



# Social Alarm and Telecare Association

## PRESS RELEASE

**Number:** 05/01  
**Date:** 07/06/2005  
**Embargo until:** 07/06/2005

RELEASE BEGINS

### TWO ADDITIONAL FREQUENCIES ALLOCATED TO SOCIAL ALARM SIGNALLING

The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administration has announced the allocation of two additional dedicated frequency bands for the sole use of social alarm systems. These new frequencies lie within the former ERMES VHF band (169.4 – 169.8125 MHz) and will be available throughout Europe. The new frequencies (at 169.593750 MHz and 169.481250 MHz) are in addition to the existing frequencies available at 868.2 – 868.25 MHz.

Social alarm systems require secure signalling mechanisms to ensure that alarm messages are received. Where radio signalling is used to connect alarm triggers (for example a personal pendant) to the alarm system, the European product standard requires that the equipment shall use a dedicated frequency, or provide for some form of active frequency management to ensure that alarm messages are received.

The availability of these new dedicated frequencies will allow designers of social alarm systems to use the longer range achievable at these frequencies to develop grouped alarm systems (Warden Call) with fewer radio receivers. This will reduce the cost of large alarm installations, while ensuring the safety of residents by providing reliable radio reception across the whole of the installation site.

SATA members have campaigned for the availability of a dedicated VHF frequency for social alarms since 1998. The announced allocation comes as a direct result of this lobbying and the technical case made by SATA members.

Tony Platten, a director of the Social Alarm and Telecare Association, welcomed the allocation of the new frequencies; “The process of securing these frequencies has been long and at times protracted, there was however clear recognition that the limitations of the existing frequency would restrict the roll out of certain Telecare applications. The new frequencies will allow new products to be introduced for the benefit of the rapidly growing elderly population.” SATA will now work with the industry and with BSI to develop an industry standard for signalling on the new frequencies.

END

#### Notes to editors:

The Social Alarm and Telecare Association (SATA) is a not-for-profit organisation formed to pursue the following objects:

- Encourage and create an open market for social alarm and telecare systems
- Support the development of open standards within the social alarm and telecare sector

Membership of SATA is open to any organisation supplying goods and services used within the social alarm and telecare industry. Further details of SATA can be found on the web site ([www.sata-uk.org.uk](http://www.sata-uk.org.uk)).

A social alarm system is specifically designed to provide vulnerable individuals with the means to call for assistance and reassurance. Currently 1.5 million individuals in the UK make use of social alarm systems to enable them to continue to live independent, fulfilling lives, at home. Generally, users have an alarm system installed in their own home that, in the event of need, will place a telephone call to a remote monitoring centre. Staff at the monitoring centre will have access to information about the source of the call, the reason for the call and the user of that alarm system. They will be able to speak to the user and establish the appropriate assistance for the user's circumstances.

The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administration (CEPT) is the international organisation authorised to review and determine radio frequency allocation within Europe. CEPT is establishing a single frequency allocation scheme for all European countries, to ensure free trade between European countries while protecting radio spectrum and ensuring its availability to licensed applications. Further information on CEPT can be found on its web site at [www.cept.org](http://www.cept.org). Copies of the decision are available on the ERO web site ([www.ero.dk/documentation/docs/docfiles.asp?docid=2052&wd=N](http://www.ero.dk/documentation/docs/docfiles.asp?docid=2052&wd=N)) and the SATA web site ([www.sata-uk.org.uk/publications/rf\\_publications.htm](http://www.sata-uk.org.uk/publications/rf_publications.htm)).

The European product standard for social alarm systems is EN 50134. That part of the standard that sets out the requirements for signalling within a social alarm system is EN 50134-5. In the UK, copies of this document are available from the British Standards Institute ([www.bsi-global.org](http://www.bsi-global.org)).

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