

RIVER FM (2NCR FM) POLICY PROGRAMMING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 As a community radio station, River FM has a programming policy (defined herein) that is based on the following principles:

- a) to make broadcasting accessible to all individuals and all sections of the community seeking access to broadcasting facilities, particularly those who do not obtain access to other media,
- b) to expand meaningful programming choice to satisfy a wide diversity of needs and interests of listeners, whether numerous or not, and
- c) to provide programs that meet the needs of the local community and are consistent with the station's Promise of Performance outlined as follows:

1.2 Station programming policy shall embrace and abide by the River FM Promise of Performance. In regard to programming, that includes the following:

- a) seeking to provide an alternative radio service for the people of Northern Rivers. Program content and format shall be such as to complement and supplement programs provided by commercial and national broadcasters serving the Northern Rivers.
- b) provision of educational programs, community access programs, high quality music and other programs considered suitable for broadcasting to the people of Northern Rivers.
- c) offering access to facilities and personnel to all community members and/or groups to produce and broadcast their programs. Other community members and/or groups shall have the right of reply to views expressed in these programs.
- d) seeking to promote public awareness of the potential of community broadcasting, encouraging the community to produce its own programs.

1.3 Station programming policy shall also embrace and abide by the community broadcasting Codes of Practice. The relevant sections for Programming are attached to this policy in Schedule 1.

1.4 Station programming policy shall also embrace and abide by the following code of ethics. In that regard, the station shall

- a) cater to the needs of those denied effective access to, and those not adequately served by, the existing media
- b) seek the highest standard in programming consistent with the widest possible community participation
- c) subject to legal requirements and station policy, avoid any kind of censorship, and

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d) encourage broadcasters to adopt a programming policy which opposes and breaks down prejudice on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic background, sex, religion, sexual preference, or mental condition.

2.0 INDEPENDENCE

2.1 Station programming policy shall at all times remain independent. This means that the programming policy of River FM shall be conceived and implemented without reference to the needs of any specific interest group (other than offering access) including political, religious, or any business interests.

2.2 Station programming (in terms of quality and content) and scheduling shall not be undertaken to meet the needs of current or potential station sponsors.

2.3 Station programming and scheduling shall be undertaken in a manner that is free from control or influence by one dominant group of members.

2.4 The Management Committee shall endeavour to ensure that station programming and scheduling is managed by a consensus approach of members broadly representative of the local community diversity.

2.5 The M. Committee shall endeavour to ensure that this policy and station programming and scheduling is subject to external community influence and scrutiny.

2.6 The M. Committee shall ensure that appropriate management structures and portfolio allocations are such that programming independence is maintained.

3.0 GOVERNANCE

3.1 The M. Committee shall remain accountable for the maintenance and development of the station programming policy and shall remain accountable for its implementation and compliance.

3.2 The M. Committee shall endeavour to provide consultative mechanisms and structures to promote participation by station members and the broader community in programming policy, program types and scheduling and programming practices.

3.3 The M. Committee shall endeavour to maintain a programming advisory committee to allow for such input from a broader base of personnel. The charter for a programming advisory committee shall be based on that outlined in Schedule 2 of this policy.

3.4 All broadcasters must remain financial members (shareholder or associate

members) of the station.

3.5 The M. Committee shall ensure that participation in all station activities and the presentation of programs is discharged without prejudice to any individuals or groups on the basis of ethnicity, race, chosen language, gender, sexual preference, religion, age, physical or mental ability, occupation, cultural belief or political affiliation.

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3.6 The M. Committee shall also ensure that programs presented on the station have a bias towards opposing prejudice in any form. The Committee shall undertake a formal review of any program which is deemed to not comply with this requirement.

4.0 COMMUNITY ACCESS

4.1 The Committee shall ensure that River FM remains open to all members of the community (groups or individuals) to access personnel and station facilities in order to present broadcast programs on the station.

4.2 The M. Committee shall regularly promote at least once per week on air that all members of the community have a right to access broadcasting opportunities on the station.

4.3 Members of the community wishing to access broadcasting opportunities shall not be screened or discriminated against on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, political persuasion, sexual preference or voice quality. However, all such members of the community must be prepared to undergo training and induction prior to broadcasting and achieve reasonable competence as a result of such training and induction.

