Changes to the Radiocommunications (Cordless Communications Devices)
Class Licence 2024

Consultation paper

july 2024

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Executive summary

We made the Radiocommunications (Cordless Communications Devices) Class Licence 2024 (the CCD class licence) and the Radiocommunications Equipment (General) Amendment Rules 2024 (No. 1) (the Equipment Rules amendment) in
June 2024.

In response to the consultation process on the drafts of these instruments, stakeholders suggested that the condition in the CCD class licence limiting the use of cordless communications devices to private use only should be removed.

We are proposing to vary the CCD class licence. We have included a draft variation instrument – the Radiocommunications (Cordless Communications Devices) Class Licence Variation 2024 (No. 1) – as an attachment to this paper for consideration.

# Issues for comment

This consultation does not pose specific questions. We welcome your feedback on the issues raised in this consultation, or any other issues relevant to spectrum arrangements for cordless communications devices.

# Introduction

We released the initial consultation paper [Remaking the Radiocommunications (Cordless Communications Devices) Class Licence 2014](https://www.acma.gov.au/consultations/2024-04/remaking-radiocommunications-cordless-communications-devices-class-licence-2014) in April 2024. In the first consultation paper, we outlined our proposals to amend arrangements for cordless communications devices (CCD). This included reviewing the CCD class licence to address the following matters:

1. Removal of the authorisation to operate CCD in the 857–861 MHz and
861–865 MHz bands to support the commencement of spectrum licences
across these frequency bands on 1 July 2024.

Updating arrangements in the 1880–1900 MHz band to reflect decisions outlined in the [*Replanning of the 1880–1920 MHz band: Outcomes paper*](https://www.acma.gov.au/consultations/2021-11/exploring-future-use-19-ghz-band-consultation-402021#outcomes-for-this-consultation) to support both digitally enhanced cordless telecommunications (DECT) and ‘future DECT’ technologies,[[1]](#footnote-2) and remove support for personal handy phone system (PHS) technology, which has become obsolete.

Making the CCD class licence ahead of the sunsetting date of 1 April 2025 to ensure continuity of arrangements for CCD.

In parallel, we proposed amendments to the [Radiocommunications Equipment (General) Rules 2021](https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2021L00661/latest/text) (the Equipment Rules) to ensure support for future DECT in the 1880–1900 MHz band.

## Outcomes of previous consultation

We received 3 submissions to the first consultation paper.[[2]](#footnote-3) These were from Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA), the DECT Forum and Shure. All submitters generally supported our proposals in the consultation paper, the new CCD class licence and the Equipment Rules amendment.

However, concerns were raised by the DECT Forum regarding section 8 of the draft CCD class licence. The condition as originally proposed is reproduced below:

**8 Operation – private use only**

(1) A person must not operate a cordless communications device otherwise than on the customer side of the boundary of a telecommunications network.

(2) A carriage service provider must not operate a cordless communications device to provide a carriage service to a person outside the provider’s immediate circle.

Note: Operation of a cordless communications device otherwise than in accordance with the conditions in this section is not authorised by this instrument, but may be authorised by another licence issued under the Act.

Example: A cordless communications device is used to provide a carriage service to another person if:

 (a) the device is used for the provision of commercial cordless telecommunications services to the public; or

 (b) the device is used for the provision of a connection under a wireless local loop arrangement.

The first concern was that subsection 8(1) may preclude existing use cases where use is not connected to a telecommunications network (for example, baby monitors). The intent is to facilitate existing use cases, so we decided to remove subsection 8(1).

The second concern was that limiting operation to ‘private use’ only (i.e., not in the provision of a carriage service to the public) may not facilitate emerging use cases. Although that condition was included in the CCD class licence as made, we are seeking views on a further variation to arrangements to address this concern. This is discussed in the next section of this paper.

The proposed maximum equivalent isotopically radiated power (EIRP) in the
draft CCD class licence for CCD operating in the 1.7175–1.7925 MHz,
30.0625–30.3125 MHz or 39.7625–40.250 MHz frequency ranges was 1.23 dBm.

We sought comment on whether the EIRP limit should instead be aligned with the higher limit of 22 dBm[[3]](#footnote-4) allowed in New Zealand. No submissions were received in relation to this matter. Therefore, the EIRP limit included in the CCD class licence remains as proposed in consultation.

In the first consultation paper, comment was also sought on whether it would be appropriate to include CCD in a future update to [Radiocommunications (Low Interference Potential Devices) Class Licence 2015](https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2015L01438/latest/text) (the LIPD class licence).

Given the similarities between the types of devices authorised by the CCD class licence and the LIPD class licence, there is an opportunity to include arrangements for CCD in the LIPD class licence, instead of maintaining arrangements in a standalone instrument. However, it was noted that the interaction between the LIPD class licence and the Equipment Rules needed to be investigated to ensure it is appropriate to include CCD in the LIPD class licence.

