



## **Renewal of Sydney community television licence**

SYDNEY: The ABA has renewed the licence held by Community Television Sydney Ltd (CTS) until midnight, Tuesday 7 May 1996. During the next few weeks, CTS will have to show cause why the licence should be renewed for a longer period.

This step has been taken because there are serious questions about whether the licence should be renewed at all given unresolved issues arising from the contractual relationship between parties involved in providing the CTS service (CTS and Filmpot Pty Ltd/SPN TV).

'Given the gravity of a decision to not renew the licence, we're concerned that CTS and any other affected party should be given reasonable opportunity to respond to the issues we have identified,' said Mr Peter Webb, ABA Chairman.

'CTS must provide clear evidence to the ABA that it is able to provide and maintain community and educational television services in accord with its licence conditions and with other relevant laws if it wants its licence renewed again,' said Mr Webb.

If the licence is not renewed, the ABA would consider whether it should issue a new licence.

'This would involve an assessment of the merits of any community-accessible non-profit organisations willing and able to provide

community and educational television services that may apply for the licence,' said Mr Webb.

When the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* took effect a new service category — community television — was defined for the first time.

However, community television licences using the broadcasting services bands cannot be allocated until a decision is made on the use of the sixth high power television channel. The Act contains no specific provision for temporary licensing of community broadcasting.

To give effect to the trial of CTV, the ABA has created a temporary licensing regime using the provisions of the Act for making spectrum (channels) available on a

temporary basis, and allowing services to operate for community and educational purposes under the open narrowcast television 'class licence'.

Aspirant community television broadcasters have access to the sixth channel under a temporary licensing scheme by which the ABA issues a single apparatus licence to a representative non-profit community organisation in each television licence area to be served.

To receive an apparatus licence, an applicant organisation must satisfy the ABA it could meet the definition of a community broadcasting service as outlined at section 15 of the Act.

An applicant must also satisfy the ABA that it is legally constituted and governed in such a manner as to ensure fair access to decision making processes and allocation of air time. The ABA has promulgated a set of allocation criteria (referred to as an access statement) which it uses when assessing compliance with the licensing requirements. ABA practice has been to issue licences for a year at a time. The relevant spectrum is presently available until 30 June 1997 on an area-by-area basis.

It is a special condition on the licence that it can only be used to provide an open narrowcasting television service for community and educational non-profit purposes.

The ABA is responsible for making the spectrum available, administering program standards and deciding issues relating to community access to the CTS service. The ABA has the power, delegated to it by the Spectrum Management Agency, to issue, renew, suspend and cancel transmitter licences.

## **Community TV in Mildura and Darwin**

SYDNEY: The ABA has decided to make two community radio licences available in Darwin and two in Mildura. It has received three applications for the Darwin licences and two applications for the Mildura licences.

'These will be the first applications for new community radio broadcasting licences to be assessed under the ABA's new merit based allocation system,' said ABA Chairman Mr Peter Webb.

The ABA called for comment on the licence applications. The period for comment closed on 12 April 1996.

Free-to-air community broadcasting service licences are allocated on the basis of merit. Where there is only one applicant, the ABA only has to decide if that applicant merits a licence.

**The ABA has released its regular publication, *Radio and Television Broadcasting Stations 1996*, which gives transmission details of all Australian national, commercial, community and retransmission (or self-help) broadcasting services as at January 1996. Other class licensed, open narrowcasting services (such as tourist information services) are not included.**

**The listings are ordered by callsign, by frequency or channel, and by area served. Information shown for each service also includes transmitter location and radiated power. A general information section includes a brief summary of transmission standards for MF AM Radio, VHF FM Radio and Television, as well as a table of TV channel frequencies.**

**Available for purchase from the ABA ph: (02) 334 7700, or Commonwealth Government bookstores, price \$40.**



# News Update

When there is more than one applicant, the ABA may also have to choose on the basis of comparative merit. Alternatively, applicants can combine to present a unified application.

'Allocation of new community broadcasting licences has begun in Mildura and Darwin because the ABA's public planning process, which is complete for both areas, identified demand for new community services,' said Mr Webb.

## Copies of applications

Copies of the applications are available in local libraries: Darwin (Northern Territory Library, Parliament House, Darwin; Batchelor College Library, Batchelor) and Mildura/Sunraysia (Carnegie Library, Mildura; Dareton Library, Dareton; and Robinvale Resource Centre, Robinvale).

Applications for the Darwin licences were received from: Darwin Christian Broadcasters Association Inc., Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (Aboriginal Corporation) (TEABBA), and Larrakia Association Inc. All three groups have applied for both licences.

Applications for the Mildura/Sunraysia licences were received from: Association for the Blind Ltd, and CARNMA Trading (Aboriginal Corporation). Both groups have applied for both licences.

## Community TV trial for Bendigo?

SYDNEY: The ABA is proposing to make a television channel temporarily available for a trial of community and educational television in Bendigo.

This follows a licence application from the non-profit community broadcasting organisation, Bendigo Community Television Inc. (BCTV).

'Because the ABA can make only one channel available for temporary community television purposes in each area, the licensee must be set up and governed as a representative organisation committed to providing access to the whole community,' said Mr Nick Herd, ABA Program Services Director.

'In this way, the wider community can gain access to the management and operation of the station, and become involved in the provision of programming.'

The ABA will consider making channel UHF 41 in the Bendigo area temporarily available until the end of June 1997, on the condition the service provided is for community and educational, non-profit purposes only.

## New commercial radio licences

SYDNEY: The ABA granted a second commercial radio licence to broadcasters in Mudgee, Parkes, Griffith and Dubbo (NSW) and Wangaratta (Vic).

The five licensees are:

- Western Broadcasters Pty Limited, owner of 2DU, which will broadcast its new service 2ZOO on FM 92.7 MHz in Dubbo and FM 103.7 MHz in Cobar;
- Radio 2RG Pty Limited, owner of 2RG, which will broadcast its new service 2RGF on FM 99.7 MHz;
- Mudgee Broadcasting Company Pty Ltd, owner of 2MG, which will broadcast its new service 2GEE on FM 93.1 MHz in Mudgee;
- Parkes Broadcasting Company Pty Ltd, owner of 2PK in Parkes, which will broadcast its new service 2ROK on FM 95.5 MHz in Parkes and FM 90.5 MHz in Condobolin;
- North East Broadcasters Ltd, owner of 3NE, which will broadcast its new service 3NNN on FM 102.1 MHz in Wangaratta.

'These new FM licences should result in a distinctly different service in each market. The services will cover the same area as the existing

## Programs granted C or P classification

*Programs granted C or P classification between 11 March 1996 and 31 March 1996. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact Liz Gilchrist on (02) 334 7840.*

Title	Origin	Clas.	New/renewal	Decision date	Applicant
JACK HANNA'S ANIMAL ADVENTURES (Series 2)	USA	C	new	28.3.96	Effie Holdings Pty Ltd
THE ADVENTURES OF THE BUSH PATROL	Australia	PRC	new	29.3.96	RosenbaumWhitbread Film and Television Productions Pty Ltd
THE SILVER BRUMBY	Australia	CAD	new	11.3.96	Media World Features Pty Ltd

C - children's program      CAD - C Australian drama      P - preschool program