

VOICES & VISION

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING
IN AUSTRALIA



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This publication is the joint initiative of the national representative bodies of the community broadcasting sector:

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, National Ethnic & Multicultural Broadcasters' Council, Australian Indigenous Communications Association, RPH Australia, Australian Community Television Alliance and Christian Media Australia.

For contact details, see back cover.

Produced with the assistance of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy via the Community Broadcasting Foundation.

July 2010

WELCOME

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING HAS HELPED SHAPE THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN AUSTRALIA. IT'S RECOGNISED INTERNATIONALLY AS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF GRASSROOTS MEDIA.

It distinguishes itself from other media by providing the local community with access and participation in media production and management. Localism and independence are defining features.

Community broadcasting provides news, information, cultural content and entertainment to communities defined by geographical location or common interest, including Indigenous, specialist music, ethnic, educational, youth, religious and print disabled.

Australia's community media sector is known for its size and reach. The vast number of stations spread across the country form a network that rivals commercial and public broadcasters. For many communities it is the only media producing local content in their area.

Reflecting Australia's immense cultural and linguistic diversity, it creates an array of services and programs, and broadens the media choices available to all of us.

Community broadcasting is taking every opportunity to expand into new online and free-to-air digital platforms. Our skills and experience working on the ground in diverse communities are providing unique and exciting contributions to the digital economy.

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING: A SUCCESS STORY

OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS COMMUNITY BROADCASTING HAS FLOURISHED.

There are now more than 350 long-term licensed community radio stations and more than 80 long-term licensed community television services around Australia, all free-to-air. A further 42 digital TV and radio services will launch in 2010.*

Each station is run on a not-for-profit basis by its community. While the sector employs 1,000 people it is largely volunteer driven, with over 23,000 Australians contributing to operations and programming.

Community demand for new services remains strong, with over 100 community organisations currently seeking new community broadcasting licences.

Community broadcasting is popular with audiences of all ages and backgrounds, closely reflecting the demographics of the Australian population.

Over four million people listen weekly to community radio, while more than nine million tune in every month. Over 600,000 Australians listen to community radio exclusively and between 2004 and 2010 audiences grew by 17 per cent.^

Community television's peak audience of over 3.7 million viewers per month will expand with its shift to a digital, free-to-air platform from 2010.°

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

THE BROADCASTING SERVICES ACT (1992) OUTLINES THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY BROADCASTING LICENSEES.

It explains the role the sector plays in delivering media services which reflect a sense of Australian identity, character and cultural diversity.

The community broadcasting sector has developed guiding principles and policies for station operations and programming, which are set out in both the Community Radio and Community Television *Codes of Practice*.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority regulates broadcasting services in Australia, including the registration of *Codes of Practice* for the broadcasting industry.

The Act and the *Codes* are complementary and stations are legally obliged to follow the requirements of both.



Volunteers from Brisbane's 4ZZZ

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY BROADCASTING

- Community broadcasters are united by six guiding principles:*
- Promote harmony and diversity and contribute to an inclusive, cohesive and culturally diverse Australian community
 - Pursue the principles of democracy, access and equity, especially for people and issues not adequately represented in other media
 - Enhance the diversity of programming choices available to the public and present programs that expand the variety of viewpoints broadcast in Australia
 - Demonstrate independence in programming as well as in editorial and management decisions
 - Support and develop local arts and music
 - Increase community involvement in broadcasting.

MEDIA INNOVATORS

THE PEOPLE WHO ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY BROADCASTING CAME FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, BUT HAD ONE THING IN COMMON: THEIR INTERESTS WERE INADEQUATELY REPRESENTED IN COMMERCIAL AND GOVERNMENT MEDIA.

Migrants, Indigenous people, those pursuing social justice, music lovers, students, people with disabilities and many others worked to establish a voice in the media that they could organise and run themselves.

In remote Indigenous communities, in rural communities lacking local media and in ethnic communities across the

nation a case was made that ultimately led to agreement from Government to licence a new broadcasting model based on access and participation, community ownership and control.

Decades on, community broadcasting is the largest sector of its type anywhere in the world and a unique feature of Australian media.

