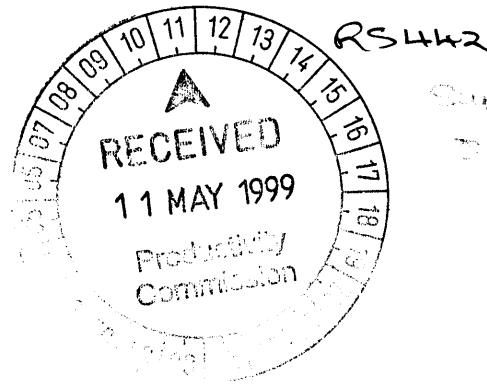


FAXED TO
DATE 11/5/99



May 10, 1999

Prof. Richard Snape
Deputy Chairman
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2
Collins Street East
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

Facsimile: 9653 2305

Dear Prof. Snape,

This letter to you and your colleague, Associate Commissioner, Stuart Simson, is intended as a written submission to the public inquiry you are conducting into broadcasting.

While the inquiry specifically examines the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 and related legislation, you are asked by the Government to pay particular attention to balancing social, cultural and economic dimensions of the public interest.

One of the elements of the inquiry will focus on the Australian conversion to digital broadcasting technology. FTA television channels in the metropolitan regions are required to convert to digital broadcasting technology from 2001 and it is this issue that is causing us great concern.

Medical telemetry has been totally overlooked in the initial stages of the conversion process and we are unable to get satisfactory answers or assurances about the future viability of our equipment from any of the authorities concerned.

As a not-for-profit community hospital, Epworth operates the biggest telemetry monitoring system for cardiac patients in any hospital in Australia and our equipment is in jeopardy, even in the preliminary testing stages of digital broadcasting.

We cannot understand why Government authorities claim that medical telemetry has no priority or even rights to continue to operate when this attitude can risk the lives of cardiac patients.

Epworth Hospital

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Australia

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While we are reassured that any television station wishing to undertake trials is now required by the ABA to liaise with hospitals in their broadcast area, we cannot be guaranteed of continued viability until the Government dedicates bands for medical use.

Only last week, the Australian Broadcasting Authority released draft digital channel plans for television services in various Australian states, yet there has been no mention of protecting the interests of hospitals and other medical and scientific institutions.

It is obvious that the moves to digital transmission must go ahead, but not at the expense of others who rely on the VHF bands for monitoring purposes.

We urge the Productivity Commission to take note to the situation and to press Government authorities to take aggressive action to set aside appropriate bands for use of organisations involved in areas other than broadcasting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hogg', written in a cursive style.

Denis R Hogg
Chief Executive