Australian Government | acma Australian Communications and Media Authority

Five-year spectrum outlook 2026–31 and 2026–27 work program

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Foreword

Radiofrequency spectrum underpins many of the services and technologies used by Australians. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) regulates the use of radiofrequency spectrum to maximise the long-term public benefit. The five-year spectrum outlook (FYSO) provides an opportunity for us to consult publicly about our spectrum management priorities. The FYSO sets out a strategic overview of our spectrum management work, the key drivers of spectrum demand forecast over the next 5 years and our annual work program for the current financial year.

The ACMA's spectrum management approach contributes to the Australian Government's broader policy priorities, including closing the digital inclusion gap for First Nations people and the net zero by 2050 commitment.

Part 1 of the FYSO 2026–31 provides the ACMA's medium-term outlook of the key drivers likely to shape the demand for spectrum and describes our spectrum management priorities for the years 2026–27 to 2030–31. Part 2 is the detailed annual work program for the 2026–27 financial year.

Following several years of consideration and consultation, we published our preferred views on outcomes for expiring spectrum licences (ESLs) in December 2025 and our preferred views on pricing in May 2026. Our policy framework for mobile and fixed wireless broadband licences promotes competition and choice, with most Australian consumers being able to choose between 3 national carriers and a range of mobile virtual network operators. We are supporting service continuity for consumers in regional, rural and remote areas – including those heavily reliant on the nbn – and favouring renewal of 5G regional rollout and low-Earth-orbit satellite (LEOsat) candidate bands, and bands that underpin co-funded coverage sites and the competition outcomes from the Optus and TPG networks sharing agreement. Our framework provides strong levels of certainty for the Australian mobile market as it continues to focus on 5G and invests in 6G and satellite innovation. Prices for renewed spectrum are based on a fair market value, providing consumers with a fair return on the use of this valuable public asset. From June 2026, licensees holding 850 MHz and 1800 MHz ESLs can apply for renewal.

Providing certainty for the future of rail safety communications is a key feature of the work program. We are developing arrangements that will continue to support rail use of the 1800 MHz band for the short-to-medium term. We have also implemented licensing arrangements in the 1900 MHz band to provide a national framework for the next generation of rail connectivity.

In this FYSO, we have maintained the review of the 1800 MHz and 2 GHz bands, outside of spectrum-licensed areas, at the preliminary replanning stage. This will allow us to consider revised planning options that reflect stakeholder feedback from our previous consultation process and take into account the growing interest for direct-to-device (D2D) services in these bands. We plan to consult on our revised planning options in Q4 2026.

CHANGE On 15 October 2026, the Australian Parliament passed the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation) Bill 2026 (UOMO Bill), which establishes the framework for a Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO). The Bill

received Royal Assent on 26 October 2026 and is now the *Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation) Act 2026* (UOMO Act).

The UOMO will require mobile network operators to ensure that baseline mobile coverage (SMS and voice) is reasonably available outdoors across Australia on an equitable basis. The framework legislation for establishing the UOMO does not specify the technologies or frequency ranges that need to be used to meet the obligation, and there are a range of allocation, licensing and planning arrangements that could be utilised. The ACMA is developing a work program to consider these aspects and is continuing to closely monitor developments that enable consumer mobile smartphones to communicate directly with satellite systems.

CHANGE On the 2 GHz mobile satellite service (MSS) allocation, we suggested in the draft FYSO that we may consult on th allocation instruments in Q2 2026 and commence the allocation in Q4 2026. Given the market and technological complexities and rapid rate of change in the industry, we do not propose to conduct an allocation in these timeframes. Instead, we plan to conduct further consultation on our proposed approach in Q4 2026 to assess the potential implications of the allocation on competition, consumers and industry while the various technology approaches mature. We will also consider the role that the allocation may play in supporting the UOMO and its role alongside other spectrum bands.

Subject to the feedback received from this consultation, we would propose to issue allocation instruments for consultation in Q2 2027, with a proposed allocation to commence in Q4 2027, though we will continue to investigate options to allow the allocation of the spectrum as soon as possible, including for trialling or testing services.

Working with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the Department), we continue to prepare for the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 (WRC-27), which is scheduled to take place in October and November 2027 in Shanghai, China. These conferences are held every 3 to 4 years to review and seek to revise the Radio Regulations (RRs), which is the international treaty governing the use of the radio-frequency spectrum and the geostationary-satellite and non-geostationary-satellite orbits.

We are progressing our significant program of radio planning and allocation activities, informed by our radio broadcast planning priorities, outlined in The future delivery of radio: Final report. These include AM to FM conversions in a number of regional markets and improving the coverage of existing services. We will continue to provide input, as requested, into the government's consideration of pathways for the future delivery of television, including the more efficient use of spectrum and infrastructure for television transmission.

We continue to improve our regulatory processes and frameworks to optimise outcomes for licensees and the public. We will consult on 2 radiocommunications instruments due to sunset this FYSO period, along with our ongoing review of the administrative and legislative technical planning instruments, which guide the planning and deployment of radiocommunications services.

As we work through complex and interconnected spectrum issues, we may need to adjust timeframes in response to changing priorities, stakeholder feedback and industry developments to ensure we continue planning for spectrum use to deliver the long-term public interest. We will communicate any changes through our 6-month and 12-month FYSO updates and, as necessary, to affected stakeholders.

Using the FYSO

The FYSO covers the 5 financial years 2026–27 to 2030–31. It comprises:

- Part 1: an outlook of the drivers likely to shape the demand for spectrum over the next 5 years
- Part 2: our detailed annual work program for the 2026–27 financial year.

For ease of interpretation, references to quarters are calendar year quarters:

- quarter 1 (Q1): 1 January to 31 March
- quarter 2 (Q2): 1 April to 30 June
- quarter 3 (Q3): 1 July to 30 September
- quarter 4 (Q4): 1 October to 31 December.

Where significant changes have been made to the draft FYSO consulted on, we have included a 'change' symbol: CHANGE. If significant new material has been inserted, we have identified this with a 'new' symbol: NEW.

Part 1: Five-year spectrum outlook 2026–31

Part 1 provides an outlook of the trends in markets, technology and spectrum uses that inform the ACMA's medium-term planning, allocation and reallocation activities. It also provides a description of our approach to spectrum management.

Overview

Our spectrum management approach and work program is focused on delivering the long-term public interest derived from radiofrequency spectrum. Advancements in radiocommunications technologies, coupled with Australians' growing economic and social use of spectrum, have increased the demand for spectrum. Our spectrum management priorities are aligned with government objectives and policy priorities and are informed by domestic technology needs and international harmonisation efforts.

This FYSO forms a key part of our reporting to government on spectrum management matters, while facilitating a two-way conversation with industry on our spectrum management work program. That work program is highly varied and cuts across overlapping planning, allocations, operational and strategic agendas. Some highlights include:

- playing an integral role in the lead up to and during major sporting events held in Australia, including the Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games, and the Formula One and Motorcycle grands prix. The ACMA provides spectrum management services for these events, including accommodating spectrum needs for sporting telemetry, broadcasting and attendees' access to mobile broadband, and resolving interference, when required. Our work helps ensure successful communications in a high-demand, congested radiofrequency environment. Discussions are underway about our role in managing spectrum at the Brisbane 2032 Olympics
- participating in international radiocommunications forums to promote and protect Australian interests in spectrum management, in collaboration with the Department, other government stakeholders and the Australian communications industry
- participating in the peak international radiocommunications regulatory forum, the ITU's World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC), which reviews and revises the RRs – the international treaty-level set of texts regarding use of the spectrum and satellite orbits. WRC-23 was held in late 2023 and considered possible new frequency allocations, service identifications, and regulatory and procedural matters across a range of services and applications
- in October 2025, after WRC, updating the Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan 2021 (ARSP) to reflect changes to Article 5 of the RRs, and we will be implementing WRC-23 outcomes, where necessary and appropriate. Preparations are underway for our participation in WRC-27
- releasing our preferred views on renewal outcomes and pricing for the expiring spectrum licences that underpin Australia's 3 mobile networks and over 30 million mobile services. This spectrum is the backbone of the communications networks that support Australians' digital lives, including new services, such as those delivered over LEOsat to Australians in regional and remote parts of the country. Our preferred views provide certainty for network operators, nbn and consumers, enabling providers to continue to deliver their existing mobile networks while accommodating new technologies that will benefit consumers and businesses nationwide. Our pricing methodology also sets a fair market rate for renewal. Applications for renewal of licences in the 850 MHz and 1800 MHz opened in June 2026.

Our approach to spectrum management

Our responsibilities to manage the radiofrequency spectrum are set out in the *Radiocommunications Act 1992* (the Radiocommunications Act) and in the *Australian Communications and Media Authority Act 2005* (the ACMA Act).

The object of the Radiocommunications Act is to promote the long-term public interest derived from the use of the spectrum by providing for the management of the spectrum in a manner that:

- facilitates the efficient planning, allocation and use of the spectrum
- facilitates the use of the spectrum for:
  - commercial purposes
  - defence purposes, national security purposes and other non-commercial purposes (including public safety and community purposes)
  - supports the communications policy objectives of the government.

CHANGE We manage spectrum consistent with the object of the Radiocommunications Act, including in relation to planning, allocation and licensing arrangements. We promote the object of the Radiocommunications Act and relevant government policy through a balanced application of market and regulatory mechanisms.

In assessing the impact that a regulatory proposal has on the public interest, we consider the overall effects on individuals, businesses, government users of spectrum and community organisations, as well as the broader economic, social and competition impacts. This approach aligns with the government's Policy Impact Analysis Framework, which ensures that policy options are well designed, well targeted and fit-for-purpose. We consider the following matters drawn from the Policy Impact Analysis Framework:

- What is the issue we are trying to solve and what data is available?
- What are the objectives, why is government intervention needed to achieve them, and how will success be measured?
- What policy options are we considering?
- What is the likely net benefit of each option?
- Who should we consult, and how?
- What is the best option of those considered and how will we implement it?
- How will we evaluate our chosen option against the success metrics?

In responding to these questions, we draw on a variety of evidence, including technical studies, stakeholder views and quantitative data, where available.

Through the FYSO and other processes, we consult on our work program priorities, as well as issues and options relating to specific planning, licensing and allocation processes. We seek input through a range of mechanisms and provide outcome statements that explain the basis for our decisions. These are often iterative processes, reflecting multiple rounds of consultation, and we will publish non-confidential submissions to ensure transparency and

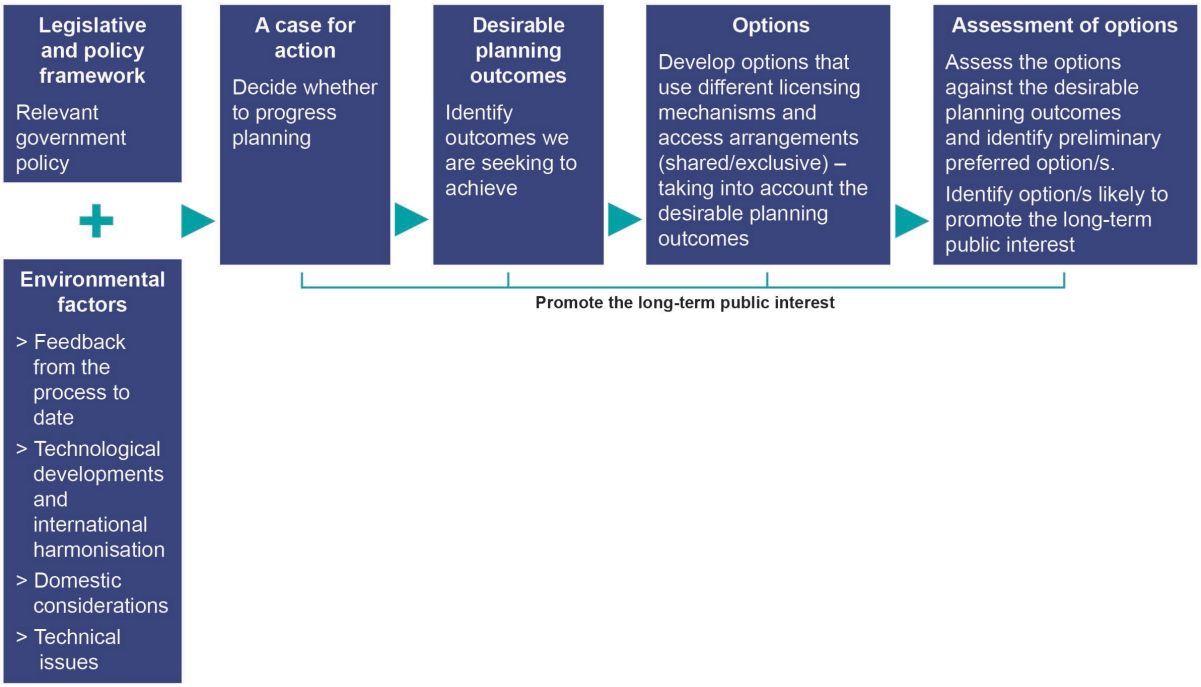
promote constructive dialogue. Stakeholder insights and perspectives are essential to shaping well-informed, robust decisions that benefit the entire industry.

The following sections provide an overview of our process for planning, replanning, allocating and licensing spectrum. Our approach to radiocommunications licensing and allocation provides further guidance and detail on our spectrum management practices.

Planning and replanning

Figure 1 describes the approach the ACMA takes in developing and assessing planning and replanning options.

Figure 1: The spectrum planning options framework



Spectrum planning comprises the investigations and decisions that determine general service and application-level uses of the spectrum. This includes developing the technical frameworks that establish co-existence arrangements between different uses and users, and heavily influences the 'licensing product' that will authorise access to the band. It also includes determining the most appropriate licensing mechanisms to apply in each situation.

To the extent possible, planning arrangements are intended to allow the allocation (or movement) of spectrum with no, or minimal, further regulatory intervention. Accordingly, planning arrangements may remain stable over long periods. However, where there is evidence of changing optimal use, it may be necessary to amend existing arrangements to enable a new use or better support an existing use. Reviewing spectrum planning arrangements in any band is a key step to ensuring they continue to support optimal use.

The band planning process is made up of 4 stages: monitoring, initial investigation, preliminary replanning and implementation. This approach has proven to be a flexible and responsive way of addressing changes in spectrum demand and ensuring the timely delivery of spectrum to market.

Planning outcomes have implications for decisions on licensing and future allocations. For example, planning outcomes will determine which uses are permitted, which in turn will determine the type of user likely to be interested in an allocation. To achieve the most efficient use of the spectrum, the interference management framework is often optimised for an expected use, even if such use is not mandatory. As an example, while spectrum licences may be 'technology flexible' in that they do not explicitly preclude any use, they are designed and optimised with a likely technology in mind to maximise the efficiency of these licences for their expected use, while taking into account co-existence requirements of other spectrum uses and users.

The spectrum management framework we use does not identify specific quantitative metrics or targets for spectrum required for a particular use or group of users. The models used to estimate such spectrum targets are highly sensitive to inputs and variables, which are difficult to predict beyond the short- to medium-term. While long-term estimates are useful as a guide for trend analysis, they are less so for determining specific spectrum targets.

Allocations and licensing

The choice of approach to allocating spectrum depends on a range of factors, such as the characteristics of the spectrum to be allocated, the expected type(s) of use, the anticipated demand for the spectrum and, if the spectrum is currently being used to deliver services, whether that use would promote the long-term public interest.

Auctions are usually preferred in circumstances where, for example, the spectrum is unencumbered or can be cleared without significant detriment to consumers or industry, and where significant excess demand is likely. While we have flexibility to use a variety of auction formats as appropriate, our most recent spectrum auctions have been conducted using an enhanced multi-round ascending auction or two-stage clock auction.[1]

Administrative allocation approaches are used when that approach will best meet spectrum management objectives. While most of our apparatus licences are offered via a simple 'over-the-counter' approach (that is, administratively), where appropriate, we use an allocation window approach to allocating specific licence-types. An allocation window allows a staged approach to considering applications, depending on whether there are competing applications and sufficient spectrum to fulfil all applications.

The other key licensing mechanism used is class licensing, including spectrum commons arrangements.[2] It allows spectrum users to access spectrum under specified rules outlined in class licences, usually in the form of common frequencies under a common set of conditions or a requirement to comply with industry or legislative standards. Class licences do not involve licence taxes or charges, and there is minimal regulatory overhead for spectrum users. While most class licences offer ubiquitous access, exceptions exist for access to certain classes of uses and users (for example, the *Radiocommunications (Public Safety and Emergency Response) Class Licence 2023* (PSER class licence), which authorises public safety agencies access to the 4.9 GHz band).

[1] More information can be found at About spectrum auctions. The ESMRA is a two-stage auction format that provides a simultaneous multiple-round clock stage for generic lots to determine the quantity of lots won of each product, followed by an assignment stage to determine the specific assignment.

[2] Spectrum commons refer to the idea that anyone can use spectrum in the spectrum commons, as long as they follow the set rules. In Australia, those rules are set out in class licences.

Lastly, where practicable, we also implement technology flexible frameworks to promote innovation and the adoption of new and emerging technologies. This includes our innovation and industry exemption framework and the ability to potentially authorise use of a wider range of complementary radionavigation-satellite service technologies.

The policy environment and regulatory reform

The object of the Radiocommunications Act includes managing spectrum in a manner that supports the communications policy objectives of the government. Our work program is informed by the policy environment in which we operate and expectations from government.

