



Public hearing in Canberra – 18 October

Tuning into community broadcasting

The definition of ‘community interest’ used for licensing community radio stations will be the subject of discussions at a public hearing in Canberra on Wednesday 18 October. Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) will appear before the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts as part of the inquiry into community broadcasting in Australia.

CRA is the national industry body representing Australia's commercial radio broadcasters. It has 252 members, representing 98 % of commercial stations on air. Commercial member radio stations are owned by 32 operators, with 80 % of the stations formed into 12 networks.

CRA has expressed its support for the diversity of listening choices that is provided through community radio. However they raise some concerns that greater clarity is needed on the licensing definitions used so that community radio is appropriately targeting its intended audience through specialised programming.

Committee Chair Jackie Kelly said “Community radio and television is a dynamic sector in Australia and provides vital services to many remote, disadvantaged and special interest groups. Ongoing funding is a significant issue for many community broadcasters.”

She added “The Committee has been inspired by the passion of many community broadcasters and the work of the volunteers that support them. The inquiry is looking to ensure that Australia maintains the vibrancy and diversity of community broadcasting”.

The inquiry into community broadcasting was referred by the Federal Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan. The Committee is investigating a range of issues including content and programming requirements, cultural diversity, meeting the needs of special interest groups, and technological opportunities and threats.

Public Hearing Program – Wednesday 18 October

Venue: Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra

9.05 am Commercial Radio Australia (Sub 109)

Further details on the inquiry, including the terms of reference, membership of the Committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/cita or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4601 or emailing cita.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment, please contact Emily Tinson (Jackie Kelly’s media officer) on (02) 6277 2369 or (02) 4732 2844

For background information, please contact the Committee Secretary, on (02) 6277 4601