Malta Communications Authority
Annual Plan 2019

Table of Contents

Page

1. Introduction

This document represents the Malta Communications Authority's (MCA) Annual Plan 2019. It sets out the priority work-streams and related individual tasks that the MCA will be conducting during 2019. The Annual Plan is reflective of the MCA's strategy update covering the period 2019 - 2021.

1.1 Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives

The mission of the MCA is:

'To promote and safeguard a communications environment that is conducive to investment, innovation, economic growth and social well-being'

For the MCA to achieve its mission over the next three years, the following are the identified strategic objectives emerging from the strategy update for the period.

1.	Promoting and safeguarding competition in the electronic communications sector.
2.	Ensuring that electronic communications undertakings provide a transparent, value for money service to users whilst adhering to incumbent social obligations.
3.	Contributing to the development and implementation of electronic communications policy.
4.	Maintaining open, safe and secure electronic communications.
5.	Facilitating digital inclusion.
6.	Maximising the potential of radio spectrum.
7.	Facilitating the development of eCommerce.
8.	Supervising the provision of electronic signatures and trust services.
9.	Safeguarding sustainable competition in the postal sector.
10.	Ensuring that postal undertakings provide a transparent, value for money service to users whilst adhering to incumbent social obligations.
11.	Contributing to the development and implementation of postal policy.
12.	Conducting research and facilitating innovation in the sectors under the MCA's mandate.

1.2   Legal Frameworks

The MCA's mission, mandate and functions derive from the Malta Communications Authority Act, Cap 418. The MCA is responsible for:

▪ the regulation of electronic communications networks and services, radiocommunications equipment and the management of the radio spectrum and numbering resource as defined in the Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act, Cap 399;

▪ the regulation of postal services as determined by the Postal Services Act, Cap 254; and for

▪ ensuring compliance with the Electronic Commerce Act, Cap 426.[1]

The MCA is also responsible for ensuring compliance with EU regulations in relation to roaming, net neutrality and cross-border parcel delivery services as reflected in the Second Schedule of the Malta Communications Authority Act.

In November 2018 the MCA was assigned by Government the task of administering Directive (EU) 2016/2102 which deals with the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. The transposition of this Directive will be carried out early in 2019.

In addition, in December 2018, the MCA was assigned by Government the task of administering two EU regulations as reflected in the Second Schedule of the Malta Communications Act, namely:

▪ Regulation (EU) 2018/302 on addressing unjustified geo-blocking and other forms of discrimination based on customers' nationality, place of residence or place of establishment within the internal market (referred to as the geo-blocking regulation), and

▪ Regulation (EU) 2017/1128 on cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market (referred to as the cross-border portability regulation).

As from 2019 the MCA's functions pertaining to the promotion of the Information Society (IS) and the promotion of eCommerce related activity have been migrated to a newly set up Government entity, Tech.mt, in line with Government direction.

1.3   Accountability Framework

The MCA is accountable to the Minister responsible for Communications for the preparation and presentation of its financial estimates for approval, following an annual consultation by the responsible Minister with the Minister responsible for Finance. The MCA presents its Annual Report on its operations for the preceding year to the Minister responsible for the MCA and the Minister responsible

---

[1] The MCA is required to ensure the proper functioning of the eCommerce sector as provided for by the Electronic Commerce Act which follows EU Directive 2000/31/EC. The same applies to eIDAS (EU Regulation 910/2014) where MCA assumes the role of a supervisory authority.

for Finance. The MCA is also held to account by the sectors it regulates and by the public on whose behalf it regulates. On a yearly basis the MCA publishes its Strategy Update, Annual Plan and its Annual Report on its website.

1.4   Communication and Engagement

The MCA is committed to engaging with various stakeholders, including citizens, consumers, authorised entities, government departments and other regulators, constituted bodies, the business community, the EU, and various other international bodies.

A variety of communication channels, such as its website and social media, are used in order to effectively build greater awareness of the outcomes of the MCA's activities, its roles and responsibilities, its various initiatives and on general trends in the sectors it regulates. The MCA also uses these communication channels to empower consumers by providing information on their rights and in assisting them in making informed choices across all communications services.

In the context of regulatory decision-making stakeholders have the opportunity to provide the MCA with feedback and express opinions on developing regulatory measures and proposed regulatory decisions through an established consultation process. This process facilitates more rigorous evidence-based decision making, knowledge sharing and a greater buy-in from all industry members. The MCA also hosts a number of industry stakeholder forums (such as the Electronic Communications Forum and the eCommerce Forum). These forums provide the industry with the opportunity to communicate on topical issues.

The MCA will continue to work to nurture and enhance its reputation as a centre of excellence and as a credible source of unbiased, high-quality information. The MCA will continue to assist relevant ministries, public authorities, players in the industry, the private sector and end-users with technical advice and input.

1.5   Measuring Performance

Progress towards the attainment of the MCA's strategic objectives is measured by a series of related activities. In this respect, and on an ongoing basis, the MCA:

- formally and informally, ascertains stakeholders' perceptions of the regulator;

- carries out bi-annual market reviews providing an overview of the trends in the sectors under the MCA's mandate;

- conducts performance measurement and monitoring in line with the KPIs identified in the MCA's strategy update and other benchmarks, such as the EU's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)[2]; and

- monitors the achievement of its objectives and work programme, identifies any shortfalls and takes the necessary steps to remedy them.

1.6 Trends and Challenges

As mentioned in the MCA's Strategy Update 2019 - 2021 the transposition of the new European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), formally adopted on the 11th December 2018, dominates the scene on the policy front. The aim of the EECC is to drive investment in new high capacity networks, mainly 5G and new fibre networks, and create a level playing field between telecoms and over-the-top (OTT) providers. Member States have two years to incorporate the EECC into national law.

Beyond the MCA's contribution to the transposition exercise, the coming years will see an intensive programme of implementation, including the adoption of new Guidelines by BEREC (the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications) and greater scrutiny of national regulatory measures governing radio spectrum as well as broadband regulation. The MCA will need to review existing regulatory operations in areas relating to infrastructure access, end-user rights and universal service aspects, the scope of regulation vis-à-vis OTT services and spectrum management.

Planned milestones such as the attainment of the EU Gigabit Society, the launch of 5G and the clearing of the 700 MHz band, the implementation of capped intra-EU calls, as well as the upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19), will necessitate the activation of the necessary resources in order to attain planned targets.

The situation with postal services presents known issues, which is not to say that their resolution will be any simpler. Foremost among these issues remain the sustainability of the universal postal service and prices for both inbound and outbound parcels and packets. The situation is characterised by the ongoing profitability of the Universal Service Provider (USP), although this has been in gradual decline over the past few years. It is also influenced by EU developments, mainly the recent regulation relative to cross-border parcel delivery services which will be implemented as from 2019. The drive towards a new EU Postal Services Directive will commence in 2019.

Whilst the main issue for postal services remains the sustainability of universal postal service provision, the question for eCommerce has to do more with finding the right level of light-touch and at the same time effective regulation, mainly as regards ensuring adherence to the 'essential requirements' by the information society service providers. A related regulatory field lies in the administration of the EU eIDAS Regulation (with regard to electronic trust services) where the MCA has set up a regulatory regime that is felt to be both 'applicant friendly' as well as technically robust. The MCA expects to

---

[2] The DESI is a composite index that summarises relevant indicators on Europe's digital performance and tracks the evolution of EU member states in digital competitiveness (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi).

enhance the attractiveness of the framework via the introduction of rules that will facilitate remote identification.

Beyond the regulatory challenge relating to eCommerce, the MCA's function on encouraging local enterprise to undergo digital transformation has now been migrated to the newly set-up entity, Tech.mt. Given the inevitable synergies between eCommerce regulatory activities on the one hand and the promotion of the uptake in eCommerce activity on the other, there will need to be ongoing co-ordination between the MCA and Tech.mt.

As regards the proliferation of Information Society, progress in digital literacy has been manifest, as reflected in published statistics. This function, together with the related tasks relating to the proliferation of the Information Society, has also been migrated to Tech.mt. Meanwhile, in November 2018, the MCA was assigned the task of administering Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016. This Directive, which will be transposed into Maltese law early in 2019, deals with the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. The MCA will therefore still have a role in addressing the digital divide, albeit from a relatively focused regulatory standpoint. In 2019 the MCA will build the necessary processes to address the effective implementation of this Directive.

In December 2018 the MCA was also tasked with the oversight of Regulation (EU) 2018/302 on addressing unjustified geo-blocking and other forms of discrimination based on customers' nationality, place of residence or place of establishment within the internal market and Regulation (EU) 2017/1128 on cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market. In 2019 the MCA will build the necessary processes to address the effective implementation of these two regulations.

The promotion of innovation, research capacity and the development of new areas of operation are other priorities that the MCA will continue to address, with the benefit of experience gained in preceding years. This experience will enable better focus on areas that are of particular relevance to the MCA's legal mandate and can therefore produce better synergies with mainstream operations.

The MCA will continue working closely with all the relevant stakeholders at EU and national levels in order to ensure that any future EU policies in the above-mentioned areas benefit the Maltese communications sector, with resultant fallout on the economy at large. In addition, the MCA will continue to provide advice to Government on topics related to the sectors under the MCA's mandate.