In terms of our specific regulatory remit, we are committed to meeting our objectives in the context of the government's broader media and communications policy framework. In our 2025 Statement of Intent, we responded to a 2024 ministerial Statement of Expectations. We showed that we will address the government's policy priorities through:

- providing timely and comprehensive advice on a range of matters relating to ESLs, having regard to relevant Ministerial policy statements
- promoting the long-term public interest derived from spectrum, including the benefits of technological developments that improve spectrum use and efficiency
- supporting government policies related to regional, rural and remote Australia including by having regard to relevant Ministerial policy statements in the planning and allocation of spectrum to support innovation and competition in these areas
- promoting technology neutral, simple and pragmatic frameworks that facilitate early adoption of new and emerging technologies, such as LEOsat enabled D2D technologies, while providing safeguards for consumers and small businesses.

We also consider and contribute to, where possible, the government's policy priorities regarding:

- First Nations people and meeting the Closing the Gap targets
- the commitment to net zero by 2050 and the role that digital infrastructure and services can contribute to this objective
- deepening people-to-people links and cooperation between Australia and the Indo-Pacific.

Section 28C of the Radiocommunications Act requires us to have regard to Ministerial policy statements (MPS) in performing our spectrum management functions and exercising our spectrum management powers. There are 2 MPS in place:

- The 2022 3.4 GHz MPS specifies 4 objectives to which we must have regard for decisions related to the 3.4–4.0 GHz band, including:
  - supporting the deployment of new and innovative technology including 5G
  - supporting a range of use-cases and users
  - supporting digital connectivity and investment in regional Australia
  - the promotion of competitive markets.
- The *Radiocommunications (Ministerial Policy Statement – Expiring Spectrum Licences) Instrument 2024* (the ESL MPS) sets out 5 key communications policy objectives to which we must have regard as we design and implement our process to manage the future use of ESLs. We have incorporated the communications policy objectives in the ESL MPS into our ESL framework:

- supporting service continuity for end users, particularly where no alternative service is available
- facilitating opportunities for new entrants and use-cases, including for LEOsats
- connectivity and investment in regional and remote areas to deliver improved services to end users
- promoting competition
- capacity for sustained investment and innovation.

We are also committed to meeting our objectives in the context of the government's broader media and communications policy framework and aim to fulfil the government's priorities through:

- publishing the FYSO each year, to provide a roadmap for spectrum releases and support new spectrum uses
- supporting technology trials and innovation, including through innovation and industry development opportunities in Australia for manufacturing banned equipment, where publicly beneficial; as well as innovation through the greater use of digital technologies targeted at reducing the regulatory burden for industry
- supporting opportunities for better telecommunications services in regional and remote Australia through our spectrum and licensing allocation processes and supporting innovations to improve service delivery, including by the rapidly emerging satellite sector
- participating in WRC and associated preparatory meetings, including ITU-R Study Groups and Working Parties to realise the benefits of wireless and satellite technology developments for Australia
- contributing our expertise to the government's work on modernising the media's regulatory environment for a contemporary Australia.

In the sections below we outline government initiatives that support these objectives. We then detail the ways that ACMA, as spectrum regulator, works to achieve the government policy priorities.

Driving productivity, investment and growth

Australians' reliance on communications products and infrastructure only continues to grow, with ACMA research indicating that mobile phone use is now almost ubiquitous – 95% of us use them to go online, 98% to make calls and 96% to send texts. As Australia's radiocommunications spectrum manager, the ACMA has a range of levers it can use to assist industry make new and innovative communications services available at the national and local level. These include the ability to make spectrum available as quickly as possible and ensure licensing and technical frameworks are effective and flexible with minimal compliance burden.

The government has tasked the Productivity Commission with 5 new inquiries focused on identifying ways to materially boost Australia's productivity. Each inquiry focused on one of the 5 pillars of the government's productivity agenda[3]:

1. Creating a more dynamic and resilient economy.
2. Building a skilled and adaptable workforce.
3. Harnessing data and digital technology.
4. Delivering quality care more efficiently.
5. Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation.

In our broader regulatory role, the ACMA is able, within legislative parameters, to streamline processes, improve transparency and, exercise forbearance where it is appropriate and pragmatic to do so while ensuring important protections for consumers and business are maintained. Spectrum enables much of the communications infrastructure and many of the technologies that help address these 5 pillars of productivity.

We develop licensing frameworks, set licence conditions and conduct spectrum allocations in a way that promotes the efficient use of spectrum and enhances competition, which in turn boosts productivity, supports investment, and facilitates innovation and market dynamism.

We promote competition through pro-competition rules (having regard to advice from the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission on allocation limits) for spectrum allocations. We configure spectrum lots to facilitate the entry of new providers, such as through area-wide licences (AWLs). The characteristics of AWLs – being technology-flexible, scalable and customisable – support competition in, for example, the use of communications to drive automation and productivity on mining sites in the Pilbara. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has favourably referenced our AWLs as a good example of innovative spectrum management.[4]

In response to the Treasurer and Minister for Finance's July 2025 joint letter,[5] we reiterated our commitment to bolstering productivity, investment and growth. We identified a range of new objectives and will continue to:

- take actions to reduce the time to market of new and innovative telecommunications products and services that will benefit consumers and industry
- support telecommunications industry growth and sustained private sector investment, given the importance of communications services to the economic and social lives of Australians

[3] The government has released the final reports of the Productivity Commission's five pillars of productivity inquiries: Productivity Commission, Five pillars of productivity inquiry final reports, pc.gov.au, 2025, accessed 9 July 2026.
[4] OECD Developments in Spectrum Management for Communication Services, pp. 22, 36.
[5] DITRDCSA - ACMA - Response letter - Nerida OLoughlin

- take actions to help improve trust and confidence in telecommunications networks, services and markets as drivers of economic growth
- streamline regulatory approaches and, where feasible, reduce timeframes for its regulatory decision-making and approvals
- take actions to improve industry understanding of its obligations and transparency of the ACMA's priorities and work program
- support industry innovation with fit-for-purpose and contemporary technical and regulatory frameworks
- seek out and take up opportunities for greater coordination with domestic and international regulators where interests align.

Resilient communications and regional connectivity

CHANGE The ACMA is contributing to strengthening the telecommunications regulatory framework. Through 2024–25 and 2025–26, the ACMA implemented 6 recommendations for which it was the lead agency arising from the *Review into the Optus outage of 8 November 2023*. These included:

- making the *Telecommunications (Customer Communications for Outages) Industry Standard 2024* to require telecommunications providers to notify customers, the public and government when there is a major outage or significant local outage in their area. Additional requirements commenced on 30 June 2026 requiring providers to publish or link to a register of outages to improve transparency for the community
- amending the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019* to:
  - require mobile carriers to wilt mobile base stations where there is a core network outage
  - require carriers to share real time network outage information with emergency service organisations
  - require providers to report to the ACMA detailing causes, steps taken to resolve, and detailed plans to avoid similar outages in the future
- registering a variation to the *C536 Emergency Call Service Requirements Industry Code* to require carriers to have the ability to remotely access and activate network management tools
- registering the new *C674 Emergency Calling – Network and Mobile Phones Testing Industry Code* to require industry testing arrangements for emergency calling.

The ACMA also made the *Telecommunications (Mobile Network Coverage Maps) Industry Standard 2026,* requiring mobile carriers and carriage service providers to develop and publish clear and comparable 4G and 5G mobile network coverage maps using a consistent set of metrics. These requirements commenced on 30 June 2026.

NEW In August 2026, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) commenced a mobile services inquiry to examine regional mobile coverage across Australia and to determine whether regulating wholesale access to some mobile services could improve consumer outcomes. The inquiry will run for approximately 12 months and will consider whether the ACCC should declare one or more wholesale mobile services, including domestic roaming and a radio access network service. The inquiry will consider a range of issues, including the role of LEOsat D2D services and their potential impact on investment, competition and consumer outcomes in the Australian mobile market. We

anticipate contributing to this inquiry over 2026–27, particularly where it relates to the implementation of the UOMO and the 2 GHz MSS allocation.

In September 2025, the government responded to the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review. The response highlighted that the government has already begun using the review's 14 recommendations to inform policies and programs to improve connectivity in rural, remote and regional areas, and will continue to:

- ensure essential telecommunication services are accessible, affordable and consumers are protected against unfair practices
- promote digital inclusion and connectivity literacy in regional, rural, and remote Australia, which will contribute to closing the digital divide and to economic growth
- focus on uplifting capacity and resilience of telecommunications networks to deliver reliable and robust mobile and broadband services, including during emergencies
- ensure telecommunications services are meeting the needs of those living and working in regional, rural and remote Australia.

NEW The government's National AI Plan, released in December 2025, sets out a roadmap to build an artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled economy that is more competitive, productive and resilient. The plan focuses on capturing the opportunity of AI by supporting digital and physical infrastructure, domestic capability and investment. In July 2026, the Prime Minister also outlined the government's approach to AI in Australia's interests, including proposed Australian standards for AI and large data centres, expectations around energy, water use and location, and stronger protections for consumers, artists and media.

While new AI and data centre investments are likely to rely heavily on fibre connectivity, they may also affect demand for resilient wireless communications. Stakeholders are increasingly adopting AI to improve efficiency, resilience and automation across their operations, including through the use of wireless broadband and private networks. The ACMA is continuing to monitor these developments to understand their implications for spectrum management, infrastructure resilience and future opportunities for reliable communications services.

NEW In July 2026, the government released the Statement on Space, identifying focus areas where Australia's space capability has unique opportunities. The Statement identifies the opportunity to strengthen resilient communications for remote and regional environments.

The ACMA works closely with the Australian Space Agency to ensure its spectrum work program has regard to the Statement's intended outcomes. This includes band planning and regulatory development that is geared towards Australia both benefitting from, and contributing to, rapidly evolving developments in the space sector.

Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO)

NEW On 26 October 2026, the UOMO Bill received Royal Assent and became the UOMO Act. The UOMO will require mobile network operators to ensure that baseline mobile coverage (SMS and voice) is reasonably available outdoors across Australia on an equitable basis. This will benefit remote, regional and peri-urban communities, improve Triple Zero access and expand public safety connectivity.

The UOMO has a default commencement date of 1 December 2027. There is flexibility in the Act:

- for the scope and timing of the UOMO to be adjusted, by legislative Ministerial instrument, in response to market readiness and extended as technology evolves
- to split the voice and SMS obligations at the commencement of the obligation, should market conditions render this necessary.

The ACMA will be responsible for enforcing the UOMO. Under the *Telecommunications Act 1997,* our powers include investigating breaches, issuing infringement notices and formal warnings, seeking enforceable undertakings and taking civil action before a court.

The ACMA will also be responsible for the enforcement of any UOMO standards, rules or benchmarks that may be applied to services, which we already enforce in relation to existing universal service arrangements.

The UOMO requires the Minister to determine performance and reliability standards for terrestrial mobile networks within 3 months of the ACCC concluding its mobile services inquiry. Consistent with the requirements of the UOMO Act, the ACMA will work with the Department on the development and implementation of these standards.

The ACMA also has a role under the Radiocommunications Act to consider appropriate planning, licensing and allocation of spectrum to support the UOMO. For example, we are developing a work program in 2026–27 to examine how the provision of D2D services covered by the UOMO could be facilitated in Australia's external territories. In Q4 2026, we will publish a consultation paper outlining our preliminary thinking on this topic.

Closing the Gap

The digital gap between First Nations people and other Australians can have a significant impact on First Nations people's and communities' engagement in business opportunities, access to health and government services, and participation in society and culture.[6]

Target 17 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap aims to achieve equal levels of digital inclusion for First Nations people as compared with other Australians, by 2026. It underpins Outcome 17, which is focused on First Nations people having access to information and services to make informed decisions regarding their lives.

[6] National Indigenous Australians Agency, First Nations digital inclusion plan (2023–26).

The First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group was established to advise on options to support progress towards the target and outcome. In its First Nations Digital Inclusion Roadmap – 2026 and beyond (the Roadmap), the group made 30 recommendations to achieve Target 17, including investment in infrastructure to increase equitable access, ensure that First Nations people are able to afford reliable internet services and support all First Nations people to gain skills to access the internet safely and effectively. It also recommended support for First Nations radio services where they are not present.

Community broadcasting licences allow licensees to provide broadcasting services on a not-for-profit basis for services that represent a community interest. Community broadcasting services aim to promote a diverse range of broadcasting for the Australian public, develop and reflect Australian identity, character and cultural diversity and provide local content. In February 2026, there were 91 community broadcasting radio licences and 66 temporary community broadcasting licences that represent First Nations community interests. We are considering an allocation work plan across 2025–27 that seeks to issue more long-term community broadcasting licences. In 2025–26, the ACMA commenced processes to allocate 5 community broadcasting licences in remote licence areas in Western Australia. These licences were allocated in September 2026 to community organisations representing First Nations community interests.

We continue to work with the Productivity Commission to provide data on First Nations community broadcasting to support the Closing the Gap dashboard, and we provide advice to the National Indigenous Australians Agency on the licensing of First Nations broadcasting services.

We work to increase digital inclusion of First Nations people, communities and businesses through our role as spectrum regulator. The Roadmap recommended that the ACMA consider how spectrum allocation can be reprioritised to ensure allocation to First Nations services in large population centres where there is currently no First Nations radio presence.

The ACMA is investigating the merits of, and potential demand for, a place-based access framework as well as other proposals to improve connectivity through the secondary market for unused spectrum. This could provide opportunities to improve coverage in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia, which often face lower levels of digital inclusion.

We continue to monitor and consider our international counterparts' new spectrum management activities to support First Nations communities. We invite comment from First Nations organisations, businesses, people and communities on how we can work together to improve our spectrum management approaches to help close the gap.

The Department is also progressing findings from the March 2025 Community Broadcasting Sector Sustainability Review report, particularly recommendation 4 – bringing a First Nations broadcaster to licence areas that do not have one.

Net-zero emissions

Spectrum access will also be critical to the rollout of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems (C-ITS), which can help reduce carbon emissions from road transport. C-ITS are interconnected systems of technologies that allow road vehicles to communicate with other vehicles, their drivers, road infrastructure and vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists. C-ITS enhances decision making based on shared information. Commonwealth, state and territory infrastructure and transport ministers continue to work together to progress C-ITS, in line with the Principles for a National approach to C-ITS in Australia, the National Road Transport Technology Strategy and 2024–27 National Connected and Automated Vehicle Action Plan. A report provided to and commissioned by the Department estimated that by 2050 connected or automated vehicles could result in fuel reductions worth $6 billion and greenhouse gas emissions reductions worth $1 billion.[7]

We have made amendments to allow for Electric Vehicle Council (EVC) members to get equivalent exemptions from electromagnetic compatibility and labelling requirements to those given to other industry bodies under our regulatory arrangements. This helps to ensure regulatory neutrality in our equipment regulation and to remove potential trade barriers for electric vehicle suppliers.

Broadcast spectrum developments

The government has outlined a range of objectives for broadcasting and media reform that aim to strengthen Australian media outlets and provide equitable access to media services and content to all Australians. We contribute to a range of government broadcasting initiatives to support these objectives.

The Department has been considering the future of free-to-air television, so it can continue to inform, educate and entertain Australians. The ACMA has been assisting the Department in this process. The Department conducted a consultation on the future of free-to-air television delivery from September to November 2026. Depending on the details of the final plan, there may be spectrum management and planning implications for the ACMA.

The ACMA continues to improve delivery of broadcast planning priorities, such as the AM to FM conversion program and supporting changed television transmission arrangements in certain regional markets.

International influences

As with all countries, the international environment is important to our domestic planning and regulatory considerations. International spectrum harmonisation, equipment standardisation and markets heavily influence domestic decisions on how spectrum is used and how coexistence between different spectrum uses and users is achieved.

Harmonising how we use spectrum with other countries and making use of international standards allows individuals and business to benefit from infrastructure and device economies of scale, global roaming and seamless interoperability. The Radio Regulations, a treaty-level document published by the ITU, details how cross-border interference is managed, how satellite spectrum and orbital resources are coordinated and which frequencies are used internationally by specific services and applications.

[7] The Centre for International Economics (CID), The Economic Impacts of Connected and Automated Vehicles, CIE website, 2021, accessed 17 September 2026.r

For this reason, we monitor international developments and engage in relevant international forums to inform, promote and protect our domestic interests. This includes:

- keeping informed of developments in other countries and regions, to identify opportunities and pressure points for change in the use of spectrum, as well as learning from arrangements that have been implemented elsewhere
- leveraging technical specifications and standards for radiocommunications technologies developed by international bodies for use domestically. Examples of these bodies include the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI)
- participating in international forums, such as the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and the ITU-R, which are influential in identifying opportunities for spectrum harmonisation both regionally and globally. See International engagement for details on our engagement in these forums.

Looking ahead, one of the most significant international events shaping global and Australian spectrum policy will be WRC-27. WRCs review and revise the Radio Regulations, which underpin international spectrum allocations and coordination processes. Decisions made at WRC-27 will influence how emerging technologies – such as 6G mobile networks, non-terrestrial networks (NTN), satellite broadband constellations, and advanced aeronautical and maritime systems – access and share spectrum globally. These outcomes will have important implications for Australia's domestic spectrum planning, as they strongly influence the frameworks for harmonisation, coexistence and innovation across multiple sectors.

For Australia, active engagement in the lead-up to WRC-27 is essential to safeguard our interests and ensure beneficial alignment with global trends. The ACMA works closely with the Department in Australian WRC preparations, in particular leading Australian involvement in ITU-R groups that undertake technical studies and draft regulatory solutions to WRC agenda items.

