BACKGROUNDER

RadComms Conference - 10 September 2014

Innovation within the television broadcasting sector and future directions for broadcast spectrum policy in Australia

- The Australian Communications and Media Authority is the independent statutory authority for Australia's media and communications legislation. The ACMA was formed on 1 July 2005 by a merger of the responsibilities of the Australian Broadcasting Authority and the Australian Communications Authority.
- Free TV Australia is an industry body representing all of Australia's commercial free-to-air television licensees including; the Nine Network, the Seven Network, Network Ten, Southern Cross Austereo, Prime Television, WIN, NBN and Imparja. The organisation provides a forum for discussion of industry matters and is the public voice of the industry on a wide range of issues.
- Australian television broadcasting had been allocated the following bands for analogue television:

VHF Band I	45-52, 56-63, 63-70MHz
VHF Band II	85-92, 94-101, 101-108MHz
VHF Band III	174-230MHz
UHF Band IV	526-582MHz
UHF Band V	582-820MHz

- Australian television broadcasters commenced the migration to digital terrestrial transmissions on 1 January 2001.
- The digital switchover was rolled out progressively around the country, region by region until the last of Australia's analog free-to-air TV signals were switched off on 10 December 2013. More than 8.7 million households are able to access digital-only free-to-air TV.
- Australian television broadcasting were allocated the following bands for digital television:

VHF Band III	174-230MHz
UHF Band IV	526-582Mhz
UHF Band V	582-820MHz

- In 2010 the Australian Government announced that Australia's Digital Dividend would be 126MHz wide, from 694-820 MHz, comprising UHF television channels 52 to 69.
- Realising the Digital Dividend requires a significant number of digital television services to be moved to new channels so that channels 52 to 69 can be cleared and made available for new services such as new mobile broadband. This process is referred to as the “restack”.
- The restack involves changing the frequencies of approximately 1,500 national and commercial digital television channels across Australia at approximately 440 transmission sites.
- The “restack” is taking place across Australia progressively and is expected to be completed by 31 December 2014.