2. Work Programme and Priorities

What follows is an overview of the MCA's work-streams - including the MCA's major ongoing work areas - to be carried out during the business plan period coupled with the priority work-streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of the identified strategic objectives.

2.1 Strategic Objective 1 - Promoting and safeguarding competition in the electronic communications sector

Overview

The MCA's primary objective is to ensure consumers and businesses benefit from a range of electronic communications products and services, with the market providing good outcomes in terms of choice, price, quality, investment and innovation. The MCA does this by ensuring that markets can work effectively, through regulation where appropriate, so that consumers can gain from the benefits of competition. During 2019 the MCA will continue to focus its work on promoting competition and creating a favourable climate for increased investment and innovation in very high-capacity fixed and mobile networks.

Maintaining the compliance framework set at safeguarding a competitive environment

The Significant Market Power (SMP) Framework - The MCA's objective in promoting and safeguarding effective competition through the SMP Framework is that regulation mitigates market power and facilitates market entry and expansion, where feasible, in wholesale and retail electronic communications markets. The MCA reviews a pre-determined set of electronic communications markets and decides, based on facts and evidence, whether or not they are, or are likely to become effectively competitive. If not, the MCA may impose appropriate pro-competitive obligations as necessary, including those relating to access, pricing, non-discrimination and transparency.

In 2019 the MCA will continue to implement, and if necessary enhance, the Virtual Unbundled Local Access (VULA) remedy imposed on GO aimed at safeguarding an alternative operator against any potential discriminatory behaviour. The MCA will also continue to monitor the VULA wholesale charges, key performance indicators and service level guarantees associated with VULA with the same objective in mind.[3] In addition, as part of the ongoing process of reviewing competition outcomes in electronic communications markets, in 2019 the MCA will assess the following two markets:

- **Wholesale Local access provided at a fixed location (Market 3a/2014)** - The wholesale local access (WLA) market concerns access to the fixed electronic communications infrastructure. WLA is the local connection between the end-user's premises and the local exchange or access node.

---

[3] In October 2018 Vodafone and GO reached an agreement whereby Vodafone will be in a position to offer broadband services over GO's FTTH network.

This connection can be copper-, cable- and/or fibre-based and is used to provide fixed-line services such as voice calls and broadband internet.

- **Wholesale Central access provided at a fixed location for mass-market products (Market 3b/2014**) - The wholesale broadband access market relates to the wholesale broadband products that communications providers provide for themselves and sell to each other. These services are one of the building blocks of the retail broadband offers that consumers buy.

The analysis of these electronic communications markets will be carried out in the context of the new guidelines for the assessment of SMP published by the European Commission in April 2018.[4] The revised Guidelines address issues which have become more prominent in recent years, such as the transition from monopolistic to oligopolistic market structures and changes in retail market outcomes, particularly with the rising popularity of bundles and the increasing usage of OTT services.

Facilitating infrastructure roll-out and sharing

The MCA will continue to facilitate the deployment of very high capacity networks and services by providing the necessary support and guidance to sector players and other institutional players. Such support and guidance will mainly address areas related to the sharing and re-use of existing physical infrastructure and access to in-building physical infrastructure. The MCA will continue to assist the Building Regulations Office (BRO) with the implementation of measures aimed at ensuring high-speed ready in-building physical infrastructure in newly constructed and renovated buildings. The MCA will also work with Infrastructure Malta - the agency responsible for the country's road infrastructure as well as the relevant street furniture - so as to further facilitate the deployment of very high capacity networks, including next generation networks such as 5G.

Managing information as the means to promote competition

The MCA will continue to collect data from electronic communications service providers and publish bi-annual market reviews. The information and data collected from the service providers is vital in supporting the MCA's regulatory decisions that serve to promote and safeguard competition. The information collected is also a valuable tool in empowering users to make informed choices and several initiatives of this nature are underway (refer to Strategic Objective 2).

This activity is supplemented by public and business perception surveys. The results of these surveys serve as an additional input to the shaping of regulatory decisions and indicate how consumers' preferences, behaviours and perceptions of electronic communications services are changing over time. In 2019 the MCA will commence a new round of consumer and business perception surveys across all the electronic communications markets.

---

[4] Guidelines on market analysis and the assessment of SMP under the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services (2018/C 159/01).

Managing the compliance framework

Effective management of the numbering resource - The MCA will continue to manage Malta's numbering plan[5] by allocating numbers to service providers for new and existing services, and by monitoring their utilisation to ensure efficient use of numbers. The MCA will ensure that all subscribers who so request can retain their number(s) independently of the undertaking providing the service. In addition the MCA will continue to monitor developments in the emerging electronic communications markets which are expected to require substantial numbering resources - such as for the deployment of IoT technologies. In 2019 the MCA will establish a national framework for numbering resources allocated for IoT services.

Active switching by consumers - Effective competition also depends on factors such as the ability and willingness of customers to switch suppliers in response to a better deal in the market place. In the context of promoting and safeguarding competition in the electronic communications sector the MCA will continue to ensure that there are low barriers to consumers exercising their choice. The MCA's objective to protect and inform consumers and specific programmes of work are discussed under Strategic Objective 2.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 1

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 1.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 1	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Wholesale local access provided at a fixed location (Market 3a) - Market review and analysis Wholesale central access provided at a fixed - location for the mass market (Market 3b) - Market review and analysis	– Public consultation – Notification of draft Decision to the European Commission – Report on Consultation / Decision
Monitoring GO's VULA Reference Offer	– Ongoing monitoring of VULA Reference Offer – Ongoing review of revisions to wholesale charges – Ongoing monitoring of VULA service level agreements and guarantees
Facilitating sharing of physical infrastructure	– Ongoing guidance on physical infrastructure access pricing and other matters to operators

---

[5] Refer to Malta's telephone numbering plan: http://www.mca.org.mt/numbering.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 1	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Ongoing guidance on access to in-building physical infrastructure to operators – Mediation services to facilitate agreement on issues related to physical infrastructure access and pricing – Advice, when requested, to the Utilities Network Dispute Resolution Board
Guidelines on in-building physical infrastructure	– Work with the BRO to establish guidelines on the installation of in-building physical infrastructure used for the deployment of electronic communications networks
Guidelines on access to roads infrastructure	– Work with Infrastructure Malta to establish guidelines on access to the roads infrastructure in order to facilitate the deployment of very high capacity networks (including 5G)
Consumer Perception Surveys *(Mobile Telephony, Fixed Telephony, Fixed Broadband, Broadcasting and Bundles)*	– Review and update consumer perception surveys – Commence field work – Analysis of survey findings and publication
Business Perception Survey *(Mobile Telephony, Fixed Telephony, Business connectivity, Broadband)*	– Review and update the business perception survey – Commence field work – Analysis of survey findings and publication
Informing stakeholders on electronic communications markets	– Publication of bi-annual market review report *June - December 2018 / January - June 2019* – Publication of quarterly data report sheets – Publication of pricing trends in electronic communications markets
Numbering for IoT services	– Public consultation – Report on Consultation / Decision

2.2 Strategic Objective 2 - Ensuring that electronic communications undertakings provide a transparent, value-for-money service to users whilst adhering to incumbent social obligations

Overview

Competition and investment alone cannot be relied upon to fully serve the interests of consumers and businesses who use electronic communications services. To make a well-informed choice about which service and supplier to choose, consumers need high-quality, impartial information and advice. Taken together, competition, targeted regulation and clear information usually lead to good outcomes for consumers. The MCA's role is therefore to ensure, via its regulatory tools at hand, that consumer welfare is maximised. The MCA will continue to focus its work on empowering consumers by providing clear information on their rights and in assisting them in making informed choices in their use of electronic communication services. The MCA will ensure that consumer rights are protected so that they can enjoy the benefits of competition and innovation to the fullest extent possible.

Reviewing operators' Quality of Service (QoS) delivery especially in data services

The designated USP, GO, is required to publish adequate and up-to-date information concerning its performance in the provision of the universal service, based on QoS parameters and measurement methods established at law. In view of the fact that society is becoming increasingly dependent on stable, reliable and secure electronic communications the MCA will, in 2019, consult on extending the obligation to measure and publish relevant QoS information across all providers of publicly available electronic communications services. The MCA will continue to ensure that providers of fixed broadband services monitor their broadband QoS and that the results are made available to the MCA on a quarterly basis. In 2019 the MCA will implement a framework on the broadband QoS measurements and reporting requirements applicable to operators providing mobile broadband services.

Improving the MCA's capabilities vis-à-vis consumer protection

In 2019 the MCA will carry out a study to assess the Quality of Experience (QoE) satisfaction level among users of public electronic communications services. The study will enable the MCA to gain further insight on consumer expectations of service quality and experience, and drivers of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the services received. The MCA will organise a public workshop to present the findings of the study. The workshop will serve to create greater awareness among the general public and industry on consumer protection issues in the electronic communications sector.

