



The ABA has finalised licence area plans which will provide several commercial, community and open narrowcast services in regional Western Australia and the remote areas of Central and Eastern Australia.

frequencies in different areas, although in the case of the capital city stations, the main stations have been assigned UHF channel 31 in much the same way as SBS has been assigned UHF channel 28 in these cities.

Comments

The ABA invites comments from all interested parties, particularly in response to issues raised in the working paper.

Comments from interested parties should reach the ABA by 5 p.m. Friday 6 December 1996. These may be sent by e-mail to 6thchannel@aba.gov.au, on disk or in writing (six copies), to The Manager, Sixth Channel Inquiry, Australian Broadcasting Authority, PO Box Q500, QVB Post Office, NSW 1230, or faxed to (02) 9334 7799.

Unless specified as confidential, all comments will be made available at the ABA's offices and the Spectrum Management Agency's offices in the Northern Territory and other States.

The *Inquiry into the future Use of the Sixth Channel Working Paper* may be obtained by calling Delphine Mathew on (02) 9334 7830 or on freecall 1800 226 667. The working paper is available on the ABA's Web site: <http://www.dca.gov.au/aba/6chwork.html>. Copies are also available from the ABA's offices in Sydney and Canberra, and offices of the Spectrum Management Agency in other States and the Northern Territory.

Licence area plans for WA Goldfields and Central and Eastern remote regions

The ABA has made channels available for community and open narrowcast radio broadcasting services in the Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Merredin areas of Western Australia, as well as community, open narrowcast and commercial radio broadcasting services in the remote areas of Central and Eastern Australia which are served by satellite transmission.

The ABA's decisions are contained in its radio licence area plans (LAPs) for radio in Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Merredin; and remote Central and Eastern Australia.

The plans do not include television services. Plans for television services in all these areas are expected to be released later this year.

Main issues - Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Merredin areas of Western Australia

Community

Channels for two community FM radio services will be made available in Kalgoorlie. These

services will operate from the nominal transmitter site at Peters Hill. One service will have a maximum ERP of 6 kW on the frequency 96.3 MHz and the other will have a maximum ERP of 1 kW on the frequency 99.5 MHz. The licence for the higher powered service will be made available for allocation immediately, and the other not earlier than one year after determination of the Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Merredin radio LAP.

A channel for one community FM radio service will be made available in Esperance. This service will operate from the nominal transmitter site at Wireless Hill with a maximum ERP of 5 kW on the frequency 103.9 MHz.

A channel for one community FM radio service will be made available in Bruce Rock. This service will operate from the nominal transmitter site at Bruce Rock with a maximum ERP of 2 kW on the frequency 100.9 MHz.

Interest in providing community radio has been expressed by Radio for the Print

Handicapped (Esperance and Kalgoorlie), Bruce Rock Community Radio Group (Bruce Rock), and Kalgoorlie College (Kalgoorlie). Additionally, steering committees for Christian Community Radio have been established at Esperance and Kalgoorlie and interest has been expressed for community radio at Kalgoorlie by Pirrya Wangkanyi Aboriginal Radio.

Open narrowcasting

Channel capacity will continue to be made available in Kalgoorlie for the existing local coverage open narrowcasting service on FM frequency 88 MHz with an ERP of 1 watt from Goldfields Museum until 7 September 1997.

Subject to clearance in accordance with Australia's obligations to neighbouring countries, the ABA will make available a high power AM channel available for a new open narrowcasting service at Kalgoorlie on frequency 1431 kHz with a CMF of 445 V.

The ABA will make available one wide coverage



FM channel for an extended period for a new open narrowcasting service to serve Esperance from a transmitter site at Wireless Hill on frequency 89.5 MHz with a maximum ERP of 5 kW.

The ABA will make available five limited coverage FM channels for an extended period for new open narrowcasting services, as follows:

- one to serve Hopetoun from a nominal transmitter site 0.5km NW of Hopetoun on frequency 97.3 MHz and at a maximum ERP of 25W, one at Lake Grace from a nominal transmitter site at Lake Grace on frequency 102.9 MHz at a maximum ERP of 50W;
- one at Merredin from a nominal transmitter site at Bates Street Merredin on frequency 95.9 MHz at a maximum ERP of 50W;
- one at Ravensthorpe from a nominal transmitter site 100m south of Ravensthorpe Hospital on frequency 93.1 MHz at a maximum ERP of 50W; and
- one at Southern Cross from a transmitter site at Antares Street, Southern Cross on frequency 88.7 MHz at maximum ERP of 50W.

All these frequencies will be made available under s.34 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, for a minimum period of five years and the providers will be determined by use of a price-based allocation system under s.106 of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*.

