

Recent conferences and study groups provide both an international and domestic perspective on broadcasting and related issues. Here is a selection of ABA reports on these events.

Conference and study group reports:

Digital radio study group consultative forum

The digital radio study group

On 6 May 2003 the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts announced the formation of a Digital Radio Study Group to report on the status of major digital radio technologies currently available internationally. The group comprises representatives of the ABA, the Australian Communications Authority and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. It is to examine initiatives currently being developed and implemented overseas, in digital radio technology and approaches to service delivery.

The study group is to inquire into and report to the Minister, by 28 November 2003, on:

1. The implementation of the alternative digital radio technologies, including Eureka 147, IBOC, Digital Radio Mondiale and digital satellite and hybrid satellite/terrestrial services, in overseas markets.
2. The relative merits of the alternative technologies in terms of the range and types of services that can be delivered, the particular advantages and disadvantages of each technology in the Australian environment, and any implications for spectrum planning, clearing or efficiency in the Australian context.

3. The implications of the alternative technologies with respect to technical standards or regulatory considerations.

Consultative forum

The Digital Radio Study Group held a consultative forum on 26 September 2003 in Sydney to hear stakeholders' views on the issues affecting any future implementation of digital radio in Australia.

At the forum, the Digital Radio Study Group released information about recent developments in digital radio technologies and the various approaches taken overseas in implementing such technologies.

The theme for the forum was 'What are the key issues the Government should consider in relation to the possible introduction of digital radio in Australia?'. Representatives of the Digital Radio Study Group set the scene by outlining the findings to date. Convened by ABA member and director of the Australian Film Television and Radio School Mr Malcolm Long, other speakers represented a variety of stakeholder perspectives: Richard Butler, Worldspace; Joan Warner, Commercial Radio Australia; Des DeCean, Austereo; Debra Richards, Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association; and Clive Morton, Broadcast Australia.

The study group will use the outcomes of the forum in the development of its report to the Minister.



At the forum, Giles Tanner, ABA General Manager, addresses participants alongside James Cameron, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (left) and Fred Gengaroli, ABA director engineering.

For more information about the consultative forum, go to:

www.aba.gov.au/radio/digital/forum/index.htm

For more information about the work of the Digital Radio Study Group contact Amanda Walsh, ABA, tel: 9334 7869 or email: amanda.walsh@aba.gov.au.

