Radiocommunications, broadcasting, transport: coordinated introduction of pan-European land-based public radio paging (repeal. Directive 90 /544/EEC)

2005/0147(COD) - 03/08/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to repeal Directive 90/544/EEC (the ERMES Directive) in order that the Commission may adopt a new harmonised spectrum plan for this band pursuant to Decision 676/2002/EC (the Radio Spectrum Decision.)

PROPOSED ACT : Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT : The Commission proposes to repeal the ERMES Directive so that a new plan of the 169.4 to 169.8 MHz band could meet current and new EC policy needs, to be established by a Commission decision adopted pursuant to the Radio Spectrum Decision.

The ERMES Directive specifying spectrum use for pan-European land-based public radio paging services (ERMES) no longer meets EC policy needs as it requires reservation in the 169.4 to 169.8 MHz band of four channels for ERMES and of the whole band according to commercial demand. Use of the band by ERMES has decreased or even ceased and ERMES has been replaced by other technologies such as short messaging systems (SMS) over GSM.

Upon the ERMES directive repeal, the Commission will adopt a new frequency plan and channel arrangement allowing for six types of applications to share the band to meet EC needs in consistency with other EU policies and objectives. These applications include hearing aids for hearing impaired people, which would improve

travelling conditions in the EC and benefit from economies of scale and price decreases; social alarms allowing elderly people to send alarm messages; asset tracking or tracing devices to track stolen goods in the EC; meter reading systems for water and electricity utility companies, and existing paging systems such as ERMES and private mobile radio systems.

The new plan would benefit various EC sectors and businesses including radio communications equipment, water and electricity sectors, communications services, theatres, exhibition and conference halls, schools and social care entities. Positive economic impacts include reduction in prices for hearing aids and social alarms, increased employment and travelling possibilities for impaired people, lower insurance costs and increased retrieval of stolen goods, lower monitoring and operating costs for utility companies, new manufacturing, investment and services opportunities, new types of applications, increased competitiveness and economies of scale with radio equipment operational throughout EC.