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NEWS

NEW LEGISLATION

Three bills relating to broadcasting have been introduced into Federal Parliament. These are the ABC/SBS Amalgamation Bill 1986, the Television Licence Fees Amendment Bill and the Broadcasting Amendment Bill 1986. The ABC/SBS Amalgamation Bill has been rejected by the Senate and the Broadcasting Amendment Bill referred to a Senate Committee. That Committee is due to report on 28 February, 1987. The Broadcasting Amendment Bill relates to the equalisation of regional commercial television, repealing the television supplementary licence scheme and providing the statutory basis for aggregation of regional television service areas. It provides a legislative base for the indicative plans.

TELEVISION STATION DRAFT CLEARANCE TIMETABLE

In September the Minister for Communications issued a draft timetable setting out when certain television stations would have to move from their existing channels to make way for new FM radio services. In the early 1960s Channels 3, 4 and 5 of the broadcasting (known as band II) frequency spectrum were assigned to television stations in regional Australia, although throughout the world band II frequencies were being allocated for FM radio services. Planning is already underway for one major commercial station, WIN4 Wollongong, to move to the UHF band. Submissions have been invited before the end of the year on the draft timetable.

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