



Metropolitan commercial TV met content quotas

ACMA recently published its 2006 local content compliance results, with all metropolitan commercial television licensees reporting that they met the Australian transmission quota and content requirements of the Australian Content Standard and Children's Television Standards for 2006.

All licensees exceeded the minimum 55 per cent Australian transmission quota—the Nine Network achieved more than 66 per cent in the Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane metropolitan markets, Network Ten averaged nearly 60 per cent in the five mainland state capital cities and the Seven Network averaged about 56 per cent in those markets.

All metropolitan commercial network licensees met the annual requirement of 250 points for first release Australian drama programs,

with Network Ten scoring 335 points in all markets, the Seven Network averaging 303 points and the Nine Network averaging 268 points.

The metropolitan networks also met all the quota requirements for children's programs in 2006, with QTQ Brisbane of the Nine Network fulfilling its undertaking to broadcast an additional 30 minutes of preschool children's (P) program during 2006 to make up for a shortfall during 2005.

The compliance results for 2006 are on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to For the public: Content & advertising > Broadcasting: About broadcasting content controls > TV content & advertising > TV content requirements > Australian content > Australian content compliance results).

Programming requirements

The Australian Content Standard and Children's Television Standards for commercial television specify:

- Australian programs must make up at least 55 per cent of all programming broadcast by a licensee between 6.00 am and midnight each year
- a licensee must broadcast at least 20 hours of first release Australian documentary programs each year
- a licensee must broadcast at least 260 hours of children's (C) programs each year
- a licensee must broadcast at least 130 hours of first release Australian C programs (50 per cent of total C requirement) each year
- a licensee must broadcast in the C band at least eight hours of repeat Australian C drama programs each year
- a licensee must broadcast at least 130 hours of Australian preschool (P) programs each year
- annual drama requirement—the drama scores for all first release Australian drama programs broadcast by a licensee in prime time in any year must total at least 250
- three-year drama requirement—the drama scores for all first release Australian drama programs broadcast by a licensee in prime time must be at least 860 over three years
- annual requirement C drama—a licensee must broadcast at least 25 hours of first release Australian children's drama programs each year and
- three-year requirement C drama—a licensee must broadcast in each three-year period at least 96 hours of first release Australian children's drama.

HDTV quota exceeded by more than 25 per cent

All free-to-air television broadcasters reported that they exceeded their quota requirements in 2006 for the broadcast of high definition television (HDTV) programs on their digital services by at least 26 per cent.

The HDTV quota of 1,040 hours per calendar year was introduced in 2003 for national and commercial television broadcasters as part of the conversion from analog to digital transmission that is currently under way in Australia.

Digital services allow broadcasters to provide significantly enhanced picture clarity and quality, through

the production of programs in high definition quality video.

Commercial television broadcasters are required to screen HDTV programs produced in high definition format to meet the quota. Popular prime-time programs broadcast in high definition in 2006 included *House* on the Ten Network, *Home and Away* on the Seven Network and *McLeod's Daughters* on the Nine Network.

The ABC and the SBS are permitted to convert their analog or standard definition digital programs to high definition digital format. In

2006, the SBS converted all the programs on its main channel to a high definition format (although its World News Channel was only broadcast in standard definition). The ABC converted all its programming to a high definition format from 9 February 2006.

All regional digital services have now started HDTV broadcasts, apart from the digital-only service in Mildura (MDV), which is required to start HDTV programming in January 2008.

Part 4 of Schedule 4 to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*

provides for broadcasters to meet HDTV quota standards. Each commercial or national television broadcasting service in a mainland metropolitan area is required to transmit a quota of 1,040 hours of HDTV programming per calendar year from 1 July 2003. The HDTV obligations for broadcasters in non-remote areas commenced two years after they began broadcasting in digital mode.

The number of HDTV hours broadcast by national and commercial television in mainland metropolitan areas for 2004 to 2006 are shown in the table. Compliance figures for individual broadcasters, including regional licensees, are on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to For licensees & industry: Licensing & regulation > Broadcasting: Broadcasting licensing > HDTV quota compliance).

Number of HDTV hours broadcast by national and commercial television broadcasters in mainland metropolitan areas, 2004 to 2006

Broadcasters	HDTV hours (range) 2004	HDTV hours (range) 2005	HDTV hours (range) 2006
ABC	1,758	2,456	7,601
Nine Network	1,349-1,371	1,817-1,842	1,760-1,812
SBS	6,550	6,888	7,310
Seven Network	1,442-1,463	1,566-1,642	2,087-2,144
Ten Network	1,071	1,274	1,318