



ABA allocates new commercial radio licences for Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay and Townsville

The ABA has allocated seven new commercial radio broadcasting licences to serve markets in regional Queensland.

The successful applicants for the licences and the amount bid for each licence were as follows:

Area	Successful applicant	Amount bid
Bundaberg (SL1150057)	Maryborough Broadcasting Company Pty Ltd	\$600 000
Cairns (SL1150014)	Greater Cairns Radio Pty Ltd	\$550 000
Cairns (SL1150044)	Border FM Broadcasters Pty Ltd	\$500 000
Mackay (SL1150018)	Barrier Reef Broadcasting Pty Ltd	\$400 000
Mackay (SL1150089)	Whitsundays Broadcasters Pty Ltd	\$325 000
Townsville (SL1150009)	Central Victoria Broadcasters Pty Ltd	\$500 000
Townsville (SL1150091)	Central Victoria Broadcasters Pty Ltd	\$500 000

'The new commercial services will add to the range and diversity of services in the Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay and Townsville radio markets,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

All successful applicants must commence a service within one year of being allocated the licence (or seek the ABA's permission for an extension of this period).

The ABA held auctions for these licences on 26 June 1998. Full payment for the licences had to be made between 45 and 47 days after the licence allocation exercise (10-12 August 1998).

The 1999 ABA Seminar

Following on from the successes of the ABA's Planning Seminars in 1997 and 1998, many people are now asking for details on the next Seminar to be held in 1999.

Next years seminar is scheduled for August or September 1999 instead of its usual date in February. This is due to the enormous workload in delivering the digital television and radio plans, as well as completing the analog planning for the metropolitan areas and the regional areas.

The 1999 ABA seminar will be scheduled so that it avoids clashes with international planning meetings and the annual general meetings of peak broadcasting bodies.

At this stage, the demand is very heavily in the direction of developments in the planning and implementation of digital broadcasting for Australia. Certainly there is much to discuss

about standards or digital television and also for digital radio. By the time of the next seminar there will be a lot of information available about the licensing policies and implementation plans for these new services. In addition, the timing will provide for an excellent forum for feedback on the final stages of planning for analog radio services in particular in the metropolitan and remaining regional areas.

The members of the 'organising committee' for the 1999 seminar, will happy to hear from readers with any suggestions fort topics and requests for speakers on specific issues of relevance to the broadcasting industry.

Comments and suggestions can be forwarded to the Director Planning & Licensing Branch by fax to (02) 6253 3277 or by email to <bob.greeney@aba.gov.au>.

Licence area populations

On 27 August 1998, the ABA determined, under s.30 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, the licence area population of each commercial television and radio licence in Australia.

Using data from the 1996 Census, the ABA has determined:

- the population of Australia;
- the population of each commercial television and radio licence area;
- the percentage of the population of Australia served by each licence;
- the percentage of each licence area population that is attributable to an overlap area.

This information is required to administer key ownership and control provisions of the Act.

The Act contains a grandfathering provision for television licensees in the event that the ABA makes new determinations of licence area populations. Section 52 of the Act provides that television licensees are not put into breach of the ownership and control provisions and population reach rules if the ABA makes new determinations. However, there is no similar grandfathering provision for radio licensees.

The new s.30 determination contains information for 70 new commercial radio licences and four new commercial television licences planned since the last determination was made three years ago.

The determination can be obtained from ABA offices in Sydney and Canberra, and is also available from the ABA's website at www.aba.gov.au