

Wednesday March 14, 2001.

Ian A Howat
PO Box 1382,
Busselton WA 6280.
Howat@netserv.net.au

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts
Submission No: ...280.....
Date Received:
Secretary:

House of Representatives'
Communications Committee,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600.

Dear Committee,

An article in today's "West Australian" newspaper explaining your committees activities in this State has prompted me to write to you with the complaint that radio transmission services in the rural areas of the southern half of this State are unreasonably poor.

My work contracting maintenance services to Telstra means that I spend 9 months per year in rural and remote areas south from the 25th parallel and east to the SA border visiting every Telstra facility at least once each year. Like most Australians I expect to be able to access ABC radio to keep abreast of current affairs, weather forecasts etc. Well it doesn't happen! There are vast regions that are simply black holes for any services let alone ABC and in the main reasonable reception can only be obtained at night, and mostly then from SA or Vic stations denying us relevant local information. I think it is fair to say that I can access Radio national about 50% of the time only.

The technology to give coverage has existed for decades, I can only assume that it is not matched by political will. Rural and remote people are insignificant numerically compared to the major population centres but we are Australians and not 2nd class citizens. We have lost our Short Wave facilities, Radio Australia which was an alternative seems to have died; it really is time to do something positive and immediate for us.

Yours faithfully,



Secretary:
RECEIVED
22 MAR 2001
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS