

I N S I D E R

POLICY SECTION

The newly formed Policy Section continues the transition from the former Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) to the ABA, created by the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*.

The ABT did not have a specific broadcasting policy monitoring or development role and each division de-

also play a co-ordinating role in formulating policy initiatives by the ABA, provide an outward focus on policy developments and keep ABA staff informed on these issues. In addition, the section will provide a value-added resource for policy formulation from the ABA's other areas. The ABA's opera-

tional areas will retain responsibility for administrative policy within their branches.

It will therefore provide a liaison, co-ordination and information gathering service as well as an internal and external focus point for the ABA.

Project teams, comprising staff from the Policy Section and rel-

The regulatory regime for each industry is markedly different and the impact for the ABA in policy terms will involve all sections of the ABA.

MAIN POLICY PROJECTS

Cultural Identity

The ABA's function in regulating cultural content has been interpreted both domestically and in terms of clarifying the requirement to comply with Australia's international obligations under treaties to which it is a signatory.

However, it is now necessary to examine the ABA's regulatory role in a borderless broadcasting environment, with global rather than insular focus.

Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting (DTTB)

Policy Section has analysed the discussion paper released by the DTTB specialist group and identified consumer issues arising from the introduction of DTTB (see p. 13).

Consumer Issues Arising from Converging Technologies

Policy Section is using research and consultation methods to examine key policy issues arising from technological developments and identify potential benefits to the community.

The section 158(n) review

The ABA is required to monitor and report to the Minister on the operation of the Act.

Enquiries about the work of the Policy Section should go to Ms Pat Manser, Director, Policy and Communications, (02) 334 7833.



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veloped administrative policy for its respective functions.

The Broadcasting Services Act charges the ABA with the role of monitoring and reporting to the Minister on the way in which the Act is achieving its stated objectives.

The Policy Section provides a focal point for fulfilling this function. It will

evant operational areas, will be formed as necessary to work on and develop particular issues.

CONVERGENCE

It is clear that convergence is occurring in the broadcasting, computing and telecommunications technologies.

ers Convention (NAB 94) Las Vegas. Mr Colin Knowles, General Manager, Planning & Corporate Division attended these conferences as part of an overseas visit, during which he discussed broadcasting developments with a

number of experts and administrations. A copy of his report, *Digital Sound Broadcasting Developments*, can be obtained by contacting Kathy Evatt on (06) 2562806.

DIGITAL SOUND BROADCASTING PAPER

During March 1994, two significant conferences discussed digital sound broadcasting developments: The Sounds of 2000, Digital Audio Broadcasting Symposium, Toronto, Canada and National Association of Broadcast-