[AT] First 5G auction to be held by RTR

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The Austrian Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungsbehörde (Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications - RTR) has concluded the last of three consultations on the first 5G frequency auction and is therefore almost ready to auction the two 5G pioneer bands in the 3.4-3.8 GHz spectrum range.

Since the terms and conditions of the auction had already been largely decided following the first two consultations, the RTR, acting on behalf of the awarding authority, Telekom-Control-Kommission (TKK), used the third consultation to instigate dialogue between all stakeholders and to put the final touches to the auction process. The TKK pointed out that 5G, with its new possibilities for industry, would also be popular with energy suppliers who wanted to broaden their product portfolio and regional Internet providers who would be able to offer a fast Internet connection to customers in remote areas. In order to promote competition, the TKK decided to subdivide the 5G frequencies regionally so that, although large operators could bid for a package of frequencies and obtain nationwide network coverage, existing local broadband providers would also be able to purchase frequencies in their region. By limiting the number of frequencies that can be acquired, single bidders can be prevented from buying the majority of frequencies and ousting competitors from the market. The TKK proposed spectrum caps of 140 to 160 MHz, with the quantity depending on the region and the operator, to be discussed as part of the consultation. The TKK also laid down certain coverage requirements in order to prevent frequency stockpiling. Depending on the frequency and region, bidders must provide 5G in up to 1,000 locations, for example. On the basis of national and international benchmarks, the TKK set minimum bid prices which, for all the available frequencies combined, total around EUR 30 million.

Following completion of the consultation and hearing, the final tender documents will be drawn up and the auction will take place in autumn 2018.

On 18 April 2018, before publishing the tender documents, the TKK published a special notice concerning the ban on agreements relating to frequency auctions. It expressly mentioned strict collusion rules, with examples including collaboration between bidders or potential bidders designed to influence the course or outcome of the auction. The TKK also warned against publicly announcing participation in the auction, bids and bidding strategies, and conveying information or dropping hints via the media. It explained that these rules should be applied prior to the

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auction procedure and that any such conduct could, in the worst case scenario, lead to exclusion from the process.

Pressemitteilung der RTR

https://www.rtr.at/de/pr/PI21022018TK

RTR press release

Dokumente der Konsultation

https://www.rtr.at/de/inf/Konsult_5GAuktion2018_2

Consultation documents

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