



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Electronic Communications Policy
The Director

Brussels, 30 AOUT 2005
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Dear Messrs Bräutigam and Schmitz,

Your reference: Powerline Communications: Questions and Answers – Memo/05/119

The President transmitted to me your letter of 5 August 2005 in which you reiterate your concern about the interference potential of powerline communications to HF radio communications and in particular amateur radio.

As former Commissioner Liikanen said in his reply to you of August 2004, the shift to a modern broadband e-society and e-economy will put pressure on the lower part of the radio spectrum, where, even without any PLC systems present, the background noise has been steadily increasing for several decades now. New approaches are needed to manage such interference; the former ex-ante management schemes that sought to take a completely risk free approach to radio interference are not sustainable.

We need to find a solution that allows our society and economy to evolve whilst protecting radio systems from harmful interference. The interference environment between a wireline communications system - including for instance DSL, Ethernets and powerlines - and a radio communications system call for a two-fold approach: imposing appropriate ex-ante controls to set limits on the interference, and ex-post interference management to ensure that an interference situation is adequately resolved for the specific frequency and place where the interference occurs. We believe that such a scheme is the most proportionate as it keeps a balance between the interests of the various stakeholders, including radio users, and puts the least possible restrictions on all sides.

This is the model of the EMC Directive of the Council and the European Parliament, both the old Directive (89/336/EEC) currently in force and also the new one that has already been adopted by the Council and the European Parliament and that will enter into force in the middle of 2007.

The Recommendation on broadband communications through powerlines (C(2005) 1031 final) that was adopted by the Commission in April of this year with the support of the EU Member States is fully compatible with the old and the new EMC rules.

Please let me assure you of my appreciation for the important role that radio amateurs can play during calamities and contingency situations. I believe that our EMC model will prove to be a model by which a rather complex co-existence and interference environment can be successfully managed, allowing for the continued successful operation of radio amateurs into the future.

Yours sincerely,



Bernd Langeheine
Director

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