



The licence area of the additional commercial television service will be the same as that for the varied MTN licence area, using 1991 census boundaries.

3. Channel capacity for a community television service will not be made available for allocation in Griffith and the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA). The decision to reserve channel 47 at Mt Bingar and 69 in Hay for a national/community television service, and the ABA's readiness to make those channels available for temporary use by community and educational television, should adequately address demand and any interest by potential community television services in Griffith and the MIA.

Licence allocation

Commercial licences will be available under a price-based allocation scheme, except where the existing commercial television operator provides the sole service of its type in the market.

As the ABA has also decided to make one licence for an additional commercial television service available in the area, MTN (the existing solus service provider) may apply to provide a second service for a limited period. The ABA can approve this (under s.73 of the Act), if it is satisfied that another person would be unlikely to be interested in, and in a position to, operate another commercial television broadcasting service in that market.

Extension of national services is primarily funded by the Australian Government. In areas where the Government has no immediate plans to extend a national service, the ABA will consider applications for re-transmission by local communities. ☐

The ABA proposes new licences for allocation in Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland, Western Australia.

ABA proposes to make new radio licences available in remote WA

The draft licence area plan for remote Western Australia contains proposals to make new commercial radio FM licences available for allocation in Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland, Western Australia.

'The ABA's public consultation has shown interest from existing commercial radio licensees in Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland in providing an additional radio service,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman.

The ABA also proposes making new FM community radio licences available for allocation at Carnarvon, Exmouth, Karratha and Port Hedland, and new AM community radio licences available for allocation at Fitzroy Crossing, Broome, Derby and Halls Creek.

So far industry has expressed little interest in providing additional commercial television services to the region, which currently has one service, Golden West Television. The ABA has invited potential service providers to submit proposals, such as aggregation of licence areas, which might result in a second service.

'The proposals will now undergo public comment and if confirmed will lay the groundwork for new broadcasting services for people living in this region,' said Mr Peter Webb.

'This is part of a national

planning process which will result in detailed blueprints for radio and television services Australia-wide. Planning services for remote WA has a high priority as there's only one commercial radio service in each radio market and one commercial television service in the region.'

Mr Webb said it was important to understand the ABA's role:

'The ABA's job is to identify vacant radio and television channels and decide the number and type of channels for new and

improved services. Then it's for business and the community to take up these opportunities,' he said.

The release of the plan follows extensive public consultation including public meetings in Carnarvon, Exmouth, Broome, Karratha, Port Hedland, Newman, Derby, Kununurra, Leonora and Meekatharra during February and March 1994. A call for written comment resulted in almost one hundred submissions, which the ABA has considered in preparing the draft plans. ▷

For copies of the LAPs

Both the LAP (Griffith/MIA) and the draft LAP (Remote WA) can be obtained from the ABA on free call 1800 810 241.

Griffith/MIA

Copies of the plan (which includes decisions, reasons and records of advice received) can be viewed in libraries in Griffith and the MIA.

Remote WA

Copies of the draft LAP for remote WA are available in local libraries throughout the remote WA region.

Submissions

Written submissions are invited and should be addressed to:

Planning Officer for Remote WA
ABA
PO Box 34
Belconnen, ACT 2616
Please quote file ref: 95/5179.

Submissions closing date:

31 October 1995



Main issues

The main constraint on the future development of broadcasting in the remote areas of Western Australia is likely to be the expense of providing additional services to isolated and relatively small communities. There are more than sufficient vacant channels available in the region to meet all immediately foreseeable demand for radio and television services.

The objects of the Act talk of the promotion of a diverse range of radio and television services offering entertainment, education and information (s.3(a)) and the encouragement of providers of commercial and community broadcasting services to be responsive to the need for a fair and accurate coverage of matters of public interest and for an appropriate coverage of matters of local significance (s.3(g)).

The ABA believes the objects of the Act would be best served by making two additional commercial radio licences available in the Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland markets.

If there are at least two additional commercial radio licences available for allocation in a market, an existing radio operator who is the sole provider of a commercial service in that market may apply for one of those licences, under the provisions of s.39 of the Act.

There is only one commercial radio operator in each of the commercial radio markets of Carnarvon (6LN), Karratha (6KA) and Port Hedland (6NW), and all of these licensees have expressed interest to the ABA in having an additional commercial radio broadcasting licence issued to them under s.39 of the Act.

The ABA proposes to make FM radio channels available for retransmission of the proposed Carnarvon commercial radio services at Exmouth, which is in the Carnarvon licence area. Similarly, it is proposed to make FM radio channels available for retransmission of the proposed Karratha radio services at Paraburdoo, Tom Price (both in the Karratha commercial radio licence area) and at a site 1km south of the Karratha township.

In the remote areas of Western Australia outside the Carnarvon, Karratha and Port Hedland commercial radio licence areas, the ABA proposes to make channel capacity available for terrestrial transmission of the new 6SAT satellite radio service.

In response to submissions expressing interest in community radio licences and considering the availability of the radiofrequency spectrum, the ABA proposes to make channels available for community radio services in Carnarvon, Exmouth, Karratha, Port Hedland, Fitzroy Crossing, Broome, Derby and Halls Creek.

Other issues

The ABA proposes to redefine the licence areas of 6LN Carnarvon, 6KA Karratha, 6NW and 6HCR Port Hedland, 6NEW Newman and 6WR Kununurra, using 1991 census descriptions rather than the present 1986 descriptions, but to otherwise leave the licence areas unchanged. The licence areas for the proposed new commercial radio services will be identical to those for the corresponding commercial radio services.

The planning process

The release of draft licence

area plans (LAPs) begins stage three of the planning process.

The first stage was completed in September 1993 with the release of the ABA's priorities for planning services across Australia. Stage two is also complete with the publication of the frequency allotment plan (FAP) in August 1994, setting out the number of radio and television channels in particular areas of Australia. With priorities set and the FAP in place, the ABA can now complete this third and final stage of the planning process, over the next two years.

Allocation of broadcasting services bands licences

With the exception of the capacity reserved for national and community broadcasters, other capacity set out in the LAP will generally be available for commercial licences, under a price-based allocation scheme. Capacity set out for community licences will be made available by means of a merit-based system. The ABA will begin the allocation process after a final LAP for each area has been determined.

Channels not immediately required for broadcasting services may be allocated for other purposes (such as open narrowcasting) for a fixed period determined by the ABA. At the end of that period, the spectrum will once again become available for mainstream broadcasting. ☐

Strong growth in advertising revenue for commercial radio

Advertising revenue for commercial radio was \$489.8M for the year ended 30 June 1995, an increase of 8.7 per cent compared with the previous year, according to figures released by the ABA.

These are the fourth in a series of unaudited biannual revenue figures for the commercial radio industry to be released by the ABA. Previously the ABA published quarterly revenue figures.

The ABA published audited annual financial results for the commercial television and radio industries for 1993-94 in the publication *Broadcasting Financial Results 1993-94* (139pp, \$60, tables on disc \$40), released in July 1995.

To see the results in detail, turn to page 13. ☐