FOR EVERY COMMUNITY

MANY KINDS OF COMMUNITIES

Community and Indigenous broadcasting stations serve specific 'community interests', which may be defined geographically or culturally.

From Kangaroo Island to Thursday Island, Christmas to Palm Island, hundreds of stations serve a broad range of interests within a defined geographical area. These make up close to half (47%) of community broadcasting stations.*

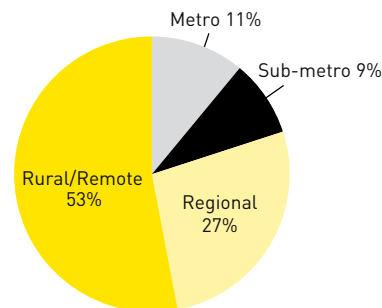
The other half (53%) of community broadcasting services are specialist services, serving communities defined by common interests.

These include ethnic, educational, Indigenous, youth, specialist music interests, print disability (RPH), seniors, gay and lesbian, arts and religious stations.

Each station is unique and incorporates its own mix of many of these interests to reflect local needs. For example, while there are six specialist ethnic stations, ethnic programming is produced at over 130 stations.

Some stations with very diverse formats manage to incorporate most or all of these specialist interests.

As below, 80 per cent of community broadcasting services are located in rural, remote and regional Australia.^



Community stations are a major provider of locally-produced content right across Australia, but particularly in remote areas.

In fact, 30 per cent of community radio stations report that they are the only source of local programs in their communities.°

SECTOR PROJECT: DIGITAL RADIO PROJECT

The Digital Radio Project (DRP) is providing digital transmission and content delivery infrastructure for metro-wide community radio stations in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth.

The introduction of digital radio services in the mainland state capital cities is the first stage of the Federal Government's digital radio framework.

The DRP is working with 37 metro-wide community stations to establish free-to-air digital services in 2010. It is central to the community broadcasting sector's increasing engagement with multi-platform service delivery.

EMERGENCY BROADCASTING

In times of emergency, many community radio stations play a critical role for their communities, working alongside emergency services agencies and other media to get the message out.

Stations are important community hubs, helping in times of emergency and keeping communities informed as they recover and rebuild.

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST MEDIA SECTOR

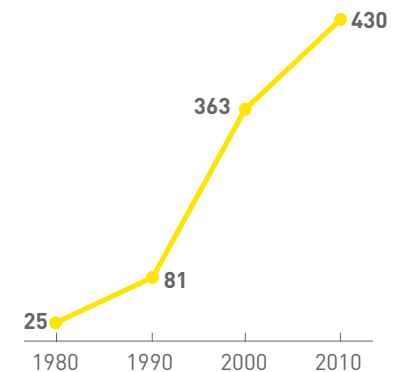
Since the first community stations in the 1970s, communities have established more than 500 licensed services.

Community demand for new services remains strong. Over 100 community organisations are operating temporary services and seeking long-term community broadcasting licences.

Stations are also transitioning to digital transmission, starting with five community television services.

In 2010, 37 community radio services in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney are launching their digital services.

Growth in Long-Term Licensed Services since 1980*



WHAT MAKES COMMUNITY BROADCASTING POSSIBLE?

PARTICIPATION, LOCALISM, INDEPENDENCE, DIVERSITY

The dedication and commitment of thousands of people working together, guided by principles of democracy, access and equity, are key to the success of community broadcasting.

Locally owned and controlled, it is an important independent voice in the Australian media landscape, countering increasing media concentration and centralisation.

Independence means that services are owned and operated by the community. Membership is open, decision-making is democratic.

Participation is key. More than 23,000 Australians volunteer their time to participate in community broadcasting each year. Annual volunteer effort is valued at \$342 million.*

Community broadcasting plays an important role in local communities. Programs are authentic reflections of the concerns, talents and creativity of the community.

The voices broadcasting are those of the audience, more accurately representing the social and cultural diversity that exists in communities.

TECHNOLOGY + TRAINING

Community broadcasting offers the opportunity to build skills, access facilities and participate in media production in the convergent multi-platform media environment.

The sector trains over 8,000 Australians each year in media production, administration and management skills.^

Community Stations:

- broadcast free-to air in analog and are adding digital services (as licensing permits)
- stream audio online
- podcast and vodcast programs
- many also archive programs online to expand audience access.

