

Proposed amendments to labelling arrangements

The ACMA is seeking comment on proposed amendments to labelling arrangements that will implement a consolidated compliance mark covering telecommunications, radiocommunications, electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) and electromagnetic energy (EME).

The ACMA has four Labelling Notices:

- > Telecommunications Labelling (Customer Equipment and Customer Cabling) Notice 2001
- > Radiocommunications Devices (Compliance Labelling) Notice 2003
- > Radiocommunications Labelling (Electromagnetic Compatibility) Notice 2008
- > Radiocommunications (Compliance Labelling—Electromagnetic Radiation) Labelling Notice 2003.

Together with ACMA technical standards, these Labelling Notices identify the regulatory requirements that a device must meet before it can be supplied to market. They require suppliers to apply a label (compliance mark) to specified devices to illustrate compliance with the requirements of the relevant Notice and to maintain certain compliance documentation (for example, test reports). Labelling requirements are intended to limit the supply of non-compliant devices to the market.

There are currently three compliance marks—C-Tick, A-Tick and Regulatory Compliance Mark (RCM)—that can be applied to meet the ACMA technical regulatory requirements identified in the Labelling Notices.

However, the existence of multiple regulatory marks, which apply to particular technical requirements, is inconsistent with the evolution in the communications and IT technical and commercial environments. The use of multiple marks also increases regulatory and compliance costs for industry.

Proposed arrangements

Following a public discussion period in 2009, the ACMA has made an in-principle decision to consolidate the existing compliance marks into a single consolidated compliance mark (the RCM) covering telecommunications, radiocommunications, EMC and EME technical requirements.

The implementation of a consolidated compliance mark will lessen some industry administrative burdens by reducing the complexity of the compliance marking arrangements and the time required to understand and meet those arrangements. Simpler marking arrangements should also increase the likelihood of compliance and so improve regulatory outcomes.

The proposed arrangements are also intended to align with the new Electrical Equipment Safety System (EESS) being implemented by state and territory electrical safety regulators. Under the EESS, equipment subject to electrical equipment safety legislation will be required to be marked with the RCM.

The new ACMA arrangements will allow suppliers—the majority of whom will also be subject to the EESS—to register on the national supplier database currently being developed by electrical safety regulators.

Implementation details

Subject to final ACMA approval, from July 2012 all ACMA Labelling Notices will specify the RCM as the compliance mark to indicate compliance with applicable regulatory requirements. The A-Tick and C-Tick will be phased out over a period of three years. Devices already labelled with the A-Tick or C-Tick at the end of this transition period will not be required to be relabelled.

The ACMA is seeking comments on the proposed implementation arrangements. A consultation paper, the draft amendments to the Labelling Notices and a new Protected Symbols Determination are available for public comment. The consultation paper includes responses to frequently asked questions about the implementation. The start date for the new ACMA arrangements will align with the commencement of the EESS (likely to be 1 July 2012). ☎

Submissions

The ACMA invites industry participants, consumer bodies and members of the public to make a submission on the consultation paper by close of business, **Friday 12 August 2011**.

Submissions should be sent by email to single.mark@acma.gov.au or by mail to:

Technical Regulation
Development Section
Australian Communications
and Media Authority
PO Box 13112
Law Courts
Melbourne Vic 8010

Further information, including a copy of the consultation paper, is available on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to About ACMA: News & media centre > Issues for comment > IFC 22/2011).

