



World radio services meet to address global spectrum demand

The World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-07), held recently in Geneva, concluded its deliberations with the adoption of an international treaty to meet the global demand for radiofrequency spectrum that has been fuelled by rapid technological developments and growth in the communications industry.

The WRC is a conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to revise and update the international treaty known as the Radio Regulations, which govern the use of the radiofrequency spectrum and satellite orbits.

The conference's 30 agenda items related to almost all terrestrial and space radio services and applications, including future generations of mobile telephony, aeronautical telemetry and telecommand systems, satellite services including

meteorological applications, maritime distress and safety signals, digital broadcasting, and the use of radio in the prediction and detection of natural disasters.

Key decisions of WRC-07 were:

- identifying globally harmonised spectrum for use by international mobile telecommunications
- bringing international regulations related to the maritime mobile service into line with current maritime communications technology, including distress and safety transmissions within the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
- introducing measures aimed at aeronautical security and modernisation of civil aviation telecommunication systems
- extending primary frequency allocations for earth-exploration satellite service, to facilitate research and exploration of Earth resources and environmental elements, including monitoring and predicting natural disasters, meteorology and climate change
- approving the use and development of satellite systems using highly inclined orbits and high altitude platforms, as well as compatibility and sharing between different space and terrestrial services and
- revising technical and regulatory provisions for fixed-satellite service (FSS) in the 800 MHz bandwidth used in different regions under varying climatic conditions for applications such as communications, TV and the internet to improve their effectiveness and facilitate spectrum access for FSS systems.

WRC-07 also advocated the development of spectrum management guidelines for radiocommunication in emergency and disaster relief, as well as identification and maintenance of available frequencies for use in the early stages of humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of a disaster. The ITU will develop a database for frequency management in disaster situations.

More than 2,800 delegates representing 164 member states attended the four-week conference, which was marked by intense negotiations on the future of wireless communications. Australia was represented by a delegation that included eight ACMA staff, led by General Manager Giles Tanner.

More information about WRC-07 is on the ITU website at www.itu.int.

CONDITIONS ON DARWIN COMMUNITY RADIO LICENCE REVOKED

ACMA has revoked additional licence conditions on the community radio broadcasting licence 8KNB Darwin held by Radio Larrakia Association Inc., which broadcasts on 94.5 MHz. The conditions were imposed when the licence was allocated in 1998 to ensure Radio Larrakia met the existing and perceived future needs of the broader Indigenous community in Darwin.

The additional conditions required Radio Larrakia to include representatives of Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) and Larrakia Nation on its board and sub-committees and to open membership to all Darwin residents. Radio Larrakia requested that ACMA revoke the additional licence conditions when it submitted

a proposed revised constitution.

ACMA considers that the interests of the Indigenous community in the Darwin licence area continue to be protected by the standard licence condition in the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* and that Radio Larrakia's proposed constitution provides an efficient and effective method of ensuring representation of Larrakia and non-Larrakia people on 8KNB's board and sub-committees.

ACMA consulted with Radio Larrakia, TEABBA and Larrakia Nation, and considered submissions from the public. The decision to revoke the additional licence conditions was published in the *Gazette*.

The revocation of the additional licence conditions does not in any

way change Radio Larrakia's ongoing legal obligation to serve the Indigenous community of the Darwin licence area—this is a standard but key condition of its licence under the *Broadcasting Services Act*.

ACMA has also considered a complaint that Radio Larrakia had failed to meet the following licence conditions:

- to represent its community of interest and
- to encourage members of the community it serves to participate in the operations and programming of the service (the complaint arose because membership to Radio Larrakia had been frozen since 2006).

ACMA found that Radio Larrakia was not in breach of its obligation to

represent its community of interest, but was in breach of its obligation to encourage community participation as a result of a freeze on its membership. ACMA took into account the fact that the decision to freeze membership was made by an authorised external body and that the breach arose from circumstances not entirely within Radio Larrakia's control, and not within its power to remedy. Accordingly, ACMA has not taken any enforcement action.

The report on the investigation is on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to About ACMA: Publications & research > Broadcasting publications > Investigations > Radio operations investigations > Radio operations – NT commercial radio investigations).