5.0 BROADCASTING ISSUES

5.1 Further to the principles and objectives outlined in this policy, broadcasters on River FM should endeavour to inform and entertain listening audiences.

5.2 All programs broadcast must comply with the legal and ethical requirements outlined in statutory and station policy documents.

5.3 All broadcasters on the station must complete training and induction prior to commencing broadcasting. All broadcasters must attend refresher training on these issues at least once every four years. The M. Committee shall ensure that records of who has completed such training shall be kept.

5.4 All broadcasters must enter into an agreement with station management that they will abide by the policies, practices and lawful instructions of the Committee or its agents. This agreement shall take the form of that described in Schedule 3 of this policy and the Program Director (or other officer/s if nominated by the M. Committee) shall be responsible for ensuring that all presenters have entered into such an agreement.

5.5 All broadcasters will take all reasonable precautions to avoid placing the station at risk of a successful defamation case against it.

5.6 All broadcasters will take all reasonable precautions to avoid placing the station at risk of a successful contempt of court, contempt of Parliament or any other legal action case against it.

5.7 All broadcasters shall be cognisant of their respective audiences in terms of what may be offensive or in poor taste. In regard to potentially offensive material, such material may not be broadcast unless:

- ⌘ the material relates to the intended target audience, and
- ⌘ that a warning has been broadcast prior to each such item, and

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- ⌘ that the broadcast of such material is between the hours of 10pm and 6am the following day.

Any broadcaster who is found to knowingly and with intent put to air offensive material with the sole intent of shocking, causing distress or for gratuitous purposes, will be suspended from broadcasting until such time as the Committee has been able to negotiate a suitable course of action to address the breach.

For the avoidance of doubt, this also includes:

- material which denigrates or vilifies any person or group on racial, religious, sexual and other discriminatory grounds,
- material which is considered harmful to children, and
- gratuitous (or un-called for) content and bad language (without context) including where material is broadcast to deliberately offend the target audience.

5.8 In addition, there are no circumstances where any station broadcaster can use the following words – f**k, c**t – in their spoken presentation. Such words contained in music can be played in accordance with the previous clause.

5.9 Under no circumstances shall material be played that would be considered harmful to children.

5.10 All music programs shall endeavour to ensure that compliance with Australian content requirements is observed.

5.11 All music broadcast on the station shall be covered by copyright. Therefore only music from recognised labels can be played and any live music performed can only be material where copyright has been approved (i.e. musicians can only present their own material unless written permission is provided to the Management Committee for other such material at least 48 hours prior to proposed broadcast).

5.12 Radio plays, poetry and other similar written works can only be broadcast with the written permission of the copyright owner provided to the Management Committee prior to such broadcasts.

5.13 Broadcasters shall strive to present programs of the highest quality at all times. As such, preparation prior to broadcasting should be at least equivalent to the time spent broadcasting.

5.14 In accordance with the law, broadcasters shall not present on-air whilst under the influence of liquor or other mind altering substances. In addition, broadcasters shall not consume alcohol whilst broadcasting – no matter where such broadcasts are being made from. Failure to comply with this clause will result in immediate expulsion from the station.

5.15 Station broadcasters may not undertake on-air talk-back on the station unless prior permission of the Management Committee has been obtained in writing. (The Management Committee shall not unreasonably withhold such permission, however it is expected that presenters wishing to broadcast talk-back would be trained in interviewing techniques and the technical requirements of the operating panel). It should be noted that talk-back is defined as random callers being put to air and not pre-arranged interviews on the telephone. No talk-back segments shall be broadcast without the seven second delay being operational and no talk-back shall be undertaken without an assistant to the presenter being present to assist with incoming telephone calls.

5.16 Programs shall start and end at the times published in the daily running schedule produced by station management. However, where news is scheduled, programs shall conclude at the commencement of the news and the next program shall commence following the news. Where news is scheduled within a program, the news shall be broadcast as scheduled.

5.17 Presenters must arrive at the station at least ten minutes prior to their scheduled program time to ensure a smooth transition between programs.

5.18 Station presenters may have guests on their programs, however where a guest becomes a regular presenter each week, such guests must become trained broadcasters and members in accordance with clause 3.4 of this policy. A guest must comply with this clause after four consecutive weeks of being a guest on any program or if it is decided by the Management Committee that such a person is no longer deemed to be a guest.

