

UK's Ofcom publishes UWB rules

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By Cantab Wireless

UWB was one of the big buzzwords of past years, a prime example of what hype can produce. However, after much published standard wars and numerous start-ups developing and commercializing the technology, during the past year UWB has suffered a set of serious set-backs. For example, in March 2009 the winner of the UWB standards battle, WiMedia Alliance, announced that it is going to transfer its technology specifications to Bluetooth SIG and thereafter cease its operations.

In that sense the news announced yesterday, that UK's Ofcom has published new UWB regulations, may seem irrelevant. But Cantab Wireless believes that just like the phase of UWB hype was just temporary, so will be this phase of doom. UWB as a technology has many excellent qualities but high-capacity short-range radios simply did not have mass-market applications in the past. This will change in the future.

The new regulations will replace the older ones which were rushed into force in 2007 in response to the expected flood of UWB devices from the USA. The new rules have been drafted so that they are compliant with relevant EU regulations and they define the maximum allowed transmission power limits in each of the frequency bands, define that higher limits can be used if appropriate interference mitigation techniques are employed, allow the use of UWB equipment in cars and trains, and define the use of UWB in BMA (Building Material Analysis) equipment.