



**The ABA will make 14 new radio licences available in Melbourne: two new commercial radio services; three new Melbourne-wide community radio services; three new open narrowcasting services; and six new community radio services to serve Melbourne City, Bacchus Marsh, Camberwell, Sunbury, Waverley and Werribee.**

# New radio services for Melbourne, Geelong and Colac

**T**he ABA has decided to make 13 new radio licences available in Melbourne.

Licences for two new commercial radio services, two new Melbourne-wide community radio services and three new open narrowcasting services will be made available. The ABA will also make licences available for six new community radio services to serve suburban areas of Melbourne (one each for Melbourne City, Bacchus Marsh, Camberwell, Sunbury, Waverley and Werribee).

In addition, the ABA will make licences available for two new community radio services and two open narrowcasting services in Geelong and one local community radio service in Colac. The AM open narrowcasting services in Geelong on 1341 kHz may be used either in Geelong or in Melbourne/Geelong.

Channels will be made available at Apollo Bay and Lorne for retransmission of the ex-

isting Colac commercial FM radio service, 3CCS. There will be no new commercial radio licences made available in Geelong or Colac.

The ABA's decisions are contained in its final licence area plans for radio in Melbourne, Geelong and Colac, released on 27 June 2000.

'The ABA has taken into account the views of all submitters before deciding on the most beneficial mix of new services to be made available in the Melbourne, Geelong and Colac region,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

'With a limited number of both wide coverage and local coverage radio channels, decisions on the best use of these channels particularly in the Melbourne area was always going to be difficult given the high level of demand for licences from aspirant broadcasters. Ultimately, the ABA has been guided by the objects of the Broadcasting Services Act, particularly that of promoting the availability to

audiences of a diverse range of radio and television services offering entertainment, education and information.'

The ABA expects to allocate the licence for the first Melbourne-wide service (91.5 MHz) by the end of this year, and the licence for the second Melbourne-wide service (100.3 MHz) in four years time.

One of the aims of the ABA's planning process is to use spectrum efficiently. To this end, Melbourne commercial radio service 3AK will move from its existing frequency to 1116 kHz, and the frequency vacated by 3AK will be made available for a new community radio service. 3AK may simulcast on its existing and new frequencies for a period of two months commencing on 1 January 2001 and ending on 28 February 2001.

All existing Melbourne local coverage community radio services now have the option to use mixed polarisation which may enable better reception at fixed installations

within their respective licence areas. Some of these services will have additional changes to their technical specifications to help improve reception within their licence areas. These are a change of site for 3INR Melbourne NE Suburbs; an increase in power for 3NOW Melbourne NW Suburbs; spectrum for an additional transmitter to serve Frankston for 3RPP Mornington; and a power increase for 3VYV Yarra Valley.

In Geelong, the existing community radio service 3YYR will change frequency and increase power to allow it to reach a wider audience. The use of the frequency for the second new Melbourne-wide commercial radio licence is dependent upon the Geelong community radio service 3YYR making the transition from its existing frequency to 94.7 MHz.

## **Licence area plans**

The licence area plans for radio in Melbourne, Geelong



and Colac contain details of all national, commercial, community and open narrowcasting radio broadcasting services that are available in these areas using the broadcasting services bands of the radiofrequency spectrum. These are the parts of the spectrum used by AM and FM radio services.

National broadcasting services are free-to-air ABC or SBS services, or Parliamentary broadcasts. Commercial broadcasting services are privately owned free-to-air services operated for a profit. Community broadcasting services are free-to-air services provided for community purposes by non-profit groups. Open narrowcasting broadcasting services are free-to-air services whose reception is limited in some way (e.g. by being targeted to special interest groups or being intended for limited locations).

The Australian Government primarily funds extensions of, or improvements to national radio broadcasting services. The respective operators fund extensions of, or improvements to commercial and community radio broadcasting services within their licence areas.

It is important to note that the ABA cannot fund or compel others to fund additional broadcasting services, or improved reception of existing broadcasting services in an area. It can only make channel capacity available.

With the exception of the capacity reserved for national

broadcasters and channel capacity made available for allocation to community broadcasters, other capacity set out in the licence area plans will generally be made available for commercial and open narrowcasting services, under a price-based allocation scheme.

Capacity set out for community licences will be made available by means of a merit-based system.

### Main issues

The main planning issue is the limited availability of spectrum to accommodate the interest expressed by existing and potential radio broadcasters in establishing new services.

The ABA's decisions in summary follow.

#### Melbourne

In Melbourne the ABA has:

- made two additional commercial FM radio licences available, one on 91.5 MHz and the other on 100.3 MHz. The allocation of the licence for the second service (100.3 MHz) will take place four years after determination of the licence area plan;
- changed the frequency of commercial radio service 3AK from 1503 kHz to 1116 kHz to improve reception of the service within its licence area;
- made three additional Melbourne wide coverage community radio licences available. Two will be on FM channels 89.9 MHz and 90.7 MHz and one on AM

channel 1503 kHz. The allocation of the AM service on 1503 kHz will take place after 3AK concludes simulcasting on this frequency on 28 February 2001;

- allowed for an optional increase in power of the existing Melbourne wide coverage FM community radio services 3MBS, 3PBS and 3ZZZ;
- made six additional local coverage community radio licences available to cover each of Melbourne City, Bacchus Marsh, Camberwell, Sunbury, Waverley and Werribee;
- allowed for an increase in power of the existing community radio services 3NOW Melbourne NW Suburbs and 3VYV Yarra Valley to help improve reception within their licence areas;
- authorised a change of site for 3INR Melbourne NE Suburbs and an additional transmitter at Frankston for 3RPP Mornington to improve reception in their respective licence areas;
- made two additional open narrowcasting radio services available in Melbourne on 1422 kHz from Werribee and 1593 kHz from Epping. The Geelong open narrowcasting service on 1342 kHz may be used to serve Geelong or Melbourne/Geelong; and
- reserved spectrum capacity for existing national radio services in Melbourne.

#### Geelong

In Geelong the ABA has:

- made no additional commercial radio services available;
- made two additional FM

community radio licences available, one on 99.5 MHz at 800 W and the other on 96.3 MHz at 56 kW;

- changed the frequency of the existing Geelong community radio service 3YYR from 100.3 MHz to 94.7 MHz to allow it to cover the greater Geelong area; and
- made open narrowcasting licences available in Geelong on 1341 kHz and 89.3 MHz. The service on 1341 kHz can be made to serve Geelong or Melbourne/Geelong.

#### Colac

In Colac the ABA has:

- increased the licence area of the existing commercial radio services and made channels available for retransmission of the 3CCS service in Apollo Bay on 95.9 MHz and in Lorne on 92.7 MHz; and
- made one community radio licence available in Colac on 104.7 MHz with associated transmitters in Apollo Bay on 99.1 MHz and in Lorne on 88.7 MHz.

#### Copies of the licence area plans

For copies of the licence area plans for Melbourne, Geelong and Colac, go the ABA web site: [www.aba.gov.au/what/broplan/licence\\_area\\_plans.htm](http://www.aba.gov.au/what/broplan/licence_area_plans.htm) or call the ABA on 1800 226 667.

