EXPLANATORY PAPER
DRAFT VARIATION TO LICENCE AREA PLAN

CANBERRA, ACT
(RADIO)
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Call for Submissions

Submissions on the matters raised in this Explanatory Paper may be made to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) as follows:

By email: lapvariation@acma.gov.au

By mail: Draft LAP Variation – Canberra
        Australian Communications and Media Authority
        PO Box 78
        BELCONNEN ACT 2616

By fax: (02) 6253 3277

Please quote file reference PF2006/0468 in your reply.

Any enquiries concerning matters raised in this document should be directed to Stirling Finlay on (02) 6256 2874.

The closing date for submissions is 5.00pm, 31 March 2006.

All submissions received will be made available for public inspection on the ACMA website.¹ (www.acma.gov.au)

¹ Note that any submission marked “In Confidence”, “Confidential” or similar, cannot be considered by ACMA in finalising the LAP.
Preliminary Views

Preliminary View – New Open Narrowcasting Service – Canberra

ACMA proposes to make available a new high power open narrowcasting (HPON) radio service to operate as follows:

- 1323 kHz from the Barton Highway Gungahlin with a maximum Cymomotive Force (CMF) of 265 V (400 W transmitter power) and a directional radiation pattern.

The 'coverage radius' of the proposed service is 28 km measured from a point with the following AMG co-ordinates: Zone 55; Easting 693179; Northing 6100570. This point is the same as the nominal transmitter site.

Tatley Pty Ltd trading as Rete Italia wrote to the then Australian Broadcasting Authority on 9 July 2004 requesting that a new high power open narrowcasting service be made available in Canberra for which Rete Italia would bid for at auction with a view to providing an Italian based radio service.

ACMA’s Policy on MF channel use for analog services states “that to preserve options while the DRM standard matures and consumer receivers become available, ACMA has adopted the general policy to consider further analog use of MF spectrum on a case by case basis, having regard to the utility of that spectrum for use by DRM digital radio services. The potential to use the spectrum for digital radio is likely to be given considerable weight however there will be exceptional circumstances where the Authority will decide to use a particular frequency for an analog service. This would include, but not be limited to, the need to meet capacity the Minister has reserved under section 31 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992”.

The utility of 1323 kHz for DRM services was assessed by ACMA engineers who indicate that the potential use of 1323 kHz in Canberra with a higher power than 400 W is constrained by an existing co-channel service in Adelaide. Consequently the frequency is only able to be considered for a HPON analog service in Canberra with a transmitter power limited to 400 W with a directional radiation pattern.

In performing its functions under Part 3 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (the Act) ACMA is to promote the objects of the Act including the economic and efficient use of the radiofrequency spectrum, and have regard to the criteria set out in section 23 of the Act. The General Approach to Analog Planning outlines the responsibilities of ACMA in relation to planning radio services. This is available on the ACMA’s public website from the following link:


As discussed in the Legislative Framework contained in the General Approach, ACMA takes the view that planning for open narrowcasting services has an important role in promoting the object at paragraph 3(a). For example, such open narrowcasting format as foreign language, racing information and tourist or traveller information services have a unique contribution to make to the range of broadcasting services available in areas. For this reason, ACMA proposes to accommodate a new open narrowcasting radio service in Canberra to operate on the MF-AM band on 1323 kHz.
Note:

ACMA also proposes to make minor variations to the LAP to correct previous drafting errors. ACMA does not intend for those minor variations to affect the rights and obligations of any persons that arise under the LAP but seeks to clarify those rights and obligations.
Preliminary View – Variation to Frequency Allotment Plan – Illawarra, South East NSW and the ACT

ACMA proposes to vary the frequency allotment plan (FAP) for the MF-AM radio band for R9 – Illawarra, South East NSW and the ACT as it relates to the preliminary view on a new open narrowcasting radio service for Canberra.

ACMA proposes to add capacity to the FAP for one MF-AM band channel for a new open narrowcasting radio service in Canberra as shown in the proposed FAP variation instrument so that the FAP is consistent with the preliminary view contained in the draft LAP.