As technology changes, community stations are working to meet the challenges of renewing broadcasting infrastructure and empowering volunteers to create media across platforms.

COMMUNICATION SPECTRUM

Communication spectrum – especially the part of the electromagnetic spectrum corresponding to broadcasting frequencies - is an increasingly valuable resource.

The Federal Government regulates use of spectrum, a public asset.

Reservation of adequate spectrum, and funding for necessary infrastructure to use it, are critical to the future of Australian community broadcasting.

SOURCES OF INCOME

The not-for-profit community broadcasting sector is largely self-funded.

Major income sources include sponsorship, membership, listener subscriptions and donations, but sources vary widely between stations in their different communities.

Federal Government funding support is provided by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and is distributed via the Community Broadcasting Foundation.

SECTOR PROJECT: AMRAP

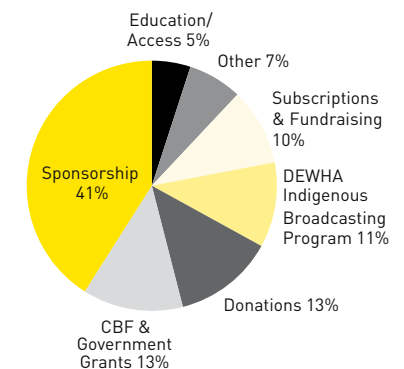
The Australian Music Radio Airplay Project is a community radio initiative that works with the music industry, Australian musicians and community broadcasters to get great contemporary Australian music national airplay, faster.

Amrap offers services for signed and unsigned Australian artists, major and independent record labels and all community radio stations around Australia.

www.amrap.org.au

From late 2007, Indigenous broadcasting funding has been provided through the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

Community Radio Funding (07-08)*



Recent research, industry analysis and bi-partisan parliamentary assessment suggest a significant increase in Federal Government support is warranted for the future development of community broadcasting.^

AUSTRALIAN CONTENT

AUSTRALIANS NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THEIR OWN AREA AND TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

Community media complements commercial and national media by providing a local focus as well as alternative and niche programming.

In other media sectors, 'local content' is often taken to refer to Australian content.

For the community broadcasting sector, local content means programming produced in the local community which is directly and locally significant to people living in that community.

Boasting 77 per cent locally produced programming (plus a further 15 per cent wider Australian content), the sector is a major source of Australian content for both radio and television at a time when mass media is increasingly reliant on overseas sources.*

This commitment to localism ensures that community broadcasting services reflect a sense of Australian identity, character and cultural diversity.

Support for Australian music, musicians and live performance is a further expression of this principle.

The sector broadcasts 36 per cent Australian music.* This significantly exceeds the 25 per cent commitment in the *Codes of Practice*, which is in turn far higher than requirements for other media sectors.

BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Each week over 46,000 hours of radio and hundreds of hours of TV programming is broadcast*
- Over 90,000 hours of community information is broadcast each year

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST LANGUAGE LABORATORY

- Programming in more than 100 languages, supporting cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural retention for Indigenous, Ethnic and refugee communities.



Presenter from Perth's 6NME

Presenter from NT's Ramingining RIBS



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media... play a critical role in ensuring the maintenance of Indigenous culture, heritage and language.

INDIGENOUS BROADCASTING

Indigenous radio and TV are part of a broader sector also encompassing print, online, film, video and communications.

They are working to have the dreams, aspirations and history of Indigenous Australians heard, seen, understood, accepted and respected by the entire Australian community.

They also play a major role in broader public understanding of how media and communications interact with their diverse cultures and heritage.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media acknowledge the diverse social, spiritual and philosophical aspects of their customs and values and play a critical role in ensuring the maintenance of Indigenous culture, heritage and language.

They also provide information, entertainment, employment and training opportunities for Indigenous communities.

