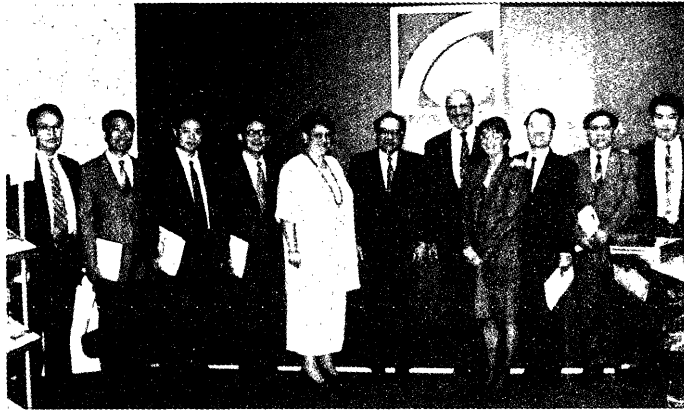


His Excellency Mr Ding Guangen, People's Republic of China

The ABA was pleased to welcome His Excellency Mr Ding Guangen, Member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party, for talks on 23 April. Mr Ding was accompanied by a delegation comprising representatives covering a number of areas including culture, information and foreign affairs. Australian officials from the departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Communications and the Arts were also present.

Mr Ding and members of his delegation were particularly interested in broadcasting regulation in Australia and in the transition to a self-regulatory regime. While broadcasting and print media in China are still largely controlled by the Government, Mr Ding noted that there is gradually more open competition in these sectors. He welcomed the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the role and functions of the ABA and more specific issues such as licensing of broadcasting services.

Centre: His excellency Mr Ding Guangen flanked by ABA members and staff, and by members of the Chinese delegation.



Beijing Television

ABA staff met with a delegation of five representatives from Beijing Television, including the President Mr Liu, on 2 April. The meeting was arranged by the China Trade Exhibition Centre.

Beijing Television (BTV) is the largest commercial television station in China, serving an audience of more than twenty million. BTV has established cooperative arrangements with broadcasting organisations from more than fifty countries and it has arrangements with a number of these organisations to broadcast their programs. BTV also purchases broadcast material from abroad and co-produces programs with foreign companies.

BTV is currently looking into the possibilities for program exchange with Australian broadcasters and cooperative arrangements for program production. The delegation was particularly interested in the broadcasting regulations in Australia which would apply to any such arrangements.

Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications, South Africa

The South African Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications visited the ABA on 1 May. The visit was part of the Committee's study of the regulation and deregulation of broadcasting and telecommunications before issuing any commentary in South Africa on the Independent Broadcasting Authority

(IBA) Report on Broadcasting and Private Television.

The nine-member Committee led by Mr Sam Moeti MP, was in Australia from 27 April to 5 May, and attended meetings in Canberra with officers from the Department of Communications and the Arts and in Sydney the staff of the ABC and SBS, as well as the ABA.

The ABA also hosted the Committee's discussions with Victoria Rubensohn from Omni Media, Peter Leonard from Gilbert and Tobin Solicitors and Sue Ferguson from the Communications Law Centre. The exchange provided valuable insight into broadcasting both in Australia and South Africa. The Committee also noted that the ABA has developed strong links with South Africa through staff exchanges with the IBA and by hosting officers from the South African Broadcasting Corporation. At the meeting with ABA members and staff were Ms M Maree, First Secretary, South African High Commission; Mr P Coetzer; Mr P Bikitsha; Dr P Mulder; Mr M Mashisane, Committee Clerk; Mr S Moeti; Ms P Sekgobelo; Mr B Vilakaz; Ms N Mtsweni and Ms M Verwoerd.



Members of the Committee meeting ABA members and staff.