5.19 Broadcasters shall play all announcements and program segments scheduled on the daily schedule by station management as close as possible to the time scheduled. Presenters will sign the daily schedule to verify that such announcements and segments have been broadcast. A failure to comply with this clause may result in dismissal from the station.

5.20 Sponsorship announcements must not be played more frequently than specified. In addition, no announcements promoting business interests shall be broadcast unless these are announcements included on the daily schedule by station management. A failure to comply with this clause may result in instant dismissal of the presenter.

5.21 The Management Committee will ensure that all station broadcasts are recorded on a logger system in accordance with statutory requirements.

5.22 Station broadcasters can arrange other current trained presenters to fill in for their programs as required or arrange to have a pre-recorded program broadcast in place of a usual live program, provided that they have arranged with the broadcasters on either side of the program in advance, or have arranged other qualified members to supervise for the period of the program. Station management must be advised in advance of any such arrangement.

5.23 If a broadcaster is intending to be absent for five or more consecutive programs, station management must be advised in advance of any such intended absence.

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Schedule 1

Codes of Practice for Programming

Code 2 - Guidelines For All Programming

The purpose of this code is to encourage programming that reflects the principles of community broadcasting; to break down prejudice and discrimination; and to prevent the broadcast of material, which is contrary to community standards.

2.1 Community broadcasting licensees shall not broadcast material which may

- incite, encourage or present for their own sake violence or brutality;
- simulate news or events in such a way as to mislead or alarm listeners; or
- present as desirable the misuse of drugs including alcohol, narcotics and tobacco.

2.2 Community broadcasting licensees will avoid censorship wherever possible, however, consideration shall be given to the audience; the context; the degree of explicitness; the propensity to alarm, distress or shock; and the social importance of the event.

2.3 Community broadcasting licensees shall not broadcast material which may stereotype, incite, vilify, or perpetuate hatred against, or attempt to demean any person or group on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, race, chosen language, gender, sexual preference, religion, age, physical or mental ability, occupation, cultural belief or political affiliation. The requirement is not intended to prevent the broadcast of material which is factual, or the expression of genuinely held opinion in a news or current affairs program, or in the legitimate context of a humorous, satirical or dramatic work.

2.4 Community broadcasting licensees will establish programming practices which protect children from harmful program material.

2.5 Community broadcasting licensees in observance of privacy laws will

- respect each person's legitimate right to protection from unjustified use of material, which is obtained without an individual's consent, or other unwarranted and intrusive invasions of privacy;
- not broadcast the words of an identifiable person unless:
 - ⌘ that person has been informed in advance that the words may be transmitted;
 - or
 - ⌘ in the case of words which have been recorded without the knowledge of the

person, the person has subsequently, but prior to the transmission, indicated consent to the transmission of the words; or the manner of the recording has made it manifestly clear that the material may be broadcast.

2.6 News and Current Affairs Programming

This code is intended to promote accuracy and fairness in news and current affairs programs. News and current affairs programs (including news flashes) programs should:

- provide access to views under-represented by the mainstream media;
- present factual material accurately and ensure that reasonable efforts are made to correct substantial errors of fact at the earliest possible opportunity;
- clearly distinguish factual material from commentary and analysis;
- not present news in such a way as to create public panic or unnecessary distress to listeners;

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- not misrepresent a viewpoint by giving misleading emphasis, editing out of context or withholding relevant available facts.

2.7 Indigenous programming and coverage of Indigenous Issues

This code acknowledges Indigenous peoples' special place as the first Australians, and offers a way to demonstrate respect for Indigenous cultures and customs, and to avoid offence with inappropriate words, phrases and actions.

In the following section, 'Indigenous Australians' refers to the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia.

When reporting on Indigenous people and issues, stations will take care to verify and observe the best way to respect Indigenous cultures and customs by

- considering regional differences in the cultural practices and customs of Indigenous Australians
- seeking appropriate advice on how to best respect Indigenous bereavement customs on the reporting of people recently deceased
- using the appropriate words and phrases for referring to an Indigenous Australian and his/her regional group

2.8 Broadcasters will seek to involve and take advice from Indigenous Australians, and where possible Indigenous media organisations and/or Indigenous broadcasters, in the production of programs focusing on Indigenous people and issues.

2.9 Broadcasters will avoid prejudicial references to, or undue emphasis on a person who is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Code 3 - Australian Music Content

'Australian Music' is defined as any music composed or performed by a citizen or ordinary resident of Australia.

