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From: Mark Chapman Smith [mailto:heartfm@bigpond.net.au]

Sent: Friday, 15 September 2006 8:08 AM

To: ECITA, Committee (SEN)

Subject: Broadcasting

15/9/06

Dear Senators

As a radio broadcasting service provider since 1968 and currently operating 14 regional narrowcast radio stations I have an interest in forwarding to you and others a quick note regarding the current broadcasting debate taken from the radio newsgroup.

Typing Mark Chapman Smith into Google will reveal many entries regarding this subject.

The debate has been identified as complex, this is not so, a simple shift for Radio and Television broadcasting from the influence of traditional owner/operators to a de-regulated broadcasting regime would bring forward diversity and freedom of speech.

Yours truly

Mark Chapman Smith

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7/8/05

Open Letter to: Ministers, Members, Advisers and Department Officers of the Australian Federal Government.

Please find a summary of posts from the Aus Radio Broadcast Newsgroup relating to upcoming decisions to be made by Federal Cabinet regarding digital radio broadcasting in Australia.

This newsgroup quite accurately reflects the current attitudes of people interested and involved in Radio Broadcasting and is a tremendous tool for feed back to ideas and concepts.

These concepts have been canvassed with the general broadcasting fraternity and reactions and responses can be read at the site.

We ask that the Minister for Communications demonstrate an understanding that new ideas and concepts are required on behalf of Australian Radio Broadcasting consumers and service providers.

Mark Chapman Smith

Concepts discussed.

1.. All current radio broadcasting license holders (Commercial-National-Community-HPON-NAS-LPON) be eligible to move directly to a digital service provision at and on equal power and coverage directly related to their existing consumer market.

2.. Major service providers and those who have paid more than one million dollars for a radio broadcasting licence to the government or at sale in the past fifteen years be eligible to aggregate their signals.

3.. Existing commercial service providers who have invested heavily in Radio Broadcasting should have access to many markets (all metro-sub-metro-regional -outback) on a possible sliding scale to their

investments not excluding an entry to television.

4.. De-regulation of Community Radio Broadcasting to include ownership, advertising and a capacity to on-sell existing licenses, with the choice of operation decided by the current operating boards..

5.. De-regulate programming for HPON and LPON including tenure.

6.. The full capacity of any digital spectrum be available to service providers to give Australian consumers a real choice in competitive radio broadcasting.

7. . All Radio Broadcasting licenses to be a one class document with rules restricting to two per market and a possible plus one separate sourced service through aggregation. ie 3AW Sydney 2UE Melbourne as an example.

8.. Ensure any new digital delivery system uses current technology excluding earlier compression methods. Recognise the capacity of digital free to air broadcasting to carry many more signals to Australian consumers in every market in the country

9.. That independent broadcast sites be retained and that one operator not control or have a right to exclude service providers at actual broadcast positions or places.

10.. Capacity for the ABC to lease duplicated signals to commercial service providers. Allow advertising on the ABC.

11.. Recognise that upgrading to an equal service provision playing field would not make automatic millionaires out of existing independent operators who for the most case have held licenses for many years at extremely low outputs restricting their trade and viability having in effect paid for the upgrade.

12.. Instigate a cut-off date moratorium some time in the recent past to identify eligible service providers for an upgrade to equal digital provision.

Mark Chapman Smith

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