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PRESS RELEASE

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TV White Space Deployment in PH the Largest in Asia

The ongoing TV White Space (TVWS) pilot testing in the Philippines is the most extensive in the Asian region. Other TV White Space deployments around the world include those in Africa the United States, the United Kingdom and Singapore, however, the one in the Philippines is the Largest in Asia to date. This was revealed at a press briefing and technology tour in Talibon, Bohol on February 21, 2014.

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Office of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and partners from the private sector are looking to address the rural connectivity deficit in the provinces with TVWS technologies. Pilot testing of TVWS is currently on going in the province of Bohol and Leyte.

TVWS refers to the vacant frequencies located between broadcast TV channels, which can be used to provide wireless data connectivity to remote communities in the country ..

TVWS is considered an ideal wireless data delivery medium for the Philippines, because of its long distance propagation features and the ability of its signals to travel over water and through thick foliage.

Undersecretary Louis Casambre of the DOST ICT Office said the agency and private company Nityo Infotech are currently testing the technology to prove the viability of TVWS for commercial purposes. The currently available TVWS equipment can deliver up to 6 megabits per second of data throughput at a maximum range of 10 kilometers.

Undersecretary Casambre said the plan is to deploy the TVWS technology in 100 sites in Bohol by end of February this year ". "The plan initially is to use TVWS as a public service allowing for connectivity for Education, eHealth, eGovernment services, environmental sensor networks such as those used by PAGASA and DOST's Project NOAH as well as Internet Access in public places such as barangays halls and town plazas." "We're actually rolling this out slowly. It's a new technology and there are some policies that need to be addressed specific to this because we're using the frequency spectrum originally allocated for TV broadcasters. We plan to ensure that the policy framework is in place before this technology is used commercially". Usec. Casambre Added.

Nityo Infotech Managing Director Roy Del Rosario said the TVWS project is a showcase of the company's willingness to invest and expand the national broadband connectivity of the country.



“This is a manifestation of our cooperation and support to the Philippine government to put in reality a national connectivity project that will boost the country’s competitiveness,” said Del Rosario.

Nityo Infotech is funding the rollout and deployment of the TVWS technology in Bohol with an investments of about \$5 million (PhP225 million), which will be used in setting up the 100 sites and other technical requirements of the pilot project.

TV White Space refers to the vacant frequencies located between broadcast TV channels in the UHF and VHF range between 54 MHz and 806 MHz. White spaces existed naturally between used channels, since assigning nearby transmissions to immediately adjacent channels will cause destructive interference.

The technology can be used in various applications such as to connect local government units (LGUs) and national agencies, hospitals and health centres, educational facilities and healthcare centers.

“We hope to be online with more a hundred pilot sites within the month in Bohol and Leyte and we plan to launch USAID’s ecofish project that allows fisherfolk to monitor fishing areas online using this particular technology.” said Ms. Bettina Quimson, Deputy Executive Director of the DOST-ICT Office.

Increasing demand for wireless data traffic and growing pressure to network capacity has spurred an interest to utilize these unallocated portions of the radio spectrum. Currently available TVWS’ long range means that less base stations are required to provide coverage for a given area compared to existing wireless technologies. Thus, TVWS is considered an extremely cost effective means for Internet/data delivery and quick deployment of such.

Pilot testing of the technology after the Bohol earthquake and Yolanda destruction in Visayas provided critical communications for relief and disaster efforts. This also helped both local and foreign governments and NGO’s perform the necessary services.

The testing of the technology was expanded to the Leyte-Samar areas after typhoon Yolanda.

About DOST-ICTO – The Information and Communications Technology Office of the Department of Science and Technology is the Philippine Government’s lead agency on ICT related matters. Its primary thrusts are in the ICT Industry Development, eGovernment, ICT policy development, Internet for all and Cybersecurity.



Photo with Caption



Bohol School One of the Pilot Sites for TV White Space

Mr. Christopher Gudia, (3rd from left with notebook computer) Principal of Tubigon West Central School in Bohol shows off a computer to connected to the Internet with TV White Space (TVWS) to visitors to the School, which is one of the pilot sites in Bohol for TVWS. Others in the Photo include DOST-ICT Office Region 7 Director Jose Bagulaya, Bohol Provincial Government Representative Glen Doloritos, DOST ICT Office Deputy Executive Director Bettina Quimson, Momo Kanouni of IXS for All, Undersecretary Louis Casambre of the DOST-ICT Office and Nityo Infotech Managing Director Roy del Rosario.