This Code reinforces the community broadcasting sector's reputation as a medium committed to developing and recognising Australian composers and/or performers by providing opportunities to have their material broadcast on a regular basis.

The BSA does not require community broadcasters to maintain minimum content levels of Australian music. However, given the nature of the community broadcasting sector and its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Australian culture and the interests of local communities, it is crucial for a significant proportion of local and Australian music, including indigenous Australian music, to continue to be broadcast by community stations.

In selecting Australian musical items, community broadcasting stations should have regard

for the make-up of the community served by the licensee.

3.1 Community broadcasters will ensure a proportion of the total number of musical items broadcast consist of:

- not less than 25% Australian music items for all community broadcasting licensees except ethnic and classical stations as cited Clause 3.1(b) below;
 - not less than 10% Australian musical items for ethnic and classical stations.
- (a) and (b) to be determined over one month.

3.2 The music requirements cited (3.1 above) exclude the use of music in sponsorship announcements and program or station promotions.

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Schedule 2

Charter for Programming Advisory Committee

The purpose of the River FM Programming Advisory Committee is to assist the Management Committee in managing the programming activity. As such the P.A. Committee is empowered to undertake all programming decisions within a framework of delegation provided by the Management Committee as follows:

Delegated Powers

Program Philosophy / Programming Policy – only the Management Committee can make changes to the program philosophy or policy; however the Program A. Committee is encouraged to continually review and make recommendations to the M. Committee on program philosophy, policy and strategy.

Program Advisory Committee Membership.

The Management Committee shall appoint the members of the P.A. Committee after seeking expressions of interest from station personnel, subscribers and any other interested parties. The Management Committee shall ensure that the P. A. committee membership is balanced in terms of gender, age and representation of the station membership and the broader community.

Program Advisory Committee Operation

The Program Advisory Committee shall abide by all station policies and comply with all reasonable instructions given by the Management Committee.

The Program Director (or M.C. member overseeing station programming) should preside over meetings of the Program Advisory Committee. In the event that the director does not wish to accept this role, the Program Committee shall recommend (elect) a Chairperson who is acceptable to the M.C. The Program Advisory Committee Chairperson shall not have a second or casting vote.

Meetings of the Program Advisory Committee are open to all members – however in the event that a consensus approach to decision-making is not achievable, formal voting rights only reside in those people endorsed by the Program Advisory Committee as bona fide members of the Program Advisory Committee. The Program Advisory Committee can meet on any frequency that it decides, however it must meet a minimum of at least once per quarter. Records of Program Advisory Committee meetings should be circulated to all committee members and the Management Committee with a copy published on the station notice-board. A quorum for the Committee shall be half plus one of the endorsed committee members.

Training – the Management Committee may delegate responsibility to the Program Advisory Committee for station training and induction from time to time.

Disciplinary matters – the Program Advisory Committee is not empowered to implement disciplinary action but can make recommendations to the Management Committee about such matters.

Expenditure – the Program Advisory Committee can not commit the station to any expenditure, but is able to make recommendations to the Management Committee as required. Any necessary Program Advisory committee operating costs must be approved by the Board in advance of any spending commitment.

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Role of Programming Advisory Committee

The Management Committee may vary the role of the Program Advisory Committee from time to time, but the generic role of the P.A. Committee would include the following:

∩ to ensure that station broadcasting is adequately resourced and presented in accordance with the legal and ethical requirements outlined in the Act, the CBAA Codes of Practice, the River FM station policies and practices

∩ to provide advice to the Management Committee on programming issues, programming policy and development, and any other issues which would further the development of the station in meeting its overall objectives.

As such, the P.A. Committee will –

- Consult with relevant stakeholders to determine that the programs delivered on River FM meet the needs identified,
- Identify program deficiencies or priorities and delivery of recruiting and training to meet current and future broadcast needs,
- Allocate timeslots to various groups or individuals as it sees fit (in compliance with the above),
- Maintain up to date records of program schedules and participants and communicate these to Sponsorship personnel (who are responsible for the Daily Running Sheet) and the Station Secretary (for membership compliance),
- Manage station access and key control as required by participants (ie maintain a key register and return of keys issued when presenters leave), as well ensuring internal mailbox labels are maintained,
- Ensure that programs are resourced in terms of co-ordination of presenters and any special needs that they might have,
- Ensure that regular program reviews are undertaken (quality monitoring) and that compliance with station policy in regard to Australian music content , station talk-back policy, station broadcasting and behavioural standards, and
- Ensure that programs are resourced in terms of co-ordination of presenters and any special needs that they might have,

