

## **Introduction**

### **Ourselves**

In making this submission we wish to introduce ourselves.

Bundaberg Broadcasters Pty. Ltd. is an independent regional radio broadcaster, which commenced broadcasting on the 16 December 1935. We operate a commercial AM radio licence (4BU – SL4169); a commercial FM radio licence (4RUM – SL6897) and in an endeavour to provide a “niche” program and to provide diversity and localism we operate narrowcast licences which use a country and western format and not a commercial format.

We are members of both the Australian Association of Independent Regional Radio Broadcasters (IRB) and the Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters (FARB). We acknowledge that both these organisations have provided submissions. We have contributed to both of these submissions and support both.

## **Our Region**

We are a regional centre, and our licences cover Bundaberg, Bargara, Childers and some outlying rural areas, giving us a potential licensing audience of 68,000.

Bundaberg lies on the south-east coast of Queensland. The city is at the centre of one of Queensland's largest sugar districts and has lent its name to the rum that is made from the local sugar. Our Licence Area includes almost 8% of Australia's sugar crop. Sugar is also milled and refined in Bundaberg.

Horticultural production is also now almost as important or if not, of equal importance to the local economy as sugar production. As well as being one of Australia's largest tomato growing areas, the region also grows avocados, beans, capsicum, zucchini, squash, cucumber, watermelon, pineapples, mangoes and macadamia nuts.

The area grows beef and dairy cattle, pigs and poultry. The local fishing industry exports to Asian markets and our brewed soft drinks are exported. Bundaberg is also the southern gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and tourism is a growth sector.

Our area has a high proportion of children and teenagers and a high level of home ownership.

Agriculture is a major form of employment in the area. The sugar refinery and distillery contribute to the city's manufacturing base, which in turn contributes to our industrial sector.

## **Radio in our area**

Bundaberg and its outlying area, today, have a broad diversity of choice. This region has a choice of:

Four national radio services – Radio National, Classic FM, Triple J and “local” ABC. Two commercial stations are on air- 4BU (AM service SL4169), 93.9 HITZFM (FM service SL6897) and a third commercial station SEAFM is to commence in the near future.

One racing station – 4TAB.

One community station – Coral Coast Community Radio.

Many narrowcasting stations – such as 97.1 (CQFM); Beat FM; The Heat and various others.

Section 40 licences are also available in this area.

With broadcast signals spilling over from other licence areas, the number of services received in this region is even greater than those quoted.

The public purse is funding the national radio services and contributing towards the community station. With such a small number of listeners and local businesses available to fund the other licences, viability must be acknowledged and the ability to provide localism is extremely vulnerable. The community station, which contributes to diversity and plays an important role in complementing other services, would not

be capable of assuming the role of a commercial radio. This is not just a matter of money but of restructure.

Our area also receives the services of three commercial television stations, two national television stations and also the services of pay television. The services of the Internet are also available. With all the radio broadcasting services, television services and the Internet, diversity is provided. More services would not necessarily mean more localism.

## **Localism**

Since our conception we have always contributed to localism. Of all the media, commercial radio plays the most important role of supporting localism. This is how we have provided and are providing localism.

With reference to local programs, 92% of our AM programs are local and 86% of our FM programs are local. We provide frequent outside broadcasts. We pride ourselves on being local.

We support community services by providing free community announcements. Some of the services are Apex; Lions; Junior Chamber; Rotary; Medical Research Groups such as Cancer, Leukemia etc.; local charities, schools and numerous other community service organisations.

Some of the committees we are members of and in which we participate:

Bundaberg Field Day  
Bundaberg and District AP&I Society  
Isis District AP&I Society  
Mt Perry AP&I Society  
Gin Gin AP&I Society  
Mt. Perry Rodeo Committee  
Dallarnil Rodeo Committee  
Bundaberg Rodeo Committee  
Gin Gin Rodeo Committee  
Bundaberg Chamber of Commerce  
Bundaberg & District Tourism and Development Board  
Community Area Disaster Committee  
Police Media Liaison Committee

Local events which we co-ordinate, host, support or sponsor:

The local Carols by Candlelight  
Bundaberg Thunder Power Boat Races  
Extreme Summer Carnival  
Siren of the Surf  
Summer Time Surf Girl  
4BU Cycling Spectacular  
Coral Coast Turtle Festival  
Coral Coast Community Radio  
Veteran Affairs and National Servicemen

Local Government Conferences.

McHappy Day

Media Charity Golf Days

Mayor's Christmas Appeal

We are on call, on a 24 hour basis, to report on urgent matters such as, road closures, floods, fires, major accidents, cyclones, winds, government warnings, and any major disaster or police matter.

We provide a communication centre for all disasters. The public expect us to be able to provide them with up to the minute information and this we do by manning our broadcasting centre, both on and off air.

We provide free airtime to any parliamentarian or local government councillor to put forward or announce a policy.

Our local journalist covers local issues, ie sport, community events.

We have staff members who are actively involved with voluntary community committees.

We provide compares for local charity events.

We provide educational tours of our broadcasting facilities.

We take work experience students.

We provide a free/low cost recording studio facility for local talent

Being local we are able to get advertisements to air at short notice. This we consider is a strength of the radio.

With reference to employment and career opportunities, as we are local we are able to contribute to the local economy by employing 29 people. We offer a training ground for the industry. Many managers of other stations and some of Australia's top announcers, commenced their careers with us or have they have spent some time with us .

While we remain independent, and are viable, we are able to provide localism, employment and career paths for many.