

NEWSLETTER

Highlights and activities for Weeks 10 - 13 (02.03.15 – 30.03.15)

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A. International Meetings attended by MCA representatives

1. GSMA – Mobile World Congress 2015

Between the second and fifth March, the MCA participated in the GSMA World Congress. The annual event, held in Barcelona, captures the interests of mobile operators worldwide, uniting nearly 800 operators with more than 250 companies in the broader mobile ecosystem, including handset and device makers, software companies, equipment providers and Internet companies, as well as organisations in adjacent industry sectors. The MCA also participated in the GSMA's Ministerial Programme. The programme, held alongside the World Congress, provides a unique platform for the world's most influential telecommunications leaders to unite and discuss the most pressing issues affecting the future of the mobile industry. The Authority was represented by Steve Agius, Chief Officer, Information and Development, and Bernard Agius, Manager Business and Innovation Development.

2. Workshop – Benchmarking of Safer Internet policies in Member States

The MCA attended a workshop on the presentation of the results of the "Benchmarking on Safer Internet Policies in Member States" study which was held on the 4th March 2015 in Brussels. The workshop focused on the following three main issues:

- a) Presentations of the findings of the study;
- b) Information on digital safer internet services and the core platform;
- c) Upcoming international conference "Net Youngsters 2020" on 16 – 17 April 2015 in Berlin

3. BEREC End Users expert working group Accessibility Workshop

The MCA attended a workshop organised by BEREC on "Accessibility" which was held on the 4th March 2015. The workshop focused on four main issues:

- a) The accessibility and usability challenges faced by disabled end-users when accessing electronic communications services;
- b) The contribution of regulators to improving accessibility for disabled citizens;
- c) Accessibility considered from the industry perspective;
- d) Designing for all - A manufacturers and service providers' challenge.

The workshop served as a valuable input to update BEREC's Report on Equivalent Access and Choice for Disabled End Users.

4. BEREC – WG – Market & Econ Anal

The MCA participated in a drafters meeting on the BEREC Report on Oligopoly Analysis and Regulation, given that Kevin Caruana is contributing on its behalf as a drafter. The report aims to develop BEREC's own analysis of oligopoly market structures and of the most appropriate manner to deal with them, paving the way for an update of the 2002 SMP Guidelines and in parallel provide BEREC with feedback in the context of the envisaged framework review. It is envisaged that the report will be issued for public consultation in Q3 2015, prior to the final publication of the report by the end of this year.

5. COCOM – General/Plenary 60th Communication Committee

The 60th COCOM meeting took place on 6th March, 2015. Among other topics on the agenda, member states were invited to give their views on the possibility of allowing the use of complementary ground components in mobile satellite services. Discussions also took place on the state of implementation with regard to the transposition of EU Directive 2014/61/EU in EU member states. The Directive relates to measures to reduce the cost of high-speed broadband deployment in the EU. During the meeting, the Commission also gave a summary of its report on the implementation of ‘112’, as well as a summary of the replies to a questionnaire on the implementation of Articles 13a and 13b of the Framework Directive.

6. BEREC – WG – Regulatory Framework Expert Working Group

The BEREC Regulatory Framework Expert Working Group met in March to discuss the upcoming review of the Electronic Communications Framework, the set of EU laws containing the rules concerning telecommunications networks and services competition and relative consumer rights. The European Commission is expected to commence a public consultation in May which is expected to lead to a number of changes to the existing laws in order for these to come to terms with the latest technology and business developments.

7. IS – ICT for All (Managing CTLTCs)

On March 13, 2015 the official launch of the “eSkills for Jobs” 2015 and 2016 campaign took place in Riga, where a high level conference was held under the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The conference was attended by over 250 stakeholders and the campaign target groups. It commanded media attention both at national and European levels. The conference took stock of existing and new digital jobs in Europe today and the corresponding e-skills needs. It highlighted the contribution of e-skills to the digital transformation of the European economy as a whole, beyond the traditional IT sector, and the potential to foster innovation, competitiveness, jobs and growth. The conference was enriched by an exhibition area where leading players displayed their products and services. The conference contributed to set-up the further policy and initiatives for e-skills development in Europe to meet an increasing demand for ICT professionals in all sectors of the economy. A policy declaration was adopted and publicly launched during the event.