Reviewing the USO framework in the context of current and envisaged user needs

In 2019 the MCA will initiate a review of the universal service in light of changing social requirements and the provisions emerging from EECC. An assessment of the potential impact of broadband as a universal service will also form part of this review. In addition the MCA will continue to monitor the performance of GO's current Universal Service Obligation (USO). GO, as the designated USP, is required to provide a publicly available telephone network at a fixed location, capable of supporting

voice, facsimile and data communications in areas where no other undertakings offer such a service at an affordable price. GO is also required to provide an electronic telephone directory (including a smartphone telephone directory app), public payphones, directory enquiry services and specific measures for users with disabilities. In 2019 the MCA will commence an assessment of GO's claim for funding the net-cost claimed to have been incurred in the provision of the USO for the year 2016.

Providing information to consumers via campaigns on relevant media and comparative reports.

Consumer awareness on fixed and mobile products and services - In 2019 the MCA will implement changes to its price comparison website, www.telecosts.com. The necessary improvements to the price comparison website will further assist consumers to take full advantage of the wide choice of competitive phone, broadband and pay-tv services on offer - whether that means opting for a new service with their current provider, or switching to a new provider. In addition the MCA will, via its website, consumer guides and the use of social media, continuously update information available to consumers on how to get the best from electronic communications services. The MCA will also continue to report on trends in the pricing of fixed, mobile and pay-tv services available on the market.

Mapping broadband services - In 2019 the MCA will commence an exercise to map information on the available fixed and mobile electronic communications services across Malta and Gozo. The platform will enable consumers to check coverage and availability of fixed and wireless broadband infrastructures, information on the operators, service / technology availability, available bandwidths and quality of public electronic communications networks and services.

Operator contracts - The MCA will continue to monitor the contractual obligations of all electronic communications operators to ensure that they are in line with applicable legislation. The MCA will ensure that such contracts provide clear and relevant information helping users to take informed and correct decisions when acquiring electronic communications services. Electronic communications service providers are, among other things, required to appropriately inform customers of fixed internet access about the minimum, normally available, maximum and advertised internet speeds they can expect to achieve. In the case of mobile networks, operators must inform their customers of the estimated maximum and advertised speed. Operators are also required to explain the remedies consumers have if they do not achieve the speeds to which they have subscribed.

Termination of contracts and switching providers - The MCA will continue to monitor inter-operator porting and switching processes, and the extent to which they promote good consumer and competition outcomes. In addition, the MCA will continue to monitor and assess the cancellation and termination arrangements of electronic communications service providers (after or during the initial commitment period), and the impact these have on consumers' ability to exit their service contract quickly, conveniently and without error.

Ensuring consumer rights and customer service - The MCA will continue to ensure that electronic communications service providers uphold the rights of their customers and deliver acceptable levels of

customer service. In addition the MCA will continue to handle and resolve complaints it receives from customers of service providers.

Mobile roaming rules - Since 15th June 2017 consumers who have roaming services have been able to use their phone abroad within the EU for no extra charge, subject to certain safeguards. The MCA will continue to monitor compliance with the roaming rules, including through consumer complaints, and engage with stakeholders if compliance concerns arise and where appropriate take enforcement action.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 2

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 2.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 2	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
QoS framework across all providers of publicly available electronic communications services	– Public consultation – Report on Consultation / Decision
Fixed and mobile broadband QoS framework - compliance monitoring	– Publication of decision on mobile broadband QoS framework – Compliance with broadband QoS monitoring and reporting obligations by service providers
Review of the universal service framework / USO	– Position paper on broadband as a universal service taking into consideration the EECC – Public consultation on the review of the USO *(planned in 2020)* – Designation of universal service provider/s *(planned in 2020)*
Review of GO's claim for funding the net cost incurred to provide the USO	– Assessment of GO's funding claim for the financial year 2016 – Decision on GO's funding claim and source of funding for the financial year 2016
Enhancements to the Price Comparison Website	– Enhancements to the price comparison portal – Updating the price comparison portal with details of electronic communications services / packages (including quality of service performance)

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 2	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Launch of revamped price comparison portal
Study on the Quality of Experience (QoE) when using electronic communications services	– Initiate study on QoE – Analyse findings and results of the study – Report on findings and results of the study – Disseminate and discuss findings of the study at the Consumer Seminar (Q4/2019)
Consumer Seminar - Consumer protection challenges in the communications sector	– Develop high-level conference plan – Develop marketing and communications plan – Seminar programme and speakers – Hold consumer seminar – Conference round up and follow-up
Mapping broadband (fixed and mobile) services	– Consult with stakeholders on the scope of the mapping exercise and data requirements – Procurement of a broadband services mapping tool – Initiate the data collection exercise – Establish a process for maintaining the broadband services mapping tool – Launch of broadband services mapping tool *(planned for 2020)*

2.3 Strategic Objective 3 - Contributing to the development and implementation of electronic communications policy

Overview

The MCA's strategic and business objectives are influenced by decisions made at both national and international level. At a national level the MCA works with stakeholders so that it can be more effective in pursuing its objectives. At the international level the MCA contributes and participates in various EU and other international fora to ensure that any future policies benefit the Maltese communications sector, with resultant fallout on the economy at large.

Transposing the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) into Maltese law

In September 2016 the European Commission proposed the establishment of a new EECC. The EECC was formally adopted by the European Parliament and Council on the 11th December 2018. EU Member States have two years to transpose the EECC into national law. The EECC aims to:

- **Enhance the deployment of 5G networks** by ensuring the availability of 5G radio spectrum by the end of 2020 and providing operators with predictability for a least 20 years in terms of spectrum licensing.

- **Facilitate the roll-out of new very high capacity fixed networks** by making rules for co-investment more predictable and promoting risk sharing in the deployment of very high capacity networks; promoting sustainable competition for the benefit of consumers, with a regulatory emphasis on bottlenecks, such as wiring, ducts and cables inside building; and a specific regulatory regime for wholesale only operators.

- **Benefit and protect consumers** irrespective of whether end-users communicate through traditional (calls, sms) or web-based services (skype, WhatsApp, etc) by:

  - ensuring that all citizens have access to affordable communications services, including universally available internet access, for services such as eGovernment, online banking and video calls;

  - ensuring that international calls within the EU will not cost more than 19 cents per minute, while making sure that the new rules would not distort competition, innovations and investment;

  - giving equivalent access to communications for end-users with disabilities;

  - better protecting consumers subscribing to bundled services packages;

  - making it easier to change service provider and keep the same phone number, including rules for compensation if the process goes wrong or takes too long; and by

- increasing the protection of citizens in emergency situations, including retrieving more accurate caller location in emergency situations, broadening emergency communications to text messaging and video calls, and establishing a system to transmit public warnings on mobile phones.

The coming years will see an intensive programme of implementation, including the adoption of new guidelines by BEREC. The MCA will also need to review existing regulatory operations in areas relating to infrastructure access, end-user rights and universal service, the scope of regulation vis-à-vis OTT services and spectrum management. While the relevant regulatory adjustments are likely to take place in 2020, the relevant groundwork will commence in 2019 in tandem with the transposition process of the EECC into Maltese Law.

In its role as adviser to Government on electronic communications policy and regulation the MCA will provide advice to Government on the transposition of the EECC into Maltese Law. The MCA will ensure that any new legislation is proportionate, reflects the challenges facing the sector and meets the needs of citizens and consumers now and in the future. The MCA is also committed to holding appropriate and necessary engagement with all of its stakeholders.

Establishing a Malta position for termination rates for mobile roaming within the EU, intra EU and domestic calls

In line with the EECC by 31st December 2020 the European Commission will, taking utmost account of the opinion of BEREC, adopt a delegated act setting a single maximum EU-wide mobile voice termination rate and a single maximum EU-wide fixed voice termination rate. In 2019 the MCA will establish a Malta position and contribute to the development of an opinion by BEREC. The BEREC opinion will, among others, assess potential effects on operators of setting single maximum EU-wide wholesale termination rates for both fixed and mobile voice.

The EECC will also ensure that consumers are protected from excessive prices for intra-EU calls. A new safeguard cap to telecom operator's prices for calls from home to other EU countries will ensure that, from May 2019 onwards, consumers can make intra-EU calls at a price not exceeding 19 cents per minute and send SMS for 6 cents. Together with BEREC the MCA will contribute to the drafting of guidelines on the implementation of retail price caps for international call and SMS within the EU.

Interacting at various EU, BEREC and International fora, highlighting the national perspective wherever necessary

The MCA's international obligations, first and foremost, entail active participation in the following EU organisations:

▪ BEREC which sets out common positions and statements of best practice to foster regulatory consistency and excellence across the EU. The MCA will organise and host the BEREC plenary meeting to be held between the 5th and 6th December 2019.

- The Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) which provides high-level strategic advice on spectrum policies to the European Commission.

The MCA will continue to contribute and participate in other EU organisations such as:

- The Communications Committee (COCOM), which assists the European Commission in carrying out its executive powers under the regulatory framework for electronic communications.

- The Radio Spectrum Committee (RSCOM), responsible for the development of implementing decisions with respect to technical measures that ensure harmonised conditions across Europe for the availability and efficient use of radio spectrum.

- The European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA), in relation to incident reporting and network security regulation. ENISA contributes to securing Europe's information society by raising awareness of network and information security and in developing and promoting a culture, of network and information security in society for the benefit of citizens, consumers, enterprises and public sector organisations in the EU.

The MCA will also continue to represent Malta in other international fora:

- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with regard to preparation for participation in the ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences.

