



Online Safety, Media and Platforms Division
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA
ACT 2601
AUSTRALIA

22 February 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Prominence Framework for Connected Television Devices

In response to your published consultation on proposals for prominence for connected television devices, you may wish to consider that the DVB-I Service Discovery specification already addresses some of the key issues raised in the Proposal Paper.

DVB-I is an open industry standard developed by the DVB Project and published as ETSI standard TS 103 770 V1.1.1 with the latest revision as DVB BlueBook A177r4, both available from the [DVB web site](#).

The DVB is a broadly-based organisation of 160 member companies that has been responsible for the development of a wide range of technical standards for digital television, including those in use in Australia and over 1.5 billion receivers worldwide.

DVB-I has been developed more recently to support both traditional broadcast radio and television services and online audiovisual services and to enable a long-term transition to delivery over data networks. It has been recognised by the ATSC in America as a candidate world standard for audiovisual service discovery. Work is also ongoing to facilitate interoperability with 5G networks.

The DVB-I protocol allows connected television devices to discover available services, whether delivered over terrestrial or satellite transmission such as DVB-T/T2 or DVB-S/S2, or as online streams such as DVB-DASH and associated applications, including video on demand services. It supports connected televisions and can be freely used by any device that has an internet connection.

The standard includes provision for the identification of regulated service lists, which are ordered lists of audiovisual services. These may include logical channel numbers and can be used to provide priority and prominence to particular services, such as those of public service media providers and other licensed broadcasters, ensuring availability and accessibility.

Service List Registry

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The Service List Registry was established last year to provide a federated system to enable service providers to advertise their services and allow compatible devices and displays to discover them and make them accessible to users.

The purpose of the Service List Registry is to offer users choice, convenience and control, with simple service selection on any screen.

The requirements for the registry were partly informed by previous consultancy work undertaken for broadcasters in Australia on future platform requirements.

A simple [online demonstration](#) is available, and a relevant example can be seen by selecting “Australia” as a Country parameter in the query interface, which will provide a sample result for Freeview Australia.

Further information about the Service List Registry is available on the [SLR web site](#) and we would be pleased to discuss further how such a system can ensure the prominence and provenance of services on compatible connected television devices in Australia.

Several leading consumer electronics manufacturers already support the specification and trial services are being evaluated in various European countries.

The Service List Registry simply provides a technical platform, analogous to the domain name system used to resolve hostnames to internet addresses. It offers a convenient mechanism for legislators, regulators and other industry bodies to manage and maintain the prominence of licensed audiovisual services.

We recommend that provision for DVB-I service discovery is included in relevant national receiver standards and platform specifications to support adoption and deployment of this standard. Given the pace of technology change, it is important that this should not be restricted to devices and displays with conventional radiofrequency tuners.

It should be emphasised that the relevant existing international technical standards, including DVB-I, can be incorporated simply by reference. This is important as consumer electronics market is multinational and relies on international standards to achieve interoperability and economies of scale.

Provision for prominence may be achieved by authorising the relevant national regulatory authority, such as the Australian Communications and Media Authority ACMA, to govern the approval of one or more regulated service lists that target Australian markets.

We envisage that the composition, ordering and technical assignment of such service lists be negotiated among the relevant service providers to achieve alignment with existing logical channel numbers under an industry code of conduct, with regulatory intervention only required in exceptional cases.

Legacy devices and displays will be unaffected, but the publication of one or more canonical service lists will serve as a transparent specification of acceptable behaviour that can be referenced by regulatory and competition authorities to achieve policy objectives.

This approach would appear to be consistent with your Proposal 9.3 for an industry code coupled with supporting legislation.

There is an opportunity for Australia to achieve a leadership position in implementing an appropriate prominence policy, based on open international standards, leveraging developments in other markets.

We appreciate the proactive approach being taken by the Australian Government in relation to the prominence framework for connected television devices and would welcome the opportunity to discuss further how it might be implemented both technically and in terms of relevant legislation and regulation.

Your sincerely,

Dr William Cooper
Chief Executive
Service List Registry