



**Public hearing in Canberra – 13 September**

# Tuning into community broadcasting

Funding for the community broadcasting 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 Government Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) will appear before the Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts as part of the inquiry into community broadcasting in Australia.

The Australian Government provides ongoing support for community broadcasting, providing funding which is disbursed through the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). The Australian Government also provides specific support for Indigenous broadcasting and for Radio for the Print Handicapped transmission facilities through other programs administered by DCITA. In 2005-06 the Australian Government will provide the CBF with total funding of approximately \$7.6 million.

DCITA is also expected to discuss conversion strategies for community television broadcasters.

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. Ongoing funding is a significant issue 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 13 September**

**Venue:** Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra  
**9.05 am** Department of Communications, Information Technology  
and the Arts (Sub 75)

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](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/cita) or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4601 or emailing [cita.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto: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