

Letter to ACMA and the Minister to Communications about the “Class Licensing Proposal”

As a radio amateur, I am asked by ACMA to write to them by today concerning their latest proposal for radio amateurs to move from apparatus licensing to class licensing.

ACMA has set parameters for my reply, indicating that form letters are not wanted, and that answers need to be restricted to the questions they have given.

I am grossly offended by ACMA and the manner in which those who have difficulty expressing themselves in writing are automatically excluded from the discussion.

Australia is a democracy, and we need to include those who would like to sign a petition expressing their views, just as much as we include those who write essays.

The drive from ACMA to change the licensing arrangements for Australian amateur radio operators needs to be examined from the beginning.

Naturally ACMA hasn't asked for my opinion on this.

To quote from their consultation paper¹ “ACMA invites comments on the questions featured throughout this paper. For ease of reference, the questions are listed below.” There are 15 questions. The basic one, “Do you support the transfer from an apparatus licence to a class licence?” is of course not asked.

The philosophy behind the change appears to have come from the Small Government ideas prominent in those supporting new right conservatism and the Libertarian movement.

ACMA is not cognisant of a major change in Australian government and has not considered the opinion of the new government towards a process to remove Government from the regulation of Amateur Radio.

I am not interested in answering 15 questions made up by those whose opinion is already fixed.

ACMA conducted a poll in 2021 asking the amateur radio community about changing to a class licence, staying with the same regulations or altering the LCD (licence conditions determination). 84% of respondents opted for no change.

ACMA has continued regardless with change, unwanted by the amateur community, as seen on its own poll.

I believe that ACMA needs to be directed by the Minister to halt their current endeavour to change unwilling amateur licencees to a different licence, and to follow that with instructions to separately discuss licensing, call sign arrangements, and power level changes with the amateur community, as well as other matters of concern to the amateur community.

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¹ https://www.acma.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/Proposed%20amateur%20class%20licence%20and%20higher%20power_consultation%20paper_1.docx