

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER
FOR IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS, THE HON. M.J.R. MACKELLAR
AND THE
MINISTER FOR POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, THE HON. ERIC ROBINSON

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NEW SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE

The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the Hon. M.J.R. MacKellar, and the Minister for Post and Telecommunications, the Hon. Eric Robinson, today announced government approval for the structure and operations of a new independent Special Broadcasting Service. In the first instance the Special Broadcasting Service will be responsible for the permanent operations of the ethnic broadcasting service through stations 2EA Sydney and 3EA Melbourne.

The Ministers said the role of the new authority would be to produce special broadcasting programmes which it would not be appropriate for the Australian Broadcasting Commission or other established broadcasters to undertake.

There will be a part-time Chairman and up to 6 part-time members who will draw upon the advice of non-statutory advisory committees for special programme areas. The advisory committees for the ethnic broadcasting service will be the National Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Council appointed earlier this year by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the State Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Committees to be announced in the near future.

The Ministers said that the new structure would make maximum use of fee-for-service contract arrangements to allow wide-scale audience group participation in the preparation and presentation of programmes.

The Government had emphasised that the new authority should take full responsibility for all programmes presented. In addition a set of "criteria for an ethnic broadcasting service" would form the basis of operation for the new service. A copy of this is overleaf.

CRITERIA FOR AN ETHNIC BROADCASTING SERVICE

"Ethnic broadcasting should :

provide a medium for presenting to non-English-speaking residents of Australia, entertainment, news and other information in their own languages;

assist those from other cultures to maintain those cultures and to pass them on to their descendants and to other Australians;

provide information and advice on the rights and obligations of residence in Australia and on other matters to assist the non-English-speaking migrant to settle speedily, happily and successfully;

encourage and facilitate the learning of English;

provide as adequately and equitably as possible for all ethnic groups including those which are numerically small;

assist in promoting mutual understanding and harmony between and within ethnic groups and between ethnic groups and the English-speaking community;

avoid political partisanship;

while avoiding institutionalisation of differences (e.g. by means such as the election of station managements), maximise the participation of ethnic groups and individuals."