8. CeBIT 2015 Conference

CeBIT is the world's largest trade fair showcasing digital IT and telecommunications solutions for home and work environments. Running over a five-day period in Hanover, Germany, the CeBIT Global Conferences are staged congruently with the CeBIT exhibition. The conferences are dedicated to providing a 360° overview of the digital industry's four core markets: IT, Telecommunications, Digital Media and Consumer Electronics. This year, the main focus of the event was on the digital economy with several discussions held around Big Data, Cloud, Internet of Things, Mobile, Security & Social Business.

9. RSCOM – Radio Spectrum Committee Meeting

The MCA attended the 51st RSC meeting in March. The following topics were discussed:

- a) The Draft of the Decision on technical standards for the use of spectrum in the 2GHz band. New technical specs are being discussed supporting direct air to ground communications (DA2GC). A final decision is expected to be adopted by summer.
- b) A Decision on the use of the 1.5 GHz band for wireless broadband services was adopted.
- c) A CEPT report on the 2.3 GHz band was presented followed by a discussion on the possible use of this band for wireless broadband services using the licensed shared access (LSA) approach to protect existing services.

10. The 13th meeting of the Future Internet Forum of Member and Associated States

The Future Internet Forum (FIF) is composed of representatives of the Member or Associated States' initiatives and activities on the Future Internet. It consists of either high-level officials from the competent ministries, or experts from public or private institutions mandated specifically to represent national Future Internet (FI) initiatives. The FIF is an informal group to allow Member and Associated States to:

- Share knowledge, experience and best practices;
- Identify key national actors, activities and institutions;
- Devise common approaches and complementarities between the various frameworks.

B. MCA Publications & Website Uploads

1. MCA discusses the use of statistics with students at St. Martin's Institute

Published 27th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/notices-and-announcements/mca-discusses-use-statistics-students-st-martins-institute>

2. MCA opens first Coderdojo club in Malta

Published 25th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/notices-and-announcements/mca-opens-first-coderdojo-club-malta>

3. Dr Andre' Xuereb talks to MCA staff about the fascinating topic of Quantum

Published 25th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/notices-and-announcements/dr-andre-xuereb-talks-mca-staff-about-fascinating-topic-quantum>

4. Highlights and Activities for Weeks 6 to 9 - Newsletter

Published 16th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/notices-and-announcements/highlights-and-activities-weeks-6-9>

5. MCA publishes latest Communications Complaints Data July – December 2014

Published 13th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/consumer/notices-and-announcements/mca-publishes-latest-communications-complaints-data-july-december>

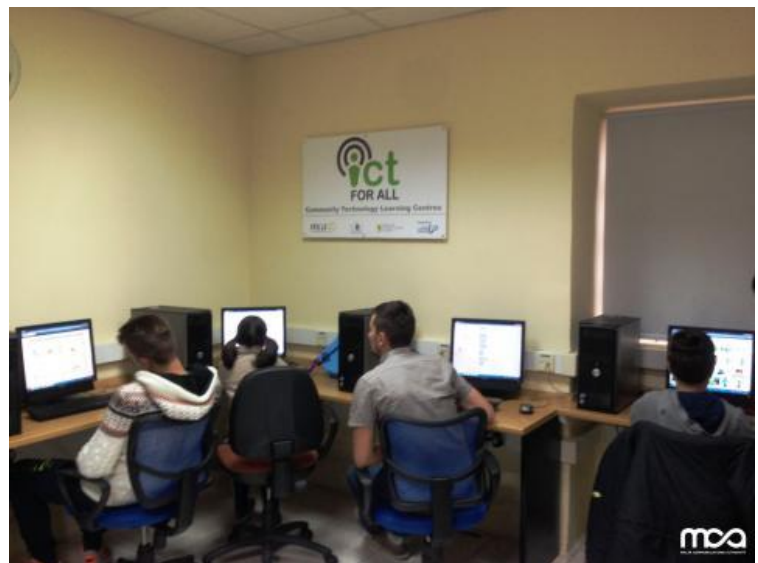
6. Certification Ceremony ENTER Project

Published 13th March: <http://www.mca.org.mt/notices-and-announcements/100-individuals-receive-certification-following-their-succesful-completion>