Spectrum management system

The ACMA continues its multi-year project to support and replace our existing spectrum management software.

In late June 2026 we delivered our new Register of Radiocommunications Licences (RRL), the first public-facing element of our new spectrum management system. This project will allow the ACMA to continue to effectively manage more than 170,000 licences held across Australia.

Ongoing regulatory improvements

We are also continuing to progress our sunsetting work program, working on legislative instruments scheduled to sunset over 2026–27. See Appendix A: Sunsetting instruments for more details.

Market and technology drivers of change in spectrum demand

Wireless (mobile and fixed) broadband

Along with traditional wide-area wireless broadband (WBB) use-cases, the emergence of non-traditional use-cases has also become a key input to our planning and allocation processes. In planning for future spectrum demand, we generally consider 3 broad categories of WBB use-cases, noting that network deployments may comprise various combinations of these categories:

1. Wide-area subscriber networks, served by ubiquitous base stations operated by one or more service providers. This category could be considered 'conventional' telecommunications carrier fixed or mobile broadband operations.
2. More limited market subscriber networks over smaller and localised areas, including fixed WBB and fleet-oriented services. Services provided by wireless internet service providers are an example of this type of use.
3. Business, government or non-commercial enterprise services operated or controlled by an entity within the confines of their own premises or land estate, for example hospitals, education precincts, industrial, mining or transport facilities. These private networks are usually best enabled through either class licensing or local area apparatus-licensing approaches.

While an ever-growing need for data generally drives demand for additional spectrum, reviewing arrangements for access to categories of bands already licensed for WBB is also important to ensure those allocations are being used efficiently, and to provide a pathway for new technology developments. Our work program continues to include projects to optimise existing planning frameworks to accommodate evolving network technologies, balanced against the need to manage coexistence with other licensed services. Such programs have resulted in mobile network operators deploying, or preparing to deploy, 5G in their existing spectrum holdings.

Our planning, allocation and licensing activities seek to support a range of regional communications use-cases and users. This is particularly relevant for WBB services, where there are multiple types of service offerings, users and deployment models, resulting in a diverse range of spectrum needs in regional Australia.

CHANGE We aim to progress the consideration of updated planning arrangements for the 1800 MHz and 2 GHz bands in remote areas for fixed and mobile WBB services. We will also commence work on implementing new WBB arrangements in parts of the upper 6 GHz band, following our planning decision of December 2024.

A number of frequency bands used for WBB are subject to the ESL process, outlined below.

We are also undertaking studies to help inform Australian positions on WRC-27 agenda item 1.7, concerning possible international mobile telecommunication (IMT) identifications in the 4400–4800 MHz frequency band, parts of the 7125–8400 MHz and the 14.8–15.35 GHz frequency bands.

Future 6G

6G will be the first generation of mobile technology to have been developed using AI in the network design, with its use-cases potentially including private networks, digital twins, and hologram technologies.

6G is expected to further enhance mobile network efficiency, reduce energy consumption and leverage existing infrastructure to complement new infrastructure investment. 6G technologies will likely need additional spectrum allocations (in particular to support initial rollouts before refarming existing spectrum becomes feasible), higher infrastructure density and potentially spectrum in the THz bands. It is likely to be released commercially from 2030, and while it will ultimately leverage a range of existing and new spectrum allocations, initial deployments are likely to be in the upper 6 GHz band.

NEW 6G specifications and standards are still under development. Work is currently underway in the ITU-R to develop spectrum regulatory arrangements for IMT-2030; and in 3GPP to evaluate candidate 6G technologies and develop technical specifications, with the first release of 6G specifications expected to be ready in 2029, ahead of expected commercial deployments around 2030.

Wi-Fi 6/6e/7

Radio local area network (RLAN) technologies, in particular Wi-Fi, have become an integral part of modern life. Wi-Fi use continues to expand, with a more diverse range of devices accessing these networks.

A growing number of countries have already made, or are in the process of making, arrangements to facilitate operation of RLANs in the 6 GHz band, mainly to enable the use of next generation Wi-Fi equipment, known as ‘Wi-Fi 6e’ and ‘Wi-Fi 7’. We have previously taken steps to support uptake of these technologies by making changes to the Radiocommunications (Low Interference Potential Devices) Class Licence 2015, which was subsequently remade as the Radiocommunications (Low Interference Potential Devices) Class Licence 2025 (LIPD class licence) to allow RLAN equipment in the lower part of the 6 GHz band (5925–6425 MHz) in Australia. Following our planning decision for the upper 6 GHz band, we expanded the frequency ranges for RLANs in the LIPD class licence to include 6425–6585 MHz (see Low interference potential devices (LIPD)).

Some countries have permitted 6 GHz band RLAN operation at higher power levels than currently permitted in Australia. Higher-power operation can enable RLAN devices to provide coverage over a larger area and we are aware of growing interest in introducing similar arrangements in Australia, however doing so introduces new interference management considerations. Automatic Frequency Coordination has been identified as one means of managing access to the band (for further details, see our consultation 6 GHz band spectrum sharing for Automatic Frequency Coordination).

Private networks

Private networks may provide enterprises with communications services that are better suited to their business needs than public wireless networks. Following the early uptake of private networks by the construction and mining sectors, we are beginning to see a range of other sectors in Australia adopt these technologies, including agribusiness, transport, logistics, and utilities. These applications are sometimes referred to as ‘P5G’ when enabled by 5G technologies or ‘pLTE’ when long-term evolution (LTE) is used.

We anticipate there will be increasing industry interest in deploying private networks using 5G technology to take advantage of new market opportunities and potential applications. In general, bands that support WBB can also be used for private networks, however our allocations of millimetre wave (mmWave) spectrum in the 26 and 28 GHz bands and mid-band spectrum categories in the 3.4–4.0 GHz band are especially well suited for these purposes.

Spectrum bands supporting WBB use

WBB (including 5G) uses spectrum that is commonly broken down into 3 broad categories:

- 'low-band' spectrum below 1 GHz, specifically, bands traditionally used to provide wide area-coverage for WBB networks
- 'mid-band' spectrum between 1 GHz and 6 GHz, which is used to provide a combination of coverage and capacity for WBB networks
- 'high-band' spectrum, above 6 GHz, which includes the mmWave bands previously used for FWA and high-capacity hot spot coverage.[8]

Each of these categories necessitates different planning considerations, due to their differing characteristics (for example, propagation characteristics), as well as international regulations and standards, domestic policy, legacy planning and allocation arrangements, and other incumbency factors.

We are aware of continued interest in the use of sub-1 GHz bands, principally due to their propagation characteristics and ability to provide coverage to wide areas. These bands are traditionally attractive for deploying WBB networks, including by regionally focused WBB providers and sector-specific providers. However, mid-and-high band spectrum, where much larger bandwidths are typically available, is becoming more important for the delivery of WBB services where population density and requirements for rich data necessitate higher capacity that cannot entirely be met through densification of low-band network infrastructure. Technology is also assisting this shift towards higher frequencies, in particular through the evolution of active antenna systems (AAS) in WBB systems.

The band planning section in Part 2 provides a detailed breakdown of low-band (the 600 MHz band), mid-band (1.5 GHz, 1.8 GHz, 2 GHz, and 4 GHz bands) and high-band (6 GHz, 40 GHz, 46 GHz and 47 GHz bands) spectrum categories under various stages of consideration – many being at the 'monitoring' stage only – for the potential delivery of WBB services. A number of these and other bands are also subject to the ESL process, which is outlined below.

Satellites

On the satellite front, much of the focus continues to be on LEOsat and MSS offerings and we continue to closely monitor developments that enable consumer mobile smartphones to communicate directly with satellite systems (D2D services).

We are also aware of the satellite industry's interest in new spectrum for gateway earth stations, including the use of Q/V bands and 'W-band'.[9] These bands are under consideration in the US, where the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has announced that it would release a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking

[8] mmWave bands span 30 GHz to 300 GHz (that is, a wavelength of 1 cm to 1 mm). However, in the current 5G context, mmWave bands span from around 24 GHz up to 86 GHz.
[9] Specifically, at 92.0–94.0 GHz, 94.1–100 GHz, 102.0–109.5 GHz, and 111.8–114.25 GHz.

comment on expanding satellite connectivity across W-band (among others).[10] These bands are also being considered in Europe for the same purposes.[11] As part of this work in December 2025 we developed interim arrangements for W-band supporting earth station transmitters in Perth and Sydney.[12] We will consider any future requests on a case-by-case basis.

NEW We are also monitoring international regulatory and licensing developments relating to equivalent power flux density (EPFD) limits for NGSO (non-geostationary satellite orbit)-based satellite broadband systems including ongoing work within ITU-R Study Group 4 and the recent FCC decision to modernise EPFD rules.[13] Revising EPFD limits may help allow NGSO systems to increase system capacity and improve service performance, subject to maintaining acceptable interference levels into GSO and other incumbent services.

Some in the satellite sector are placing increasing focus on this issue. In response, we intend to examine whether our current reliance on the EPFD limits specified in Article 22 of the Radio Regulations remains fit for purpose for assessing NGSO-GSO coexistence under our domestic NGSO licensing regime. This may include an assessment of whether alternative coexistence metrics could support more efficient spectrum use. A deviation from those limits could involve the application of Article 22.5CA in the Regulations, which affords administrations the flexibility to allow Article 22 EPFD limits to be exceeded within their own territory. We intend for this work to be undertaken in Q2 2027 and that it will be independent of any consideration of reform of international regulations, including Article 22, within the ITU-R's work program.

Spectrum sharing

Spectrum sharing in its traditional form is a core component of managing access to spectrum – all users 'share' the spectrum through coordinated access (by working around other users on a time, frequency or spatial separation basis) or by uncoordinated access, where interference potential is understood and accepted and/or mitigated by technology (for example, under the LIPD class licence). 'Non-traditional' sharing arrangements, most notably dynamic spectrum access regimes, are also being considered, or implemented, internationally.

Some non-traditional sharing concepts that are currently being studied internationally take advantage of the 'typical' use-cases of RLAN and IMT in the upper 6 GHz band, combined with additional mitigation measures, to enable co-channel and same-area sharing. Under a non-traditional model, the dynamic application of mitigation measures, for example, those that consider specific deployment scenarios, signal propagation conditions or both, could be used to facilitate more efficient spectrum access through sharing.

Another example of spectrum sharing involves the use of databases that contain relevant data – such as station location and protection requirements – to provide a sharing arrangement. Under these arrangements, a device would interrogate the database to determine if operation at a particular location would not impact existing stations.

Examples of databases currently in operation include Automatic Frequency Coordination (AFC), used to manage interference between RLAN devices and fixed links, and the

[10] See FCC Looks to Unleash 20,000 Megahertz for Satellite Spectrum Abundance.
[11] See ECC work item FM44_52 FSS Earth-to-space coordinated use within 90/100/110 GHz ranges.
[12] See ACMA consultation Interim arrangements for W-band fixed satellite service earth station transmitters.
[13] See FCC, Modernizing spectrum sharing rules for space-based broadband, Report and Order (adopted 30 April 2026).

Spectrum Access System (SAS), used to enable sharing spectrum between mobile WBB services and incumbent services in the 3550–3700 MHz band (also known as the Citizens' band Radio Service (CBRS)). These database systems can operate under a tiered model, where details of the primary-tiered users are included in the database and second-tier users cannot operate until granted permission by the database.

Other international initiatives focused on spectrum sharing include the FCC's Enhanced Competition Incentive Program (ECIP) and ongoing work in the US, as outlined in its National Spectrum Strategy, to pursue expanded opportunities for shared access to government-held spectrum through the exploration of a common spectrum management platform.

Spectrum sharing through careful planning and use of appropriate regulatory tools presents a unique opportunity to allow a diverse range of licensees to access spectrum and help foster greater levels of industry partnerships through different spectrum-sharing arrangements. These can have beneficial effects on the economies of some areas, such as regional and remote Australia.

We are exploring the utility and feasibility of AFC to permit the operation of higher power RLAN devices in the 6 GHz band. Our discussion paper, 6 GHz band spectrum sharing for Automatic Frequency Coordination, sought input from relevant stakeholders and closed on 6 February 2026. Subject to review of submissions, we will follow up with a further consultation paper in Q3 2026. We also continue to:

- monitor other innovations and advances in spectrum-sharing arrangements domestically and internationally
- encourage industry-led proposals of new approaches to spectrum sharing and remain open to discussing how spectrum-sharing arrangements could be best facilitated to meet the needs of different spectrum users.

Radio and television services

Broadcasting services may be delivered using various parts of the spectrum, including AM and FM frequencies for radio and VHF, UHF and satellite frequencies for TV. Evolving digital transmission technology and changes in viewer and listener behaviour are altering the modes of delivery and, consequently, changing the demand for broadcasting spectrum. To ensure that policy settings are optimised to respond to this changing environment, the future delivery of television services is being examined more broadly under a Department-led initiative. For example, we are aware that television broadcasters have been changing the video compression standard of some of their services from MPEG2 to MPEG4 and, in some areas, all television services are now delivered using MPEG4.

We continue with a significant program of radio planning and allocation activities, informed and prioritised by our radio broadcast planning priorities, outlined in The future delivery of radio: Final report. These include AM to FM conversions in regional areas and improving the coverage of existing services. We have expanded the AM to FM conversion program for commercial radio broadcasting services in regional areas to include competitive markets. FM conversion of AM services in regional areas has the potential to improve listener experience and support industry by delivering improved audio quality, reduced signal interference and lower costs for broadcasters. We continue to work with commercial AM licensees in solus

(single licensee) and competitive regional radio markets to progress their requests for AM to FM conversions.

We also remain open to trials of new broadcasting technology – in 2023, we licensed multiple trials of small-scale DAB+ technology and past trials have included DAB+, DRM for AM (DRM30) and DRM for FM (DRM+) technologies for radio. In 2024 we issued a new DAB licence for the ABC in Launceston.

Spectrum for government requirements

Many public service entities require the use of spectrum, including federal and state agencies responsible for defence, national security, law enforcement, safety and emergency services.

Transport , scientific and meteorological services also have unique spectrum needs. For example, the Bureau of Meteorology is an important government spectrum user (the third-largest spectrum holder by frequency in Australia). It holds many licences between 2 MHz and 100 GHz to support a range of observing systems, including active and passive sensors, fixed and mobile systems and other terrestrial and satellite services. This spectrum use assists meteorological observations, forecasts, warnings, analyses and advice about Australia's atmosphere, water, ocean and space environments.

Government spectrum users usually operate within the same spectrum management framework as other users, although some government spectrum needs warrant additional considerations and regulatory arrangements. For example, a significant portion of Defence spectrum access is authorised under Defence apparatus licences, which can be issued in bands with certain footnotes ascribed in the Table of Allocations in the ARSP. These are commonly termed 'Defence bands'. Similarly, bands accessed by Airservices Australia used for internationally harmonised aeronautical communications, navigation and surveillance services are set aside through ARSP footnotes.

Part 2: 2026–27 annual work program

Part 2 provides information about the spectrum management work program that will be the ACMA's focus over 2026–27.

Overview

When we set our spectrum management priorities, we consider a range of relevant matters, including:

- domestic and international trends in spectrum uses
- developments in international spectrum harmonisation and technology standardisation
- evolution of communications technology
- the most cost-effective and least-restrictive approach to achieve policy objectives
- feedback received through consultation with stakeholders.

In response to these influences, we develop our detailed annual work program. Work program activities are grouped under the following headings in accordance with the ACMA's spectrum management functions and powers:

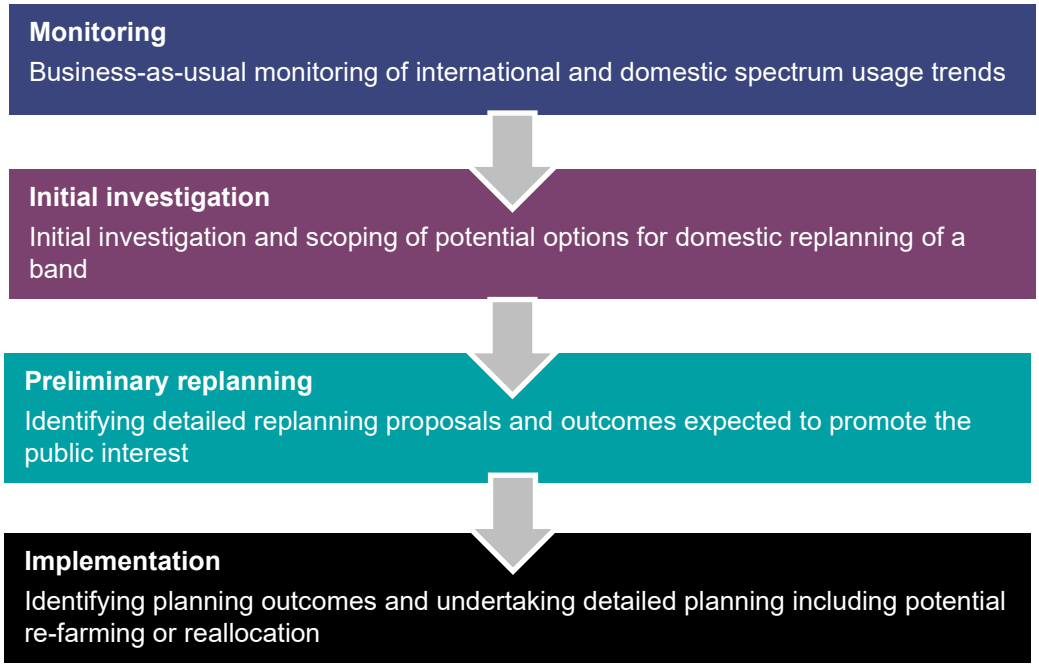
- band planning
- forward allocation program
- optimising established planning frameworks
- licensing and regulatory development
- pricing
- compliance and enforcement
- international engagement.

