

The Committee Secretary,
House of Representatives Communications Committee,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA ACT 2600

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts
Submission No: 121
Date Received: 26/10/00
Secretary: <i>Janet Holmes</i>

Subject: Radio Industry Enquiry.

Secretary:.....
RECEIVED
26 OCT 2000
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND
THE ARTS

Dear Sir/Madame,

It has come to my notice that an enquiry and report on the adequacy of radio services in regional and rural Australia, is to be conducted. In view of the current situation, this has come as no surprise to me, and in fact is a welcome process in the opinions of many.

I wish to briefly bring to the notice of your committee, something which appears as a gross anomaly in respect to apparent faulty administration, and blatant unfairness is concerned, with the allocation of radio frequencies in the Central Victorian region.

A frequency to which I now refer is 88.7 MHz FM. After a period of fifteen years or so of broadcasting by Central Victorian Gospel Radio on this and other wavelengths, continuation of transmissions ceased on March 31st, 2000, at the direction of the responsible authority. That same frequency was reallocated to another organisation, and has remained silent ever since. CVGR in its own right as a broadcaster has therefore also been silenced.

I have it on good and proper authority, that many folk have written to ABA [Australian Broadcasting Authority], including myself, pleading for reasons of such action, and asking for further consideration of the matter, to no avail. In the few cases where ABA have replied, considerable variations with no clear meaning apparently occur. The only clear cut reason for taking away the channel seemed to suggest such transmissions were unimportant and of low priority, not to mention a certain degree of ambiguity contained in the letters.

Until cessation of programs, a Christian network of human relationships within society had been established within range of the emitted signals. It was very evident by anyone listening to programs, that many people of all ages received a great deal of comfort and spiritual guidance from the dedicated presenters. It is understood that the station telephone log records several hundred persons making contact each month, seeking help of some nature. No doubt the head of CVGR staff could testify to this.

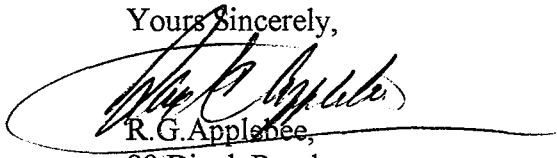
There was undoubtedly an incalculable amount of social benefit, and favourable influence bestowed upon the community over a wide area. Now there lies a void in this media. Satan is having a field day, and surely someone will pay.

CVGR was transmitting on a twenty four hour each day basis, on subject matter which is virtually unavailable elsewhere. Even after many hundreds of signatories to a petition, and pleading letters, still we are being deprived of access to a means of receiving biblical teaching over the air; so important to many, especially the elderly, those who are isolated and unable to attend places of religious worship, and in some cases the physically impaired.

It is my earnest plea that an enquiry be made into the system of frequency allocations, with special attention being given to those only being used on some occasions, the number of justifiable allocations to any one particular person or body, and in particular, reasons for granting 88.7 FM to a body already broadcasting on other frequencies, including an AM station which reaches as far north from Melbourne as Echuca at any time of the day or night.

With all these things in mind, it is hoped that some day soon the people of Central Victoria may again be given the opportunity to listen to a program they so much cherished in the past.

I remain,
Yours Sincerely,



R. G. Applebee,
90 Dinah Road,
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VICTORIA 3451

October 15th, 2000