



Radiocommunications conference highlights **importance of smart spectrum** regulation

ACMA's inaugural conference on spectrum issues, RadComms 2006, reinforced the importance to the communications industry of effective radiocommunications regulation.

In his opening remarks, ACMA Chairman Chris Chapman highlighted the many and increasing uses for radiocommunications in our daily lives and the conundrum of ever-greater claims on spectrum for new and exciting applications needing to be balanced against the legitimate needs of incumbents. Managing this is a core issue for ACMA and one that has ramifications not just for the communications industry, but the everyday lives of all Australians.

The conference considered how best to plan and manage Australia's radiofrequency spectrum into the future, with increasing demand for spectrum and resulting scarcity. It recognised that spectrum sharing and planning approaches that allow for increased usage by different

applications are needed.

Emerging technologies, such as WiMAX and fourth generation mobile phone standards, have the capability to become key economic enablers, and timely release of spectrum for such developments helps ensure continued growth for the competitive and diverse Australian communications industry. For example, wireless internet service providers play a key role in making broadband available in towns and regional areas—there needs to be spectrum available to support both Australia-wide networks and regional-based networks.

The conference was a valuable opportunity for ACMA to consult and explore with industry on a broad range of spectrum planning issues. Specific conference topics included

satellite spectrum issues, the digital dividend, wireless access services, digital radio, expiring spectrum licences and unassigned television channels, defence spectrum requirements, land mobile spectrum planning, and the future of spectrum reform. Presentations were delivered by ACMA and industry participants, and each day ended with a panel-style question and answer session, which saw a high level of audience participation and robust discussion on topical spectrum issues.

Held at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney on 11 and 12 December 2006, the conference was attended by around 200 delegates from federal and state government organisations, carriers and service providers, satellite

CONFERENCE PANEL MEMBERS CHRIS CHEAH (ACMA AUTHORITY MEMBER), ANDREW KERANS (ACMA), ERIK LENSSON (ACMA), MUSHFIQ RAHMAN (TELSTRA) AND DR GRAEME KING (NORTEL)

operators, broadcasters, equipment manufacturers and retailers, overseas regulators, regional development boards, local government and small internet service providers. ACMA thanks delegates and speakers for their attendance and participation. The positive feedback received will help ensure the success of the next spectrum management conference.

As part of its ongoing consultation on planning for future spectrum use, ACMA released the following papers at the conference (see page 14):

- *Strategies for Wireless Access Services: Spectrum Access Options*
- *Strategies for Wireless Access Services: 1785–1805 MHz*
- *Planning of the 71–76 GHz and 81–86 GHz Bands for Millimetre Wave High Capacity Fixed Link Technology.*

Comments on matters raised in these papers close on 28 February 2007. The papers are on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au.

RadComms 2006 conference presentations are also on the ACMA website.