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20 clients are Channel Nine in Melbourne and the Sydney station 2UW. He concedes that building a client base is a slow process, but said BNA is on the verge of signing two more 'very significant' clients.

Asked about plans for expansion, for example in the area of voice news services, Milne said that BNA's primary business was the provision of information electronically. It is however also providing 'read to air' services to a total of 39 stations around the country via the Australian Radio Network satellite facility, ARNSAT. Milne said that further expansion in this area was unlikely, since there was 'no money in it'. □

The Budget and the Broadcasters

The 1994-95 budget papers contain strong hints that the Government expects the national broadcasters to continue efforts to maximise their revenue from their commercial activities.

The Government noted that the ABC expects to raise a gross revenue from 'independent sources (mainly commercial activities) of around \$90m' in 1994-95. SBS is expected to raise \$13.3m gross this year, of which \$8.1m is to come from advertising.

SBS advertising revenue had grown from \$3.5m net in 92/93 to \$5.4m in 93/94. SBS spokesperson Robert Stokes said that the volume of ads is still 'nowhere near' the five minutes in the hour that the network is permitted to carry, partly because advertisers remain wary of the network's 'block advertising' approach.

The ABC and the SBS both told *CU* they were satisfied with the budget outcome, and in particular with the Government's continued commitment to triennial funding, guaranteeing them a level of funding until 1997-98. Continued exemption from the Efficiency Dividend was also welcomed.

ABC spokesperson Roger Grant said that although the ABC's appropriation had fallen from \$532m in 93/94 to \$515m in 94/95 this was because there had been two special, one-off payments last year - \$12.5m for pay TV, and about \$3m to cover an extra pay period in the financial year. From the ABC's point of view, Grant said, they had 'got the best possible deal'. The SBS received \$75m for 94-95, and will receive an additional \$1m on top of its base funding for each year of the triennium.

Teleworking Gets Boost

Working at home and feeling isolated? Help may be at hand.

The Asia Pacific Telework Association Inc (APTA) is a new organisation formed late last year to further the cause of teleworking in all its forms in the Asia Pacific region.

The aims of the organisation include:

- co-operatively promoting the benefits of teleworking to governments, the private sector and the public;
- enabling members to communicate with each other, with clients and other groups by means of a low cost electronic mail network;
- identifying and supporting disabled and disadvantaged groups which could benefit from teleworking;
- providing advice on all aspects of the planning and implementation of telecommuting, teleworking and telecottages projects.

APTA will produce a regular newsletter and members will also receive the UK magazine *Teleworker*. It has arranged with two leading electronic mail providers for members, as part of their membership subscription, to have an electronic mailbox providing access not only to other members but to the whole Internet for e-mail and news groups. Initial membership will allow the opening of the mailbox and two free hours of connect time. APTA is also investigating low cost STD call options such as AUSTPAC to assist members away from major centres.

APTA is operated by a steering committee, assisted by a 19-member advisory board which includes people from legal firms, unions, the media, tertiary education, communications, and public interest groups.

Subscription costs are \$250 (corporate), \$100 for an individual teleworker, \$50 concession. Contact: APTA, PO Box N542, Grosvenor Place, Sydney 2000. Phone inquiries to the steering committee member Nick Hough (02) 241 2933 fax 241 5354. □

THE HIGHWAY

