

900 MHz Band Plan 1992 No. 47

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Statutory Rule 1992 No. 47

900 MHz Band Plan

Issued by the Authority of the Minister for Transport and Communications

Provisions for Spectrum Planning

Subsection 19(1) of the Radiocommunications Act 1983 (the Act) provides that the Minister may, by instrument in writing, prepare frequency band plans, not inconsistent with the Spectrum Plan prepared under section 18 of the Act.

Subsection 19(2) provides that a frequency band plan shall make provision for purposes for which the band may be used, including provisions specifying the purposes for which any part of the band (including any particular frequency or frequency channel) may be used.

Subsection 19(3) provides that a frequency band plan may apply with respect to a specified area and with respect to a specified period.

Subsection 20(1) of the Act provides that before preparing a frequency band plan, the Minister shall publish the plan he proposes to prepare and invite interested persons to make representations in connection with the proposed plan.

The Radiocommunications - Australian Spectrum Plan, prepared by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport and Communications on behalf of the Minister on 7 December 1990, divides the radio frequency spectrum into frequency bands, designates frequency bands for defence purposes, and specifies the general purposes for which other frequency bands may be used. Frequency band plans specify more particularly the purposes for which any part of the frequency band may be used.

Consultation

A proposed frequency band plan for the 900 MHz Band (820-960 MHz) was published by the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of the Minister in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. GN 17 on 8 May 1991.

Thirty three submissions were received in connection with the proposed plan in response to the invitation for public comment in GN 17.

Following due consideration of the submissions, the Band Plan has been revised by the Parliamentary Secretary. Changes made to the gazetted Plan include the setting of dates for the progressive close down of the AMPS system by 2000, the introduction of more flexible arrangements for the trunked land mobile service and the provision of additional spectrum for cordless telecommunications services on a shared basis with other services.

The revised 900 MHz Band Plan was signed by the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of the Minister on 19 February 1992 and has effect from the date of notification of the making of the Band Plan in the Commonwealth Gazette.

The 900 MHz Band Plan

The 820 - 960 MHz band currently supports a variety of radiocommunications services, including:

- the analogue AMPS cellular mobile telephone service (Telecom's MobileNet);
- the trunked land mobile service;
- single channel, low capacity and wide band fixed point-to-point links;
- radio broadcasting studio to transmitter fixed links;
- miscellaneous low power fixed and mobile services; and
- radiolocation services.

The purpose of this Band Plan is primarily to facilitate the extension of public mobile telecommunications competition in Australia, as part of the Government's telecommunications reform agenda. In particular, it provides spectrum allocations for cordless telecommunications services including public access cordless telecommunications services and provides for the transition from AMPS to digital mobile telephone services utilizing the European GSM technology. This requirement results from the acceptance by the Government of AUSTEL's recommendations in regard to these services.

The Band Plan aims to provide for the orderly continuation of existing services affected by the new arrangements for public mobile and cordless telecommunications services. Wherever possible, this is achieved by:

- providing alternative allocations for displaced services;
- allowing for transitional arrangements within the 820 - 960 MHz band; and
- allowing continued operation of existing services on a secondary basis where such operation will not inhibit the introduction of primary services.

The spectrum allocations in this Band Plan will affect most existing services to some extent. Some existing equipment may require replacement or modification and/or a change in operating frequency to comply with the new Band Plan. In some cases existing services will not be able to be accommodated in the 820 - 960 MHz band and will need to be accommodated in other bands.

NOTES ON TABLE OF PROVISIONS

Clause 1 - Citation

States that the citation for the Band Plan for the 820 - 960 MHz band is to be the 900 MHz Band Plan.

Clause 2 - General

Describes the intention of the Band Plan and outlines the approach adopted for its implementation.

Clause 3 - Interpretation

Subclauses 3(1) and (2) provide for definitions of terms used in the band plan.

