

## ACMA keeps Grand Prix communications on track

Since 1996, the Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC) has contracted ACMA (and the former ACA) to provide on-site interference management services for its Formula One Grand Prix event, held in Melbourne in March. The 2007 Australian Grand Prix presented several new challenges to ACMA's Southern Australia Regional Office team.

Preparations began months before, with the first requests for frequency

assignments arriving in December 2006. More than 800 frequencies were assigned by ACMA for the Grand Prix.

As the first Formula One Grand Prix on the annual calendar, ACMA staff are often the first to deal with new communications technology being used for such events. When the hundreds of organisations involved set up their communications equipment on Thursday, the first day of the event, problems emerged with this

year's innovation for corporate boxes—mobile on-site television.

Two high-power transmitters were causing severe interference to wireless microphones operated by local and international broadcasters. ACMA staff worked closely the operator and broadcasters for two days to find a solution. By Friday afternoon the system was working satisfactorily.

Meanwhile, on Friday morning, one of the racing teams turned on its bi-

PROVIDING COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT FOR THE FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX AT ALBERT PARK IN MELBOURNE, ACMA'S EXECUTIVE MANAGER REGULATION AND COMPLIANCE, ALLAN MAJOR, AND THE TEAM FROM ACMA'S SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA REGION

directional amplifier system operating around 420 MHz. Other racing teams immediately reported significant interference as the system picked up, amplified and retransmitted extraneous signals across a wide area. ACMA staff quickly located the problem and assisted the team to reduce the signal level.

Knowledge gained from such issues informs planning for Grand Prix events around the world. As in previous years, AGPC and ACMA will meet to assess the lessons from this year's event and incorporate them into planning for next year.

## Do Not Call Register access fee options proposed

In another important step in developing the Do Not Call Register, ACMA recently released a discussion paper on the fees telemarketers will be charged to access the register.

Two possible access fee pricing options, both based on an annual subscription fee and excess usage charge model, were put forward for comment. The options are:

- Option 1—aims to recoup the full identified cost over four years. Industry costs will be the same in each year.
- Option 2—aims to build up to full cost-recovery arrangements over the four years and recoup part of the identified cost. Industry costs will gradually increase each year. Under each option, there is a

subscription type that allows telemarketers to check up to 500 numbers per year at no cost.

When it announced funding of \$33.1 million over four years to establish the Do Not Call Register, the government also announced that approximately \$15.9 million would be recovered from telemarketers over the same period. ACMA has now

proposed that, due to lower than expected costs for the establishment of the register, the maximum identified costs to be recovered from industry are \$11.4 million over four years.

Under the scheme, telemarketers may submit their telephone number lists to the register operator for checking against the register. This process of 'washing' calling lists will help telemarketers avoid breaching the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006*.

The Do Not Call Register is due to commence operation in May 2007. Once it is operating, it will be illegal, in the absence of consent, for any non-exempt telemarketer in Australia and overseas to contact a number listed on the register.

ACMA engaged Access Economics to assist in developing an appropriate access fee pricing model and is expecting to determine the fees for accessing the Do Not Call Register in April 2007.

Regular updates on the implementation of the Do Not Call Register scheme are published at [www.acma.gov.au/donotcall](http://www.acma.gov.au/donotcall).

### THE DO NOT CALL REGISTER

The Australian Government introduced legislation to establish the Do Not Call Register in response to the increasing level of community concern about the growth in unsolicited telemarketing calls. ACMA is responsible for establishing and overseeing the operation of the register and contracted Service Stream Solutions Pty Ltd in February 2007 to build and operate the register until February 2011. ACMA will oversee the register's operation and investigate breaches of the legislation.

It will generally be unlawful to make telemarketing calls to numbers placed on the Do Not Call Register. The Act allows telemarketers to submit their contact lists to the register operator for checking against the register. Upon submission of the list and payment of the appropriate access fee (if any), the register operator will inform the access seeker which numbers in their list (if any) are, or are not, on the register. This process of 'washing' contact lists will assist telemarketers to comply with the Do Not Call Register Act.

Certain public interest entities will be allowed to make specific types of calls to numbers on the register. This exemption applies to charities, government bodies, educational or religious organisations, registered political parties, independent members of parliament and electoral candidates. Market and social researchers will be permitted to call when conducting opinion polling and standard questionnaire-based research calls. However, these calls will be subject to the national telemarketing standard. Further exemptions apply where an individual has consented to receiving a call or where consent can be reasonably inferred from the individual's business and other relationships.