

## **WIA Repeater and Beacon Licence Recommendation Policy**

**December 2014**

### **Background**

For many years the WIA has provided a recommendation service for those wishing to licence an amateur radio beacon or repeater.

In August 2014 the WIA released a draft Repeater and Beacon Licence Recommendation Policy for comment. The draft policy attempted to strike a balance between the principals of good spectrum management, (the minimisation of cross-interference between repeaters), and the experimental nature of the amateur service and its inherent need for flexibility.

The WIA encouraged all interested persons, and clubs, to review the draft policy and submit comments to the WIA by November 2014.

This policy document taken into account comments received and presents a framework for the future operation of the service.

The WIA also intends to publish a repeater and beacon guidelines document.

### **The role of the WIA and the ACMA**

The WIA may make recommendations to the ACMA in relation to repeater and beacon licences. The ACMA has a long standing practice of having regard to the WIA's recommendations, and recognises the WIA's expertise in regard to the use of Amateur spectrum.

Individual radio amateurs and radio clubs are encouraged to discuss their applications for repeater or beacon licences, or for a change of licence conditions for an existing service, in the first instance with the WIA Repeater and Beacon Coordination service.

WIA appointed volunteer repeater and beacon coordinators will evaluate a prospective licence application or change of conditions; provide advice; and assign recommended frequencies taking into account the amateur radio

bandplan and other site related factors.

If the applicant wishes, the WIA will submit the application together with the WIA's recommendation to the ACMA for consideration, or the applicant may submit the application to the ACMA itself.

The WIA's role is to provide advice to potential applicants in order to ensure compatibility with this policy. However, the final decision on whether an application is acceptable rests with the ACMA. Where the applicant disagrees with the WIA's recommendation, the WIA will lodge the application with the ACMA in its original form, along with the WIA's recommendation based on this policy. **The WIA will not amend any prospective application.**

The ACMA will consider information provided by the applicant, the WIA and any other relevant matters before making a decision on the application. Where a WIA coordinator does not agree with any part of the licence application, the coordinator will discuss any areas of disagreement with the applicant. Discussion may be by any written or verbal means, including through a third party. Where agreement cannot be reached between the applicant and the WIA, then the WIA will include an explanation of the areas of disagreement, and its recommendation on matters that it considers the ACMA should consider in assessing the application.

The WIA does not charge for the recommendation service.

The ACMA charges an application fee, which is currently \$28 for repeater and beacon licence applications. This charge applies whether the application is submitted directly to the ACMA or through WIA. [The ACMA Licence Fee Schedule is here.](#)

The typical time for the WIA to process a prospective application and provide it to the ACMA for its consideration is 28 days.

The final decision made by the ACMA may be subject to re-consideration under the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*. [Further information on this aspect is available here](#)

**EMR:**

The WIA strongly recommends that all repeater constructors/operators carefully assess their EMR compliance requirements. The WIA reminds site owners that they are responsible for their own transmitter's compliance with the EMR regulations in force at the time.

**IRLP and APRS:**

Internet Radio Linking Program (IRLP) and Amateur Packet Radio System (APRS) services do not normally require individual licensing. However, due to the varying ways in which these services are operated, individual licensing may be required in some cases, especially for unattended operation. Discussion with the ACMA is recommended in the first instance and the ACMA may refer the inquiry to WIA Repeater and Beacon Coordination Service if appropriate.

Due to the limited spectrum available for repeaters and in some cases beacons, the WIA would apply the same principles regarding frequency allocation and spectrum reuse to IRLP and APRS systems. The WIA will work with individuals, clubs and the ACMA to ensure that when licensing is required it is undertaken in the most practical and cost effective way.

**Point to Point Links:**

Applicants are encouraged to licence any associated point to point links as part of the repeater. The WIA will make recommendations concerning point to point links on an individual case by case basis.

**The Policy**

- 1. Definition of high, medium, low and remote density areas:**  
Spectrum density areas referred to in this policy are defined by the ACMA in spectrum density maps, which are available [here](#)
  
- 2. Access** – The WIA will provide a repeater and beacon licence recommendation service to all radio amateurs and radio clubs holding an Australian Advanced or Standard grade amateur radio licence. WIA membership is not required.
  
- 3. Processing** – The WIA will provide advice on prospective applications on a first come-first served basis. However, some advice may take longer to complete, as complex or problematic applications will require additional work. If this is the case the prospective applicant will be advised. The applicant can decide to apply directly to the ACMA at any time during the process.
  
- 4. Bandplans** – The WIA will generally provide advice and make recommendations in accordance with the amateur radio bandplans in force at the time. A recommendation in regard to a repeater or beacon application may be held over if the relevant bandplan is in the process of revision. If this is the case, the prospective applicant will be advised and can decide to apply directly to the ACMA if they wish.
  
- 5. Power of repeaters** - The WIA will generally apply a 50 Watt maximum power recommendation to prospective repeater applications in high and medium density areas or if the repeater is to be located close to non-amateur radio services.

If the repeater is to be located in a remote density area in NSW, Queensland, or Tasmania, or in a low or remote density area in other

states or the Northern Territory, and not close to non-amateur radio services, a power level higher than 50 Watts peak may be supported.

If the repeater is to be used in association with a high-gain antenna a power of less than 50 Watts may be recommended.

6. **Spectrum availability** – The prospective applicant will be notified if WIA considers that spectrum is not available for their proposed repeater or beacon.
7. **Portable repeaters** - Portable repeaters will only be recommended for licensing when the proposed application justifies their use, (ie. short-term community service), and if the nominated frequency is available throughout the proposed coverage area. The recommended power for a portable repeater will be determined on a needs basis.
8. **Amateur Beacons** – Beacon licence applications will be evaluated on a case by case basis, considering the spectrum availability, environmental factors (co-location near other services), and the purpose of the beacon.
9. **IRLP and APRS services:** If an IRLP or APRS service requires individual licensing, the repeater and beacon coordinators will work with stakeholders and the ACMA on a case by case basis.
10. **Technical innovation:** This policy is not intended to limit experimentation and technical innovation. Applications using emerging technologies which will not interfere with existing single fixed frequency services will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
11. **Reconsideration of WIA Recommendation:** A potential applicant who does not agree with a recommendation of the repeater and

beacon coordinators may seek a reconsideration of that recommendation through the WIA Board, stating the particulars of the case and the grounds for reconsideration. Alternatively, the potential applicant can advise the WIA to lodge the application with the ACMA in its original form, or may lodge the application directly with the ACMA. The ACMA's decision on the application may be reviewable and more advice about these review rights is available [here](#).