



Tasradio highest bidder for Hobart narrowcasting licence

Tasradio Pty Ltd was the highest bidder for a licence to provide an open narrowcasting service in Hobart, Tasmania at a licence allocation exercise conducted by the ABA in Sydney on 29 April.

Tasradio, licensee of commercial radio service 7HT Hobart, bid \$280 000 for the licence. The open narrowcasting service will operate on 1080 kHz in Hobart.

'The ABA is very pleased with the result of the auction,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman. 'The level of bidding demonstrated a real depth of interest in the market. It shows again that the radiofrequency spectrum is a public asset of great worth.'

Commercial radio service 7HT Hobart currently provides a commercial service on 1080 kHz on the AM band, however the frequency will become available from 25 May 1998 following 7HT's conversion from AM to FM.

The ABA has made 1080 kHz available for narrowcasting for two years. At that time the ABA expects to have completed the planning of new radio broadcasting services in Hobart and a licence to operate a service on 1080 kHz will be allocated in accordance with the ABA's planning decision for the frequency.

Consultation in metropolitan and surrounding markets

The ABA has released information booklets for the planning of radio broadcasting services in metropolitan and surrounding markets including: Sydney, Katoomba and Gosford; Melbourne, Geelong and Colac; Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Richmond/Tweed and Gympie; Perth; and Adelaide.

Submissions

The ABA has completed consultation meetings in all of the above markets and now invites submissions to the licence area planning process for these markets.

Submitters are asked to develop and present submissions so they address the matters in chapter 3 of the the ABA's *General Approach to Planning* (included as appendix B of the information booklets for the relevant markets).

For copies of the information booklets call the ABA on Freecall 1800 810 241.

Once it has the submissions, the ABA will

form preliminary views on the number and category of new radio services (commercial, community and open narrowcasting) to be made available for allocation in each market and publish these views in draft licence area plans for comment. The closing date for submissions is 15 June 1998.

Digital television consultative group

On 29 April 1998, the Minister for Communications, Senator Richard Alston, announced the establishment of a high-level group to begin work on the complex technical, content, regulatory and planning issues associated with making digital technology available to Australian homes.

Digital terrestrial television transmissions will start on 1 January 2001 in the Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth metropolitan areas, and from 1 January 2001 to 1 January 2004 in all other areas.

The new consultative group will include senior members nominated by peak representative bodies in the free-to-air and pay TV, on-line, content, and equipment manufacturing industries, together with consumer representatives.

The consultative group will provide broad input and advice on a range of policy, technical and other issues. Discussions with key industry players and others, including consumer groups, on an individual basis will of course continue to take place as needed, notwithstanding the existence of a more formal consultative group.

The Secretary of the Department of Communications and the Arts, Mr Neville Stevens, will chair the group.

Representative groups

Australian Association of National Advertisers
Australian Broadcasting Authority
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Australian Communications Authority
Australian Consumers Association
Australian Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers Association
Australian Information Industry Association
Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association
Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations
Internet Industry Association
Screen Producers Association of Australia
Special Broadcasting Service

**Submissions
Closing date:
15 June 1998**

**Send submissions to:
Planning and Licensing
Branch
ABA
PO Box 34
Belconnen ACT 2616**