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# The ACMA's international engagement—regulating in a globalised communications and media environment

## Occasional paper

JUNE 2015

communicating

facilitating

regulating

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# Executive summary

The ACMA's overriding purpose is to make communications and media work in the public interest, and its international engagement is central to achieving this. The role of international engagement in both protecting and promoting Australia's communications and media interests is reflected in the legislation the ACMA administers—particularly for spectrum management, telecommunications and radiocommunications standards-setting, unsolicited communications and cybersecurity, and online content.<sup>1</sup> These areas of the ACMA's work span jurisdictional boundaries, often making it necessary to engage with international bodies and overseas regulators to develop effective responses to the challenges they raise.

The ACMA and its predecessors have been engaging with overseas organisations and in international fora for many years. However, the continued global integration of communications and media markets and services, and the disruptive impacts of digital technologies is driving the need for greater collaboration and cooperation between countries. The ACMA is one of many communications and media regulators around the world looking to maximise the social and economic benefits of digital technologies through developing best-practice responses to these challenges.

International engagement is an important way the ACMA advances policies and programs that will help to reduce harms and promote outcomes in the interests of Australian business and the community. For example, the ACMA's international engagement aims to prevent cybersecurity threats and unsolicited communications at the source country through entering bilateral and multilateral arrangements to support a safer networked environment. And, along with other international regulators, the ACMA is looking to ensure that sufficient spectrum is available to cater for the expected growth in mobile broadband services through regional and global harmonisation to foster innovation and productivity within the Australian communications sector.

Through engaging with overseas regulators and other international bodies, the ACMA can learn from their experiences and enhance its own regulatory practice. In so doing, the ACMA ensures its decisions and approaches reflect world's best practice, and as an organisation it is well positioned to respond to the pressures and demands of the evolving environment in which it operates.

The strategies the ACMA uses to promote Australia's communications and media interests through international engagement are shaped by domestic considerations and international frameworks. The ACMA aims to ensure that its international activities align with its legislative responsibilities, promote broader government policies and support priorities identified in its internal work program. This often involves close consultation with government, industry and community representatives. The ACMA achieves international and regional outcomes through developing bilateral and peer relationships, engaging with multilateral organisations and building regional

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<sup>1</sup> On 1 July 2015, the ACMA will cease to have responsibility for online content, with the function transferring to the newly created Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner.

cooperation. It relies on its reputation and influence internationally, regionally and with its domestic stakeholders to leverage value from these relationships.

The ACMA advances its international agenda through facilitating collaboration, coordinating various viewpoints and representing Australia's positions in international fora. Domestically, there are a number of consultative and technical working groups that inform the ACMA's positions and contributions at international meetings. Regionally, the ACMA fosters support for Australian initiatives among neighbouring administrations in Asia and the Pacific. Globally, the ACMA operates within recognised international frameworks and processes relevant to the communications and media sectors. Importantly, these activities are underpinned by the significant expertise and knowledge the ACMA brings to working through the challenges of the global communications and media environment.

Other strategies that enhance the ACMA's ability to achieve international outcomes include strategic intelligence-gathering on developments in media and communications, and information-sharing to promote trans-border cooperation. The ACMA provides capacity-building opportunities for other communications and media regulators by way of training programs, contributions at international forums and hosting visits to ACMA offices to discuss regulatory practice. Targeted participation by senior ACMA executives in international and regional fora, conferences and meetings and direct engagement with other relevant regulators also support the effectiveness of the ACMA's international engagement.

# About this paper

This occasional paper discusses the reasons why the ACMA undertakes international engagement in terms of the global communications and media environment and the public interest benefits it aims to achieve through its engagement. The paper provides an overview of the strategies the ACMA uses in undertaking international engagement and case studies which demonstrate what the ACMA has achieved through its international engagement.

## research**acma**

Our research program—research**acma**—underpins our work and decisions as an evidence-informed regulator. It contributes to our strategic policy development, regulatory reviews and investigations, and helps us to make media and communications work for all Australians.

research**acma** has five broad areas of interest:

- > market developments
- > media content and culture
- > social and economic participation
- > citizen and consumer safeguards
- > regulatory best practice and development.

