



Cocos (Keeling) Islands

The ABA has allocated a new community radio licence for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Western Australia, to VKW 'Voice of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands' Incorporated (VKW).

The new service will broadcast on 96.0 MHz on the FM band from the West Island and 102.7 MHz from the Home Island. VKW's temporary community broadcasting licence expires on 14 August 2004 and the permanent radio broadcasting licence will commence on 15 August 2004.

'The proposed service will add to the range and diversity of services in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands area,' said Ms Maddock.

VKW was the only applicant for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands licence. Its application was assessed with particular regard to whether the proposed service would meet the existing and perceived future needs of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands community.

VKW currently operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The proposed service will provide programs that will cover a wide range of local issues that

will appeal to the general community of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

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The Cocos (Keeling) Islands area is currently served by one national radio service: ABCRN; and one commercial radio service: 6FMS. It is also served by national television services ABC and SBS, and six commercial television services: GWN, WIN (both West and Home Islands) and four Indonesian/Malaysian language channels: Anteve, SCTV, TP1 and Indosair (Home Island).

The ABA finalised the Remote Western Australia radio licence area plan in August 1996. It determined that one new community radio broadcasting licence be made available for Cocos (Keeling) Islands operating from the West Island. In March 2004, the ABA determined a variation to the Remote Western Australia licence area plan to make additional channel capacity available for the Cocos (Keeling) Island community radio service to operate from Home Island. ☒

Variation to digital channel plans for regional Queensland

The ABA has released a variation to the digital channel plans for Regional Queensland to include the allotment and assignment of digital channels for television repeater services at Airlie Beach, Ayr, Bowen, Bowen Town, Charters Towers, Collinsvale, Proserpine, Shute Harbour and Stuart. In addition, the ABA has varied the allotment of an unassigned channel at Townsville North.

The plans set out the channels the existing commercial and national television broadcasters will use for their digital transmissions. The ABA has also identified as yet unassigned channels that may be used for other purposes, including datacasting.

'In finalising these plans the ABA weighed up a number of important factors. These include the aim of spectrum efficiency, the need to minimise any changes that viewers will have to make to their existing reception equipment to receive digital broadcasts and the desirability of broadcasters being able to use their existing transmission facilities to broadcast their digital television services,' said Ms Maddock.

An explanatory paper, which discusses issues raised in submissions, and the variation to the digital channel plans is available on the ABA's web site, www.aba.gov.au/tv/digitaltv/planning/qld/index.htm or from the ABA, tel: 1800 226 667. ☒