Indigenous broadcasters have as their aim a peak National Indigenous Broadcasting Service, a new authority to parallel the ABC and SBS. This was recommended in a key report of the Productivity Commission and is still to be adopted.*

- Dedicated Indigenous community radio stations (metro and regional): **25**^o
- Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS): **105**
- Other community radio stations with Indigenous programming: **89**
- Hours of Indigenous content broadcast each week throughout Australia: **1,392**

* Productivity Commission 2000, Broadcasting, Report no. 11, Ausinfo, Canberra.
^o Community Broadcasting Database (2007-08)

DIVERSE WORLDS

COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS PROVIDE CREATIVE, DIVERSE PROGRAMMING, PUSHING MEDIA BOUNDARIES WITHIN MORE THAN 500 RADIO AND TV SERVICES NATIONWIDE.

PROGRAMS ARE AS DIVERSE AS THE COMMUNITIES THAT CREATE THEM AND SERVICES VARY WIDELY, INCORPORATING THE FOLLOWING AREAS AND MANY MORE.*

MUSIC

Australians love community broadcasting for its diverse music formats. They allow people who are enthusiastic and deeply knowledgeable about music to share their interest.

There are specialist stations that play classical music, others play independent contemporary music, some specialise in Indigenous, country or jazz music, but virtually every station has music as a core part of its programming.

NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS & SPORT

News, current affairs and sport are critical components of community broadcasting, often providing the only locally based information.

In ethnic and Indigenous programs, news and information in over 100 languages enables a huge range of Australians to keep in touch.

National services produced within the sector include *National Radio News* (NRN), *National Indigenous News Service* (NINS), *The Wire*, a live daily current affairs program and *The Daily Interview*.

ETHNIC BROADCASTING

Ethnic community broadcasting is a champion of multiculturalism, helping to shape a diverse, harmonious and inclusive Australian society.

New immigrants and refugees report that early access to ethnic community radio makes a profound difference to their settlement experiences.

It provides information in their first language as well as assisting with cultural maintenance.

Ethnic broadcasting provides a vital source of information and contact in rural areas.

- Dedicated Ethnic Stations: **6**
- Other community radio stations with ethnic programming: **131**
- Number of Languages: **95**
- Number of hours of ethnic programs produced each week: **2027**

EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING

Educational institutions were among the early pioneers of community broadcasting. Today, a key group of stations embrace an educational role in its broadest sense.

They produce informative and knowledgeable talks and music programming to get people talking and thinking.

This is combined with a strong commitment to access and training, most having formal connections with tertiary institutions and schools. Partnerships with schools are also strong and are part of the educational role played by many more stations across the sector.

- Stations with an 'educational' community interest: **8**
- Universities with formal connections to community broadcasters: **12**
- Sector-based Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) providing nationally accredited training: **6**

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

Almost three-quarters (72%) of all community radio stations broadcast religious programming.

Christian stations make up almost 10 per cent of all community radio stations, with 36 full-time Christian stations.

- Dedicated religious stations: **35**
- Other community radio stations with religious programming: **163**
- Hours of religious programming each week: **3,704**

RPH AUSTRALIA

RPH Australia provides a network of independent radio reading services which strive to meet the daily information needs of the three million Australians with a print disability.

RPH services are designed to provide easy access to a diverse range of high-turnover print media, such as newspapers, magazines and books.

- Dedicated RPH community radio stations: **17**
- Other community radio stations with RPH programming: **18**
- Hours of RPH content broadcast each week: **2050**

YOUTH BROADCASTING

Community broadcasting is a pathway for young people to directly experience all aspects of media production and operations.

In many stations, young people are the driving influence in engagement and expansion into new technologies and opportunities.

Through their involvement, young people communicate with each other and the wider community, developing key life skills.

Formal links with schools and tertiary institutions are an important part of many stations' activities.

* Figures drawn from Community Broadcasting Database (2007-08)

AUDIENCES & SUPPORTERS

LARGE + LOYAL AUDIENCES

Australians love community broadcasting and recognise it as a valuable part of the media landscape.

The sector has shown strong growth in audience figures as people listen out for alternative sources of news and entertainment.

According to the biennial Community Radio National Listener Survey (2010), Australians value most the local content and diverse music formats that community radio offers.

- In an average month, 9.3 million Australians (54 per cent of the population) listen to community radio
- Every week, 4.4 million (26 per cent) listen to community radio
- 640,000 Australians are exclusive regular listeners to community radio
- Community television services attract 3.7 million Australian viewers every month
- In an average month 1.6 million Australians (7.3% of the population) speak a language other than English at home and listen to community radio.

