



News Update

Another aspirant, Christian Air Broadcasters, has been operating on the second available frequency, 95.7 MHz, continuously for the past year and will continue until 30 May under its present licence. Gold Coast Community Broadcasters will then change channels and broadcast on 95.7 MHz until 30 September 1999.

Two groups will share the third available frequency, 94.9 MHz, during this time. They are Hott FM, a youth service that has also been broadcasting on and off over the past four years and a new group called Heat FM, which seeks to include the gay and lesbian community in its broadcasts.

Gold Coast Community Broadcasters

The ABA licensed a new aspirant, Gold Coast Community Broadcasters, to use 94.1 MHz on the FM band from 2 February to 30 May 1999.

On 2 February, Gold Coast Community Broadcasters advised the ABA that delays in the delivery of a radio transmitter prevented the start of its temporary service. The ABA understood that transmission would commence by the end of the first week of February.

Gold Coast Community Broadcasters then started broadcasting on 11 February.

ABA collects \$206.6m in licence fees

The ABA has collected commercial broadcasting licence fees of \$206.6m. The fees are based on revenue earned by the commercial television and radio industries during the 1997-98 year.

'Licence fees are paid by industry for using broadcasting spectrum which is a scarce public resource,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman. 'The money collected goes to the Commonwealth's consolidated revenue.'

The ABA collected \$194.5m from 47 commercial television services (compared to \$170.7m from 44 services in the previous year) and \$12m from 213 commercial radio services (compared to \$10.8m from 181 services in the previous year). A small number of services are yet to pay or have not paid the correct fee.

'This is a 13.8 per cent increase on last year's figure of \$181.5m. This reflects an increase in the number of both television and radio services and also lower rebates claimed by regional television services,' said Professor Flint.

The rebate scheme, which has been in operation since 1989, recognises the expenses

incurred by regional television licensees in expanding their service areas under the Government's equalisation policy. The two licensees in Tasmania claimed rebates of \$800 000 each which reduced the amount of fees payable by them. Some regional services in New South Wales and Victoria have been able to offset the payment of their licence fees by using credits accrued over the period of the equalisation rebate scheme.

Rebates and use of unused credits for this year totalled \$5.7m (compared to \$7.4m in the previous year). The reduction is due to the fact that services in markets which first benefited from this policy in 1988-89 have now exhausted their right to a rebate.

Annual licence fees are calculated on a percentage of gross earnings by the licensee for the previous financial year. Fees for individual operators are not available in order to preserve confidentiality.

The April issue of *ABA Update* will contain the aggregated financial results for commercial television and radio.

Internet content regulation

In December 1998, the ABA reported to the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator the Hon. Richard Alston on its work in the area of online content regulation. The report was prepared in response to the second direction from Minister requiring the ABA to investigate online content regulation issues including codes of practice, content labelling, community education and international developments. The report is available on the ABA's web site <www.aba.gov.au>.

While the report is complete, Stephen Nugent, formerly Manager, Research at the ABA, has taken up a temporary appointment as Manager Special Projects. His responsibilities include coordinating the online content regulation activities of the ABA. In addition, he is involved with the ABA's preparations for digital broadcasting, particularly datacasting, the area where digital broadcasting and online services most closely overlap.

In terms of online content regulation, the ABA continues its membership of the reference group for the Internet Content Rating Alliance. It will also continue the Australian Families Guide to the Internet web site, liaison with industry, community organisations and government agencies, and participation in, and presentation at, relevant conferences and seminars.



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The ABA anticipates that the introduction of legislation in the near future that will give it responsibility for online content regulation. The ongoing preparatory work in this area will assist the smooth transition to this expanded role when the legislation is enacted.

Kids Internet quiz to run again

There was a great response to the ABA's quiz for children, 'How net savvy are you?' launched on the Australian Families Guide to the Internet web site on Online Australia Day.

As part of the quiz, children answered questions on Internet house rules and submitted house rules of their own. Two entrants received prizes donated by Kidz.net — yearly subscriptions to its 'kidz only' zone.

