

13 December 2013

Mr Phil Wait  
President  
Wireless Institute of Australia  
PO Box 2042  
BAYSWATER VIC 3153

ACMA file reference: ACMA2012/1199

Dear Phil,

**Amateur access to 50-52 MHz following closure of the last Channel 0 TV station**

Thank you for your letter dated 18 November 2013 concerning amateur access to the 50-52 MHz band following the closure of channel 0 television services. You sought specific advice on when the translator station at Tamworth in New South Wales is due to close.

Management of the switchover of stations to digital transmissions was undertaken by the Department of Communications' Digital Switchover Taskforce. I have been advised that all channel 0 services have now ceased. I can advise that the translator station at Tamworth was switched off on 27 November 2012.

With regard to your understanding that sections 15, 36 and 43 in the *Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Amateur Licence) Determination No. 1 of 1997* (Amateur LCD) would be void upon the closure of the last channel 0 television station, I can advise that these sections have not been revoked and are still in force. With the cessation of all channel 0 television stations, however, practically speaking, amateur operations in the 50-52 MHz band will no longer need to be curtailed in order to avoid interference to channel 0 stations.

With regard to the broader issue about channel 0 spectrum, the ACMA recognises the opportunities that the closure of analog television services represents. These opportunities include all VHF channels between 45 and 144 MHz (channels 0 – 5 and 5A). Accordingly, I intend to discuss how best to progress a review of this VHF spectrum with the Department of Communications.

Any review, will of course include discussions and consultations with interested parties, including the WIA. Your request for primary status for amateur operation in this band segment is noted and will be kept in mind during the proposed review. The additional issues outlined in Michael Owen's letter of 11 May 2010 to Chris Chapman will also be taken into account.

I recognise that one possible outcome of the proposed review of the VHF spectrum may be that changes are proposed to the amateur arrangements. For this reason I do not propose to amend the legislated amateur arrangements at this time. This approach is being taken so that any proposed changes can be progressed at the same time.

I trust this information is of assistance. If you would like to discuss these issues further, in the first instance please contact Anne Chadwick from the Convergent Regulation Branch, on (03) 9963 6722 or by email at [anne.chadwick@acma.gov.au](mailto:anne.chadwick@acma.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**Maureen Cahill**  
General Manager  
Communications Infrastructure Division