

RadComms08—Meeting future spectrum needs

Industry stakeholders and ACMA representatives gathered recently to discuss the future of radiofrequency planning in Australia at RadComms08, ACMA's second annual conference on spectrum management.

The conference, held at the Sofitel Melbourne, was attended by approximately 280 delegates and included representatives from federal and state government, carriers and service providers, satellite operators, broadcasters, equipment manufacturers and retailers, and overseas regulators.

Also in attendance were several representatives of regional development boards, local government organisations and internet service providers.

ACMA and industry presentations focused on contemporary radiofrequency spectrum issues. The conference included coverage of ACMA's proposed draft *Spectrum Management Principles* and *Five-year Spectrum Outlook 2009–2014*.

There was also extensive discussion on other ACMA initiatives released prior to the conference, such as the *Final Report of the Independent Review of Government Spectrum Holdings* and ACMA's preliminary response to this report, as well as the *Spectrum Options: 403–520 MHz* discussion paper.

One of the underlying themes of the conference was increasing spectrum demand for new technologies. This was highlighted in ACMA Chairman Chris Chapman's opening speech, which explored how our future may be affected by some new uses of the radiofrequency spectrum (see pp. 7–10).

Senator Stephen Conroy, Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, also addressed the conference on the first day. The minister highlighted the digital switchover, the digital dividend and the expiry of the 15-year spectrum licences as key issues for government consideration in the coming years.

The conference was a valuable opportunity for ACMA to consult and explore with industry on a broad range of spectrum planning issues. Specific highlights included presentations on the digital switchover, government spectrum, digital radio, cognitive radio, land mobile and intelligent transport systems.



SENATOR CONROY DELIVERS THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT RADCOMMS08

The end of each day featured a panel-style question-and-answer session, which saw a high level of audience participation and robust discussion on topical spectrum issues. A welcome reception on the first night of the conference set up a useful informal networking opportunity for delegates and ACMA attendees.

At the conference dinner on the second night, delegates were treated to a highly entertaining presentation by Dr Fred Watson, Astronomer-in-Charge of the Anglo-Australian Observatory. Dr Watson is well known for science journalism and is a regular guest on ABC Radio.

Copies of presentations from the three-day event, including the addresses from Chris Chapman and Senator Conroy, are available on the ACMA website at <www.acma.gov.au/radcomms08>. For further information, contact Bridget Lally on (02) 6219 5203 or <bridget.lally@acma.gov.au>.



ACMA'S GILES TANNER WITH PANEL MEMBERS