C. MCA Events

16th March: MCA opens first Coderdojo in Malta

On the 16th March this year, Malta joined a global network of coding clubs with the opening of the first Coderdojo club at the National Council for Women in Blata I-Bajda. 50 other countries are taking part in this initiative which is aimed at promoting computer coding to children aged between 7 and 17 years of age. This initiative is spearheaded by the MCA, with the assistance of KPMG Crimsonwing and the Department of Education and it contributes greatly to the MCA's ongoing drive to promote the use of ICT in society at large.



13th March: MCA discusses the use of statistics with students at St. Martin's Institute

Students from St. Martin's Institute who are currently studying statistics as part of their curriculum were given an overview of how statistics are used at the Authority. MCA representatives discussed the application and analysis of data obtained from the local operators and how this is used for internal purposes, EU requirements and numerous publications.

Mr Ivan Bugeja (Manager External Relations) conducted an overview of the MCA functions and a provided background information of the developments in the communications sector. Mr Kevin Caruana (Market Analyst) tackled the market analysis activities of the Authority and the related publications. He explained the necessity of such publications and importance of market data in this regard, whilst Mr Roderick Gusman (Operations Market Analyst) tackled the data collection process and the use of statistics for internal and EU purposes. Mr Gusman explained the role of a statistician within the MCA and gave an overview of analysis undertaken for past projects.



5th March: ENTER Certification Ceremony with Żebbuġ Local Council

During a certification ceremony held yesterday at the Boys secondary school in Żebbuġ with the support of the Żebbuġ Local Council, 100 individuals between the age of 25 and 64 years of age were recognized for successfully completing the MCA’s basic training in ICT as part of the ENTER project, which was launched back in 2013. This project is just one of the many initiatives undertaken by the MCA in its drive to reduce gaps in ICT usage and support social cohesion and inclusion. These initiatives are designed to deliver tangible benefits to citizens such as improved skills, better employability, increased quality of life and strengthened community cohesion.



4th March: Press Launch eActive Aging .comm lehen digitali

It is widely acknowledged that access to essential services and information, maintaining and enhancing social support networks and opportunities for meaningful social and civic engagement are increasingly compromised by a lack of digital literacy. This is more prevalent amongst older adults and people with a disability as they are more prone to lagging behind other social groups in the adoption and effective use of ICTs. The number of initiatives undertaken by the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) in an attempt to address this has continued unabated. This new training programme - .com – lehen digitali is yet another initiative in an ongoing stream of activity that is targeting senior citizens and individuals with a disability to encourage increased ICT take-up and enhance active living among this segment of the population.



ONE News Feature: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4HxuutGZ9k>

TVM News Feature: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZejZ7T-SN_0&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWc9k0Iy9ko7VQNhTqRG TIC_&index=10

D. Media participation

MCA representatives participated in various television & radio programmes.

1. Television

- 16.03.15: TVM News Feature
(Yanika Cassar – World Consumer Rights Day)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRb9bSCYpsQ&index=11&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWc9k0ly9ko7VQNhTqRGTIC
- 17.03.15: ‘TV PM’ – TVM
(Mark Schembri – .comm lehen digitali)

2. Radio

- 04.03.15: ‘L-Informatika u s-Socjeta’ - Radju Marija
(Sephora Busuttill + Inspector Timothy Zammit – *Internet Safety*)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8--48yS5Yk&index=10&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWdTjpHTpRgNg7TTuYgaHX9A
- 11.03.15: ‘L-Informatika u s-Socjeta’ – Radju Marija
(Nicholas Vella + Paul Cumbo - *Internet*)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqIY9f_HiNY&index=11&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWdTjpHTpRgNg7TTuYgaHX9A
- 11.03.15: ‘Għalina Lkoll’ – RTK
(Mark Stivala – World Consumer Rights Day)
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWf-wgb_MRQd_LfD0foOu_Uw