This research contributes to the ACMA's regulatory best practice and development theme.

# Why the ACMA engages internationally

The ACMA engages internationally to strengthen its—and ultimately Australia's—influence, reputation and relationships in a globalised communications and media environment. This helps it achieve its purpose of making communications and media work in the public interest through world's best-practice regulatory approaches.

## International engagement provisions in ACMA legislation

The ACMA has a number of legislative responsibilities that reflect the globalised nature of communications and media. These set an expectation that the ACMA engages internationally as a strategy to support regulatory outcomes.

- > *Australian Communications and Media Act 2005*—under sections 8 and 9, the ACMA has responsibility to manage Australia's input into international standards-setting for telecommunications and radiocommunications (except where Standards Australia is responsible for such input).
- > *Radiocommunications Act 1992*—objects under section 3 include the provision of a regulatory environment that maximises opportunities for the Australian communications industry in domestic and international markets, and the promotion of Australia's interests in international agreements, treaties and conventions relating to radiocommunications or the radiofrequency spectrum.

Under section 299, a person or body exercising a power under the Act (other than Part 4.4 or 5.5) must have regard to any agreement, treaty or convention between Australia and another country or countries that makes provision in relation to radio emission.

- > *Telecommunications Act 1997*—objects in section 3 include the provision of a regulatory framework that promotes the efficiency and international competitiveness of the Australian telecommunications industry. Other references in this Act include compliance by carriers and carriage service providers with international agreements (Part 20), international standards for numbering (Part 22) and submarine cable regulation (Part 24A). International technical standards are also implicitly relevant to the ACMA's technical regulation powers (Part 21).
- > *Spam Act 2003*—under section 42, the ACMA is to liaise with regulatory and other relevant bodies overseas about cooperative arrangements for the prohibition or regulation of unsolicited commercial electronic messages and address-harvesting software.
- > *Do Not Call Register Act 2006*—under section 41, the ACMA is to liaise with regulatory and other relevant bodies overseas about cooperative arrangements for the prohibition or regulation of unsolicited telemarketing calls and unsolicited marketing faxes. Section 44 anticipates that Australia will enter into multilateral arrangements with other countries concerned about the regulation of telemarketing and enables regulations to be made giving effect to these agreements once in place.
- > *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*—on 1 July 2015, the ACMA's responsibilities for online content will be transferred to the new Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner. However, over a number of years the ACMA has undertaken considerable international engagement under clause 94 of Schedule 5 and clause 114 of Schedule 7 of the Broadcasting Services Act. These clauses provided for the ACMA to liaise with regulatory and other relevant bodies overseas about cooperative arrangements for the regulation of the internet industry and the

commercial content services industry, including (but not limited to) collaborative arrangements to develop multilateral codes of practice and content-labelling technologies.

Part 8B of this Act provides for applications for international broadcasting licences to be made to the ACMA. These licences are for the broadcast of services from Australia to audiences in other countries (but do not include services provided by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation or the Special Broadcasting Service, or other exempt services as defined in the Act). Licensing these services ensures Australia's national interest is considered before any services are broadcast internationally.

## **Using international engagement to achieve communications and media public interest outcomes**

The following examples illustrate some of the benefits of international engagement in the ACMA's key areas of responsibility. They also reveal how the continued global integration of communications and media services is driving the need for greater collaboration and cooperation between countries, with increasing numbers of communications and media issues beyond the capacity of sovereign nations to effectively manage.

As Australians continue to engage in the networked environment, the number and complexity of the following types of issues should also increase. International engagement has an important role in this environment in helping the ACMA to identify emerging issues and respond to the challenges they present.

### **Spectrum management**

Radiofrequency spectrum is a key enabler for economic growth. A recent ACMA study found that mobile broadband has contributed over \$33 billion, or more than two per cent of GDP, to Australia's economy in the seven years to 2013. An estimate prepared by the Centre for International Economics (CIE) suggests that the economic value of spectrum in Australia could be \$177 billion over a 15-year period.<sup>2</sup> In realising the social and economic benefits of new communication technologies and services, global spectrum management policies and objectives should align as closely as possible with Australia's spectrum usage interests.

