

# **DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA**

## **PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA**

### **House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts**

#### **Radio Industry Inquiry**

#### **APPENDIX 1**

##### **Selection Of Newspapers And Commercial Radio Stations Owned And Operated By DMG Group In Non-Metropolitan Areas Around The World**

###### **Newspapers**

The Bath Chronicle  
Bristol Evening Post  
Herald Express  
Grimsby Evening Telegraph  
Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph  
Hull Daily Mail  
Lincolnshire Echo  
Gloucestershire Echo  
Evening Telegraph  
Evening Express  
Evening Post  
The Citizen  
Leicester Mercury  
The Sentinel  
South Wales Evening Post  
Express & Echo  
Western Daily Press  
Evening Herald  
Western Morning News  
Press and Journal  
Carmarthen Journal  
Cornish Guardian  
Essex Chronicle  
The Mid Devon Gazette  
Wellington Weekly News Courier  
East Grinstead Courier  
Seven Oaks Chronicle  
Llanelli Star

North Devon Journal  
Retford Times  
The Cornishman  
Brentwood Gazette  
The West Briton  
Aberdeen Herald & Post  
Ashby & Coalville Mail  
Belper Express  
Beverley Advertiser  
Boston Target  
Carmarthen Herald  
Cheltenham News  
Derby Express  
Exeter Leader  
Gainsborough Target  
Gloucester News  
Grimsby Target  
Haltemprice Target  
Hansfield & Ashfield Reporter  
Holderness Advertiser  
Horncastle, Woodfall Spa and Conningsby Target  
Hull Advertiser  
West Hull (North) Advertiser  
East Hull Advertiser  
East Hull (South) Advertiser  
West Hull (South) Advertiser  
Ilkeston Express  
Leicester Mail  
Loughborough Mail  
Louth Target  
Mansfield Weekly Post & Reporter  
Neath & Port Talbot Shopper  
Newton Abbot Weekender  
North Staffs Advertiser  
Nottingham Recorder  
Plymouth Extra  
Scunthorpe Target  
Seven Oaks NIF  
Sleaford Target  
South Lincolnshire Target Series  
Spilsby & Skegness Target  
Swansea Herald of Wales  
Tewkesbury News  
Torbay Weekender  
Tunbridge Wells NIF

These regional and rural newspapers have a combined circulation of more than 4.05 million copies. This means that one in seven of the adult population reads one of our newspapers throughout the whole of regional and rural United Kingdom. We submit that such penetration could not be achieved without a strong philosophy of knowing, understanding and reporting those issues of relevance to our local communities. This is *in addition* to 3.1 million copies of its London metropolitan dailys and 2.5 million copies of its London Sunday newspaper.

## **Commercial Radio Stations**

5SE, Mt Gambier  
96.1 Star FM, Mt Gambier  
3BO, Bendigo  
91.9 Star FM, Bendigo  
3MA FM, Mildura  
99.5 Star FM, Mildura  
2AY, Albury  
B104.9 FM, Albury  
2CS, Coffs Harbour  
105.5 Hot FM, Coffs Harbour  
2RG, Griffith  
99.7 Star FM, Griffith  
2GZ, Orange  
105.9 Star FM, Orange  
2MC, Port Macquarie  
105.1 Star FM, Port Macquarie  
107.9 Star FM, Dubbo  
2WG, Wagga Wagga  
93.1 Star FM, Wagga Wagga  
2LF, Young  
93.9 Star FM, Young  
6VA, Albany  
Hot FM, Albany  
6BY, Bridgetown  
Hot FM, Bridgetown  
6TZ, Bunbury  
Hot FM, Bunbury  
6SE, Esperance  
Hot FM, Esperance  
6KG, Kalgoorlie  
Hot FM, Kalgoorlie  
6WB, Katanning  
Hot FM, Katanning  
6MD, Merredin  
Hot FM, Merredin  
6NA, Narrogin  
Hot FM, Narrogin  
6AM, Northam  
Hot FM, Northam  
4CA, Cairns  
103.5 Hot FM, Cairns  
4GC, Charters Towers  
Hot FM, Charters Towers  
4HI, Emerald  
Hot FM, Emerald  
4CC, Gladstone  
Hot FM, Rockhampton  
4MK, Mackay

100.3 Hot FM, Mackay  
4AM, Mareeba  
Hot FM, Mareeba  
4LM, Mt. Isa  
102.5 Hot FM, Mt. Isa  
4ZR, Roma  
Hot FM, Roma  
4TO, Townsville  
103.1 Hot FM, Townsville  
Vibe FM, Regional East England  
Vibe FM, Essex  
Vibe FM, Kent  
Vibe FM, Sussex  
Kfm, Tunbridge Wells  
Breeze FM, Crawley and Reigate  
Fame 1521 AM, Crawley and Reigate  
Danubius Radio, Hungary  
2CR FM, Bournemouth  
Classic Gold 828, Bournemouth  
Ten FM, Reading  
Classic Gold 1431/1485, Reading  
B97 Chiltern FM, Bedford  
Classic Gold 792/828, Bedford  
Beacon FM, Wolverhampton  
WABC Classic Gold, Wolverhampton  
Broadland 102, Norwich  
Classic Gold Amber, Norwich  
97.6 Chiltern FM, Dunstable  
Classic Gold 792/828, Dunstable  
GWR FM, Bristol  
Classic Gold 1260, Bristol  
GWR FM, Swindon  
Wiltshire & Classic Gold 936/1161, Swindon  
Gemini FM, Exeter  
Westward Radio, Exeter  
102.7 Hereward FM, Peterborough  
Classic Gold 1332, Peterborough  
FM 103 Horizon, Milton Keynes  
Lantern FM, Barnstaple  
105.4 FM Leicester Sound, Leicester  
Mercia FM, Coventry  
Classic Gold 1359, Coventry  
Northants 96, Northampton  
Classic Gold 1557, Northampton  
Orchard FM, Taunton  
Q103 FM, Cambridge  
RAM FM, Derby  
Classic Gold GEM, Derby  
102.4 Severn Sound FM, Gloucester  
Classic Gold 774, Gloucester  
SGR Colchester, Colchester  
SGR-FM, Ipswich

Classic Gold Amber, Ipswich  
96 Trent FM, Nottingham  
Classic Gold GEM, Nottingham  
Wyvern FM, Worcester  
Melody FM, Bolzano (Italy)

All of these stations are in regional and rural markets in the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia and all of them have a consistent record of very high ratings amongst target regional and rural audiences, which again could not be achieved without a strong philosophy of knowing, understanding and broadcasting those programs of relevance to our local communities.

# **DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA**

## **PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA**

### **House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts**

#### **Radio Industry Inquiry**

#### **APPENDIX 2**

#### **Selection Of Colleges, Exhibitions and Shows Owned And Operated By DMG Group In Non-Metropolitan Areas Around The World**

##### **Colleges**

Bellerbys College, Brighton & Hove, England  
Embassy CES, Brighton, England  
Embassy CES, Cambridge, England  
Bellerbys College, England  
Embassy CES, Folkestone, England  
Embassy CES, Hastings, England  
Bellerbys College, Wadhurst, England  
Embassy CES, London, England  
Bellerbys College, London, England  
Embassy CES, Boston, USA  
Laselle College, Boston, USA  
Embassy CES, Fort Lauderdale, USA  
Embassy CES, New York, USA  
Embassy CES, San Diego, USA  
Embassy CES, San Francisco, USA  
Embassy CES, Brisbane, Australia  
Martin College, Brisbane, Australia  
Embassy CES, Cairns, Australia  
Martin College, Cairns, Australia  
Martin College, Canberra, Australia  
Embassy CES, Gold Coast, Australia  
Martin College, Gold Coast, Australia  
Embassy CES, Melbourne, Australia  
Taylors College, Melbourne, Australia  
Martin College, Parramatta, Australia  
Embassy CES, Perth, Australia  
Martin College, Perth, Australia  
Taylors College, Perth, Australia

Embassy CES, Sydney, Australia  
Taylors College, Sydney, Australia  
Martin College, Sydney, Australia  
Metropolitan Business College, Sydney, Australia

These colleges all provide integrated educational programs in the UK, USA, Australia, Ireland and Spain. There is a network of 21 regional and rural area offices across five continents. These offices recruit students from regional and rural areas (and metropolitan areas) and provide them with an opportunity to study at our colleges for their careers and development.

## **Exhibitions and Shows**

DMG Group owns and operates hundreds of exhibitions and shows worldwide. They are too numerous to list here. The following is just a selection of those which *either* are held in regional and rural areas *or* attract a significant proportion of their exhibitors or audiences from regional or rural areas:

Frutas & Verduras Agricultural Commodities Show, Argentina  
Wood Tech Agricultural Commodities Show, Canada  
Chemsource Agricultural Chemicals Show, England  
Asia Pacific Building and Coatings Show, Thailand  
Surface Engineering Show, England  
Interior Design Exhibition, Australia  
Designex, Australia  
Working with Wood, Australia  
Hotels and Hospitality Fair, Australia  
Food Tech Exhibition, Australia  
Pack Tech Exhibition, Australia  
Environmental Trade Show, Canada  
Logistics & Transport Exhibition, Australia  
Handling and Storage Exhibition, Australia  
Timber and Working with Wood Show, Australia  
Buildex, Australia  
Materials Handling Exhibition, Australia  
Daily Mail Ideal Home Show, England  
Warwick Arts and Antiques Show, England  
Anaheim Harvest Festival, USA  
Phoenix Harvest Festival, USA  
Pleasanton Harvest Festival, USA  
Pomona Harvest Festival, USA  
Tucson Harvest Festival, USA  
Arizona Fall Home Show, USA  
Auckland Home World, New Zealand  
Calgary Home & Interior Design Show, Canada  
Commonwealth Bank Home Show, Australia  
Deseret News Fall Home Improvement Show, USA  
Fall New England Home Show, USA  
Inland Fall New England Home Show, USA  
Inland Valley Fall Home Show, USA  
North Texas Fall Home Improvement Show, USA  
Peninsula Fall Home & Garden Show, USA

South Bay Fall Home & Garden Show, USA  
Birmingham Ski & Snowboard Show, England  
Daily Mail Ski and Snowboard Show, England  
The International Tourism & Travel Show, England

These exhibitions and shows are sometimes held in regional and rural areas and, in all cases, they attract a significant proportion of their exhibitors or audiences from regional or rural areas.



# DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA

## PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

### House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts

#### Radio Industry Inquiry

#### APPENDIX 3

#### Public Survey Results

#### AC Nielsen Radio Surveys 2000 (AC Nielsen Pty Ltd)

<b>Timeslot</b>	<b>% of People in Metropolitan Markets Who Listen to Commercial Radio</b>	<b>% of People in Non-Metropolitan Markets Who Listen to Commercial Radio</b>
6.00am-7.00am	41.9%	45.4%
7.00am-8.00am	61.3%	63.6%
8.00am-9.00am	62.8%	66.1%
9.00am-10.00am	50.8%	54.5%
10.00am-11.00am	46.9%	50.8%
11.00am-12.00 noon	44.5%	48.4%
12 noon-1.00pm	42.1%	45.5%
1.00pm-2.00pm	40.2%	41.9%
2.00pm-3.00pm	40.9%	42.1%
3.00pm-4.00pm	48.0%	49.5%
4.00pm-5.00pm	49.9%	49.3%
5.00pm-6.00pm	47.7%	44.0%
6.00pm-7.00pm	36.2%	30.2%
7.00pm-8.00pm	28.0%	23.9%
8.00pm-9.00pm	25.4%	22.7%

<b>Timeslot</b>	<b>% of People in Metropolitan Markets Who Listen to Commercial Radio</b>	<b>% of People in Non-Metropolitan Markets Who Listen to Commercial Radio</b>
9.00pm-10.00pm	24.6%	22.7%
10.00pm-11.00pm	21.3%	18.5%
11.00pm-12.00 midnight	13.1%	10.8%

These independent survey results also reflect our own survey results. That is, audiences in regional and rural markets put even more emphasis than their counterparts in metropolitan markets on listening to commercial radio in the mornings. Regional and rural listenership is greater than metropolitan listenership by significant margins during early and mid-morning. The situation is then relatively even through the middle of the day and the afternoon. It is around that time that metropolitan listenership really starts to overtake regional and rural listenership. Then, as the evening and night draws on, metropolitan listenership is significantly greater than regional and rural listenership. DMG Group's emphasis on breakfast programs and programs in the morning timeslots, is supported by these results. AC Nielsen also found, in a survey of 36,910 people, of which 26,157 people lived in regional or rural areas, that 76.6% of all people aged 10-17 listen to commercial radio as opposed to community radio or ABC/national radio, 59.5% of all people aged 55 and over listen to commercial radio as opposed to community radio or ABC/national radio and all other age groups are above 70% and the average, for all age groups, is 68.8%. Moreover, the average is even higher for women, as opposed to men, with 71.4% of all women listening to commercial radio as opposed to community radio or ABC/national radio. That figure for all men is 65.6%.

These results demonstrate that in a survey dominated by listeners in regional and rural areas (more than 70% of the survey), the dominance of commercial radio over all other forms of radio is overwhelming. The surveyed markets included more than half of the regional and rural markets in which commercial stations are owned and operated by DMG Group. These results are therefore an independent reflection of the success of our commercial stations.