  The next World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19) will be held between the 28th October and 22nd November 2019. The WRC-19 will consider a range of important spectrum related issues including spectrum for mobile broadband (5G), satellite use and RLANs (Wi-Fi). The MCA will work closely with local stakeholders and European partners to develop Malta's and European positions with the aim of achieving outcomes which are best aligned with national interests.

- The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), the International Regulators' Group (IRG) and other related workgroups.

- The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and in the Commission's High Level Internet Governance Group (HLIGG).

In addition, the MCA will continue to provide advice to Government:

- on proposed EU legislative measures, recommendations and other communications; and

- on the interpretation and application of any new regulations, directives, recommendations, guidelines, advice and regulatory best practice and other EU documents.

The MCA will continue to actively contribute to pan-European initiatives in relation to:

- the harmonisation of spectrum for wireless broadband services;

- the Digital Agenda for Europe which, amongst others, underlines the importance of broadband deployment to promote social inclusion and competitiveness;[6]

- the European Commission's vision and policy actions to turn Europe into a Gigabit Society by 2025;[7]

- the European Commission's 5G Action plan in relation to the development and introduction of 5G wireless technologies in the EU;

- the ongoing submission of accurate statistics and information to the EU organisations;

- better access to emergency services - '112' - by extending the access requirements from traditional telephony to new technologies; and to

- the common European-wide telephone services of social value via the harmonised numbering range beginning with '116'.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 3

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 3.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 3	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Transposition of new EECC into national law	– Review of adopted EECC and commence transposition exercise – Report reflecting proposed changes to legislation submitted to Government – Public consultation taking into consideration Government's feedback (*(planned in Q1/2020)* – Review of responses received to the public consultation

---

[6] In line with the 'Digital Agenda for Europe' broadband targets there should be 30 Mbps broadband or more for all by 2020 (achieved in Malta). In addition, 50% of households are to be subscribed to at least 100 Mbps or higher by 2020.

[7] The new EECC will help Europe meet its target of providing 1-Gbps broadband to schools, hospitals and large businesses, and a minimum of 100-Mbps for all households - which need to be upgradeable to 1Gbps - by 2025.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 3	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Submit revised version of proposed changes to legislation to Government for approval prior to publication as a Bill – Parliamentary process and making of subsidiary legislation *(planned for the first half of 2020)*
Monitoring fixed and mobile interconnection rates	– Contributing to the European Commission's discussions on fixed and mobile interconnection rates
Regulating the prices of intra-EU calls	– Contributing to the drafting of BEREC guidelines on pricing of intra-EU calls – Drafting of enforcement provisions – Consumer information campaign – Monitoring adherence to new rules as from 15 May 2019 – Monitoring market / price developments and reports to the European Commission
WRC-19 preparation and participation *(between 28th October and 22nd November 2019)*	– Contribute to work being carried out by CEPT ECC/CPG and ITU-R Study Groups on the various agenda items of WRC-19 – Review work being undertaken by the CEPT ECC/CPG – Participate and contribute to the WRC-19
Hosting the BEREC plenary meeting in Malta *(between 5th and 6th December 2019)*	– Hold BEREC plenary meeting
EU and International policy and regulatory initiatives	– Ongoing participation and contribution in the following fora and related working groups: • *BEREC, RSPG, RSCOM, COCOM, IRG, ENISA, CEPT, ITU, ICANN and HLIGG*

2.4 Strategic Objective 4 - Maintaining open, safe and secure electronic communications

Overview

Society is becoming increasingly dependent on access to open, safe, reliable and secure electronic communications systems. A growing number of basic functions in all sectors of society such as digital services, electricity supply, water, health care, transport, finance, etc. require that electronic communications networks, services and equipment work everywhere - and at all times. The MCA will continue building the necessary cyber-security capability and continue to ensure communications providers are managing security risks and appropriate levels of resilience.

Building the necessary capacity in the network and cyber-security domain

In 2019 the MCA will finalise a review of the minimum security and integrity requirements and reporting obligations of public electronic communications network and service providers. The review is intended to provide further clarity on what is expected of them in this field. Moreover, the establishment of the minimum security and reporting measures will facilitate future actions that the MCA may need to take in case of operators who are not compliant with the legal requirements.

With the transposition of the Directive (EU) 2016/1148 concerning measures for a high common level of security of network and information systems across the EU,[8] the provisions in the new EECC, as well as the evolving security and integrity landscape the MCA will, during the course of 2019, assess whether additional guidelines and/or legislation is necessary in order to ensure higher levels of resilience and security in the provision of public electronic communications networks and publicly available electronic communications services.

The MCA will continue to work closely with the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (MHAS), the Critical Information Infrastructure Protection (CIIP) Unit within the Critical Infrastructure Protection Directorate (CIPD), the Office of the Information and Data Protection Commission (IDPC), Malta Security Services (MSS) and the police on matters related to cyber-security.

Analysing net neutrality practices and establishing an industry code of practice on zero rating

The MCA will continue to monitor compliance by the operators with net neutrality principles, taking utmost account of the BEREC guidelines, in order to safeguard equal and non-discriminatory treatment of traffic in the provision of internet access services and related end-user rights. The MCA will continue to publish its annual report regarding its monitoring and findings. The annual reports are also submitted to the European Commission and to BEREC. In 2019 the MCA will implement a tool developed by BEREC aimed at stepping up net neutrality monitoring activity. The MCA will also establish a code of practice, together with industry, to allow for the review of potential zero-rated products prior to their market launch. While zero-rating may offer some short-term benefits for consumers there may be

---

[8] Measures For High Common Level of Security of Networks and Information Systems Order, Cap 460.35

concerns relating to the practice on competition and net neutrality grounds. The European Commission will in 2019 evaluate the net neutrality regulations. The MCA will contribute to the work being carried out by BEREC on the review of the EU net neutrality provisions.

Addressing ENISA security incidents reporting requirements

The MCA ensures that operators take appropriate measures to ensure the integrity of their networks and services in line with the technical guidelines issued by ENISA. The MCA also ensures that incidents on network failures above a certain threshold are reported to the MCA. The MCA will continue to follow up any incidents of concern in order to understand their cause, the appropriateness of the operator's response, and the steps that have been taken to minimise the risk of recurrence. On an annual basis the MCA reports severe incidents to ENISA together with the action taken.

Participating in the EU Internet Governance Forum

In 2019 the MCA will continue to contribute to the EU Internet Governance Forum dealing with matters relating to internet governance (such as, artificial intelligence, IoT and cybersecurity). In addition the MCA will continue to promote Internet Governance principles through the Malta Internet Governance Forum. The Malta Internet Governance Forum, chaired by the MCA, is a national multi-stakeholder forum where industry, government, academia and civil society meet to discuss key issues associated with the Internet.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 4

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 4.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 4	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Review of network security and integrity requirements	– Public consultation on the minimum security and integrity requirements – Response to consultation / Decision
Evolution of the security and integrity requirements	– Assess the breadth of current network integrity and security requirements (also taking into account any relevant provisions in the EECC code) – Update the current network integrity security requirements in order to reflect developments within the technology and security sector

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 4	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Audit the public electronic communications networks and service providers in order to assess the measures being taken to comply with obligations
Net Neutrality Regulation - Code of Practice on zero-rated products	– Drafting a code of practice on zero-rated products – Consultation with internet access service providers – Publication of the code of practice – Monitoring the adoption of the code of practice
Net Neutrality Regulation - Compliance and Enhancements	– Ongoing monitoring of the product offers by internet access service providers – Annual report on the MCA's activities
ENISA notification requirements related to security and integrity of networks	– Monitor operator reports on integrity and security incidents – Report on severe incidents to ENISA and the action taken
EU Internet Governance Forum	– Participation and contribution to the EU Internet Governance Forum

2.5 Strategic Objective 5 - Facilitating digital inclusion

Overview

In November 2018, the MCA was assigned the task of administering Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016. This Directive deals with the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. This new role places a regulatory dimension to the MCA's approach towards bridging the digital divide.

The internet is an essential way to access and provide information and services. Web accessibility allows everyone, including people with disabilities, to perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Internet. Accessibility has become necessary due to the rapid growth of online information and interactive services provided on the web and by mobile applications. Making websites and mobile apps more accessible results in better user experience for all, not just users with disabilities.

Transposing the provisions of Directive (EU) 2016/2102

The MCA will provide advice to Government on the transposition of Directive (EU) 2016/2102 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. The transposition of the Directive (EU) 2016/2102 will be carried out early in 2019.

Drafting an implementation plan detailing organisational and operational set-up and mode of regulation

In 2019 the MCA will create the necessary framework to address the lack or absence of online accessibility that contributes to the exclusion or partial exclusion of disadvantaged segments of society. In addition, the MCA will establish the relevant roles, relationships and methodology leading up to the successful implementation of the Directive (EU) 2016/2102 and ongoing monitoring of accessibility of websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies and enforcement thereafter.

