

NETWORK INSIGHT

NUMBER AND TYPE OF DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL CHANNELS

SESSION 1

3 OCTOBER

Ian McGarrity

IMW Media Services

DISCLAIMER

- **Not all detail is known**
- **Bills may change as they move to Acts**
- **My outline is of potential possibilities not probabilities**

THE BILL NO ONE WILL NOTICE

- **Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (No. 1) 2005**
- **Remote areas – section 38b – one new commercial service**
- **Affect all WA outside of Perth – eventually all remote areas of NT, Qld, SA, NSW, Vic and Tas**
- **WIN/Prime – 3 services – 1 transmitter – no HDTV**
- **Why ABC/SBS HDTV?**

THE OTHER BILLS AND CHANNELS

- **Upon assent ABC/SBS multichannels genre restrictions repealed**
- **1 Jan 2007 all FTA including ABC/SBS one HDTV multichannel**
- **1 Jan 2009 all commercials one SD multichannel**
- **End simulcast period – repeal HDTV quota – commercials/ABC/SBS choose SD and HD multichannel mix**
- **2007/08 multiplex A and multiplex B channels start?**

ABC AND SBS MULTICHANNELS

- **ABC 720p HD TV – thinks of one SD multichannel**
- **ABC 1 HDTV multichannel – 1 SD**
- **SBS 576p HDTV – thinks of two SD multichannels**
- **SBS 1 HDTV multichannel – 2 SD**
- **It's all about extra funding and priority setting. Currently ABC spends less on ABC 2 than any one of its radio multichannels. BBC spends more on its TV digital multichannels than all national radio**
- **Pay retransmission**
 - ABC 2 in 'entertainment' at channel 126 not with ABC 1 (at 102) in 'main free to air' section of EPG
 - SBS 2 not retransmitted

ALL HDTV MULTICHANNELS

- **Where did this come from?**
- **When might it happen – could it be 24/7?**
- **Viewers**
 - _ FTA receivers are HD (no Pay HD receivers)
 - < 50% of these attached to HDTV devices
 - < 3% of households full potential
 - about 2% analog tuner devices attached to HD receivers
 - SD receivers can't receive
- **If niche channels much viewing on secondary TV sets. Suspect < 5% of secondary sets in digital homes have HD receivers attached. No HD Pay retransmission of FTA**
- **Commercials? ABC/SBS why not?**

COMMERCIAL SD MULTICHANNELS

- **One each from 1 Jan 2009**
- **No Australian content or children's quotas for Simulcast Period – captioning only for programs previously transmitted on main channel**
- **AUSFTA – Will it allow content restrictions to lift after Simulcast Period?**
- **Will Simulcast Period need new definition to cater for region by region sequential switch off?**

THE UNASSIGNED CHANNELS

- **Multiplex A**
 - 6 to 8 in home fixed location FTA services
 - Narrowcast and datacast
 - Foxtel and commercial FTA worried about narrowcast definition
- **1993 to 2003 – 84% of narrowcast operation complaints from commercial free to airs. 47% complaints upheld**
- **Australian content, program classification and codes of practice?**
- **No FTA control but Pay control allowed**

THE UNASSIGNED CHANNELS

- **Multiplex B**
 - Called mobile but could be for in home unless controlled by FTA broadcasters
 - No traditional commercial or subscription TV channels if in home
 - What is ‘traditional’?
- **If all in home – 6 to 8 channels**
- **Australian content, program classifications and codes of practice?**
- **Likely to be mobile and not MPEG2 system – If so not relevant to Digital Action Plan, home digital take up and analog switch off**

THE UNASSIGNED CHANNELS

- **Lots more detail to come**
 - Narrowcast definition
 - Any change to datacast definition
 - Simulcast Period definition
 - Rollout timing obligations cap cities/regionals
 - % of gross revenue for multiplex A annual licence fee
 - Australian content, program classification and codes of practice