



# News Update

## ABA ties with Korean regulator

SYDNEY: The ABA formalised its relations with the Korean Broadcasting Commission (KBC) in the form of a Co-operation Agreement signed by the ABA's Chairman, Mr Peter Webb, and the KBC's Chairman, Mr Kim Chang-yul. The exchange took place during a visit by three KBC Commissioners in June.

Mr Bob Scott, Deputy Chairman of the ABA, said the Co-operation Agreement would contribute to information exchanged on broadcasting issues in a rapidly changing international communications environment.

Commissioner Kim Taek-Hwan, who led the KBC delegation, conveyed the KBC Chairman's pleasure that the KBC and the ABA had this opportunity to formalise their relations.

'The ABA is a leader in broadcasting regulation and we hope the KBC may benefit from the lessons learnt by a seasoned broadcasting regulator,' Mr Kim said.

The Co-operation Agreement aims to facilitate channels of communication between the ABA and the KBC and seeks to promote achievement of the objectives of the respective agencies.

In addition to Korea, the ABA has close working relations with broadcasting regulators in countries in Asia and the Pacific, North America and Europe.



Back row L to R: Mr Kyu Euk Chung, Mr Lee Jung-Suk, Mr Shin Jung-Hyu, Mr Gareth Grainger, Ms Pat Manser, Ms Phyllis Fong  
Front row L to R: Mr Bob Scott, Mr Kim Taek-Hwan

## International research forum newsletter

SYDNEY: The ABA has released the second edition of the newsletter, *International Research Forum on Television and Children*.

The International Research Forum (IRF) is an initiative of the ABA emerging from the World Summit on Television and Children held in

Melbourne in March 1995. The IRF provides an international forum for promoting awareness of the need for research into children and television, stimulating research as an aid to policy making, exchanging information, and encouraging collaboration on research in this area.

'The forum creates opportunities for communication and collaboration between researchers working on projects related to children and the media' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman.

Membership of the IRF continues to grow with more than 100 members from over 20 countries now involved. Countries represented include Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, United Kingdom, France, Sweden, South America, Russia and South Africa.

The second edition of the newsletter includes information about the 1998 World Summit on Television and Children, other relevant conferences and events, news on what's happening in the area of television and children around the world and recently completed and current research projects being conducted by IRF members.

Researchers interested in being part of the forum or subscribing to the newsletter should contact Mr Stephen Nugent, Research Manager, ABA phone (02) 334 7865.

The newsletter is now on-line at the ABA's Web site: <http://www.dca.gov.au/aba/hpcov>

## New Australian drama on pay TV

SYDNEY: Pay TV drama channels are set to spend 10 per cent of their program expenditure each year on new Australian drama programs, under new guidelines released by the ABA.

While each pay TV licensee is subject to a licence condition that 10 per cent of program expenditure on predominantly drama channels must be on new Australian drama programs, it is clear to the ABA that few, if any, pay TV licensees will themselves spend money directly on programming and the spirit of the licence condition could be easily avoided.

'In these circumstances, the ABA has decided to encourage voluntary expenditure on new Australian drama by those corporate entities in the industry who do purchase programming,' said ABA Chairman, Mr Peter Webb.

'The aim of the ABA is that pay TV broadcasters, or where appropriate, pay TV channel providers, act in a way which honours the spirit of the licence condition,' Mr Webb said. 'In this way, the development of the pay



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TV industry should lead to new opportunities for the Australian drama production industry.'

Experience with the operation of the pay TV industry, as well as extensive consultation with pay TV broadcasters, pay TV channel providers and the production industry, has informed the development of the new version of the guidelines.

'The pay TV industry's positive response to the new voluntary regime gives me every confidence that the aim of the condition will be met,' Mr Webb said.

The guidelines are intended as an interim measure pending the outcome of the Ministerial review of Australian content on pay TV, which is scheduled to be conducted prior to 1 July 1997.

## **ABA requirements**

The ABA will require proof by way of an auditor's statement concerning the calculation of program expenditure and the 10 per cent amount required to be spent. The ABA also requires detailed information in relation to each new Australian drama program on which money has been spent.

The voluntary compliance approach of the guidelines has been adopted as an interim measure, prior to the Ministerial review of Australian content on pay TV.

The ABA envisages that compliance information in relation to the condition and these guidelines will be a valuable input to the review.

## **Pay TV drama channels**

The ABA has defined a pay TV drama service as one which shows more than 50 per cent of drama programming annually. There are currently 13 predominantly drama pay TV channels being provided in Australia (see table, 'What's on subscription television?' on p.17 of this issue of *ABA Update*).

It is too early to estimate how much money will be spent on new Australian drama. The ABA will monitor the requirement for new Australian drama by way of annual expenditure statements from pay TV broadcasters and channel providers.

The licence condition requires expenditure on new Australian drama programs but does not explicitly require that the programs be broadcast. The ABA expects, however, that in most cases the Australian drama programs supported by the condition in practice will be broadcast on pay TV.

Some programs may end up being broadcast on a different predominantly drama pay TV channel to the one in relation to which the 10 per cent obligation was

generated. 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 the other pay TV drama services.

The ABA began its consultative process in September 1995 when it released a draft of the new guidelines for comment.

Throughout the ABA's consultative process, pay TV broadcasters and channel providers have been co-operative and have indicated their support for the voluntary scheme put forward by the ABA.

## **Discontinuation of bi-annual revenue returns for commercial radio**

SYDNEY: The ABA, in consultation with the Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters (FARB), has decided to terminate the collection of bi-annual revenue figures, from June 1996.

The ABA expects to continue releasing annual financial results in February or March of each year in the same format as the 1994-95 series. The ABA previously released bi-annual results, as the publication of the annual data took up to six months from collection date. The annual returns for 1994-95 were published within two months of the collection date (31 December 1995), obviating the need to continue releasing bi-annual results.

*Broadcasting Financial Results 1994-95* is available from the ABA (in disk format only), price \$100.

## **Community television for Bendigo and Hobart**

SYDNEY: The ABA has allocated temporary community television licences to Bendigo Community Television Inc. (BCTV) and Hobart Access Community Television Inc. (HACT).

Both BCTV and HACT are non-profit organisations who satisfy the criteria set out in the ABA's Access Statement and the general rules governing potential community broadcasters seeking access to a vacant channel. BCTV will broadcast on UHF channel 41 and HACT will broadcast on UHF channel 37.

The ABA has issued temporary licences in a number of areas for community television services using vacant high powered free-to-air television channels.

In many parts of Australia there is only one