Implementing and commencing the monitoring process

In 2019 the MCA will commence with the monitoring of public sector websites to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Directive (EU) 2016/2102. In addition the MCA will embark on the relevant information and training programmes relating to the accessibility of websites and mobile applications – as emphasised in the Directive - in order to ensure user uptake and therefore maximise the outcome of the regulatory initiative. Training programmes will also be delivered to relevant stakeholders and staff of public sector bodies, designed to train them how to create, manage and update the accessible content of websites and mobile applications. The MCA will also raise awareness on the accessibility requirements, their benefits to users and to owners of websites and mobile applications, and give feedback in the case of any failure by public sector bodies to comply with the requirements at law.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 5

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 5.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 5	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Web Accessibility Directive - Transposition	– Drafting of Legal Notice – Presentation of Legal Notice to Parliamentary Secretary – Approval of Legal Notice by Parliamentary Secretary – Presentation of Legal Notice to Parliament – Approval of Legislation by Parliament
Web Accessibility Directive - Implementation of Regulation	– Establishment of Initial Framework – Meeting with stakeholders (FITA, CPRD, MITA) – Establishment of Guidelines – Presentation of process and Guidelines to Government's Chief Information Officers (CIOs) – Establishment and development of an open data portal – Creation of a webpage and publishing of guidelines

2.6 Strategic Objective 6 - Maximising the potential of Radio Spectrum

Overview

The MCA is responsible for ensuring the optimal use of the radio spectrum identified in the national radio frequency plan.[9] This includes planning for future spectrum requirements, such as for mobile data and fixed wireless backhaul. Optimal use of the radio spectrum resource is a key factor in terms of delivery of services, competition, choice and widespread availability.

In 2018 the MCA assigned additional spectrum in the 800 MHz band and 2.6 GHz band for the use of wireless broadband services. In addition, the current licences for the rights of use of the 900 MHz and 1800 MHz spectrum were revised to further facilitate innovation and investment in IoT services.

The currently assigned spectrum in the 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2.1 GHz and 2.6 GHz frequency bands has enabled improvements in the quality, reliability and performance of existing 3G and 4G mobile networks, as well as investment in the deployment of 4.5G networks. The MCA will continue to ensure that sufficient spectrum is made available for new wireless technologies, including 5G, to facilitate the deployment of new and innovative services.

Implementing the National Spectrum Management Strategy

The MCA will in 2019 finalise a review of the national radio spectrum management strategy. The strategy will, among others, identify the radio spectrum bands capable of supporting new wireless broadband technologies, such as 5G technology, and services that will require radio spectrum in the near future. It will set out the MCA's view on a number of prevailing spectrum management issues including: the use of auctions, radio spectrum competition caps, spectrum trading (transfers and leases), licence duration, fees for spectrum rights of use, sharing and collaborative arrangements, technology and service neutrality and transparency of information. The strategy will also establish the MCA's policy on the renewal of licences for the rights of use of radio spectrum used for electronic communication services that will expire in the coming years.[10]

Continuing the process to clear the 700 MHz band

In June 2018, in line with the EU Decision 2017/899, the MCA published Malta's roadmap on the use of the UHF (470-790 MHz) band. The national roadmap outlines three key milestones: (1) the 700 MHz duplex band to be made available for commercial mobile wireless broadband services as from June 2021; (2) the 700 MHz centre gap and guard bands to be reserved for SDL (supplementary downlink)

---

[9] The MCA regularly reviews the National Radio Frequency Plan (NFP) to reflect changes to the allocation of spectrum taking into account European and International regulations: http://www.mca.org.mt/national-frequency-plan.

[10] In 2020 spectrum in the 2.1 GHz band and the 3.4 - 3.6 GHz band assigned to GO and Vodafone. In 2021 spectrum in the 470-790 MHz band - also referred to as the UHF band - assigned to GO. In 2022 spectrum in the 2.1 GHz band assigned to Melita and spectrum used for terrestrial Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) assigned to Digi B Network.

and PPDR (public protection and disaster relief) services subject to demand aspects including those related to IoT; and (3) the primary use of sub 700 MHz band for digital terrestrial television (DTT) to be secured until 2030. The MCA will over the coming three years implement the initiatives emerging from the national roadmap on the use of the UHF band.

Establishing the respective assignment frameworks for the three pioneer bands identified for 5G

In 2019 the MCA will establish the radio spectrum assignment framework and licence conditions for the pioneer bands identified for 5G - 700 MHz, 3.6 GHz (3400 – 3800 MHz) and 26 GHz (24.25 – 27.5 GHz) bands - in order to facilitate the rollout of 5G networks and services in Malta. The 700 MHz band will be made available for mobile wireless broadband services as from June 2021. The 3.6 GHz and 26 GHz bands will be made available for wireless broadband services as from the end of December 2020.

Exploring solutions to potential infrastructure issues posed by 5G deployment

In 2019 the MCA will explore solutions to potential infrastructure issues posed by the deployment of 5G networks. The MCA will establish an appropriate access and infrastructure sharing framework facilitating access to base stations and small-area wireless access points (also referred to as small cells) for both existing and new operators. The MCA will also work with the respective entities and agencies responsible, among others, for the building and upkeep of the countries roads, ancillary road infrastructure, as well as the relevant street furniture in order to facilitate the rollout of 5G networks (such as for the deployment of small-area wireless access points).

Showcasing 5G use via targeted initiatives, among which consulting on PPDR services as a tangible use case for 5G

In 2019 the MCA will finalise a feasibility study to identify potential interest and material use cases that tap into the potential of next generation 5G technologies and services for the benefit of the Maltese market. The study will, amongst other things, look into the availability of spectrum that will enable 5G technologies and applications, identify funding and investment options for the deployment of 5G in Malta, as well as identify and liaise with key stakeholders interested in such technologies and applications.

The MCA plans to invite expressions of interest from industry and other interested parties in using spectrum for the provision of 5G pre-commercial trails and qualified use cases. The MCA plans to make available radio spectrum in the 3.6 GHz band, 26 GHz band and other 5G candidate bands, under a pre-commercial trial regime. This will enable electronic communications operators and other interested parties (e.g. research groups, universities, industry, public authorities) to conduct trials on the use of 5G technology for qualified use cases.

The '5G for Europe Action Plan'[11] notes that public services may be an early adopter and promoter of 5G. The national roadmap on the use of the UHF band identifies that the 700 MHz centre gap and

---

[11] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/5g-europe-action-plan

guard bands could be used for the deployment of broadband PPDR communications services. In 2019 the MCA will embark on a consultation process with all stakeholders in order to determine national broadband PPDR needs and subsequently establish a framework for the assignment and management of the 700 MHz centre gap and guard bands.

Implementing the TV transmission strategy for commercial transmissions and contributing to the way forward on General Interest (GI) transmissions, with emphasis on the future of DTT

In line with the national roadmap on the use of the UHF band, in 2019, the MCA will establish the assignment and management principles for the right to use of sub-700 MHz band for DTT. This will serve to provide direction to the market in respect of spectrum availability following the expiry of GO's radio spectrum licence for commercial DTT services in May 2021. This will be followed by an expression for interest for the rights of use of the sub-700 MHz band in order to ensure continuity of commercial DTT in Malta until 2030. The redeployment of the sub-700 MHz band by 2021 also necessitates a review of Government's policy on GI television transmissions. During 2019 the MCA will continue to contribute to the Broadcasting GIO (General Interest Objectives) committee led by the Broadcasting Authority (BA) and tasked with updating Government's policy for digital broadcasting.

Ensuring continued balance between EMF thresholds and the roll-out of new infrastructure

The MCA will continue its routine monitoring of electronic magnetic field (EMF) emissions with a view to ensuring that levels of electromagnetic radiation do not exceed the levels established by the International Commission of non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), which are also endorsed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The EMF results by locality are publicly available on the MCA website. In addition the MCA will maintain ongoing liaison with the department responsible for environmental health on EMF related issues and will continue with its EMF auditing programme. In 2019 the MCA will carry out a pilot project to assess the feasibility of remote monitoring of EMF emissions.

The future rollout of 5G networks is expected to increase the number of base stations with the use of small-area wireless access points (also referred to as 'small cells') and of higher frequency bands than those of existing mobile networks. In addition to the ongoing monitoring of EMF emissions, the MCA plans to map the infrastructure and related EMF emission measurements with the information being more easily available to the public.

Ensuring efficient and effective use of spectrum and associated radiocommunications equipment

In 2019 the MCA will finalise a review of the licensing regime with respect to the Private Mobile Radio (PMR) service in order to ensure the efficient use of spectrum. The MCA will also review the current licensing regime for fixed links (specifically in the case of fixed links using spectrum above 40 GHz) capable of providing base-station backhauling for the deployment of 5G networks.