---

**AC Nielsen Radio Surveys #1 2000 and #1 1999**  
**(AC Nielsen Pty Ltd)**  
**(All people 10+)**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Townsville</b>	<b>Cairns</b>	<b>Mackay</b>	<b>Albury</b>
DMG Adult Contemporary Station	25.4	18.9	18.1	10.9
DMG Hits Station	22.0	22.5	27.8	34.0
Next Commercial Station	18.1	16.2	19.3	22.7
Best National Station	11.1	7.4	4.5	7.1
Best Community Station	5.0	3.5	3.3	1.3

---

## **BDA Marketing Planning 2000 (Roy Morgan Research)**

The following are some of the nine media consumer types for Australians aged over 14 years:

- *heavy television viewers*, 11.6%, these people spend a lot of time watching commercial television, but are light users of all other media; they are mainly retired or unemployed with low incomes, in urban and especially rural locations;
- *filling in time*, 13.3%, these people are medium to heavy consumers of newspapers, commercial television and commercial radio, but rarely use the internet, cinema or ABC radio; they are mainly retired or unemployed people, on lower incomes (with some affluent retired people), in urban and especially rural locations;
- *self development*, 9.1%, these people are heavy users of newspapers, the internet, ABC radio and cinema; they are mainly urban professionals on middle to high incomes and they usually do not contain many people in rural locations;
- *net focus*, 15.4%, these people account for half of all internet use, but have a low interest in other media except cinema; they are mainly students, professional and skilled workers on middle to high incomes in urban areas and they usually do not contain many people in rural locations;
- *high involvement*, 2.0%, these people are the true *media addicts*, with a wide interest in all media types, especially the internet; they are young, urban and mostly male; they have high disposable incomes and include many students and they usually do not contain many people in rural locations.

This typology indicates that commercial radio continues to be more important to regional and rural listeners than in metropolitan areas and, accordingly, the ratings success of our stations, in regional and rural areas, must be an even better reflection of audience demands in those areas, than would be the ratings success of commercial radio stations in metropolitan areas (because their audiences are at present more fragmented by internet and other forms of media). This typology also recognises that those who live in metropolitan areas are already ahead of those who live in regional and rural areas, in terms of use of internet and other new and different means of delivery of media services. These observations lead to one inescapable conclusion. That is, commercial radio stations in regional and rural markets, particularly our commercial stations, through their very high ratings, obviously reflect the audience needs of very large sections of their regional and rural communities and, as a result, the policy focus of governments should not and need not be on the quality of services provided to those communities by commercial radio stations - because it is clear that that quality is very acceptable to those communities - but rather the policy focus should be on increasing access of audiences in regional and rural markets to internet and other forms of delivery of media services (and skills training to enable people to utilise that access), in order to bring them closer to their metropolitan counterparts.

# DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA

## PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

### House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts

#### Radio Industry Inquiry

#### APPENDIX 4

##### Summary Statistics for Commercial Stations Owned by DMG Group

- 1 DMG owns one radio station in some markets and two radio stations in other markets. The Inquiry is about the relationship between radio stations and their local communities. The aggregate relationship, rather than two separate relationships, is most relevant, therefore, in markets where two radio stations are owned by DMG. As a result, this summary of statistics does not identify separate positions of separate radio stations in such markets. Rather, it concentrates on the aggregate position.
- 2 The notation "N/A" means either "not available" or "not applicable", where relevant. It does not mean "zero". In cases where the appropriate response is "zero" we have put "0". In some cases information is "not available" because it is too old and records are no longer kept or, alternatively, the records which are kept, in some cases, are not specific enough to enable some information to be extracted.
- 3 Information supplied in respect of all items is based on the records and other documentary evidence held at the local radio stations or at other central offices of DMG.
- 4 DMG acquired most of its local radio stations in 1996 and 1997. Accordingly, information in relation to 2000 and 1998 in each case relates to a period of ownership by DMG. Information in relation to 1996, however, in some cases relates to a period of ownership before DMG. Moreover, even in cases where local radio stations were acquired by DMG in 1996, the information supplied in relation to that year reflects the policies and operations of previous owners and relates to a period before any new policies or operations were introduced by DMG.
- 5 A number of new local radio stations have commenced broadcasting during the period since 1996. That is the result of section 39 licences plus subsequent price based allocated licences issued by the ABA. As a result, therefore, in some markets it is difficult to make a direct comparison between years. However, given that we are more concerned with the aggregate position in a market and not the separate positions of separate radio stations, this is not a material issue.

- 6 Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest, does *not* include free community service announcements in the nature of advertisements and does *not* include live broadcasts of match day football (AFL, ARL or any other code), basketball or cricket.

	ALBURY AGGREGATE (2AY & STAR FM)			ALBURY HUB
	2000	1998	1996	2000
1 Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	36	57	84	N/A
2 Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	209	210	240	N/A
3 Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	127	126	96	N/A
4 Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
5 Number of employees of local radio station.	19	29	31	37
6 Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14	14	8	N/A
7 Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	54	34	17	N/A

		<b>CAIRNS AGGREGATE (4CA &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	40	120	150
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	192	120	150
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	144	216	186
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	1	2	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	26	37	37
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8	17	22
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	28	28	35

		<b>MT. GAMBIER AGGREGATE (5SE &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	36	57.5	57.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	102	112.5	117.5
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	198	166	161
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	0	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	19	25	24
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	25	25	25
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	32.5	36.5	36.5



		<b>MT. ISA AGGREGATE (4LM &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	29	31	51
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	181	31	51
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	155	305	285
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	9	10	13
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	7	8	8
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	36.5	37.4	37.4

		<b>BRIDGETOWN AGGREGATE (6BY &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	0	24.5	24.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	112	92
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	224	244
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	2	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	1	2	2
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14.5	14.5	13
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>BUNBURY AGGREGATE (6TZ &amp; HOT FM)</b>			<b>BUNBURY HUB</b>
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2000</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	80	66	66	N/A
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	80	92	66	N/A
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	256	244	102	N/A
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	2	2	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	12	18	16	26
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	15.5	16.5	15	N/A
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4	N/A

		<b>ALBANY AGGREGATE (6VA &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	20	51	51
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	81	61
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	255	107
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	0	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	8	11	11
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	15.5	16.5	15
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>ESPERANCE AGGREGATE (6SE &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	28	43	43
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	75.5	55.5
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	260.5	112.5
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	2	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	6	6	6
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	15.5	16.5	15
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>COFFS HARBOUR AGGREGATE (2CS &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	64	164	96
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	212	306	306
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	124	30	30
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	2	3	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	16	28	32
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8	13	8
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	30	15.8

		GLADSTONE (4CC)		
		2000	1998	1996
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	36	92	134
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	84	92	134
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	84	76	34
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	2
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	21	28	33
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	6	7	10
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	25.2	32	32

		<b>DUBBO (STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	26	N/A	N/A
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	113	N/A	N/A
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	55	N/A	N/A
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	10	N/A	N/A
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	12	N/A	N/A
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	21	N/A	N/A



		<b>GRIFFITH AGGREGATE (2RG &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	57.5	95.5	75.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	208	269	267
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	128	67	69
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	2	1	3
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	13	14	14
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	15	16	12.5
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	53.7	52.8	32.9

		<b>KALGOORLIE AGGREGATE (6KG &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	29	62	72
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	82	72
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	254	96
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	4	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	8	12	12
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	18.5	18.5	17
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>KATANNING AGGREGATE (6WB &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	0	24.5	24.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	112	92
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	224	76
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	1	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	1	3	3
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14	28	27
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>MACKAY AGGREGATE (4MK &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	62	144	124
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	192	144	124
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	144	192	212
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	22	23	22
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8.5	12	9
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	36.5	37.4	37.4

		<b>MERREDIN AGGREGATE (6MD &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	0	24.5	24.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	112	92
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	224	76
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	1	3	3
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14	28	27
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>NARROGIN AGGREGATE (6NA &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	4.5	24.5	24.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	80	112	92
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	256	224	76
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	2	3	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	3	3	3
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	28	28	27
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		<b>NORTHAM AGGREGATE (6AM &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	0	40	40
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	75.5	80	60
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	260.5	256	108
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	2	5	6
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14	28	27
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	31	31	15.4

		ROMA (4ZR)		
		2000	1998	1996
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	21	46	41
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	102	167	112
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	66	1	56
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	2	4
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	7	8	8
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8	9	9
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	28	21	21



		<b>PT. MACQUARIE AGGREGATE (2MC &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	59	104	131
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	217	242	257
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	119	94	79
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	6	3	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	20	30	29
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	14.5	20.5	23.5
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	35	28	34

		<b>WAGGA WAGGA AGGREGATE (2WG &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	61.5	123.25	136.5
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	210.5	334.75	336
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	125.5	1.25	0
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	3
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	18	27	25
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	20	21	21
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	41.87	40.35	42.75

		<b>YOUNG AGGREGATE (2LF &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	46	78	78
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	168	257	258
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	168	1	0
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	0	0
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	9	13	14
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	10	16	16
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	30	24	24

		<b>BENDIGO AGGREGATE (3BO &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	36	106	114
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	102	106	212
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	234	230	124
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	3	3	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	15	21	27
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	9	5.1	5.5
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	26	20	20

		<b>EMERALD AGGREGATE (4HI &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	28	N/A	N/A
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	150	N/A	N/A
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	18	N/A	N/A
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	2
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	10	N/A	N/A
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	11	N/A	N/A
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	28	N/A	N/A

		<b>MILDURA AGGREGATE (3MA &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	82	102	102
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	221	169	169
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	115	167	167
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	2	1
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	13	18	18
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	48	47	47
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	51.3	55.8	55.8

		<b>MAREEBA (4AM &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	32	53	53
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	138	115	115
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	30	53	53
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	14	17	17
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8	7	3
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	34	34	34

		TOWNSVILLE AGGREGATE (4TO & HOT FM)			TOWNSVILLE HUB
		2000	1998	1996	2000
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	54	137	137	N/A
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	185	137	137	N/A
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	151	199	199	N/A
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	31	38	39	42
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	12	13	6	N/A
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	93	103	N/A	N/A



		<b>ORANGE AGGREGATE (2GZ &amp; STAR FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	57.5	127	107
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	208	139.5	129.5
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	128	196.5	206.5
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	3
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	15	20	22
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	13	17.5	15.5
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	53.7	53.7	53.7

		<b>CHARTERS TOWERS AGGREGATE (4GC &amp; HOT FM)</b>		
		<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1996</b>
1	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio.	62	144	124
2	Hours of live broadcasting per week from local studio or hub or other studio.	192	144	124
3	Hours of pre recorded broadcasting per week.	144	192	212
4	Number of logged complaints received per annum in connection with the content or quality of programs.	0	1	0
5	Number of employees of local radio station.	3	5	N/A
6	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to local news, weather, current affairs, sport, community announcements and other items of local interest.	8	7	3
7	Hours of broadcasting per week devoted to advertising for local businesses.	34	34	34

# DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA

## PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

### House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts

#### Radio Industry Inquiry

#### APPENDIX 5

#### Productivity Commission References of Interest

<b>Productivity Commission Report</b>	<b>Our Summary and Discussion of Points Made by the Productivity Commission on those Pages of the Productivity Commission Report</b>
<b>Pages 2 to 3</b>	Regional consumers and broadcasters would be disadvantaged by policies that deepen the digital divide between country and city. They should not suffer from regulatory restrictions on the types or amounts of services they receive. The same applies in connection with new technologies generally and is not only limited to digital technologies;
<b>Page 3</b>	Quotas for Australian content, etc, are designed for the old fashioned regulated industry and will not work in the digital age and will end up disadvantaging everybody;
<b>Page 5</b>	Current broadcasting policy, with ownership restrictions, content requirements, etc, reflects a history of political, technical, industrial, economic and social compromise, and this legacy has created a policy framework that is inward looking, anti competitive and restrictive, and as boundaries between media dissolve and the old concept of broadcasting becomes obsolete, this regulatory framework is eroding and being circumvented, and it is unfair to continue to impose restrictions on old media when new media is free to do as it likes;

<b>Productivity Commission Report</b>	<b>Our Summary and Discussion of Points Made by the Productivity Commission on those Pages of the Productivity Commission Report</b>
<b>Pages 5 to 6</b>	Existing broadcasting policy reflects a history of political, technical, industrial, economic and social compromises. This legacy of quid pro quos has created a policy framework that is inward looking, anti-competitive and restrictive. As boundaries between media dissolve and the old concept of broadcasting becomes obsolete, this regulatory framework is eroding and being circumvented. Technological change has ramifications for many specific areas of media regulation. This includes content regulation. With the increasing pace of technological change in media and communications, the means for achieving the community's policy objectives must also change. Content regulation, including local content quotas, are now completely inappropriate ways for achieving the community's policy objectives;
<b>Page 12</b>	Services such as datacasting and broadband access to the internet could be particularly valuable in regional areas where cable networks are not feasible and the costs of accessing the internet using telephone lines are high. Government policy must be directed towards making internet access more available and affordable in regional and rural areas. Commercial radio must not be the scapegoat because governments may have failed to make internet access more available and affordable;
<b>Page 26</b>	In a convergent environment, the national broadcasters may be required to play an even more significant role in promoting the social and cultural objectives set for broadcasting. That is because content regulations and local content quotas are just not appropriate ways to seek to achieve social and cultural objectives. Those regulations and quotas would put commercial radio at a significant disadvantage relative to other means of delivery of media services;
<b>Pages 28 to 29</b>	The quota system was designed for analogue television and will not be readily adaptable to the digital, convergent environment. As convergence proceeds, quotas will be less and less effective. If Australia's social and cultural objectives are to be achieved in the digital era, new approaches should be found. That is because the quota approach is no longer appropriate or effective. There needs to be a complete reassessment and study of appropriate policies for the pursuit of social and cultural objectives in the future converged media environment. That reassessment and study must encompass all forms of broadcasting and media services, and it is inappropriate and unfair to consider it in the context of commercial radio stations in regional and rural areas, unless and until it is considered at the same time in respect of all other forms of broadcasting and media services and in all markets;
<b>Page 36</b>	The ABA should conduct regular research on the demand for community radio programming, should also conduct evaluations of existing community licensees before renewal every five years to assess whether licensees are meeting the objectives of their licences and the licence should be offered for reallocation if a licensee has not succeeded in meeting its objectives;