The ACMA has a role in negotiating international spectrum outcomes that benefit Australia both in terms of spectrum access for domestic services and our interests in other countries. The demand for spectrum to support mobile broadband services is expected to increase in response to the growing proliferation of machine-to-machine (M2M) interactions and developments in the 'Internet of Things'. Australia's participation in international spectrum management, including efforts to harmonise international spectrum, has meant greater efficiencies in the operation of spectrum domestically and means that future demands for spectrum, especially mobile broadband spectrum, should be more easily accommodated.

Harmonised spectrum also creates larger and more efficient markets for communications and media products and services. For example, the ACMA has led Australia's promotion of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) plan for harmonised spectrum in the 700 MHz band. This means that Australia is now part of an expanded

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<sup>2</sup> Centre for International Economics, *The economic value of spectrum*, January 2015. Research report prepared for the Department of Communications and cited in the department's report of its [spectrum review](#), March 2015.

Asia–Pacific mobile phone market, with economies of scale making cheaper and more innovative products and services available in Australia. A case study examines the ACMA’s role in developing the APT’s internationally harmonised plan for mobile broadband spectrum.

#### ***Case study one—the APT 700 MHz spectrum plan***

Spectrum capacity is under pressure from the rapid expansion of mobile data applications. A range of multimedia devices, including e-book readers, tablets, game consoles, MP3 players, cameras and remote healthcare monitoring devices, are placing additional demands on spectrum capacity in the medium to long term. While the future applications that will derive their data from mobile services are unknown, it is likely that this pressure will continue to increase as new technologies appear.

Australia, led by the ACMA, has taken the opportunity to work with other countries in the Asia–Pacific region to develop a new, internationally harmonised plan optimised for mobile broadband, using spectrum in the 700 MHz band.

As a result of the ACMA’s work in achieving the digital dividend with the switchover from analog to digital television, spectrum became available in the 700 MHz band for other uses. Before it could allocate new spectrum licences in this digital dividend spectrum, the ACMA needed to develop a band plan.

As a technology-taker with a comparatively small population, Australia’s spectrum interests are best served by harmonisation with other international spectrum band plans. The ACMA considered band plans adopted by the US and Europe but found that the US arrangement lacked efficiency and the European band plan was not suited to Australia because it only had a partial overlap with Australia’s digital dividend spectrum.

Instead, for the first time, a harmonised digital dividend band plan specific to the Asia–Pacific was considered. Working within the APT Wireless Group (AWG), the ACMA developed the APT 700 MHz spectrum band plan. This plan was agreed in September 2011.

The technical efficiencies and utility of the APT 700 MHz plan means it has been adopted or is being seriously considered by countries throughout the world including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. It has also been adopted by the international 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) as a band for Long Term Evolution (LTE) technology.

While the technical benefits of the APT 700 plan could have still been realised even if Australia had ‘gone it alone’, harmonising with our Asia–Pacific neighbours means that Australia benefits from being part of a much larger communications market, and will have access to the leading technologies from international phone manufacturers and other technology suppliers. The economic benefits of harmonisation associated with economies of scale increase with market size. The success of the APT 700 plan beyond the Asia–Pacific now means its coverage extends to markets with an estimated combined population of over two billion people and growing.



## **International standards-setting**

There is also a need for the ACMA to promote Australian interests in international telecommunications and radiocommunications standards-setting. The ACMA uses international standards and risk assessments in managing the supply of communications and information technology products, consistent with the government's Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda announced in October 2014. In broad terms, the regulatory arrangements are intended to manage risks associated with health and safety, interference between radiocommunications devices and services, supply of voice telephony and network integrity.

By influencing telecommunications and radiocommunications standards development within the Asia-Pacific region and internationally, the ACMA promotes the safety and reliability of products entering the Australian market. The ACMA also influences outcomes to prevent technical regulations and certification systems creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade, and promotes the development of open global standards, which allow for interconnectivity and interoperability across networks and services. These approaches contribute to Australia meeting its obligations as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which aims to ensure that technical standards and testing and certification requirements do not unnecessarily impede international trade.

