



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bidding limits set for low-band spectrum auction in the Year of 5G

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, today announced that allocation limits will apply to the amount of low-band spectrum that mobile network operators can acquire in Australia's upcoming 5G spectrum auction.

The Government is preparing to auction spectrum in the 850 MHz and 900 MHz bands before the end of this year. Different limits will apply in metropolitan, more populated regional areas, versus less populated regional and remote areas.

In more populated areas, bidders will be limited to acquiring a total of 82 MHz of sub-1 GHz spectrum. This means that no bidder can hold more than 40 per cent of low band spectrum in metropolitan and more populated areas.

To encourage investment in larger geographic but more sparsely populated regional and remote areas, a slightly higher limit of 92 MHz or 45 per cent of low-band spectrum has been set.

These limits have been set following advice from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and are designed to promote competition and the efficient allocation of spectrum.

The purpose of the allocation limits is to prevent spectrum being monopolised by a single bidder. Providing all bidders the opportunity to acquire this spectrum will encourage competition in Australia's mobile market and investment in 5G networks in regional Australia.

"This outcome strikes the right balance between supporting an efficient allocation of spectrum and making connectivity available, as economically as possible, to Australians everywhere," Minister Fletcher said.

Minister Fletcher's direction to ACMA also requires it to "set-aside" spectrum in the 900 MHz band for Optus and TPG Telecom. This will guarantee these operators the opportunity to acquire 10 MHz of 900 MHz band spectrum at the auction to support continuity of services. Optus and TPG Telecom rely heavily on their 900 MHz holdings for their national mobile networks.

For more information on ACMA's preparation for the auction, visit <https://www.acma.gov.au/850900-mhz-band>

For a copy of the Minister's allocation limits direction visit: www.legislation.gov.au

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