



'While there will obviously be some delay while TVS establishes its service, the ABA expects it to be on air as soon as possible and that once it is, every effort will be made to continue to meet the needs and interests of the ethnic communities that have been served by CTS,' said Professor Flint.

The ABA has asked TVS to report monthly on its progress.

Applications in Sydney

The ABA invited applications for the Sydney licence on 17 February 2003. Applications closed on 9 March, and copies of the applications were available for public viewing, from 26 May 2003, on the ABA's web site and in the City of Sydney Library. The ABA received five written submissions from members of the public about the applications.

Community TV licence allocated for Perth

The ABA has allocated a community television licence for Perth. The successful applicant, Channel 31 Community Educational Television Ltd (Access 31), will provide the service on channel 31.

'Access 31 has held several licences under the community television trial. The allocation of this licence should enable Access 31 to build on its achievements under the trial and further enhance its standing in the Perth community,' said Professor Flint. 'To date, Access 31 has provided a range of local community programs covering such issues as arts and culture, sport, education, ethnic and community information. The Perth community should look forward to a continuation of these local programs with Access 31 making a strong commitment to the provision of local programming.'

The ABA received five applications for the community television licence, from: Channel 31 Community Educational Television Ltd (Access 31), West TV Ltd (West TV), WA Media Group Ltd (WAMG), Community News TV Ltd (CNT) and Community Television Australia (CTVA).

The ABA found that four applicants, West TV, WAMG, CNTV and CTVA, did not meet the criteria for a community broadcasting service.

The ABA is of the view that Access 31 merits a licence on

the basis that it has demonstrated that its proposed service would meet the existing and perceived future needs of a broad cross-section of the Perth community.

'The ABA would like to acknowledge the commitment and experience of other applicants for the licence and hope that they continue to be involved in community television by working with Access 31,' said Professor Flint. 'The ABA would particularly like to acknowledge the active role taken by successive Western Australian governments during the community television trial.'

Access 31 is required to commence the service within one year from the date of allocation of the licence.

Applications in Perth

On 17 February 2003, the ABA invited applications for the community television licence in Perth. From 26 May 2003, copies of the applications were available, on the ABA's web site and in the State Library of Western Australia. The ABA received 15 written submissions from members of the public about to the applications.

Community television licences

In 1992, the Government asked the ABA to conduct a trial of community television using the vacant sixth television channel (UHF channel 31 in capital cities) in Australia. As the ABA did not have the power to issue temporary community television licences it made the channel available for fixed periods for non-profit community/educational open narrowcasting services. Community television services have been provided on a trial basis since 1994 under open narrowcasting class licences.

A review of the community television trial, conducted under Schedule 4 to the Broadcasting Services Act, was tabled in Parliament in June 2002. As a result of the issues raised in the review, the Act was amended in 2002. The new framework for community television licences introduced requirements aimed at improving the financial and management capacity and accountability of community television licensees. It also assists the revenue raising ability of the community television sector. The new measures are intended to balance the need for ongoing financial viability of the community television sector with the need to ensure that the sector maintains its community and not-for-profit nature.

A community television service must not be operated for profit or as part of a profit-making enterprise.

Allocation of community broadcasting licences

Part 6 of the Broadcasting Services Act provides for the allocation of community broadcasting licences.

The ABA uses a merit-based allocation process where applicants compete on the basis of merit for the licence. The process includes opportunity for the public to comment on applications received. The ABA must also have regard to:

- a) the extent to which the proposed service would meet the existing and perceived future needs of the community within the licence area of the proposed services and
- b) the nature and diversity of the interests of that community and
- c) the nature and diversity of other broadcasting services (including national broadcasting services) available within that licence area and
- d) the capacity of the applicant to provide the proposed service and
- e) the undesirability of one person being in a position to exercise control of more than one community broadcasting licence that is a broadcasting services bands licence in the same licence area and
- f) the undesirability of the Commonwealth, a State or Territory or a political party being in a position to exercise control of a community broadcasting licence.

