



Sixth channel inquiry

SYDNEY: The ABA is pleased with the response to its *Inquiry into the future use of the sixth television channel issues paper* with more than 300 submissions received.

The issues paper has been available both on the Internet and in a print version since July 1996; and more than three hundred of the print versions have been distributed.

The ABA is looking at all proposals as it prepares the working paper, which is scheduled for release in early October.

Due to the complexity of the issues involved, the ABA met with individual groups and organisations interested in the spectrum prior to the 31 August deadline. The ABA found these meetings to be informative, especially as changing technology has made an impact on the potential use of the sixth channel since the *House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport, Communications and Infrastructure (HORSCOTCI) Inquiry into Possible Uses of the Sixth High Power Television Channel* concluded its report in September 1992.

The HORSCOTCI Report gave priority to educational use of the sixth channel. However, as educational interests were not ready to use the channel in capital cities, the Committee recommended the channel be used for community television on a trial basis.

The ABA will make known the options that emerge from the submissions as soon as possible so there is ample time to refine the implementation and regulatory aspects. There will be further consultation in October/November after the release of the Working Paper.

The ABA is scheduled to report its findings to the Minister by the end of February 1997.

New radio licences

SYDNEY: The ABA has allocated a second commercial radio licence to broadcasters in Cooma (NSW), Charleville (Qld) and Northam (WA).

The three licensees are:

- Radio Snowy Mountains Pty Ltd, owner of 2XL in Cooma, which will broadcast its new service 2SKI on FM 97.7 MHz in Cooma, with transmitters operating on 94.7 MHz at Jindabyne and 92.9 MHz at Thredbo.
- Pinecam Pty Ltd, licensee of commercial radio service 4VL Charleville. The new commercial radio service, 4CCC, will broadcast on FM 101.7 MHz from Charleville and FM 96.5 MHz at Cunnamulla.
- Radio 6AM Pty Ltd, owner of 6AM in

Northam, which will broadcast its new service 6NAM on FM 96.5 MHz in Northam.

The fee for each licence was \$10,000.

Licensees now have 12 months to get the new service up and running.

The ABA has already granted licences to commercial radio broadcasters in the following towns: Armidale, Bathurst, Bega, Dubbo, Goulburn, Griffith, Gunnedah, Inverell, Lithgow, Mudgee, Orange, Parkes, Taree and Young (NSW); Ballarat, Colac, Horsham, Mildura, Wangaratta (Vic); Charters Towers, Emerald, Gympie, Innisfail, Longreach, Nambour, Roma (Qld); Mt Gambier (SA); Albany, Carnarvon, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Mandurah, Merredin, Port Hedland (WA); Queenstown (Tas) and Darwin (NT).

Three services have commenced:

- Mildura, Radio 3MDA Pty Ltd on 99.5FM;
- Radio Ballarat Pty Ltd, BBA FM on 103.13; and
- Sunshine Coast Broadcasters on 91.9 Sea FM.

Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy 'Winter School'

BRISBANE: The Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy held its inaugural Graduate Winter School in July.

The main topics for discussion were current issues in regulation of the Internet, media policy, indigenous cultural policy, citizenship and museums. The speakers included policy practitioners and academics with delegates coming from institutions across Australia and representing a range of disciplines.

The ABA's Mr Gareth Grainger, General Manager Policy and Programs, and Ms Kaaren Koomen, Manager On-line Services Investigation were included on the panel to discuss 'Regulation of the Internet'.

The Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy was established in July 1995 under the Australian Research Council's Research Centres Program. The Centre provides a national program of teaching and research in cultural and media policy. Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology and the University of Queensland all participate in the Centre, which is located at Griffith University.

To ensure the Centre's work is aligned with the needs of government, industry, academic and community groups the Centre's National Advisory Committee includes representatives from each of these sectors. Mr Grainger is a member of the committee.

The Centre also provides consultancy services on a wide range of cultural and media policy questions.



Further information on the inquiry may be obtained from Phyllis Fong, ABA Manager, Policy Section on (02) 9334 7700.