Because of the success of the quiz, the ABA has decided to run it again but with a different prize — a year's subscription to 'KAHooTZ: a club just for kids'. KAHooTZ is a safe zone on

the Internet, available by subscription. The prize has been donated by the KAHooTZ developers (Australian Children's Television Foundation, Telstra and Hewlett-Packard). Entries to the competition close on 20 March 1999.

The quiz can be found at <www.aba.gov.au/family>.

Commercial and open narrowcasting licence allocations—round 7

The ABA is preparing to call for applications in mid March for a new round of licence allocations for commercial radio broadcasting licences and in late March for open narrowcasting radio licences.

Applicants should keep watch for notices inviting applications: in the *Australian* newspaper, on the ABA's web site <www.aba.gov.au/what/broplan/newlic.htm> or contact the ABA's Licensing section, freecall 1800 226 667.

Temporary community broadcasting licences

Temporary community broadcasting licences issued during January 1999, in order of area served.

Licensee	Area served	Freq.	Period	Issue date
Australian Capital Territory				
ArtSound FM	Canberra	103.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
Canberra Christian Radio Ltd	Canberra	107.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
Canberra Community Radio Inc.	Canberra	107.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
Country Music Collective Inc	Canberra	103.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
Ethnic Broadcasters of ACT (EBC)	Canberra	103.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
Radio Antenna International FM Inc	Canberra	107.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	29-1-1999
New South Wales				
Bega Access Radio Inc	Bega	93.7	23-1-1999 to 22-7-1999	22-1-1999
Southern Mountain Media Inc.	Bowral	99.5	1-2-1999 to 31-7-1999	21-1-1999
Deepwater and Districts Community FM Radio Incorporated	Deepwater	91.1	31-1-1999 to 30-9-1999	18-1-1999
Living Sound Broadcasters Ltd	Kiama	94.1	20-1-1999 to 31-7-1999	18-1-1999
Newcastle Christian Broadcasters Ltd	Newcastle	99.7	1-2-1999 to 1-8-1999	28-1-1999
Chinese Community Radio Association	Sydney	96.9	21-1-1999 to 21-2-1999	20-1-1999
Out FM Sydney Ltd	Sydney	94.5	21-1-1999 to 30-5-1999	25-1-1999
Victoria				
West Gippsland Community Radio Inc.	Gippsland	99.5	14-1-1999 to 13-1-2000	12-1-1999
Central Melbourne FM Incorporated	Melbourne	91.5	1-2-1999 to 21-2-1999	28-1-1999
Dance Club Broadcasters Inc	Melbourne	89.9	25-1-1999 to 7-3-1999	18-1-1999
JOY Melbourne Independent Community Broadcasters	Melbourne	90.7	30-1-1999 to 28-2-1999	28-1-1999
Nu Country Music Radio Inc	Melbourne	94.9	25-1-1999 to 28-2-1999	18-1-1999
Swinburne Student Union Inc	Melbourne	94.1	16-1-1999 to 31-1-1999	14-1-1999
WYN FM Community Radio Inc	Melbourne	88.9	20-1-1999 to 31-3-1999	18-1-1999
Queensland				
Bowen Community Broadcasting Association Inc	Bowen	95.1	1-2-1999 to 30-4-1999	25-1-1999
Cool FM Community Radio Association Inc.	Gold Coast	100.1	4-1-1999 to 30-9-1999	4-1-1999
Gold Coast Community Broadcasters	Gold Coast	94.1	2-2-1999 to 30-5-1999	25-1-1999
Toowoomba Christian Broadcasters Assoc Inc	Toowoomba	92.9	1-2-1999 to 31-10-1999	25-1-1999

Feedback invited

It is now nine months since the ABA re-launched its web site and we want to know what you think of it, so we can improve it. Let us know if the ABA web site:

- gives you the information you need
- should have additional information
- is easy or difficult to navigate
- or any other comments.

Send your comments by email to: feedback@aba.gov.au