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Radiocommunications Act review (Part 4.1 of the Act): Reporting of Illegal Repeaters

To whom it may concern,

With the growing proliferation of illegal repeaters in recent years, it has become evident that this growth has led to an increase in carrier network and general RF interference.

Powertec Telecommunications is the main distributor of Cel-Fi Nextivity repeaters in Australia. Cel-Fi Nextivity Repeaters have been approved for use across 200 carriers and operators in 100 countries. In many countries, including Australia, Cel-Fi products are respected as the only family of repeater solutions approved by all three of the Australian Mobile Operators for use on their networks. The Cel-Fi Nextivity Repeaters improve the end users cellular (voice and data) experience, by guaranteeing network safe operation while boosting only each operator's frequencies and insuring non-interference with other Network Operator's licensed bandwidth.

The use of illegal repeaters within Australia is a growing concern due to the interference they can inflict particularly on the carrier network. Powertec have in the past experienced instances where we have identified the installation of illegal repeaters, via site surveys or have been informed of unwitting individuals that are intending to install illegal repeaters due to cost effectiveness and false claims that they have been approved by the carriers and are network safe.

It is important that if an organisation or individual identifies an installation that has an illegal repeater, there is the ability to report this to the ACMA via notification mechanism (e.g. web based application, email or hotline) as we understand currently that in most cases illegal repeaters causing network interference are reported generally via a carrier who has unexplained noise rise in the network.

ACMA can use this information to identify the illegal repeater and engage the offender to decommission the illegal repeater. This will benefit the carriers and persons legitimately using other affected RF devices in minimising the impact of the illegal repeaters on their environments.

We believe this broader brush will serve to warn users in many cases before interference and damage is caused.

Best regards

Eric Albina
National Carrier Manager
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