

## NEWS

### **Convergence Review**

- Submissions to the Australian Government's Convergence Review are now available on the website of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) at:  
[http://www.dbcde.gov.au/digital\\_economy/convergence\\_review/submissions\\_received\\_for\\_the\\_convergence\\_review\\_open\\_call](http://www.dbcde.gov.au/digital_economy/convergence_review/submissions_received_for_the_convergence_review_open_call)
- All ASTRA submissions to the Convergence Review, including the final submission and supporting report from Deloitte Access Economics, are available on the ASTRA website at:  
[http://astra.org.au/pages/convergence\\_review](http://astra.org.au/pages/convergence_review)
- The Review Committee is expected to release an interim report in December for further comment before submitting its final report to the Government in March 2012.

### **Junk Food Advertising legislation**

On 21 November 2011, the Greens introduced the Protecting Children from Junk Food Advertising (Broadcasting and Telecommunications Amendment) Bill 2011 into the Senate. The Bill includes amendments that would prohibit a subscription broadcasting television licensee from broadcasting an unhealthy food advertisement on a subscription broadcasting service that is primarily intended for or watched by children. The Bill, Explanatory Memorandum and Second Reading Speech are available here:

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbillhome%2Fs827%22>

### **Review of additional commercial television licences and future of broadcasting services bands spectrum**

On 2 November 2011, the Government introduced legislation to defer until 1 January 2013 the statutory review (under section 35A of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*) of whether to allocate one or more additional commercial television broadcasting licences, and to broaden the scope of the review to take into account alternative uses of broadcasting services bands spectrum. Further information on the Broadcasting Services Amendment (Review of Future Uses of Broadcasting Services Bands Spectrum) Bill 2011 is available here:

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbillhome%2Fr4699%22>. The Bill was passed by Parliament on 24 November 2011.

### **Anti-siphoning legislation**

Legislation to implement the Government's reforms to the anti-siphoning scheme announced in November 2010 is now expected to be introduced in the Autumn 2012 Parliamentary sittings.

## **Digital switchover**

On 21 November 2011, the Australian Government released its response to the (then) House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts report of February 2006 *Digital Television: Who's Buying It?*

## **Production Tax Offset amendments**

Amendments to tax legislation to implement recommendations of the review of the independent production sector received Royal Assent on 30 November 2011. Further information on the legislation available here:

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbillhome%2Fr4676%22>

## **Emergency warnings communications**

On 23 November 2011, the Senate Environment and Communications References Committee released its report into the capacity of communication networks and emergency warning systems to deal with emergencies and natural disasters, available here:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/ec\\_ctte/emergency\\_communications/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/ec_ctte/emergency_communications/index.htm)

## **ASTRA ACTIVITY**

- **ALRC National Classification Scheme Review Discussion Paper** – On 30 September 2011, the ALRC released its detailed discussion paper for its review of classification. Further information, including the discussion paper, is available on the ALRC website at: <http://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/classification/respond-discussion-paper>. ASTRA's submission, made on 18 November 2011, is available here: <http://assets.astra.org.au.s3.amazonaws.com/d9dc25baec8fb54604218df15e4f1d4f/ASTRASubmissionALRCNationalClassificationSchemeReview.pdf>
- **ACMA draft band plan for TVOB services** – The ACMA invited comment on two proposed new frequency band plans to be made under the *Radiocommunications Act 1992* that are intended to support the introduction of television outside broadcast services into the bands 1980-2110 MHz and 2170-2300 MHz. Further information is available on the ACMA website at: [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_410182](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_410182). ASTRA's submission, made 21 November 2011, is available here: <http://assets.astra.org.au.s3.amazonaws.com/3ee7ec47a6aa3ddd80993a47147b9a52/ASTRASubmissionACMABandPlanforTVOBservicesFinal.pdf>
- **ACMA future licensing for Earth receive stations** – The ACMA has commenced consultation on options for responding to non-compliance with licensing requirements for satellite Earth receive stations. Further information is available on the ACMA website at: [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_410178](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_410178). ASTRA's submission, made 25 November 2011, is available here: <http://assets.astra.org.au.s3.amazonaws.com/e362fe5214f53a846addfa4fcabc9b40/ASTRASubmissionACMAEarthStationLicensingFinal.pdf>

- **DBCDE Interactive Gambling Act Review** – On 10 November 2011, ASTRA participated in a DBCDE-hosted industry roundtable discussion in relation to the IGA Review, with a particular focus on advertising provisions in the Act.
- **Long term arrangements for Electronic News Gathering (ENG) in alternative bands to the 2.5 GHz band** – ASTRA has been in active consultation with the ACMA regarding its ongoing process for determining long term arrangements for alternative spectrum bands for ENG and TV outside broadcast activities.
- **Live odds in sports broadcasts** – ASTRA is in ongoing discussions with DBCDE regarding measures to address live odds promotion in sports broadcasts.
- **Captioning legislation** – ASTRA has been in continuing consultations with DBCDE regarding the detail of proposed legislation for captioning requirements on subscription television. The legislation is now expected to be introduced in the Autumn 2012 Parliamentary sittings, with an exposure draft released for comment before the end of 2011.
- **Captioning Quality** – ASTRA is involved in continuing consultations with the ACMA regarding captioning quality indicators. Captioning quality requirements are expected to be included in the upcoming captioning legislation.
- **ASTRA Codes Review** – the process of reviewing and updating the ASTRA Codes continues with the ACMA.

The Policy Calendar on the ASTRA website is available here: <http://astra.org.au/pages/policy-calendar>

## **DISCUSSION PAPERS/REQUESTS FOR COMMENT**

### **Digital dividend auction - 700 MHz and 2.5 GHz lot configuration**

As part of preparation for the digital dividend auction, the ACMA is considering how spectrum in the 700 MHz and 2.5 GHz band subject to reallocation will be divided into lots for sale. Further information is available on the ACMA website at: [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_410209](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_410209). Submissions close **2 December 2011**.

### **Digital dividend auction - Fees and deposits**

The ACMA is undertaking “informal engagement” to seek information and views from stakeholders (particularly prospective auction participants) as to the most appropriate fee and deposit arrangements for the digital dividend auction. The feedback provided by stakeholders during this informal process will help inform the ACMA's draft allocation determination for the digital dividend auction. Further information is available on the ACMA website at: [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_410226](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_410226)