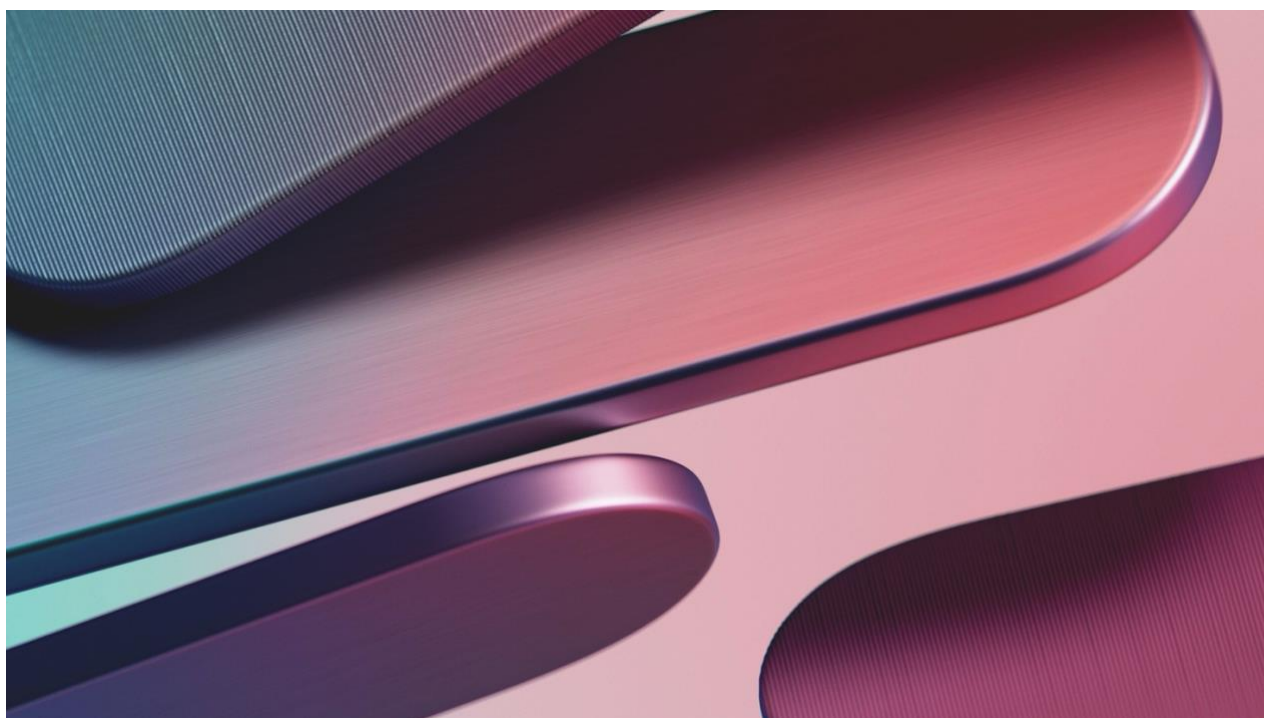


Automatic Frequency Coordination-assisted spectrum sharing in the 6 GHz band

Ericsson Response to ACMA Discussion Paper

February 2026





Executive Summary

- This submission provides Ericsson's response to issues raised in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) discussion paper regarding adoption of an Automatic Frequency Coordination (**AFC**) framework in the 6GHz band.
- In summary, Ericsson supports:
 - Prioritising protection of licensed Fixed Services (**FS**).
 - Limiting AFC-enabled Standard-power RLAN device operation below 6425MHz.
 - A centralised ACMA-administered coordination model.
 - Authorising AFC-enabled standard-power RLAN devices via a nationwide class license on a No Interference, No Protection (**NINP**) basis.



