

New associate member

Mr John Dickie has been appointed as a part-time associate member of the ABA by Mr Michael Lee, Minister for Communications and the Arts. Mr Dickie has been appointed under section 156(1)(a) of the *Broadcasting Service Act 1992* for the purposes of the investigation into the regulation of on-line information and entertainment services.

Mr Dickie is Chief Censor at the Office of Film and Literature Classification. His appointment relates to the Minister for Communications and the Arts' request that the ABA's investigation consider issues relating to the nature of the relationship between the nature of the material available and community standards and the protection of children. His expertise will also assist the ABA when considering issues relating to the measures to encourage or require community needs to be met.

As part of its investigation, the ABA will take account of the reports of the Broadband Services Expert Group, the Computer Bulletin Board Services Task Force, the Communications Futures Project and the Senate Select Committee on Community Standards.

For further discussion about the ABA's on-line services investigation, see Q&A, pp.10, 11.

industry which took no responsibility for content, especially problematic material which raises social and ethical questions.

Mr Webb said both the Commonwealth and State governments have made it clear they might introduce legislation designed to curb behaviour which constituted a criminal offence.

'On the other hand, the business community and individuals who value their right to freedom of expression will not accept controls that infringe on commerce or stifle individual creativity and self-expression,' Mr Webb said.

'A middle ground must be found in policy terms, and industry should do its part with government and the community to find it for Australia.'

He said the on-line industry needs to clearly define its many sectors, form industry associations to represent these participants and articulate a responsible industry attitude to the community.

'Competitors in the on-line service industries will have to find neutral ground upon which to meet and agree on policy questions,' he said.

Mr Webb said government will expect on-line service industries to do what industries like the commercial television and radio sectors have achieved.

'These sectors have worked together to define a competitive framework which respects community needs and concerns,' he said.

Pay TV drama guidelines

SYDNEY: The ABA has released its latest draft guidelines for new Australian drama on pay TV.

Each pay TV broadcasting licensee which provides a service predominantly devoted to drama programs, must ensure at least 10 per cent of annual program expenditure in relation to that service is spent on new Australian drama programs.

The ABA has defined a pay TV drama service as one which shows more than 50 per cent of drama programming annually. This includes services which show live action and animation techniques (like cartoons) for more than 50 per cent of their programming. Animation has always been recognised as drama by free-to-air television regulations.

'Parliament's aim when drafting the licence condition was to create new opportunities for the Australian drama production industry by providing jobs and developing creative Australian product for these new services,' said ABA Chairman, Mr Peter Webb.

The ABA will hold further discussions with



John Dickie

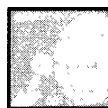


Broadbanders should take action

SYDNEY: Telecommunications, broadcasting and computing industry groups involved in developing on-line services should take action now on community and government concerns, according to Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman. Speaking at the Cable TV and Interactive Services Conference in Sydney, Mr Webb said,

'If industry takes an active role in resolving some of the possible problems raised by the content of on-line services, Government policy need not be interventionist. This result will probably have to be earned, rather than conferred.'

He said neither government nor the community would be likely to accept an on-line



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broadcasters and program makers on the new guidelines, which set out how the ABA will administer the 10 per cent requirement.

'The pay TV industry has changed significantly since we released the original guidelines in May last year. The operation of the pay TV business has become clearer and services are now up and running,' said Mr Webb.

'The new guidelines reflect these developments and should assist both pay TV operators and film and television producers. Services likely to be caught by the requirement would be those like Galaxy's Showtime and Optus Vision's Movie Greats channels.'

Where the format of a pay TV drama service does not easily accommodate showing new Australian drama, for example nostalgia formats, the guidelines allow operators to show the material on one of their other services.

At this stage it is too early to estimate how much will be spent on new Australian drama. The ABA will monitor the requirement for new Australian drama by way of annual returns from operators detailing expenditure.

The ABA intends to finalise the new guidelines in November. They should take effect towards the end of 1995.

ABA allocates pay TV licences to CFM TV

SYDNEY: The ABA has allocated one licence for a non-satellite pay TV broadcasting service to CFM Television Pty Ltd.

CFM says it intends to deliver its pay TV service via MDS (multipoint distribution system which transmits via microwaves) within a fifty kilometre radius of the central business district of Perth. The service will provide a variety of programs with a heavy emphasis on horse racing, greyhound racing and harness racing.

'The ABA examined the shareholding structure of the company and found it complied with the foreign ownership provisions of the Broadcasting Services Act,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman. 'In addition, the ABA found no reason to regard the company as being unsuitable to be allocated pay TV licences.'

CFM is 50 per cent owned by the WA Trotting Association and 50 per cent owned by CFM Technology Pty Ltd.

CFM currently operates a narrowcasting service in Perth as CFM Channel 12 which telecasts local greyhound, horse racing and trotting. This narrowcasting service is transmitted to 320 subscribers.

The ABA has now issued a total of 1076 non-satellite subscription television broadcasting licences, see adjoining table for details.

Planning visits

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: On 11 August, Mr Colin Knowles (General Manager ABA Planning and Corporate) and Jenny Brigg (Assistant Manager Implementation Policy), visited the Riverland region to meet with licensees and aspirant broadcasters to discuss planning issues that have emerged as a result of the release of the draft Riverland discussion paper and licence area plan in 1994.

During the visit, ABA representatives met with a group interested in establishing a community radio service, and were impressed with the enthusiasm of this emerging group and the strong support for community radio developing in the Riverland. The ABA sees this as an exciting new development as there is currently

Submissions

Submissions on the guidelines close on Monday, 23 October 1995.

Send submissions to:
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PO Box Q500
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For copies of the guidelines, call
Judy Cummings on
(02) 334 7848.

Non-satellite pay TV licences issued by ABA

Licence holder	No. of licences
Access Cable Television Ltd	110
Access Cable TV (Northern Rivers) Pty Ltd	4
Cable Television Services Pty Ltd	20
Central Coast Cablevision Pty Ltd	54
CFM Pty Ltd	1
Cosmovision Cable Television Pty Ltd	50
Cox Media Pty Limited	56
CVC Pay TV Pty Ltd	20
Dergat Pty Ltd	4
Explorer Channel Pty Ltd	1
Graft Pay-Per-View (Australia) Pty Ltd	10
Home Show Cable Australia Pty Ltd	20
Interactive Telecommunications Network Ltd	150
Multicorn Australia Pty Ltd	35
Neighborhood Cable Pty Ltd	72
NRS Group Pty Ltd	13
Oberon Broadcasters Pty Ltd	10
Pacific Media Telecommunications Pty Ltd	18
Paynet Telecommunications Pty Ltd	8
Planet Pay TV Pty Ltd	20
PPV TV Pty Ltd	20
Premier Cable Australia Pty Ltd	43
Prime Media Developments Pty Ltd	45
Private Cable Network Pty Ltd	102
Rowcom Holdings Pty Ltd	28
Selectra Pty Ltd	50
Star Vision Pty Ltd	50
Vinatech Pty Ltd	50
Visitor Publishing Group Pty Ltd	2
Wright Weller Rosenblum Pty Ltd	10
Total	1076