

Richmond Shire Council

50 Goldring Street, Richmond, N.O. 4822
P.O. Box 18
Telephone (07) 4741 3277
Facsimile (07) 4741 3308



Please address all communications to the Chief Executive Officer

Secretary:.....

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27 OCT 2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND
THE ARTS

Our Ref.:

Your Ref.:

25th October, 2000

The Committee Secretary
House Communications Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,

Re: RADIO INDUSTRY INQUIRY

Reference is made to the abovementioned matter. Please find enclosed herewith Submission to the Radio Industry Inquiry on behalf of the Richmond Shire Council.

Yours faithfully,

R. John Scarce
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Communications,
Transport and the Arts

Submission No: *143*

Date Received: *27/10/00*

Secretary: *Janet Holmes*

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RADIO INDUSTRY INQUIRY - SUBMISSION

The Richmond Shire Council covers an area of 27,000 km² with a population of approximately 1200. The main centre is the township of Richmond, where approximately 80% of the population reside.

Richmond's only radio service is the ABC via 4JK and Council has installed via self help, 4TAB which is transmitted to the township only. To provide this service, the Shire has to rent a licence from a firm in Dubbo, New South Wales. The Shire found this necessary when the ABC ceased racing broadcasting.

The Shire also owns via self help, 3 television stations, being Imparja, SBS and Central 7. The ABC owns and operates their own TV re-transmission.

While one firm in Dubbo NSW owns a number of existing licences throughout the country areas and is not prepared to utilize them, there is very little limited chance of non-metropolitan radio broadcasting. The firm will of course rent them at a nominated fee.

A second radio station would enhance the quality of life of the residents of Richmond. Providing a much needed variety, options and differing ideas.

Having only one choice in radio stations, does not allow the community to hear alternative points of view, topics, news services and cultural activities.

Our closest commercial radio is Charters Towers to the east and Mount Isa to the west and Longreach to the south, none of which can be received on normal radio equipment in Richmond. Commercial radio usually involves communities considerably more than the ABC talkback programmes etc. and being able to ring in with comments etc, as well as local businesses being able to advertise their product and business.

Regional Australia does not want anything more than our city cousins. In fact, half the reason for living in regional areas is to get away from the negative aspects of the city. What regional Australia requires, is the option to have what services we choose. Regional Australia does not want Government to pay for the service, just to facilitate it. For example, if Richmond wanted to put in a community radio station tomorrow, it should be able to do so, without having to either purchase or rent a licence from someone, purely for commercial gain.

The freeing up of licence restrictions, may see improvement to services in Regional Australia, without much effort.