<b>Productivity Commission Report</b>	<b>Our Summary and Discussion of Points Made by the Productivity Commission on those Pages of the Productivity Commission Report</b>
<b>Page 40</b>	Any type of quota must be directed only at Australian programming (albeit inappropriate) and there is no suggestion that it should be any more local than that;
<b>Page 48</b>	Governments will not be able to maintain regulatory barriers around broadcasting services as other means of providing these services spread, and attempting to do so would merely drive innovation away from regulated services to less regulated platforms such as cable, satellite and the internet;
<b>Page 56</b>	Open, competitive bidding for new licences means that it would be unfair to now impose local content and other requirements which would impact unfairly on the prices paid for the licences;
<b>Page 63</b>	Evidence proves that at breakfast time, when most people prefer news and information, radio is the most popular form of media and, as a result, what we do at our stations with local breakfast announcers and morning news bulletins, etc, is to satisfy the demands of our audiences;
<b>Page 67</b>	People in rural areas tend not to turn to radio, particularly commercial radio, for news and current affairs, relative to other forms of media and relative to metropolitan areas;
<b>Page 72</b>	Media use tends to be greater in larger cities than in smaller cities, there is a higher proportion of “low involvement” media users in regional areas, regional areas also have a higher proportion of heavy television viewers (due to unemployment, filling in time, fewer entertainment choices, geographic isolation, etc) but these people do not listen so much to radio, a number of rural people have problems with internet access and that is why they continue to listen to radio and watch television and, as internet access becomes easier in regional and rural areas, owners of commercial radio in those areas anticipate a further reduction in audiences;
<b>Page 94</b>	Commercial radio broadcasters finance their operations through the sale of advertising time, they therefore have a commercial relationship with advertisers, commercial services are a means of delivering audiences to advertisers, broadcasters respond to consumer preferences indirectly through the preferences of advertisers, which in turn are related to measures of audience size and composition, being the research undertaken by radio owners, etc and, as a result, commercial broadcasters may broadcast programs that large audiences marginally prefer rather than those that somewhat smaller audiences strongly prefer, this phenomenon is recognised in our legislation and, instead of any attempt to change it, community licences have been issued and it is those licences which are required to serve local and community needs and which therefore focus on programs that somewhat smaller audiences strongly prefer;

<b>Productivity Commission Report</b>	<b>Our Summary and Discussion of Points Made by the Productivity Commission on those Pages of the Productivity Commission Report</b>
<b>Page 95</b>	None of the models for financing broadcasting (national, commercial, community) is perfect. Each has different implications for efficiency and equity, but if properly managed and regulated, the different sections can complement each other to provide diversity in programming and opinion;
<b>Page 100</b>	Profits are much higher for metropolitan stations than for regional radio stations, and much higher for FM stations in metropolitan markets, with profits in metropolitan markets being currently higher in real terms than at any other time since 1987/88, with total industry profits now about double the profits in those years;
<b>Page 105</b>	Convergence, the broadcasting industry and the computer industry overlapping to an exceptionally large extent, online radio, radio becomes converged with hybrid kinds of media, such as email, online newspapers and magazines, streamed video and audio, datacasting, etc;
<b>Page 111</b>	All forms of media compete in the market for information, entertainment and ideas, but each offers a distinct service, but technological change may blur such distinctions and, in a hypothetical fully converged media system, all media services would be in competition and owners of commercial radio in regional and rural areas must be equally placed with their metropolitan brethren to be able to compete in the converged market;
<b>Page 112</b>	Convergence means different sorts of media platforms and the necessity to be able to deliver media services through internet and telecommunication lines, as well as the radio frequency spectrum, etc;
<b>Page 128</b>	Advertising in radio is considerably smaller than in newspaper and in television and growth rates in advertising in radio have been well below growth rates in newspapers, television and magazines, virtually over the entire period since 1970;
<b>Page 129</b>	Capital city and regional markets tend to display different characteristics, capital cities dominate the advertising revenue for both television and radio, growth in the advertising for television revenues in capital cities and regional markets was quite similar, but for radio there have been significant differences in the growth of advertising revenue between capital city and regional broadcasters, and between FM and AM broadcasters and it is clear that advertising revenue in capital cities grew more than three times as fast as in regional areas, advertising revenue for FM broadcasters grew over seven times as fast as for AM broadcasters, for FM broadcasters, advertising revenue for regional stations grew around 1.5 times as fast as in capital cities and for AM broadcasters advertising revenue grew for capital city stations, but declined for regional stations;

<b>Productivity Commission Report</b>	<b>Our Summary and Discussion of Points Made by the Productivity Commission on those Pages of the Productivity Commission Report</b>
<b>Page 131</b>	<p>National advertising is much more profitable than non-national advertising, yet television dominates national advertising expenditure and newspapers dominate non-national advertising expenditure, with radio falling between both of those forms and, of course, there is more demand for the less profitable non-national advertising in regional and rural areas than in capital cities;</p>
<b>Page 259 to 261</b>	<p>Digital radio, conversion to digital radio is not imminent, partly because there is no clear new market application for the spectrum occupied by analogue services (unlike television). Greater audio quality may not have great consumer appeal, as radio is used more as a casual medium, also the use of digital radio means significantly greater number of transmitters and obviously the infrastructure cost for the digital radio network in regional and rural Australia;</p>

# DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA

## PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

### House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts

#### Radio Industry Inquiry

#### APPENDIX 6

#### Selected Interview Quotes

#### EXTERNAL INTERVIEWS

##### LOCALISM

*All the following quotes have been approved for reproduction in this submission.*

**Kevin Wales (Mayor of Wagga Wagga, New South Wales)**

“Local radio is very important to rural communities. 2WG plays a vital role in the Wagga community. It is interested and involved in local events and issues. It works with the City in getting a positive message out. I have a regular monthly talk show on 2WG which ensures local issues are known and discussed. I initially had reservations about the hub arrangement, but they have been unfounded and the community service is as good as ever.”

**Shaun Nelson (MLA, Member for Tablelands, Legislative Assembly of Queensland)**

“It is my belief that Northern Talking Point has given me the ability to address Tablelanders on a personal level regardless of their linguistic capability. Many people would find it hard to read the concepts that can be clearly understood when spoken to them. With TV reception in the remote parts of my electorate limited to only two channels or none at all, I have found the access to local radio invaluable in my position as a community leader.”

**Mick Veitch (Deputy Mayor of Young, New South Wales)**

“From Young’s perspective, local management at 2LF has shown that you can combine a local approach to broadcasting with a national format. Good examples of local programs are the local rugby football broadcasts and the daily funeral announcements.”



**John Thinee (Principal, Jays Real Estate, Mt. Isa, Queensland)**

“I am the Licensee of a fairly large local Real Estate Office with 20 staff and have resided in Mount Isa for 34 years. For the past six years I have been President of the Mount Isa Chamber of Commerce.

My occupation and my position in the Chamber of Commerce have necessitated ongoing business dealings with these Radio Stations. In all aspects of their operations they are very professional and maintain a strong focus on the Region covered by their broadcast area. I believe this would be the view held by the majority of the Business Houses in this City.

The various branches of the media can have a significant beneficial or other impact on Regional Communities. Radio Stations 4LM and Hot FM have been extremely supportive and involve both management and staff in the promotion of community related events and issues.”

**Tim Mulherin (MLA, Member for Mackay, Legislative Assembly of Queensland)**

“Mackay is well-serviced by radio. Through the ABC, there are a number of stations providing national broadcasts, and there are also radio stations such as Hot FM and Sea FM with a strong local presence. In relation to Hot FM and Sea FM, local support is generated by their sponsorship of Mackay events and festivals, their assistance of locals from time to time by holding appeals for people in crisis, and through their employment of members of the Mackay community. An example of how radio stations can provide crucial support concerns the joint campaign of 4MK and the Mackay Daily Mercury, a local newspaper, to create local employment. This campaign demonstrated that reducing Mackay unemployment was of concern to these media bodies, and, practically, resulted in the target of new positions created being doubled. Having stations with a local component reflects community aspirations and supports its endeavours which, I think, is very important.”

**Peter Maguire (Mayor of Emerald, Queensland)**

“In recent times [since introduction of the hubs], I have noticed that local content has been re-introduced at 4HI/Hot FM. There has been an increase in local news, national programs have been cut down and a rural program, “The Country Mile” has been re-introduced. This has had a positive impact on the town and the region. It is important, particularly in country areas, for a radio station to respond to community needs and to be part of the community.”

**Barry Bishop (MLC, Member for North Western Province, Legislative Council of Victoria)**

“My office utilises the local news service provided several times a week, owing to a good relationship with the journalist, and the fair and equitable air time I’m afforded in regard to community or Parliamentary issues. The news service is an invaluable guide to what’s happening now, as opposed to three hours ago.

The station is often utilised for listener feedback on topical issues, which makes for a varied program, in addition to providing a good medium for the support of community services.”

**Greg Muller (Chief Executive Officer, City of Mt. Gambier, South Australia)**

“For some considerable time, 5SE has excelled in providing continuing quality radio broadcasting to our region. In addition, the Station’s commitment to the community is without parallel in Australia. The level of community support and involvement by the Station is the obvious centre piece of the Station’s very successful policy. Its achievements for the region have ensured that the region is served with quality radio broadcasting, excellent regional news service and

community access and an outstanding record of community service across all spectrums of the region. The Station has always responded to community needs and is always available to provide assistance and expertise to the region and its people. We are proud of Radio 5SE and FM 96.1 for what it has achieved and will achieve for our region.”

**Baden Waldron (Deputy Mayor, Roma Town Council, Queensland)**

“On New Year’s Eve 2000, Roma celebrated with its biggest ever, and most successful town party. The Y2K Party, instigated by Roma Town Council, and organised by a high profile community committee; including community Radio 4ZR manager, Deb Beran, attracted more than half of Roma’s population, of 6400 people.

4ZR played a key role in community awareness of this event, promoting at no cost to the community, all of the pre event fundraising (which meant residents of Roma and district were admitted free of charge).

In the month leading up to New Year’s Eve, the station promoted the event constantly, building to almost blanket coverage over the last ten days.

Once again Radio 4ZR fulfilled its community obligations, assisting strongly to bring the people of Roma together, on this historic occasion.

4ZR, since its foundation, has actively promoted major community events and it is great to see the tradition continuing into the 21st century.”

**Helen Brayne (Mayor, Griffith City Council, New South Wales)**

“Council has always found our local radio station, 2RG, to be very supportive of the community.

Their local news segment services not only Griffith but the wider Western Riverina with regular informative news bulletins. They also provide community information segments for many local organisations to allow them to keep the community informed, for example, Red Cross, Radiotherapy Appeal and sporting events.

Council itself has a regular half hour “Mayor on the Air” segment which is well received.

There appears to be no difference to the range of community and news programs offered since the introduction of the hub. All features have been maintained and we are probably better off for immediate urgent broadcasts with the hub operating from Albury.

I have received no complaints from the community of any lessening of service. Staff and management are all very committed to providing excellent community radio.”

**John Castrilli (Mayor of Bunbury, Western Australia)**

"Every region has its own cultural characteristics. Therefore, due regard has to be given to local content. In my opinion, the balance of radio coverage is adequate because not only do those people need local content, but also broader regional and national content. It's all about information; people need to know what's happening not only in their own locality, but also what's happening outside of it. A spread of information has local, regional and national significance."

**Eriks Celmins (Director, Third Wave Media Pty Ltd, Market Research Consultant to DMGRR)**

“We undertook extensive audience surveys and research in Cairns, Mackay and Albury in late 1998 and early 1999. The purpose of the surveys and research was to determine whether there was any appetite amongst audiences for talk stations in competitive markets. We concluded that there was no such appetite. The results of our surveys and research can be summarised easily. First, in the age demographic of 35-54 years, the audience for mainly talkback programming was very limited. There was room for occasional topic segments, but these had to be balanced by music, to satisfy the majority interest, especially those listening while working. Maybe talk programming was seen as being too distracting at work. The conclusion was, that to build the important day time listening share and be commercially viable, DMG needed to move to music based programming, especially between 9.00am and 12.00 noon.”

## INTERNAL INTERVIEWS

### LOCALISM

#### **Bryce Nielsen (Local General Manager, Townsville)**

“The insertion of local raves [*ie local news highlights and gossip bulletins*] and other local information twice per hour is more than sufficient in Townsville. There have been no complaints in that regard. The quality of programs and commercials has improved exponentially since the introduction of better technology and more skilled employees. Most programs for the Townsville stations come out of the local studio or the hub at Townsville.”

“This is nothing new. Townsville in 1994 took 12 hours of programming from 2UE in Sydney and three local news bulletins were inserted during the day. Roma in 1997 took 14 hours of programming per day from Gladstone. Hot FM throughout North Queensland took all of its programming from Bunbury right up to 1998. There were local news bulletins inserted three or four times per day. That was all. Up to 1998, Young took 14 hours of programming per day from Orange. Technology did not enable even the insertion of local raves or other local information. Any news bulletins which were inserted came from Wagga. Now that’s all changed.”

