



News Update

Australia to send 50,000 radios to areas hit by tsunami

The Australian commercial radio industry is spearheading a mission to restore broadcast communications to survivors in tsunami-hit countries and is contributing up to 50,000 AM/FM portable radio sets to stricken areas.

Joan Warner, chief executive officer of industry body Commercial Radio Australia, said the initiative involved the donation of radio sets, fresh batteries and broadcasting equipment to survivors and broadcasters affected by the disaster, which has killed 150,000 people and left millions homeless.

Ms Warner said the industry had also offered a number of engineers to help set up temporary broadcasting facilities in disaster zones. The volunteer engineers would be sent in small groups for short periods of time. The industry has also coordinated the provision of seven transmitters.

'Indonesia's public broadcasters have said more than 30 of their employees are missing or feared dead, and many broadcasting facilities were severely damaged during the disaster,' Ms Warner said.

'Helping to restore radio communications to affected areas is a practical way the Australian industry can contribute to relief efforts and will provide a channel for authorities to communicate vital information about water, food and medical aid.'



Commercial Radio Australia has been liaising with the government's AusAID agency on logistical and health issues for the volunteer engineers and transport of the equipment.

Commercial Radio Australia has also gained the support of the Asia Pacific Broadcast Union (ABU) to coordinate the initiative through the region. The ABU, which represents 130 radio and television broadcasters in 54 countries, is asking its members to support the project by donating radios and broadcast equipment to Indonesia's Aceh region, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

One of the broadcasters that has been affected is Radio Republik Indonesia. It has managed to set up a temporary studio and AM and FM transmission facilities in Banda Aceh but requires emergency broadcast equipment and a minimum 5,000 portable radios for the homeless.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation has also requested FM radio receivers for survivors, while the Maldives needs battery-powered radio sets for eight temporary shelters each housing 500 to 3,000 people.

To date, 10,000 radio sets have arrived in the Maldives, 5,000 in Indonesia and 5,000 in Sri Lanka. These will be sent by local governments to most affected areas. A further shipment of radios is expected at the end of the month.

C and P programs

Programs granted C and P classification between 23 November 2004 and 20 January 2005. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact the ABA on (02) 9334 7700.

Program	Episodes	Program style	Program type	Country of origin	New/renewal	Class.	Decision date	Applicant
<i>Penny Drew</i> (series 1)	1 – 26	Live action/	Drama – Series Animation	Australia	New	PRC	20.12.04	Cloud 9 Screen Entertainment Group
<i>Playhouse Disney</i> (series 4)	1 – 50	Live action	Light entertainment – Variety	Australia	New	P	20.12.04	Walt Disney Television International (Aus/NZ)
<i>Wicked Science 2</i> (series 2)	14 – 26	Live action	Drama – Series	Australia	New	CD	20.12.04	Jonathan M Schiff Productions Pty Ltd

C – children's program, CD – C drama, P – preschool, PRC – provisional C, PRP – provisional P Class. – Classification