The benefits to Australian suppliers of this approach derive from the reduced costs associated with being able to rely on overseas compliance records to demonstrate compliance with ACMA technical standards.

International engagement in this area also assists the ACMA identify emerging standards, technology and market trends in international and regional markets. This information can provide useful strategic intelligence for Australian industry and consumers.

### ***Case study two—APEC TEL Mutual Recognition Arrangement***

The APEC TEL Mutual Recognition Arrangement (APEC TEL MRA) is a multilateral agreement between members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). It provides for the mutual recognition of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), and mutual acceptance of the results of testing and equipment certification procedures undertaken by those bodies in assessing conformity of equipment to the importing economy's own technical regulations.

The APEC TEL MRA streamlines conformity assessment procedures for a wide range of telecommunications and telecommunications-related equipment, and facilitates trade among the APEC member economies. The APEC TEL MRA provides benefits to manufacturers, CABs, regulators and consumers.

The ACMA administers Australia's contribution to the APEC TEL MRA. It ensures the procedures agreed to under the MRA align with Australian regulatory requirements related to electromagnetic compatibility, radiocommunications devices and telecommunications customer equipment, all of which are the responsibility of the ACMA.

## Spam, cybersecurity and telemarketing

Many of the messages and threats related to spam and internet security originate off-shore and a growing number of telemarketing calls also originate in other jurisdictions. So international engagement in these areas is an important strategy to address unsolicited communications and threats from malware and phishing. This leads to a more secure online environment for users and a reduction in the harmful impact of unsolicited communications and cybersecurity threats on Australian home and business users.

### **Case study three—‘Microsoft imposter’ scam**

The ACMA’s Do Not Call Register is successful in reducing the number of unwanted telemarketing calls from legitimate businesses. However, the sources of scam calls are not legitimate businesses. The ACMA liaises with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and international regulators to help combat this increasing global problem.

In 2012, collaboration between the ACMA, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) resulted in court orders against US-based parties alleged to be linked to scams in which telemarketers masqueraded as representatives of Microsoft.

The ACMA first became aware of what was referred to as the ‘Microsoft imposter’ scam in 2009, after complaints were received from registrants to its Do Not Call Register. The scam generated nearly 10,000 calls to the ACMA’s Do Not Call complaint line and at its peak represented about 50 per cent of all the reports made.

Australia was one of the first targets of this scam, which subsequently spread to other countries. The ACMA tracked the ‘Microsoft Imposter’ scammers and worked with the FTC and CRTC in the period leading up to the FTC’s action.

## Online content

The ACMA has had significant involvement in the development of cross-border measures to address prohibited online content and has received international recognition for materials it has produced to raise awareness about online safety. The ACMA has been an active participant in the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE) since 2000 as part of Australia’s commitment to the Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Online, and has memoranda of understandings (MoUs) with NetSafe (New Zealand’s online safety advisory body) and Childnet International, a global children’s charity based in the UK.

INHOPE hotlines around the world take reports about online child sexual abuse material from members of the public, and work cooperatively with industry and law enforcement to ensure illegal content is rapidly dealt with wherever it is hosted. In the 2013 calendar year, members made nearly 55,000 reports of child sexual abuse material across the INHOPE network, with the ACMA making nearly 7,600 reports. Content is typically removed within three days. All INHOPE hotlines have in-built mechanisms to ensure law enforcement operations are not compromised.

## Satellite coordination

There is an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) process for coordinating access to the radiofrequency spectrum used by satellite systems.<sup>3</sup> The ACMA acts as the Australian administration for the ITU process in managing frequencies for satellite communications. Member states of the ITU (including Australia) are bound by its administrative regulations. These regulations aim to facilitate the rational, efficient and equitable use of the radiofrequency spectrum and associated orbits, and to prevent instances of harmful interference.

Satellite operators may approach any administration in the world, including the ACMA, to file their satellite system with the ITU. In undertaking this work, the ACMA considers the regulatory framework provided by the ITU's treaty-level Constitution and Convention and Radio Regulations, and Australian law and principles. The ACMA is responsible for filing Australian satellite networks with the ITU. See the next chapter for a description of the international process for bringing satellite networks into use.

