



Variations to digital television conversion schemes

Commercial television

The ABA has released a draft variation to the Commercial Television Conversion Scheme. The amendments to the scheme are a necessary consequence of the *Broadcasting Services (Digital Television and Datacasting) Act 2000*, which amends Schedule 4 to the Broadcasting Services Act.

Among the proposed changes to the scheme is the requirement to simulcast in standard definition digital mode, permission for a broadcaster to submit one or a series of implementation plans and changes to the ABA's planning powers once the analog/digital simulcast period ends.

Bandwidth

The amendments now define a channel as 7 MHz of bandwidth.

New planning decision at end of simulcast

At the conclusion of the simulcast period, the legislation now requires that the

ABA make a planning decision about the efficient use of the spectrum. The broadcaster no longer chooses either the digital or analog channel for permanent broadcasting when the simulcast period ends: the ABA must plan a channel, based on the efficient use of the spectrum and consideration of datacasting needs, for continued broadcasting in digital mode.

National television

The ABA has released a draft variation to the National Television Conversion Scheme. The variation incorporates necessary changes as a consequence of amendments to the Broadcasting Services Act relating to digital television.

Among the proposed changes to the scheme is the requirement to simulcast in standard definition digital mode, permission for a broadcaster to submit one or a series of implementation plans and changes to the ABA's planning powers once the analog/digital simulcast period ends.

Submissions closed on 8 December 2000.

The ABA will create a public file of the submissions received which will be placed on its web site.

Seven new radio services for Perth?

In the draft licence area plan for the Perth market, the ABA is proposing to make channels available for an additional commercial radio service in Perth and two local coverage community radio services to serve the Armadale and Kalamunda regions. The ABA is also proposing to make four new open narrowcasting services available in Perth.

The new commercial radio service is proposed to be a high power service operating on 93.7 MHz on the FM band.

In order to improve reception of the existing Perth commercial radio services 6IX and 6PR, the ABA is proposing an increase in transmitter power, a change of frequency for 6IX (to 1269 kHz on the AM band) and a change of main transmitter site for the services. The ABA is also proposing to make two AM channels available for additional transmitters for the services. The proposed AM transmitters will enable the licensees of 6IX and 6PR to improve their coverage of the Perth commercial radio licence area.

The ABA is proposing to make two additional local coverage community radio stations available, at Kalamunda (on 106.5 MHz) and at Armadale (on 107.3 MHz).

The ABA is not proposing to make any new wide coverage community radio licences available in Perth. The ABA is

however proposing to allow the existing wide-coverage community AM radio services 6AR and 6NR to convert to the FM band at high power. This would enable these services to improve reception within their licence area and provide parity with the other existing wide-coverage community FM services.

The ABA is also proposing to change the frequency of the existing community FM radio service 6CCR Fremantle from 100.1 MHz to 107.9 MHz and increase its transmission power. The proposed change of frequency will allow the existing wide-coverage community AM radio service 6NR to convert to FM. The proposed increase of the transmission power will enable 6CCR to improve reception throughout its licence area.



To see the draft licence area plan

The draft licence area plan for Perth can be viewed at the ABA's web site at www.aba.gov.au/what/broplan/laps/Perth. Copies of the licence area plan are available from the ABA by calling Freecall 1800 810 241, and are also available for viewing at local libraries.

Closing date

The closing date for comments on the draft licence area plan is **5 pm Friday 12 January 2001.**

The draft variations to the National Television Conversion Scheme and the Commercial Television Conversion Scheme are available on the ABA's web site at www.aba.gov.au/whats_new/index.

Copies can also be obtained from the ABA by calling Freecall 1800 810 241.