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Expansion of digital radio to regional Australia: Proposed principles for licence area deeming.

Response to ACMA issues paper – Brendon Agpasa

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Introduction

The radio broadcasters and Federal Communications Minister Paul Fletcher MP welcomes the opportunity to respond to the ACMA's issues paper, *Expansion of digital radio to regional Australia: Proposed principles for licence area deeming*.

This submission has been informed by consultation with national, commercial, community, narrowcast and narrowband radio licensees, Sector Representative Organisations, other sector bodies, key stakeholders and many others to provide digital radio channel plans.

Background

National, commercial, community, narrowcast and narrowband radio stations do more than deliver audio entertainment and information to audiences across Australia.

The ABC, SBS, Commercial Radio Australia, CBAA, and ANRA appreciates that the ACMA is seeking feedback on digital radio rollout was granted the new DAB+ and Digital Radio Mondiale rollout for over a four-year period.

Across Australia the costs of transmission via analogue radio will be reinvested in extending DAB+ and DRM rollout to regional, sub-metropolitan, remote and rural areas, as well as Australian island territories and surrounding regions.

Digital radio has broadcasting in the licence areas of Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin and Perth, while the ACMA is looking up for facilitating the digital radio rollout in regional areas where licensees make the commercial decision that they wish to offer the new services.

New digital radio services will be allocated on a frequency blocks being 8A, 8B, 8C, 8D, 9A, 9B, 9C and 9D will be available for allotment in each licence area to multiplexes carrying national, commercial, community, narrowcast and narrowband services.

Principle one: spare capacity on the multiplex

The first principle to be applied in decides that the community licence area and new narrowcast licence area and new narrowband licence area to be the same as a commercial licence area is whether there is excited for digital radio multiplex transmitter capacity for community services.

We need to consider it appropriate to get digital radio multiplex transmitter capacity is reserved for designated community, LPON, HPON and MF-NAS radio broadcasting licensees as planned for future. This will be a maximum of digital quality services (more services may be possible with higher quality services using a lower and higher bit rates).

However, we provide the digital radio services to simulcasts of increased 450+ community services, 2610+ narrowcast services and 80+ narrowband services but may assist broadcasters in sharing the costs of delivery.

Each service being able to access approximately 64 kbit/s.

It should be the upper limit for community, narrowcast and narrowband broadcasting radio services using the two-ninths allocation on a single digital radio multiplex transmitters.

You may deem the community, narrowcast and narrowband licence areas that would result in six of more community, narrowcast and narrowband services having access to multiplex capacity, reflecting the number of incumbent community, LPON, HPON and MF-NAS services eligible to operate in some of all licence areas.

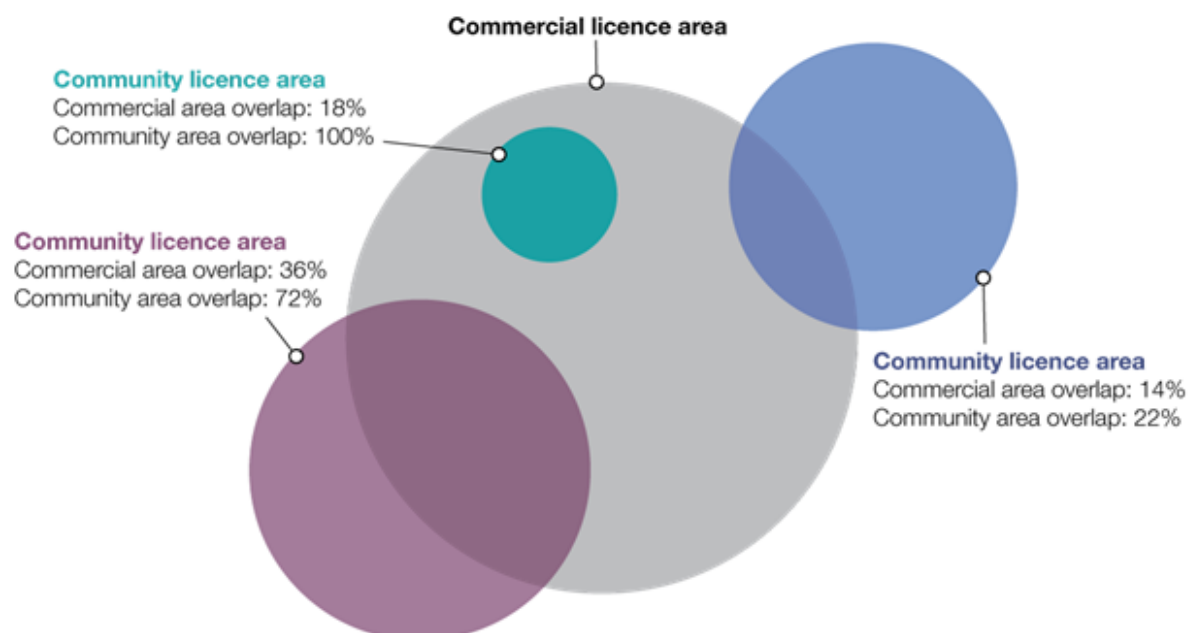
Principle two: significant correlation between commercial and community licence area populations

The second principle to be applied in a community licence area to be the same as a commercial licence is there was a significant correlation between the two licence areas.

These include the extend the additional reach of 12 million Australians of radio listeners and the coverage of major centres in all capital cities and regional areas.

