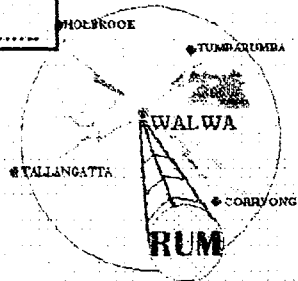


**Radio  
Upper  
Murray**

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House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts	
Secretary:.....	Submission No: 120
<b>RECEIVED</b>	Received: 26/10/00
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS	

88.7 &  
107.7 FM



A Project of Upper Murray Community Radio Inc. (No. A0030970H) ABN 65841700385.

## COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO RADIO SERVICES

The Committee Secretary,  
House of Communications Committee,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra.

23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2000.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Committee of Management, members, staff and listeners of this station, I would like to submit the following to the forthcoming inquiry.

The truly "local" commercial radio station of years ago basically no longer exists – with rare exceptions – having been absorbed into one of a small number of networks operating around the country, with programming originating from one or other of the capital cities, and local content non-existent, or of a minor nature.

The role of the "local" radio station has now been undertaken by community radio stations, in many cases covering areas never contemplated by commercial organisations, and allowing communities and areas to have their "own" station, where this would have been unthinkable in the commercial radio arena, even years ago.

This "localised" broadcasting base enables a broadcasting service, on a close, personal, neighbourly basis, to be provided, particularly in areas such as ours, where reception from stations outside the area is generally poor quality.

Despite these changing roles of commercial and community stations - particularly in the provision of a truly local service – community radio is treated as the "poor relation" of the sector.

Whilst the economics of paid versus volunteer staff enables community stations to operate, even greater and more efficient services could be provided if more assistance were provided for their operation.

The Australian Broadcasting Authority has an off hand, cavalier approach to community radio, with last-minute decisions/notifications regarding licences and other matters creating unnecessary difficulties for community stations.

In addition there have been several cases of community stations being ordered to change their frequency to an extent necessitating the purchase of new transmitters, with no suggestion – automatic or by negotiation – of compensation, despite the fact that the former frequency, being in a more “favoured” area of the frequency range, is then sold to the commercial sector, frequently for many millions of dollars.

It seems that, even in the administration of the broadcasting sector, the mighty dollars speak loudly!

We would ask that, whilst considering the role, if any, of commercial radio in the local area, more credit and acknowledgement of the contribution of community radio be given, in providing a full range of entertainment, information, support services and emergency roles to their local communities.

From this acknowledgement of the role played by community radio could come support for increased resources being provided to the sector, which would seem to be in line with the current bi-partisan support for increased and improved services, in many areas, for rural Australia.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harley Beith', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Harley Beith (Mrs.)  
Secretary.