

Realising the digital dividend now a step closer

A new ACMA discussion paper outlines the second step in the three-step process to realising the digital dividend.

Clearing the digital dividend focuses on the process of clearing digital television services from the digital dividend spectrum, commonly known as 'restack'.

The ACMA is seeking input from the broadcasting industry and other interested stakeholders on the proposed objectives and planning principles that will govern the preparation of channel plans for the restack.

There are three steps to realising the digital dividend:

- > Completing the switchover to digital television.
- > Clearing digital television services from the block of UHF spectrum corresponding to television channels 52–69.
- > Reallocating the cleared spectrum to new users.

Restack cannot take place in an area until analog television has been switched off. While a restack timetable has not yet been developed, the process is due to be completed by the end of 2014.

When restack occurs, viewers in areas where television services change channel may need to retune their digital receivers. While retuning is a minor procedure, the ACMA will work closely with industry and the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy on strategies to inform and help viewers in the lead-up to restack in each area. ☎

Submissions

The ACMA encourages submissions from all interested parties. Comments on the paper close on **4 April 2011** and can be sent by email to digitaltvreplan@acma.gov.au or by mail to:

Chief Engineer & Manager
Television Planning Section
Australian Communications
and Media Authority
PO Box 78
Belconnen ACT 2616

Clearing the digital dividend is available on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to About ACMA: News & media centre > Issues for comment > IFC 07/2011).

Changes proposed to Tasmanian radio services

The ACMA is seeking public comment on proposed changes to radio services in the Hobart and Devonport regions of Tasmania.

The ACMA is proposing to:

- > vary the radiation pattern of the existing national radio broadcasting service 7PB so that it operates on 747 kHz from broadcast site Ralphs Bay
- > make FM spectrum 96.1 MHz, with a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 3.2 kW, available for an additional transmitter for the existing community radio broadcasting service 7RPH at Devonport, and extend the Hobart RA4 licence area to reflect the inclusion of that additional transmitter
- > make FM spectrum 94.9 MHz, with a maximum ERP of 1.5 kW, available for a new open narrowcasting radio service at Hobart.

The closing date for comments on the proposals is **5.00 pm, Friday 25 March 2011**. ☎

The proposed changes are contained in the *Draft Variation to the Licence Area Plan for Hobart Radio—No. 1 of 2011* and an accompanying explanatory paper, which are available on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to For licensees & industry: Service & technical requirements > Broadcasting: Analog planning > Licence areas > Licence area plans > Draft Licence Area Plans).