



News Update

Alexandra/Eildon

In the radio licence area plan for the Shepparton region, released on 21 September 1997, the ABA determined one new community FM radio broadcasting service be made available in the Alexandra/Eildon region.

The ABA advertised for applications for the new licence on 25 February 1998. One application was received for the advertised licence, from Upper Goulburn Community Radio Inc.

Wangaratta

In the radio licence area plan for the Wangaratta region, released on 21 September 1997, the ABA determined one new community FM radio broadcasting service be made available in Wangaratta.

The ABA advertised for applications for the new licence on 27 February 1998. One application was received for the advertised licence, from Wangaratta Community Radio Association Inc.

(99.3 MHz), Corowa, Culcairn, Henty and Holbrook, NSW; Benalla, Euroa and Wangaratta, Victoria; and Atherton (two licences) Ayr, Biloela, Bowen, Innisfail, Mackay (103.5 MHz), Mossman, Rockhampton (99.9 MHz) and Tully, Queensland.

The applicant for these licences will be issued the licence for the reserve price, subject to the requirements of the *Radiocommunications (Issue of Broadcasting (Narrowcasting) Transmitter Licences) Determination* including payment of the price of the licence, being met.

If a successful applicant, either a single applicant or a highest bidder at auction, does not meet any of the requirements of the Determination, the applicant will not be issued the licence. The ABA may then re-offer the licence.

The duration of each licence is five years.

No applications were received for the licences to serve Charters Towers, Dysart, Emerald, Mackay (93.9 MHz), Middelmount, Moranbah, Proserpine, Rockhampton (92.7 MHz), Saraji, Sarina, Tieri and Townsville, Queensland and Seymour, Victoria.

The ABA will accept expressions of interest for these licences, as well as other licences which have previously been offered but not taken up and are currently 'on the shelf'.

Bunbury community considering self-help for SBS

The Bunbury City Council recently decided that it could not afford the \$1.5 million costs to install its own SBS transmitter at Mt Lennard to provide the community with its first SBS service.

The Council had previously been granted a licence by the ABA to operate a self-help SBS transmitter at Mt Lennard. This would require a relatively high power transmitter to serve Bunbury and the South West of Western Australia.

Mt Lennard is the established transmission site for all of the television services intended to serve the South West of Western Australia: ABC and GWN television, all of Bunbury's FM services, and the new WIN International UHF commercial television service due to start before April 1999.

Following discussions with the ABA, the Council has decided to consider a less powerful and more local transmitter to provide SBS to Bunbury. This smaller facility is likely to 'borrow' the channel planned for Mt Lennard since there are no other groups seeking to provide the local SBS service.

New commercial and open narrowcasting licences

On 1 May the ABA called for applications for seven commercial radio licences and, on 8 May, for 45 licences for open narrowcasting radio services to serve regional areas in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

The ABA will conduct two auctions in June to allocate licences which received more than one application. The first, in Sydney on 25 June, is for 10 open narrowcasting licences: Albury (1296 kHz), Berrigan, Deniliquin, Finley, Jerilderie, Moama, Mulwalla, Tocumwal and Wakool, NSW; and Shepparton, Victoria.

On 26 June in Brisbane, the ABA will auction licences for seven new commercial radio services in regional Queensland: one in Bundaberg, and two in each of Cairns, Mackay and Townsville; and four new open narrowcasting services: Bundaberg (two licences), Ingham and Maryborough.

The reserve price for each commercial radio licence is \$100 000 and for the open narrowcasting licences is \$4000.

The results of these auctions will be in the August issue of *ABA Update*.

Open narrowcasting licences

The ABA received only one application for open narrowcasting licences for Albury





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Many other large regional communities have adopted a similar approach and installed a self-help facility, rather than wait until the Government funds SBS transmission in their area.

The Bunbury City Council is looking for a suitable site near the city from which to operate its low power SBS transmitter. Once a suitable site has been determined, the Council will complete its planning work and will apply to the ABA for a licence to operate its own television transmitter to provide the local SBS service.

The SBS signal is now available on the satellite in Western time, so Bunbury viewers will be able to receive SBS in local time. Until recently, the SBS signal was only available on a small 'spot beam' aimed at Perth, and the programming was in Eastern time for viewers who used that signal for self-help transmissions. The Perth service was time-shifted in Perth.

ABA Deputy Chairman appears before Senate Legislation Committee

Mr Gareth Grainger, ABA Deputy Chairman, appeared before the Senate Environment,

Recreation, Communications and the Arts Legislation Committee on 11 June 1998 to answer questions concerning the recent High Court decision upholding Project Blue Sky's challenge of the Australian Content Standard.

Mr Grainger told the Committee that the ABA had commenced a review of the current standard. The process will follow a course of public consultation after the release of a discussion paper (expected at the end of June). Mr Grainger said the ABA would pursue a range of options in considering how the standard would be revised to include New Zealand.

In response to the suggestion that the ABA could somehow administer the rules differently to avoid the impact of New Zealand programs, Mr Grainger stated, 'What we will endeavour to do is to accommodate the finding of the High Court but, as far as possible within that interpretation, to achieve what we see as being other objectives of the Broadcasting Services Act, notably the requirements to promote Australian culture, character and identity'.

Though the current standard has been ruled unlawful by the High Court, it is still in force and will be until the review has been completed. The new standard is expected to be in place by 1 January 1999.

Any community interested in the self-help scheme for provision of SBS television services, should read the booklet, *Self-help Guide*, available from the ABA, tel: (02) 9334 7700.

Programs granted C or P classification

Programs granted C or P classification between 1 May and 4 June 1998. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact Liz Gilchrist, Manager, ABA Children's Television, on (02) 9334 7840.

<i>Program title</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Class.</i>	<i>New/renewal</i>	<i>Decision date</i>	<i>Applicant</i>
DREAM HORSE, THE	Norway	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
HERE'S HUMPHREY	Australia	P	new	29-5-98	Banksia Productions
KIMI AND THE WATERMELON	New Zealand	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
MARTIN'S SECRET	Czechoslovakia	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
MUSCLE BUSTLE	Korea	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
PINK SOFA, THE	Denmark	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
RESCUE TEAM, THE THE GLUE, THE TART & THE BIRDCAGE	Latvia	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children
SPORTS HIGH	Australia	PRC	new	1-5-98	Barron Television Ltd
TRANSFORMING MACHINE — CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY INVASION, THE	Poland	C	new	22-5-98	Festival of Television for Australian Children

C – children's program, CAD – C Australian drama, P – preschool, PRC – provisional C Class. – Classification