About Ericsson

Provided below is background to Ericsson in Australia and relevant 5G market developments and 6G forecast:

- Ericsson has been a trusted, secure supplier of critical technology to the Australian market for over 136 years.
- We support 206 live 5G networks in 85 countries, including Australia, and are a key supplier to Telstra, NBNCo, Optus and TPG.¹

5G Global Market Update

Provided below are key insights from the Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2025 edition:

- There are forecast to be 6.4 billion 5G subscriptions by the end of 2031 – comprising two-thirds of all mobile subscriptions at the time.
- About 1.4 billion people are expected to be served by FWA broadband by the end of 2031 – 90 percent via 5G.
- Over 90 communications service providers (CSPs) have now launched or soft-launched 5G SA networks, an increase of 30 from twelve months earlier, enabling the emergence of new differentiated connectivity and monetization models.
- 56 CSPs currently offer differentiated connectivity services based on network slicing – with a combined total of 118 offerings.
- The first commercial 6G deployments are expected in leading markets by 2030–2031. 180 million 6G subscriptions are forecast by 2031, with potential for faster uptake if early market launches accelerate.²
- More insights contained within the full report [here](#).

¹ Ericsson, 2025, [Explore Ericsson 5G Advanced](#)

² Ericsson, 2025, [Ericsson Mobility Report](#)



1 Introduction

Ericsson welcomes the opportunity to comment on issues raised in the Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA's) discussion paper on the adoption of an Automatic Frequency Coordination (AFC) framework to enable outdoor standard-power RLAN operation in the 6 GHz band.

Our responses address specific questions raised and reflect our priority to protect licensed fixed services, ensure efficient spectrum use, and support sustainable long-term spectrum management.

Ericsson also supports the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association's (AMTA) submission in response to the discussion paper.

2 Responses to Issues for Comment

2.1 Do you support the adoption of an AFC framework in Australia to enable outdoor standard-power operation in the 6 GHz band? What are the key benefits and concerns? In particular, who would the main beneficiaries be, and what would be the implications for consumers in the telecommunications market?

Ericsson does not have an opinion on the extent to which an AFC framework could enhance existing Frequency Coordination processes in Australia.

However, if a standard power RLAN devices were to be introduced in the 6GHz band, we believe an AFC framework becomes essential to ensure strong protection for licensed fixed services, operating in the 6GHz band. It is also essential that future IMT services in the Upper 6 GHz band are not adversely affected by outdoor standard-power RLAN devices. With protection of future IMT services in mind, our position is that outdoor standard power RLAN devices should only operate below 6425MHz.

2.2 How might AFC change the way WISPs and other communications service providers operate, particularly in terms of supporting greater spectrum efficiency or service innovation?

No comment.

2.3 Are there any alternatives to AFC that could support dynamic and efficient frequency assignments in the 6 GHz band?

No comment.

2.4 Would established models in other jurisdictions such as the US and Canada, or aspects of these models, be appropriate for the Australian radiocommunications environment?

We believe that protection of licensed services must remain the primary objective. For that reason, a centralised, "command-and-control" approach, supported by a single nationwide register for AFC-enabled standard power RLAN devices would provide a strong basis for co-ordination, interference investigations and ongoing regulatory oversight.



- 2.5 How much spectrum should be made available under AFC, and what bandwidths should be allocated to support individual AFC service offerings? Should part or all of the 6 GHz spectrum available for RLAN use be made available for AFC-enabled access by standard power devices, or is there a case for arrangements supporting a range of power levels above VLP/LPI and below/including standard power?**

It is our view that AFC-enabled standard-power RLAN devices should be limited to operation below 6425MHz. This approach is recommended to maintain clear spectrum for Low Power Indoor (LPI) / Very Low Power (VLP) devices to operate at full performance and potentially reduces the required amount of guard band spectrum adjacent to future IMT allocations in Upper 6GHz.

- 2.6 What degrees of geographic and spectrum segmentation should be considered when planning for individual AFC system deployments? For example, would planning for localised, self-contained areas or multiple sub-bands foster competition in the market for the provision of AFC services, or would that come at too much of a cost to spectrum efficiency (through the need for guard bands/spaces)?**

Ericsson recommends spectrum separation by limiting AFC-enabled standard-power RLAN devices to operate below 6425MHz. This arrangement is proposed to maintain clear spectrum for LPI/VLP devices to operate without outdoor standard-power RLAN devices causing interference.