18.03.15: 'L-Informatika u s-Socjeta' – Radju Marija

(Denise Borda + Paul Cumbo - *eCommerce*)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qNAV2snhyE&index=12&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWdTjpHTpRgNg7TTuYgaHX9A

25.03.15: 'L-Informatika u s-Socjeta' – Radju Marija

(Mark Schembri + Thea Tanti – *Project ENTER ICT Courses*)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeXKjZr9I-s&index=13&list=PLI8Jd_mlhkWdTjpHTpRgNg7TTuYgaHX9A

E. Legal Updates

Case Sittings

- 9th March: MaltaPost Plc vs l-Awtorita ta' Malta dwar il-Komunikazzjoni: This case refers to the contestation of a regulatory decision on postal markets. During this sitting, MaltaPost continued with the submission of their evidence. Case stands adjourned for continuation [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: GO plc vs the Malta Communications Authority. Issue of decision by the Administrative Review Tribunal rejecting GO's contestation of MCA's decision on markets 4 and 5.
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 85/2014 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2006 because of an alleged breach of the then norms on the carriage of adverts on Cable TV. Case stands adjourned for further information [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 88/2014 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2008 following the late submission of information required in the course of gross revenue calculations. Case stands adjourned for further information [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 91/2014 – contestation by Melita of a decision whereby MCA did not uphold Melita's complaint made in relation to a GO bundled product in 2010. Melita submitted their evidence. Case stands adjourned for continuation [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 92/2014 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2010 following the removal of four TV football channels. Case stands adjourned for further information [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 93/2014 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2010 whereby the MCA had requested Melita to provide information relating to the audit of its billing procedures. Case stands adjourned for submissions by both parties [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 114/2014 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2014 relating to incorrect billing following termination of subscriber agreement. Case stands adjourned for continuation [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].
- 23rd March: Melita plc vs the Malta Communications Authority – No. 1/2015 – contestation by Melita of a fine imposed in 2014 the failure to submit statistics on hybrid mobile market. Case stands adjourned for evidence by Melita [pending before the Administrative Review Tribunal].

F. International News

1. TELEVISION

Advanced Television *Analyst: Apple, Google battle for TV spoils*

The market for streaming video devices at \$99 and below has become increasingly crowded and competitive, according to Paul Erickson, Senior Analyst, IHS Technology [[read more](#)].

Macworld *New Apple TV hardware coming this summer, report says*

Apple is reportedly prepping a new Apple TV set-top box for this summer, with Siri, the App Store, and home automation as centrepieces [[read more](#)].

Advanced Television *Sky ups prices, market worried*

Sky is unexpectedly increasing its subscriber prices in the UK. Normally any price rise happens in September but the hike comes just 6 weeks after the broadcaster agreed to pay the Premier League £4.2 billion for a share of the TV rights [[read more](#)].

2. SPECTRUM

Engadget *T-Mobile wants your WiFi spectrum to boost its coverage*

Wireless spectrum is expensive, which is why carriers are eyeing up at the portions of our airwaves that are currently reserved for WiFi. According to GigaOm, T-Mobile is planning to stick its tanks on the WiFi industry's lawn by launching a form of 4G that operates on the 5GHz band, promising better speed for uploads and downloads [[read more](#)].

Policy Tracker *Italy's neighbours await relief from TV, FM radio interference*

Italy's failure to comply with ITU Radio Regulations on harmful interference is wreaking havoc with TV broadcast and FM radio signals in neighbouring states, according to the countries affected and the ITU [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Canadian AWS-3 spectrum sells for \$1.7 billion*

Unlike the 700 MHz band auction last year, Canada's AWS-3 auction significantly boosted the amount of spectrum available for challengers to the country's three main operators [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Analogue switch-off stand-off leaves Kenyans without TV*

In a series of night-time raids last month, the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) forcibly switched off the analogue signal for the majority of Kenya's regions [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Swedish regulator supports mobile allocation of 2.7–2.9 GHz*

