



G3NJB
MTCRA

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN RADIO AMATEURS AND LISTENERS

Media Ownership Consultation Responses
Broadcasting Policy Division.
Department of Culture, Media and Sport,
2-4 Cockspur Street,
London SW1Y 5DH

Att. The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP

12TH January 2002

Dear Madam,

This Association has followed with interest the development of the Government's proposals with respect to national Religious Broadcasting here in the UK.

We broadly support your suggestions outlined in the Consultation Document of November 2001 but ask that you consider the ideas concerning safeguards as outlined in our recent letter, a copy of which is attached.

Yours faithfully,

For the President and Executive of
The World Association of Christian Radio Amateurs and Listeners

Victor Brand
Amateur Radio Licence G3JNB

8 Greenway, Campton, Bedfordshire, SG17 5BN. Tel: 01462 850001

Attached: Original letter on Consultation.



G3NJB
MYORA

THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN RADIO AMATEURS AND LISTENERS

Communications White Paper
do CIL DTL
151 Buckingham Palace Gate,
London, SW1 W 9SS

Sir,

CONSULTATION RESPONSE:

The World Association of Christian Radio Amateurs and Listeners is dedicated to the furtherance of Christian friendship and fellowship through amateur radio activities and the monitoring of amateur and religious broadcast stations. The preponderance of our membership is in the United Kingdom although it extends to thirty countries.

The Association has surveyed the opinions of a sample of British members and is agreed upon the following:

1. That licensed national and local broadcasting with ownership by established Christian bodies of terrestrial, satellite or cable stations, should be permitted.
2. It is appreciated that The White Paper relates to 'religious' broadcasting in general and thus it is expected that the facility will be open to many faiths.
3. The concern of all is that inappropriate use may be made of such broadcasting by political, unethical and inappropriate bodies. Thus it is seen that a rigorous examination of all licence applications will be necessary and should be mandated to a new body, perhaps entitled the Religious Broadcasting Authority, to whom the RA would turn prior to the granting of each licence.
4. This Association recommends that this entire matter should be examined in a positive manner, prior to the enactment of law, in order to establish the initial parameters that would permit the issue of a licence. This work should be the responsibility of the above suggested Authority, consisting of appropriately experienced senior clerics from the principal religious organisations, licensing experts, broadcast media executives and multi-denominational members of the laity with a knowledge of the subject.
5. The matter of censorship has been raised but surely this is unacceptable in a free and independent environment? However, strict licensing

conditions, not dissimilar to those enforced under our own long established 'Amateur Radio License' are deemed vital. The prohibition of 'on-air' politically motivated teaching, soliciting money or financial support (other than for recognised disaster appeals), the use of suggestive or salacious discourse and the use of subliminal messages are amongst the obvious matters that must be established in law.

- 6 This Association shares the concern of many with respect to the opportunity that may arise for undesirable bodies to gain access to this nation's broadcast media. Television evangelists bent on generating personal wealth are not seen as acceptable. Thus, it is emphasised that an appropriately empowered, national body should oversee all such broadcasting and have the right to shut down a station proved to be in error, pending a review.
- 7 For proper regulation of this particular medium, and to permit the above suggested body to exercise its full powers, it is considered essential that an official monitoring service be established. This should NOT be added to the work load of existing government monitoring units but be a new and well equipped national organisation, staffed by trained personnel.
- 8 Finally, it is recommended that the granting of a license for national or local broadcasting should be for a 'provisional' period, prior to a full and regular, renewable permit. This would enable critical examination of actual professional capabilities and audience acceptability. It is also thought that the size of an applicant's organisation should not legislate against it, since many a modest local but well established body may wish to extend their ministry by broadcast.

WACRAL executives have a life-time of experience in matters of regulatory licensing as applied to the 60,000 radio amateurs here in the UK. Overall, we find no fault with these rules since they are intended to support and protect both the amateur and the broadcasting environment, whilst legislating against misuse by the opportunist.

We hope that these notes will prove helpful in your deliberations and the formulation of an acceptable Bill.

For the President, Executive and members of
The World Association of Christian Radio Amateurs and Listeners

Victor Brand, G3JNB

8, Greenway, Campton, Bedfordshire, SG17 5BN Tel: 01462 850001