

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFORMATION SERVICES

The ABA has opened up new business opportunities for low power information services throughout Australia by releasing five channels in the FM radio broadcasting band.

Low power services provide localised information such as tourist radio, parking advice for outside public events and commentary at sporting fixtures. Tourists and spectators can then tune-in on their radios for up-to-date details.

The ABA has received about 50 applications regarding low power services.

'The decision will allow many of these services to get up quickly, perhaps in time for the Christmas holidays', said Mr Brian Johns, ABA Chairman.

The channels have been released on an interim basis until 31 January 1994, when their allocation will be reviewed after the ABA's detailed planning of the FM radio bands.

The five channels in the 87.5-88 MHz part of the FM band (87.6, 87.7, 87.8, 87.9 and 88.0) are intended for use by transmitters with a coverage of less than two kilometres in urban areas (this restriction will be eased in rural areas to allow coverage of up to 10 kilometres because there is less chance of interference).

The channels are available for use in all parts of Australia, except where television programs are received on channel 3 (85-92 MHz), as interference problems could result.

The ABA is examining which channels can be made available in areas receiving a channel 3 television service and will make an announcement early in the new year.

Technical conditions (which are included below) which apply to the use of low power channels are available from the ABA: 'It will be up to operators to satisfy these conditions and avoid interference to other services. This will greatly simplify planning arrangements', Mr Johns said.

Localities where television programs are received on channel 3:

ACT
Canberra

SA
Renmark/
Loxton

NSW
Nyngan
Newcastle/Hunter River
Glen Innes
Eden
Wollongong

WA
Bunbury
Baandee
Kambalda

Tas
Nth/Eastern
Tasmania

Vic
Eildon

Qld
Darling Downs/
South Burnett
Townsville

The following technical conditions apply to low power services:

Emission characteristic: VHF-FM conforming with the Emission Standard for the Australian Frequency Modulation Sound Broadcasting Service

Channel frequencies: 87.6, 87.7, 87.8, 87.9, and 88.0 MHz.

Coverage radius: The received field strength, measured at a height of 10 metres above ground level is not to exceed 48 dBuV/m beyond two kilometres from the transmitter.

Height of antenna above ground to the electrical centre of the antenna: 10 metres maximum.

Effective radiated power: 1 watt maximum.

Special conditions:

1. Spurious emissions from the installation shall not exceed the limits specified in clause 2.4 of the Emission Standard for the Australian Frequency Modulation Sound Broadcasting Service. The installation of an output filter on the transmitter to reduce the power of the second harmonic to at least 90dB below the fundamental is strongly recommended.
2. The licensee shall correct all cases of interference to other radiocommunications services arising from the operation of this transmitter. This shall include correction of interference to radio and television reception. (See Note 1). Since services operating under these specifications are designed to be interference limited this condition does not apply to stations operating in conformance with the specification under special condition 4.
3. In rural areas the coverage radius restriction may be relaxed to a level which will result in a field strength of not greater than 48dBuV/m (measured at a height of 10 metres) at any location beyond 10 kilometres from the transmitter. The maximum effective radiated power of any transmitter established under these conditions shall not exceed 10 watts and the received signal in any area zoned residential shall not exceed 48dBuV/m measured at a height of 10 metres at any location more than two kilometres from the antenna.
4. Minimum co-channel separation for transmitters operated by the same licensee is not restricted. Minimum co-channel separation between different licensees shall be 10 kilometres.

