

**Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
(DBCDE)**

Portfolio or Agency mission/charter

The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) aims to develop a vibrant, sustainable and internationally competitive broadband and communications sector which promotes the digital economy for the benefit of all Australians.

Through these activities, DBCDE supports and encourages the development of world class communications infrastructure so consumers can access a diversity of services that are:

- competitively priced;
- widely accessible;
- provided on fair and just terms; and
- reliable and innovative.

Current space-related activities/responsibilities:

DBCDE provides policy advice to Government concerning radiofrequency spectrum access and management, broadcasting services and telecommunication services.

DBCDE works closely with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) concerning spectrum management issues, including space-related activities. Additional detailed information on space-related activities is available from the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au.

DBCDE also participates in the Australian Government Space Forum.

Publicly available information on portfolio/agency budgets and expenditure on space-related activity

DBCDE manages a number of communication programs which involve delivery of services via satellites:

- The Satellite Phone Subsidy Scheme - an initiative to make mobile communications more accessible for people living and working in areas beyond wireless terrestrial mobile coverage areas. Successful applicants can purchase a satellite phone at a reduced cost.
- Australian Broadband Guarantee – a program to help residential and small business premises access a metro-comparable broadband service regardless of where they are located.
- ABC/SBS radio and TV satellite services
- Digital Television Australia-Wide - a satellite television service to provide digital television to viewers in areas of digital television signal deficiency (or black spots).

Legislation administered by portfolio/agency

The more significant legislation administered by DBCDE includes:

- *Radiocommunications Act 1992*
- *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*
- *Telecommunications Act 1997*

International space-related agreements

Australia is a signatory to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Constitution and Convention. DBCDE and the ACMA take a lead role in fulfilling Australia's responsibilities under this treaty.

The ITU convenes the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC). The WRC provides the mechanism for international agreement governing the use of the radiofrequency spectrum for telecommunications and radiocommunications services, including satellite services.

The ACMA, in consultation with DBCDE and industry, monitors developments within the WRC and facilitates discussion and development of proposed Australian positions to be presented to the WRC. The most recent WRC was held in Geneva over October and November 2007, with the next WRC scheduled for January 2012.

DBCDE also manages Australia's involvement in the International Telecommunications Satellite Organisation (ITSO) and the associated ITSO Agreement.

Contact

Don Williams
Manager, Radiocommunications Policy Section
Networks Policy and Regulation Division
Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
Ph: (02) 6271 1549
Email: don.williams@dbcde.gov.au

Jason Ashurst
Manager, ITU & Treaties Section
Networks Policy and Regulation Division
Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
Ph: (02) 6271 1928
Email: jason.ashurst@dbcde.gov.au