



## **New community radio licence for Tamworth**

The ABA has allocated a community radio licence for Tamworth, New South Wales.

The licence was allocated to Peel Valley Christian Broadcasters Inc and the new service will broadcast on 89.7 MHz on the FM band.

The licensee has 12 months to get the new service up and running.

'The proposed service will add to the range and diversity of services in the Tamworth region,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman. 'The applicant satisfied the ABA it would meet the existing and perceived future needs of the Christian community in the Tamworth region.'

The ABA has allocated this licence after a process of consultation with the people of the local community to seek their views on what additional broadcasting services were needed in their area.

Applications for the new community radio licence were invited via a public notice in the *Northern Daily Leader* on 23 April 1999 and the application received was assessed, particularly in regard to whether the proposed service would meet existing and future community needs.

The Peel Valley Christian Broadcasters Inc service currently operates four days a week as a temporary community broadcaster. However, with the allocation of the permanent community licence, Peel Valley Christian Broadcasters Inc. anticipates increasing the service to seven days a week. The programming for the service is expected to include daily bible readings, programs focused on women and family issues, children's programming and music.

## **Applications invited for new community radio licences**

The ABA has invited applications for five new community radio licences. The licences are to serve Kempsey, Muswellbrook, Port Macquarie, Port Stephens and Taree in New South Wales.

'Allocation of new community radio licences has begun as a result of the ABA's public planning process being finalised in these areas,' said Professor David Flint, ABA Chairman. 'The planning process identified demand for new community broadcasting services operated by people living in each of these locations.'

Free-to-air community broadcasting service licences must be allocated on the basis of merit.

Under this system, in areas where there is only one applicant for a community broadcasting licence, the ABA need only decide if the applicant merits a licence.

When there is more than one applicant, the ABA may also have to choose on the basis of comparative merit. Alternatively, applicants could combine to present a unified application.

Applications for the licences must be received before 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 4 August 1999. From 11 August, copies of any applications received will be placed in the relevant local public libraries. The ABA welcomes written submissions from members of the public in relation to the applications received. Submissions should be lodged with the ABA by Wednesday 25 August 1999.

## **Newcastle**

The ABA has also invited applications for a new community radio licence to serve the Newcastle region of New South Wales.

The ABA is aware of two active community radio groups in Newcastle, Newcastle Christian Broadcasters (Rhema FM) and Vision Impaired Persons Radio Inc. To ensure a fair process, the ABA is inviting applications from all interested groups.

'Applications must meet certain criteria and the ABA will decide if a licence is to be allocated and in the case of competing applicants, to which applicant. The ABA is not obliged to allocate a licence even though it has advertised for and received applications,' said Professor Flint.

'If the ABA receives more than one application for the licence it must choose on the basis of merit. In making its decision it will weigh the applications against the needs and interests of the community and the extent to which the proposed services would meet those needs and interests. It will also consider the applicants' capacity to provide their proposed services and the nature and diversity of other broadcasting services in the area.'

Applications for the licence must be received before 5.00 p.m. 26 August 1999. Any application received will be made available in the Newcastle Public Library from 2 September 1999 for public perusal. The ABA invites members of the public to lodge submissions on those applications. The applications and public submissions will be carefully considered by the ABA in reaching its decision.

### **Applications**

Applications for the licences in Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Taree, Port Stephens and Muswellbrook must be received before 5.00 p.m., Wednesday 4 August 1999.

Applications for the Newcastle licence must be received before 5.00 p.m. Friday 26 August 1999.