



RADIO EMFM 104.7

3 GRR

ECHUCA MOAMA BROADCAST SERVICE INC AO033933E

Submission 85

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

“TUNING INTO COMMUNITY BROADCASTING”

Submission on behalf of Echuca Moama Broadcast Service Inc – 3GRR.

The Local government areas that we cover are:

Shire of Campaspe - Victoria

Shire of Murray – NSW

Prepared and sent by Geraldine Parker, President/Station Manager

➤ **History of 3 GRR – Radio EMFM**

3 GRR was formed in 1995 and went to air in 1996 on a temporary licence and in 1997 gained a full Community Broadcast Licence. WE have a committee of management of 10 and announcers and volunteers there are over 40. There are no paid staff so all work is done by volunteer members. We operate 24 hours per day seven days a week .and are live to air approximately 110 hours per week.

➤ **Current Situation at 3 GRR**

We have been operating out of a 6 metre by 3 metre site office for 18 months. Our previous site was a rented premises. We are currently building a new studio in the old football change rooms at the Echuca East Recreation Reserve. As we have very limited space we have only been running an on air studio and have not been able to do any production, limited training and limited office duties.

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➤ **The scope and role of Australian Community Broadcasting across radio, television, the internet and other broadcasting technologies**

Radio EMFM's to provide entertainment, local news, education, promotion and support of our community from Primary school children to the aged community.

We have 48 volunteers with 40 being on air announcers
Their ages start at 13 and go well into the twilight years (over 80)
We cover all types of music in our programming – country, pop/rock, easy listening, hip hop, classical, contemporary, religious Indigenous, and Australian.

Over the last 10 years we have trained well over 200 announcers with one young announcer gaining a place at Radio School and one Specialist School student gaining employment. The Specialist school student has Asperger's Syndrome and was uncommunicative and by coming to Radio EMFM for Work Experience ended up with his own music program and learnt so many skills that he gained a job in customer service. (to me this has been our greatest achievement giving this young man the skills and opportunity to learn in a way that he could relate to).

We welcome new members with in the last month the local Indigenous Women's Group coming on board to start training in May and to develop a program for Indigenous Women to address Domestic Violence. We are also developing a program for Media Students at the local Secondary College to write, develop, produce and air a 12 part radio play in 2007. Also later this year the local Echuca East Primary School will be developing and producing a one hour per week program for their school that will go to air during school hours.

Radio EMFM broadcasts local football into the area covering 5 local clubs – Echuca United, Moama, Tongala, Lockington Bamawn United and Elmore.

Radio EMFM is the only radio station that is local and therefore we are included in our local disaster plan. We support the community by regularly airing if there is a local disaster or problem, (bridge closures, phone system down at the local hospital etc)

We support all of our local schools primary and secondary with community announcements and work experience for secondary

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students we have a weekly program for community groups to come in and let the community know what they do, how they do it and any other information. Our local Shire CEO comes in on the first Monday of the month for 1 hour and discuss shire issues.

Church groups, schools, sporting groups, service organisations, Special interest groups, we have assisted nearly all the groups in our area with community announcements, live broadcasts (Rotary Team Rally, Centenary of Federation Celebrations, Local Sport)

➤ **Content and programming requirements that reflect the character of Australia and its cultural diversity**

We have daily community announcements free of charge to all community organisations, local news and weather and regular interviews of local groups

We have the CCLLEN coming in and doing a 2 hour program which is produced by local students, Local Football broadcasts and scores, Tri State games opening ceremony and scores, Local Indigenous Women's Domestic Violence group

All our programming is live (from 7am to 10pm daily) except for 'Deadly Sounds" (1 hour) an Indigenous program produced in Sydney and Radio Outthere produced by the St Vincent de Paul Society for young people.

We are the only local radio station for this area. The commercial stations are networked and do not provide the extensive local content that we do. We also offer local artist the opportunity to promote themselves and play their music. And we encourage all of our announcers to air at least 40% of Australian Music.

➤ **Technological opportunities, including digital, to expand community broadcasting networks**

We are from technologically up to date. We don't have computers in the studio and this is because of financial constraints. We are looking to update our studios in the near future.

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➤ **Opportunities and threat to achieving a diverse and robust network of community broadcasters**

Radio EMFM has a small budget and derives no monies from government funding

Income	\$20000.00	
Expenditure		
Power/phone	\$ 6500.00	
Statutory Fees	\$ 4000.00	(CBAA, APRA etc)
Rent	\$ 5000.00	
Insurance	\$ 1500.00	(inc Public Liability)
All other items	\$ 3000.00	

Our budget over the last three years has been stagnate. Due to the effect of the drought it has meant that our money has been limited. Businesses which have supported us in the past have been severely hit and have just not been able to support us. We have only just been treading water and our equipment has not been updated for over 4 years. We have not been able to pay some of our outstanding accounts and have struggled to keep going. We have the support of our community but have been limited in the financial support that we have been able to secure. If the drought had not so severely affected our area we would have had more opportunities and a greater chance to grow.

At present we have no computer based broadcasting facilities. Our transmission board is over 20 years old, we have no back up studio or training studio so all of our training is done on air. We currently have no back up power source and we have just purchased new antenna for our station as the current one was destroyed in a rain storm last year.

Despite all these lack of facilities we are growing in members and new members seem to be appearing on a weekly basis.

➤ **Opportunities**

- Develop stronger links with local groups
- Develop stronger links and programming with local schools
- Develop a training program for local students
- Grow with our community towards the need of our community
- Strong supporter base with all volunteers

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Improve support of Local Government Authorities
Get more local businesses involved
Update equipment

➤ **Threats**

Lack of financial investment
Inability to maintain our current equipment and purchase new equipment
Further Drought problems

GERALDINE PARKER
President/Station manager

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