#### **Stuart Snell (Local General Manager, Charters Towers)**

“In the early 1990s, Charters Towers took all of its programming from other places. Mornings came from Bunbury, afternoons came from Mt. Isa and evenings came from the networked Sky product. Local commercials were inserted from time to time. There was no local news, current affairs, etc. Programming from Bunbury was terribly inappropriate. For example, Bunbury announcers would complain about their weather going cold, whereas there were heatwaves and tropical storms approaching Charter Towers! In the late 90s, from around the time DMG took over, Charters Towers reverted to about 12 hours of local programming per day and the balance from the Sky product. This relates to the AM station. Right throughout this entire period, Hot FM took all of its programming, all day, from Bunbury. Today our AM station comes directly from Cairns which is extremely close and the technology associated with the hub system allows us to insert a large number of local commercials and local news and current affairs items. This functionality was not available with earlier networking formats. It is also very important to note that although our breakfast program and morning programs are produced in Townsville, they are specifically produced for Charters Towers and are done live by announcers who are beamed directly into Charters Towers. These are extremely local programs. The technology and other facilities are simply better in Townsville than in Charters Towers. That is why our local breakfast and morning programs are produced in Townsville. My team provides all of the local information for that program and we work hand in hand with the announcer on line. Hot FM takes its programming from Townsville and this is much more relevant than the old programming from Bunbury. Again there is plenty of opportunity to insert local stuff.”

“Charters Towers is a very small town with little advertising revenue independently. It could not afford quality announcers and could only have ever afforded average announcers. Now we are able to obtain the best quality announcers, programming and commercials, taken through Townsville and Cairns.”

#### **Blair Sullivan (Hot FM Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“I am the group programming director for all of our Hot FM stations. Before the introduction of the Townsville hub, most of our stations took a 24 hour feed from Bunbury. Those on the east coast of Queensland had about six to eight hours of locally produced program and the balance was

a feed from Bunbury or from Townsville/Mackay/Cairns. It is now greatly improved. Hot FM stations in central Queensland do four hours of their own local programming per day (although some of it is produced at the hub in Townsville) and 12 hours per day is networked live from Townsville (which includes at least four hours of live network programming). Local news bulletins, commercials, etc, are regularly inserted into the programming. Only late night/early morning programming is automated in the old fashioned networking way. This is vastly better than the past. As for Hot FM stations on the east coast of Queensland, they are even better off and 16 hours of their programming per day is either live from the local studio or live from the hub and, in both of those cases, the programming is top quality and “local”.”

“The standard of programming since the introduction of the hub has improved across the board. In Western and central Queensland markets, in particular, the hub system has enabled the introduction of localism which otherwise did not exist and just was not sustainable for a commercial operation. Listeners would be mighty disaffected if anything resulted in a change to the new system.”

**Rob Kidd (Local Announcer, Townsville)**

“I am the announcer for five hours of local programming every afternoon from the Townsville hub. My show goes live to our AM/Heritage stations in Queensland. Music is determined by our research and listener surveys. Those surveys are undertaken by independent research consultants throughout all of our AM/Heritage markets. I then put in my own conversations, comments, humour and other commentaries. We insert two local raves per hour for each of our individual markets (eg Townsville, Cairns, Mackay, Gladstone, Mareeba, Mt Isa, Charters Towers, Emerald and Roma). For these last few markets, it is sometimes only one local rave per hour. Material for the local raves is received from our local station managers who email, fax or telephone the information to us at the hub, or is actually received from listeners who telephone a 1300 number and give us the lowdown on what is happening locally. The local raves are then produced in Townsville and inserted into my show. It works really well.”

**Sue Gilbert (Local General Manager, Gladstone)**

“In the early 1990s, Gladstone fed virtually all of its programming into Emerald, Roma, Mareeba and Biloela. It also fed some of its programming to Rockhampton. The local stations in those markets inserted one local spot per hour. Local advertising was dropped in. The new Townsville hub has not changed much of that for Emerald, Roma and Mareeba, except that the technology is much better and, therefore, the quality of the programs is better, the quality of the announcers is better, the ability to insert local items is much easier and, therefore, there are many more local spots. Advertising has increased because of the better quality. Emerald, Roma and Mareeba also have some live programs which they did not have before. They are much better off.”

“Gladstone is in a good position. It has seven hours of locally produced live programming each day and another nine or so hours which is live from the hub at Townsville. That live programming is still incredibly local, because of the insertion of numerous local spots and local raves, the listeners’ hotline and the e-mailing and other delivery of local items on a continuous basis from the local manager to the hub. It is now so easy to drop local news, weather, advertising and other events into the hub programming. And it is also quicker, because the local spots can be produced in Townsville and automatically inserted into the programming, rather than having to be produced at the local station, then sent to a central position and then beamed back. Gladstone only has about seven hours of old fashioned networked programming, in an automated sense, per day, from 10.00 pm until 5.00 am.”

**Merv Bunt (Local General Manager, Emerald)**

“Emerald provided a 24 hour service in the late 80s and very early 90s. That is because the coal mining industry was absolutely booming. Population was on the increase and the economy was strong. Since then, with different mines either closing or slowing down, there has been a fall in the population and a dive in the economy. Local advertising interest is much less in real and absolute terms than it was when I first went to Emerald in the mid-80s. After the start of the 90s and definitely by the mid-90s, with the station becoming obviously unprofitable, we took all of our feed from 2UE in Sydney. There was hardly anything local on the air. That improved a little in the late 90s, when we had our own breakfast show for three hours each day and also three morning local news slots. The introduction of the hub has been the best thing to happen for radio in Emerald since the 80s. We continue to produce our own breakfast program. We also produce one hour of local talk in the late morning and one hour of local country programming in the early afternoon. This local country programming is about to commence. We only take two hours of metropolitan networked programming (John Laws). Our other programming comes from the Townsville hub and a lot of it is live, with local news, local raves, local commercials, local weather etc. inserted on a regular basis.”

“It simply would not be possible for us to have more local content in Emerald. That is because there is a limit to the amount of advertising revenue we can extract from local advertisers. We are virtually at that limit. We simply cannot afford another announcer and, therefore, we have no ability to produce further programs on site at our local studio. In any event, the quality of what we get from Townsville is so good and is better than anything Emerald could get on its own account and, with new technology, it is so “local”, that there is no need for anything else.”

“Emerald in the 1980s broadcast all of its own programs. Some programming was then networked from Gladstone shortly after the start of the 1990s. This changed the manner in which the local station dealt with local matters but it did not change the quality of broadcasting of those matters. Local news and current affairs, etc, was inserted into the networked programming coming from Gladstone. It was always possible to “go local” and that happened in cases of severe storms and flooding, etc. It is not difficult to “go local”. All you do is flick a switch and start talking from the local studio. Emerald took more and more programming from Gladstone throughout the 1990s. The recent switch to the hub at Townsville therefore has not made any difference at all in terms of the amount of programming which is not locally produced. However, the new technology at Townsville permits a superior form of networking which, at the same time, makes it even easier for local stations to insert local news or current affairs, etc. In the past it would be necessary to call the hub at Gladstone and ask them to record a local message and then to send it to Emerald for broadcasting, whereas now, we can just call the hub at Townsville and technology allows them to record the message and send it directly from Townsville to our listeners, so there is no need for double handling back through Emerald. This has greatly increased the speed with which local messages can be put to air. It is an enormous improvement.”

“We have an edge over our competitors with the hub system. It enables us to put more time and effort into quality programming and announcer talent. Locally based stations simply do not have the resources to do that and the locally produced product is therefore nowhere near the same quality. Moreover, they cannot employ or retain quality announcers in the same way as us.”

**John Inglis (Heritage Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“Local communities are much more interested in quality than local production per se. There is a clear example. When I worked in Darwin we took a feed of the Martin Molloy program from Austereo in Melbourne. This was every afternoon. It was a very expensive program. People knew that the program was coming from Melbourne. We could easily have employed our own

announcer to do an afternoon program from our local studio. We tried that for a while. But no-one listened to it. They all wanted Martin Molloy because it was a show with great quality and was produced in a professional way. We had no choice and we went with Martin Molloy.”

“Local raves and other local news and information is relayed instantaneously by email from our local managers to the hub and is then broadcast from the hub during our very regular local spots. This is true local information. A cross section from today’s most recent local rave includes information regarding a forthcoming fete, a town market, the movies which are currently showing in town, the football club’s news and a traffic accident at a major intersection. In the past, local content from local announcers was very often merely no more than a form of advertising for mates. That just doesn’t happen any more.”

**Ken Gannaway (Regional General Manager (Northern Markets) Bunbury)**

“Radio West is the name given to our AM stations. All those stations are extremely local. There is between five and seven hours of live local broadcasting per day from the local studios in places such as Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Albany and Bunbury. We respect the fact that different markets have very different cultures. Some are part of the wheatbelt. Some are part of the goldfields. Some are part of the wine industry around the Margaret River. We make sure we focus on the distinct interests in the different regions by having local breakfast shows, a couple of hours of local talkback and various local news and weather inserts each day. Local content and localism generally are business matters and not “airy fairy”. If we do not have enough local content, we will lose our audience on the AM stations. On the other hand, if we have too much local content and we focus on all of the hardships and crises in the area, people will get bored and turn off. So it is important from a business point of view that we find the happy medium. The absence of complaints about programming says that we have done pretty well in finding that happy medium.”

**Stuart Endersby (Group Program Director (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“Our Hot FM stations focus much more on music for young people. Local news and information, and talk back is important, but not pivotal. If you want that stuff then you turn to our AM stations on Radio West. Hot FM stations devote up to a couple of hours per day, in aggregate, to local news and weather, commentary by local announcers, taking calls from listeners, etc. Sometimes it is even less. But that is what our audience demands. We have seen in the past that if we give them much more of that stuff, they turn off. They know that Radio West is there if they want it.”

**Joan Peters (General Manager Sales (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“Busseltown used to receive a feed of most of its programming from Bunbury. It now does some of its own local programming and the introduction of better technology means that local news and current affairs can be inserted much more easily. Even in Collie, where admittedly live local programming from the local studio is nothing compared to what it was 10 years ago, DMG has made an effort to get close to the community, by sometimes doing outside broadcasts from the local shopping centre, by doing local promotions on a regular basis, etc.”

“Sometimes it is necessary to reach a balance. Bridgetown previously had its own announcers for at least a few hours each day. It now has much less than that. That might appear to some to be reduced localism. But it doesn’t mean that at all. First, better technology means we are able to easily insert local news and current affairs items. That is not just done randomly. It happens at regular and predetermined intervals in the networked programming. Secondly, the quality of the programming and of the reception is so much better. Centralising the broadcasting and satellite technology in Bunbury has meant that the quality of the reception throughout the Bridgetown area is infinitely better than it was 10 years ago. In addition, it means that our local person at

Bridgetown is able to focus almost exclusively on getting local news, current affairs, sport, weather and other items of local interest, and to continuously feed that stuff back to Bunbury via email. Bunbury then produces local segments and inserts them into the networked programming regularly. In the past, it would never have been possible to allow a person to devote almost all of their time to obtaining and collating such information in Bridgetown.”

“As part of my sales responsibilities, I am always on the look out for the opening of new businesses, the opening of agricultural shows, the presentation of major awards, etc. We always try to arrange a live feed from those events. It enables us to increase advertising revenue from the people involved. Everyone therefore benefits. I also take charge of obtaining community service announcements. They are always put to air free of charge. We promote local quiz nights for the football club, trivia nights for the charities, fundraising events for the hospitals, etc. This is seen as a way to increase the goodwill of our stations.”

**Steve Sutton (Local General Manager, Mt. Isa)**

“The terms of reference for the Parliamentary Inquiry were tabled at the Council meeting. It was decided that there would be no formal response. That is because it was thought that there was no need for any formal response. To be frank, no-one was quite sure why we were having the Inquiry. All of the people in Mt. Isa go out of their way to let me know what a fantastic job they think we are doing. Mt. Isa has more local content on its airwaves now than it has ever had in the past. Local live breakfast announcers plus regular inserts of local news and current affairs, together with regular programming from Townsville, means that it is much more local and much more relevant than it ever was in the past. First, we have more content directly relevant to Mt. Isa and second, the stuff which does not come from Mt. Isa comes from Townsville rather than Bunbury. The quality of the reception is now so much better than ever before. DMG has allowed me to join the local Council and also to be on five or six other local community group committees. What other business would allow its local manager to devote so much time to local committees. The people in Mt. Isa recognise that I devote such time to their causes and they are very thankful to DMG. Local radio these days is very professional and the quality speaks for itself, and at the same time, we still have just as much, if not more, local news and current affairs and other relevant material. Our communities are grateful for this. No-one has ever suggested to me that we should go back to the old tin shed style of radio.”

**Alan Mead (Chief Engineer (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“Western Australia has always had a very large amount of networking. It is because we are so big. Most regional centres have been served by network programming for at least 20 years. It is not a big deal over here. At least networking has allowed us to enjoy the benefits of much better technology. Others who first must fight about whether or not they want networking, will fall behind and will miss out on valuable time to be able to get the benefits of technology.”

