

AUSTRALIAN UHF CB/PERSONAL RADIO/UHF "LICENCE-FREE" RADIO CHANNEL DESIGNATIONS

In Australia, although there is no individual licence needed for this equipment, its use is still governed by federal legislation. Under these laws certain channels have been designated for specific uses. The following chart shows the 80 channels, their corresponding frequency, and the use designated by law or general acceptance.

Legally restricted use	General use (legally)	Repeater output	Repeater input	Generally accepted use
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Chnl	Frequency	Use
1	476.4250	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
2	476.4500	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
3	476.4750	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
4	476.5000	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
5	476.5250	EMERGENCY. (Simplex & Rptr output)
6	476.5500	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
7	476.5750	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
8	476.6000	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).
9	476.6250	General use.
10	476.6500	<i>4WD Channel</i>
11	476.6750	CALL CHANNEL
12	476.7000	General use.
13	476.7250	General use.
14	476.7500	General use.
15	476.7750	General use.
16	476.8000	General use.
17	476.8250	General use.
18	476.8500	<i>Caravan & Camper Channel</i>
19	476.8750	General use.
20	476.9000	<i>Houseboats on the Murray River</i>
21	476.9250	General use.
22	476.9500	DATA ONLY – NO Voice (by Law)
23	476.9750	DATA ONLY – NO Voice (by Law)
24	477.0000	General use.
25	477.0250	General use.
26	477.0500	General use.
27	477.0750	General use.
28	477.1000	General use.
29	477.1250	<i>Eastern states Pacific Hwy/M1 Road Ch</i>
30	477.1500	General use.
31	477.1750	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
32	477.2000	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
33	477.2250	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
34	477.2500	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
35	477.2750	Emergency. Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
36	477.3000	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
37	477.3250	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
38	477.3500	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).
39	477.3750	General use.
40	477.4000	Road Channel. (Australia wide)

Chnl	Frequency	Use
41	476.4375	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
42	476.4625	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
43	476.4875	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
44	476.5125	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
45	476.5375	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
46	476.5625	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
47	476.5875	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
48	476.6125	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).
49	476.6375	General use.
50	476.6625	General use.
51	476.6875	General use.
52	476.7125	General use.
53	476.7375	General use.
54	476.7625	General use.
55	476.7875	General use.
56	476.8125	General use.
57	476.8375	General use.
58	476.8625	General use.
59	476.8875	General use.
60	476.9125	General use.
61	476.9375	Guard Channel – Not in Use
62	476.9625	Guard Channel – Not in Use
63	476.9875	Guard Channel – Not in Use
64	477.0125	General use.
65	477.0375	General use.
66	477.0625	General use.
67	477.0875	General use.
68	477.1125	General use.
69	477.1375	General use.
70	477.1625	General use.
71	477.1875	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
72	477.2125	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
73	477.2375	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
74	477.2625	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
75	477.2875	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
76	477.3125	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
77	477.3375	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
78	477.3625	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).
79	477.3875	General use.
80	477.4125	General use.

NOTES:

