

Your narrowcasting licence: Use it or lose it

Fact sheet

Low power open narrowcasting (LPON) is used for niche radio broadcasting services.

It allows services to be delivered to specific locations at certain times, or to be targeted to special interest groups, such as tourist information and ethnic and religious programming.

The ACMA issues and manages LPON licences.

Important points about LPON licences

- > **Make sure you're aware of the conditions and requirements** in the [Radiocommunications Licence Conditions \(Broadcasting Licence\) Determination 2015](#).
- > **There are power and coverage limitations**, although you can apply to change the location of an existing LPON site.
- > **There are separation distances between LPON services** that must be met to prevent interference.
- > **An LPON service must not be operated as a commercial or community radio broadcasting service**. This can result in penalties of up to \$200,000.
- > We issue transmitter licences for LPON services **through a price-based allocation process**.

Use it or lose it

The 'use it or lose it' provision is very important for LPON licensees. It stops people from getting an LPON licence and not operating it, which is known as 'hoarding' and is not permitted. It also means that spectrum, which is a scarce resource, is used efficiently. If you don't use it regularly, the licence should be returned to the pool so others can use it.

If you hold an LPON licence, you must:

1

Start broadcasting within 6 months of getting your licence

- > This allows enough time to set up infrastructure.
- > There must be evidence of the transmitter set up at the licence location and technical details of the frequency you're operating on.

2

Use it regularly

- > You need to broadcast with 'reasonable regularity' for the duration of the licence. This could mean a service broadcasting daily or for frequent special events.

3

Keep records

- > You must keep a logbook of the hours/events of operation.
- > You must keep visual and audio broadcast recordings.
- > You must document the nature of the service being provided, whether daily or for special events.

If you don't follow these rules, your licence may be cancelled or not renewed.