



The ABA has released a discussion paper, *Review of Options on the Future Use of 1386 kHz for the Sydney Licence Area*, which sets out issues surrounding the use of this frequency.

Options for the AM frequency 1386 kHz in Sydney

The ABA is seeking public comment and submissions on its discussion paper on the options for the future use of the 1386 kHz (AM) frequency in the Sydney area.

The discussion paper, *Review of Options on the Future Use of 1386 kHz for the Sydney Licence Area*, sets out issues surrounding the use of the 1386 kHz frequency and suggests possible options for its future use. It also includes background information to assist submitters in considering the issues and possible options.

‘At the time that the ABA decided not to allocate the community broadcasting licence using the 1386 kHz frequency, it gave an undertaking that after 12 months it would review

matters relating to possible uses for this frequency,’ said Professor Flint. ‘The ABA would like to hear from key stakeholders and the general public about how it might best use this frequency and resolve some of the problems surrounding its use given that it is the last remaining unallocated planned frequency in the analog Sydney market.’

Options proposed by the ABA in the discussion paper for the use of the frequency include retaining it for a community service, making it available for an open narrowcasting service, using it for Digital Radio Mondiale trials or making it available for other purposes.

1386 kHz

On 16 December 1999, the ABA determined the radio licence area plan for the Sydney area. The ABA determined that three new Sydney-wide community radio licences on the FM band be made available for allocation, and that 1386 kHz be made available for an open narrowcasting service.

On 24 May 2001 the ABA decided to allocate three community broadcasting licences:

to Free Broadcast Inc. (youth), Muslim Community Radio (Muslim) and Gadigal Information Service Aboriginal Corporation (Indigenous). However, three other applicants for the licences were also able to satisfy the ABA that they had the capacity to provide their proposed services which also would meet the existing and perceived future needs of the community in the Sydney licence area.

This high level of capacity among a number of these applicants had not been readily apparent at the time of initial planning for community radio services for Sydney. Consequently, the ABA formed a preliminary view that an additional wide-coverage community radio service should be made available in Sydney.

A variation to the Sydney radio licence area plan determined that frequency 1386 kHz be made available as a community radio broadcasting service with a nominal transmitter site at Homebush Bay. Applications were invited for this licence on 15 July 2002 and eight applications were received. On 27 February 2003 the ABA decided not to allocate the licence as it

was satisfied that none of the eight applicants was able to satisfy all of the criteria.

The ABA became aware of concerns about electromagnetic radiation and electromagnetic compatibility, and possible health and safety issues relating to new residential developments located close to the nominal transmitter site in Homebush Bay.

The ABA decided that due to these problems, the frequency would not be made available for temporary community broadcasting licences and that these matters would be reviewed in 12 months.

Submissions to Review of Options on the Future Use of 1386 kHz for the Sydney Licence Area

The ABA welcomes written submissions from members of the public about to the applications received. Submissions should be lodged with the ABA by 5 pm on Monday, 21 June 2004. They can also be lodged by email: to info@aba.gov.au. Copies of submissions received will be displayed on the ABA’s web site.

