

The Senate

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Standing Committee on  
Environment, Communications,  
Information Technology and the Arts

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Broadcasting Services Amendment (Media  
Ownership) Bill 2006

Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Digital  
Television) Bill 2006

Communications Legislation Amendment  
(Enforcement Powers) Bill 2006 [Provisions]

Television Licence Fees Amendment Bill 2006  
[Provisions]

and

discussion paper by the Minister for Communications, Information  
Technology and the Arts on the two channels of spectrum for new  
digital services

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## Abbreviations

ABA	Australian Broadcasting Authority
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACCC	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
BSA	<i>Broadcasting Services Act 1992</i>
BSB	broadcasting services bands of spectrum
CCBA	Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
CCITA	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.
DCITA	Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
Department	Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
Digital Television Bill	Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Digital Television) Bill 2006
DPP	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
Enforcement Powers Bill	Communications Legislation Amendment (Enforcement Powers) Bill 2006
FTA	free-to-air
HDTV	high definition television
Licence Fees Bill	Television Licence Fees Amendment Bill 2006
MEAA	Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance
Media Ownership Bill	Broadcasting Services Amendment (Media Ownership) Bill 2006

Minister	Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
non-BSB	non-broadcasting services bands of the spectrum
Radiocommunications Act	<i>Radiocommunications Act 1992</i>
Register	Register of Controlled Media Groups
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
SDTV	standard definition television
SPAA	Screen Producers Association of Australia
TPA	<i>Trade Practices Act 1974</i>



# Glossary<sup>1</sup>

<b>3G</b>	Third generation of mobile systems. Provide high-speed data transmission and supporting multimedia applications such as full-motion video, video-conferencing and Internet access. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Analogue transmission</b>	A method of broadcasting based on wave patterns.
<b>Apparatus licence</b>	Grants a right to use spectrum. It is relatively prescriptive, restricting use of spectrum to a particular type of equipment (or apparatus) using a particular frequency in a particular region.
<b>Bandwidth</b>	The difference between the lowest and highest frequencies being used. The range of frequencies occupied by a signal, or passed by a channel. More generally, the information carrying capacity of a band or service.
<b>Broadcasting licence categories</b>	Categories specified under the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (BSA): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• national television and radio;</li><li>• commercial television and radio;</li><li>• community television and radio;</li><li>• subscription television;</li><li>• subscription broadcasting and narrowcasting (which includes subscription radio); and</li><li>• datacasting.</li></ul>
<b>Broadcasting services bands (BSB)</b>	The broadcasting services bands are the designated parts of the radiofrequency

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1 Unless otherwise indicated, definitions are sourced from the Productivity Commission's Inquiry Report, *Broadcasting*, Report no. 11, 3 March 2000, pp XIX-XXIII, <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/broadcst/finalreport/broadcst.pdf> (accessed 3 October 2006).

2 Office of Communications, *The Communications Market 2006*, 10 August 2006, pp 279-285, <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/research/cm/cm06/glossary.pdf> (accessed 4 October 2006).

spectrum which have been referred to the ACMA for planning under section 31 of the Radiocommunications Act 1992. Normal analogue commercial broadcasting services (AM and FM radio services and free-to-air UHF and VHF television services) are provided on the broadcasting services bands.<sup>3</sup>

### **Datacasting**

The delivery of content via the BSB in a variety of forms, including: text, data, speech, sound and visual images. Content that is datacast can also be interactive, in the form of computer games or internet-style services. However, genre conditions stipulated in schedule 6 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992, restrict the type of material that can be datacast.<sup>4</sup>

### **Digital television**

A replacement technology for existing free-to-air analogue services. It provides better picture quality and reception, plus a variety of new features that enhance the viewing experience.<sup>5</sup>

### **Digital transmission**

Transmission of data in encoded binary form as zeroes and ones. Digital signals are less prone to distortion and interference than are analogue signals; they are easily encrypted and compressed; and they require less bandwidth.

### **Free to air (FTA)**

Radio and television broadcasts that are intended to be received by viewers free of charge at the point of consumption.

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3 The ACMA website, [http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER.852114:STANDARD::pc=PC\\_90188#bsb](http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER.852114:STANDARD::pc=PC_90188#bsb), accessed 5 October 2006.

4 *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, s. 6; Chowns J., Parliamentary Library Service, *Bills Digest ServiceBills Digest No. 26 2005–06: Broadcasting Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2005*, 17 August 2005, <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/bd/2005-06/06bd026.htm#gg> (accessed 4 October 2006).

5 Digital Broadcasting Australia website, *Digital TV Glossary*, <http://www.dba.org.au/index.asp?sectionID=9> (accessed 4 October 2006).

<b>High definition television (HDTV)</b>	HDTV refers to pictures that contain significantly more detail than other pictures as they contain a larger number of pixels. The minimum HDTV picture resolution is 576 lines x 720 pixels at 50Hz progressive scan (576p). HDTV pictures have an image resolution which is superior to SDTV pictures and existing analogue pictures, with up to six times the improvement in detail. HDTV pictures are also ghost free and in widescreen format. A HD set-top box or an HD integrated television set is required to receive HDTV signals. <sup>6</sup>
<b>Mobile television</b>	Television broadcast to mobile devices, primarily mobile phones, capable of receiving television signals. <sup>7</sup>
<b>Multi-channelling</b>	The transmission of more than one stream of programming over a television channel. The ABC may broadcast three programs at the same time, for example.
<b>Non-broadcasting services bands (non-BSB)</b>	Remaining radiofrequency spectrum [outside of the BSB] which is unreserved, and may be used for other services. This [spectrum] is also regulated by ACMA. <sup>8</sup>
<b>Open narrowcasting services</b>	Broadcasting services whose reception is limited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by being targeted to special interest groups; or</li> <li>• by being intended only for limited locations, for example, arenas or business premises; or</li> </ul>

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6 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Digital Television: Who's buying it*, February 2006, p. 10.

7 Mr Brian Currie, General Manager, Regulatory Affairs, Hutchison Telecommunications (Australia) Ltd, *Committee Hansard*, 28 September 2006, pp 67, and 76–77.

8 See the Australian Communication and Media Authority website, under *Non-broadcasting services band licences*, [http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER:STANDARD::pc=PC\\_90188#bsb](http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER:STANDARD::pc=PC_90188#bsb) (accessed 4 October 2006).

- by being provided during a limited period or to cover a special event; or
- because they provide programs of limited appeal.<sup>9</sup>

**Spectrum**

Bandwidth expressed in terms of the frequencies the system can carry.

**Spectrum licence**

Grants a right to use a precisely defined piece of spectrum for any purpose, using any type of apparatus, subject to only broad technical requirements designed to minimise interference with other spectrum users.

**Standard definition television (SDTV)**

The digital television signal, carried in about one quarter of the spectrum capacity of an analogue signal and broadcasting at the same (or similar) resolution as analogue systems, is referred to as standard definition digital television or SDTV. SDTV in 4:3 aspect ratio has the same appearance as analogue television, minus the ghosting, snowy images and static noises.<sup>14</sup> The SDTV picture resolution is 576 lines x 720 pixels @ 50Hz interlaced (576i).<sup>10</sup>

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9 *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, ss. 18(1).

10 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, *Digital Television: Who's buying it*, February 2006, p. 9.