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<sup>3</sup> The ITU is the United Nations agency that deals with the frequency coordination of satellites, among other duties. The ITU only deals with administrations, not with satellite operators. Australia is a signatory to ITU treaty-level arrangements.

# How the ACMA engages internationally

The ACMA's international engagement strategy aims to ensure that its international activities align with its legislative responsibilities, promote whole-of-government policies and support relevant priorities in its work program.

## International engagement strategies

There are six main strategies that guide the ACMA in undertaking its international engagement.

### 1. Build strategic relationships with international organisations, particularly converged regulators

The ACMA maintains a number of key relationships with regulators and other organisations in various countries.

Key stakeholders are likely to be those that:

- > seek outcomes that align with the ACMA's objectives
- > support Australia's positions at international meetings
- > have formalised cooperative arrangements with the ACMA
- > have knowledge and/or expertise likely to assist the ACMA.

Agreements such as MoUs with other international agencies can strengthen relationships through formalising information-sharing and cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

### 2. Participate in relevant international and regional fora, negotiations, conferences and meetings

Strategic participation in relevant international fora provides opportunities for the ACMA to:

- > undertake its international legislative responsibilities
- > influence outcomes affecting communications and media in Australia
- > demonstrate its value as a constructive international participant
- > promote government policies on enhancing international competitiveness, regional stability and removing barriers to trade
- > gain knowledge and build capacity
- > support efforts to build capacity in other countries.

### 3. Gather strategic intelligence and information on emerging international communications and media developments, trends and best-practice responses

Strategic intelligence and information allows the ACMA to:

- > more effectively influence international negotiations and decision-making processes
- > identify emerging issues that could affect communications and media in Australia

- > benchmark the ACMA's regulatory responses against world's best practice
- > provide credible and timely information and advice on international communications and media issues (both domestically and internationally).

#### **4. Provide training programs, and host visits from overseas representatives and delegations as well as international meetings and events.**

This strategy:

- > develops capacity in the region
- > strengthens the ACMA's international reputation
- > strengthens relationships and influence, particularly within the Asia-Pacific region
- > provides opportunities for information exchange and enhancing the ACMA's knowledge base.

Hosting visits from delegations and overseas representatives are usually arranged in response to requests from overseas regulators. They range from individuals meeting ACMA staff for an hour or two to delegations of upwards of 20 people that require numerous ACMA staff to coordinate contributions.

The provision of training can range from ad hoc requests to hosting major events. For example, the International Training Program (ITP) is run over a number of days in conjunction with the ITU every few years, with dozens of registrants from numerous countries. As the host nation, the ACMA organises the program, develops and delivers presentations, and runs the event. Other training requests include staff attachments over a week or more and tailored sessions for an hour or two on specific topics.

#### **5. Advise government and make strategic information and intelligence available to stakeholders in a responsive and timely manner**

This strategy supports:

- > government policy development in communications and media
- > valuable international intelligence, information and contacts being available to ACMA stakeholders.

The ACMA regularly responds to requests from other government departments for comments and advice on aspects of international agreements and other issues that are relevant to its responsibilities.

#### **6. Facilitate industry and community stakeholder input into formulating Australia's positions on relevant issues of international significance**

This strategy supports:

- > developing positions to advance Australia's national interests at international negotiations and meetings
- > creating stakeholder trust and ACMA authority in managing and representing Australia's communications and media interests
- > meeting legislative responsibilities through an enhanced knowledge base.

The ACMA invests hundreds of hours of staff time facilitating meetings and coordinating stakeholder contributions to issues being considered at an international level, and developing positions for Australia to take to international meetings.

## Operating in the international environment

Much of the ACMA's international engagement occurs through international structures and processes relevant to communications and media. In achieving outcomes in this environment, the ACMA relies to a large extent on the influence, reputation and relationships it has within the international communications and media community. Strategies often involve facilitating collaboration, coordinating various viewpoints and representing Australia's positions in international negotiations, as well as fostering support for Australian initiatives among administrations in our region.

The main ways the ACMA gives practical effect to its international engagement are through:

- > multilateral engagement
- > regional cooperation
- > bilateral and peer relationships
- > consultative groups and technical working committees.

