



# News Update

Mr Williams said that, 'While the Government is confident that a self-regulatory approach is appropriate for the on-line industry, we will ensure that there are safeguards to deal with matters of serious public concern and flagrant breaches of codes or relevant laws within Australia'.

The Government would also seek international cooperation on content labelling techniques and codes of practice.

The proposed regulatory scheme for on-line service providers will be implemented through amendments to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*. Principles for the amendments are available for public comment at the Department of Communications and the Arts' website <http://www.dca.gov.au/govtpol.html> or by calling the Department's free call number 1800 656 637.

Comments on the principles for Commonwealth legislation can be lodged with the Department by 8 August 1997 by mail:

Assistant Secretary  
On-line Industry and Communications  
Technology Branch  
Department of Communications and the Arts  
GPO Box 2154, Canberra ACT 2601  
or e-mail: [online@dca.gov.au](mailto:online@dca.gov.au)

All comments received will be publicly available unless confidentiality is expressly sought.

A further opportunity for comment will be provided through an 'exposure draft' of amendments to the *Broadcasting Services Act* which will be released before it is introduced into Parliament later this year.

## ABA meets with World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

SYDNEY: Jim Miller of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) met with the ABA and

representatives of the Office of Film and Literature (OFLC), Phillips Fox and Internet Industry Association of Australia (intiaa), and the Department of Communications and the Arts at the ABA's Sydney offices on 10 July. This was the second time Jim Miller had met with the ABA.

Discussed at the meeting was the recent decision against the Communications Decency Act (CDA) in the USA. The CDA was struck down by the USA Supreme Court on 26 June 1997. The court ruled that the Internet is protected by the First Amendment, and that the CDA was a violation of freedom of speech.

Discussion also focused on developments with Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS), filter software labelling systems based on PICS and developments in content labelling in the USA and Europe.

By using PICS-compatible labelling schemes and filter software, people can control access to Internet content that they find objectionable.

For more information about W3C and PICS see <http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW>, about RSAC see <http://www.rsac.org>. The text of the CDA appeal is available at [http://www2.epic.org/cda/cda\\_decision.html](http://www2.epic.org/cda/cda_decision.html).

## ABA chairman welcomes White House announcement on Internet

UNITED STATES: The Chairman of the ABA has welcomed statement from US President Bill Clinton on regulation of content on the Internet.

'An American policy position was essential following the demise of the Communications Decency Act in the US Supreme Court,' Mr Webb said.

'President Clinton's strategy of enforcing existing child pornography and obscenity laws in cyberspace, endorsing the deployment of blocking software and Net content rating systems and improving parental education about how to use such technologies at home closely mirrors the ABA's approach over the past 18 months,' he said.

Mr Webb also welcomed the news that Netscape will include PICS (the Platform for Internet Content Selection software) in the next version of its browser and the news that IBM will sponsor RSAC (the US Recreational Software Advisory Council). RSAC has

L-R: Jim Miller of the World Wide Web Consortium; Peter Webb, ABA Chairman and John Dickie, Chairman of the Office of Film and Literature Classification.





developed one of the most sophisticated rating systems for Internet content, RSACi.

'The ABA looks forward to working with RSAC and the European-based INCORE organisation on the international working group on content rating announced,' Mr Webb said.

'President Clinton's statement and announcement of a national framework for on-line content regulation in Australia by the Minister for Communications and the Arts, Senator Alston and the Attorney-General, Mr Williams, gives renewed impetus to the global convergence of views on this difficult issue,' he said.

## Beijing Television visit

SYDNEY: ABA staff met with a delegation from Beijing Television (BTV), including Mr Wu Tian Xi Deputy Director, during July. This was the second visit by BTV in recent months.

Members of the delegation were interested in investigating the possibility of broadcasting to the Chinese community in Australia. They were aware of the opportunities provided by the recent changes to the broadcasting environment and are keen to access the most appropriate means of transmission. The program classification system and conditions relating to the sale of videos was discussed, as BTV produces a wide variety of programs which they feel would be of interest to Australian audiences.

## ABA wins court action relating to Kalgoorlie licence area plan

MELBOURNE: SAT FM Pty Ltd has lost its challenge against the ABA's decision to make no additional commercial FM radio broadcasting services available for allocation in the Kalgoorlie region of Western Australia. The decision was handed down by Justice Sundberg on the 13 July. Justice Sundberg was of the view that the ABA's determination was not a decision of an administrative character. It follows that it is not a decision to which the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977* (AD(JR) Act) applies. As a result, the objection to competency was upheld, the application dismissed and the applicant ordered to pay the respondent's costs.

In October 1996, the ABA released its licence area plan for Kalgoorlie radio. SAT FM Pty Ltd filed an application for an order of review under the AD(JR) Act in the Federal Court on 11 November 1996. The application sought a review of the ABA decision of 8 October 1996, that no additional commercial FM radio broadcasting services are to be made available in the Kalgoorlie licence area.

The ABA filed a notice of objection to competency asserting that the decision was of a legislative character, not an administrative character, and therefore was not a decision to which the AD(JR) Act applied.

## Temporary transmission of programs by aspirant community broadcasters

For broadcasts in the period 18 June to 12 October 1997, in order of area served.

Applicant	Area	Frequency	Period	Date signed
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>				
Radio Antenna International FM Inc.	Canberra	103.1	2 7 97 - 25 9 97	4 6 97
Canberra Christian Radio	Canberra	107.1	3.7.97 - 1.8.97	4.6.97
Artsound	Canberra	103.1	5.7.97 - 28.8.97	24.6.97
<b>New South Wales</b>				
Macarthur Community Radio	Campbelltown	100.5	5.7.97 - 13.7.97	19.6.97
Australian Film Television & Radio	Epping	100.1	27.6.97 - 11.7.97	19.6.97
Radio Rhema Coffs Harbour	Coffs Harbour	106.9	6 7 97 - 6.7.97	24.6.97
Radio Rhema Coffs Harbour	Coffs Harbour	106.9	6 7 97 - 5 8.97	24.6.97
Community Radio Coraki Assoc.	Coraki	88.9	5 7 97 - 30 9 97	19 6 97
Radio Five O Plus Association Inc	Gosford	95.3	5.7.97 - 5.7.97	24 6 97
Central Coast Broadcasters Ltd	Gosford	94.1	5 7.97 - 12.10.97	19.6.97
Hawkesbury River Radio Group Inc.	Gosford	93.3	7.7.97 - 10 9.97	19 6 97