

NEW ABORIGINAL RADIO SERVICE FOR PORT AUGUSTA

The ABA has issued a transmitter licence to Umeewarra Aboriginal Media Association to serve the Port Augusta area of South Australia.

Umeewarra's licence is the first issued for the provision of an Aboriginal narrowcast service.

Umeewarra applied for a transmitter licence for an open narrowcasting service to provide traditional, cultural and educational programs to Aboriginal people including language, music, history, community news and interviews. The service will broadcast on 89.1 MHz from 6 am to midnight daily.

The licence has been issued from 1 April 1993 for a 12 month period.

'Since the Broadcasting Services Act came into effect in October 1992, narrowcasting has offered an avenue for increased diversity of services,' said Mr Tim O'Keefe, ABA member.

There have been over 190 transmitter licences issued for narrowcast services since December 1992. The majority have been for low powered tourist information services.

OPEN NARROWCASTING

The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* allows open narrowcasting services to operate under the class licence provisions. These class licences allow an operator to enter the market, providing they have a transmitter licence issued under

the Radiocommunications Act, or have secured some other methods of delivery outside the broadcasting services bands.

A transmitter licence allocates a particular frequency for the service but, unlike broadcasting services, a narrowcasting service has limited tenure on the frequency.

The Aboriginal communities at Port Augusta have been interested in obtaining a licence to broadcast Aboriginal programs since 1985. The Umeewarra Aboriginal Media Association, representing several communities, was formed in 1987.

Umeewarra lodged an expression of interest for an FM community radio station with the Department of Transport and Communications in March 1990. However under the Public Radio Plan, there was a long waiting list in dealing with applications for these kinds of licences and it was not scheduled for consideration until 1994.

The fact that Umeewarra is operating an open narrowcasting service does not preclude it from seeking a community broadcasting licence in the course of the ABA's planning process for new services.

The ABA has received over 550 submissions on the planning of new services and is intending to release a draft priorities report in late April.



ABA GRANTS NHULUNBUY FM RADIO SERVICE

The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) has granted a licence for Nhulunbuy's first community FM radio station.

The licence was granted for five years to East Arnhem Community Radio Incorporated (EAR) in Nhulunbuy, Northern Territory.

The new FM station will meet the needs of the local community by providing a wide range of music, local information, news and talkback.

During times of emergency, EAR will also provide information for the community. The importance of a local radio facility during emergencies, especially cyclones, was emphasised by EAR during the ABA's inquiry.

'I'd like to congratulate East Arnhem Community Radio on the work and commitment it's put into achieving a licence,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Deputy Chairman.

To satisfy the ABA, EAR had to demonstrate management, financial and technical capabilities, as well as the ability to provide a comprehensive and adequate service.

Members of the Nhulunbuy community also demonstrated they would be in a position to control the licence and participate in the operation and programming of the service.

These criteria no longer apply under the new *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, but were in force at the time the inquiry began.

The ABA's decision is explained in greater detail in its Nhulunbuy report available from the ABA on (02) 959 7811.