Swedish regulator PTS believes the 2.7–2.9 GHz band is underused and should be jointly allocated to mobile at WRC-15 [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Ofcom consultation reveals priorities for spectrum above 6 GHz*

Spectrum above 6 GHz should be considered for future 5G IMT mobile communications but not to the detriment of the satellite, broadcast, space, radio astronomy or aviation industries, said the respondents to an Ofcom consultation [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Mobile operators to focus on sub-1 GHz spectrum for 5G*

The Next Generation Mobile Networks (NGMN) group set up by mobile operators to forge a consensus on 5G has issued a white paper outlining their vision for the new generation of mobile connections [[read more](#) – subscription required].

Policy Tracker *Brussels offers €0.5m in spectrum sharing competition*

Half a million euros are up for grabs in a competition organised by the European Commission to make a breakthrough in decentralised spectrum sharing [[read more](#) – subscription required].

3. POST

BBC *MPs fear postal market changes*

An influential committee of MPs has called on the postal regulator to show that it can react swiftly to changes in the postal market. The Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Committee (BIS) said Ofcom had to perform a "balancing act" between encouraging competition and preserving the universal service obligation (USO) [[read more](#)].

Post & Parcel *EU Commission seeking action on cross-border parcel shipping prices*

The EU Commission has pledged to work to harmonise delivery charges and rules for parcels as part of its new strategy to boost e-commerce [[read more](#)].

4. MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

BBC *Telefonica finalises £10bn sale of O2 mobile phone firm*

Telefonica has finalised a deal to sell its O2 mobile phone network to Hutchison Whampoa for £10.25bn. The companies said they had reached a "definitive agreement" on a deal, which will create the UK's biggest mobile operator [\[read more\]](#).

5. eCOMMERCE

BBC *European Parliament backs cap on card processing fees*

The European Parliament has backed a deal to cap the fees retailers pay to process debit and credit card transactions, which EU officials say will mean savings for customers [\[read more\]](#).

The Verge *Facebook Messenger will now let you send money to friends*

The company joins Snapchat, Square Cash, and Venmo in the booming peer-to-peer payment market [\[read more\]](#).

Universal Postal Union *UNCTAD includes home postal delivery in new e-commerce index*

A United Nations report says postal networks are critical elements of the e-commerce chain and includes home postal delivery as an indicator in a new global index measuring countries' e-commerce readiness [\[read more\]](#).

6. INNOVATION

c|net *Google confirms wireless efforts, plans bigger reveal 'in coming months'*

Google will launch a wireless service of its own, but it may be a limited project. Sundar Pichai, senior vice president of products for Google, confirmed that the world's largest search company was in talks with wireless carriers, and suggested an answer would arrive "in the coming months" [\[read more\]](#).

Daily Herald *5 things to know from the latest Apple event*

All eyes were focused on the watch, but Apple CEO Tim Cook also unveiled a new MacBook and announced other deals at a company event Monday in San Francisco [\[read more\]](#).

Federal Aviation Administration *Amazon Gets Experimental Airworthiness Certificate*

The Federal Aviation Administration issued an experimental airworthiness certificate to an Amazon Logistics, Inc. unmanned aircraft (UAS) design that the company will use for research and development and crew training [[read more](#)].

Telecoms.com *Vodafone Germany claims country's first commercial VoLTE service*

Vodafone Germany has launched a voice-over-LTE (VoLTE) service in Germany. Claiming it is the first such service in the country the telco demonstrated the first live VoLTE call and said it is ready to be rolled-out across its 4G network [[read more](#)].

Engadget *Sling TV's \$20 cord-cutter package comes to Xbox One*

From the start, Microsoft intended for the Xbox One to be at the centre of both games and TV watching. With the launch of Sling TV on the game console, it can bring those two parts together properly for gamers in the US [[read more](#)].

eCommerce Times *FAA's Sluggish Pace Frustrates Amazon's Drone Ambitions*

Although the FAA last week granted Amazon permission to conduct outdoor tests, the unmanned aircraft system covered by the authorization is no longer in use [[read more](#)].

