



nominees were: the U.S. Federal Communications Commission; Education Network Australia (EdNA) an Australian government initiative; and Bayern Online, a trend-setting project launched by the Bavarian State Government.

The award was presented live on the Bertelsmann Foundation Web site, <http://preis.stiftung.bertelsmann.de>

## **ABA Fairfax investigation**

At its regular fortnightly meeting on 17 August, the ABA considered the resignation of Mr Bob Muscat as Chief Executive Officer of John Fairfax Holdings Limited and the setting up of a three person interim committee of management to run the newspaper publisher.

The ABA is investigating whether a breach of the cross media rules of the Broadcasting Services Act has occurred since the appointment of Mr Brian Powers to the board of directors of John Fairfax Holdings Limited.

The terms of reference of that investigation are: whether Mr Brian Powers, Mr Kerry Packer, Mr James Packer, Publishing and Broadcasting Limited, Consolidated Press Holdings Limited or any related or associated persons have since 17 May 1998 committed any breaches of a provision in Division 5, 6 or 7 of Part 5 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*.

The ABA expects to be in a position to give a further indication of progress in its investigation next month. It should then be in a position to announce when a report of its investigation will be released.

The ABA's report will, so far as is possible, confine itself to looking at events during the period 17 May to 24 August 1998. It will consider the circumstances of Mr Muscat's resignation and his testimony to the ABA on 24 August.

Fairfax has informed the ABA that it is actively seeking a new Chief Executive Officer and that the three person committee of management is only an interim arrangement.

'The ABA will continue to scrutinise developments at Fairfax,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

## **ABA allocates new non-broadcasting services bands commercial radio licence for Albany, WA**

The ABA has allocated a new commercial radio broadcasting licence to serve Albany, WA. The licence is restricted in its operation to using

means of delivery which do not use the broadcasting services bands.

The licence has been allocated to Pirate Broadcasters Pty Ltd and is the first non-broadcasting services bands commercial radio licence to be allocated by the ABA.

Non-broadcasting services bands commercial radio licences can be allocated by the ABA on application under s.40 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*. Applicants for a licence must pay an application fee, currently set at \$695.

The ABA understands the licensee proposes to provide its service on 1611 kHz, a frequency just outside the AM radio band. The MF-AM band referred to the ABA by the Minister for Communications, the Information Economy and the Arts for planning is 526.5 to 1606.5 kHz inclusive.

The licence area for the new service is the same as that applying to the existing commercial radio services in Albany, 6VA and 6AAY.

## **GWN acts on ABA television reception concerns in South West WA**

Following concerns expressed by the ABA about reception of the SSW television service in South West WA, Golden West Network Pty Limited has agreed to install and maintain a television transmitter in the town of Pemberton.

Golden West Network's offer came in written submissions on the ABA's proposal to impose a licence condition on Golden West Network's SSW commercial television licence.

The ABA's action followed representations about television reception in the licence area by the Federal Member for Forrest, Mr Geoff Prosser and others.

Golden West Network has also provided the ABA with data on field strength measurements carried out by the National Transmission Agency (NTA) in relation to the signal quality in parts of the SSW licence area, including the five towns listed in the ABA's proposed condition (Pemberton, Margaret River, Bridgetown, Nannup and Manjimup).

Golden West Network believes the data shows that signal quality in the five towns is no worse than it was before the refurbishment of the Mt Lennard transmission facility in December 1996.

The ABA is presently considering Golden West Network's submissions and the NTA's technical data.