

File note

File note of	File note of video meeting with Hills Radio
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Date	13 May 2020
Subject	Video meeting with Hills Radio to discuss application for Mt Barker RA1 community broadcasting licence allocation

Video meeting conducted via Skype on 6 April 2020.

Attendees were as follows:

ACMA

1. Creina Chapman, Deputy Chair and CEO (**CCh**)
2. Hugh Clapin, Manager, Community Broadcasting and Safeguards Section (**HC**)
3. Robin Christie, Senior Licensing and Compliance Officer (acting), Community Broadcasting and Safeguards Section

Hills Radio

1. Richard Bridge, Chairman (**RB**)
2. Michelle Tamblyn, Secretary and administration coordinator (**MT**)
3. Nicholas Gibbs, Management Committee member and technical specialist (audio) (**NG**)
4. Rod Cooper, Management Committee member and technical specialist (IT and communications) (**RC**)
5. Mark Newman, Treasurer (**MN**)
6. Chris Carpenter, General Manager (**CCa**)

Questions and answers

HC: Confirm that the by-laws Hills provided on 27 July 2017 as part of its TCBL application are current.

MT: Confirmed they were the current by-laws.

HC: Clarify total number of members and volunteers – referring to question 13 (p8) of Hills' application vs. question (p5).

MT: Hills does not have 58 different presenters.

MN: The numbers on p8 of the application do not include presenters.

MT: All volunteers are financial members. At the time of applying, Hills had 49 members and 105 subscribers. Asked if they should provide the ACMA with Hills' current number of presenters or the number at the time of applying.

HC: Clarify the amount of locally-produced, Australian-produced, overseas-produced and third-party material on the weekly schedule.

- > **Clarify the difference between the 30 hours per week of material of local significance proposed in its response to question 10, and the 118 hours of locally-produced material proposed in its response to question 9?**
- > **Clarify whether the total amount of Australian- and overseas-produced material on its proposed schedule stated in its response to question 9 (40 hours per week) is consistent with the total amount of third-party content stated in its response to question 10 (28 hours)?**

CCa: The schedule provided is a proposed schedule.

CCh: Would Hills' current seven-day a week streaming service become its full-time broadcasting service if it was allocated the licence?

CCa: Programs that are streamed online when Hills is not broadcasting are pre-recorded but they expect to replace this with live programming if allocated the licence. Some announcers are not interested in online streaming. Programs that are currently being broadcast will remain the same. Hills has also provided coronavirus information on its service.

HC: What paid-for content do you broadcast?

CCa: No paid content. Deutsche Welle early morning news on Saturday, and also with the German program on Sunday. Other news is taken from local Macquarie service (not CRN) in return for acknowledging Macquarie.

HC: How does Hills propose to encourage members of the community to provide programming ideas? If not soliciting program ideas from the community (question 11 in application), how does Hills encourage community participation in program provision?

CCa: The answer to question 11 should be 'yes'. South African program is an example. Hills asks for input in the Weekend Herald and via Facebook. Hills asks on-air for people to contribute.

MT: No formal process. People drop in or respond to the newspaper or Facebook posts.

HC: The ACMA has concerns that several provisions of Hills' constitution, by-laws and policies concentrate control of Hills in the hands of the General Manager, and the board, in such a way that they do not encourage community participation. Does Hills see these issues as readily addressable?

- > **E.g. by-law 8.8 allows the GM to create new by-laws with strong sanctions, and constitution clause 18.4 does not allow by-laws to be 'undone' by general meeting.**

RB: Hills has a transparent culture. They want to promote inclusion and input from all members. The constitution may read that way, but doesn't operate that way in the real world.

MN: The constitution was drafted by a solicitor who specialises in not-for-profits.

HC: The ACMA has concerns that several provisions of Hills constitution, by-laws and policies do not encourage open membership, and therefore may discourage community participation. Does Hills see these issues as readily addressable?

- > **E.g. by-law 1.6.2 states members can't be a member or volunteer with a 'competing' broadcaster.**

RB: Recently a Hills volunteer wanted to volunteer with another station in South Australia. The board agreed and promoted cross-station activity.

CCa: At Coast FM people wanted to work at other stations. It's a question of who your loyalty is to as a community station. It's a question of resourcing.

- > **E.g. by-law 5.2 states that the GM is on the judiciary committee. What if there is a complaint against the GM? Does the GM still sit on the judiciary committee?**

MT: Hills has had judiciary sub-committees without the GM. They can do this in future.

CCa: They tell members there is an alternative process for complaining about the GM – i.e. go to the board.

MT: This alternative process is explained at inductions.

CCh: It seems there is a difference between the constitution and business as usual.

CCa: It is a good time to revise the constitution. Hills has been running for six years.

CCh: Are commissions internal or external?

MN: Commissions were based on a sponsorship manager working on a commission basis. Hills does not have a sponsorship manager now. Chris is doing sponsorships for no commission.

CCa: Hills would like a sponsorship manager. Hills has 30 to 40 sponsors who want to get bang for their buck.

CCh: Question about reading for print handicapped (RPH) content.

CCa: Outlined Hills' RPH content (e.g. Weekender Herald and Australian history book readings) and confirmed it was different to the RPH content broadcast in Adelaide.

HC: Any further comments.

CCa: Hills did 71 outside broadcasts last year – every weekend and some weekdays. Event organisers asked Hills to attend to do outside broadcasts. If volunteers don't want to do live announcing, they can record voice tracks in studio two. Hills focuses on live and local. Hills has solar backup at the station and the tower.

RB: Hills is flexible, inclusive and transparent. RB gets good in-person feedback on the service where he lives – this is on the edge of the licence area and shows good 'pull'.

MT: Meets new arrivals, explains it's not just about music, tries to help each volunteer find a niche, and supports them to do what interests them. The number one rule is 'have fun'.

CCa: Volunteers gain new skills and new employment. About 16 people trained at Hills have gone on to commercial stations.

RC: Promotes Rotary on-air, which has gained around 20 members as a result.

MN: Hills is inclusive. A local school visited recently. Hills tries to help people to seek paid opportunities in radio.

Hills agreed to take the following questions on notice:

- > **Provide more details on how the programs on Hills' proposed schedule are different from or complement programs available on other broadcasting services in the licence area. Appendix 10, part B lists many programs – but doesn't explain how the program is different from or complements existing programs.**
- > **Provide a copy of Hills' Volunteer Registration and Volunteer Worker Agreement forms.**

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