



ACMAsphere

Australia's regulator for broadcasting, the internet,
 radiocommunications and telecommunications

www.acma.gov.au

Issue 5 – February 2006

Chris Chapman: first ACMA Chair

The Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan announced on 30 January that she intended to recommend to the Governor-General that Chris Chapman be appointed as the inaugural Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the ACMA, for five years.



CHRIS CHAPMAN

Senator Coonan said she was delighted that Mr Chapman has agreed to join ACMA as its first Chairman and its CEO.

'He has relevant and diverse skills in broadcasting and telecommunications, as well as extensive legal, financial and management expertise. His significant experience will assist ACMA as it faces many challenges in the next few years from the rapid technological changes taking place in television, radio and other forms of the media', she added.

Mr Chapman, who has been Chief Operating Officer of specialist funds management activities at Babcock & Brown Limited, will start with ACMA on 27 February 2006.

'I'm delighted to be joining an organisation that has already established an impressive platform in a very short period of time. I'm also obviously pleased that the Minister saw the depth and variety of my broadcasting, online and telecommunication experiences as a key attraction,'

Mr Chapman said.

The Minister paid tribute to the Acting Chair, Lyn Maddock, who will return to her role as Deputy Chair when Mr Chapman assumes his position. 'Ms Maddock has been the Acting Chair since ACMA's inception and her energy and commitment to the Authority have been greatly appreciated during the transition,' Senator Coonan said.

Before his time with Babcock & Brown,

Mr Chapman has been Chief Executive, Prime Infrastructure Management Limited; Chief Executive Officer of Optus Ltd joint venture – Excite@Home Australia Pty Limited; Chief Executive Officer, Stadium Australia Management Limited; Chairman, Film Australia Limited; Director, National Film and Sound Archive and occupied various positions within the Seven Network Ltd. He has also practised as a solicitor.

REVIEW OF THE CHILDREN'S TELEVISION STANDARDS

ACMA is to undertake a full review of the Children's Television Standards.

The Children's Television Standards came into effect in January 1990. Although there have been substantial variations

to the standards since then, there has not been a major re-consideration of their policy underpinnings.

In announcing the review, Lyn Maddock, Acting ACMA Chair said: 'The objective of the children's television standards is to ensure that children have access to a variety of quality television programs made specifically for them.'

'With the development of new media in recent years, and the social changes that have accompanied that, ACMA wants to ensure that children's television needs are still being met in the most appropriate way.'

DISCUSSION PAPER

ACMA will first conduct research in 2006 that will inform the review and assist in developing a discussion paper. The discussion paper is expected to be released for public comment later this year, and its release will be widely advertised.

WIDE-RANGING ISSUES

ACMA expects that a wide-ranging review of this nature will attract considerable interest from the broadcasting and production industries, parents, teachers and other groups and

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CTS—PROVISION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

ACMA has included a new provision in the Children's Television Standards to make way for the extensive coverage planned for the Melbourne Commonwealth Games in March. A temporary provision, it allows the Nine Network and its affiliated stations to displace weekday preschool children's P programs from 16 to 24 March during the Games coverage only. Under the standards, commercial television stations must show children's C and preschool children's P programs in designated timeslots on weekdays. While broadcasters can displace C programs for live sporting events and events of national importance suitable for children in certain circumstances, P programming did not have this flexibility.

Children not missing out on their favourite programs

The network and affiliates are required to make up these programs during the weeks either side of the Games; to begin to notify the audience and their parents at least two weeks before the start of the Games coverage; and to advise when the displaced programs will be broadcast.

Consultation

Section 126 of the Broadcasting Services Act requires ACMA to seek public comment before determining, varying or revoking a program standard. In this case, one submission only was received, requesting confirmation that the proposed changes for the Commonwealth Games would also apply to licensees receiving programs from the Nine Network. The new provision, CTS25A, makes it clear that any licensee with the right to broadcast the Commonwealth Games live on a free-to-air television service is covered by the provision.