Band planning

Band planning activities support the establishment of new spectrum uses.

In establishing new planning frameworks, we consider bands at 4 distinct stages as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Stages in spectrum management band planning



A band's possible progression through each stage will depend on a range of factors and, in some cases, may move back to an earlier stage if consultation processes, information gathering, or prioritisation suggest this is appropriate. Similarly, bands may 'jump' stages if circumstances warrant doing so. There is no set period for which a band must remain at a particular stage, or an expectation that a band must proceed between stages. Timing of any progression is based on the circumstances at hand and not on any predetermined cadence.

In addition, only a relatively small number of bands are considered beyond the monitoring stage at any one time – most spectrum arrangements are relatively stable and do not need replanning.

When considering replanning options, we seek to identify alternative bands, alternative arrangements within the same band, or both.

The 4 stages of band planning provide the framework for a thorough consultation regime. This enables stakeholders to keep us apprised of developments and issues in various bands and inform us of their views and the implications of different options for incumbent or potential new services. The consultation process at each stage allows us to be transparent about our approach to band planning and understand the costs and benefits of a particular planning proposal.

Table 1: Band planning activities

Planning stage	Frequency band/s	Priorities and proposed timelines
Monitoring	600 MHz (617–698 MHz) 3.3 GHz (3300–3400 MHz) 4 GHz (4400–4990 MHz) 13 GHz (12.75–13.25 GHz) 40 GHz (37–43.5 GHz) 46 GHz (45.5–47 GHz) 47 GHz (47.2–48.2 GHz) Bands being studied for a possible IMT identification under WRC-27 agenda item 1.7: • 4400–4800 MHz • 7125–8400 MHz • 14.8–15.35 GHz	Continue to monitor domestic and international developments to identify usage trends
	NEW 7100–7250 MHz	Q1 2027: Release consultation paper on the need for a potential new work item
	5030–5091 MHz band for drone command and non-payload communications (CNPC)	Continue to monitor development of the relevant draft ITU recommendation that specifies the characteristics of terrestrial air-ground links operating in the aeronautical mobile radiocommunication service Further work depends on global developments and domestic needs
Initial investigation	2300–2302 MHz	CHANGE Q2 2027: Consultation on future use of the band
	Long-term use of the 1800 MHz band	CHANGE Not scheduled for 2026–27
Preliminary replanning	1.5 GHz (1427–1535 MHz)	Not scheduled for 2026–27
	1800 MHz and 2 GHz bands outside of	CHANGE Q4 2026: Consult on revised planning options

Planning stage	Frequency band/s	Priorities and proposed timelines
	spectrum-licensed areas	
Implementation	2 GHz MSS (1980–2010 MHz and 2170–2200 MHz)	CHANGE Q4 2026: Consult on proposed approach to allocation. Subject to feedback from this consultation, we would consult further on allocation instruments in Q2 2027 and an allocation commencing in Q4 2027, though we will continue to investigate options to allow the allocation of the spectrum, as soon as possible including for trialling or testing services
	Upper 6 GHz (6585–7100 MHz)	Q4 2026: Consult on proposed licensing approach which may include reallocation declaration and definition of licence areas

Monitoring stage

In the monitoring stage, we maintain an awareness of international and domestic spectrum related developments and interest in potential changes to the use of the band that may require substantial planning activities.

There is no direct action required by stakeholders, but there is an open invitation for stakeholders to engage with us on relevant developments and issues.

In general, bands and issues included at the monitoring stage represent potential work items beyond our immediate, detailed, annual work program. Importantly, not every band being monitored will subsequently be considered for replanning.

600 MHz (617–698 MHz)[14]

Recent developments

CHANGE The Department has recently released a public discussion paper on future options for the distribution of free-to-air television services in Australia.

There is a sixth television channel allocated in each area, which is currently available in most areas for trials of more advanced digital television technology. Previous industry trials of DVB-T2 technologies were conducted in 2018 and 2019 and we will continue to support industry-driven initiatives for trials of new television transmission technologies in the future.

We note that some television broadcasters have been changing the video compression standard of some of their services from MPEG-2 to MPEG-4. In some areas, all television services are now delivered using MPEG-4.

The *Broadcasting Services Amendment (Community Television) Act 2024* extended the use of the sixth channel by incumbent community television broadcasters, which will be allowed to use the sixth channel until an alternative use of the spectrum is identified.

[14] This lower boundary (617 MHz) is based on the bottom edge of the 2 × 35 MHz plan identified for the US 600 MHz band. The size of any guard band between the bottom of possible 600 MHz arrangements and the upper edge of ongoing broadcasting would need to be considered as part of any review of the band. The upper boundary aligns with the top edge of the US 600 MHz band plan, noting that the top edge of the highest channel used for broadcasting in Australia ceases at 694 MHz.

Internationally, the European Union spectrum policy group published a report in November 2025 on the future of the related 470-694 MHz range. It is principally a summary of developments and plans by the member states in the band.

Next steps

Free-to-air broadcasters are increasingly delivering their services online, and demand for online services continues to rise. We will monitor the progress of the government's consideration of the future of television broadcasting.

We will continue to monitor examination of band use by other countries, Europe, the ITU and the APT.

3.3 GHz (3300–3400 MHz)

The 3.3 GHz band is currently allocated in the ITU RRs on a primary basis to the radiolocation service worldwide. In Australia, the radiolocation service in this band is designated to be used principally for defence and national security, as described in footnote AUS101A to the sole-primary radiolocation service allocation in the ARSP. The Department of Defence is normally consulted in considering non-defence use of the radiolocation service in this band. At WRC-15, the 3.3 GHz band was identified for IMT in numerous countries. Recommendation ITU-R M.1036 includes frequency arrangements for the implementation of the terrestrial component of IMT in the 3.3 GHz band with some implementation aspects included. Numerous countries have identified the band for IMT.

The 3.3 GHz band is part of 3GPP profile bands n77 (3300–4200 MHz) and n78 (3300–3800 MHz) for 5G.

Recent developments

As an outcome of WRC-23 agenda item 1.2, this band was identified for IMT in Region 2. Several African countries also added their name to existing footnotes in the ITU-R RRs identifying the band for IMT.

There has been increasing interest in using this band for IMT. Various countries in Asia, Africa, South America and the Middle East plan to or have assigned spectrum in the band for WBB.[15]

Next steps

We will continue to monitor developments in this band.

4 GHz (4400–4990 MHz)

The 4400–4500 MHz band is currently allocated in the ITU RRs on a coprimary basis to fixed and mobile services worldwide, while the 4500–4800 MHz band also includes an allocation for the fixed-satellite service (FSS). In Australia, these bands are designated to be used principally for defence and national security, as described in footnote AUS101 of the ARSP. The Department of Defence is normally consulted in considering non-defence use of spectrum in the 4400–4800 MHz band.

The 4800–4990 MHz band is currently allocated on a primary basis for fixed and mobile services in Australia. In Australia, the fixed and mobile services in this band are designated to be used for defence and national security purposes via the application of footnote

[15] Policy Tracker, *3.3-4.2 GHz benchmarking: Global and regional overview*, Policy Tracker website, accessed 15 December 2025.

AUS101A to these service allocations in the ARSP. Accordingly, the Department of Defence is normally consulted in considering non-defence use of the fixed and mobile services in this band. The 4950–4990 MHz part of the band is also allocated to the radio astronomy service on a primary basis under Footnote 443 of the ARSP.

The 4 GHz band is standardised for 5G under the 3GPP profile band number n79 (covering 4400–5000 MHz). As of September 2024, 1,039 devices were announced for this band.[16]

There is some interest domestically from mobile network operators, wireless internet service providers and other fixed wireless access operators in pursuing this band for WBB in Australia. The band has also been identified for IMT in some countries, as detailed in footnote 441A and 441B of the ARSP. However, except for the RCC, we are not aware of any regional bodies (including the APT) supporting WBB in the band.

Several countries, including Australia, have implemented arrangements in the 4940–4990 MHz band for public safety, defence and national security purposes. While the band was originally intended to support high-speed localised coverage for an incident or event, its inclusion in 3GPP standards for 5G technologies means that it might be suitable for wider-area high-speed broadband public safety applications. The PSER class licence sets out arrangements for the use of this band by those entities.

The band is also within the scope of WRC-27 agenda item 1.7. ITU-R study groups are carrying out studies to support WRC-27 consideration of a possible IMT identification.

Recent developments

Over the past few years, there has been increasing interest in this band from other countries. Japan has made the 4500–4900 MHz band available for WBB. Part or all the band has been identified for IMT in over 40 countries but, to date, only a few countries have allocated spectrum for that purpose.

China, Nigeria, Korea, Russia and Taiwan plan to assign, or have assigned, spectrum in the 4800–5000 MHz band for WBB use. Brazil, China, Myanmar, Nigeria, Paraguay, Russia, Singapore, Uruguay and Vietnam are also considering all or part of the broader 4400–5000 MHz band for WBB use.[17] There is some interest from domestic WBB users in pursuing the band for this use in Australia.

Next steps

We will continue to monitor developments in this band, including engaging in the relevant ITU-R studies under WRC-27 agenda item 1.7.

40 GHz (37–43.5 GHz), 46 GHz (45.5–47 GHz) and 47 GHz (47.2–48.2 GHz)

The 40 GHz and 47 GHz bands are of significant interest for both terrestrial 5G and satellite broadband services. We will consider global trends and local circumstances, including domestic and international take-up of mmWave 5G services, to determine whether replanning for possible 5G in the 40 GHz and 47 GHz bands is appropriate.

[16] Global mobile Suppliers Association, *5G Device Ecosystem September 2024 – Member report*, GSA website, 2024, accessed 14 January 2025.
[17] Global mobile Suppliers Association, *Spectrum – 4400MHz-5000MHz January 2022. National Spectrum Positions*, GSA website, 2022, accessed 23 March 2022.

We note that optimal spectrum management outcomes are likely to be achieved when both bands are considered simultaneously.

Recent developments
In October 2025, Ofcom released results of their auction of mmWave spectrum, which included the 40.5–43.5 GHz band.[18]

We have developed an interim licensing process for licence applications for satellite gateway earth stations in these bands, which are recorded in spectrum embargo 80.

Next steps
We continue to invite comments on the likely demand for this spectrum in the near term.

We will also continue to monitor the 40 GHz, 46 GHz (mainly in Region 1 countries) and 47 GHz bands identified for IMT use at WRC-19 following the allocation of mmWave spectrum in the 26 and 28 GHz bands.

While we do not intend to undertake a full review of these bands at this time, we acknowledge that the satellite industry is seeking greater certainty in accessing this spectrum to assist with long-term planning (particularly for gateway earth stations), with a number of operators looking to deploy new satellite systems in the coming years. We are open to considering whether changes can be made to the interim arrangements currently recorded in embargo 80 to provide greater certainty for gateway earth stations, depending on resourcing and competing requirements.

Bands being studied under WRC-27 agenda item 1.7

WRC-27 agenda item 1.7 will consider studies on sharing and compatibility and develop technical conditions for the possible use of IMT in the frequency bands 4400–4800 MHz, 7125–8400 MHz (or parts thereof) and 14.8–15.35 GHz, taking into account existing primary services operating in these and adjacent frequency bands.

In Australia, those bands, either in part or in full, are used for defence purposes. There are also other uses, such as satellite services, point-to-point (PTP) links and television outside broadcasting systems that operate in some of these bands.

Recent developments
ITU-R Working Party 5D (WP 5D) has been identified as the responsible group for conducting work under agenda item 1.7. Work on this issue commenced in 2024 and WP 5D is in the process of conducting sharing and compatibility studies.

Next steps
We will continue to engage with stakeholders via the Department and ACMA's preparatory processes for international meetings to develop Australian positions on WRC-27 agenda item 1.7 and contribute to studies. We will also monitor developments in other regions and countries.

NEW 7100–7250 MHz

The frequency range 7100–7250 MHz is currently allocated for television outside broadcast (TOB) services. There is growing interest in using the band for WBB services, in particular to

[18] Ofcom, *Award of the mmWave (26 GHz and 40 GHz) spectrum bands*, Ofcom website, 2025, accessed 22 December 2025.

support the initial 6G deployments as an extension to spectrum in the frequency-adjacent upper 6 GHz band.[19]

Recent developments

In December 2024, we released our planning decisions for the upper 6 GHz band, which included replanning the frequency range 6585–7100 MHz for wide-area wireless broadband (WA WBB) services in defined areas (see Upper 6 GHz (6585–7125 MHz) for more about the ongoing work to implement these arrangements).[20] This work will provide up to 515 MHz of spectrum for the potential first deployments of 6G in Australia.

Next steps

While we recognise the benefits of a hypothetical combined allocation of upper 6 GHz and lower 7 GHz spectrum in Australia to avoid potential fragmentation of the band (assuming that amount of spectrum is required), there are several issues that need further consideration before a potential new work item on this band could be created. These include:

- Does the WBB sector need more mid-band spectrum to support the introduction of 6G in Australia? The risk of fragmentation needs to be balanced against the risk of under-utilised (or even unsold) spectrum.
- What use best promotes the long-term public interest of the frequency range 7100–7250 MHz, noting that this spectrum is currently allocated to other services in Australia and that replanning it for additional WBB use could be considered an incremental benefit?
- Is it appropriate to commence replanning work before a WRC-27 outcome and before there is more certainty about IMT support in this spectrum in other jurisdictions (and the resultant implications for device ecosystems)?

We aim to release an initial consultation paper in Q1 2027 that will help us to better understand the above issues. The intent is to use that process to inform us on whether there is enough justification to elevate the lower 7 GHz band to the Initial Investigation stage of our planning process. Early consideration of these issues will help to ensure that Australia remains well placed to take advantage of the outcomes of WRC-27 and maturing international interest in WBB use of the range 7100–7250 MHz.

5030–5091 MHz

At WRC-12, the 5030–5091 MHz band was identified for use by line-of-sight (LoS) and beyond line-of-sight (BLoS) remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) command and control radio links (CNPC) in the RRs. LoS and BLoS CNPC relate to terrestrially and satellite-based control of RPAS, respectively.

Excluding Defence use, RPAS operating in non-controlled airspace currently use technologies predominantly authorised under the LIPD class licence for both CNPC and payload communications. In controlled airspace, however, operation of remotely piloted aircraft is far more heavily regulated, and systems authorised under the LIPD class licence might not have the level of protection from interference required for safety critical control links.

[19] The 7025–7250 MHz band is part of a broader range for spectrum bands to be considered for a possible IMT identification under agenda item 1.7 at WRC-27.
[20] Also see *Outcomes paper: Future use of the upper 6 GHz band*.

The 5030–5091 MHz band is being examined internationally as a potential candidate for CNPC in controlled airspace, although consideration of LoS arrangements is more advanced than for BLoS.

Recent developments

The ITU-R has been drafting a new recommendation that specifies the characteristics and protection of terrestrial and satellite CNPC links operating in the aeronautical mobile (route) service and aeronautical mobile satellite (route) service in the band for some time. The status of this recommendation remains at 'preliminary draft'.

The United States has established initial regulatory arrangements that provide RPAS operators with the ability to obtain direct frequency assignments for non-network operations.[21] Meanwhile, some countries in Europe and the Asia-Pacific are considering implementation of the WRC-12 outcomes.

Acknowledging domestic and international momentum in this space, we started a consultation process in 2021 on international trends in the 5030–5091 MHz band. In 2022, we published arrangements to allow temporary access to part of the band (5055–5065 MHz) for LoS RPAS CNPC links. These interim arrangements will be in place while we await finalisation of relevant work within the ITU-R on band planning.

Next steps

We will continue to monitor the progress of the draft ITU-R recommendation through our participation in ITU-R WP 5B meetings. An options paper outlining proposals for more permanent arrangements will be released when international arrangements are sufficiently mature. The timeframe for elevation of this frequency band to preliminary replanning status depends on the completion timeframe of relevant ITU-R studies and other international developments.

BLoS CNPC is currently not within the scope of the interim arrangements put in place in the band, given that, when these interim arrangements were implemented, BLoS developments were only at the early stages of consideration internationally. We will continue to monitor developments and may consider consulting on arrangements for BLoS CNCP if international momentum warrants us doing so.

It should be noted that our role in enabling CNPC operation in the band is confined to making licensing arrangements to access this spectrum. Specific technologies and procedures for safe operation of RPAS are matters for other regulatory agencies, such as the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and Airservices Australia, and any expanded arrangements in the band will be developed in consultation with those agencies.

Initial investigation stage

In the initial investigation stage, we start a conversation with stakeholders on future use-cases, industry and consumer needs, and implications for incumbents associated with the potential domestic replanning of a band. Factors that may influence moving a band from monitoring to initial investigation include developments in international spectrum harmonisation, technology standardisation, arrangements in other countries, the existing domestic spectrum environment and domestic demand drivers.

[21] See FCC Adopts Initial Rules for Uncrewed Aircraft Use in the 5 GHz Band.

This stage normally includes initial consideration of whether the new spectrum use(s) would contribute to promoting the long-term public interest derived from the use of the spectrum, along with preliminary assessments on co-existence and other technical considerations.

