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New radio services for Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton

The ABA has made channels available for six new FM radio services in the Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton regions of New South Wales.

Channels have been made available for two new community radio services, one each in Tamworth and Grafton.

Two channels for open narrowcasting services have been made available in the Armidale licence area, one high power service for Armidale and one low power service for Walcha.

A channel for a medium power open narrowcasting service has been made available in each of the Tamworth and Grafton markets.

"The ABA can now move to allocate licences for the new community services in Tamworth and Grafton and the open narrowcasting services in Armidale, Walcha, Tamworth and Grafton," said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

Channel capacity will continue to be made available for the existing open narrowcasting service in Armidale, known as 2UNE and operated by the Students Association of the University of

New England. Following expiration of the current licence period, the channel will be made available for allocation.

The ABA's decisions are contained in its final licence area plans for radio in Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton. The decision to make these new services available follows interest expressed by parties in providing new radio services. The licences for the community radio services will be allocated via a merit based process. The licences for the open narrowcasting services will be allocated by auction.

Commercial radio

No additional commercial radio licences have been made available for allocation in the Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton markets.

Community radio

Peel Valley Christian Broadcasters Inc has expressed interest in providing a community radio service in Tamworth. Clarence Valley Christian Broadcasters and Creative Native Australia have expressed interest in providing a community radio service



in Grafton. 2RPH has expressed interest in providing community radio services in both Tamworth and Grafton. Other interested parties may emerge at the licence allocation stage.

Any new community radio licences will be made available by means of a merit-based allocation process.

Open narrowcasting

NSW Race Narrowcasts Pty Ltd, has expressed interest in providing open narrowcasting radio services in Tamworth and Grafton. Smooth FM and Creative Native Australia have expressed interest in providing an open narrowcasting service in Grafton. Other interested parties may emerge at the licence allocation stage.

All the licences made available for open narrowcasting

services will be allocated via a price-based allocation system.

National radio

The licence area plans for Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton reserve spectrum capacity for all existing national radio services. There are six existing national radio services operating in the Armidale region, four in the Tamworth region and one in the Grafton region.

Details of the radio licence area plans for Armidale, Tamworth and Grafton will be available for viewing at local public libraries, or can be obtained from the ABA by calling Freecall 1800 810 241. This information is also available on the ABA's website at www.aba.gov.au.