The mechanics of the changes Also changed is the substitution of ACMA for ABA, the former Australian Broadcasting Authority. As a result of re-making the Children's Television Standards, a minor consequential change to the Australian Content Standard has been made to ensure that past decisions about the classification of C programs and P programs remain in force.

REVIEW OF THE CHILDREN'S TELEVISION STANDARDS

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individuals with concerns for children's welfare. Issues likely to attract comment include:

- the current assessment process for children's and pre-school (C and P) classified programs
- the quota system
- the possibility of tradable rights.

The debate over children's obesity and the role of food advertising is certain to be an issue in the review.

There are competing views in the community over questions about what is in the best interests of children and ACMA expects to hear from all sides in relation to a number of controversial issues. Ms Maddock said that while

ACMA has no pre-conceived views, contentious issues of this kind will be considered in the context of relevant 'whole of government' public policy and public health initiatives and well-grounded, evidence-based research.

The review is likely to take 12 to 18 months to complete.

FOUR DECADES IN DEVELOPMENT

The Children's Television Standards reflect extensive community and industry consultation and have traditionally tried to balance:

- public interest concerns that children's special viewing needs are met
- the commercial television

industry's reliance on advertising revenue and

- the child audience's lack of earning or buying capacity. The standards reflect the long-standing policy in Australia that children are entitled to quality, age-specific and comprehensive programs geared to their special cognitive abilities and experiences.

The following table gives a brief outline of the history of children's television regulation.

The Children's Television Standards 2005 and the Broadcasting Services (Australian Content) Standard 2005 are on the ACMA website, www.acma.gov.au. (Go to Radio & TV > Content regulation > Television > Codes & Standards.)

The 1970s	C (children's) commercial television program classification introduced, along with regulations to ensure minimum amounts of age-specific, quality children's programming on Australian commercial television
1977	The former Australian Broadcasting Tribunal addressed the quality of children's programming on commercial television in its Self Regulation Inquiry.
1979	The birth of the C (children's) classification, C time and a Children's Program Committee, introduced to improve the quality and increase the quantity of children's programs.
The 1980s	Standards for children's television evolve, with minimum annual hours for children's programs, including Australian programs and rules for advertising.
1984	The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal introduced new standards following extensive public consultation and input by the Children's Program Committee. The standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out criteria for the C classification • required 50 per cent of C programs to be first-release Australian programs, with a minimum amount of new Australian children's drama broadcast each year • limited program repeats and advertising during C time, and • set a minimum of 30 minutes of preschool programs to be broadcast each weekday.
The 1990s	Revised standards stipulate there should be more new Australian children's drama. Programs are to be classified before broadcasting.
1990	Revised Children's Television Standards came into effect on 1 January 1990. They set the requirement for new Australian children's drama programs at 12 hours a year in 1990 and 16 hours a year after that. They also required P programs to be classified before broadcasting.
1996	In January, the Children's Television Standards were amended to include provisions relating to changes to the Australian Content Standard. The changes to the Children's Television Standards incorporated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a progressive increase of quality first-release Australian children's drama to 32 hours each year by 1998 • eight hours of repeat Australian children's drama each year, and • a requirement for all P programs to be Australian.
1992	Introduction of the Broadcasting Services Act and the Australian Broadcasting Authority, with requirements regarding children's television program standards for children's programs and Australian content for commercial television licensees.
1999	The ABA varied the Children's Television Standards, reflecting a new Australian content standard (Broadcasting Services (Australian Content) Standard 1999) relating to treating Australian and New Zealand programs equally. Both variations came into effect on 1 March 1999.
2000+	Variations continue; ACMA announces a full review of the standards.
2002	Further variations were made to the Children's Television Standards, following a review of the Australian Content Standard. The changes related to the removal of the primary school focus in the definition of children in CTS 1 and to the obligation of commercial television licensees to broadcast Australian children's drama.
2005	The ABA reviewed the Children's Television Standards to clarify technical drafting and minor policy issues. The variations defined key terms, adopted consistent terminology and ensured the standards were consistent with recent variations to Australian C drama quotas.
2006	ACMA to begin a full review of the Children's Television Standards.