We may undertake public consultation through mechanisms, including public and industry meetings (such as spectrum 'tune-ups') and discussion papers.

2300–2302 MHz

The 2300–2302 MHz band is allocated in the ARSP to fixed and mobile services on a primary basis and amateur services on a secondary basis. It is currently used by amateur services, including for earth-moon-earth operations. The adjacent 2302–2400 MHz (2.3 GHz) frequency range has been subject to spectrum licensing since 2000.

The 2300–2400 MHz band was identified globally for IMT at WRC-07. The 2.3 GHz band is currently used to provide WBB services across Australia.

Recent developments

Carrier aggregation and emerging 5G technologies will allow operators to deploy services in bandwidths of up to 100 MHz. The current 98 MHz of spectrum available in the 2.3 GHz band is not optimised for this use. Consequently, there is interest from spectrum licensees in the 2.3 GHz band in making the 2300–2302 MHz band available for WBB use.

Next steps



Our next step will be to investigate and assess possible long-term uses of the band, including the feasibility of allocating 2300–2302 MHz in connection with our ESL process. Licensees may begin to apply for renewal of expiring 2.3 GHz band licences from July 2028. Accordingly, we plan to consult on this matter before this time, likely in Q2 2027.

We have indicated that we would update our preferred view in relation to the 2.3 GHz ESLs held by Telstra in mid-2027. We will align our assessment of the 2300–2302 MHz band with these updates.

Long-term use of the 1800 MHz band for rail services

State-based entities[22] currently hold spectrum licences in the top 10-15 MHz of the 1800 MHz band (1710–1785 MHz and 1805–1880 MHz), which are due to expire in June 2028 (see Expiring spectrum licences (ESLs)).

These licences are, or are planned to be, used to operate rail safety communications services in the five major capital cities. Existing networks use Global System for Mobile Communication - Railway (GSM-R) based technologies, however there is growing interest, both domestically and internationally, for GSM-R to be replaced by 5G-based Future Rail Mobile Control System (FRMCS) networks. FRMCS specifications are still under development (the final version due December 2027), however trials are underway in Europe. In Europe, the 1.9 GHz band (1900-1910 MHz) has been allocated for the roll-out of FRMCS services, and similar arrangements have been introduced for rail services in Australia.

Recent developments

In December 2025, we released our Preferred views on ESL frequency bands and licensing arrangements. Our preferred view is that, because the long-term picture for delivery of rail

[22] These spectrum licences are currently held by: RailCorp (NSW); VicTrack; Queensland Rail; Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (SA); Public Transport Authority of Western Australia.

services is currently unclear, existing services may be more appropriately authorised by apparatus licences in the short- to medium-term, with further work necessary to establish the use of the 1800 MHz band likely to best promote the long-term public interest.

Apparatus licensing will enable existing rail services to continue to operate in the 1800 MHz band without interruption, while also providing the ACMA greater flexibility to update arrangements as the long-term delivery of rail becomes clearer.

CHANGE In February 2026, we commenced consideration of high-level proposals for a 1800 MHz band apparatus licence framework to support rail services in the short to medium term with the release of the consultation paper *Review of the 850 MHz and 1800 MHz spectrum licence technical frameworks*. Taking into account feedback received to that initial consultation, we consulted on specific arrangements for apparatus licensed rail services in the 1800 MHz band in June 2026 and aim to release finalised arrangements in Q4 2026. We have also implemented arrangements for rail services in the 1.9 GHz band.

Next steps

Our next step will be to consider the long-term use of the frequency ranges in the 1800 MHz band that are currently allocated via spectrum licences to state government entities.[23] This work will include an initial investigation into the long-term spectrum needs for rail communications, including whether the long-term capability need for rail services could be met using the 1.9 GHz band alone, and potential competing demand for the 1800 MHz band spectrum currently allocated to state government entities. This work would take into account existing rail deployments in this spectrum and the planned life cycle of these deployments.

We envision that access to the 1800 MHz band for rail services would continue to be required over the short-to-medium term, in particular to enable the ongoing operation of existing GSM-R networks. However, starting the conversation about the long-term spectrum needs of the rail sector will help provide clarity to stakeholders, in particular to rail operators that are starting to plan for the future deployment of new FRMCS networks, or upgrading existing GSM-R networks to FRMCS.

NEW FRMCS specifications and international deployments will be a key source of information in understanding the long-term spectrum requirements for rail services. To allow additional time for these to further mature, we do not intend to progress this review in the 2026–27 period. We will consider whether we can commence the review in 2027–28 when developing our work program for the FYSO 2027–32.

[23] 1770–1785 MHz / 1865–1880 MHz in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane metropolitan areas, and 1775–1785 MHz / 1870–1880 MHz in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

Preliminary replanning stage

In the preliminary replanning stage, we seek feedback on detailed replanning options that have been informed by feedback received at the initial investigation stage, along with a thorough consideration of the spectrum use(s) that would promote the long-term public interest.

Considerations are informed by detailed technical co-existence studies and include identification of draft, high-level technical planning frameworks. We also analyse ongoing incumbent spectrum needs and identify available mitigations to address any adverse impacts that potential changes in the planning environment may have on incumbent users.

Formal public consultation may occur through mechanisms, including public industry meetings (such as spectrum 'tune-ups') and options papers.

1.5 GHz (1427–1535 MHz)

At WRC-15, the entire 1.5 GHz band was identified for IMT within Regions 2 and 3, while 1427–1452 MHz and 1492–1518 MHz were identified in Region 1. The Region 1 identification of the 1452–1492 MHz range was limited to African and Arab administrations – the band was not identified in Europe due to disagreement over the protection of aeronautical mobile telemetry services.

There is support domestically from WBB interests to progress the re-farming of this band. There is interest in using the band for WBB from both mobile network operators and private operators, subject to equipment availability.

Domestically, the impact on incumbent uses of the band, including aeronautical telemetry services and fixed services (including the digital radio concentrator system), will need to be considered as part of any replanning process. Compatibility with MSS operating above 1518 MHz will also need to be considered.

Recent developments

In December 2023, we released our decision to consider and make arrangements for MSS use in the bands 1518–1625 MHz and 1668–1675 MHz. In September 2025, we decided to allow the Radiocommunications 1.5 GHz Frequency Band Plan 2015 to sunset, while largely maintaining the current band arrangements in a spectrum embargo until our review of the broader 1427–1535 MHz frequency range has been completed.

Next steps



Recognising stakeholder feedback that indicates that progressing the review of this band is a lower priority than other projects, we have decided to not progress this review in the 2026–27 period. We will reassess its timing and priority in the FYSO 2027–32.

1800 MHz (1710–1785 MHz and 1805–1880 MHz) and 2 GHz (1920–1980 MHz and 2110–2170 MHz) outside of spectrum-licensed areas

The 1800 MHz and 2 GHz bands, outside of spectrum-licensed areas, are used for mobile and fixed services via Public Telecommunications Service (PTS) and PTP licensing. Our policy on the assignment and use of PTS licences is described in radiocommunications assignment and licensing instructions (RALIs) MS33 and MS34. We are also aware of some interest and preference in using these bands to deploy IMT-based D2D services. However, as detailed in our Operation of an IMT satellite direct-to-mobile service: Regulatory guide, the operation of DTD would only be practical under an Australian-wide spectrum licence that are not currently available in these bands.

Recent developments

Between June and October 2024, we consulted on options for future arrangements in the band. Stakeholder feedback to that consultation provided a diverse range of views on our planning options and in some cases additional options were proposed. Given the nascent interest in D2D services in these bands at the time, the planning options we consulted on in 2024 did not include potential regulatory reform that would be necessary to support the use of D2D services.

The FYSO 2025–30 flagged the release of our planning outcomes in Q1 2026. However, in light of the feedback that we received to the 2024 consultation, and the growing interest for the operation of D2D services in these bands, we have maintained this work item at the Preliminary Replanning stage. This will allow us to seek stakeholder feedback on a revised set of planning options that consider these recent developments.

Next steps



We aim to consult on our revised planning options in Q4 2026.

Implementation stage

The implementation stage concludes an ACMA band planning activity. In this stage, we make decisions on band planning arrangements that are expected to promote the long-term public interest derived from use of the spectrum. This stage includes further development of detailed technical planning frameworks (and additional consultation if necessary) and licensing and allocation frameworks, as required.

Conclusions from our planning process are communicated in outcomes papers and usually also contain preliminary views on future activities, such as licence types, areas and conditions and reallocation action that gives effect to clearance of incumbent services, if applicable.

When reviewing or developing technical frameworks that describe technical arrangements for the use of a frequency band, we may establish a technical liaison group (TLG) to assist in the development of those frameworks. Further information on TLGs is available from the ACMA website.

2 GHz MSS (1980–2010 MHz and 2170–2200 MHz)

The 1980–2010 MHz and 2170–2200 MHz bands are currently used for television outside broadcast (TOB) services on a shared and non-exclusive basis for short-term applications, such as covering special events. TOB was introduced in the 2 GHz band in 2012 on an interim basis. In January 2021, we released the Replanning the 2 GHz band (1980–2010 and 2170–2200 MHz) outcomes paper after considering submissions to the 2019 Planning of the 2 GHz band discussion paper.

In the outcomes paper, we outlined our decision to replan the 2 GHz band for MSS, with:

- 2 × 25 MHz (1980–2005 MHz paired with 2170–2195 MHz) replanned for MSS Australia-wide under apparatus-licensing arrangements, with:
- a price-based allocation via auction – we expressed the preliminary view that an auction was the most appropriate mechanism to resolve competing demand, given demand appeared likely to exceed supply (as expressed in responses to the options paper)
- arrangements to provide support for terrestrial applications if a mobile-satellite licensee wishes to supplement or extend its service. For example, extending coverage of a satellite network with terrestrial-based complementary ground component infrastructure or direct air-to-ground communications services (involving ground-based WBB links to aircraft) to provide inflight communication services.
- 2 × 5 MHz (2005–2010 MHz paired with 2195–2200 MHz) dedicated for satellite Internet of Things (IoT) and similar narrowband services to be used on a shared basis between operators. This arrangement will provide spectrum access with a low barrier to entry for innovative satellite applications and will assist in growing the Australian space industry.

To support the introduction of MSS in the band, existing TOB services will be required to cease operation in the band. Under the Radiocommunications (Mobile-Satellite Service) (1980–2010 MHz and 2170–2200 MHz) Frequency Band Plan 2022, TOB services are to cease operations by 1 March 2026 in metropolitan and designated areas (as defined in the band plan), and by 1 March 2024 elsewhere.

In Q3 2022, we updated our licence assessment procedures for space and space receive licences to include the new arrangements for 2 GHz narrowband MSS.

In Q4 2023, we started preliminary consultation with industry on draft technical design principles (technical parameters and coordination requirements with adjacent band services) to support MSS use in 1980–2005 / 2170–2195 MHz (including the use of complementary ground components) and preliminary views on certain allocation design issues. We also sought updated information on the level of demand for 2 GHz MSS spectrum to assess whether demand for the spectrum is likely to exceed the available supply. We also sought stakeholder views on the availability of suitable equipment for deployment of MSS in the 2 GHz band.

Recent developments

In Q3 2025, we completed a further consultation on allocation, licensing and technical design matters. The consultation included proposals concerning lot configuration, allocation method, licence term and commencement, and licensing arrangements.

Next steps

CHANGE In the draft FYSO, we suggested that we may consult on the allocation instruments in Q2 2026 and commence the allocation in Q4 2026. Given the market and technological complexities and rapid rate of change in the industry, we do not propose to conduct an allocation in these timeframes. Instead, we plan to conduct further consultation on our proposed approach in Q4 2026 to assess the potential implications of the allocation on competition, consumers and industry while the various technology approaches mature. We will also consider the role that the allocation may play in supporting the UOMO and its role alongside other spectrum bands.

Subject to the feedback received from this consultation, we would propose to issue allocation instruments for consultation in Q2 2027, with a proposed allocation to commence in Q4 2027, though we will continue to investigate options to allow the allocation of the spectrum as soon as possible, including for trialling or testing services.

Upper 6 GHz (6585–7125 MHz)

There has been significant interest in the 6 GHz band (5925–7125 MHz) for both radio local area networks (RLANs, most notably Wi-Fi) and IMT over the last few years. Having already made arrangements in the lower 6 GHz band (specifically 5925-6425 MHz) for RLAN use, in June 2024, we released a public consultation paper on potential options for the upper 6 GHz band.[24] That paper also canvassed the potential use of higher powered RLAN devices in the broader 6 GHz band.

At that time, several countries (including the US, Canada and South Korea) had already allocated the entire upper 6 GHz band for RLAN use, and there was an established international market for suitable equipment.

In late 2023, WRC-23 identified the 7025–7125 MHz band for IMT use in Region 1 (Europe, Africa, and the Middle East) and Region 3 (Asia-Pacific) as well as in some Region 2 (Americas) countries. The frequency range 6425–7025 MHz was also identified for IMT in Region 1 as well as in some Region 2 and Region 3 countries.

In December 2024, we released planning decisions for the band, which included introducing arrangements for RLAN use in the 6425–6585 MHz band, adding 160 MHz to the existing

[24] See *Options paper: Future use of the upper 6 GHz band*.

500 MHz in the lower 6 GHz band, and wide-area wireless broadband (WA WBB) services in the 6585–7100 band.[25]

Recent developments

In November 2025, Europe's Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) released Opinion on the long-term vision for the upper 6 GHz band. The RSPG recommends a band split arrangement, with the frequency range 6585-7125 MHz prioritised for WBB use. The range 6425-6585 MHz is to remain unallocated until the conclusion of WRC-27, where use of either WBB or RLAN services in this range would depend on if WRC-27 identifies the range 7125–7250 MHz for IMT. The RSPG's final opinion also acknowledges the ongoing work by the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) to exploring secondary use of WA WBB and RLANs in overlapping service areas – an approach that is not being considered here.

In January 2026, Ofcom released Expanding access to the 6 GHz band for commercial mobile and Wi-Fi services. It proposes prioritised spectrum sharing in the upper 6 GHz band, with 6425–6585 MHz prioritised for Wi-Fi and 6585–7125 MHz prioritised for WBB.

While not critical to enabling upper 6 GHz services in the Australian market, the preferred boundary in Europe and the UK being the same as for Australia is a useful reinforcement of our domestic planning processes.

Next steps

Noting international developments, in particular the release of RSPG's opinion in Europe, we are comfortable that there will be a satisfactory ecosystem for WBB devices in the upper 6 GHz band. Accordingly, we aim to progress implementation of the WA WBB arrangement as detailed in the December 2024 decision paper.

The first step towards implementation is to consider when WA WBB access to the band will be required and the type of licence that should be used to authorise access. Information from the WA WBB sector suggests that additional mid-band spectrum will be needed by 2030 to support the anticipated growth in demand and we welcome views on this from domestic WBB operators. On the question of licence type, while further analysis of the licensing arrangements for WA WBB services is required, as a starting point it would seem that WA WBB access in the defined areas may be best authorised via spectrum licences, with WBB access in other areas provided under apparatus licensed arrangements.

If the intent is to ultimately authorise WA WBB use via spectrum licences, our first step would be to consult on a spectrum re-allocation declaration to be made under section 153B of the Radiocommunications Act. This declaration would establish the frequency ranges and geographic areas subject to spectrum licensing. Although WA WBB access may not be needed until 2030 at the earliest, a benefit of making a re-allocation declaration in the short term would be to provide certainty to both prospective WA WBB licensees and incumbent users. Early notice of the geographic areas to be subject to spectrum licences would help incumbents ascertain if their services would be impacted by the declaration and would set the timeframes for when impacted services would need to cease operating in the band.

We aim to consult on potential licensing arrangements and a draft re-allocation declaration (should spectrum licensing be preferred view) in Q4 2026. We will commence developing a

[25] See *Outcomes paper: Future use of the upper 6 GHz band*.

spectrum licence technical framework, beginning with establishing a TLG, after a re-allocation declaration has been made.

We intend to prioritise establishing the new arrangements for WA WBB in defined areas, given that we expect this is where the initial demand will be greatest compared to WBB in other areas. Accordingly, we do not propose to develop the apparatus licensed framework for WBB services outside defined areas in the 2026–27 FYSO period.

Forward allocation workplan

Our approach to designing spectrum allocations reflects outcomes from the ACMA's planning processes, guided by the object of the Radiocommunications Act and relevant government policy considerations. Information from incumbent and prospective spectrum users about the demand for access to specific bands, and the timing of any possible allocation, also provides important feedback to guide the development of technical frameworks, licensing and allocation decisions.

The Radiocommunications Act enables us to allocate spectrum licences via auction, tender, by a predetermined or negotiated price or by 'direct allocation'. We tailor allocation processes to the particular circumstances and objectives of each allocation.

Access to apparatus-licensed spectrum is typically enabled through an 'over-the-counter' process, also known as administrative allocation. This process can provide timely spectrum access to support specific and diverse kinds of radiocommunications services and use-cases. More recently, when making a band available to a new set of users, we have employed an 'allocation window' approach, which enables a staged consideration of applications for apparatus licences.[26] We can also set allocation limits for administrative allocation of apparatus licences[27], as well as allocating transmitter licences using a price-based process, such as an auction.

The Radiocommunications Act establishes a set of mandatory processes for allocating spectrum licences. This can take at least 16 to 18 months, from confirmation of the planning decision to the start of an auction for a price-based allocation of licences. This process will take longer where there is uncertainty. For example, if there are options for how spectrum can be configured, the process will take longer because further consultation and engagement with potential bidders will be necessary and important.

