

ABA LICENCES COMMUNITY TELEVISION IN ADELAIDE AND LISMORE

The ABA has licensed community access groups in Adelaide and Lismore to use the sixth high-powered television channel.

Transmitter licences have been issued to ACE TV (Adelaide Community and Educational TV Inc) and LINC TV (Lismore Informative Network Community Television Inc.), initially for a one year period.

The sixth channel (UHF Channel 31) has been released to providers of open narrowcasting services for community and educational non-profit use.

The ABA also announced it is making the sixth channel available in Adelaide and Lismore until 28 February 1996 and extending the availability of the sixth channel in Sydney and Melbourne from 28 February 1994 until 28 February 1996.

'We have extended the release period of the sixth channel because the ABA is conscious of the lead times needed for community access users to establish and prove themselves in terms of raising funding and meeting community needs,' said ABA Chairman, Mr Brian Johns.

Both ACE TV and LINC TV have satisfied the ABA that they will be accessible to individuals as well as community and educational groups. Recently SCAT TV (Student and Educational Community Television) - another Adelaide community television group - became a full member of ACE TV by agreement.

To safeguard access and community

participation in the sixth channel, the ABA assessed both ACE TV and LINC TV against the ABA's access statement (see below) which details the extent to which applicants should provide for new groups to take part.

The ABA cannot allocate permanent community television licences on the sixth channel before a ministerial review of the television broadcasting industry, which must be conducted by July 1997. Licences were issued in March 1993 to consortia of community access groups in Sydney and Melbourne.

COMMUNITY TELEVISION APPLICATIONS

Groups wishing to use the sixth channel, in areas which have not yet been licensed at this stage, must apply to the ABA for a radiocommunications transmitter licence.

Application forms for transmitter licences are available from Ms Ann Bourne, ABA Planning Division, (06) 256 2860

ACCESS STATEMENT

The ABA is committed to making available radiofrequency spectrum (the sixth channel) for allocation to providers of open narrowcasting services for community and educational non-profit use.

In exercising its discretion to issue transmitter licences to applicants propos-

ing to provide such services, the ABA will have regard to the extent to which the service will be accessible to individuals and relevant groups within the area to be served.

In considering the accessibility, the ABA will give consideration to the extent to which the applicant's constituting documents safeguard:

1. the level of openness or non-exclusivity in membership and membership policy
2. the existence and fairness of any grievance mechanisms relating to membership exclusions;
3. the equity of access for members to programming airtime and the existence of structures including a grievance mechanism, designed to allocate airtime fairly;
4. the flexibility of programming policy and format sufficient to allow new sources of programming to be incorporated, and;
5. the right of the community to take part in a range of activities involved in the operation and management of the service.

The ABA will further look to the constituting documents of the applicant (and any other material on which the applicant relies) for evidence of a consistency with the purposes for which the sixth channel has been made available, that is, community and educational non-profit use.



ABA MEETS NEW TEN GROUP CHAIRMAN

The ABA met with the new chairman of the Ten Group Limited (formerly Oltec Ltd), Mr John Studdy, in early May, to discuss ongoing issues about the company's Ten network licences.

Issues covered at the meeting included the role of the Ten Group Limited's independent chairman, the chairman's relationship with senior management, the requirements of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* and the nature of the ABA's involvement.

ABA Chairman Mr Brian Johns said the

ABA has a continuing role regarding the ownership and control of commercial broadcasting licences.

'This responsibility has meant we have been kept informed of any significant arrangements and have discussed issues arising, both during the lead-up to the purchase of the Ten licences and subsequently,' he said.

Mr Johns said the ABA had been keen to meet Mr Studdy as the Ten Group Limited's new chairman and before he faced major decisions at the network.



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