



Public hearing in Canberra – 9 August

Tuning into community broadcasting

The provision of digital spectrum for community television will be the focus of discussions at a public hearing in Canberra this Wednesday. **Open Spectrum Australia** (formerly known as the Community Spectrum Taskforce) will appear before the Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts as part of the inquiry community broadcasting in Australia.

Open Spectrum Australia, which is a taskforce of industry, community, academic and technical experts, was established to maximise community access to digital television spectrum. It also aims to encourage the creative and diverse use of digital spectrum.

Currently community television does not have access to digital spectrum and Open Spectrum Australia is expected to discuss the importance of a long term commitment to providing community television with dedicated spectrum. The opportunities of new technologies and applications for community media will also be raised.

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. Community television is an important component of this sector and it faces particular challenges with the shift to new technologies and with pressures on spectrum usage”.

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 its community broadcasting networks”.

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 9 August

Venue: Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra

9.05 am **Open Spectrum Australia (Community Spectrum Taskforce)** (Sub 56)

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