We recognise the regulatory, consultation and financial burden of running multiple allocations concurrently. We seek to plan appropriately to minimise encumbrance on applicants and interested bidders.

Table 2 summarises our indicative timing expectations for future allocations.

[26] This approach was used for the allocation of AWLs in the 3.4-4 GHz bands
[27] Under section 102G of the Radiocommunications Act.

Table 2: Forward allocation indicative timing

Band	Stage	Proposed allocation timing	Notes	Allocation method
2 GHz MSS (1980–2005 / 2170–2195 MHz)	Further consultation on allocation and licensing design and technical framework matters	CHANGE We plan to conduct further consultation on our proposed approach in Q4 2026. Subject to the feedback received from this consultation, we would propose to issue allocation instruments for consultation in Q2 2027, with a proposed allocation to commence in Q4 2027, though we will continue to investigate options to allow the allocation of the spectrum as soon as possible, including for trialling or testing services.	Allocation of apparatus licences	CHANGE We previously consulted on the basis that a price-based allocation mechanism might be required to resolve competing demand for the spectrum. Our Q4 2026 consultation will explore allocation methods in further detail.

2 GHz MSS

In 2026–27, we are focused on the allocation of licences for MSS in the 1980–2005 MHz and 2170–2195 MHz bands.

In the 2 GHz consultation paper released in Q4 2023, we indicated that we had not formed a final view on the approach to allocation of this band. An important consideration to inform any decision on the design of a preferred allocation method is the level of expected demand for the spectrum. If demand is likely to exceed supply, we will generally look to design a mechanism to resolve competing demand that is transparent and results in efficient spectrum allocation.

In our Q4 2023 consultation paper, we sought updated information on the likely level of demand for 2 GHz MSS spectrum to assess whether demand is likely to exceed the available supply. We also sought views on the availability of suitable equipment for the deployment of MSS in the 2 GHz band, on lot configurations for the spectrum, and on the most appropriate amount of spectrum for desired use-cases. We began a public consultation on the allocation design and technical framework matters in Q3 2025 (see Band planning).

The consultation covers lot configuration, allocation method, licence term and commencement, and licensing arrangements.

CHANGE On the 2 GHz MSS allocation, we suggested in the draft FYSO that we may consult on the allocation instruments in Q2 2026 and commence the allocation in Q4 2026.

As set out above, given the market and technological complexities and rapid rate of change in the industry, we do not propose to conduct an allocation in these timeframes. Instead, we plan to conduct further consultation on our proposed approach in Q4 2026 to assess the potential implications of the allocation on competition, consumers and industry while the various technology approaches mature. We will also consider the role that the allocation may play in supporting the UOMO and its role alongside other spectrum bands.

Subject to the feedback received from this consultation, we would propose to issue allocation instruments for consultation in Q2 2027, with a proposed allocation to commence in Q4 2027, though we will continue to investigate options to allow the allocation of the spectrum as soon as possible, including for trialling or testing services.

In determining outcomes in the long-term public interest, the ACMA will consider a range of factors including encouraging competition in the band, spectrum efficiency and consumer access to services and devices, the latter in the context of the introduction of the UOMO. The ACMA will also take into account decisions made on spectrum use in international jurisdictions which may impact on the Australian market, particularly in regard to device availability.

Optimising established planning frameworks

Optimising existing spectrum planning arrangements is a priority for the ACMA. This is typically achieved through updates to elements of the spectrum planning technical framework, such as band plans (either administrative or legislative) and RALIs.

These changes are intended to address band and service-specific issues identified within existing frameworks, for example, by addressing technology developments and enabling sharing opportunities and other changes to improve the efficient use of the spectrum.

We have an ongoing review program for the spectrum planning technical framework to ensure its currency and consistency with current technologies and operational practices. This work is primarily focused on frequency coordination requirements for apparatus-licensed services, which are predominately recorded in RALIs.

Considering spectrum licence technical frameworks and ensuring spectrum embargoes continue to be appropriate are additional elements of this work program. Table 3 shows our proposed optimisation work across a range of different spectrum uses.

Table 3: Optimising established planning frameworks

Planning area	Project priorities	Proposed timelines and actions
Broadcasting	Vary several solus licence areas in NSW and VIC[28] to enable AM to FM conversions	Ongoing: Consultation as needed
	Vary several competitive licence areas in NSW, VIC and ACT[29] to enable AM-to-FM conversions	Ongoing: Consultation as needed
	Vary Remote WA LAP to make changes to technical specifications of various broadcasting services	CHANGE Q4 2026: Consultation
	Consult on digital radio channel plans for the licence areas where broadcasters have committed to rollout digital radio	Timing is driven by demand from broadcasters

[28] This may include a subset of the following commercial licence areas: Colac, Gunnedah, Inverell, Lismore, Lithgow, Moree, Parkes, Swan Hill and Young. We are consulting with the licensees to determine indicative timelines and relative priorities. Proceeding with these variations may depend on the relevant licensees making timely strategic business decisions on available implementation options.

[29] This may include a subset of the following commercial licence areas: Albury, Atherton, Bunbury, Canberra, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Kempsey, Maryborough (Bendigo), Maryborough (QLD), Murwillumbah, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Orange, Sale Toowoomba, Wagga Wagga and Warragul. We are consulting with the licensees to determine indicative timelines and relative priorities. Proceeding with these variations may depend on the relevant licensees making timely strategic business decisions on available implementation options.

Planning area	Project priorities	Proposed timelines and actions
Satellite planning	Considering changes to Q/V-band interim arrangements (Embargo 80) for gateway earth stations and monitoring emerging W-band interest	Ongoing: Consultation as needed
	NEW Considering regulatory approaches and potential review of application of EPFD limits for NGSO system licensing	Q2 2027: Consultation
Low interference potential devices (LIPD)	Monitor international and domestic developments that may prompt variations to the LIPD class licence	Ongoing
Co-operative Intelligent Transport Systems	Monitor developments in C-ITS	Ongoing
Spectrum planning, assignment and coordination requirements	Review our apparatus licence assignment and coordination requirements to ensure their currency and consistency with current technologies and operational practices	Ongoing
Review of spectrum licence technical frameworks	Review of spectrum licence technical frameworks below 4 GHz, on a band-by-band basis	CHANGE Q3 2026: Released outcomes of the 2.5 GHz band review Q1 2027: Release consultation on the 2.5 GHz band technical framework after ESL renewal, including apparatus licence framework for TOB in the mid-band gap
Consideration of higher-power 6 GHz band RLAN	Review AFC technologies and other potential approaches to spectrum sharing between higher-power RLAN devices and other uses in 5925–6585 MHz	CHANGE Q4 2026: Released options paper on possible introduction of AFC

Planning area	Project priorities	Proposed timelines and actions
Body scanners	Undertake preliminary scoping studies into the requirements of body scanners and potential new market offerings, with a view to possibly reviewing the body scanning class licence	Progress and any public consultation to be announced in a future FYSO

Broadcasting

We continue to provide spectrum planning and licensing assistance for ad-hoc requests for optimising existing television transmission infrastructure, as well as facilitating trials of new television transmission technologies.

We provide information about television reception and interference on our website and manage the mySwitch website, a public television coverage data portal with address specific information about television coverage and access to Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST). We also provide interference diagnostic services where external interference is the cause.

For radio spectrum planning, we are progressing with the priorities outlined in The future delivery of radio: Final report.

Our current radio broadcasting planning priorities are:

- converting commercial, national and community broadcasting services from AM to FM where FM spectrum is available
- enhancing coverage of national, commercial and community broadcasting services where spectrum is readily available
- making digital radio channel plans for regional DAB+ if a commercial licensee or national broadcaster has committed to a rollout
- supporting trials of new broadcasting technology.

These broad categories of activity inform our prioritisation of individual requests for planning and allocation.

Recent developments

We have:

- continued our engagement with commercial radio AM licensees in regional radio markets that had expressed interest in converting their AM services to FM
- continued the Broadcasting Technical Liaison Group (BTLG) to undertake regular stakeholder engagement on the AM to FM conversion process to discuss ways to progress applications
- completed an internal review of AM to FM conversion processes and commenced implementing the recommendations, with input from the BTLG
- continued to adjust resourcing and processes to improve AM to FM conversion delivery
- published an update to our AM to FM conversion principles to clarify how we are applying the principles to progress the conversion program

- finalised the variations to the Perth and Remote Western Australia LAPs to give effect to ABC AM to FM conversions and other requests
- NEW finalised the variation to the Hamilton LAP to give effect to AM to FM conversion and other requests
- NEW finalised the variation to the Horsham LAP to give effect to AM to FM conversion and other requests
- finalised the variations to Riverland, Mount Gambier/South East and Griffith television licence area plans and made transmitter consolidation declarations in these areas.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will:

- provide guidance notes and data for AM to FM conversions in regional competitive markets
- continue the engineering assessments for AM to FM conversions in regional competitive markets; engineering reports received from the broadcasters will be prioritised in accordance with the planning principles
- progress engineering assessments for AM to FM conversions in regional solus markets, as required
- make LAP variations to enable the conversions of the commercial AM services to FM in various licence areas, as engineering work is finalised
- make LAP variations to improve the coverage of broadcasting services in various licence areas, as engineering work is finalised
- consult on and finalise the variation to the Remote Western Australia LAP to make changes to technical specifications of various broadcasting services
- if requested by broadcasters, consult on and make variations to television licence area plans and make transmitter consolidation declarations in these areas
- further improve AM to FM conversion process
- consult on arrangements for remaking the Broadcasting Services (Technical Planning) Guidelines 2017 before the instrument sunsets on 1 October 2027
- engage with the broadcasting industry on requests for trials of digital radio and potentially issue further scientific licences for trials
- engage with the broadcasting industry about requests to make or vary digital radio channel plans and potentially consult on these proposals
- NEW consider deeming community licence areas in Launceston for purposes of digital radio.

Table 4 summarises the status of AM to FM conversions in competitive markets. Planning work will be progressed in 2026–27. We are consulting with the licensees on the required inputs to determine relative priorities.

Table 4: Status of requests for AM to FM conversions in competitive markets

Licence area	Expressed interest	Submitted request for LAP variation	In-market licensee agreement
Albury	Yes	Yes	Yes
Atherton	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bunbury	Yes	Yes	Yes
Canberra	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coffs Harbour	Yes		
Dubbo	Yes	Yes	
Kempsey	Yes		
Maryborough (Bendigo)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maryborough (Qld)	Yes		
Murwillumbah	Yes	Yes	Yes
Muswellbrook	Yes	Yes	Yes
Newcastle	Yes	Yes	
Orange	Yes		
Sale	Yes	Yes	Yes
Toowoomba	Yes	Yes	Yes
Warragul	Yes	Yes	Yes

Satellite planning

We continue to engage internationally to coordinate, develop and implement measures to enhance spectrum use for satellite communications and space research services.

Recent developments

In November 2025, we published Regulation of space-based communications systems to help industry better understand the regulatory framework for space-based communication systems in Australia.

In December 2025, we completed a consultation on interim arrangements for W-band FSS Earth station transmitters supporting NGSO earth stations at specified locations in Perth and Sydney. Following that consultation, in December we issued the first W-band Earth station licences for a non-renewable term of one year. We will consider any future requests on a case-by-case basis.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will:

- provide ongoing operational support for Australian-filed satellite networks, including:
  - assisting Australian satellite operators with ongoing satellite coordination negotiations with other administrations
  - assessing new notices related to the progress of existing Australian satellite networks
  - filing of new networks
  - supporting international administration-level satellite coordination meetings with other administrations
- continue to monitor trends in the spectrum needs of space-based communications systems and developments in emerging space-based technologies and applications
- support the development of the Australian space industry by participating in forums, such the Australian Space Agency Space Coordination Committee
- assess new licence applications for space-based communications systems for consistency with Australian and ITU requirements
- consider whether changes can be made to the interim arrangements for Q/V bands (37.5–43.5 GHz, 47.2–48.2 GHz, 48.2–50.2 GHz, and 50.4–52.4 GHz) currently recorded in embargo 80, to provide greater certainty for gateway earth stations, depending on resourcing and competing requirements
- monitor emerging interest in W-band (92.0–94.0 GHz, 94.1–100 GHz, 102.0–109.5 GHz, and 111.8–114.25 GHz) for earth station gateways with case-by-case consideration of licence applications, with any access conditional on a future review of the band to develop arrangements with the timing of any review dependent on resourcing and competing requirements considerations
- NEW consider regulatory approaches and seeking stakeholder views on EPFD limits for NGSO systems, including the potential application of ITU Radio Regulations Article 22.5CA ahead of global reform
- provide support and information to assist organisations wanting to develop experimental satellite systems with short-duration missions
- continue to monitor the demand for spectrum and emerging regulatory arrangements for NGSO constellations.

Organisations proposing new satellite communication systems, or modifications to existing systems, should contact us to discuss whether their plans can be accommodated under current arrangements or whether updates are required. Where updates are necessary, the timing of any future work will depend on priority compared to other tasks detailed in the annual work program – early contact with the ACMA may minimise delays should further work be required.

Low interference potential devices (LIPD)

The LIPD class licence authorises a wide range of applications including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth technologies and IoT services along with other uses, including certain spread spectrum and ultra-wideband transmitters.

Recent developments

The Radiocommunications (Low Interference Potential Devices) Class Licence 2025 came into effect on 1 October 2025.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will continue to monitor international and domestic developments that may prompt variations to the LIPD class licence.

The LIPD class licence is generally updated every 18-24 months. The timing of the next review of the LIPD class licence will be outlined in the next FYSO.

Co-operative Intelligent transport systems

Co-operative Intelligent transport systems (C-ITS) are a range of wireless technologies designed to enable vehicle-to-vehicle, vehicle-to-person or vehicle-to-infrastructure (collectively known as V2X) communications.

The Radiocommunications (Intelligent Transport Systems) Class Licence 2017 (ITS class licence) supports the use of wireless technologies and devices in the frequency range 5855–5925 MHz (the 5.9 GHz band). Compliance with the current European standard for C-ITS is a condition of the ITS class licence, following advice from industry.

Recent developments

Current arrangements for C-ITS remain fit for purpose. The Australian approach has been to follow European standards. In March 2025, ECC Decision (08)01 (the harmonised use of Safety-Related ITS in the 5875–5935 MHz frequency band) was updated to allow the use of wider channel bandwidths. Discussions are continuing regarding revision of ETSI Standard EN 302 571.[30] As the ITS class licence directly references ETSI Standard EN 302 571, any changes in the European arrangements will be incorporated into our arrangements and consequential updates will not be required.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will continue to monitor developments in C-ITS.

Spectrum planning, assignment, and coordination requirements

The spectrum planning framework is a complex array of interlinking technical and policy documents. The content and interrelationships can be difficult to understand and interpret, even for experienced practitioners, with information on any one service or part of the spectrum contained in multiple documents.

In Q3 2022, we released an information paper on the role of the spectrum planning framework to improve transparency and explain the planning framework to assist stakeholders.[31]

We also regularly review the spectrum planning technical frameworks to ensure they remain current and consistent with current technologies and operational practices. This includes routinely reviewing the frequency coordination requirements detailed in RALIs. This is

[30] ETSI Standard EN 302 571 - Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS); Radiocommunications equipment operating in the 5 855 MHz to 5 925 MHz frequency band; Harmonised Standard covering the essential requirements of article 3.2 of Directive 2014/53/EU.
[31] See our webpage on our role to manage spectrum.

captured in our rolling frequency coordination requirements review work program for the coming 12-to-18 months.

Recent developments

In July 2025, we finalised the frequency coordination requirements review work program for 2025–26, which sets out our work program for further reform of RALIs and associated documents.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will continue to:

- consider where improvements can be made to our assignment and coordination requirements
- update RALIs identified for review in the frequency coordination requirements review work program for 2025–26.

Review of spectrum licence technical frameworks

Following a 2019 consultation process, interest was expressed in reviewing all spectrum licence technical frameworks below 4 GHz. To date, reviews of the 700 MHz, 850/900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2 GHz, 2.3 GHz and 3.4 GHz band technical frameworks have been completed.

We will also undertake a review of spectrum licence technical frameworks, on a band-by-band basis, as part of the expiring spectrum licence process. These reviews will be aimed at ensuring that spectrum licence conditions and provisions in associated legislative instruments remain fit for purpose following the spectrum licence renewal process.

Recent developments

We convened a 2.5 GHz band TLG between October 2025 and February 2026. Taking into consideration the outcomes of the TLG, we publicly consulted on changes to the 2.5 GHz band spectrum licence technical framework in June and July 2026, releasing our outcomes in September 2026. We are now working with spectrum licensees to include these changes on existing 2.5 GHz band spectrum licences.

Following public consultation, in May 2026 we finalised the technical frameworks that will apply to renewed spectrum licences in the 850 MHz and 1800 MHz bands. We settled these technical frameworks before the renewal application period commenced on 18 June 2026 to provide applicants certainty on the conditions and arrangements that would apply to their renewed licences.

Activities planned for 2026–27

The next spectrum licensed band to expire is the 2.5 GHz band (on 30 September 2029). We plan to finalise the technical framework for this band before the renewal application period opens on 1 October 2027. The new framework would be applicable after the expiry of the spectrum licences in this band. We expect to commence this work in Q1 2027, which will build on the previous review of this band. This work will also consider new apparatus licensed arrangements for TOB services that are currently operated under the 2.5 GHz band mid-band gap spectrum licences due to expire 30 September 2029.

