

Changes to **the code** on life-threatening and unwelcome calls

An industry code that clarifies how life-threatening and unwelcome calls are handled by carriage service providers was registered by ACMA recently. The code gives telecommunications carriage service providers greater power to take action when life-threatening or unwelcome calls are made, including SMS and email communications, including the power to suspend the telecommunications services of someone who persists in making unwelcome calls, text messages or emails.

Life-threatening and unwelcome calls demand predictable and coordinated action on the part of all carriers and carriage service providers

involved, as well as the National Relay Service Provider, ensuring their speedy resolution. If a consumer receives a series of nuisance calls or a life-threatening call, the code has a clear sequence of steps to be taken by the carriage service provider to assist in the resolution of the issue. If warnings by carriage service providers to the offending party are ignored, services may be switched off after a final warning is issued.

The code also now covers non-real-time communications, such as short message service (SMS), multimedia messaging service (MMS) and email.

Industry bodies can develop codes of their own volition, or they may be requested by ACMA to do so.

The *ACIF C525:2006 Handling of Life Threatening and Unwelcome Calls* code was developed by the Australian Communications Industry Forum, now a division of the Communications Alliance. The registration of the code makes it enforceable by ACMA, as the regulator.

Before registering a code, ACMA must be satisfied that the industry body has consulted the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, the Privacy Commissioner where codes deal with privacy issues, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and a representative consumer body. ACMA must also be satisfied that the code reflects

Parliament's intention that public interest—particularly community safeguards—be addressed in a way that does not impose undue financial and administrative burdens on the telecommunications industry.

The original code, registered in October 1999, provided a standard approach for dealing with unwelcome and life-threatening calls, including consistency of analysis and management of calls, obligations for record-keeping and timeliness on carriers and carriage service providers and a single point of contact for police in life-threatening situations. This is the second revision. The code is on the Communications Alliance website (www.commsalliance.com.au).

Coverage of **2AAA Wagga Wagga** and **2TVR Tumut** extended

ACMA has made channel capacity available to improve and extend coverage of the community radio service 2AAA Wagga Wagga and to extend the licence area of community radio service 2TVR Tumut, allowing more people in the Riverina region to enjoy the benefits of community radio.

The change enlarges the 2AAA Wagga Wagga licence area and makes channel capacity available for translators to extend coverage of the service to the townships of Gundagai and Coolamon. New transmitters have also been planned to rectify signal

deficiencies within 2AAA's existing licence area at Wagga Wagga South and Junee. It also increases the licence area of 2TVR Tumut and makes capacity available for translators that will enable 2TVR to extend its coverage to include the townships of Talbingo and Gundagai.

The variation to the licence area plan:

- provides technical specifications for additional transmitters for the community radio broadcasting service 2AAA Wagga Wagga, to serve the areas of Wagga Wagga

South, Gundagai, Coolamon and Junee

- defines a new licence area, including the areas of Wagga Wagga, Gundagai, and Coolamon, in which the community radio broadcasting service will be available
- removes a technical specification containing an alternative location for a transmitter for the 2AAA community radio broadcasting service to serve the general area of Wagga Wagga and
- provides technical specifications for

additional transmitters for the community radio broadcasting service 2TVR Tumut, to serve the areas of Gundagai and Talbingo.

ACMA's decision took into consideration the submissions received in response to the draft licence area plan variation released in February 2006. The variation is on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to ACMA > Publications > Broadcasting > Planning > Final licence area plans).

TEMPORARY COMMUNITY BROADCASTING LICENCES ALLOCATED 1-19 SEPTEMBER 2006

State	Licence area	Licensee	Community served	Frequency	Start	Finish	Allocated
WA	Geraldton RA2	Midwest Aboriginal Media Association	Aboriginal	100.5 MHz	28/9/06	27/9/07	14/9/06
NT	Alice Springs RA2	8CCC Community Radio Incorporated	General	102.1 MHz (Alice Springs) and 102.1 MHz (Tennant Creek)	19/11/06	18/11/07	18/9/06
Qld	Esk RA1	Brisbane River Valley Radio Inc.	General	95.9 MHz	12/9/06	11/3/07	19/9/06