



News Update

Sunshine Coasts' second major commercial radio station is switched on



L-r Robert Scott, ABA Deputy Chairman, Stan Willmott, executive director of SeaFM Limited and Nick Scott, general manager of Sunshine Coast Broadcasters, officially switch on 91.9 Sea FM on 21 June. This is the second major commercial radio station on the Sunshine Coast; it aims to target the under 40s age group in the area. Photo: *Sunshine Coast Daily*

New radio licences for Mandurah

SYDNEY: The ABA has finalised its licence area plan for radio in the Mandurah region of Western Australia. One channel has been made available for a new community radio service and another for an open narrowcasting service.

'The licence for a community radio service will not be available for allocation for at least two years. This will give existing aspirant groups time to consolidate and new aspirant groups the opportunity to emerge,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman.

The decision to make a channel available for an open narrowcasting service follows interest expressed by the TAB of Western Australia. The ABA is currently developing a system for issuing open narrowcasting licences and expects the licence for this service to be issued via an auction later this year.

In March this year, following a change to the broadcasting legislation, an additional commercial radio licence was issued to the licensee of 6MM Mandurah. It has 12 months to get its service up and running. The new service will operate on the FM radio band.

'Due to the absence of strong investor and community interest, the ABA decided there was

no point in making a licence available for a third commercial radio service in the market, as was proposed in the draft plan for the region,' Mr Webb said.

'The ABA's role is to identify vacant broadcasting channels and decide the number and type of new services and licences to make available for allocation. We cannot fund or make others fund new radio services.'

The ABA had two expressions of interest (from jmb Pty Ltd and SAT FM Pty Ltd) in providing a competing commercial radio service in the Mandurah market. Both groups have recently withdrawn their interest in the Mandurah market.

Details of the radio licence area plan for Mandurah will be available for viewing at the Mandurah Public Library, or can be obtained from the ABA by calling freecall 1 800 810 241.

ABA extends application period for Darwin and Mildura commercial television licences

SYDNEY: The ABA has extended the closing date for applications for new commercial television broadcasting licences in the Darwin and Mildura areas. The application period will now close on Friday 16 August 1996.

The ABA has decided to extend further the period for receiving applications following decisions by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). The commercial television licensees in the Darwin, Mildura and Griffith markets had sought reviews of the ABA's decisions not to grant them permission to operate second commercial television services in their respective licence areas.

In a decision handed down on 1 July 1996, the AAT upheld the ABA's decisions in relation to the Darwin and Mildura licensees, and set aside the ABA's decision in relation to the Griffith licensee. (see p.6)

'The ABA has extended the application period for the Darwin and Mildura commercial television licences to allow interested parties sufficient time to prepare and lodge applications,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman.

Companies interested in applying for the Darwin or Mildura licences must purchase an information package titled *Price-based Allocation of Commercial Broadcasting Licences* from the ABA. The cost of the package is \$50.

The information package explains how to apply for a licence and provides technical specifications of the services for which licences are available. The package also includes a copy of the Determination, under which the licences will be allocated, and other information relating to the licence areas of licences being offered.