Explanatory Paper

Variation to Licence Area Plan for Innisfail Radio
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Call for Submissions

Submissions on the matters raised in this Explanatory Paper may be made to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) as follows:

By email: lapvariation@acma.gov.au
By mail: Draft Licence Area Plan Variation – Innisfail Radio
          ACMA
          PO Box 78
          BELCONNEN ACT 2616
By fax: (02) 6253 3277

Please quote file reference 2004/2265 in your reply.

Any enquiries concerning matters raised in this document should be directed to Ms Megan Meredith (02) 6256 2831.

The closing date for submissions is 5.00pm, 31 October 2007.

All submissions received will be made available for public inspection on the ACMA website.¹ (www.acma.gov.au)

¹ Note that any submission marked “In Confidence”, “Confidential” or similar, cannot be considered by the ACMA in finalising the LAP variation.
Preliminary Views

Preliminary View – Open Narrowcasting Service - FM Radio - Tully

ACMA is proposing to vary the technical specifications of the high powered open narrowcasting service in Tully to change the nominal transmitter site as follows:

- Open Narrowcasting (ONC) Tully to operate on 92.7 MHz from Euramo 7km South of Tully, QLD with a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 300 W omnidirectional radiation pattern.

The United Christian Broadcasters Australia Ltd (UCBA) requested a change of transmitter site for its High Power Open Narrowcasting (HPON) service in Innisfail QLD. UCBA wish to use an alternative transmitter site for this service citing an inability to meet the costs associated with transmitting from the nominal site.

ACMA’s assessment of UCBA’s request found that the proposed site is closer in proximity to the urban centre of Tully which will be provided a suburban grade of service. Whilst the potential listening audience will be less than the audience that would be receiving the service from the licence area plan (LAP) site, the primary intention has always been to provide coverage to the main population centre at Tully.

This view has not changed since first proposed in a draft variation released on 31 May 2007.
Preliminary View – Commercial FM Radio – Hinchinbrook

ACMA is proposing to vary the operating conditions of the 4KZ and 4ZKZ services as follows:

- To change 4KZ to operate on 97.7 MHz from Broadcast Site Casual Cassowary Tea House Bruce Hwy Hinchinbrook a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 50 W directional radiation pattern;
- To remove the capacity of the service 4ZKZ operating on 96.1 MHz from Broadcast Site Casual Cassowary Tea House Bruce Hwy Hinchinbrook;
- To remove the capacity of the service 4ZKZ operating on 88.5 MHz from Broadcast Site 1 Dawson Road Bramston Beach;
- To remove the capacity of the service 4ZKZ operating on 93.1MHz from Broadcast Site Council Water Treatment Plant Murray Falls;
- To add capacity for the service 4ZKZ to operate on 90.3 MHz from Broadcast site Euramo 7km S of Tully a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 300 W omni-directional radiation pattern;
- To add capacity for the service 4KZ to operate on 102.5 MHz from TV Site Graham Range a maximum effective radiated power (ERP) of 400 W omni-directional radiation pattern;

Draft Variation

Part of the 31 July 2003 variation to the Innisfail LAP included the planned Hinchinbrook Radio Blackspot service. 4KZ (Coastal Broadcasters Pty Limited), the licensee of the Innisfail commercial radio services advised that it could not implement the planned Hinchinbrook Radio Blackspot services. The planned site was found to be unsuitable as it is situated in a World Heritage listed area in the Hinchinbrook National Park with no mains power or road access. An alternative site was located in Cardwell near Hinchinbrook.

ACMA’s assessment of the request found that the proposed site will offer similar coverage within the Innisfail area. The original LAP technical specification was for a 25 W ERP omni-directional radiation pattern. The assessment proposes to use a directional radiation pattern to minimise the extent of potential signal overspill into the Townsville RA1 licence area, increasing the maximum ERP to the north and decreasing it to the south.

This view has not changed since first proposed in a draft variation released on 31 May 2007.

Revised Draft Variation

Since the release of the draft LAP on 31 May 2007, ACMA has received a submission from Coastal Broadcasters Pty Limited. ACMA is now proposing the following;
Bramston Beach, Hinchinbrook and Murray Falls
The licensee of the 4ZKZ commercial service which currently has specifications in the LAP for additional transmitters at Bramston Beach, Hinchinbrook and Murray Falls has indicated that these transmitters are not required, as the areas are adequately served by other transmitters within the area.

Tully
The licensee has indicated that the 4ZKZ service in Innisfail does not provide an adequate signal to the Tully area, and it regularly receives listener complaints about the poor signal in Tully.

ACMA’s has investigated the request and found the licensee’s comments accurate. ACMA has identified 90.3 MHz with an ERP of 300 W omni-directional could be used at Euramo, 7km south of Tully. The proposed service would not cause interference to any existing broadcasting services and would not result in technical signal overspill into adjacent areas.

Graham Range, Babinda
The retransmission service 4KZ operating from Babinda, licensed to Coastal Broadcasters Pty Ltd has not been included in LAP for Innisfail. Transmitters operated by licensees are required to be included in LAPs, however it is common in planning to authorise operation of a transmitter via a drop through of spectrum under s.34 of the Broadcast Service Act 1992 prior to the variation of a LAP to expedite the commencement of a service and to meet commitments such as the governments radio spots program.
Preliminary View – National Radio Service – Babinda

ACMA is proposing to vary the technical specifications of two national radio services in Babinda as follows:

- 4ABCRR to operate on 94.1 MHz from Police Hut Graham Range with a maximum ERP of 400 W directional radiation pattern;
- 4ABCRN to operate on 95.7 MHz from Police Hut Graham Range with a maximum ERP of 400 W directional radiation pattern;

A minor variation was made to the nominal transmitter site location for two national radio services, 4ABCRR and 4ABCRN. Changes were also made to the output radiation patterns for both these services as it was discovered by ACMA that these output radiation patterns were previously incomplete.