

**Cooloola Christian Radio**  
FM 91.5  
**'The Positive Alternative'**  
4GCR

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Submission No. 20

14 March, 2006

The Secretary  
Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the  
Arts  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

Sir/Madam

**Community Broadcasting Inquiry**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the enclosed document regarding the experience of Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated.

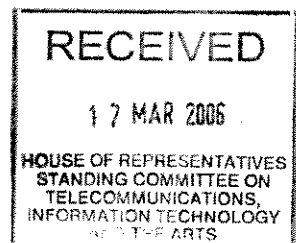
Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated is a small community radio station but feel we have an important role in the Gympie community especially in the life of the Christian community and in the occurrence of natural disasters.

Please find enclosed, the documents we have produced to address the first two terms of reference. We hope these will be of help to your inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Thomason  
Manager, Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated

Enc.



## **“Tuning into Community Broadcasting”**

### **Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated**

#### ***The scope and role of Australian community broadcasting across radio, television, the internet and other broadcasting technologies:***

The predominant community of interest that Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated broadcasts to is the Christian community. However, we welcome non-Christian listeners and have heard many reports of how the content of our broadcasts have been appreciated by them.

Christians are generally inadequately served by other media as the opinions commonly held and expressed by presenters do not uphold Christian values and /or ethics and Christian values are often held up as subjects of ridicule more and more these days. Christian parents need entertainment and information broadcast in a manner which is not going to undermine the values upheld in their homes and which compliments the way they are endeavouring to raise their children. Youth need programming which does not subject them to the use of coarse language and yet challenges them on the issues of life. Cooloola Christian Radio Station gives them opportunities to take part in that programming and training so that they can become presenters, delivering the content to other youth.

Over several years now; youth have been trained in various skills within the radio station. One in particular now has a career in Adelaide as a presenter. More recently a couple of others have obtained cadetships at a bigger station on the Sunshine Coast.

However, the radio station encourages people of all ages to participate in their area of interest and the volunteers currently range in age from fifteen to seventy odd.

Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated is entirely operated with the skills of volunteers. Some people have served since the very beginnings of the station others have come on board in the last few weeks. Some of the positions these people fill include presenters, radio technicians, IT, administration, bookkeeping, reception, maintenance and management. Currently there are thirty-five volunteers in the team who keep the station running. On average seven people a year have been trained in various capacities and many have used these skills in different areas of the community.

Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated has 200 financial supporters. Association membership is open to anybody and all are encouraged to attend meetings and volunteer their time and effort.

## COOLOOLA CHRISTIAN RADIO ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

There are several programs that cater for the general community. These include programs which highlight the interests of people in our community and community notices on behalf of hospital auxiliary groups and the Red Cross, among others.

Cooloola Christian Radio Station played a vital role in the last major flood in the Gympie area in 1999. The local commercial radio station was unmanned as it occurred after office hours. As the flood waters came; many local people were observing and measuring the rising water and noting any bridge closures. They telephoned Cooloola Christian Radio Station with their reports and as a result the community was kept up to date and many businesses on Mary Street (the main retail area in Gympie) were able to save stock and valuables which would otherwise have been damaged or lost in the imminent floodwaters. Many people, who had never tuned into the radio station before, listened that night.

Gordon Thomason, manager of Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated is a member of the Disaster Planning Committee.

Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated has a good relationship with many of the charities, has a good working relationship with the local council, and liaises with local Christian schools and churches of all denominations.

Recently Gordon Thomason (manager) worked in conjunction with a local school to produce recordings of bird sounds which are now used by staff and students on PowerPoint presentations.

One of the local Christian schools has just helped us by distributing a survey we have just produced to ascertain the listening habits and comments of the community to enable our policy of continuous improvement in our broadcast.

**COOLOOLA CHRISTIAN RADIO ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**

***Content and programming requirements that reflect the character of Australia and its cultural diversity;***

For several years now Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporation has been broadcasting news delivered with content relevant to the Christian community. This was brought in as a direct response to the request of the local Christian community.

This fills a particular need in our community as certain news items are never covered in the secular media available to Gympie and the surrounding area.

As discussed formerly in the submission; our part in informing the community in times of flood or disaster is not to be underestimated as the local commercial radio station is not manned except in business hours.

We are the only community based radio station found in Gympie. We broadcast at least nine hours of locally produced programs per week, extra if interviews have been prepared. Included are many notices for local churches, Christian groups and community based organisations including Gympie & District Landcare and Little Haven Palliative Care.

We support Australian artists wholeheartedly. We play their music on a daily basis, interview them when they come to town and advertise any performances they hold locally. Many of our locals also have spots on our program speaking encouraging messages.

Cooloola Christian Radio Association Incorporated encourages racial diversity; the Christian message is available to all races and cultures without preference.