

# MEDIA RELEASE

---

23 March 2016



## Community Broadcasters and Stations Oppose the CBF's new model

The Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) has ignored the strong voices that have opposed them establishing an agency that will be at odds with ethnic community broadcasting.



The CBF is the agency that administers funding to the community sector and has announced that it will make radical changes from an agency that administers funds to one that controls the funds, and shapes new guidelines for the sector. It is a huge shift away from the reason why the CBF was established.

There is broad opposition to the CBF changes; which is easy to see from the last round of submissions. The last round of consultation was the only time that the submissions were open and transparent. All previous consultation was closed and only available for viewing by the CBF. This process has been questionable especially when the open round, on the 18 December 2015, showed that almost half of the submissions strongly oppose the CBF going ahead. A significant number also raised serious concerns that the CBF should not have announced it will go ahead.

Those opposing the CBF changes are not just Ethnic community broadcasters but are also Educational Licenses, Indigenous broadcasters and organisations and many regional stations.

Those organisations that voiced opposition to the changes had this to say:

*It [the consultation process] was all about the CBF putting out a determined position and us being asked to respond. Responses would then go into a hole and no dialogue followed. This is not consultation, or bringing people with you. The assertion that the CBF would make all the decisions was consistently made, the option to consider different frameworks was not provided. A lot of wasted time and energy has been consumed because of the impact of this approach. Deborah Welch Manager Radio Adelaide and former CBF board member and CBAA President.*

*“With regard to the changes to Ethnic Broadcasting funding, we oppose them, as these changes will place a greater burden on us in the grant application process” 2BOB Taree*

*“There appears to be no analysis or investigation into the impact these changes will make to the different type of business models station use. There is also very little detail on how the transition process will work and any guidance on the consultation process that will be in place when the actual grant guidelines are determined or published”. 2GLF Liverpool*

*“We are not sure if the new interim guidelines which will require us to prove actual costs would provide the same incentive to start new programs.” One FM Shepparton*

*“None of the changes the CBF is planning would help in any way with Radio Adelaide’s situation”.* **Radio Adelaide Deborah Welch Manager**

*“I would also note that there has been minimal consultation with the Indigenous broadcast sector, and certainly CAAMA has not been involved to any great extent in discussing the impact of the proposed changes to the CBF structure”..... .”* The original objectives of CBF should be re-examined to re-track CBF back to its original ‘reason for being’- that being to administer and coordinate the allocation of funds provided to it by the Government”  
**Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)**- Michael Robertson, CAAMA Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Northern Indigenous Media Alliance:....”

*“The community radio sector is made up of many nations and cultures. We allowed the CBF to receive and distribute our money on that basis. It’s our money, not the CBF’s money.....*  
**3KND – Melbourne’s Indigenous Station** - Jim Remedio Station Manager and ex-CBF Board member:

*“I can well recognize people’s fear of the CBF becoming a ‘sector shaper’ as opposed to a funding body.”* **2SER Sydney Educational Radio** - Melanie Withnall Station Manager and CBAA board member.

This Submission made by 4EB in Brisbane explains in detail how successful the hourly rate is and the reason why it needs to be maintained:...*“Essentially, the costs of producing a program and the ability to raise funds for a specific program irrespective of which city it is broadcast from should not be a factor when determining how much funding should be provided for a particular ethnic program. It should remain that each program has a weighted hourly rate as per the current grant allocation system for ethnic program grants.....Community radio is about access and empowerment. A competitive funding model runs contrary to the purpose and underlying values of having community run media.”* **4EB Brisbane’s full time ethnic station.**

*Many other organisations including the CBAA have said the hourly rate should be maintained.....‘It is noted that neither the Nous Review report nor the Content Review report recommended this change. The CBAA is yet to hear a solid argument for the proposed changes [the hourly rates] and believe that, in the absence of an extensive consultation process backed by sound reasoning, they should not go ahead at this time’.*(CBAA Submission July 2015) **Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA).**

*‘Per hour funding’ versus the ‘cost of production’ for certain specialist broadcasters. This change is dramatic ..... the proposed stance by the CBF is not supported by the original Nous report or the Content Review that was undertaken.* **3PBS – General Manager and previous CBAA President Adrian Baso:**

All the submissions are available on the CBF website at: <http://www.cbf.com.au/cbf-update/responses-embracing-change-stronger-future-community-broadcasting/>

The organisations that support the CBF changes are also available on the CBF website. Mostly those in favour of the reforms made very short submissions and did not provide any analysis to support their argument but said it would be good for the CBF to become more 'efficient and effective' and many consisted of two lines in an email. Those that agree to the changes don't receive or understand ethnic community broadcasting. Only one station in favour of the changes had Ethnic broadcasters at their station.

What's at stake is Ethnic community broadcasting receives almost \$4 million annually and is the stakeholder that has the most to lose from the CBF changes. Therefore the changes implemented by the CBF will have a significant impact on how the Ethnic community broadcasters continue to broadcast and impose negative effects on multiculturalism and social cohesion in Australia.

The NEMBC will maintain its campaign against the CBF by asking all Ethnic community broadcasters and stations to boycott the CBF's new model and ignore the call for nominations for any of the positions on the CBF board or committees.

Under the CBF's proposed changes, the existing democratic processes will be abolished and the NEMBC is concerned that Ethnic community broadcasting will be controlled by a small group of appointed people on the CBF Board, hand-picking their own organisation and creating a self-perpetuating board of management without appropriate ethnic community input or representation.

---

For more information, contact NEMBC Executive Officer Russell Anderson (03) 9486 9549

Dr Tangi Steen 0481 013 717

Mr Nick Dmyterko 0416 004 639



Dr Tangi Steen  
NEMBC President



Nick Dmyterko  
NEMBC Vice president

23 March 2016