**Graeme Keller (Group Accountant (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“We must attempt to strike a balance. Centralisation and networking enables better technology and reception, the production of more professional programs and commercials, the ability to afford the very best announcers, programmers, engineers etc. and, very importantly, the ability to produce “big spend” or “long reach” programs which a small local station cannot ever produce (due to its scarce resources or its limited audience reach). As for this last point, we have a program called “WA Today” which sometimes entails an interview with the Premier or a Federal Minister and the taking of questions and other talk back conversation between listeners and those politicians. Large networks can afford to run productions like that and politicians are prepared to participate because with one program we can offer them half of the population of the State! Small



local radio stations have no chance in that league. And our audiences appreciate that we can deliver such programs to them. The counter balance is that local residents cannot knock on the front door of the local studio any time of the day and find an announcer and two or three other people to talk to. They no longer have the ability to drop in and request their favourite song or to report their missing pet. But I suppose the inability to request your favourite song is today just as much a product of sophisticated research, as it is the fact that there might not be the same physical presence at the studio. In other words, research dictates the music we play today. You cannot just ring up and ask. That has a lot to do with research and virtually nothing to do with physical presence. On the other hand, your ability to obtain an immediate market wide broadcast about your lost dog has admittedly almost disappeared. It is not an emergency and therefore we would not interrupt networked programming to report it, although it could be easily inserted in a local rave. I suppose that is about the true cost.”

“Advertising revenue from local businesses has increased a lot since networking was introduced in a big way a few years ago. That is because they respect the quality of our product. Listeners don’t complain and advertisers don’t complain.”

**Collin Taylor (Local General Manager, Northam)**

“Local presence is not the same as local content. At Northam we no longer have a breakfast announcer at the studio. However, my team’s collection of local news and current affairs and other items of significance, and our relay of that information on a continuous basis by email to Bunbury, means that local bulletins are inserted very regularly into the network programs. Moreover, those local bulletins are of much better quality than they were in the past. It actually gives me time to have increased community contact, not the other way around.”

**Antonell Caputo (Local General Manager, Kalgoorlie)**

“Our AM station is ingrained in the culture of Kalgoorlie and it has always been that way. It is very active in the community and does a lot of charity work. We won an award last year for the best broadcasting station for community services. For example, we raised \$40,000 at a recent Rotary auction.”

“We do at least four hours of live local broadcasting each day and that includes “Goldfields Today”. People find that very relevant to them in Kalgoorlie. There are a lot of itinerant workers and other semi permanent workers in Kalgoorlie. Our station is therefore seen to be one of the only constant threads through the community. We also do live crosses many times to hotels, work places etc. Although we get a lot of program networked from Bunbury, local residents do not see that as unusual. So many services are brought in from outside, in Kalgoorlie, that this is seen as natural. Television is just the same.”

“We still do about 30% of our own commercial and program production. We enjoy it. It means that some of our stuff has a very local feel when that is necessary. We have a great mix. That is because clearly the staff in Bunbury are of better quality than the staff we previously had in Kalgoorlie and, therefore, for most of the other things which need to be done, Bunbury does it better. They have professionally trained accounts people, billing people, traffic controllers, advertisement bookers, etc. We therefore get the best of both worlds.”

**Jenny Rodgers (Local General Manager, Albany)**

“We do a lot of community service announcements. It is true that we only have live local broadcasting for about three hours each day. It has taken time for the community to become accustomed to that. We still have a lot of local bulletins, but they are fed into the networking.

My aim is to develop a high profile for the station within the community. I have good links with the local chamber of commerce and similar organisations.”

**Geoff Rowe (Local General Manager, Narrogin)**

“Until a few years ago, our station was located several kilometres out of town. Locals therefore rarely dropped in to see us. But after a fire destroyed the station, it was relocated into town. It was then getting 10-15 visitors each day and that still continues. There is no suggestion by anyone that it is less local than it was a few years ago. Networking incorporates a lot of local input and Bunbury is good at taking our local stories, writing them up and inserting them into the feed.”

“There is definitely enough local content. From Monday to Friday, a live breakfast show is broadcast out of Bunbury specifically for our market. It is highly relevant to our listeners and is just as local, but of better quality, than it ever could be if we employed our own announcer in the town to do it. We have a live regional show which includes handyman hints, a rural information service, a talk of the town section with town councillors, a regional roundup from different towns, a local sports update, etc. It is very relevant and very local. We have not had any complaints. We run many local announcements and we have a live Saturday morning program. We are also just about to start a new one hour show called “Rural Focus” which will provide rural information, four day weather forecasts, information from the Farmers’ Federation, the Australian Wheat Board, livestock reports, local community information, etc. We have done a number of field days and these receive a great response from the local and from our clients. Our last field day was just three weeks ago.”

**Garry Leddin (Regional General Manager (Southern Markets), Albany)**

“The quality of the product offered by us in our markets is unquestioned. We have never had any queries about the relevance of our news, current affairs and other information to the local community. Our product is regarded by all as being as local as necessary in a regional market. Advertisers have also said to us that we now have an even better quality product with more local content. They can assess that very well through the local sales they make.”

**Craige McCulloch (General Manager Hub, Albury)**

“Our FM station is almost entirely local. It is only automated between 12 midnight and 6.00am. The rest is local and, except for two hours, it is also live. Our AM station does take afternoon and evening programming from 2CH. But that was because the introduction of a new FM service in Albury meant that the choice open to audiences became greater and a lot of them moved away from our old AM style programming. We were also at a disadvantage because the new FM service has a much stronger signal than our AM service and therefore picked up a wider catchment area. When we introduced 2CH programming we got a lot of the audience back. They love it. We produce and insert regular local news bulletins and other current affairs and community services announcements. For most of the day those bulletins are broadcast every half hour. Sometimes they are even more frequent.”

“There has been no significant change to the programming format in Albury since the introduction of the hub. Our significant investment is very real to the local population. They see it in bricks and mortar. There is no negative feedback at all. Albury recognises our very strong commitment to them.”

“We sponsor as many things as we can in Albury and Wodonga if they are non profit. We give free airtime for promotion of these organisations and activities. We send morning crews to fetes,

fairs and other shows. Our breakfast announcers will often walk the streets of Albury/Wodonga and speak live to the local population. At the moment we do that at least each week. We often do broadcasts live from a community event or show.”

“Steve Bowen in the breakfast team often sets up a free bbq or a free soup kitchen in winter where locals, on their way to work, stop and grab a bowl of soup and talk live into the radio.”

**Glen Holmes (Local General Manager, Mildura)**

“Programming is more “live and local” now than it has ever been. This is due to the seamless programming and the number of local windows open to individual stations each hour. The hubs are also very conscious of local requirements and they therefore excel in presenting local issues. This can be seen in the news bulletins. We now produce our own news and insert local segments after the national segments for each bulletin. That is not how we did it before the hubs. Our news is now more local than it has ever been. In addition, before the hubs, local news was only reported five times each day. We now report local news every half hour from 7.00am until 6.00pm. This is an enormous advancement.”

“Both our stations are heavily involved in community activities. We recently sent crews out to the “Great Vanilla Slice Triumph”. This is a local competition and we made live crosses to that competition right throughout its duration. We went local for five hours one day when the TAFE held its Open Day. We broadcast live directly from the campus for that period. We do that sort of thing quite often.”

**Graham McDonald (Local General Manager, Young)**

“We continue to do six hours of live programming every Sunday when we entirely produce locally the broadcast of one of our local football matches. This is in addition to at least seven or eight hours of live local broadcasting every other day by 2LF. Our radio stations are the only true “local” media in Young. Newspapers come from Wagga and television stations come from metropolitan and major regional markets. We have therefore gone to great lengths to retain the integrity of our local bulletins and all other aspects of local information. Our locals regard us “fondly” because of this. I know this has not changed since the introduction of the hubs. The only comments we have received, since then, relate to the improvement in the quality of our programs. We often broadcast from or cross to local and community events. For example, we will shortly go local for the Cherry Festival Breakfast and we will run the usual sausage sizzle and other festivities.”

**Cath Mabbott (Local General Manager, Dubbo)**

“We send significant amounts of information, local newspaper clippings, local sporting and current affairs news, and so on, by email or fax to the hub. That happens many times each day. Albury has been excellent in turning that information around into a local bulletin and broadcasting that local bulletin back to Dubbo on a very quick track. We have also just decided to do a 12 hour live program every Saturday. This will cover talk, sports, callers’ questions, agricultural news, chat time, local identities, etc. We also intend to go live from local picnic days once they recommence in Dubbo.”

**Chris Corbett (Local General Manager, Griffith)**

“Before the hub, all our news bulletins were taken from Sky. That was a generic national bulletin which had a Sydney and national focus. Local headlines were inserted usually six times each day. They did not run for very long. They were made up of the best local stories our people could

muster up. We now have a much more professional approach. First, our major news bulletins are produced in Albury and they therefore have a regional focus and not a Sydney or national focus. Secondly, because some of the hack work has been taken away from the local station, our people are now able to focus more closely on obtaining and conveying local items to the hub. The hub then produces a quality local bulletin which is inserted into the programming many more times each day than we previously did. We continue to take Aussie Rules and NRL matches during the winter and we insert our own local score updates throughout those programs. We continue to do a live broadcast every Anzac Day outside the local ceremony spot. We do the Christmas Pageant live every year and we will continue to break out of hub programming to do these sorts of things.”

**Dan Bradley (Program Director, Rockhampton)**

“All of our stations are more local now than they have ever been. When I first joined DMG in 1997, I would travel to regional markets and the product heard on our airwaves contained very little local information. Generally the announcers would announce the songs and would not extend much beyond that. Today, however, announcers are forced to fill the local windows each half hour or hour with local information. This is in addition to the local bulletins which are produced at the hub. In other words, our new approach has, in a sense, forced localism back on to the air. Announcers in the past were able to take a soft option. They can’t do that any more, because they are given slots of time which they simply must fill.”

“It is incorrect to assume that just because a program is produced “locally”, in the sense of a physical person broadcasting live from a studio in the town, that it will necessarily produce a better product or a more local product than one which is produced remotely using local information. Our ratings and margins confirm that listeners have also noticed that our product is now more local and is a better product, as our stations are now rating No. 1 in every market in which we broadcast. No further proof is required.”

“Radio stations must be relevant to their audience and, hence, fortnightly we conduct research to determine the listening preferences of our stations’ audiences. We do this in every one of our markets. If they want more local news, we give it to them. By the same token, if they want less local stuff or if they show us a clear preference for a particular type of programming, we give that to them as well. We program from audience preferences “upwards”. We do not program from our own preconceived notions of what they want to hear and then impose it “downwards” on them.”

“Sometimes they just don’t want local stuff. The Martin Molloy program is a clear example. For years we took a feed of that program each afternoon from Austereo in Melbourne. Local communities were aware that the program was produced in Melbourne and yet it consistently achieved very high ratings. When Martin Molloy ceased broadcasting, we replaced it in some markets with locally produced material and the ratings went down very fast. Another example is the John Laws program.”

“Our stations now employ more journalists than they did before the hubs were brought online. Most stations which employed a local journalist have retained that journalist. This is very important - some people don’t realise it. The Northern hub has gone on and employed an additional three journalists and the Southern hub has employed an additional four journalists. These are all in addition to the local journalists which were employed by the local stations before the hub came on line. Each one of our news bulletins has a mixture of state, national and international news. However, that is no longer the emphasis. We also have significant local news bulletins which are separate and are inserted each time, and they are just as emphasised as the state, national and international news. So every time there is a news break, it includes one

combined bulletin which covers local, state, national and international news, as well as one extra purely local bulletin. Local people want both. We therefore give them both.”

**Dean Pickering (Group Program Director (Southern Markets) Albury)**

“Albury and Coffs Harbour always produced their own night shows before the hubs came along. Albury still does that, although through the hubs, whereas it is not done any longer at Coffs Harbour. But I do not think that is a problem. People do not complain and the hubs enable programs to sound more local than they could before when stations were simply taking feeds of programs from capital cities. There has been a little loss of a few local programs, such as night shows in Coffs Harbour but, in the main, the quality of programs across the board has increased significantly and, in those few cases where local shows are no longer produced, they have been replaced with better quality stuff which still has a lot of local relevance.”

“With the old feed style programming, there was no opportunity to discuss local issues, but the introduction of the hub system has enabled this to occur (through the local windows each hour) and, in fact, it forces announcers to discuss local issues.”

“The introduction of the hub has not caused any reduction in each stations’ involvement with their local community. This would have remained the same. There is no reason why it would have got better or worse. There is no correlation between these things at all.”

**Roger Dunn (Local General Manager, Bendigo)**

“I have not received any listener complaints recently regarding the programming or the origins of the programming in Bendigo. Other complaints were minor, such as complaints in relation to reception or complaints from small advertisers and those complaints have since reduced dramatically.”

**Phil O’Donnell (Local General Manager, Mt. Gambier)**

“Our stations do nine or ten hours of their own programming each day during the week and we also produce our own sports show for a few hours every Thursday night during winter.”

“I don’t think our community is really aware that we get quite a bit of programming from Albury. I recently brought down one of our very good announcers from Albury so he could attend a local function and do a bit of a gig for us for an hour or so. He was very well received and it was pretty obvious that most of the people there just thought that he was an announcer who worked in our local studio at Mt. Gambier. They hear him every day and they have no idea that he is broadcasting from a point so far away. He is a fantastic quality announcer and we make sure that all of the local stuff is inserted, and so why would anyone know that he was not in Mt. Gambier? It just doesn’t matter. When we told people that he was from Albury, they just laughed and didn’t care. In fact, I think they were pretty impressed that something like that could come from Albury and they received it as seamlessly as they do.”

**Yvonne Braid (Local General Manager, Wagga Wagga)**

“We still do almost as much local broadcasting as we did before the hubs. Very little has changed in that regard on our AM station. Although a bit more has changed on the FM station, it is still not unreasonable.”

