

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Budget Estimates Hearings May 2009**  
**Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio**  
**Australian Communications and Media Authority**

**Question No: 33**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: Written**

**Topic: SALE OR REALLOCATION OF SPECTRUM**

**Senator Birmingham asked:**

How much has the Government budgeted to receive from the sale or reallocation of spectrum for each of the years covered by the forward estimates? As far as possible, please break down by band frequency/sector

**Answer:**

The Government has not budgeted for the sale or reallocation of spectrum in any of the years covered by the forward estimates, such action signals the Government's expectations and may adversely limit the amount of future revenue.

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**Question No: 197**

**Program No. 1.2**

**Hansard Ref: ECA 100**

**Topic: CYBERSAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Senator Wortley asked:**

“What age are the students that have access to the courses or the program?”

**Answer:**

All schools across Australia have access to Internet Safety Awareness Presentations. To date, the range of ages that have accessed a presentation are from Year 3 (age 9) to Year 12 (age 17+).

Presentations are adjusted by specialised and experienced ACMA trainers to suit student age groups. Since October 2007, the ACMA has delivered 452 presentations at 268 schools. The year levels to which the ACMA has presented as a percentage of this overall amount are as follows:

Years 7&8 (13 and 14 year olds) – 39%  
Years 9&10 (15 and 16 year olds) – 26%  
Years 5&6 (11 and 12 year olds) – 19%  
Years 11&12 (16, 17 and 18 year olds) – 13%  
Years 3&4 (9 and 10 year olds) - 2%

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**Question No: 198**

**Program No. 1.2**

**Hansard Ref: ECA104**

**Topic: FAMILY FRIENDLY FILTER PROVIDERS**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

Is Websense one of the Family Friendly filter providers?

If so, why is an abortion page included on the Australian Communications and Media Authority blacklist still accessible from parliamentary computers?

**Answer:**

Websense Inc. has advised the ACMA that it distributes two separate filter software products: the Websense filter (used in Parliament House) and the SurfControl filter. While the SurfControl filter is one of the 13 Family Friendly Filter products, the Websense filter is not. The ACMA sends its URL notifications to Websense Inc. for filtering by the SurfControl software. The notifications are not applied to the separate, Websense filter.

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**Question No: 199**

**Program No. 1.2**

**Hansard Ref: ECA111**

**Topic: ABILITY TO LOCATE THE ORIGIN OF EMERGENCY CALLS FROM MOBILE PHONES**

**Senator Fielding asked:**

**Could you provide an update to the 2004-05 report that examined the technology available?**

**Answer:**

The (then) Australian Communication Authority's (ACA's) 2004 research into location information available for emergency calls from mobile services was undertaken specifically because, at the time, the ACA recognised that technologies were changing, and that "the potential use of highly accurate location information to enhance the emergency call service poses a complex challenge to both the telecommunications industry and the emergency services community". The discussion paper *Location, Location, Location* ([http://www.acma.gov.au/webwr/consumer\\_info/location.pdf](http://www.acma.gov.au/webwr/consumer_info/location.pdf)) explored the issues, many of which remain relevant.

Submissions to the review confirmed that there was no single 'silver bullet', but there were a number of emerging technologies appeared promising, including network-based approaches, handset-based approaches or a combination of the two. An example of a network-based solution is cell identification which essentially estimates the general location of a handset based upon the location of the serving base station. The satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS) is an example of a handset-based solution. Essentially, those remain the main approaches available for mobile phones, although the sophistication of each technology has continued to develop.

In 2004, submitters strongly argued that the different approaches would range in cost and complexity, and would have different performance and accuracy capabilities. For example, network-based solutions are often only available for calls on the carrier's own network and presents difficulties where emergency calls could have 'roamed' to another network, being the strongest in the area (rather than the carrier's own network). Handset-based solutions require dedicated GPS chips be included in handsets at manufacture, with the current market penetration of GPS handsets estimated to be less than 10 per cent. GPS applications also have reduced accuracy in determining vertical positioning (e.g. multi-storey units).

Following its analysis of the submissions received, the ACA concluded that there were significant commercial incentives for carriers to introduce location techniques of their own volition – and indeed this has been occurring. At the time, the ACA concluded that, especially given the evolving nature of the technologies and business models around location-based services, it was premature to impose a single regulated technological solution. This was similar to the approach adopted by the European Union but in contrast to the US regulatory model, where mobile carriers are required to implement high accuracy location techniques and provide emergency service organisations (ESOs) with location information with specific levels of accuracy.

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This approach appears to have been working, as a number of mobile providers have already started offering commercial location-based services for their own customers. The ACMA is actively exploring how these developments might be utilised to improve the location information that can be provided to ESOs in a practical way.

A significant development since 2004 has been the widespread take up of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services. These services pose a range of new and different challenges including that, as they are essentially software applications, they are inherently more location independent and 'nomadic'.

The ACMA is working with its Emergency Call Service Advisory Committee, and independently, to identify whether there is a consistent, justifiable mobile location solution (covering both mobile calls and certain VoIP services) for Australia's emergency call service model.