### Multilateral engagement

#### *Treaty-level organisations*

For international telecommunications and radiocommunications, the ACMA represents Australia's position at meetings of the ITU. The ITU is the peak international decision-making body for the radiocommunications sector, and provides an important role in discussing and resolving international telecommunications technical, operational and governance issues. The ACMA facilitates domestic study groups comprising industry, government and consumer stakeholder representatives. It also provides input from these groups to the relevant ITU study groups, managing Australian delegations attending the ITU study group meetings (the delegations may have representatives from the ACMA, other government departments and industry).

The ACMA is also responsible for filing Australian satellite networks with the ITU. The ACMA assesses proposed foreign satellite networks and initiates coordination processes (where necessary) with foreign administrations' satellite networks to ensure coexistence. The ACMA also assists Australian satellite operators negotiate satellite coordination with other overseas operators.

#### *International forums*

The ACMA is at the forefront of international efforts to reduce spam and enhance cybersecurity, developing globally recognised technological solutions to protect consumers and businesses from spam, malware and phishing. Its Spam Intelligence Database software has been shared with three overseas regulators and the public-private partnership approach utilised in the Australian Internet Security Initiative is increasingly being adopted internationally to combat malware-infected computing devices.

The ACMA's international engagement in this area includes encouraging and assisting other jurisdictions to legislate against unsolicited communications and adopt malware mitigation programs to help minimise internet security threats. The ACMA promotes these approaches through:

- > **London Action Plan**—recognising spam as a cross-jurisdictional problem, the ACMA has helped establish, and has been an active contributor to, international forums such as the London Action Plan (LAP). The LAP brings together regulators, law enforcement and industry representatives from some 27 countries to address spam enforcement issues and the related problems of online fraud and deception, phishing and the spread of viruses.

- > **International Do Not Call Network**—in 2011, the ACMA joined regulators from 11 other countries to form the International Do Not Call Network. The ACMA, which operates Australia's Do Not Call Register, has served as the network's co-chair. The network was created to facilitate sharing of information between member agencies to address domestic Do Not Call issues, including about:
  - > developing policies and strategies for establishing and enforcing Do Not Call regulatory frameworks
  - > identifying global trends, with a view to establishing a consolidated response to common issues.

### **Regional cooperation**

Regional cooperation includes supporting countries in the Asia–Pacific region across a range of issues including:

- > trade and international competitiveness through the development of international agreements
- > regulatory capacity-building
- > enhancing regional leverage
- > promoting and maintaining regional stability.

An important aspect of this regional focus is maintaining and extending relationships within the APT. The ACMA has developed strong relationships with these administrations through participating in (and hosting) regional activities sponsored by the APT, including preparations for ITU meetings such as the ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC) and World Telecommunications Standardisation Assemblies (WTSA). These preparatory meetings provide opportunities for Australian views to be incorporated into regional positions, which are carried forward for consideration at international decision-making fora.

### **Case study four—regional spectrum cooperation: hosting APG15-3**

The ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) is a forum for many key debates on spectrum and other critical international radiocommunications issues. As a key milestone to WRC-15, to be held in Geneva in November 2015, the ACMA hosted the third of five APT Preparatory Group meetings (APG15-3) in Brisbane from 9 to 13 June 2014.

More than 350 delegates from 32 of the 38 APT member administrations attended APG15-3, which had a key focus of further developing the Asia–Pacific regional views on WRC-15 Agenda items.

The ACMA manages an extensive preparatory process for the WRC and, through this process, develops the views for Australia's future spectrum requirements. APG15-3 was an opportunity to integrate Australia's preliminary views on WRC issues into the regional views developed at the meeting, with Australia's views often providing the basis for the final regional views. The Australian delegation and the ACMA provided leadership and helped negotiate difficult decisions during the meeting.

In hosting the event, the ACMA led one of Australia's largest ever delegations to an international radiocommunications meeting, with a total of 50 delegates registered. Bilateral meetings were also organised between senior ACMA delegation members and key regional and international representatives.