“2WG and Star FM have always been heavily involved in the local community. In fact I believe that they are more involved with the local community now than they have ever been. I am involved in many community committees, groups and associations. Many of our announcers are

similarly involved. Just a few examples of what we do include the raising of \$18,000 in one week in early October for Camp Quality (via a live radio auction every day), assistance with an appeal to raise funds for a new radiotherapy unit, sponsoring the “largest bowl of rice” fundraiser, advertising the garden festival and all of these other activities free of charge, sponsoring the jazz festival, sponsoring the city to lake fun run, conducting outside broadcasts from local festivals and sponsoring the Christmas spectacular. We break into hub programming many times every month just to do live local or community events which normally go for a number of hours.”

*Yvonne Braid is recognised as an absolute leader in all things to do with the Wagga community and in recognition of her contribution, she has had a Wagga freight train named after her.*

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

### **Bryce Nielsen (Local General Manager, Townsville)**

“It is always possible for a station to “go local” if an emergency arises. When a cyclone went through Townsville around Xmas 1999, 4TO went local 24 hours per day for days. It was the only form of communication to local residents. Our competitors lost power and were off the air. Television was similarly not available and newspapers were not distributed. 4TO proved that when necessary, it can do it (and do it well).”

### **Blair Sullivan (Hot FM Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“New technology at the Townsville hub makes it much easier to “go local” whenever required. There was recently a cyclone in Cairns. 4CA becomes the central communication point in those circumstances. A disaster co-ordination centre was established at the city council and it thereupon used 4CA as the main communication device for residents. Direct telephone hookups were established between the disaster coordination centre and 4CA. 4CA immediately focussed local programming on residents, hospitals, chemists, power authorities, supermarkets and other community services. It broadcasted warnings, progress reports, opening times of shops and businesses, etc. We were completely local from our own studio for more than three days. It was hard work but, at the same time, it was easy to actually do it. We just flick a switch and the hub disappears. All of our staff were requested to come to work and, as often happens, many of them moved their entire families into the radio station for the duration of the cyclone. That enabled them to be of service around the clock.”

“In April this year we received a call at the local station from Police at 1.05 am. A young child was lost. We called Townsville, a message was recorded and was then broadcast directly from Townsville to all of our listeners in Cairns. The message was broadcast twice, almost immediately and the child was found by 2.00 am.”

“Outside the 4CA switchboard hours, we have an arrangement with Black and White Taxis. Their switchboard answers any calls which go into 4CA. They then have set procedures to follow if an emergency call is received. They will immediately notify senior station executives. In addition, the Police, SES, fire brigade and other emergency services all have direct and home contact numbers for senior executives. I have received three such calls in the past two years and have acted immediately in each case. There has never been a complaint.”

“All stations which take Hot FM programming from the hub may interrupt programming at any time to “go local”. Hot FM in Townsville went local 24 hours per day during the cyclone which hit around Christmas 1999.”

### **Stuart Snell (Local General Manager, Charters Towers)**

“Emails are sent on a daily basis from Charters Towers to the Townsville hub for broadcasting in our breakfast program and for other local inserts. The system works very well. A listener contacted the local station recently to say that her sister’s house had burnt down. We called the hub, and the message was recorded appealing for clothes, food and other assistance, and the message was broadcast on the very next local rave. No problems at all. It is always possible for us to “go local” in cases of major disasters or emergencies. I would sit in the studio and be the announcer if necessary.”

**Rob Kidd (Local Announcer, Townsville)**

“In my five hour afternoon program, I am always able to insert emergency type information into the local raves. On 25 September, a Townsville local called the station to advise that there was a small bushfire and that it was creating visibility problems for drivers etc. We recorded that conversation and it was broadcast a few minutes later in the next local rave insert. These sorts of things happen every day. Of course, if there is a real disaster or emergency, the local stations can just go local anyway.”

“A cyclone passed through Townsville at Christmas 1999. We switched off the network programming and went local 24 hours per day for about three days. For weeks following that, we ran numerous promotions and recordings of local people expressing their gratitude for our excellent coverage of the crisis. People really feel close to us when these situations arise. We also feel close to them.”

**Sue Gilbert (Local General Manager, Gladstone)**

“If our local station gets a call from the Police or I get a call directly, I will either call in an announcer, or I will do it myself, from the local studio, or will relay the information to Townsville, depending on how urgent the situation is and what is the most appropriate response. In many instances, Townsville could produce and broadcast a local liner just as quickly and more professionally than I could do it in Gladstone. I get one or two calls like this each year and sometimes I deal with them myself and sometimes I deal with them through Townsville but, in every case, they are dealt with instantaneously.”

**Merv Bunt (Local General Manager, Emerald)**

“Our station has a great relationship with the Police. About three or four times each year, we will break into any hub or network programming to assist with local emergencies. In September 2000 the Police telephoned to ask for assistance in locating a three year old girl who was missing. We were able to get an item on this to air within four minutes. I was able to easily override the network programming. We do the same thing when there are dangerous roads, traffic incidents, etc.”

**John Inglis (Heritage Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“The hub system enables more support to be given to local stations in times of emergency. If necessary, resources can be moved from the hub to assist the local station. In the old days, announcers would broadcast around the clock during local emergencies and they would end up being more exhausted than most of the local residents. These days we can send in backup resources from the hub if necessary or we can at least give them periodical times off air when we produce a summary of the day’s activities in relation to the emergency and we beam that from the hub.”

“We have a cyclone manual for the Northern region. It sets out in a lot of detail how our stations must deal with each stage of a cyclone. Listeners also have a 1300 number which enables them to get through to a hotline at the hub. That enables emergency information to be broadcast immediately. Each station manager also the ability to “go local” and disconnect the hub or other network service at any point. For less urgent emergencies or disasters, the hub can prepare an announcement dealing with the matter and broadcast it through the local channel on one of the local raves or even on one of the local commercial spots if there is not enough time left. We can always act as quickly as the situation requires.”



**Stuart Endersby (Group Program Director (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“All of the emergency services organisations in Western Australia have one “hot line” contact number for our entire network. That number is answered 24 hours per day. Police, fire brigades, road authorities, etc, can call us at any time. We then assess the urgency of the situation in conjunction with the caller. If it is extremely urgent, we immediately call the hub and networked broadcasting, if it is going on at the time, is immediately pulled and the relevant stations go local straight away. They will go local through a reserve announcer at Bunbury broadcasting into the affected region, or by a local announcer in the local studio. In cases where it is decided that the matter is not so urgent, we prerecord a message at Bunbury and then drop it into the feed. People in the West are usually very interested in emergencies and disasters in other parts of the State. Accordingly, we sometimes just drop the network feed from Bunbury altogether and replace it with a broadcast relevant to the emergency. That broadcast for a short time will go into every market. No-one ever seems to mind.”

“We have a great record. Not so long ago there was a cyclone in North Queensland. The Townsville hub was still not up and running. The hotline call from Queensland came straight to us and, within four minutes, we ran an emergency alert broadcast from Bunbury straight back into all of the relevant markets in North Queensland. We do not get those calls any more because of the hub at Townsville, but it shows you what we can do. On another occasion, we arranged a coordinated search for a missing person through all of our markets in the West. And it only took us six minutes to produce and run the emergency broadcasts. Our ability to respond to these sorts of things is just not an issue. We are as good as anywhere in the world. The hotline also means that any emergency services organisation and also any other interested listeners can acquaint us with an emergency virtually instantaneously.”

**Alan Mead (Chief Engineer (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“If there is an emergency, a message can be recorded in Bunbury and immediately transmitted via an ISDN link to the local stations. If there is a more pressing need locally for a message to be transmitted on air, the local manager will arrange for an immediate message and will override the networking.”

**Collin Taylor (Local General Manager, Northam)**

“We have a good relationship with the local emergency people. Northam have a water authority and a roads office, as well as other emergency organisations. We often book advertisements for them relating to outlying areas. This is a community service.”

**Geoff Rowe (Local General Manager, Narrogin)**

“The station is able to respond very well to emergency situations, particularly because we have the capacity to go live to air at any point. For example, two years ago there was a bushfire. Within just a few minutes of finding out, our station went live on air for the whole day, giving regular updates. We also later initiated a radio auction to raise funds for the victims of the bushfire.”

**Craige McCulloch (General Manager Hub, Albury)**

“We hardly ever get emergency calls which require immediate action in Albury. We are not like North Queensland or even like the West. However, the SES, Police and Fire Brigade have my direct contact numbers and for other key staff, and it is always possible for us to “go local” at any point if the need should arise.”

**Glen Holmes (Local General Manager, Mildura)**

“Emergencies in Mildura are not frequent. Occasionally we get a dust storm. We go local in those circumstances if necessary. We recently received a call advising that a truck had rolled on the local highway and that the area was dangerous as a result. I emailed that information through to the hub and an immediate announcement was made on air. It took only a matter of minutes.”

**Graham McDonald (Local General Manager, Young)**

“In summer months we often get told about bushfires. In the past, we announced them on air as soon as possible. That was usually within a few minutes. This is the first full year of operation of the hub and we have not yet had any bushfires to deal with. However, I have established the guidelines which will apply and am confident that as soon as we get notice of a bushfire in the summer, we will be able to email that notice to Albury and have the local alert inserted into our hub programming within 3-5 minutes. If it is ever necessary to go even quicker than that, we will just pull the plug and go live. All of the emergency services people have 24 hour contact numbers for the station and also for me and for key staff members and for the hub. Occasionally we are asked to broadcast urgent messages for itinerant fruit pickers (because often police and other organisations have no other way of contacting itinerant workers). We regard this as an important service. The structure we have in place for the hub for bushfires, etc, will also operate in exactly the same way if we get a request to broadcast an urgent message for an itinerant worker.”

**Chris Corbett (Local General Manager, Griffith)**

“There has been no change since the hub. Our ability to break into scheduled programming today is no different than it was before the hub. Police and emergency services people have contact numbers for all of us and also for the “duty mobile” which is on a roster system.”

“On 29 September this year a local contractor mistakenly severed some optic cable in the area. This resulted in the blackout of all mobile phone services, EFTPOS facilities and, importantly, the “000” number. That number became unavailable to our population for quite a long time. Within four minutes of being told, I arranged for the hub in Albury to announce that this situation had arisen and we then kept everyone in touch with the situation constantly and sort of acted as the “emergency operator” until “000” was restored.”

**Dan Bradley (Program Director, Rockhampton)**

“The hubs mean that an individual station’s ability to respond to an emergency is much easier. Even when stations took feed overnight from Sky, for example, those stations could break into the programming and go local. But it was messy and complicated to do that and was also messy and complicated to get back into the automated program. This is because we did not run Sky and we therefore did not determine the processes to be followed. With the introduction of the hub, however, we have changed it so that stations have a choice, depending on the type of emergency, to go local themselves immediately, to go local at a particular point in time or to convey the information to the hub and request the hub to broadcast the message on their behalf either as soon as possible or in the next local window. There are four possibilities therefore available. The local manager will finally determine which of the four possibilities he uses. We have the system set up so it is very easy for him to choose whichever he wants in conjunction with emergency services people.”

**Dean Pickering (Group Program Director (Southern Markets) Albury)**

“It is very easy for the local stations to break into hub programming and to go local. Programmers would prefer that the stations wait for a convenient time to do so, but they can do it in second if the need arises. Stations do not need to seek the approval of anyone before breaking into hub programming.”

**Roger Dunn (Local General Manager, Bendigo)**

“It is very easy to break into hub programming. I suppose it might take a while for me to break into it if I am a long way away from the station when an emergency is conveyed to me. But if I can get hold of someone who is closer to the station, then they can interrupt the programming more quickly. There will always be someone close to the station. The hubs themselves are able to break into our programming at any stage, in a case of real emergency, so I could always just instruct them to do it anyway.”

**Yvonne Braid (Local General Manager, Wagga Wagga)**

“It is very easy to break into hub programming and broadcast any information required in the event of an emergency. I just did this on 29 September. A severe thunder warning was issued and 2WG broke into hub programming and immediately broadcast the details of the storm. The treatment of emergencies is no different now than it was before. In the past, we would take feeds from 2UE or from Sky and sometimes it was necessary to break into that programming to broadcast the details of an emergency. In fact it probably took just a little bit longer than it does now, due to the technology we have. But there has really been just no change at all.”

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Bryce Nielsen (Local General Manager, Townsville)**

“Regional markets in the past were often used as a training ground for junior announcers. That is not possible as much these days with the introduction of the hubs. On the other hand, however, the introduction of the hubs does mean that some local announcers will have an opportunity to move into the hubs if they are good. It gives them a midway progression between regional markets and metropolitan markets.”

### **Blair Sullivan (Hot FM Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“The introduction of the hub system has had almost no effect on the employment of announcers in Western and central markets, and only minimal effect in coastal markets. The hub system in fact enables me to spend more time doing “air checks” of the quality of announcers’ programs and thereby for me to assist and train those announcers better.”

### **Sue Gilbert (Local General Manager, Gladstone)**

“Certainly we now employ less people at the local station in Gladstone. However, one of our technicians moved to Townsville and one of our program directors is about to do the same. We therefore actually experienced no redundancies as a result of the introduction of the hub. We simply moved a couple of people into Townsville. They were happy about that, because it was a progression for them.”

### **Merv Bunt (Local General Manager, Emerald)**

“Our employees are now multi-skilled. One of our salespersons does announcing in the early afternoon and I also do announcing when required.”

### **Ken Gannaway (Regional General Manager (Northern Markets) Bunbury)**

“We only employ local people. Announcers will sometimes move from market to market and, in particular, from smaller markets into Bunbury. But we never recruit announcers from the East. That would be disastrous. They must understand the local culture of the West. Some of our markets are very isolated and self contained. Kalgoorlie is a good example. On the other hand, some other markets are much more variable and the employees comprise a mix of long term permanent residents and short term or semi-permanent residents.”