Ericsson notes the ACMA is also considering the possible future use of AFC in 6585-7100MHz in non-WA WBB areas (Refer illustration on Page-11). Ericsson does not support potential arrangements for RLAN devices operating above 6585MHz in Australia. However, if such arrangements were to be pursued by ACMA the AFC must provide support for defined exclusion zones to manage geographic separation for the necessary protection of future IMT Services in Upper 6GHz.

- 2.7 What are the respective roles and responsibilities for industry and government in realising an AFC regime? Should AFC be operated by industry under government-set rules or should government play a more direct role in providing AFC services?**

Ericsson supports the ACMA retaining a direct and central role in administering AFC services. In our view, the approach best facilitates regulatory consistency, transparent oversight, and robust enforcement.

- 2.8 What role should databases such as the ACMA's RRL or other coordination mechanisms, such as those administered by the ACMA but used by accredited assigners, play in the process?**

Ericsson considers that a single authoritative database should exist to record the operational characteristics of AFC-enabled outdoor standard power RLAN devices. Ericsson considers, an alternative (distributed) record, would introduce unwarranted complexity and potentially cause data integrity challenges.

We believe the ACMA Register of Radiocommunications Licences (RRL), would play a critical role in the realisation of an AFC framework. That is, the RRL serves as the primary



database of reference for licensed services that the AFC shall be required to protect from harmful interference.

2.9 What is the need for, and potential structure of, a tiered access model for incorporating standard power RLAN devices in the 6 GHz band?

We believe a tiered access model is essential to uphold the priority of licensed services. In addition, limiting operations of standard-power RLAN devices to below 6425 MHz further safeguards the performance of **LPI/VLP** devices, which are more vulnerable to interference due to their lower priority status. This arrangement would maintain clear spectrum to ensure that end user indoor Wi-Fi6E & Wi-Fi7 devices are able to operate without degraded performance due to interference from outdoor standard-power RLAN devices.

2.10 With respect to licensing, should individual AFC-coordinated devices be registered on the RRL or covered by broader system-wide licensing arrangements, or are there other authorisation models that we should consider?

In our view, **AFC**-enabled standard power RLAN devices should be recorded on a nationwide database managed by the **ACMA**, accessible to (at least) fixed link licensees. Furthermore, we believe standard power RLAN devices should be authorised by a nationwide class license, operating on a no-interference, no-protection basis. This combination supports efficient spectrum coexistence and provides a clear basis for investigating interference issues.

2.11 What processes and safeguards would need to be established to accredit, audit and ensure ongoing compliance of industry-led AFC operators? What type of rules should be imposed on prospective AFC operators and how should those rules be codified?

No comment.

2.12 What technical or administrative features (e.g., real-time geolocation, exclusion zones, device registration, database accuracy and latency) will be critical to the successful implementation of AFC?

Key critical technical requirements include clearly defined exclusion zones and a highly accurate underlying database. Given the **RRL**'s current daily update cycle, imposing 24-hour delay before authorizing a new **AFC**-enabled standard power RLAN device would appear to be adequate in practice. Such an approach would effectively prevent interference from standard power RLAN devices toward higher priority licensed services.

2.13 How should data integrity, ownership, and update mechanisms be managed in AFC systems? Are ACMA's existing systems (such as the RRL) sufficient, or would changes or new systems be required to support real-time coordination?

Ericsson's view is that an if **AFC** framework is established the implementation should be based on a national register, managed and administered by the **ACMA**. Ericsson does not have a view as to whether such a register would be best implemented as part of an existing system, or a new system.



Based on our understanding of the primary use case for AFC (i.e. avoiding impact from standard power RLAN devices to higher priority licensed systems, typically point to point fixed links), a requirement for real-time co-ordination is not warranted.

2.14 Market for AFC Services and Device Compliance Standards

No comment.

2.15 What standards or other mandatory specifications should be prescribed to ensure AFC-enabled devices comply with operational rules (for example, GPS accuracy, firmware requirements, revalidation intervals)? What are the implications for manufacturers and operators?

No comment.