Procuring key equipment for the purpose of managing the spectrum compliance framework

The MCA will continue to monitor the radio spectrum and take all necessary action to prevent harmful interference and to mitigate it when it occurs. In 2019 the MCA will continue to invest in the upgrading of its radio spectrum monitoring facilities to be in a better position to plan for future assignment of radio spectrum as well as for monitoring all kinds of emissions.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 6

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 6.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 6	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
National Spectrum Management Strategy	– Public consultation on the National Spectrum Management Strategy – Publication of National Spectrum Management Strategy – Implementation of new radio spectrum management principles
Towards a 5G ecosystem	– Identify potential industries that may be directly or indirectly affected by the rollout of 5G – Establish the needs for the successful rollout and implementation of 5G within the relevant industries – Liaise with other public entities so as to identify any restrictions which could hinder the deployment of small cells, taking into account the provisions in the EECC – Analyse how access and infrastructure sharing rules can be simplified – Identify possible co-investment, risk-sharing models and commercial agreements that can promote both competition and infrastructure sharing – Develop a framework for private small cell sharing
Facilitating 5G pre-commercial trials and qualified use cases in Malta	– Identification of possible 5G use cases

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 6	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Invite expressions of interest for the provision of 5G pre-commercial trails and qualified use cases – Facilitate the deployment of the first 5G use cases
Deployment models of BB-PPDR network - 5G use case	– Consultation on the deployment models for BB-PPDR networks – Establish the assignment and management principles for the 700 MHz spectrum in the centre gap and guard bands – Invite expressions of interest for the 700 MHz spectrum in the centre gap and guard bands – Award of the 700 MHz band in the centre gap and guard bands *(planned in 2020)*
Review of licensing framework for fixed links operating above 40 GHz	– Review licensing framework for fixed links above 40 GHz for backhaul connectivity – Public consultation – Response to Consultation / Decision
Assignment framework for the rights of use of 5G spectrum (700 MHz, 3.4 - 3.8 GHz and 26 GHz)	– Public consultation on the proposed radio spectrum assignment framework – Invite expressions of interest for the rights of use of the 5G pioneer bands – Assignment of the rights of use depending on market interest *(planned in 2020)*
Reassignment of the rights of use of spectrum in the 2.1 GHz band	– Public consultation on the proposed radio spectrum reassignment framework – Decision on the spectrum reassignment framework – Invite expressions of interest for the rights of use of the 2.1 GHz band – Award of the rights of use of the 2.1 GHz band *(dependent on market interest)*
Reassignment of rights of use of spectrum used for T-DAB	– Development of a framework to make available T-DAB radio spectrum following expiry of current licence

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 6	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
	– Public consultation on the proposed spectrum assignment framework (*planned for 2020*) – Invite expressions of interest for the rights of use of radio spectrum for T-DAB services (*planned for 2020*)
Assignment of rights of use of spectrum for commercial DTT services	– Public consultation on the proposed assignment framework for the rights of use of DTT spectrum in the sub-700 MHz band – Invite expressions of interest for the rights of use of DTT spectrum – Award of the rights of use of DTT spectrum (*planned in 2020*)
Review of radiocommunications equipment licences - Private Mobile Radio (PMR)	– Public consultation on the revised PMR licensing framework – Proposal to Government on the revised PMR licensing framework
Pilot project on remote monitoring of EMF emissions	– Consult with the operators on the data format required – Procurement of the necessary EMF monitoring hardware – Commission the test sites and commence gathering of the respective information – Compile and analyse the information gathered from the pilot sites – Scoping exercise on whether to rollout remote EMF monitoring nationwide
EMF emissions - monitoring compliance	– EMF monitoring and publication of results – Audit of EMF measurements
Upgrading radio spectrum monitoring facilities	– Tender for the procurement, installation and commissioning of a radio monitoring system – Adjudication and award of the tender – Implementation of new spectrum monitoring facilities

2.7 Strategic Objective 7 - Facilitating the development of eCommerce

Overview

eCommerce is radically changing the way business is conducted and is impacting all areas of economic activity in one way or another. eCommerce transaction figures for both goods and services continue to grow rapidly, underscoring the need for more vigilance on quality and reliability of service delivery by Malta-located Information Society Service Providers (ISSPs), albeit on a light-touch basis.

The MCA's regulatory oversight focuses on enhancing security for the buyer and, by implication, increase the attractiveness of the online seller. Two new elements that will be included in the MCA's 2019 work programme relative to eCommerce and online services have to do with managing the respective EU regulations on geo-blocking and cross-border portability. The new regulatory tasks in relation to geo-blocking and cross-border portability of online services will be addressed through a mix of regulatory oversight and consumer information.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/302 which addresses unjustified online sales discrimination based on customers' nationality, place of residence or place of establishment within the internal market.

In 2019 the MCA will implement the Geo-blocking Regulation which addresses the problem of customers not being able to buy goods and services from traders located in a different Member States for reasons related to nationality, place of residence or place of establishment. The MCA will set up the necessary monitoring and enforcement structures to ensure that consumers enjoy the service levels that the regulation sets out to achieve.

Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/1128 on cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market.

In 2019 the MCA will implement the Regulation on cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market. The MCA will set up the necessary monitoring and enforcement structures to ensure that the objectives that regulation sets out to achieve are fully met.

Maintaining regulatory oversight on the activities of Information Society Service Providers (ISSPs)

During 2019 the MCA will continue to invest the necessary resources into monitoring regulatory compliance with the eCommerce Act. The MCA will continue to focus its work on awareness raising by ensuring that Malta-located ISSPs are aware of their obligations arising out of the eCommerce Act and that consumers are aware of their rights and avenues of redress. Such initiatives include:

- Providing adequate and up-to-date information to service providers regarding requirements relative to the take-up and pursuit of such services.

- Providing information to users of such services of their rights and the pitfalls in online ordering that they should be looking out for.

- Assessing the adoption of eCommerce and ICT by local businesses and consumers via the findings of eCommerce business and consumer surveys commissioned by the MCA and other entities (such as the National Statistics Office). The results of such surveys assist the MCA in gaining a better understanding of the barriers that certain business and industries are facing in implementing eCommerce services and in identifying initiatives that could increase confidence in using eCommerce.

- Holding at least one eCommerce forum to keep interested parties informed of regulatory and technical developments. The forum seeks to create an eCommerce community where industry players and other stakeholders can meet to discuss topics of mutual interest and to share experiences and knowledge.

- Participating and contributing to fora targeting the uptake of eCommerce amongst SMEs.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 7

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 7.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 7	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Implementation of Geo-blocking Regulation	– Monitoring and enforcement structures – Ongoing monitoring and enforcement
Implementation of Cross-Border Portability Regulation	– Monitoring and enforcement structures – Ongoing monitoring and enforcement
Business and Consumer perception surveys on the use of eCommerce	– Assess the results from eCommerce business and consumer surveys – Identify new work areas that could increase confidence amongst consumers and businesses in using eCommerce.
Regulatory oversight on the activities of Information Society Service Providers (ISSPs)	– Ensuring that Malta-located ISSPs are aware of their obligations – Ensuring that consumers are aware of their rights and avenues of redress.

2.8 Strategic Objective 8 - Supervising the provision of electronic signatures and trust services

Overview

The EU Regulation 910/2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (referred to as the 'eIDAS Regulation') creates an European internal market for electronic trust services (eTS) - namely electronic signatures, electronic seals, time stamping, electronic delivery service and website authentication - by ensuring that they will work across borders and have the same legal status as traditional paper based processes.

The changes required to existing national legislation in order to ensure legal consistency and clarity with the eIDAS Regulation - primarily the Electronic Commerce Act, Cap 426 and the Electronic Trust Services Notification and Fees Regulations, SL426.03 - were adopted in July 2016.

As the body tasked with the supervision of qualified trust service providers the MCA, as required, grants qualified status to trust service providers and the services they provide. The MCA is responsible for maintaining and publishing a trusted list of certified service providers using qualified trust services and their status. The MCA will continue to supervise qualified trust service providers to ensure that the qualified trust services they provide meet the requirements of the eIDAS Regulation. The MCA also takes action in relation to non-qualified trust service providers, when such providers do not meet the requirements laid down in the eIDAS Regulation.

Streamlining the existing supervision process in order to make it more effective, following a first year's full operation

In 2017 the MCA put in place the necessary procedures and guidelines for the effective implementation and monitoring of the eIDAS Regulation with regard to qualified trust service providers. During 2018 the MCA continued to build internal competence (technical and legal) in supervising trust service providers. In 2019 the MCA will continue to monitor the situation and, if necessary, make enhancements to the registration and subsequent monitoring processes in a cycle of continuous improvement. The MCA will continue to participate in the Forum of European Supervisory Authorities for Electronic Signatures (FESA) which comprises of regulatory bodies from all EU countries that meet twice a year to develop common points of view for dialog with political and technical institutions. The FESA discusses, amongst others, best practices for trusted list management and conformity assessment methods.

Establishing a new regulation that focuses on remote identification for eIDAS

During 2019 the MCA will continue to promote Malta as a venue for registration of qualified trust services providers. The MCA will also encourage the development and use of innovative trust services in Malta. In addition, the MCA will strive to create the necessary capacity in order to address the regulation of new and innovative services, such as remote identification and certification via the use of biometrics.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 8

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 8.

Priority Programme of Works 2019- Strategic Objective 8	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
eIDAS Regulation - Promotion and Monitoring	– Ongoing monitoring and supervision of qualified trust service providers in line with the eIDAS Regulation – Update as necessary internal monitoring processes and guidelines – Contribute and participate in FESA meetings
Remote Identification Regulation	– Establishing a regulation that focuses on remote identification

2.9 Strategic Objective 9 - Safeguarding sustainable competition in the postal sector

Overview

The MCA has an objective to promote the development of the postal sector and to safeguard sustainable competition and innovation in postal service provision. To develop a competitive and sustainable postal services sector in Malta, it is important that postal service providers can compete on a fair basis so that users of postal services derive maximum benefits in terms of choice, price and quality.

