are to be retained for broadcasting.

I should be grateful for a reply by close of play on 14 June.

I am sending copies of this to Private Secretaries to members of E Committee and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely*  
*Alan Walters*

C J WALTERS

C A Whitmore, Esq.



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## DRAFT ARRANGED PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION ON THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SPECTRUM

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is yet in a position to make a statement about the report of the Mobile Radio Committee on the frequency requirements of the land mobile services.

### DRAFT REPLY

The report of the Mobile Radio Committee is being published today and copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

The Committee recommended that additional dual frequency channels should be provided for the land mobile services as soon as possible to relieve the present congestion; and work on this is in hand. As to provision for growth of the land mobile services, a detailed inter-departmental study of the whole of the range 30-960 MHz which was initiated some time ago has disclosed no means by which this need can be met within the existing framework of allocation of frequencies unless, as the Committee hoped, TV bands I and III are made available for the land mobile services when the 405-line services occupying these bands have been closed down. These bands remain internationally allocated to broadcasting on a primary basis, and, even if it were decided to re-allocate all or part of them for land mobile radio in the United Kingdom, it would be some time before they could be brought into such use. The band 854-960 MHz should in due course yield a significant amount of spectrum for civil land mobile use, but it is in general less attractive for land mobile services under existing technology.

The Government is anxious to ensure that every effort is made to meet the requirements of the land mobile services and I therefore propose to set up an independent review of the spectrum from 30-960 MHz. The task of the review will be to examine the existing pattern of occupancy in this range and against this background to examine the present and future requirements for spectrum, including those identified



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by the Mobile Radio Committee, and the scope for meeting them. The opportunity will also be taken to review the existing arrangements for consultation with interests outside Government about the use of the frequency spectrum and for the assignment of frequencies, with a view to ensuring that there is public confidence in the system. I am pleased to be able to announce that Dr J H H Merriman, <sup>CB</sup> ~~CBE~~ OBE F.Eng, has agreed to chair the review; I propose to appoint some additional members whose names I will announce as soon as possible.

The review will be asked to report by June next. In view of the urgency of the situation I shall ask for an interim report from the review team by September of this year as to the future use of bands I and III, taking account, not only of the need to provide for expansion of the land mobile services, but also of various possibilities for the continued use of these bands for broadcasting. The ~~full~~ terms of reference of the review will be as follows:

1. To help Ministers to formulate a view on the long-term problems foreseen in the radio frequency spectrum between 30 and 960 MHz, and specifically to assist in taking a decision on the future use of TV bands I and III when the present 405-line TV services are withdrawn, there is to be an independent review of the radio frequency spectrum in this range. The review is to:

(a) examine the present pattern of spectrum occupancy in this range taking into account:

(i) the international commitments and constraints arising from the international Radio Regulations, and from membership of the United Kingdom of such bodies as NATO, ICAO, IMCO, etc; and

(ii) the desirability of aligning spectrum usage as far as possible with that of neighbouring Administrations;

(b) investigate the likely continuation of the upsurge in additional requirements for accommodation in this part of the spectrum, and consider how they might be satisfied within the available spectrum and by innovative technological developments;



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- (c) identify and quantify those requirements which cannot be accommodated by these means and examine what scope there is for meeting them in some other way;
- (d) make recommendations for consideration by Ministers as to changes that may be required to meet the situation and specifically in respect of the future use of TV bands I and III;
- (e) consider the adequacy of the existing machinery:
  - (i) for consultation regarding the use of the frequency spectrum; and
  - (ii) for the assignment of frequencies,

and to recommend any changes that might be made in the interest of public confidence in the system.

2. The review is to cover the time-scale up to the end of the century, and any foreseen improvements in technology are to be taken into account. The economic resource and operational consequences of any recommended changes in spectrum occupancy are also to be considered; and any cases of inefficient use of the spectrum - having regard to the operational characteristics and other constraints on the users - are to be brought to light, together with any recommendations for improvement.

~~3. The review body is to be given access to all information made available to the inter-departmental machinery of classification up to and including SECRET.~~

3. The review body is to submit its final report by 1 June 1983, and an interim report as to the future use of bands I and III by 1 September 1982 at the latest.

In the meantime, the Government is anxious to facilitate an early and substantial expansion of radiotelephone services. The demand for these services is so great and the time required to design, develop and install these new and very complex high-capacity systems is so long that we feel that they should be given priority, provided that this can be done without prejudice to the interests of other mobile radio

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users. The re-planning of the 854-960 MHz band is not yet complete, and access to it for civil purposes will have to develop over a period of some years, but I am provisionally allocating 30 MHz of spectrum in that band to radiotelephone services on the understanding that a final decision in this matter will be taken as soon as I have the advice of the review team as to the future use of bands I and III. My rt hon Friend will be making a separate statement about the Government's intentions concerning the future of radiotelephone services under the BT Act.

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