Consideration of higher-power 6 GHz band RLAN

The latest generations of RLAN technologies (such as Wi-Fi 6e and 7) are specified for use of spectrum in the broader 6 GHz band (5925–7125 MHz). In Australia, the LIPD class licence permits RLANs devices in the range 5925–6585 MHz.

As the range 5925–6585 MHz is also used by apparatus-licensed services (notably, fixed PTP links), the existing and planned RLAN arrangements in the LIPD class licence includes a low power limit relative to RLAN arrangements in other bands. This reduced power limit allows 6 GHz band RLAN devices to coexist with fixed links on an uncoordinated basis.

There is growing interest in permitting higher power RLAN devices that would support expanded coverage. Additional arrangements would be required to manage coexistence with other spectrum users. AFC (a dynamic-access system) is used to manage interference between RLAN devices and fixed links in some international jurisdictions.

Recent developments

We have provided some initial discussion on the topic of higher-power RLAN and AFC in previous consultation papers related to broader 6 GHz band planning issues.[32] We noted interest from industry and outlined that there may be different options for permitting higher-power RLAN devices, ranging from traditional site-based coordination to the use of dynamic-access systems, such as AFC. We also stated that there are a range of factors that need further consideration before AFC could be implemented in Australia.

Additionally, we released a discussion paper in Q4 2025 about the potential utility and feasibility of AFC in Australia in the 5925–6585 MHz band. The paper discusses technical and regulatory considerations for a potential AFC framework in Australia. It also discusses possible inter-service arrangements and how AFC systems, if implemented, might be used in Australia, including the respective roles for industry and government in realising an AFC capability in our spectrum management environment. Following consideration of submissions, we will release an options paper on higher-powered AFC RLAN arrangements, with the date to be outlined in a future FYSO.

A 12-month scientific licence was issued to Dreamtilt Pty Ltd on 20 October 2025 to trial AFC in the Gladstone area. Qualcomm will implement the AFC trial and will use Cambium Networks' PMP 450V, ePMP 4600 radio access points or both, with associated subscriber points. A recent report on the rollout of equipment and the progress of the trial indicates there have been no interference issues with other licensed services. Regular monitoring of this trial will continue as customer equipment is installed and begins to operate in a normal consumer environment. We would welcome any additional proposals for trials from interested parties.

Activities planned for 2026–27

A consultation paper on next steps the implementation of AFC was released in early October 2026 following strong industry support to the discussion paper released in Q4 2025. This paper provides a roadmap to enable SP RLAN use of the 5925–6585 MHz frequency range and seeks feedback on high-level implementation options, such as licensing, accreditation and coexistence.

[32] For example, see our October 2021 and June 2024 consultation processes.

Subject to stakeholder feedback, we aim to consult on the detailed arrangements for AFC-enabled SP RLAN operation, although this may not occur until Q3 2027.

We will continue to monitor developments internationally. We will also continue to welcome proposals for further trials of AFC technologies or other potential approaches that may facilitate spectrum-sharing between higher-power RLAN devices and other uses of the 5925–6585 MHz range.

Body scanners

We recognise that body scanners play an important role in aviation security. When we made class-licensing arrangements for body scanners used for aviation security screening in 2018, we considered a range of technical, operational and policy issues, as well as the views of radiocommunications stakeholders.

Activities planned for 2026–27

The ACMA intends to undertake preliminary scoping studies into the requirements of body scanners and potential new market offerings, with a view to possibly reviewing the Radiocommunications (Body Scanning – Aviation Security) Class Licence 2018. It is too early in the process to indicate the timing for public consultation of any potential changes that result from these studies; we will announce progress in a future FYSO update.

Licensing and regulatory development

To promote efficient spectrum use, the interference management framework is often optimised for an expected use, even if such use is not prescribed within the planning or licensing arrangement. For example, while spectrum licences may be 'technology flexible' in that they do not explicitly preclude any use, they are designed and optimised with a likely technology in mind. This maximises the efficiency of these licences for their expected use alongside the co-existence requirements of other spectrum uses and users.

Table 5 summarises proposed licensing and regulatory development activities for 2026–27.

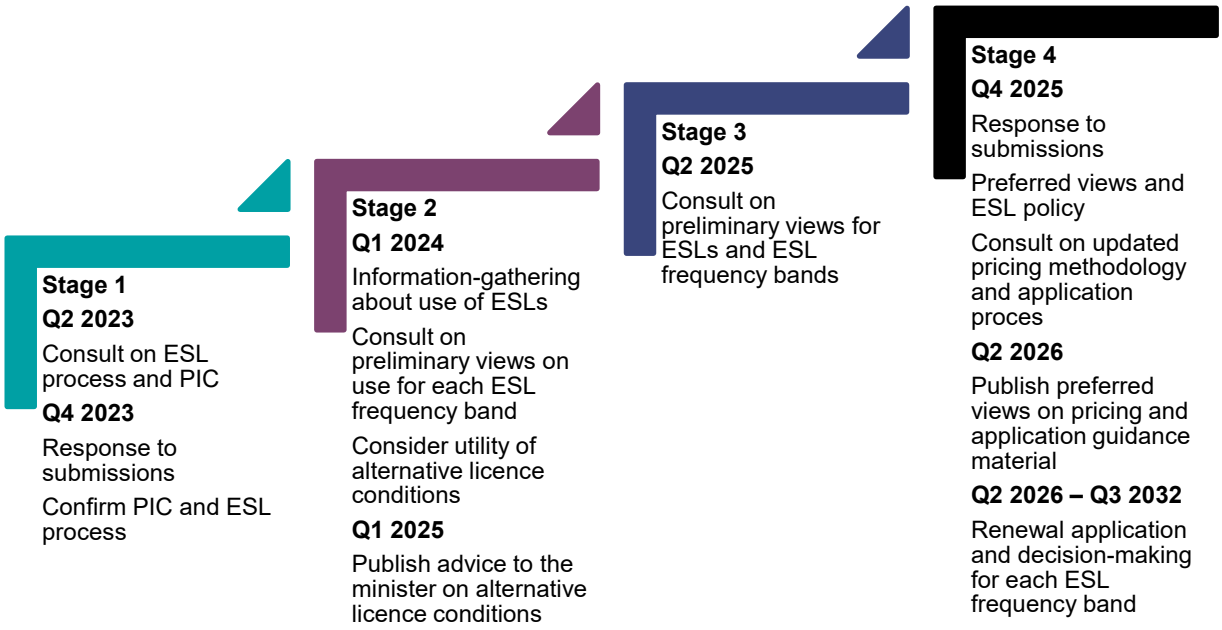
Table 5: Licensing and regulatory development

Work area	Project priorities	Proposed timelines
Expiring spectrum licences	Commence application and decision-making process for ESLs in 850 MHz and 1800 MHz bands NEW Finalise apparatus licensed arrangements for 1800 MHz band rail services	Q2 2026 – Q2 2028 Q4 2026
Place-based access framework	CHANGE Continue to consider merits of a place-based access framework and other options to improve secondary access with the Department	Ongoing
Amateur radio class licence and examination rules	Consult on changes to the Radiocommunications (Amateur Stations) Class Licence 2023 and the Radiocommunications Accreditation (Amateur Radio Examinations) Rules 2023 to clarify, streamline and improve the amateur radio licensing, assessor accreditation and examination frameworks	Q1 2027
Banned equipment exemptions	CHANGE Consult on remake of Radiocommunications (Exemption – Remotely Piloted Aircraft Disruption) Determination 2022, Radiocommunications (Exemption – Bomb Disposal Electronic Counter Measures) Determination 2023 and Radiocommunications (Exemption - Visiting Dignitaries) Determination 2023	Q1 2027
UOMO work program	Progressing work associated with the spectrum management aspects of implementing the UOMO. This work program will cover any	Q4 2026

Work area	Project priorities	Proposed timelines
	necessary licensing, planning and allocation initiatives	

Expiring spectrum licences (ESLs)

Figure 3: ESL 4-stage process



Note: Figure 3 is a guide only and is limited to core activities relating to the ACMA's overall 4-stage ESL process. Band-specific activities, like reviewing spectrum licensing technical frameworks, are not captured.

NEW Recent developments

In December 2025, we released preferred views on outcomes for expiring spectrum licences and began stage 4 of the ESL process. Preferred views reflect the arrangements for ESL spectrum we think are likely to promote the long-term public interest for all Australians. These views will act as a framework for assessing ESL renewal applications.

In broad terms, our preferred views are that renewal of ESLs used for mobile phone services and the fixed wireless component of the nbn until 2044 is likely to promote the long-term public interest. We also consider that continuing to support rail communications and TOB services currently authorised by ESLs through a transition to apparatus licensing will balance providing certainty for incumbent licensees and consumers with opportunities to evaluate the long-term arrangements for the underlying spectrum.

We formed our preferred views based on our public interest criteria and government policy objectives and priorities.[33] These views were also developed with regard to feedback from stakeholders to our stage 3 preliminary views consultation that ran between April and June 2025, with a reply-to-comment period in July 2025.

We published our preferred views on pricing for ESLs in May 2026. Our preferred views have incorporated refinements to our methodology and benchmarking dataset based on stakeholder feedback and a further peer review of the methodology in our updated preliminary views released in December 2025. These changes were aimed at enhancing the transparency, consistency and robustness of our methodology for determining a fair market value for the spectrum. We have retained key elements of our approach to pricing contained in both stage 3 and stage 4 of the ESL process, including the use of direct benchmarking as the primary valuation methodology, expressed in $/MHz/pop terms.

In October 2026, we consulted on our proposed approach to updating benchmarking datasets for ESL bands with licences expiring in 2029 and later. The consultation paper primarily covered how we propose to incorporate new spectrum award information. We also consulted on converting renewal prices into spectrum access charges (SACs) using population projections, and setting up future consultation arrangements to best support a transparent and predictable approach to renewal pricing for licensees.

Our preferred views on pricing also provided clarity about timeframes for payment for renewed licences. Licensees applying within 9 months of the application window opening will be able to pay the relevant spectrum access charge 2 months prior to the commencement of the new licence. Licensees that apply outside of this 9-month timeframe may need to pay charges at the time of licence issue, which is likely to be 5 months after lodging a renewal application.

We finalised the application and decision-making process for ESLs and published an application form and guide for applicants in May 2026. The application guide details how we propose to consider applications and engage with applicants. The process was informed by consultation on the renewal application process for ESLs undertaken between December 2025 to March 2026.

As identified above (see Review of spectrum licence technical frameworks), we finalised the technical framework that would apply to renewed 850 MHz and 1800 MHz band spectrum licence in May 2026.

With application, pricing and technical frameworks now in place, eligible licensees can start applying to renew their licensees as each 2-year renewal application period opens.

We are developing new apparatus licensing arrangements for rail in the 1800 MHz band to ensure that operation of existing rail services is not interrupted by the proposed transition. Initial consultation on proposed arrangements commenced in February 2026 (concurrent with our consideration of updates to the 1800 MHz band spectrum licence technical framework), providing clarity on how the transition to apparatus licences will work. Taking into account feedback received to that initial consultation, in June 2026 we consulted on specific

[33] The ACMA's public interest criteria incorporate Commonwealth Government communications policy objectives specified in the Radiocommunications (Ministerial Policy Statement – Expiring Spectrum Licences) Instrument 2024 to which we must have regard when designing and undertaking the ESL process.

arrangements for apparatus licensed rail services in the 1800 MHz band and aim to release finalised arrangements in Q4 2026.

Activities planned for 2026–27

The renewal application period for ESLs in the 850 MHz and 1800 MHz bands commenced on 18 June 2026. In most cases, licensees have until licence expiry on 17 June 2028 to make a renewal application, although we strongly encourage licensees to apply for renewal as soon as possible at the beginning of the application period.

CHANGE Stakeholders continue to accord defragmentation of the 3.4–4 GHz band a high priority and have emphasised the benefits of the ACMA leading a defragmentation exercise. While industry is best placed to undertake most of this work, we will engage with stakeholders in the second half of 2026 to get a clear sense of where we can assist. Agreed priorities and timeframes and stakeholder cooperation will be key to determining the scope and feasibility of any resulting work.

In Q1 2027, we expect to commence a review of the technical framework for 2.5 GHz band spectrum licences and the consideration of apparatus-licensed arrangements for the continuation of TOB services after the expiry of the 2.5 GHz mid-band gap spectrum licences (see Review of spectrum licence technical frameworks).

CHANGE Exploring options for place-based spectrum access

We are exploring potential opportunities with the Department to enable third-party access to spectrum included in spectrum licences in areas where incumbent licensees have not deployed services and the spectrum is unused. This includes a place-based access framework, as well as other options to improve secondary access, which could enable third parties to apply for licences to deliver localised connectivity solutions in areas where there is limited commercial incentive for incumbents to provide services.

This work builds upon advice we gave in 2024 to the then minister, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, that looked at whether imposing conditions in spectrum licences – such as rollout obligations, ‘use-it-or-lose-it’ and ‘use-it-or-share-it’ requirements – could achieve policy objectives like broader coverage, connectivity or competition.

Our advice broadly concluded that network-wide regulatory approaches, for example those set under the *Telecommunications Act 1997*, could be a more effective ways to achieve objectives relating to coverage and service quality. We also suggested that a place-based secondary licensing framework may be a more appropriate mechanism to achieve the desired policy outcomes.[34] In response to this advice, the then minister asked us in February 2025 to work with the Department to further explore the merits of a secondary licensing framework.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We are continuing to consider the merits of a place-based access framework and other options to improve secondary access with the Department.

[34] The advice drew upon submissions to the stage 2 ESL consultation and an international study we commissioned from PolicyTracker.

CHANGE Maritime regulatory arrangements: Portable and mobile LMR

We are considering the possible use of portable and mobile LMRs on specified VHF maritime channels by public safety bodies LMRs cannot be routinely possessed or operated on VHF maritime channels outside of emergency situations.[35]

Ongoing public safety body use would allow them to, for example, test deployment in emergency situations, allow personnel to carry less equipment, reduce costs and make routine operation easier. However, there are various considerations that need to be evaluated, including qualifications requirements and any impact on maritime radio channels and users.

A trial in Tasmania, under a permit issued in accordance with the General Equipment Rules and a scientific licence, is providing useful data to inform considerations of ongoing use and quantify any impact on maritime channels and users.

Activities planned for 2026–27

With only one trial participant and no indication of sufficient demand to justify investigating a broader licensing solution, we will focus on identifying a longer-term licensing arrangement for the current participant and will no longer be consulting on this proposal. We invite other emergency services organisations to contact us directly if they have an interest in these arrangements.

Drones and emerging aviation technologies

Uncrewed aircraft systems, also known as RPAS or drones, have become increasingly popular with hobbyists and commercial users. Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) aircraft, or air taxi concepts that are crewed and uncrewed are rapidly maturing and progressing through certification processes, with a planned market introduction around 2027–28. These emerging aviation technologies rely on radiocommunications for command-and-control functions (such as telemetry, radar and navigation) and payload communications (such as video and sensing). In December 2024, CASA published a review of its *Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Strategic Regulatory Roadmap*. This provides CASA's long-term plan for safely integrating RPAS and AAM into Australia's airspace and future regulatory system, alongside traditional aviation. A key component of this integration is the Uncrewed Traffic Management system (UTM). UTM will support the safe and efficient integration of emerging aviation technologies and conventional, crewed aircraft.

We have spectrum and licensing solutions in place to support commercial and consumer uses of drones. Most current drone use-cases can be supported by the LIPD class licence,[36] and users can access the spectrum the class licence makes available at no cost. We have also implemented interim arrangements to allow larger drones – potentially those that operate in controlled airspace – to use spectrum in the 5055–5065 MHz frequency range. While we expect drones to increasingly transfer to mobile (including 5G) networks over time, larger drones used for commercial or military purposes are increasingly requiring access to dedicated aeronautical spectrum, such as the 5030–5091 MHz band.

As drone use becomes more widespread, so too do concerns about their unlawful use, which has given rise to a market for drone jamming equipment. There is a permanent ban in place

[35] Sections 49 and 196 of the Radiocommunications Act provide for defences relating to operation and possession of unlicensed devices and causing interference to radiocommunications to deal with emergencies.
[36] The LIPD class licence authorises the widest range of class-licensed devices, including Wi-Fi and Bluetooth technologies and a range of IoT services, along with a range of other uses including certain spread spectrum and ultra-wideband transmitters.

for drone jamming equipment, meaning that people are not allowed to operate, supply, offer to supply or have a drone jammer. These arrangements are also designed to help prevent drone jamming equipment from entering Australian supply chains.

To ensure that legitimate uses for drone jammers can be facilitated, exemption arrangements have been in place since 2020 to allow police access to counter-drone equipment. This helped to facilitate the national rollout of counter-drone capability by all Australian police forces, currently authorised under the Radiocommunications (Exemption – Remotely Piloted Aircraft Disruption) Determination 2022 (RPAS Determination). We will continue to monitor international approaches to detecting and responding to incidents where drones could pose a risk to safety and security.

We are also supporting local industry through the innovation and industry development exemption framework, which can facilitate research, development and manufacturing of a range of otherwise potentially banned devices, including counter-drone equipment. This framework was featured in the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service Report 2024–25 as a case study in managing access to sensitive and high-risk technologies in the public interest.