The Totalisator Agency Board has expressed interest in providing open narrowcasting radio services at Esperance, Hopetoun, Kalgoorlie, Lake Grace, Merredin, Ravensthorpe and Southern Cross. Other bidders may emerge when the licences are auctioned.

Commercial

No additional (i.e. third) commercial FM radio broadcasting services will be made available for allocation in the Esperance, Kalgoorlie or Merredin licence areas. The licence areas of the existing commercial radio services 6SE, 6SEA, 6KG, 6KAR, 6MD and 6MER will be redefined against 1991 Census boundaries.

National services

The ABA has also made channels available for new national radio services in Condingup/Howick, Lake Grace and Narembeen.

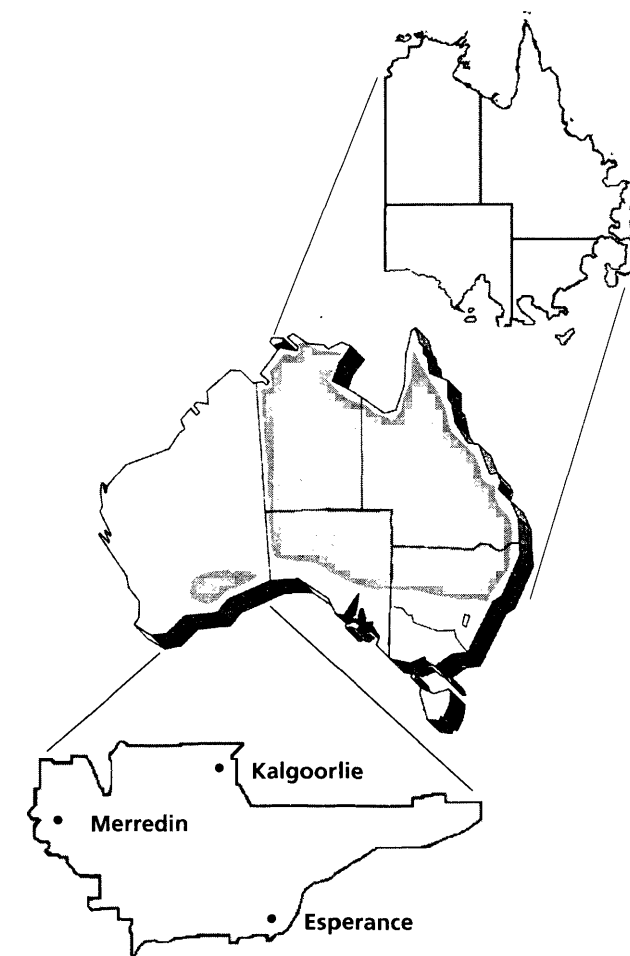
Extension of national services is primarily funded by the Australian Government. In areas where the Government has no immediate plans to extend a national service, the ABA will consider applications for re-transmission by local communities.

Main issues - remote Central and Eastern Australia

Commercial radio

The ABA's decision not to plan for additional competing commercial radio services for the remote regions of remote Central and Eastern Australia is a result of the lack of entrepreneurial interest and the fact that the existing licensees of 8SAT and 4SUN for each of the respective remote areas are in the establishment phase of providing their services.

The ABA has made channels available for transmission of the 8SAT service at Bourke (NSW); Apollo Bay, Marysville, Mt St Leonard (Vic); Bordertown, Ceduna/Smoky Bay, Coober Pedy, Fairview, Kapunda, Keith, Kingscote, Kingston SE, Lameroo,



Pinnaroo, Port Vincent, Roxby Downs, Streaky Bay, The Gap, Woomera, Yorketown (SA); Groote Eylandt, Jabiru, Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek (NT); and Lord Howe Island.

The ABA has made channels available for transmission of the 4SUN service at Bourke, Comboyne, Coolah, Coonamble, Nyngan, Tenterfield, Warrumbungle and Wilcannia (NSW); and Alpha, Banana, Burrum Heads, Chinchilla, Collinsville, Cooktown, Dirranbandi, Gin Gin, Julia Creek, Karumba, Kilcoy, Meandarra, Miles, Monto, Normanton, Rathdowney, Richmond, Tara, Taroom, Thursday Island, Wandoan, Weipa and Yelarbon (Qld).

Community radio

Borrooloola was identified for

a new community radio service in the draft LAP released in February 1996. A representative of the aspirant community radio group recently indicated to the ABA that the group was still in the developmental stages and it would be unlikely to be in a position to provide a full time community radio service until 1997. For this reason, the ABA has decided to make a licence available at a date no earlier than 12 months from when the licence area plan has been determined.

Open narrowcasting

Channels have been made available for open narrow-casting series at Balranald (NSW), Alpha and Birdsville (Qld) and Coober Pedy (SA).