Continuing enhancements to the MaltaPost economic control model

The designated USP, MaltaPost, is currently classified as having SMP in all the markets falling within the scope of the universal postal service. These *ex-ante* remedies imposed on MaltaPost aim to prevent anti-competitive practices and to safeguard the interests of users and operators alike. MaltaPost's audited regulatory (separated) accounts are critical information for the MCA to be in a position to assess how the universal postal service is performing financially, for assessing universal postal services' prices for compliance with tariff requirements of the Postal Services Act, and other regulatory requirements.

In 2019 the MCA will continue to enhance its current economic control model used to monitor tariffs and price change requests raised by MaltaPost. In assessing any claims for changes in tariffs the MCA considers whether the universal postal service is provided at prices which relate to cost and give incentives for efficient universal service provision.

Analysing competition dynamics in specific postal markets

The MCA will continue to monitor the application of the *ex-ante* remedies imposed on MaltaPost as well as the relevant postal service markets, the aim being to ensure that market review decisions remain relevant and that remedies reflect any changes in the markets. In 2019 the MCA will finalise a review of the postal services markets in Malta. The review will assess, among others, whether MaltaPost continues to enjoy SMP in any of the postal services markets falling within the scope of the universal postal service.

Managing the postal compliance framework

The MCA will continue to ensure compliance of both licensed operators providing services within the scope of the universal postal service and operators subject to a general authorisation providing only services that fall outside the scope of the universal postal service. The MCA will ensure that operators that offer services that fall within the scope of the universal postal service are appropriately licensed to carry out such activities. This is particularly important for safeguarding the provision of the universal postal service.

The MCA will continue to monitor MaltaPost's compliance with its regulatory obligations related to the provision of the universal postal service. The MCA's monitoring in respect of the universal service provision mainly includes the following: (i) ensuring that pricing of its universal postal services comply with the tariff requirements of the Postal Services Act; (ii) monitoring compliance with the MCA's regulatory accounting decision; and (iii) monitoring compliance against the established QoS standards and related performance targets.

Maximising efficiencies in collection and analysis of data

The MCA will continue to collect relevant, accurate and timely information on the postal market in an efficient and effective manner and include this in published bi-annual market reviews. This activity is supplemented by periodic public and business perception surveys. The results of these surveys serve as an additional source of information in support of regulatory decisions, as well as an indication of how the needs of residential and business postal users are changing over time and where innovation in the postal sector is under way. In 2019 the MCA will publish the findings of a household and business perception survey of the postal sector.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 9

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 9.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 9	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Price control framework to ensure sustainability of the USO provision	– Simulate MaltaPost's separated accounts on MCA's control model – Generate hypothetical future-looking scenarios with regard to the USO – Monitor any price changes requests proposed by MaltaPost
Regulatory financial reporting by MaltaPost	– Ensure MaltaPost's compliance with the regulatory financial reporting requirements – Ongoing monitoring of MaltaPost's financial performance with regard to the universal postal service
Market Analysis - Postal Services Markets	– Consultation document concerning review of post services markets – Response to Consultation / Decision

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 9	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Postal Consumer Perception Surveys	– Publish postal survey findings - households, businesses and large bulk mailers
Compliance, enforcement and investigations	– Ongoing monitoring and enforcement of operators licensed to provide services within the scope of the universal postal service – Ongoing monitoring and enforcement of operators subject to a general authorisation providing only services outside the scope of the universal postal service
Informing stakeholders on the postal markets	– Publication of bi-annual market review report *(June – December 2018 and January – June 2019)* – Publication of quarterly data report sheets

2.10 Strategic Objective 10 - Ensuring that postal undertakings provide a transparent, value-for-money service to users whilst adhering to incumbent social obligations

Overview

The MCA has the duty to ensure the provision of a universal postal service that meets the reasonable needs of postal service users in Malta. With the ongoing decline in traditional letter mail volumes coupled with the significant growth in incoming cross-border packets and parcels, the sustainability of the USO has become increasingly dependent on incoming cross-border mail. The surplus being generated by MaltaPost from inbound cross-border mail flows partially compensates for income declines in other areas, thereby supporting the financial sustainability of the USO. However, MaltaPost's audited regulatory accounts show that the growth in revenue in domestic and outgoing cross-border mail flows is slowing down due to the ongoing decline in traditional letter mail volumes.

Determining the feasibility of existing universal postal service obligations

In 2019 the MCA will in continue to press for quality of service delivery of the universal postal service at the established efficiency targets. The MCA will continue to ensure the feasibility of the existing USO and, where justified, provide MaltaPost with additional flexibility in the provision of the universal postal service in order to be in a position to secure the necessary efficiencies in operation and related costs.

Implementing the EU regulation on cross-border parcel delivery

The Regulation on Cross-border Parcel Delivery Services (Regulation (EU) 2018/644) adopted on 18th April 2018 aims to improve price transparency and enhance regulatory oversight of parcel delivery in such a way as to allow consumers and retailers to benefit from affordable deliveries and convenient return options. In 2019 the MCA will start to gather information from parcel delivery service providers about their services and the public list of tariffs applicable for single-piece postal items. The European Commission on its part will publish the tariffs of all Member States on a dedicated website. As a result citizens will be able to compare parcel delivery costs more easily and benefit from more affordable prices for cross-border parcel delivery. In addition, the MCA will carry out its first assessment of cross-border single-piece parcel tariffs within the scope of the USO. The assessment, which will be carried out in line with the European Commission's guidelines, will identify those tariffs deemed to be unreasonably high. The European Commission will publish its first annual report on the tariff assessments carried out by the Member States in the third quarter of 2019.

Managing the compliance framework

The MCA will continue to keep the public informed of postal market developments and postal trends that are taking place within the postal sector. The MCA will continue to empower postal service users by providing information regarding the provision of postal services in Malta. The MCA will also continue to monitor compliance by the USP and other service providers in relation to protecting the integrity and security of mail, access to universal postal services, complaints handling procedures and compensation schemes, as well as quality of service.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 10

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 10.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 10	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Implementing the EU Cross-border parcel Regulation	– Data collection process in line with Article 4 of the Regulation – Cross-border prices forwarded to the European Commission for publication – Identification of tariffs that the MCA objectively considers necessary to assess – Assessment of tariffs considered to be unreasonably high – Report to the European Commission
Ensuring the sustainability of the universal postal service / USO	– Monitoring the sustainability of the existing USO – Establishing a way forward on the review of MaltaPost's USO
Monitoring of the USP's activities and other service providers	– Ongoing monitoring of mail integrity, postal service schemes, QoS and complaints handling

2.11 Strategic Objective 11 - Contributing to the development and implementation of postal policy

Overview

The MCA contributes to the development and implementation of postal policy by providing input to Government on EU proposals, as well on national matters. The MCA also participates and contributes to the establishment of positions within the European Regulators Group for Postal Services (ERGP).

Providing policy advice to Government on EU and other international matters as well as on aspects that are national in scope

During 2019 the MCA will continue to provide advice to Government on the interpretation and application of any new regulations, directives, recommendations and other EU documents. The MCA will continue to actively participate and contribute to the ERGP responsible for advising and assisting the European Commission in consolidating the internal market for postal services and ensuring the consistent application of the European postal regulatory framework for postal services. The MCA will continue to participate in the European Commission's Postal Directive Committee and the European Committee for Postal Regulation (CERP).[12] The MCA also contributes to the Universal Postal Union (UPU) on matters regarding cross-border postal services. The next UPU Congress will be held in 2020.[13] In addition, an UPU Extraordinary Congress is planned to be held in September 2019 to discuss the way forward on the review of the UPU postal terminal dues remuneration system.

Providing statistical and other relevant information to EU and other international fora

The MCA will continue provide accurate statistics and information to the EU and other international organisations regarding the postal services market. The MCA will also continue to collaborate with peer regulators on a one-to-one basis or collectively in the relevant organisations.

Participating in the ERGP discussion on the new EU Postal Services Directive, envisaged to commence in 2019

During 2019 the MCA will continue to contribute and participate in the ERGP discussion on a new EU Postal Services Directive. In the first quarter of 2019 the ERGP will publish a report analysing the main market developments and the implications for regulation as well as the regulatory problems/drawbacks of the current postal regulatory framework. In addition, in 2019 the ERGP will provide the European Commission with an opinion on reforming the Postal Services Directive. The ERGP's opinion on reforming the EU Postal Services Directive will contribute to the European Commission's report in 2020 on the application of the EU Postal Services Directive and the report on the implementation of the Regulation on cross-border parcel delivery.

---

[12] With the formation of the ERGP, the MCA's work in CERP has been scaled back.