More broadly, the ACMA works within a model for managing emergency calls that is created by Government. This relies on close cooperation between the emergency call person (Telstra for Triple Zero and 112 calls) under Commonwealth regulation and the three emergency service organisations (ESOs), with regulatory and operational oversight provided each State and territory government. The success of any initiative for enhanced location information developed by the ACMA for either voluntary or regulatory adoption would require complementary action and investment to be undertaken by the state-based ESOs that provide the emergency response.

The ACMA recently reviewed the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Services) Determination 2002* [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_310543#ecs\\_determ](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_310543#ecs_determ) primarily to address a range of issues with the current operation of the ECS. In the course of that review, submitters raised the need for enhanced location information, but this is better considered on a cross-jurisdictional basis, consistent with the underlying service provision model for the ECS. The ACMA is participating in these processes.

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Question No: 200

Program No. 1.1

Hansard Ref: ECA115

Topic: DO NOT CALL REGISTER REVENUE

Senator Birmingham asked:

What will be the ongoing annual cost and ongoing annual revenue of the Do Not Call Register after 2011-12?

Answer:

The ACMA is unable to precisely identify the ongoing annual costs and annual revenue of the Do Not Call Register as the current four year contract with the Register Operator expires in February 2011.

For your information, the estimated annual direct cost and revenue for 2009-10 to 2010-11, which is contained in the Cost Recovery Impact Statement (June 2009) for the Register, is provided below.

	<b>1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010</b>	<b>1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Estimate (\$m)	Estimate (\$m)	(\$m)
<b>Total direct costs to operate and maintain the Register</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>2.48</b>	<b>6.07</b>
Less Revenue collected	2.66	2.88	5.54
Over or (under) recovery	(0.93)	0.40	0.53
<b>Annual cost-recovery amount</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>5.54</b>

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**Question No: 201**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA118**

**Topic: GERSHON REVIEW**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

The Gershon efficiency dividend is 2.5 per cent of ACMA's IT business-as-usual costs this year. What does that equate to in terms of the effective increase in the efficiency dividend?

**Answer:**

The savings required to be found under Phase 1 of the Gershon Review equates to an increase in the efficiency dividend of 0.21%

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**Question No: 202**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA119**

**Topic: WIND FARMS**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

Do the wind farms at Gunning and Cullerin interfere with digital TV and mobile phone reception?  
Is it generally true that wind farms can affect reception?

**Answer:**

The ACMA is not aware of any particular complaints of interference to digital television reception from the wind farms at Gunning and Cullerin in NSW.

Wind farms can affect reception of radio, television and other radiocommunication services. The extent and nature of reception problems is often uncertain given the variability in received signal levels, antenna installations, terrain and other obstructions. The potential for interference will also depend on the relative locations of the broadcast transmission site, wind farm towers and viewer and the material, speed and orientation of the wind turbine blades.

The ACMA understands that wind farm proponents usually address interference to television, radio and mobile phone reception in environmental assessment reports prepared for state planning authorities. The typical approach is to consider the number of households within a particular distance of the wind farm towers and the potential impacts on reception at those households. A "baseline" survey of reception quality prior to building towers is often conducted to assist in determining whether any reception complaints are due to the wind farm, or were evident prior to construction.

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**Question No: 203**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA124**

**Topic: BUDGET ITEM FOR 'DIGITAL TELEVISION SWITCHOVER – REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA, VICTORIA AND QUEENSLAND'**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

What will ACMA spend over the next three years on evaluating digital transmission reception to assess whether digital TV etc, is the same coverage?

**Answer:**

The ACMA will spend \$6.183m on evaluating digital television transmission coverage and reception.

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**Question No: 204**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA125**

**Topic: DIGITAL TELEVISION SWITCHOVER**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

Can ACMA provide detail of the full funding allocated to it for digital switchover related tasks?

**Answer:**

Total funding for the ACMA relating to Digital Television Switchover is \$14.238m Operating and \$1.192m Capital funds.

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**Question No: 205**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA126**

**Topic: TRIGGER EVENTS AND LOCAL CONTENT**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

**How many licences have been affected by trigger events since January 2008?**

**Answer:**

Eighty-nine licences have been affected by trigger events since April 2007, when the local content obligations on trigger event affected licences came into effect.

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**Question No: 206**

**Program No. 1.1**

**Hansard Ref: ECA 126**

**Topic: TRIGGER EVENTS AND LOCAL CONTENT**

**Senator Minchin asked:**

**How many commercial radio licensees, having been notified, have failed to comply with the rules that you impose on them regarding local content?**

**Answer:**

Overall, there has been a high level of compliance with the local content requirements by trigger event affected licensees. Non-compliance mainly relates to late lodgement of forms and reports in the early stages of the scheme's implementation, a period when licensees were still familiarising themselves with the new obligations. Three licensees (six licences) provided ACMA with draft local content plans after the required timeframe; and two other licensees (5 licences) were late in the provision of annual compliance reports.

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**Question No: 208**

**Program No. 1.2**

**Hansard Ref: ECA33 and ECA34 (26/5/09)**

**Topic: ACMA BLACKLIST**

**Senator Ludlam asked:**

What proportion of the current ACMA Blacklist consists of RC material?

**Answer:**

At 30 April 2009, 51 per cent of URLs on the list provided access to content that had been, or would likely to have been, classified RC by the Classification Board.