The Equipment Rules specify standards for many devices, including short-range equipment in the Short Range Equipment Standard in Part 15 of Schedule 5. Short-range equipment includes all radiocommunications devices authorised by the LIPD class licence. By authorising CCD under the LIPD class licence, they would become, by definition, ‘short-range equipment’, and therefore the Short Range Equipment Standard would apply, where it does not currently.

This would mean that to determine whether a CCD meets the requirements of the Short Range Equipment Standard, the testing methods identified in the Short Range Equipment Standard for the device would need to be used. The testing methods are:

For the 1.7175-–1.7925 MHz band – ETSI EN 300 330[[4]](#footnote-5)

for the 30.0625–30.3125 MHz and 39.7625-40.250 MHz bands – ETSI EN 300 220‑1[[5]](#footnote-6)

for the 1880–1900 MHz band – ETSI EN 300 440[[6]](#footnote-7)

One submitter responded to this issue, advising that it would be inappropriate for CCD to be incorporated into the LIPD class licence as the testing methods are not applicable to CCD. We will further consider this issue when we next update the LIPD class licence.

# Proposed variation

A draft Radiocommunications (Cordless Communications Devices) Class Licence Variation 2024 (No. 1) (draft instrument) is included with this paper for consideration.

In its response to the first consultation paper, the DECT Forum recommended removal of the requirement in the CCD class licence that effectively required the operation of cordless communications devices be for private purposes only. The evolution of DECT is supporting a large variety of applications beyond phones and headsets, including IoT, smart home, smart metering, mesh networks, wireless microphones and more. The DECT Forum flagged that the ‘private use only’ condition may not support all use cases and applications of DECT.

We considered the proposed changes recommended by the DECT Forum. Given the applications of DECT technology are broadening beyond cordless telephony and other private-only use cases, our preliminary view is to support the removal of section 8 from the CCD class licence. However, we formed the view that further public consultation is required prior to the removal of section 8 entirely to ensure all stakeholders have an opportunity to consider this change. The part of section 8 that remains prevents a carriage service provider from using CCD in the provision of a carriage service to
the public.

During the replanning of the 1880–1920 MHz band, which concluded with the release of an [outcomes paper](https://www.acma.gov.au/consultations/2021-11/exploring-future-use-19-ghz-band-consultation-402021#outcomes-for-this-consultation) in November 2023, there was significant support expressed in submissions for facilitating future DECT technologies. Removal of this condition which may prevent these applications is in line with this support.

We also note that the use of DECT in 1880–1900 MHz is not restricted to private purposes in other jurisdictions.

We are seeking comment on whether to remove the condition in the CCD class licence that operation of cordless communications devices be for private purposes only.

# Invitation to comment

## Making a submission

We invite comments on the issues set out in this consultation paper.

[Online submissions](https://www.acma.gov.au/have-your-say) can be made by uploading a document. Submissions in PDF, Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format are preferred.

Submissions by post can be sent to:

The Manager

Spectrum Planning Section

Australian Communications and Media Authority

PO Box 78

Belconnen ACT 2616

The closing date for submissions is **COB,** **Monday 12 August 2024**.

Consultation enquiries can be emailed to freqplan@acma.gov.au.

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1. DECT technology has now matured to include [DECT-2020 New Radio (NR) standards](https://www.etsi.org/standards#page=1&search=TS%20103%20636%20&title=0&etsiNumber=1&content=0&version=1&onApproval=0&published=1&historical=0&startDate=1988-01-15&endDate=2020-10-07&harmonized=0&keyword=&TB=&stdType=&frequency=&mandate=&collection=&sort=1). DECT-2020 NR was developed to support broad and diverse wireless internet of things (IoT) applications requiring both ultra-reliable and low-latency communication needed in voice and industrial applications. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Submissions are available on the [ACMA website](https://www.acma.gov.au/consultations/2024-04/remaking-radiocommunications-cordless-communications-devices-class-licence-2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. 22 dBm is equivalent to -8 dBW. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [ETSI EN 300 330](https://www.etsi.org/deliver/etsi_en/300300_300399/300330/02.01.01_60/en_300330v020101p.pdf): Short range devices (SRD); radio equipment in the frequency range 9 kHz to 25 MHz and inductive loop systems in the frequency range 9 kHz to 30 MHz; harmonised standard covering the essential requirements of article 3.2 of Directive 2014/53/EU. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. [ETSI EN 300 220-1](https://www.etsi.org/deliver/etsi_en/300200_300299/30022001/03.01.01_60/en_30022001v030101p.pdf): Short range devices (SRD) operating in the frequency range 25 MHz to 1 000 MHz;

Part 1: Technical characteristics and methods of measurement. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [ETSI EN 300 440](https://www.etsi.org/deliver/etsi_en/300400_300499/300440/02.02.01_60/en_300440v020201p.pdf): Short range devices (SRD); Radio equipment to be used in the 1 GHz to 40 GHz frequency range; harmonised standard for access to radio spectrum. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)