

Proposal to allow class licences in spectrum designated for spectrum licensing

ACMA recently released a discussion paper on a proposal to amend the *Radiocommunications Act 1992* to allow class licences to be issued in spectrum designated to be spectrum licensed under section 36 of the Act. Under the proposed change, spectrum licensees will be separately consulted if spectrum being considered for class licensing is included in spectrum covered by their spectrum licence.

Under the *Radiocommunications Act*, parts of the spectrum may be set aside for spectrum licensing in two ways. Under section 36, specified parts of the spectrum may be designated to be allocated by issuing spectrum licences. Under section 153B, spectrum may be declared as subject to re-allocation by issuing either apparatus or spectrum licences.

A class licence may be issued in spectrum re-allocated under the section 153B arrangements. However, the operation of section 138 of the *Radiocommunications Act* prevents ACMA from issuing class licences in spectrum designated under section 36 to be allocated by issuing spectrum licences.

Comments on the proposed change closed on 17 February 2006. For more information, contact ACMA's Space and Terrestrial Regulation section by email to radiocommunications.licensing.policy@acma.gov.au or fax to 02 6219 5133.

Future use of unassigned TV channels examined

ACMA is examining the possible future allocation of television channels originally planned for datacasting services. A discussion paper was released recently and ACMA is seeking comments by Wednesday 26 April 2006 on issues including:

- the potential uses for the unassigned television channels, including (among others) datacasting, subscription television, open narrowcasting and mobile television
- the level of industry demand for these and other possible applications;
- marketing issues, such as possible allocation methods, area sizes, competition limits and spectrum packaging options and
- technical issues, such as spectrum availability and priorities in as yet unplanned

areas, technical licence conditions and characteristics, compatibility requirements with digital television standards and management of interference to existing analog and digital television services.

The release of the ACMA paper follows publication, as part of the government's public consultation on media policy, of a discussion paper on media reform by the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. The media reform paper is on the department's website (www.dcita.gov.au).

The ACMA paper, *Future use of unassigned television channels*, is on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au or contact Brendan Vernon on telephone 02 6219 5262, email spectrum.allocations@acma.gov.au.

UWB to be supported by proposed Spectrum Plan variation

To support the introduction of ultra wideband (UWB) vehicle radar technology in Australia in the 22–26.5 GHz frequency band, ACMA proposes to vary the *Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan*. The proposed variation, under section 34 of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*, involves the inclusion of the provisions of Article 4.4 of the International Telecommunication Union Radio Regulations to any cell

in any position to which an international footnote reference appears.

ACMA is seeking comments about the proposed variation of the Spectrum Plan. Written representations about the proposed variation should be submitted by close of business 19 April 2006 and addressed to The Manager, Space and Terrestrial Policy, Pricing and Policy Branch at the Australian Communications

and Media Authority, PO Box 78, Belconnen ACT 2616, or by email to radiocommunications.licensing.policy@acma.gov.au.

For more information about the proposal, contact Rebecca Dale at ACMA on telephone 02 6219 5578, fax 02 6219 5133 or email radiocommunications.licensing.policy@acma.gov.au.