

■ technicians should be efficient, competent and professional in their work.

Expectations about fault repair were strongly influenced by the fact that consumers would pay for programs and channels. Participants generally expected a very high standard of service from pay TV companies.

Privacy

Discussion about privacy covered the compilation of lists and the distribution of those lists to other organisations about household viewing habits and other personal details. Direct marketing was seen as the main reason for compiling and distributing personal information.

Participants distinguished between the use of information by the pay TV provider who collected the information and the use of that information by other organisations. Generally, there were no objections to pay TV organisations using personal information to handle cus-

tomers accounts and to provide information about pay TV channels and associated services.

Most participants responded overwhelmingly against the distribution of personal details to other organisations for direct marketing purposes. However, some people saw benefits to distributing personal information for marketing purposes, saying it might be helpful to receive information that is relevant to personal tastes and interests.

Many participants agreed that options be given up-front at the time when an initial contract or agreement was signed and on the bill allowing consumers to change the option at a later time. In order to protect subscriber privacy, participants expected to be:

- fully informed about what personal information would be collected and how it would be used;
- given the option to indicate whether their personal information could be used by other organisations; and
- given the opportunity to indicate what type of information they want to receive.

Pay TV codes of practice

■ consumer issues covered by the codes of practice for pay TV are: subscriber rental options; fault repair; privacy; and credit management and billing.

■ the final draft of the pay TV codes of practice is being discussed by the ABA and the Confederation of Australian Subscription Television (CAST), following consideration of public submissions.

■ the ABA will only register the codes of practice when it is satisfied that: appropriate community safeguards are adequately covered; that the code has been endorsed by a majority of providers of pay TV services; and that the public has had the opportunity to comment.

■ the ABA conducts ongoing research which the industry must take into account when developing its codes.

■ a copy of the report on the Centennial Park research project has been provided to CAST.

■ consumer legislation relevant to pay TV subscriber issues is applied by the ABA and other regulatory organisations.

Consumer information

Consumer information was seen as an important aspect of the complaint handling and privacy processes. In fact, receiving comprehensive information about these matters was just as important as receiving information about the price, content and the channel classifications of pay TV services, at least initially.

Participants identified requirements for information covering privacy, fault repair and complaints procedures. These were that:

- the information be provided in written form. For example, an agreement, publication or advice on the television bill that could be easily referred to if needed; and
- information be given on-screen.

'The participants in this small study did not want pay TV operators passing on their personal information to other organisations without their permission', concluded Linda Sheldon, the ABA's research manager.

'The ABA's research indicated that the needs, views and expectations of consumers must be taken into account for the subscription television codes of practice to be a success.' □

Australia's first ever contemporary music summit was held at Parliament House in Canberra on 27 April 1995. Drawing together a broad range of artists, managers, producers, union officials, promoters, journalists, broadcasters and arts administrators, the summit discussed present and future issues affecting the contemporary music industry. Andrew Poole of the ABA's Standards section, reports.

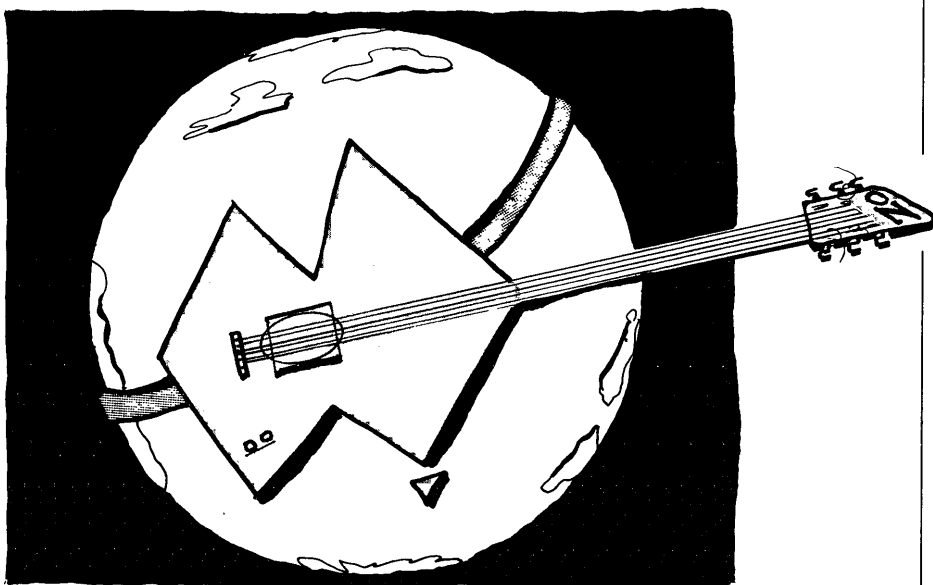
Australian music:

Michael Lee, Minister for Communications and the Arts, gave the opening address which raised many of the issues discussed at the summit, including the need:

- to address questions of copyright;
- for more new Australian music on radio;
- to see Australian performers be supporting acts for foreign tours;
- to ensure a fair return to artists and record companies from radio broadcasts of their recordings;
- to develop a national scheme for artist and repertoire development;
- to keep Australian recording studios open; and
- to meet the challenges of new communications technology which could change the way music product is distributed.

General concern for the health of the industry was expressed by a number of delegates. Keynote speaker, Mushroom records managing director, Michael Gudinski, said that new music is the basis of the industry and a quota should be introduced to ensure a higher representation of new music on radio.

A recording studio was set up in front of Parliament House to demonstrate that Australian artists use some of the most up-to-date music technology available in the world. Australian musicians performed in a variety of combinations and



no three legged dog

the signals were fed to the Internet. Interested spectators were 'pulling down' performances and songs from the Internet via modem linked computers.

During the summit four United States radio stations viewed the performances on the Internet and asked permission to re-broadcast the songs. This highlighted industry demands for copyright laws to be amended to cope with new technology. Jeremy Fabinyi, of the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society, called on the Government to implement the recommendations of the Copyright Convergence Group and create transmission rights and performance copyright.

Questions on the state of the music industry consumed much of the delegates' time. There was a perception that the industry is not as healthy as it had been in the 1980s. It was suggested that a combination of a decline in the standard and number of venues, lack of commitment to new Australian artists by the major record companies and commercial radio, and competition from other forms of entertainment such as video and computer games, had led to this situation.

In defence of commercial FM radio, 3MMM programmer Lee Simon said that his station broadcast more than 30 per

cent Australian content, yet only 10 per cent of music supplied to him by major record companies was Australian. The Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters Code of Practice requires contemporary hits, pop/rock and album oriented rock format stations to broadcast at least 25 per cent Australian music.

However, the perception that radio could do more remains. Michael Lee suggested that if the commercial broadcasters have not lifted their game with regard to new Australian music by the time the ABA completes the planning for radio in the capital cities, then the case for issuing youth format community radio licences will be greatly enhanced.

This music summit provided an all too rare opportunity for a broad cross-section of the music industry to meet and discuss issues affecting their industry, with the added bonus of receiving a sympathetic hearing from the Federal Government.

Despite the pessimism expressed by some at the Summit about the state of the industry, it is worth noting that so far this year three Australian albums have debuted at number one: *Hi Fi Way* by You Am I, *Frogstomp* by Silverchair and The Cruel Sea's *Three Legged Dog*. Now, that's got to be good news for Australian music. ☐

The Australian music code requires that either a proportion of the total time occupied in the broadcasting of music or a proportion of the total number of musical items broadcast shall consist of music items performed by Australians. The following report gives details of compliance with the code for the period 1 July - 31 December 1994.

Compliance with the Australian music code

Compliance with the Australian music content requirements of the Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters' Code of Practice has been high for the second half of 1994. Metropolitan stations recorded an average figure of 21.5 per cent Australian content. There are different content requirements for different formats (see over page).

Contemporary format stations averaged 28 per cent and adult contemporary or hits and memories format stations averaged 22 per cent. These are well above the 25 per cent and 15 per cent required for these formats by the code.

Stations operating in regional markets with a service area populations of fewer than 100 000 are required to broadcast at least 10 per cent Australian content. They recorded an average compliance figure of 25 per cent.

The Australian music code (Code 4) is monitored by the Australian Music Performance Committee (AMPCOM) which is made up of representatives of the music and radio industries. The ABA has observer status at AMPCOM meetings.

The code applies during the 'Australian Performance Period' (APP) - 126 hours between 6 a.m. and 12 midnight in any one week. The level of Australian content required depends on the station's program format. For example, a station with a hits and memories format is required to broadcast not less than 15 per cent Australian content whereas a ▶