

## **Communications Plan**

### **Allocation of Non-commercial Radio Frequency 106.1 FM at Mt Kaukau**

#### **Executive Summary**

Non-commercial radio frequencies are allocated without a resource charge to community radio stations throughout New Zealand to ensure people in their communities have access to programmes and information relevant to them.

Currently 24 stations operate on non-commercial community licences in New Zealand.

With the pending expiry of the 106.1 FM frequency at Mt Kaukau in April 2016, a decision was taken to call for expressions of interest in the frequency to ensure the local community was being well served now and in the future.

#### **Purpose/Goal**

The purpose of these communications is to ensure the four applicants are aware of the results of the allocation process and the three unsuccessful applicants understand why this was the case. This is particularly so for one of the unsuccessful applicants, Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust, the trust currently using the frequency.

#### **Approach**

The approach to these communications will be proactive and timely and in plain language.

#### **Background**

The 106.1 FM frequency has been available since 2008 with the licence secured over this time by Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust.

With expiry of the licence occurring in April 2016 a decision was taken to review the licence in order to ensure the current broadcaster was fulfilling community needs with its programming. This includes providing listeners with an alternative service to those offered in the area by other stations operating on a 'for profit' basis.

Accordingly on 3 November 2015 the Ministry for Culture and Heritage called for expressions of interest in the frequency. These closed on 11 December 2015 and an independent panel met on 26 January to consider them.

As a result the radio frequency has been allocated to Wellington Access Radio Society Incorporated.



## Situation Analysis

While two of the unsuccessful applicants were applying for the first-time for this frequency and failed to show they had the resources or experience to provide the service the other unsuccessful applicant Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust is currently using the frequency.

On these grounds trust members could argue they are already providing a service and they may be aggrieved that they did not have their application renewed. They could express this concern via the airways and also to other key people in the community.

Timing is a critical factor in these communications as letters will go out to all four applicants this week and as well a notice will go up on the Ministry's website.

## Key Messages

- An independent panel, comprising Carrie Cook, Manager, Media Policy, Ministry for Culture and Heritage; Jane Wrightson, Chief Executive, NZ On Air; and Brian Pauling, an independent contractor with a background in media as a broadcaster, academic and researcher, met on 26 January 2016 to consider the four applications
- The four applications considered were – Atiawa Toa FM Ltd; Valley FM Charitable Trust; the incumbent Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust; and the successful applicant Wellington Access Radio Society Incorporated
- Wellington Access Radio Society was the strongest applicant having experience as a community radio station in the Wellington region for 34 years and with the capability to extend its community reach through the Hutt Valley region; the society is professional, providing a reliable and strongly community-based service inclusive of many ethnic groups
- The Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust has not been providing sufficient programming of the kind required of a non-commercial community radio licensee.

## Risks/Issues and Mitigation

Risk/issue	Mitigation
Members of the Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust will be genuinely upset about losing the radio frequency	Talk to Chair first-hand to explain the situation, prior to the decline letter being sent <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clearly explain why they were not the successful applicant – based on the criteria they needed to meet</li><li>• Thank them for the service they have provided</li></ul> Reiterate success criteria in the decline letter and include the name of the successful applicant
Key people in the community are lobbied by Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust members to take-up their cause	Send letters to key people in the Hutt Valley community, including mayors and MPs, to outline the situation and covering off the success criteria



The Minister for Broadcasting Hon Amy Adams is lobbied to take action	Update Minister about the decision and why it has been made. Approaches to the Minister should be referred to MCH as it is an administrative decision; cover-off the steps taken via letters to mayors, MPs and unsuccessful applicants
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## Questions and Answers (To be used as and when required)

Q: What is the purpose of non-commercial radio frequencies?

A: These frequencies are available and allocated without resource charge across New Zealand to community radio stations, frequently operated by community trusts or incorporated societies, to provide people in the community with access to radio programmes relevant to them.

Q: What area does the non-commercial radio frequency 106.1 FM at Mt Kaukau cover?

A: The radio frequency has the potential to extend across the Hutt Valley region, Wellington City and the Porirua basin.

Q: Why was the decision made to reallocate the frequency?

A: The licence was due to expire and a decision was made to seek expressions of interest for the frequency to ensure people in the Hutt Valley were being best served in the provision of community-based programming.

Q: Why wasn't the incumbent provider – the Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust, the successful applicant?

A: All the applications were considered on their merit against the criteria established by the policy for awarding these frequencies, in other words did they:

- promote local broadcasting services which support local and regional character, as well as identity and democratic and civic participation among regional and local groups
- promote innovation and a diverse range of content and formats reflecting audience diversity and cater for their interests
- facilitate wide access to technical, cultural and social broadcasting
- provide for long-term broadcasting developments.

Wellington Access Radio Society was the strongest applicant when measured against these criteria.

Q: What happens now?

A: The Hutt Community Radio Trust will need to cease broadcasting on or before 2 April 2016 when its licence expires and the Wellington Access Radio Society will begin using the radio frequency once it has established its FM transmission arrangements. In the meantime it will continue to broadcast on its current licence on 783AM.

Q: How long will the new licence be issued for?

A: No decision has been made yet as to the term of the licence, but it will be for a maximum of 15 years through to the expiry of the current management right in 2031, when all existing non-commercial community licences will expire.

Q: What happens to the Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust now?

A: The trust is an entity and can continue as such, however it will no longer be able to use the 106.1 FM radio frequency.

## Action Plan

Channel	Target group	Key Message/s and/or collateral	Who by	Date
Briefing Note, weekly meeting	Minister for Broadcasting	Outline the situation as per key messages	Rick, Carrie	2 February
Phone call	Chair – Hutt Community Radio and Audio Archives Charitable Trust	Explain why the trust wasn't the successful applicant	Rick	9 February
Phone call/email	Minister's press sec and adviser	Outline the situation as per key messages and what's being done in mitigation	Christine	4 February and update 9 February
Letters to four applicants	Four Applicants	Thank them all for applications, cover off criteria and why they were or weren't successful	Rick (Carrie and Christine peer review)	4 February
Letters to key stakeholders	Hutt Valley mayors and MPs	Outline the situation as per key messages	Rick	9 February
Website notice	Stakeholders interested in the radio frequency	Outline that Wellington Access Radio Society has been awarded	Rick and Fran	9 February



	Hutt Valley community	the 106.1 FM radio frequency		
		The date for the commencement of broadcasts on this frequency will be advised in due course, in the meantime Wellington Access radio will continue to broadcast on 783AM		
		Include link to the Society's website		

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