

CURRENT STATE OF TELEVISION PLANNING

The ABA has released *Television Planning in Australia*, the final volume in a series on the current status of broadcast planning in Australia. The book sets out the current use and availability of channels for television services in individual markets throughout the country.

'Planning new television and radio services is one of the ABA's most crucial functions,' the Chairman of the ABA, Mr Brian Johns, said.

'These volumes provide an important reference point in the planning process and we will be inviting general submissions on them shortly.' (See below).

The planning reflected in this publication provides for six terrestrial television services throughout Australia. In some areas, five services are already available (three commercial, the ABC and the SBS).

Planning for the next generation of broadcast television services, which will be delivered using digital technology, will flow on from the existing plans. The ABA has already set aside the sixth channel, on a temporary basis, for the provision of national or community broadcasting services (see below).

Television Planning in Australia is Volume 6 in the series *Current State of Radio and Television Planning* and includes licence area maps and descriptions of the existing television markets throughout Australia. It covers national and commercial television in the capital cities and regional markets as well as the remote commercial television services. Volumes 1 to 5 in the series cover radio planning in the various states.

SIXTH CHANNEL

On 22 December 1992, the Minister for Transport and Communications directed the ABA to reserve the sixth channel as a high power national television channel for the provision of national or community broadcasting

services. The Government has encouraged the temporary use of these frequencies to allow educational and community groups to establish a case for permanent allocation. On this basis the ABA decided on 17 February 1993 to make the sixth television channel available, on an area by area basis, to providers of open narrowcasting television services for community and educational non-profit purposes.

THREE COMMERCIAL SERVICES

The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* prevents the ABA from allocating more than three commercial television licences in any area of Australia before a ministerial review of the television broadcasting industry, which must be completed before 1 July 1997.

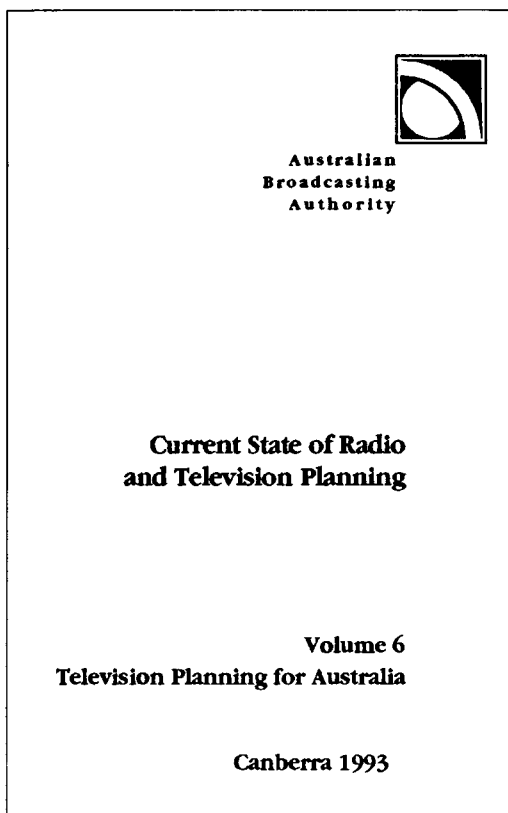
set out in Part 3 of the Broadcasting Services Act. The emphasis is on the efficient and effective allocation of the broadcasting bands to meet market and social needs. All of the stages of the planning process must be the subject of wide public consultation.

The Act provides for a three stage planning process. This process is central to the operation of the Act as channels cannot be made available for new services until the planning is completed. The three stages are:

- establishment of priorities for planning the provision of services;
- preparation of frequency allotment plans that determine the number of channels to be available in particular areas of Australia, to provide services that use the broadcasting services bands; and
- preparation of licence area plans which determine the number and characteristics, including technical parameters, of the broadcasting services that are to be available in particular areas.

An exposure draft of planning priorities will be released for public and industry comment at the end of April. The draft takes into account over 550 public submissions. At the same time, draft Frequency Allotment Plans for AM radio, FM radio and television will be released for public comment. The *Current State of Radio and Television Planning* series is an important reference point for comment on these plans and sets of the books have been supplied to libraries in most major centres of the country to allow for informed public input.

The complete six-volume set is available for purchase from the ABA Office in Canberra. They cost \$20 per volume, or \$100 for the six-volume set. Send cheques or money orders to ABA, P.O. Box 34, Belconnen, ACT, 2616 or for credit card orders, phone (02) 959 7811.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning functions of the ABA are

