

17 January 2001

Ms Janet Holmes
The Inquiry Secretary
House Communications Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Janet

During our recent appearance before the Committee we were presented with three Questions on Notice on which we undertook to provide the Committee members with further information.

The answers to the questions are provided below:

1. A comparison between the normal hours of networking on 2TM/2TTM Tamworth, 2VM/2NOW Moree and 2MO/2GGG Gunnedah and the service provided during the recent floods.

2MO/2GGG (Gunnedah)

2MO is local from 6am to 6pm (50%) during weekdays and from 6am to midday (25%) on weekends. 2GGG is local from 6am to 2pm (33%) on weekdays and is 100% networked on weekends.

During the recent floods, as the crisis worsened, local programming was gradually extended to 75% on 2MO and 50% on 2GGG to allow for the broadcast of hourly, and in some cases half-hourly, warnings from local State Emergency Services and police. Outside of that time, networked programming was regularly interrupted with similar updated warnings, a situation which continued for about three weeks.

2VM/2NOW (Moree)

2VM is local from 5am to 7pm on weekdays and 6am to midday on weekends. 2NOW is local from 6am to 6pm on weekdays and 6am to midday on weekends. While the Moree stations did not extend local programming on either station during the flood crisis, it regularly interrupted both the local and networked programming, generally at one-hour intervals (half hourly during the peak) to broadcast warnings provided by local emergency services. These warnings continued on a regular basis for some three weeks until the flood crisis passed.

2TM/2TTM (Tamworth)

Both Tamworth stations are local from 5am to 6pm on during weekdays and 6am to midday on weekends. During the recent flood crisis the station broke into network programming to broadcast warnings provided by the local emergency services and at the peak of the crisis dropped network programming totally for about 24 hours to provide listeners with regular updates of the situation.

2. The percentage of programming locally sourced versus networked?

As indicated to the Committee, FARB surveyed its regional members in gathering information for its submission to the Inquiry to ascertain the level of networking. Of the 201 stations in regional markets, 154 (76%) responded to the questionnaire.

From these responses the following table shows the percentage of weekly airtime which is networked/syndicated:

Percentage of airtime networked/syndicated	Number & percentage of stations receiving network/syndicated programs - WEEKDAYS	Number & percentage of stations receiving network/syndicated programs - WEEKENDS
75% - 100%	62 (40.20%)	84 (54.50%)
50% - 75%	26 (17.00%)	3 (2.00%)
25% - 50%	21 (13.60%)	13 (8.50%)
0% - 25%	45 (29.20%)	54 (35.00%)

3. The number of licence areas in which there is only one commercial operator?

The attached table shows the licence areas with one commercial owner, their network affiliation (if applicable) plus licence areas with multiple ownership and again, their network affiliation.

I trust these answers address the questions raised by the Committee members. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Kind regards

Graeme Carroll
Manager Public Affairs