



Press release

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Spectrum assignment for broadband internet via satellite

Starlink satellite system receives spectrum usage rights in Germany

The Bundesnetzagentur has today issued spectrum usage rights to the SpaceX company for its Starlink satellite system.

“We created the spectrum-related legal framework so that broadband internet can be provided via satellite in Germany,” said Jochen Homann, Bundesnetzagentur President.

First spectrum assignment for mega-constellation of satellites

The Starlink satellite system is designed to enable satellite broadband internet services, including secure home office connections (VPN) and remote desktop, with similar latency as with terrestrial networks.

Currently there are approximately 800 Starlink satellites in low-earth orbit. According to the company, the system will comprise more than 4,400 satellites when complete.

This is the first spectrum assignment for a mega-constellation of satellites with a very large number of low earth orbiting satellites.

Securing interference-free operation

The spectrum assignment contains requirements that ensure interference-free operation and co-existence with other services in the same and adjacent frequency bands, including with fixed links, radio astronomy and geostationary satellite services.

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Due to the newness of this satellite constellation the spectrum assignment is initially limited to one year so that adjustments can be made if necessary for the subsequent longer-term spectrum assignment.

In addition to the spectrum assignment for the satellite network, Starlink has received spectrum assignments for several earth stations in Germany that function as gateways to ensure the transition and connection to the internet.

Details of the requirements for the Starlink satellite network will be published in the Bundesnetzagentur's next Official Gazette (in German) on 23 December 2020 and available online at www.bnetza-amtsblatt.de/download/49.

The Bundesnetzagentur is an authority under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Its core tasks include supervising the energy, telecommunications, postal and railway markets.

As part of its mandate, the Bundesnetzagentur ensures that as many undertakings as possible can use the infrastructure in these sectors so that consumers benefit from competition and favourable prices.

The authority employs over 2,900 people at its headquarters in Bonn and Mainz and its 46 regional offices.

