

Press release: Government to boost 5G and simplify planning to support mobile deployment

Previous investment in the 5G testbeds and trials programme has driven work in the healthcare, tourism, transport and broadcasting sectors. The latest investment will support similar work in the logistics and manufacturing sectors.

Projects will trial ways which can help these sectors increase their productivity and output, boosting the UK economy. The trials could cover different manufacturing processes as well as across road, air, and sea based freight logistics.

The funding was announced by Digital Secretary Jeremy Wright at the 5G World Conference as part of London Tech Week. The latest round of investment is through the £200 million project to test 5G technology that's up to ten times faster than 4G and able to support more than a million devices per square kilometre.

Digital Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

As part of our modern Industrial Strategy, we're making sure that Britain has a telecoms infrastructure that is fit for the future.

5G is about more than mobile phone consumers having a fast and reliable connection anywhere in the country. It's a vital piece of technology that can be used to improve the productivity and growth of our industrial sectors. That's why we're excited to develop new trials in areas such as manufacturing and logistics that can really benefit from 5G.

In addition to the new funding, the Government has confirmed that it will consult on proposals to simplify planning processes in England to both support the further roll-out of 4G and aid the faster introduction of 5G.

Hamish MacLeod, Director at Mobile UK, said:

Getting the planning system right for future 5G and today's 4G networks is critical to ensure the UK continues to lead the world in digital connectivity. It is right that the Government has announced it is to look at simplifying planning processes and we stand ready to work in partnership to ensure this can happen as quickly as possible to aid the continued rollout of mobile

networks.

This is part of the Government's long-term strategy for meeting its digital connectivity targets, outlined in the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review.

The plans involve tackling barriers to deployment and creating the right conditions for investment to deliver better network coverage that supports the way we live and work today.

A key part of this is making new spectrum available to increase capacity for mobile connectivity. The Ministry of Defence, in partnership with DCMS, has committed to making 168MHz of new spectrum available to facilitate the deployment of fixed and mobile networks.

This means the Government has already exceeded its target to make 500MHz of public sector spectrum available for commercial use by 2020, and will continue to work with departments to explore opportunities for more spectrum to be made available.

Notes to editors:

- We expect a public competition to launch later this year for bids to be made for the next testbed and trials in 5G. The competition will be open for bids from across the whole of the UK.
- The recent release by the Ministry of Defence of 168 megahertz in the 8 gigahertz band, puts the total spectrum released under PSSRP at 552 MegaHertz.
- The Government has undertaken a thorough, evidence-based and hard-headed review of the 5G supply chain to ensure the secure and resilient roll-out of 5G. Throughout the review, we have consulted extensively with industry and have been clear from the start on their need to comply with the government's final decision which will be published in due course.