

## PEOPLE ARE WATCHING MORE TELEVISION

The average weekly time spent viewing television increased in 1992, according to figures released by the ABA.

The figures are contained in *Audiences and Programs in 1992*, the first in an occasional series of ABA papers on trends and issues in broadcasting.

'The first paper provides a review of audience measurement data for Australian television and radio in major metropolitan centres,' said ABA Chairman, Brian Johns. 'The ABA sees the paper as providing objective information about significant trends in viewing and listening habits of Australians.'

The paper highlights the following main points about television audiences and programs in 1992:

- the average weekly time spent viewing television increased everywhere, but children watched television less, except in Melbourne;

- a clear preference was demonstrated for news and current affairs programs - '60 Minutes' was the most popular regular program nationally;
- in each major metropolitan market, the four most popular regular programs were Australian;
- overseas programs dominated the television markets for children (5 to 12 years) and teenagers (13 to 17 years).

The paper highlights the following main points about radio audiences:

- the average weekly time spent listening to radio fell in 1992, most sharply in Sydney (55 minutes less) and Melbourne (46 minutes less);
- the longest average weekly listening time was in Adelaide (23 hours 22 minutes) while the shortest was in Brisbane (21 hours 21 minutes);

- the highest rating AM stations were most popular with the 40 plus age group;
- the highest rating FM stations were most popular with the 10 to 39 age group.

The television topics covered include average weekly time spent viewing, the ten most popular programs, station audience share and child and teenage viewing. The paper contains ratings information on C classified programs and the most popular programs for the child and teenage audiences.

Radio topics covered include average weekly time spent listening, program formats for commercial radio stations and audience share.

*Audiences and Programs in 1992* is published by the ABA, price \$5.00.

TABLE 1: AVERAGE WEEKLY TIME SPENT VIEWING 1991- 92

| 6AM - 12MN, MONDAY - SUNDAY |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------|
|                             | ALL PEOPLE | MEN               | WOMEN             | TEENS               | CHILDREN          | HOMES  |
|                             | HR:MIN     | 18+ YRS<br>HR:MIN | 18+ YRS<br>HR:MIN | 13-17 YRS<br>HR:MIN | 5-12YRS<br>HR:MIN | HR:MIN |
| <b>SYDNEY</b>               |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 22:06      | 21:12             | 24:34             | 19:49               | 18:26             | 39:27  |
| 1991                        | 21:32      | 20:24             | 24:07             | 19:23               | 18:40             | 39:10  |
| <b>MELBOURNE</b>            |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 22:11      | 21:56             | 24:57             | 17:33               | 17:38             | 39:08  |
| 1991                        | 20:52      | 20:41             | 23:43             | 16:11               | 16:42             | 38:18  |
| <b>BRISBANE</b>             |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 23:12      | 23:29             | 26:45             | 17:24               | 17:48             | 41:22  |
| 1991                        | 21:31      | 21:20             | 24:46             | 16:54               | 18:00             | 40:21  |
| <b>ADELAIDE</b>             |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 21:14      | 21:04             | 24:21             | 20:00               | 15:56             | 38:30  |
| 1991                        | 21:06      | 19:45             | 23:59             | 19:33               | 17:57             | 39:17  |
| <b>PERTH</b>                |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 22:09      | 22:16             | 24:52             | 18:46               | 17:29             | 39:54  |
| 1991                        | 20:57      | 20:38             | 23:18             | 19:27               | 17:31             | 39:41  |
| <b>AVERAGE</b>              |            |                   |                   |                     |                   |        |
| 1992                        | 22:10      | 21:59             | 25:05             | 18:42               | 17:27             | 39:40  |
| 1991                        | 21:12      | 20:34             | 23:58             | 17:39               | 17:46             | 39:21  |

Note: In 1991 the system for measuring television audience size was changed from a diary based system to people meters.

Source: Nielsen Media Research, Feb - Nov 1991 and Feb - Nov 1992.

**TABLE 2: RADIO LISTENING TABLE**

| 5.30AM - 12MN, MONDAY - SUNDAY |                |          |           |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------|-----------|
|                                | ALL PEOPLE 10+ | MEN 18+  | WOMEN 18+ |
|                                | HRS:MINS       | HRS:MINS | HRS:MINS  |
| <b>SYDNEY</b>                  |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 22:36          | 24:26    | 23:15     |
| 1991                           | 23:31          | 24:57    | 24:43     |
| <b>MELBOURNE</b>               |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 22:48          | 24:41    | 23:31     |
| 1991                           | 23:34          | 25:12    | 24:22     |
| <b>BRISBANE</b>                |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 21:21          | 23:36    | 21:26     |
| 1991                           | 20:58          | 23:05    | 21:07     |
| <b>ADELAIDE</b>                |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 23:22          | 24:44    | 24:23     |
| 1991                           | 23:58          | 25:01    | 25:21     |
| <b>PERTH</b>                   |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 22:27          | 24:26    | 23:03     |
| 1991                           | 22:32          | 24:28    | 22:33     |
| <b>NEWCASTLE</b>               |                |          |           |
| 1992                           | 21:52          | 23:35    | 22:24     |
| 1991                           | 21:39          | 23:54    | 22:40     |
| <b>CANBERRA</b>                |                |          |           |
| 1992*                          | -              | -        | -         |
| 1991                           | 20:42          | 22:25    | 21:19     |

*All calculations are based on the potential audience of each group or sub-group.*

*\* The 1992 figures for Canberra have not been included because only one survey was conducted during that year.*

## DROP IN THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS TO ABA

The number of complaints about commercial television to the ABA dropped by more than 40 per cent this year.

In the six months to June, the ABA received 930 complaints and comments about television programs, compared to 677 for the three months to the end of 1992.

The major categories of complaint were taste and decency on television (211), violence (108), program scheduling (88), news and current affairs in G time (76), sexism (74) and other (100) which included racism, the amount and sound level of advertisements, programs being unsuitable for children, 'live' sport not broadcast live and comments relevant to various standards.

Complaints about television made up 82 per cent of a total of 1139 complaints and comments received by the ABA during the six month period. Complaints about commercial radio comprised 15 per cent, and community radio less than three per cent.

'This is a pleasing trend which we'll be monitoring closely during the transition from standards to codes of practice for the broadcasting industry,' said ABA Chairman, Mr Brian Johns.

'Complaints are an important barometer of the industry's responsiveness to community standards, and they will help the ABA assess how well codes of practice are working.'

Under legislation passed last year all broadcasters are expected to develop self-regulatory codes of practice on pro-

gram content matters and how they handle complaints (see below).

Industry codes for commercial radio, endorsed by the ABA, were introduced in May. The commercial television industry code of practice will start operation on 5 September (see p.1 for further detail on the code).

### HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

The procedure for making complaints about radio and television programs has changed.

Until October last year, if you wanted to complain you contacted the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT). The ABT referred these complaints to television and radio stations to let them know what audiences thought of their programs.