

## News Update

- the outcome of the ABA's inquiry into the future use of the sixth television channel; and
- the ABA's research program.

Mr Senchuk said that the CRTC's relations with the ABA had matured over the years to the extent that the CRTC was keen to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the ABA as soon as possible. Arrangements for signing the MOU have commenced, and the ABA looks forward to continuing its warm working relationship with the CRTC.

## Investigation into cricket South Africa tour

SYDNEY: The ABA's decision about the acquisition of the broadcast rights of the South Africa cricket tour by the Seven network and FOXTEL has been challenged by the Nine network.

The ABA was satisfied that the rights to the event were acquired by a free-to-air broadcaster within the meaning of the antisiphoning rules before their acquisition by a pay TV licensee. The ABA was also satisfied that the relevant licence condition had been complied with.

Nine network sought a review of the ABA's decision in the Federal Court and FOXTEL joined as a party to the litigation. The matter was heard on 21 February before Justice Lockhart whose decision was handed down on 25 February 1997. The Court decided the ABA had erred in law and on 26 February 1997 ordered the ABA's decision be set aside and remitted to the ABA to decide the matter again according to law. The ABA is reconsidering its decision and has sought comment from the parties concerned.

On 28 February 1997, FOXTEL filed a notice of appeal against Justice Lockhart's decision and was granted leave to seek a date for the appeal hearing as soon as possible. The appeal was heard on 17 March 1997 before the full Federal Court in Perth. The appeal was dismissed.

Siphoning is defined as the obtaining by a pay TV licensee of the exclusive rights to broadcast events, such that those events could not be received by the public on national or commercial television broadcasting services.

The South Africa v Australia cricket series of test and one-day matches is covered by the Minister for Communications and the Arts' antisiphoning list.

The Nine network had expressed concern to the ABA about the acquisition of rights to these

events by the Seven network and a possible breach of a licence condition by the pay TV licensee, FOXTEL.

## Paris forum on young people and the media

PARIS: The International Forum of Researchers, *Young People and the Media, Tomorrow*, to be held in Paris this month will feature contributions from more than 140 individuals and organisations with expertise in the area of young people and the media. The ABA will be represented at the Forum and will be contributing in a number of ways.

The ABA's Chairman, Peter Webb, will be part of an international roundtable of regulators discussing various issues relating to children and the media, including research needs of national regulators, programming for children and protection of children from material which might be harmful to them. ABA General Manager, Gareth Grainger, will be speaking on behalf of the International Scientific Committee which defined the program for the Forum.

Other ABA presentations will outline the ABA's research program on children and the media and share its experience with the classification of children's programs and the operation of the children's television standards. Finally, future development of the ABA coordinated International Research Forum (IRF) will be a focus of discussions with the many IRF members who will be attending.

The Forum runs over five days, 21 to 25 April. Each of the first four days focus on a specific theme, starting with 'beyond media effects'. This is followed by 'media and social issues', 'the how and why of future research' and 'media education and media literacy'. The final day is given over to reports back from the many workshops that are part of the program and to discussion of shared visions for the future of research on young people and the media.

Future issues of *ABA Update* will provide reports on the outcomes of the Forum and the implications for research efforts in Australia.

## ABA consults with producers in WA

PERTH: Representatives of the ABA recently visited Perth to seek the views of the Western Australian film and television production community about Australian content on pay TV.

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