7. LEGAL

Tech Crunch *Viber Faces Ban In Korea As SK Telecom Wins Potentially Wide-Ranging Patent Suit*

Free calling and messaging service Viber could be banned in South Korea, after the company lost a patent suit to domestic operator SK Telecom [[read more](#)].

TechCrunch *UK Chancellor Says "Google Tax" On Diverted Profits Will Come Into Effect Next Month*

UK Chancellor George Osborne confirmed that a new tax dubbed the "Google tax" — because of its aim at tech companies that divert profits made in the UK — will come into effect next month, from April 1. He also pledged £600 million (\$880 million) to improving broadband in the country [[read more](#)].

BBC *Facebook data row reaches top Euro court*

The future of how Europeans' data is shared with US companies such as Facebook and Google is set to be considered by the EU's highest court [[read more](#)].

8. SECURITY

BBC *Banning Tor unwise and infeasible, MPs told*

A ban on online anonymity networks would be "technologically infeasible" and unwise, MPs have been told. Parliamentary advisers said networks such as Tor could be used for criminal ends but also in the public interest [[read more](#)].

9. NET NEUTRALITY: USA

Total Telecom *FCC's Wheeler defends Title II, AWS-3 auction price*

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) chairman Tom Wheeler, fresh from voting to use Title II regulations to enforce net neutrality, took to the stage at Mobile World Congress on Tuesday to defend that decision and to discuss the recently-concluded AWS-3 auction [[read more](#)].

eCommerce Times *FCC Drops Net Neutrality Rules on Dissection Table*

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission on Thursday released the final version of its controversial open Internet rules. In the introduction to the some 400 pages of new rules, which cover both wired and wireless broadband, the commission stated its "carefully tailored rules" would prevent specific practices that are harmful to Internet openness, such as blocking, throttling and paid prioritization [[read more](#)].

10. REGULATION ABROAD

Ofcom *Ofcom announces Strategic Review of Digital Communications*

Ofcom has announced an overarching review of the UK's digital communications markets, to ensure that communications providers and services continue to meet the needs of consumers and businesses [[read more](#)].

Ofcom *New rule for competition and investment in superfast broadband*

From 1 April, a pricing rule will mean BT must maintain a sufficient margin between its wholesale and retail superfast broadband charges, in order to allow other providers profitably to match its prices [[read more](#)].

European Commission *European Commission demands that the German regulator amends its mobile termination rates in line with the EU's regulatory framework*

The Commission issued a recommendation concluding that the German regulator (BNetzA) acts contrary to the EU recommended approach for the calculation of mobile termination rates (MTRs) [[read more](#)].

11. NET NEUTRALITY

Cullen International *Telecoms Single Market: Council ready to negotiate with Parliament*

The Council is prepared to start negotiations with the European Parliament on the Telecoms Single Market proposal, albeit only on net neutrality and roaming. Coreper I, assembling member states' deputy permanent representatives to the EU, gave a mandate to the Latvian presidency on March 4, 2015 [[read more](#) – subscription required].

New York Times *First Lawsuits Filed Against the F.C.C.'s 'Net Neutrality' Rules*

Two lawsuits were filed against the Federal Communications Commission's new rules for broadband Internet service, the beginning of what is expected to be a flurry of legal challenges to the new regulations [[read more](#)].

12. QUALITY OF SERVICE

Telecoms.com *BT, Sky, TalkTalk broadband customers UK's least satisfied – report*

Consumer organisation Which has published the results of its latest UK broadband satisfaction survey claiming the worst performers are the country's three biggest providers BT, Sky and TalkTalk [[read more](#)].

13. MOBILE

Telecoms.com *Five UK operators agree to cap bills for stolen mobiles*

EE, O2, Three, Virgin Media and Vodafone have entered into a voluntary agreement to cap bills at £100 for stolen or missing mobile phones, provided a report has been made to the network provider and police within 24 hours of losing the device [[read more](#)].

BBC *BT returns to mobile phone market*

BT is re-entering the UK's consumer mobile phone market, with a range of 4G subscriptions. Its cheapest offer is aggressively priced at a discounted rate of £5 a month for existing BT broadband customers [[read more](#)].

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