



The ABA allocates community radio broadcasting licences using a merit-based allocation process and after consulting with the people of the local community to seek their views on what additional broadcasting services were needed in their area.

New community radio licences

Albury

The ABA has allocated a new community radio licence for Albury, New South Wales. The licence was allocated to Vision Australia Foundation to operate a service on 101.7 MHz on the FM band.

The ABA invited applications for the new community radio licence in the local media on 27 February 1998 and received two applications. These were from Association for the Blind (now known as Vision Australia Foundation), targeting the print handicapped community, and Albury-Wodonga Christian Broadcasters, targeting the Christian community. When the ABA assessed the applications, it extended particular regard to whether the proposed services would meet existing and future needs within the Albury region.

The ABA awarded the licence to Vision Australia as the print-handicapped community, which makes up 10 per cent of the population, is currently poorly served. The ABA decided that Vision Australia had better established a need for its proposed service. The ABA decided the proposed Vision Australia service would meet the existing needs of the entire Albury licence area community to a greater extent than would Albury-

Wodonga Christian Broadcasters through its proposed service.

The proposed Vision Australia service will operate full time, and will reflect the range of needs and interests of the local print handicapped community. It will provide entertainment, information, book readings, magazine and newspaper readings, and some religious programming. It will include programming of relevance to the local community in Albury.

Existing services

The Albury area is currently served by the ABC and SBS national television services, and three commercial television services, VTV (WIN), GLV (TEN) and AMV (Prime). In addition to the ABC radio services 3ABCRN, 3MRR (regional), ABC Classic FM, and 3JJJ, there are three commercial services 2AAY, 2AY, 2BDR, one community radio service, 2REM, and a narrowcasting service NSW Race Narrowcasters Pty Limited (Racing).

On 16 December 1998 an additional narrowcasting service was allocated to Tatley Pty Ltd, which has not yet started providing a service.

Maryborough

The ABA has allocated a new community radio licence for Maryborough, Queensland.

The licence was allocated to Wide Bay Christian Broadcasters Association Incorporated to operate a service on 105.1 MHz on the FM band.

When the ABA invited applications for the new community radio licence in the local media on 7 December 1998, Wide Bay Christian Broadcasters was the only applicant. The ABA assessed the application and gave particular regard to whether the proposed service would meet existing and future needs in the Maryborough district.

The proposed service will operate full time, and will reflect the range of needs and interests of the local Christian community. While its focus will be on providing spiritual and inspirational programming it will also provide en-

tertainment, news and a range of information relevant to the general community.

Maryborough region

The Maryborough area is currently served by the national television services, ABC and SBS, and three commercial television services. In addition to the ABC radio services 4ABC FM, 4JJJ, 4ABCRR and 4ABC RN, there are two commercial radio services, 4MB and 4CEE. There is currently no community radio service operating except for the temporary community broadcasting service which Wide Bay Christian Broadcasters Assoc. has been providing since January 1998.

In the radio licence area plan for the Maryborough/ Hervey Bay region, which was released on 5 February 1998, the ABA determined that two community radio licences be made available to provide services in the area. One would serve Maryborough and Hervey Bay and the other would serve just Hervey Bay.

Allocation of the licence for Hervey Bay is still under consideration.

The licensees, Vision Australia and Wide Bay Christian Broadcasters Association Incorporated, have 12 months to get the new services up and running.