

applications for areas which currently have no low power information services, returning other applications for re-submission when self-regulation is implemented.

ASSESSMENT OF RESPONSES

Very clearly, in many cases, the low power open narrowcasting information service facility is being used to overcome a shortage of higher power narrowcasting channels pending initial completion of planning the broadcasting services bands. Many applications are for other than information services. Industry generally supports self-regulation, but under conditions which would limit the number of services which could operate in an area, to minimise the potential for interference between services. Many operators want to provide wide area coverage, and seem willing to use multiple low power transmitters to achieve it if necessary. These operators want to use what is, essentially, a talking 'billboard' to provide wide coverage services. Other arrangements are being put in place by the ABA to allow for wide coverage services. The basis for the ABA releasing the sub-band is on the premise that many operators can have quick access to spectrum for low power open narrowcasting local information services, within published guidelines.

Suggestions to increase transmitted

power and to increase the radius of protection for low power open narrowcasting information services would increase the power of these transmitters to a level where each application would need coordination to ensure that no interference occurs to other services, thus defeating the purpose of making the sub-band available on the basis of minimum intervention by the ABA or the SMA. In addition the proposed power increase, if accepted, would reduce the capability of the low power sub-band, 87.6-88.0 MHz, to provide localised information services as originally intended.

Some concerns were expressed about the difficulty of ensuring that low power open narrowcasting information services do not operate as defacto commercial or community radio broadcasting services. Any such trends would be handled under the appropriate provisions of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*.

Removal of the antenna height site restriction would provide licensees with significantly more flexibility to provide low power information services. The controlling factor is the signal level throughout a licence area and the field strength at the licence area boundary. This is specified for a low power information service that the signal strength must not exceed 48 dBuV/m at any point two kilometres from the transmit-

ting antenna. If necessary the transmitter power and/or antenna height have to be reduced so that the service complies with this boundary condition. It is recognised that the internationally accepted standard method of measuring the field strength at 10 metres height above the ground can be difficult, therefore consideration could be given to specifying the field strength measured at a more representative height, say 2 metres, but this would require an appropriate reduction in the specified field strength, at a distance of 2 kilometres, to make allowance for the reduced measuring height, to about 40 dBuV/m.

THE FUTURE FOR SELF REGULATION

The ABA now has considerable input to the proposal for self regulation of low power open narrowcasting information services and needs time to consider that input and review its self regulation proposal. It is expected that in this review the information received will lead to some form of self regulatory arrangement which is more suitable to industry in the longer term.

The ABA is currently examining these objectives with a view to making alternative licensing arrangements which would address the major concerns of submitters. The outcome of these considerations will be finalised as soon as possible.



PROGRAMS CLASSIFIED C AND P

The following table contains programs awarded C and P classification by the ABA between 1 January and 8 March 1994. Producers interested in submitting programs for classifications should contact Nigel Ryan on (02) 334 7840.

TITLE	ORIGIN	CLASSIFICATION	NEW/RENEWAL	DECISION DATE	APPLICANT
ANIMAL TRACKS	Aust/NZ	P	new	21.2.1994	Kids TV (NZ) Limited
LAMB CHOP'S PLAYALONG (Series 2)	USA	C	new	21.2.1994	Warner Bros (Aust) Pty Ltd
LAMB CHOP'S PLAYALONG (Series 2)	USA	P	new	21.2.1994	Warner Bros (Aust) Pty Ltd
SPELLBINDER	Aust/Poland	PRC	new	21.2.1994	Film Australia
TOTALLY WILD (Series 3)	Australia	C	new	8.3.1994	Network Ten