



The ABA is proposing to make at least 10 new radio licences available in North Queensland and Far North Queensland in new draft licence area plans.

New radio services proposed for northern Queensland

The ABA is proposing to make at least 21 new radio services available for allocation in North Queensland and Far North Queensland. The regions include the radio markets of Cairns, Atherton, Innisfail, Townsville, Mackay and Charters Towers.

In draft licence area plans for radio services, the ABA proposes to make licences available for four new commercial radio services, five new community radio services and 12 new open narrowcasting radio services.

Main planning issues

While the ABA's proposals would increase the availability of radio services throughout the regions, there is limited spectrum available. This is particularly the case in the Townsville area where the operation of the ABC television service on channel 3 further restricts the availability of FM radio channel.

Commercial radio

The ABA is proposing to make three new commercial radio

licences available for allocation, one each in Townsville, Mackay and Cairns. This follows interest by potential service providers. If these proposals are taken up, Townsville, Mackay and Cairns would each have three commercial radio services. The ABA is also inviting submissions from potential service providers in relation to a possible fourth commercial radio licence in each of Townsville, Mackay and Cairns.

The ABA granted a second commercial radio licence to the operator of 4GC Charters Towers on 7 May 1996. This service has yet to commence broadcasting.

The ABA is also proposing to decrease the licence area of the existing commercial radio service in Atherton, 4AM. This will make the licensee eligible to apply for a second commercial radio licence under section 39 of the Broadcasting Services Act.

Community radio

The ABA has proposed to make one new community radio licence available in each of

Cairns, Atherton, Townsville, Mackay and Bowen. Once these licences are issued, residents of Cairns, Townsville and Mackay will have access to two community radio services each.

There is interest in providing two additional community radio services in the Cairns market. However, given available technical capacity in the Cairns market, the ABA considers it is feasible to plan only one additional service for the market.

The ABA is proposing an increase in transmitting power for the existing community radio services in Townsville, 4TTT and 4KIG. The proposal follows submissions from the licensees. A change to a better transmitting site for the existing community radio service 4CRM at Mackay is also proposed following a submission from the licensee.

Open narrowcasting radio

The draft licence area plans also contain proposals for one AM narrowcasting service in each of Innisfail and Tully,

one new FM open narrowcasting service in each of Cairns and Mossman, and two new FM open narrowcasting services in Atherton. As well as one high and one low power open narrowcasting services at each of Townsville and Mackay, and one medium power open narrowcasting service at each of Ayr and Ingham.

Parties expressing ongoing interest in providing new commercial radio services in Cairns, other than existing broadcasters, are:

- Mr Ludo Maes
- RG Capital
- SAT FM
- Traveller Radio

Parties expressing interest in providing new commercial radio services or open narrowcasting radio services in the Townsville market are:

- Australia Announce Archive;
- Coastal Broadcasters Pty Ltd;
- Lower Burdekin Development Council Inc;
- Lynton Properties Pty Ltd;
- R G Capital Radio;
- SAT FM Pty Ltd;
- Suthers & Taylor Lawyers on behalf of a group of interested parties; and



• TAB Queensland.

Parties expressing interest in providing new commercial radio services or open narrowcasting radio services in the Mackay market are:

- Australia Announce Archive
- Link Communications
- R G Capital Radio
- SAT FM Pty Ltd; and
- TAB Queensland.

Other parties may emerge at the licence allocation stage.

The ABA did not receive expressions of interest from any party wishing to provide additional radio services in the Charters Towers area.

Public comment

The public is now invited to comment on the suggestions made in the draft radio licence area plans. Mr Webb said it is important to understand the ABA's role.

'The ABA's job is to identify vacant radio channels and

decide the number and type of new licences to be made available. Then it's for business and the community to take up these opportunities.'

'We cannot fund or make others fund extra services. We cannot demand improved reception of existing services,' he said.

It is also important to note that making any of these services available is dependent on further information being provided to the ABA. The information we are seeking is detailed in the discussion paper and a recently published booklet, *The ABA's General Approach to Planning*.'

Consultation

The release of the draft plans follows wide public consultation by the ABA which held meetings in the region in May 1995. Submissions were received from 21 parties about radio services in the region.

The ABA recognises that the information currently available to it may be dated, and is seeking extra information from interested parties relating to the specific markets being planned. While the ABA can contact parties who have previously expressed an interest, it is also interested in hearing from any other parties who have not been involved in the planning process to date.

Allocation of licences

Commercial licences and transmitter licences for open narrowcasting services will be allocated under a price-based allocation scheme. Community licences will be allocated by means of a merit-based system. The ABA will generally begin the allocation process after a final LAP for each area has been determined.

The ABA's draft plans and discussion paper are available in local libraries in Townsville, Bowen, Mackay, Charters Towers, Cairns, Atherton and Innisfail. Copies are also available from the ABA by telephoning freecall 1800 810 241.

Written submissions should be addressed to: Planning Officer for Townsville, Mackay and Charters Towers or: Planning Officer for Cairns, Atherton and Innisfail, ABA, PO Box 34, Belconnen, ACT 2616.

Closing dates: For Townsville, Mackay and Charters Towers: 22 August 1997.

For Cairns, Atherton and Innisfail: 29 August 1997.

Programs granted C or P classification

Programs granted C or P classification between 8 July and 14 August 1997. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact Liz Gilchrist, Manager, Children's Television section on (02) 9334 7840.

| Title | Origin | Class. | New/ Renewal | Decision date | Applicant |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| DOOM RUNNERS | Australia | CAD | new | 17.6.1997 | Millennium Runners Pty Ltd |
| CROCADOO (Series 2) | Australia | PRC | new | 21.7.1997 | Energiee Entertainment Pty Ltd |
| KURRIYALA | Australia | PRC | new | 31.7.1997 | Hilary Kuhn |
| THE FLYING FRUIT FLY CIRCUS | Australia | PRC | new | 31.7.1997 | Southern Star Entertainment Pty Ltd |
| CHALLENGER! (Series 3) | Australia | C | new | 10.7.1997 | Queensland Television Ltd |
| GOODSPORTS (Series 6) | Australia | C | new | 14.7.1997 | WIN Television Tasmania |
| HOT SHOTS (Series 4) | Australia | C | new | 23.7.1997 | Sportsworld Network |
| NOW YOU SEE IT (Series 9) | Australia | C | new | 18.7.1997 | Becker Entertainment Pty Ltd |
| TIME MASTERS (Series 4 & 5) | Australia | C | new | 18.7.1997 | Southern Star Entertainment Pty Ltd |
| BOBTALES | Australia | CAD | new | 14.7.1997 | Gripping Films and Graphics |
| THE SILVER BRUMBY (Series 2) | Australia | CAD | new | 8.8.1997 | Media World Features Pty Ltd |

C - children's program, CAD - C Australian drama, P - preschool, PRC - provisional C Class. - Classification