SUPPORTED BY SPONSORS

Community radio and TV offer local business, government and the third sector unique opportunities to reach Australians of all ages and backgrounds through sponsorship.

Sponsorship plays an important role in generating financial support for the community broadcasting sector.

It forms 41 per cent of community radio sector income and is the largest single income source for community radio and television services.

- Australians in hard-to-reach regional, rural and remote areas can be accessed by community broadcasting
- Ethnic broadcasting, RPH Australia and the Indigenous media sector facilitate access to their communities
- Sponsorship of niche programming in specialist stations allows access to demographic groups that are difficult to reach via other media.

SECTOR PROJECT: CBONLINE

CBOnline manages online, technical and research projects for the sector, including the Digital Delivery Network (DDN), National Listener Survey and National Station Census (formerly the Community Broadcasting Database).

The DDN automates program ordering and distribution from the Community Radio Network satellite channel.

The Census surveys stations biennially to collect current data about station operations. In alternate years, CBOnline commissions the National Listener Survey - independent audience research.

www.cbonline.org.au



SUPPORTED BY COMMUNITY

As not-for-profit organisations, community radio and TV stations rely on support from the community.

For many stations annual radiothons, where listeners and viewers become members or donate, are key to sustaining operations.

Fundraisers, events and live performances are also ways that communities show support for their local station.

- More than 165,000 Australians are subscribers or donors*
- Subscriptions and donations collectively contribute 23% of community radio sector income
- Listeners and the local community contribute to stations' operating revenue through subscriptions, membership fees, annual on air appeals and airtime access fees.

* Community Broadcasting Database (2007-08)

PEOPLE & SKILLS

MEDIA LITERACY IS CRITICAL IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Community radio and TV stations form Australia's largest media literacy workshop, training over 8000 people each year in media production, administration and management skills.*

As the digital revolution continues, community broadcasting is a catalyst for the development of media and digital literacy in hundreds of Australian communities through its focus on access and participation.

As part of this process, broadcasting is being transformed by digital convergence. A wide range of technology, people and management skills are now essential in today's multi-platform media environment.

When people participate as producers, not just consumers, their relationship with media is transformed. This experience develops multiple transferable skills.

For Indigenous communities, media is a key employment area, particularly providing opportunities for young people.

In migrant and refugee communities, participation in their local station is key to being a part of their own and the broader community.

It's also critical for language maintenance and development.

For school and University students, as well as volunteers at any age, being part of their local community station fosters creativity and active engagement, builds confidence and facilitates entry, or re-entry, into formal learning and employment.

The broader Australian media depends on community broadcasting for both entry-level and advanced training and skills development.

Many thousands of people employed in other media across the country were originally community broadcasters. Many more remain highly skilled community broadcasters whilst pursuing careers in other fields.

TRAINING IN COMMUNITY BROADCASTING

With huge numbers of participants and the range of complex skills and activities needed to operate a station, training at all levels is a fundamental and ongoing enterprise.

Stations offer training from informal mentoring and formal courses to nationally accredited qualifications as part of both VET and University frameworks.

SECTOR PROJECT: NATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT

The National Training Project (NTP) supports the development and delivery of nationally-recognised training in media and management skills for Australian community broadcasters.

This includes entry-level training pathway courses as well as certificate and diploma courses.

Innovation is the key to NTP success, resulting in the development of e-learning resources and the utilisation of new technologies for the learning environment.

NTP priorities include broadcasters in rural and regional areas as well as Indigenous, Radio for the Print Handicapped and ethnic broadcasters.

www.nationaltrainingproject.org.au



Volunteers from Lismore's RiverFM

Six organisations within community broadcasting are Registered Training Organisations. They offer an accredited training umbrella for many local stations.

- Brisbane Indigenous Media Association
- Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
- Diversitat
- Goolari Media Enterprises
- Radio Adelaide
- Radio Larrakia.

The community broadcasting sector offers two major streams of training:

Media Skills: encompassing a range from studio operation and radio presentation to video, digital multimedia and online production.

Management Training: incorporating governance, finance and business, people and community engagement skills, project management and effective leadership. Broadcast technology and online skills training is also a key focus for future training development.