- **Channels 5 and 35 are legally designated for emergencies only.** Using channel 35 for general use can block a distant repeater and prevent someone calling for help. Heavy penalties apply for the misuse of channel 5 and 35 – up to \$1,565,000 fine, or 5 years prison for an individual.
- Channels 1 to 8 and 41 to 48 are used by **repeaters** (range extenders) to **transmit** the repeated signals. If travelling it is best to avoid using these channels for 'general use' to help avoid interference from repeater systems as you travel.
- Channels 31 to 38 and 71 to 78 are used by **repeaters** (range extenders) to **receive** signals. Using one of these channels for 'general use' can interfere and block a distant repeater. Consider avoiding using these channels for general use, even if no repeater operates on this channel.
- Channels 22 and 23 are reserved for **data only**; telemetry or telecommand. No voice transmissions are permitted by law.
- Channels 10, 18, 20 and 29 are used by **general acceptance** as indicated. Under law they are **general use** channels, however use outside of the "accepted use" shown could be subject to interference from mobile stations passing through and using the channel for the accepted use.
- Channel 40 is a road channel by **general acceptance**; however it has been used as such since UHF CB was first legalised.
- Channels 61, 62 and 63 are "guard channels" to protect the data channels, and not presently released for use.
- Channels 1 to 40 are the same designations as the original wide-band 40 channel band-plan. Channels 41 to 80 were introduced when the band changed to narrow-band channel spacing. Old 40 channel sets can still talk to 80 channel sets using channels 1 to 40.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Despite the name "Licence-Free" attached to the numerous amount of UHF radio equipment now available, all of the "Licence-free" UHF radios sold in Australia are CB Radio and are still governed by federal legislation and a Class Licence. This simply means that the use and operation of these "licence-free" radios is still controlled by rules and laws, including what channels can be used for what purpose.

CB Radio has been legal in Australia since 1977, and although it required a paid individual licence for many years, in 1994 the Australian Government removed the need for an individual "Apparatus Licence" and replaced it with a "Class Licence". Class Licences have been used for some time for things like mobile phones, where the individual that owns the phone doesn't need to obtain a licence to use it. The use of mobile phones is still governed by laws, just like CB, but these laws are now automatically applied to anyone that uses the equipment.

The channel designations that were in place when the Apparatus Licensing was in operation still exists, but is now covered by the Class Licence. These designations are shown on the chart of page 1, with colour coding to indicate a legally designated channel, a legally accepted channel use, or a generally accepted channel use. Misuse of a channel that is **legally designated** can lead to heavy penalties. Unlike the old Apparatus Licensing system, the Class Licence only covers you when you are operating in accordance with the provisions of the licence. The Radiocommunications Act 1992, section 132 states:

(3) Operation of a radiocommunications device is not authorised by a class licence if it is not in accordance with the conditions of the licence.

What does this mean? It means that if you are using the radio contrary to the conditions of the Class Licence, you are deemed to be operating a radiocommunications device **without a licence!** The Radiocommunications Act states:

46 Unlicensed operation of radiocommunications devices

(1) Subject to section 49, a person must not operate a radiocommunications device otherwise than as authorised by:

- (a) a spectrum licence; or
- (b) an apparatus licence; or
- (c) a class licence.

Penalty:

- (a) if the radiocommunications device is a radiocommunications transmitter:
 - (i) if the offender is an individual-imprisonment for 2 years; or
 - (ii) otherwise-1,500 penalty units; or
- (b) if the radiocommunications device is not a radiocommunications transmitter-20 penalty units.

What does this interpret into? If caught "operating without a licence", there are three penalties that can apply:

1. \$626 "on-the-spot" infringement notice, for minor offences; or
2. For an individual, up to 2 years prison (court imposed); or
3. For others (businesses, companies, etc.) up to \$469,500 fine (court imposed).

This includes the use of an emergency channel for non-emergency communications. What constitutes an "emergency" is defined by the Radiocommunications (Interpretation) Determination 2015, Schedule 1 (Dictionary):

emergency signal means:

- a) a call for assistance; or
- b) a signal of distress; or
- c) a message that is related to a call for assistance or a signal of distress.

This means that, regardless of who you are unless your transmission on UHF 5 or 35 is a call for assistance, a signal of distress, or a message that is related to one of these transmissions you could be charged (to appear in court) under section 193 ("*Interference in relation to certain radiocommunications*") or 194 ("*Interference likely to endanger safety or cause loss or damage*") of the Radiocommunications Act 1992, the penalty for which is:

- a) For individuals, up to 5 years imprisonment (court imposed); or
- b) For all others, up to \$1,565,000 fine (court imposed).

NOTE: For offences against s193 or s194 there are no options for an "on-the-spot" fine, it must be dealt with by a court of law. The above fines are correct as at 1 July 2023, but will increase every 3 years.