

Comments sought on draft of new Australian Radiofrequency Plan

ACMA has released a draft of a new Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan for public comment. When completed, this will replace the current spectrum plan developed in January 2005.

The proposed changes in the draft spectrum plan provide new opportunities for international mobile telecommunication, space research activities, radio astronomy, mobile-satellite services, and harmonisation between space and future terrestrial activities.

The changes were agreed internationally at the International Telecommunication Union World Radiocommunication Conference held in October and November 2007.

'Adopting these proposed changes will allow Australian spectrum users to benefit from these international changes,' said ACMA Chairman Chris Chapman.

Changes have also been proposed to reflect domestic developments, mainly associated with enhancing future flexibility for the anticipated growth in radiocommunication services in Australia.

The proposed changes to the plan will provide for:

- protecting space research activities while allowing the use of new high data-rate meteorology satellite services

- upgrading the radiolocation service to primary and allocating additional spectrum to the existing space research activities
- sharing between the mobile-satellite and space research services, and between the mobile-satellite and mobile services
- improving satellite coordination and notification procedures
- spectrum harmonisation between space and future terrestrial services
- sharing arrangements between the fixed service and satellite systems using highly inclined orbits
- spectrum compatibility between the radio astronomy and active space services.

The Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan divides the radiofrequency spectrum into frequency bands and specifies the purposes for which the bands may be used, in accordance with the requirements of section 30 of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*.

It is intended to:

- provide a basis for management of the radiofrequency spectrum in Australia

- inform radiocommunication users about the services allocated to each frequency band and of any conditions attached to those allocations
- reflect Australia's treaty obligations as a member of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- provide details of international frequency allocations agreed by the ITU for the three world regions as contained in the ITU Radio Regulations.

ACMA routinely updates the plan after each ITU World Radiocommunication Conference.

Comments on the draft plan should be received by ACMA by **Friday 3 October 2008**. The proposed changes are scheduled to take effect on 1 January 2009.

Detailed information about the changes can be found on the ACMA website at <www.acma.gov.au> (go to About ACMA: News & media centre > Issues for comment > IFC 13/2008).

