

Broadband wireless access licences in regional areas to be auctioned

ACMA will use a new price-based allocation process to allocate any more apparatus licences for broadband wireless access services in the 1900–1920 MHz frequency band. Under the process, applications are assessed every three months. If applications conflict, an auction is held; otherwise licences are granted at the reserve price.

Most apparatus licences are issued on a first-in-time basis, which is appropriate where there is no excess demand for spectrum. Licences in the 19 GHz band were first made available in 2005, on a first-in-time basis, for delivery of broadband wireless access

services in regional and remote areas. However, demand exceeded supply and some applicants were unable to obtain licences.

Following this unexpectedly high market demand, ACMA decided to auction broadband wireless access licences in the 1900–1920 MHz band. Price-based allocation is the simplest way to ensure fairness and the efficient use and allocation of spectrum where demand for spectrum exceeds supply.

Licences are issued with rollout obligations to encourage deployment of services and discourage hoarding. If these obligations are not met and

licences are not renewed, spectrum will become available for allocation by auction.

ACMA will model the allocation process on the highly successful open-outcry auction allocation method used to allocate low power open narrowcasting licences. The method was developed in 2001 to allocate low value spectrum where there is excess demand. Applicants for licences may apply at any time and are assessed together every three months.

Where an application can be accommodated under the planning model with no conflict with either existing licences or other licence

applications, ACMA offers a licence at the reserve price. Where more than one application satisfies the planning model, but they conflict with each other, ACMA holds an open-outcry auction to allocate lots. An applicant may bid only on a lot they have nominated. This approach has proven to be an effective allocation method.

More information about the allocation of licences in the 1900–1920 MHz band is on the ACMA website at http://auction.acma.gov.au/current_projects/index.asp.

Anti-collision VEHICLE RADAR covered by class licence

ACMA has broadened its licensing regime to include new wideband technologies, including anti-collision vehicle radar.

Licensing arrangements need to be flexible for operation of mobile anti-collision vehicle radar systems. For this reason, ACMA has authorised operation of these systems under the *Radiocommunications (Low Interference Potential Devices) Class Licence 2000*.

Ultra wideband short-range vehicle radar (UWB SRR) is a radiocommunications technology that enables the detection, location and tracking of the movements of persons and objects that are up to 30 metres from the vehicle. It is capable of precise detection, which can enable features such as near-collision avoidance (including blind-spot detection and parking assistance), improved airbag activation and suspension systems that respond better to road conditions.

A vehicle containing UWB SRR could be used almost anywhere across Australia, except where exclusion zones have been established to alleviate concerns of potential interference to sensitive radio astronomy service stations operating in the same frequency band. It is considered a significant vehicle safety aid and has been in operation in the United States, Europe and the United Kingdom since 2005. Although currently limited to luxury car models, vehicle radar is expected to become a more common option in the future as demand increases and economies of scale reduce the cost.

UWB SRR systems are short-range radio devices activated when vehicles are in operation. They operate at very low power levels and have technical and



operational characteristics that mean they present little interference risk to each other, or other users of the spectrum.

The Low Interference Potential Devices Class Licence authorises the operation of a wide range of low-power radiocommunications devices in various segments of the spectrum. These transmitters do not require individual frequency coordination because of their low interference characteristics. Examples of equipment already covered by the licence include garage door openers and personal alarms. The licence and a related information paper are on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to ACMA > Legislation > Radiocommunications > Class Licences).