### **Joan Peters (General Manager Sales (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“It is always important to employ sales reps from the local town. It is better to have locals because our clients respond better to people who are part of the community. They like to see the sales reps spending their money in the town. I always keep that in mind and therefore go out of my way to employ local people as sales reps. It is even more important with sales reps than it is with announcers or any other radio station employees. Sales reps are the people who take your money and they are the ones who therefore need to be local and that is why it is our policy to make sure that they are always local.”

### **Collin Taylor (Local General Manager, Northam)**

“When networking was introduced, back before DMG’s time, in the West, it was clear that there would be certain reductions in employee numbers at local stations. However, employees were

never sacked. They were simply not replaced when they resigned. Instead, when they resigned, the remaining employees picked up any increased work load or, more often than not, the work load had not increased anyway, because of the networking. This approach is why it actually took many years in the West for employee numbers to drop by any noticeable amount. In some markets clearly we now employ quite a few less people than we did 5 or 10 years ago. But that has arisen through the policy of non-replacement, rather than any active retrenchments. This of course is subject to the overriding principles that we still warn and, if necessary, retrench people if on proper objective standards they are not performing. But if they are performing at appropriate levels, they will be retained until they resign.”

**Antonell Caputo (Local General Manager, Kalgoorlie)**

“We had five announcers many years ago. We now only have two. However, we did not retrench the three who left. They left of their own accord over a period of years and, once they left, they were not replaced.”

“Staff are always a problem in Kalgoorlie. There is very high turnover. We always give a lot of opportunities to young people just out of radio school. They see Kalgoorlie as a starting point. But so many of them only stay here for about one year and then they move on. It is also very hard with our sales staff. They are nearly always the wives of miners. Miners come and go and, when they go, we lose our sales staff. We probably have the highest turnover in regional radio. But that is part and parcel of Kalgoorlie. At least it enables us to give fresh opportunities to young radio school graduates more often than other radio stations can give those same opportunities.”

**Jenny Rodgers (Local General Manager, Albury)**

“Multiskilling is now essential. We must be “jacks of all trade”. People with sales skills must also have skills in administration, computers, client liaison and public relations. There is no room any more for an employee to say “I don’t do that” or “I don’t do this”. You must be prepared to do anything and everything. This does not mean that we do not have specialists who are the very best in their fields. But the specialists are at the hubs. That is where they are of the greatest value.”

**Garry Leddin (Regional General Manager (Southern Markets), Albury)**

“The Mayor of Bendigo was concerned about the redundancies which might occur upon the establishment of the hub in Albury. Of course there were a small number of redundancies (but we employed many more people in Albury). We spoke to the Mayor beforehand and we dealt with the redundancies as sensitively as possible. We did not have any complaints from the Mayor or from anyone else about changes in the quality of our product or about local content. The only comments made were about the potential redundancies.”

**Graham McDonald (Local General Manager, Young)**

“It is true that we were once a training ground for junior announcers and, with the introduction of the hub and therefore less announcing positions in Young, we do not have the same opportunity to train young people in the skills of announcing. On the other side, however, the hub does provide a very neat stepping stone and enormous opportunity for those announcers who are left and, if they are really good, they will be able to move to the hub and there they will receive the best radio training it is possible to receive in the world.”

**Dan Bradley (Program Director, Rockhampton)**

“The hub system enables us to obtain and retain better announcers than we were previously able to do. This is because the hubs are able to take their pick of the bunch from all of the regional and local markets when selecting announcers. In turn, announcers are keen to work at the hubs as their listening audience is potentially over one million people, rather than audiences which are less than 100,000 in most of the individual regional markets. This means announcers who are trying to make a big name for themselves are much more able to do so from the hubs. DMG is also able to pay announcers much better at the hubs and it can therefore attract better announcers with better remuneration packages.”

“The hub system has promoted a greater delineation of responsibilities amongst the various personnel which are required to operate a radio station. For example, in the past a program director at a regional station would also have been required to double as a production assistant or announcer and would have been part of the executive team and therefore required to attend sales meetings and other administrative meetings. They were “run off their feet”. Since the introduction of the hub, however, program directors have been able to focus exclusively on that role. They can spend more time doing air checks of announcers and assisting announcers to improve their work. This leads to better training and better quality announcers. Similarly, journalists are able to focus just on collecting and conveying local news and information. It all works much better and this is why the quality of our programs has visibly improved.”

“As hubs are able to attract better quality and more experienced announcers, this means that junior announcers are able to learn from these experienced announcers. Previously, junior announcers might be sent to a regional market and left to their own devices with little coaching or mentoring to improve their skills. This does not happen now. For example, we have just employed a 17 year old announcer who will do the breakfast show for one of the Western Queensland markets. He will do that show from the hub and will get direct training and mentoring from the experienced announcers who are there. The program directors will also be able to do frequent air checks of his work to assist him to improve his skills.”

“We employ at least one local breakfast announcer in all but the very smallest of our markets. In some we employ two. In Rockhampton, we are going to call for applications for a second breakfast announcer as soon as we commence broadcasting next week. These will be local people.”

**Dean Pickering (Group Program Director (Southern Markets) Albury)**

“It is true that the introduction of the hubs and networking in general means that there is no longer the same training ground opportunities for young announcers and programmers. They must be good enough on day one to be lead announcers at the local stations or to be junior announcers or programmers at the hubs. The other side of the equation, however, is that listeners in regional and rural markets now get much better announcers broadcasting into their markets and the quality of the programs and of the announcers, both those who are still at the local studios and those who are now at the hubs, is fantastic.”

**Roger Dunn (Local General Manager, Bendigo)**

“In Bendigo we probably employ 10-12 less people today than we did five years ago. That is a reduction of around 25%. I know we have been hit just a little harder than some of the other markets. But it is important to realise that not all of our employee losses have been due to redundancies. Many people left of their own accord between 1998 and when the hub came on line. We just did not replace them.”

## COMPLAINTS

### **Stuart Snell (Local General Manager, Charters Towers)**

“There have been no complaints in relation to the quality of programming since the introduction of the hubs. Programming was of variable quality in Charters Towers up until the introduction of the hub, but now the quality of the programming has improved enormously and the service is more professional and more local. Why would there be any complaints?”

“Before the introduction of the hub, advertisers often complained because of the poor quality of advertising we offered, the fact that the same announcer did all of the advertising and because technical problems led to the station being off the air quite often. Since the introduction of the hub, advertisers have noticed the difference. They have said that the quality of advertising has improved and also the ability to insert advertising at appropriate times each hour is also much better.”

### **Sue Gilbert (Local General Manager, Gladstone)**

“I have received no complaints as a result of the move to the Townsville hub. We have been hubbing for many years in any event. The only comments I have received are positive in relation to the quality of the programming. We have a fantastic breakfast announcer and that clearly helps with the local profile of the station. I doubt whether many of our listeners even know that a fair amount of our programming comes out of Townsville. If they did know, however, I doubt whether they would care.”

### **Antonell Caputo (Local General Manager, Kalgoorlie)**

“We get occasional complaints about bad reception in cases where severe inclement weather interferes with the satellite. This has been a problem for many years. It is not just because we get a satellite feed from Bunbury. It would have been the same in the old days. We never get complaints about our local content or our reduced staff numbers or our physical local presence. We cover those things very well.”

### **Geoff Rowe (Local General Manager, Narrogin)**

“We receive very few complaints. On average it would be no more than one or two per year. These complaints are usually about the quality of the signal, and that cannot be helped in some of the remote parts of the licence area. I have never had a complaint about content.”

### **Glen Holmes (Local General Manager, Mildura)**

“I have received no negative feedback at all in Mildura. To the contrary, there has been a lot of positive comment from advertisers. They say that the technology and talent now being used is producing a quality of advertising that was not produced in the past in any regional centres. In my view this is technology and talent which I simply would never have been able to afford in Mildura. But we can afford it for the entire network through the hubs.”

### **Graham McDonald (Local General Manager, Young)**

“I have never received any complaints regarding the quality of programs. I did receive a handful of complaints about reception and technological issues when the hub first came on line in Albury. However, we have fixed those problems and have not received any such complaints for many months. The technical issues have now been completely sorted out.”

**Cath Mabbott (Local General Manager, Dubbo)**

“Occasionally people do ask why our format is so similar to the format in Orange. This tends to be a query out of curiosity and not a complaint. When we explain that some of the programming is networked, that does not spark any negative response. But the overwhelming majority of the calls we get are from people who tell us that they love our music or love our announcers. Advertisers have also said that the sound and scripting of our commercials is now much better than it was in the past and it much better than our competitors.”

**Chris Corbett (Local General Manager, Griffith)**

“I have received no complaints from listeners and there has been no negative comment in the local press in Griffith. The hub in Albury is just not an issue for Griffith people. The only negative comment has been in Wagga newspapers which are distributed in Griffith. Wagga seems to have become totally obsessed about this issue. Nobody else seems to care very much. The quality of programming is fantastic and that is all anybody else cares about. Even advertisers comment positively on the quality of the commercials and they note the greater variety of talent which is now available.”

**Ashley Myatt (Local General Manager, Coffs Harbour and Pt. Macquarie)**

“There has been very little negative feedback in Coffs Harbour since the introduction of the hub. Moreover, the quality of programming and localism generally has not been attacked at all. On the other hand, there have been a few complaints about format choice in Pt. Macquarie. These few complaints do not have anything to do with the quality of our programs. Rather, they seem to be because the population in Pt. Macquarie may be a little older than the population which is now targeted by 2MC. In particular, the music we now play, from the hub, seems to be aimed at a younger audience. This also has an impact on the relevance of news and current affairs. That is, older audiences prefer a lot of talkback radio and they prefer news and current affairs in a particular way. These complaints have suggested that 2MC may not be pitching right at the level which is required. Our surveys and research will pick this up next time if it is really true. If our audience share suffers as a result of wrong targeting then it will be necessary for us to change. If our audience share does not suffer, on the other hand, then we know that we have properly targeted the majority. In any event, these few complaints are a matter of programming format and have nothing to do with hubbing.”

**Roger Dunn (Local General Manager, Bendigo)**

“Complaints from advertisers were not unusual in the first little while after the hubs were introduced. But that has now reduced dramatically and I think most of the complaints were because the advertisers, being local Bendigo people, were annoyed and disappointed that Albury was chosen as the site for the hub instead of Bendigo. Some of the advertisers also complained because they thought employment at our radio station would fall significantly and I suppose that would have an impact on the economy and therefore on their businesses. But those complaints very quickly fell away and employment numbers did not drop by so much anyway.”

“I think complaints from advertisers were really about the fact that initially they thought we would lose something in Bendigo because there would be less physical bodies sitting in the Bendigo studio. However, I think they have now worked out that that does not have much to do with how “local” we are. That is probably why they do not complain any more.”



**Phil O'Donnell (Local General Manager, Mt. Gambier)**

“I have not received any complaints at all. I have actually received lots of positive comments. One listener telephoned only recently to say that she was very impressed with the announcer who was doing a particular show, which was from the hub and she said she thought he was “too good for Mt. Gambier” and belonged in the city! Of course, I disagree with the last comment, but it does give you an idea of the fact that we now have the ability to broadcast quality programs that we just could never do before.”

**Yvonne Braid (Local General Manager, Wagga Wagga)**

“We have suffered from a widespread campaign which has been incorrect on many occasions and is simply wrong and vicious. There were adverse comments made by the local newspaper. It is widely circulated and read. Some of those comments were simply incorrect. For example, at one stage, a journalist in that paper said that 2WG and Star FM were moving to Albury and it was implied that there would be no local presence in Wagga at all and that there would be no local information on our station. That was absurd. It really stirred up a lot of discontent. Then some people in Wagga were particularly put out simply because Albury has traditionally been a “rival town”. And it was not just that Wagga had lost the hub opportunity, but that it had lost it to Albury. Wagga has lost a number of other industries to Albury. It is a raw nerve. On our part it was probably regrettable, in hindsight, that we relocated the studio premises from the main street in Wagga, where it had been for 50 years, to the lakeside. This has left a building in town appearing to be empty and that, together with adverse press, has allowed our detractors to argue and create the impression that we have left Wagga altogether and that we broadcast 24 hours per day from Albury. This is really quite dishonest. Our detractors also keep pushing the line that our stations are now owned by “some London company”. For many years our stations were owned by a local Wagga family. There was discontent when ultimately it was sold to a foreigner. These are emotional issues. The quality of our service is so high that I am sure these emotional issues would recede, except that our detractors keep going out of their way to publicise them and to play them up. The final complaint relates to the banks. A number of the big banks have closed branches in Wagga and they have left many buildings empty. This has caused significant job losses in Wagga. We now pay some of our bills with cheques which come to us from Sydney. Sometimes we have no choice because banking facilities in Wagga are not what they were before. Sometimes of course it is just company policy that certain cheques come from Sydney, but some of our locals have noticed that the cheques come from Sydney and they have said to me that we are just like the big banks. They have painted us with the same brush. That is unfair because we have not left Wagga and we continue to provide our services and in fact they are even better quality than before. We have not done anything to employment like the extent it was done by the banks.”

## **OTHER**

### **Carol Bermingham (Local Sales Manager, Townsville)**

“The introduction of better technology through the hub system has led to a marked improvement in the quality of advertising we are able to produce. Advertisers have all commented positively.”