Areas of Overlap

- Internal Training
- plan and implement recruiting
- co-ordinate delivery of basic training & induction
- approve competency of trainees
- ensure new trainees receive Station Volunteer Handbook
- ensure new trainees sign Presenter Contract and pay fees
- recommend timeslots to Program Advisory Committee
- maintain training manual and trainer teams
- identify advanced training requirements
- organise delivery of such training
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- **Production/Promotion** – this area should be managed by the Sponsorship Committee and ensure that adequate program and station promotion occurs to gain maximum leverage from our broadcast medium. In the event that the Sponsorship Committee fails to discharge that function effectively, the Management Committee may ask the Programming Advisory Committee to assist.

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Schedule 3

RIVER FM PRESENTER AGREEMENT

I,

(full name of Presenter)

of

(address)

accept the role of a broadcaster on River FM and agree to the following:

1. To abide by the constitution of the River FM (2NCR FM) North Coast Radio Inc
2. To abide by the station code of ethics and community broadcasting Codes of Practice.
3. To abide by station policies, practices and procedures.
4. To present programs at the appointed time and to make appropriate arrangements if this is not possible.
5. To ensure that all scheduled announcements and segments are broadcast as scheduled and to enter the time of broadcast and signature on the running sheet as evidence of such announcement broadcast.
6. To not broadcast any unauthorised sponsorship announcements and to provide a copy to the Sponsorship Committee prior to broadcast of any community announcements or sponsorship announcements, and not broadcast these until management approval is given
7. To provide summary forms as required (eg. APRA surveys, etc)
8. To never incur expenditure on behalf of River FM without prior Management Committee approval
9. To use all station equipment in a responsible manner and to protect such equipment from damage.
10. To undertake some voluntary work for River FM in addition to my program. Such work to be performed in any 12 month period and be negotiated with station management.

In addition, by my signature below, I acknowledge that:

- my program timeslot belongs to River FM and that the station has the right to alter program schedules as it sees fit,
- in order to maintain security and protection for personnel and equipment, I may be under video surveillance whilst on station premises,
- I have a basic understanding of the role and objectives of River FM and the community broadcasting sector in general, and

I have received adequate training and induction to commence broadcasting and understand the legal obligations I have as a broadcaster.
I also understand that this agreement shall continue to have effect until it is replaced by a new agreement or if I cease to occupy a broadcasting position at River FM for more than twelve months.

Presenter's Signature Date.....

Witness

Name and Address of Witness:

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Schedule 3

RIVER FM COMMENTATOR AGREEMENT

(For individuals involved only as commentators)

I,

(full name of Commentator)

of

(address)

accept the role of a broadcaster on River FM and agree to the following:

1. To abide by the constitution of the River FM (2NCR FM) North Coast Radio Inc
2. To abide by the station code of ethics and community broadcasting Codes of Practice.
3. To abide by station policies, practices and procedures.
4. To present programs at the appointed time and to make appropriate arrangements if this is not possible.
5. To ensure that all scheduled announcements and segments are broadcast as scheduled and to enter the time of broadcast and signature on the running sheet as evidence of such announcement broadcast.
6. To not broadcast any unauthorised sponsorship announcements and to provide a copy to the Sponsorship Director prior to broadcast of any community announcements or sponsorship announcements, and not broadcast these until management approval is given
7. To never incur expenditure on behalf of River FM without prior Management Committee approval
8. To use all station equipment in a responsible manner and to protect such equipment from damage.

In addition, by my signature below, I acknowledge that:

- my program timeslot belongs to River FM and that the station has the right to alter program schedules as it sees fit,
- in order to maintain security and protection for personnel and equipment, I may be under video surveillance whilst on station premises,
- I have a basic understanding of the role and objectives of River FM and the community broadcasting sector in general, and
- I have received adequate training and induction to commence broadcasting and understand the legal obligations I have as a broadcaster.

I also understand that this agreement shall continue to have effect until it is replaced by a new agreement or if I cease to occupy a broadcasting position at River FM for more than twelve months.

Announcer's Signature Date.....

Witness

Name and Address of Witness:

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