



ABA finds Landscape program should have been 'tagged'

The ABA has found Prime Television (Southern) Pty Ltd, the licensee of CBN Southern NSW (Prime), breached a condition of its licence by not broadcasting the required particulars (commonly known as 'the tag') at the conclusion of the *Landscape* program on 7 April 2004.

The *Landscape* program is a two-minute program featuring the views of the Prime Minister of the day that has been broadcast on Prime since October 2000.

The ABA commenced an investigation after receiving a complaint that the program contained political matter and had been broadcast without the required particulars.

The ABA found the program did contain political matter, that Prime did broadcast the politi-

cal matter at the request of another person and that the program should have included the required particulars at the conclusion of the program.

In making its decision, the ABA noted that the broadcaster had acted in good faith, based on a previous decision about an earlier broadcast of the *Landscape* program. In light of this, the ABA decided that no action would be taken in this instance.

As a general comment arising from this investigation, the ABA emphasises that licensees have a responsibility to advise their audiences of the origin of any political matter being broadcast. As explained in the ABA's *Guidelines for the Broadcasting of Political Matter*, (August 1998), the purpose of clause 4 of Schedule 2 to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* is to assist

the general public in their identification of broadcasts that are political.

The right of licensees to broadcast political matter needs to be balanced with the right of audiences to be able to identify the source of the information contained in the political matter that is broadcast. If the required particulars were announced immediately after broadcasts of political matter, audiences would be able to clearly identify the program matter as political matter that has been broadcast at the request of a person other than the licensee.

A report on the ABA's investigation is available at <http://www.aba.gov.au/tv/investigations/completed.htm>.⁵