



The ABA is to advise the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts on which events or tournaments should go on a list of events to be covered by the new anti-hoarding provisions of the Broadcasting Services Act.

The ABA will also advise the Minister on development expenditure for the purposes of the Australian drama expenditure rules for pay TV.

ABA to examine:

the use of rights to live sporting events on free-to-air television

The Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts has directed the ABA to advise him on which events or tournaments should go on a list of events to be covered by the new anti-hoarding provisions of the Broadcasting Services Act.

'The ABA will examine the way in which rights to major sporting events have been used in the past, and whether there is a public expectation of these events being shown live and in full on free-to-air television. There may also be events that have grown in importance in the public's perception over time,' said Professor Flint.

The new rules oblige free-to-air television broadcasters with live rights to designated events and tournaments but who do not intend to use all or part of them, to offer the

unused rights to the ABC and SBS. The ABC and SBS must offer unused rights to each other. The 'must offer' rules provide that the offer time will be no less than 30 days before the event or series starts, unless the Minister is satisfied that it should be a shorter period.

The regime will apply prospectively to live free-to-air broadcast rights to events,

which are acquired by licensees (or their program supplier), or the national broadcasters, after the Minister has declared those events

and series and their offer times. The ABA will report to the Minister by 31 August this year.

Issues paper

The ABA has released an issues paper which is available on the ABA's web site at www.aba.gov.au/what/program/anti_si.htm.

and the treatment of pre-production expenditure for pay TV drama channels

The ABA is proposing more flexible treatment of development expenditure for the purposes of the Australian drama expenditure rules for pay TV.

The ABA is investigating how development costs should be treated following a direction by the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts to advise him on this matter.

'Development is increasingly seen as a crucial part of the creation of successful films and television programs,' said Professor Flint. 'Better resourced development processes should enhance the objectives of the legislation — the delivery to audiences of quality Australian programs. At the same time it is important that safeguards are in place to meet the Minister's concerns that expenditure is on the development of genuine and potentially eligible projects.'

The ABA's proposal is con-

tained in a discussion paper which also discusses the strategic role of development in the making of film and television programs.

The proposal would mean, subject to a number of conditions, that script development expenditure made to third parties could count towards the expenditure requirement, even if the project does not proceed to production. To be eligible the project must have an Australian or a New Zealand producer and the writer/s developing the script must be Australian or New Zealanders.

The ABA is scheduled to deliver its report to the Minister by the end of the year.

Discussion paper

The ABA seeks comment is sought on the proposal in the discussion paper. The discussion paper is available on the ABA's web site, www.aba.gov.au.

Submissions closing date
5pm Friday 28 July