### **Sue Gilbert (Local General Manager, Gladstone)**

“Technology is now much better. The technical aspects of producing advertisements and the sound and feel of them is much more professional. The quality is very good. Townsville has excellent quality people. The biggest factor in successfully producing a program or advertisement is the people. Local information can easily be inserted now. It is the quality of the producers and announcers which makes the real difference. It doesn't matter where the program is actually produced, so long as the quality is good and the local information is dropped in. Gladstone programming is of much better quality and much more local today than it ever was in the past. The hub system also enables us to keep top quality people, whereas small local stations cannot compete for top people and cannot retain them.”

“I am very proud of the fact that more people at Biloela listen to our Gladstone station than listen to the local stations in Biloela. That must indicate that the quality of the service is very good. To have programs actually made by people in Biloela does not seem to be a motivating factor for the people of Biloela to listen to their radio station.”

### **Merv Bunt (Local General Manager, Emerald)**

“It is important to be actively involved with the community. I am on good terms with the local mayor and am involved with various local committees and community events. The station is therefore seen to be one of the community's involved leaders. That is very important. We therefore often do our live broadcasting from local sites, schools, sports days, etc. We conduct two fundraising events each year, one on Good Friday and one for the old persons home in Emerald. We do that charity programming all day, on those days and we just cut off the hub and networked programming altogether.”

### **John Inglis (Heritage Group Program Director, Townsville)**

“Changes in radio have been for the better. The hub system allows for and leads to a considerable improvement in quality. It also preserves and, in some cases, even enhances, local content. In some remote markets that is because it is now easier, with new technology to collect, convey, produce and broadcast local items. Communication from the local town to the hub and broadcast from the hub back to the local town is instantaneous. In other cases, the hub ensures local content is not lost (because there is a slot where local content will go). At one of our stations a few years ago, there was virtually no local content because employees were young and attempted to be “hip and cool”. They thought local material and current affairs was “old hat” and just didn't bother. Programming from Townsville now makes sure that there is at a certain amount of local content. We can always have more local content, but not less local content, because of the way the hub programming and time slots work.”

“The quality of programming now is significantly better than before the hub. Quality depends on the ability of our announcers, the type of music which is programmed and the quality of our

commercials. The hub system enables resources to be devoted to research and surveys, announcer training and quality control, production of commercials in a professional setting and other similar advances. This was never possible when everything came from the local studio, music was chosen just according to the personal preferences of the local manager or announcer, commercials were made by the local announcers without the assistance of proper equipment and announcers were too busy doing everything and had no time for training or to improve their announcing skills.”

**Ken Gannaway (Regional General Manager (Northern Markets) Bunbury)**

“Networking has enabled us to take a much more professional approach to advertising. The quality of our commercials is now first rate. The only complaints we have had are from very small advertisers who previously were given much more than they ever paid for. For example, in one market we had an announcer who had a couple of small local businessmen mates. He would cross to their shops or factories and give them about an eight minute direct feed to promote themselves and to say whatever they liked. Yet they would only pay for a standard 30 second advertisement. And even then, we were forced to chase them for months before being paid. We now say that if you pay for 30 seconds, you only get 30 seconds. Why should other advertisers subsidise that sort of behaviour. We have cleaned it up considerably. It’s one thing to say that advertising time should be available to local businessmen. We agree and we make sure that it is always available to them. We have spare advertising time on all of our stations. If they would like to pay for that time, they can take it. But it is absurd to suggest that we must give it away, yet some of the old fashioned local businesses want just that.”

**Joan Peters (General Manager Sales (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“We do not just seek radio advertising from potential advertisers. Rather, we act as consultants to local businesses in advising them on the most appropriate way to promote and advertise their products and services. In that way a real service is provided to local businesses. Often we encourage newsprint or telephone advertising in conjunction with radio advertising. Sometimes we even recommend that radio advertising be deferred until certain parameters are achieved. We try to be complete advertising consultants. In the long term our local businesses benefit from that approach and our revenue dollars, in the long term, will therefore be greater. We develop a relationship with local businesses and are often consulted by them for general advice and assistance, even in cases where radio advertising is not the major focus of their approach to us.”

“DMG is just so professional. The stations were owned by others in the early 90s when I first started in the West. All the owners were interested in was immediate dollars. They had no cash flow. Sales reps were encouraged to offer massive discounts on the last day of the month if they could get cash upfront for advertising. This would enable our salaries to be paid to us the next day. DMG came in and said that was not the way to run a business. We now focus on long term relationships and we always know that the money will be there for our salaries regardless of sales performance in a particular month. We have much more security than we had in the early 90s.”

“We should not fool ourselves. I come from Bridgetown and see myself as a Bridgetown person. We had a local radio station in the mid 80s which had quite a few hours of broadcasting per day live via local announcers. But then the economy fell right out of the bottom of Bridgetown. Over a period of more than five years, banks closed and left, supermarket chains closed and left, big sections of the population, particularly youth, went to larger cities and towns to seek employment, etc. A local radio station just would not have continued to be viable. Bridgetown was not big enough. If it were not for the benefits of networking, it is my opinion that we would have lost the

radio station altogether. No-one would have been able to make it work. Networking has saved local radio stations for the local communities in many small towns. Otherwise, they would have disappeared altogether, or would have been taken over by very amateur operations with no idea what to do.”

**Alan Mead (Chief Engineer (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“There have been significant changes in technology over the past two decades. Most of this has been on the computer and satellite side. We can now arrange programming and networking from computer terminals and we can get instantaneous communication from our stations and from other locations via email. The old fashioned mechanical side of the business has declined very much and will almost go out of existence soon. These are things such as the use of turntables, physically loading tracks, hooking up links, etc. Many more people were needed to do that sort of thing than we now need to run the computers. But the people we now need to run the computers must be skilled. In the past the level of skill required was much less. We cannot go backwards. More people must become more skilled if they want this sort of work.”

“Digital radio in country areas is most unlikely in the near future. That is mainly because digital transmissions are very short range. This means it is prohibitive from a cost perspective to put in place the necessary infrastructure. It would be necessary to introduce a large number of transmission sites to be able to get the same coverage that we do today. It might be possible in very small markets. But our markets in the West are some of the largest markets in the world and digital is just not appropriate at the moment. That is probably why digital radio has been introduced in Europe and parts of Canada, but not in the US where most of the markets are bigger. The US has explored the possibility of putting a digital signal onto existing FM signals. That might work from a technical point of view in the West (although I have not thought about the planning and other implications). Existing satellite and ISDN technology will continue to be used in the West, in my opinion, for a long, long time.”

**Graeme Keller (Group Accountant (Western Markets), Bunbury)**

“It is important to look at economic and financial trends in different locations. Every market does not move in the same direction. We have been able to get more revenue out of some markets over the past few years, but less revenue out of other markets. I can give you examples. Apart from networking, we just cannot afford to continue with the same employee numbers in a market where revenues have fallen by 30% over 6 years. On the other hand, we can take a different approach in coastal markets where population and economic activity seems to power ahead and, as a result, revenues continue to grow. At least networking means that a quality of service can be retained in some smaller markets where, without networking, the stations would either disappear or be left to run down so that the quality of programming would be disastrous. We treat our listeners better than that.”

**Geoff Rowe (Local General Manager, Narrogin)**

“When networking was first introduced, there were a small number of people who were unhappy and tried to engender some local dissent. But we worked out that the people who were unhappy were mainly small local businesses who worked out that they would no longer receive free or heavily subsidised airtime. But we even found that most of those local businesses came back. Our advertising hit such a good quality that they could not afford not to come back.”

**Craige McCulloch (General Manager Hub, Albury)**

“Advertisers and audiences constantly feed back to us that the quality of our product from both stations is much better since the introduction of the hub, in terms of music and the quality and sound of programs and of advertising being produced.”

**Glen Holmes (Local General Manager, Mildura)**

“In regional areas it simply is not possible for stations to obtain and retain presenters with the profile and experience of those in the big cities. For example, we could never obtain or afford John Laws. Without taking a feed of programs like that from the capital cities or from hubs, small regional stations would never be able to broadcast those quality shows to their audiences. Audiences would therefore receive a very second rate product. We are now able to overcome this through hubs.”

**Dan Bradley (Program Director, Rockhampton)**

“Before the hub, local stations were unable to employ fulltime producers. One person would be both a producer and a promotions manager. That person had limited equipment for producing commercials and also had limited access to different voices. In some markets, one announcer did all of the voiceovers for commercials. Advertising became monotonous and was generally of a poor quality. Since the introduction of the hubs, one person is employed purely to produce commercials at the hubs. That person has access to state of the art equipment and facilities, and also has access to between 12 and 14 announcers, at any one time, to do the voiceovers for the commercials. This means that the quality of the commercials has improved markedly and many different voices may be heard doing the commercials.”

**Dean Pickering (Group Program Director (Southern Markets) Albury)**

“Some small advertisers have complained because, in the past, they could telephone a local station and have an advertisement read over the air within just a few hours. These days, because commercials are produced at the hub, there is at least a 24 hour turnaround and sometimes a little bit more. But the quality of the commercials is now much better and, at the end of the day, it is unreasonable to require us to cater for advertisers who cannot think at least 24 hours in advance. If it was a community service announcement or a disaster or emergency alert, that would be a different story and we would still put it on the air immediately. But advertisers cannot reasonably complain because it takes more than a day to get their advertisement to air.”

# **DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA**

## **PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA**

**House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts**

### **Radio Industry Inquiry**

#### **APPENDIX 7**

**Letter from Barry Sandry of Platinum Advertising to Ad News**

# **DMG RADIO AUSTRALIA**

## **PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA**

### **House Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts**

#### **Radio Industry Inquiry**

#### **APPENDIX 8**

#### **Engineering Description of Hubs for Engineering Excellence Raward**

## **ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE RAWARD**

The system was designed by Steve Adler, Tim English and Shane Davis. The main equipment suppliers were Computer Concepts Corporation, Comsys and DSP Media.

DMG Engineering performed installation of all equipment with the exception of one private cabling contractor and Comsys for the satellite system.

The Hubs supplies two separate programs at any given time to 22 transmitters in Queensland and 21 transmitters in NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

Both Hubs deliver their programming and data via satellite. The satellite uplink system incorporates physical space diversity to negate the effects of rain attenuation and equipment failure. The main uplinks are at the Hub ends with fully redundant uplink systems at Charters Towers in the North and at Bendigo in the South. This system is fully automatic and requires no intervention whatsoever should rain attenuation or equipment failures occur.

Digital audio storage and presentation is achieved using Computer Concepts "Maestro" system. DMG and Computer Concepts jointly developed the "Forward and Store" mechanism which allows prerecorded material to be sent out to all receiving stations for synchronised replay at any given time. DMG and Computer Concepts also developed the "Events Server" which allows the triggering of unlimited events at the receiving sites.

The news room system utilises the Computer Concepts "Newsroom" operating system. This system allows for the "Forward and Store" of tailored news bulletins directly to the receiving sites for replay at news time.

These systems enable the immediate or lagged insertion of bulletins and other programs, as required. Items can be brought forward and broadcast immediately from the "Forward and Store" and items can also be inserted at any time whatsoever through the "Events Server". These systems enable the use of new technologies and automation, coupled at the same time with immediacy and changes to programming whenever required. Nothing needs anything more than the flick of a switch.

Production is accomplished utilising the DSP production system. DSP and DMG jointly designed the system to make all three production studios "networkable" to allow the interchange of production material. The production studios were ergonomically designed to allow producers to make commercials quickly and efficiently. The Hub production studio's produce between 800 and 1000 commercials and promos per week. All this material is transferred to each receiving site via the "Forward and Store" mechanism.

Traffic / Scheduling is based on the Computer Concepts VT traffic software. All traffic for Queensland is done from the Hub in Townsville. All traffic for NSW, Victoria and South Australia is done from the Hub in Albury. The VT system has been integrated into the "Forward and Store" mechanism. All logs are delivered to the receiving sites via this mechanism. Reconciliation is performed every two hours with the receiving stations making a short duration ISDN connection. This method is very cost effective because there is no need for a permanent Wide Area Network. These savings which result from there being no need for a permanent Wide Area Network are savings in technology costs and not in labour costs.

There are three "On Air" studio's, two "Voice Tracking" studios, three production studios, two news studios and one news prep in each Hub. The whole system revolves around a digital audio switch that was designed by Computer Concepts. The brand name for this switch is "Epicenter". There is no analog audio in the hubs except for microphones and loud speakers. All audio is handled in AES-EBU format. Any studio can select a source from anywhere in the Hub and play it. In the very near future, we will be connecting the Townsville Hub and the Albury Hub together so the any studio in any hub can select any audio source. ie: An on air studio in Townsville could select a production microphone in the Albury Hub etc. The system was designed to be very modular in its connectivity. We can produce programs anywhere and simultaneously broadcast them anywhere else through these systems. We can also produce and broadcast news bulletins in the same way instantaneously.

Power redundancy was paramount in our thinking. Each Hub has twin redundant uninterruptable power supplies that handle the entire load of the facility. There is an emergency power plant at each site with the ability to "plug in" an external emergency power plant should the need arise.

Out of the three "On Air" studios, one is always spare. There is the space diverse satellite system, which has been described earlier. The "Epicentre" switcher is set up into two individual systems. Each system can supply both programming streams should one system fail.

Each receiving site has a complete "Maestro" system installed. Should any part of the Hub system fail, the receiving stations can go into a live or automated local mode thus keeping the station on the air until repairs can be affected. By installing a complete "Maestro" System at each



receiving site also means that there are always two copies of the audio data at any one time. ie:  
One at the Hub and one at the receiving site.