Spectrum policy

The radio spectrum is an important resource managed by the Crown, through the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), on behalf of the people of New Zealand. The efficient use of this resource to provide services such as telecommunications and broadcasting is essential to the functioning of a modern economy.

Radio Spectrum Management (RSM) is a business unit within the MBIE that is responsible for providing advice to Government on the allocation of radio frequencies to meet the demands of emerging technologies and services. Spectrum is allocated in a manner that ensures radio spectrum provides the greatest economic and social benefit to New Zealand society.

National legislation

The primary mechanisms for managing radio transmissions are the Radiocommunications Act 1989 and the Radiocommunications Regulations 2001. The Radiocommunications Act establishes the licencing regime which manages interference issues between uses of radio spectrum. Two licencing regimes are used, spectrum licences under a management rights regime, and radio licences under an administrative regime.

RSM is responsible for administering national legislation to manage radio spectrum in New Zealand. The Act and Regulations set out the minimum requirements for the licencing regime, and other guidance and information is provided by RSM through other means such as Public Information Brochures (PIBS), Codes of Practice and Reference Standards.

More on Acts and Regulations

- Codes of Practice
- Public Information Brochures (PIBS)
- Reference Standards

Radiocommunications Act 1989
Radiocommunications Regulations 2001

International obligations

New Zealand is a signatory to the ITU Telecommunications Convention, which gives international treaty status to the associated International Radio Regulations. As such, it is important that national spectrum management is consistent with and promotes compliance with our international treaty obligations. The Radiocommunications Act requires all licensees to comply with the International Radio Regulations which transfers these international obligations into New Zealand's national law.

RSM is responsible for ensuring New Zealand meets its international obligations under International Telecommunications Union (ITU) treaties and participates in international multi-lateral and bi-lateral discussions relating to radio spectrum.

As part of meeting New Zealand’s obligations under the ITU treaties, the Ministry publishes a table of frequency usage in New Zealand.

More on International relations

Acts and regulations

Information about the Radiocommunications Act 1989 and the Radiocommunications Regulations 2001 and other relevant legislation.

Official information notices (Gazette)

A summary of, and links to, gazette notices relevant to Radio Spectrum Management including general user licence, radiocommunications product compliance and prohibited equipment gazette notices.

Standards

The standards cover a range of requirements from mandatory through to voluntary and provide guidance on a variety of matters relating to the sale, manufacture, installation and use of EMC and radio products.

Codes of Practice

Codes of Practice are guidelines for suppliers and installers to minimise the likelihood of causing interference.

Allocation of spectrum

Details of the mechanisms for the allocation of spectrum such as the management rights regime and the administrative radio licence regime.

Public policy spectrum reservations

Information on parts of the spectrum reserved by the Crown for public policy uses.

Expiry of spectrum rights – policy decisions

Description of the policy decisions regarding the process's involved with the expiry of spectrum rights, and the implementation of projects renewing management rights and spectrum licences.