

## NEWS

### **Broadcast spectrum**

In her speech to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) Radcomms Conference on 3 October 2013, Free TV CEO Julie Flynn outlined the position of commercial FTA television broadcasters regarding future use of broadcast spectrum, including that commercial FTA broadcasters required “spectrum certainty”, as well as a “clear migration pathway” to transition to more spectrum-efficient standards such as DVB-T2, MPEG-4 and HEVC. The relevant media release is available at: [http://www.freetv.com.au/Media/News-Media\\_Release/FREE\\_TV\\_CALLS\\_FOR\\_SPECTRUM\\_CERTAINTY.pdf](http://www.freetv.com.au/Media/News-Media_Release/FREE_TV_CALLS_FOR_SPECTRUM_CERTAINTY.pdf)

### **NBN Co**

On 3 October 2013, the Minister for Communications, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, announced changes to the NBN board and senior management, including the appointment of Dr Ziggy Switkowski as Chairman. The Government also asked the NBN Co to begin a strategic review into the progress and cost of the project. The full media release is available on the Minister’s website at: [http://www.minister.communications.gov.au/malcolm\\_turnbull/media\\_releases/dr\\_ziggy\\_switkowski\\_appointed\\_executive\\_chair\\_of\\_nbn\\_co\\_strategic\\_review\\_of\\_nbn\\_project\\_to\\_commence](http://www.minister.communications.gov.au/malcolm_turnbull/media_releases/dr_ziggy_switkowski_appointed_executive_chair_of_nbn_co_strategic_review_of_nbn_project_to_commence)

### **Screen Australia – development program for high-end television drama**

On 10 October 2013, Screen Australia announced that it will launch a program to support the development of internationally driven high-end television drama before the end of the year. The High-end Television Development Program has been set up “in recognition of the unprecedented audience and market growth for high-end television, and the ambitious, authorial and emotionally engaging storytelling that has connected with high-end global audiences, who flocked to shows such as *Game of Thrones*, *Breaking Bad*, *Top of the Lake*, *House of Cards* and *The Bridge*”. The program aims to assist Australian producers to develop inventive, high-end ideas, and will fund up to five projects each year in two rounds, with up to \$40,000 available for each successful project. Full details on the Screen Australia website at: [http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/news\\_and\\_events/2013/mr\\_131010\\_television.aspx](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/news_and_events/2013/mr_131010_television.aspx)

### **Copyright & piracy**

In his address to the Australian International Movie Convention on 14 October 2013, the Attorney-General, Sen the Hon George Brandis QC, stated that an effective legal framework for protection and enforcement of copyright is fundamental to sustaining today’s creative content industries, noting that in reviewing intellectual property laws, his “...very strong disposition is on the side of the content creators”. The full speech is available at: <http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Speeches/Pages/14October2013-AddresstoAustralianInternationalMovieConvention.aspx>

### **Screen Australia – Drama Report**

On 24 October 2013, Screen Australia released its Drama Report, noting that overall drama expenditure has increased by 9 per cent for 2012/13, boosted by Australian television drama, which

has reached the highest levels on record, increasing by 27 per cent. The full report is available on the Screen Australia website at: [http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/about\\_us/pub\\_dramareport.aspx](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/about_us/pub_dramareport.aspx)

### **ACCC Interim approval to performing rights arrangement**

On 24 October 2013, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) granted conditional interim authorisation to the Australasian Performing Right Association Ltd (APRA) for its arrangements for the acquisition and licensing of performing rights in music. APRA holds the rights for the performance of almost all music in Australia. A large number of businesses, including broadcasters, must purchase a licence from APRA to broadcast music. On 30 April 2013, APRA sought reauthorisation for its standard arrangements for the acquisition and licensing of the performing rights in its music repertoire. APRA's current authorisations expire on 31 October 2013. Further information on the ACCC website at:

<http://transition.accc.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/1111601/fromItemId/278039>

### **ACMA Annual Report**

On 31 October 2013, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) released its annual report. Major projects for the ACMA highlighted in the report include the digital dividend spectrum auction and the ongoing contemporary community safeguards inquiry to inform broadcasting codes of practice. The full report is available on the ACMA website at:

<http://www.acma.gov.au/theACMA/Library/Corporate-library/Corporate-publications/annual-report-2012--13>

### **Closed captions for Foxtel On-Demand movies**

Foxtel has announced that, as of 1 October 2013, it has commenced closed captioning of selected on demand movie services. The full media release is available on the Foxtel website at:

<https://www.foxtel.com.au/about-foxtel/communications/foxtel-increases-access-and-choice-by-introducing-closed-cap-204934.htm>

### **Parliamentary sittings**

Parliament will resume Tuesday 12 November 2013, with four weeks of sittings up until 12 December 2013. The full Parliamentary calendar is available on the Parliament House website at:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Sitting\\_Calendar](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Sitting_Calendar)

### **ASTRA ACTIVITY**

- **ASTRA Codes Review** – On 25 October 2013 the ACMA registered revised Subscription Broadcast Television, Subscription Narrowcast Television and Subscription Narrowcast Radio Codes of Practice. The 2013 ASTRA Codes are available on the ASTRA website at: <http://www.astra.org.au/Menu/Policy/Codes-of-Practice>
- **Sports betting advertisements and live odds promotions in sports broadcasts** – On 31 October 2013 ASTRA made a submission to the South Australian Independent Gambling Authority's "28-day draft" Gambling Codes of Practice, which includes new provisions for the regulation of gambling advertising in South Australia. This is the last formal process before the new codes are registered. Further information on the consultation process is available on the IGA website at: <http://www.iga.sa.gov.au/pubcons.aspx>
- **Long term spectrum arrangements for television outside broadcasts (TOB) in alternative bands to the 2.5 GHz band** – ASTRA continues to work with the Government, the ACMA and other stakeholders to ensure a sustainable long term solution for TOB spectrum arrangements.

ASTRA submissions are available on the ASTRA website at:  
<http://www.astra.org.au/Menu/Policy/Overview/Submissions>

## **DISCUSSION PAPERS/REQUESTS FOR COMMENT**

### **ALRC Inquiry into Serious Invasions of Privacy**

On 8 October 2013, the Australian Law Reform Commission released an Issues Paper for its Inquiry into Serious Invasions of Privacy. Submissions close **11 November 2013**. Further information and copies of the Issues Paper are available on the ALRC website at:

<http://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/invasions-privacy>

### **NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Discussion Paper**

The NSW Government has released a discussion paper as part of the consultation process regarding the development of the State's Arts and Cultural Policy. The discussion paper includes reference to the promotion of screen industries in NSW. Submissions close **20 December 2013**. Further information and the discussion paper is available on the NSW Arts website at:

<http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/index.php/about-us/our-work/nsw-arts-and-cultural-policy/>