

Secretary:.....

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON

COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND

THE ARTS

Committee Secretary,
Radio Industry Inquiry

House of Representatives Standing Committee
R1 Suite 116 Parliament House,
Canberra A.C.T. 2600.

" Killara,"

Bingara. n.s.w. 2404.

25th October, 2000.

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

Submission No: 230

Date Received: 1/11/00

Secretary: Janet Holmes

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing regarding the Radio Industry Inquiry into the adequacy of radio services in regional and Rural Australia and the extent to which there is a need for the Government to take action in relation to the quantity and the quality of radio services in regional and rural Australia.

I preface my submission by stating my name, address and contact details :

Miss Julie Butler.

" Killara,"

Bingara. n.s.w. 2404.

Phone / Fax ; (02) 67247121.

I am a grazier and poet and it is on these two areas I will base my submission. I have a Bachelor Of Arts Degree, and I am a member of the following poetry organisations ;

1. Writing Fellow with the Fellowship Of Australian Writers (NSW).
2. The Jiffy Bag Poets.
3. The Poets Union (NSW).
4. The NSW Writers' Centre.
5. The New England Writers Centre.
6. The Regional Poets Co-Operative.
7. Network (QLD).
8. Friends of the ABC (VIC).
9. Member of the International Congress Of Poets.
10. Distinguished Member of The International Society Of Poets.

My poetry has been published in Australia, U.S.A., Germany , United Kingdom and India. My poetry has been widely broadcast on ABC Radio and numerous commercial radio stations in NSW, QLD, South Australia, and also to East Timor on Radio National.

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It is of grave concern to me the state that the quantity and quality of radio services in regional and rural Australia has fallen, to, particularly since Radio Station 2SM in Sydney centralised country radio in February this year. This has been a disaster of unequalled proportion of anything to have occurred in radio in this country. Radio listeners only have the choice of ABC Radio and some 2SM based commercial radio station. There is no consideration given to country listeners on 2SM Radio at all. Local news services have all but vanished, no sporting coverage, no rural market reports and commodity service announcements, and no other form of local content at all, with very few community service announcements.

Before centralisation in February we had an outstanding radio program of talkback with presenter Paul Tolley that served the wide and varied interests of NSW / QLD listeners. I was Paul Tolley's Resident Poet for two and a quarter years - now there is no outlet for poetry at all on the current radio network of 2SM. Paul Tolley's program had many poets from all walks of life read their own poetry which was greatly enjoyed by the vast network of listeners to his program. Paul Tolley's Program was suited to all regional and rural Australia with serious talkback on current issues, rural issues, up to the minute weather information, storm and flood warnings, fire warnings, entertaining, educational and informative, dealing with the issues that affected people in his listening area. Now there is nothing - a huge black hole and void.

Country People depend on the radio for up to date information vital to running a viable agricultural business, Radio reaches people everywhere - in the house, while driving in their vehicles, on their tractors in the paddocks. Radio is the only medium that does this effectively and the loss of the quantity and quality of radio services in regional and rural Australia is abhorrent.

The adequacy of radio services by commercial radio in regional and rural Australia as it now stands is disgraceful and the worst since radio came to Australia and I urge the Government to take immediate and decisive action before it is too late to rectify the glaring problems that exist. ABC Radio does a marvellous job and there should be no cuts to its budget or services provided.

The radio of today is the future of all our tomorrows.

Thanking you.

Yours faithfully,

Julie Butler.B.A.

J. A. Butler.