



Public hearing in Canberra – 29 November

Tuning into community broadcasting

Sponsorship and licensing issues for the community radio sector and access to digital spectrum for community television will be the focus of discussions at a public hearing in Canberra this Wednesday. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) will appear before the Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts as part of the inquiry into community broadcasting in Australia.

ACMA is responsible for the regulation of broadcasting, radiocommunications, telecommunications and online content.

The framework by which ACMA regulates the broadcasting sector is set out in the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (BSA). The BSA sets out arrangements by which ACMA plans the availability of spectrum for broadcasting services and allocates broadcasting licences, and broadcasting services licence conditions. The current regulatory arrangements have enabled the development of the wide range of community radio services currently operating in most areas of Australia, and the provision of community television in several areas.

Committee Chair Jackie Kelly said “Community radio and television is a dynamic sector in Australia and provides vital services to many remote, disadvantaged and special interest groups. Licensing and sponsorship regulations are two significant issues for many community broadcasters. Access to digital spectrum for community television is crucial for the continuation of those services”.

She added “The Committee has been inspired by the passion of many community broadcasters and the work of the volunteers that support them. The inquiry is looking to ensure that Australia maintains the vibrancy and diversity of community broadcasting”.

The inquiry into community broadcasting was referred by the Federal Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan. The Committee is investigating a range of issues including content and programming requirements, cultural diversity, meeting the needs of special interest groups, and technological opportunities and threats.

Public Hearing Program – Wednesday 29 November

Venue: Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra

9.05 am Australian Communications and Media Authority (Submission 115)

Further details on the inquiry, including the terms of reference, membership of the Committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/cita or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4601 or emailing cita.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment, please contact Emily Tinson (Jackie Kelly’s media officer) on (02) 6277 2369 or (02) 4732 2844

For background information, please contact the Committee Secretary, on (02) 6277 4601