



8MAB Borroloola

Causing a record to be made of broadcast matter relating to a political subject

The complaint

In May 2002 the ABA received a complaint alleging that community radio station 8MAB, operating in the remote Borroloola region of the Northern Territory, had failed to include a tag with the required particulars for political matter in a broadcast which advocated that listeners vote for these particular candidates in the elections for positions on the Borroloola Community Government Council.

In the course of the investigation, it was revealed that 8MAB had not retained a tape of the broadcast and that the licensee was not aware of any obligations in this regard.

Decision

The ABA determined that the licensee breached the licence condition at clause 5 of Schedule 2 to the Act by not causing a record to be made of broadcast matter relating to a political subject. The ABA also determined that, as the ABA has no evidence to suggest that the political comments in question were broadcast 'at the request of

another person', the licensee did not breach the requirements of subclause 4(2) of Schedule 2 to the Act.

Action taken

The licensee advised the ABA that all station announcers are verbally instructed to:

- adhere to the community code kept in the studio
- not broadcast political statements of a personal nature
- tape all interviews with visiting politicians on a video player set up at the studio console.

The licensee also provided the ABA with a copy of a statement that all station personnel would now be required to sign which outlines their responsibilities and legal requirements.

In view of the action taken by the licensee to ensure that the requirements of the Act are met, the ABA intends to take no further action in this matter, but it may take this matter into consideration if it finds similar future breaches of the Act.



For the full report on these investigations, go to the ABA web site:
www.aba.gov.au/tv/investigations/breach_findings/ or www.aba.gov.au/radio/investigations/breach_findings/