



The ABA has released the licence area plan for television services in the Mount Gambier/South East region of South Australia.

# No new commercial TV service for Mount Gambier

The licence area plan for television in the Mount Gambier/South East region reserves channels for ABC, SBS and national/community television services, but no channel has been made available for an additional commercial television service due to lack of interest in providing such a service.

'Channels haven't been made available for further commercial television services as there is insufficient entrepreneurial interest. This follows withdrawal of interest expressed by a number of parties, including confirmation that the incumbent licensee, SES, is not interested in providing an additional commercial television service in the area,' Mr Webb said.

The ABA will look at radio in the Mount Gambier/South East region when it begins its licence area planning for radio in the Mount Gambier/South East region, scheduled to take place in 1997.

## Television priority

Planning for television in the Mount Gambier/South East region was given a high priority as the area receives few television services, compared to the more populated areas of Australia.

Mr Webb said it was important for people to understand the emergence of new services depends on the market: 'New commercial services will only appear if a business operator decides to make a go of it. The ABA cannot fund or compel others to fund new broadcasting services.'

'ABC and SBS funding decisions are made by Government. In areas where the Government has no immediate plans to extend these services, the ABA will consider applications for retransmission by local communities.'

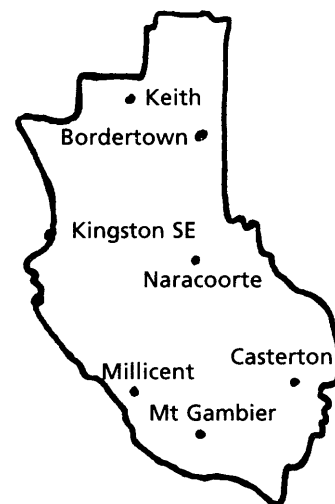
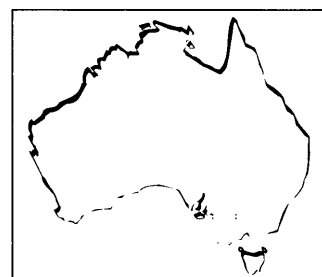
He added that: 'Improvements to the ABC TV service operating from Mt Burr were

carried out prior to release of the plan, and a local retransmission service for ABC TV at Naracoorte is already operating.'

## Interest in providing services

The following parties initially expressed interest in providing new commercial television services in the Mount Gambier/South East region: the existing television operator in the region, SES; Telcasters Australia Limited (TEN Queensland); Sunshine Broadcasting Network Ltd; Southern TV Corporation Pty Ltd; WIN TV Network; and Regional TV Corporation Pty Ltd. However, they all subsequently withdrew their expressions of interest.

A news release circulated in March 1996 announced the ABA's intention to revise its preliminary view that an additional commercial television service would be made available in the Mount Gambier/South East region, unless strong entrepreneurial interest in providing such a service was expressed. The ABA received no further expressions of interest to provide an additional commercial television service in the region, and subsequently made the decision not to make an additional commercial television service available for allocation in the Mount Gambier/South East region.



## Options

The ABA will consider options as they arise for improving commercial television services in the region, including:

- reviewing the licence area plan for television services in the Mount Gambier/South East region if strong entrepreneurial interest in providing second services emerges in the future; and
- providing channels for commercial licensees that operate outside the region licence area for retransmission of their services into the region.

### Where to see the licence area plan

Copies of the plan can be viewed at the Mount Gambier Public Library, Mary Lattan Memorial Library (Port MacDonnell), Nangwarry Community Library Nangwarry Primary School, Kalangadoo Primary School, Penola Community Library, Naracoorte Public Library, Millicent Public Library, Keith Community Library, Casterton Community Library and Bordertown Public Library.

Copies of the licence area plan are available from the ABA, telephone Freecall 1 800 810 241.