COMMUNITY TELEVISION

THE COMMUNITY TELEVISION SECTOR IN AUSTRALIA IS VIBRANT AND DIVERSE.

There are CTV stations in Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Brisbane. In addition, 78 Indigenous community television licences service remote communities under the Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS) scheme.

Licensing of community TV broadcasters commenced in early 1987 and legislation to allow for permanent licensing of community TV services was introduced in 2002. In November 2009, digital licences were granted to community TV operators in the mainland capital cities, along with \$2.6 million in funding for transmission upgrades.

Metropolitan community TV services produce 166 hours per week of local programming. Community TV provides local communities with a chance to access television broadcasting facilities and participate in the world of TV.

Community television in remote Indigenous communities produces local programs that work towards language and cultural maintenance. They are also a source of local news and information.

Over 3.7 million Australians tune into community TV each month.* One third of community TV programming is news and current affairs, presenting views and discussing issues not covered by other media sectors.

GET INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY BROADCASTING!

INDIVIDUALS:

find your local station via www.cbonline.org.au and

- VOLUNTEER
- BECOME A SUPPORTER
- DONATE

ORGANISATIONS:

- MAKE NEWS: are you a community organisation with something to say? Contact the news room at your local station and tell them all about it.
- BECOME A SPONSOR: get your message heard across the country on community radio and TV.
- PROMOTE LOCAL ARTS & MUSIC: promote local shows or get your band heard on community radio and TV. Contact your local station or AMRAP for details.

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING RESOURCES

- **Community Broadcasting Foundation:** The CBF is an independent non-profit funding agency that solicits and distributes funds for the maintenance and development of community broadcasting in Australia. See www.cbf.com.au for a range of information about sector grants, projects and publications.
- **Codes of Practice:** The Codes of Practice set out the guiding principles and policies for programming on community broadcasting stations (www.cbaa.org.au).
- **Government:**
 - www.dbcde.gov.au
 - www.environment.gov.au
 - *Tuning in to Community Broadcasting* House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, June 2007
- **Regulation:** The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has a range of information about licensing, spectrum and other key regulatory aspects of community broadcasting (www.acma.gov.au).
- **Sector Projects:** The community broadcasting sector manages four key projects:
 - Australian Music Radio Airplay Project (www.amrap.org.au)
 - Community Broadcasting Online Project (www.cbonline.org.au)
 - Digital Radio Project (www.cbaa.org.au)
 - National Training Project (www.nationaltrainingproject.org.au)
- **Sector Advocacy:** Community Broadcasting & Media: Year 2015 (Sector Budget Submission Oct. 2009). (www.cbaa.org.au)
- **Sector Research:** The Community Broadcasting Database is a biennial survey of the community radio sector. The Community Radio National Listener Survey is a biennial survey of community radio audiences. These research projects are undertaken in alternate years. (www.cbonline.org.au).
- **Other Research:**
 - *Community Media Matters - an audience study of the Australian community broadcasting sector* (Meadows, Forde, Ewart and Foxwell, Griffith University, Brisbane, 2007).
 - *Culture, commitment community - the Australian community radio sector* (Meadows, Forde and Foxwell, Griffith University, Brisbane, 2002).

FOOTNOTE FROM PAGE SIX

This estimate is based on median weekly earnings of \$1,000 for full-time workers (Australian Bureau of Statistics Ausstats data series 6310.0 published in August 2008). An hourly rate of \$28.57 for an average of ten hours per week per volunteer (as established by Meadows, Forde and Foxwell in *Culture, commitment community - the Australian community radio sector*, Griffith University, Brisbane, 2002.) for 23,000 volunteers yields a figure of \$341,697,200 per annum.

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NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES OF THE COMMUNITY BROADCASTING SECTOR

Australian Community Television Alliance

Ph:(03) 9660 3131

Australian Indigenous Communications Association

www.aicainc.org.au | Ph:(02) 6262 8699

Christian Media Australia

www.christianmedia.org.au | Ph:(08) 8121 4277

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia

www.cbaa.org.au | Ph:(02) 9310 2999

National Ethnic & Multicultural Broadcasters Council

www.nembc.org.au | Ph:(03) 9486 9549

RPH Australia

www.rph.org.au | Ph:1300 710 440

