

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 under the *Radiocommunications (Citizen Band Radio Stations) Class Licence 2025*, or by general acceptance.

Legally restricted use			General use (legally)			Repeater output			Repeater input			Generally accepted use		
Chnl	Frequency	Use	Chnl	Frequency	Use	Chnl	Frequency	Use	Chnl	Frequency	Use	Chnl	Frequency	Use
1	476.4250	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	41	476.4375	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
2	476.4500	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	42	476.4625	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
3	476.4750	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	43	476.4875	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
4	476.5000	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	44	476.5125	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
5	476.5250	EMERGENCY. (Simplex & Rptr output)	45	476.5375	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
6	476.5500	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	46	476.5625	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
7	476.5750	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	47	476.5875	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
8	476.6000	Repeater Output (<i>band 1</i>).	48	476.6125	Repeater Output (<i>band 2</i>).									
9	476.6250	General use.	49	476.6375	General use.									
10	476.6500	4WD Channel	50	476.6625	General use.									
11	476.6750	General use (<i>formerly call channel</i>)	51	476.6875	General use.									
12	476.7000	General use.	52	476.7125	General use.									
13	476.7250	General use.	53	476.7375	General use.									
14	476.7500	General use.	54	476.7625	General use.									
15	476.7750	General use.	55	476.7875	General use.									
16	476.8000	General use.	56	476.8125	General use.									
17	476.8250	General use.	57	476.8375	General use.									
18	476.8500	Caravan & Camper Channel	58	476.8625	General use.									
19	476.8750	General use.	59	476.8875	General use.									
20	476.9000	Houseboats on the Murray River (SA)	60	476.9125	General use.									
21	476.9250	General use.	61	476.9375	Guard Channel – Not in Use									
22	476.9500	DATA ONLY – NO Voice (by Law)	62	476.9625	Guard Channel – Not in Use									
23	476.9750	DATA ONLY – NO Voice (by Law)	63	476.9875	Guard Channel – Not in Use									
24	477.0000	General use.	64	477.0125	General use.									
25	477.0250	General use.	65	477.0375	General use.									
26	477.0500	General use.	66	477.0625	General use.									
27	477.0750	General use.	67	477.0875	General use.									
28	477.1000	General use.	68	477.1125	General use.									
29	477.1250	Eastern states Pacific Hwy/M1 Road Ch	69	477.1375	General use.									
30	477.1500	General use.	70	477.1625	General use.									
31	477.1750	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	71	477.1875	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
32	477.2000	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	72	477.2125	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
33	477.2250	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	73	477.2375	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
34	477.2500	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	74	477.2625	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
35	477.2750	Emergency. Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	75	477.2875	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
36	477.3000	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	76	477.3125	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
37	477.3250	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	77	477.3375	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
38	477.3500	Repeater Input (<i>band 1</i>).	78	477.3625	Repeater Input (<i>band 2</i>).									
39	477.3750	General use.	79	477.3875	General use.									
40	477.4000	Road Channel. (Australia wide)	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 from calling for help. Heavy penalties apply for the misuse of channels 5 and 35 – up to \$1,820,000 fine, or 5 years' **imprisonment** 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 prevent interference from repeater systems.
- 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 with and block a distant repeater. Consider avoiding these channels for general use, even if no repeaters operate on them.
- 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 the law, they are general-use channels; however, use outside the "accepted use" shown could be subject to interference from mobile stations passing through and using the channel for 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 are 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 communicate with 80-channel sets using channels 1-40.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Despite the name "Licence-Free" attached to the numerous amounts of UHF radio equipment now available, all of the "Licence-free" UHF radios sold in Australia are CB radios and are still governed by federal legislation and a Class Licence. This means that these "licence-free" radios are still subject to rules and laws, including which channels can be used for which purposes.

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 who 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 who uses the equipment.

The channel designations in place when Apparatus Licensing was in operation still exist but are now covered by the Class Licence. These designations are shown on the chart on 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 legally designated channel 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.

There is also the option of a "civil penalty" of 300 penalty units. What does this interpret into? If caught "operating without a licence", there are three maximum penalties that can apply:

1. \$109,200 civil penalty; or
2. For an individual, up to 2 years in prison (court-imposed); or
3. For others (businesses, companies, etc.), up to a \$546,000 fine (court-imposed).

This includes using an emergency channel for non-emergency communications. What constitutes the appropriate use of the emergency channels is defined in the Class Licence as operation:

- a) During an emergency or natural disaster; or
- b) For the purposes of an emergency services organisation's response, or ability to respond, to an emergency or natural disaster.

This means that regardless of who you are, if your transmission on UHF 5 or 35 interferes with a call for help, 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 \$1,820,000 fine (court-imposed).

NOTE: For offences against s193 or s194, there are no options for an "on-the-spot" fine; a court of law must deal with it. The above fines are correct as of 1 July 2026, but will increase with CPI.