Immediately prior to APG15-3, the ACMA also hosted the first APG Training Workshop. The workshop was very well received—it was rated as one of the top three events on the 2014 APT calendar.

The objective of the workshop was to help APG delegates from developing countries better understand the complex processes of regional APG meetings. More than 80 people from 22 APT member countries participated in the workshop, including many senior office-bearers from the APG and ITU representatives.

The two-day workshop included presentations on the APG meeting process and interactive sessions on writing, presenting, debating and contributing to APG meetings.

The workshop was enthusiastically received, with positive feedback from the participants, APT and the Republic of Korea, which announced its intention to establish the workshop as a feature of each WRC cycle and requested the ACMA to contribute its expertise and assist at the next event.

Another example of regional cooperation and capacity-building was the ACMA's co-hosting of the first forum and training program on combating child exploitation material online in the Asia–Pacific in 2014.

#### **Case study five—Combating child exploitation material online forum, 2014**

In 2014, the ACMA collaborated with the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to co-sponsor and host in the ACMA Sydney office an inaugural international invitation-only forum and training event, *Combating child exploitation material online* (CCEMO).

CCEMO supported the activities of INHOPE hotlines by providing a regional focus to the international fight against online child sexual abuse material.

The forum brought together law enforcement, International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE) and INHOPE Foundation members in the Asia–Pacific region, along with industry and non-government organisations who work to combat online child exploitation material.

The attendees exchanged strategic and operational information through a range of presentations from public, private, law enforcement and industry bodies. These sessions discussed operational methods and opportunities for innovative collaboration and information-sharing.

A training event was held on the third day for operational practitioners who investigate online child exploitation material. A number of recently established hotlines for reporting child sexual abuse material in the region were able to attend.

#### **Bilateral and peer relationships**

The ACMA maintains a number of key relationships with regulators and other organisations in various countries. These relationships help the ACMA to remain informed about communications and media developments in the UK and Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific. They also contribute to building goodwill and cooperation on responding to issues of mutual concern.

The ACMA has both formal and informal relationships with other communications and media regulators and international organisations. For example, the ACMA has developed close working relationships with other regulators around the world on combating spam and problematic telemarketing calls. These partnerships enable organisations to:

- > share intelligence on sources of spam and problematic telemarketing calls
- > identify and close down compromised computers that spread viruses and send spam
- > raise consumer and business awareness about email, SMS and phone scams



- > develop technologies, programs and policies to fight spam and problematic telemarketing calls.

Australia currently has anti-spam arrangements with South Korea and Thailand.

An important mechanism for collaboration on spectrum issues is the Spectrum Regulators Forum (SRF). The SRF is an initiative of the New Zealand Ministry of Economic Development (MED). In addition to the ACMA, membership of the SRF includes regulators from New Zealand, Canada, the US, the UK and Hong Kong. The SRF enables invited regulators from markets with similar approaches to spectrum regulation to share their views in an informal environment. Issues discussed include developments in technology, spectrum management, and compliance and administration of the radiofrequency spectrum.

### **Consultative groups and technical working committees**

As part of its regulatory activities, the ACMA participates in a number of consultative groups that contribute to international fora, such as the European Telecommunications Standardisation Institute (ETSI), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and International Special Committee on Radio Interference (CISPR). Domestic consultative groups include Standards Australia's technical working committees responsible for developing Australian input into international electromagnetic capability (EMC), electromagnetic radiation (EMR) and electrical safety standards (that are either adopted directly or indirectly in Australian standards). This participation allows the ACMA to indirectly influence international discussions so that the outcomes of those discussions (for example, technical standards) can be adopted directly in Australia.

Through participating in Communications Alliance and Standards Australia technical committees, the ACMA strongly encourages reliance on applicable international standards and limits any Australian differences to those areas necessary to protect public safety or reflect Australian radiocommunications spectrum allocations. For example, within Standards Australia the ACMA advocated removing the historical differences between the Australian standards AS/NZS 4295 and AS/NZS 4583 and the equivalent European standards to allow suppliers to use European compliance records to demonstrate compliance with the Australian standards. This is anticipated to reduce the cost of supplying to the Australian market radiocommunications devices operating in the aviation and land mobile bands.

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