



ABA decides not to allocate community radio licence in Gosford


The Australian Broadcasting Authority has decided not to allocate a community radio broadcasting licence in Gosford, New South Wales at this time.

On 19 December 2002, the ABA allocated a community radio licence to Gosford Christian Broadcasters Ltd. On 31 January 2003, the Federal Court set aside the ABA's decision to allocate this licence on the basis that the decision to allow Gosford Christian Broadcasters Ltd to lodge a late application for the licence affected the legal rights, interests and legitimate expectations of the other applicants.

The ABA formed a preliminary view on 13 March 2003 to not allocate the licence and gave each applicant an opportunity to make a further submission. The ABA considered this additional information and subsequently assessed the valid applicants for the third licence: Newcastle Christian Broadcasters Ltd (Christian); Radio Yesteryear Inc (general community interested in music from 1930s to 1960s); and Wyong Gosford Progressive Community Radio Inc (minority groups).

"After giving careful consideration to the criteria laid down in the legislation and the information provided by the applicants, the ABA has decided in this case not to allocate the licence," said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman.

"The ABA will review the situation in due course with a view to re-advertising the licence late in 2003 or early in 2004. During the intervening period the ABA encourages the applicants to operate a temporary service to develop their capacity," he said.

Until such time as the ABA reconsiders a permanent allocation, the channel set aside for this licence (94.9 MHz) will be made available for temporary community broadcasting. 


Extension of time for 5CS to continue broadcasting on FM in Spencer Gulf

The Australian Broadcasting Authority is proposing to allow commercial radio service 5CS Spencer Gulf North until 30 September 2003 to switch frequency from AM (1044 kHz) to FM (105.9 MHz).

5CS was required to change frequency by December 2002. However, due to difficulties experienced in meeting its obligation, 5CS has requested more time to implement its FM service.

The ABA determined the Spencer Gulf North licence area plan in December 2001. In the plan the ABA aggregated the 5CS Port Pirie and 5AU Port Augusta commercial radio licence areas to form a new commercial radio licence area for the Spencer Gulf region.

The ABA determined that 5CS would operate on 105.9 MHz to serve the entire Spencer Gulf North area while 5AU would operate on 1242 kHz to serve the Port Augusta/Whyalla area and on 5CS's AM frequency, 1044 kHz, to serve the Port Pirie/Whyalla area.

A copy of the draft variation to the Spencer Gulf North licence area plan is available on the ABA web site at www.aba.gov.au or by calling Freecall 1800 226 667. 

Planning issues

A report from Radhaz Consulting, commissioned by Planning NSW and the Sydney Olympic Park Authority, contradicts previous reports that indicated excessive radiation from the Homebush Bay AM transmission mast of broadcasters 2SM and 2UE to the nearby Waterfront residential development (see ABA Update No.118 March 2003 'AM Radio Transmission Sites Under Pressure'). The Radhaz report concludes that human exposure limits are "not exceeded and are therefore not considered to pose a health hazard."

The Radhaz report does, however, identify the potential for interference to electronic equipment from the AM services.

Further discussions between the broadcasters, Commercial Radio Australia, the state and federal authorities and the developer are expected. 