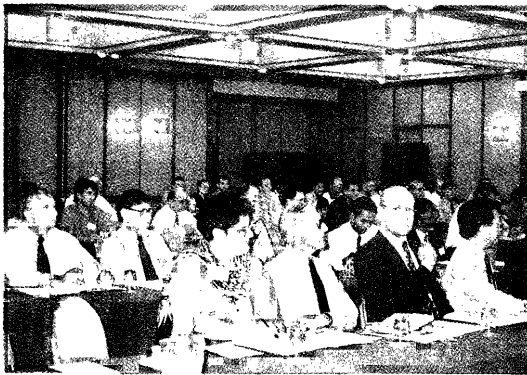




**ABA, Manager, Planning Engineering, Mr Bob Greeney reports back from the the ABA's inaugural planning seminar, held at Rydges Canberra, 24 February 1997.**

# ABA planning seminar

**Right: ABA member, Ms Kerrie Henderson, Mr Allan Williams from Phillips, ABA member, Mr Tim O'Keefe.**



**Middle: ABA member, Ms Kerrie Henderson; Mr Allan Williams from Phillips; ABA Planning Branch, Mr Teck Lee; Mr Joe Anderson from Community radio 2GLF; ABA Chairman, Mr Peter Webb; ABA General Manager, Corporate services and planning, Mr Colin Knowles.**



**Right: Industry and government mix at the ABA's inaugural planning seminar.**



The ABA's inaugural planning seminar provided both ABA planners and industry representatives with an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas.

Keynote speaker, ABA Chairman, Mr Peter Webb in opening the inaugural seminar, outlined the ABA's planning progress to date. The ABA has allocated second licences to 49 of the 55 eligible commercial radio stations throughout regional Australia; finalised the equalisation of television services in Tasmania; licensed more than sixteen hundred open narrowcasting services including approximately forty high power AM and medium power FM open narrowcasting services; and licensed temporary community television services in eight capital city or regional cities.

Mr Webb also reported the ABA has concluded the licence area planning in all group one licence areas. He concluded his opening remarks by referring to the role of the ABA in the planning process for digital services, indicating that the planning processes will begin soon for both digital radio and digital television services.

Other speakers at the seminar included ABA officers from Planning, Research and the licence allocations areas; spectrum planners from the Spectrum Management Agency; and guest speakers from the WA Premier's Department, and from Radio Frequency Systems (RFS) and John S Innes Pty. Ltd.

ABA speakers outlined methods for planning FM radio services, including discussions on interference between FM radio and Band III television services; aeronautical services in the adjacent frequency bands, and elements of AM planning; field strength prediction ▶

Copies of all papers presented at the seminar are available from the ABA price \$15. Call 1800 226 667

methods; allocation of community broadcasting licences; standards and guidelines applicable to broadcasting services; international plans for broadcasting satellites; attitudinal research in broadcasting planning.

The paper from the WA Premier's Department looked at the need to 'listen to the listener and see the viewer's viewpoint'.


Mr John Innes looked at developments in the design of AM transmission antennas: at how designers might reduce the sky-wave component of their transmissions and hence reduce some

night time interference between AM services.

Mr Robin Blair from RFS introduced many in the audience to the problems of designing practical filters for adjacent channel operation of digital television services in the presence of analog television services. Currently, practical filters are quite large and there is still a lot of work to be done before the design of these filters will have reached the stage where everyone will be satisfied.

And finally the SMA looked at their relationship with the ABA and broad-

casters, describing the SMA's frequency assignment processes as well as outlining aspects of spectrum planning.

In closing the seminar, Colin Knowles, ABA General Manager, Planning and Corporate Services expressed his delight with the general response to the inaugural Planning Seminar, and indicated that it is hoped to make these seminars a regular feature on the ABA's annual calendars. He said the next seminar is likely to look at issues related to the policies and planning for the introduction of digital radio and television services over the next few years. 

**ABA Update presents highlights from the speech given by ABA Chairman, Mr Peter Webb, at the ABA's inaugural broadcasting planning seminar.**

## Planning for digital television and radio

The planning process for digital services needs to be properly constructed as to avoid the difficulties under which analog planning has laboured for the past few years.

The ABA hopes to be in a position shortly to propose to the Government both a procedure for coming to terms with digital television and some suggestions for policy settings.

In digital radio, the ABA's Digital Task Force has produced a very good report about how digital radio might best be

introduced into Australia and the Minister for Communications and the Arts is soon to receive a report from an advisory committee on the same topic.


The ABA looks forward to working with the Minister and his Department on mapping out the digital future.

The ABA has faced legislative difficulties in trying to achieve efficient planning of new analog services.

In order to accommodate digital television and digital radio, it will be necessary for the Broadcasting Services Act to be renovated. The task of getting the legis-

lative policy right will commence soon and it will be important for parliamentarians to join in the process early.

The ABA will tackle its role in the process of introducing digital services in an open and consultative way and is prepared to assist the Parliament with any information or advice that will make its job easier.

A sober assessment of the issues, coupled with expectations that are grounded in reality rather than hope, or hype, will return good dividends for the Australian community. 

## Channels for community-funded re-transmission in Perth

The ABA is willing to consider making channels available for community-funded re-transmission services to improve television reception problems in Perth.

The ABA is aware of reception difficulties faced by some Perth viewers, particularly in the foothills areas, but has not planned additional transmission facilities at this stage as the television licensees have indicated they are not interested in providing such services.

Perth already has the maximum three commercial television services and the


ABA's consultation process focussed on the prospect of improving television reception in some areas of Perth where it is not the best.

Regrettably, the commercial television licensees are not presently inclined to take corrective action, preferring to wait for the advent of ghost cancelling technology in receivers.

The ABA is in the hands of the market as to whether corrective transmission facilities will be financed by licensees.

Ghost cancelling technology may resolve reception problems for television

reception in the future where ghosting is the major problem. While the technology is not commercially available in receivers at the present time, it may become a viable option within two years.

The ABA's decisions are contained in the television licence area plan for Perth metropolitan television. 

**Details of the television licence area plan for Perth metropolitan are available for viewing at major public libraries, or can be obtained from the ABA by calling Freecall 1800 810 241.**