If an analog community, LPON, HPON and MF-NAS radio broadcasting services is expanding to digital radio rollout, so cases can be a significant proportion of extending DAB+ and Digital Radio Mondiale into all of around Australia would represent 12,000,000 people, increasing the overall reach to 100% of the Australian population.

Figure 1: Depiction of population overlaps



The population overlaps of Community licence area for up to 100% of access to both long-term of community broadcasting licences and temporary community broadcasting licences went allocated to go digital in near future.

There are up to over 441 services in 393 community licence areas was comparison to over 200 services in 161 commercial licence areas had results in population overlaps.

Table 1: Licence area population overlap—results

Population overlap	Is the overlap greater or equal to 25 per cent?	Is the overlap greater or equal to 50 per cent?	Is the overlap greater or equal to 75 per cent?
Commercial licence area population overlap	82 licence areas 98 services	49 licence areas 63 services	30 licence areas 39 services
Community licence area population overlap	139 licence areas 155 services	131 licence areas 147 services	123 licence areas 139 services

Note: The results in this table are presented solely for the purpose of illustrating the assessment of population overlap between licence areas. They are not representative of the total number of community licence areas or community services that may be deemed under the proposed deeming principles.

Principle three: relevance of community interest to the community of the commercial licence area

The third principle proposed is the relevance of the community interests represented by the community radio broadcasting licensees to the community of the commercial licence area.

An affected community, narrowcast and narrowband radio broadcasting licensees may be able to serve a larger audiences in digital mode in addition to that provide its simulcasts of analog service.

A community, narrowcast and narrowband interest of a licence may include:

- General geographic area – towns, communities, local areas
 - RPH for print disability
 - Religious
 - Indigenous
 - Ethnic
 - Youth and seniors
 - Educational
 - Sport
 - Music
 - LGBTI for gay and lesbian
- Some commercial station relays
- Low power high school outlets
 - TAB (racing and sport)
- Tourist and visitor information services
 - Smaller operators

Any suggestions and feedback

We look up for Federal Communications Minister Paul Fletcher MP to discuss the digital radio rollout for cost of \$3.5 billion dollars in total for reinvestment, along with ABC's expanded international radio services for up to \$2.4 million dollars had worked with five year plan.

Recently in June 2020, SEN expands into Sydney, purchases 2CH and acquire an additional licences of 1539AM Sydney, 1593AM Melbourne and 90.7FM Darwin, ACE Radio broadcasters have entered into an agreement to purchase Pacific Star Network's 1377AM Melbourne radio licence of 3MP.

It's direct to home satellite receivers will also benefit because new DAB+ satellite platform will carry the VAST radio services. New DAB+ satellite will also carry Raw FM and 3ABN Australia Radio for the first time, as well as SCA Radio 1 (Hit Network), SCA Radio 2 (Triple M LocalWorks), RSN Racing and Sport, Sky Sports Radio, WA TAB Radio, Nine Radio Syndication's national satellite distribution, Hit FM WA (ex-Red FM), Triple M WA (ex-Spirit Radio), Flow FM, The Breeze and Rebel FM.

Other investment had includes \$10.5 million dollars of extending digital radio rollout, Digital Radio repeaters had the funding of \$8 million dollars, \$1.5 million per year of simulcast radio stations, \$4 million for digital radio transmission and satellite equipment, \$8 million for DAB+ and DRM carry analogue stations digitally, \$6 million for direct to home satellite delivery of digital radio, \$2.4 million for digital radio receivers, \$5.2 million for Digital Radio Mondiale was exported to Australia, \$1.7 to \$10 million for digital radio extends into sub-metro areas, regional areas and surrounding regions, \$500 million for digital radio retransmission services, \$7.2 million for upgrade from ABC's domestic and international shortwave services to digital radio rollout and \$13 million for relay of Australian radio services into overseas digitally.

New secondary services which only operate on both part-time basis and provide alternative programming to main service, it will be able to offer new formats and pop up programming to celebrate festival, tour, news or sports event, alongside ABC's emergency broadcasting services, ABC News on Radio's Parliament, and SBS National Radio Network.

Over coming years, Commercial radio broadcasters in Newcastle, Dubbo, Albury, Lithgow, Sale, Bathurst, Cooma, Goulburn, Warragul, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Cairns, Bundaberg, Geelong, Murwillumbah and more had expands to DAB+ and Digital Radio Mondiale in the future.

Digital Radio services provides a niche formats including chill, contemporary hits, country, rock, dance, sport, racing, news, talk, childrens, 80's, 90's, jazz and foreign language content.

The ABC and SBS is planning to extend digital radio services in regional and remote Australia to make permanent its improved DAB+ and Digital Radio Mondiale broadcasting capabilities.

Also, Digital Radio Mondiale had planned and tested was adopted, it carries national, commercial and community stations could be rolled out into all markets for one of digital standard and data services that digitise the metropolitan, regional and remote radio services will have new DRM access and additional services in the near future.

In markets, DRM carries ABC Radio stations, SBS Radio stations, commercial stations, community stations and LPON, HPON and MF-NAS stations was expanding to regional and remote areas and increasing the rollout of radio broadcasters that gives them potentially few digital stations, including the simulcasts of AM and FM frequencies, along with digital-only stations and the alerts and warnings of Emergency Warning System provides bushfires, storms and more.