The definitions of "primary service" and "secondary service" state that they have the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Radiocommunications - Australian Spectrum Plan. Essentially, as provided for in subsection 7(4) of Part 3 of the Spectrum Plan, stations of a secondary service have a lower priority than primary and permitted services, shall not cause harmful interference to stations of those services, and cannot claim protection from harmful interference from stations of those services.

Subclause 3(3) provides that the use of the term 'authorised' refers to an authorisation given by the Secretary of the Department, or by an officer of the Department authorised in writing by the Secretary, for the relevant purpose.

Clause 4 - General Purposes for Band Segments

Provides that the 900 MHz Band may only be used for a service which transmits or receives signals in a frequency range specified in Column 2 of Tables 1 or 2 in the Schedule, for a purpose which accords with the allocation for that range, and in a geographic area specified in Column 3 for that range. This clause is subject to clause 9 of the Band Plan, which provides for exemptions and exceptions to this clause. This clause is also subject to Part 4 of the Spectrum Plan, which makes provision for general uses of the spectrum, other than those specified in the Band Plan.

Clause 5 - Channelling Arrangements for Allocations

Subclause 5(1) provides that allocations specified in Table 5 in the Schedule may only operate within a channel whose centre frequency and channel bandwidth are as specified in the Table. This clause is subject to subclause 5(2) and clause 9 of the Band Plan, which provide for exemptions and exceptions to this clause. This clause is also subject to Part 4 of the Spectrum Plan, which makes provision for general uses of the spectrum other than those specified in the Band Plan.

Subclause 5(2) provides that channelling arrangements other than those specified by subclauses 5(1) may be authorised where such arrangements provide for more efficient use of the spectrum, when compared with the channelling arrangements specified for that segment.

Clause 6 - Status of Allocations

Provides that services specified in Table 1 in the Schedule are primary services, and those specified in Table 2 are secondary services.

Clause 7 - Allocation Commencement Dates

Clause 7 (1) provides that allocations specified in the Band Plan take effect from the commencement of the Plan, subject to Clause 7(2), which provides that allocations specified in Column 2 of Table 3 in the Schedule are to have effect on the date specified in Column 4 of Table 3.

Clause 8 - Allocation Cessation Dates

Provides that an allocation specified in Column 2 of Table 4 in the Schedule is to cease to have effect on the date specified in Column 4 of Table 4.

Clause 9 - Exemption From Compliance with Clauses 4 and 5

Subclause 9(1) is a grandfathering clause which provides for services operating at the time of the commencement of the Band Plan, with technical or operational characteristics other than those specified by clauses 4 or sub-clause 5 (1), to continue operating as secondary services.

Subclause 9(2) provides that, to facilitate implementation of the Band Plan, any segment+ of the Band Plan may be authorised to be used temporarily, up to the relevant conversion date, for purposes or with technical or operational characteristics other than those specified in the Band Plan.

SCHEDULE

TABLE 1: PRIMARY SERVICE ALLOCATIONS

Table 1 allocates segments of the 900 MHz Band for specified purposes in specified geographic areas on a primary basis.

TABLE 2: SECONDARY SERVICE ALLOCATIONS

Table 2 allocates segments of the 900 MHz Band for specified purposes in specified geographic areas on a secondary basis.

TABLE 3: COMMENCEMENT DATES FOR ALLOCATIONS

Table 3 specifies commencement dates for those allocations in the 900 MHz Band subject to a commencement date other than the date of the making of the Plan.

TABLE 4: CESSATION DATES FOR ALLOCATIONS

Table 4 specifies cessation dates for those allocations in the 900 MHz band subject to cessation.

TABLE 5: CHANNELLING ARRANGEMENTS

Table 5 specifies the channel centre frequencies and maximum channel bandwidths for the segments of the 900 MHz Band.

FIGURE 1: 900 MHz BAND PLAN DIAGRAM

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the 900 MHz Band Plan.