The Aviation White *Paper: Towards 2050* outlines that fit-for-purpose legislation will be needed to adequately protect Australian communities, infrastructure and businesses from security risks of drones and AAM. The government will consider options to introduce such legislation before 2030. This work will involve the ACMA, which will contribute radiocommunications and spectrum management insights to the whole-of-government process.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We will continue to collaborate with the Department on drone management and contribute to relevant government initiatives on emerging aviation technologies. This includes monitoring the current and future implications of spectrum and licensing requirements for drones and AAM alongside international developments in spectrum management.

We will continue working with the emerging aviation technologies sector to monitor spectrum and licensing requirements internationally and domestically.

CHANGE We will continue to collaborate across government on UAS, including on proposed approaches to Australia's drone security, about which the Department of Home Affairs consulted in April 2026. We will also contribute to the development of fit-for-purpose legislation that will be needed to adequately protect Australian communities, infrastructure and businesses from security risks of drones and AAM.

CHANGE For continuity of arrangements for Australian police forces, we will consult on a proposed remake of the RPAS Determination in Q1 2027. This consultation will also include the proposed remake of the Radiocommunications (Exemption – Bomb Disposal Electronic Counter Measures) Determination 2023 and Radiocommunications (Exemption - Visiting Dignitaries) Determination 2023.

Amateur radio

The amateur service is a longstanding use of the radiofrequency spectrum, with a range of bands available for qualified amateur operators. It is designed primarily to facilitate hobby radiocommunications and technical experimentation.

On 19 February 2024, after extensive consultation, we changed licensing arrangements for amateur radio operation. Amateur radio operators can operate their amateur station without having to pay licence fees as long as they meet the conditions in the Radiocommunications (Amateur Stations) Class Licence 2023 (amateur radio class licence). From that date, the ACMA has also been managing and delivering amateur radio qualification and call sign services (rather than a third-party providing these services under a deed).

In the last FYSO, we stated that we are considering minor amendments to the amateur radio class licence arrangements, which includes the Radiocommunications Accreditation (Amateur Radio Examinations) Rules 2023 (the examination rules). These changes would improve clarity, streamline administration and strengthen the integrity of amateur radio arrangements.

Some amateur operators are interested in increasing the power level at which they can operate their radios above their current transmission power limits. Since 1 July 2023, amateur operators can apply for scientific licences for certain experimentation uses that may involve using high-power, including for activities, such as reflecting signals from a celestial body, and inter-continental ionospheric and trans-equatorial propagation experiments. Consideration of the establishment of a mechanism by which high-power use-cases, not enabled under scientific licensing, can be authorised is also on our long-term amateur radio work agenda.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We plan to consult in Q1 2027 on minor changes to the amateur radio class licence and examination rules to clarify, streamline and improve the amateur radio licensing, examination and accreditation frameworks. Associated policy documents, including the ACMA's call sign policy, qualification framework and accredited assessor guidelines with be revised as part of the changes.

Our plan to investigate and assess possible long-term uses of the 2300–2302 MHz band in Q2 of 2027 will also involve amateur radio. Advanced qualified operators currently use this band on a secondary basis for radio experimentation and activities, including for Earth-Moon-Earth operations.

NEW In 2026–27, we will also commence work on the syllabi for amateur radio examinations, with consultation on any proposed new or revised syllabi to occur with accredited assessors. We plan to commence this work by developing a syllabus for the regulations examination.

UOMO work program

The ACMA will progress work associated with the spectrum management aspects of implementing the UOMO. This work program will cover any necessary licensing, planning and allocation initiatives, such as examining how the provision of D2D services that may support the UOMO could be authorised in Australia's external territories. We are committed to facilitating the effective management of potential interference from D2D services into the nationally significant Australian Radio Quiet Zone Western Australia (ARQZWA) to support radioastronomy observations using the Square-Kilometre Array (SKA). Our view is that bilateral coordination between LEOsat operators and the CSIRO, which has responsibility for the SKA, is the best way to manage this interference, and we are working proactively with those operators to ensure coordination occurs.

Activities planned for 2026–27

We plan to publish this work program in Q4 2026 and commence implementing soon after.

Pricing

We are responsible for implementing pricing arrangements to facilitate the effective and efficient allocation of spectrum. We administer ongoing taxes (such as the apparatus licence tax, spectrum licence tax and commercial broadcasting tax), as well as conducting valuations to inform market-based prices for ESLs. Our pricing work is informed by recommendations from the Spectrum Pricing Review, and ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

Our priorities for 2026–27 include:

- implementing ESL pricing arrangements as outlined in our preferred views on pricing paper
- maintaining the tax regimes for apparatus licences, including the annual updates to the transmitter and receiver licence tax determinations
- continuing the 520 MHz to 5 GHz band pricing review (broadened from 2.69 GHz to 5 GHz)
- maintaining the tax regime for spectrum licences, by updating the annual electromagnetic energy (EME) component of the spectrum licence tax.
- CHANGE administering the extended suspension of the Commercial Broadcasting Tax (CBT) to 8 June 2028, by assessing commercial broadcasting tax and implementing the Commercial Broadcasting (Tax) (Transmitter Licence Tax Rebate) Rules 2024 (the Rebate Rules).

NEW ESL pricing

We released our preferred views on ESL pricing in May 2026, in which we outlined $/MHz/pop prices for spectrum licence renewals for each ESL band. As part of the process of assessing renewal applications, we will consult on draft spectrum access charge determinations to set prices for spectrum licence renewals along with our draft decisions to renew licences. We will also make future updates to benchmarking data, as per the approach signalled in our preferred views paper and discussed in more detailed in our more recent Updating benchmark datasets for expiring spectrum licences consultation paper.

Activities planned for 2026–27

- If required, make spectrum access charge determinations for ESL renewals.
- In Q4 2026, release a consultation paper about the process for future updates to benchmarking data.
- In April 2027, consult on and finalise preferred views on $/MHz/pop pricing for 2.5 GHz band spectrum licence renewals using updated benchmarking data. The renewal application period for the 2.5 GHz band commences 1 October 2027, so we will use benchmarking data up to 6 months prior.

Maintaining the tax regimes

The ACMA maintains tax arrangements to ensure consistency with its licensing and planning arrangements.

Activities planned for 2026–27

Our work to maintain the tax regimes is ongoing and will be a focus of our pricing work for 2026–27, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Tax regime activities, 2026–27

Project priorities	Proposed timelines
Update the total annual EME component amount for 2026–27	Q3 2026
Implement the annual update of taxes using the population-based methodology	Q1 2027

Spectrum Pricing Review implementation

The ACMA has substantively implemented recommendations from the Spectrum Pricing Review. However, we are yet to implement some related pricing work detailed below.

Activities planned for 2026–27

The ACMA plans to conduct future pricing work stemming from the implementation of the Spectrum Pricing Review, including:

- preparing for expansion of the boundaries of the Perth and Adelaide medium-density areas to allow affected licensees time to prepare for the changes to their apparatus licence tax amounts. In our August 2024 consultation paper about remaking sunsetting apparatus licence tax determinations, we proposed to move the timing of the changes from mid-2025 to a later date that aligns with the introduction of our new spectrum management system
- CHANGE reviewing band pricing to update apparatus licence taxes in certain frequency ranges. In October 2025, we consulted on a review of the 2.69 GHz to 5 GHz frequency range, which focused on our approach to demand analysis and expanding the review to include additional frequency ranges. We have combined analysis and review of the 520 MHz to 2.69 GHz with the 2.69 GHz to 5 GHz review, helping to ensure relative prices between adjacent bands remain appropriate. We commenced consultation on the broader 520 MHz to 5 GHz band pricing review in Q2 2026.

Commercial broadcasting tax

The commercial broadcasting tax (CBT) is imposed annually on transmitter licences associated with a commercial broadcasting licence. An overview of CBT arrangements can be found in the Commercial broadcasting transmitter licence fee schedule, including information about the responsibility to pay commercial broadcasting taxes by the due date, the need to contact the ACMA should a licensee anticipate that payment may not be made by the due date and the penalties that can apply for making late payments.

Activities planned for 2026–27

CHANGE In the 2026–27 Federal Budget, the government extended a suspension of the commercial broadcasting tax for another 2 years, from 9 June 2026 to 8 June 2028, to provide temporary relief for commercial television and radio broadcasters. The suspension is currently administered through the Rebate Rules, providing a 100% rebate for all CBT imposed during the suspension period.

Compliance priorities

The utility of spectrum is also affected by the interference protection environment. The risk of causing harmful interference to the radiocommunications spectrum is managed through our planning and allocations work and our compliance programs.

Each year, as part of these compliance programs, we set whole-of-agency compliance priorities that aim to systematically identify and address high-risk compliance issues or issues of significant concern to the community or industry by maximising our regulatory reach in a strategic and resource-efficient manner.

Outcomes: Compliance priorities 2025–26

The 2025–26 ACMA compliance priorities were announced on 27 June 2025.

The ACMA once again made ‘Tackling the supply of dodgy devices’ a compliance priority, as we continued to see complaints about non-compliant radiocommunications devices advertised or bought online. These devices may not meet safety standards and can cause interference to communications, GPS and emergency services, which can put Australians at risk.

As part of the program, the ACMA launched a new initiative called the Equipment Safety Pledge (the Pledge). The Pledge was launched on 12 December 2025 with 6 signatories: eBay, SHEIN, Gumtree, Icom Australia, Temu and Radio Warehouse. The pledge is a set of voluntary commitments the platforms have made to help reduce the prevalence of non-compliant ‘dodgy’ radiocommunications devices being advertised and sold to Australians online. These commitments include detecting and preventing the sale of non-compliant and illegal communications devices, cooperating with the ACMA, educating sellers and empowering consumers to report dodgy devices.

The ACMA ran an advertising campaign for dodgy devices from December 2025 to February 2026. The campaign included advertisements on social media, as well as targeted marketplace advertising and information on the ACMA’s website, including how to check if a device is compliant before purchase. The campaign also included a focus on educating consumers on the risks of ‘grey market’ mobile phones being bought online or from overseas. A full report on the outcomes of the dodgy devices compliance priority program will be published on our website later this year.

We continue to educate people about the harms of non-compliant and illegal radiocommunications devices by providing updated information on the ACMA website with further guidance to suppliers and consumers, as well as working with Pledge signatories and other entities to actively reduce the number of devices within our community. We anticipate shifting our audit activity into a business-as-usual program to inform our assessment of the Pledge’s effectiveness.

NEW Compliance priorities for 2026–27

We announced our 2026–27 compliance priorities on 26 June 2026.

Equipment regulation for mobile phones will be focus for the ACMA over the next financial year. Suppliers of mobile phones to the Australian market must ensure their products are

compliant with our regulatory requirements. We will prioritise testing the effectiveness of the current framework and strengthening assurances that phones supplied in Australia remain compliant across their life cycle.

In particular, we will check if phones are labelled with the Regulatory Compliance Mark and have been tested to carry a call to a mobile network, including Triple Zero calls.

International engagement

The ACMA, the Department, Australian industry and government stakeholders participate in international radiocommunications forums to promote and protect Australian interests in spectrum management, including spectrum harmonisation and international frequency coordination.

The highest-level international radiocommunications forum is the ITU's WRC, which reviews and revises the Radio Regulations, the international treaty level document regarding use of the spectrum and satellite orbits.

The next WRC will be held in late 2027 (WRC-27) and will consider a large agenda concerning new frequency allocation and procedural matters across a range of services. The Department will lead the Australian preparatory processes and the Australian delegation to this meeting in preparation for WRC-27, with the ACMA providing technical, regulatory and subject matter expertise.

Other forums within the ITU, and regionally within the APT, consider issues with a technical focus that are also of significance to Australian spectrum management. These forums include ITU-R study groups and their working parties and the APT Wireless Group (AWG). We manage Australian input and participation in these forums in consultation with the Department and industry. ITU-R study groups and working parties also undertake studies relevant to WRC agenda items. We work in consultation with the Department to manage engagement in these processes.

We also undertake informal bilateral and multilateral engagement with peer regulators from around the world. This engagement is invaluable in coordinating international activities and sharing information between spectrum managers on issues of common interest. In particular, we are focused on strengthening the relationships and cooperation between Australia and the Indo-Pacific to support broader government policies and activities.

In September 2025, in conjunction with the APT, the ACMA hosted an online Spectrum Management Seminar for the Asia-Pacific region. This was attended by 49 delegates from 18 different countries.

We also plan to conduct another training activity in Q1 2027 that will be tailored for Pacific Island nations and their specific needs. This will build on previous training programs that the ACMA and relevant partners have previously delivered, including the November 2024 Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Training Program and the September 2025 online Spectrum Management Seminar.

We look forward to participating in and delivering other events within our region, which will help to strengthen our relationships with these countries in relation to spectrum management and broader government policy objectives.

Activities planned for 2026–27

Table 7 summarises the international engagement activities that we have engaged in, or anticipate engaging in, during the 2026–27 financial year. Meetings are subject to confirmation and may change.

Table 7: International engagement in 2026–27

Meeting	Date
APT Conference Preparatory Group for WRC-27 (APG27-3)	27–31 July 2026
APT Wireless Group Meeting 37 (AWG-37)	7–11 September 2026
ITU-R Working Party 5D	28 September to 8 October 2026
NEW IIC International Regulators Forum and Annual Conference	12–15 October 2026
NEW Delegation from Taiwan	22 October 2026
ITU-R Working Party 4A, 4B and 4C and Study Group 4	7–30 October 2026
ITU-R Working Party 5A, 5B, 5C and Study Group 5	18 November to 1 December 2026
NEW UK delegation (Ofcom)	26 November 2026
APT Conference Preparatory Group for WRC-27 (APG27-4)	Q1 2027 (TBC)
CHANGE APT Wireless Group Meeting 38 (AWG-38)	Q2 2027 (TBC)
CHANGE ITU-R Working Party 5D	9–18 February 2027 (Planned)
Second Session of the Conference Preparatory Meeting for WRC-27 (CPM27-2)	5–15 April 2027
ITU-R Working Party 5A, 5B and 5C	Q2 2027 (TBC)

Note: Exact dates for some meetings are still to be finalised.

In addition to these meetings, for which the ACMA leads Australia's participation (with the exception of APG and CPM27), we also manage Australian participation for the following Study Groups (SG) and their associated Working Parties (WP): SG 1, SG 3 and WP 3J, 3K, 3L, 3M, SG 6 and WP 6A, 6B, 6C, SG 7 and WP 7A, 7B, 7C and 7D.

We will continue to manage and provide technical, regulatory and subject matter expertise for Australian engagement in international spectrum management forums through consultative frameworks.

At a domestic level, the Australian Radiocommunications Study Groups and the Preparatory Group for the APT Wireless Group provide the ACMA with expert advice from industry, academia and other government agencies on international radiocommunications matters.

We consider input from these groups to help develop Australian contributions to international forums and form Australia's positions on international radiocommunications and spectrum management issues.

Acronyms and shortened forms

ACCC	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
AI	artificial intelligence
AWL	area-wide licence (type of transmitter licence)
BLoS	beyond line-of-sight
CNPC	command and non-payload communication
EPFD	equivalent power flux density
ESL	expiring spectrum licence
ETSI	European Telecommunications Standards Institute
FCC	United States Federal Communications Commission
FSS	fixed-satellite service
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
IMT	international mobile telecommunication
IoT	Internet of Things
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ITU-R	Radiocommunication Sector of the ITU
LEOsat	low Earth orbit satellites
LoS	line-of-sight
MPS	Ministerial policy statement
MSS	mobile satellite service
Ofcom	United Kingdom spectrum regulator
PTP	point-to-point
RALI	radiocommunications assignment and licensing instruction
RLAN	radio local area network
RPAS	remotely piloted aircraft systems
RRs	Radio Regulations
the Department	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
TLG	technical liaison group
WBB	wireless broadband
WRC	World Radiocommunication Conference
3GPP	Third Generation Partnership Project (standards organisation for mobile telecommunications)

Appendix A: Sunsetting instruments 2026–27

Table 8 lists the consultations we plan to undertake in 2026–27 for radiocommunications instruments scheduled to sunset in 2027. In addition, there are a number of instruments we plan to allow to sunset. These are listed in Table 9. These instruments relate to particular allocations that have been conducted. In the event we were to conduct an allocation relating to the relevant spectrum, we would consult on and make new allocation determinations and marketing plans.

Table 8: Radiocommunications instruments due to sunset in 2027 that are proposed to be remade

Sunsetting instrument	Consultation timing
Broadcasting Services (Technical Planning) Guidelines 2017	Initial consultation in Q3 2026 Final consultation in Q2 2027
NEW Broadcasting Services (Class Licences) Determination 2017	Q3 2026
Radiocommunications (Register of Radiocommunications Licences) Determination 2017	Q4 2026 to Q1 2027

Table 9: Radiocommunications instruments that will be allowed to sunset in 2027

Instrument	Due to sunset on
Radiocommunications (Spectrum Licence Allocation – 700 MHz Band) Determination 2016	1 April 2027
Radiocommunications Spectrum Marketing Plan (700 MHz unallocated lots band) 2016	1 April 2027
Radiocommunications (Spectrum Licence Allocation – Multi-band Auction) Determination 2017	1 October 2027
Radiocommunications Spectrum Marketing Plan (1800 MHz unallocated lots band) 2017	1 October 2027
Radiocommunications Spectrum Marketing Plan (2 GHz unallocated lots band) 2017	1 October 2027
Radiocommunications Spectrum Marketing Plan (2.3 GHz unallocated lots band) 2017	1 October 2027
Radiocommunications Spectrum Marketing Plan (3.4 GHz unallocated lots band) 2017	1 October 2027