Wireless Institute of Australia

National Technical Advisory Committee

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6 METRE BAND PLAN CHANGES 2014

The 6 metre band plan has been updated to reflect the situation that exists since the closure of low band analog television. This involves several changes:

1. Reference to the “Eastern States DX Window” (50.000 - 50.300 MHz) has been removed, as it is now legal for amateurs in all call areas to operate above 50.300 MHz.

2. Two segments above 50.300 MHz have been reserved for possible future use:

   50.320 - 50.400 MHz - reserved for possible upward expansion of the beacon segment, which presently extends to 50.320 MHz.
   50.400 - 50.500 MHz - guard band for proposed new Region I beacon segment.

3. The remainder of the lower part of the band (50.500 - 52.000 MHz) is simply designated “All Modes”. There are various possible uses for this spectrum, and a number of options will present themselves in public discussion.

4. The 52 MHz Narrow Band Modes segment remains because Standard licensees are still restricted to frequencies above 52 MHz. So the 52 MHz SSB segment and calling frequency remain. Assuming that Standard licensees are eventually given the use of the whole 50 - 54 MHz band, alternative uses can be considered for this 52.000 - 52.300 MHz segment.

5. The 52 MHz beacon segment has been deleted because the migration of beacons from 52 MHz to 50 MHz is now complete. This opens up the possibility of using this now vacant beacon segment to provide up to eight extra repeater channels. The corresponding output frequencies, 1 MHz higher, are all presently voice simplex channels but with no allocated uses. They are believed to be unused but this, and other possible implications, will need to be checked before any final changes are made.

Various options for future uses of the band will be circulated for comment, including publication in “Amateur Radio” magazine.

It should be noted that major changes to the band plan must be kept on hold until ACMA confirms that the Amateur Service will regain the full use of the entire 50 - 54 MHz band. At the present time, this looks very likely, but it cannot be taken for granted. Therefore we cannot burn any bridges just yet - for the time being, we need to keep 52 MHz spectrum available for narrow band modes and beacons.

The band plan as it currently stands is shown on the following page.

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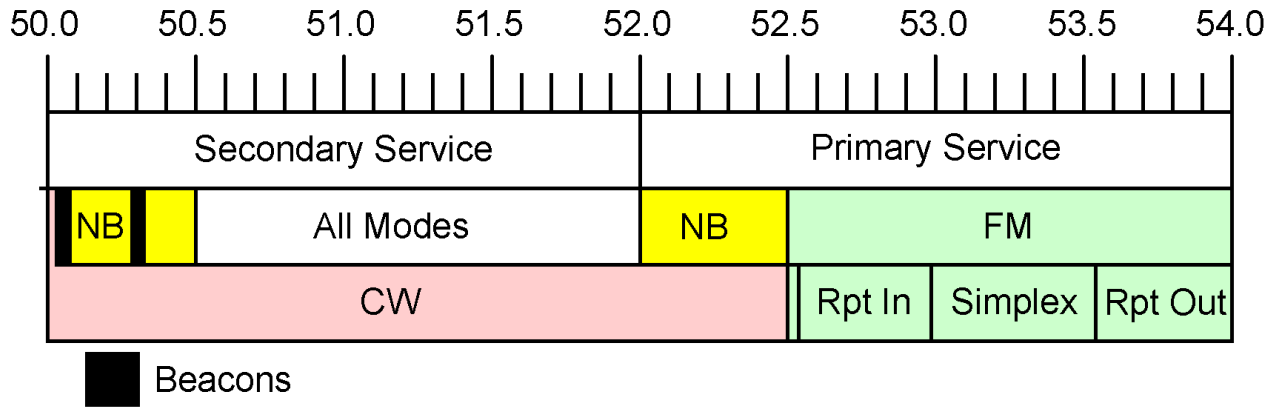
June 2014



50.000 - 50.500	NARROW BAND MODES	(Note 1)
50.000 - 50.080	CW only	
50.020 - 50.080	International beacons	(Note 2)
50.080 - 50.100	International DX window	
50.100 - 50.150	CW / SSB: International DX only	
50.110	International DX calling frequency	
50.150 - 50.280	CW / SSB: DX or local	
50.200	Australian calling frequency	
50.220 - 50.240	Digital DX modes	
50.280 - 50.300	Beacons (VK1,2,3,4,7)	(Note 2)
50.300 - 50.320	Beacons (VK5,6,8,9,0)	(Note 2)
50.320 - 50.400	Reserved - future beacons	
50.400 - 50.500	Reserved - future Region I beacon segment	
50.500 - 52.000	ALL MODES	
52.000 - 52.500	NARROW BAND MODES	(Note 1)
52.100	SSB Calling frequency	
52.525 - 53.975	FM SIMPLEX AND REPEATERS	(Notes 3,4)
52.525	International simplex calling frequency	
52.550 - 52.975	Repeater inputs	
53.000	Simplex: data (BBS forwarding)	
53.025	Simplex: data (general use)	
53.050	Simplex: data (recommended APRS channel)	
53.075 - 53.100	Simplex: data (general use)	
53.125 - 53.500	Simplex: voice	
53.150	National WICEN frequency	
53.300	National ARDF frequency	
53.525	Simplex: voice	
53.550 - 53.975	Repeater outputs	

Note 1: Narrow Band Modes

This segment is reserved for modes such as CW, digital modes and SSB with bandwidths up to 4 kHz. Weak signal operation has absolute priority. International practice is to keep the segment below 50.150 MHz clear at all times for international DX operation, and to use 50.150 MHz and above for contacts within the country or region. Calling frequencies should be used only to make initial contact and then vacated as soon as possible. The calling frequencies are 50.110 MHz for international DX only, and 50.200 MHz for all other operation.

The following spot frequencies are recommended for digital DX operation using SSB-based modes:
50.220 Weak signal modes with bandwidths below 100 Hz, e.g. PSK and slow CW
50.225 Weak signal modes with bandwidths up to 500 Hz, e.g. MFSK, JT44 and similar
50.230 High speed meteor scatter modes with bandwidths up to 3 kHz, e.g. FSK441

Note 2: Beacons

The international beacon sub-band is 50.020 - 50.080 MHz. To reduce overcrowding in the lower end of the DX window, the following alternative frequencies for beacons have been adopted:

For call areas VK1, VK2, VK3, VK4, and VK7: 50.280 - 50.299 MHz.
For call areas VK5, VK6, VK8, VK9 and VK0: 50.300 - 50.319 MHz.

All 52 MHz beacons have now closed and migrated to 50 MHz.
The beacon segments should be kept clear of other transmissions.
Note however that the internationally accepted frequency for stations using WSPR mode is 50.293 MHz (indicated dial frequency using USB). This corresponds to the WSPR signal actually occupying 50.2944 - 50.2946 MHz.

Note 3: FM Simplex

Channel spacing is 25 kHz. Channels reserved for special purposes should be kept clear of other operation.

Note 4: Repeaters

The repeater split is 1 MHz (negative offset) and the channel spacing is 25 kHz. Six repeater channels are reserved for re-use in the following call areas:

52.750 / 53.750 - VK5/8	52.800 / 53.800 - VK6
52.825 / 53.825 - VK7	52.850 / 53.850 - VK2
52.900 / 53.900 - VK3	52.950 / 53.950 - VK4

The remaining channels are available for use in any call area.
Repeater channels are co-ordinated nationally to reduce the possibility of interstate sporadic E interference.