[13] Held every four years, this is the highest-level event of the UPU where the strategic futures of the postal sector and the UPU for the following four years are negotiated.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 11

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 11.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 11	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
EU / International policy and regulatory initiatives	– Ongoing participation and contribution in the following fora and related working groups: ERGP and the Postal Directive Committee – Provision of statistical and other relevant information to EU and international fora
Review of the EU Postal Service Directive	– Contribution to the ERGP Opinion on Review of the EU Postal Services Directive

2.12 Strategic Objective 12 - Conducting research and facilitating innovation in the sectors under the MCA's mandate

Overview

The MCA remains committed to facilitating innovation and research in the sectors under the MCA's mandate. In 2019 the MCA will focus its work in relation to promoting and facilitating development in the areas under its mandate, primarily in the following areas: (1) the use of spectrum for innovation, mainly via testing and trials; (2) the exploitation of new technologies for innovation, via research and discussion on the potential of Wi-Fi, 5G and IoT; (3) the updating of the regulatory toolkit in order to facilitate the rollout of these technologies; and (4) exploring the needs and the opportunities for the space communications industry in Malta.

Updating the National Broadband Plan with implementation strands in relation to 5G and Gigabit Society commitments taken at EU Council Level

In 2019 the MCA will consult on the National Broadband Strategy in line with the strategic objectives for 2025 set out in the European Commission's communication "Towards a European Gigabit Society[14]" and in the 5G Action Plan. The strategy will pave the way for the future of fixed and mobile broadband in Malta including the establishment of the 5G "path-to-deployment". The strategy will also take into consideration the use of future 5G infrastructure to improve the performance of electronic communications services used for public safety and security.

Developing untapped potential of spectrum and other related activities and supporting wireless research and development

The MCA will continue to make spectrum available to enable new and innovative technologies and services (refer to Strategic Objective 6). In addition, having regard to future trends, including the increased demands for advanced mobile services, potential impacts of IoT and 5G, and new wireless opportunities associated with space communications, the MCA will continue to promote the uptake of test and trial licences.

As mentioned under Strategic Objective 6 the MCA plans to invite expressions of interest from industry and other interested parties for launching 5G pre-commercial trails and qualified use cases. The MCA plans to make available radio spectrum in the 5G candidate bands under a pre-commercial trial regime, which will enable electronic communications service providers and other interested parties to conduct trials on the use of 5G technology.

Reviewing IPv6 and other numbering limitations that might impair the deployment of new and innovative services

The connectivity requirements for IoT devices are particularly wide and will require new service offerings to meet the individual requirements. In addition, the rollout of IoT devices may require the

---

[14] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/improving-connectivity-and-access

upgrading from Internet Protocol Version 4 (IPv4) to Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) addressing scheme and may also require significant numbering resources. IoT devices are heavily reliant upon robust and secure communication as the data collected by device sensors can include sensitive information. IPv6 will enable more secure M2M communication and allow for the IoT to continue to expand. Given the significant potential for life-style and productivity enhancement associated with IoT, the MCA will review the current situation with regards to IPv6 addressing scheme and other numbering limitations.

Stepping up Space Communications Initiatives

In line with the Malta National Space Policy[15] the MCA will continue exploring the needs and the opportunities for the space communications industry in Malta.

Satellite filings with the ITU through Malta - The MCA will continue to encourage satellite operators to register space resources with the ITU through Malta in line with the satellite filing framework.

Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) - The MCA will continue to support local industry and academia participating in the Galileo projects. The MCA will also continue to support Government by participating in programme committee, evolution and supervisory authority meetings. The MCA will contribute and participate in the European Commission's expert group on governmental satellite communications (GovSatCom) concerning the feasibility for setting up a European satellite communications network to address governmental communication needs.

Liaison with other Entities - The MCA will continue working with the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and other players responsible in facilitating investment in space-related activities in Malta.

Updating Feasibility Study on the International Connectivity Project

Malta is entirely reliant on links to Sicily for international telecoms connectivity. In 2015 the MCA carried out a feasibility study for a new submarine cable connecting Malta to other alternative locations with the objective of enhancing the resilience and security of the current international electronic communications connectivity. The study-phase is now at a relatively advanced stage and the articulation of the business model in tandem with a final cost/benefit assessment are planned to be completed in 2019. There is increasingly the likelihood that, given its strategic importance, the project will qualify for state-aid. Following state-aid approval by the European Commission the MCA will issue a request for expressions of interest for the deployment of a new submarine cable linking Malta to mainland Europe.

---

[15] http://mcst.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-Malta-National-Space-Policy-2017.pdf

Shaping the ecosystem through Intelligence reports

In 2019 the MCA will carry out a series of intelligence reports and discussion papers aimed at identifying key emerging technologies and services (locally and international) which are relevant to the communications sector. The MCA will also assess whether national regulations are suitable for the deployment of emerging technologies in Malta and identify any measures which could facilitate the deployment of such technologies.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 12

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Objective 12.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Strategic Objective 12	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Towards a 5G ecosystem *(also reflected under Strategic Objective 6)*	– Identify the potential industries that may be directly or indirectly affected by the rollout of 5G – Establish the needs for the successful rollout and implementation of 5G within the relevant industries – Liaise with any other public authority so as to identify any restrictions which could hinder the deployment of small cells, taking into account the relevant provisions in the EECC – Analyse how access and infrastructure sharing rules can be simplified – Identify possible co-investment, risk-sharing models and commercial agreements that can promote both competition and infrastructure sharing – Develop a framework for private small cell sharing
Submarine cable feasibility study	– Request for expressions of interest *(subject to initiative qualifying for state-aid)* – Selection of Investment Parties – Establishment of investment model and timescales for implementation *(subject to market interest)*

National Broadband Strategy - Broadband policy towards a gigabit society	– Public consultation – Review feedback from public consultation – Publish broadband policy towards a gigabit society
Reviewing IPv6 and other numbering limitations	– Setting up of IPv6 Task force – Initiate setup of IPv6 platforms amongst ECS providers – Promote the uptake of IPv6 in Malta – Set-up an IPv6 test bed and commence trials
Galileo - Participating in the GNSS and PRS programme	– Attending programme committee, evolution and supervisory authority meetings – Increasing public awareness, visibility and interest in Galileo and supporting dissemination of project results – Stimulating collaborative research across industry and academia and developing skills and knowledge transfer – Assisting government, industry and academia to foster academia-industry relationships that benefit each party – Enhancing knowledge transfer and sharing of lessons learned with other Member States
MCA Connectivity Centre	– Survey developments in new and innovative technologies – Identify regulatory burdens that could delay or hinder the availability of new and innovative technologies – Training plan to keep abreast with the latest technological developments

2.13 Ensuring Quality and Continuity in Delivery

The MCA strives to be an active and dynamic organisation that is capable of responding to the rapidly changing environment and is positioned, in terms of expertise, robust analytics and up-to-date information, as well as resources, to address issues that affect our ability to fulfil our mission.

The MCA is committed to maintaining an efficient and effective strategic and business planning function, supported by the monitoring of actual performance against set targets. In order to optimise its performance, the MCA is also committed to ensuring that its employees possess the necessary expertise to contribute fully towards the achievement of the MCA's objectives. The MCA will ensure that their knowledge remains up-to-date through ongoing investment in training and continuous learning.

As new functions are assumed the MCA will dovetail these with its business in as seamless a manner as possible. The MCA's mission, strategic and business objectives, organisational structure, policies and procedures will be updated to reflect the change in scenario.

The MCA will continue to focus on the development of new e-services, as well as the efficient utilisation of existing ones, both internally to simplify interaction within MCA as well as externally to all its stakeholders.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Organisational

The table below contains a listing of the priority work streams for 2019 that will contribute to working effectively.

Priority Programme of Works 2019 - Organisational	
Project / Activity	**Planned Output**
Strategy Update and Business plan	– Publication of Strategic Update 2019 - 2021 – Publication of Annual Plan 2019 – Strategy Update 2020 - 2022 – Business and Financial Plan 2020 - 2022
Annual report and financial statements	– Publication of MCA's Annual Report 2018
Performance management and monitoring	– Quarterly performance management reviews
Processes and procedures	– Ongoing review of the MCA's business processes and procedures
Staff training	– Staff training in both soft and hard skills

2.14 Delivery of the Work Programme

The priority work streams and outputs envisaged to be performed in 2019 are shown under each of the above strategic objectives. The major outputs listed under each strategic objective represent the MCA's current best view of the priority work streams that will be undertaken during 2019.

The MCA caters for the element of uncertainty that will inevitably characterise its work programme throughout any given year. The MCA therefore intends to retain flexibility within the 2019 work programme, in order to respond to changes and new issues arising during the course of the year.

The MCA will update its plans every quarter and make adjustments to its work programme when necessary to make sure it keeps pace with the rate of market change and any critical issues affecting citizens and consumers at any one time.

3. Financial Projections

The MCA's projected expenditure for 2019 is expected to be as shown in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: MCA's Expenditure Analysis 2019						
	Staff Costs (€)	Administrative Expenditure (€)	Operational Expenditure (€)	Projects Expenditure (€)	Depreciation Charge (€)	Total Expenditure (€)
Electronic Communications	1,954,706	448,300	298,341	412,320	102,048	**3,215,715**
Postal Services	140,362	20,964	11,140	26,460	-	**198,926**
Radio Spectrum Monitoring	239,531	57,675	175,178	12,020	-	**484,404**
Radiocommunications Equipment	116,465	22,855	2,684	2,760	-	**144,764**
eCommerce and eTrust Services	182,198	30,665	21,358	115,500	-	**349,721**
Total Expenditure (€)	**2,633,262**	**580,459**	**508,701**	**569,060**	**102,048**	**4,393,530**