



AUSTRALASIAN RAILWAY ASSOCIATION INC

Association Number A03958 ABN 64 217 302 489

8 May 2012

Ms Maureen Cahill
General Manager
Communications Infrastructure Division
Australian Communications and Media Authority
PO Box 78
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Ms Cahill,

Rail Simplex Channels

Thank you for your letter of 27 April clarifying the medium to long term availability of the frequency 450.050 MHz for use by the Australian Rail Industry. The Australian Rail Industry strongly supports the use of the 450.050 MHz as a national simplex channel for rail use only.

The Australian Rail Industry also wishes to formally confirm that it is seeking apparatus licences to support its operations in the 400 MHz Rail Industry Only segments and for the 450.050 MHz simplex frequency channel.

The Industry is aware of, and will be making a submission to, the *Opportunity Cost Pricing* paper that has been circulated by the ACMA for comment.

In your letter you raised a number of other matters that you wished to progress with the Industry. In particular, you sought clarity on:

The Australian Rail Industry's long term strategy for the 450.050 MHz simplex channel

- The Australian Rail Industry's long term strategy for the 450.050 MHz simplex channel is to use the channel for a nationally harmonised approach for local area train radio communications. This channel is and will remain a critically important channel to the Industry.

Identifying radiocommunications licensees that are part of the rail industry

- The ARA Spectrum Committee is currently finalising a comprehensive list of Australian Rail Industry licensees, which the Committee will make available to the ACMA as soon as it is completed. In addition, a list of 450.050 MHz licensees that are considered to

not be part of the Australian Rail Industry is at Attachment A. The Australian rail Industry will continue to work with the ACMA to identify those licensees that may impact the Industry.

National harmonisation, noting some areas do not use this channel

- National harmonisation and interoperability are a priority for the Australian Rail Industry. The majority of the Industry already holds licences for the 450.050 MHz channel. However, its wider use has been restricted due to its use by non-rail licensees. Once the 450.050 MHz channel has been appropriately cleared other rail entities will transition to this channel.

Appropriate bandwidth for the channel in high, medium, low and remote density areas

- In relation to the Bandwidth for the 450.050 MHz channel, the Australian Rail Industry considers 12.5 kHz to be suitable in all regions.

Strategies and timeframes to deal with non-rail incumbents on the channel

- The Australian Rail Industry believes that the optimal timeframe for non-rail incumbents to transition out of the 450.050 MHz channel would be by 31 December 2014. This aligns with the timeframes for transition that are set out in the ACMA paper *The Way Ahead – Decisions and implementation options for the 400 MHz Band* which will allow sufficient transition time for the Australian Rail Industry prior to the 31 December 2015 deadline.

If there are any issues that you seek further information or clarifications please do not hesitate to contact the ARA. The key contact within the ARA is Vicki Brown, Director Transport Policy (02 62704508) or vbrown@ara.net.au. The ARA looks forward to continued co-operative engagement with the ACMA on all issues relevant to the rail industry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan Nye', written in a cursive style.

Bryan Nye
Chief Executive Officer