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PUBLIC STATEMENT

UPDATE ON THE FM SPECTRUM RE-FARMING

The Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) wishes to update the public on the progress made in the re-farming of the FM frequency band (87.5 – 108 MHz). The project is aimed at realizing free channels in the band to accommodate more licensees.

Roadmap and Data Collection

Following the constitution of the Taskforce, a Roadmap has been developed for a successful overhaul and re-planning of the FM Band. The team has also collected data from all FM Transmission Sites and monitored spectrum occupancy to establish an understanding of the current network setup, opportunities, and challenges on the ground.

The objective of the physical data collection was to appreciate the actual status of the current FM environment to form a basis for the new FM network plan. The data collection exercise went further to identify new potential sites which will be analyzed further to determine their suitability.

Way forward

The next activity will be network simulation to plot coverage prediction maps, calculate adjacent channel interference, and intermodulation interference, and define appropriate protection margin among other parameters. After this exercise, MACRA will organize a briefing meeting with all broadcasters.

Lastly, the Authority wishes to commend all licensed broadcasters awaiting the issuance of new frequencies for their patience and would like to assure them that they will be assisted once the re-farming exercise is finalized. For prospective licencees, the Authority is advising them not to submit any applications until the exercise is completed. For any further information regarding the exercise write dg@macra.mw.

Dated this 5th June 2023



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